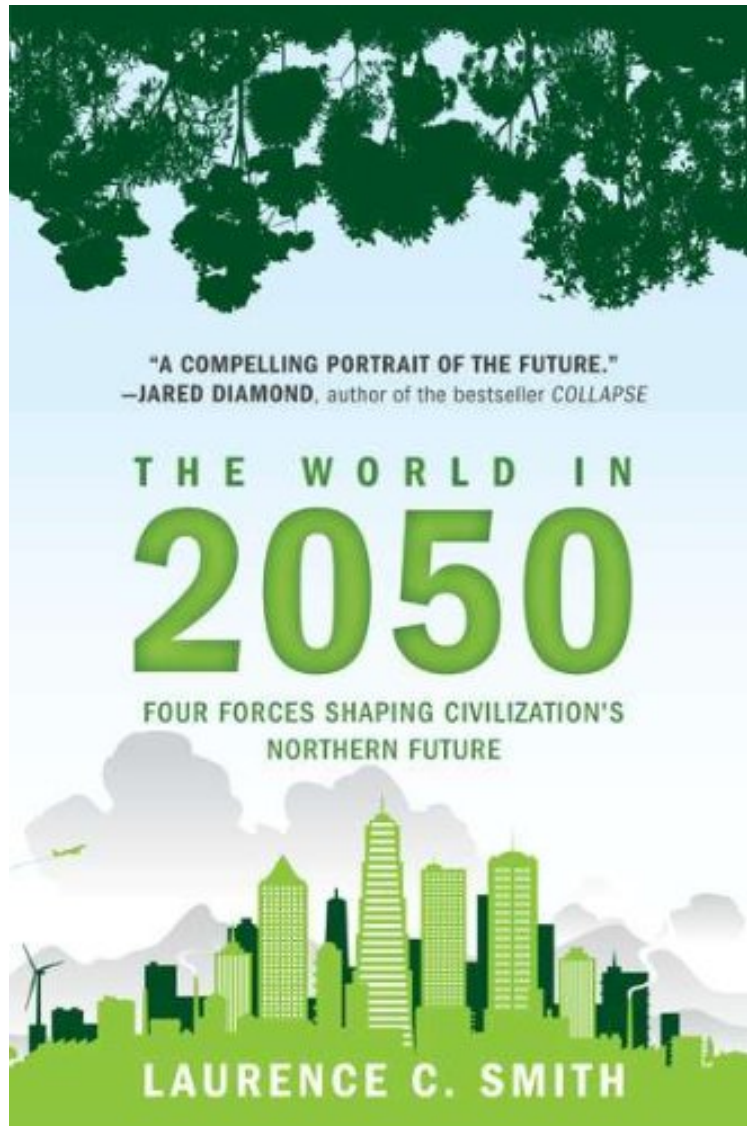


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The World in 2050: Four Forces Shaping Civilization's Northern Future

Laurence C. Smith

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Laurence C. Smith : The World in 2050: Four Forces Shaping Civilization's Northern Future before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The World in 2050: Four Forces Shaping Civilization's Northern Future:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Educational uses for the bookBy Max IaconoI found this book

excellent. I teach Globalization to M.A. students and I plan to use selected portions of this book in my future Globalization courses as a student reading and discussion assignment. The book is very useful to help place Globalization in perspective also in the context of other major developments and global forces since -as one of the other reviews also indicates - it "identifies four global forces likely to determine our future: human population growth and migration; growing demand for control over such natural resource "services" as photosynthesis and bee pollination; globalization; and climate change" In a university course on Globalization one typically (or at least often) tries to cover the various "dimensions of globalization" placing more or less emphasis on each one, depending on the audience and the purpose of the course. Namely, one tries to examine the political, economic, social, cultural, ideological, environmental and institutional dimensions of globalization and their various sub-variables, as these manifest themselves or as they emerge and develop further in various "places and levels" on our globe at various times. One such "place or level" is the Arctic North. In a course one can of course also "cover" the other main "global forces" above (other than globalization, and namely demographics, natural resource consumption, and climate change in the context of covering the "environmental dimension of globalization") But the book provides an alternative treatment which also does not treat globalization necessarily as a given or as necessarily continuing in the same form or to the same extent as it is occurring today. In any case in a university learning setting it is often just as important to stimulate students' critical thinking and their capacities to analyze, synthesize and examine using multi-disciplinary lenses, rather than providing any final analysis or definitive answers. One of these disciplinary lenses which often is neglected by non-geographers is that of the discipline of geography which can contribute a great deal to our understanding. (Geography and past History are two aspects of present reality which are relatively speaking constant and unchangeable though of course they can be interpreted in various ways and as such can also help us in trying to understand possible likely futures) And the book is certainly useful in providing alternative future scenarios and helping the reader consider how or why they may or may not come about (or their relative probabilities) and what and who could or could not do something about them. I also thoroughly enjoyed reading the book because it also tells a personal story and some of the adventures of the author in researching and writing the book and his various travels to areas of the North which I think are all extremely interesting and which most of us typically know very little about.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. What Dreams May Come!By Julian Perez KerrVery well researched book. very educational on many aspects of how the world works, like energy and demographics. I did not know much about how energy and clean water was made until I read this. I believe this should be required reading for all college freshmen to stimulate debate on how to prevent or at least minimize the effects of human impact on the environment and other species.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Objective Analysis of Major TrendsBy Michael E. MartinThe focus of this book is climate change and the resulting shift of people and economies north. I began reading with some skepticism about climate change, but the author makes an unemotional, objective case. He doesn't make demands to reduce activities that increase global warming; he simply extends the current trends in warming, population growth, and economic growth, and then projects the consequences (good and bad) to the world's population. I hoped that his analysis would have considered expanding technology. While it is difficult to measure technological trends and project what will be commonplace in the future (20 years ago, who projected that social media would be a cultural force?), technology may well change energy utilization, efficiency and production. That in turn may control global warming and his projections of geographic shift of the people. The book is very thoroughly researched and I learned a great deal (quite unexpectedly) about immigration attitudes and policies, aboriginal rights, and international relations.

A compelling portrait of the future and vividly relates the big challenges facing the world now. Jared Diamond, New York Times bestselling author of Collapse and Guns, Germs, and Steel The world's population is exploding, wild species are vanishing, and our environment is degrading. What kind of world are we leaving for our children and grandchildren? Just who will flourish and who will fail in our evolving world? Combining the lessons of geography and history with state-of-the-art model projections and analytical data, Guggenheim fellow Laurence C. Smith predicts how the eight nations of the Arctic Rim (including the United States) will become increasingly powerful while the nations around the equator struggle for survival. Like Bjorn Lomborg's The Skeptical Environmentalist, The World in 2050 is as credible as it is controversial, projecting the looming benefits as well as the problems of climate change.