



## NYT says peak oil "almost certainly correct"

Posted by [Stuart Staniford](#) on March 1, 2006 - 3:00am

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Was browsing the NYT on a short break from work tonight when I was amazed to discover a long op-ed by Robert Semple Jr, associate editor of the Times Editorial Board, on peak oil. Unfortunately, [it's behind the Times Select paywall](#), so the rest of you will have to make do with a few fair use quotations:

When President Bush declared in his 2006 State of the Union address that America must cure its "addiction to oil," he framed his case largely in terms of national security -- the need to liberate the country from of its dependence on volatile and in some cases hostile nations for much of its energy. He failed to mention two other good reasons to sober up. Both are at least as pressing as national security. One is global warming...

The second reason is just as unsettling, and is only starting to get the attention it deserves. The Age of Oil -- 100-plus years of astonishing economic growth made possible by cheap, abundant oil -- could be ending without our really being aware of it. Oil is a finite commodity. At some point even the vast reservoirs of Saudi Arabia will run dry. But before that happens there will come a day when oil production "peaks," when demand overtakes supply (and never looks back), resulting in large and possibly catastrophic price increases that could make today's \$60-a-barrel oil look like chump change. Unless, of course, we begin to develop substitutes for oil. Or begin to live more abstemiously. Or both. The concept of peak oil has not been widely written about. But people are talking about it now. It deserves a careful look -- largely because it is almost certainly correct.

So there you have it. The NYT editorial board is on record that peak oil is "almost certainly correct". They are a little fuzzy on the timing still:

When will oil peak? At least one maverick geologist says it already has. Others say 10 years from now. A few actually say never. The latest official projections from the Energy Information Administration put the peak at 2037, or 2047 -- depending, of course, on how much of the stuff is out there and how fast we intend to use it up. But even that relatively late date does not give us much time to adjust to a world without cheap, abundant oil.

But hey, let's give them another six months: they'll almost certainly catch up. Indeed one striking feature of the editorial was it quoted all the right experts and books - they've clearly been doing their homework.

So, our respectability just went up about six notches...



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