



Books and Documentaries

Here are some great books and documentaries that highlight America's path to Energy Independence

The Next Shale Revolution

In November 2017 Bloomberg broadcast [The Next Shale Revolution](#), a 45-minute documentary that is well worth watching.

The Green and the Black

[*The Green and the Black; The Complete Story of the Shale Revolution, the Fight Over Fracking and the Future of Energy*](#) offers an insider's view. Gary Sernovitz provides the perspective of someone whose job is to persuade investors to finance it. Greg Zuckerman's [*The Frackers*](#) remains a highly readable account and one of our favorites. Sernovitz incorporates additional features; one is that he became a fossil fuel advocate only after his first passion of writing fiction came up short of providing a meaningful paycheck. The world has enough starving writers. While Sernovitz the novelist isn't a household name, his writing engages the reader and breezily moves you through his story. New York-based aspiring writers whose very livelihood in the energy sector is opposed by the Sierra Club require nimble social skills. Moving between socially liberal literary circles and promoting the investment merits of fracking to clients can lead to soul-searching. Sernovitz displays fact-based mental agility in occupying two worlds that rarely touch, while also conceding to some doubts. Few have to examine their actions so thoughtfully. Sernovitz freely admits to holding two apparently contradictory ideas.

The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels

In the debate over global warming, the environmentalists claim the moral high ground while the "non-believers" deny man-made climate change. The very question of whether you "believe" in global warming suggests religious conviction with little point in debate. This is what makes Alex Epstein's moral defense of fossil fuels so intriguing.

We have clients across the political spectrum, and it's a safe bet that they're with us looking for strong investment results with little care for our views on other topics. However, there are some who concede to a certain moral precariousness in putting their green credentials alongside investments designed to profit from America's Shale Revolution. For them, Alex Epstein presents an intellectual framework for conscience-free investments in energy infrastructure.

The Domino Effect

"Rusty" Brazier runs RBN Energy, a firm that provides very useful research on production trends in U.S. hydrocarbons. Their website maintains a regular blog and also offers deeper analysis on specific topics. They reach over 20,000 industry executives, and we find many useful insights in their work.

The Domino Effect: How the Shale Revolution is Transforming Energy Markets, Industries and Economics was published early last year, coincidentally just a few weeks prior to the low in the energy sector's bear market that was largely due to U.S. hydrocarbon output. Like his blog posts, Rusty's book is well researched and highly engaging. He describes events as dominoes falling against one another in a seemingly inevitable sequence. The first domino was caused by improvements in technology that drove significantly enhanced returns from shale-sourced natural gas production. The consequent abundance drove the price of natural gas lower, inducing Exploration and Production (E&P) companies to switch to more profitable Natural Gas Liquids (NGLs), which were often found with or nearby "dry" natural gas. Lower prices followed for NGLs, and activity then shifted to crude oil. The resulting increase in U.S. production drew the world's attention to the Shale Revolution as crude slumped in 2014-15.

The Absent Superpower

America's path to Energy Independence is taking place through myriad advances in hydrocarbon output, driven by the many advantages we possess. In *America Is Great!* we noted the benefits of America's energy sector's large skilled labor force, access to capital, culture of entrepreneurialism, constant drive for productivity improvements, ready availability of water, vast network of infrastructure and private ownership of mineral rights as key elements driving the Shale Revolution. Take a step back though and consider the broader implications of an America no longer reliant on foreign sources of energy. We can all be armchair geopolitical analysts as we ponder the ramifications. Peter Zeihan has done just this in his latest book, *The Absent Superpower: The Shale Revolution and a World Without America*. It follows up on his previous book, *The Accidental Superpower: The Next Generation of American Preeminence and Coming Global Disorder*, and contemplates the shifting alliances and security needs of both world and regional powers. They were published only ten months apart, a feat of literary productivity significantly greater than my own work at writing books. I'm obviously not the only person with lots to say.