

Global Trodden

by Bill Zam

Hot enough for ya?

By the time you read this, perhaps not. However, my home state, Connecticut, has been experiencing uncharacteristically warm weather over the last several months. My research assistant tells me that we have not experienced temperatures like this since the famous Indian Summer of February, Eighteen-Hundred-and...all right, I'm not fooling anybody. I don't have a research assistant, but if I did, she'd be saying, "Fuck, it's hot in the office." Then she'd probably say, "Sorry, is it unprofessional to say 'fuck' at the office?" before moving on to "Now that I think about it, how does a desk in the furnace room of your house count as an office?" and inevitably she'd arrive at, "I quit."

At first I thought the escalated temperature was just the heat from the furnace, but when I went out looking for a new research assistant to replace Victoria (which is what I named this imaginary person before she stormed out), I realized that it was downright balmy outside, too. Which is good, because the fact that I work from a home office meant I was still in my boxers.

So what is going on with the weather? Global warming has received more press than ever lately, in large part because of the Al Gore documentary "An Inconvenient Truth," but since it's an inconvenient truth that I haven't had time to watch this film, and my make-believe research assistant just quit, I'm going to have to explain this phenomenon on my own. So if you want Victoria's job, read through the following hypotheses and get back to me when you have verified which one of the following culprits is responsible for global warming. After that, you can answer my hate mail from environmentalists and people that care about that whole "future" thing.

1. Heat Miser – You may recall that in "The Year Without a Santa Claus," Mr. Hundred-and-One gets cooled off by Mother Nature, who insists he allow it to snow for one day in his territory. Though Mother Nature was able to temper his anger for 51 minutes plus commercials, I believe that after 22 years of network television repeats, he can no longer bear the humiliation. In addition to this annual embarrassment, two developments over the last few months have no doubt added to his fire ire. First, the Martin Short character in "The Santa Clause 3" pays homage to Heat Miser's rival brother, Snow Miser. Secondly, I've decided to grow my hair out a bit. With the amount of gel I use, I've bogarted Heat Miser's look. "Jack Frost" was one thing, but I'm too much. *Ba dum dum dum, too much.*
2. The Human Torch – Like Heat Miser, this fiery member of the Fantastic Four is always being chided for his hotheaded antics. Why, just last week he tried to go Supernova, reaching 4000 degrees Kelvin and nearly destroying the Earth. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he was out showing off for some girl and upped the Earth's core temperature a few dozen ticks. Jooohhny! Some people dismiss this theory when I present it to them, claiming a) that one individual human being could not raise temperatures over such a broad geographic area, or 2) that he is a fictional comic book character. It is my contention, however, that 1) the gullible people that think Johnny Storm is fictional are also vulnerable to having their kidneys stolen and b) they don't know how to count.
3. My Mother-In-Law – My mother-in-law grew up in Jamaica. She's also an amazing cook who spends a lot of time toiling over a hot stove. Perhaps this is why she is comfortable with her thermostat set at slightly above 212 degrees. When she kindly offers me a cold beer, some of the bottles actually run for the back of the fridge. Sometimes you can actually see the clocks sliding down the wall like in that Salvador Dali painting. My sister-in-law grew up in these surroundings, and often when she comes over on even the warmest summer days she'll ask for a sweatshirt and a blanket before snuggling up inside our oversized George Foreman grill.

4. Buster Poindexter – David Johansen released the catchy ditty “Hot Hot Hot” in 1987 under the name Buster Poindexter. When business-minded musician Prince wrote “1999,” in 1981, he probably intended to capitalize on the resurgence of the song’s popularity when the end of the century rolled around. Perhaps “Hot Hot Hot” is Buster Poindexter’s long-term gamble and he knew global warming would destroy us all, but not before he sold a few records. Then again, he may have used the alternate name because he new the song was so catchy that people would be trying to get it out of their heads 20 years later and might try to kill him if they new where he lived.
5. Evil Scientists – Thirty-eight percent of meaningless conversations that occur in elevators in corporate America are about the weather, and you don’t need Victoria to validate that! It would not surprise me in the least if someone got so sick of platitudes like “it feels like rain,” “it’s unseasonably warm” and the one that began this article that they decided to give these lethargic talkers something to *really* chat about. In my opinion, making an example of someone with a nice Goodfellas-style beat-down would probably take care of it, but it seems the evil scientists have instead decided to invent a death ray that cooks the entire planet. I would try to find these people to stop the madness, but chances are their lair is inside a volcano, and it’s just too damn hot.
6. Golfers – I have friends that are loyal golfers that are absolutely astonished that they are still able to be out on the course in the middle of winter. At least, they pretend to be astonished. Perhaps they’re simply in league with the mad scientists from Theory Number Five. This may sound implausible, but face it, how many people other than Tiger Woods have the money to build a death ray that big?
7. The Pussycat Dolls – This all-girl pop band is not singing, “loosen up my buttons” because it’s sexually provocative. It’s because they can’t believe the temperature spike! But there’s a good chance they’re also responsible for the national heat wave. They receive enormous criticism for simply selling sex as opposed to providing intelligent messages in their music. It comes down to this: if you look like that, nobody cares if you can spell “meteorology.”
8. Meteorology – I think it’s interesting that “weatherman” is actually slang for meteorologist, which to the layman (as opposed to laywoman or Layla) sounds like a person who studies meteors. Instead of making stupid jokes with the news anchors, the weathermen should be watching for these suckers. Meteors are my most plausible global warming theory, primarily because when I chased Victoria outside, I noticed a gargantuan flaming asteroid that appeared to be heading toward my house. For that matter, it looked big enough to be heading toward your house, too. Quick, head for the offurnace!
9. List Overkill – Instead of writing real articles, lazy writers take this time of year to submit recaps of the previous 12 months, with tired ideas like “Best Movies of 2006,” “Worst Dressed Reality Stars,” or even “Insensitive, Uninformed Hypotheses About Global Warming.” Outcry over these hackneyed reviews may have resulted in some of the lesser writers having their columns burned in public bonfires, thereby raising temperatures wherever newspapers and magazines are sold. Hey, do you smell smoke?