

# SUNBEAMS

Cars today are almost the exact equivalent of the great Gothic cathedrals: I mean the supreme creation of an era, conceived with passion by unknown artists, and consumed . . . by a whole population which appropriates them as a purely magical object.

Roland Barthes

Do you know there's a road that goes down to Mexico and all the way to Panama? And maybe all the way to the bottom of South America where the Indians are seven feet tall and eat cocaine on the mountainside? Yes! You and I, Sal, we'd dig the whole world with a car like this because, man, the road must eventually lead to the whole world. Ain't nowhere else it can go — right?

Jack Kerouac

The secret point of money and power in America is neither the things that money can buy nor power for power's sake . . . but absolute personal freedom, mobility, privacy. It is the instinct which drove America to the Pacific, all through the nineteenth century, the desire to be able to find a restaurant open in case you want a sandwich, to be a free agent, live by one's own rules.

Joan Didion

Instant gratification is not fast enough.

Suzanne Vega

We haven't accepted — we can't really believe — that the most characteristic product of our age of scientific miracles is junk, but that is so. And we still think and behave as though we face an unspoiled continent, with thousands of acres of living space for every man. We still sing "America the Beautiful" as though we had not created in it, by strenuous effort, at great expense, and with dauntless self-praise, an unprecedented ugliness.

Wendell Berry

Among politicians and businessmen, "pragmatism" is the current term for "to hell with our children."

Edward Abbey

I think God's going to come down and pull civilization over for speeding.

Steven Wright

According to some commercials, driving an SUV means you support terrorists. The answer is the hybrid gas-electric car, which only supports terrorists when going uphill.

Jon Stewart

Whenever there's one of these bogus shortages, the oil companies give you those stupid brochures, "Fifty Ways to Save

Energy." They spill 80 million gallons in Alaska and they want you to go to the bathroom in the dark.

Jay Leno

This, finally, is the punch line of our two hundred years on the Great Plains: we trap out the beaver, . . . infect the Blackfeet and the Hidatsa and the Assiniboin, . . . suck up the buffalo, bones and all; kill off nations of elk and wolves and cranes and prairie chickens and prairie dogs; dig up the gold and rebury it in vaults someplace else; ruin the Sioux and Cheyenne and Arapaho and Crow and Kiowa and Comanche; kill Crazy Horse, kill Sitting Bull; . . . plow the topsoil until it blows to the ocean; ship out the wheat, ship out the cattle; dig up the earth itself and burn it in power plants . . . ; dismiss the small farmers, empty the little towns; drill the oil and the natural gas and pipe it away; dry up the rivers and the springs, deep-drill for irrigation water as the aquifer retreats. And in return we condense unimaginable amounts of treasure into weapons buried beneath the land that so much treasure came from — weapons for which our best hope might be that we will someday take them apart and throw them away, and for which our next-best hope certainly is that they remain humming away under the prairie, absorbing fear and maintenance, unused, forever.

Ian Frazier

Don't get me wrong: I love nuclear energy. It's just that I prefer fusion to fission. And it just so happens that there's an enormous fusion reactor safely banked a few million miles from us. It delivers more energy than we could ever use in just about eight minutes. And it's wireless.

William McDonough

The use of solar energy has not been opened up because the oil industry does not own the sun.

Ralph Nader

Let us plant dates even though those who plant them will never eat them. We must live by the love of what we will never see. This is the secret discipline. It is a refusal to let the creative act be dissolved away in immediate sense experience, and a stubborn commitment to the future of our grandchildren. Such disciplined love is what has given prophets, revolutionaries, and saints the courage to die for the future they envisaged. They make their own bodies the seed of their highest hope.

Ruben Alves

Men travel faster now, but I do not know if they go to better things.

Willa Cather

*Sunbeams are welcome and may be sent to The Sun, 107 North Roberson Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. We're sorry, but we're unable to respond personally to your suggestions.*