

## The Heartland Institute Under Attack

*Global Warming Fever Drives Scientists to Desperation*

By Matt Patterson

**Summary:** *It was Valentine's Day, but it was no love letter. On February 14, 2012, renowned environmental scientist Peter Gleick transmitted to a group of liberal bloggers and journalists documents that he obtained from the Heartland Institute, a Chicago-based think-tank specializing in environmental policy. Gleick's goal: destroy Heartland, a group that has mobilized scientists who are skeptical about global warming. Gleick faked his identity and pretended to be a Heartland board member to obtain some of the documents. One of the documents that Gleick sent was a fake, created by Gleick or parties unknown to prove what wasn't true. Gleick's reckless, unethical and, most likely, criminal action shows just how desperate green activists are to prop up their overblown claims about global warming.*

**D**r. Peter Gleick was a trusted and respected scientist, with a career studded with honors and awards. And then he threw it all away.

Gleick, who was born in 1956, studied engineering and applied science at



**Dr. Peter Gleick - Thief**

Yale and received his Ph.D. in Energy and Resources from the University of California, Berkeley in 1986. He is currently president of the Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment, and Security, which he co-founded in 1987.

The Oakland, California-based research group has a staff of twenty-five scientists and program officers who seek “to produce solutions that advance environmental protection, economic development,

and social equity.” In 2010 the Pacific Institute received more than \$2.2 million in grants and contributions from a mix of foundations (e.g. Hewlett, Packard, Robert Wood Johnson, Rockefeller Brothers, Rockefeller) and government agencies (e.g. Sacramento County and the Florida

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Department of Environmental Protection, EPA, USAID and the U.N. Environment Programme).

Gleick's research focuses on water as it relates to "human health, the hydrologic impacts of climate change, sustainable water use, privatization and globalization, and international conflicts over water resources." The Pacific Institute's website lists his many scientific and popular works on water management and consumption, including *Bottled and Sold: The Story Behind Our Obsession with Bottled Water* (Island Press, 2010).

Peter Gleick has been widely honored for his work on water resources. He was elected an Academician of the International Water Academy in Oslo, Norway and was named a "visionary on the environment" by the BBC. He received a \$500,000 MacArthur Foundation "genius" award in 2003 and was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2006.

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In 2011 Dr. Gleick was named chairman of a new task force on "scientific ethics and integrity" at the American Geophysical Union (AGU). Established in 1919, the AGU is an international association of 61,000 academics and policymakers "dedicated to furthering the sciences of geophysics" by sponsoring meetings and publishing scientific journals.

But on February 16, 2012 Gleick resigned from the AGU task force citing "personal, private reasons." We now know that two days earlier he had passed along to media outlets and online blogs documents that he claimed came from the Heartland Institute, a Chicago-based nonprofit research and advocacy organization. Gleick considered Heartland's views on climate change unacceptable, and he believed the document disclosure would discredit the organization. Then four days after his resignation, Gleick astounded his colleagues and supporters by confessing that he had stolen the documents.

And that was just the start of "Fakegate."

### **Fakegate**

Gleick's action was intended to discredit Heartland, whose conferences and publications sharply challenge what was once the conventional wisdom on so-called global warming. Gleick attached the stolen documents to an email that read:

*"Dear Friends (15 of you):*

*In the interest of transparency, I think you should see these files from the Heartland Institute. Look especially at the 2012 fundraising and budget documents, the information about donors, and compare to the 2010 990 tax form. But other things might also interest or intrigue you. This is all I have. And this email account will be removed after I send."*

Three things got in the way of Gleick's attempt to discredit Heartland:

1) Most of the documents were thoroughly uninteresting, revealing nothing controversial or even surprising about Heartland's internal organization;

2) the single document that appeared damaging—called "January 2012 Confidential Memo: 2012 Heartland Climate Strategy"—didn't come from Heartland at all (as Gleick would later admit) and was an obvious and clumsy forgery;

3) the other documents were obtained under false pretenses: Gleick used a stolen identity and fraud to gain access to the genuine Heartland documents.

A mere 24 hours after Gleick's document dump, Heartland confirmed that someone (not known to be Gleick at that point) had impersonated a member of the Heartland

board of directors. Pretending to be the board member, Gleick convinced a member of Heartland's support staff to send the documents to his "new email."

The Heartland Institute is a prominent free-market think tank founded in 1984 by Joseph Bast, its current president, to "discover, develop, and promote free-market solutions to social and economic problems." While it promotes tax and budgetary reform, school choice, and market-based healthcare reforms, Heartland is perhaps best-known for its involvement in the climate wars.

Heartland's initiatives have earned it the respect and admiration of many climate scientists. They despair that the mainstream media mindlessly promotes global warming scare stories and they shake their heads as government agencies and foundations steer grant money to those who make the most extreme claims about changes in the earth's climate.

Heartland challenges the theory that modern society's industrial capacity is producing gas emissions that are warming the earth's climate to such an extent that all of humanity is threatened by natural disaster. Heartland dissents from the arguments for global warming and it publishes alternative interpretations of climate change.

Heartland's tenacity has put it on Al Gore's enemies list and made it the bete noire of the

United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Heartland's publication *Climate Change Reconsidered* is the only comprehensive review of the scientific literature on global warming besides the IPCC's, which is all the more reason why environmental activists like Gleick want to destroy its reputation.

As Gleick intended, the stolen Heartland documents caused a sensation when they were posted online by the liberal blogs and as the *New York Times*, the *Guardian* in Great Britain and other media outlets rushed to disclose their contents. However, it quickly became apparent that the documents revealed no illegal or inappropriate behavior by Heartland's staff. But they did disclose confidential information about Heartland's operations and budget.

One memo revealed that Heartland is supported by about 1,800 donors and expects to raise over \$7 million in 2012. Other documents revealed the identities of some donors as well as the home addresses and other contact information for Heartland's board of directors. Perhaps most troubling, Gleick disclosed to extremist blogs like DeSmogBlog the identity of the scientists working with Heartland on its research and publications, potentially exposing them to career retribution and physical danger.

The phony "Heartland Climate Strategy" memo was a different beast altogether.

It falsely claimed that the Charles G. Koch Foundation, a favorite bogeyman of the Left, had funded Heartland's climate change work in 2011 to the tune of \$200,000. (In fact, Koch contributed \$25,000 to Heartland for work on healthcare reform.) The memo also cast doubt on the integrity of Heartland's efforts at climate education. According to the memo, Heartland had developed a K-12 global warming curriculum that was "effective at dissuading teachers from teaching science."

Heartland denounced the memo as an obvious fake and created a website, [fakegate.org](http://fakegate.org), which described the forgery:

\* "The memo contains numerous errors of fact and interpretation that no one at Heartland would have made. Significantly, every error in the fake memo has the effect of casting Heartland's fundraising and education efforts in a negative light. "

\* "A thorough forensic analysis of Heartland's computers (and those owned by Heartland's president and his spouse) by Protek International concludes 'the Memo was not created on Heartland's computer systems and never existed there, or within Heartland's email systems, prior to its posting online on February 14, 2012.'"

Journalists like *The Atlantic's* Megan McArdle pointed out other glaring inaccuracies in the memo and speculated

about why it was manufactured:

*“Most notably, it claimed that the Koch foundation had given \$200,000 in 2011, when the actual number was \$25,000 ... Given other anomalies surrounding the document, it seemed to me very likely that whoever had phished [i.e., engaged in email fraud] the authenticated board package had been disappointed by the lack of sizeable contributions from Big Oil and the Kochs, and so had written the memo to make sure that the documents told a nice, neat story about corruption and secrecy, rather than a boring, equivocal story about an issue advocacy organization with a spot of budget trouble.”*

### **The Thief Confesses**

On February 20, Gleick published an astonishing confession at *The Huffington Post* in which he admitted to stealing most of the documents, although he wrapped his illegality in a blanket of self-righteous moralizing. But Gleick claimed the phony Climate Strategy memo was mailed to him anonymously. Gleick wrote in part:

*“At the beginning of 2012, I received an anonymous document in the mail describing what appeared to be details of the Heartland Institute’s climate program strategy. It contained information about their funders and the Institute’s apparent efforts to muddy public understanding about climate science and policy. I do not*

*know the source of that original document but assumed it was sent to me because of my past exchanges with Heartland and because I was named in it.*

*Given the potential impact, however, I attempted to confirm the accuracy of the information in this document. In an effort to do so, and in a serious lapse of my own professional judgment and ethics, I solicited and received additional materials directly from the Heartland Institute under someone else’s name. The materials the Heartland Institute sent to me confirmed many of the facts in the original document, including especially their 2012 fundraising strategy and budget.*

*I forwarded, anonymously, the documents I had received to a set of journalists and experts working on climate issues. I can explicitly confirm, as can the Heartland Institute, that the documents they emailed to me are identical to the documents that have been made public. I made no changes or alterations of any kind to any of the Heartland Institute documents or to the original anonymous communication.”*

Gleick contends that he was an innocent recipient of the “climate strategy” memo. But Heartland and other analysts have demonstrated that Gleick himself or a co-conspirator must have forged the memo.

\* For one, according to Heartland, “The memo references only the documents that

were stolen by Gleick. Except for Board members, no one except Gleick had access to all of the documents cited in the memo.”

\* A computer analysis conducted by of Dr. Patrick Juola of Duquesne University compared the writing styles of works authored by Heartland president Joseph Bast to those of Dr. Gleick. Juola concluded that the memo was likely created by Gleick.

\* McArdle reported on an analysis of how the documents were scanned into PDF format. It disclosed that the genuine documents stolen from Heartland all were created in the Central Time Zone, where Heartland is headquartered. The fake memo was scanned in the Pacific Time Zone, where Gleick resides.

### **Fallout**

The fallout from Gleick’s half-hearted confession, and the growing belief that he manufactured the “climate strategy” memo, came fast and furious. On February 20, 2012, American Geophysical Union President Michael McPhaden condemned the chairman of his group’s task force on scientific ethics and integrity.

While still managing to criticize Heartland and other global warming “deniers,” McPhaden censured Gleick in the manner of one academic administrator to another:

*“AGU is disappointed that Dr. Gleick*

*acted in a way that is inconsistent with our organization's values. AGU expects its members to adhere to the highest standards of scientific integrity in their research and in their interactions with colleagues and the public. Among the core values articulated in AGU's Strategic Plan are 'excellence and integrity in everything we do.' The vast majority of scientists share and live by these values.*

*AGU will continue to uphold these values and encourage scientists to embrace them in order to remain deserving of the public trust. While this incident is regrettable, it should not obscure the fact that climate change is occurring or interfere with substantive scientific discourse regarding climate change."*

Other members of the environmental movement were less forthright. Joseph Romm, climate expert at Think Progress, a project of the liberal Center for American Progress, noted that Gleick had "crossed the line" in taking the Heartland documents. But he commended Gleick for apologizing for his "serious lapse" and attacked the Heartland Institute which, Romm said, continues "spreading misinformation."

### **Joseph Bast Responds**

Joseph Bast is president and CEO of The Heartland Institute, and the author and/or editor of 21 books, including Rebuilding

America's Schools (1990), Why We Spend Too Much on Health Care (1992) Eco-Sanity: A Common-Sense Guide to Environmentalism (1994), and Education & Capitalism (2003).

In an interview with *Green Watch*, Bast speculated on the reasons for Gleick's descent into criminality and described how it has damaged Heartland. He also discussed what these events tell us about the media and the environmental movement.

**GW:** What are your thoughts on Gleick's motives for singling out Heartland? There are a lot of organizations working on green issues on both sides of the spectrum, why do you think Gleick perceived Heartland as especially threatening to him and his side?

**Bast:** *"I suppose Gleick was personally offended by James Taylor's take-down of him at forbes.com, where they had an exchange of views that revealed how little climate science Gleick knew compared to Taylor. Since Taylor is a lawyer and not a scientist, I'm sure that defeat stung. But we were on his radar well before then due to our six International Conferences on Climate Change, because we published two reports for the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), and because of our high profile in publicizing the Climategate scandal."* [ed. note: James Taylor is a Heartland senior fellow and managing editor of its "Environment and Climate News."]

**GW:** What do you think about the support Gleick is getting from liberal bloggers and writers for perpetrating his fraud?

**Bast:** *"Utterly shameful and totally to be expected. Gleick is being hailed as a hero for breaking the law, lying, and exposing completely innocent people to harassment and attacks by thugs from Greenpeace and other extremist organizations. You would think that this would be a wake-up call for legitimate journalists and real environmentalists to realize just how corrupt the global warming movement has become and to distance themselves from it. But so far, the reaction has been just the opposite, to circle the wagons, justify and defend Gleick's bad behavior, and deny that what Gleick did reflects in any way on their movement."*

**GW:** Has Heartland been hurt by Gleick's actions?

**Bast:** *"Yes. Every major newspaper in the U.S. and many major publications around the world ran multiple stories repeating the false claims contained in Gleick's fake memo and in his confession. Those statements will remain on the Internet forever, rising to the surface in comment fields whenever we appear in the press. Allies of Gleick are attacking our donors and the scientists who work for us, which will cost us contributions and make it more difficult to recruit scientists in the future."*

*Putting a dollar amount on these damages is difficult, but correcting the damage will cost many millions of dollars.”*

**GW:** Do you see any silver lining for Heartland and its mission?

**Bast:** *“I don’t see any “silver lining” or benefit to The Heartland Institute. Something like 95% of press coverage we got before February 14 was positive or neutral. Now a third of it is negative. Every dollar we spend on litigation or replying to false accusations is a dollar taken away from more worthy projects. We’re losing donors who were with us for 20 years or longer. It will take years to undo this damage. I think the movement for climate policy based on real science and rational choices, on the other hand, will benefit from this episode, as much or even more than it did from Climategate. How can any honest and intelligent person hear about what Gleick and his allies did and still believe anything the environmentalists and the MSM say about climate? Advocates of climate alarmism have been totally discredited. They can never be trusted again, and not only on climate or even environmental issues.”* [Ed. note: Climategate is the name of the controversy concerning the disclosure of emails on the server of the Climate Research Unit (CRU) at Great Britain’s University of East Anglia. The emails show CRU researchers conspiring to manipulate data and stifle their critics.]

**GW:** What has been the response from conservative organizations and sympathetic journalists? Do you think the affair has received the kind of media coverage it deserves?

**Bast:** *“Conservative, online, and independent media and organizations have been great. Alan Caruba, Judith Curry, James Delingpole (who coined the word “Fakegate”), Tom Harris, Steve Hayward, Chris Horner, Donna Laframboise, Marc Morano, Steve McIntyre, Steve Milloy, Tom Nelson, Joanne Nova, Anthony Watts ... they’ve all been great. It’s often said that when liberals are attacked, they hang together; whereas when conservatives are attacked, they scatter. That didn’t happen this time. Conservatives are confident, and rightly so, that our science is right and theirs is wrong, that we’ve got the moral high-ground and they are lost in the sewers, left working with the likes of DeSmogBlog.*

*As far as the “right” amount of media coverage? The mainstream media [MSM] over-reacted to the story, failing completely to authenticate the documents, condemn the crimes, quote our responses, or respect the victims of Gleick’s actions. So the story got too much MSM attention in the beginning. But the mainstream media’s attention span is not much longer than that of a two-year-old, so they’ve already moved on to the next shiny object. They won’t report on Fakegate again unless Gleick is indicted or sentenced. The online buzz is still intense,*

*and we’re winning in that arena, so I’m pretty happy with that.”*

## **The Search for ‘Why’**

In the days since Gleick first confessed to stealing the Heartland documents there has been much speculation about why an eminent scientist would engage in such foolish, immoral and illegal behavior. It’s important to note that as of this writing Peter Gleick has not confessed to manufacturing the climate strategy memo.

McArdle in *The Atlantic* condemned Gleick’s “gross violation of journalistic ethics,” writing: “The very, very best thing that one can say about this is that this would be an absolutely astonishing lapse of judgement for someone in their mid-twenties, and is truly flabbergasting coming from a research institute head in his mid-fifties.” Indeed.

Marlo Lewis, senior fellow Center For Energy and the Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, tells *Green Watch* that Gleick’s behavior is emblematic of the increasing desperation of the global warming community, a desperation driven by the general public’s lack of interest in the global warming paradigm. An April 2012 Rasmussen Reports poll found that only 40 percent of respondents believe global warming is primarily caused by human activity, down from 47 percent in April 2008.

Lewis suggests three reasons why fewer people believe the theory that global warming is man-made and so catastrophic that government has to regulate carbon emissions through “cap-and-trade” laws and other measures that punish businesses and consumers:

1) The bad economy. When people have trouble paying their monthly bills, they are far less inclined to concern themselves with fanciful theories like global warming. They are even less likely to accept punitive energy taxes on gasoline and restrictions on coal-fired power plants, oil drilling, the Keystone pipeline and similar measures.

2) Climategate. Starting in 2009, thousands of leaked emails and documents originating from the University of East Anglia’s Climate Research Unit (CRU), one of the world’s leading promoters of the man-made global warming hypothesis, made it clear that scientists working on global warming research for CRU were routinely conspiring to exaggerate warming data.

They also communicated with one another about destroying or suppressing information damaging to their cause, and they discussed manipulating data, admitting to one another that the case for man-made global arming is far less airtight than they publicly claimed.

3) “The climate is not cooperating.” Lewis notes the lack of significant warming during

the last decade or more. This has been a devastating blow to those like Gleick who would have the public believe the Earth is warming, and that your SUV is to blame.

As the scientific case for global warming crumbles and the political case loses public support, climate alarmists are growing increasingly frustrated and desperate. This is producing the unethical behavior of people like Gleick. In trying to discredit Heartland, Gleick has called into question his own integrity and the legitimacy of his cause.

“Gleick has done enormous damage to his cause and his own reputation, and it’s no good to say that people shouldn’t be focusing on it,” writes McArdle. “If his judgement is this bad, how is his judgement on matters of science? For that matter, what about the judgement of all the others in the movement who apparently see nothing worth dwelling on in his actions?”

Long ago Gleick made a laudable decision to dedicate his life to science. Sadly, fear and hatred drove him to dishonor his reputation and sully the name of the Heartland Institute. That’s his personal shame. But shame also on those who choose to excuse or ignore Gleick’s actions.

**GW**

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# GreenNotes

From the “never let a crisis go to waste” file, Sen. **Dick Durbin** (D-IL) used a string of tornado storms that ravaged the Dallas, Texas area in early April to plea for more carbon taxes. According to Durbin, man-made global warming is responsible for tornadoes, and much else besides. “It’s your money or your life,” Durbin lectured. “We are either going to dedicate ourselves to a cleaner, more livable planet and accept the initial investment necessary or we’re going to pay a heavier price in terms of loss of human life, damage and costs associated with it.” Durbin’s comments are shameful, but not surprising.

Unfortunately for Durbin, evidence keeps mounting that Earth’s warming cycles may be altogether natural, and have nothing to do with our SUV emissions. The latest blow to the anthropogenic global warming theory: A new study by geochemist **Zunli Lu** from **Syracuse University** in New York state found that the infamous “Medieval Warm Period”, which saw unusually warm temperatures in Europe 1,000 years ago, was actually far more extensive and significant than scientists previously thought. In fact, it was a worldwide event and even extended down to Antarctica. The team studied a rare mineral called ikaite, which forms in cold waters, as a record of past climate conditions. “We showed that the Northern European climate events influenced climate conditions in Antarctica,” said Lu. “More importantly, we are extremely happy to figure out how to get a climate signal out of this peculiar mineral. A new proxy is always welcome when studying past climate changes.” This new proxy shows conclusively that the Earth warmed dramatically a millennium ago, without the help of man-made carbon emissions.

Your tax dollars at work: On April 5th, the US **Department of Energy** (DOE) announced a \$100,000 cash prize for software companies to develop mobile applications (i.e., for a smart phone or tablet computer) that help consumers track their energy usage. Unfortunately, someone forgot to tell the DOE that such apps already exist, in abundance. As the *Daily Caller* reports, “A quick scan of the iTunes and Android markets shows nearly two dozen existing applications that accomplish the same purpose — helping users keep track of their energy consumption at home. The uMeter app, for example, allows consumers with Wi-Fi-enabled home energy meters to ‘manage and optimize their energy consumptions, in order to reduce their expenses and carbon footprint,’ according to the description.” The *Daily Caller* notes that all of these applications were created by private developers, who somehow managed without DOE subsidies or incentives.

If there’s a bigger scam out there than wind power, *Green Notes* hasn’t seen it. Case in point: Nevada’s disastrous wind turbine program created by the state legislature in 2007 and implemented by **NV Energy**. To date, about 150 wind turbines have been installed throughout the state, mostly in the north and rural areas. The \$46 million program promised to produce both abundant clean electricity and lower energy bills for Nevada consumers. Unfortunately, it has produced little power and even less savings. In Reno alone, for example, “one turbine that cost the city \$21,000 to install saved the city \$4 on its energy bill. Overall, \$416,000 worth of turbines have netted the city \$2,800 in energy savings,” reports the *Las Vegas Sun*.

On April 9th, **Sierra Club**’s Ohio chapter filed suit in the Franklin County Common Pleas Court against the **Ohio Department of Natural Resource**, claiming the agency has ignored Sierra’s request for documents pertaining to a new program allowing oil and gas drilling in Buckeye State parks. “Ohioans have the right to know about the backroom deals being made to bring fracking into our state parks,” said **Jed Thorp**, manager of Sierra’s Ohio chapter. “The reckless natural gas industry has no place fracking on some of our state’s most beautiful public lands.” But **Carlo LoParo**, a spokesman for the Department of Natural Resources, says that Sierra is not being ignored, but that some of the requested documents do not yet exist “because the drilling program is still developing,” reports the *Plain Dealer*. “It’s not an issue of public records being denied,” said LoParo in a statement. “The documents are being assembled where they exist; being finalized where they’re not yet complete.” In 2011 Ohio lawmakers passed **House Bill 133**, which opened parks for oil and gas drilling and created the **Oil and Gas Leasing Commission** to lease state-owned land for exploration.