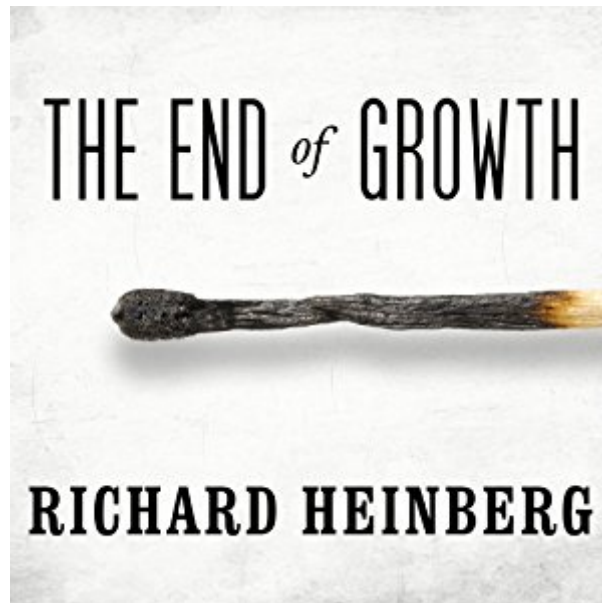


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The End Of Growth: Adapting To Our New Economic Reality



Synopsis

Economists insist that recovery is at hand, yet unemployment remains high, real estate values continue to sink, and governments stagger under record deficits. *The End of Growth* proposes a startling diagnosis: humanity has reached a fundamental turning point in its economic history. The expansionary trajectory of industrial civilization is colliding with non-negotiable natural limits. Richard Heinberg's latest landmark work goes to the heart of the ongoing financial crisis, explaining how and why it occurred, and what we must do to avert the worst potential outcomes. Written in an engaging, highly readable style, it shows why growth is being blocked by three factors: Resource depletion
Environmental impacts
Crushing levels of debt
These converging limits will force us to re-evaluate cherished economic theories and to reinvent money and commerce. *The End of Growth* describes what policy makers, communities, and families can do to build a new economy that operates within Earth's budget of energy and resources. We can thrive during the transition if we set goals that promote human and environmental well-being, rather than continuing to pursue the now-unattainable prize of ever-expanding GDP.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I enjoyed reading this book. I really think the author is on to something here, and his hypotheses and conclusions cannot be easily dismissed. He gives several major reasons why economic growth in most of the world will slow and halt in coming years. Some of his reasons I am a bit skeptical of - for example, I tend to think governments of the world will find a way to work out their debt problems - but there is one overriding factor which will pull the plug on growth if unchecked, and the author's

treatment of this factor is, in my opinion, the strongest feature of the book. This is, of course, the escalating price of energy, especially oil. As the author himself says, "No energy, no economy". The escalating price of oil - especially gas for cars and planes - will (and already has) put a major block on the ability of modern economies to flourish (not immediately, of course, but slowly and inexorably), especially without a viable alternative on the horizon. I have seen this in stark fashion in my own geographic area, where I have seen the price of gas rise 50 cents a gallon in just the last few weeks. It doesn't take a lot of deep thinking to realize that that's money that comes out of our pockets that can't be spent in other areas of the economy. Things wouldn't be so bad if there, in fact, a viable energy substitute which would become relatively feasible from a \$ standpoint as the cost of oil rises farther. However, the author does a good job explaining why fossil fuels have (and had) uniquely favorable characteristics that are unlikely to be easily replicated by anything else on the horizon.

I was fortunate enough to acquire this book after hearing Heinberg speak. Quite simply, this is a paradigm shifting book. If things you hear create a sense of dissonance for you--like seeing a dead in the water economy and a president and congress who keep telling you how things are getting better. Or watching people you know go through bankruptcy while bankers get record bonuses. Or simply that empty feeling you get when you hear politicians and businessmen alike talk about getting America "back to where we were" and you think, "Really?", then this book is for you. Heinberg painstakingly lays out the case for "the end of growth". He acknowledges the policy errors that compounded it but simply points out that we are past the point of peak oil, peak minerals and our environment is maxed out. We have to live with a reality based construct of what we have. Now having read the book you are forever struck by the fundamental error in thinking exhibited by virtually all of the policy creating world (with some exceptions). This book deepened my despair at America's failure of leadership at the recent Environmental conference in Durban. But Heinberg makes an argument for the fact that a less-consumption oriented culture can still be a very happy, more locally based culture. Not unimportantly the book fundamentally helps you see where you want to go next in your own life. It helps you plan for your real future (though I have no desire to paint it as a handbook for the future) in a reality based way. Paradigm shifting is not an entirely comfortable process. It was uncomfortable to read this book though I was already familiar with some but not all of the main ideas. But it is well worth reading.

Recommended to me by a financially literate fellow board member, I downloaded the book to my

Kindle Fire. The authors make a very strong, dispassionate case for the reality that population growth and access to fossil fuels are confronting one another head on as we speak. The world's economic malaise is not co-incidental. Rather it is a denouement of this reality. It takes more and more energy to access energy for growth. Bigger is worse. Growth will ultimately be limited to the amount of energy the earth can regenerate. In other words, economic growth will end. The book is a vital read for anyone who wants to participate in a successful transition from growth at the expense of depleting resources to finding a balance between renewable energy and sustained life. I was impressed with the lack of emotional motivation. The case is built on facts with many graphs supporting the case. Plus it was fun to read. It makes riding a stationary bike fun, as you see the future landscape flying by.

Book was received as described in new condition.

The title is a little misleading because Heinberg is talking about the end of growth as we know it, not that all growth will end, but growth based on fossil fuel consumption, ever increasing alterations to our crops to feed the population and Birthrates that will stagger the planet. In other words, things aren't going to go back to the way they were - low unemployment, growing economic activity and rampant fossil fuel consumption will end. The book is based on the findings in another of another book, Limits to Growth, published 40 + years ago that talks about how we are abusing the resources we have, overpopulating the planet and destroying our way of life if we don't change.

This book is not talking about worn-out commonplaces. It exposes clearly what is in the title: the causes of the the end of growth. Facts and figures are listed, not only with criticism, but also with offering possible solutions. The writer does not waste time with lengthy explanations, he is not using politically correct language, but goes to the heart of the problem. This book should be added to every high school and college library as compulsory reading. In addition, politicians should read it before entering into any debate about growth.

Anyone who cares to be informed on economics, but especially politicians, most of whom have pretensions of social leadership but crucial brevity of vision, should read this book with care, absorb its message and step outside their usual temporal bounds. Belief in unfettered and perpetual growth is only leading to a lemming-like self-destruction of the human species. It is time to act with real courage to promote the adoption of the radically new and creative social and economic paradigms

needed to avoid an unparalleled human catastrophe.

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