



PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY COLLOQUIUM

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“How to Talk to a Science Denier: What I Learned at the Flat Earth Convention”

Abstract

“It's sometimes claimed that trying to convince a science denier with facts will only backfire. The latest research, however, shows that this is mistaken and that there ARE effective techniques that can be used to keep someone from becoming a science denier and even help them to overturn mistaken beliefs once they are formed. The secret lies in recognizing that even empirical beliefs may be held for reasons that have nothing to do with evidence, such as personal values, trust, ideology, and group identity. The best way to convince someone in this case is not to berate them, or clobber them with evidence, but engage in an examination of the cognitive and

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