



Energy in America: A Tour of Our Fossil Fuel Culture and Beyond

Ingrid Kelley

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Scientists tell us we need to cut carbon emissions immediately to forestall effects of global warming. Reducing fossil fuel use is the key, and energy experts are hard at work devising solutions. Engineers create remarkable clean energy technologies. Energy policy analysts invent carbon credits and renewable portfolio standards. Fossil energy industrialists promise new, “clean” technology. Renewable energy industrialists compete to develop the magic bullet for transportation fuel or power generation. Every idea is designed to change the nation’s energy sector to one that is clean and sustainable for the future.

But what is this energy sector we have and how did it come about? Design professionals, planners, elected officials, and community leaders are under tremendous pressure to find solutions to climate change. They need a broader view of America’s relationship with energy to gain perspective on how new ideas might work. *Energy in America* tells this story, emphasizing that energy use has always been based on cultural factors as well as technology.

Energy in America relates how coal, oil and natural gas built the nation from its beginning and created today’s consumer culture. It continues with the rise of the electric utility industry and its influence on American society. Finally, it explores the 1970s, when America woke to conservation and efficiency, and the renewable energy industries were born. It concludes with a look at the future possibilities for community energy planning and current trends in sustainable energy policy. The book features a comprehensive energy timeline from 1775 to the present. Each chapter provides primary web sources, and the book contains a complete index.

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