

Interview with Willie Soon (WS)

Duration: 17:48

BM: Yeah, so I spoke to you 2 years ago in Chicago

Man: Oh yeah

BM: Hi how you doing?

Man: How are ya?

WS: Good. Best dressed!

BM: So I was in Chicago 2 years ago, we spoke for about half an hour then

WS: Half an hour, I remember

BM: And at that time- well let's put it this way: You seem a lot more cheerful this year. It seems from a distance, that things are going much better than they were then

WS: Uh-huh

BM: I was wondering what that might be, what's happened in the last two years for you

WS: Oh I wouldn't say, I always have a very sunny disposition

BM: Yeah

WS: Because you wouldn't be able to survive in this area if you don't think clearly, if you don't have a sunny disposition.

BM: Yeah

WS: The condition of my work condition doesn't change

BM: Sorry?

WS: It doesn't change. I am a happy soul.

BM: Yeah

WS: If I look any happier than before, it's mainly because my work is going very well. All of a sudden- two years ago I would say I didn't have this but now I'm working on 7 or 8 papers in parallel.

BM: Oh brilliant

WS: I guess last few years I was able to gain more notice via a lot of my colleagues who were willing to collaborate with me, the most recent one, I wrote one paper saying that the sun is more powerful, and I use this word very carefully. With- these are people who might believe in IPCC but it was not acid test of any kind

BM: Yeah

WS: So we just collaborate, because I learn my skill, they learn the data So we collaborate very well from institutions from Finland, from Italy, Florence, and from Russia, from Australia, from China, from Taiwan, my god, is good no, we are one people. We work together, we produce paper that the sun is rather influential, and the evidence is rather strong for how it affect the climate change over the full Holocene, which is about 11-12,000 years. But on this paper we focus specifically on how it changes throughout millennial timescale, which is 1,000-2,000 years kind of changes.

BM: Yeah

WS: And why this is important is they are very large in variation, this is why this topic is- I would say somewhat politically censored by IPCC. They will always have some token nonsense which they put in the report..

BM: Yeah

WS: But as I tried to demonstrate in my talk today, it's a complete joke. They just pay lip service to some of these references where they will selectively filter out some of the even more important publications that actually go against them

BM: Yes

WS: Come on guys, let's be serious

BM: Yeah

Man: Really great stuff

WS: Hope you have fun, a lot of fun

BM: So what papers do you have coming up?

WS: I have one that is very interesting for being able to resolve the seasonal amplitude of change in the Southern China sea, where we have real proxy from corals and molluscs that grow during warm and cold time. But is never been able to resolve the seasonal cycle during middle warm period for example. If you use tree ring, you're sensitive to spring and summer temperature, if you use some ice core thing, you know winter frustration, if you use sediment you get only certain seasonal phenomenon, of one season, but here you resolve whole season during those times, so this information is hard to get.

BM: Yeah

WS: And remember this information cannot be generated with zero principle from climate model

BM: Yeah

WS: This is where we will service some input to- if they care of course, but I hope so, this are the kind of science is far more important than you imagine. So that kind of paper. Also I have mathematical techniques paper, time series, multiple time series. Usually people analyse two at one time. Here I want to give credit to my colleagues, Dr Peter Herasco Ferrara, two of us collaborate very well. He's somewhat of a climate magician from Mexico, this is why I travel to Mexico in March on a very limited budget, not IPCC funded. We work on these mathematical techniques using the wavelor [?] transform where we can cross-correlate 1,000 series if we wish. We do three just to test the principle. We start with six and ten. Then we produce a paper to introduce a new technique. One may be surprised how you people claim you can be doing some kind of analysis, you don't even have any formal technique, so I'm there to explain this, to do this thing right. I just invent tools as I come along. Whatever the analysis or the question demands of you, I will try to fulfil that role. Will I keep this kind of black secret? Oh my god, use it!

BM: Yeah

WS: That's the kind of science that I wish would be more in- in the area of IPCC. But I just have to make a very strong statement: IPCC is completely hopeless. The best solution for them is to shut them down. Close the shop, and then bye-bye, and then maybe something more healthy will come of it. People say no, there'll be another, you know, Hydra head coming up, you chop one another come up, I disagree.

BM: Yeah

WS: I really think that at least if you kill IPCC completely, whatever the foundation is, even if it's another head from this Hydra, I don't really care, but it's far better than having this thing continue to exist and then trying to revamp it from a flawed structure. I mean Bob Carra explained very well the four points of what the flaw of IPCC is

BM: Yeah

WS: The hocus pocus science. They are focus- they are political bodies, they only focus on preordained conclusions – the search for only anthropogenic path of carbon dioxide effects on the system. Then there is another part that I forget. It's really- really a very flawed principle to operate on. I mean important we are somewhat of a philosopher ourselves. I adamantly and vehemently disagree with that approach.

BM: Yeah

WS: They have been ruining science. I think if we really give them another light of the day- we have given them benefit of the doubt from close to please- 1990 or 1988 until now

BM: Yeah

WS: - for over 25 years a period. A quarter of a century has created a lot of weakness, I mean a lot of damages which I hope we can recover from it.

BM: One thing- because I might use the image on the slide, could you tell me why you used that image; do you think Einstein would have been a climate sceptic?

WS: My viewpoint is that if he were to be alive today he would probably be really really sad about the situation. I will put it this way: the number one maverick equal of Einstein's stature would be Professor Freeman Dyson. Of Princeton. They're at the same princetitude- the same institute. Though Dyson of course is no Einstein. When I was subjected to abuse- I don't know if you know

about that, in November- in *Boston Globe*, decided to do a front-page piece full attack on me. Because I'm so influential. Excuse me. That's very personal thing. Because they find out my message is perhaps too important, too accurate, they attempt to do these smear tactics. But what I am very proud, Freeman Dyson was willing to speak up on my behalf. Of course I would have no way to influence what Freeman Dyson say or not say. He said, the work of Willie Soon, he is a scientist, and once you promote science- so I am absolutely confident a man of Einstein's stature would totally abhor what IPCC has done to science, never mind climate science, geological sciences, oceanography, I mean you have it, even satellite techniques. You have heard of outrageous things people don't talk about. I hope you go to Nicholas Morner's [?] session on sea level change. I have looked into all this issue, it's terrible. They are not producing experimental measurement, they are producing adjustment that is not substantiated by any reasonable rules. No calibration, no nothing. Oh my god, what are you talking about, give us a break.

BM: Yeah

WS: And if you say you measured something, don't give us the phony error bar. Give us the true error bar. That's the thing that troubled me most.

BM: Yeah

WS: My sunny disposition again. That I wished to say that I'm sunny, I-

BM: You mentioned the *Boston Globe*. We spoke last time about Greenpeace's attempts to damage your reputation. Have you recovered from that in the last two years?

WS: I wouldn't say recover or non-recover, I'm pretty much the same. The only sad thing I know for sure is as long as I remain in the institution they will do the same approach. I found out- this is very troubling because you would think this is one or two time deals. They wait for one or two years and resubmit the FYA to look for more updated and my institution is willing to work with Greenpeace instead of talking to me.

BM: OK

WS: They are willing to do that for Greenpeace. Which I 100% disagree because I find Greenpeace is not a scientific body, they've never been interested in science whatsoever. And if I was to make any political statement you can tell that I am merely joking, I do not presume to tell any policy description of any kind, except that I do as a human being, as a person, I hate how these poor people and good people like us who only believe in something decent to be abused by that sort of policy. Why would I want to pay electricity that is ten times more expensive than I can pay now? What's the reason? Give me. If the reason is to save the earth I'm sorry, I'm not so powerful to save the earth. We will do what we can, we are good steward of the environment, as I like John Coleman's statement to be very eloquent this morning, to speak of the way in which that you know we love the natural world as much as any one of you, please do not doubt that. Do not give the insinuation. It's uncalled for, let's have more civil discussion if there's to be any discussion. If you want a debate, scientific debate, let's do it. Because we've been calling for scientific debate for years. In this conference itself, they've been asking all the major people like Michael Mann, Michael Oppenheimer, Jim Hansen, what have you, please come. Of course we're not going to pay you fees, we don't have money. I would actually disagree if they pay them fees to come here

BM: OK

WS: - it costs too much, the money would be better used-

Man: Offer them the same that you are getting

WS: What?

Man: Offer them the same as you're getting

WS: Sorry?

Man: Offer them the same as you're getting

WS: That's about nothing

BM: How much is it?

WS: Nothing

BM: You don't get paid to attend this event?

WS: Oh my god I'm on annual vacation please

BM: On what?

WS: I'm on annual vacation, I'm not here in any official capacity. Gimme a break, but, well-

Man: I'll get back with you later

WS: Thank you, thank you Glenn for your patience

BM: One of the things last time you said Greenpeace had managed to disrupt your funding from Exxon, has that recovered or is that still-

WS: Oh of course. Exxon have not fund me any more. They have not funded me for many years. I think they're afraid of that public pressure. As I've already told, Money doesn't guide me in any way. As simple as that, really. I'm as poor as that.

BM: What drives you then?

WS: Oh come on, if anybody hear what I have to say last night, the last part of it. It's a very simple thing. We are very average people of average intelligence who just want to believe in decency, the humanities of life, of anything good, anything beautiful. And I give an example of father who I- who doesn't barely go to sch- who had 6 years of formal education because he's very poor in China, he understand, he respect science so much, so much science, that really among the most wonderful gift that we are given, is endow upon us, some people say God, some people say Jesus Christ, some people say whatever. And my father would agree with me, we have a mutual agreement that if he dies, his funeral I do not have to go. Actually I did not go to his funeral. I feel a little bit sad but I knew that hey man, him and me are buddies. So that is my own personal experience.

BM: So that did happen?

WS: Oh yeah of course. In September. Because a week after that- I was going to go home to see him because we know he was hospitalised with water accumulating in his lung. He die all of a sudden. But then I know that the following week I have to go to Stockholm for a international conference my good friend is organising and we've been planning this for two years. And I 100% sure, this is not even a shadow of a doubt, as a son I feel bad. But I know he knows me and I know him. That's good enough for me. Anybody could say anything about me but I'm fine, because I'm not judged by that kind of standard. The standard is of course eternity. I'm a scientist. He understand how science works, there's no emotion. Excuse me. Of course we're human. Flesh and blood. We have flesh and blood, you know.

BM: One thing Greenpeace would have tried to say you're trying to make money out of your science. But you're saying-

WS: I'm very poor

BM: - that it's the opposite.

WS: In fact-

BM: Could you me give some description of what your financial situation is.

WS: No that's too personal, but I am very poor. I am, I would say, if you consider last three or four years, I'd say I'm on minimum wage. I could work in McDonald's and make more money.

BM: OK

WS: That's as simple as that. Even my wife don't know this. I don't discuss money. She support me in every way she can about science. But she doesn't understand this. But then she does understand. But people understand integrity, honesty. So I am extremely proud, I face my two kids and one young daughter. I'm very proud, I'm very happy, I sleep very well, in fact I snore so much. So I'm happy. I'm doing science as I dream of doing. I never dream I can ever reach the status of being a scientist! Oh my god the title of being a scientist! I am a true scientist. In that rigorous sense. I pursue this happiness.

BM: So Exxon didn't give you an explanation? Did they write you a letter?

WS: They don't, they don't have to. Come on, they're funding- they're a very big company and I'm a small little potato, I can only even if tou're allowed to submit-

BM: It was quite a long relationship wasn't it

WS: I was paid by them at least for 5-10 years

BM: I thought was longer than that

WS: Longer than that, yeah. It's a bit long but not that long actually. I think I got- please everybody

should know this thing is on the public record. I don't think I get ever more than \$50,000-\$60,000 a year. Sometimes it's 20, sometimes 30 that sort of thing

BM: And that's not salary, that's research?

WS: This is, that is, uh, whatever it is it takes to make me to stay at my workplace, overheads, blah blah blah. In the beginning my workplace was a lot friendly because it was a very nice and visionary director who care about science more than you know, perception and honesty-

BM: What was his name?

WS: His name was Professor Owen Shapiro. Who's quite famous by the way

BM: I think I know the name

WS: Owen Shapiro and Einstein delay equation.

BM: Oh right

WS: So you can imagine his stature. He was very fun, very good to us. He even spent two weeks writing rebuttal to my little excursion with Professor Michael Mann from the University of Virginia and Penn State.

BM: Have you ever met Michael Mann?

WS: Of course I've met Michael Mann!

BM: You've met him at conferences?

WS: I have met him early on, we exchange email. He even sent me a program in 95, 96 when he was a student in Yale, and at that time I was already a postdoc. And he was very friendly with me but I guess you can imagine.

BM: When did you meet him most recently? How long ago?

WS: You know I see him at geo conferences but he would never acknowledge, he would do his [imitates]. He's a very interesting character. I say "Hello, Mike!" Actually I'm just trying to provoke him. He's uncool that's all. I have no other attitude than just trying to learn as much as I can. My job is of course- if you know how much time I spend working. It's embarrassing to tell people. I work very hard.

BM: What hours?

WS: Many hours.

BM: 60?

Man: Many hours

WS: As I get older- If I were to be not married with kids, I would work a lot more. I just have fun.

Brendan, it's been way too long, I better not hold up my good friend

BM: No, that's good

Man: We gotta eat, or we'll starve to death