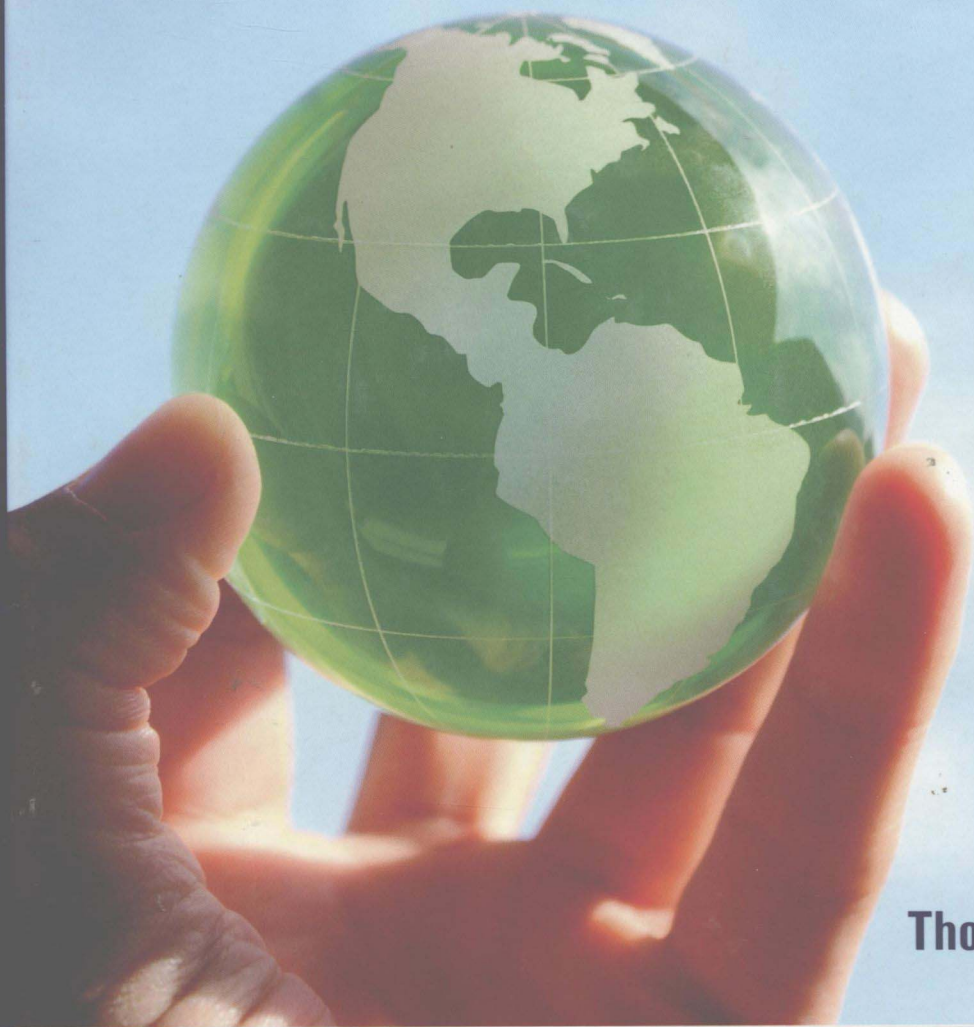


Future Energy: Opportunities and Challenges



Thomas W. Kerlin



Setting the Standard for Automation™

FUTURE ENERGY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Thomas W. Kerlin



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Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts.

*Attributed both to former Senator Patrick D. Moynihan
and to former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger*

**...to live on the earth's energy income rather than its energy
capital.**

Isaac Asimov

**It is quite evident, though, that this squandering cannot go on
indefinitely, for geological investigations prove our fuel stores to
be limited. So great has been the drain on them of late years that
the specter of exhaustion is looming up threateningly in the
distance...**

Nikolai Tesla (1931)

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About the Author

Tom Kerlin retired as head of the Nuclear Engineering Department at the University of Tennessee in 1998, after serving on the faculty for 33 years. His professional interests include instrumentation, nuclear reactor simulation, and dynamic testing for model validation. He has published extensively on these topics.

In addition to his university service, Dr. Kerlin founded a spin-off company, Analysis and Measurement Services Corp., to provide the nuclear industry with the testing capability that he invented for safety system sensors. Dr. Kerlin's method has been used hundreds of times in nuclear power plants in the U.S. and around the world.

Upon retiring, Dr. Kerlin studied the literature on energy production and use and concluded that there was a need for a comprehensive book on our future options that even non-specialists would understand. This book is the result.

PREFACE

A revolution in energy production and use is upon us. Huge changes are starting to rumble through our lives. We cannot avoid these changes, but we can manage them if we approach them in an informed way.

Our current dependence on fossil fuels for most of our energy must be reduced or eliminated because of resource depletion and the environmental effects of fossil fuel combustion.

This book offers no prescriptions for achieving a desirable energy future. Instead, it presents the scientific and technical information needed to evaluate our options for intelligent energy production and use.

Everyone uses energy, and many are appropriately concerned about future energy cost, availability, and environmental impact. Some are content to rely on what the “experts” tell them. Others want to know enough about how energy systems work to be able to make their own assessments. Serving this group is the focus of this book.

In order to understand energy production and use, it is necessary to build on a foundation of indisputable facts. This requires some consideration of basic science, but nothing beyond that science which is taught in high schools. Science tells us what is possible and, probably more importantly, what is impossible. Science also provides the framework for obtaining quantitative evaluations of possibilities in energy production and use. Without a basis in science, and without the use of scientific principles to generate numerical assessments, statements about energy production and use must be viewed as uninformed opinion rather than established fact.

It is expected that this book will be used in survey courses about energy in universities and colleges. The book also should serve interested citizens who want to learn about energy and energy professionals who want to learn about energy options outside their specialty. An effort was made to present the science and technology in a simple and intuitive way. When detailed

information was considered necessary for readers who wish to see the basis for assertions in the main text, more detailed discussions appear in appendices.

Exercises are provided for most of the chapters. These are intended primarily for use in college and university courses. Each exercise has one of three purposes: to provide experience in using some of the quantitative assessment methods, to send the reader to current literature to learn about the status of the rapidly changing energy enterprise, and to stimulate the reader to formulate opinions and provide the rationale for those opinions.

Contents

Acknowledgment xv

About the Author xvii

Preface xix

Part I: GETTING STARTED

Chapter 1 – Introduction to the Energy Story 3

- 1.1 The Energy Issues 5
- 1.2 Three Viewpoints 5
- 1.3 Success Stories 6
- 1.4 Getting Energy 7
- 1.5 Energy and the Environment 9
- 1.6 Making the Transformation 9
- 1.7 Preparing for the Energy Future 11
- References 11

Chapter 2 – Fundamentals 13

- The Main Points 15
- 2.1 Understanding Energy 15
- 2.2 Conservation of Energy 17
- 2.3 Energy and Power 17
- 2.4 Units of Measure 17
- 2.5 Forms of Energy 22
- 2.6 Energy Utilization 34
- 2.7 Energy Efficiency 37
- 2.8 Energy Balances 39
- 2.9 A Little Chemistry 40
- 2.10 A Little Biology 46
- 2.11 Linear vs. Exponential Growth 48
- 2.12 Energy Information on the Internet 50
- 2.13 Energy Facts vs. Energy Fiction 52
- Exercises 52

Chapter 3 – Energy Production and Consumption 55

The Main Points 57

3.1 Overview 58

3.2 World Energy Production and Consumption 59

3.3 U.S. Energy Production and Consumption 61

3.4 Oil Production and Consumption 63

3.5 Natural Gas Production and Consumption 67

3.6 Coal Production and Consumption 69

3.7 Uranium Production and Consumption 70

3.8 Electricity 71

3.9 Greenhouse Gas Release and Pollution from Energy
Production 72

3.10 Energy Recoverable from Non-Renewable Resources 73

3.11 Interpretation 75

References 76

Exercises 76

Part II: ENERGY SOURCES

Chapter 4 – Fossil Fuels 81

The Main Points 83

4.1 Introduction 84

4.2 Oil 86

4.3 Oil Sand 102

4.4 Oil Shale 105

4.5 Gaseous Hydrocarbons 107

4.6 Coal 113

4.7 Synthetic Liquid Fuels 119

4.8 Fossil Fuel Summary 124

References 125

Exercises 126

Chapter 5 – Renewables 129

The Main Points 131

5.1 Introduction 131

5.2 The Solar Resource 132

5.3 Useful Energy Derived from Sunlight 137

5.4 Useful Energy from Non-Solar Sources 138

5.5 Using Renewables 138

References 139

Exercises 139

Chapter 6 – Solar Energy 141

- The Main Points 143
- 6.1 Introduction 143
- 6.2 Solar Heating 144
- 6.3 Solar Electricity 154
- 6.4 Looking Ahead 160
- References 161
- Exercises 161

Chapter 7 – Biofuels 163

- The Main Points 165
- 7.1 Introduction 165
- 7.2 Plants and Energy 166
- 7.3 Plant Characteristics 169
- 7.4 Biochemical Processes 170
- 7.5 Thermochemical Processes 174
- 7.6 Chemical Processes and Applications 176
- 7.7 Hybrid Processes 179
- 7.8 Biofuels Requiring No Processing 181
- 7.9 Biomass-to-Biofuel Process Overview 181
- 7.10 Looking Ahead 183
- References 184
- Exercises 184

Chapter 8 – Wind Energy 187

- The Main Points 189
- 8.1 Introduction 189
- 8.2 Wind Energy Potential 190
- 8.3 Wind Energy Physics 191
- 8.4 Wind Energy Machines 192
- 8.5 Intermittency 196
- 8.6 Wind Machine Siting 197
- 8.7 Wind Energy Status and Prospects 198
- References 199
- Exercises 199

Chapter 9 – Hydroenergy 201

- The Main Points 203
- 9.1 Introduction 203
- 9.2 Physics of Falling Water Energy 204
- 9.3 Turbines and Generators 205
- 9.4 Falling Water Hydroelectric Systems 206

- 9.5 Pumped Storage 208
- 9.6 River Flow, Tidal Flow, and Ocean Current Energy Converters 209
- 9.7 Wave Energy Converters 211
- 9.8 Tide Energy Converters 213
- 9.9 Hydroenergy, Environmental Effects, and Public Safety Concerns 213
- 9.10 Hydroenergy and Load-Following 214
- 9.11 Hydroenergy Contribution to Energy Needs 214
- References 215
- Exercises 215

Chapter 10 – Geothermal Energy 217

- The Main Points 219
- 10.1 Introduction 219
- 10.2 Sub-Surface Conditions 220
- 10.3 The Resource 222
- 10.4 Hydrothermal Sources 223
- 10.5 Enhanced Geothermal Systems 224
- 10.6 Geothermal Energy for Heat and Electricity 227
- 10.7 Environmental Effects 230
- 10.8 Heat Pumps 231
- 10.9 Conclusions 232
- References 232
- Exercises 233

Chapter 11 – Nuclear Energy 235

- The Main Points 237
- 11.1 Introduction 238
- 11.2 Fission Reactors 238
- 11.3 Safety 243
- 11.4 Energy Costs and Environmental Impacts 250
- 11.5 Proliferation 252
- 11.6 Reactor Design Evolution 253
- 11.7 Nuclear Fuel Supply 262
- 11.8 Fusion 263
- 11.9 Nuclear Energy in the Future 265
- References 266
- Exercises 266

Chapter 12 – Hydrogen 269

- The Main Points 271
- 12.1 Introduction 271

12.2	Hydrogen Properties	273
12.3	Hydrogen Production	276
12.4	Hydrogen Storage	282
12.5	Options for Hydrogen Production Sites	283
12.6	Hydrogen Distribution	284
12.7	Use of Hydrogen as a Fuel	284
12.8	Energy Efficiency	285
12.9	Hydrogen's Future	286
	References	287

Chapter 13 – Energy Transport 289

	The Main Points	291
13.1	Introduction	292
13.2	Coal Transport	292
13.3	Liquid Fuel Transport	292
13.4	Gaseous Fuel Transport	294
13.5	Electricity Transport	297
13.6	Environmental Issues	303
13.7	Overview	304
	References	304
	Exercises	305

Part III: ENERGY DEMAND

Chapter 14 – Population and Energy Demand 309

	The Main Points	311
14.1	Introduction	311
14.2	Population History	312
14.3	Exponential Population Growth	313
14.4	The Demographic Transition and Population Stabilization	314
14.5	Total Fertility Rates	315
14.6	Future Population Estimates	316
14.7	Energy Implications	317
14.8	The Bottom Line	319
	References	319
	Exercises	319

Chapter 15 – Residential Energy Use 321

	The Main Points	323
15.1	Introduction	324
15.2	Residential Energy Consumption	325
15.3	Space Heating and Cooling Systems	330

- 15.4 Water Heaters 341
- 15.5 Lighting and Appliances 343
- 15.6 Local Electrical Energy Production 346
- 15.7 Building Features and Lifestyles 347
- 15.8 Possibilities 350
- 15.9 Commentary 352
- References 352

Chapter 16 – Commercial Energy Use 355

- The Main Points 357
- 16.1 Introduction 357
- 16.2 Commercial Energy Use 358
- 16.3 Capital Investment Incentives and Barriers 361
- 16.4 Reducing Commercial Energy Consumption 363
- 16.5 Trends 363
- 16.6 Possibilities 364
- 16.7 Commentary 365
- References 365
- Exercises 366

Chapter 17 – Industrial Energy Use 369

- The Main Points 371
- 17.1 Introduction 371
- 17.2 Consumption by Energy Type 372
- 17.3 Consumption by Use 373
- 17.4 Industry-Specific Consumption 375
- 17.5 Industrial Energy Consumption and the U.S. Economy 376
- 17.6 Supply Side Opportunities for Reducing or Modifying Energy Consumption 377
- 17.7 Reinventing Industrial Processes 379
- 17.8 What Can I Do? 380
- References 380
- Exercises 381

Chapter 18 – Transportation Energy Use 383

- The Main Points 385
- 18.1 Introduction 386
- 18.2 Transportation Energy Consumption 387
- 18.3 Vehicle Statistics 390
- 18.4 Vehicles with Internal Combustion Engines 393
- 18.5 Electric Vehicles 396
- 18.6 Hybrid Vehicle Status 405
- 18.7 Gas Power 405