



## Soliciting TOD Reader Feedback for My Energy Book

Posted by [Robert Rapier](#) on January 4, 2012 - 4:49pm

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Tags: [fossil fuels](#), [nuclear power](#), [peak oil](#), [politics](#), [renewable energy](#) [[list all tags](#)]

Some of you may be aware that I am writing a book - the title is **Power Plays: Energy Options in the Age of Peak Oil**. While I have contributed several chapters to books in the past, this is my first full book, and I only recently learned that the publication process is moving much faster than I had imagined. I signed the book contract in August 2011, and we were targeting completion of the book by year-end 2011. My assumption was that it would probably take months to get final edits, artwork, etc. completed and that it might go on sale during the second half of 2012, but I wouldn't have been surprised to learn that it wouldn't be available until 2013.

However, I recently learned – to my great surprise – that the book is already for sale at a number of outlets, [including Amazon](#), and that release is scheduled for March 15th, 2012. So I am really feeling the pressure at this point. Right now I have to turn in the final chapters and edits by January 15th. That means I have 2 weeks left to make adjustments. I still have to write three chapters, but a lot of that work is done. The book is supposed to be 250 pages, and I have about 180 written. But nothing is set in stone until January 15th.

What I would like to do is share my thoughts with TOD readers and request some feedback and suggestions. The main issue is that I don't want to overlook something major. I would also like to hear what readers would like to see in a book on energy. Essentially, the goal of the book is to provide essential information for people from zero knowledge about energy to those who are fairly sophisticated in their views on energy, but presented in a (mostly) non-technical manner. I also want to press hard for changes in our energy policy so that we can be better prepared for the difficulties that I believe await us. Scattered throughout the book are facts that may not be commonly known, and sidebars that cover a number of controversial topics. My goal is that everyone will learn things that they did not know, and I can safely say that has been the case for me as I have written the book.

Below is the Table of Contents as things currently stand, followed by a short synopsis of each chapter. The final order of the chapters may be different than depicted below, and I may even decide to add or substitute a chapter depending on the feedback I get here.

### Chapter 01 – Overview

This chapter is basically an explanation of why energy is important in our lives, and gives a brief summary of topics such as “Energy Misconceptions” and “Energy Politics.” I also lay out some questions that the book will answer.

### Chapter 02 – Fossil Fuels and Nuclear Power

This chapter covers the history of oil, coal, natural gas, and nuclear power, and discusses countries that produce the most and that use the most.

## **Chapter 03 – Renewables**

Similar to the previous chapter, except covering biomass, wind, solar power, hydropower, and geothermal power.

## **Chapter 04 – Energy Production**

Discusses how the major forms of energy are produced.

## **Chapter 05 – Climate Change**

I go over the science behind climate change, and look at the challenging prospects for reining in carbon emissions.

## **Chapter 06 – Peak Oil**

I cover what peak oil is, the misconceptions behind peak oil, and the threat it poses to modern civilization.

## **Chapter 07 – Nuclear**

This looks at the future of nuclear power, with an emphasis on the ramifications of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster.

## **Chapter 08 – Threats**

Here I cover some of the major threats to energy security besides peak oil. I write about OPEC, emerging countries, and the implications of declining EROEI. I also cover the threat posed by oil chokepoints, which is something that is presently in the news as Iran threatens to shut down the Strait of Hormuz.

## **Chapter 09 – Better Energy Policies**

Here I focus on several ideas that will help move countries away from dependence on imported oil – and ultimately fossil fuels in general – while also making sure supplies are adequate during the transition. I talk about fossil fuel taxes, drilling proposals that fund alternative energy and mass transit, and the need for an Open Fuel Standard.

## **Chapter 10 – Due Diligence**

This chapter explains how to sort out hype from reality, particularly when dealing with an alternative energy technology.

## **Chapter 11 – The Race to Replace Oil**

This chapter is not yet written, but will cover many of the contenders to replace oil. I plan to look at methanol, ethanol, mixed alcohols, DME, and probably fuel from algae.

## **Chapter 12 – Corn Ethanol: Past, Present, and Future**

I cover the history of corn ethanol policies in the U.S., detailing what worked and what needs to be improved. I talk about the implications of the blend wall and how it is impacting the industry.

## **Chapter 13 – The Role of Biomass**

This chapter is not yet written, and I may decide that this material is adequately covered in other chapters. This one is a candidate for substitution.

## **Chapter 14 – Energy and Politics**

This chapter covers the history of energy policy in the U.S. over the past four decades, and why that has resulted in such a high level of dependence on imported oil.

## **Chapter 15 – The Road Ahead**

This chapter isn't written, but will be my assessment of what lies ahead and which pathways offer the most promise for mitigating the energy crunch.

So there you have it. What does it look like I am missing, and what suggestions do you have? What messages do you think is important to convey to the general public?

Besides editing already submitted chapters, I need to write about 4 pages a day for the next three weeks. So there is still plenty of time to influence the final version. TOD will naturally be acknowledged in the book for reader's contributions. Thanks in advance to those willing to offer suggestions.



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