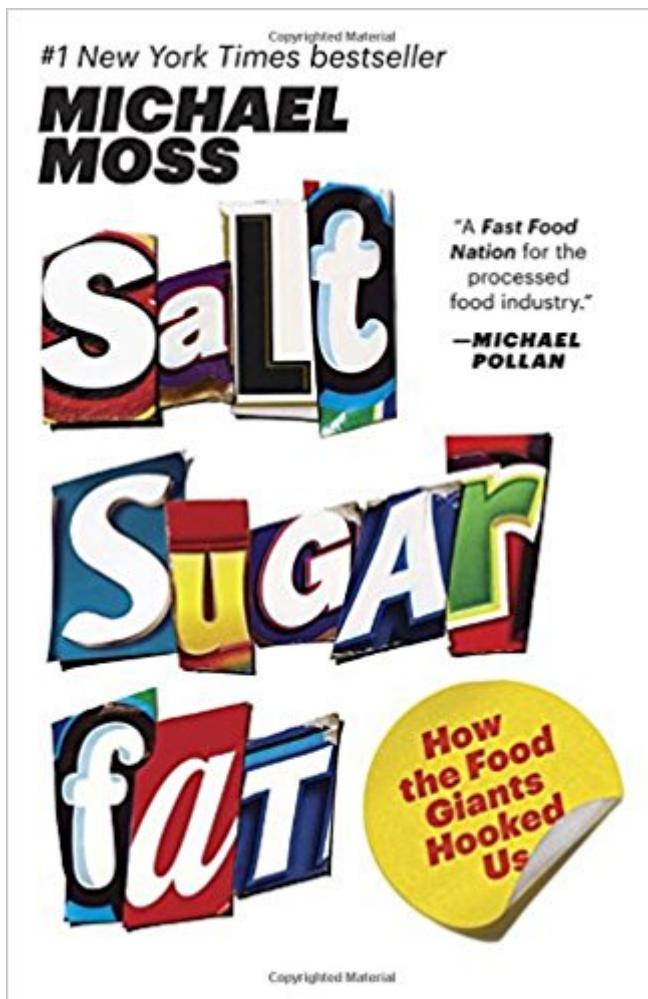


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# Salt Sugar Fat: How The Food Giants Hooked Us



## Synopsis

NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The Atlantic  $\cdot$  The Huffington Post  $\cdot$  Men's Journal  $\cdot$  MSN (U.K.)  $\cdot$  Kirkus Reviews  $\cdot$  Publishers Weekly#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER  $\cdot$  WINNER OF THE JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION AWARD FOR WRITING AND LITERATURE

Every year, the average American eats thirty-three pounds of cheese and seventy pounds of sugar. Every day, we ingest 8,500 milligrams of salt, double the recommended amount, almost none of which comes from the shakers on our table. It comes from processed food, an industry that hauls in \$1 trillion in annual sales. In *Salt Sugar Fat*, Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter Michael Moss shows how we ended up here. Featuring examples from Kraft, Coca-Cola, Lunchables, Frito-Lay, Nestle, Oreos, Capri Sun, and many more, Moss's explosive, empowering narrative is grounded in meticulous, eye-opening research. He takes us into labs where scientists calculate the "bliss point" of sugary beverages, unearths marketing techniques taken straight from tobacco company playbooks, and talks to concerned insiders who make startling confessions. Just as millions of "heavy users" are addicted to salt, sugar, and fat, so too are the companies that peddle them. You will never look at a nutrition label the same way again.

Praise for *Salt Sugar Fat*

"[Michael] Moss has written a *Fast Food Nation* for the processed food industry. Burrowing deep inside the big food manufacturers, he discovered how junk food is formulated to make us eat more of it and, he argues persuasively, actually to addict us."

"Michael Pollan  $\cdot$  If you had any doubt as to the food industry's complicity in our obesity epidemic, it will evaporate when you read this book."

"The Washington Post  $\cdot$  Vital reading for the discerning food consumer."

"The Wall Street Journal  $\cdot$  The chilling story of how the food giants have seduced everyone in this country . . . Michael Moss understands a vital and terrifying truth: that we are not just eating fast food when we succumb to the siren song of sugar, fat, and salt. We are fundamentally changing our lives—and the world around us."

"Alice Waters  $\cdot$  Propulsively written [and] persuasively argued . . . an exactingly researched, deeply reported work of advocacy journalism."

"The Boston Globe  $\cdot$  A remarkable accomplishment."

"The New York Times  $\cdot$  Book Review

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Q&A with Michael Moss Q. How did you land on salt, sugar, and fat as your way to write about the industry? Why these three ingredients? A. I'd been investigating a surge in deadly outbreaks of E. coli in meat when an industry source, a microbiologist, suggested that if I wanted to see an even bigger public health hazard, I should look at what food companies were intentionally adding to their products, starting with salt. And sure enough, when I looked at this--by gaining access to high level industry officials and a trove of sensitive, internal records--a window opened on how aggressive the industry was wielding not only salt, but sugar and fat, too. These are the pillars of processed foods, the three ingredients without which there would be no processed foods. Salt, sugar and fat drive consumption by adding flavor and allure. But surprisingly, they also mask bitter flavors that develop in the manufacturing process. They enable these foods to sit in warehouses or on the grocery shelf for months. And, most critically to the industry's financial success, they are very inexpensive. Q. So, how big is the processed food industry, exactly? What kind of scale are we talking about here? A. Huge. Grocery sales now top \$1 trillion a year in the U.S., with more than 300 manufacturers employing 1.4 million workers, or 12 percent of all American manufacturing jobs. Global sales exceed \$3 trillion. But the figure I find most revealing is 60,000: That's the number of different products found on the shelves of our largest supermarkets. Q. How did this get so big? A. The food processing industry is more than a century old--if you count the invention of breakfast cereals--so it's been steady growth. But things really took off in the 1950s with the promotion of convenience foods whose design and marketing was aimed at the increasing numbers of families with both parents working outside the home. The industry's expansion, since then, has been entirely unrestrained. While food safety is heavily regulated, the government has

been industry's best friend and partner in encouraging Americans to become more dependent on processed foods. Q. What three things should a health-conscious supermarket shopper keep in mind? A. The most alluring products--those with the highest amounts of salt, sugar and fat--are strategically placed at eye-level on the grocery shelf. You typically have to stoop down to find, say, plain oatmeal. (Healthier products are generally up high or down low.) Companies also play the better-nutrition card by plastering their packaging with terms like "all natural," "contains whole grains," "contains real fruit juice," and "lean," which belie the true contents of the products. Reading labels is not easy. Only since the 1990s have the manufacturers even been required to reveal the true salt, sugar, fat and caloric loads of their products, which are itemized in a box called the "nutrient facts." But one game that many companies still play is to divide these numbers in half, or even thirds, by reporting this critical information per serving--which are typically tiny portions. In particular, they do this for cookies and chips, knowing that most people can't resist eating the entire three-serving bag. Check it out sometime. See how many "servings" that little bag of chips contains. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The U.S. has the highest rate of obesity in the world, much of it due to the abundance of cheap, calorie-rich, processed food. Food companies manipulate our biological desires to scientifically engineer foods that induce cravings to overeat, using terms like mouth feel for fats and bliss point for sugars to tinker with formulations that will trigger the optimum food high. Coke even refers to their best customers as heavy users. Moss portrays how the industry discovered the allure of added sugar in the 1900s, and has been jacking up the levels ever since, without regard for consumer health, in everything from soda to breakfast cereals to instant pudding, in a race for market share. The food industry is not about to change, but this book is a wake-up call to the issues and tactics at play and to the fact that we are not helpless in facing them down. Moss is an investigative reporter with the New York Times; he won a Pulitzer Prize in 2010 for his investigation of the dangers of contaminated meat. --David Siegfried --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book is jam packed with real life conspiracies and facts about the biggest market manipulators in history. I have really enjoyed reading this book as the author is eloquent and keeps heaps of information light and quick to read. It doesn't bog you down while reading and it was a real page turner for me. I have become concerned with my health over the past 5 years, since I got married,

and my overall diet went from lentils and brown rice day in, day out, to cardboard boxes, plastic packaging, fast food, restaurants, take out, microwaves, lunch meats, cheese galore, cookies, candy bars, etc. etc. After being in and out of over 7 different specialists' offices and surgical suites in the years since this S.A.D. under-haul with various severe ailments from gastrointestinal to gynecological, I have began taking back control of my health. This book has been somewhat of a nail in the coffin in those regards. Basically, I learned to stop feeding myself lies. After reading this book, I can see blatant lies and misleading claims all throughout the grocery store. Meaning advertising on signs and boxes - all bright and colorful to lure you and your children with willynilly health claims based on a minute shred of evidence from a biased Nabisco or General Mills 'investigation.' etc. "Contains real fruit juice" means nothing. "100% natural" is meaningless and any person can put that on ANY product whether it's true or not. Stop giving your kids Capri Sun and sweetened 'fruit juices.' You owe it to them to educate yourself so they have a shot at a long and healthy life without being shot in the foot by their parents during their formative years. Really. Take some responsibility. Don't even get me started on Lunchables! One of the downfalls of our modern day society. "It's like I'm sending my kid to school with a present so he knows I love him! Tee Hee!" Yeah, well enjoy your child having plaque in his arteries by age ten. I digress. Keep this in mind the next time you go shopping: Lead paint tastes sweet, but that doesn't mean you should eat it!!! I bet a lot of people would be surprised to know that Betty Crocker is a figment of an ad execs imagination. Not real, not in the least. Don't fall for her lies about Crisco and making life easier by NOT cooking dinner and having more TV time in the evenings. This is how we went off the rails, and the U.S. government was a huge promoter of that. Nearly everyone knows the U.S. is in cahoots with the sugar industry, the beef industry, the dairy industry, and so on and so forth. Essentially, anything that is bad or unnecessary for us is shoved in our faces by the DOA (Eat more beef and cheese!), by the huge conglomerates themselves, and, as another surprising example, by Philip Morris; a tobacco company who actually owns several of the biggest "food" production companies around. Quick - what's the overall biggest contributor of saturated fat in the American diet? Cheese! And then Beef! Whoo hoo! Oh, er...wait...heart disease is our nation's #1 killer.... and the government wants us to eat more.. cheese? Oy. Anyway - Great book. I highly recommend to anyone without a clue. It might clear some things up. I apologize for being snarky. It's just that.. you know. Insurance rates. Crowded hospitals. Less room in your airplane seat when sitting next to someone due to size. Others' actions impact everyone else and no one considers their fellow-person anymore. Sigh.

We all know the food industry spends millions studying the best ways to use marketing to reel us in and entice us to buy their food, but this book is a fascinating (and scary) look at how much money and energy they put into knowingly addicting us to sugar, fat and salt by making sure their foods stimulate our "bliss point". There is no doubt that this country is addicted to sugar, fat and salt, and we need to get a handle on these addictions very quickly if we are to reverse the obesity and other chronic disease epidemics. Reminds me all too much of the tobacco industry, and as such we must all fight for stricter regulations on marketing to children, and most importantly, fight the Farm Bill that has contributed so much to the obesity epidemic. We simply cannot afford to continue to subsidize the products that become processed food at the expense of fruits and vegetables that could literally save our lives. Read this book and get angry and DO SOMETHING! Obesity, diabetes, heart disease (the list goes on) are killing us and are going to kill our kids if we don't do something right now, today. Write your congress people and encourage them to do away with the Farm Bill and also to implement stricter regulations to control marketing of unhealthy food to kids.

OMG! If this book doesn't scare you into eating right, there's no hope. Wait. There probably isn't hope anyway. This well researched and heavily documented book details the lengths that the huge food conglomerates - think General Foods, Nestle, Kraft, and more - go to keep us addicted to high calorie, high fat, high sugar and high salt convenience/processed food. In fact, it is the convenience that enables these companies to continue to churn out these foods that barely supply the nutrients you need to live. Instead, we are marketed to with laser-like precision so that we fill our grocery carts with the junk that encourages obesity, diabetes, hypertension and more. It's really a scary book. In fact, about half way through it, I was overcome with a feeling of helplessness and powerlessness in the face of these humongous, multi-national food producers. They literally have billions and billions of dollars with which to formulate food or, more accurately, pseudo-foods that set up a craving for more, more, more. More salt. More sugar. More fat. The book itself is extremely well researched and documented with well over 200 notes in the back citing the authors sources. It's a relatively easy read although it does get a little deep in the weeds from time to time. Still, the book is worth the time and effort it takes to read it. You will never look at food the same way, again, either in the grocery store or your local restaurant or sub shop.

Salt Sugar Fat by Michael Moss is a tremendous book and I highly recommend people to read it! The book makes reference to Pepsi, Coca Cola, Kraft Foods, etc., all products that we relate to in our everyday lives. Moss' investigation on companies such as these was a fascinating read. He was

able to investigate the practices of these companies and their tactics to maximize profits. Moss does not bog the reader with dense, minute details but instead gives brief and concise description of his findings. Again, I highly recommend this book because what he describes in the book is visible in our everyday lives!

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