Words That Start With E

and Other Reasons for Librarians to Fight Climate Change and Climate Change Denial

Jennifer McDevitt

Ecology, economy, equity.

Exemplars, educators, enablers.

Outline

- reality of climate change
  - sustainability as an ideology
- influence of climate change on libraries
- role of libraries in fighting back
  - devaluing disinformation
  - nonviolent action
  - preserving Indigenous Knowledges and creating a third space

Reality of Climate Change

Cristina Mittermeier

A damp Adélie fledgling struggles to shake the moisture from its muddy down. Warming has increased precipitation so much along the western Antarctic Peninsula that many penguin chicks—whose moisture-repelling feathers haven't yet come in—get soaked and then freeze to death in polar winds.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER

The Big Meltdown

POZNAN
Climate Change
Conference
The motion is:
"We save the planet,
but not yet..."
12-12-08

Cristina Mittermeier

Crabeater seals slither onto floating ice to nap, give birth, or hide from killer whales or leopard seals. (Note the prominent scars.) With less sea ice available off the Antarctic Peninsula, icebergs like this one, calved from glaciers on land, provide critical resting places for animals. Despite their name, crabeaters feed mostly on shrimplike krill—another Antarctic staple whose future is in doubt.

CRISTINA MITTERMEIER

Sustainability as an Ideology

“A practice, relationship, or institution is *not* sustainable if it undermines the social, economic, or environmental condition of its own viability.

[… Sustainability concerns] the welfare of people and other species distant in time or space”

Thiele, L. P. (2016).
Sustainability. Polity Press.

Economy is the management, or stewardship, of the resources;

Ecology is the relationship of the community with its environment, particularly the natural environment;

and Equity is fairness to all.

ALA. (2019).
"Sustainability and Libraries."

Influence of Climate Change on Libraries

Libraries are “exemplars, educators, and enablers” of sustainability.

IFLA. (2018).

Exemplars, educators, enablers: Libraries and sustainability.

the ALA “enthusiastically encourages activities by itself, its membership, library schools and state associations to be proactive in their application of sustainable thinking in the areas of their facilities, operations, policy, technology, programming, partnerships and library school curricula”

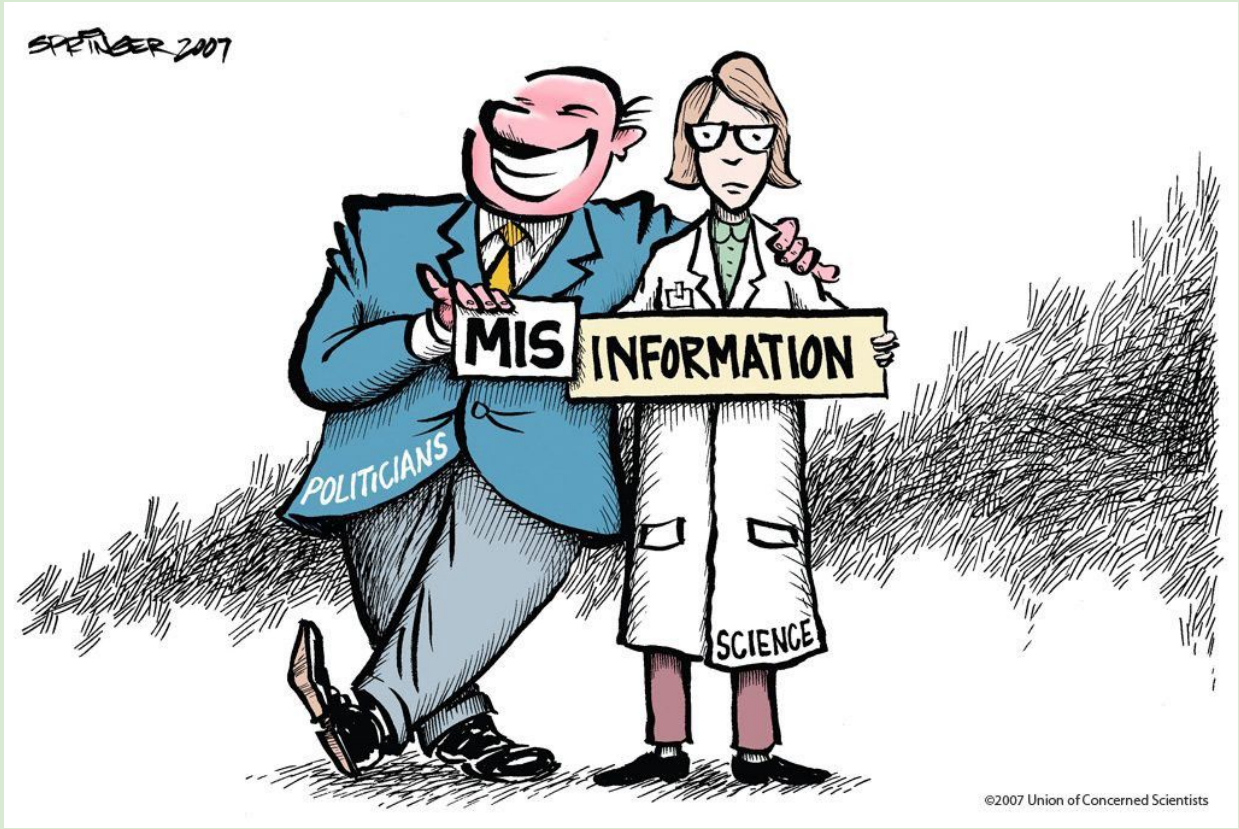
ALA. (2015).

“Resolution on the Importance of Sustainable Libraries.”

“access to accurate information, not censorship, is the best way to counter disinformation and media manipulation”

ALA. (2017).

“Resolution on Access to Accurate Information.”


SPRINGER 2007
MIS
INFORMATION
POLITICIANS
SCIENCE
©2007 Union of Concerned Scientists

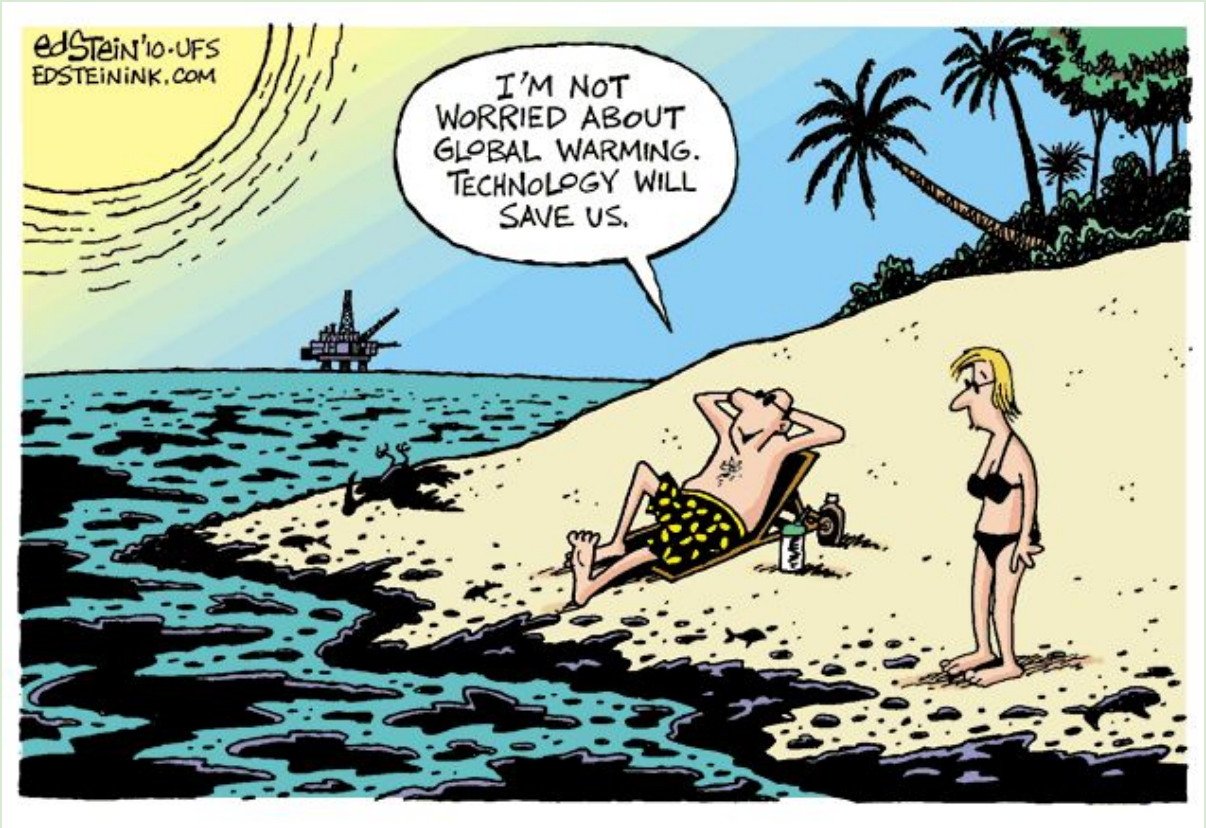
As cultural institutions that serve all members of society, including children, young adults, adults, and the elderly alike, libraries have a legal and moral obligation to contribute to sustainability education through teaching more than information literacy; they should take over the leadership in teaching sustainability literacy.

Petra Hauke. (2018).

"From Information Literacy to Green Literacy:
Training Librarians as Trainers for Sustainability Literacy."

Indigenous Knowledges are “major resource[s] for adapting to climate change” and should be integrated with existing practices

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2014).
Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report - Summary for policymakers.


edStein'10-UFS
EDSTEININK.COM
I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING. TECHNOLOGY WILL SAVE US.

Ed Stein

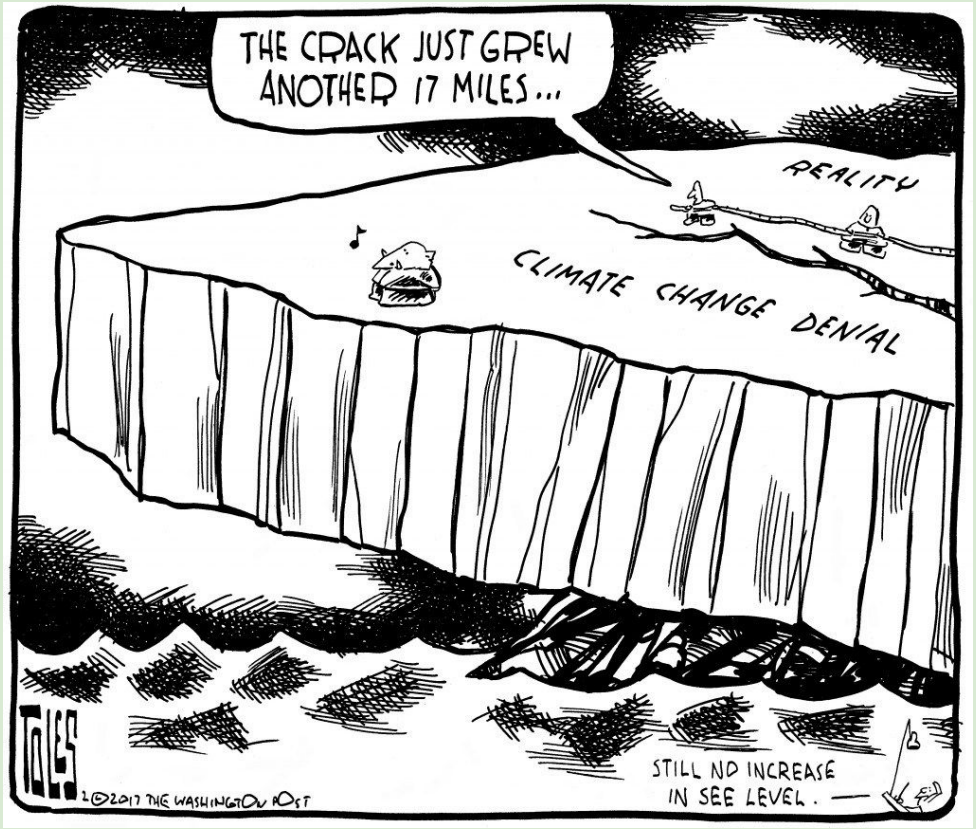
“technology is always the tool of the powerful, and the more powerful the technology, the truer this is. And the more libraries rely on that technology to do our daily work and fulfill our missions, the more vulnerable we have become to those in power”

Henk, M. (2014).
Ecology, Economy, Equity: the Path to a Carbon-neutral Library. ALA Editions.

Role of Libraries in Fighting Back

“socially organized denial[, which is] the process by which individuals collectively distance themselves from information because of norms of emotion, conversation, and attention and by which they use an existing cultural repertoire of strategies in the process”

Norgaard, K. (2011).
Living in Denial: Climate Change, Emotions, and Everyday Life. MIT Press.



Washington Post

“the system as it exists shelters us from the true consequences of our collective actions. We are protected from knowing the scale of the server farms and their carbon footprint … We live in a blissful ignorance that insulates us from the physical and social reality of our information system”

Henk, M. (2014).
Ecology, Economy, Equity: the Path to a Carbon-neutral Library. ALA Editions.

Devaluing Disinformation

“According to a 2007 Harris poll, 71 percent of people in the U.S. believed the burning of fossil fuels causes climate change. In 2009, that number had fallen to 51 percent. In 2011, it fell further to 44 percent”

Harger, E. (2016).
Charting a new course--ALA and climate crisis. In *Which Side Are You On? : Seven Social Responsibility Debates in American Librarianship, 1990–2015*. McFarland.

“[in Alberta], 41 percent of the population believe humans cause climate change, whereas in Canada’s Atlantic provinces the number is 68 percent. And, while 97 percent of climate scientists state categorically that human activities are responsible for global warming, only 47 percent of economic geologists do”

Harger, E. (2016).
Charting a new course--ALA and climate crisis. In *Which Side Are You On? : Seven Social Responsibility Debates in American Librarianship, 1990–2015*. McFarland.

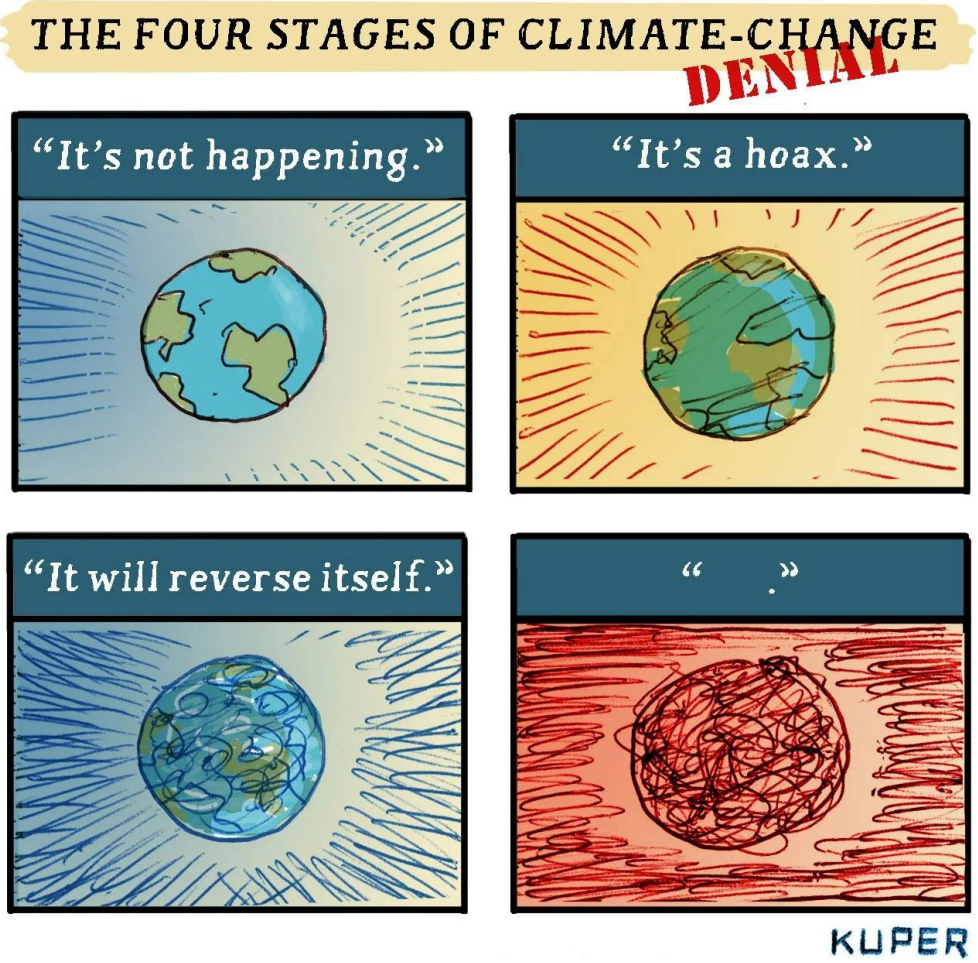
Robb Kendrick, National Geographic

An individual can do small things, like donating their time and money and making efforts to lead a sustainable lifestyle, but “the basic structure of our daily routines keeps the systems that depend on the combustion of fossil fuels very much alive. Climate change manifests here and there, so it’s easy not to treat it like the global, ever-present crisis it truly is”

Harger, E. (2016).
Charting a new course--ALA and climate crisis. In *Which Side Are You On? : Seven Social Responsibility Debates in American Librarianship, 1990–2015*. McFarland.

“unless we have a vision for what a library should be and what the information system should look like, we will not be able to build the library and information system we want”

Henk, M. (2014).
Ecology, Economy, Equity: the Path to a Carbon-neutral Library. ALA Editions.


THE FOUR STAGES OF CLIMATE-CHANGE
DENIAL
"It's not happening."
"It's a hoax."
"It will reverse itself."
" ."
KUPER

Peter Kuper

Horsey
IT'S SETTLED...
WE AGREE TO SIGN A PLEDGE TO HOLD ANOTHER MEETING TO CONSIDER CHANGING COURSE AT A DATE YET TO BE DETERMINED.
CLIMATE CHANGE
WORLD LEADERS

Nonviolent Action

Nonviolent Actions

- host community conversations about the effects of using fossil fuels
- boycott
- demand policy changes
- talk about climate change in professional settings
- reach out to advocacy groups and small activist groups
- partner with community organizations

Preserving Indigenous Knowledges and Creating a Third Space

In the third space, neither the speaker nor the listener is “correct”, but rather the knowledge shared hopes to co-construct new hybrid meanings.

Glasson, G., Mhango, N., Phiri, A. & Lanier, M. (2010).
Sustainability science education in Africa: Negotiating Indigenous ways of living with nature in the third space. *International Journal of Science Education, 32*(1), 125-141.

Cristina Mittermeier

CLIMATE
SUMMIT
WHAT IF IT'S A BIG HOAX AND WE CREATE A BETTER WORLD FOR NOTHING?
• ENERGY INDEPENDENCE
• PRESERVE RAINFORESTS
• SUSTAINABILITY
• GREEN JOBS
• LIVABLE CITIES
• RENEWABLES
• CLEAN WATER, AIR
• HEALTHY CHILDREN
• ETC. ETC.
JOEL PETT

Questions?

Get in touch: mcdevitt@ualberta.ca

Online resource guide: bit.ly/WordsThatStartWithE