An examination of the centrality of energy resources to social formations with especial focus on how twentieth century societies were built around and became path-dependent upon oil. Subsequent consideration of the contingency of this relationship and whether there is any plan B when in this new century oil is less cheap, plentiful and much more contested especially with the growth of China whose oil supply has itself just peaked. More generally to consider whether 'modernity' was a contingent and lucky consequence of oil gushing out of the ground, beginning with the first oil gusher at Spindletop, Texas in 1901.

Seminar Details

Date: 19th September 2011 at 3pm

Venue: School of Applied Social Sciences
32 Old Elvet, Room 113

Guest Lecturer Profile: http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/sociology/profiles/john-urry/