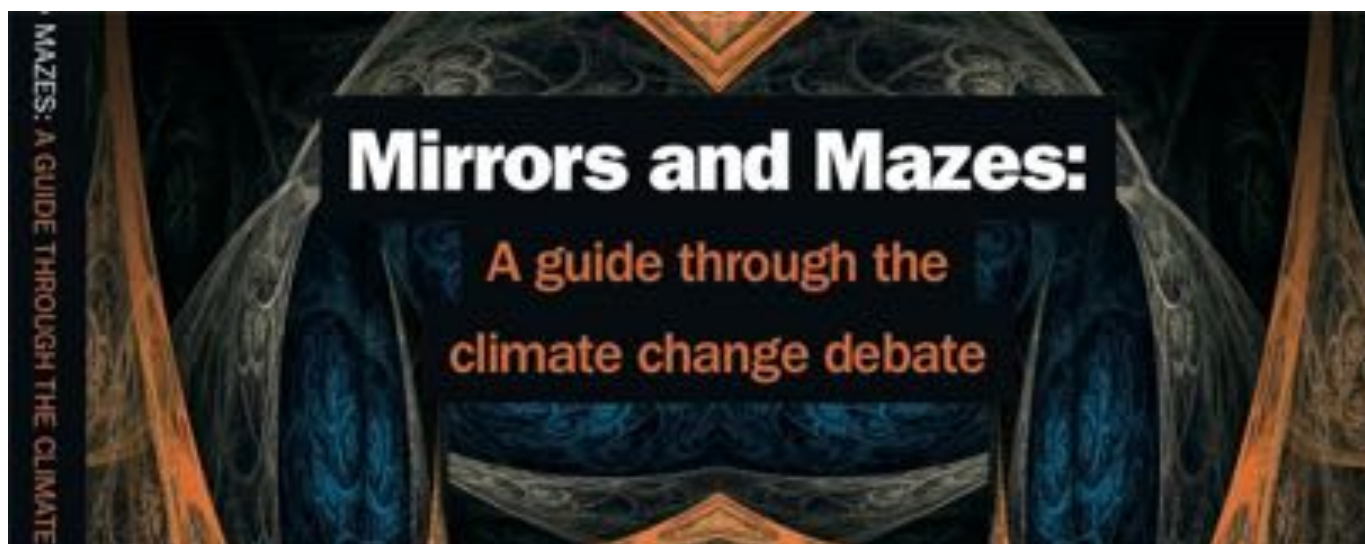


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MIRRORS AND MAZES: A GUIDE THROUGH THE CLIMATE DEBATE



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MIRRORS AND MAZES: A GUIDE THROUGH THE CLIMATE DEBATE

A book by an Australian Member of the Explorers Club

Awarded Alumnus Scientist of the Year by Northern Illinois University 2011.

This is the book that I never would have expected to write 15 years ago. Despite its short length, it is rich in detail, the result of a decade of study and careful fieldwork. I found this book about the climate debate to be as challenging as any exploration venture. There were so many illusionary and false ideas surrounding the topic and leading only to dead ends. I often had to retrace my steps and unravel the illusions before travelling down the next path – hence the title, ‘Mirrors and Mazes’.

The idea of writing a book developed when I saw engineers drafting coastal development guidelines near Nowra, NSW. Their calculations presumed that beaches always receded when sea level rose. When I superimposed aerial photos from 1948 over aerial photos from 2008 – shock horror! Despite a rise in sea level through that period, the beaches had actually advanced seaward – completely opposite to what their equations predicted! It was clear that this movement was caused by increased vegetation in the foredunes trapping millions of tonnes of sand.

The photo below shows the beach at Kinghorn Point, New South Wales, advancing seaward like a wave as vegetation traps more sand. One picture is better than a thousand words!



After seeing this, I asked myself: *How often are we falsely making assumptions when the outcome is very different? How many other scientific clichés, supposedly explaining how nature reacts, are out there?*

My background is a little unusual. I was a Catholic priest-scientist, a micro-palaeontologist who studied the past 15 million years of Antarctic history. I enjoyed the wonder of Antarctica through 4 mainland expeditions and was privileged to twice visit the actual South Pole. With such a spread of experience, I knew that objective science could have no inspiration and direction from the world religions, nor from political movements, nor from environmental crusades, nor from philosophic disciplines. I also knew that a scientist can only use the strictures of scientific method and evidence and that ‘consensus’ has never been an answer to any scientific question, but merely the opinion of the day.

So I began to delve into the climate world, and I did so inspired by the ideals of the first modern scientific academy. It was called the Academy of the Lynxes (*Accademia dei Lincei*) founded in 1603 by an Italian Prince, Federico Cesi, with the motif of the lynx, an animal with incredible eyesight. Galileo was himself a member! Following its hallowed tradition, I, as with any true scientist, had to describe without fear or favour what I saw, not what others expected me to see.

So what did I see, as I wrote this book?

After finding that some beaches did not retreat as sea level rose, I turned my attention to sea level rise. We are being told all the time by so-called ‘experts’ that sea level is accelerating and that sea level rise this century could be up to one metre. But analyses of the Fort Denison tide gauge in Sydney Harbour (one of the best maintained in the world) showed that over the last 120 years sea level rise had been at a steady pace, not getting faster and faster, and always less than 10cms/100 years. These analyses were

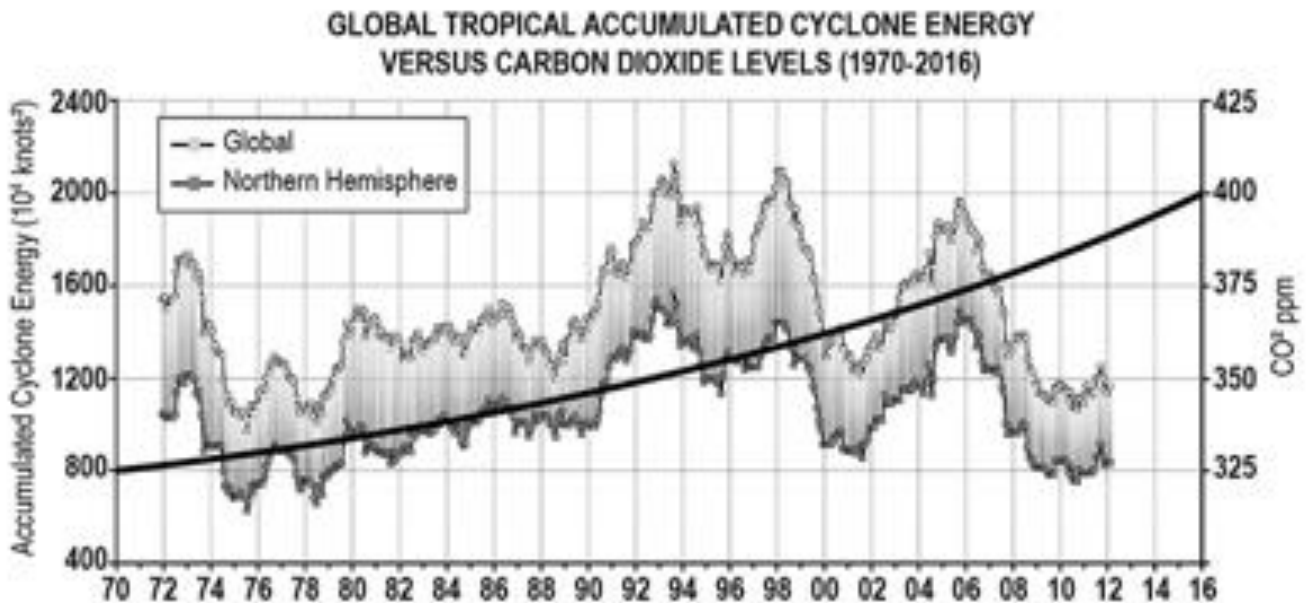
by world-famous institutions like the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration of the USA. And this steady sea level rise not surprisingly was also evident from the nearby HMAS Creswell tide gauge in Jervis Bay and regional tide gauges in New Zealand.

Being surprised, I corresponded with a senior design engineer at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena as to why the present satellite sea level rise data from the Jason satellites since 1992 were so much higher than the tide gauge data. I was shocked to learn that the NASA satellite design engineers desperately want to replace the present sea level satellite system due to large intrinsic instrumentation problems. Their new proposed system is called GRASP – Geodetic Reference Antennae in Space – but NASA has not been given a budget to build it. So once more I found people expounding a story-line (that is, sea level rise acceleration) quite different from what was happening in nature.

Then there were the false storylines regarding storms. There was no evidence from data all across the world that storms were becoming more frequent or more severe. While losses of life and infrastructure damage from storms had increased, this was due to rises in population density. So, once again, ‘scientists’ were confused: there are more people, not storms!

I noted with some amusement that the Prime Minister’s Science Award in Australia in 2015 went to Professor Graham Farquhar of the Australian National University for showing that winds have been dropping over the Australian continent for the past 30 years. As a good scientist, Professor Graham Farquhar just described what he saw, despite them being the opposite to scientists playing with predictive models.

Below is a graph of the wind velocities taken every 6 hours in the tropics over the past 42 years versus carbon dioxide levels that rose 23%. There is absolutely no correlation.



When I turned to temperature records the story twisted even further. Over the last 150 years, there was only a stepwise increase in the Earth’s atmospheric temperature with at least 70 years of temperature pauses, despite carbon dioxide levels rising continuously during this time. There was no relationship between the rise in CO₂ levels.

I realised there had to be some mistake about the sensitivity of the climate system to CO₂, which follows the American Academy of Science’s 1979 proposal that temperature will rise 3°C when CO₂ levels double. Like many other scientists I agree this is a wild overstatement. I was even more surprised when I discovered that the IPCC has often lamented the failure of their predictive models to properly

account for the diversity and complexities of cloud formation. However, the IPCC states that models cannot be used as predictive tools and also that scientists, in the first place, cannot all agree whether clouds cause the world to either cool or warm.

As I told people about my ideas, I was asked how could I, as an Antarctic Explorer and scientist, possibly deny the present rapid climate change in Polar Regions? I would answer: *'the high latitudes near the Poles have always been the most sensitive regions on Earth to any climate change and their climate history is always volatile and quickly reflects short-term climate change.'* I queried why anyone could say recent temperature changes in these regions were unprecedented. I looked at the diaries of the Greenland settlers in the Middle Ages. It was so warm in Southern Greenland that they had cattle and they buried their dead in ground that today is permafrost and as hard as steel. Such evidence showed that in various warming periods, like the one today, rapid climate change will always occur in the polar regions and a comparison to Greenland history instructs us not to panic.

When people talk of unprecedented climate change, I looked at Moruya, 300 kms south of Sydney New South Wales. About 8000 years ago there were temperate rainforests in this region and the climate reflected the temperate rainforest regions that are now today 500 kms north of Sydney! The climate at Moruya 8000 years ago enjoyed summer and winter maxima 2°C more than today, and summer and winter minima 5°C to 7°C more than today! Looking at these figures I could not see that our 0.8°C change in the last 150 years was *unprecedented*.

I could go on, but when I analysed article after article on climate change, I realised that the general public and many sincere, intense environmentalists and conservationists were being led down a *MAZE* and stranded as in a distorted *HALL OF MIRRORS*. I did not see any modern climate crisis despite being told by one Emeritus Professor: *Howard, I thought you would be 'one of us'!*

Finally I would like to clarify to my readers that I do want to see the development of alternative energy technologies to diversify away from our absolute dependency on coal, oil and gas – energy sources humankind still desperately requires for its survival. Unfortunately, there is so much panic from faulty climate models predicting an impending climate catastrophe, that many communities have been conned to spend trillions of dollars installing the present *infant* technologies that require large subsidies ballooning national debts. What a waste, when those trillions should be directed to better develop such technologies to reduce their cost and improve their effectiveness.

Join me on my exploration journey through the world of climate. I hope by showing the wonder and richness of the climate system, you find this guide helpful in forming your own understanding of climate and the debate that surrounds it.

Dr. Howard T Brady, a proud member of the Explorers Club of New York for over 40 years.

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ABOUT AUTHOR



HOWARDBRADY

Born Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia in 1940. Degrees: B.A: Dip.Phil: Dip.Theol: M.Sc: Ph.D. Catholic Priest educator 1965-75 US Naval Chaplain in Antarctica 1975-76, involved in Antarctic science 1975-1981. CEO of an oil and gas company exploring in Papua New Guinea and Australia 1988-2005. CEO of stone company paving Martin Place and other Sydney plazas prior to the Sydney Olympic Games 1998-2000. Honorary Associate School of Biological Sciences, Macquarie University 1980-1985: 2005-2011. Research into climate change and the non-linearity of the climate system 2005-present. Presented with the Alumnus Scientist of the Year Award for contributions to Antarctic science by Northern Illinois University, USA, 2011. Published book, Mirrors and Mazes: A guide through the climate debate 2016. Married:- wife Geraldine and children Dominic, Alanna, Gabrielle, Nicholas. Member of the Australian Microscope and Microanalysis Society. Member of the Australian Academy of Forensic Sciences.

**Jim**

(<http://anzec.org/mirrors-and-mazes-a-guide-through-the-climate-debate/#comment-12>)

Well done Howard.

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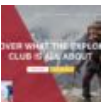
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