

DISCOURSES OF *CLIMATE!* DELAY

STOP DECEPTION!

TIME TO DEFEND OUR FUTURE!

WE BELIEVE IN
CLIMATE CHANGE.
TRUST US!

No!

No!

No!

No!

No!

No!

No!

No!

No!



DELAY IS THE NEW DENIAL

Now that the human hand in climate change is recognised by most people and outright denial is becoming rarer, a new mysterious force is threatening climate action! Some use it to actively prevent life saving action from happening, others help these dark forces unconsciously. Bewitched by the magic of the words these actors use, they fall into the trap of spreading arguments for what can only be called deadly but greenwashed inaction.

But fear not! A study led by the MCC research institute has analysed the debate and demystified the magic. This Comic will help you learn to identify the four most common lines of argument (and their subtypes) used to delay climate protection. These arguments are part of a wider range of stories used to describe the climate crisis that act as important influences on public opinion. They can make the difference between engendering a resolve to act and spreading disgruntled resignation. Recognizing and calling out these arguments, can and will break the power and corrosive influence they have on our collective efforts to respond to this crisis.

Now that denial is finally unacceptable, debate should concern

where we are headed as societies,

how fundamental the changes are that we need to make,

how to compel the vested interests of fossil-fuelled industries to make those changes
(whether they want to or not),

and how to wrestle with the worrying signs of a changing climate without abandoning our
resolve to prevent it from worsening.

Discourses of delay obscure and block this essential conversation from happening.
It's time to unlock our own powers, join forces and stop the deception!

What do we want? Climate action!
When do we want it? Now!

DISCOURSES OF DELAY

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/global-sustainability/article/discourses-of-climate-delay/7B11B722E3E3454BB6212378E32985A7>

British Petroleum (BP) first promoted and then successfully popularized the term "carbon footprint" with the intention to manipulate our thinking about one of the greatest environmental threats of our time. 2004 the company unveiled its "carbon footprint calculator" and successfully made people believe that their own daily life was largely responsible for heating the earth, while BP itself appeared to care and doing something about the issue.



„BP had a vision: to inspire the public and attendees of the One Young World event to reduce their carbon emissions. Our 'Know your carbon footprint' campaign successfully created an experience that not only enabled people to discover their annual carbon emissions, but gave them a fun way to think about reducing it – and to share their pledge with the world.”

“I have three daughters, they are all quite fashion conscious, I like to point out to them, having something new for every season four times a year is creating quite a significant ecological footprint, have you realised that? Because they are all about climate change.”

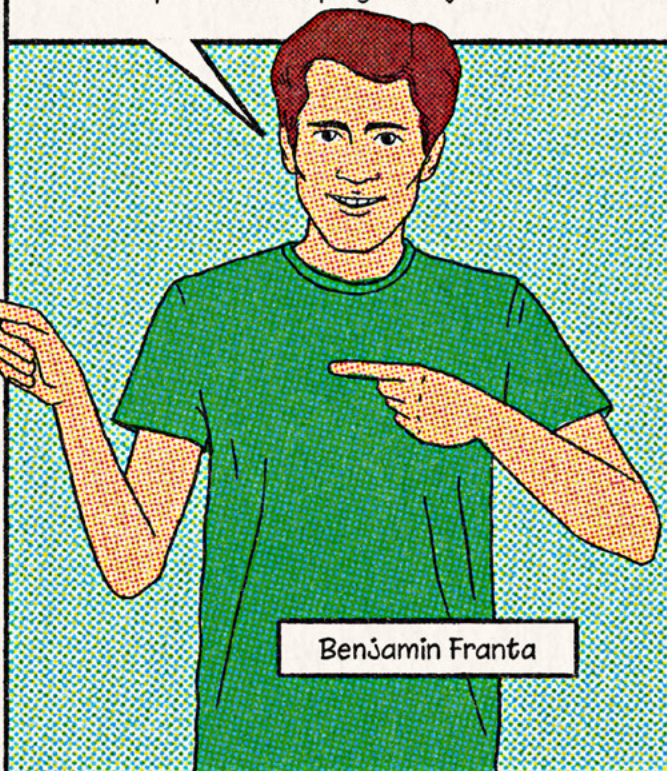


hell



Ben van Beurden, CEO Shell

“This is one of the most successful, deceptive PR campaigns maybe ever.”



Benjamin Franta

1. INDIVIDUALISM

Summary:

Individuals and consumers are ultimately responsible for taking actions to address climate change.

Strategy:

This discourse pushes responsibility onto individuals, arguing that they should take appropriate decisions as consumers and voting publics to address climate change. Individualism avoids discussion of corporate responsibility and the regulatory measures that would be needed to stimulate system-wide change. It ignores problems of power and the constellations of influence (media, marketing, pricing, etc.) that shape many individual actions.



The first step to reducing your emissions is to know where you stand. Find out your [#carbonfootprint](#) with our new calculator & share your pledge today!



Know your Carbon Footprint
knowyourcarbonfootprint.com

4:08 PM • Oct 22, 2019 • Twitter for Android

167 Retweets 2K Quote Tweets



Mary Annaïse Heglar @MaryAnnaHeglar
Replying to @bp_plc
Bitch, what's yours???

23

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Even if you feel like you can't do anything else to fight climate change, you can definitely talk shit to the fossil fuel industry. Try Greentrolling!

MARY ANNAÏSE HEGLAR

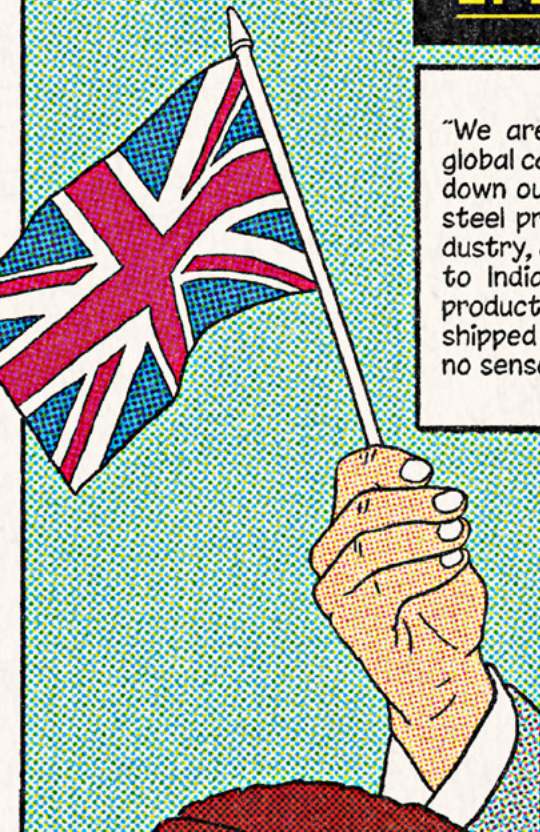
Summary:

Our carbon footprint is trivial compared to [...]. Therefore it makes no sense for us to take action, at least until [...] does so. Also known as the "But China!" or the "we're just 2 % argument".

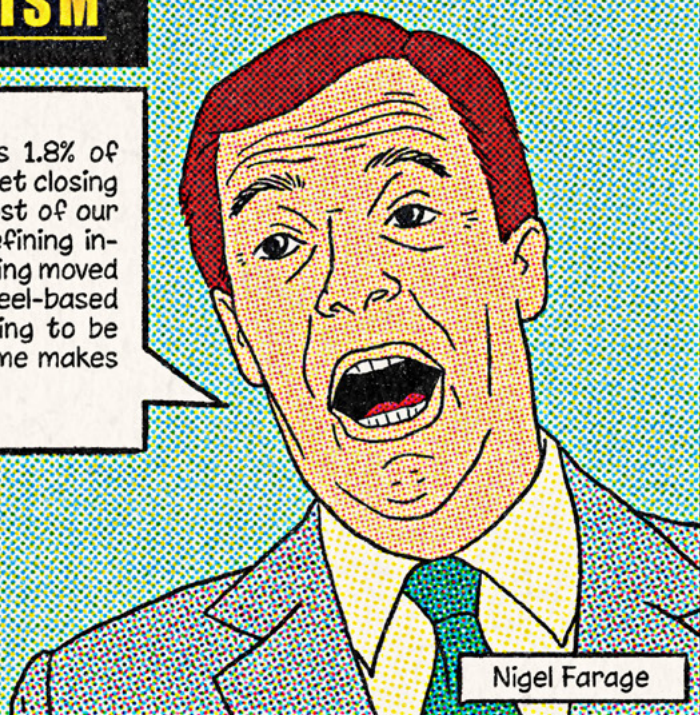
Strategy:

Whataboutism focuses attention on distant perpetrators of climate harm over which the discursive agent and audience have limited control (such as China, or difficult to mitigate industries). This discourse often exploits confusion between aggregate levels of emissions and per capita emissions. For instance, it is common to claim that a country represents only (e.g.) 2% of total global emissions, and therefore has limited responsibility, despite high per capita or historical emissions. The strategy also works for industries and the carbon intensity of activities, for instance when used to play down the importance of aviation.

2. WHATABOUTISM

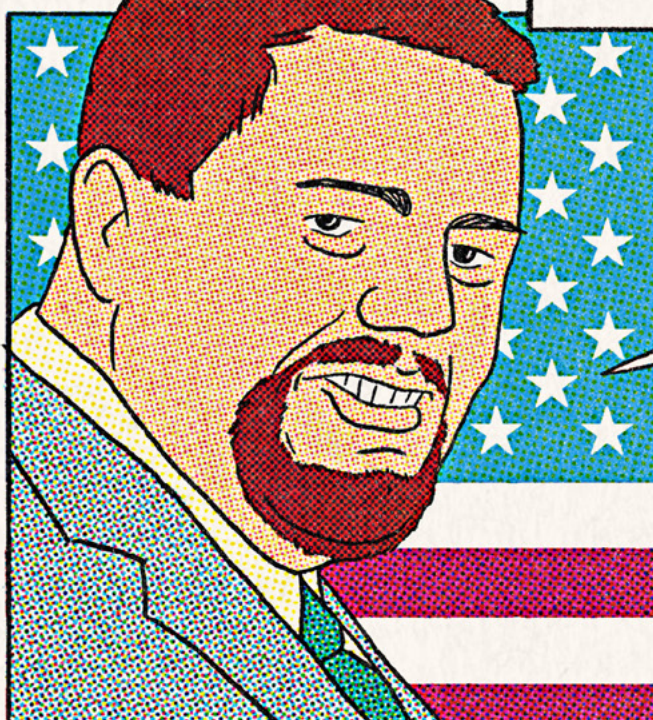


"We are a nation that produces 1.8% of global carbon dioxide, so I do not get closing down our aluminium smelters, most of our steel production, and now our refining industry, and all that production being moved to India, and therefore the steel-based products made in India then having to be shipped back to Britain! This to me makes no sense at all."



Nigel Farage

Farage has cast doubt on climate science on a number of occasions and both UKIP and the Brexit Party have fielded numerous climate science denying candidates. UKIP's party manifesto 2015 argued that "coal must be part of the solution" for cheap energy security and that it's "time to get fracking."

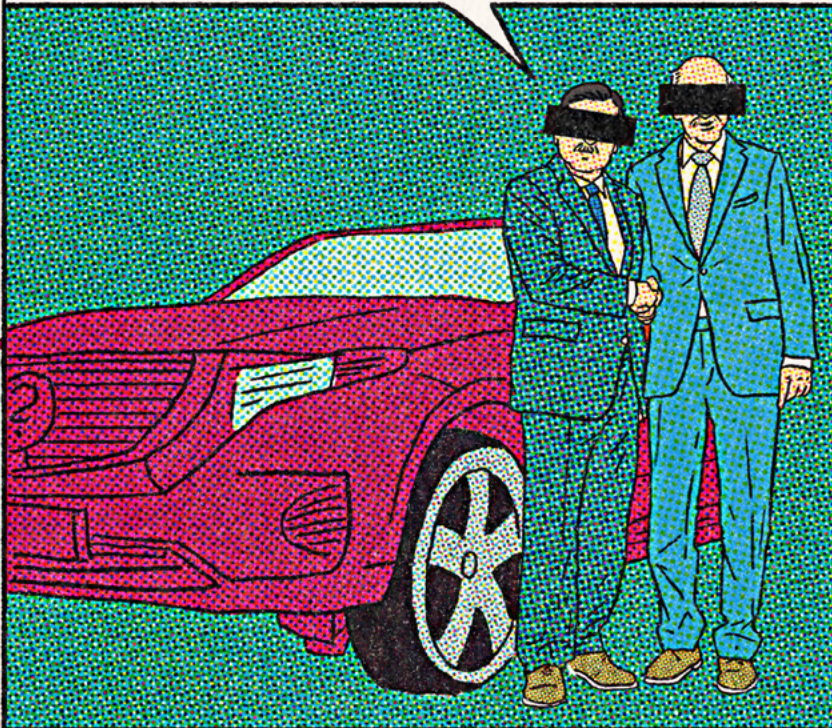


"Oil and natural gas are not the only products that have contributed to rising greenhouse gas emissions. Using fossil fuel companies as scapegoats without addressing the systemic issue of decarbonizing all of society risks allowing the other contributors to continue with business as usual."

Brent Wm. Gardner,
Americans for Prosperity

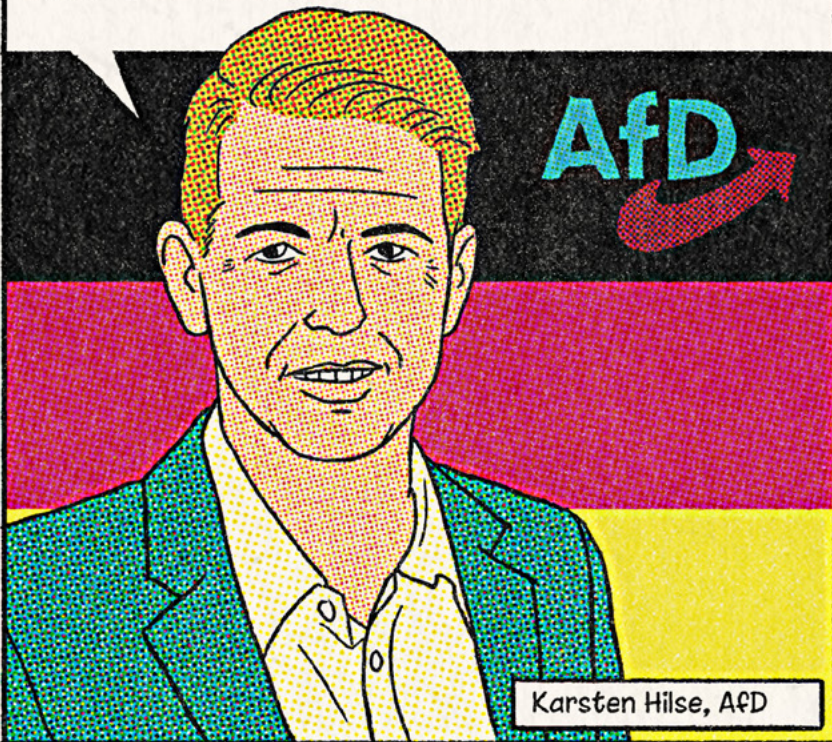
Conservative Transparency describes Americans for Prosperity as "the centerpiece of the Kochs' political machine" and highlights its connection to the Tea Party movement. As of 2015, David Koch, who has been a key figure in funded think-tanks and organizations distorting climate change science, is still the chairman of the AFP Foundation.

"A CO2-price might be a good idea in principle, but we think it does not work if the land transport sector is singled out. First one should see that agriculture is included too."



Anonymous quote, author meeting with a management board member of a German car manufacturer

"But even if it were possible to fully achieve the desired CO2 emission reduction [in Germany], it would only result in a maximum reduction of 0,000,653 °C of a hypothetical temperature increase, sometime in the distant unknown future."



Karsten Hilse, AfD

Karsten Hilse is the environmental spokespersons of AfD (Alternative for Germany) a far-right populist political party. He employed the vice president of the climate denial organisation EIKE in his office. EIKE (Europäisches Institut für Klima und Energie) is a spin-off of CFACT Europe. CFACT (Committee for a constructive tomorrow) is funded by Chrysler, Exxon Mobil, Chevron and the notorious right-wing liberal Koch Brothers, among others.

Ever wonder why Farmers feel targeted when it comes to climate action? Have a look at data from yesterday's @EPAireland climate report. Clearly, the first climate action we can all do is use cars which are less carbon intensive. #backingfarming

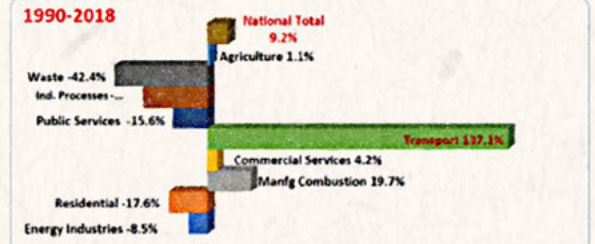


Figure 1: Change in greenhouse gas emissions 1990-2018 Source: EPA

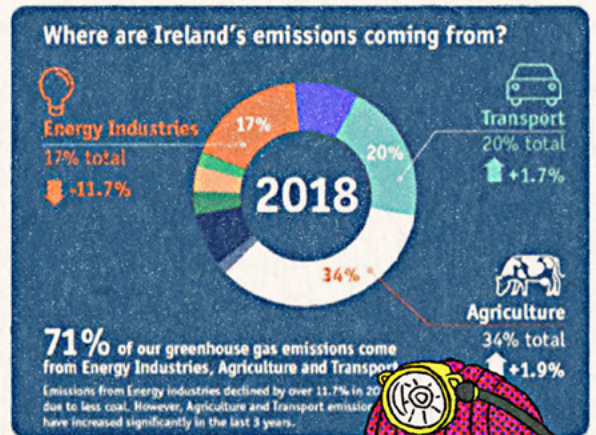
5:27 PM · Oct 25, 2019 · Twitter Web App

44 Retweets 8 Quote Tweets 71 Likes



Replying to @PJRUdden @IFAMedia and 3 others

They are using change rather than totals to mislead. The fuel used in agriculture is also meant to be included in transport. While just agricultural emissions are 34% of total Irish emissions and we are in a 1.4million person food deficit, exports vs imports.



Pro Lausitz Braunkohle

"If Germany were to meet its committed targets and actually save 163 million tonnes of CO2 by 2040, this would simply not be noticeable given the global increase of 10,836 million tonnes. But what role does Lusatian lignite play in this increasingly negligible share of Germany?"

"In short, the agreement doesn't eliminate coal jobs, it just transfers those jobs out of America and the United States, and ships them to foreign countries. This agreement is less about the climate and more about other countries gaining a financial advantage over the United States. The rest of the world applauded when we signed the Paris Agreement – they went wild; they were so happy – for the simple reason that it put our country, the United States of America, which we all love, at a very, very big economic disadvantage. A cynic would say the obvious reason for economic competitors and their wish to see us remain in the agreement is so that we continue to suffer this self-inflicted major economic wound. We would find it very hard to compete with other countries from other parts of the world."

President Trump statement on the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement



"I ask: what's it all for? We've been told that it's all about saving the world with some deluded notion that if we completely stopped emitting carbon in Australia today we would have some profound impact on saving the globe. This is false, the facts are clear: of global emissions China is responsible for 28%, America 15%, Europe 11%, India 7%, and Australia entirely 1.3% of global emissions.

If we stopped emitting altogether tomorrow, not only it would have no impact but undoubtedly other countries would simply increase their emissions because to suggest the kind of manufacturing we do here in Australia could be done cleaner or greener in China or India is just a false proposition."

Josh Manuatu,
president of the Australian Young Liberals

3. 'FREE RIDER' EXCUSE

Summary:

Reducing emissions is going to weaken us. Others have no real intention of reducing theirs and will take advantage of that.

Strategy:

The 'free rider' excuse propagates a zero-sum-game view of global climate mitigation: if we adopt policies to reduce emissions, others will actively take advantage of us, for instance by increasing production and employment in dirty sectors, or by continuing to flout global decarbonisation norms. It takes advantage of, and encourages, mistrust towards foreign nations. It ignores the achievements of global climate deals and encourages a race towards the bottom. The narrative that one's own country is virtuous, fair and is 'playing too nice', while other countries are devious and ready to take advantage of it, is a key ingredient of nationalism.

Summary:

We should focus our efforts on current and future technologies, which will unlock great possibilities for addressing climate change.

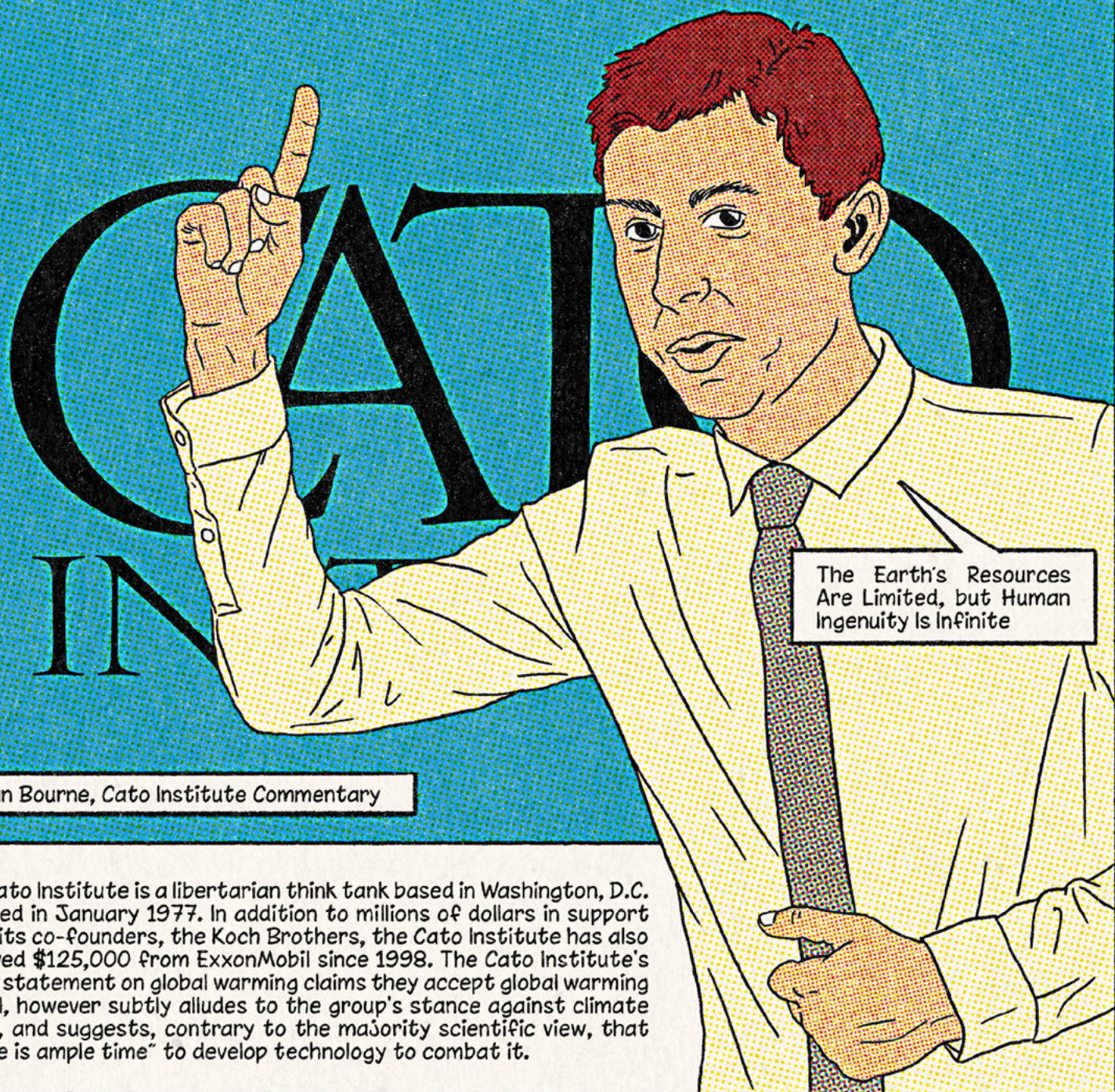
Strategy:

Technological optimism diverts attention from the (near-term) regulation of fossil fuels and demand-side energy use, while focusing attention on the long-term (uncertain) prospects of technological change. It frames climate mitigation in a positive and optimistic light that is consistent with right-of-centre entrepreneurial values.

There are many variations. In generic form, technological optimism often refers to past transitions between technology systems, implying that such a transition will naturally occur for climate mitigation due to human ingenuity and market forces. A more specific 'technological myths' strategy takes advantage of short-termism in the public and media debate by repeatedly claiming, over time, that a low-carbon technological breakthrough will happen in a few years. This breakthrough is typically presented as imminent enough to discourage other forms of climate action (e.g. reducing demand), but also as far enough in the future to justify why it is not happening already. A third strategy is to hype the low or declining carbon intensity of current technologies, ignoring the absolute emissions associated with growth in demand for these products or services.

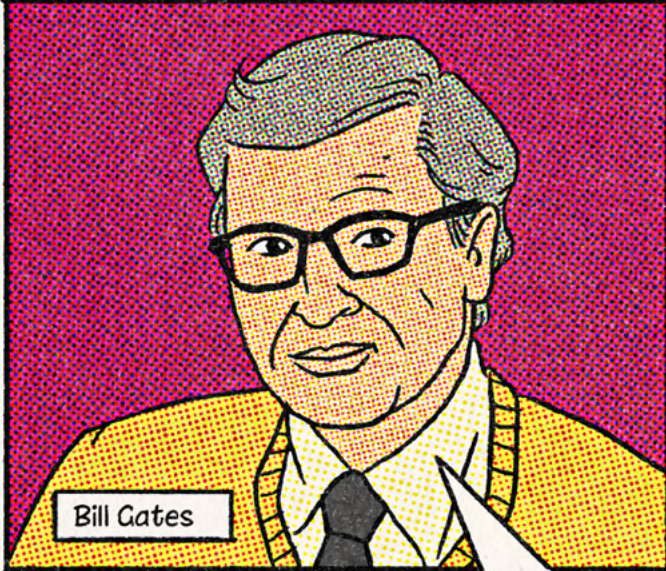
Together these discourses distract from on-going unsustainable technology transitions (e.g. the growth of SUVs, fossil exploration). They also disguise and confuse the importance of absolute, rather than relative, emissions growth.

4. TECHNOLOGICAL OPTIMISM



Ryan Bourne, Cato Institute Commentary

The Cato Institute is a libertarian think tank based in Washington, D.C. founded in January 1977. In addition to millions of dollars in support from its co-founders, the Koch Brothers, the Cato Institute has also received \$125,000 from ExxonMobil since 1998. The Cato Institute's public statement on global warming claims they accept global warming is real, however subtly alludes to the group's stance against climate policy, and suggests, contrary to the majority scientific view, that "there is ample time" to develop technology to combat it.



Bill Gates

"I remain optimistic that it is still within our reach to avoid the disaster [...] Tech is the only solution. Yes, human behavior can reduce the numbers 10% here, 20% there, but without innovation, there's no way."

* Gates is one of the world's biggest "super-emitters" due to his regular private jet travel. He described owning private planes as his "guilty pleasure." 2021 he joined a £3bn bidding war to buy the world's largest private jet services company just as he prepares to publish his new book "How to Avoid a Climate Disaster". (2021)

"BMW group reduces CO2 Emissions in Europe again" PR: "The BMW Group has reduced CO2 emissions from its new car fleet in Europe (EU 28) to 122 grams/kilometre. Compared to 2016, this marks a reduction of a further 2 gram/kilometre (2016: 124g/km). The BMW Group has been reducing CO2 emissions from its EU fleet for years: since 1995, the average CO2 emissions for new BMW Group vehicles sold in Europe has fallen by more than 42%."

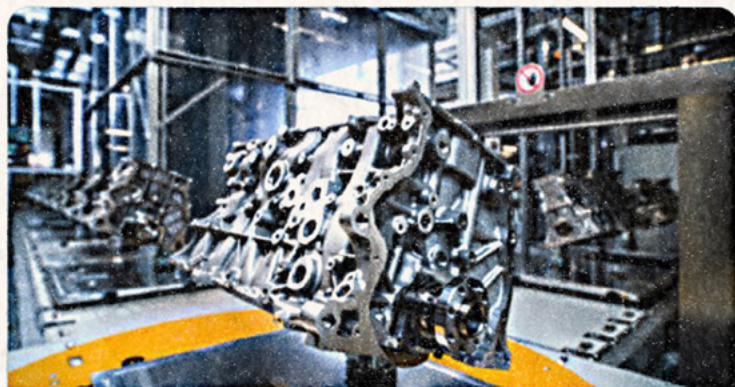
BMW press release



Manuel Grebenjak @ManuelGrebe · Nov 1

BMW will in the future build MORE GASOLINE engines at its worldwide largest engine plant in Steyr. The group seems to be fully aware of the climate crisis.

via @mtiemann



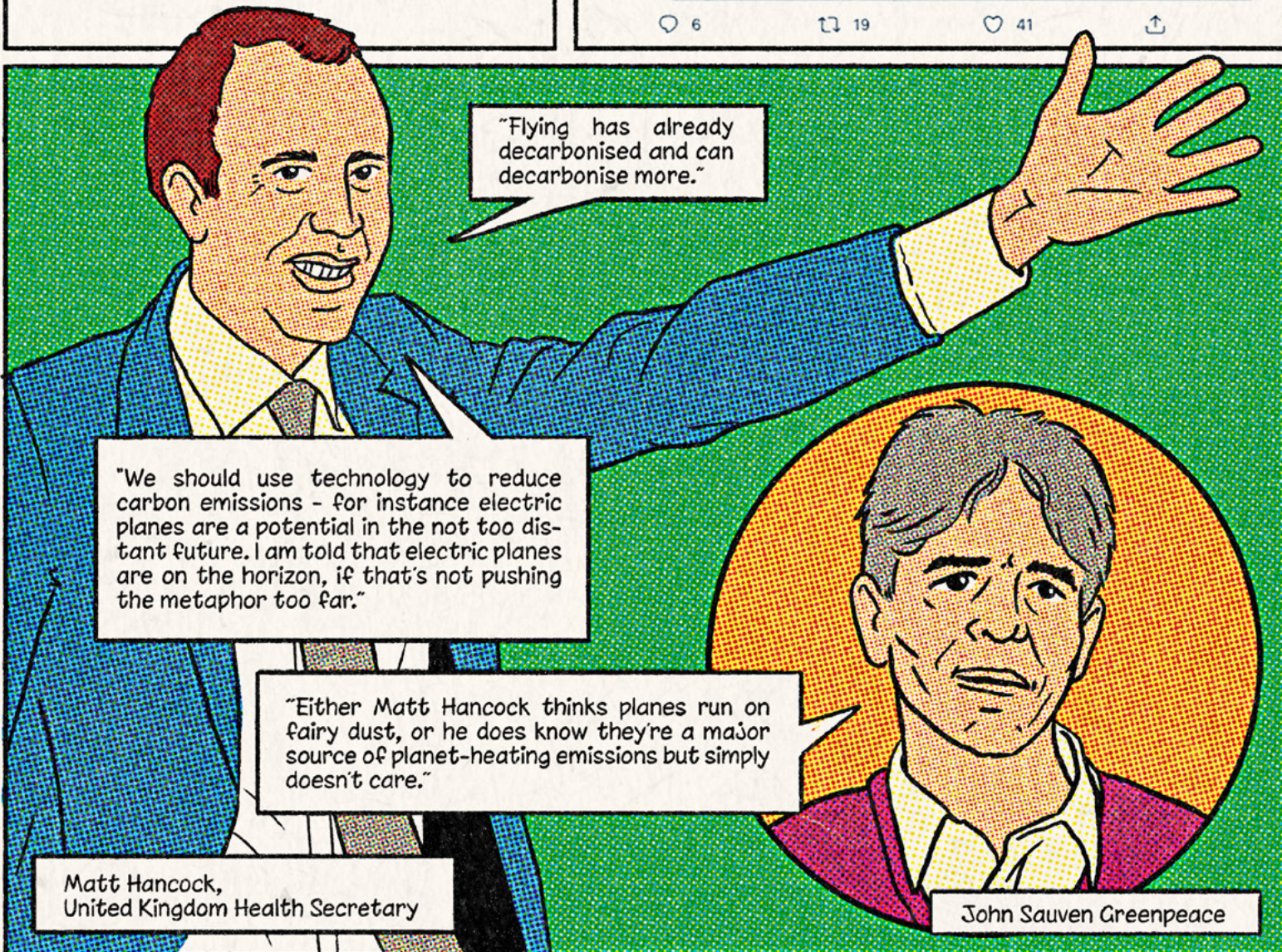
BMW erweitert in Steyr die Kapazitäten für Benzinmotoren
Im Motorenwerk am Standort Steyr hat BMW eine neue Motorenmontagelinie zur Produktion von hocheffizienten 4- und 6...

automobil-produktion.de

6

19

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"Flying has already decarbonised and can decarbonise more."

"We should use technology to reduce carbon emissions - for instance electric planes are a potential in the not too distant future. I am told that electric planes are on the horizon, if that's not pushing the metaphor too far."

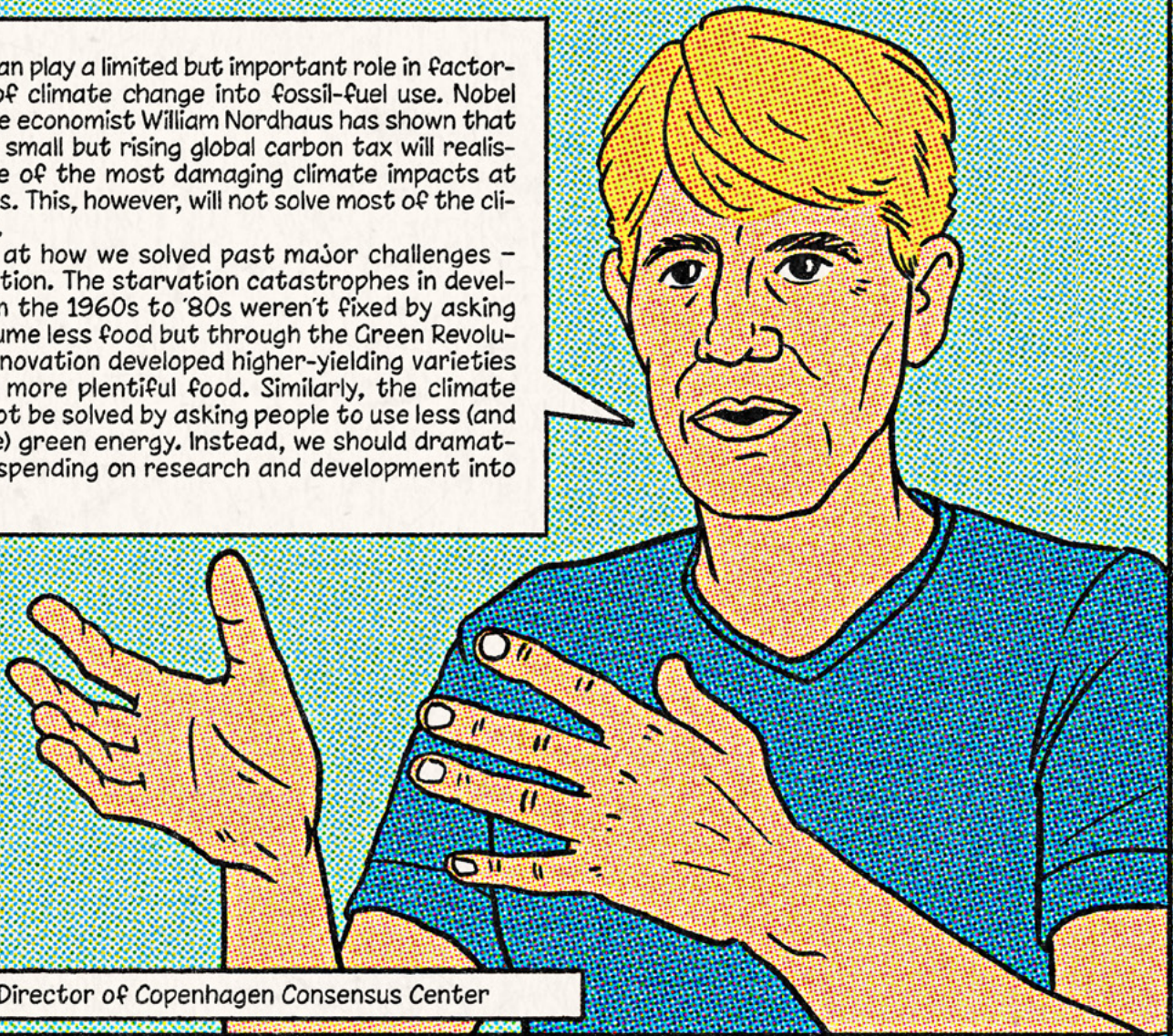
"Either Matt Hancock thinks planes run on fairy dust, or he does know they're a major source of planet-heating emissions but simply doesn't care."

Matt Hancock,
United Kingdom Health Secretary

John Sauven Greenpeace

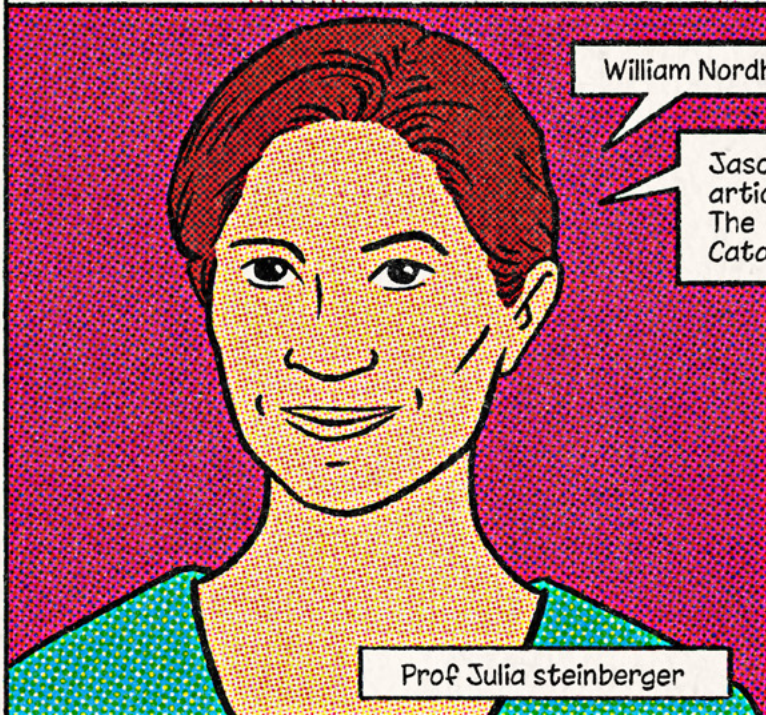
"A carbon tax can play a limited but important role in factoring the costs of climate change into fossil-fuel use. Nobel laureate climate economist William Nordhaus has shown that implementing a small but rising global carbon tax will realistically cut some of the most damaging climate impacts at rather low costs. This, however, will not solve most of the climate challenge."

We must look at how we solved past major challenges – through innovation. The starvation catastrophes in developing nations in the 1960s to '80s weren't fixed by asking people to consume less food but through the Green Revolution in which innovation developed higher-yielding varieties that produced more plentiful food. Similarly, the climate challenge will not be solved by asking people to use less (and more expensive) green energy. Instead, we should dramatically ramp up spending on research and development into green energy."



Børn Lomborg, Director of Copenhagen Consensus Center

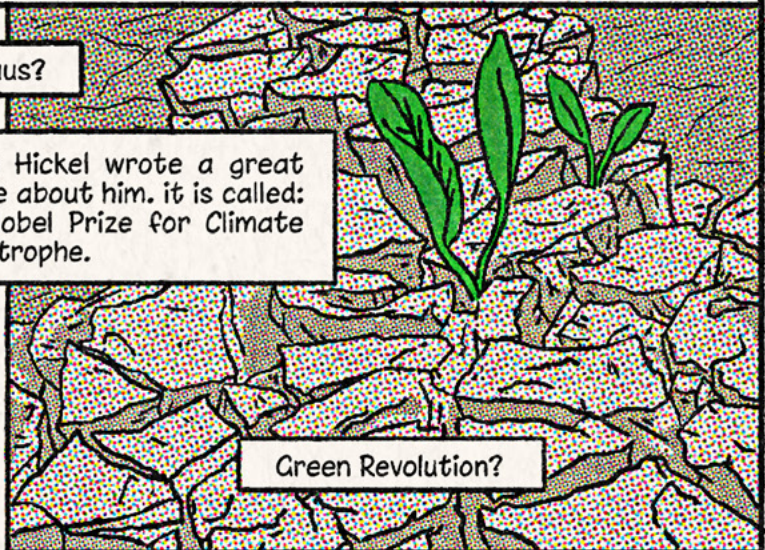
Lomborg is best known as the author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist* and *Cool It*, two books that downplay the risks of global warming. Lomborg does not have a background in climate science and has published no peer-reviewed articles in journals devoted to climate change research. He has, however, authored policy studies arguing against climate change prevention measures.



Prof Julia Steinberger

William Nordhaus?

Jason Hickel wrote a great article about him. It is called: *The Nobel Prize for Climate Catastrophe*.



Green Revolution?

Economics is a reality-free zone. Milton Friedman famously didn't care if the axioms underpinning economic models reflected reality or not, as long as they propped up his preference for (often authoritarian) neoliberal free-market policies.

A 2016 report by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) concluded that the green revolution's "quantum leap" in cereal production has come at the price of soil degradation, salinisation of irrigated areas, over-extraction of groundwater and the build-up of pest resistance. Meanwhile others argue that the Green Revolution's main aim was not "Feeding the world" and increasing productivity but gaining profits by replacing subsistence agriculture with commercial food production for the market.

Summary:

We are world leaders in addressing climate change. We have approved an ambitious target and have declared a climate emergency.

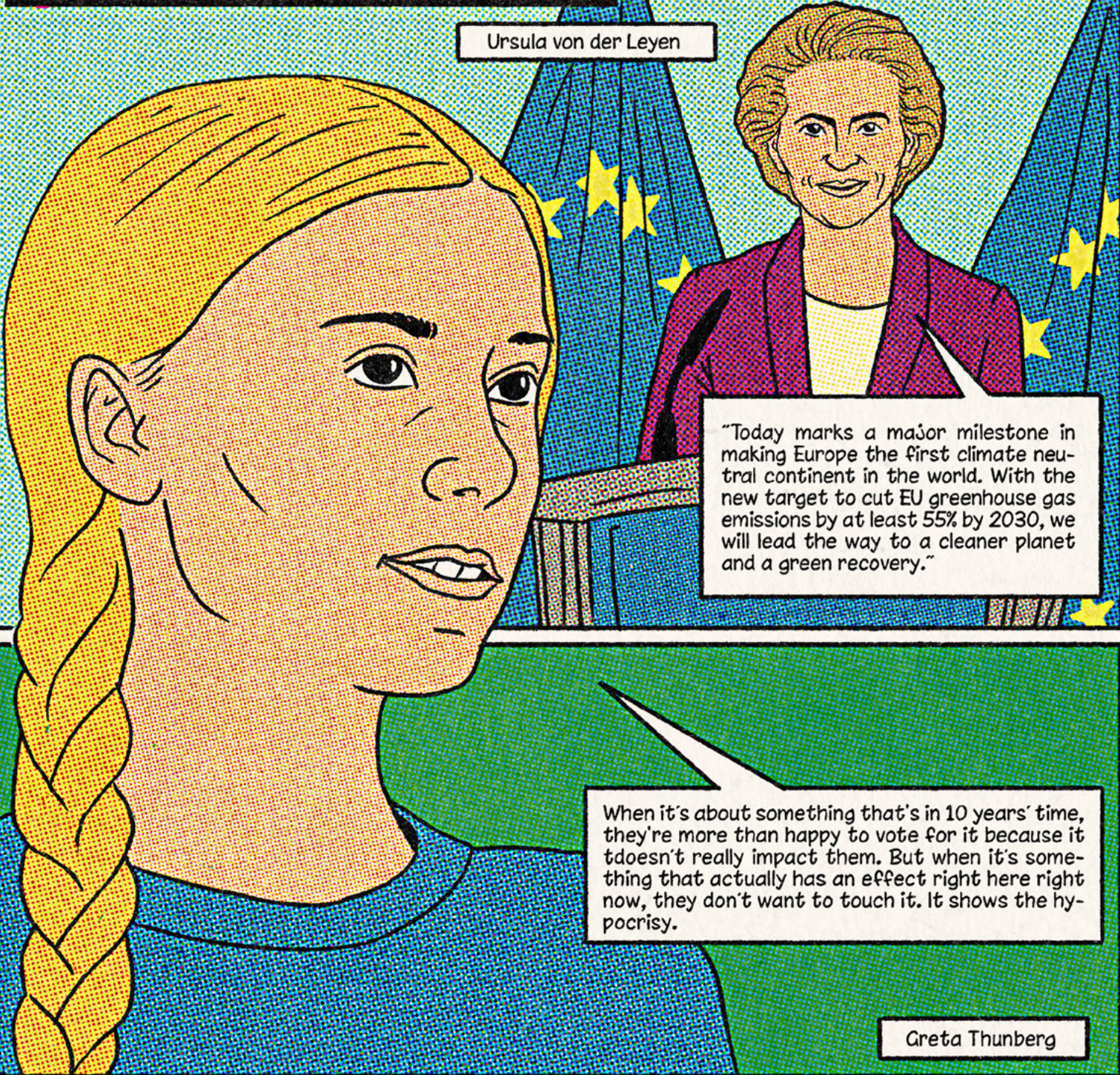
Strategy:

All talk, little action is a strategy that centres on establishing one's own definition of success, referring back to this claim in order to deflect from more stringent mitigation demands. It is common to use a narrow interpretation of progress, along a specific time-period, with reference to a concrete example.

One variation is to tout actual historical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. in Northern EU countries). Another is to draw attention to the setting of broad target-based commitments. Both strategies satisfy public demands that 'something must be done' on climate change, without actually doing what is necessary (i.e. establishing concrete policy instruments such as a carbon price, or addressing future bottlenecks in climate mitigation, such as the transport and agricultural sectors). They highlight political action, but can obscure high levels of per capita (and consumption-based) emissions. They also tap into popular nationalism / exceptionalism narratives.

5. ALL TALK, LITTLE ACTION

Ursula von der Leyen



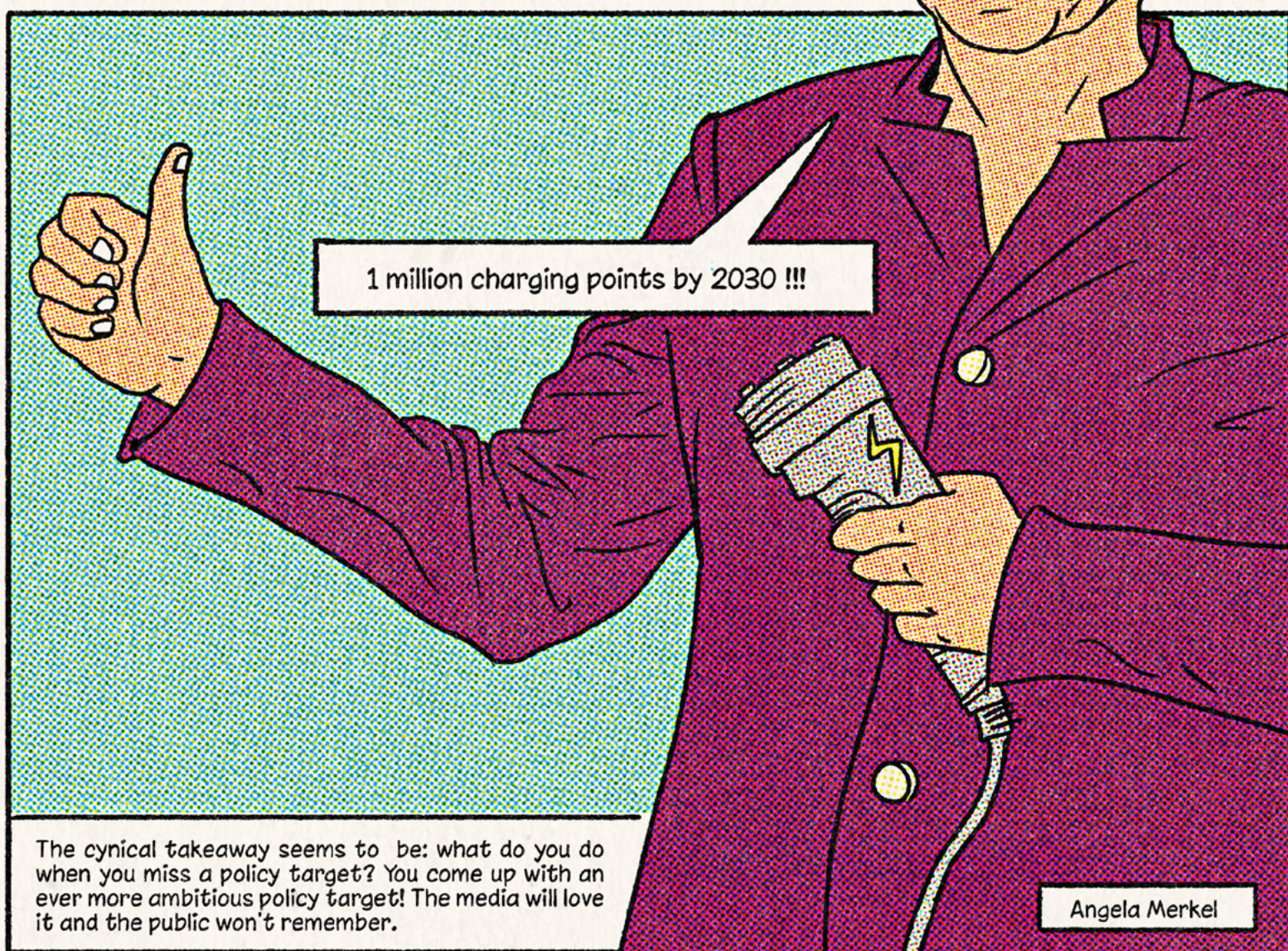
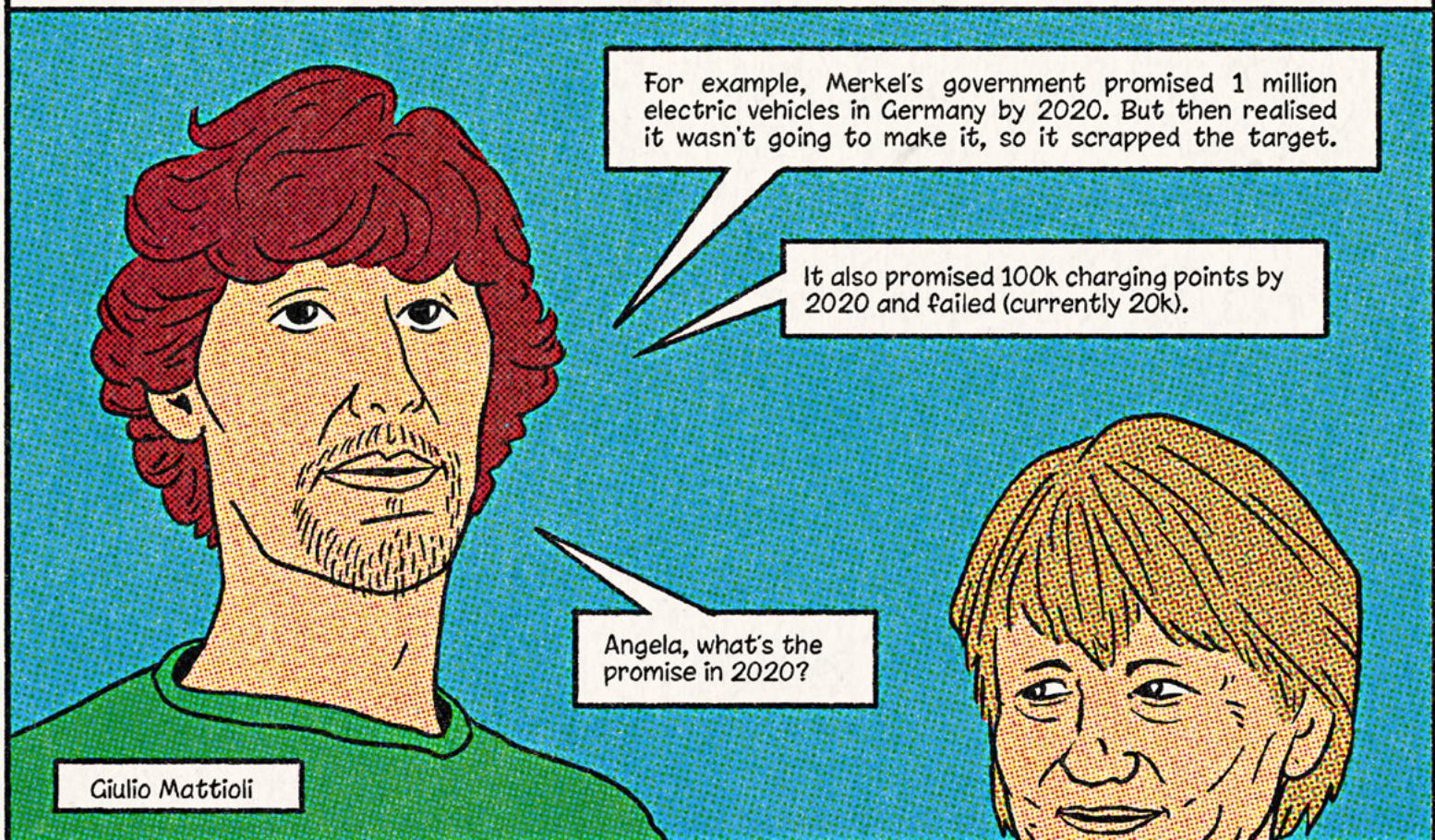
"Today marks a major milestone in making Europe the first climate neutral continent in the world. With the new target to cut EU greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, we will lead the way to a cleaner planet and a green recovery."

"When it's about something that's in 10 years' time, they're more than happy to vote for it because it doesn't really impact them. But when it's something that actually has an effect right here right now, they don't want to touch it. It shows the hypocrisy."

Greta Thunberg

September 2020, the EU decides its new target for emissions cuts by 2030. The new target is to reduce emissions by at least 55% from 1990 levels by 2030 - up from an earlier goal of 40%.

What Greta Thunberg rightly points out here is what we have called the 'targetism' / 'all talk no action' variant of discourses of climate delay, and it's pretty pervasive. No sector is more familiar with this than transport. Transport climate mitigation is the story of a widening gap between aspirations & reality.



The cynical takeaway seems to be: what do you do when you miss a policy target? You come up with an ever more ambitious policy target! The media will love it and the public won't remember.

Summary:

Society will only respond to supportive and voluntary policies, restrictive measures will fail and should be abandoned.

Strategy:

No sticks, just carrots suggests that climate action should consist exclusively of enticing incentives ('carrots'), avoiding any restriction, regulation or even monetary disincentives ('sticks') as these are deemed as unacceptable to the population. This runs against evidence suggesting that 'carrots' and 'sticks' are complementary, that both are required for effective climate action. This rhetoric fits well with populism, as it tends to depict the population as homogenous, hardworking and overburdened by laws and taxes made by the 'elites'. It also tends to obscure the way in which some parts of the population would 'lose' from 'stick' measures, while others would 'win' (e.g. taxes on aviation would affect mostly frequent fliers, which are concentrated among the top income classes).

6. NO STICKS, JUST CARROTS

"My approach is that I want more options, rather than bans. Banning – that's the Green's approach, they want to prescribe how people should travel. There will be no paternalism and tax increases with me. (...) I expect much from incentives (...).

[The possibility of mass protests like the French Yellow Vest movement in Germany] is exactly what worries me.

Politicians in Berlin toy around with ideas that are far removed from people's daily lives outside of the capital. People are angry about it, and they stand up to it.

They want climate action and clean air, but don't want vehicle bans, motorway speed limit reductions or tax increases. They want to live free"



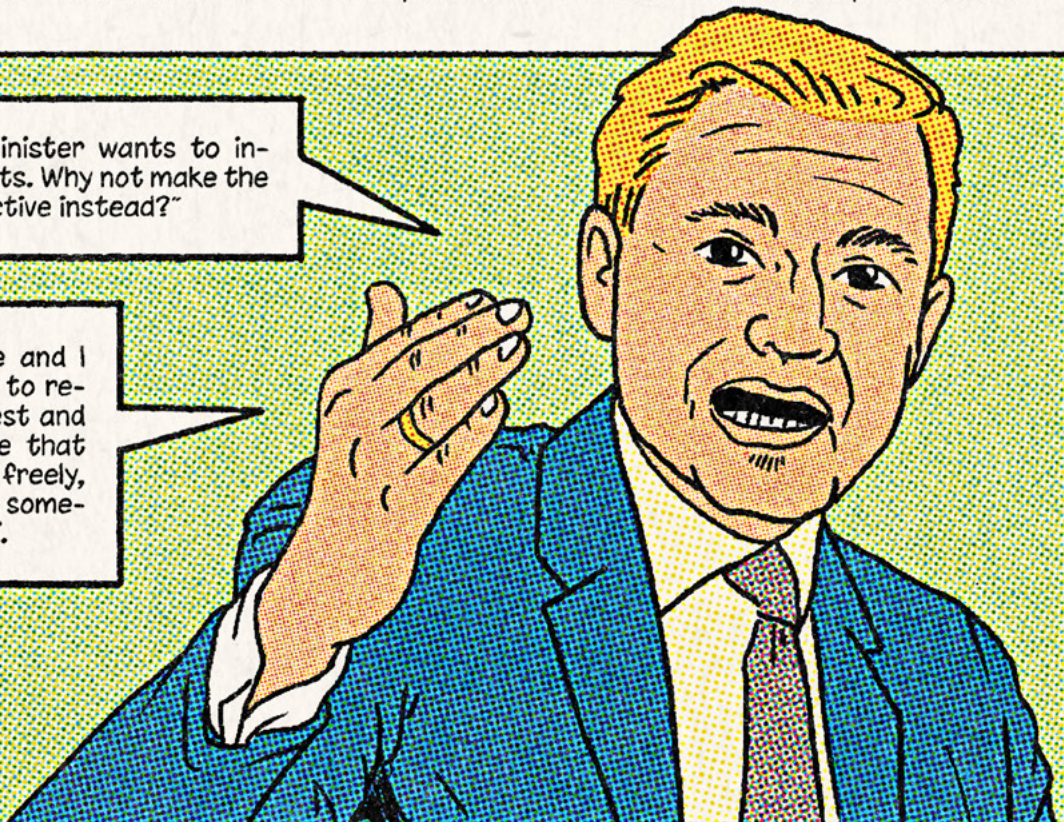
Andreas Scheuer, (CSU)

Scheuer is Germany's Transport Minister. In 2019 he described speed limits for reasons of climate protection as "against all common sense".

"The environment minister wants to increase taxes on flights. Why not make the railways more attractive instead?"

"I do not want to renounce and I do not want others to have to renounce. I want to use the best and latest technology to ensure that people can live and move freely, while at the same time we do something for climate protection".

Christian Lindner (FDP)



"We put emphasis on the innovative capacity of competition. Innovative approaches and new technologies are key for climate action. Greater efficiency reduces energy, resource use, and emissions, while improving quality of life (...). We don't prescribe sustainable behaviour through regulations, we put our trust in the citizen's sense of responsibility" German Free Democratic Party's strategy on climate action

'Carrotism' is widespread in Germany, a Country which used to be regarded as a leader on climate protection, but where even in 2020 an old growth forest was sacrificed for an Autobahn. 'Carrotist' rhetoric fits well with populism and a popular counterargument to car taxes in Germany is that the motorist is the "milking cow of the nation." It also tends to infantilise and victimise the public. It depicts them as passive, but potentially riotous subjects, who basically just want to eat carrots and be 'left alone', rather than active citizens, taking part in a debate about the collective future.



Michael Theurer (FDP)

Sometimes such a populist streak can result in Christian Lindner sounding indistinguishable from AfD leader Björn Höcke, who, a German Court ruled in 2019, may be called a fascist.

A culture war is raging against the car. The Greens and the warning associations allied with them are not concerned with clean air or the global climate. People are to be re-educated and the car industry is to be decapitated. The goal is to give nobody a free ride.

"Every Advent wreath causes more nitrogen oxide than the limit for diesel cars. We are experiencing a traffic-policy killing spree."

BTW, I like to tell people that the first word that I spoke in my life was "car".

Lindner, 2019 on driving bans caused by limits to air pollution.

It may also come as no surprise that a party which prefers no sticks at all, has a deputy federal chairman who is a climate change denier.

ALL researchers who have studied such climate changes over decades ... over centuries say they're all just small ripples.

I am against all this hysteria, we should finally discuss the matter with reason.

Listen to this man, Vahrenholt!

"We must reduce emissions, but not commit economic suicide."

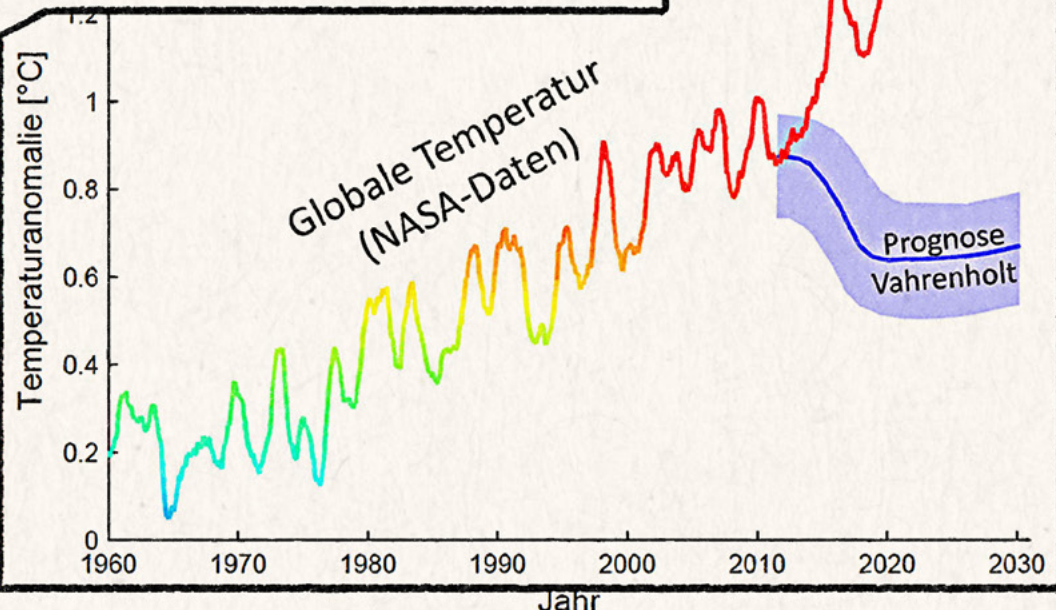
Nicola Beer, FDP

Fritz Vahrenholt

Vahrenholt is a co-author (with Sebastian Luening) of *Die kalte Sonne* (The Cold Sun), a book questioning the existence of man-made climate change. In 2019 he sent a 4-page pamphlet "The Earth is getting greener - the catastrophe is not happening" to members of the German Bundestag that claimed that the goals of the Paris Accord can be met without global emission reductions.

He served as a senator for the environment, was a member of the Board of Directors of the oil and gas company Deutsche Shell AG, a member of the "sustainability advisory board" to chancellor Schröder and Merkel, manager at RWE (the largest CO2 emitter in Europe) and head of the German Wildlife Foundation (which he has transformed into an anti-wind energy lobbying association).

So how did the layman's climate forecast by ex-RWE manager Fritz Vahrenholt from his book "Die kalte Sonne" turn out?



Prof. Stefan Rahmstorf

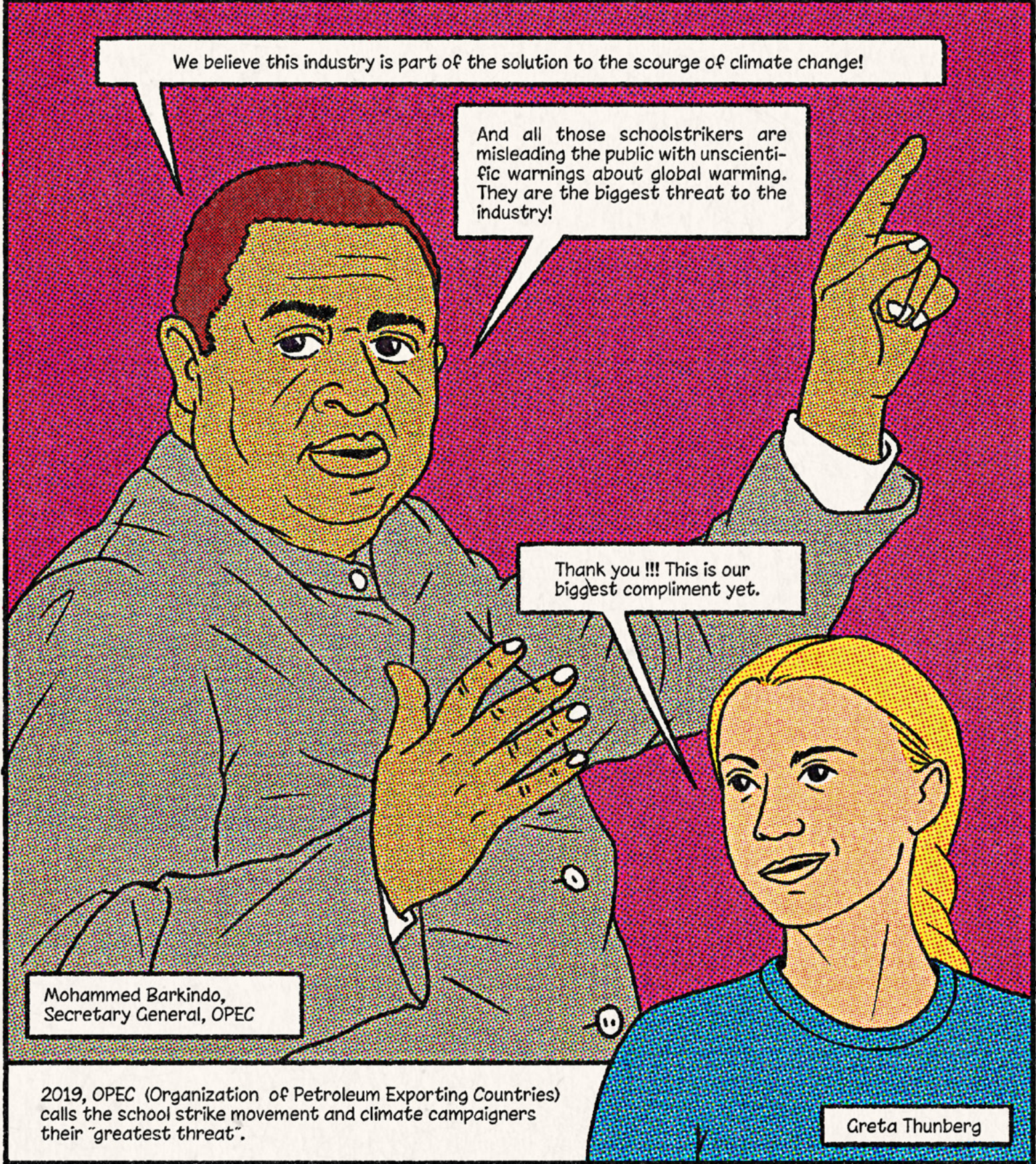
7. FOSSIL-FUEL SOLUTIONISM

Summary:

Fossil fuels are part of the solution.
Our fuels are becoming more efficient and are the bridge towards a low-carbon future.

Strategy:

The fossil fuel industry often argues that it is well positioned to advance climate solutions, predominantly through technological means. These discourses are similar to technological optimism, but they point to specific areas of progress: reducing fossil extraction and production emissions, investing in "cleaner fuels" or "bridging fuels" (e.g. gas), and developing carbon capture and storage. A central rhetorical strategy is to connect fossil fuels to the good life, implying that any shift away from them will challenge prosperity and social progress.



We believe this industry is part of the solution to the scourge of climate change!

And all those schoolstrikers are misleading the public with unscientific warnings about global warming. They are the biggest threat to the industry!

Thank you !!! This is our biggest compliment yet.

Mohammed Barkindo,
Secretary General, OPEC

2019, OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) calls the school strike movement and climate campaigners their "greatest threat".

Greta Thunberg



**THESE
BIG BRAINS**

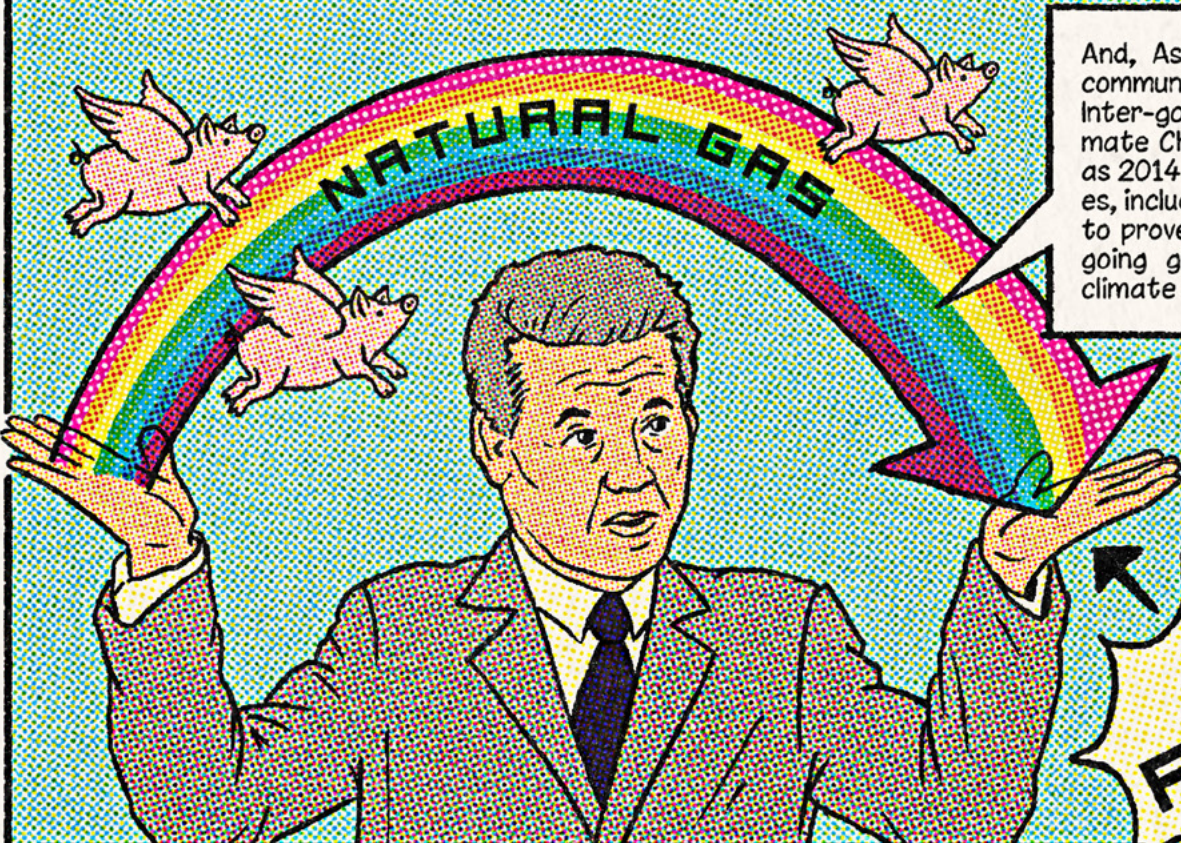


**PRODUCE
CLEANER
ENERGY**



**WHILE
REDUCING
EMISSIONS**

"Natural gas and oil... support hundreds... of high-tech career paths... these big brains... produce cleaner energy... while reducing emissions..." (American Petroleum Institute TV advertisement)

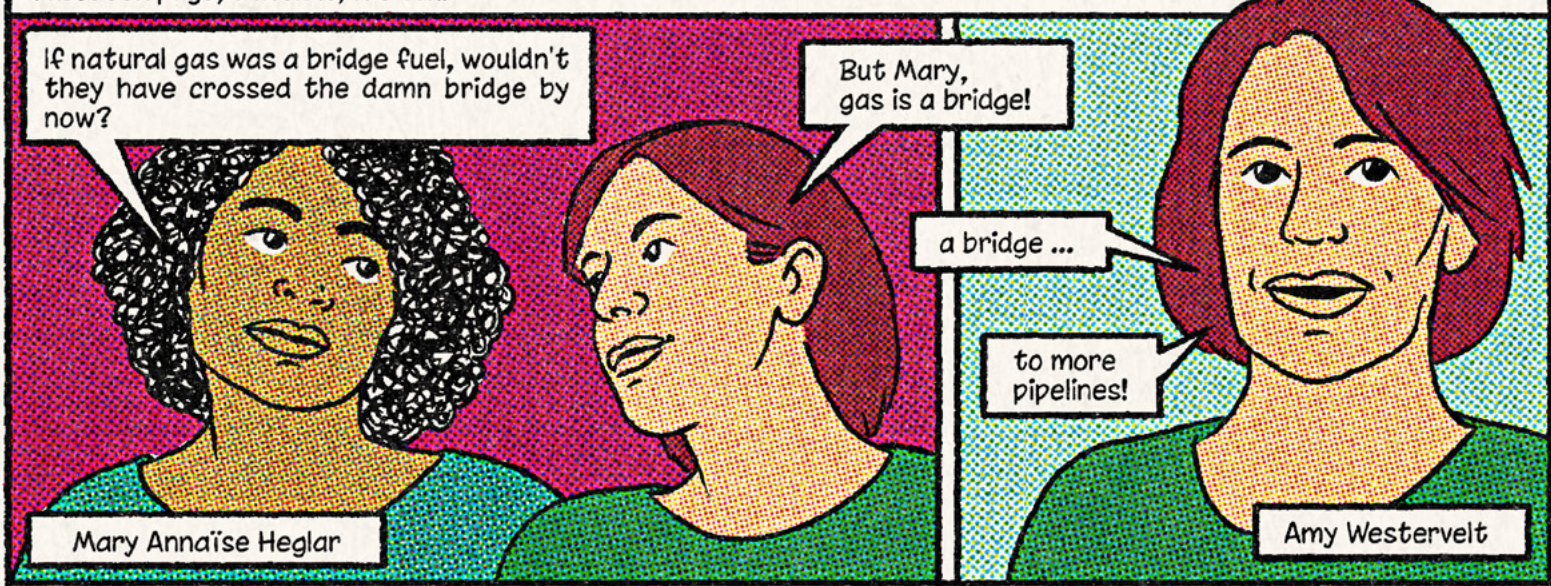


And, As most of the scientific community represented on the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change agreed as recently as 2014 that other energy sources, including natural gas, are likely to prove indispensable in the ongoing global effort to combat climate change.

**THE
FUTURE**

David J. O'Donnell, Associate Director, Massachusetts Petroleum Council

O'Donnell was the only person to testify against divesting from fossil fuel industry in a November 2019 legislative hearing, where he tried using various discourses of delay, but it didn't go well at all. MassDivest published the video on its Facebook page, watch it, it's fun.



If natural gas was a bridge fuel, wouldn't they have crossed the damn bridge by now?

But Mary, gas is a bridge!

a bridge ...

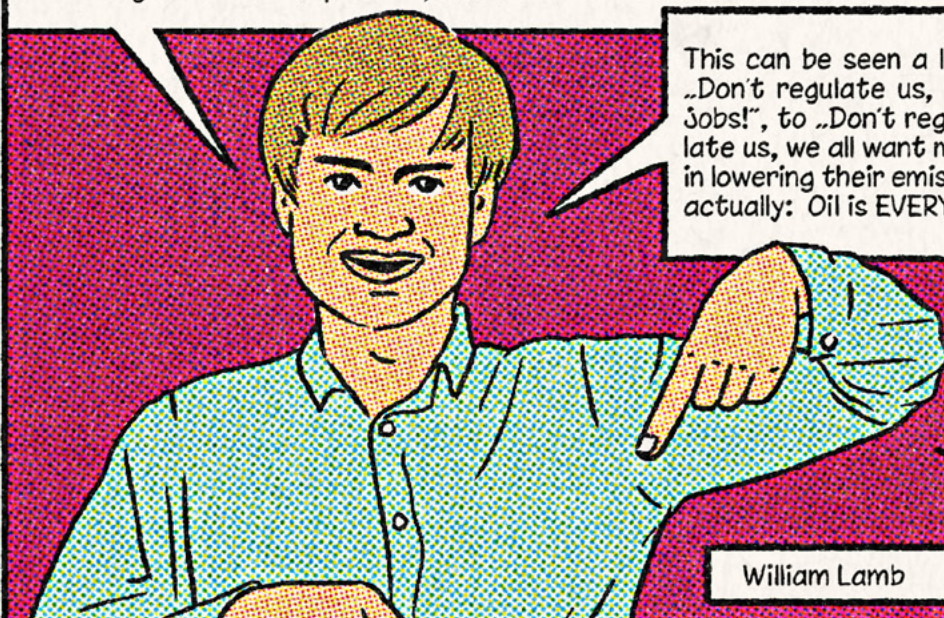
to more pipelines!

Mary Annaïse Heglar

Amy Westervelt

Btw The oil and gas industry pushed the idea of methane ("natural gas") as a clean energy solution for years. While the idea of methane as a bridge fuel is no longer widely accepted, the industry is spending heavily to again deceptively sell the myth that hydrogen - a fossil fuel based gas just like methane - is the new bridge fuel.

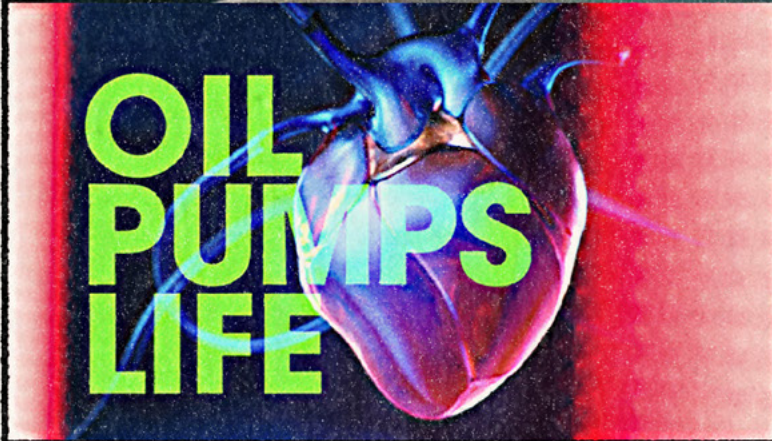
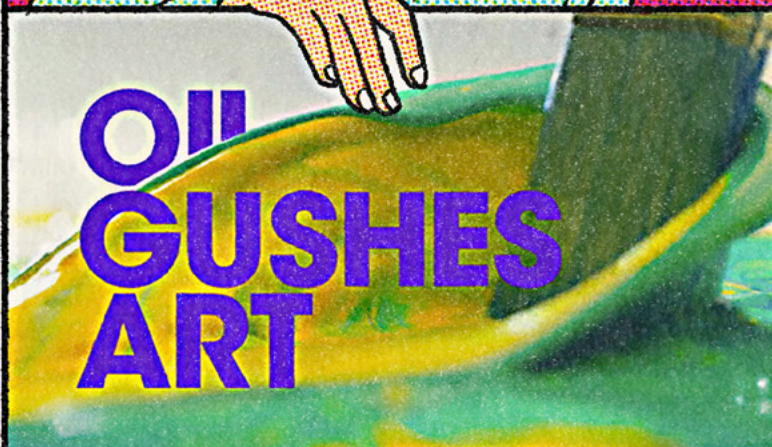
Good old Fossil Fuel Solutionism! A classic discourse of climate delay. Claim to Support climate targets, but Oppose actual policy ("crushing regulations"). Declare fossil fuels "necessary" and then Vaguely claim that "Big Oil is not the problem, But the solution."



This can be seen a lot in fossil fuel ads. Messages range from „Don't regulate us, we're already doing the work, with lots of jobs!“, to „Don't regulate us, jobs, jobs, jobs!“, to „Don't regulate us, we all want more energy“, and we support happy families in lowering their emissions.“ to finally “Don't regulate us, because actually: Oil is EVERYTHING!”

Here is one example, in which oil is presented as new, modern, sexy, connected to life, well-being, progress, AND already clean and getting cleaner. The implication being: don't regulate oil, it is everything in society!

William Lamb



"This ain't your daddy's oil... oil gushes art... oil strikes a pose... oil taps potential... oil pumps life... oil runs cleaner... oil explores space... together we can power past the impossible"

(American Petroleum Institute Super Bowl 2017 TV Commercial, 'Power Past Impossible')

8. APPEAL TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

Summary:

Climate actions will generate large costs. Vulnerable members of our society will be burdened; hard-working people cannot enjoy their holidays.

Strategy:

The appeal to social justice frames climate mitigation as a social justice issue – focusing attention on the short-term costs of a transition and associated distributional risks, while downplaying long-term benefits and avoided harms. It is often used to highlight potential job losses (e.g. in the coal and automotive industries) and “foregone” consumption opportunities (such as holidays). It tends not to reference the potential social justice benefits of climate policies (e.g. improving public health), nor the benefits of avoiding dangerous climate impacts.

4 Sun Sunday, January 6, 2019

1GM

LABOUR would double family air fares

The last Labour government tripled air passenger duty and any new tax will hammer hard-working families and prevent them from enjoying their chance to go abroad!

Duty-free fuel, airline tickets, planes, parts, repairs and fuel are all zero-rated for VAT, alongside baby clothes and wheelchairs.

A new frequent-flyer tax and ending the duty-free status of flights and airport shopping are other options being discussed. A £238 flight would rocket to £505 if all the measures are introduced, pricing many families out of a holiday completely. Treasury minister Robert Jenrick said the last Labour government tripled air passenger duty and any new tax would hammer hard-working families and prevent them from enjoying their chance to go abroad.

Shadow Treasury minister Clive Lewis wants to load taxes on to lifestyles that he claims are destroying the environment. He favours a rising tax on frequent flyers to control and push down demand for flights' and has told MPs: "The price of air travel does not reflect the environmental damage caused."

James Roberts of the Tax-Payers' Alliance, said: "We already have the steepest air taxes in Europe. Labour have got this completely wrong." Asked about the tax plans, a Labour spokesman said last night: "This isn't party policy." david.wooding@the-sun.co.uk

Remember during the Gilets Jaunes protests, some said "we should tax aviation fuel instead, that would be progressive"? Well, it turns out that, if you try *really* hard, you can make even that seem 'unfair towards the poor'.

I would love to do a thorough debunking of all the tricks used in the article to make aviation taxes seem regressive, but let's just say that:

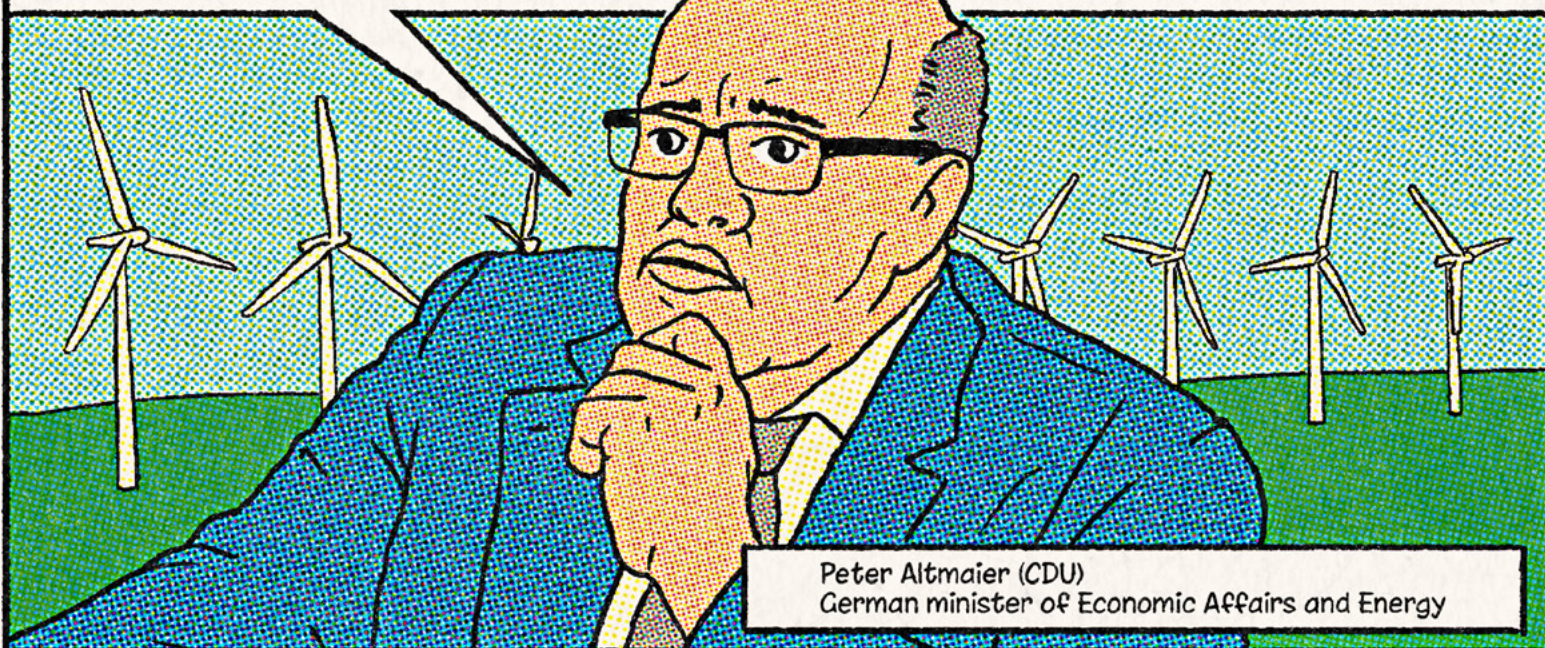
Robert Jenrick
UK Treasury minister

Giulio Mattioli

- 1) many/most people fly less than once every 12 months or never
- 2) participation in air travel and no. of flights increase *dramatically* with income
- 3) given 1) & 2), 'frequent flyers' are very concentrated among high-income groups
- 4) given 1) & 2) it doesn't make *any* sense to provide estimates for an 'average' household
- 5) a 'frequent flyer' tax would exempt the first 1 or 2 flights per year

As an aside: gotta love how the Tory minister is worried about Labour 'preventing families from enjoying their chance to go abroad' while... err abolishing freedom of movement with Brexit
Moral of the story is: no matter how progressive an environmental tax is, populists & vested interests will always present it as regressive, if they want to.

"The photovoltaic expansion is not stalling at all. When I was the environment minister in 2012, green energy made up roughly 23 percent of the power supply, but today there are days when it supplies around 65 percent of our electricity. Unfortunately, there are days when the wind doesn't blow and there's no sunshine, and then these sources can only provide 15 percent of our power. But we still have to supply hospitals, schools and industry with energy. If all wind turbines are standing still, it doesn't help to have a few thousand more. We can't allow climate protection to jeopardize prosperity and jobs."



Peter Altmaier (CDU)
German minister of Economic Affairs and Energy

Altmaier bears significant responsibility for, among other things, the massive collapse in expansion of solar and wind energy in Germany and the so-called coal phase-out law, which, with an end of coal-fired power generation only in 2038, makes it impossible to achieve the mandatory Paris climate protection targets not only for Germany but for the entire EU. Altmaier employs Nikolai Ziegler at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. He is the chairman of "Vernunftkraft," an umbrella organization of anti-wind power initiatives that advocates the abolition of the Renewable Energy Sources Act (EEG) and a halt to the expansion of wind power and photovoltaics. Vernunftkraft also stands for the blatant denial of man-made climate change. Vernunftkraft is - like EIKE and CFACT Europe - a member of the European Platform against Wind Turbines. Between 2015 and 2019, the wind power industry lost nearly three times as many jobs as there are left in lignite Germany-wide.

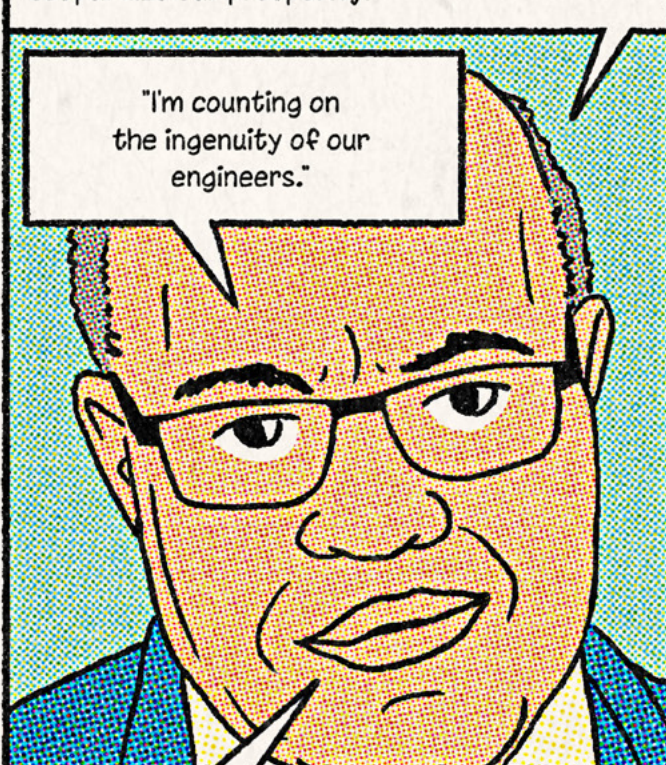
A CO2 tax would, among other things, increase the price of driving and heating. Our climate decisions should speak to all of society, not only to the wealthy. Not everyone can afford an electric car! The most vulnerable citizens should not pay the highest price for our climate targets.



Manfred Weber (CSU)

I believe in technological solutions, I don't believe in new taxes. I want Airbus to develop a plane that produces no CO2 in the future.

"Climate protection will only work if it does not jeopardize our prosperity."



"I'm counting on the ingenuity of our engineers."

Ps: "Gas is not only important, it is sexy."

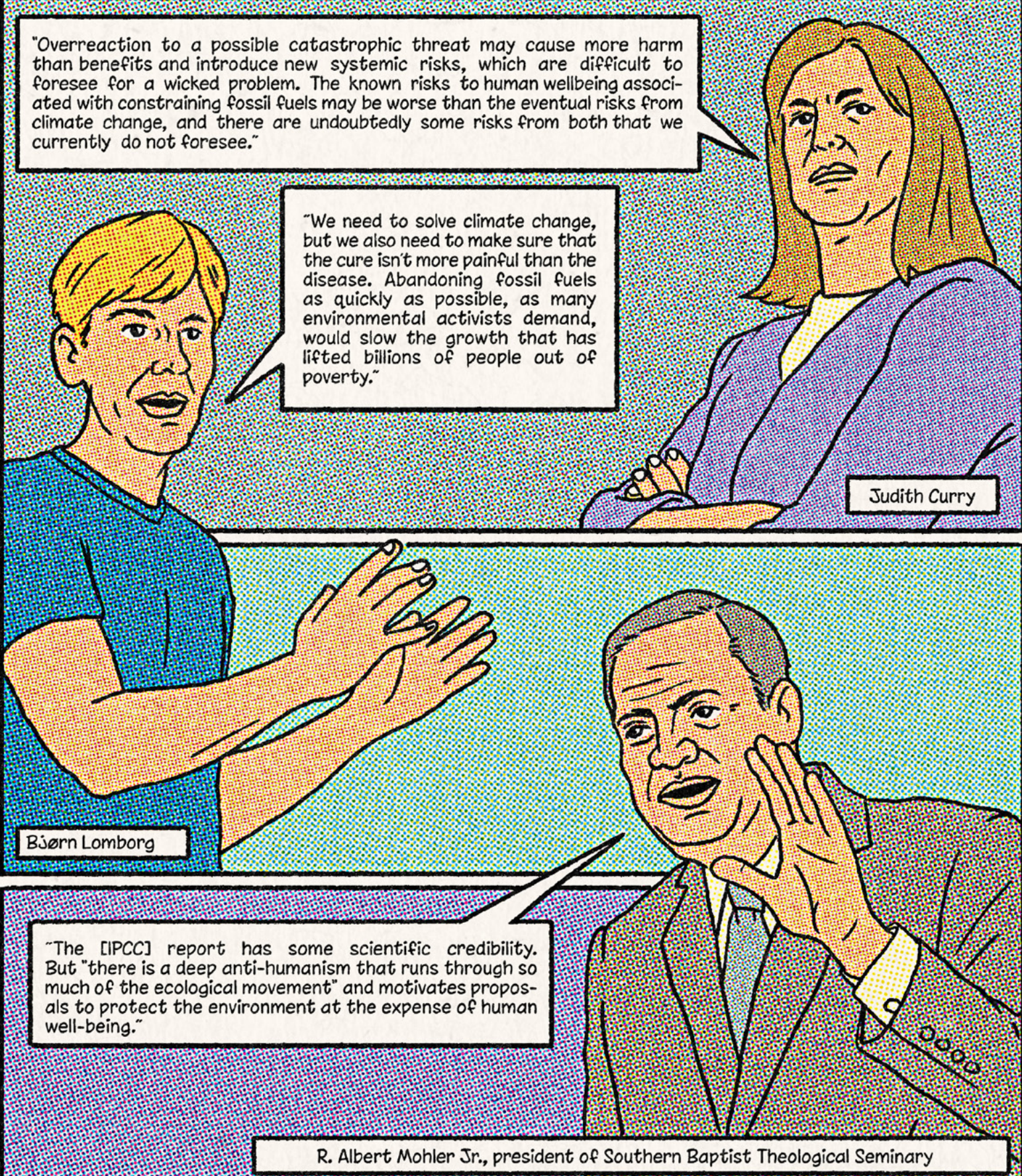
9. APPEAL TO WELL-BEING

Summary:

Fossil fuels are required for development. Abandoning them will condemn the global poor to hardship and their right to modern livelihoods.

Strategy:

The appeal to well-being is an extreme variation of the appeal to social justice. It claims that fundamental livelihoods are threatened by climate mitigation, particularly those in poor and developing countries. The central strategy is to conflate energy access and its associated well-being benefits (e.g. mobility, lighting, heating) and with fossil fuels. Concurrently, it tends to ignore the possibilities of low-carbon and decentralised energy services for addressing development needs.



"Overreaction to a possible catastrophic threat may cause more harm than benefits and introduce new systemic risks, which are difficult to foresee for a wicked problem. The known risks to human wellbeing associated with constraining fossil fuels may be worse than the eventual risks from climate change, and there are undoubtedly some risks from both that we currently do not foresee."

"We need to solve climate change, but we also need to make sure that the cure isn't more painful than the disease. Abandoning fossil fuels as quickly as possible, as many environmental activists demand, would slow the growth that has lifted billions of people out of poverty."

Judith Curry

Bjørn Lomborg

"The [IPCC] report has some scientific credibility. But "there is a deep anti-humanism that runs through so much of the ecological movement" and motivates proposals to protect the environment at the expense of human well-being."

R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

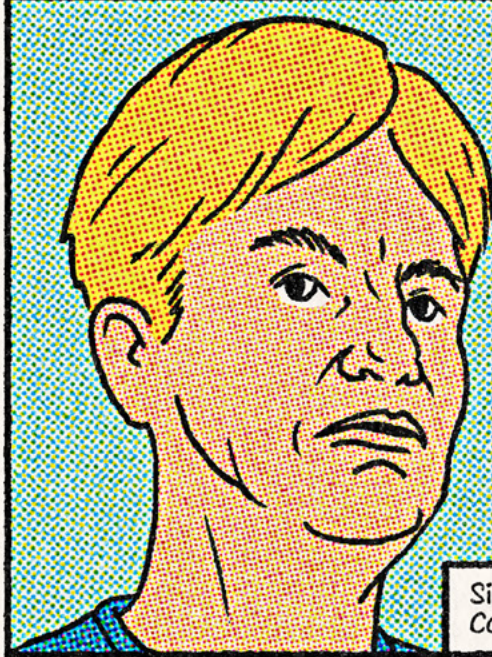
Apart from ignoring the possibilities of low-carbon and decentralised energy services for addressing development needs, these people are also known for quotes like the following. It hardly seems that these people could seriously care about the well being of poor or marginalized people.



"Trump's election provided an opportunity for a more rational energy and climate policy."

"I do receive some funding from the fossil fuel industry."

Judith Curry resigned from her position as professor at the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the Georgia Institute of Technology in 2017 citing the "craziness" of climate science, and plans to focus on her private business. Curry was ranked #4 among other noted deniers in a Nature Communications article that ranked 386 "climate change contrarians" based on media visibility (The article also ranked bona fide climate scientists and found that deniers had nearly 50% more visibility in the media than mainstream scientists). She actively engaged with the climate change skeptic community and appeared on the Richie Allen show to speak about the IPCC. The show is part of the David Icke network and Icke is known to believe that he is the son of God and that the world is run by reptiles.

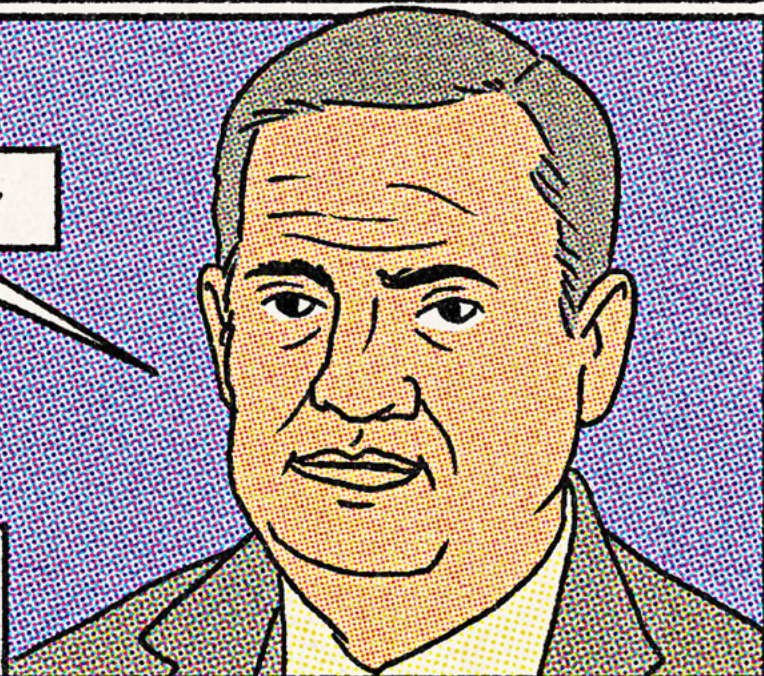


"A 20-foot rise in sea levels...would inundate about 16,000 square miles of coastline, where more than 400 million people currently live. That's a lot of people, to be sure, but hardly all of mankind. In fact, it amounts to less than 6% of the world's population - which is to say that 94% of the population would not be inundated."

Since this comic was created at the end of 2020, let's add one of Lomborg's Covid-19 quotes: "Significant data indicate corona is no worse than common flu."

"While the Bible does not endorse slavery, it does require slaves to obey their masters."

When Albert Mohler was asked, if that rule also applied to runaway slaves, like the famed Harriet Tubman, he added that there is no loophole for disobeying.



10. POLICY PERFECTIONISM

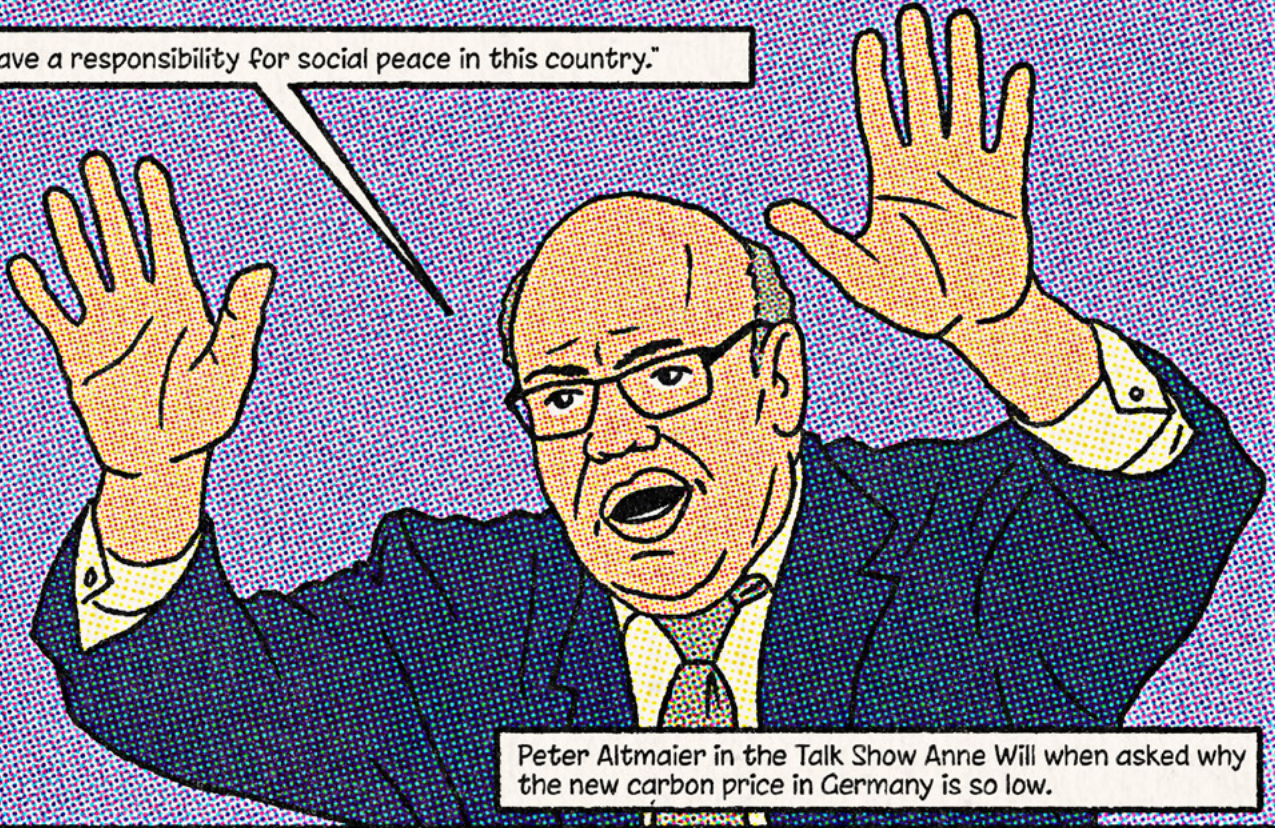
Summary:

We should seek only well-crafted solutions that are supported by all affected parties; otherwise we will waste limited opportunities for adoption.

Strategy:

Policy perfectionism delays every legislative action by referring to potential regulatory risks, imperfect policy design, or potential economic costs. It argues that we need more and more time to do better and better policies – ideally at a very high level of ambition and coordination (e.g. a global carbon price, or a comprehensive reform of the EU ETS). The potential loss of popular support is used to deflect responsibility: "If we rush policies, public support is gone and we can't do anything". Alternatively, it calls for eliminating existing policies, to be replaced by a single optimal solution.

"We also have a responsibility for social peace in this country."



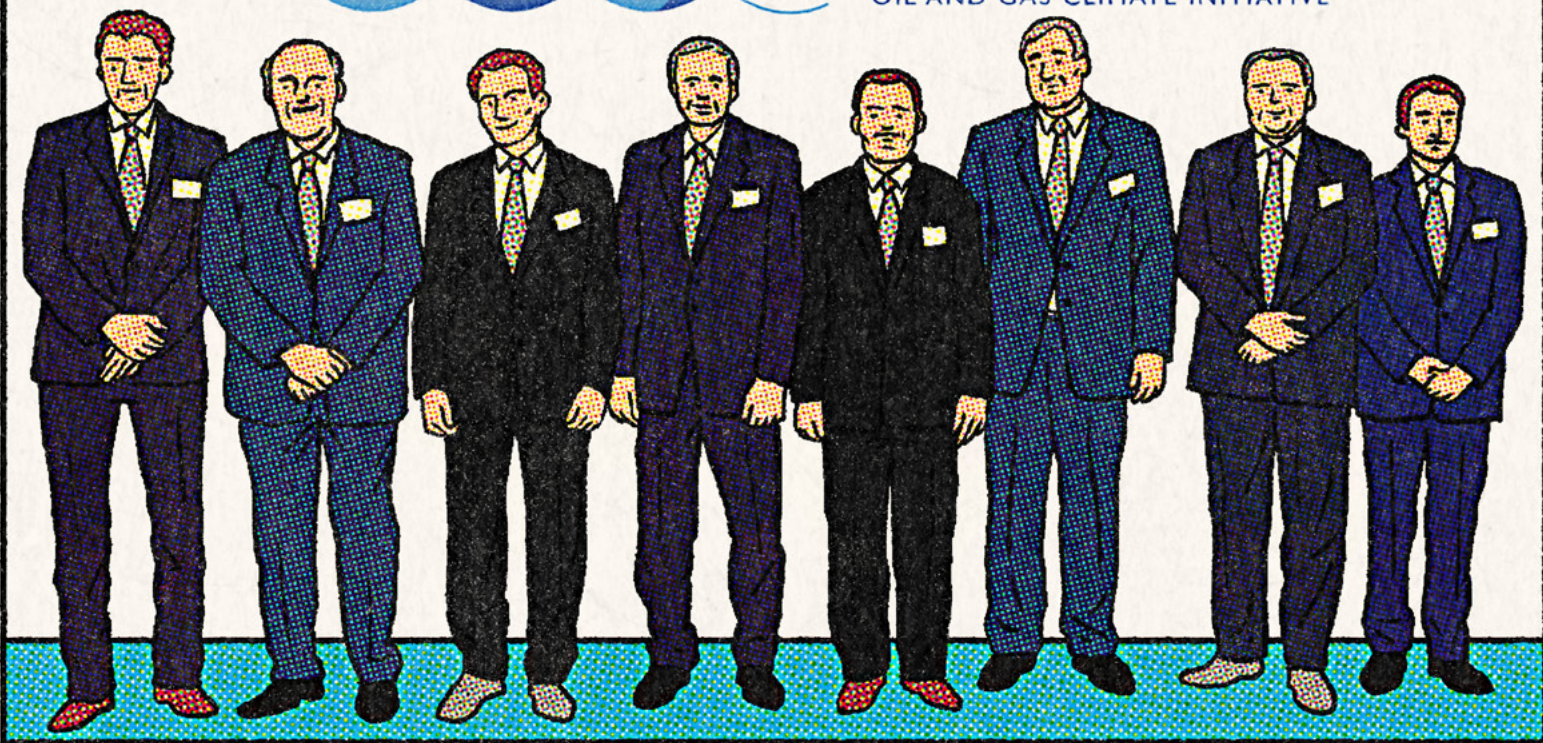
Peter Altmaier in the Talk Show Anne Will when asked why the new carbon price in Germany is so low.

"We want both: to achieve the climate goals by 2030 and to preserve social peace. If a CO2 price had a steering effect, i.e. should immediately lead to changes in behaviour, then 20 or 30 euros would not be enough. I could say that we are forcing everything over the price, starting tomorrow. It doesn't matter who can pay it. That would, however, significantly exacerbate the division in the country."



Malu Dreyer, leader of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD)

2015 before the COP21 in Paris ten oil and gas giants released a Joint Collaborative Declaration under the Oil & Gas Climate Initiative (OGCI) and called for a global price on carbon. Signatories included the CEOs of Total, Statoil, BP, Shell, BG Group, Saudi Aramco, Pemex, Sinopec, Eni, Reliance, and Repsol. Eight heads of these companies met to discuss their demand on a panel where they unsurprisingly agreed that there was actually no chance for a global carbon price happening. In the meantime, gas, gas, and more gas, was emphasised by everyone on the panel. And while they all recognised the challenge of meeting a 2C target, no substantial solutions other than a carbon price were put forward.

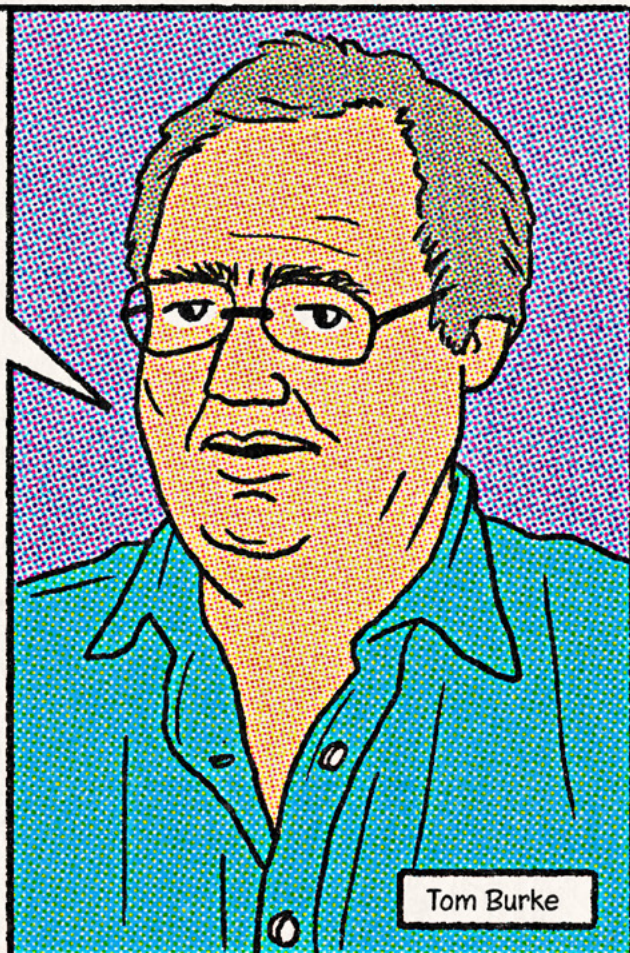


The call for a carbon price is a shield with which to defend themselves from calls for faster change. If we are not decarbonising fast enough, they will argue, it is not their fault. If only governments were brave enough to put the carbon price up higher and faster, they will lament, we would get there sooner. This is hocus-pocus. They know full well governments will be deeply reluctant to put up consumers bills. This is simply a stratagem to re-balance the political equation. Politicians are to be caught between the pressure to protect the climate and the pain of doing it with a carbon price. You do not have to be a cynic to believe that faced with this kind of dilemma most politicians will do very little.

There is a further subtlety to this plan. Calling for a global carbon price will mobilise hostile, if covert, opposition from every finance ministry on the planet. Few national prerogatives are as fiercely protected as the right to raise (or lower) taxes. Sixty years of building a Single Market have not persuaded the nations of the EU to surrender any taxation prerogatives to Brussels.

Keeping the climate safe means persuading 190 nations to co-ordinate their energy policies. After 30 years of trying we are still someway from succeeding. Yet, by comparison with coordinating their tax policies this is straightforward. There is no chance that the world will agree on a global price for carbon in the few years we have to keep the climate safe.

Oil company CEOs lack neither intelligence nor experience. They have not overlooked the political problems of calling for a global price on carbon. They are counting on them.



Tom Burke

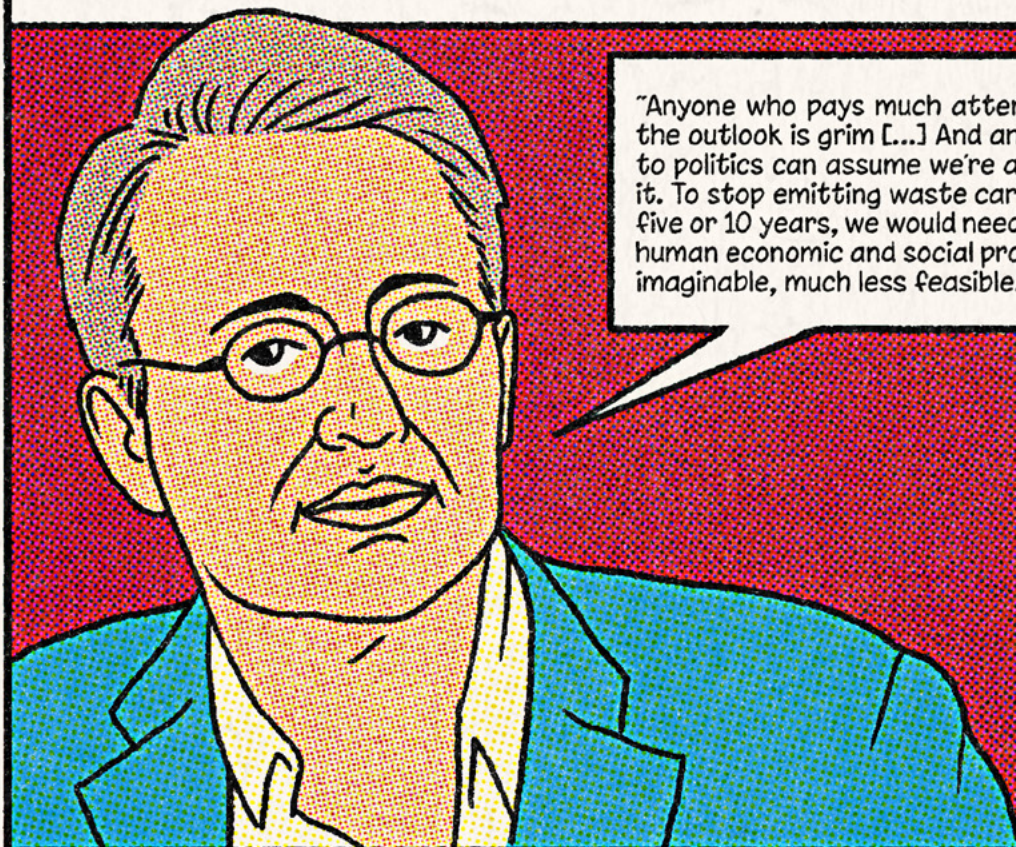
11. CHANGE IS IMPOSSIBLE

Summary:

Any measure to reduce emissions effectively would run against current ways of life or human nature and are thus impossible to implement in a democratic society.

Strategy:

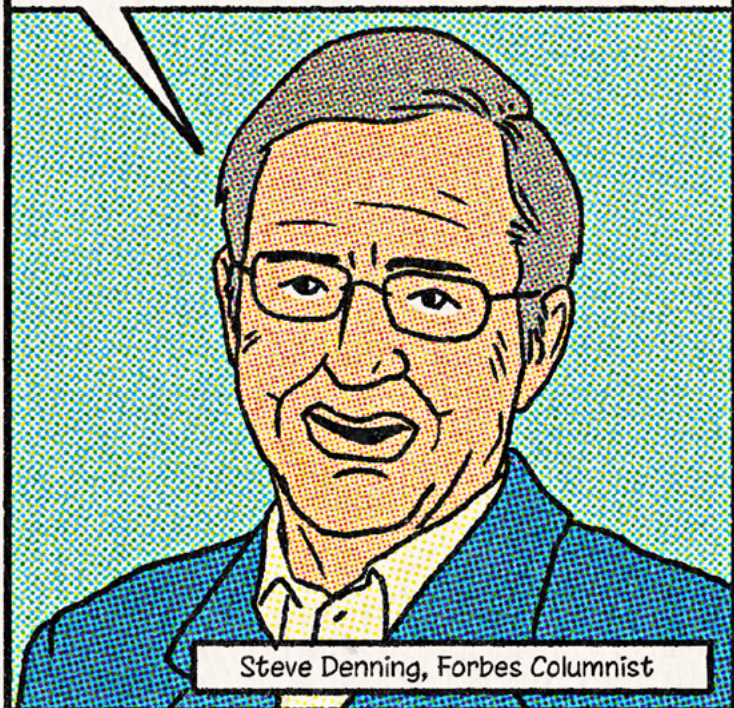
Change is impossible points to different fundamental areas of 'carbon lock-in', such as social acceptability, global capitalism, the overwhelming power of interest groups, the limited substitution possibilities of technology, etc. These arguments reify the current state of things and obscure how things have changed in the past. They deny that human societies are capable of collective reflexivity about long-term trade-offs. On the other hand, they have *prima facie* credibility, as they point to real lock-in and to the acceptability problems of many policies. But, rather than searching for a way out, they suggest to surrender.



"Anyone who pays much attention to climate change knows the outlook is grim [...] And anyone who pays much attention to politics can assume we're almost certainly going to botch it. To stop emitting waste carbon completely within the next five or 10 years, we would need to radically reorient almost all human economic and social production, a task that's scarcely imaginable, much less feasible."

Roy Scranton

"Introducing further regulations and controls with ever more intrusive impacts on lifestyles would require enormous political support, which is unlikely to be forthcoming in the current divisive political climate."

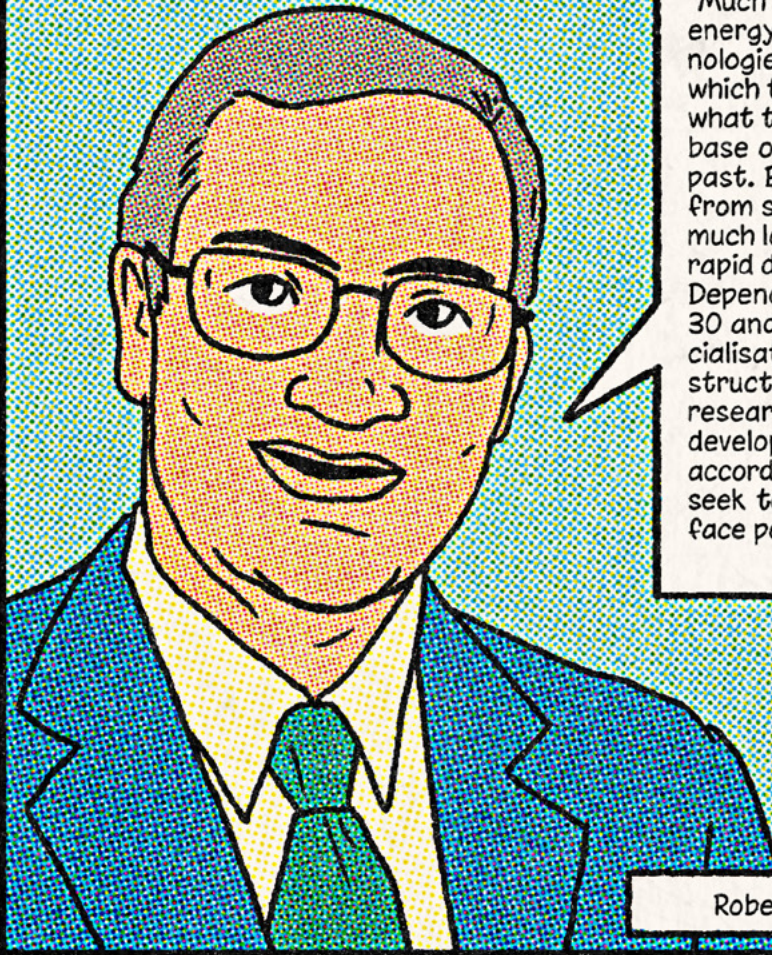


Steve Denning, Forbes Columnist

"Despite what a lot of activists say, it is entirely legitimate to invest in oil and gas because the world demands it. We have no choice but to invest in long-life projects."



Ben Van Beurden, CEO Shell



"Much of the current public discussion concerning future energy transitions is based upon speculation as to the technologies that might be available, their costs, and the rates at which they might be commercialised. Anyone can dream about what the future may hold, but it would seem more prudent to base one's judgments on what has actually happened in the past. Based on the history of energy transitions, the period from scientific discovery to widespread commercialisation is much longer than is currently estimated by the advocates of rapid decarbonisation.

Depending on the technology, the process may take between 30 and 50 years, or much longer where widespread commercialisation depends upon the replacement of long-lived infrastructure. None of the steps in the innovation pathway – research, discovery, testing, demonstration, initial market development or widespread commercialisation – operates according to a fixed or predictable schedule. Governments that seek to impose their policy preferences on the outcomes will face perhaps insurmountable obstacles."

Robert Lyman for the Global Warming Policy Foundation

The Global Warming Policy Foundation (GWPF) is a UK-based think tank founded by climate change denialist Nigel Lawson with the purpose of combating what the foundation describes as "extremely damaging and harmful policies" designed to mitigate climate change. A 2015 GWPF "Report" on Climate Change stated: "[...] Human emissions of carbon dioxide, a transparent, odorless, non-toxic gas, essential for plant growth and contained at about 40,000 parts per million (ppm) in our own breaths. Carbon dioxide has been mercilessly demonized as 'carbon pollution', when in fact it is a benefit to the planet. Agricultural production has increased substantially and the Earth is greener today with the 400 ppm current levels of carbon dioxide than it was with preindustrial levels of about 280 ppm. And two or three times higher levels would be even better."

The sun is the main driver of climate change.

Not you.
Not CO2.

🌍 Earth to scale.



Robert Lyman also writes for the Heartland Institute, a Chicago-based free market think tank and charity that has been at the forefront of denying the scientific evidence for man-made climate change and the lung cancer risks of smoking. And in 2017 gave a speech titled "Can Canada Survive Climate Change Policy" at the Alberta-based group Friends of Science. According to Friends of Science, there are six things everyone should know about climate change:

1. "The earth is cooling."
2. "The Sun causes climate change."
3. "Al Gore was wrong about CO2."
4. "Violent weather isn't getting worse."
5. "It's been hotter."
6. "Climate computer models are proven wrong."

And that "Catastrophic Anthropogenic (Human-caused) Global Warming" is a theoretical threat, mostly used by environmental groups to raise money."

12. Doomism

Summary:

Any mitigation actions we take are too little, too late. Catastrophic climate change is already locked-in. We should adapt, or accept our fate in the hands of God or nature.

Strategy:

Doomism is a discourse that "all is lost". It removes one's agency to address climate change, thereby absolving individuals of responsibility to take meaningful actions. However, it does leave room for a focus on adaptation and resilience, hence protecting individual and community assets while allowing declarations of "standing up to climate change". Alternatively, it might suggest that we leave our fate to "God's hands".


"We don't really worry about climate change because it's too overwhelming and we're already in too deep. It's like if you owe your bookie \$1,000, you're like, 'OK, I've got to pay this dude back.' But if you owe your bookie \$1 million dollars, you're like, 'I guess I'm just going to die.'"



**CATASTROPHIC
CLIMATE CHANGE
BY 2040**

Colin Jost

Saturday Night Live skit the weekend following the release of the 2018 report from the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The report was one of the most dramatic ones yet, predicting that some of the most severe social and economic damage from the rise in global temperatures could come as soon as 2040.

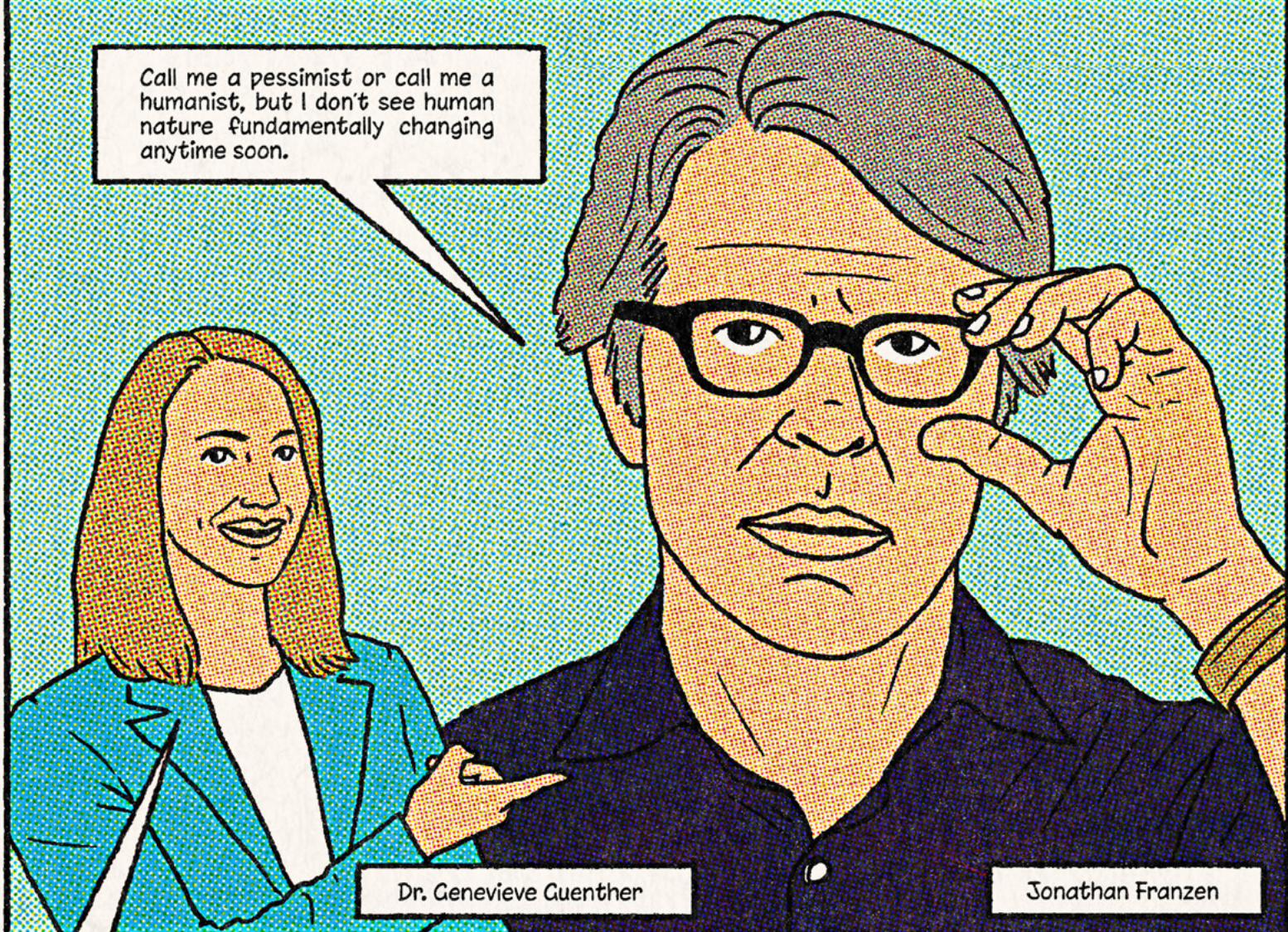


"As a Christian, I believe that there is a creator in God who is much bigger than us, and I'm confident that, if there's a real problem, He can take care of it."

US Congressman Tim Walberg

"What if We Stopped Pretending? The climate apocalypse is coming. To prepare for it, we need to admit that we can't prevent it." Jonathan Franzen, New Yorker Comment

Call me a pessimist or call me a humanist, but I don't see human nature fundamentally changing anytime soon.



Dr. Genevieve Guenther

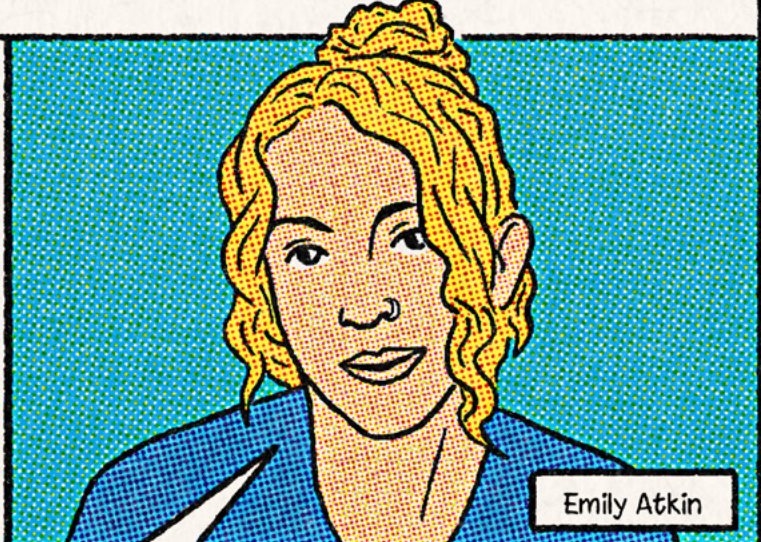
Jonathan Franzen

This kind of denier argument hides its ideological commitments under the invocation of "human nature": we will never stop emitting carbon dioxide, it says, because of "human nature." This is pure ideology, hiding the real (and contingent) material conditions of our existence behind the lie of natural inevitability. In other words, Franzen looks at power and sees "human nature." But of course he does!



Amy Westervelt

In climate change, many of these elite white men might be experiencing their very first brush with imposed change, with a force beyond their control upending their lives; that might make them particularly ill-equipped to envision what's next, let alone lead us there. The story of climate change, both its history and its future, needs to be told by people who have already experienced injustice and disempowerment, people who are justifiably angry at the way the system works.



Emily Atkin

Maybe it's because I've watched too many superhero movies, but Franzen's logic—that all-out war against the fossil fuel industry only makes sense if it's "winnable"—seems incredibly (sorry) pigeon-hearted to me. If Captain America taught us anything, it's that you shouldn't need the guarantee of success to fight for what you know to be right; especially when that fight will determine whether millions of people live or die.

Thank you for reading!

And a big thank you to William F. Lamb

Giulio Mattioli

Sebastian Levi

J. Timmons Roberts

Stuart Capstick

Felix Creutzig

Jan C. Minx

Finn Müller-Hansen

Trevor Culhane

&

Julia K. Steinberger

for their work on this important study

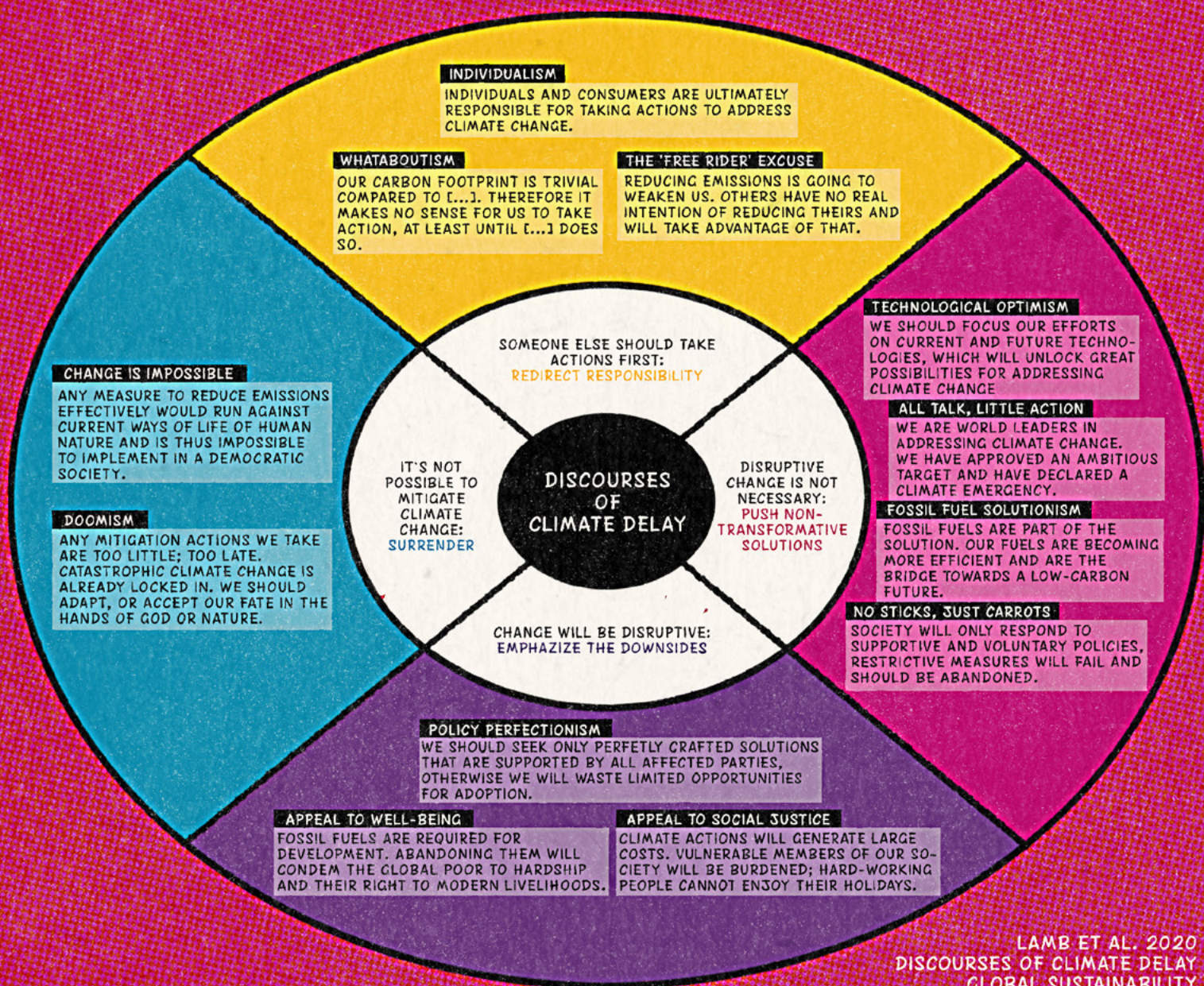
This comic and the sources for the quotes used can be found at

celinekeller.com/discourses-of-climate-delay

2021 - Céline Keller



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DISCOURSES OF DELAY BINGO

 CARROTS WITHOUT STICKS	 TECHNOLOGICAL OPTIMISM	 'FREE RIDER' EXCUSE	 APPEAL TO WELL-BEING
 FOSSIL FUEL SOLUTIONISM	 CHANGE IS IMPOSSIBLE	 INDIVIDUALISM	 APPEAL TO SOCIAL JUSTICE
 ALL TALK, LITTLE ACTION	 DOOMISM	 WHATABOUTISM	 POLICY PERFECTIONISM
NON- TRANSFORMATIVE SOLUTIONS	SURRENDER	REDIRECT RESPONSIBILITY	EMPHASISE DOWNSIDES