

An ocean of plastic - Capt. Charles Moore on CBS television

Contributed by Jan Lundberg
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Also: plastic/petroleum/population overshoot connection; Meryl Streep's plastic water-bottle embrace

The new book Plastic Ocean by Capt. Charles Moore was featured March 4 on CBS television, NY City:

"The invention of plastic was a revelation, but its durability makes it almost impossible to decompose. So where does it go? Into a 'soup' of floating garbage that is filling our oceans. David Pogue of the New York Times reports."

Watch the program:
CBS This Morning

The big plastic picture according to Culture Change

Just why there is so much plastic manufactured and strewn around our beautiful Earth is not going to be on CBS or in the New York Times any time soon. Petroleum is a convenient substance for building modern civilization. The stuff makes plastic, almost all liquid fuels, and supports modern agriculture and food distribution. So no wonder there are so many people obliviously consuming non-renewable resources. We've heard of overpopulation and Malthus, but what is really at work needs clarification:

Malthus thought that population would approach a sustainable limit, then hover there, with many people living in poverty and misery. He did not imagine overshoot and sudden collapse. He did not understand that technology was converting mineral concentrations and much of the biosphere into windfall stocks that would stimulate rapid population growth. Now, two hundred years after Malthus, humans have multiplied their numbers far beyond any sustainable limit, and the end of the windfall stocks is in sight.

- the late David M. Delaney, October 2003, "Overshoot in a Nutshell" essay.

For some sad humor about the plastic plague, here is what Meryl Streep was actually clutching to her breast last Sunday night at the Academy Awards; it's no Oscar! Embarrassing to be caught this way, on the morning-after front page of the Los Angeles Times, but it happens to the best of us. Meryl Streep starred as the heroine Karen Silkwood in the anti-nuclear movie Silkwood, so she is of course an environmentalist.

For more on the plastic plague, read Culture Change's announcement of Capt. Moore's new book Plastic Ocean, and also see Culture Change's webpages on the plastic plague. Visit Capt. Moore's website of the Algalita Marine Research Foundation, located in Long Beach, California.

Plastic Ocean back cover jacket quoting Jan Lundberg flanked by Navy and Homeland Security fans of Capt. Moore

For more on overshoot and carrying capacity, go to Overpopulation: Resources for Understanding and Taking Action

Essays of David M. Delaney