

Abstract Submitted
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Energy & Climate: Getting Quantitative RICHARD WOLFSON, Middlebury College — A noted environmentalist claims that buying an SUV instead of a regular car is energetically equivalent to leaving your refrigerator door open for seven years. A fossil-fuel apologist argues that solar energy is a pie-in-the-sky dream promulgated by naïve environmentalists, because there’s nowhere near enough solar energy to meet humankind’s energy demand. A group advocating shutdown of the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant claims that 70% of its electrical energy is lost in transmission lines. Around the world, thousands agitate for climate action, under the numerical banner “350.” Neither the environmentalist, the fossil-fuel apologist, the antinuclear activists, nor most of those marching under the “350” banner can back up their assertions with quantitative arguments. Yet questions about energy and its environmental impacts almost always require quantitative answers. Physics can help! This poster gives some cogent examples, based on the newly published 2nd edition of the author’s textbook *Energy, Environment, and Climate*.

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