



Robert Henson: biographical notes

Robert Henson grew up in Oklahoma City, surrounded by the wild weather of the US Great Plains. It was a tornado warning that got him interested in atmospheric science at the age of seven. Before long he was issuing daily predictions at his elementary school.

Henson holds a bachelor's degree from Rice University and a master's degree in journalism from the University of Oklahoma. He also completed graduate work in meteorology at Oklahoma, taking part in tornado research campaigns with Howard Bluestein and other leading storm scientists. Henson estimates he has seen more than 30 tornadoes and hundreds of severe thunderstorms.

In 1989 Henson joined the National Center for Atmospheric Research and its parent organization, the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research. "I came to NCAR just as climate change was becoming a huge concern nationally and globally," says Henson. "It's been fascinating to watch the up-and-down cycles of political and media attention intersect with the evolution of the climate itself."

Henson has interviewed dozens of the world's top climate scientists while producing newsletters and reports for UCAR and NCAR. He has won several Distinguished Technical Communication awards in international competitions sponsored by the Society for Technical Communication. As a freelance writer, his work has appeared in *Nature*, *Scientific American*, *Discover*, *Audubon*, *Sierra*, and dozens of other publications. He is a contributing editor for the magazine *Weatherwise* and wrote and produced more than 100 segments for the US-syndicated radio program "The Weather Notebook." Henson's previous books include *Television Weathercasting: A History* (McFarland, 1990) and *The Rough Guide to Weather* (Rough Guides, 2002)

"I've always been interested in extreme weather, but the sheer scope and importance of global climate change is every bit as compelling as a tornado or a hurricane," says Henson. "This is an issue that we'll be grappling with for decades if not centuries to come." In Henson's eyes, uncertainty about climate change can no longer be a rationale for inaction. "There are uncertainties about how global warming will take shape that must be studied and clarified. At the same time, there are many steps we can take as individuals and societies to reduce the risk of the most dangerous climate change and to help us deal with the changes that do occur."

More biographical details can be found at: <http://www.ucar.edu/news/staff/henson.shtml>