

# Energy (ad) wars

## UPDATED INFORMATION

Ever since the steep rise in gasoline costs last summer, we've seen a steep rise in image/issue advertising from energy providers. What is interesting is that it continues, even months later. The big ones here are traditional oil companies like Chevron and Exxon/Mobil, the coal and natural gas industries and nuclear energy. Steadily, these three are competing for attention, one has to wonder from whom and to what end. And of course, before I forget, there is T.Boone Pickens, the millionaire, who is self-paying for ads pushing wind and natural gas energy as a way to "stop our dependence on foreign oil." Pickens is part of Clean Energy, an outfit promoting natural gas.

Chevron is running a campaign that is centered around the tag line "human energy." It is designed to make gasoline look environmentally friendly (in fact, that is exactly what all three types of energy want you to think—that they are the most eco-friendly). There are two types of commercial—one saying Chevron is a company concerned about the human race, and the future and another about conserving energy—for instance unplugging more. I am not certain who the target audience is for the campaign, nor am I certain the campaign works.

Meanwhile, the Nuclear Energy Institute (I think) is running a commercial with the tagline "nuclear-clean air energy." In searching for info about the ad, I came across AREVA (a nuclear company) that was running an ad campaign with the tagline "pure energy." You see the theme here?

And finally, there is the omnipresent commercial ~~for the clean coal~~ oil and natural gas industry. You've seen it—a woman in a black pant suit is walking around talking about how we can tap our own ~~(clean)~~ energy resources at home. This commercial has

been running fairly steadily since before the election last year, and still, I can't find a link to it. (If you can, will you send it to me or post in the comments?). Of course, clean coal has come under fire, because apparently, there is no such thing. I saw the commercial again last night and saw that it is for the Oil and Natural Gas Industry. The concept really is not about eco-friendliness but rather using American resources (you know, drilling more at home). It is quite anachronistic in a way because it has no mention or acknowledgment of the impact of the energy industry on the environment.

In the end, all some of these energy sources are trying to prove to us that they are the most ecological/green alternative. The gas/oil industry is the one running the most scared. After the rise in fuel prices last summer, people made changes in their energy usage, and are now demanding fuel alternatives. So, gas has to position itself as somehow clean and friendly.

Do you find any of these commercials compelling or convincing?