



## The Long Emergency: Surviving the Converging Catastrophes of the Twenty-first Century

By James Howard Kunstler

With his classics of social commentary *The Geography of Nowhere* and *Home from Nowhere*, James Howard Kunstler has established himself as one of the great commentators on American space and place. Now, with *The Long Emergency*, he offers a shocking vision of a post-oil future.

The last two hundred years have seen the greatest explosion of progress and wealth in the history of mankind. But the oil age is at an end. The depletion of nonrenewable fossil fuels is about to radically change life as we know it, and much sooner than we think. As a result of artificially cheap fossil-fuel energy we have developed global models of industry, commerce, food production, and finance that will collapse. *The Long Emergency* tells us just what to expect after we pass the tipping point of global peak oil production and the honeymoon of affordable energy is over, preparing us for economic, political, and social changes of an unimaginable scale.

Are we laboring under a Jiminy Cricket syndrome when we tell ourselves that alternative means of energy are just a few years away? Even once they are developed, will they ever be able to sustain us in the way that fossil fuels once did? What will happen when our current plagues of global warming, epidemic disease, and overpopulation collide to exacerbate the end of the oil age? Will the new global economy be able to persevere, or will we be forced to revert to the more agrarian, localized economy we once knew? Could corporations like Wal-Mart and McDonald's, built on the premise of cheap transportation, become a thing of the past?

**From one of our most exciting thinkers, the most prescient and engaging look at the problems we face since Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock*.**

Riveting and authoritative, *The Long Emergency* is a devastating indictment that brings new urgency and accessibility to the critical issues that will shape our future, and that we can no longer afford to ignore. It is bound to become a classic of social science.

### Praise

“What sets *The Long Emergency* apart from numerous other books on this theme is its comprehensive sweep—its powerful integration of science, technology, economics, finance, international politics and social change—along with a fascinating attempt to peer into a chaotic future. And Kunstler is such a compelling, fast-paced and sometimes eloquent writer that the book is hard to put down...Kunstler, like George Orwell, understands that being honest about the past and present is the only way to prepare ourselves for an uncertain future. Civilization, he believes, will survive the end of cheap oil, but not without great loss. ‘How many familiar things in time may go?’ he wonders. ‘What will abide in our collective memory?’ Not all readers will accept his answers to these questions, but I think we must be grateful to him for showing us the need to ask them.”

—David Ehrenfeld (Professor of Biology, Rutgers University), in *American Scientist*

“James Howard Kunstler’s *The Long Emergency* may be destined to become the Dante’s *Inferno* of the twenty-first century. It graphically depicts the horrific punishments that lie ahead for Americans for more than a century of sinful consumption and sprawling communities, fueled by the profligate use of cheap oil and gas. Its central message—that the country will pay dearly unless it urgently develops new, sustainable community-scale food systems, energy sources, and living patterns—should be read, digested, and acted upon by every conscientious U.S. politician and citizen.”

—Michael Shuman, author of *Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities in a Global Age*

“James Howard Kunstler has given us, with his usual engaging wit and verve, a new kind of post-apocalypse scenario. Instead of the nuclear or ice-age wasteland of our earlier imaginings, he has depicted with detailed extrapolation the civilization of the United States after the oil runs out and a great economic collapse occurs. It is a strangely Arcadian vision, like the agrarian America that Jefferson, Calhoun, and the Southern Agrarians dreamed of. But Kunstler has fleshed it out with delightful quirky insights and provided our science fiction writers with a fresh mise-en-scene.”

—Frederick Turner, author of *The New World* and *The Culture of Hope*