

# Cocaine: An Unauthorized Biography by Dominic Streatfeild

"[Streatfeild] is an excellent storyteller.... This book is a great read." —The Seattle Times

## COCAINE

AN UNAUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY

DOMINIC STREATFEILD

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### [An Amazing Book - A Must Read For Anyone Interested In Coke](#)

Cocaine, writes filmmaker Dominic Streatfeild, is not some evil spawn of Satan but simply a commodity. Like other commodities, cocaine has a history. When the Spanish conquistadors came to South America and observed that Indians who chewed the leaves of Erythroxylon coca could, it seemed, march over the tallest mountain or through the densest forest for days on end, they knew they were onto something. The newcomers took to growing coca themselves, and in time their product found an audience outside the continent, with users such as Sigmund Freud, Ernest Shackleton (who took Forced March cocaine tablets to Antarctica in 1909 for the energy boost they gave), Duke Ellington, and, eventually, half of Hollywood to testify to its powers. Streatfeilds appropriately rapid narrative takes in such key moments and players as the year of cocaine 1969, when the film Easy Rider reintroduced the drug to American popular culture, and George Jung, whose exploits are chronicled in Ted Demmes film Blow, to create a portrait of the drug that ranges over centuries. Though he supports legalization, Streatfeild acknowledges the evil and corruption

surrounding the trade. Drawing lessons from history, he also suggests the possibility that cocaine will fizzle out in the year 2015 the way it did in the early twentieth century. At the close of this absorbing book, he adds, It deserves to. --Gregory McNamee

### **Personal Review: Cocaine: An Unauthorized Biography by Dominic Streatfeild**

I've remembered my younger days as a kid always being told to stay away from drugs, and not to mention the famous slogan of "Crack is Wack." Whenever I walked with my mother through the streets of Lower Manhattan in New York City during the mid to late 1980's, I would notice a lot of crack vials and syringes on the floor. The violence drugs caused during the 1980's and early 1990's. I was always curious as to why many people were being killed for drugs. The movie Scarface answered many of my questions. During my freshman year of high school is when I first heard of Pablo Escobar, and it was in part of his death. I knew drugs profit in huge amounts of money, but then I wondered how it was made. While in high school, I've asked several people as to how it was made, but was not satisfied with the answer. I have always wondered the history of this drug. On occasions I've searched the internet looking for information regarding cocaine, but was not content with the results either, until I discovered this book on Amazon.com. Before purchasing this book, I had bought and read: Kings of Cocaine by Guy Gugliotta, and Jeff Leen; Killing Pablo: The Hunt for the World's Greatest Outlaw by Mark Bowden; and The Big White Lie: The Deep Cover Operation That Exposed the CIA Sabotage of the Drug War : An Undercover Odyssey by Michael Levine. All these books are 5 STARS as well. As I mentioned earlier I was familiar with the violence that drugs caused, but wondered on the history of the illicit drug. This book has answered all of my questions, and hopefully it will answer yours. The author goes in depth from Pre Columbian times, the world's advertisement for remedies, to its illegalization, and to the approximate present. I highly recommend this book.

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