



TD Lysenko: A favorite of Stalin and the patron saint of climate deniers

[The other day I suggested](#) that climate advocates ought to start working in school board elections as a way of building long term political support for vigorous climate action.

Well, it looks like they will need to start playing defense as well. [October’s Scientific American reports](#) that climate deniers are now pushing the Orwellian “academic freedom” laws,

which allow for the use of information only on creationist sites, many of which teach that the earth is not billions of years old, or from climate change contrarian think tanks, which attribute the recent trend in warming not to an increase in greenhouse gases but rather to unstoppable solar cycles. Students would also learn that the pre-industrial revolution Medieval Warming Period refutes anthropogenic global warming — even though it was merely a regional warming event. Scientists do not give these view credence, but that does not keep them from appearing in lesson plans to dispute the fact that human activity has affected the earth’s climate.

One wonders how far such “academic freedom” laws go: if a second-grade teacher wants to teach her students about the wondrous medical effects of leeches, would that apply? Perhaps the [phlogiston theory of combustion](#)? The genius of [Trofim Lysenko](#)?