

Undermining Science: Suppression and Distortion in the Bush Administration

Seth Shulman

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UNDER- SUPPRESSION AND DISTORTION MINING IN THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION SCIENCE



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Updated with a New Preface

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Seth Shulman : Undermining Science: Suppression and Distortion in the Bush Administration before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Undermining Science: Suppression and Distortion in the Bush Administration:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An essential reference on GW Bush administration abuses of

scienceBy Christopher Paul WinterI have read a number of books which delve into the abuses of science by the administration of George W. Bush. Seth Shulman's /Undermining Science/ is one of the two most comprehensive examinations I've seen. (The other is /The Republican War on Science/.) You might conclude that, With "Dubya" out of office, these books would be of only historical interest. I wish it were so; but the fact is that science remains under attack in Congress and in at least 14 statehouses. Also, corporate interests still stand to benefit from deflecting scientists' concerns in a number of areas -- most notably the concern about rising levels of carbon dioxide. Many of the people who operated in the public sector now serve corporate interests directly, as employees, or in like-minded organizations dedicated to influencing public opinion. It is therefore useful to know the names and tactics of these people, and Shulman's book provides that information. It is well written and thoroughly researched, with abundant endnotes and a good index. To some degree it overlaps with Chris Mooney's book -- naturally enough, since both examine abuses of science. Both for example, cover Bush's support for abstinence-only sex education. But Mooney probes Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative; Shulman, focusing on the Bush administration, looks at the less grandiose but equally misguided missile defense program undertaken after Bush abrogated the Antiballistic Missile Treaty (see "FAITH-BASED MISSILE DEFENSE", pp. 97-100.) Shulman also looks at Bush administration efforts to upgrade our nuclear weapons and the defective analysis that led us into the second war with Iraq. His book was updated with a new edition in 2008. I consider it one of the essential references on the recent history of science in America.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Science in the Federal Government during the First Part of the 21st CenturyBy Roger D. LauniusSeth Shulman's "Undermining Science: Suppression and Distortion in the Bush Administration" undertakes a critical review of the approach that the George W. Bush administration took toward dealing with policy issues raised in the world of science. In essence, he argues that Bush's science policy was predicated on what was good for big business, his base for campaign donations, or reflected in his evangelical Christian religious beliefs. Accordingly, Shulman's core areas of investigation involve many of the hot button issues where science and religion met during the first part of the 21st century: severely restricting stem cell research, professing abstinence only sexual education, reducing EPA regulations to relax pressure on corporations, relentlessly championing an anti-abortion stance, denying global warming to defeat the need for carbon reduction regulations, the age of the Earth and evolution, and a host of other issues. As a journalist, Seth Shulman offers lucid prose and a great sense of storytelling. He builds a progressing sense of tension as a succession of events take place in the Bush administration's concerted effort to subjugate the quest for scientific truth to the political agenda of business and the evangelical right. In the process Shulman argues that this threat to scientific integrity also represents a threat to America's democratic institutions. The stories are not unknown, to be sure, but all of them spring from a set of priorities that aimed toward specific ideological objectives. While there are endnotes in this book, "Undermining Science" is largely a work of journalism rather than a work of scholarship. This is a disquieting book, and written as it was at the end of the Bush administration does not offer much sense of hope. Shulman sees the situation as inextricably partisan and not at all easily resolved.6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The Destruction of Proper ProcessBy Hubert I. FlomenhoffThis reviewer has worked for the Navy Dept. in Washington, and for businesses, big and small. I am a "conservative liberal" Democrat, so that will color my comments. With that background, I must say that anyone who wishes to get a real understanding of what the Bush administration has done to distort the proper process of government at all levels must read this book. For example, in May of 2008, it was in the news that the administration directed the EPA to take into account the cost to businesses of the regulations which it proposes. This is a clear conflict of interests; it is the job of such agencies to propose a regulation, give the supporting facts to justify it, circulate it to the public for comments, and leave it to the politicians to resolve the conflicts. Seth Shulman's book documents this kind of action throughout government, how political considerations have been brought to bear on every agency. It reminds one of the stories we have heard about the ubiquitous presence of political officers in the days of the communist Soviet Union. The book is a detailed documentary of the damage done to the proper workings of government by this Republican administration, causing the resignations of innumerable highly qualified people. It should be a revelation to moderate Republicans as to how true conservative principles have been compromised by the Bush administration.

This vitally important exposeacute; shows how the Bush administration has systematically misled Americans on a wide range of scientific issues affecting public health, foreign policy, and the environment by ignoring, suppressing, manipulating, or even distorting scientific research. It is the first book to focus exclusively on how this explosive issue has played out during the presidency of George W. Bush and the first to comprehensively document his administration's abuses of science. This paperback edition contains a new preface bringing to light the most up-to-date research on these abuses. Undermining Science covers: * The Bush administration's abuse and misuse of science in areas including stem cell research, AIDS prevention, environmental protection, the Iraq war, the teaching of evolution, and global warming; * The administration's use of political litmus tests in selecting administrators for science-based agencies and in selecting scientists on federal advisory committees; * The dangerous consequences of the Bush administration's war on science for the caliber and integrity of the nation's scientific research.

From Publishers Weekly ing the evidence of how the Bush administration has systematically denied and doctored scientific findings that fail to support its political positions, journalist Shulman adds some new details in this accessible book. Combining thorough research with lucid prose and a sense of mounting outrage, he charges that the president's appointees and advisers are not only threatening the scientific enterprise but also American democracy itself. In human health, for example, he points to censored studies of race-based medical disparities, shows how guidelines on lead regulation have been decided by political appointees with ties to the lead-paint industry and reviews the now-infamous controversies over Plan B birth control and abstinence-only education. He also tells of scientists being questioned about their political beliefs, voting records and support for presidential policies during interviews for committee appointments. Though he cites recent congressional bills supporting scientific integrity, these are only small flickers of hope in a dark partisan landscape. While much of this information has been reported previously, especially in Chris Mooney's 2005 bestseller, *The Republican War on Science*, Shulman's consolidation of these tales of manipulation, intimidation and deception makes for disquieting reading. (Jan.) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Exhaustively sourced and researched, Shulman's book leaves no doubt that the integrity of government research is under attack.... A work of timely muckraking." - Discover Magazine "A concise, straightforward case history of the politicization of science." - Nature "Combining thorough research with lucid prose and a sense of mounting outrage... these tales of manipulation, intimidation and deception make for disquieting reading." - Publishers Weekly "From the Inside Flap" Shulman's remarkably well-documented litany of abuses should serve as a wake-up call not only to society, but also to political leaders, who cannot govern for long without independent scientific expertise grounded in unquestioned integrity."mdash;Simon Levin, Center for BioComplexity, Princeton University