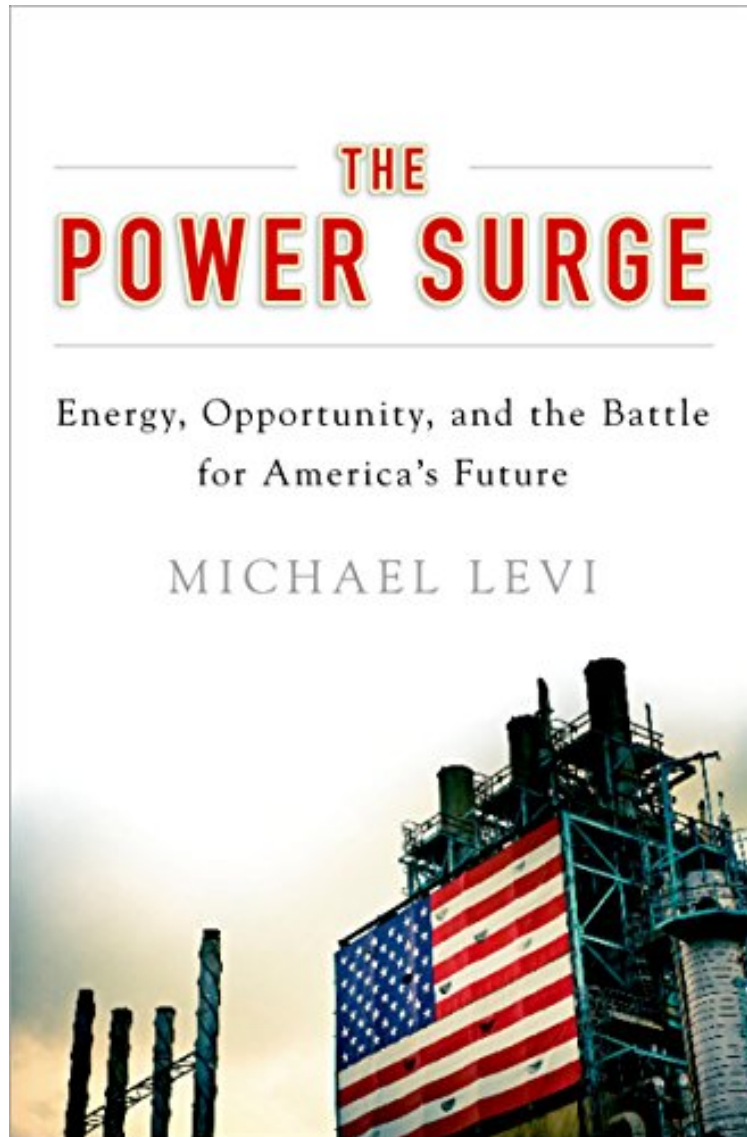


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# The Power Surge: Energy, Opportunity, and the Battle for America's Future

*Michael Levi*

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**Michael Levi : The Power Surge: Energy, Opportunity, and the Battle for America's Future** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Power Surge: Energy, Opportunity, and the Battle for America's Future:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Evenhanded review of the issueBy Hill Country BobA 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 (CO<sub>2</sub>) 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. Plentiful, and cheap energy make possible the advanced industrial society. Thus, unless we want to regress as a society, we need to be concerned about the sources of cheap power for now and the future. His bottom line is that there is no utopia for the USA, and we are going to need to pursue all avenues to meet our energy needs. Well done book. If I could add topics to be included I wish that he would have addressed safety of the different power generation systems as we unfortunately lose lives with all systems, coal mine accidents, wind installation and maintenance accidents etc. There is no such thing as a perfectly safe system to generate electrical power. Nuclear, including the lives lost at Chernobyl has a low personnel loss rate in relation to the electricity generated. A new generation of nuclear power plants has been designed and is being built, The design of these new plants is such that the reactor core cannot overheat and melt if cooling is lost. Thus no incidents like Three Mile Island or the Japanese Tsunami can occur with the new design plants. will reduce the highly radioactive nuclear waste with the long life. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Overview of energy as an industry and associated policy By A. Menon The Power Surge is a discussion of the current state of energy, policy and paths we should think about for the future. It predominantly focuses on the US but has aspects of global energy policy as much energy policy is dependent on global coordination. The book is split into 8 chapters, each concise and straightforward to read. The book starts with discussing aspects of the shale gas industry and then goes into an overview of the energy industry including paths for oil and gas consumption as well as the space of alternative energy. He discusses the divide in approach across the nation for those focusing on fossil vs those focusing on green energy. The author then reminds the reader that this is not the first time this debate arose and it started with the oil shocks of the 70s. The book moves on to focusing on shale gas and the issues concerning community and economy, it discusses some of the political aspects of energy and includes the Russian political move of shutting down natural gas pipelines in 2009 and the reminder of the importance of energy policy and dependency. It discusses the technological limitations of natural gas for running automotive fleets as well. One gets a sense of the pros and cons of shale gas as well as a framework to think about how to balance differing interests. The book moves on to energy independence and starts historically by discussing the oil shocks in the 70s and how energy independence was first focused on then. It discusses all the forms of oil available- in Alaska, offshore and in the oil sands. It gives estimates of how much each of these could add to yearly output. It also discusses economics and how the supply and demand side of oil can function, the impacts of cartels and the breakdown in oligopoly pricing in declining pricing environments. It also discusses the flawed thinking of sufficiency in open markets with elastic supply sides abroad. The book moves on to discussing climate change and various thoughts about the risks of global warming and the greenhouse gas concentrations that are currently considered dangerous thresholds. It discusses the uncertainty in all of these estimates. The author then focuses on the changing nature of the auto industry. It uses BYD to discuss the difficulty in electric cars but discusses how fuel efficiency standards have been instrumental in reducing oil dependency. Price has been a large driver of this and the author again uses basic economic logic to discuss how higher oil prices change the duration of usage needed to legitimize from a pure price perspective the benefit of using more fuel efficient cars. It goes through the history of alternative energy and hybrid cars. It discusses how infrastructure or lack thereof for alternatives is a reason for difficulty in scalability. The author then discusses alternative energy sources like wind and solar and some of the limitations and benefits. Not having storage for dealing with the cyclicity of the energy source is a big detriment. The subsidies for some energy sources create perverse incentives to sell electricity below 0 as the net profit is still positive post the subsidy. The author then discusses some geopolitics focusing on the strategic importance of the energy industry and the tail event probability of aggressive action escalation. It is just an overall warning of the nature of energy politics. The author ends with policy thoughts on how to balance all of the diverse options policy makers have and the way to balance and diversify. The Power Surge is a good overview of energy as an industry, the economics as well as the politics of it. It is fairly simple in its arguments and very easy to digest. I think it states clearly what issues are to be considered and many of the view points surrounding the issues. My only criticism is some of the discussion is very base level and overly discusses the iterative natures of lower prices motivating demand which raises prices which motivates supply etc... The first time such an argument is discussed i guess it can be helpful but thereafter the mechanics don't need to

be repeated. But all in all despite the repetition of certain economic ideas the book is helpful as an overview of what policy makers should think about when considering energy policy, which is among the most important for our modern day political economy. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I was lost; but now ...By Mickey Long When it came to the energy debates, friends on both sides so fiercely disagreed they left me lost. This book gave me the lexicon, the issues, the technology, the arguments and the logic. Levi lucidly sweeps the geopolitics and technology orbiting the energy environment. Levi taught me what I need to know. Spend a weekend to read this book, and you'll likely learn more on the issues than 90% of those around whom you navigate -including main-stream media. Better still, you'll best discern the level headed among the politicians, business leaders, and environmentalists. I was lost, but now I'm found; was blind, but now I see. 5 stars for its educational enrichment. Thanks Mr. Levi Kindle Version

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.

"All revolutions need their storytellers. So it is surprising that America's energy revolution of the past few years has not had a serious scribe before now.... In *The Power Surge* Michael Levi of the Council on Foreign Relations takes an excellent first stab at making sense of America's new energy resources.... The book's main strength is the clarity with which the author explains the development of shale exploitation and assesses the implications of the shale boom." -- *The Economist* "An authoritative new book." --Joe Nocera, *New York Times* "The Power Surge is just fabulous." --Tom Keene, *Bloomberg* "Michael Levi's *The Power Surge* is a welcome relief to melodramatic debates over energy. With a calm voice and an eye for detail, Levi makes the case for a more realistic scenario: renewable energy and fossil fuels are set to share the stage for decades to come.... Levi touches on many ways the energy boom may impact other issues, including climate change, foreign policy and even the dynamics within small communities.... [T]here is a wealth of detail and insights, delivered in a clear prose...." --Kevin Begos, *Associated Press* "Levi... is a smart, pragmatic observer of the energy wars.... He knows how to cut through specious arguments on both sides of the energy-and-climate debate while keeping in target the bigger challenges facing the U.S. and the world... [*The Power Surge*] is one of the best analyses of the amazing changes taking place in the energy sphere today, touching on everything from fracking to climate change to the Keystone XL pipeline debate." --Bryan Walsh, *Time* "Levi, a senior fellow for energy and environment at the Council on Foreign Relations and one of the country's most pragmatic energy experts, combines a researcher's analytical detachment with a journalist's flair for on-the-ground storytelling to take ordinary readers into the impassioned and often ideologically warped debate over how best to keep the nation -- and the world -- industrious, comfortable, mobile and well lighted... For anyone keen to explore and understand all of the potential combinations and outcomes of our energy wars, *The Power Surge* provides a compelling and timely primer." --Tom Zeller Jr., *Huffington Post* "Michael Levi's new book, *The Power Surge*, is very likely to be one of the best things you'll read about the ongoing oil and gas boom in the United States . . . The book is filled with detailed on-the-ground reporting and carefully reasoned observations about how the oil and gas uptick could have all sorts of unexpected impacts on everything from U.S. foreign policy to climate change to transportation. And it works remarkably well: There were dozens of places that forced me to completely reconsider what I thought I knew about energy markets." --Brad Plumer, *Washington Post* "A boom in oil and gas production, coupled with the sliding cost of renewable energy, offers the United States a chance to curb reliance on foreign fuels and boost economic growth. Levi's book *The Power Surge* makes a persuasive case that Democrats and Republicans can at least avoid mutual sabotage . . . Appeals for bipartisanship are often quixotic. Levi, however, manages to avoid sounding utopian . . . Levi's myth-busting is exactly what the U.S. energy debate needs." --Christopher Swann, *Reuters* "Recommended . . . [An] engaging and illuminating book." --David Biello, *Scientific American* "A detailed, clear-eyed look at the radical transformations taking place in America's energy landscape, *The Power Surge* shifts from fracking to the Keystone XL pipeline to the future of renewables with thoughtful analysis and vivid storytelling." --*The Week* "A highly readable account of a complex topic. Abandoning polarization, it opens the door to further scientific conversations to consider the possibilities of consensus on energy development strategies -- a discourse desperately needed if we are to

overcome political inertia. Levi demonstrates great breadth of knowledge and engagement with policies." --Science "[We] highly recommend picking up *The Power Surge*." --Rob Wile, *Business Insider* "This book gives you [a] strategy, gives you a game plan, and it gives you critical insights . . . Everybody, I encourage you strongly to buy this book . . . Buy this book. It's awesome." --Marc Lamont Hill, *Huffington Post* "Storytelling and interviews mix with more detailed analysis throughout the book, which helps keep the reader engaged... Levi adeptly unpacks the most widespread claims regarding increased US oil production's economic impacts. [He] maintains a no nonsense, unbiased approach and readily calls out exaggerations made by groups on either side of a given issue... The climate change discussion really excels..." --Jared Anderson, *Breaking Energy* "[A] breakthrough book." --Perry Smith, *Augusta Chronicle* "[A]n illuminating account." --Reihan Salam, *National* "It is far from easy to find a specialized, high-quality book, aimed at a particular audience but written in simple language, with a strong journalistic flavor, that is clearly intelligible to the average reader. Yet Michael Levi has written just such a work... Anyone with an interest in this subject, so essential to our lives, would be well-advised to read Levi, since, as Daniel Yergin puts it, he 'captures the turning point in the energy situation in America and the world.' Levi masterfully provides practical examples, linking them to the general trend..." --Oil "In *The Power Surge*, Michael Levi captures the emerging turning point in America's energy situation. Combining thoughtful analysis and balanced independent judgment with vivid on-the-ground reporting, Levi delivers both a timely field guide to today's fervent energy debates and compelling insight into the evolving mix of options that is shaping tomorrow's energy world." --Daniel Yergin, Pulitzer-Prize winning author of *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World* and of *The Prize* "Michael Levi has given us a rare gift: a sensible, substantive book that is so well-written it's fun to read. *The Power Surge* argues persuasively that we must move beyond false choices between clean energy and traditional fuels, and instead aggressively pursue both in new ways. And along the way, it introduces colorful characters and rigorously examines why our energy future is crucial to our economic one. With this book, Levi cements his growing reputation as one of the nation's leading thinkers on energy." --Peter Orszag, Vice-Chairman, Citigroup and former Director of the Office of Management and Budget "The *Power Surge* packs big ideas into a concise and illuminating package to make a powerfully persuasive case for America's embracing an all-of-the-above energy future. Michael Levi cuts through vast barriers of suspicion and ideology to find common interests where the stakeholders do not. The shale gas boom and renewables revolution together promise a U.S. energy trifecta, for the economy, security, and the environment, a future that offers new reasons for Americans to unite." --William K. Reilly, former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator and co-chair of the President's BP Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill Commission "Energy will energize our economy and our political debates over the next few years as never before. Michael Levi's important book should be carefully considered by anyone who cares about our energy future and that means anyone who cares about our economic future." --Lawrence H. Summers, Charles W. Eliot University Professor and President Emeritus, Harvard University, and former Secretary of the Treasury "The *Power Surge* is a sweeping account and incisive examination of today's profound global energy developments and the inextricably related political and environmental challenges." --Frederick W. Smith, Chairman CEO, FedEx Corporation "[P]acked with perspective . . . Readers seeking to understand America's energy policies and prospects will welcome this even-handed, smart, and accessible book on a topic of incomparable economic importance." --Publishers Weekly "Calm, reasoned and balanced, presenting arguments and evidence, not wish lists and beliefs." --Kirkus s About the Author Michael Levi is the David M. Rubenstein Senior Fellow for Energy and the Environment and Director of the Maurice R. Greenberg Center for Geoeconomic Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations.