# Sustainability for the second half of the age of oil

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# The dirty secret to wealth production: Use more energy



#### OIL & GAS PRODUCTION PROFILES 2010 Base Case





Our projections for UK oil production make sense only if low EUR -- Analysis by John Hallock

# II. Declining EROI

# Technology is real and important. But so is depletion

The integral of their effects is reflected in EROI

#### EROI: Origin of concept



#### I. DEFINITION of EROI (Sometimes EROEI)

Energy return on investment for an activity:

Energy delivered to society



Energy put into that activity

Usually consider energy invested *from society* 





Williams probably used this "kicking or spring pole method" for drilling his wells



 Spindletop , Beaumont Texas, 1901.

18 million barrels a year from a trivial investment.



The energy cost of getting the next barrel is going way up



 Today: Thunder horse platform -- up to 90 million barrels a year –but investment is huge



# US Oil Field Size



# Petroleum production in Norway in 1970 – 2008



# Energetic cost of petroleum production in Norway in 1991 – 2008.

Leena Grandell



# EROI of Norwegian petroleum production in 1991 – 2008





Year

# EROI for Oil: US and other



## III. Economic consequences

Economics is usually considered a social "science", but the foundation of real economies is biophysical Understanding the role of energy in economies (BPE) does what economics does not:

Is consistent with know scientific laws
Makes sense of history

- 3) Gives lie to indefinite growth
- 4) Explains residual in Cobb-Douglass equation & failure of Phillips curve
- 5. Gives an absolute limit to market solutions

 The economist will argue that should scarcity comes to oil the price will go up, giving incentives to go get more or develop the technology to do so. OUR NEXT QUESTION: What is economics?

 Economics is the study of the allocation of scarce resources among competing ends

VS.

 Economics is the study of how people transform nature to meet their needs (Polanyi)

# Standard view of inputs and outputs to an economy (U.S. in 1990)



U.S. Economy (Average for one person for one year) GDP \$20,000?

#### • This is a social definition of economics:

 It implies that scarcity is only relative scarcity, that humans are rational, that firms, households and markets are all that you need to make a legitimate economic analysis or understanding.

#### • We all know that that is not true.....

## AN EQUALLY LEGITIMATE VIEW OF THE US ECONOMY





















![](_page_31_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_31_Figure_2.jpeg)

![](_page_32_Picture_0.jpeg)

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start!

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![](_page_35_Figure_0.jpeg)

Charles A.S. Hall · Kent A. Klitgaard

# Energy and the Wealth of Nations

Understanding the Biophysical Economy

![](_page_36_Picture_3.jpeg)

#### My final professional goal

![](_page_37_Picture_1.jpeg)

## THE END

![](_page_38_Picture_1.jpeg)

![](_page_39_Picture_0.jpeg)

![](_page_40_Picture_0.jpeg)

# Interdisciplinary Economic Model

![](_page_41_Figure_1.jpeg)

![](_page_42_Figure_0.jpeg)

- Our second, quite different, definition of economics comes from the great Hungarian economic anthropologist Karl Polanyi (*Trade* and Market in Early Empires) who provided what he termed a Substantive definition of economics:
- Economics is the study of how people transform nature to meet their needs.

Economic development is often a series of resource booms and busts

#### K. Ross Toole History of Montana

![](_page_44_Figure_2.jpeg)

#### 1800

![](_page_44_Picture_4.jpeg)

2000

# **Ecuador's exploitation cycles**

![](_page_45_Figure_1.jpeg)

# What if these guys were right?

![](_page_46_Picture_1.jpeg)

William W. Behrens III

A Report for THE CLUB OF ROME'S Project on the Predicament of Mankind

\$ 2.75

A POTOMAC ASSOCIATES BOOK

Revisiting the Limits to Growth After Peak Oil

Charles A. S. Hall and John W. Day, Jr. 2009 American Scientist, Volume 97: 230-237

# II. THE GROWTH RATE OF MANY ECONOMIES IS DECLINING

### The evidence: declining growth rate of US GDP

![](_page_48_Figure_1.jpeg)

#### Another way of looking at the same data

![](_page_49_Figure_1.jpeg)

- GDP (10 y. avg.)

#### Global petroleum

![](_page_50_Figure_1.jpeg)

Why is this the case? Why is the economic growth in the US (and OECD and maybe the world) slowing down?

Are we just in an economic downturn or are we on a slope?

#### • For me economics is summarized as this:

 For every dollar you spend the energy equivalent of roughly a coffee cup's worth of oil is spent somewhere in the world to bring you that dollar's worth of good or service

# **OUR SECOND QUESTION**

# What is wealth and where does wealth come from?

![](_page_54_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 2.7. Labor productivity (dotted line), as measured by real value added per production worker-hour, and energy used

What Denison missed

## THE END

![](_page_55_Picture_1.jpeg)

![](_page_56_Figure_0.jpeg)

- Processing gains
- Light tight oil
- Other unconventional oil

NGLs

#### Crude oil:

Fields yet to be found

Fields yet to be developed

Currently producing

![](_page_57_Picture_0.jpeg)