

RISING POWERS SHRINKING PLANET

THE NEW GEOPOLITICS OF ENERGY

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AUTHOR OF RESOURCE WARS AND BLOOD AND OIL

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From the author of the now-classic *Resource Wars*, an indispensable account of how the world's diminishing sources of energy are radically changing the international balance of power

Recently, an unprecedented Chinese attempt to acquire the major American energy firm Unocal was blocked by Congress amidst hysterical warnings of a Communist threat. But the political grandstanding missed a larger point: the takeover bid was a harbinger of a new structure of world power, based not on market forces or on arms and armies but on the possession of vital natural resources.

Surveying the energy-driven dynamic that is reconfiguring the international landscape, Michael Klare, the preeminent expert on resource geopolitics, forecasts a future of surprising new alliances and explosive danger. World leaders are now facing the stark recognition that all materials vital for the functioning of modern industrial societies (not just oil and natural gas but uranium, coal, copper, and others) are finite and being depleted at an ever-accelerating rate. As a result, governments rather than corporations are increasingly spearheading the pursuit of resources. In a radically altered world-- where Russia is transformed from battered Cold War loser to arrogant broker of Eurasian energy, and the United States is forced to compete with the emerging "Chindia" juggernaut--the only route to survival on a shrinking planet, Klare shows, lies through international cooperation.

Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy Details

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Michael T. Klare**

From Reader Review Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy for online ebook

!Tæmbu?u says

KOBOBOOKS

Matthew says

Frustrating and at times infuriating, especially the massive sums of financial and military "aid" to energy supplier nations that play all sides to their own benefit. Out tax \$\$ go to support second- and third-world leaders with money and weapons used to suppress their own people, just so that American energy companies can get favorable concessions to oil and gas rights in those countries, and then even more of our tax \$\$ go directly to the energy companies to subsidize their international business with tax breaks and commercial incentives, not to mention outsized and unearned "executive compensation," and people still get fleeced at the gas pump. The US may not be the only country at fault here, but our government holds responsibility for the worst of it, and has been pushing the global economy closer to a hard reckoning on energy issues for more than 30 years, since the "Carter Doctrine" got us stuck in the Persian Gulf in 1980. Though the rest of the economy and much of the globalized business community left the Cold War behind about 20 years ago, the US energy industry is still stuck there, and because of that remains unable to handle the growing rivalries with China, Russia and India in both old and new places like Africa, Southeast Asia and the Caspian Sea.

Barry says

Klare's argument in this book is that there is increasing competition between nation-states for non-renewable resources, particularly (but not only) for hydrocarbons (oil & gas). This competition seems to be increasing in intensity and shows worrying signs that it may develop into a new kind of cold-war, with potentially disastrous consequences for our global future (even if war is avoided, the cost of military build-up to service conventional energy security needs will strip the resources needed for a transition to sustainability). A better solution would be for nation-states to develop cooperative relationships to ensure energy security and invest in developing the new energy and industrial technologies to move to a sustainable future.

I found it good, but a bit repetitive in parts. You can get the essence of it from the first two chapters and the last chapter, skipping the Prologue and chapters three through eight.

David Jedeikin says

Insightful, sobering look at the energy crises that are sure to be upon us in the years to come. A must-read for anyone interested in the state of our planet, our civilization, and our future.

Shane Kiley says

very informative, readable

David says

This book was more realistic than the books that encourage the rich and the greedy to keep pursing business as usual. He addresses the new cold war we are entering, climate change, economical challenges, and the possibility that if we don't learn to work together with all the new rising powers on a sustainable future we could see the worst World war ever.

Aaron says

Like "Blowback," this is another book that reveals one's ignorance. It's dense in parts but also stuns you at times with its ability to connect the dots. What solidified the United States' oil-thirsting, militaristic empire building in the Middle East? The Carter Doctrine (yep, that's Jimmy Carter, that incorrigible liberal).

And before that, it was FDR who set the stage for decades and decades of U.S. policy in the Middle East. As the spoils of WWII were divvied up, FDR met with the king of Saudi Arabia to ensure the flow of oil to America while providing a "security umbrella" to the Saudis in the form of military bases.

Klare's knowledge of world geopolitics really is staggering, and perhaps his great accomplishment here is to make you see just about everything - and I mean everything - through the lens of energy, with the established powers and the rising powers increasingly agitating to secure more of it.

Toward the end of the book, he offers some hope in the idea that major nations could collaborate, rather than compete, to build a renewable energy infrastructure, both in the interests of securing sustainable economic development but also to curb the catastrophic consequences of global warming.

Indeed, Klare's book is essential reading - for its penetrating analysis of world geopolitics, including the pending crises of peak fossil fuels (i.e., oil) and global warming.

I'm glad I read it. But I can't say I'm reassured about the future of humanity.

Papajack says

Just getting into it. Another factual perspective viewpoint on where we are in power, who is gaining, and the likely outcomes.

A must read.

Sylvia says

One sentence: those with the most energy resources are the rulers of the world.

Stephen says

For much of the 20th century, a handful of industrialized countries enjoyed access to a seemingly infinite supply of oil. But a century of economic progress has seen global demand for oil soar. Ever more countries are scrambling for a bigger piece of the petroleum pie, and there's increasingly less to divide, while appetites the sticky sweet stuff have only just been whetted. As nations scramble to find new oil deposits to replace those which they've already exhausted, the global balance of power has shifted. Formerly impoverished nations are now fat with wealth, and titans of the global economy have become increasingly anxious beggars on the verge of throwing punches. In *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet*, Michael Klare elaborates on why the global dependency on a resource with an unstable future is a growing threat to world peace and muses on how the great powers, old and new, can turn competitive tension into collaborative energy and prevent quests for energy security from becoming World War III.

Oil (and gas) are potent stuff. The energy contained within them isn't limited to fuel for transportation: they can and have brought back to life, Lazarus-style, failed states like Russia which capitalized on its ability to control the flow of fuel to Europe. They've also turned desert wastelands dotted with yurts into spectacles of affluence; goodbye tents, hello opulent towers and water fountains performing music. This enormous wealth has been generated because global demand for oil is climbing at the same time that supplies are faltering: the great wells have been drained, discoveries of new ones are falling, and wells are exhausted more quickly than they can be found. In addition to our rapacious appetite for fuel wreaking havoc on the environment (who needs mountains when you can have coal? Aw yeah.), they're not having a happy effect on global politics, either. Not only has the wealth and power given to Russia and the new petrostates been restricted to a relative few, with little of the wealth being invested back into their societies, but the few have used the power to strengthen their hand; petty tribal chiefs now have money and foreign militaries doing their oppressing for them. Which foreign militaries? Those of the United States, Russia, and China, the Big Three who are canvassing the globe in search of resources and playing games with whatever tinpot dictator they can pressure to give it to them -- from the Caspian Sea to Africa, and especially the Middle East. Although Klare's early chapters detail the rising demand for oil, most of the book is given to studying how various powers, the big three in addition to Japan, India, and a few other states, are competing with one another in board rooms cutting deals, and increasingly on the edge of the battlefield. While no wars have erupted yet, Klare seems to think they're inevitable. His final chapter urges the powers to work together to solve their common problem of energy security, rather than wasting scarce resources trying to stave off the inevitable.

Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet is a book to read if you've any interest in global affairs and the future of energy. It's replete with data to impress (and horrify) your friends: did you know we'll have to double our production of oil to meet predicted demand by 2020? (Considering that we've been reduced to smashing greasy rocks together to find it, that's a fairly daunting challenge.) Klare is an engaging writer, making a discussion of production figures seem interesting; it helps that competition for them is causing so much conflict. Given the importance of the subject, this is a book I think more people should read, but there are a couple of niggling problems: first, this book is four years out of date, and so many of the facts may have changed. Russia's Gazprom, for instance, isn't quite as intimidating now as it was in the book, and the new petrostates aren't wasting all of their oil money. Some nations on the Persian Gulf are investing in renewable

energy in anticipation of the inevitable day that oil proves to be not magic and runs out, like every other resource. Additionally, some of his advice seems a bit unhelpful, namely that suggestion that China and America collaborate to make more fuel-efficient cars; those meager contributions be dwarfed by the fact that both nations are aggressive car promoters and yearn for more automobile sales. These are trifling matters, though; the meat of the book is more than food for thought.

Tarn says

Middling book with some actual supporting graphs and information; the best part of this book is the author's continuing treatment of geopolitics. He lays it out that all countries can be divided into two camps: those with energy deficits and those with energy surfeits. That's really the best part, along with an analysis of global fossil energy flows and extraction rates - although those have been treated more fully in other books.
