

Viewpoint: Hoping to change minds of ‘science deniers’ — from vaccine skeptics to GMOs rejectionists? Don’t use the tactics offered in this patronizing new book

[Harvard philosopher Lee] McIntyre wants to help us change people’s minds. Specifically, to help us change the minds of these strange, incomprehensible people called “science deniers”. He addresses five main groups of “deniers”: flat earthers; climate deniers; anti-vaxxers; GMO sceptics; and Covid deniers.

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Over the course of the book he meets various people — the flat earthers; two coal miners; a couple of hippyish friends of his — and tries to talk to them about their beliefs, using the methods he has learnt. His solution is to listen, to be respectful, to meet people face to face, and to do so over several meetings. Does his approach work?

In short: no. hilariously, both of the coal miners he meets cheerfully accept the reality of climate change, but say that the economic value is worth the potential damage to the climate. His first hippyish friend is entirely pro-vax and only slightly GMO-sceptical; the other one is anti-GMO but on anti-corporate

So he falls at the first hurdle: he not only doesn’t convince anyone, he doesn’t meet anyone who unambiguously disagrees with him, except the flat earthers.

[This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.](#)