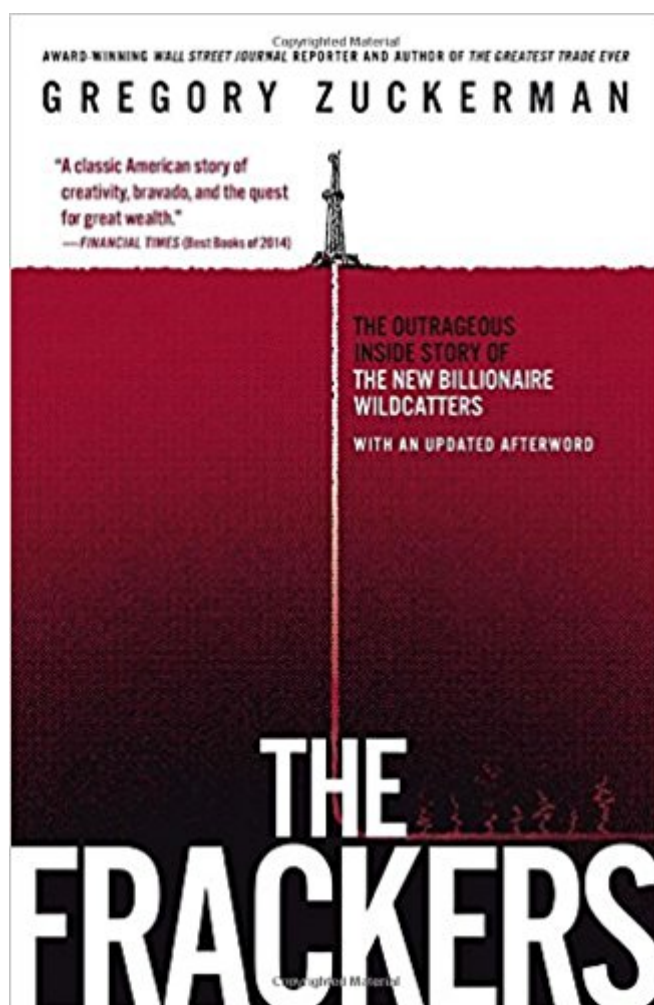


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The Frackers: The Outrageous Inside Story Of The New Billionaire Wildcatters



Synopsis

“A lively, exciting, and definitely a thought-provoking book.”
Booklist Things looked grim for American energy in 2006, but a handful of wildcatters were determined to tap massive deposits of oil and gas that giants like Exxon and Chevron had ignored. They risked everything on a new process called fracking. Within a few years, they solved America’s dependence on imported energy, triggered a global environmental controversy, and made and lost astonishing fortunes. No one understands the frackers’ ambitions, personalities, and foibles better than Wall Street Journal reporter Gregory Zuckerman. His exclusive access drives this dramatic narrative, which stretches from North Dakota to Texas to Wall Street.

Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Portfolio; Reprint edition (October 28, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1591847095

ISBN-13: 978-1591847090

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.1 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 356 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #95,294 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #11 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Energy & Mining > Natural Resource Extraction #22 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Energy & Mining > Oil & Energy #26 in Books > Business & Money > Processes & Infrastructure > Infrastructure

Customer Reviews

Fans of the lively, character-driven nonfiction of writers like Kurt Eichenwald and Ben Mezrich should welcome this book with open arms. It’s a potentially dry story: a bunch of guys try to make a lot of money by hammering subterranean rock formations (shale, mostly) with liquid, breaking them up, allowing the trapped-in natural gas to come to the surface. This is hydraulic fracturing, otherwise known as fracking, and, in Zuckerman’s hands, the topic generates a surprisingly entertaining story about Big Men with Big Ideas, the highly competitive (and, in some cases, increasingly desperate) search for a new and potentially highly profitable source of energy. Zuckerman also explores the often passionate and outspoken opposition to the drilling procedure

(for some, fracking doesn't just sound like a dirty word; it is one), although he doesn't come down on one side or the other. He shows us the beneficial side of fracking and the potentially environmentally disastrous side, and lets us find our own ground to stand on. A lively, exciting, and definitely thought-provoking book. --David Pitt --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

"Zuckerman's fast-paced, densely interesting *The Frackers* is the first book to tell the stories of the obstinate, ravenous, methodical, sometimes rascally oil executives of the recent boom. By focusing on people instead of trends, it gets to the heart of why the United States is once again the largest supplier of oil and gas in the world." •The New Republic "Told with care and precision and a deep understanding of finance and corporate politics as well as oil and geology." •Bryan Burrough, The New York Times "Fans of the lively, character-driven nonfiction of writers like Kurt Eichenwald and Ben Mezrich should welcome this book with open arms . . . A lively, exciting, and definitely thought-provoking book." •Booklist "A fascinating study of American entrepreneurial culture and the modern robber barons who succeeded in creating an energy revolution." •Kirkus "Lovers of business and capitalism will appreciate *The Frackers*, Zuckerman has done valuable and timely reporting on the men and independent companies that created the shale boom." •Associated Press

Not knowing much about fracking, but wanting to know what all the controversy was about I chose this book to get me up to speed. It was a great book to start with. It provided history about fracking and identified the key players who made it happen. It also explained the interaction between the companies and state and federal governments; current through the end of 2013. It also touched on the state of fracking in other countries outside the U.S. I think this book is still relevant and recommend it as a good starting point for someone wanting to learn about fracking. It will provide the reader with the necessary framework to read and understand more detailed information about fracking.

As the title says, this book is primarily a history of five or six prominent players in the shale fracking energy revolution. Some were lifelong wildcatters, others were simply investors interested in the oil and gas industry and the book focuses primarily on them and others to give a history of fracking in the US. The writing is excellent, the story flows smoothly, and the characters are quite colorful.

From an Egyptian-born former restaurant owner to a high school educated wildcatter turned billionaire to engineers, geologists and investors, the people described are fascinating as you follow their successes and failures in trying to drill for oil. The author doesn't focus too much on the technical details of the techniques and technology advances that made cost effective shale drilling possible, but he does give enough of an overview to give the reader an idea of what it took to make the energy revolution possible. The main action in the book starts in the early 1990s and ends in 2014. This is a great read and recommended for anyone interested in shale energy or just enjoys interesting character-driven nonfiction.

I've followed American oil and gas wildcatters for a decade. Zuckerman wrote a great story highlighting some of the largest egos in the fields and the risks they took to make fortunes, go broke, and establish America's dependence of energy.

Very nice narrative of turning the impossible into possible! I work in the oil industry, and I understand that 30 years ago, if someone came to tell you that you can extract oil/gas from shale, you should not hire him/her. It was just against science and common learning at the time. However, because of some people who thought otherwise, the impossible became possible, and extracting oil/gas from shale happened, and caused a big disruption in the industry causing one of the biggest slump in commodity prices ever. I enjoyed reading it and it was very informative, both on the historical side, and the technical side. Recommended for anyone who is interested to know about creative destruction in the oil industry!

Frackers is able to take an industry (that I was vaguely familiar with) and bring it to life. It covers the historical perspective, the main characters, companies, and technology. This is a narrative that impacted and continues to impact practically every person in the USA. The writing flows well and the reader is comfortably introduced to many people in the industry and their back stories. Gregory Zuckerman recognized the importance of this energy revolution and researched it interviewing all the key figures and documenting their thoughts, memories, and actions. I believe this book will likely be a book referred to by future historians. I had recently read *The Quantum 10*, a historical account of the figures that were responsible for the creation of quantum mechanics. A book that relies on the newspaper accounts and reviews of personal letters to tell a detailed story. Kudos to Mr Zuckerman for not letting the story of Fracking be left to third hand accounts.

I am familiar with the oil & gas industry. I worked for several companies and I invest in energy companies today. I learned a lot from this book, which is very well researched and enjoyable to read. The cast of characters who started a modern energy revolution in this country should be praised. The wildcatters are similar to the explorers and pioneers who pushed west in the early days of our country. Most of them started out with very little. They fought their own battles, against volatile markets, difficult geology, harsh weather and Wall Street investors. Thanks to their bold pursuit of oil and gas in forgotten domestic fields over the past couple of decades, we can now power our economy with our own fuel, not imported fossil fuels from unstable regions of the world, as we have done for the past 40 plus years. Historians will hopefully recognize these Americans as 21st Century visionaries who freed us from dependence upon imported energy from OPEC countries.

This book shows a great example of what a free people who are allowed to work hard and keep the fruits of their labors can accomplish. While our mind numbing bureaucracy is attempting to micro-manage energy resources and picking winners and losers in the game, these individuals went out and accomplished what no top down system will ever accomplish. The cast of characters are shown warts and all, but they have given the world a great gift and changed the worldwide energy equation for the next 50 years. They will be remembered in the long run as pioneers with as much impact as the printing press, Ford's assembly line and Edison light bulb and the personal computer.

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