

## ***A Cyclonic Taste of Things to Come***

**A Blog Entry in Comments From Left Field and GordonTalk**

August 26, 2005

As [Hurricane Katrina](#)—now a Category 5, the most powerful force on the planet—bears down on New Orleans, threatening the largest American city below sea-level with the cataclysmic flooding long feared, we cannot help but feel humbled by the awesome power of nature.

The other night, guest-hosting for Barry Gordon on [NewsRap](#), I discussed with my good friend [Steven R Kutcher](#), a world-class environmentalist, and our audience the physical and psychological benefits from appreciating and respecting nature (I highly recommend a new book, [Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder](#), by [Richard Louv](#)).

While such discussions among "tree huggers" rarely make for exciting, provocative debates—the whole point is that if we learn to love the world around us (field and stream, birds and bees, flowers and heaven forbid our fellow human beings) when we're young, we'll tend to love 'em when we're older—disrespecting nature can have profoundly disastrous consequences.

I hope I'm not the only one old enough to remember those old margarine commercials where the lady warned, ["It's not nice to fool](#)

[Mother Nature"](#)—right before the thunder and lightning hit.

Disregarding those words to the wise, my fellow fossil fuel—addicts, our insatiable jonesing for those combustible hydrocarbons is going to be the death of us yet.

Every million barrels of petroleum, million cubic feet of natural gas, or million tons of coal we burn add just that much more sunlight-trapping carbon dioxide to the atmosphere of [the Greenhouse we call Earth](#), getting just that much hotter year after ever less temperate year.

Not that every place on Earth will see this [rise in temperature worldwide](#); in fact, some places will experience—and, arguably, have experienced—record severe winter weather because of this phenomenon: Global Warming aggravated by our burning fossil fuels is fundamentally altering the climate of the entire Planet Earth, by adding more energy to the global weather systems.

And that brings us back to the uneasy situation in The Big Easy.

As Katrina's fury is fed by the warm waters of the Gulf—as we remember how NOAA predicted that, after a record-breaking start, [this could be one of the worst hurricane seasons ever recorded](#)

—we should take grave notice of this dire warning, based upon the best meteorological modeling, about the effect of [Global Warming on hurricanes](#):

The strongest hurricanes in the present climate may be upstaged by even more intense hurricanes over the next century as the earth's climate is warmed by increasing levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Although we cannot say at present whether more or fewer hurricane will occur in the future with global warming, the hurricanes that do occur near the end of the 21st century are expected to be stronger and have significantly more intense rainfall than under present day climate conditions.

Remember that. Remember that when we see the devastation that we unfortunately, undoubtedly will in the days ahead.

Remember that when the [Bush administration tries to stop the world](#) from dealing with the problem of Global Warming.

And remember that when we see scores, hundreds, or thousands more Americans die atop the world's second-largest known oil reserves, in Iraq.