

# Center for American Progress



## **SPECIAL PRESENTATION:**

**“CLIMATE AND CULTURE: USING THE ARTS TO  
GALVANIZE THE PUBLIC ON GLOBAL WARMING.”**

## **MODERATOR:**

**ANA UNRUH COHEN, DIRECTOR OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY, CENTER FOR AMERICAN  
PROGRESS**

## **FEATURING:**

**GARY BRAASCH,  
PHOTOJOURNALIST SPECIALIZING IN  
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**JUDITH HELFAND, PEABODY AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKER;  
ACTIVIST AND EDUCATOR**

**KIM STANLEY ROBINSON,  
AWARD-WINNING SCIENCE FICTION AUTHOR**

**NICOLE ST. CLAIR, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR  
THE CLIMATE CAMPAIGN AT ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE**

**12:30 PM – 2:00 PM  
THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2006**

**TRANSCRIPT PROVIDED BY  
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MS. ANA UNRUH COHEN: Good afternoon. I'm Ana Unruh Cohen, the director for environmental policy here at the Center for American Progress. Welcome to our panel today, the first in a series on climate and culture in which we're going to examine how the arts and artists can help galvanize the public and policymakers on global warming.

It seems like every week there's new evidence from the scientific community about the impacts that are happening now because of human activities and our emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, but the urgency of the call from the scientific community is yet to be matched with a commensurate political or public action on the issue. But we all know that the arts and pop culture are powerful forces in our society here in the United States and across the world, and so those things can be brought to bear – artists, pop culture, television, movies – to help the public internalize and understand complex issues like the consequences of global climate change.

As we know, D.C. policy debates, although sometimes entertaining, are rarely inspiring, so while preparing for this panel and in finding our great panelists to join us today, I couldn't help but wonder if we'd be further along in the United States on taking action on climate change if Ross from *Friends* had been a climatologist rather than a paleontologist. Today's panel may not be able to answer that specific question, but they are prepared to share with us what they're doing with their own talents and in their own work to educate and motivate the public to take action on the climate change, and also how artists in conjunction with scientists, policymakers, and the public can help meet the climate challenge.

In your packet you have longer biographies of each of our panelists, but today I just – before we started I wanted to give you a brief introduction of the four panelists, and then they'll speak and then we'll go for some questions and answers.

You may not recognize our first panelist Gary Braasch, but I'm sure you've seen his photographs. They've appeared in over 150 publications including *Time*, *National Geographic*, *Scientific America*, just to name a few. Since 2000, he's been focused on his world view of global warming project. He's traveled the world documenting the impact of rapid climate change on cultures and ecosystems, and he's going to share some of those photos and experiences with us today.

While Gary's pictures can be heartbreaking, both for their beauty and for the loss that they record, our second panelist, Judith Helfand's films are at times side-splitting. Judith, along with her co-producer and co-director, Daniel B. Gold, has created a whole new genre of film: the toxic comedy. The first toxic comedy was *Blue Vinyl*, a movie looking at the environmental repercussions of this – of the vinyl siding Judith's parents put on her childhood home. Their forthcoming movie, *Melting Planet*, tackles the issue of global warming, juxtaposing humor with horror and creating science-made-accessible

scenarios for the public. She and her films and Mr. Gold have been – have won numerous awards and nominations. She teaches film at NYU as well.

Our third panelist, Nicole St. Clair, is the director of communications for the climate campaign at Environmental Defense, where in addition to promoting the Ad Council campaign that I hope you all have seen by now, she has focused on developing the concept that a carbon cap is necessary for U.S. global economic competitiveness. And although the bios don't say it, she's not out of place on this panel. She is an accomplished flautist who studied for three years at the Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University. So any questions about music, I'm just going to volunteer Nicole to answer.

Our final panelist is Kim Stanley Robinson. He is an award-winning science fiction writer whose work has been published in 22 languages. His latest trilogy takes place in the not too distant future right here in D.C. as his characters in the nation figure out how to respond to abrupt climate change. The first two books of this series, *Forty Signs of Rain* and *Fifty Degrees Below* are available in bookstores and our lobby, and the final book will be published next year.

So without any more words from me, a lowly policy analyst and scientist, I'm going to turn it over to the artists. Gary?

MR. GARY BRAASCH: Thank you very much. Thanks, Ana. Thanks for the Center for American Progress for holding this panel. I've been a conservation photographer for 30 years. And in the projects that I've undertaken starting with the old growth forests of the Northwest, I've definitely understood that photography has a huge power to explain and also to engage people, so when I started my project on global warming in 1999 I knew that the pictures would probably be something that people hadn't seen yet. Of course, many more pictures are available now.

The main outlet of my pictures right now is my web site, [worldviewofglobalwarming.org](http://worldviewofglobalwarming.org), and from the reaction to this and to pictures that have been published, I've learned a bit about which pictures seem to connect people with global warming and climate change as an issue better than others. And I have to start with pictures that are incredible landscapes and so forth. Antarctica is definitely a place where people connect. It's a magical place, but of course it's one of the places like the Arctic where climate change effects have begun to show up much more strongly. Also, large animals like the polar bear definitely attract attention. This is in Alaska where there should be some ice for this bear to be on, not solid ground.

Returning to Antarctica just for a moment, the thing that seems to be the most dramatic for people as a landscape have to do with glaciers. All but one or two glaciers on the planet are shrinking very rapidly, and even the ones in Antarctica – on the edges of Antarctica are starting to flow faster. This is in Antarctica. And so I undertook to find old pictures of glaciers and to travel to where those pictures were made and see what it looked like now. This was a picture I took of my own hand and a photograph from 1932.

It's hard to read, but basically this is a picture I undertook to show glacial recession in the Andes.

The more powerful pictures are sets of pictures, and this is a poster that was done for an exhibit in New York City last fall. Sets of pictures starting in the upper left with the Athabaska Glacier in Jasper National Park, Canada, which is one of the most visited places in the world. And going through other famous glaciers, glaciers in Glacier Park – National – Glacier National Park in the U.S., and Rhone Glacier, and so on. These kinds of comparisons definitely get people's attention and it happens to be a scientific fact that glacial recession is a very strong cue to rapid climate change.

I've also gone to places where people are already in danger from climate change. One of the places that has hit a chord with people in the – in looking at the pictures is Tuvalu. This is part of Tuvalu, a very small atoll in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, no more than about four meters at its highest place. And I understand that highest place was actually a bulldozing place where they made the landing strip that you can see there in that photograph. But when I was there in February of 2005, they had what's called king tides and high enough to come in over the roads and come up right into people's gardens and into their – in to where they live. And this particular photograph was made on February 9<sup>th</sup>, and I was very lucky to upload this picture to the BBC web site the same day from Tuvalu via satellite. And BBC ran it and made a link to my web site and I got almost a million hits on my web site that day. People definitely are connecting with this issue.

Another place where people are already at risk is Alaska. This is a picture of Shishmaref on the coast of Alaska suffering from incredible erosion because the permafrost is melting and also because there's not as much ice in the ocean so the waves from the Bering Sea can come right in and take the buildings away. This town – it's about 500 people live there. They're going to have to move and it's unknown now where that money is going to come from to reestablish their village in a safer place. And I think the conversations I've had with native Alaskans and the pictures I've made are definitely the kind of image that everyone can connect with.

Other places in the world where I've photographed people that are already at risk, this is in China. It's very appropriate now since President Hu is visiting. By the way, that's a question that we've been asking for some time in this country. President Hu? (Laughter.) But they having – not only are they a cause of a great deal of climate change and emissions, but they've also already begun to feel the effects with drought and so on.

And this picture made just last summer indicates the threat to Bangladesh. This is not high – this is a high tide, but not during any kind of storm or flood. This is just the normal high tide. You can see how little free board they have with these villages. If the sea level should rise even half a meter, a great percentage of that particular part of the town would be under water.

Then there's Miami. Until Katrina hit, I had to explain what might happen if a large hurricane and storm surge came into an American coastal city. We don't have to talk about that anymore. We saw it happen and we saw the ramifications. But just as a reminder, there's no free board in Miami either and many other places have this problem of rising sea level and the real threat of even a medium-sized storm coming in on a higher tide.

We have some technology. And I would – just as a reminder that I think that at sometimes environmental issues are taken a little bit too seriously in terms of the kind of deadly talk that we go through, a little bit of humor helps. One of the things I found was in talking about graphs and charts and all the technical part that people get bored pretty fast, but somebody put together a chart that actually – I mean, I'm not sure about the data, but it's pretty interesting. It correlates the change in temperature with the number of pirates, so I think that the message from the skeptics is you have to be careful of your data. And I think that global warming data is very solid, but you have to be very careful of correlations like this.

The other direction that I'm going in preparation for a book that I'm doing is to talk about where we get our energy now and the directions that we need to go. And so I'm making pictures of American coal mining now in the Appalachians. There just was an article in *Vanity Fair* and other places. This is an issue that needs to be taken care of. We should not be treating our land and our people like this to get coal. This is in West Virginia. And, of course, we do have alternatives and to talk immediately about what we can do and what everyone should be doing and what companies can do is where we need to move the discussion now.

I want to share this with you because this came to me actually just yesterday from somebody who saw my web site. And if you can't read it, it says, "Although I do not have a science background of any kind, I would like to be able to do something. The photographs are so revealing and so sad. I know I will not live long enough to see the devastation caused by greenhouse gases, but my grandchildren will. If you have suggestions for me or know of groups I can join, please let me know." I think she'll see – I think – I don't know how old this woman is, but I think she may see changes in her lifetime. But this is the kind of connection I think we need to make and to have real actions ready for people so they can know what direction to take and can start helping immediately.

Thank you.

MS. COHEN: Thank you, Gary.

Judith?

MS. JUDITH HELFAND: Well, that's a perfect segue. Thank you, and thanks for having me. I've never been in a lefty think tank quite like this before. I walked in. I

was like, wow, how do you get one of these. So I'm really glad you left it on the sort of the question of what to do.

As a filmmaker who often is incredibly lucky to have lots and lots and lots of people in a room who sit in the dark, if they're on – if they're at home, they're kind of watching with their thumb, but hopefully you make it sort of arresting and as entertaining as it is sort of painful, and you're able to sort of balance the humor and the horror, and so they don't lean or they put the clicker down and they don't just watch with their thumb.

But particularly when you have millions of people watching around the world, like we did with HBO and *Blue Vinyl*, or you have a captive audience in a movie theater and you have a couple of hundred souls who are feeling something with their head and hopefully most importantly with their heart, when the lights come up they say, "What do we do?" and so that is really sort of where we come to this on some level.

We as filmmakers are very dedicated to linking our work and the hearts and minds of the people that we touch with the stories often of the activists or the scientists or the advocates and the people who are sort doing the work and struggling with that story in some way. We want to, you know, sort of link the hearts and minds of the audience to the people who are doing the work on the ground.

So in addition to being filmmakers, we're also part of an organization which I co-founded called Working Films, so when the lights go up and someone says, what do I do, we've spent months and months and months thinking about the to do, and there's people in the audience who I know we're going to be working with on *Melting Planet* so when the lights come up and someone like Sue writes in and says, "What do I do?" there's something that's very, very concrete that they can do. And that's a goal on some level of our filmmaking.

An interesting story, you said Shishmaref. Well, we started making a film, *Melting Planet*, that was going to be a juxtaposition of places where you could truly see the impact of global warming and juxtapose that with stories of – whacky stories of adaptation and maybe hopeful stories of mitigation and certainly solutions, which is what a lot of the films that people are making right now on global warming are doing. But when we were in Shishmaref, and we were there for about, I don't know, 10 or 12 days a couple Junes ago, Tony, who is in charge of actually taking up the whole village and helping them move and he's in charge of relocation, we were filming him right at the shoreline that you just saw. And we said, "Okay, what about here?" And he said, "This is good. That's where the BBC shot me, and that's where the French did the story about me, and that's where the Japanese did a story about me," and we said, "Gee. Oh, my gosh." He goes, "And *People Magazine* was over here. Actually, no, they did me in front of the house."

And we just started to think like the only thing that changes – everyone comes here and the only thing that changes is that there's more erosion and another house has kind of fell into the ocean. And perhaps these stories of impact are not quite – maybe it's

not about that, at least from our perspective. I mean, it is, but we started to take one step back and we started to think about the people who were struggling to tell the stories, the Garys of the world.

And so we actually flipped and we for ourselves, we decided that the story for us was the struggle to get the story out. And since we're speaking to an American audience with our film and since Americans really sort of – they often will champion the underdog, so if they watch someone who is struggling to try to figure out how to talk to someone and they sit up at night and they worry about it and they're on top of their roof and they're sort of screaming and no one's listening, that possibly they would like that character. And if they liked that character, maybe they'd get the science sideways. So we wouldn't sort of talk at them. They'd sort of watch this real serious problem through somebody who was trying to get it out to them, and so that became our story *Melting Planet*.

So like we say, we say linked by a common struggle, a group of self-appointed global warming messengers are on a high-stake quest to bridge the most dangerous chasm ever to emerge between scientific understanding and political action. They seek to understand why a crisis they see as urgent and terrifying is perceived by their fellow citizens as distant and irrelevant, and by their government with apathy and denial. They range in age and experience from a 23-year-old Yale dropout and his compatriots trying to organize campuses across the country into a political movement – he gets a Mohawk along the way – to an investigative journalist, one of our heroes – we call him the Colombo of climate change, Ross Gelbspan, who's no longer able to bear the burden of the truth that he's uncovered and sort of wants to quit, but then he doesn't because of Katrina; and a whistleblower, Rick Piltz, who we were lucky enough to be the first to interview with – four days after he left his job and he was the guy who wrote – whose work led to Cooney sort of leaving his position, going back to ExxonMobil. And all of this is so that we could expose – is so that he could expose his climate change science memos that had been blatantly manipulated by big oil political operatives. So all of this happens and we juxtapose all of these stories.

The piece that I want to show you is our Arctic ambassador, Sheila Watt-Cloutier and this is a story about sort of global warming messaging writ very, very, very large – sort of a big scream to the rest of the world to kind of wake up. And I think sort of for us, it's sort of about juxtaposing everyday life with everyday life, and sort of saying, oh, my gosh. Look – how much more do they have to scream and hoping that the American public will sort of want to listen before everybody gets too hoarse to the point where they can't or, as I said, if we all go down in the boat, you could just pull out your flute and play for us.

So maybe you could roll the tape. This is just a work in progress. Actually, the world has not seen this, so if C-SPAN is really watching then this is a world premiere of a work in progress. It will be a feature and it'll come out in 2007. This is just a little taste.

(Film clip shown.)

(Applause.)

Oh, we should – you want to cut that off? Yeah. We’re – yeah. They’re working on it. So that’s just a little taste. Actually, that’s probably – so you can get a sense of sort of toxic comedy meets global warming. And I’ll just sort of end by saying it’s an interesting moment where the longer our country waits to sort of truly, truly participate and the data sort of gets worse and the evidence becomes more and more solid, or more and more melted as the case may be, or more and more hot, this seems like the scientists then are sort of becoming advocates, which is not necessarily what they want to do. Now, advocates have to become poets. And everybody is sort of on this quest to sort of search for what will that ultimate image be? I’m not sure that it’s – that it’s an image, but there’s no doubt in my mind that linking art and science and activism and altruism and you’re recognizing that.

MS. COHEN: All right. Thanks. Nicole?

MS. NICOLE ST. CLAIR: Well, thank you. That was actually a great segue for me, both because I was there at that Arctic picture that they were taking and froze my butt off too, but (audio gap). I’ll just talk loudly. Who told me on the plane all about this new movie he was going to be in about gay cowboys and I thought, I’m going to have to try and look for that when it comes out.

We have been involved in trying to find an iconic image for this issue that would pull together what the scientists are telling us, what people are starting to understand just even deeply personally in their own lives. And the sense that we’re sort of at a moment of cultural transformation, and we wanted to help nudge that moment along by partnering with the Ad Council, who has a history of doing that kind of thing – of taking once verboten issues and bringing them into the mainstream in a way that once they’ve done that, we forget how much things have changed so quickly.

So I would like to start actually by showing the two PSAs that we developed with the Ad Council and then talk about them after that.

MS. COHEN: All right. Maybe you can tell us a little bit about the PSAs?

(Public service announcement shown.)

MS. ST. CLAIR: So when we first showed those ads with Ogilvy and Mather who developed them pro bono, one of our staff members said, “Well, that ought to do it.”

I want to talk a little bit first about the process of what we were trying to do because even the way that we approached this issue and these ads and this depiction – this sort of hard-hitting depiction of the problem and certainly bringing children into it was a little bit of a departure for the style of Environmental Defense which has been –

our tag line, for those of you who don't know, it's finding the ways that work. We're very focused on solutions. We're focused on being bipartisan. We're focused on working with everybody to solve problems. And yet when we were going through the two-year creative development process, and there were ads developed before these were settled on, we kind of ended up with three sort of basic principles for a public engagement.

One was, first of all, the wake-up call in the sense that when you are in such an incredibly dense media environment, it takes a lot to grab people and kind of shake them into paying attention. And certainly when they're watching TV with their thumb, as you put it so well, that's just a very hard thing to do these days and it kind of – so you want to have that startle effect.

Secondly, we felt that it was very important that we're in a moment now where people need to start to feel personally engaged. People feel, I think, personally worried, but don't feel that there's a lot they can personally do. And we know historically now that as much as we work hard in Washington to pass policies, we can't move the nation forward on anything unless people personally feel that they have a stake in the outcome and they understand why.

And third, we thought that having an icon, having the image that sort of pulls the whole story together and is a memorable moment in the national psyche is just incredibly important. And a lot of people are doing that: everything from Gary's pictures, which people are now becoming quite familiar with, and the many movies that are starting to come out, and people are starting to have a sense of this is really something that's happening, but we wanted to try to bring it into the American pop culture as much as we could.

So when we were going through the process, we did try solutions. We tried to cut to the chase of light bulbs and hybrids and things like that, and Ogilvy came up with some really clever, cute ads about those things, and they just – they didn't do it. And I think something interesting about that is that I've noticed just walking through an airport I can't walk around without seeing energy company ads about carbon and the solution and renewal energy and there's really pretty pictures. And I think it's Chevron that has those really fun full-page ads that are like daisies going around, but they're electric plugs and it's terrific. And I think that that – the fact that that is happening means that the country is starting to understand the moment that we're in – the transformational moment of energy that we're in, but it's lacking that urgency and it's lacking certainly the near panic that scientists are starting to feel and feel like they're sort of shouting into the wind and we're not hearing it.

So we went back to the drawing board saying, okay, more urgent. I have to say we laughed at ourselves because we kept saying more urgent, more urgent. And then when we actually saw the ads we said, oh, gosh. (Laughs.) Is it that serious? But we asked for it. And the reason – part of the reason we asked for it, too, is – and certainly we were careful. We did a lot of research. We shared it with people all along the way. We

had focus groups. We did the whole thing. But the thing that people would tell us is that certainly they care about protecting those they love and so certainly your children are the ultimate sense of love for human beings. And the other way that I think human beings – I think almost the only way human beings can really relate to the future in a personal way and certainly to relate to the concept of 30 years, which it has been posited as the sort of tipping point when we just have lost our chance to do something about this, the only way to have that concept of 30 years is to look at their eight-year-old. And I think that's where we came forward with that.

So now, if you'll notice – I don't know if you did notice – at the end of the ads it said there's still time. The little girl does not get hit by the train. And it says, go to [fightglobalwarming.com](http://fightglobalwarming.com). And we worked very hard on doing a website that has all the information about the melting glaciers and the more global effects, but we started to try and bring in some of the personal engagement. And certainly the focus – a lot of the focus of this website is on what you can do, but even on the problem side I always find it troubling to posit some of those global problems with the everyday facets of American life: driving your car and heating and lighting your home. Nobody wants to go backwards on that and so I feel like that's an unfair setup that we're doing. And so we wanted to kind of just turn that around a little bit.

So we did some great work. Our writers did terrific work on finding just individuals who are starting to – I wanted it to look like an Oprah site or a real simple or something where they talk about your house and home, your health, your kids. So this, for example, is a – actually, the daughter or 12-year-old daughter of one of our members who had to stop playing soccer, even though she was a star soccer player – she's 12 years old – because she had bad asthma and there are just too many bad air days that are exacerbating that. And I think there are gardeners around the country who are aware – I mean, my mother is aware of how the zones are changing for planting. People have their own awareness of the problem. And even if they can't to our satisfaction focus – focus groups and polls exactly explain the problem and the policy solution. They know something's up. And so I think we felt that we were at a moment where we could just push the envelope a little bit and nudge people a little bit further into, yeah, something is up and we've got to do something about it.

We're in good company also on that. We've seen Fox News doing a special. We've seen Oprah doing an entire program where she was saying, "Come on, you know, everybody, change your light bulbs." And so that's sort of all out there. And as I say, the energy company stuff is also helping with people starting to get comfortable with the idea that there are these solutions in front of us.

However, the one place we want to kind of jump forward – I think all of us want to jump forward from is this idea of it's a policy issue. And we in Washington love policy issues and we think those are exciting and fun and compelling to talk about, but that's remote for the public. And what we want to do is move from a policy issue to global warming becoming a part of the cultural lexicon, a sign that something is going wrong, and that energy use – how we use our energy, where we get it from, what its

effects are – is part of our cultural transformation. And so I always like to say that I feel like we're in – global warming is part of a bigger narrative, and Gary referred to that by showing the strip mining.

We're really in a point now where it's about storytelling, and I think that the really basic story here is that there is a battle royale going on right now for our future. And on one side you see fossil fuels ferociously now doing not only advertising for strong sort of energy company renewable things, which I think is positive, but also ferociously battling to scrape away every little last bit of the earth where they can and sort of cling to that old way. That worked for us so well. I mean, I'm very happy that we discovered how to harness fossil fuels in the last 100 years. Obviously, that's changed our lives and created modern civilization in a lot of ways, but we are now on this brink of the new energy future. And I feel that that entire future is just sort of bubbling right below the surface. People are interested in it and people are inspired by it, and so we want to capture that sense that we are at that moment.

So what do PSAs have to do with that? There is – I can't even – there's a litany of the famous PSAs that the Ad Council has done, including this one, "Friends don't let friends drive drunk." Now, we all feel as adults at this time in 2006 that driving drunk is obviously a stupid thing to do and no one would ever do that, and everybody's aware you need to have a designated driver. Well, I'm 38. In my lifetime people used to say, let's have one for the road. That's how much this campaign helped change that awareness over time.

Another one that many of us are familiar with, it's the crying Indian. A lot of us who grew up in the '70s remember him at the side of the road crying when he saw people littering. Now, littering may seem like a small issue but it seemed like an intractable issue at the time, and that's joined by many issues. AIDS. I remember when we didn't know what AIDS was, much less talked about condoms freely in public discourse. "This is your brain on drugs," a couple of those.

I think that now what we want to do is we want to – if we're showing global warming as a transformation point, we want to have that iconic image – that juxtaposition between that old way of doing things, bearing down on the future in a way that is untenable and not right. And so many of us have thought that this might be the iconic image [train bearing down on little girl]. I actually personally think it might be this one [close-up of little girl's face]. I think the expression on this child's face – it captures her response to the folly of our generation. It – there's so much in her expression of sort of couldn't you guys have done better, can't you do better? You know what to do, can't you just do it? And I think that that reminds us that we can and must do better for their future and for the future of this planet. So that's what we're doing.

(Applause.)

MS. COHEN: Thanks, Nicole. And your point about storytelling is the perfect segue to our last panelist, Stan Robinson.

MR. KIM STANLEY ROBINSON: It is indeed. Thank you very much. It was a hard story to tell when it was something that might happen in the next 200 to 500 years and the temperatures might go up a little bit. It was difficult to get a handle on how important it was and how you would tell it in story terms if you wanted to. But that's all changed and it represents a paradigm shift really in the sciences and I think now in the culture, and it's not been that long.

Really, the first book called *Abrupt Climate Change* came out from the National Research Council in 2002, and this book was a compilation of the scientific studies of the previous decade or so. And I think that the real paradigm-buster was the results from the Greenland ice core where they 100,000 years of data that was really good on the atmospheric content. And they realized that as we were warming up from the last ice age, we dropped back into the little ice age called the Younger Dryas, and that that had happened – really profound climate change – in apparently three years. And the data were pretty undeniable and the scientific community took notice.

So the other thing I think that's been really important has been the impact on the oceans, which it only recently has been noticed that this carbon dioxide added to the atmosphere does – is not just in the air, but also uptake by the oceans, and the oceans are markedly more acidic than they were before. And this is really important because the oceans are sensitive and the bottom of the food change, the phytoplankton and the other really small creatures have very delicate calcium shells that may not form in a more acidic ocean. And if the bottom of the food chain goes, as we all know from our third-grade science class, the top of the food chain and everywhere in between is in trouble, and we're at the top of the food chain.

So these things have made a difference in the scientific community and this is another part of the paradigm shift is you've never seen the scientific community act like this before. They tend to want to stay in their labs and do their science, and it's remarkable how in America, especially scientists have very little impact on policymaking here in Washington, D.C. But now they're banding together in their associations and groups and the international impact of these groups is now undeniable. And the media – the usual journalistic practice of trying to find both sides of an issue in order to be fair to both sides has broken down, I think, under the impact of the consensus view by all these scientists that there may be some individual scientists still out there that a journalist can track down and find that say that this is not a problem, but now they're clearly anomalous and the scientific community is on board on this and is acting like an alarm in a hotel.

And what they're pointing out is that it isn't just a change in the weather, but a mass extinction event that like the end of the Cretaceous when the meteor struck, like the end of the Permian when 95 percent of all species died. This will be an anthropogenic mass extinction event, which the scientists like to use the Latin words for it, but it means that we'll be killing off the biosphere.

So it becomes an easier story to tell in a lot of ways and is, I think, the basis for what we're seeing now as the kind of cultural revolution. And one of the things that everybody's asking is, can we actually do this change fast enough? Can we – because when we discovered the ozone layer was being wrecked by chlorofluorocarbons, we managed to change that out in about ten years, but that was actually a very small industry. This one is fundamental, as we know, to our civilization. It's the power generation and it's the – our transport systems. And we also with the United States, 5 percent of the world's population are burning 25 percent of the world's carbon per year.

So we need a technological change of quite major proportions and we need the sort of social movement that goes along with it – a kind of cultural revolution. And the question arises, can we do this in time? And I think that I, like all science fiction writers, look to history to use analogies in order to construct models of the future. And you do see rapid cultural revolutions in the past. It's possible to do both the technological shifts like the change from LPs to cassettes to CD players. It's actually a useful part of capitalism to replace the technology that's already maxed out with a new one. Then also the New Deal, that – and the earlier crisis – international crisis in world history that our federal government was able to react with the New Deal and that this gives us some models for behavior right now.

It's a new investment possibility. The clean technologies that we need for power generation and for transport, they already exist. They're very close to ready. It's merely a question of figuring out how to arrange the cost of it, which will clearly be shared by all of society. It's not as if there are certain special interests that are going to suffer horribly out of this. It's simply going to be the cost of survival and so it can be factored in, I think, fairly easily. And I think it's going to be – really, the story of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be: can we invent a sustainable civilization by using the mechanisms that we already have in place politically and technologically to do this? And we have a fairly short period of time here to do it in and yet if we are all on board with it I think it can be done.

Now, you know, science fiction will be telling that story in advance as a kind of predictive, act as a form of modern day prophecy. It's done that all along and 20<sup>th</sup> century science fiction did a tremendous job in predicting the feel of right now. I often say that we're all now living in a science fiction novel that we are co-authoring, and that's what – the best description of the feel of modern America in the Year 2006 is really American science fiction of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Now, writing it now in that context, since we live in a science fiction novel and the question of what the science fiction writer writes right now is actually a problem, and every writer has to solve that in their own way. You have to think of science fiction stories as being like scenarios that test out a kind of a model and say, "Well, if we do this, we'll get there. If we do that, we'll get over here." And then write a story that makes it more or less plausible as a kind of thought experiment to test it.

Naturally, because things either go well or poorly, most science fiction stories will break down into either the utopian or the dystopian, and we all know what those are. We

can immediately think of examples of both. And it's interesting that many of the most famous science fiction novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were dystopias, but it needn't be thought that this means that science fiction has been negative or that the future will be negative. A dystopia is like a warning sign saying, "Don't go here." And it's fundamentally a utopian gesture saying that we can make choices right now that will make a difference; that what we do now matters. So that science fiction is fundamentally a positive and utopian gesture no matter how horrible the future is that's being depicted.

So, you know, 20<sup>th</sup> century utopias are a little bit thin on the ground and yet they keep cropping back. H.G. Wells with an amazingly stubborn persistence kept writing them until he died at the end of World War II. And I believe that what happens is people begin to think: "Well, the future's going to be like," and when they try to imagine it, it's the consensus bulk of all the science fiction they've ever seen and read that forms that vision. And that H.G. Wells had a measurable impact on the postwar world because he kept saying it's going to be like this: a scientific meritocracy with a kind of a social safety net at the bottom and it's going to be a good society, and he kept saying that even in the face of quite remarkable dark times for the last 20, 25 years of his life.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we have the *Ecotopia* by Ernest Callenbach which a lot of people in the Pacific Northwest still live by and determine to make come to pass. And the ongoing example of the work of Ursula K. Le Guinn, who keeps on writing on how we can have a more environmentally conscious technological future and it will be a good place. So there are problems with writing stories about when things go right, but Tolstoy famously said, "All happy families are alike," implying that they are therefore boring – (laughter) – and hard to do in story terms.

And if you were to propose to write a novel in which you say, "Well, the history of the 10 years in which we swapped out the technological base and managed to keep on living as we did before," this doesn't sound like the greatest topic for a novel. In fact, it kind of reminds one of the old Soviet socialist-realist novels like Gladkov's *Cement* and other books like that. I quite like those novels, but it's clear that it's a narrative problem to tell this story of how things go well. But you have to think about it: even if you try to make things go well, problems are going to arise. We're going to do it badly and so there's a certain comedy in just the intention. So that really utopias ought to all be seen as black comedies or as toxic comedies and then they make sense in narrative terms, and hopefully there will be a lot of them and they will help to shape what we do in this next century.

MS. COHEN: Well, thanks, Stan.

I'm going to take the first question and then we're going to open it to the audience. So get your questions ready.

I just want to throw out to the panel the two kind of biggest sort of pop culture creative works on global warming that have hit the public had been the movie *The Day After Tomorrow* and Michael Crichton's *State of Fear* and both of those have been

criticized for how they treated some of the science and the artistic license they took. And so I wondered if you guys could share a little with us about what you see as your responsibility to the scientists as you're trying to communicate their stories and what they're seeing as well as how you feel about your responsibility to the public; while you're trying to entertain them and move them, you know, you're also trying to educate them and how you balance all those things, and – so if anybody wants to jump in. I hope that wasn't too tough a question. I sort of warned Stan about it, so I don't know if he wants to maybe answer first.

MR. ROBINSON: Well, sure. All art depends – especially narrative – on the willing suspension of disbelief of the audience, so that you suspend your disbelief on purpose in order to entertain this fiction and see how it goes. The viewer of the movie, the reader of the book will give up on that project of suspending their disbelief if they're flagrantly insulted by things that they know not to be true in the real world, so it's a tricky thing but you have to try to be plausible. You have to engage in a collaboration with the audience that says this could happen and if you do things too radically unrealistic as happened in the movie *The Day After Tomorrow*, where they didn't really trust the material and threw in every possible disaster within a two-week period to give it a kind of a Hollywood bang –

MS. COHEN: I think it was a weekend. (Laughter.)

MR. ROBINSON: Well, a weekend in hell. It was when the wolves appeared on the deck of the frozen ship that I realized that they had gone to far. (Laughter.) And also I have not read *State of Fear*, but I have heard descriptions of it and if it is true that he has environmentalists conspiring to murder people in order to hoax environmental damage and not only that, but keep it secret, which is really perhaps the most implausible thing of all, then it's too implausible to work as art. (Laughter.) So you have keep that in mind.

MS. COHEN: Thanks. Anybody? Any of the other panelists want to –

MS. ST. CLAIR: I would also just say for the narrative that I was describing that our nation is in right now, you always need tension for a good narrative. And I think that the tension that we're seeing is that fear – the state of fear that the old guard is in about losing their hold on the whole economy, and I don't think it's a necessary fear. I think there's a – I think as I said there's a transformational moment where they can move forward. But when we did our ads – and we had a lot of debate about even talking about 30 years as being this sort of tipping point because we didn't want people to be distracted by arguing about the science, obviously. And we were very surprised when we actually launched the ads a month ago: there was not really any argument about that. And so my attitude is that when things like the Michael Crichton book popped up, that's a sign of sort of a losing side getting worried and some people thought it was a good beach read. I also heard it wasn't a very good book, maybe for the reasons he said.

MS. HELFAND: You know, for – it's funny because we have to be – we have to be done by, I guess, sort of the end of the summer and we're going to be done just when

hurricane season strikes again. And then, you know, sort of everything can shift. And so I want, you know, we're like: "Oh, no," you know, "What do we do?" you know, "How do we – do we wait for sort of the ending and what happens and," you know, "if this isn't the tipping point right now and if this sort of confluence of all of this media doesn't move things, well then, you know, what does that mean? And then what if there's this other hurricane and what does that mean and what do we do?" And, you know, unfortunately it's sort of like the big – I think, the big drama in all of this is just sort of being able to collapse a future that hasn't – that on some level is it's happening, but how do you collapse the future into the present without everybody having to get hurt in order for them to get it so they can move on something before they completely experience it? And on one level, we all know that we are very experiential learners and until it's sort of like you get cancer or your house blows away, you just don't get it. And I think that that's – that's the drama that we are sort of trying to sort of grapple with.

And that is the interesting thing about the messengers is that they get it without – they get it. So why do they get it and someone else doesn't? And so it's sort of is that place that we're really interested in working in.

But the one place in *Day After Tomorrow* that was really profound, think it's the vice president, sort of, said something like: "Why didn't you tell us?" And he's like, "I've been trying to," you know, and it's like all hell's breaking loose. And so I think that was – that was the profound; that was not about fiction, you know. I mean, that was foreshadowing in the future and the past all pushed together, right?

MS. COHEN: Gary, do you want to add anything?

MR. BRAASCH: Well, I just want to say that the issue of the imprecision of the way science moves study by study, sort of incremental, is one of the problems that writers and artists and the political system has to deal with. We actually know more about climate change and what is happening and what may happen in the near future about climate than we do about a whole lot of business and political decisions that we make. And I think making more comparisons about how much information we have and how those decisions need to be made on that regard I think would be important. It's probably not my role to do, but the idea of how people assume there may be a fire in their house even though it hasn't happened to them and they don't – and they're being very careful not to have it, nevertheless they have insurance.

And I think we need to think in the same sort of terms in order to move this more in the political realm of taking out these insurance policies of doing these things that are – that actually positive changes to our energy supply and so forth because we already have enough information to see that there is a direction of movement in the climate that is not good, but this is a difficulty of communicating this. It's not – the alarm bells are going off, but the fire trucks aren't actually rolling up to your house yet and that's a moment we need to try to work to make more palpable to people.

MS. COHEN: All right. Thanks. We'll go to your questions now. Please wait for the mike. And if we have any press here, I just want to give them the first opportunity, so any press? Any questions? No? Well, we'll take this gentleman right here. Please give us your name and any affiliation.

Q: Sure. I'm Robert Alexander and I'm on your mailing list. I do a fair amount of things with all the local activists and I guess sensible policy groups. I thank all of you very much for coming. It's nice to see the scientists and the folks who are behind the cameras and things come out of the lab and meet and greet.

I guess I had a first thought, and I see it happening here at the Center for American Progress, is that we need like a cultural DARPA, like the Defense Advanced Research Projects Administration where they come up all the ideas at the Defense Department, and I sort of see that happening here. And with art and the cultural people being a big role in that and by that we also – with art, we address the environment, which you guys are doing.

I want to just say I grew up without religion and without art, but with nature, and that I've come to love both religion and art a whole lot. Both have their foundations in nature. And like you guys are doing, I want to posit that we need to re-teach through art. And now that I've learned a little bit about religion, the Bible as art or literature, and the first story of Genesis which talks about climates and the flood.

MS. COHEN: Do you have a question for our panelists?

Q: Well, actually I guess, you know, it's sort of like I would like – would any of you meet me after here and I'd like to collaborate on any projects? I have a bit of a thesis but rather than even push that because that's sort of not really my way, I'd rather just give you a thought or two and then like free memes really. The Genesis story has God – has God destroying man the first time after man destroys earth and then he doesn't really do it anymore.

MS. COHEN: I'm sure our panelists would be happy to talk to you afterwards, but we've got a couple other questions in the audience. So I'd like to go to those unless you had a question that you want to pose.

Q: Well, I don't think they'd be able to answer it themselves, the question I posed, unless I gave them a brief outline.

MS. COHEN: All right. Well, why don't you talk to them afterwards then?

Q: Okay.

MS. COHEN: Thanks. And we have a question over here.

Q: Hi. Rabbi Daniel Schwartz, Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light. Hi, Judith.

MS. HELFAND: Oh, hi. It's a great segue. (Laughter.)

Q: I actually don't have a question about religion although folks should know that the next one –

MS. COHEN: We'll get to that.

Q: – in the series. Okay.

MS. HELFAND: And we can talk to each other afterwards.

Q: Right. When you're talking about the notion of a battle royale, Nicole, and the resistance to transformation and how deep – a number of the panelists how deep this transformation is. It's just not one industry; it's a bunch of industries. The metaphor that came to my mind was slave-owning societies resisting the end of slavery, and I was wondering if any artists to your knowledge have used that as a metaphor, the immorality of slavery and yet this huge resistance to giving up this very profitable economic model.

MS. ST. CLAIR: I don't know about artists using it. Actually, that's funny. That came up at a meeting I was in last summer where we were talking about our goals in 20 years or something, and we were talking about one of the goals being the national conversation being changed so much on this that it would be like that, where people might have used to say, "Well, how would the South survive economically without using slaves?" And we'd like to get to that same place of how could we, you know, possibly not wreck the economy if we don't stop using oil? And so that's all I can say about that. That's what resonated with me. I don't know if anybody else knows about that.

MS. COHEN: Stan?

MR. ROBINSON: I don't think it's a good analogy because of the moral horror of slavery. I mean, finding oil and finding out that we could power our civilization with it was basically a good thing and it was an accident that carbon dioxide fills the atmosphere and changes the climate that we discovered. And now, there are oil companies that are resisting a change, but there are also enormous collections of capital in need of new investment possibilities and may be convinced by some fairly subtle federal nudging to invest in these new areas as in undeveloped country that needs to be developed: a country called sustainability. And there's good guys throughout all of these energy companies and industries and it was a relatively small campaign to kind of derail this question in the '90s and not everybody was on board the way, say, everybody in the tobacco industry was on board that disinformation campaign. So I think we ought to think of it in a more positive terms than that.

MS. ST. CLAIR: You know, I could say one thing about the battle royale: that's exactly right that there are – there's a wide array of people in the energy industry. It's not that – I don't believe it's the energy industry versus everybody else. I think there's a tiny fraction who are powerful in the moment, but I think that's right.

MS. COHEN: All right. We've got some more hands. We have one – we'll go right there, Paige, to begin with.

Q: Hi. My name is Josh and I'm with the World Resources Institute. My question is if we take the '60s as a time that in which art and pop culture was used to successfully promote cultural issues and we sort of see that what failed in that movement was the way in which politics sort of splintered into something that was more about identity rather than the unified identity against some sort of struggle, is it possible then to levy sufficient – like a quorum of people to now work through pop culture as a way to influence change, or has what pop culture is become too disparate to make that a possibility?

MS. COHEN: Gary, you were here in D.C. in the '60s, you were telling us. (Laughter.) Should I put you on the spot?

MR. BRAASCH: Well, I will have to say I'm not sure – I'm not sure I agree with the idea that the '60s failed, but to put it – I am certainly of that generation and it is true in my own heart that I feel that the goals that were given out in terms of caring for the earth and personal attention to your surroundings and in a sort of an anti-corporate direction from the standpoint of "Let's not all be the same. Let's not all buy the same products. Let's not all, you know, get caught up in what somebody else thinks we should buy." Those kinds of ideas I think – some of those did not carry on in the society. I think that we are very much less connected with nature in general than we were then and that has disserved everyone. It has disserved the country.

And one of my goals since I have tried to keep my feelings from when I was a young man into my older age here and in my work is that nature is really important and what the world does for us is extremely important. We will not be here, the culture would not be alive, our society would not be the way it is if nature was not providing us with immense amounts of services at no cost to us, initially anyway. And this is something that's been overlooked a lot.

So just from my own point of view, if we can in this moment of energy crisis and climate crisis that's coming along here, I think if we can see how important it is for us to understand what nature does and the healing powers of the planet and more directly about the ways that we're harming some of the natural services of the planet, then I think we'll be able to take a bigger picture of what we're doing and make easier the transformation.

The fact that glaciers are rapidly melting is not just about going to vacation in what used to be Glacier National Park. And it really is about that that's the source of water for at least two billion people directly on the planet. It's the source of the great

rivers of the world and there will still be water running in those rivers but the amount of water that will not come because especially in the summer when the glaciers are melted back too far is an immense problem that is coming. That's part of that freight train. And I think it's possible to slow that and it will be a great service to the entire planet if we – if this is one of the goals. So I think just in terms of my own connection with nature, we need to look at the bigger picture of what the planet – what's happening with the planet and how we use those services and integrate that in the goals that we have for this change.

MS. COHEN: I'd just add to it real quickly that when I was putting this panel together, I was looking for a musician and there's lots who were doing really great stuff in educating people at their concerts and what they do, but I couldn't find anybody who had the song yet, but I'm told Melissa Etheridge has written one for Al Gore's movie, so maybe that will be the first and there'll be more.

But it looks like Judith and Stan wanted to say something?

MS. HELFAND: Yeah. I just, you know, 1995 there was a terrible, horrible, horrific heat wave which actually did not sort of bore itself into the psyche of the American public. Seven hundred thirty-nine people died in just a few days, you know. They basically were cooked in their apartments behind closed doors and the majority of them, you know, were older, poor and more often than not people of color. And there was a very, very similar scenario this past September in New Orleans. And so I think that, well, you know, when we think about sort of like the '60s and, you know, my thinking sort of goes back to the Back to the Earth Movement and identity politics. And it's very, very, very important to talk about nature, but I think that we have an opportunity right now.

Same thing, you know, when we made *Blue Vinyl*, it became very clear that unless it was an affordable alternative to vinyl siding that they could sell at Home Depot, it's just not going to work. And so if we just talk about nature, which is a great thing, but if you can't afford to go on vacation and you can't afford to sort of leave the city, and, in fact, the city is the place that will cook you if there's a heat wave because there's no economic infrastructure and there are sort of no grocery store to go to or a movie theatre to go to because there's just nothing there because it's sort of an urban-rural place. You know, then we are all in trouble. So I think what we learned is that we have to sort of address disaster preparedness, which now really just means addressing the root causes of poverty. And so perhaps there's a way to address the root causes of poverty and embrace the energy – you know, the – what were you calling it that was so great? The power generation and this great economic opportunity all at once. And I think if we could do that, you know, then, you know, we could sort of take sort of black power and turn it to green power and we could sort of do something that's really effective.

So I just want to remind us when we think about sort of like the '60s or the sort of great opportunity we have when we think about nature, we can't do it from a place of elitism, which I'm not saying that you are, but we sort of really have to think about what

this great economic opportunity really could mean and who has to be included in it and who gets hurt first for the global warming.

MS. COHEN: Okay. Question. Paige, the woman in the pink up here in front.

Q: Hi. I'm Emily (unintelligible) from Congressman Tom Allen's office. And my question sort of goes to congressmen and senators now who do want to get involved in the global warming issue, my boss being one of them. One thing that we agree with is that this isn't just a policy issue and so where we're starting to kind of brainstorm on this is how do we engage our constituents? Because we don't hear from a lot of people about global warming, but we want to like actually bring it to them instead. And so I wondered if the panel could kind of talk about how congressmen or senators who have a constituency that may believe that it's going on and think that something should be done – how we can better engage our constituents to start talking about that.

MS. COHEN: In fact, they all might want to take a crack at it, but who wants to go first?

MS. HELFAND: I just have a question: maybe they call it something else. Maybe they're actually addressing it; they just don't call it that yet.

MS. COHEN: That's a good point. Anybody want to add to that?

MR. ROBINSON: I often say to people the world is your body. And people think that it's an artist using hyperbole and they think they know where their body begins and ends, and then I invite everybody to hold their breath and then after we all start breathing again, then I point out that's part of their body and you can't do without it.

And Gary mentioned the economic value of nature. Scientists attempted to calculate this in a famous paper in *Nature* magazine: \$33 trillion a year in free services from nature. In a way, it's a silly calculation to make because it's – probably should be worth infinity, but it does illustrate how we can make these calculations. And so I think a lot of people are really worried about their own bottom line and surviving economically in these hard times and that it could be put in those terms: that this is a matter of health.

I also think there's a positive way of put – because all these are so negative and it really – it begins to sound like people need to get into renunciation and our culture is not good at renunciation – not at all – and I'm not myself. But if you think about it, we're all primates and we're a kind of chimpanzee and our brains grew by a factor of three in just a million years by doing relatively simple things in the outdoor world. And I've been pursuing this experiment and just doing whatever the Paleolithic people did and rather than the technological replacement for that activity because there certainly is a for-profit technological replacement for all of the natural acts that we do – all of them. And yet if you take a step back to the natural act itself, it's more fun, it's healthier and it is less of a carbon cost. So there's a collection of goods out of acting this way in that you could be happier, healthier, spend less money and wreck the planet less all at once. And so it

doesn't come back to renunciation or behaving like saints, but merely doing the smartest thing in primate terms.

MS. COHEN: Okay. Let's go right here to the woman in blue.

Q: Thanks. Hi. I'm Leanne Tobias. I'm with Malachite (ph) LLC. First a comment, very brief, and then a question and it's a segue from the '60s because like Gary, I remember it. And on my way over here today, I was thinking of one of the most impactful ads I've seen in my life and that's, of course, the very famous little girl with the daisy ad from the Lyndon Johnson presidential campaign. And I'm wondering if it might not be a helpful thing to have an ad that has that type of powerful, immediate, frightening impact for global warming. But the question for Nicole in particular and others, is what does the focus group research show in what people know, what they need to know and what they'd like to know on the subject of climate change?

MS. ST CLAIR: Well, I'll answer that question, but I'll also say that we have a lot of people ask us, "Is this the Johnson daisy ad," – the girl in the train ad, in particular?

Q: I would tell you (inaudible).

MS. ST CLAIR: Yeah. So that's good.

Q: (Off mike.)

MS. ST. CLAIR: Or not.

MS. COHEN: I think it's close, though.

MS. ST. CLAIR: We certainly were asked that question. And the focus group research – as I referenced before, people can't always – you know, we have these sort of – especially in our environmental groups, we have exactly the causes and the solutions and the right language and people don't always nail it. You know, they don't say, "It's caused by pollution from cars and power plants," but they do know that it's pollution. They are concerned. There have been a lot of polls in the last year. We had another poll conducted for the launch of these ads by Whit Ayres who's our pollster here in Washington finding that overwhelming majority of Americans thought global warming was real, were concerned about it, weren't necessarily aware that it was as urgent as it is. I think that's one of the disconnections that we're seeing between what the scientists are saying what people are understanding.

And then the other thing is that we polled this and Fox News did a similar and more detailed poll in the fall about what individuals could do about it, and people really didn't know. And I think that's a huge amount of a problem is it's so overwhelming of a problem. I mean, I remember in the '80s, my sister cancelled our family's subscription to *Newsweek* after a cover on global warming because she thought it was too scary and, you

know, "What can I do about that?" (Laughter.) And I think we're still in that problem now.

And yet the other thing that I found striking about the poll was they asked people whether they would be willing to do things that would help and, of course, there's always a factor of people not wanting to say they wouldn't because they don't want to seem like a jerk, but even given that factor the numbers were overwhelming: in the 80s and 90s percent. And that actually goes to the other question about how do you talk about this to the constituents. Global warming is an energy issue and there's a lot of talk about energy right now on every front, right? On the geopolitical front, the energy crisis front and global warming, so I think when you start to connect it to energy use around people's homes, they get that. So –

MS. COHEN: Paige, we'll have the last question just from the gentleman right behind you in the vest, and so we need to wrap up soon so if you could get right to your question that would be great.

Q: My name is Bill Neal. I am an author. We've come close to saying it but what's the panel's take on the Apollo Alliance's New Apollo project, which is the closest to turning the ship around out there has its flaws. Ross Gelbspan wrote about it, but it's not enough art for the panelists?

MS. COHEN: Just for those people who may not be familiar with the Apollo Alliance, it's a coalition of environmental groups and labor groups trying to form a blue-green alliance and rebuild America in a green way. Anybody want to comment on whether that needs to be a green-blue artistic alliance, perhaps?

Q: (Off mike) that fraction. Any thoughts as to why?

MR. BRAASCH: Well, I would say I think ideas like that – big picture imaginings of a new economy are very important and they will get a lot more traction as we get into this. It's inevitable. I mean, we will eventually have more people in the government who think this is an issue and will move energy policy in the direction of making changes that are needed.

And I also think that – just to change the subject a little bit here to get back to personal values – there's certainly a moral and a human rights part to this whole thing if you look at the entire planet. I mean, the reason I mentioned glaciers was to focus on the fact that that's the water supply for billions of people. And I think that places in the world that have less money are also the places where they have the less benefit out of the energy that we have and they have more problems of how energy is extracted. Places that have droughts are going to see droughts are going to be deeper. So there's a way to turn this issue in your mind and also to think of the big picture that down the road a number of years when energy is maybe more evenly distributed and some of these problems are less urgent, then many people will be benefited and lives will be improved because of the changes that we can make.

MS. COHEN: Thanks, Gary. Oh, go ahead.

MS. HELFAND: Just – in answer to the question about the Apollo Alliance, I looked at my friend, Joe Uehline and I thought: “Gee, Joe must know all about that because he works for the AFL-CIO for so long and is one of the sort of – and is someone who merges art and organizing and labor all the time, so do you have an answer for that?”

MS. COHEN: If you could wait for the microphone. We’ll let you go – we’ll give you a minute.

JOE UEHLINE : Hi. Well, I would say that, yeah, the Apollo Alliance is a great project. It is missing art, and in terms of a topic for this panel rather than talking about the Apollo Alliance, we should think about, and I would ask the panelists to think about, the fact that every great social movement in history has had a backbone and a soul made of art – every one. And we’ve left the discussions up too much to the think tanks perhaps and to great initiatives that you all are taking here in moving this to art because artists see the world in a different way. When Jimi Hendrix said, “When the power of love becomes stronger than the love of power, we will have peace,” he sort of took a huge issue and boiled it down – you know, it’s like Steve Forbert’s song, you don’t have to wait for Melissa Etheridge. He wrote the song *Good Planets are Hard to Find*. (Laughter.)

MR. : I love that song.

MR. ULINE: Yes.

MS. COHEN: We obviously need an education there.

MR. UEHLINE: So I’m going to ask the panelists, how do we take this to the bottom line that was articulated earlier and that’s action?

MS. COHEN: All right. Thanks.

MR. UEHLINE: And what do we do?

MS. COHEN: And let’s just use that. If everybody wants to take just one minute to wrap up final thoughts, that will be great. Any final thoughts from the panel? (Laughter.) So go ahead, Stan.

MR. ROBINSON: In preparing for this panel, I went to the Environmental Defense website and they have connection to a place where you can rate your own household for its carbon burning. This is a tremendous tool because it goes right to your energy bill and suggests ways to lower it and it also goes right to your sense of personal responsibility. And so it’s, I think, a good action. I’ve wanted something like this online and to have found it is one of the greatest things out of this panel for me although the news was shocking, I have to say. (Laughter.)

MS. COHEN: Go ahead, Judith.

MS. HELFAND: First, one of the things that I learned from making *Blue Vinyl* and is something that we are bringing with us all the way through *Melting Planet* is – and I learned it from Bill Walsh, who runs an extraordinary organization called the Healthy Building Network and he always says, “Do not blame the consumer. It’s not their responsibility.” It’s on – you know, it’s institutional transformation that will change things. And so obviously, you know, I agree with you: it’s great to be able to do that for your house, but I think we also have to look at the big house and the White House, and so I think that we can’t do it just as lots and lots of individuals. It’s going to have to be really big and the world is waiting for us and U.S. and us with a capital “U,” so at the same time that we work on our individual houses, I see no – the only thing I could think about is that we sort of have to move sort of the political machine to participate with the rest of the world.

And obviously, states are doing that and some of the governors are doing that and they’re a wonderful model and college campuses are doing that, but we have to do it in a big way.

MS. COHEN: Nicole, do you have any final thoughts?

MS. ST CLAIR: Just that I think that this is – as scary as it is, I think it is a signal of a transformation that we’re actually undergoing as much as we’re trying to say that we should go through it. And everything from, you know, there are farmers in Kansas who are ready to be involved in carbon markets and are changing their farming practices and there are companies in Ohio where the car companies are laying off tens of thousands of people, but other new energy companies are starting up. And the *Washington Post* profiled the major investors behind Google and Amazon and E-bay are now getting into green technology and so I feel like that is on the move in America – that new energy future – and the more people start to own this problem and feel that it is a controllable thing, I think it does bump back up nationally because people feel like, if I can do this, we can do this as a nation, and so it’s less scary.

MS. COHEN: All right. Thanks.

Gary?

MR. BRAASCH: I want to go back to the famous ad, the Iron Eyes Cody ad that the Indian with the tear that we all know so well.

MS. HELFAND: He was Italian, by the way. (Laughter.)

MR. BRAASCH: This was –

MS. HELFAND: It’s true.

MR. BRAASCH: – supposedly a very successful – very successful ad campaign, but my problem with it was the slogan which was, “People cause pollution. People can stop it.” At the time, talking about litter, none of us were in control of the kind of products that we were getting and we really didn’t have a choice to stop it. We were basically told that throw-away was the way to do it, and it would basically be to make more profits for companies involved. That’s how I see it anyway.

But the second part of it is definitely true and I think what ads need to do and what films and people’s personal relations and political talk needs to do is to help people understand that it is a transformation that needs to happen not just in our own lives personally, but in the corporations and the companies and the governments that are giving us the products that we use. And so the word has to go up the chain of command.

I do believe that if American consumers and car owners and drivers refuse to buy cars until they were all hybrid, which is technically possible, I think the companies would move. But they are not offering us enough choice and I think if we – this is a direction that I think this whole movement needs to go is to have people take more control, not only of their own lives in terms of new light bulbs and appliances, but also in demanding the kind of products that we can tell them are available and the kind of lifestyle that we can tell them is available. I think this can be done and we have so many outlets now for this kind of connection to be made.

MS. COHEN: All right. Thanks. Thanks for all of you for joining us on this lunch time. I just want to let you know the second in the series “Climate and Culture” will happen Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10.30, I think, and there we’ll be looking at religious perspectives on environmental stewardship and Rabbi Schwartz will be joining us along with others.

This panel would not have happened without the very hard work and, at some points last minute very hard work of some staff members here. I just wanted to acknowledge them: Abby, Alex, Paige, and Michael. If you’ll join me in thanking the panelists, I’ll appreciate that, and Happy Earth Day to everyone.

(Applause.)

(END)