



Snake Oil: How Fracking's False Promise of Plenty Imperils Our Future

By Richard Heinberg

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The rapid spread of hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") has temporarily boosted US natural gas and oil production... and sparked a massive environmental backlash in communities across the country. The fossil fuel industry is trying to sell fracking as the biggest energy development of the century, with slick promises of American energy independence and benefits to local economies. SNAKE OIL casts a critical eye on the oil-industry hype that has hijacked America's energy conversation. This is the first book to look at fracking from both economic and environmental perspectives, informed by the most thorough analysis of shale gas and oil drilling data ever undertaken. Is fracking the miracle cure-all to our energy ills, or a costly distraction from the necessary work of reducing our fossil fuel dependence?

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Editorial Review

Review

Those who think fracked gas is a panacea for our energy future would do well to read this cautionary account--it has an undeniable whiff of reality about it.

-- **Bill McKibben**, founder of 350.org and author of *Oil and Honey: The Education of an Unlikely Activist*

Many long-time observers of the world energy scene have been wondering whether claims being made for US shale gas and tight oil are "too good to be true." Here is hard evidence that they are indeed. America will achieve real, long-term energy independence and security only by doing two things: reducing energy demand and developing distributed renewable energy sources.

-- **Michael Klare**, Director of Five College Program in Peace and World Security Studies at Hampshire College, author of *The Race for What's Left*

We are already living with the false promise that fracking would not harm the environment. Now read the facts about the false promise that it will provide an energy-secure future and lots of jobs. *Snake Oil* debunks all the myths. It is a must-read for our elected leaders.

-- **Maude Barlow**, Board Chair of Food & Water Watch and author of *Blue Covenant*

Unconventional production from shales has been hyped mercilessly by the oil and gas industry. Richard Heinberg does an outstanding job of purging the myths and bringing sensibility to a dialogue which, unfortunately, has been driven by a brand of thinking on the part of energy producers that closely mimics the mentality of Wall Street.

-- **Deborah Rogers**, founder of Energy Policy Forum, former Wall Street financial analyst

Snake Oil exposes the unsustainable economics behind the so-called fracking boom, giving the lie to industry claims that natural gas will bring great economic benefits and long-term energy security to the United States. In clear, hard-hitting language, Heinberg reveals that communities where fracking has taken place are actually being hurt economically. For those who want to know the truth about why natural gas is a gangplank, not a bridge, *Snake Oil* is a must-read.

-- **Michael Brune**, Executive Director of the Sierra Club and author of *Coming Clean*

"Those who think fracked gas is a panacea for our energy future would do well to read this cautionary account?it has an undeniable whiff of reality about it."--**Bill McKibben**, founder of 350.org and author of *Oil and Honey: The Education of an Unlikely Activist*

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"We are already living with the false promise that fracking would not harm the environment. Now read the facts about the false promise that it will provide an energy-secure future and lots of jobs. *Snake Oil* debunks all the myths. It is a must-read for our elected leaders."--**Maude Barlow, Board Chair of Food & Water Watch and author of *Blue Covenant***

"It always sounded too good to be true . . . Richard Heinberg authoritatively explains the fine print beneath the hype—sure enough, fracking is the 21st-century version of snake oil. The real deal is energy efficiency along with solar and wind power. It's time for a sober and honest debate about our energy future. That's why *Snake Oil* is essential reading."--**David W. Orr, Paul Sears Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies and Politics at Oberlin College, author of *Down to the Wire***

"In *Snake Oil*, Richard Heinberg reveals two key themes everyone should understand: The promise of shale oil and gas abundance is exaggerated and misleading, and the cost of producing the shale oil supply has reached a level that is inconsistent with economic growth."--**Arthur Berman, consulting geologist and Director of Labyrinth Consulting Services, Inc.**

"The shale "revolution" might be over sooner than you think. *Snake Oil* does what the mainstream media have failed to do: ask the tough questions—particularly about the economics—and closely examine the real potential of fracking for oil and gas. This book is an important counterpoint to what has been little more than regurgitated industry press releases thus far and is an essential read for investors and policy makers."--**Chris Nelder, energy analyst and author of *Profit from the Peak***

"When some things are too hard or painful to understand, it takes a heroic effort to even try to get a message across. Richard Heinberg is a beacon of light cutting through the fog of wishful thinking to illuminate the critical issues by which the human project may stand or fall: energy and economy."--**James Howard Kunstler, author of *Too Much Magic* and *The Long Emergency***

About the Author

RICHARD HEINBERG is the award-winning author of ten previous books including *THE PARTY'S OVER*, *POWERDOWN*, and *THE END OF GROWTH*. A Senior Fellow at Post Carbon Institute, he is one of the world's foremost energy educators and communicators about the urgent need to transition away from fossil fuels. He is a recipient of the M. King Hubbert award for excellence in energy education and since 2002 has given over five hundred lectures on fossil fuel depletion to audiences around the world. He has been published in 'Nature,' the world's premiere scientific journal; he has been quoted in 'Time' magazine and other major publications; and he has been interviewed on national radio and television in seven countries.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

James Stover:

Now a day people who Living in the era everywhere everything reachable by interact with the internet and the resources inside can be true or not demand people to be aware of each details they get. How many people to be smart in having any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Reading a book can help persons out of this uncertainty Information especially this Snake Oil: How Fracking's False Promise of Plenty Imperils Our Future book because this book offers you rich details and knowledge. Of course the data in this book hundred % guarantees there is no doubt in it you may already know.

Chris Gibbons:

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