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## Oil Never Sleeps

Recently while reading Surfer Magazine I came across a fascinating article called "Oil Never Sleeps". At first I thought it would be just another "Environmental Complaint" or whining session. Surfers are always concerned with the ocean and the safety of using it. I was surprised to see a new view or perspective being used. In the past, oil contaminations were always told of from an etic point of view towards the oil industry.

In this article, the author connects with the surfers and the oil industry as being part of both of them (Emic). His discussion making this inclusion was very clever. The surfboards, wetsuits, wax, and accessories are primarily made from petroleum. The transportation to the beach even uses and supports this beast that's been destroying the ocean and earth.

His examination of the data is fairly thorough. It reminded me of class discussions about cultures that exploit nature versus those who live in harmony with it. All of this time I have felt myself to be one of the more environmentally aware people. I ride bicycle and skateboard locally to keep from using a car. Now after reading about "petroleum surfboards", I realize that bicycles have a lot more oil in them than you might think. All of the safety gear is oil, the helmet, pads, shoes, lycra shorts, bottles, even the wristwatch. The same applies to skateboarding.

At this point I look up and see thousands of gallons of oil in my house. I'm surrounded by it. My sofas, phones, t.v., vcrs, planters, catbox, computer system, picture frames, all of my product containers, security system, bags, tapes, cameras, even the pen I'm using. I wear it, put it in my mouth twice a day to clean my teeth, massage my head for vanity with it, cover my eyes with it, talk to it, carry it in my pockets, buy groceries with it, get cash with it, and walk with it on my feet. It makes me ill thinking that I pointed the finger outward to lay blame on "them" when Exxon Valdez spilled our lover into the ocean.

The culture of the industrial world has revolved around oil. It fights and kills for it. It's worse than any drug addiction and more powerful than money (which was printed on 50% oil based paper). This illness is limited to those of us above the farming level. The mode of subsistence for the whole world is oil, with exception of the rapidly disappearing natural inhabitants (tribes, animals, etc.).

The author didn't look this deeply into the subject, but it did probe me to look at the whole picture about oil. Nevertheless, his picture of us and oil is just as terrible. The ending didn't give many reasonable solutions, there can always be safer ships, but until this "culture of oil" develops higher understanding or moves on, we will all have to deal with spills, land contamination, and acid rain. If the earth is our mother, then oil is our lover.