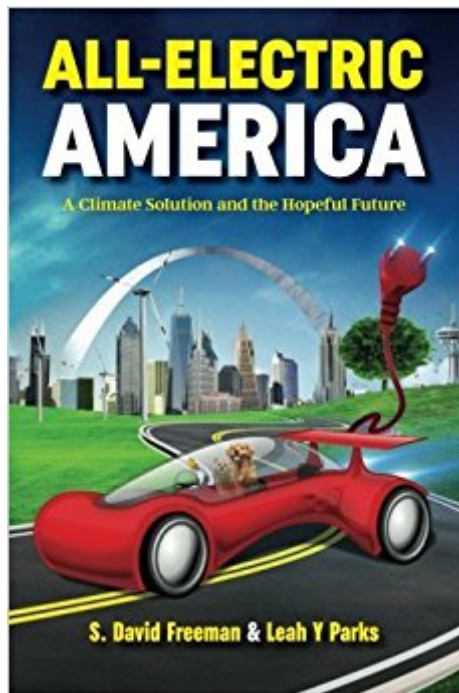




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All Electric America: A Climate Solution And The Hopeful Future



Synopsis

The modern day Edisons have done their job. We need not wait any longer. We are poised to wake up to a world running completely on renewable energy. Waiting any longer is like saying we shouldn't have used the personal computer in 1985 until the smartphone was invented. In "All-Electric America" authors S. David Freeman, former utility CEO, and Leah Y Parks, a journalist in the electricity industry, explain how making the transition to an all-electric, all renewable society by the year 2050 is necessary, practical, and achievable. An energy infrastructure powered by the sun and wind & running on electricity, for all our energy needs, will be reliable, cleaner, safer, and CHEAPER. It will be superior to the system we have today and will lead to a better future. It is time for the utility industry, politicians, and consumers to wake up to the opportunity that this energy transformation will provide. The resources currently allocated towards oil and other fossil fuels can instead be invested in the development of an all-renewable 21st century electricity infrastructure. Investments in coal mining, oil exploration, gas drilling, building new coal and gas plants, shipping and protecting oil, and fighting wars to protect oil interests will give way to a focus on building solar and wind energy, energy storage, and modernizing our grid. The clock is ticking. With every breath we take the Earth continues to warm. The specter of global warming requires that the transformation must begin immediately. Freeman and Parks show how, with the current "All of the Above" policy, we are, instead, on a path to climate hell. They present a course of action that gives us the best hope of eliminating disastrous climate change. Many are saying we need to achieve our global warming 2°C goal, but few are carrying out a real plan or fully understand the problem. Freeman and Parks evaluate the latest research, technology, and energy policy and lay out a comprehensive strategy with achievable goals and a clear timeline for when it must be done. We will need to replace all fossil fuels including coal, oil and natural gas used for electricity, heating, transportation, and industrial processes. They find that our only hope is to reduce our emissions by 3% each year for the next 35 years so that we reach zero emissions by 2050. Anything less risks severe climate disaster. Freeman and Parks present a vision and strategy to achieve a future where all of our energy sources are powered with the free fuel of the sun and the wind, we live free of the specter of climate change, and one in which we are "Living Better Electrically."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This is a timely and engaging educational book about America's energy future. It rightly focuses on the cleanest and most efficient types of energy and transportation... It amplifies the vision that an electric America powered by clean, renewable energy will produce significant health, environmental, and cost benefits with little downside. I highly recommend this book for lay audiences, students, and those in the energy sector who would like to be kept up to date in this rapidly-changing field." - MARK Z. JACOBSON, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Stanford University

"The U.S. has some big problems that require bold solutions. Unfortunately, books about solutions to our society's problems are often given short shrift by reviewers or languish on our bookshelves... [All-Electric America] is scathing but optimistic, and manages to be bold while remaining pragmatic. Drawing on their combined years of experience, Freeman and Parks make the case for addressing the dangers of climate change with some concrete steps to counter our current downward spiral... When All-Electric America comes out in January of 2016 you will have a chance to make yourself knowledgeable about the real avenues available to us to transform our energy infrastructure for present and future generations by moving toward a new renewable energy economy..." - RALPH NADER, Consumer advocate, lawyer and author

"One cannot read this book without coming away with an optimistic belief that we, as humans, can handle this problem. Curing cancer and ending world hunger may be beyond us, but converting to an all-electric future can be done. We have the science and we have the policies, we just need the political will and the perseverance." - R.F. HEMPHILL, Former executive VP at AES & CEO of AES Solar Power Ltd.

"David Freeman and Leah Parks have written a book whose importance cannot be

understated and whose timeliness is critical... "It is an inspirational book in that the authors show clearly not only why energy sustainability has to be the most important policy issue of our time, but ways to achieve it."

DAVID DUKE, Associate Professor & Head of Environmental and Sustainability Studies, Acadia University, Canada. "This is an excellent book. I strongly recommend reading it..."

KARL-FRIEDRICH LENZ, Professor of German Law, European Law and International Trade Law, Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo. "This book was a surprise and a revelation. What it does, no less, is propose in the strongest terms that America's electric utilities do two things: (1) step forward boldly and supplant energy suppliers that fuel our buildings and transportation sectors, both of them high-energy use and high carbon emitting and (2) as quickly as possible, end use of fossil-fueled generation and replace it with renewable energy...Check it out."

ROBERT MARRITZ, Publisher and executive editor, ElectricityPolicy.com and Electricity Daily. "All Electric America is an important piece of work that all of us should read. But, it's also a potent reminder of David Freeman's commitment to be in it for the longhaul. With much work to do to overcome powerful interests intent on slowing progress; we could all do well to follow his example."

ROB SARGENT, Energy Program Director at Environment America.

S. David Freeman is a leading authority on energy policy. He was appointed by President Jimmy Carter as head of Tennessee Valley Authority, one of the nation's largest electric utilities. After 7 years at TVA, he spent 30 years as the CEO of major public utilities in Texas, California, and New York. He then served as Deputy Mayor of Los Angeles for Energy and the Environment. He is currently a senior advisor to Friends of the Earth and has authored three books on energy including, "A Time to Choose." Leah Y Parks is an associate editor for ElectricityPolicy.com and Electricity Daily, a journal and daily newsletter that examine current events and the state of the electricity industry for utility executives, commissioners, regulators, and other experts in the field. She is also a freelance writer, has acted as an advisor for technology reports, and has written extensively about innovations in energy storage, smart grid technology, energy infrastructure, and renewable energy.

(First published on Lenz Blog) All-Electric America was written by S. David Freeman, who was born in 1926 and has a long career as CEO of various energy companies. The second author is Leah Y. Parks, a journalist covering the electricity sector. The Kindle edition of this book (which I read) was published in October 2015. This is an excellent book. I strongly recommend reading it. The authors make the case for a 100 percent renewable energy system. Actually, the title is slightly misleading. They are talking about "all renewable," not "all"

electricity. They note that solar and wind energy is cheap enough to completely displace fossil fuel in the United States. And, as Kees van der Leun highlighted in this Tweet, they wrote: US deserts are gold mines for solar power, and its central region is a veritable Saudi-Arabia of wind. Their case is motivated by global warming, for which they use the interesting rhetoric device of calling it "climate hell." But it does not depend on recognizing this danger. The transition to renewable makes economic sense even without that particular motivation. They don't like the nuclear option, citing proliferation concerns, dangers from radiation, and the failure of nuclear to deliver low prices. The most interesting proposal was a call for utilities to own the batteries in electric vehicles. That would of course instantly make those electrical vehicles cheaper purchases than gasoline cars. Since fuel costs are already cheaper, such a move could massively accelerate electric vehicle adoption. I am not sure what exactly the business model would be. The value for the utility comes from using the car batteries as grid storage capacity. And maybe from using this as a sales point to keep the car owner as a customer. Figuring out how this makes economic sense for an utility looks like an interesting question. Of course, if it turns out that this would lose money for the utility under present market conditions, one could think about establishing a feed-in tariff for electricity from car battery storage as an alternative to get this done quickly. One point where I don't agree with the authors is at location 371. There they write: Fossil fuel companies surely want to burn it all. There's a grammar mistake in that sentence. But that's not the reason I disagree. Fossil fuel companies want high prices for their products. Guess what happens to those prices if there is a decision to leave 75% in the ground? The authors note that fossil fuel use needs to decrease by 3% each year to phase them out in the time frame left under a 2 degrees scenario. Just assume for a moment that the fossil fuel industry agrees and sets up a mining schedule (like Bitcoin has) that does exactly that, and is calculated to leave 75% in the ground. Obviously, such a decision would instantly lead to massively higher oil prices. Which is great news for the fossil fuel industry in the short term. It is also great news in the long term. Remember that while oil eventually can't be burned any more, you can always use it as raw material in the chemical industry without CO2 emissions. Even now, more than 10 percent of oil use is non-fuel. So even now, the fossil fuel companies don't want to burn all the oil. And their interest would be to agree with the authors and Bill McKibben and start reducing their production massively.

The most important point made by David Freeman & Leah Parks is that reductions of Green House

Gas (GHG) emissions must occur at 3 percent per year, STARTING NOW, to reach zero emissions by 2050 to stay within two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels to avoid catastrophic climate change. If we don't go beyond 270 Giga-tons of GHG's from now on we'll stay within the 2-degree Celsius range. At our present rate of GHG production, if no reductions are made by 2030 we'll have used up that 270 Giga-tons and we'll have to reduce GHG's by 20% per year; an almost impossible feat. Storage is neglected and must be built side-by-side with wind and solar to supply reliable constant power to the grid. They end the book with sample legislation. Sadly, there is no mention of converting refineries to biomass gasification fuels. Keep It In The Ground is their message for a clean, low cost sustainable energy future or we can choose to go to climate hell. We have a moral duty to choose the former.

Once again, Dave Freeman has done what should have been done a long time ago--written a book that lays out a logical and useful path to solving climate change in the lifetime of many people living today. This might be Freeman's best book, since it addresses a critical question and without much ideology, provides solutions that have already proven they can work. The language is clear, the organization is appropriate, and the conclusions are thoughtful. One cannot read this book without coming away with an optimistic belief that we, as humans, can handle this problem. Curing cancer and ending world hunger may be beyond us, but converting to an all-electric future can be done. We have the science and we have the policies, we just need the political will and the perseverance. Well done, Dr. Freeman!

The authors lay out a clear, logical plan to transfer America to a clean, renewable all-electric nation by 2050. They present a sequence of logical steps we can take to wean this nation off of fossil fuels. It's a clear plan that we can follow, year by year. Trains, Planes, Automobiles, Factories, homes and office space, they have it all covered. In addition, they show how to provide jobs for those displaced by the transformation and show how this change will benefit our economy. The technology is there today. They mention some of the promising but unproven technologies, but their plan doesn't rely on anything that is currently pie-in-the-sky. The only thing we may be lacking as a nation is the courage. America has lead the world with bold ideas in the past from the national highway system to sending a man to the moon. It's time for the next great transformation from the age of fossil fuels to the age of clean, renewable energy. I highly recommend this book.

The authors' treatment of very complex technological and environmental issues is clear and

informal, yet not so dumbed-down as to be patronizing to the reader. This is not a simple-minded polemic ripping the bad guys and predicting ruin if what is advocated is not adopted. The focus, as the subtitle suggests, is on solutions and hope, not villains and heroes. This is reflected in the upbeat tone of the text which is consistent with the central message of the book: through applied science, technological innovation, and the manifesting of political will, our global warming problem can be resolved, and we can sustain the standard of living we are accustomed to while continuing to grow our economies. All Electric America elevates the moral tone of the contentious discussion about our energy future, provides sound information and analysis, and advocates a realistic pathway that takes us beyond what seems to be, at times, an intractable dilemma.

This may be the definitive work on the subject. The text is detailed and well documented. Indeed, Mr. Freeman points us to the transportation future that is destined to happen.

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