What's the Worst That Could Happen?
by Greg Craven

Great For The Person Who Doesn't Know Where They Stand.

6.5 million YouTube viewers can't be wrong: A provocative new way to look at the global warming debate. Based on a series of viral videos that have garnered more than 6.5 million views, this visually appealing book gives readers—be they global warming activists, soccer moms, or NASCAR dads—a way to decide on the best course of action, by asking them to consider, “What’s the worst that could happen?” And for those who decide that action is needed, Craven provides a solution that is not only powerful but also happens to be stunningly easy. Not just another “change your light bulb” book, this intriguing and provocative guide is the first to help readers make sense—for themselves—of the contradictory statements about global climate change. The globe is warming! or The globe is not warming. We’re the ones doing it! or It’s a natural cycle. It’s gonna be a catastrophe! or It’ll be harmless. This is the biggest threat to humankind! or This is the biggest hoax in history.

Millions have viewed the short video, "The Most Terrifying Video You'll Ever See," by science teacher Greg Craven. In it, he posits a 2 X 2 grid: the 2 rows are "global warming is false," and "global warming is true." The 2 columns are "take significant action now," and "take little or no action now." Then he goes through this decision grid analysis, and decides that reasonable people ought to understand that this simplistic analysis makes it crystal clear that "we" need to take significant action now to combat global climate warming/weirding.

In his book, What's the Worst That Could Happen?: A Rational Response to the Climate Change Debate, he reviews that decision grid and his analysis. Then, using an example involving giant mutant space hamsters, he explains the error of his analysis.

This book is his careful, methodical rebuilding of his argument, with you, the reader. More than three-quarters of this book is preparing you to build your own case, to develop your own conclusion. He discusses our inherent biases, the issue of evaluating credibility, and the nature of science. He gives us an example of how he evaluates the credibility of both the "warmers" and the "skeptics." And then he asks you, the reader, to come to a conclusion. In the penultimate chapter, he discusses his conclusion (it's not a mystery).

I really like this book for its clear approach to thinking about complex issues outside our individual areas of expertise. After all, what percentage of the world's population, your state's inhabitants, or your city or town's population is a bona fide climate scientist? One thousand of one percent? So it really isn't an issue of you understanding the detailed science. Instead, it is all about how you evaluate credibility, how you tolerate and assess risk, and what you do or don't do.

And the first thing I've done, after reading this book, is order three more. Time for this information, Craven's message, to go viral again, just like the video. Well, "viral" is really not the word here. I'll use "bacterial" instead... slower, but hopefully just as exponential in its growth.

Note: in today's newspaper, there is an article that Lord Christopher Monckton (mentioned on page 145, and labeled as low on Craven's credibility scale), is not a member of the British House of Lords as Monckton claims. The British House of Lords writes "Christopher Monckton is not and has never been a Member of the House of Lords. There is no such thing as a 'non-voting' or 'honorary' member." Perhaps future of editions of this book will make note of this.

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