

Collaborative synergy

Building an energy geography resource hub

Library and geography faculty at our institution consistently partner on integrating information literacy and academic research skills into geography courses. Librarians typically create course guides as part of that effort. During the 2021–2022 academic year, we—an academic librarian and a geographer at a liberal arts college—co-created an energy geography LibGuide intended to serve a wider community.¹ In this article, we detail our collaborative process for creating a dynamic, interdisciplinary guide. While recognizing the challenges that can accompany this type of close partnership, we highlight the synergistic benefits to each of us, potential benefits to our audiences, and our plans for continued collaboration. Projects like this deepen interdisciplinary cooperation and may broaden the LibGuides audience.

Impetus and goals

Energy geography is necessarily interdisciplinary; its topical coverage, vast. The lively field, which entails the study of energy's spatial dimensions and spans both human and physical relationships, continues to blossom with original publications. Whether analyzing patterns of energy production's environmental impacts, tracing transnational energy commodity chains, or assessing the justice implications of energy developments, energy geographers mobilize a diversity of approaches to understand complex energy issues, which are always both social and technical.

Geographer Tiffany Grobelski maintains working bibliographies of energy geography resources to incorporate in her teaching and research. She also developed a list of suggested news sources for students in her 200-level Energy Geography course as part of an assignment in which students locate reputable articles on a current energy issue of their choice. Grobelski's overriding goal as an educator is to advance energy literacy.² She realized that her mushrooming lists of resources should be consolidated and made available to others for the benefit of the campus community and really anyone interested in energy topics. She approached librarian Anna Hulseberg about creating a centralized hub for these resources. Her hope was that working with a librarian with expertise in designing, developing, and curating resources in content management systems would bring this daunting yet exciting act of public scholarship to fruition.³

Hulseberg has a history of collaborating with geography faculty,⁴ and in recent years had worked with Grobelski on incorporating a library component into another research-based

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Energy Geography: Current Events

Start Here

Current Events

Energy Justice

Nuclear Energy, War & Peace

Scholarly & News Articles

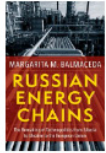
Books

Government & International Sources

Current Events

An energy geography lens can help us make sense of the world around us. This page highlights resources that can help deepen our understanding of current events.

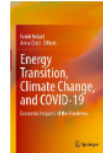
Russia-Ukraine Crisis



Russian Energy Chains: The Remaking of Technopolitics from Siberia to Ukraine to the European Union by Margarita M. Balmaceda
Call Number: HD9502.R82 B368 2021

- [Nuclear Safety and Security in Ukraine \(International Atomic Energy Agency\)](#)
Provide "updates on nuclear safety, security and safeguards implications of the conflict in Ukraine as a result of the Russian Federation's military operation" that began in February 2022.
- [Petition of Solidarity with the People of Ukraine \(American Association of Geographers\)](#)
"We, the undersigned members of the American Association of Geographers (AAG), declare our unequivocal support for the sovereign country of Ukraine and the families and individuals impacted." ([Read More](#))

COVID-19 Pandemic



Energy Transition, Climate Change, and COVID-19 by Fateh Belaid (Editor); Anna Creti (Editor)
Call Number: HC59.3.E54 2021

- [COVID-19 \(International Energy Agency\)](#)
Resources on this page explore the "impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on global energy markets, energy resilience, and climate change."
- [COVID-19 Impacts on Oil Markets \(Energy Policy Institute\)](#)
This page provides links to a podcast, and analysis, and related resources on the impact on oil markets of COVID-19. From the Energy Policy Institute at The University of Chicago.

Screenshot of the Energy Geography LibGuide.

class. Therefore this project was an opportunity for Hulseberg, as the liaison to the Department of Geography, to expand her involvement by working even more closely with faculty. This partnership would provide her new insight into how a geographer conceptualizes research in their field, and it would allow her to share and expand her expertise in developing research guides. In turn, Grobelski was inspired to work more closely with Hulseberg after reading a testament to the generative and active-learning potential of collaborations between geography faculty and librarians in research-based undergraduate learning.⁵ The collaboration promised to be mutually beneficial in multi-directional ways, including for engaging our students.

Thus one main shared goal was to deepen liaison librarian–course instructor collaboration through co-creating a guide “from scratch.” Another shared goal was to expand the research guide audience. Typically, the librarian is the sole author of course guides, although instructors are invited to suggest additional resources. Hulseberg uses the guides to engage students with resources, guide them through the research process, host research activities, and facilitate further engagement with librarians. Students in specific courses are usually the intended audience for course guides, but this does not preclude other students or librarians using them. However, in this case, Hulseberg more deliberately developed the guide for different audiences. Grobelski’s vision was to create a visually appealing “landing page” that incorporated a variety of energy geography sources and showcased recent acquisitions. We both envisioned the guide serving multiple audiences, not only students enrolled in a specific course.

Although we came to the project with distinct goals and foci driven by our respective areas of expertise and disciplinary prerogatives, this is precisely what made the collaboration fruitful. As we moved through the process of co-authoring a guide, our goals interfaced in generative ways.

Energy Geography: Start Here

Search Research Guides Search

- Start Here
- Current Events
- Energy Justice
- Nuclear Energy, War & Peace
- Scholarly & News Articles
- Books
- Government & International Sources

About Energy Geography

What is energy geography? Energy geography is the study of energy's spatial dimensions, and the use of geographical concepts to understand energy issues. Energy is integral to social and spatial relationships, linking physical and human factors. Energy systems involve both social and technical aspects, which shape each other. This means that energy geography must necessarily be interdisciplinary. Geographical studies of energy have incorporated methods and ideas from a wide range of disciplines, including economics, cultural studies, political economy, political science, legal studies, history, sociology, anthropology, science and technology studies, urban planning, GIScience, and civil engineering—just to name a few. Whether analyzing patterns of human energy production's environmental impacts, tracing transnational energy commodity chains, or assessing the justice implications of energy developments, energy geographers mobilize a diversity of approaches to further our understanding of these complex issues.

About this Guide

This guide serves as a general resource on energy geography as well as a guide for students in GEG 229. It was created Librarian Anna Hulseberg and Professor Tiffany Grobelski.

Note: Some resources on this guide are restricted to Gustavus users. If you are not a Gustavus user, you may need to contact your local library for assistance accessing material.

Questions? Contact Anna Hulseberg (ahulsebe@gustavus.edu). Helping students with research is my favorite part of my job!



"Winter Harbour - Cycling in Winter in Copenhagen" by Mikael Colville-Andersen is licensed under CCO 1.0

Key Books on Energy Geography

Review Articles

Review articles summarize the current state of research on a particular topic and are a good place to start. These two articles provide overviews of the field of energy geography:

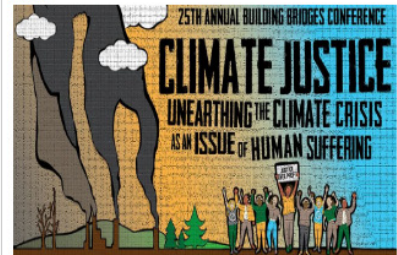
- Baka, J., & Vaishnav, S. (2020). The Evolving Borderland of Energy Geographies. *Geography Compass*, 14(7), 1–17. Energy geographers consider energy a "borderland topic" because of its ability to connect different geographic concepts and debates. In this review, the authors analyze scholarship in geography and energy studies to examine the development of the borderland of energy geographies in recent years. NOTE: Gustavus users may request this article through Interlibrary Loan.
- Calvert K. (2016). "From 'Energy Geography' to 'Energy Geographies': Perspectives on a Fertile Academic Borderland." *Progress in Human Geography* 40(1): 105–25. This article summarizes the contributions and relevance of geographical thought and practice to energy issues. It describes foundations of geographical approaches to energy studies and identifies current areas of energy geography research.

Professional Associations

- Energy and Environment Specialty Group (EESG) of the American Association of Geographers (AAG)

Gustavus Resources

Climate Justice: Unearthing the Climate Crisis as an Issue of Human Suffering (25th Annual Building Bridges Conference, 2020)



- Building Bridges Keynote Address: David Archambault II
- Building Bridges Keynote Address: Nnimmo Bassey

Climate Changed: Facing Our Future (Nobel Conference 55, 2019)



Start Here page from the Energy Geography LibGuide.

Collaborative process

Our process has been iterative, mediated by a shared Google document, occasional emails, and Zoom meetings. Meetings kept the project moving forward by holding us accountable to respective tasks and allowing us to mutually envision a way forward. One of our first decisions was selecting a platform to host the guide. Hulseberg immediately suggested LibGuides, the content management system that our library (like so many other libraries) uses for research guides and with which much of our potential audience is familiar.

Grobelski shared a Google document containing initial ideas for sections of the guide. This step was difficult for her in the sense of not knowing what format or categories might be most helpful for LibGuide creation. Right away there was a dilemma about whether to organize the guide thematically or by source type, an issue familiar to librarians. We worked through this question together, with Grobelski bringing knowledge of the geography research landscape and Hulseberg drawing on her experience developing guides for a range of subject areas. Eventually we settled on a hybrid combination of thematic tabs (such as Energy Justice) and tabs based on source type (such as Scholarly and News Articles). This hybrid approach reflects the importance of both content and format for identifying and evaluating information sources.

Energy Geography: Nuclear Energy, War & Peace


Search Research Guides Search

Start Here Current Events Energy Justice Nuclear Energy, War & Peace Scholarly & News Articles Books Government & International Sources

Nuclear Energy, War & Peace

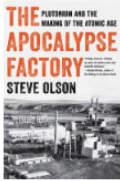
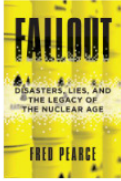

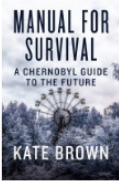
On this page you'll find new acquisitions and a selected bibliography of books on nuclear energy, war, and peace. You'll also find a selected list of films on the topic.

Looking for more books and DVDs? Search the Library Catalog



"Paper Crane" by MarkyBon is licensed under


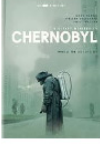
Recent Acquisitions on Nuclear Energy, War & Peace

 <p>The Apocalypse Factory: Plutonium and the Making of the Atomic Age Call Number: New Title Shelf QC773.A1 O47 2022</p>	 <p>Fallout: Disasters, Lies, and the Legacy of the Nuclear Age Call Number: TD196.R3 P43 2018</p>	 <p>The Future of Nuclear Waste: What Art and Archaeology Can Tell Us about Securing the World's Most Hazardous Material Call Number: TD898.14.S63 J69 2020</p>	 <p>Manual for Survival: A Chernobyl Guide to the Future Call Number: TD196.R3 B785 2019</p>
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Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies at Gustavus

- Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies Library Guide
- Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies Program

Selected Films on Nuclear Energy, War & Peace

 <p>The Atomic Cafe Call Number: Audio Visual U263 .A798 2002 ISBN: 9780767043373</p>	 <p>Chernobyl Call Number: Audio Visual PN1992.77 .C44 2019</p>
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Energy Geography LibGuide Nuclear Energy, War, & Peace page.

The Google document was our asynchronous “meeting place” and workspace. Grobelski included key authors, organizations, books, academic journals, news sources, films, and other sources to include. She added resources from our library collection and links to examples of library guides from which she drew inspiration and direction.⁶ From the outset she wanted to feature resources at our own college, for example, recently hosted conferences about climate change and links to the college’s sustainability initiatives. At the same time, Hulseberg identified additional relevant resources (including subscription databases), investigated questions that arose (such as how to address access restrictions on a guide meant for a wider audience, the best way to provide access to archived footage from conference lectures, and options for incorporating conference poster artwork), and began building the guide. During the process we identified and ordered additional books and films to feature. Once we had a draft version of the guide, we could review and revise the structure and content in real time.

In our meetings we used the draft page to talk through design elements such as determining a logical order for the tabs, what content to add to each tab given the interconnectedness of the topics, how to balance thoroughness with highlighting key resources, and selecting images that would support our goals for the guide. We were committed to featuring people in all the images because energy is social, yet pictures depicting energy landscapes are commonly devoid of people and only show technology. Each of us developed enhanced content. For example, Grobelski curated review articles to feature and wrote blurbs for text boxes in the guide, such as, “What is energy justice?” Hulseberg added resource descriptions, tips for accessing full text, and options for getting help. When the guide went live, we associated it with multiple subjects in the LibGuides system: geography as well as peace, justice and conflict studies.

Initially, Grobelski struggled with sharing the guide in public form because she worried it was not exhaustive enough, a preoccupation many academics share. Hulseberg had also struggled with this issue and helped Grobelski overcome such perfectionist mental blockades by creating the initial structure and emphasizing that it could be reworked. We have already seen the salience of certain topics increase in unexpected ways that called for updates. For example, because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Chernobyl and nuclear safety have become conspicuous. This led us to create a "Current Events" tab highlighting resources to help people expand their knowledge of current events through an energy geography lens.

Benefits of collaboration

The experience of co-authoring a LibGuide expanded our skills and perspectives. We gained insight into how each conceptualizes research and best practices in her respective field, and we learned from questions and ideas the other brought to LibGuide creation, including our own blind spots. Hulseberg shared her expertise in research guide design and grew her knowledge of LibGuides. Grobelski learned about LibGuides as a content management system—what is possible, what design elements are available, and how they can be optimized. Together, we co-developed the form and substance of the guide, which clarified its scope and shape while generating novel insights along the way. The guide will continue to be a work in progress as we integrate more interdisciplinary sources, such as films and works of fiction. Our effort deepens interdisciplinary work at our college and furthers its liberal arts educational mission.

The project also holds potential benefits for our audience. Students benefit from a librarian with a deeper understanding of energy geography content, resources, and goals. They benefit from a professor invested in and knowledgeable about both the content and organization of the guide. Students and other users benefit from the collection development work that emerged from the process. They have access to an interdisciplinary energy geography hub intended to support integrative learning and help them make connections to other courses and interests.

Instead of hoarding a working list of energy geography resources, Grobelski was able to partner with Hulseberg to make it available to the wider community. The project provided an exciting opportunity to make a landing page that incorporates a wide variety of sources and hooks into community conversations, both at our college and beyond; for instance, with links to websites of local organizations working on energy issues. We hope the guide will serve a handful of audiences, not only students in geography but also in peace studies and environmental studies, faculty teaching about energy topics, and community members—perhaps in unforeseen ways.

Concluding thoughts

We have established a collaborative effort that can serve as a springboard for future projects and a model that can be adapted by others. Based on our experiences, we recommend closer library liaison–departmental faculty collaboration on interdisciplinary guides for a wider audience. However, those endeavoring to undertake similar projects should be aware of a few challenges. First, partnering requires more communication and an iterative process that simply takes time. Second, creating a guide to serve both the local community and a

wider audience raises challenges such as access restrictions. Finally, maintaining a relevant, current guide takes ongoing labor.

Voices missing from this discussion are those of students and other users of the guide. We imagine them as key beneficiaries of our collaboration. We thus plan to explore user perspectives on the guide in the coming year. We will also explore how to make interested parties in our local community and beyond aware of our site. We look forward to continuing our collaboration and developing the guide based on what we learn about users' needs and experiences. ♪

Notes

1. The guide is available at <https://libguides.gustavus.edu/energygeography>.
2. "Energy Literacy: Essential Principles for Energy Education," US Department of Energy, accessed May 13, 2022, <https://www.energy.gov/eere/education/energy-literacy-essential-principles-energy-education#:~:text=Energy%20Literacy%20is%20an%20understanding,in%20terms%20of%20energy%20systems>. See also Jan E. DeWaters and Susan E. Powers, "Energy Literacy of Secondary Students in New York State (USA): A Measure of Knowledge, Affect, and Behavior," *Energy Policy* 39, no. 3 (2018): 1699–1710, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2018.03.030>.
3. A joint intellectual endeavor that produces a public good. See "What is Public Scholarship?," Center for Community & Civic Engagement, Carleton College, accessed May 13, 2022, <https://www.carleton.edu/ccce/faculty/engaged-research-scholarship/what-is-public-scholarship/>.
4. See, for instance, Anna Hulseberg and Anna Versluis, "Integrating Information Literacy into an Undergraduate Geography Research Methods Course," *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 24, no. 1 (2017): 14–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10691316.2017.1251371>.
5. Conor Harrison and Kathryn Snediker, "Teaching Critical Resource Geography: Integrating Research into the Classroom," in *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Resource Geography*, ed. Matthey Himley, Elizabeth Havice, and Gabriela Valdivia (Abingdon, Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2021), 319–32.
6. We referred to these guides, which we originally consulted when creating a Lib-Guide for a commodities research assignment for a different class: "Commodities," University of South Carolina Libraries, last updated Jul 27, 2022, <https://guides.library.sc.edu/c.php?g=410229&p=2796636>; and "Doing Research on Commodities," Simon Fraser University Library, <https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/research-assistance/subject/geography/commodities#introduction>.