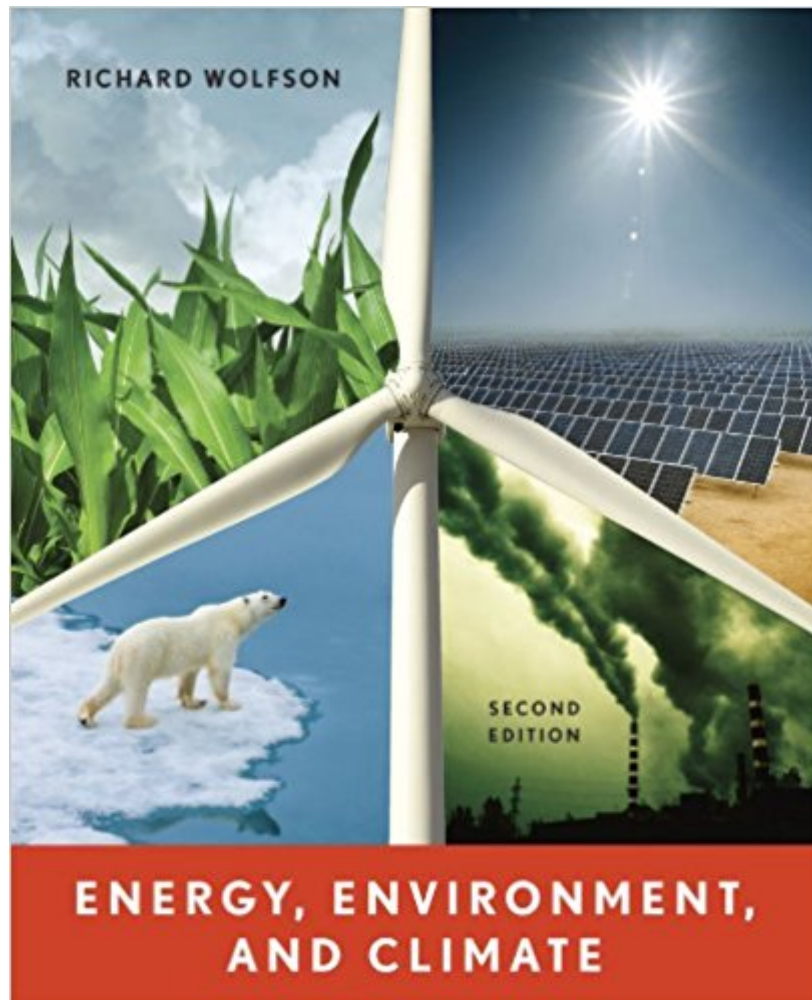




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Energy, Environment, And Climate (Second Edition)



Synopsis

Emphasizes climate change as an energy-related environmental issue. Energy, Environment, and Climate, Second Edition, is the most contemporary book for the energy course. Written for non-science majors, the text presents the physical concepts in easy-to-understand language and asks students to apply those concepts to contemporary energy issues. Students learn to analyze the important questions that face today's citizens and deal with the answers both qualitatively and quantitatively. End-of-chapter questions provide an opportunity for students to practice what they've learned and provide instructors with questions that can be debated in class.

Book Information

Paperback: 435 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 2 edition (October 17, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0393912744

ISBN-13: 978-0393912746

Product Dimensions: 8.1 x 0.8 x 10.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 20 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #93,367 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #81 in Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Rivers #113 in Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Weather #114 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction

Customer Reviews

Richard Wolfson is the Benjamin F. Wissler Professor of Physics at Middlebury College, where he also teaches environmental studies. He holds a BA in physics and philosophy from Swarthmore College, an MS in environmental studies from the University of Michigan, and a PhD in physics from Dartmouth. His research involves solar astrophysics and terrestrial climate, and he has published nearly 100 papers in the scientific literature. Wolfson's other books include several introductory physics texts, as well as Nuclear Choices: A Citizen's Guide to Nuclear Technology (1993) and Simply Einstein: Relativity Demystified (2003). He has five video courses for the Teaching Company's Great Courses series: Einstein's Relativity and the Quantum Revolution: Modern Physics for Nonscientists (1999); Physics in Your Life (2004); Earth's Changing Climate (2007); Physics and Our Universe: How It All Works (2011); and Understanding Modern Electronics (2014).

I'm reading this textbook for a graduate school class in environmental biology for educators. I have worked through the first 10 chapters and have completed most of the exercises, review questions, and research problems in each chapter. So far, I think Dr. Wolfson has fairly, accurately, and thoroughly presented basic facts about humanity's use of energy, the consequences of that use, the alternatives currently available, or technologically possible, and the costs and benefits of both our current energy supplies and proposed alternatives. Dr. Wolfson does not display any bias toward any particular view of climate change or energy use. He instead provides the student with the mathematical tools needed to quantitatively analyze a broad body of well documented facts. My only criticism is a mild one. Dr. Wolfson does say that his text requires only high school level algebra skills. I think that is accurate. Anyone who did reasonably well in high school algebra should be able to follow the text. However, I do wish that in the beginning chapters, as he worked through the conversions and calculations of power, energy, and work, his examples had been just a bit more mathematically detailed. I could follow his explanations, but having not needed to do any dimensional analysis for the last 30 years, I was a bit sketchy on keeping my factors and labels straight as I worked through his examples and then tried to do the exercises. In some of his examples, he implies the completion of steps that he assumes his readers already understand. In others, he lays out mathematical solutions in a narrative form that is tough to follow, and while I was able to work through things like: $(1/5 \text{ Btu/h/ft}^2/\text{degF})(1000\text{ft}^2)(70\text{degF} - 45\text{degF}) = 5000 \text{ Btu/h}$ it would have been a bit easier to follow if it had been laid out more clearly in factor/label format, at least for the first few chapters. Maybe the best way to address this would be for the publisher to supplement the "answers to selected exercises" found in the text with a slightly more detailed solutions guide on their website. Altogether though, this is a well written text. The layout of the pages leaves adequate room for sufficiently detailed marginalia. It contains a number of tables and figures that are well worth tabbing for future reference and the questions, exercises, and research problems are an outstanding guide for a student who is serious about learning the material.

Although I didn't enjoy the class, the textbook itself was pretty easy to read and read in a fairly conversational tone. I particularly enjoyed that aspect of it. That being said, the exercises at the end of each chapter were HORRIBLE and almost impossible to solve without a lot of prior knowledge of conversions and electricity. I wouldn't recommend it as a textbook for a 1000 level class like the one I was in, but maybe a 2 or 3000 level class where the students already have strong quantitative skills that will assist them in applying the concepts learned in the book.

Pretty good book, I used it for an environmental studies class and it explained many concepts very well. The only issue would be the math problems at the end of each chapter. It would be good to have a table with conversions there with the problems so that I don't have to search through the book to find the proper conversion, but it is manageable. Overall, pretty good and you'll know more about the different types of energy sources and issues facing the environment.

Really well written, I learned a ton while teaching a course with this text. And I think he did a really good job at one of the hardest parts, which is giving a clear-eyed view of the pros and cons of nuclear power. In stark contrast to introductory physics texts (including Wolfson's own fine and concise Essential University Physics), this book is one where you really might want to spring for the latest edition.

Quality is good as a text book, the price is so much better than renting price at my college Context wise though, I don't think it is interesting enough if you are looking for some to teach or to read for fun.

Classic in discussing energy and physics as applied to environmental concern.

Love the fact that renting is cheaper than buying straight out.

Thoroughly addresses energy sources and flows. Everything from fossil fuels to nuclear to renewable and sustainable resources are covered.

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