

# Toward petrocollapse, convergence, and culture change

by Jan Lundberg

As we bring the world conferences on petrocollapse, and try to start a trend towards shops' charging for plastic bags to cut down on toxic petroleum waste, we have come a long way.

The days of fighting road construction (or at least report on such projects) yielded to across the board opposition to petroleum dependence. Never hesitating to point out overpopulation as a major consequence of petroleum-oriented agriculture, we have hammered on critical steps to protect Earth's climate and guard against the propaganda of the techno-fix.

In this newsletter you get our latest thinking, a taste of our recent publishing successes, a look at past activities, and what we hope to accomplish soon. You can help out in the short-term or the long haul, whether with us, on your own, or in your community.

## Developmental progress

Culture Change has the ideas, people, and the technology. We fight fire with fire, using multimedia techniques for expression and dissemination. We operate in today's world of utilizing resources and money to inject sense into the minds of engaged citizens as well as leaders real and in name only.

For the sake of efficiency we primarily publish online, and leave printing & distribution to others. In the two years since



The first Petrocollapse Conference, Oct. 5, 2005, Unitarian hall Manhattan photo by Jamey Hecht

our last printed newsletter, we have maintained and broadened our extremely active outreach.

## Republican Congressman quotes us

In May, Congressman Roscoe Bartlett quoted the Culture Change Letter at length on the floor of the House of Representatives, on C-SPAN, regarding the imminent impacts of peak oil.



Earlier this year we created a new website that allows quicker presentation of articles from various correspondents. We are in the process of preparing a system to charge for certain website access. Turn the page for a list of

our recent reports, many of which have been syndicated. We still serve as a resource for road fighting and car-free living through our archives online, or when publicly commenting on transportation and energy.



photo by Jamey Hecht

James Howard Kunstler at our NYC conference

Our message has led peak-oil consciousness toward frank acknowledgment of peak and the shortcomings of alternative fuels and crops, toward discussion of successor lifestyles and sustainable culture.

We now have an office in Berkeley, CA. Our first project was plastics, heeding the call of under-reported research about the plight of the oceans at the hands of the petroleum industry and our throwaway culture. We helped launch California-based Campaign Against the Plastic Plague. We promote fees on plastic supermarket bags, and we screen the award-winning film *Our Synthetic Sea* around the country.

Our group is still the anti-petroleum, conservation, visionary group you have followed for years. You may be glad to learn I recently did a ten-week tour of the nation by Amtrak, to speak about peak oil, plastics, and culture change. I'm now on a West Coast tour. What's next:

## Petrocollapse Conferences

We organized The Petrocollapse Conference in New York City on October 5. The World Trade Center Environmental Organization filled the role of Moderator. We thus advanced the debate on peak oil. Focusing beyond the historical maximum of global oil extraction, we are already exploring the whole new set of circumstances under which we must live.

To maintain our momentum, such as to put on the upcoming DC Petrocollapse Conference, we need your assistance. As a supporter of our organization, you can be proud of our evolution and accomplishments. Can you be generous at this time so that Culture Change can continue to lead the debate on sustainability and the supposed techno-fix? None of our illustrious speakers in New York even asked about an honorarium for the Petrocollapse Conference, because we could all sense history was being made and we had to rise to the occasion. We ended up pulling in enough money to pay everyone. However, we must fund our activities!

### Our current mission statement:

*Through our activities we hope to change consciousness, leading to action for social change. Adopting sustainable living now not only has benefits but will be crucial for our survival. After the petroleum economy collapses, people will need models of sustainability that are already in place to lead towards a culture in harmony with nature.*

Below is a list of several reports and essays that came out in the last year, most recent first. If you would like us to send any of these to you in hard copy, please let us know. (We can also supply CDs and DVDs of the Petrocollapse Conference.) It is expected that the book based on these essays will appear within a year:

- The natural chaos of our Universe
- Sudden mitigation or catastrophe
- Reflections on Jan Lundberg's Amtrak peak-oil tour
- A return to tribes
- A Way Out of Iraq: Relocalize Economic Life (by Aaron G. Lehmer)
- System failure requires visionary opposition movement
- Petrocollapse for change of culture - Jan Lundberg speaks at Manhattan peak oil conference, Oct. 5



Eric Drooker

- The main lesson from Katrina for our petrosociety
- Good news and bad news at the dawn of petrocollapse
- News release:

## Gasoline Price Reflects Dwindling Global Oil Reserves, Not Merely Price of Crude

- Termination of the fossil-fuels society
- The Plastic Generation's transformation and the demise of the religion of techno-worship

Radio shows are another way we reach the public and connect activists. Regular talk shows with Jan Lundberg are on KPOO F.M., San Francisco, heard online at kpoo.com. Jan is also a frequent guest on six other Bay Area radio stations speaking about oil, climate change and sustainability.

Compared to other organizations, Culture Change concentrates on the big picture forgotten by other groups in their day-to-day struggle to be watchdogs of the government and industry. We step back and present the unvarnished truth on our common predicament and what our options are for attaining sustainability. A case in point: what about...

### Electric cars powered by wind?

Such a development is extremely unlikely on a large scale. And it will not save crashing ecosystems. But the technofix message is what gets the mainstream's attention and the funding. The technofixers fail to make their case, as their vision promotes a single, future economy that magically supersedes today's petroleum infrastructure via one-world-government policy-making. And of course, overpopulation and peak oil aren't mentioned. Crash? The crash mentioned is ecological, not petroleum -- and it's brought up mainly to sell you a nonprofit institute's Christmas Fundraising Package! Green techno-visionaries, such as Lester Brown, Jeremy Rifkin, Amory Lovins and Ross Gelbspan do well at stating our planet's basic problems, but these boostermens' "solution" is dangerously fantastical. Small is beautiful, but are we who advocate such a vision to be ever marginalized until we're acknowledged as devastatingly correct?

One way we have found to be more effective is to avoid paperwork.

So, any tax-deductible donations must be made payable to our sponsor Ecocity Builders; we can accept such donations sent to our address. Thank you for being part of the solution. We look forward to hearing from you.



*We thank Tim Barton, London, and Andy Singer, Berkeley, for their art and cartoons (respectively)! Also, thank you John, Richard, Mike, Cal, Janet, Phil, Bill, Dennis, Joe, Jim, and many other volunteers and supporters!*

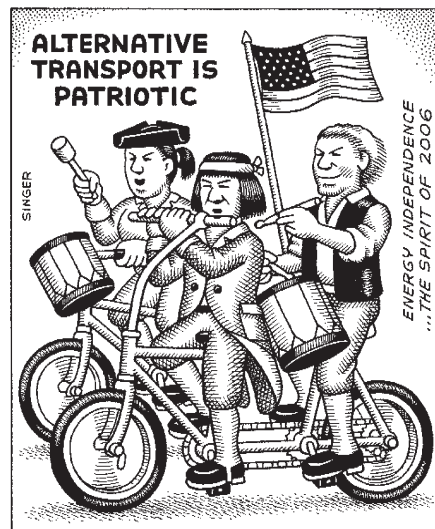


Write to us at Culture Change P.O. Box 4347, Arcata, CA 95518 USA  
Tel./ fax: 1-215-243-3144 Email: [info@culturechange.org](mailto:info@culturechange.org)

### Editorial board **Culture Change** Letter:

Bill Devall, Derrick Jensen, Janet Kobren, Susan Meeker Lowry, Raul Riutor, Gar Smith, Miguel Mulkay Valencia, Colleen Verdon. Editor and publisher: Jan Lundberg

**History:** Sustainable Energy Institute, formerly Fossil Fuels Policy Action, founded Culture Change in 1988, based on Jan Lundberg's experience with the petroleum industries. He had helped the EPA phase out lead, his firm predicted the Second Oil Shock, and then returned to his roots as a social-change activist. Culture Change created the Alliance for a Paving Moratorium, *Auto-Free Times* magazine, Pedal Power Produce, and other successes (successes in their own way!). Past advisory board members included Norman Cousins and David Brower. For more information and links to our many colleagues around the world, see our websites [culturechange.org](http://culturechange.org) and [petrocollapse.org](http://petrocollapse.org)



### Speakers at the world's first Petrocollapse Conference New York, NY

John Darnell, Ph.D.  
Michael Kane  
James Howard Kunstler  
Jan Lundberg  
Jenna Orkin  
David Pimentel, Ph.D.  
Michael Ruppert

#### Panelists

Albert Bates  
Aresh Javadi  
Pincas Jawetz  
Jason Meggs  
Dan Miner  
David Room

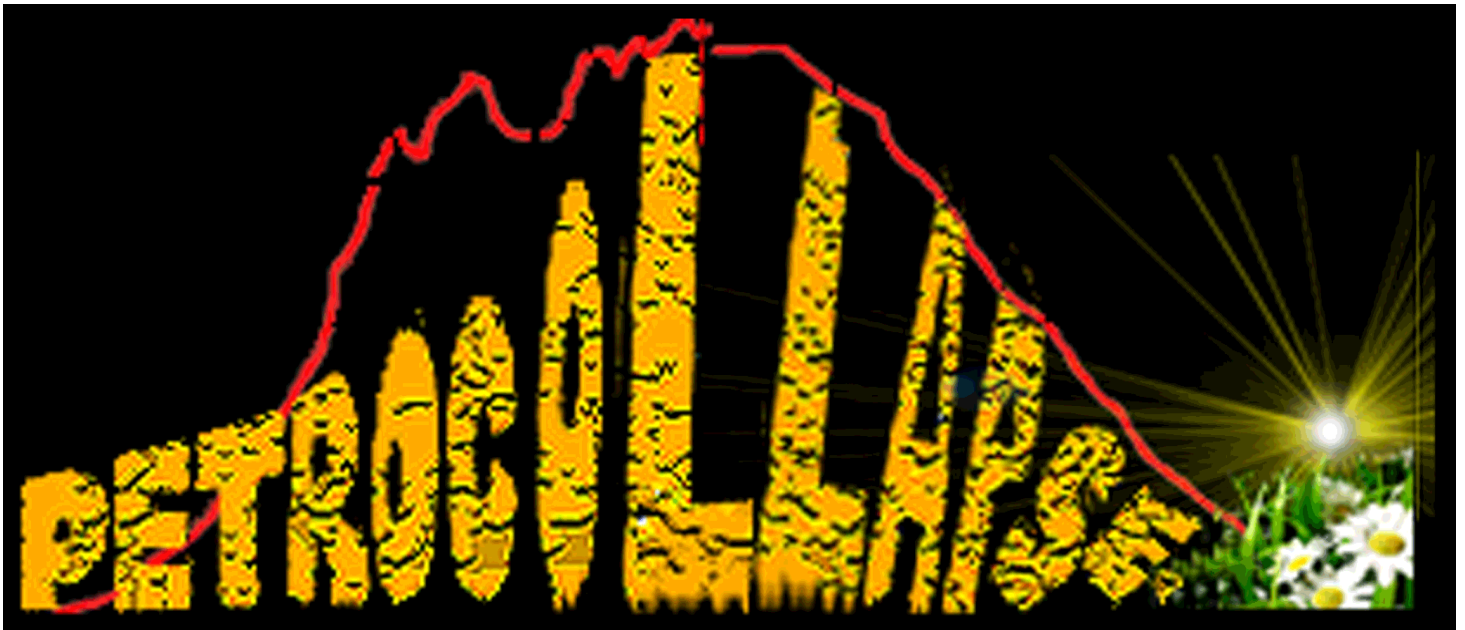
Cong. Roscoe Bartlett's environmental/energy coordinator  
From the Wilderness Publications  
Author, *The Long Emergency*  
Oil industry analyst, [culturechange.org](http://culturechange.org), musician  
Moderator, World Trade Center Environmental Organization  
Agricultural economist, Cornell University  
From the Wilderness, author, *Crossing the Rubicon*

Global Ecovillage Network, The Farm; author  
More Gardens, Bronx, NY  
[culturechange.org](http://culturechange.org) and SustainabiliTank  
Plan B Project, city planning UC Berkeley  
New York nonprofit executive  
Post Carbon Institute, Global Public Media website

**Hear them all on audio files at [www.petrocollapse.org](http://www.petrocollapse.org), or order the DVD from us (\$22).**



Ready for the press conference to start at New York City Petrocollapse Conference: David Room, Jan Lundberg, Michael Ruppert, Jenna Orkin Photo by Jamey Hecht



## How will the DC Petrocollape Conference compare to past peak oil conferences?

In New York, we broke new ground by acknowledging peak oil and moving beyond the debating stage to discussing implications, mitigation, future trends, and obstacles to survival.

In Washington DC this spring we will explore more deeply and get at the root factors of our present condition, and seek to bypass unhelpful institutional barriers. Come help us shake up and wake up the nation's capital! The speakers will be as exciting as the New York line-up, but not all the same (see page 3).

From the Second U.S. Peak Oil and Community Solutions Conference September 24, 2005: there was this online blog: "Regarding Jan Lundberg's talk, it seems to me that there IS a major difference between the oil shocks of the '70s and the post-peak oil scenario. The '70s oil shocks were temporary; the post-peak oil shock will be permanent. This, I would think, is bound both to sustain and to increase hoarding behavior (as long as hoarding is still possible)." - by 'Cameron', *TheOil-Drum.com*

## Plastics campaign news - Culture Change pushes for bag fees at supermarkets

The good news is that the plastics issue is finally heating up, with new warnings issued in the form of scientific studies. For example, the plastic components of the dashboard, seats, etc. in cars have been identified as a serious threat to health. (see Culture Change on line Letter 121). The bad news is that the toxic petroleum spill that is plastics is not abating at all, and the poisonous filth will be



with us for hundreds of years. Plastic from petroleum never biodegrades, but keeps on killing. There's six times as much plastic debris in the middle of the Pacific as there is zooplankton (e.g., krill). This is one reason Culture Change and the Campaign Against the Plastic Plague are fighting for fees to be put on plastic shopping bags given away at supermarkets. One of our tactics is to show the award-winning film "Our Synthetic Sea". See [algalita.org](http://algalita.org) to order DVD.



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P.O. Box 4347

Arcata, CA 95518 USA

