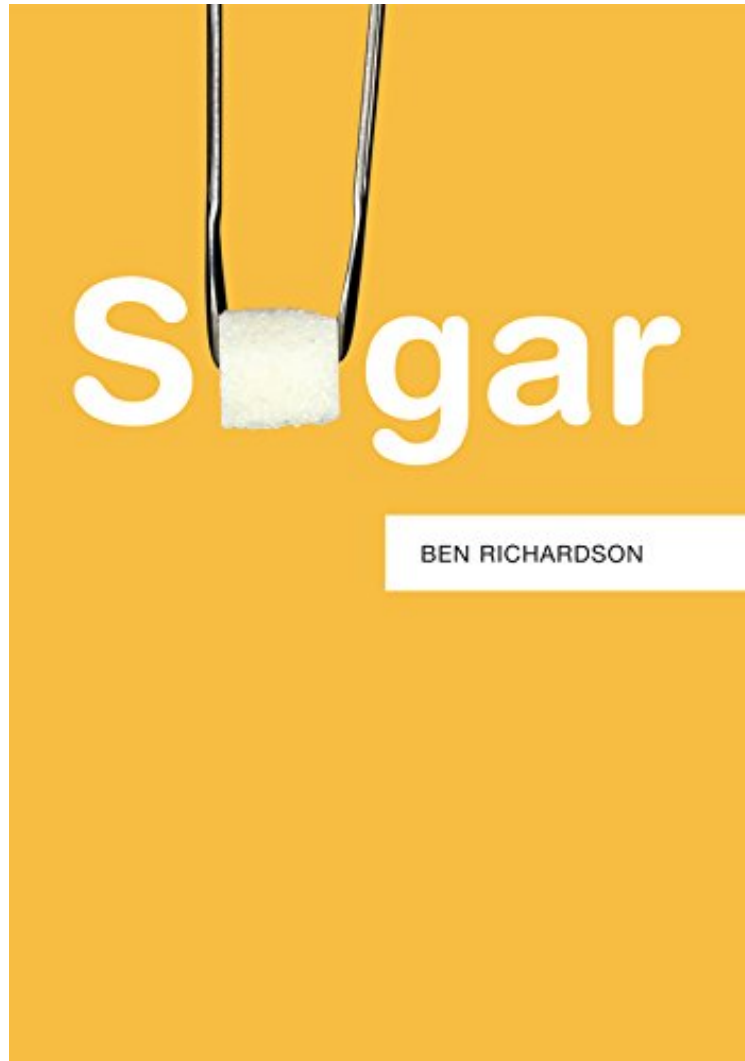


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Sugar (Resources)

Ben Richardson

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Ben Richardson : Sugar (Resources) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sugar (Resources):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful book!By Michael FakhriOne of the best and most accessible accounts of the political economy of sugar. This book uses a study of sugar as a way to discuss global food and agriculture practices and policies. Richardson provides the rare study that examines how sugar is consumed, exchanged, and produced today. He finds that this system hurts more people than it helps. He concludes with an insightful road map that may lead to a global policy that can undo much of that harm.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Overview of Global Sucrose Industry's Problems of Health, Trade, Labor Environment.By mirasreviewsldquo;Sugarrdquo; is an overview of the global sugar industry, specifically the sucrose industry, written

by Ben Richardson, an Associate Professor of International Political Economy at the University of Warwick, focusing on 1995-2015 with an emphasis on social inequalities created or perpetuated by the industry. Sugar is unique among agricultural plant products in that it can be extracted from both grass-crop sugar cane, which grows in tropical climates, and root-crop sugar beet, which grows in temperate climates. So there are sugar fortunes and farms all over the world. The trade in sugar was \$39 billion in 2011. The crop uses 31 million hectares of land. The sugar industry employs 1.1 million people in manufacturing and tens of millions in farming. And sugar is the second-most protected agricultural commodity behind rice. All of which magnify the scale of the problems in the sugar industry. Richardson tackles a different issue in each chapter, first presenting the topic or perceived problem followed by the push-back by citizens, NGOs, or governments. He looks first at the consumption of sugar, which quadrupled over the course of the 20th century, but which is now falling in some Western nations. He discusses how and why this happened, then the efforts of the medical community to discourage sugar consumption and some of the forms that has taken. A chapter on the international trade in sugar examines the current trend of liberalizing the trade of this once heavily-protected commodity, resulting in the "financialization" of sugar and exposure to speculation. Particularly interesting is the discussion of Cuba's sugar industry, which imploded with the Soviet Union. Labor practices are the subject of one chapter. In some parts of the industry, unsafe conditions, bonded labor, and underpaid or unpaid child labor are common. One solution has been modernization, which also reduces the number employed, and labor unions have made some strides. Richardson addresses the ecological impact of the sugar industry, particularly in countries where the industry has expanded greatly in recent decades: water and soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, water depletion, soil erosion, and the fight over biofuels. There have been calls for regulation by environmental organizations as well as the World Bank and the UN's Committee on World Food Security. In his concluding chapter, Richardson points out that the "sugar lobby" is not homogenous but comprised of different actors with different, sometimes conflicting agendas. Richardson offers some suggestions for "more ecologically sound and socially just" sugar production. These all involve policies and activism that he has already mentioned in previous chapters. Some of these suggestions, like the adoption of "appropriate technologies", meaning non-industrial technologies, and promoting food sovereignty, seem more utopian than practical. To what extent can this combination of approaches reform the industry? And can non-industrial sugar farming meet increasing global demand? I'm sure the demand will eventually go down, but I expect it to continue to increase in the foreseeable future. "Sugar" is an overview, not an effort to be comprehensive. The chapters on trade, labor issues, and environmental impact are light on statistics. More numbers would help the reader judge the scope and severity of the problems.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sugar and Coffee By Shannon On The Lakes As a coffee-a-holic, I have long been aware of the seedy side of coffee growing. Workers getting a fraction of what they should be paid, and the entire water supply of communities being contaminated to the point where they will never have clean water again. Soil so deadened by pesticides that it is rendered useless. Coffee is one of the most pesticide infused products that you ingest, which is why there is such a buzz about coffee being free trade and organic. Knowing all of this, I chose to still keep my head in the sand about sugar. I would giggle at the old soda pop print ads. If you Google them, you'll find a woman cheerfully drinking a sugary soda and the caption is something to the effect of, if you drink sugary drinks your appetite will be curbed and you will lose weight. Another claims that soda is terrific for babies. This book has enlightened me the way that researching coffee did, and instead of pouring over countless studies and facts, it's all here in one book. Ben Richardson goes into every aspect of sugar and how we, as a nation, are manipulated by it without knowing the consequence in both our bodies and in the Earth. I had no idea that communities that depend on sugar production are contaminated in the same way that coffee communities are. And that it is the sixth-largest agricultural user of water. Water, which is becoming a precious commodity, especially in areas that grow sugar cane and sugar beets. From pesticides to politics and price-fixing, from metabolism to disease, there is so much to learn in this book. It will change the way you think, and hopefully the way you eat. For me personally, my main vice after caffeine is sugar. Like any addict, I make jokes about it being my divine addiction. And I'll never be one of those people that gives up white sugar entirely, although I admire them greatly. (How's THAT for the rhetoric of an addict?) That being said, every journey begins with one step. If you are a sugar addict like me, or perhaps you're just interested in agricultural social justice and consequence, this book is a must-read. Sugar is not as sweet as one would think.

There is more sugar in the world's diet than ever before, but life is far from sweet for the exploited producers making nature's 'white gold' and the unhealthy consumers eating it. Why has the billion-dollar sugar trade created such inequities? In this insightful analysis, Ben Richardson argues that the most compelling answers to this question can be found in the dynamics of global capitalism. Led by multinational companies, the mass consumption of sweetened snacks has taken hold in the Global South and underpinned a new wave of foreign investment in sugar production. The expansion of large-scale and highly-industrialised farms across Latin America, Asia and Africa has kept the price of sugar down whilst pushing workers out of jobs and rural dwellers off the land. However, challenges to these practices are gathering momentum. Health advocates warning against costly diseases like diabetes, trade unions fighting for better pay, and local residents campaigning for a cleaner environment are all re-shaping the way sugar is consumed

and produced. But to truly transform sugar, Richardson contends, these political activities must also address the profit-driven nature of food and farming itself.

This is a fascinating interdisciplinary book and it covers much ground very well. It is well referenced and has a useful further reading section. I would recommend it for anyone interested in the good, the bad and the ugly of our globalized food system. International Affairs "This is a fascinating interdisciplinary book and it covers much ground very well. It is well referenced and has a useful further reading section. I would recommend it for anyone interested in the good, the bad and the ugly of our globalized food system." Tim Benton, UK's Global Food Security Programme and University of Leeds, UK "Ben Richardson's Sugar is an intriguing survey of all things sugar, including consumption and foodways, the means of production, and how governments deal with their sugar industries and conduct their sugar-related international trade relations. True to his mission of providing a Marxist perspective, Richardson concludes by advocating for reform from below. Sugar draws on the scholarship of many sugar experts and will be a valuable resource for journalists and others researching sugar issues." Elizabeth Abbott, Author, Sugar: A Bittersweet History "Sugar has shaped our history and our politics; it affects our health, and influences the livelihoods of millions. Sugar is a lens on a fast-changing, globalised world, where the politics of agrarian change, international commerce, workers' rights and human health must be examined together. This is a fascinating book that both informs and challenges. Anyone interested in global politics, agriculture, business and social change and justice should read it." Ian Scoones, University of Sussex About the Author Ben Richardson is Associate Professor in International Political Economy in the Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick.