

Some members of Congress — not to mention any number of bloggers — think climate change is a hoax. Most famously, Senator Inhofe has said:

With all of the hysteria, all of the fear, all of the phony science, could it be that manmade global warming is the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on the American people? It sure sounds like it.

Maybe that shouldn't be too surprising — conspiracy theories in general have a degree of perennial popularity. But even if you're a person who believes in conspiracy theories, you shouldn't believe in this one. It is *much* more likely that 9/11 was deliberately allowed by the government, Elvis is still alive, and the moon landing was faked.

There's no doubt that that many of our fellow citizens do believe in conspiracy theories. The [American Enterprise Institute](#) has collected poll results about conspiracy theories. For instance, in a 2006 poll, over a third of the public thought the following statement was either very or somewhat likely:

People in the federal government either assisted in the 9/11 attacks or took no action to stop the attacks because they wanted to United States to go to war in the Middle East.

In fact, according to another poll, 14% think that "President Bush intentionally allowed the 9/11 attacks to take place because he wanted the United States to go to war in the Middle East."

One poll even got about 5% to agree that "shape-shifting reptilian people control our world by taking on human form and gaining political power to manipulate our societies." These are probably the same people who, according to other polls, think Elvis may still be alive and that the moon landing was faked.

Each of these other crazy theories — except the one about the reptilian aliens — is more plausible than the conspiracy theory about climate change. Most of the other theories would require only a relatively small group of people to take action on a single occasion. They also mostly involve people who belong to a single covert organization — maybe MI-5 for Princess Di, or the National Security Council for 9/11. Even faking Elvis's death and giving him a false identity could have been done by a small group. Presumably, faking the

moon landing could have been done by secret group within NASA (though I've never understood what the motive was supposed to be — concealing the reptilian shape-shifter's moon base?).

In contrast, faking climate science would require cooperation from hundreds or thousands of academics in many universities and research groups in different parts of the world. It's hard to imagine how such a conspiracy could be concealed. Indeed, in my experience, most academics are incapable of keeping a secret of any kind after about two glasses of wine. No one in their right mind would try to organize a conspiracy of this kind, and if they did, the plot wouldn't hold up for more than a day or so.

Believing that climate change is a hoax isn't like believing that Elvis's death was faked. It's like believing that rock stars are immortal and that *all* of their deaths have been faked. If there's such a thing as a rational conspiracy theorist, you should pass on the climate conspiracy theory.

By the way, climate skepticism is a conspiracy by the reptilian shape-shifters. They want to increase carbon emissions as a way of geo-engineering the planet to be more hospitable to cold-blooded lifeforms. Pass the word.