

Foghorn Leghorn

Mr. Thiesmeyer

English III

20 March 2013

Proper Heading

This font is smaller than should be to save space

A Country on Empty

Don't forget title

With all of the problems facing America lately, it begins to get overwhelming. How does one focus on or choose one issue to represent or to fight for? With unemployment at near-record levels, the economy going down the toilet, the climate going haywire, and never-ending wars going on overseas, it is easier to simply shut our eyes and block it all out as the world burns down around us. One of the scariest problems facing this country in the near future is the United States' dependence on fossil fuels and the seeming apathy towards what will happen when we run out.

Pathos

Towards the latter half of the 19th century, America began its torrid love affair with a sticky black substance called oil. With the advent of the automobile and the subsequent gaining of that individual freedom that only comes from having a car, the personal dependence of oil became everyone's responsibility. In the 1920's, around 20% of the American populous owned a vehicle (www.historylearningsite.co.uk). Today, everyone who can have one does and the number of passenger vehicles on the road is around 275,000,000 (www.rita.dot.gov). It is not just people being moved around by gas, however, but our food, goods, and mail. It powers electric generators that light and heat our houses. It pushes trains and semis, floats planes in the sky, plows our fields, and crosses oceans. Oil and petroleum products also account for every piece of plastic you have ever seen, held, or thrown away. All of it used up, burned up, gone forever. The problem is, there is only so much of it to go around, and when we're out, we're out.

Logos

Cite sources

Pathos

There is much debate as to whether or not the world has reached peak oil, that point where oil supply begins the downhill slope to gone. Some companies, such as British Petroleum claim there is as much as "40 years of uninterrupted oil supply" (Clark 1) while others claim that it could be more

or less. The exact number of years we have left is not as important as what happens when the oil runs dry. At that point, if the United States has not created systems or renewable energy, it's lights out, game over.

If you think the US is being proactive on this measure, you are wrong. Go outside and look around. How many wind turbines, solar farms, buildings with photo-electric panels, electric cars, or tide mills do you see? How many are being built? Not enough, that's for sure. And when the oil goes away, so does everything we currently take for granted. Cars will lie useless, the semis, trains, and barges that haul our food will no longer roll, tractors that harvest that food will cease, power plants will sit silent, planes will no longer fly, and all the petroleum products that we depend on will no longer be. The world as we know it, will end and we'll be back to the 18th century. Pathos

We are headed towards a brick wall at full speed. We've taken off the safety belt by not adequately preparing. We've blinded ourselves to the danger by not having the discussion, by ignoring the inevitable. Fossil fuels are a finite resource and they will run out. It is only a matter of time.

Page break here – combined to save space

Works Cited

"America in the 1920's." *America in the 1920's*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.

< http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/America_economy_1920s.htm>

Clark, Josh. "Have We Reached Peak Oil?" *HowStuffWorks*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.

< http://www.rita.dot.gov/bts/sites/rita.dot.gov.bts/files/publications/national_transportation_statistics/index.html>

"National Transportation Statistics | Bureau of Transportation Statistics." *National Transportation Statistics | Bureau of Transportation Statistics*. US Department of Transportation, n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.

< <http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/green-science/peak-oil.htm>>