

Sociologist [Aaron McCright](#), in a recently published academic [article](#), analysed 7 years of Gallup polling data on environmental issues (from 2001-2008) and reached these startling (not) conclusions:

- women have a greater scientific understanding of climate change than men do;
- women are more likely than men to worry that climate change is a large problem; but
- men think they know more about climate change than they actually do while
- women think they know less about climate change than they actually do.

Why do these findings not surprise me? They're disturbing in more than one way. First, as blogger Matt McDermott [says](#), most climate skeptics — at least the most prominent ones — seem to be men. And yet they're more scientifically ignorant than women. I have to say that in my anecdotal experience I've been questioned extensively by a number of people who are skeptical that global warming is occurring. Every one of them is male. But before we celebrate the clear thinking of women, Professor McCright's findings also point to cause for concern. As he describes in detail, numerous studies have shown that girls and women frequently underestimate their strength and understanding of science and math. His is yet another, demonstrating "a troubling pattern that inhibits many young women from pursuing scientific careers."