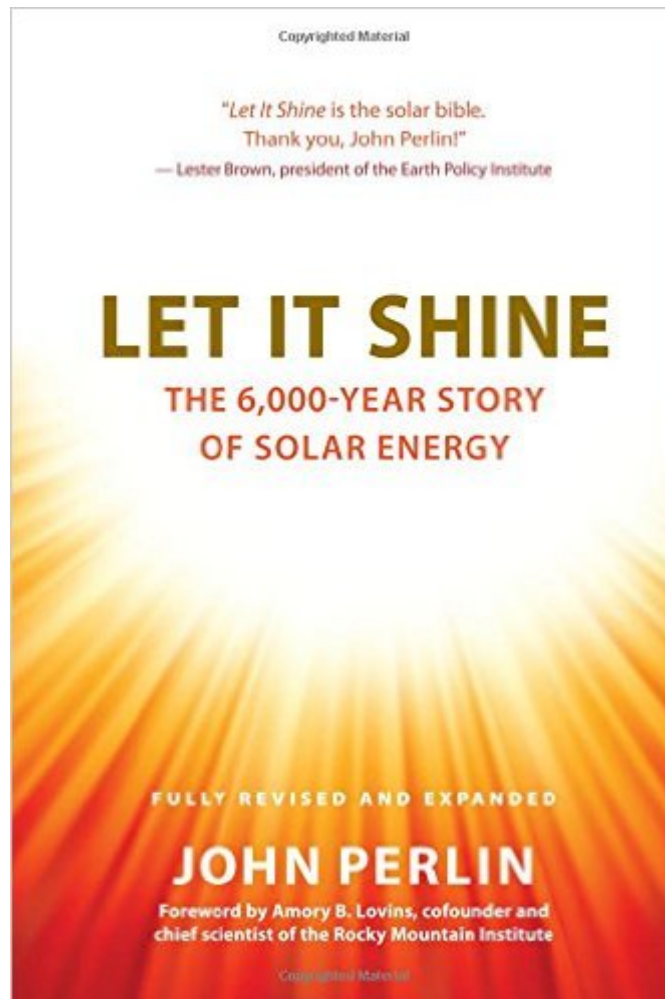


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# Let It Shine: The 6,000-Year Story Of Solar Energy



## Synopsis

Even as concern over climate change and energy security fuel a boom in solar technology, many still think of solar as a twentieth-century wonder. Few realize that the first photovoltaic array appeared on a New York City rooftop in 1884, or that brilliant engineers in France were using solar power in the 1860s to run steam engines, or that in 1901 an ostrich farmer in Southern California used a single solar engine to irrigate three hundred acres of citrus trees. Fewer still know that Leonardo da Vinci planned to make his fortune by building half-mile-long mirrors to heat water, or that the Bronze Age Chinese used hand-sized solar-concentrating mirrors to light fires the way we use matches and lighters today. With thirteen new chapters, *Let It Shine* is a fully revised and expanded edition of *A Golden Thread*, Perlin's classic history of solar technology, detailing the past forty years of technological developments driving today's solar renaissance. This unique and compelling compendium of humankind's solar ideas tells the fascinating story of how our predecessors throughout time, again and again, have applied the sun to better their lives—and how we can too.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Perlin's original solar history, *A Golden Thread* was an inspiration to my solar career. *Let It Shine* digs deeper and wider into the past, and adds a major section on photovoltaics. Is there nothing new under the sun? Sure there is, but the development of successful solutions from the sun go WAY back. So do the follies. Perlin makes it all enlightening and amusing. Understanding the

past helps us avoid classic mistakes, and gives a rich context to what we are seeing and doing now. I've read most of Perlin's books. Even if they seem to be out of my field, I find them a first-class read. The man is a true, original historian, and a great storyteller who projects the big picture. If you are in any way involved with solar energy, at any level (aren't we all?), you will be grateful to have this book, if only for the adventure.

This was an amazing book that spelled out the history and technology of solar energy in an easy to understand way. This is a great read for anyone interested in incorporating solar into building a home. The book focuses more on theory than engineering. The way the author ties together history with the topic of solar energy is excellent. Study history to learn from mankind's mistakes.

This book is a great read. John Perlin has put together a fascinating set of stories and information about how humans have harnessed the sun's energy over thousands of years. The book is filled with facts, original drawings and descriptions of cool solar devices and the interesting characters who made them happen. An inspirational history of human invention as much as it is a history of solar power, you'll be sharing the stories in this book with everyone... "Did you know that..." As usual Perlin has done a huge amount of research, and presents his material in an engaging way. Included photographs, lithographs etc really add to the story.

Let it Shine by John Perlin is a book that features the sun as an amazing resource that people have been using for thousands of years. Solar power isn't a new idea, in fact, it has been in use for over six thousand years (and probably much longer than that). Read this book to find out about how humans have been using the sun, and what to look forward to in terms of future plans, too. Let it Shine is a very educational yet still interesting and relevant book about the sun, energy, and how people as a civilization have been using it. Before reading this book, I knew that using the sun was not a new concept. However, I didn't realize that people had been putting it to such good use, even six thousand years ago. School doesn't exactly teach us about all the cool things that it should, but thanks to books like this, we can learn fascinating details about mankind, civilizations, and new ways to look for the future of humankind. I really enjoyed reading and learning so much from this book. I think that using renewable (and free) resources for energy is something that should be invested in much more than is currently being done. I also think that depending solely on a power grid is probably not the best idea countries can have. The move should be to have self-sustaining sources for families to utilize. Books and authors such as this only make me believe that more

strongly. If you also feel this way, and want to learn more, I highly recommend that you read this book. I definitely recommend it.\* Thank you to the publisher of Let it Shine, New World Library, for providing me with a copy of this book for review. All opinions expressed are my own.

As a solar aficionado & solar industry employee, I found this book extremely engaging and insightful. John Perlin, a UC-Santa Barbara research scholar/professor, writes with incredible clarity and knowledge about solar's beginnings to the current trends in solar. I am not a scientist by training or profession (rather a liberal arts major in college), but I felt compelled to read this book from start to finish. The diagrams were engaging and clear; in particular, I found his writing fascinating and with a very clear tone of voice (and I admit as the person who drafts press releases for my company, I am a bit of a grammar Nazi). As one book critic called "Let it Shine: The 6,000 Years Story of Solar Energy," this nonfiction book truly is a Solar Bible! My company's sales director was so impressed with this book that he purchased 20 copies for the sales team to read (and educate themselves on). Although I am on the marketing team, I was lucky enough to receive one of the extra copies. Amazing~ thank you John Perlin!

Who knew that solar energy was actually used 6,000 years ago? Who knew that the US Military still believes strongly in solar power? John Perlin has not only done enormous amounts of research, but he's written a book that doesn't require a Ph.D in physics to read and understand. This book is fun, it's exciting, it's provocative and tells the real story of how our sun has been alternately loved and hated as an energy source. Wait til you see some of the documents that Perlin has unearthed! Great book for anyone who wants the real history in a great read.

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