

The Keystone XL Pipeline and America's Psychopathic Government

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Keystone XL Pipeline is a long-controversial proposed Canadian pipeline project through the U.S. north to south, from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, to trans-ship the world's most global-warming filthiest oil, from Canada's tar-sands, to be burnt and used in Europe.

[On March 24th](#), U.S. **President Trump** informed the to-be-owner of the Keystone XL Pipeline project, that he gives them the go-ahead to build it, after U.S. **President Barack Obama** had, near the end of his Presidency, prohibited it. Obama had wanted it built (and had [pressured the EU to accept](#) the oil that would be shipped to them from the proposed Pipeline's southern terminus in Galveston, to sell this Canadian oil in Europe), but the EU said no; they wouldn't relax their anti-global-warming standards to accept the world's dirtiest oil, and this refusal by them eased Obama's decision to give Ms. Clinton's campaign the boost it needed by his simply nixing the project altogether. He nixed it in order to show Democratic voters that the Democratic Party cares about the environment, so as not to depress the electoral turnout for **Hillary Clinton** (who was actually a [big supporter of fossil-fuels](#)) on Election Day November 8th. But not only did the EU say no; the voters said no, to *Clinton*, too. So, this was a double disappointment to Obama; he had turned the Pipeline down for nothing — nothing that he had wanted, anyway, because global warming never seriously mattered to him (and therefore [what he was doing about it in secret was supportive of the gas-and-oil industries](#)).

Clinton had done all she could to rig the Environmental Impact Statements to favor construction of Keystone: The State Department needed to go through three draft versions before even one of them — [the final one, which was released by her successor, Secretary of State Kerry](#) — included any estimate at all of the impact that the Pipeline would have *on global warming*. Until the third (the Clinton-Kerry) version, all that it estimated was the impact that global warming would have *on the Pipeline* (and other such trivia — and loads of such distractions, so that the press didn't even recognize that the [«State Dept. Keystone XL Study Ignores Climate Impact»](#), as I headlined my original report on the first of the three): the Clinton State Department reported that the pipeline would have no such global-warming impacts at all, but only good impacts (such as trivial increases in employment). They were puff-pieces for the Pipeline. [No climatologist was on any of the three teams](#) that prepared the three drafts.

This had not been an oversight; it was intentional, so as to make politically palatable for Obama to approve the project ([which he wanted to do](#)), and for him to be able to do it far enough in advance of the 2016 Presidential campaign so as not to impede the election of a Democratic President following him. But [the EPA balked at both of the first two drafts](#), and

these delays caused Obama's decision to come too close to the 2016 elections, for his comfort; so, it was, for him, a politically forced «No».

What, then, will be the likely impact, upon the climate, if the Pipeline is ultimately built and operated? Though the two all-Clinton Environmental Impact Statements said nothing whatsoever about the global-warming impact, the Clinton-Kerry one did; and — because, like the first two, it was prepared by oil-industry contractors (instead of by the U.S. State Department or any other federal workers), who had bigger and private fish to fry (oil-industry contracts) than to worry about the global climate — they vastly underestimated its Green House Gas emission (GHGe) impact.

Even as of the present time, no thorough climatological impact assessment has yet been performed of the proposed Pipeline; but, on 10 August 2014, a serious but very limited (called therefore «a simple model to understand the implications of the pipeline for greenhouse gas emissions») was finally published, by two Seattle climatologists, at the Stockholm Environment Institute, in [NATURE: Climate Science](#), and it made note of the fact that not even the final one of the State Department's three Environmental Impact Statement versions had so much as even just *considered* (much less *calculated*) the likely impact that the usage of such a pipeline would have on the petroleum market (which, after all, was the reason why it was being proposed to be built), and on the global prices for petroleum as a fuel competing against other fuels. These two climatologists stated:

Here, we apply a simple model to understand the implications of the pipeline for greenhouse gas emissions as a function of any resulting increase in oil sands production. ... Our analysis suggests incremental GHG emissions of 100110Mt CO₂e, or four times the upper State Department estimate. The sole reason for this difference is that we account for the changes in global oil consumption resulting from increasing oil sands production levels, whereas the State Department does not. ... Our simple model shows that, to the extent that Keystone XL leads to greater oil sands production, the pipeline's effect on oil prices could substantially increase its total GHG impact.

After the extensive 'news' coverage that had been done of the Keystone XL issue, there was, finally, an at least elementary scientific analysis of the proposed Pipeline's impact upon global warming, but there was little press coverage of this, and none of those few news-reports linked to the scientific article itself (as I just did here), and [one of those 'news' reports](#) even misstated that, «The study also says the pipeline could reduce oil prices to \$3 a barrel,» which it did not say: it said that XL might reduce the price *by up to* \$3 a barrel — there's, of course, a big difference. (And, furthermore, the Keystone XL Pipeline [would increase the price of gasoline in the center of the United States](#); the price-decreases would be for the *export*-markets.) What's critically important, however, is that all of that price-lowering would be price-lowering on *the most CO₂-intensive of all oils*, tar-sands oils, which require around an extra \$12/barrel to process because of the extra expenses to remove the sand from it. That's where the extra CO₂-emissions would be coming from, that extra processing: the replacement of relatively clean oil, by relatively dirty oil. This is something that almost all of the 'news' reports on Keystone XL have ignored entirely — but it is also the reason why the Koch brothers and other major owners of the tar-sands are desperate to get their product to market as inexpensively as possible. And the Keystone XL Pipeline would be by far the cheapest way to do that. The petro-gas billionaires don't care about whether our grandchildren will be living on a dying, scorching,

planet; they want their extra billions of dollars while they're alive to enjoy it. And our Presidents are serving today's billionaires; certainly not serving future generations of us.

Here are some of my other, prior, articles on Keystone XL:

[«Keystone XL Pipeline Would Double the Kochs' Net Worth, Says New Report»](#)

[«Hillary Clinton's Bought-And-Paid-For Favors for Keystone XL Deal»](#)

[«John Kerry vs. Hillary Clinton on the Keystone XL Report»](#)

[«Keystone XL Pipeline Corruption With State Department Should Not Be Legal»](#)

[«Obama Is Desperately Trying To Find A Way To Approve The Keystone Pipeline»](#)

[«The Kochs Have Bet Big That The Earth Is Doomed»](#)

[«TransCanada's \\$15 Billion Lawsuit Against U.S. on Keystone XL Presents Strong Case»](#)

[«Elizabeth Warren Comes Down Hard Against Keystone XL Pipeline While Hillary Clinton's Allies Push It Ahead»](#)

The Keystone XL story is a perfect example to confirm, thus far, [what Jimmy Carter said](#) of U.S. federal politics, Washington DC:

Now it's just an oligarchy with unlimited political bribery being the essence of getting the nominations for president or being elected president. And the same thing applies to governors, and U.S. Senators and congress members.

And anyone who thinks that Trump is any different from Obama, other than being far less intelligent and not nearly as slick, should see [this from Political Wire](#), reporting that Trump doesn't even care what health care bill he passes, but only that he signs one into law. Whatever the corrupt Congress can pass, he will sign. If that doesn't display total psychopathy, then the term «psychopath» has no meaning. The whole thing is a con; that's all the top level of the U.S. federal government now is.

*Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).*

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