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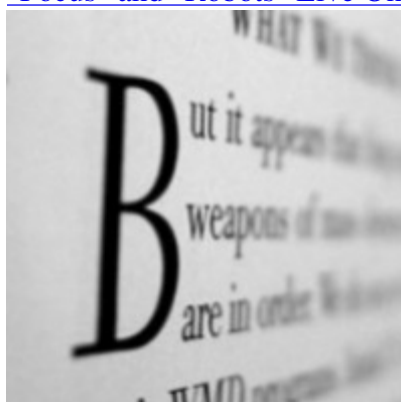
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SXSW Eco Coverage: "Green is Good"



Vincent Stanley (R) at SXSW Eco

The second year of the SXSW Eco conference gathered people from all over the world to discuss the myriad ecological and energy problems facing our world. Panels spanned topics as diverse as sustainable food, green design and ecologically responsible fishery management.

Despite the disparate nature of these topics, one idea that emerged at panel after panel was the concept that certain things cost us far more than what we actually pay for them, otherwise known as [Externalized Costs](#).

During the Wednesday panel, "[Filmmakers Clean Energy Confab](#)" a spirited talk between documentary filmmakers **Peter Byck** [*Carbon Nation*] and **Josh Tickell** [*Fuel*], Byck estimated that the true price of coal-powered electricity where he lives in Kentucky was really 24 cents a Kilowatt hour (instead of the stated price of 7 cents a kilowatt hour). Among the hidden costs Byck described was the cost of repairing the roads after transporting coal from the mines to the power plants.

"Everything we use costs more than we pay for it," **Vincent Stanley**, VP of marketing at Patagonia said during the "[Don't Buy Our Jacket](#)" talk, where he discussed a [Patagonia ad that ran in *The New York Times* on the most recent Black Friday](#). This idea that things really cost more than we pay for them turned up again and again at SXSW Eco.

DON'T BUY THIS JACKET



[Patagonia](#)

The Thursday afternoon keynote at SXSW Eco was “[Is America Sleepwalking on Clean Energy? Can Entrepreneurs and Innovators Offer a Wake Up Call?](#)” a talk between [Senator Byron Dorgan](#) and alternative energy specialist [Jigar Shah](#). During the talk Shah said that in order to get the true cost of coal burning energy plants, you ought to figure in the health care costs of burning “clean coal - including the human cost of all the asthma in Kentucky.

On Friday, the all-female panel at “[Sustainable Fashion: From Visibility to Viability](#)” addressed issues including the impact of fast fashion. “If something costs 10 dollars and was made in Bangladesh ...think about it,” said **Kavita Parmar** of the Indian-artisan to consumer [IOU Project](#).

“We don’t live in a real world. We don’t pay the price at the pump we are supposed to pay,” added eco-model

Summer Rayne Oakes during the panel.

The Friday afternoon SXSW Eco closing keynote by [Annie Leonard](#) “[The Story of Change](#)” (a follow-up to her popular video on externalized costs “[The Story of Stuff](#)”) brought a strong response from the crowd; at one point Leonard even referenced the idea that giving her talk at an eco conference was “preaching to the choir.”

With all of the SXSW Eco panels touching on the importance of calculating the real costs of the seemingly cheap items we use everyday, it was hard not to flirt with the idea that the philosophers of the band [Belle and Sebastian](#) had long-anticipated this trend of addressing the concept of "externalized costs" in their 2006 “[Song For Sunshine](#)” where the lyrics include the phrase “Someone pays the real price for my cheap-flight life.”

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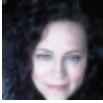


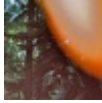
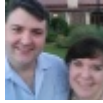


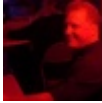


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