

## The 'Debate'

First published on [griffintheatre.com.au](http://griffintheatre.com.au).

### Backstory

In 2014, David Finnigan received \$19,000 from [Arts ACT](#) to write a play exploring climate change and Australian politics. The resulting script, *Kill Climate Deniers*, was nominated for the 2014 Max Afford National Playwrights Award.

In late 2014, *Herald Sun* columnist Andrew Bolt discovered Finnigan had received funding from Arts ACT. Bolt hadn't read the play—but the title was enough...

*"How does the ACT government justify spending taxpayers' money on a theatre work entitled Kill Climate Deniers?" [he wrote](#). "What sane government donates to a project urging others to kill fellow citizens, even as a 'joke'?"*

Others decried it too, sight unseen. Climate sceptic and writer Don Aitken [blogged about it](#) and the ACT Shadow Arts Minister, Brendan Smyth, [condemned the funding body](#) for the decision.

### In denial

David Finnigan says that he, in fact, is a 'climate denier' himself:

*"Far more prevalent than full-blown climate deniers—and ultimately far more dangerous—are what Jonathan Rowson has described as '[stealth deniers](#)', those who accept the scientific evidence of climate change, but who take no direct action or plan anything in their life based on the fact. I'm not preparing for a future in which the strength and frequency of droughts, heatwaves and bushfires escalates year after year. If you say you believe in something but don't act on it, do you really believe in it?"*

### What's the point?

*Kill Climate Deniers* is an angry, energised response to the climate change 'debate' and its hyperbolic title was an intentional move by Finnigan. He acknowledges that some people might find it offensive:

*"Upsetting and offending people might be collateral damage on the way to making a bigger point. In any case where people are being offended by*

*an artwork we need to weigh up the costs and benefits of the work—is the content and the point that the artwork is making worth the cost of upsetting and outraging this group of people?”*

We would like to stress that this play is satirical and in no way constitutes a threat or act of terror. We encourage you to come and see the work yourself, and then tell us what you think—love, hate or otherwise. And if you want to ask us anything about the production, contact us at **[info@thatproductioncompany.com.au](mailto:info@thatproductioncompany.com.au)**.