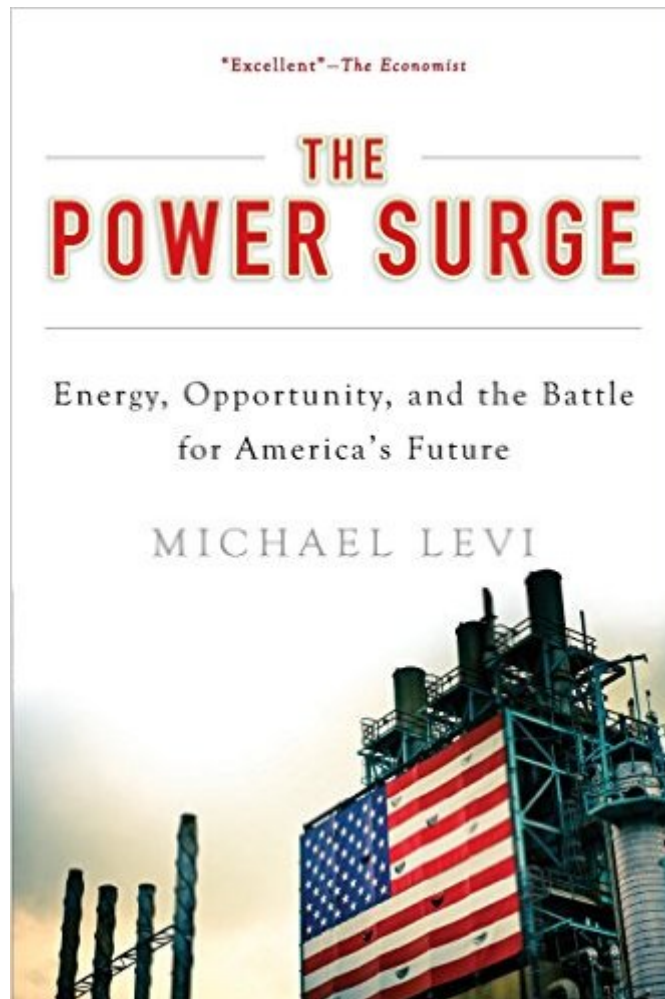


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The Power Surge: Energy, Opportunity, And The Battle For America's Future



Synopsis

The United States is in the throes of two unfolding energy revolutions, and partisans--convinced that only their side holds the key to American prosperity, security, and safety--are battling over which one should prevail. In *The Power Surge*, Michael Levi takes readers inside these revolutions. He shows how oil and gas production, after decades in decline, are being propelled upward by new technologies and high prices, prompting enthusiasts to predict an economic renaissance and impending energy independence. On the other side of the fight, he visits eco-startups and manufacturers betting on a new energy future, revealing how more efficient cars and trucks are increasingly dominating the road and costs for renewable energy have plummeted, leading many to herald a starkly different future that moves beyond fossil fuels and saves the planet. Armed with on-the-ground lessons, and drawing on insights from economics, politics, international relations, and climate science, *The Power Surge* takes on the big claims made by both sides in the fight over American energy, explaining why the purists are often wrong. Both unfolding revolutions in American energy offer big opportunities for the country to strengthen its economy, bolster its security, and protect the environment. Levi shows how to seize those with a new strategy that blends the best of old and new energy while avoiding the real dangers that each poses.

Book Information

Paperback: 280 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; Reprint edition (October 1, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0199390029

ISBN-13: 978-0199390021

Product Dimensions: 9.1 x 0.9 x 6.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (44 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #899,037 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #390 in [Books > Business & Money > Industries > Energy & Mining > Oil & Energy](#) #402 in [Books > Business & Money > Economics > Commerce](#) #831 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Environmental Policy](#)

Customer Reviews

This book is startlingly and refreshingly different from most discourse on any policy issue in America today. Michael Levi has no obvious agenda: he seems genuinely to want to explore the roles of

fossil fuels and renewable energy sources in our country (and on the planet) and to suggest how public policy could be devised for them, if it should be at all. He presents the positions of the pro-fossil-fuel advocates and of the proponents of renewable energy sources, and he presents his own critiques of their positions. His background in math (he has a doctorate in nuclear physics) enables him to see the weaknesses in some of the arguments on both sides. He has done an immense amount of research in the archives and "on the ground." He is quite knowledgeable about the processes both of getting legislation passed and of negotiating international agreements, such as on limiting carbon emissions. Moreover, his knowledge of macroeconomics allows him to point out some profoundly counter-intuitive facts about the impact of domestic oil production on "energy independence" and on the price of petroleum. He clearly is convinced that fossil fuels are creating a future with perilous consequences for the next generation, but he has to conclude that Americans need to abandon their advocacy of "only fossil fuels" or "only renewable energy" for the foreseeable future and realize that both have to be utilized for the next several decades: he wants to replace coal with gas immediately, but gas and oil simply cannot be replaced overnight. He has the numbers and the facts to make a good case, and if you fall into the "only this" category for either source of energy, as I was for clean energy, you owe it to yourself to read his book.

A well done attempt to put oil on troubled waters, if I can be forgiven for using this old saying. He addresses two energy communities, renewables, and fossil fuel that exist in America today. He talks to people on each side and I believe fairly reflects their position and the technology and other issues with each side, renewables and fossil fuel. He does not address every form of renewal or fossil fuel energy, but just the main points. Electricity generation today is very dependent upon coal which is cheap, and is used for base load as it is so cheap in large electricity generation plants. It has its drawbacks in being dirty, and its emissions, including all of the soot products and gas (CO₂) which is of concern to the global warming part of the environmental community. Wind and solar panel are cleaner, but are not energy dense and have other issues besides the land that that take to replace one coal powered electrical power plant. They are not really suitable for electrical system base load today, as we lack large scale energy storage facilities to even out the electrical production of wind mills and solar panels so that they could meet the base load requirement for electricity in place of a coal fired or nuclear powered electrical generation plant. He addresses the need for hydrocarbon fuel for transportation today and in the future. He believes that there is room for both renewables and fossil fuels today and we need both today as we transition to a future United States. I should state that I like living in an advanced industrial society, and believe that most of the advanced world likes

it as well. I would like for everyone in the world to have the opportunity to live in an advanced industrial society.

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