



## April 2010 TRENDEVENTS

### A Society Consumed by Locusts: Youth in the Age of Moral and Political Plagues,

By Henry A. Giroux —

[\[http://www.truthout.org/A-Society-Consumed-Locusts-Youth-Age-Moral-and-Political-Plaques95820\]](http://www.truthout.org/A-Society-Consumed-Locusts-Youth-Age-Moral-and-Political-Plaques95820)

As the recent health care debate has made clear, the decades-long conservative campaign against the alleged abuses of "big government" is far from over. In the 1980s, when Ronald Reagan insisted that government was the problem not the solution, he unleashed what was to become a neoliberal juggernaut against both the welfare state and the concept of the public good. Reagan's conservative ideological stance revealed a smoldering market-driven disdain for any form of governance that assumed a measure of responsibility for the education, health, and general welfare of the country's citizens. He also helped launch a new political era in which consumerism and profit making were defined as the essence of democracy, and freedom was redefined as the unrestricted ability of markets to govern economic relations free of government regulation. Even worse, the obligations of citizenship, if not agency itself, were reduced to the never-ending need to consume goods, buy into market-driven services, and fashion public needs according to the protocols of celebrity culture... For over 30 years, the American public has been reared on a neoliberal dystopian vision that legitimates itself through the largely unchallenged claim that there are no alternatives to a market-driven society, that economic growth should not be constrained by considerations of social costs or moral responsibility, and that democracy and capitalism were virtually synonymous. At the heart of this market rationality is an egocentric philosophy and culture of cruelty that sold off public goods and services to the highest bidders in the corporate and private sectors, while simultaneously dismantling those public spheres, social protections, and institutions serving the public good. As economic power

freed itself from traditional government regulations, a new global financial class reasserted the prerogatives of capital and systemically destroyed those public spheres advocating social equality and an educated citizenry as a condition for a viable democracy. At the same time, economic deregulation merged powerfully with the ideology of individual responsibility, effectively evading any notion of corporate responsibility, while effectively undercutting any sense of corporate accountability to a broader public.

As a result of the triumph of corporate sovereignty over democratic values, the supervisory authority of the state was reconfigured into a disciplinary device largely responsible for managing and expanding the mechanisms of control, containment, and punishment over a vast number of American institutions. As the social contract came under sustained attack, the bridges between public and private life were dismantled and the market became a template for structuring all social relations. With the devaluing of public goods, public values and public institutions, the model of the prison emerged as a core institution and mode of governance under the neoliberal state. Democracy suffered a major hit. The list of casualties is long and includes the ongoing privatization of public schools, health care, prisons, transportation, wars, the public air waves, public lands, and other crucial elements of the commons, along with the undermining of some of our most basic civil liberties. At the same time, those institutions that once offered relief and hope to people were now replaced by the police, courts, and the prison, all of which had a disproportionate effect on poor and minority youth.

The legacy of casino capitalism with its reckless gambling and corruption has contributed to the loss of trillions of dollars from the public coffers, while simultaneously undermining the most basic democratic values. Making a mockery of an aspiring American democracy, the economic neo-Darwinism of the last 30 years has given free rein to a society that "celebrates fraud, theft, and violence." The holy

trinity of deregulation, privatization, and commodification has produced vast inequities in wealth, income and power, exemplified by the fact that "at the start of the recession the collective wealth of the richest 1 percent of Americans was greater than that of the bottom 90 percent combined." But the regime of free-market fundamentalism has not only produced "the biggest concentration of income and wealth since 1928," it has also caused enormous hardship and suffering among those populations now considered redundant and increasingly disposable... Undeniably, the social and economic collapse we are now experiencing was preceded by a moral and political collapse, largely caused by a political class and a formative culture deeply insensitive to its social and ethical responsibilities. The renowned historian Tony Judt has insisted that since the 1980s, we have inhabited what he calls "an age of pygmies," a time largely "consumed by locusts" and characterized by an "uncritical admiration for unfettered markets, disdain for the public sector, the delusion of endless growth.... and an obsession with "the pursuit of material wealth [while] indifferent to so much else." The Dreamscape of neoliberalism has ushered in a long period of social and economic revenge against those populations marginalized by race and class. The new government of insecurity has reshaped welfare through punitive policies that criminalized poverty, pushed people into workfare programs so as to force them into menial labor and where that failed made incarceration the primary tool of making such populations disappear. As Loic Wacquant has argued, "Poverty has not receded but the social visibility and civic standing of the troublemaking poor have been reduced." Moreover, we have witnessed in the last few decades the rise of a punishing state that "offers relief not to the poor but from the poor, by forcibly 'disappearing' the most disruptive of them, from the shrinking welfare rolls on the one hand and into the swelling dungeons of the carceral castle on the other."

Populations that were once viewed as facing dire problems in need of state interventions and social protections are now seen as a problem threatening society. This becomes clear when the war on poverty is transformed into a war

against the poor; when young people, to paraphrase W. E. B. Du Bois, become problem people rather than people who face problems; when the plight of the homeless is defined less as a political and economic issue in need of social reform than as a matter of law and order; or when the state budgets for prison construction eclipse budgets for higher education. The reach of the punishing state is especially evident in the ways in which many public schools now use punishment as the main tool for control. In the devalued landscape of public schooling, what becomes clear is that punishing young people seems to be far more important than educating them. Similarly, as advocates of market rationality raise an entire generation on the alleged virtues of "unrestricted individual responsibility," the disdain toward the common good finds its counterpart in increasing acts of "collective and political irresponsibility."

What might it mean to oppose the institutions, reverse the values and challenge the power relations that created this theater of civic morbidity and culture of cruelty? Dare one not take account of the profound emotional appeal, let alone ideological hold, of neoliberalism on the American public? The success of a market ideology that has produced shocking levels of inequality, poverty, and human suffering buttressed by a market morality that has spawned rapacious greed and corruption should raise fundamental questions. How did market rule prove capable of enlisting in such a compelling way the consent of the vast majority of Americans, who cast themselves, no less, in the role of the "moral majority"? This means the questions we need to be asking ourselves must extend beyond how we proceed with competent and effective economic reform. Just as neoliberal logic extends well beyond the economic realm, we must also consider at a deeper level how we dismantle the culture of permanent war and fear, how we learn to think beyond the narrow dictates of instrumental rationalities, how we decriminalize certain identities, how we depathologize the concept of dependency and recognize it as our common fate, how we foster a culture of questioning and shared responsibilities, and how we reclaim the public good — how we reconstitute, in short, a viable, sustainable, and aspiring democratic society. What are the implications of theorizing education, pedagogy, and the practice of learning as essential to social change and where might such interventions take place? In the current historical moment, young people are

increasingly defined through a youth control complex that is predatory in nature and punishing in its consequences, leaving a generation of young people with damaged lives, impoverished spirits, and bankrupted hopes. One such place to begin — especially for educators — is with the current state of young people in the United States.

While youth have always represented an ambiguous category, young people are under assault today in ways that are entirely new because they now face a world that is far more dangerous than at any other time in recent history. As Jean-Marie Durand pointed out, as war and the criminalization of social problems become a mode of governance, "Youth is no longer considered the world's future, but as a threat to its present. [For] youth, there is no longer any political discourse except for a disciplinary one." This intensifying assault on young people can be more fully grasped through the related concepts of "soft war" and "hard war."

The soft war analyzes the changing conditions of youth within the relentless expansion of a global market society that punishes all youth by treating them largely as markets and commodities. This low intensity war is waged through the educational force of a culture that not only commercializes every aspect of kids' lives, but also uses the Internet, cell phones, and various social networks along with the new media technologies to address young people as markets and consumers in ways that are more direct and expansive. The reach of the new screen and electronic culture on young people is disturbing. For instance, a recent study by the Kaiser Family foundation found that young people ages 8 to 18 are spending more than seven-and-a-half hours a day with smart phones, computers, TV, and other electronic devices, compared with less than six-and-a-half hours five years ago." When you add the additional time youth spend texting, talking on their cell phones, "watching TV while updating Facebook — the number rises to 11 hours of total media content each day." There is more at stake here than what some call a new form of attention deficit disorder, one in which youth avoid the time necessary for thoughtful analysis

and engaged modes of reading. There is also the issue of how this media is being used to create a new generation of consuming subjects. Corporations have hit gold with the new media and can inundate young people directly with their market-driven values, desires, and identities, all of which are removed from the mediation and watchful eyes of parents and other adults.

The hard war is more serious and dangerous for young people and refers to the harshest elements, values, and dictates of a growing youth-crime complex that increasingly governs poor minority youth through a logic of punishment, surveillance, and control. For example, the imprint of the youth-crime complex is evident in the increasingly popular practice of organizing schools through disciplinary practices that subject them to constant surveillance through high-tech security technologies while imposing upon them harsh and often thoughtless zero-tolerance policies that closely resemble the culture of prisons. In this instance, even as the corporate state is in financial turmoil, it is transformed into a punishing state and certain segments of the youth population become the object of a new mode of governance based on the crudest forms of disciplinary control. Poor minority youth have not just been excluded from "the American dream," but have become utterly redundant and disposable, waste products of a society that no longer considers them of any value. Such youth subjected to a form of racial dumping now experience a kind of social death as they are pushed out of schools, denied job training opportunities, subject to rigorous modes of surveillance and criminal sanctions, and viewed less as disadvantaged than as flawed consumers and civic felons. Under such circumstances, matters of survival and disposability become central to how we think about and imagine not just politics, but the everyday existence of poor white and minority youth.

As the social safety net and protections unraveled in the last 30 years, the culture and administrative apparatus of the prison, operating within the narrow registers of punishment and crime management, has become a core institution of American society. In part, this is evident in the fact that over seven million people are now under the jurisdiction of some element of the criminal justice system. Within this regime of harsh disciplinary control, there is no political or moral vocabulary for either recognizing

the systemic economic, social, and educational problems that young people face or for addressing what it means for American society to invest seriously in the future of young people, especially poor minority and white youth. Instead of being viewed as impoverished, minority youth are seen as lazy and shiftless; instead of being understood in terms of how badly they are served by failing schools, many poor minority youth are labeled as uneducable and pushed out of schools, or even worse. Against the idealistic rhetoric of a nation that claims it venerates young people lies the reality of a society that increasingly views youth through the optic of law and order and is all too willing to treat them as criminals, and, when necessary, make them "disappear" into the farthest reaches of the carceral state.

What are we to make of a society that allows the police to come into a school and arrest, handcuff, and haul off a 12-year-old student for doodling on her desk? Even worse, where is the public outrage over a school system that allows a five-year-old kindergarten pupil to be handcuffed and sent to a hospital psychiatric ward for being unruly in a classroom? What does it mean when a society looks the other way when 25 Chicago middle-schoolers ranging in age from 11 to 15 are arrested for a food fight, held for "11 hours at the police station, charged with misdemeanor reckless conduct and later suspended from school for two days? Or when an 11-year-old autistic and cognitively impaired child is repeatedly abused in school by both teachers and security guards?[13] Where is the public outrage when the mainstream media reports that two officers when called to a day care center in central Indiana to handle an unruly 10-year old tasered the child and slapped him in the mouth. This follows another widely reported incident in which a police officer in Arkansas used a stun gun to control and allegedly out-of-control 10-year old girl. One public response came from Steve Tuttle, spokesman for Taser International Inc., who insisted that a "Stun gun can be safely used on children." [14] Sadly, this is a small sampling of the ways in which children are being punished instead of educated in American schools. All of these examples point to how little regard our society has for young people and the growing number of institutions willing to employ a crime-

and-punishment mentality that constitutes not only a crisis of politics, but the emergence of new politics of educating and "governing through crime." [15] The abuse of children in and out of schools has become endemic to American society and the culture of cruelty that produces it is increasingly being mimicked by the children who are subject to it daily. Violence, harsh modes of competition, a crippling emphasis on toughness coupled with stripped down forms of pedagogy that confuse training with educating, leave young people unprepared to resist imitating the worst dimensions of the selfish and narcissistic values and behaviors that dominate a consumer, celebrity infatuated society. This moral and political tragedy is made obvious by the many "get tough" policies that have rendered young people as criminals, while depriving them of basic conditions necessary to improve the quality of their lives and future. At the same time, the influence of such policies on the behavior of young people can be seen in the increase in bullying and violence that young people increasingly inflict on each other. As Christopher Robbins has written in his eloquent book, "Expelling Hope," punishment and fear have replaced compassion and social responsibility as the most important modalities mediating the relationship of youth, not only to the larger social order, but also to each other. Subject to a coming-of-age crisis marked by an ever expanding police order with its paranoid machinery of security, containment, and criminalization, many young people are removed from modes of education that should provide them with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to think critically about education, justice, and democracy.

At this moment in history, it is more necessary than ever to register youth as a central theoretical, moral, and political concern. Doing so reminds adults of their ethical and political responsibility to future generations and will further legitimize what it means to invest in youth as a symbol for nurturing civic imagination and collective resistance in response to the suffering of others. Youth provide a powerful referent for a critical discussion about the long-term consequences of neoliberal policies, while also gesturing toward the need for putting into place those economic, political, and cultural institutions that make a democratic future possible.

One way of addressing our collapsing intellectual and moral visions regarding young people is to



**False Spring**, by: James Howard Kunstler  
 kunstler.com, April 05, 2010

In a place like upstate New York, north of Albany, where April is more generally known as "mud season," and the wait for "ice-out" on the big lakes takes forever, and on frigid nights the windigos [*A cannibalistic creature of Algonquian mythology believed to have been a lost hunter forced by hunger to eat human flesh and thereafter to have become a crazed man-eating ogre roaming the forests*] steal through the tops of the tall pines — it would seem foolish to complain about perfectly beautiful weather... We just had a week in the 70s, with more to come. The grass went from ochre to bright green in about thirty-six hours. The buds are popping like mad. This is usually what the first week of May is like around here, and that fact alone may explain New York State's relentless population drain over the past forty years.

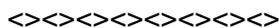
I was out on my bicycle, naturally, taking it all in — like, why sit inside and sulk because the weather is strange in a pleasant way? — and I ventured into the outlands east of town, where an impressive number of gigantic new houses had landed like alien mother ships in the former cow pastures and wood lots. Of course, the aesthetics were an issue apart from the socioeconomics of it, but nonetheless interesting... Each new, gigantic house seemed the result of a losing struggle to reinvent basic design principles that did not require reinvention. I doubt the spirit of joyous "creativity" among the star architects has seeped down to the level of the provincial house builders, who, after all, are just assemblers of modular materials like dimensional lumber and eight-foot sheetrock. It's their inability to assemble these parts coherently that's really striking, so what you get is an endless variety of mistakes along with a complete absence of anything done really well — which may be the essence of what the "diversity" craze has really meant to us, the ethos of current times.

The abiding quality of all these houses was grandiosity (by which I do not mean grandness). That, too, is a signature of these times in America — the nation too big to fail and

tragically destined to do just that on account of its too big to fail-ness; and, of course, one could not fail to wonder, cruising by these hideously ponderous houses, whether as a matter of fact they were failing in terms of the owners' ability to keep up with the payments, for instance. One after another, I pictured a husband and wife within sitting in the sunny breakfast room on Easter morning humped in tears as they sorted through stacks of bills and bank statements... and I imagined the yellow foreclosure tape a few weeks hence atop the weird split-block portico treatments and misbegotten arrays of concrete balusters, and the colossal Palladianesque windows with their pathetic snap-in muntins (and the fantastic solar heat gain, not figured in by the designer-builder, that would turn the lawyer foyer into something like a crematorium by two p.m.)... and the pension fund in Wisconsin or Norway that was sitting on the booby trapped CDO that contained this sketchy mortgage and thousands of others just like it... and, well, this choo-choo of thoughts led to envisioning the train wreck of economies and nations that lies in wait just around the bend....

One also could not fail to reflect on the recklessness of a nation that placed untold million-dollar bets on the idea that it would be possible to travel anywhere in an automobile from houses like these a few scant years from now. This far along in the tribulations of our time, most Americans still have not heard of **peak oil**, and the few who have regard it as some figment that Ralph Nader or Al Gore conjured up on an acid trip in a sweat lodge. The more sophisticated among the mentally unwashed are certain that the earth has a creamy nougat center of low-sulfur light crude oil, or they heard that the Bakken formation in Dakota holds more oil than Saudi Arabia, or that the whole U.S. car and truck fleet will be electrified in a year or two, or that we can "drill-baby-drill" our way to permanent oil abundance, or just that the American can-do spirit will come up with something to keep Happy Motoring alive because we're the greatest! Such grandiosity... Personally, I look at these houses scattered around what was only recently a dedicated farm landscape, and I am quite sure that the denizens within will be marooned in their great rooms, and that very probably many of them will have no job to go to — in the conventional sense of what we think a job is, in some corporation or institution — and that in a surprisingly short span of years these buildings will be ruins or squats. I think these thoughts after struggling up a rather steep hill more than half-a-mile (and many others

previously). A trip anywhere from here, to do anything, and the return trip, would occupy an entire day even for someone in decent physical condition. Somebody accustomed to rations of Cheez Doodles and Mountain Dew would be dead by then. There will be lots of dead... On the macro level, the feeling spreads across the U.S.A. that our troubles are behind us. Employment is ticking up. The S & P index only goes up now. The banks have stabilized and those "toxic assets" (which I call "frauds" and "swindles") have been disarmed and safely buried under Yucca Mountain. Housing starts may still be weak, but the "gaming" industry is making great strides in places like the old Puritan commonwealth of Massachusetts; so, soon we'll have a virtually automatic economy of leisure-and-entertainment paid for by creaming off a small percentage of the quarters pumped into video slot stations. No doubt the Chinese will be jealous and try to imitate us. All these lovely mild days, I was not unconscious of the eeriness of the weather and the possible insidious effects of it on the local ecosystem in everything from the added generations of deer ticks carrying Lyme disease and the death of the honeybees to the fate of this year's apple crop. I confess: it made me very nervous. Something is happening... out there.



**What went wrong? The misdirection of civilization,**

By Denis Frist – EnergyResources April 9, 2010

I have just read an interview with Lord Rees of Ludlow, President of the Royal Society. He is regarded as one of Britain's foremost scientific brains. He has expressed concerns about the future of our society in his book, ***Our Final Century***, but focuses on possible natural disasters. He has, however, the typical scientific view of the ability of humans to understand how natural forces work and how we can devise systems to make use of these forces. He believes in the ability of science to provide insight and the ability of technology to provide useful systems using natural resources. He assumes, as is common, that these natural resources are gift from nature.

A number of natural laws of been enunciated. The Laws of Thermodynamics and Newton's Laws of Motion are well known, but specialists use many others in their considerations. However, the current spate of advances in the frontiers of knowledge indicates how little we knew about the role of natural forces in the past. A sustainable organism has been evolving over millions of years under the control of these natural forces, even though we have yet to learn how some of them operate. There is still the presumption that we can devise means of using some of these forces without evoking unintended consequences. We have still to learn that devising the means to use natural forces to unleash the power of fossil fuels was a horrendous mistake. It produced the material waste that has precipitated rapid climate change. There is no recognition of the degree of self-regulation and self-organization that the vast array of natural forces has developed over eons. There is just the presumption that we can devise measures with the necessary inherent natural degree of control.

The fact that so many of the measures devised by humans have used natural forces successfully tends to blind us to the failures. The use of fossil fuels to provide the energy that has powered industrialization without understanding the impact of the wastes produced on the climate and on the marine ecosystem is one example of the unintended consequences of our inventiveness. The heavy dependence of agriculture on artificial fertilizers produced using depleting natural resources is another, and it is very worrying due to the consequential growth of the global population. One that will cause much concern in the future has been the construction of cities and the associated infrastructure using irreplaceable natural resources without having sufficient material resources to continue their operation whilst protecting them from natural forces such as wind and rain. Consequently, there is virtually no understanding that our civilization will have a relatively short life, in evolutionary terms, simply because our systems are dependent on using natural capital which is running out.

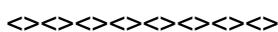
What will happen to our materialistic civilization in the coming decades is quite clear but how people will react is not. The masses will not be able to understand why there are so many unsuspected environmental problems making it harder to survive. There is bound to be much talk about what should be done about energy, food, water, sanitation, etc., by



from members of Congress, let alone senior party officials.

No, to find anything like what we're seeing now you have to go back to the last time a Democrat was president. Like President Obama, Bill Clinton faced a G.O.P. that denied his legitimacy — Dick Arme y, the second-ranking House Republican (and now a Tea Party leader) referred to him as "your president." Threats were common: President Clinton, declared Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina, "better watch out if he comes down here. He'd better have a bodyguard." (Helms later expressed regrets over the remark — but only after a media firestorm.), and once they controlled Congress, Republicans tried to govern as if they held the White House, too, eventually shutting down the federal government in an attempt to bully Mr. Clinton into submission.

Mr. Obama seems to have sincerely believed that he would face a different reception, and he made a real try at bipartisanship, nearly losing his chance at health reform by frittering away months in a vain attempt to get a few Republicans on board. At this point, however, it's clear that any Democratic president will face total opposition from a Republican Party that is completely dominated by right wing extremists. For today's G.O.P. is, fully and finally, the party of Ronald Reagan — not Reagan the pragmatic politician, who could and did strike deals with Democrats, but Reagan the antigovernment fanatic, who warned that Medicare would destroy American freedom. It's a party that sees modest efforts to improve Americans' economic and health security not merely as unwise, but as monstrous. It's a party in which paranoid fantasies about the other side — Obama is a socialist, Democrats have totalitarian ambitions — are mainstream. And, as a result, it's a party that fundamentally doesn't accept anyone else's right to govern... In the short run, Republican extremism may be good for Democrats, to the extent that it prompts a voter backlash, but in the long run, it's a very bad thing for America. We need to have two reasonable, rational parties in this country. And right now we don't.



**Growing low-oxygen zones in oceans worry scientists,**

By Les Blumenthal — McClatchy Newspapers, March 7, 2010 [[http://news.yahoo.com/s/mcclatchy/20100307/sc\\_mcclatchy/3444187](http://news.yahoo.com/s/mcclatchy/20100307/sc_mcclatchy/3444187)]

Washington — Lower levels of oxygen in Earth's oceans, particularly off the United States' Pacific Northwest coast, could be another sign of fundamental changes linked to global climate change, scientists say... They warn that the oceans' complex undersea ecosystems and fragile food chains could be disrupted.

In some spots off Washington state and Oregon, the almost complete absence of oxygen has left piles of Dungeness crab carcasses littering the ocean floor, killed off 25-year-old sea stars, crippled colonies of sea anemones, and produced mats of potentially noxious bacteria that thrive in such conditions... Areas of hypoxia, or low oxygen, have long existed in the deep ocean. These areas — in the Pacific, Atlantic, and Indian oceans — appear to be spreading, however, covering more square miles, creeping toward the surface and in some places, such as the Pacific Northwest, encroaching on the continental shelf within sight of the coastline.

"The depletion of oxygen levels in all three oceans is striking," said Gregory Johnson, an oceanographer with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Seattle... In some spots, such as off the Southern California coast, oxygen levels have dropped roughly 20 percent over the past 25 years. Elsewhere, scientists say, oxygen levels might have declined by one-third over 50 years... "The real surprise is how this has become the new norm," said Jack Barth, an oceanography professor at Oregon State University . "We are seeing it year after year."

Barth and others say the changes are consistent with current climate-change models. Previous studies have found that the oceans are becoming more acidic as they absorb more carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

"If Earth continues to warm, the expectation is we will have lower and lower oxygen levels," said Francis Chan, a marine researcher at Oregon State... As ocean temperatures rise, the warmer water on the surface acts as a cap, which interferes with the natural circulation that normally allows deeper waters that are already oxygen-depleted to reach the

surface. It's on the surface where ocean waters are recharged with oxygen from the air.

Commonly, ocean "dead zones" have been linked to agricultural runoff and other pollution coming down major rivers such as the Mississippi or the Columbia. One of the largest of the 400 or so ocean dead zones is in the Gulf of Mexico, near the mouth of the Mississippi... However, scientists now say that some of these areas, including those off the Northwest, apparently are linked to broader changes in ocean oxygen levels.

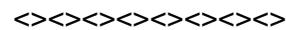
The Pacific waters off Washington and Oregon face a double whammy as a result of ocean circulation... Scientists have long known of a natural low-oxygen zone perched in the deeper water off the Northwest's continental shelf... During the summer, northerly winds aided by Earth's rotation drive surface water away from the shore. This action sucks oxygen-poor water to the surface in a process called upwelling.

Though the water that's pulled up from the depths is poor in oxygen, it's rich in nutrients, which fertilize phytoplankton. These microscopic organisms form the bottom of one of the richest ocean food chains in the world. As they die, however, they sink and start to decay. The decaying process uses oxygen, which depletes the oxygen levels even more.

Southerly winds reverse the process in what's known as "down welling" ...Changes in the wind and ocean circulation since 2002 have disrupted what had been a delicate balance between upwelling and down welling. Scientists now are discovering expanding low-oxygen zones near shore... "It is consistent with models of global warming, but the time frame is too short to know whether it is a trend or a weather phenomenon," Johnson said.

Others were slightly more definitive, quicker to link the lower oxygen levels to global warming rather than to such weather phenomena as El Nino or the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, a shift in the weather that occurs every 20 to 30 years in the northern oceans... "It's a large disturbance in the ecosystem that could have huge biological changes," said Steve Bograd, an

oceanographer at NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center in Southern California... Bograd has been studying oxygen levels in the California Current, which runs along the West Coast from the Canadian border to Baja California and, some scientists think, eventually could be affected by climate change... So far, the worst hypoxic zone off the Northwest coast was found in 2006. It covered nearly 1,200 square miles off Newport, Ore., and according to Barth it was so close to shore you could hit it with a baseball. The zone covered 80 percent of the water column and lasted for an abnormally long four months... Because of upwelling, some of the most fertile ocean areas in the world are found off Washington and Oregon. Similar upwelling occurs in only three other places, off the coast of Peru and Chile, in an area stretching from northern Africa to Portugal and along the Atlantic coast of South Africa and Namibia... Scientists are unsure how low oxygen levels will affect the ocean ecosystem. Bottom-dwelling species could be at the greatest risk because they move slowly and might not be able to escape the lower oxygen levels. Most fish can swim out of danger. Some species, however, such as Chinook salmon, may have to start swimming at shallower depths than they're used to. Whether the low oxygen zones will change salmon migration routes is unclear... Some species, such as jellyfish, will like the lower-oxygen water. Jumbo squid, usually found off Mexico and Central America, can survive as oxygen levels decrease and now are found as far north as Alaska... "It's like an experiment," Chan said. "We are pulling some things out of the food web and we will have to see what happens, but if you pull enough things out, it could have a real impact."



**Does Economics Violate the Laws of Physics?**

In an article by Nathaniel Gronewald of October 23, 2009 reprinted from Greenwire in the Scientific American, it was noted that at least some economists realized that few economists foresaw the recent crash. Some have even gone so far as to wonder if their theories and mathematical models fail to predict future events for the simple reason that they violate the laws of physics. Some hope to construct a new economics called "biophysical economics". These economists decry the standard economic mantra of continuous growth which standard economic theory espouses. Failure to take



Our social system is fragile because we are dependent on energy resources poised for decline. Measures should be taken immediately, but it is more likely that we will continue “whistling past the graveyard”. All conservation measures should be fully implemented. As soon as they become available, all lights should be replaced with light emitting diodes. Construction of a high speed passenger rail system should be begun at once. The freight rail system is in dire need of upgrading (the rail system, not the rolling stock). Construction of a continental electrical grid with a very high capacity so that power can be sent anywhere no matter how it is generated with very high transmission efficiency is mandatory. Current plans to interconnect local grids is similar to interconnecting the cow trails across the continent, then referring to that as a continental transportation system.

The operation of a price system is sending human society careening toward a bottomless pit. If we are to survive, we need to install a social system based on the science and technology that has built the world in which we live — a Technocracy.

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**Whale on the Menu**, *New Scientist*, April 17, 2010

Compiled by Paul Cordsmeyer, CHQ  
 Technocracy Inc. [[www.technocracyinc.org](http://www.technocracyinc.org)]  
 2475 Harksell Rd.  
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PROPOSALS to resume commercial whaling have been dealt a blow by DNA detective work showing that restaurants in the U.S. and South Korea illegally sold whale meat from Japan... In June, Japan, Iceland, and Norway expected to ask the International Whaling Commission (IWC) for permission to resume commercial whaling. They say they can prevent smuggling by matching the DNA of whale meat sold in markets to a register of all legally caught whales, but all have refused to make their DNA registers public.

To find out the origin of whale meat being sold outside Japan, Scott Baker of Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon, and colleagues secretly took samples from two restaurants, one in Santa Monica, California and another in Seoul, Korea. They compared the DNA with tat from samples bought in Japan, and found that they came from the same animals — proving that meat from the same animals – proving that meat from whales hunted in Japan’s (so called) scientific programme have been illegally sold Abroad (*Biology letters*, DOI:10.1098/rsbl.2010.0239). The findings resulted in police raids on the restaurants last month.

Baker says the monitoring system can only work if Japan Iceland and Norway make their DNA registers publicly available, and hand them over to an independent body like the IWC so routine checks can be carried out.

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