



I guess this is discourse...? (or Levitt of Freakonomics on today's Maass piece)

Posted by [Prof. Goose](#) on August 21, 2005 - 1:08pm

Topic: [Economics/Finance](#)

[Stephen Levitt, author of Freakonomics, is already not very pleased with today's Maass NYT piece \(see post below for discussion of the Maass piece\).](#) At all. In fact the title of his post today is, "Peak Oil: Welcome to the media's new version of shark attacks" (thanks to Jeff B. for bringing this to our attention...)

Here's a snippet:

The cover story of the New York Times Sunday Magazine written by Peter Maass is about "Peak Oil." The idea behind "peak oil" is that the world has been on a path of increasing oil production for many years, and now we are about to peak and go into a situation where there are dwindling reserves, leading to triple-digit prices for a barrel of oil, an unparalleled worldwide depression, and as one web page puts it, "Civilization as we know it is coming to an end soon." One might think that doomsday proponents would be chastened by the long history of people of their ilk being wrong: Nostradamus, Malthus, Paul Ehrlich, etc. Clearly they are not. What most of these doomsday scenarios have gotten wrong is the fundamental idea of economics: people respond to incentives.

Verrrry interesting. I imagine this **is** the beginning of hearing about this more and more from folks/the MSM/etc. The question then becomes how the story is framed, and how good of a job we do at using the discourse to promote the changes necessary to come in for a softer landing. I hope you'll all go over there and tell him why he's wrong (SB, odo, and I have already been there). **Update [2005-8-21 14:2:20 by Prof. Goose]:** I was just noticing that this discussion sounds like a minor-league version of the discussion between HO and JDH of Econbrowser last week. At least their discourse was much more informed (on both sides...).

Technorati Tags: [peak oil](#), [oil](#)



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