

SOLAR SISTER *Amy Myers Jaffe*

Amy Myers Jaffe, 47, got her start in the field of energy policy as an anomaly: a young Jewish woman who spoke Arabic, which she had learned at Princeton University. She spent her formative years based in New York, reporting on oil for Dow Jones International and other news organizations. Eventually she found herself in Houston, where she was invited to consult for the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, an influential nonpartisan think tank at Rice University. "I knew how to get great data. I knew all these people," she says, a shrug in her voice. Jaffe's first report for the Institute, which was about political stability and oil in the Gulf region, made a big splash in Washington, DC, and she decided to stay at Baker, where she now leads the Energy Forum, which promotes discussion and research on energy policy, politics, and economics.

A brash New Yorker who frequently appears on TV and radio to talk about oil policy—"I'm an attractive Jewish-looking woman from New York, not a 60-year-old man!"—Jaffe predicted five years ago that the nation's lack of oil-refinery capacity would result in oil shortages; she also warned in 1996 that our dependence on foreign oil would lead to the problems America has in the Middle East today. "Amy should be recognized for stepping out and saying what needs to be said," says Dr. Lee Schipper, director of research at EMBARQ, the World Resources Institute's Center for Transport and the Environment. Following the President's State of the Union speech, Schipper says, "Amy showed a lot of balls when she said on PBS what the President and the Vice President are afraid to say: that we need to get out of our large cars."

Jaffe is a pragmatic hybrid—pro-environment and pro-business—and she sees the solution to global warming in solar energy distributed by using nanotechnology that relies on structures at the scale of single atoms and small molecules. Until these technologies are up to speed, she says, we need to drill offshore for natural gas, we need to force automakers to double fuel efficiency, and we need to tax gasoline. "And I mean by dollars," Jaffe adds, "not cents." —E.R.

