

**Title of Session:** The Social Studies Forum - A World Without Oil

**Moderator:** Michael Hutchison

**Guest Speakers:** Ken Eklund, Cathy Fischer, and Dee Cook

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Room: Social Studies Forum Group

MichaelH: Welcome to tonight's Social Studies forum

BJB2 hands the formalities over to Michael

MichaelH: as BJ reminded me, we have a special session on tap for tonight, one that I think you'll all find extremely interesting... an alternative reality game called "World Without Oil".

MichaelH: before we start, though

MichaelH: let's let everyone introduce themselves... could you tell us who you are, what you teach, and where you are geographically located?

RicardoS: My name is Richie Saavedra and I am a Kinesiology major, I am located at Texas A&M Kingsville

YasmineT: I'm Yasmine I'm a student from Sydney Australia, taking up an MA in e-learning

MichaelH is a social studies teacher in southwestern Indiana

DebbieM: I'm Debbie and located in Indianapolis. I'm a tech coordinator and teach K-8 computer aps.

KenE: Hi everyone, I'm Ken Eklund, I am a game designer and writer in San Jose. I'm the creative director of "World Without Oil."

ErikaIC: I'm Erika, I'm a student at the University of Texas-Pan American located in deep south Texas

CathyGst1: Hi, I'm Cathy, I work with ITVS, we are the presenters of WWO and Beyond the Fire (if you're familiar with that online classroom experience)

DeeGst11: I'm Dee Cook, in Austin, TX; I'm attending college and am also a community liason for WWO

MejoradoO: my name is Ozzieann but everyone calls me Ozzie I am a student at Texas A&M in Kingsville Texas

ErikaIC: can I ask a question, Michael?

MichaelH: sure, Erika, go ahead

ErikaIC: at the end of this forum, do we get some kind of transcript?

ErikaIC: I have to turn that in to my prof.

MichaelH: Erika, TI members get an e-mail transcript delivered as soon as they log off

MichaelH: it looks like you are a TI member, so you should be fine

YasmineT: same here Erica

DebbieM: The transcript is one of the best parts Erika!

YasmineT: yup:)

ErikaIC: oh ok just making sure. It's for a grade

MichaelH: Ken, I think everyone's ready to start...

YasmineT: the top right selection box that says action in the box, click on the down arrow select detach

MichaelH: As I mentioned at the start... WWO is an alternate reality game regarding a very real problem. I'll let Ken describe a bit about the site

BJB2 listens to Ken

BJB2 . o O ( please post personal discussions/greetings in a private message )

KenE: This game is not your typical online game, or typical game.

KenE: it's an alternate reality game, played online

KenE: The game is a realistic, collaborative "serious game for the public good" that will put its players inside an oil shock.

KenE: it's called alternate because the reality represented on the website

KenE: the idea is, when you go to the website, you are stepping "in game"

KenE: into the alternate reality.

KenE: the alternate reality will get very deep

KenE: because we are asking people to create web material that is "in game" also

KenE: and as we gather and publish these stories, you can spend hours "in game"

KenE: looking at videos, reading blogs, looking at pictures

KenE: all of which make the oil shock seem absolutely real.

KenE: students can participate fully in this.

KenE: they are great storytellers, and have great imaginations.

KenE: they know how to put things online.

YasmineT: what can they learn from being in game?

KenE: they learn the importance of oil to our culture, for one thing.

KenE: they learn online collaboration, for another.

KenE: a skill very important as we move forward.

YasmineT: they collaborate to understand the effect of oil to the world

KenE: correct.

KenE: to build a BIG picture of the oil shock

KenE: encompassing many individual stories.

KenE: each person makes a small contribution

KenE: to a powerful, big result.

CathyGst1: Ken, can you talk about the 'daily' scenarios?

KenE: Yes, good idea. Each day there will be an update.

KenE: the update tells what the big events are in the oil shock

MichaelH: Ken, when you have a second, can you share the URL for the site with everyone?

MichaelH: but

KenE: sure.

MichaelH: remember it will open in another window, and everyone will want to come back here as soon as possible

MichaelH: and, all the URLs are in the transcript

KenE: here it comes

KenE: <http://www.worldwithoutoil.org>

KenE: the site you are seeing now is the pre-site

KenE: the teaser. The game hasn't started yet

KenE: it starts on Monday [Ed Note: Monday, April 30].

KenE: you will see the big beautiful full site on Monday.

RicardoS: alright

MejoradoO: ok

KenE: but there are interesting things to see here -

KenE: a sample video, a sample phone message, and many blogs

KenE: all done in game.

MejoradoO: ok sounds cool

KenE: let me restate how you play

KenE: from a prepared text.

KenE: It will be simple to play:

KenE: (1) after game-start on April 30, check the website, [www.worldwithoutoil.org](http://www.worldwithoutoil.org), to see the broad developments in the crisis.

KenE: (2) Take a moment to seriously imagine how these developments would impact you.

KenE: (3) Then tell us your story – as if the crisis were real. You can send us an email, a link to your blog post, or call our 800-number and leave a message. Our more involved players will be creating videos, images, or special “in game” pages on their websites. You can check out other people's stories for inspiration!

KenE: (4) Each story is a bit more evidence that this issue is very real. We're encouraging everyone to "Play it -- before you live it".

KenE: It starts on April 30th and runs through May.

MejoradoO: does everyone who gets on this web site see it?

KenE: yes.

MejoradoO: can you make up your own stories?

YasmineT: playing it before you live it is a very important learning experience that gets you ready for the real thing

KenE: absolutely. That's the idea.

MejoradoO: that is so neat

CathyGst1: What's so fascinating is that most of the game takes place off the website itself, throughout the Internet, and globally

RicardoS: Do you think one of these days the world will be with out oil?

MejoradoO: on this web site have you made up a story?

KenE: we have made up the big story, about the economics of the oil shock

KenE: but the little stories are up to the players

MejoradoO: so you had help doing it?

KenE: yes, research.

YasmineT: stories about how to help each other survive the oil shock?

KenE: yes

MejoradoO: is it a group thing or you do it on your own?

KenE: either

ErikaIC: so, this is good to use in the classroom?

KenE: I would think so.

ErikaIC: cool

MejoradoO: well I'll have to check this game out

YasmineT: I think it's gonna go better in a community because the sites got kind of a uniting people thing going on

CathyGst1: students can work together or as individuals to try and work things out during the crisis

MichaelH: after all, guys, it is an educational resource... that's why Ken and Cathy and Dee are here

KenE: if I may, I'd like to bring Dee in

MichaelH: Cathy, Dee, Ken... I wondered if you had strategies or ideas to share about possibly using this in a one computer classroom?

YasmineT: what's in the nerve center?

DeeGst11: Go ahead, Ken

MichaelH: whoa everyone.... let's slow down a bit on the questions

KenE: the WWO website is the nerve center for the oil crisis.

KenE: during Hurricane Katrina, the newspaper website there

KenE: became the central point

KenE: for exchanging breaking news about the crisis

CathyGst1: About the one computer classroom application -- this is where the class can work together as a community, create a persona and a collective response to the oil shock

KenE: the thing is, it's interactive

KenE: which kids dig

MichaelH: yep

MejoradoO: yea that's true

ErikaIC: yup

KenE: they can participate in discussions with other players

YasmineT: yeah it fosters collaboration not competition

KenE: they can affect the course of the game.

KenE: if a bunch of people send in stories

KenE: then the crisis improves.

BJB2: Ken, obviously the site is geared toward research, but it's also great for cross-curricular subjects like social studies, language arts, science

KenE: absolutely, I would think. social studies - politics - who gets what?

MejoradoO: what grades do you use this for?

CathyGst1: ... and problem solving which goes across multiple disciplines

KenE: middle and high school

BJB2: what grades do you think would be able to do something like this, Ozzie?

DeeGst11: Not to mention computer courses or graphic design, if students want to create a video or image to share

MejoradoO: the grades that Ken said

BJB2 smiles and nods to Ken and Dee..very cool!

CathyGst1: filmmaking students too - multimedia

KenE: I have another URL for you

JosephFr: That's awesome

MichaelH listens to Ken

KenE: this is to the teacher material for the site

KenE: although it is just about to be upgraded.

KenE: <http://www.worldwithoutoil.org/teach>

MejoradoO: what about in college would it be a good idea to use it there?

KenE: oh yes, perfect for college.

MejoradoO: I think I'll tell my professor about it

DeeGst11: There's really no age limit, in my opinion - anyone who can talk about oil can join in and learn something

RicardoS: that would make a college class a lot more interesting

KenE: all are welcome to play.

KenE: college students will find a lot there

MejoradoO: yea it's a good idea

KenE: very thought-provoking.

YasmineT: I can grasp the sharing stories bit....where does the collaboration in the game come in?

KenE: good question. The thing is, without collaboration, an oil shock will be a true disaster.

KenE: everyone for themselves.

KenE: so we will be calling on people to demonstrate collaboration

MejoradoO: how so?

KenE: in order to lessen the impact of the shock.

YasmineT: yes which is a very important skill to develop (provoking thought) instead of just thought transmission and remembering

KenE: they can send a group picture - everyone on bicycles

CathyGst1: one small example would be for people to carpool

KenE: they can send us a transcript of a conference call or discussion

RicardoS: so they can save oil

KenE: they can film a video of people gardening

YasmineT: or how to live without it?

JosephFr: yeah

KenE: producing food locally, so it doesn't have to be trucked in.

DeeGst11: On a larger scale, the players are collaborating with the game in order to influence its direction

YasmineT: so do we see in the game, how these people's contribution affects the world w/o oil?

KenE: Dee, can you talk a bit about the characters?

KenE: my fingers - tired.

DeeGst11: Sure!

MejoradoO: there is a big issue about people hacking the computers would they be able to get into this web site and erase the stories or change them?

RicardoS: it's kind of hard to think about the world without oil, because people now a days depend so much on it\

DeeGst11: There is a backstory in place to explain the existence of the WWO site

BJB2: Thanks, Dee. I was hoping you would point that out

DeeGst11: 8 people were approached in a snowed-in Denver airport by a man talking about an oil shock on April 30

DavidWe: It's hard to think about the world without ENERGY - what the energy comes from has changed through time

RicardoS: yep

DeeGst11: Some believed him more than others, but they decided to band together and create the WWO site to inform the world that there might be a crisis coming,

DeeGst11: Along the way, the 8 characters gathered a couple more, so now they're 10.

DeeGst11: They have been posting entries to a group blog, along with their own sites

DeeGst11: So if you're interested in reading the story side of the game so far, I have another URL for that

DeeGst11: <http://community.livejournal.com/worldwithoutoil/>

BJB2: what about countries that use mass transportation efficiently?

KenE: oil that you cannot afford is the same as no oil at all.

CathyGst1: but what happens when the prices get so high you can't afford to just jump in your car when you want to?

RicardoS: do tell

CathyGst1: or oil is rationed?

DebbieM: Simplify - we can do it simple and better...

DeeGst11: See, these are all great jumping-off points for class discussion!

KenE: you can see how the oil subject is a compelling one

KenE: and one that generates vigorous discussion and opinions.

DebbieM: We'll all have a better idea how compelling after participating in this reality game

BJB2 nods. Effects everyone

RicardoS: yep, sure does

KenE: it's the oxygen of our economy.

KenE: who gets oxygen as we run short?

ErikaIC agrees

MichaelH: that's an interesting analogy Ken, well put

DebbieM: I don't know if kids/young adults can imagine a world without technology - much less a world without oil. Will this game instill in young people some energy or concerns to spearhead a cause - a cause for a simpler less energy-sucking lifestyle - is that one of your intentions?

JosephFr: hmm..

KenE: we intend to bring up a very real question

CathyGst1: My understanding from friends that work at MTV is that kids are very interested in the environment

KenE: and to pose a very realistic, and possible scenario.

RicardoS: I can't imagine the world without TV or computers

DebbieM: they seem to be less attached to some things that adults can't live without (except cell phones)

MejoradoO: me either especially now since that's all we use in classes

RicardoS: we would still be with chalk boards

ErikaIC: much less cell phones

KenE: I think that when the game is over, the players will have figured out what to do on their own.

DebbieM: Perfect

KenE: maybe something we don't even imagine

BJB2: true problem based curriculum!

KenE: the hive mind is very powerful.

KenE: VERY powerful.

MejoradoO: when can we start playing this game?

RicardoS: And computer design everything, there would be no clothes or shoes, bridges, anything

YasmineT: yeah it's like learning to save energy by playing

YasmineT: great idea

KenE: you can sign up on the site now.

JosephFr: nice idea

KenE: the game itself starts on Monday. Runs for a month.

DeeGst11: And developing those rational skills - how to approach a huge problem by solving it in small chunks - is an important trait

KenE: then there will be an archive

MejoradoO: and you can play it at any time?

KenE: good point Dee.

KenE: yes. Log in when you want. Read stories

YasmineT: and instilling the importance of everyone's contribution

MichaelH: it sounds like a great site, Ken, Dee, Cathy

DebbieM: Sorry to bring this up - will there be any content monitoring - I teach in a Catholic school

RicardoS: sounds like a very interesting site

KenE: yes, everything is screened, Debbie

DebbieM: thank you

KenE: although it is the Internet

KenE: and accidents happen.

DebbieM: I understand ...

YasmineT: why does it only run for a month?

KenE: because that is enough time

KenE: to get the input we need.

KenE: and prove the concept/

KenE: more games to come, we hope.

MejoradoO: how long does it take to play?

KenE: you play as little or as much as you like.

DeeGst11: James - the direct link to signup is here:  
<http://worldwithoutoil.org/addhero.aspx>

MichaelH: guys, go back to the "Be a Hero" link

MejoradoO: but if you get off do you have to start all over again?

KenE: clicking on image that appears.

YasmineT: will the results of the game be kept on the site?

KenE: yes. the site will grow and grow

YasmineT: cool

KenE: with all the stories.

MejoradoO: ok

CathyGst1: The site will be archived after the active game is finished

ErikaIC: cool

KenE: you can search for stories added by a certain author

KenE: or for videos, blogs

CathyGst1: There will be lots of content there and additional class activities based on that content

KenE: or for stories posted from your area.

YasmineT: can communities still live in the community after the event's done?

MichaelH: Ken, Cathy, Dee.... can students upload video content... I thought I saw something in the discussion a bit ago that led me to that conclusion

KenE: yes, videos.

KenE: you don't upload to us

DeeGst11: Although they need to find a place to host the file

KenE: you upload to YouTube

DeeGst11: right

MichaelH: ok, I see

KenE: and we link to it, if it's OK

MichaelH: I'm not sure if our filter blocks YouTube or not

CathyGst1: It's all very web 2.0

JosephFr: It might not

DeeGst11: Google Video would work

DeeGst11: and I think Photobucket might do videos now, but I'm not sure

MejoradoO: yea they do

CathyGst1: Ken, will there be channels for WWO on any of these video sites?

KenE: I hadn't planned it, but easily done

DeeGst11: That's a good idea

KenE: or search by keyword: worldwithoutoil

CathyGst1: Might be good to have them aggregated

KenE: we can't control that.

KenE: people will do what they do.

CathyGst1: it's a beautiful thing...

KenE: I have another prepared bit

MichaelH: go ahead, Ken

KenE: about the project goals.

KenE: 1. We will be leading a large number of mainstream people, especially young people, to engage with their energy future.

KenE: 2. We will be creating a rich, interactive, collaborative vision of the oil shock.

KenE: 3. We will be creating a method to harness the power of collective intelligence and imagination to apply to large real-world problems.

KenE: 4. We will be gathering real information about people and their reactions to the crisis.

KenE: 5. We will be uniting disparate communities in collaboration around a common concern.

YasmineT: I'll share this with my classmates

KenE: 6. We will be creating a web-savvy global community motivated to take action on big problems.

DavidWe . o O ( web-savvy!! )

KenE: so your students have the opportunity to contribute something of value

KenE: to something very big and important.

MejoradoO: I have to tell my professor about this web site I think she'll enjoy it

MichaelH: Ken, we have just a couple of minutes left...

MichaelH: do you have any contact information you would like to share before we quit?

RicardoS: I think this discussion really made me think about wwo

KenE: when the site launches, there will be a contact link

MejoradoO: well thank you for sharing the game with us

RicardoS: Thanks a lot

KenE: you're welcome. Thank you for questions.

MichaelH: Ken, we certainly appreciate you, Cathy, and Dee spending time with us this evening

CathyGst1: I'd like to let everyone know that PBS Teachers will be highlighting this site on Friday if you want to spread the word and send out links

JosephFr: Thank you

ErikaIC: wow

DavidWe: Way to go PBS Teachers!

DeeGst11: Thanks so much for having us

CathyGst1: Thank you!

DebbieM: Well done, Ken. All the best...

ErikaIC: thanks guys!

JosephFr: Great job

DebbieM: Good night everyone...

KenE: thank you. I will stick around for a few more minutes

RicardoS: Peace....and take it easy

KenE: if there are more questions.

JamesAG: Thanks Ken and all!

MejoradoO: ok thank you bye.

MichaelH: Ken, one quick question...

KenE: yes

MichaelH: are you planning to have WWO available next year for another run... I have a reason for asking

KenE: we plan on making an archive

KenE: so people can relive it

KenE: and sift through its many stories

MichaelH: TAPPED IN has a summer carnival in July, and I didn't know if you'd be interested in coming back for a second session to discuss the site again

KenE: that would be fine.

JosephFr: Sound good

KenE: we should have the archive up by then.

MichaelH: I just didn't know how the interaction, etc. would be if the site is archived

KenE: it will be totally different, but fascinating in a different way

CathyGst1: We'll know more after the game - obviously.

KenE: like looking at Katrina footage is, maybe.

MichaelH: ok. I'll send you a follow up e-mail about that. I also didn't know what your summer plans would be like

KenE: busy, I'm guessing!

KenE: but happy to be here.

MichaelH: me too!

CathyGst1: Thanks so much Michael!

BJB2 hopes Dee and Cathy and Ken can be at the festival...

MichaelH: thank you Cathy

BJB2: the Theme is Playing to Learn

MichaelH: it was a pleasure to have you back with us

KenE: oooh that's a good theme!

DeeGst11: Wow, what an appropriate theme

CathyGst1: I'll do my best. Don't know my July plans yet.

DavidWe thinks it would be a great session for the Festival

BJB2 heads to the festival planning meeting

MichaelH: I don't know if BJ is listening in... I'm not sure exactly what day the festival is

BJB2 waves bye. Thanks again

BJB2: July 25

DeeGst11: Thanks again for having us and I look forward to seeing y'all play.

DeeGst11: Good night!

KenE: bye Dee! thanks

CathyGst1: Bye everyone!

DavidWe waves to Dee

DavidWe: Ciao, folks

MichaelH waves