



Screening at the University of Western Ontario
Event Report
March 27, 2013

On Wednesday, March 27th, the University of Western Ontario presented a screening of the award-winning documentary Switch. The film addresses worldwide energy production and consumption, and looks at ways that we might transition to a sustainable energy future. For the most part, the audience drew from the science student population, with a limited number of faculty in attendance.

SCREENING FACILITATOR

Professor Burns Cheadle
University of Western Ontario

The group discussion that followed the screening was wide-ranging, but three topics emerged as the dominant themes for the evening:

1. There was a general disappointment that white American males seemed to dominate the interviewees, and that women and visible minorities were notably underrepresented in a documentary on a topic that touches every human on the planet. Very little was heard from common people, or end users of energy and the conversation was limited to producers of energy.
2. Although there was some debate on the matter, the consensus of the audience was that the developed nations do not have the moral basis to instruct the developing economies on matters of energy conservation or adoption of relatively expensive green energy options.
3. We had broad agreement that individuals can have a large impact on energy consumption patterns if they have sufficient awareness of energy issues to inform personal decisions regarding conservation measures in their own lives. One audience member expressed a strong opinion that Facebook should be banned because it requires billions of people to recharge their smart phones and tablets on a nightly basis. While there was some agreement that our collective addiction to social networking has an energy footprint, most audience members did not agree that Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter were the root of energy supply issues.