

Q&A

Stopping Climate Action Mis-Information: How Is the Media Complicit and What Can Journalists Do?

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Andrea Learned 1:15 PM

Who - ideally - could the media quote more often or highlight that might counter the ubiquitous fossil fuel quote? Are journalists in need of help finding those sources/resources?

Anonymous Attendee 1:23 PM

Sending here just in case it's getting lost in the chat. Marcus, do you see opportunity for the PR folks in the room to help drive and develop that relationship between the voices/spokespeople you mention and reporters?

Larissa Balzer 1:24 PM

What about shifting the narrative from 'human-caused climate change' to 'industry-caused climate change'?

Theresa Braine 1:27 PM

I think it's a matter of false equivalency when it comes to how one quotes them?

Anonymous Attendee 1:31 PM

Why is that misinformation, exactly? NOAA's website says there's little data one way or the other. More research is needed.

Gloria Gonzalez 1:31 PM

As an editor, I find it insulting the idea here that editors are the roadblock. To the example just mentioned, do you have any idea about how many events, including by groups similar to yours, we get invited to cover. The number of events far outweighs the number of reports I have on staff.

Halle Parker is going to answer this question live.

Anonymous Attendee 1:32 PM

I'm referring to the connection between whales and offshore wind

Bobby Magill 1:32 PM

I've never had an editor anytime in the last 15 years tell me not to write a story painting climate change as urgent.

Halle Parker is going to answer this question live.

Bobby Magill 1:34 PM

Which editors are you referring to? Have you talked to any?

Halle Parker is going to answer this question live.

James Bruggers 1:34 PM

When you find errors in stories, do you go to the reporter and editor and ask for a correction?

Curtis Tate 1:34 PM

My rule is I don't leave out the perspective of fossil fuel interests and their allies. I just don't quote them saying false things.

Rocky Kistner 1:35 PM

Also you've addressed some of this issue, but do you have more examples of the media's lack of focus on funding by special interests. Why do you think this is often ignored?

Anonymous Attendee 1:42 PM

Aaron Johnson in the chat works for the Western Energy Alliance, a fossil fuels group.

Curtis Tate 1:42 PM

Totally agree with what Marcus just said. That is a big challenge in coal country.

James Bruggers 1:42 PM

so journalists should not call climate change climate change in stories about climate change?

Kathie Florsheim 1:45 PM

Lois- can you say more about the disinformation about native plants and native insects in the gardening community

Bobby Magill 1:49 PM

Why is the Sierra Club a trusted source to deliver science and data?

Kathie Florsheim 1:55 PM

Lois, not all insects are obligate species, like the monarch and asclepias. I am an active organic gardener in RIm=, haven't seen anything like this so far

James Bruggers 1:14 PM

Please provide specific examples of journalism - the stories and outlets themselves - of climate misinformation or disinformation that prompted this panel, excluding the Fox and right-wing media ecosystem? The panel identified as a problem "media outlets" that are "sensational and full of misinformation." I'd like to know what stories and outlets, please, otherwise this is just a discussion of generalizations.

Gloria Gonzalez 1:18 PM

Are you suggesting journalists should not be quoting fossil fuel industry participants in stories?

Bobby Magill 1:18 PM

I see journalists using data and questioning fossil fuel companies all the time, in the Washington Post, the NYTimes, local media and elsewhere. What news outlets do you see failing at this and spreading misinformation as you see it?

Clint Wilder 1:22 PM

There is big growth of disinformation at the local level, sowing opposition to a wind farm for example — "wind turbines cause cancer" and the like. How can local journalists report better on this, avoiding both sides-ism and perhaps exposing the fossil-fuel industry-backed "citizens groups" that are often behind it?

This question has been answered live

Rocky Kistner 1:23 PM

The role of journalism is not necessarily to push for certain actions but to inform and educate the public about critical topics like climate change. What do you think environmental journalists do well in terms of story telling, and what areas do you think we could do better?

Anonymous Attendee 1:27 PM

I don't understand. Even if reporters report that climate action is urgent, why shouldn't fossil fuel companies be quoted in stories? Isn't that fair?