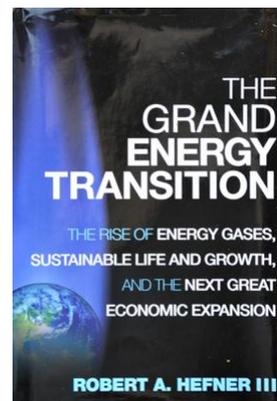


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“Books in Brief” section, by Linda Sargent

“The Grand Energy Transition – The Rise of Energy Gases, Sustainable Life and Growth, and the Next Great Economic Expansion” by Robert A. Hefner III, John Wiley and Sons, Inc. (\$29.95)



Reaching back into history, heat and energy started with fire, then moved to coal, oil and gas. The Hefner family has always been involved in the oil and gas industry and exploration. However, Robert Hefner III came to the conclusion that the world’s energy future lies in another direction.

Founder of GHK Exploration, Hefner has spent his career promoting natural gas as an energy source. While the big oil companies testify before Congress and spout numbers about U.S. oil reserves, Hefner has made it his mission to disqualify their facts, and has repeatedly proven their numbers wrong.

This book, at times too technical for a layman to understand, makes a firm and logical argument as to why the United States should turn their thought processes to the development of the natural gas industry to heat and cool our houses, run our automobiles, promote industry and jobs, reduce global warming, and improve our environment and air quality.

Hefner makes strong arguments about the advantages of replacing coal with natural gas. Most homes in the United States are already on a natural gas grid, and converting automobiles from gasoline to natural gas would save money and be cleaner, thus improving the environment, as well as eliminating our dependence on foreign oil. Many countries are already leading the U.S. in conversion efforts.

One has to wonder why the domestic oil companies oppose this innovative initiative. Natural gas reserves are not depleted. For over 15 years, oil companies have argued that the U.S. only has enough reserves to last, at most, five to ten years.

The Grand Energy Transition is an interesting concept that would work in the United States just as it is working in other countries. Perhaps if one state steps up to the plate and serves as a guinea pig, then other states will hop on the conversion train.