

ARMS 56

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THE SCIENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

An excerpt from the Competitive Enterprise Institute on the "hockey stick theory" of global warming:

"The main propaganda device of the [United Nations Third Assessment Report on climate change] is the 'hockey stick graph.' The graph is a temperature record derived from tree rings dating back to 1000 AD and running through 1900, with the 20th century thermometer-based temperature data attached at the end. It claims to show that global temperatures have remained steady or even decreased during the last millennium until the industrial age, when there was an anomalous warming represented by the blade of the hockey stick. The hockey stick is largely bogus, however. The margin of error is so large that nearly any temperature trend could be drawn to fit within it.

"Global warming alarmists use the hockey stick to claim that current warming is greater than at any other time in the last 1,000 years. The Medieval Warm Period (MWP) and the Little Ice Age (LIA) were two naturally occurring events during the last millennium where the range of global temperature change exceeded that of the 20th century. During the MWP, global temperatures were higher than they are today. The MWP, however, does not show up in the hockey stick graph.

"The hockey stick theory has effectively been dismantled by, among others, Dr. Sallie Baliunas and Dr. Willie Soon of Harvard in their recently published meta-analysis of 240 peer-reviewed climate studies. Also, Wallace Broecker, of the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, argued in Science magazine that the MWP and the LIA were indeed global phenomena. Referring to the hockey stick, Broecker notes, 'A recent, widely cited reconstruction leaves the impression that the 20th century warming was unique during the last millennium. It shows no hint of the Medieval Warm Period (from around 800 to 1200 A.D.) during which the Vikings colonized Greenland, suggesting that this warm event was regional rather than global. It also remains unclear why just at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution and before the emission of substantial amounts of anthropogenic [manmade] greenhouse gases, Earth's temperature began to rise steeply.'"