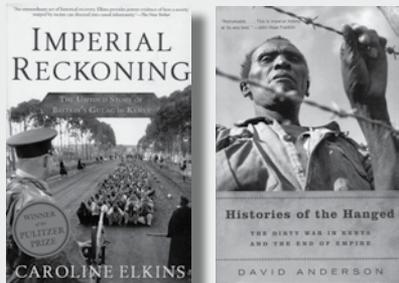


Book Notes

Editor's Note: All Book Notes in this are by Ralph D. Winter

David Anderson, Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire (New York: WW Norton Company, 2005)

Carolyn Elkins, Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2005)

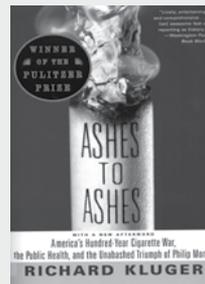


Both of these books are enormously detailed records of Britain's final days of control in the country of Kenya. Both of them give a great deal of attention to the rise of the Mau Mau and the violent methods as well as the violent reprisals the British used against them. Virtually the entire Kikuyu population was relocated into concentration camps in order to put down the rebellion. The story is a lot like France's withdrawal from Algeria, a very nasty, difficult, bloody story which perhaps not until 2005 has ever really been detailed for public reference. I can find no evidence that either author knew the other was doing their prodigiously detailed and parallel work. The result is somewhat like the four Gospels, these accounts are really quite supplementary and both of real value.

The following book notes will be somewhat scrambled in an overall commentary. It may not seem obvious that there is a direct relationship between the fight against tobacco, the fight against slavery, and the fight against child prostitution. But there is.

The major link is simply the fact that cultural forces are so much stronger than we normally estimate them to be. These three books are only a small sample of the large literature that by this time illuminates the tobacco issue, but at least I can mention them.

Richard Kluger, Ashes to Ashes: America's 100 Year Cigarette War, the Public Health and the Unabashed Triumph of Phillip Morris, (New York: Random House, 1997)



Richard Kluger came out with this book in the 1990s. It is probably still the most detailed account available, giving developments seen from inside of the burgeoning tobacco industry itself. Endlessly complex mergers and deals between the different companies scrambling for a lock on the market portray a labyrinth of complexity. The book also gets into the details, equally complex, of legal actions, and government relations, and things like that. So much so that some reviewers have felt that simply too much data is presented. It is indeed a ponderous book of 805 pages. But its greatest limitation is that, having been published in 1997, it stops short in the mid-90s and, naturally, cannot take into account the last decade of progress of the whole picture. It is important to indicate, though, that the subtitle speaking of "the Unabashed Triumph of Phillip Morris" still holds true—in fact, it is even more true by far now than when this book was published.

Iain Gately, Tobacco: A Cultural History of How an Exotic Plant Seduced Civilization (New York: Grove Press, 2001)

This book is by a British author who gives an incredibly detailed account of the avid acceptance of tobacco down through the centuries and more recent decades in all sorts of contexts. This avid acceptance was boosted especially by the world wars—most prominently the Second World War—but even the current wars in the Middle East. In wartime it has somehow been assumed that tobacco use is an aid to the success of the military effort. For American audiences the book is limited by the fact that it not only ends in 2001 but also omits any reference to the growing and astonishing turn of events in this country in which governments have become now the backers of the industry itself—the industry is now paying huge sums to all of the State governments in return for protection against law suits. What they pay is easily covered by raising the price of cigarettes. Also, the book does not concern itself with the deadly effects of nicotine.

Allan M. Brandt, The Cigarette Century: the Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America (New York: Basic Books, 2007)

Of the three books that I have looked at extensively, the most complete and up-to-date book is that of a Harvard professor of the history of medicine and science, Allan M. Brandt. One nice thing about this book is that it doesn't go into the theory that the American Revolution was primarily a war over tobacco—which the book by the British author Gately actually claims was "a tobacco war." By comparison the books already

mentioned about slave trade patiently explain that the American Revolution was a war over the protection of slavery (not, as with the Civil War, the opposition to slavery).

This most recent book is the largest of the books in physical size (not in actual word count, because the type is larger and the pages are fewer than the Kluger book). But it is very outspoken. The book by the British author doesn't actually say anything negative about cigarette smoking at all, just the flourishing of this exotic plant. The book by Kluger is definitely a criticism of the industry and this one by the Harvard professor is very definitely opposed to what the book concludes to be a truly global terror.

One of the most astounding graphs in the book is one that shows the astonishing rise of overseas sales by the strength and power of Big Tobacco. The incredible power of this malignant industry can be seen in the fact that since 1963 the domestic U.S. sales of Phillip Morris cigarettes tripled from 50 billion to 200 billion, while in the same period sales internationally exploded 40-fold from 20 billion in 1963 to 800 billion. Overseas the result to a great extent derives from two things: the amazing skills of the U. S. industry in promoting their goods and confusing the public and secondly and equally important, the substantial efforts of the U. S. State department and Department of Agriculture in gaining the breakdown of barriers to the import of American cigarettes in foreign countries. Indeed, the last chapter of *The Cigarette Century* book is entitled "Exporting an Epidemic."

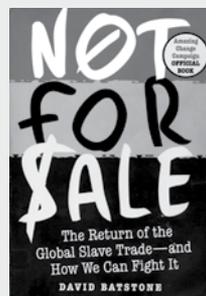
The Evangelical Surgeon General C. Everett Koop as early as 1990 commented:

At the time we are pleading with foreign governments to stop the export of cocaine. It is the height of hypocrisy for the US to export tobacco... I think the most shameful thing that this country did was to export disease, disability and death by selling our cigarettes to the world. What the companies did was shocking, but even more appalling was the fact that our government helped make it possible (p. 468).

His comment that we are "pleading with foreign governments" is an enormous understatement, when we are literally bombing and burning thousands of square miles of cocaine production in Colombia only to increase the price of cocaine and thus the profit for the smugglers. President Carter has been quoted saying that we kill more people in Colombia with our cigarette exports than they kill in the US with their cocaine exports. Should Colombia bomb and burn U.S. tobacco fields?

This is not the time or the place to go into great detail other than simply to draw the parallel between the incredibly powerful cultural forces in the perpetuation of traditional slavery, modern slavery and the export of a deadly drug throughout the world. These are all similar problems in terms of their harmful effects on human beings and also the mechanism of their gain, namely, the enormous power of culture as opposed to reason or faith.

David Batstone, Not For Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2007)



This is a well-written up-to-date book, sections of which are quoted in *Mission Frontiers* and *Sojourners* magazines. Written by a senior editor of *Sojourner's* magazine, its cover says it is the "Amazing Change" campaign official book.

Zach Hunter, Be the Change: Your Guide to Freeing Slaves and Changing the World (Michigan: Zondervan, 2007)



This is another book that is connected with the "Amazing Change" campaign, along with the movie *Amazing Grace*.

Written by a 15-year-old student-activist, it's a very attractive book, and it would be exciting for teenagers to see. **IJFM**