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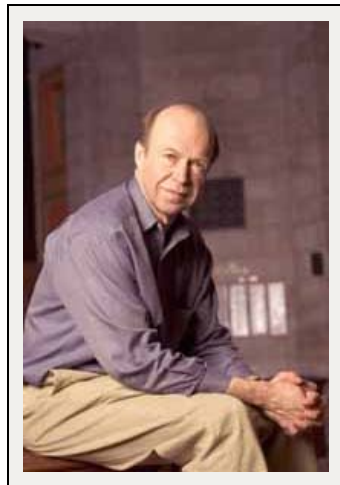
## The Art of Listening

Posted on May 21st, 2008 by earlelland

A couple of weeks ago, famed NASA climate scientist [James Hansen](#) gave the annual [Bowdler Lectures](#) for the [School of Earth Sciences](#).

Hansen's opposition to NASA's attempt to stifle climate change discussion that opposed current administration policy led to the resignation of a senior NASA public affairs official and a [reworking of the agency's policy on scientists talking to the news media](#).

That episode has fueled a new book, "[Censoring Science](#)," by author [Mark Bowen](#), whose 2005 book, "[Thin Ice](#)," chronicled OSU geologist [Lonnie Thompson's](#) research efforts for the last quarter-century.



Along with his two lectures — one more technical and a second aimed at the general public — Hansen appeared on [WOSU-AM's "Open Line."](#) With [Hansen as a guest](#), host Fred Andriele dove into the controversy surrounding climate change research.

Once Andriele opened the conversation up to callers, first in line was a regular called "Bob" who often played the contrarian role when the topic touched on climate change.

After firing his first volley of five or six arguments against global warming, Hansen responded simply that, "It would've been nice if you had come to one of my talks yesterday," and called the arguments Bob raised as "a common trick" to confuse weather with climate.

After a few minutes of back-and-forth statements, Hansen slammed the door:

"I think the reason that you don't understand things is that you don't bother to listen! You just keep interrupting and bringing up a different point," and then went on to counter Bob's supposed evidence.

What's significant here is Hansen's willingness to counter opponents by pointing to their strategies before trying to provide actual data. Researchers often make a mistake when they assume that their rational arguments and overwhelming data will win an argument.

That only works when the opposition actually wants to reach a common accord and respects the evidence that science brings to the table. In areas

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where science collides with public policy — climate change, evolution versus intelligent design, animal rights, stem cell research, etc. — the reliance on fact over emotion is at best an uphill struggle. *—Earle Holland*

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## One Response to “The Art of Listening”

[Pro stem cell research](#) // Jun 11, 2009 at 7:40 pm

Quoting : “...Researchers often make a mistake when they assume that their rational arguments and overwhelming data will win an argument” .

If you ask me (as a humble citizen of the planet earth and reader of this blog), what would you believe, a statement based on years of research, made by a CREDIBLE scientist, or a statement made by who knows which official from NASA or whatever governmental organisation or agency (in any government of the world btw !), my answer would be definitely “the scientist” !

Policies changed overnight based on conflict of interest or on other hidden objectives are backward dribble techniques.

“Hansen’s opposition to NASA’s attempt to stifle climate change discussion...” :

<> – W. Shakespeare

<> – Seneca .

Best Regards,  
Pro stem cell research.

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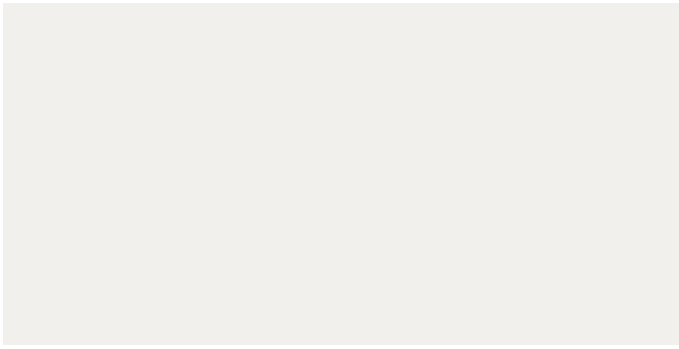
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