



Upton Sinclair

You know that things are getting bad when cool-and-collected [Ann Carlson asks](#) whether climate deniers and foot-draggers can sleep at night. It seems to me, though, that there is a pretty straightforward answer, courtesy of Upton Sinclair:

It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends upon his not understanding it.

This doesn't mean that people know that they are killing the planet, and don't care. Rather, it is that getting them to see the science requires them to make investments in knowledge that they have little time for, and would be against their interest if they found the answer. So why invest the time and energy to do it? Why spend your precious time doing something that can only turn out badly for you either way?

Besides, this is a long run problem, people tell them themselves: in the long run, as Lord Keynes said, we are all dead. Well, nowadays it *is* long run, and Lord Keynes is dead.