

Inside the Bell

Perception Management

The term “perception management” leads one to conclude it is a technique to influence the belief others have of an event or action. That is, the application of “spin” following an event with the hope of reinforcing the interpretation of the event to reflect favorably the position or image of the spinner.

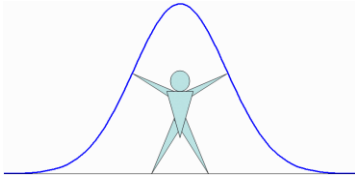
Actually, the definition above is not even close. Perception management is the whirling dervish of spin. Where spin attempts to influence the interpretation of events, perception management attempts to create events in the minds of the community with predetermined attributes useful to the organization creating the perception. Where spin deals with events after they occur, perception management deals with how events are interpreted before they occur. In fact, there is no requirement in the execution of perception management that the event actually occurs at all, only the belief that it did.

The term perception management is attributed to the US Department of Defense, the definition of which includes the phrase, “perception management combines truth projection, operations security, cover and deception, and psychological operations.” In other words, there is no requirement for “truth” in the exercise of perception management techniques. The only requirement is the target of the perception believes the information conveyed is, in fact, true and acts on the information in ways beneficial to the originator of the perception. Perception management is essentially lying to achieve your goal. With perception management, the end does justify the means.

The use of perception management techniques is not new. Miscreants of various stripes have used lying to get what they wanted. Con men and hoaxers have been around forever. It's only in the last decade or so, with the coming of age of a morality free generation and the development of the Internet that we've seen perception management reach epidemic proportions.

It is not surprising that inarticulate, narcissistic individuals use the Internet to distribute their less than convincing venom, but the technology allows those who should know better to generate and disseminate professionally structured misinformation.

Historically, widely believed hoaxes have been scarce. One example, Piltdown Man, occurred in 1912. A gentleman named Charles Dawson claimed that fragments of a skull and jawbone he collected in England were from a species somewhere between modern man and apes, an example of the “missing link.” The hoax was exposed in 1923 but it wasn't until 1953 that the scientific community rejected Piltdown Man as a hoax consisting of a human skull and a chimpanzee jawbone with filed down teeth. It seems if you have the trappings of authority, or a reputation in the community, whatever you say will be believed without challenge and the true believers you gather in support of your thesis cannot easily be redirected from the “facts” supporting their faith even when



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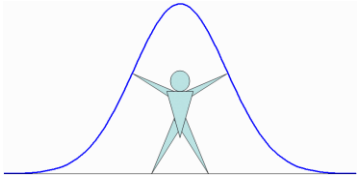
faced with overwhelming evidence to the contrary. It is very difficult to reexamine your public statements, admit error and “eat crow.”

Almost a century later we are also in the thrall of another scientific hoax, global warming created by human activities. Initially, the premise was easy to accept and vigorous promotion by politicians, environmentalists and the United Nations using peer reviewed papers, press releases and a motion picture created a body of “fact” supporting the premise and urging immediate action to avoid the global holocaust that would ensue if nothing were done.

Over time, more credible scientists, climatologists, geologists and astronomers have researched the “facts” and exposed most of them as fanciful interpretations of the data or deliberate fabrications. Some examples:

- The claim that human generated carbon dioxide would accumulate in the atmosphere and raise the average temperature anywhere from 3.6 to 8.1 degrees Fahrenheit has been shown to be incorrect. Not only was the initial conclusion based on incorrect information (since corrected by NASA) but the historical temperature and CO₂ records clearly show that increases in temperature precede increases in CO₂ by several hundred years. In other words, increases in temperature lead to increases in CO₂ not the other way around.
- The mean temperature of the Earth is most strongly influenced by the observed cycles of the Sun not by locally produced phenomena. The Sun has a number of cycles, sunspots, variations in rotational speed and variations in the solar wind to name a few, that directly affect the temperature of not only the Earth but the other planets as well. These cycles correlate extremely well with the historical record, have proved accurate in predicting a number of global climate variations and explain not only global warming but also the corresponding melting of the Martian polar ice.
- The Earth has had many warm spells prior to the current one and before the industrial revolution cited as the beginning of the current crisis. Nine hundred years ago, the temperature of the Earth was warm enough to support a vibrant agricultural community in England. This was a period of expanding human progress characterized by the end of the Dark Ages and expansion of architecture and literacy.

It is clear that the consensus on human caused global warming was established based on an unproven theory and before the scientific testing of the theory had even begun. Global warming provides support for political agenda and governmental action consistent with current progressive dogma. Science has begun to test the theory and the evidence for global warming is unsupportable. Eventually, the science will prevail and the alarmists will fade from public view along with the crisis. Then the world can focus on dealing with the effects of the



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purely natural, and recurring, terrestrial temperature cycles. I just hope it doesn't take 41 years.

Russ
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