

3rd World Congress on

CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL WARMING

October 16-17, 2017 Dubai, UAE



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Climate catastrophe refugees and the political value of terrorism to climate change denial in the United States

The aim of this study is to show how legislative processes ostensibly aimed at drafting laws that embody justice and equality have become systemically co-opted and corrupted through the machinations of legislators beholden to a donor class whose profit-objectives depend on the unfettered extraction of hydrocarbons. It's thus no surprise that the denial of anthropogenic climate change has come to inform not only energy-legislation, but potentially all law-making insofar it has become imperative to insure against profit-suffocating regulation. Senator James Inhofe offers an apt example. In 2015, he sponsored two bills, one acknowledging that climate change is real, but denying that it's anthropogenic; another to make English the official language of the US, the English Unity Act of 2015. While the first attempts to circumvent the debate concerning climate change, the second aims to discourage border crossings are two apparently different issues until we realize that many migrants are climate change refugees. Inhofe denies climate change but tacitly recognizes that it produces conditions for migration. He calls human-made global warming a hoax, but sponsors a bill to deter migrants seeking to flee its consequences. Throughout Inhofe's defense of the two bills, he refers to illegal immigrants as drug-runners and terrorists, a narrative that offers just what he needs: it detracts from the facts about climate change refugees and provides justification for policies like President Trump's wall. It provides apparent substance to the American president's references to radical Islamic terrorists alleged to cross from the South and helps to justify US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord. In the world, according to climate change denial, drafting law is less about social or environmental justice and more about insuring the hegemony of multinational energy interests. There are no winners. But there are losers: A planet that can no longer support human life makes refugees of us all.

Biography

Wendy Lynne Lee is a Professor of Philosophy at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania where she taught for over 25 years. She has published about 40 scholarly essays in her areas of expertise which include philosophy of language, philosophy of mind/brain, feminist theory, theory of sexual identity, post-Marxian theory, nonhuman animal welfare, ecological aesthetics, aesthetic phenomenology and philosophy of ecology. Her most recent book is *Eco-Nihilism: The Philosophical Geopolitics of the Climate Change Apocalypse*.

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