



Energy: Science, Policy, and the Pursuit of Sustainability

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In the early 2000s, energy prices have fluctuated wildly, from historic highs in the winter and spring of 2001 to the lowest wholesale prices in decades a few short months later. As the largest user of fossil-fuel energy, the United States is the key player in the world's energy markets, and our nation's energy policy (or lack thereof) has become a subject of increasing concern. Energy: Science, Policy, and the Pursuit of Sustainability is an essential primer on energy, society, and the environment. It offers an accessible introduction to the "energy problem" -- its definition, analysis, and policy implications. Current patterns of energy use are without question unsustainable over the long term, and our dependence on fossil fuels raises crucial questions of security and self-sufficiency. This volume addresses those questions by examining the three broad dimensions of the issue: physical, human, and political-economic. Chapters consider: the laws of nature and the impacts of energy use on our physical and ecological life-support systems the psychological, social, and cultural factors that determine how we use energy the role of government actions in adjusting costs, influencing resource consumption, and protecting the environment how markets work, and the reasons and cures for market failures in responding to long-term environmental and energy problems Energy links energy use with key environmental issues of population, consumption, and pollution and offers readers a range of material needed for an informed policy perspective.

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