THE AUTHORITY ON THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY
AUGUST 2008
WWW.TECHNOLOGYREVIEW.COM

Technology Review

PUBLISHED BY MIT SINCE 1899

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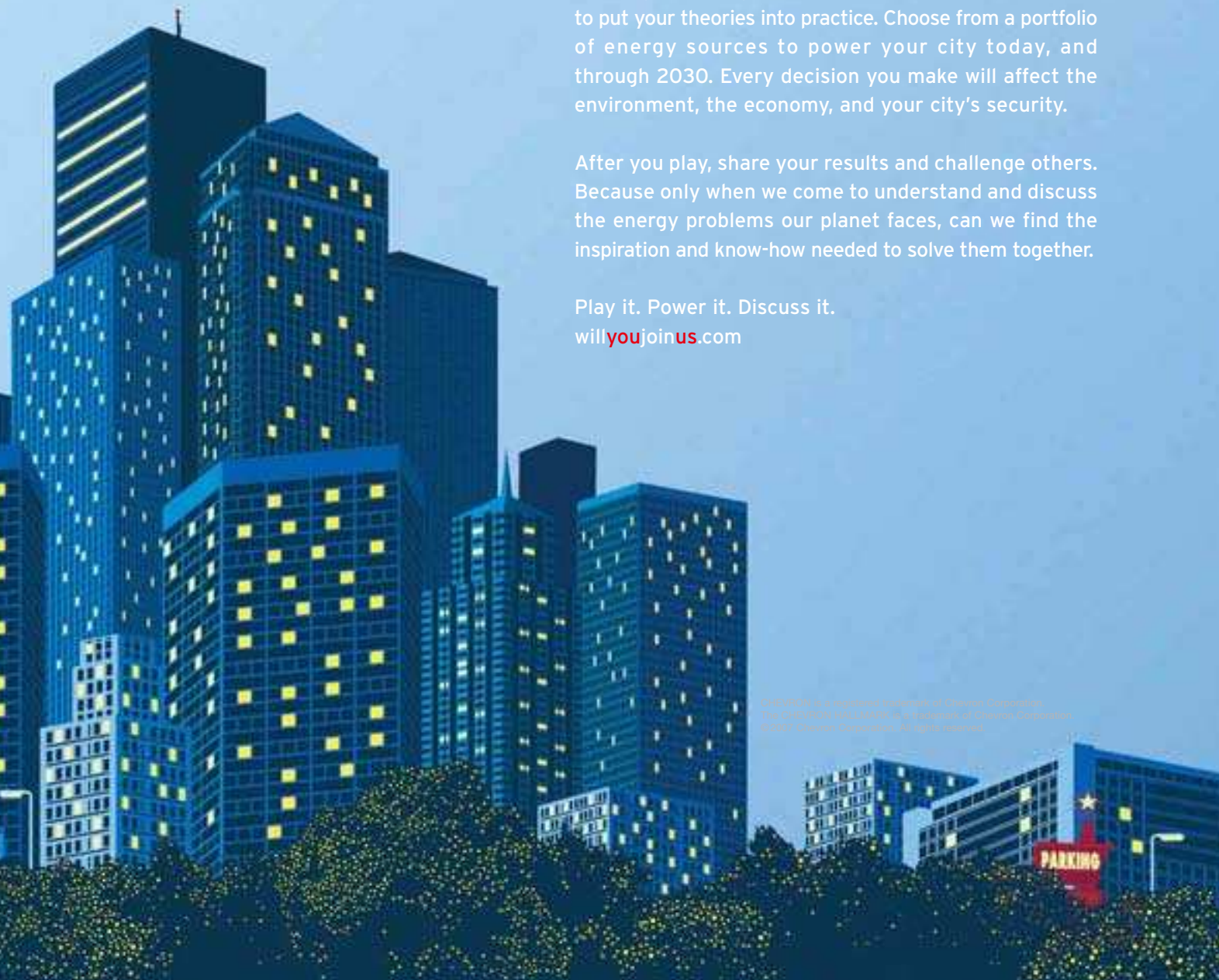

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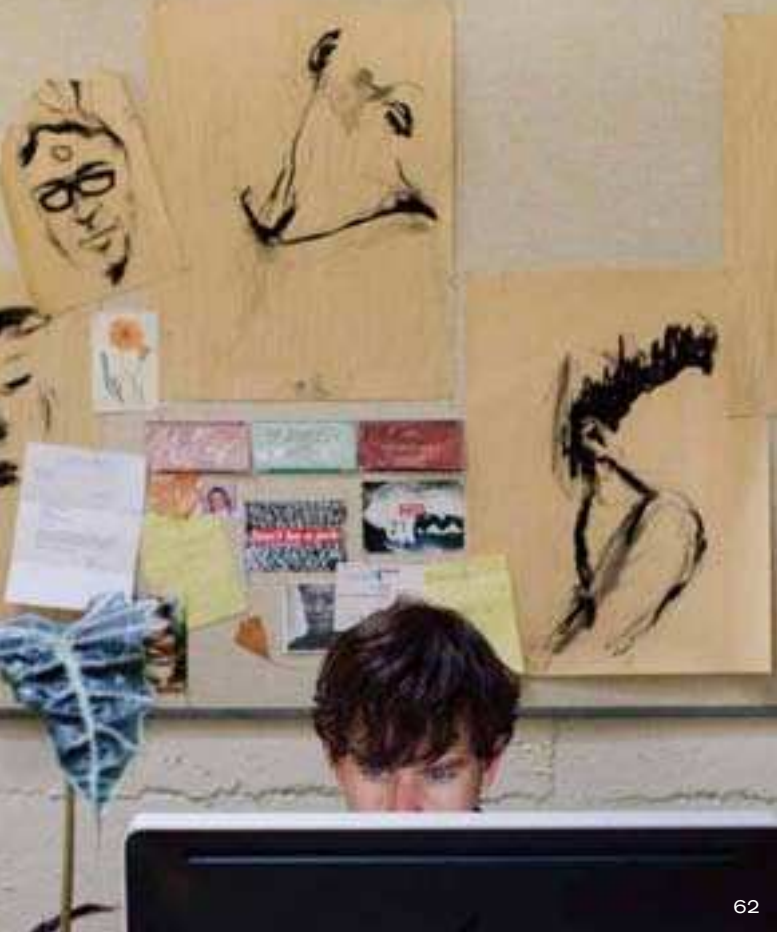

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BRYANT URSTADT based the anchor piece for our special issue on Web 2.0 on a simple question: Are social networks good businesses? *("Social Networking Is Not a Business," p. 36)*. "It was hard to answer the question," says Urstadt. "The response I got was either 'Social networking is no business at all,' or 'It's the next colossal Google-like money-making machine.' Neither side seemed to see the other's point of view. On top of that, there seemed to be announcements almost every day: MySpace adopting OpenSocial; a Google-led effort to make it simple for third-party software to be integrated into any social network; AOL buying Bebo; Facebook opening its platform code; Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg wandering alone around India while key players at his company left and new ones came aboard. The story was almost moving too fast to nail down."

Urstadt last wrote for *Technology Review* on the role of quantitative financial analysts in the debt crisis of 2007 ("The Blow-Up," November/December 2007). His writing has appeared in *Harper's*, *New York*, *Portfolio*, and *Outside*.

KATRINA FIRLIK is a neurosurgeon and writer. In this issue's essay *("A Messy Art: Managing the Fiddle Factor in Brain Surgery," p. 72)*, she discusses the love-hate relationship that surgeons have with new technology. "The general public," she says, "accepts the fact that new technology in their lives—cell phones, laptops—can be accompanied by little glitches here and there. What they may be surprised to find out is that similar glitches are inherent in new surgical technology as well."

Firlik might soon be offering solutions to the very problems she addresses here. With the founding of New Brain Industries, she has become an entrepreneur. She is also writing a novel which, based on the theme of surgery for cognitive enhancement, portrays a future she insists is right around the corner.

Firlik is the author of *Another Day in the Frontal Lobe: A Brain Surgeon Exposes Life on the Inside.*

MARK WILLIAMS reviewed Spencer E. Ante's new biography of Georges Doriot, the man most responsible for creating venture capitalism as we know it today *("Founding Father," p. 84)*. "Most of us don't understand how historically anomalous our society is in its acceptance of the disruptions wrought by technology," says Williams. "The Chinese deliberately stalled their own industrial revolution in the 15th century, for instance, and in 1793 the Emperor Qianlong would tell the British, 'We have never valued ingenious articles, nor do we have the slightest need of your country's manufactures.' The Romans found no other use for the steam engine than to open temple doors with it. What's made the difference in our modern societies is capitalism—and not just any form of capitalism, but the institution of venture capital."

Williams is a *Technology Review* contributing editor.

JUSTIN FANTL photographed the offices of Twitter, a startup that represents the extreme of social networking: users of its service, in short "tweets," send "followers" constant updates on their days' activities and thoughts *("Home Tweet Home," p. 62)*. During the shoot, Fantl says, "I found that I kept looking at the large clock positioned at one end of the work space. It seemed to serve as a constant reminder of how fast things move in the tech world."

Fantl has been featured in the *Communication Arts Photo Annual.*