

### Response to “Keeping Our Cool”

In the September editorial “Keeping Our Cool” (1), John Moore discusses a startling proposal from climatologists (2) that he seems to regard as “science fiction”. As the proposals are revealed in which mankind proposes to intentionally alter the Earth’s climate, Moore seems to suggest that mankind is to the point of considering such proposals because somebody (the United States?) has not spent enough money for the past 30 years to develop alternative energies. Moore concludes that “we”, the world’s chemistry teachers, are not doing a good job of educating the public about climatology as it is affected by human behavior. Moore suggests that we discuss in general chemistry more climatology.

I respectfully disagree. Physics and chemistry are hard sciences. Engineers can use the results of these sciences to build bridges, to design rockets that can take humans to Luna’s surface, to create plastics to put your garbage in, and to almost build subways under Boston. Everything beyond chemistry and physics in the tree of science is too complex. The higher the complexity the less reliable the science (My apologies to the biochemists.) My point is that climatology is not a hard science.

General chemistry teachers should teach general chemistry. They should teach neither the appreciation of the wonders of modern science, nor should they teach the evil consequences of modern science. Other courses in the chemistry departments of the world may, and perhaps should, teach these things. No one teaches all of a modern general chemistry text, but I assure you the student’s next chemistry teacher or employer invariably wishes they had.

#### Literature Cited

1. Moore, John W. *J. Chem. Educ.* **2006**, *83*, 1255.
2. Broad, William J. How to Cool a Planet (Maybe). *The New York Times*, June 27, 2006, p F1.

#### Roy W. Clark

Middle Tennessee State University  
1615 Jupiter Place  
Murfreesboro, TN 37130  
royclark@bellsouth.net