



High Noon for Natural Gas: The New Energy Crisis

By Julian Darley, Richard Heinberg

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Blackouts, rising gas prices, changes to the Clean Air Act, proposals to open wilderness and protected offshore areas to gas drilling, and increasing dependence on natural gas for electricity generation. What do all these developments have in common, and why should we care?

In this timely expose, author Julian Darley takes a hard-hitting look at natural gas as an energy source that rapidly went from nuisance to crutch. Darley outlines the implications of our increased dependence on this energy source and why it has the potential to cause serious environmental, political, and economic consequences. *In High Noon for Natural Gas* readers can expect to find a critical analysis of government policy on energy, as well as a meticulously researched warning about our next potentially catastrophic energy crisis.

Did you know that:

- Natural Gas (NG) is the second most important energy source after oil
- In the U.S. alone, NG is used to supply 20% of all electricity and 60% of all home heating
- NG is absolutely critical to the manufacture of agricultural fertilizers
- In the U.S. the NG supply is at critically low levels, and early in 2003 we came within days of blackouts and heating shutdowns
- Matt Simmons, the world's foremost private energy banker, is now warning that economic growth in the U.S. is under threat due to the looming NG crisis?

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Editorial Review

Review

Choice

Darley, an environmental researcher in the UK, offers a fresh look at a fuel that is widely misunderstood. Although it is essentially methane, natural gas has been considered a waste byproduct, a prime fuel, a major source for fertilizer, a political football, and a short- or a long-term solution for the energy problem. The author assesses each of these conflicting views and shows the economic, environmental, and political dilemmas that must be reconciled. The electric power industry embraced gas to rid itself of the problems inherent with coal. Environmentalists were impressed with how clean natural gas burned. Economists liked the low relative costs. These are all flawed conclusions, and this author's thesis is that a massive worldwide conservation effort is the only viable future course of action. Given the world's political jumble, he is not hopeful. Extensive notes are included. Summing Up: Recommended. All levels.

(J.C. Comer, emeritus, Northern Illinois University)

"What's that hissing sound? Worried about oil running out? Don't look now, but natural gas is next on the endangered hydrocarbons list."--**Salon.com**

From the Publisher

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About the Author

Julian Darley is a British environmental researcher who writes about nonmarket and non-technology-based responses to global environmental degradation. He runs an Internet broadcasting station (www.resilience.org), develops Open Source web database sites for nonprofits and civil society organizations, and is currently writing a book on how and why we need "global relocalization" of the economy, society and culture. Julian lives in Vancouver, Canada.

Richard Heinberg is Senior Fellow at the Post Carbon Institute. He is the author of several influential books on resource depletion including *Peak Everything: Waking Up to the Century Of Declines*.

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