



A Letter from the TOD Editors Box...

Posted by [Prof. Goose](#) on July 26, 2006 - 1:32pm

Topic: [Sociology/Psychology](#)

Under the fold, I have posted a letter that we get more often than you might think--a query along the lines of: "I'm young-ish, so what can I do about all of this?"

I have a pretty standard answer that I give, which is usually along the lines of: "live your life, learn all that you can (especially skill-wise), and do what you can to slowly prepare your world. It is likely that you will have time to adapt...but time passes quickly."

I remember when I emailed an "expert" on Y2K around June of 1999 asking a very similar question re: Y2K. His response: "there's no need finishing your degree, after the apocalypse that will be Y2K, degrees and money will be worthless." (Yes, that's a quote that I just cut and pasted from an email.)

Needless to say, I didn't listen. I am rather glad about that. But, as we have discussed many times here the phrase "this is different" seems to apply to the empirics of peak oil in comparison to Y2K.

So, I figured with the diversity of opinion that is TOD, I would let you answer her email. She will be reading.

Dear Editors of The Oil Drum:

I'm not sure if this is an appropriate way to ask this question, so I hope you will let me know if it is not. I have only been a regular reader of the site for a few weeks and I did not want to burden the comments area with questions that may have already been asked multiple times.

I'm 24 years old and for as long as I've known what it was I've been concerned about peak oil and about the potential consequences for my country (the U.S.) and the world as a whole. The thing that keeps me up at night the most is the feeling that there is nothing I can do to stop us from sleepwalking over the edge of a cliff. I have worked to reduce my own reliance on fossil fuels but I still feel like I'm not doing enough. I think your site is fantastic (if sometimes terrifying) and I would love to probe you for advice.

My question is what can I, as an individual do to prepare myself to survive peak oil? I live in Chicago. I own a small, relatively efficient car (a Ford Focus) that I drive less than 20 miles a week. I bike or take the bus to work. I rent my apartment and I have no debt, children or husband. I also don't have much in the way of assets. I do my best to buy locally grown foods. I grow some veggies in my backyard and on my deck, although certainly not enough to put a dent in my food consumption. I have a job that I love (political consultant), but I know that it is extremely unlikely to be a workable career should things really start to go downhill. People won't need research consultants when they can't eat. My boyfriend is a computer scientist, and I am also interested to hear your take on what his job prospects may be like post-peak. I have some

marginal agricultural skills - I can handle horses and have some experience with other livestock as well.

So... what do you, the esteemed editors of The Oil Drum recommend? What more should I be doing? Is it foolish for me to stick with a job I love that's not likely to provide me with skills that will be useful post-peak? Should I be thinking about moving somewhere smaller and more rural? Everything I've read said the cities will be, at best undesirable and and at worst extremely dangerous as things start to progress. What skills and careers do you think will be in the most demand?

I know most of these questions cannot be answered definitively yet, but I am curious about your opinions and thoughts. If there are any sites on the Web that discuss the practical side of peak oil in a non-alarmist, non-crazy way I would love to know about them.

Thanks so much for reading through this long treatise. Please let me know if this would be better direct else where or as a comment on the site. Please keep up the excellent work.



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