



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on November 8, 2012

Global-warming Scientist Sues Detractors, Defames Self

Controversial climatologist Michael Mann is suing global-warming skeptics for defamation, while earning their ridicule with false claims of having received the Nobel Peace Prize. Mann's suit is against the Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) and National Review, Inc. (NRI) for comparing him to retired football coach and convicted serial child molester Jerry Sandusky.



Mann, a professor of meteorology at Penn State University, made his name famous more than a decade ago with his [hockey-stick graph](#), showing temperatures spiking abruptly in the late 20th century after holding relatively steady for most of the last millennium. The graph figured prominently in both the 2001 Third Assessment Report and the 2007 Fourth Assessment Report of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and Al Gore cited it in [An Inconvenient Truth](#) in 2006.

But many [scientists](#) and a [congressional investigation](#) found the graph to be fraudulent, and the 2009 [Climategate](#) controversy called Mann's research methods further into question. A number of investigations ensued in the scandal's wake, all of which were declared by media and scientists alike to be [whitewashed](#). Nevertheless, the inquiries absolved Mann and his Climategate colleagues.

This past July Rand Simberg published an article on CEI's blog, [OpenMarket.org](#), comparing Penn State's investigation and exoneration of Michael Mann to its Sandusky coverup and whitewash. He pointed out the university's stake in the case: namely, Mann's fame and subsequent research funding. He noted the "same university president who resigned in the wake of the Sandusky scandal was also president when Mann was being" investigated. Simberg concluded by calling for a new independent investigation. Mark Steyn of [National Review](#) reprinted Simberg's comments.

Mann filed a [complaint](#) against the journalists and their publishers for libel and the "intentional infliction of emotional distress." NRI attorneys countered that the statements in question are protected under the First Amendment and pointed out the unsettled controversy surrounding Mann's hockey-stick data manipulation. They warned, "Moreover, if Dr. Mann decides to pursue this matter, he and his research would be subjected to a very extensive discovery of materials that he has fought so hard to protect in other proceedings."

The reply didn't stop there. *National Review's* editor, Rich Lowry, published his response to Mann: "[Get Lost.](#)"

My advice to poor Michael is to go away and bother someone else. If he doesn't have the good sense to do that, we look forward to teaching him a thing or two about the law and about how free



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debate works in a free country.... In short, he risks making an ass of himself. But that hasn't stopped him before.

Undeterred, Mann filed suit in D.C. Superior Court in late October and has garnered stinging mockery by doing so. Steyn writes, "I noticed on the press release (published on his [Facebook page](#)) that Dr. Mann claimed to have been '[awarded the Nobel Peace Prize](#)' and that on the complaint itself we are accused of the hitherto unknown crime of '[defamation of a Nobel prize recipient](#).'" When NRI asked the Nobel Foundation, it denied Mann has ever won a Nobel prize.

Thomas Richard of [The Examiner](#) dug deeper into the case by contacting Geir Lundestad, director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute. Lundestad confirmed, "Michael Mann has never been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize." He explained, "Unfortunately we often experience that members of organizations that have indeed been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize issue various forms of personal diplomas to indicate that they personally have received the Nobel Peace Prize. They have not."

So it appears Mann's assertion is based on his contributions to IPCC and Al Gore, both Nobel prize recipients. IPCC did, in fact, issue [certificates with altered text](#) to IPCC participants, including Mann, an "unfortunate" move according to Lundestad. But it makes Steyn wonder who has damaged Mann's reputation more: his detractors, or the Mann himself?



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