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Chicken: The Dangerous Transformation Of America's Favorite Food (Yale Agrarian Studies Series)



Synopsis

Anthropologist Steve Striffler begins this book in a poultry processing plant, drawing on his own experiences there as a worker. He also reports on the way chickens are raised today and how they are consumed. What he discovers about America's favorite meat is not just unpleasant but a powerful indictment of our industrial food system. The process of bringing chicken to our dinner tables is unhealthy for all concerned—from farmer to factory worker to consumer. The book traces the development of the poultry industry since the Second World War, analyzing the impact of such changes as the destruction of the family farm, the processing of chicken into nuggets and patties, and the changing makeup of the industrial labor force. The author describes the lives of immigrant workers and their reception in the small towns where they live. The conclusion is clear: there has to be a better way. Striffler proposes radical but practical change, a plan that promises more humane treatment of chickens, better food for the consumer, and fair payment for food workers and farmers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Wow! An academic who can write! This is a great book from beginning to end. Striffler actually worked in poultry processing plants and lived to tell about it -- and tell about it he does! He really provides an excellent, if critical, look at not only the industry, but how we raise, cook, eat....food in general. And he is a great writer. It really makes you think. One other thing. I noticed one reviewer on [Amazon](#) was critical of Striffler for caring more about poultry workers than chickens. Uhh? I hope he

cares more about people than birds! Is this a bad thing? I am an animal rights activist, and I wish there was more on this subject in the book, but that would be a very different book for a very different audience. This is just not a book about animal rights; it is much broader in perspective. But I found the book to be very informative, and even suggestive for those of us interested in animal rights....because Striffler provides the whole picture. The fact is that most people eat chicken, and will do so for some time -- so the question is how do we make the system better for everyone, including the birds. On this, Striffler is very critical of the industry; his analysis is superb and his ideas suggestive. Let's not lose perspective!

I bought and read Striffler's book to gain a better understanding of the largely immigrant-filled workforce in the meat processing industry. This book more than satisfied me. It serves not only to introduce you to the growth of the chicken industry, but also to describe insightfully immigrant workers' experiences, in any industry. It is a very timely book given this year's focus on immigration reform. This industry will likely be more affected than any other if any major legislation is enacted.

This is one of the best books I have read on food. If you liked *Fast Food Nation* you will love this book. In some ways it is better, in other ways it is just different. Striffler is a wonderful writer and storyteller. The history of the industry, and the rise of so many chicken products, is fascinating. His account of working in a poultry processing plant is incredible -- sad and funny at the same time. Definitely read this book. It will change the way you think about chicken, food in general, and the immigrant workers who do all the work. Awesome book!

A harsh indictment of the aggressive tactics of the poultry giants, Striffler's work gives a grim view of the consequences for farmer, worker, and consumer. This book can be enjoyed equally by activist, academician, and voracious reader all equally. Imminently readable, Striffler's work not only conveys a sense of the author's ideology but more importantly, backs up his concerns with hard and fast statistics. Even for those who don't wish to endure a frontal assault on Tyson Foods and other major agribusiness corporations, the discussion on how American consumerism around chicken has changed over the last 20 years. For those who are old enough to remember a world without McNuggets, it's an interesting cultural retrospective.

Chicken tells you more than you thought you wanted to know about what we eat and buy. But after reading it you are hungry for opportunities to do something about the situation Striffler lays out so

compellingly. Nuggets of wisdom about nuggets of poor nutrition but high profits reaped from unconscionably high suffering.

I'm not for sure about this book. I got it for my daughter for her college classes that she sent me a list of books she needs for the up coming semester in the Summer for her Winter classes. I'm guessing she likes it. She getting good grades in the class and hasn't said anything to me about any problems with the book. She did tell me a lot about this book and class talks in the classroom. It got her to rethink about eating and the class wasn't about that LOL but it help her to rethink about other things that the class was teaching too.

This book is a must read for anyone who eats Chickens. You should know what you are supporting and the dangers of the product.

Great text for the anthropologist! I am writing my dissertation on immigrant labor and would love to find more sources like this! Great!

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