

Deep-Gas Theories

David Osborne's article "The Origin of Petroleum" (February Atlantic) was well done and attempted to balance the arguments between the organic and inorganic proposals. A couple of points need mentioning.

The idea of drilling a basement impact crater to test for abiogenic hydrocarbons did not originate with Tom Gold. Nor did the idea that abiogenic hydrocarbons originating in the mantle could migrate along the fracture pattern from a large-scale basement impact.

These proposals were part of a lecture on impact craters I presented to the Petroleum Exploration Society on New York on September 20, 1879. Excerpts from that lecture were subsequently published in the January, 1981, issue of Journal of Petroleum Geology, under the title "Impact Craters - Implications for Basement Hydrocarbon Production."

Prior to this paper, none of Mr. Gold's articles ever mentioned any possible relationship between impact craters and abiogenic hydrocarbons. One now gets the impression, from reading his articles on the Siljan Ring, listening to his lectures, and watching him on TV, that he alone has is the originator of the impact-crater concept.

Siljan is among the worst craters to test for abiogenic hydrocarbons and represents a distortion of the impact theory I first presented to our PESNY MEMBERS and later published. We must not in any way consider the pending disaster at Siljan a legitimate test for abiogenic hydrocarbons. To do so will curtail needed research on other basement impact structures that are viable exploration targets.

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