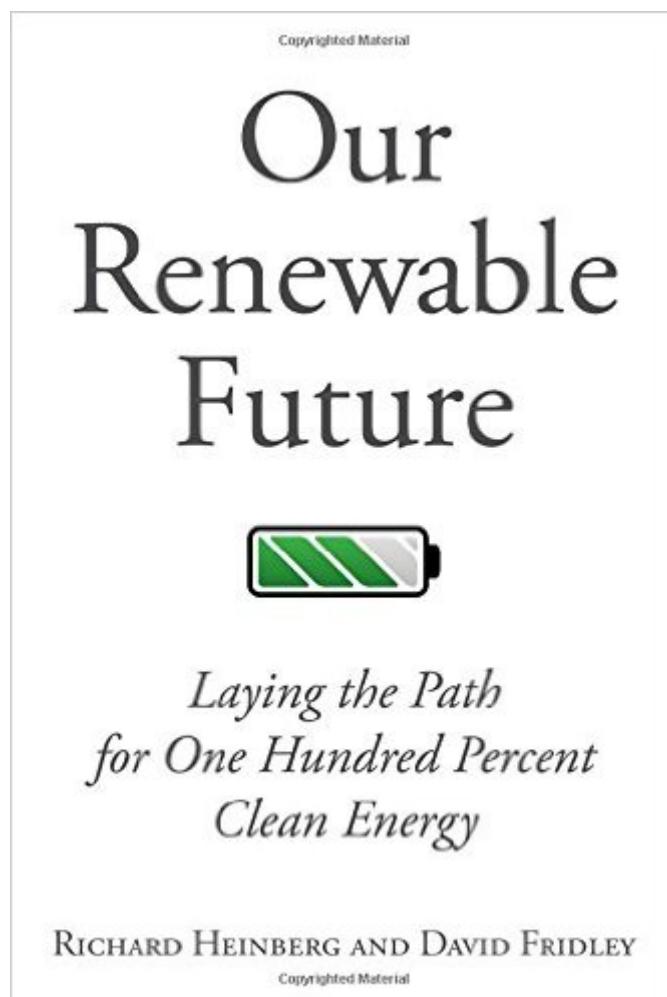


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Our Renewable Future: Laying The Path For One Hundred Percent Clean Energy



Synopsis

The next few decades will see a profound energy transformation throughout the world. By the end of the century (and perhaps sooner), we will shift from fossil fuel dependence to rely primarily on renewable sources like solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal power. Driven by the need to avert catastrophic climate change and by the depletion of easily accessible oil, coal, and natural gas, this transformation will entail a major shift in how we live. What might a 100% renewable future look like? Which technologies will play a crucial role in our energy future? What challenges will we face in this transition? And how can we make sure our new system is just and equitable? In *Our Renewable Future*, energy expert Richard Heinberg and scientist David Fridley explore the challenges and opportunities presented by the shift to renewable energy. Beginning with a comprehensive overview of our current energy system, the authors survey issues of energy supply and demand in key sectors of the economy, including electricity generation, transportation, buildings, and manufacturing. In their detailed review of each sector, the authors examine the most crucial challenges we face, from intermittency in fuel sources to energy storage and grid redesign. The book concludes with a discussion of energy and equity and a summary of key lessons and steps forward at the individual, community, and national level. The transition to clean energy will not be a simple matter of replacing coal with wind power or oil with solar; it will require us to adapt our energy usage as dramatically as we adapt our energy sources. *Our Renewable Future* is a clear-eyed and urgent guide to this transformation that will be a crucial resource for policymakers and energy activists.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A very carefully researched examination of what a complete transformation to renewable energy is likely to entail. The authors caution that we will need to emphasize energy efficiency and learn to do with less, and that we will need to avoid a number of potential pitfalls on the way to a 100% sustainable society. The book begins by walking the reader through the basics of energy and power, and explains such concepts as EROEI and embodied energy, before turning to the different characteristics of various energy sources and such problems with renewable energy as intermittency and the need for storage, demand management, capacity redundancy and the like. Yes, it is somewhat technical, but not overwhelmingly so, and the authors persuasively argue what some other writers such as Ozzie Zehner have been saying: we will not simply be able to swap out fossil fuels for wind and solar power. In particular, we are going to have to learn to live with substantially less energy; we are going to have to remake not only our systems for producing energy, but also for using it--in agriculture, transportation, industry, ...everything. Along the way, the authors discuss issues that I have not seen mentioned much in the literature, but that are obviously important. Such as the need, ultimately, to manufacture sustainable energy equipment (wind turbines, solar cells, etc.) using only sustainable energy--electricity--and what this is likely to entail. The fact that our road infrastructure itself is very heavily dependent on fossil fuels, and for this and other reasons, electric cars may be a red herring where sustainability is concerned. They are careful in stating their conclusions, but these conclusions are supported by meticulously developed and footnoted arguments.

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