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The Coke Machine: The Dirty Truth Behind The World's Favorite Soft Drink

The *Coke* Machine
MICHAEL BLANDING



Synopsis

Ever since its "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing" commercials from the 1970s, Coca-Cola has billed itself as the world's beverage, uniting all colors and cultures in a mutual love of its caramel-sweet sugar water. The formula has worked incredibly well, making it one of the most profitable companies on the planet and Coca-Cola the world's second-most-recognized word after hello. However, as the company expands its reach into both domestic and foreign markets, an increasing number of the world's citizens are finding the taste of Coke more bitter than sweet. Journalist Michael Blanding's *The Coke Machine* probes shocking accusations about the company's global impact, including: Coca-Cola's history of winning at any cost, even if it meant that its franchisees were making deals with the Nazis and Guatemalan paramilitary squads; How Coke has harmed children's health and contributed to an obesity epidemic through exclusive soda contracts in schools; The horrific environmental impact of Coke bottling plants in India and Mexico, where water supplies have been decimated while toxic pollution has escalated; That Coke bottlers stand accused of conspiring with paramilitaries to threaten, kidnap, and murder union leaders in their bottling plants in Colombia; A disturbing portrait drawn from an award-winning journalist's daring, in-depth research, *The Coke Machine* is the first comprehensive probe of the company and its secret formula for greed.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you're planning on reading Blanding's *THE COKE MACHINE* there's one thing you need to be

prepared for: you'll walk away from the book with a Coke jingle or two stuck in your head indefinitely. Despite this, the book is an excellent read that should be passed along to family and friends because when you're done with it you'll want to discuss it. From a purely aesthetic point of view, *THE COKE MACHINE* is well organized, strongly researched and superbly written. The introduction begins with a grueling story of a murdered union worker in Columbia and compels the reader to consider the complex question of corporate responsibility for moral and ethical behavior in the face of a corporation's drive toward stakeholder profits. Blanding builds momentum by describing the history of Coke, its ad campaigns, and its national struggles to resist any negative mark on its brand image. Part two weaves Coke's international story through Mexico, Colombia, India and Guatemala, raising questions about Coke's role in environmental destruction, water shortages, dismantling of unions, and even murder. There's something interesting for everyone in this book, because the Coca-Cola Company is ubiquitous within the United States and internationally, and because it has affected all of our lives whether we realize it or not. As *The Coke Machine* describes, Coke has spent its more than one hundred years in existence protecting its image and sales beyond anything else; the "dirty truth" about Coke that Blanding so factually lays out before us. If you're a parent, the book's chapter on "The Battle for Schools" should not go unread.

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