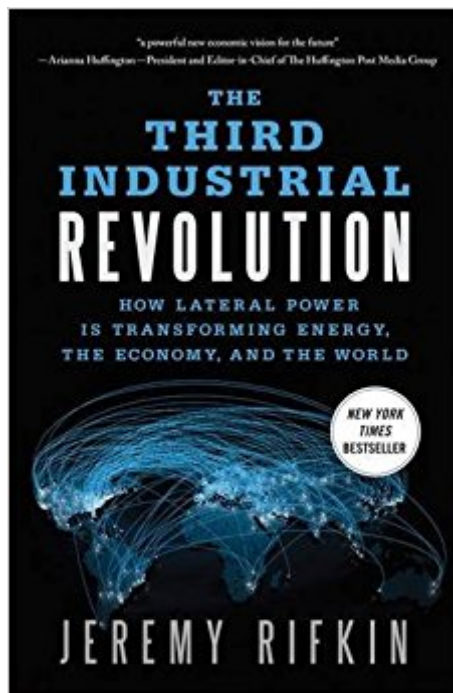


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The Third Industrial Revolution: How Lateral Power Is Transforming Energy, The Economy, And The World



Synopsis

The Industrial Revolution, powered by oil and other fossil fuels, is spiraling into a dangerous endgame. The price of gas and food are climbing, unemployment remains high, the housing market has tanked, consumer and government debt is soaring, and the recovery is slowing. Facing the prospect of a second collapse of the global economy, humanity is desperate for a sustainable economic game plan to take us into the future. Here, Jeremy Rifkin explores how Internet technology and renewable energy are merging to create a powerful "Third Industrial Revolution." He asks us to imagine hundreds of millions of people producing their own green energy in their homes, offices, and factories, and sharing it with each other in an "energy internet," just like we now create and share information online. Rifkin describes how the five-pillars of the Third Industrial Revolution will create thousands of businesses, millions of jobs, and usher in a fundamental reordering of human relationships, from hierarchical to lateral power, that will impact the way we conduct commerce, govern society, educate our children, and engage in civic life. Rifkin's vision is already gaining traction in the international community. The European Union Parliament has issued a formal declaration calling for its implementation, and other nations in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, are quickly preparing their own initiatives for transitioning into the new economic paradigm. The Third Industrial Revolution is an insider's account of the next great economic era, including a look into the personalities and players • heads of state, global CEOs, social entrepreneurs, and NGOs • who are pioneering its implementation around the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Third Industrial Revolution" offers a fascinating look at Jeremy Rifkin's views on the future of energy and the economy. Rifkin believes we are on the verge of a new industrial revolution that will transform the economy and society in a similar way to the major changes that occurred in the 19th and 20th centuries. Rifkin's "third" industrial revolution is based on "five pillars:" (1) A general shift to renewable energy. (2) Micro-generation of clean energy in homes, offices and other buildings. (3) Hydrogen and other forms of energy storage in homes and throughout the economy (4) an "Internet-like" smart energy grid that would allow individuals to generate power and then distribute it, and (5) Conversion of transportation away from fossil fuels to electric plug-in or hydrogen fuel cells. While the book contains a lot of insightful analysis, I think it gives short shrift to the problem of jobs. Technology and globalization are increasingly destroying well-paid opportunities for workers in developed countries. The book does discuss this, but only in the very last few pages. This is surprising because, of course, Rifkin wrote a book about this issue in the 1990s ("The End of Work"). Now, however, he seems to buy into the more conventional view that green jobs will solve the problem of unemployment. I'm doubtful of that. Technologies like artificial intelligence and robotics are accelerating and will soon have a dramatic impact. Advancing technology will also make offshoring of high wage jobs a bigger and bigger problem in the West. "The Third Industrial Revolution" offers many good ideas, but I think it ultimately falls short of answering the question on many peoples' minds: How will average people in developed countries like the United States make an adequate living (and keep pace with the cost of living) while competing with both technology and globalization? That is a critical question because if households are focused on individual survival, it will be very difficult to amass political support for the energy and climate change policies Rifkin advocates. For a strong analysis of the jobs/income issue and some solutions, also read "The Lights in the Tunnel."

This book is good, but it's definitely verbose, as it repeats the same concepts over and over again. There is no doubt that the author is well versed in the subject matter, both in breadth and depth, but there is only so much one can espouse about the transformation of modern society from a fossil-fuel based economy to a renewable-energy based economy. Yes, Europe is way ahead of the United States in achieving the 5 factors that will successfully transform society into the Third Industrial Revolution - we get it. Oh, you want to make the point again? O.K. - got it. Again? Really? There is no need to study that concept ad-nauseum from every conceivable angle. For the layperson, this book is a little much. I think I put it down permanently about midway through... Wait a month and

buy it used in order to save yourself some \$\$'s and thus form your own mini economic revolution.

The concepts that Rifkin puts forward are incredibly important to the future of our economy, but more importantly to combating climate change. I so want to like this book, because more people need to become familiar with these concepts. But the writing! Mr. Rifkin, it is very nice that you have had dinner with Angela Merkel, and met with many heads of state, but this does almost nothing for your narrative. It reads more like an ego trip than a description of the very important process of communicating ideas, and the development of long range plans for the implementation of those ideas. The book could be a great resource as well, but is incredibly under-footnoted, so it has very little value for further research. A real disappointment.

I heard an interview with him and was really inspired. So, I got this book. Well, the interview was Great. The book isn't. His vision and ideas are really compelling. I hope I see it all come to pass. However, I couldn't finish the book. It is mostly a chronicle of all the discussions that have happened with many governments. That's all a bit dull. It will make for good history when the TIR happens.

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