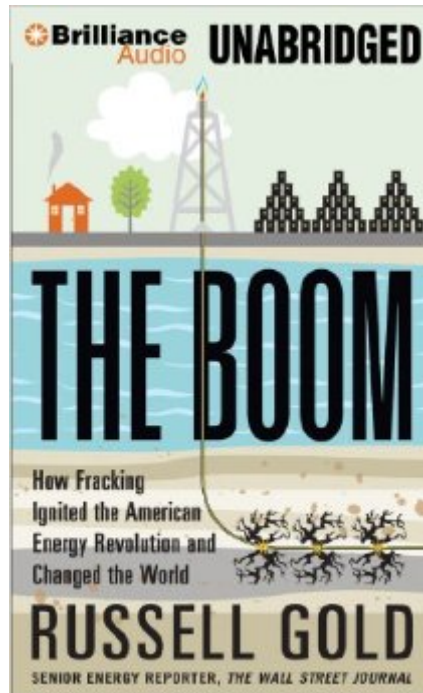


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The Boom: How Fracking Ignited The American Energy Revolution And Changed The World



Synopsis

The "best all-around book yet on fracking" • (San Francisco Chronicle) from a Pulitzer Prize finalist: "Gold's work is a tour de force of contemporary journalism" • (Booklist). First invented in 1947, hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, has not only become a major source of energy, it is changing the way we use energy, and the energy we use. It is both a threat and a godsend for the environment, and it is leading the revival of manufacturing in the United States. A definitive narrative history, *The Boom* follows the twists and turns in the development and adoption of this radical technology. It is a thrilling journey filled with colorful characters: the green-minded Texas oilman who created the first modern frack; a bare-knuckled Oklahoman natural gas empire-builder who gave the world an enormous new supply of energy and was brought down by his own success and excesses; an environmental leader whose embrace of fracking brought an end to his public career; and an aging fracking pioneer who is now trying to save the industry from itself. A fascinating and exciting exploration of one of the most controversial and promising sources of energy, *The Boom* "brings new clarity to a subject awash in hype from all sides" a thoughtful, well-written, and carefully researched book that provides the best overview yet of the pros and cons of fracking. Gold quietly leads both supporters and critics of drilling to consider other views" • (Associated Press).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Russell Gold's 2014 book, *The Boom: How Fracking Ignited the American Energy Revolution and*

Changed the World, is a gripping tale of adventure, ambition, science, and being in the right place, at the right time, with the right accidental technology. And much luck. Whatever side you are on in the oil shale and fracking debate, after reading Gold's tale, it is easy to see that the unlikely technology of hydraulic fracturing has extended the life of fossil fuels, just when it looked like renewables might get a foothold. Gold is a masterful narrator and story teller. He stands aside, for the most part, and lets his cast of oil men, land owners, and financier characters speak for themselves. Yet, Gold does frame this epic story within his own. His parents, owners of a small Pennsylvania acreage, go to him for advice when they are offered an oil lease for their land. Like so many Americans, the drilling and fracking debate has brought the reality of our gluttonous fossil fuel consumption to their literal back and front yards. Yes, in many instances they are handsomely compensated, but this comes at the cost of stinking truck traffic and fumes, constant noise, not to mention the danger of well water, and aquifer contamination. The industrial strength concrete that is supposed to encase the pipes and wells in many cases has failed. The oil drill well pads also need new roads across pristine country side, and wide swaths of dug up earth for the new pipelines. Some land owners, Gold relates, soon end up with buyer's remorse for leasing their property. Yet, it is a complex issue.

As someone who has been working in the energy sector for more than 40 years, I am probably more familiar with the subject of drilling and fracking than the average citizen, but I still learned some things from Russell Gold's "The Boom." It is always healthy to look at an issue as sensitive as fracking from both points of view, and this is something that Gold does an admirable job of doing via this book. The new fracking technology was originally intended to tap into the huge natural gas reserves that were until the last decade or so pretty much beyond the ability of contemporary drilling methods to recover. That technology has proved to be just as effective in the recovery of shale oil that had previously been way too expensive to recover and bring to market. The question now is one of safety and environmental impact of the fracking techniques being used in so many thousands of wells each year. Economically, there is no doubt that fracking has had a huge beneficial impact on the country. Environmentally, the final judgement is yet to be reached because, while it is true that some water wells have been contaminated by natural gas leaking into the neighboring water systems, this has happened so few times that there is not great impact involved - so far. On the other hand, those who lease their property to drilling companies do often find their personal lives shattered and changed forever by all the drilling activity that suddenly springs up around their homes, farms, and ranches. Of course, they can always take the big money and run - and lots of

them do - but that's not a welcome option for everyone.

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