

The Essentials of Global Warming

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Global Climate change had dominated the headlines and, as students and citizens, it is important to know the facts about this term the media keeps throwing around. The Oregon Survey Research Laboratory took a survey and 75% of those surveyed were concerned about global warming. We've all heard about some of the detrimental effect of global warming, such as the melting of the polar ice caps. If the polar icecaps melt and the sea level rises, many cities will be covered with water and become uninhabitable. Some of the cities in the United States that would be affected are New York City, Miami, Wilmington, NC, and New Orleans. Another problem that results from global warming is that many of the crops the stabilize local economies would fail--the agricultural makeup of the planet would be altered. Places that would have a grain-growing climate would not have the right temperature and precipitation levels to grow grain, and there would be famine of extreme proportions. There simply would not be enough food to feed everyone, especially at the rate of population growth in the planet.

A lesser-known aspect of global warming is its possible effects on international relations. If global warming altered the planet, there would be a perfect political climate for war. Resources would be so precious that people might fight and die to get food, and it would become as contentious and precious (if

not more) as oil is today. This tension might be an especially large problem as the northern hemisphere will see much more severe changes than the southern hemisphere. There might even be a world war between the northern and southern hemispheres. The effects of global warming will be more pronounced in the northern hemisphere because it is home to the most land and the most industrialization. Therefore, the southern hemisphere would be changed very little and be able to keep producing at its current ability, but the northern hemisphere would be drastically changed and therefore unable to produce at its current level. As a result, the governments of the northern hemisphere might make a desperate plea to the southern leaders to feed their starving citizens. If refused, the northern governments might very well resort to force leading to the strong probability of global warfare.

The Bush Administration recently declared global warming "imaginary," saying that it was uneconomical for America to participate in climate change reduction programs. On one hand, scientists have measured an overall rise in the atmospheric temperature of the Earth of 4-6 degrees Celsius. The average temperature has been changing naturally throughout Earth's history. There has been an earlier warming that created conditions even warmer than today. The most recent period lasted from about 800-1200 AD. That period

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It seems to me that middle ground is virtually nonexistent with regards to technology. People are either highly tech-savvy (aka the geeks/nerds) or are tech-illiterate (aka the don't-know-and-don't-care-to-know).

Example: you know the type . . . those who live and breathe technology, who appear to be talking to themselves but actually have a Bluetooth strapped to their head at all times. They're the ones who trade in their cell phones every other month to get the latest and greatest, whose cars have navigation systems and iPod connectivity and practically drive themselves. They're the ones who depend on their Blackberries to keep them on schedule and who call their significant others to ask what kind of pickles to buy at the grocery store.

On the other end of the spectrum are those who may not know how to use computers at all, who think technol-

ogy is utterly confusing and may possibly ruin the world some day. Example: on the April 10th episode of *The Office*, when Jim asks Dwight's babysitter-turned-date for her e-mail address because he has "a lot of questions," she replies, "E-mail?"

If you're wondering where you fall on this technology spectrum, take the following survey to find out if you are tech-savvy or tech-illiterate. Read each statement, and then make a check next to each statement with which you agree.

- ☐ You can tell the difference between a USB port and a FireWire port
- ☐ You idolize Bill Gates and/or Steve Jobs
- ☐ You can take digital pictures, get them to your hard drive, edit them, and upload them to a photo sharing site or blog
- ☐ You know what a blog is—and even write your own
- ☐ You get excited when you see a new tech gadget on a magazine cover, television show, newspa-

- per, or website
- ☐ You know how to use the basics: e-mail, Internet, and Microsoft Office suite
- ☐ You own an iPod/mp3 player and know how to add music, videos, etc. to it from iTunes and your hard drive
- ☐ You'd rather spend money on the newest technology than on anything else
- ☐ You're either pro-PC or pro-Mac, but usually not both
- ☐ You know HTML, Java, and/or another programming language

Add the number of checks you made. If you have . . .

0-3: Sorry, you're tech-illiterate. You, my friend, should keep reading Star Tech and get with the 21st century.

4-6: You're somewhat-savvy. You fall into the rarely found middle ground of technology world. You should check out the latest "PC World" issue to become geekier.

7-10: Congratulations! You're a GEEK! (No, really . . . it's a good thing!)

Where do you fall on the tech spectrum?

Photo courtesy <http://www.newton.k12.ms.us/vocationaltech/html/program/businessstech/images/technology.jpg>

