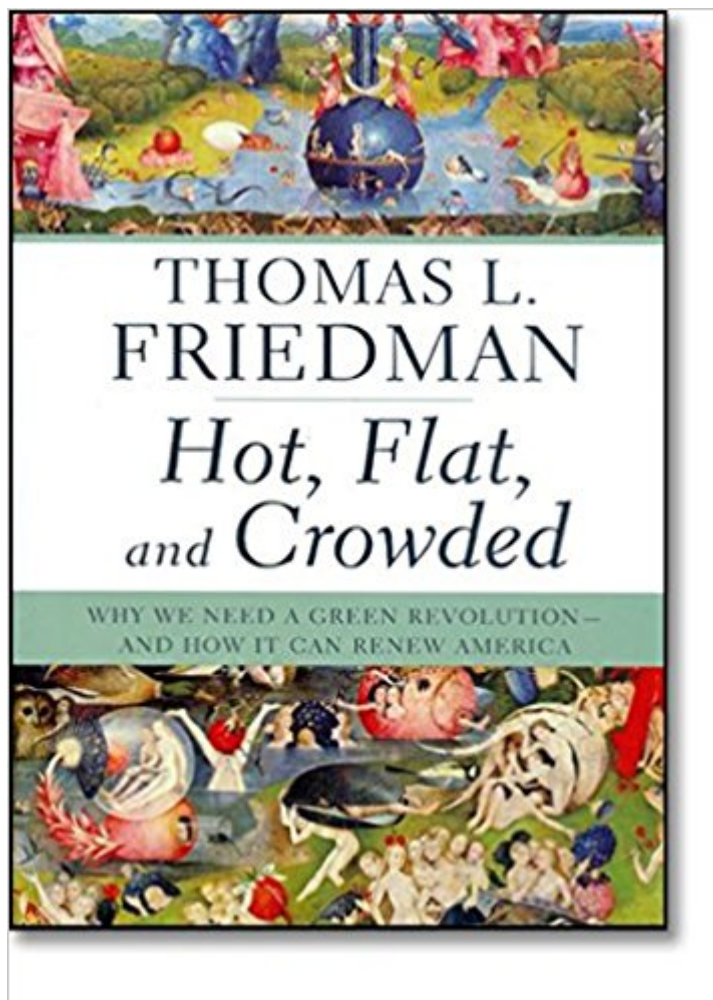


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# Hot, Flat, And Crowded: Why We Need A Green Revolution--and How It Can Renew America



## Synopsis

Thomas L. Friedman's no. 1 bestseller *The World Is Flat* has helped millions of readers to see globalization in a new way. Now Friedman brings a fresh outlook to the crises of destabilizing climate change and rising competition for energy—both of which could poison our world if we do not act quickly and collectively. His argument speaks to all of us who are concerned about the state of America in the global future. Friedman proposes that an ambitious national strategy—which he calls “Geo-Greenism”—is not only what we need to save the planet from overheating; it is what we need to make America healthier, richer, more innovative, more productive, and more secure. As in *The World Is Flat*, he explains a new era—the Energy-Climate era—through an illuminating account of recent events. He shows how 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the flattening of the world by the Internet (which brought 3 billion new consumers onto the world stage) have combined to bring climate and energy issues to Main Street. But they have not gone very far down Main Street; the much-touted “green revolution” has hardly begun. With all that in mind, Friedman sets out the clean-technology breakthroughs we, and the world, will need; he shows that the ET (Energy Technology) revolution will be both transformative and disruptive; and he explains why America must lead this revolution—with the first Green President and a Green New Deal, spurred by the Greenest Generation. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* is classic Thomas L. Friedman—fearless, incisive, forward-looking, and rich in surprising common sense about the world we live in today. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 448 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 1 edition (September 8, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374166854

ISBN-13: 978-0374166854

Product Dimensions: 6 x 28.6 x 228.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 434 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #86,072 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Alternative & Renewable #21 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Energy & Mining > Oil & Energy #69 in Books

## Customer Reviews

**Book Description** Thomas L. Friedman's phenomenal number-one bestseller *The World Is Flat* has helped millions of readers to see the world in a new way. In his brilliant, essential new book, Friedman takes a fresh and provocative look at two of the biggest challenges we face today: America's surprising loss of focus and national purpose since 9/11; and the global environmental crisis, which is affecting everything from food to fuel to forests. In this groundbreaking account of where we stand now, he shows us how the solutions to these two big problems are linked--how we can restore the world and revive America at the same time. Friedman explains how global warming, rapidly growing populations, and the astonishing expansion of the world's middle class through globalization have produced a planet that is "hot, flat, and crowded." Already the earth is being affected in ways that threaten to make it dangerously unstable. In just a few years, it will be too late to fix things--unless the United States steps up now and takes the lead in a worldwide effort to replace our wasteful, inefficient energy practices with a strategy for clean energy, energy efficiency, and conservation that Friedman calls Code Green. This is a great challenge, Friedman explains, but also a great opportunity, and one that America cannot afford to miss. Not only is American leadership the key to the healing of the earth; it is also our best strategy for the renewal of America. In vivid, entertaining chapters, Friedman makes it clear that the green revolution we need is like no revolution the world has seen. It will be the biggest innovation project in American history; it will be hard, not easy; and it will change everything from what you put into your car to what you see on your electric bill. But the payoff for America will be more than just cleaner air. It will inspire Americans to something we haven't seen in a long time--nation-building in America--by summoning the intelligence, creativity, boldness, and concern for the common good that are our nation's greatest natural resources. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded* is classic Thomas L. Friedman: fearless, incisive, forward-looking, and rich in surprising common sense about the challenge--and the promise--of the future.

**Thomas Friedman and Fareed Zakaria: Author One-to-One** Fareed Zakaria: Your book is about two things, the climate crisis and also about an American crisis. Why do you link the two? **Thomas Friedman:** You're absolutely right--it is about two things. The book says, America has a problem and the world has a problem. The world's problem is that it's getting hot, flat and crowded and that convergence--that perfect storm--is driving a lot of negative trends. America's problem is that we've lost our way--we've lost our groove as a country. And the basic argument of the book is that we can solve our problem by

taking the lead in solving the world's problem. Zakaria: Explain what you mean by "hot, flat and crowded." Friedman: There is a convergence of basically three large forces: one is global warming, which has been going on at a very slow pace since the industrial revolution; the second--what I call the flattening of the world--is a metaphor for the rise of middle-class citizens, from China to India to Brazil to Russia to Eastern Europe, who are beginning to consume like Americans. That's a blessing in so many ways--it's a blessing for global stability and for global growth. But it has enormous resource complications, if all these people--whom you've written about in your book, *The Post American World*--begin to consume like Americans. And lastly, global population growth simply refers to the steady growth of population in general, but at the same time the growth of more and more people able to live this middle-class lifestyle. Between now and 2020, the world's going to add another billion people. And their resource demands--at every level--are going to be enormous. I tell the story in the book how, if we give each one of the next billion people on the planet just one sixty-watt incandescent light bulb, what it will mean: the answer is that it will require about 20 new 500-megawatt coal-burning power plants. That's so they can each turn on just one light bulb!

Zakaria: In my book I talk about the "rise of the rest" and about the reality of how this rise of new powerful economic nations is completely changing the way the world works. Most everyone's efforts have been devoted to Kyoto-like solutions, with the idea of getting western countries to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions. But I grew to realize that the West was a sideshow. India and China will build hundreds of coal-fire power plants in the next ten years and the combined carbon dioxide emissions of those new plants alone are five times larger than the savings mandated by the Kyoto accords. What do you do with the Indias and Chinas of the world?

Friedman: I think there are two approaches. There has to be more understanding of the basic unfairness they feel. They feel like we sat down, had the hors d'oeuvres, ate the entr e, pretty much finished off the dessert, invited them for tea and coffee and then said, "Let's split the bill." So I understand the big sense of unfairness--they feel that now that they have a chance to grow and reach with large numbers a whole new standard of living, we're basically telling them, "Your growth, and all the emissions it would add, is threatening the world's climate." At the same time, what I say to them--what I said to young Chinese most recently when I was just in China is this: Every time I come to China, young Chinese say to me, "Mr. Friedman, your country grew dirty for 150 years. Now it's our turn." And I say to them, "Yes, you're absolutely right, it's your turn. Grow as dirty as you want. Take your time. Because I think we probably just need about five years to invent all the new clean power technologies you're going to need as you choke to death, and we're going to come and sell them to you. And we're going to clean your clock in the next great global industry. So

please, take your time. If you want to give us a five-year lead in the next great global industry, I will take five. If you want to give us ten, that would be even better. In other words, I know this is unfair, but I am here to tell you that in a world that's hot, flat and crowded, ET--energy technology--is going to be as big an industry as IT--information technology. Maybe even bigger. And who claims that industry--whose country and whose companies dominate that industry--I think is going to enjoy more national security, more economic security, more economic growth, a healthier population, and greater global respect, for that matter, as well. So you can sit back and say, it's not fair that we have to compete in this new industry, that we should get to grow dirty for a while, or you can do what you did in telecommunications, and that is try to leap-frog us. And that's really what I'm saying to them: this is a great economic opportunity. The game is still open. I want my country to win it--I'm not sure it will.

Zakaria: I'm struck by the point you make about energy technology. In my book I'm pretty optimistic about the United States. But the one area where I'm worried is actually ET. We do fantastically in biotech, we're doing fantastically in nanotechnology. But none of these new technologies have the kind of system-wide effect that information technology did. Energy does. If you want to find the next technological revolution you need to find an industry that transforms everything you do. Biotechnology affects one critical aspect of your day-to-day life, health, but not all of it. But energy--the consumption of energy--affects every human activity in the modern world. Now, my fear is that, of all the industries in the future, that's the one where we're not ahead of the pack. Are we going to run second in this race?

Friedman: Well, I want to ask you that, Fareed. Why do you think we haven't led this industry, which itself has huge technological implications? We have all the secret sauce, all the technological prowess, to lead this industry. Why do you think this is the one area--and it's enormous, it's actually going to dwarf all the others--where we haven't been at the real cutting edge? Continue reading the Q&A between Thomas Friedman and Fareed Zakaria

Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times columnist Friedman (*The World Is Flat*) is still an unrepentant guru of globalism, despite the looming economic crisis attributable, in Friedman's view, to the U.S. having become a "subprime nation that thinks it can just borrow its way to prosperity." Friedman covers familiar territory (the need for alternate energy, conservation measures, recycling, energy efficiency, etc.) as a build-up to his main thesis: the U.S. market is the "most effective and prolific system for transformational innovation.... There is only one thing bigger than Mother Nature and that is Father Profit." While he remains ostensibly a proponent of the free market, he does not flinch from using the government to create conditions favorable to investment, such as setting a "floor price for crude oil or gasoline," and imposing a new gasoline tax (\$5-\$10 per

gallon) in order to make investment in green technologies attractive to venture capitalists: "America needs an energy technology bubble just like the information technology bubble." To make such draconian measures palatable, Friedman poses a national competition to "outgreen" China, modeled on Kennedy's proposal to beat the Soviets to the moon, a race that required a country-wide mobilization comparable to the WWII war effort. Recognizing the looming threat of "petrodicatorship" and U.S. dependence on imported oil, this warning salvo presents a stirring and far-darker vision than Friedman's earlier books. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Friedman's work is always provocative with a cautionary tone followed by an optimistic outlook. Although this as well as his previous books are somewhat dated (this one doesn't take into account the recent natural gas boom created by fracking), the general message remains as true and pertinent today as when it was written (since our politicians don't have the courage to overcome the lobbyists of the wealthy and enact these long term policies). The book really could be about 2/3 the length as Friedman does have a tendency to continue to hammer well established concepts over and over to emphasize his points but you can see this coming and skip ahead fairly easy. If you don't want to commit to the whole book you should at least read the story about First Solar in the latter part of the book. That says a lot about the power of the elite pulling us in the wrong direction.

Tom Friedman always has a practical point of view on things and this book is no exception. I found this book to be more forward-looking compared to *The World Is Flat*, which is more journalistic in its reporting of events that led to the world's economic state today. This book is more about steps the United States can take to ensure American dominance in the 21st Century. I highly recommend this book to anyone that just thinks of environmental rights advocates as "treehuggers". Tom Friedman goes into extensive detail about how a green movement can have economic and national security benefits as well, such as reducing poverty and increasing productivity in regions of poor countries that do not have a stable electric grid and bankrupting petrodictators, who benefit from and are able to remain in power due to oil revenues.

Excellent book--though if you read a lot of Friedman, there's nothing to justify a new title. He has said the same thing over and over. Of course he's right--but redundant.

Hot, Flat and Crowded: Book Review The latest book by Thomas Friedman, *Hot, Flat and Crowded*:

Why the World Needs a Green Revolution, and How It Can Revolutionize America, beseeches America to lead the world in what Friedman terms a green revolution. In the book he urges America to demolish the walls it has built post-911 and rebuild relationships with the world to accomplish the daunting task of reworking our entire way of life to meet the challenges of an ever more populated, flat, and undeniably warming world. Anyone who has an interest in the new green revolution or feels that the world needs a change for the better would truly benefit from the author's insight, anecdotes, facts, and plans to change the world. Thomas Friedman's depth of knowledge of world affairs is truly remarkable once one delves into one of his books. His apparent, extensive research and personal interviews with some of the world's leading businessmen, politicians, and world leaders is a break from the media blitz that has surrounded climate change and the green revolution. Besides presenting mounds of facts, statistics, and current events, the author provides perspective on those events and how they relate to one another, making it easier for people who may not have as deep a knowledge of world affairs to understand the true implications of the global threats we face daily. This reviewer appreciates a writer who not only presents the facts and the situation, but has a plan to solve it. Throughout the book, Friedman presents logical, fact based plans to right the wrongs of society to promote conservation, reduce energy use, and bring the U.S. back to its rightful position as leader of the free world. Friedman manages to cut through to the heart of climate change and global crowding and provide real solutions rather than simply relating the facts as so many other authors do. Hot, Flat and Crowded is simply one of the best books on climate change that the market has to offer.

We can save the world by demanding all G8 leaders adopt this political platform and tell the big fossil fuel and utility companies to get on board or be left behind. Our government must set the right price signals and tax structure for R&D for renewable energy. We must take our government back from these companies for the long term survival of the species and to reshape the environment and the world's economy. The G8 and/or U.S. can lead this or be left behind. This book enhanced my thinking that this must be done soon. We need to make sure our governments get the backbone to make the changes necessary. Are we going to wait until we have reached the tipping point? We will probably not plan ahead and react to disasters that may wipe us out. Read the book and talk to your elected officials. If they say this is crazy then you know they are not a visionary leader or have been bought by big business and need to be VOTED out. The dumbing down of America must stop!!!! We need to wake up, get off our asses and demand a platform that is outlined in this book. We should be tired of those with the money being greedy to the point of making the rest of us suffer and

eventually die so they can live for the now. The way we are going is not sustainable and we have crapped in our own nest. Stop the insanity!!!

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