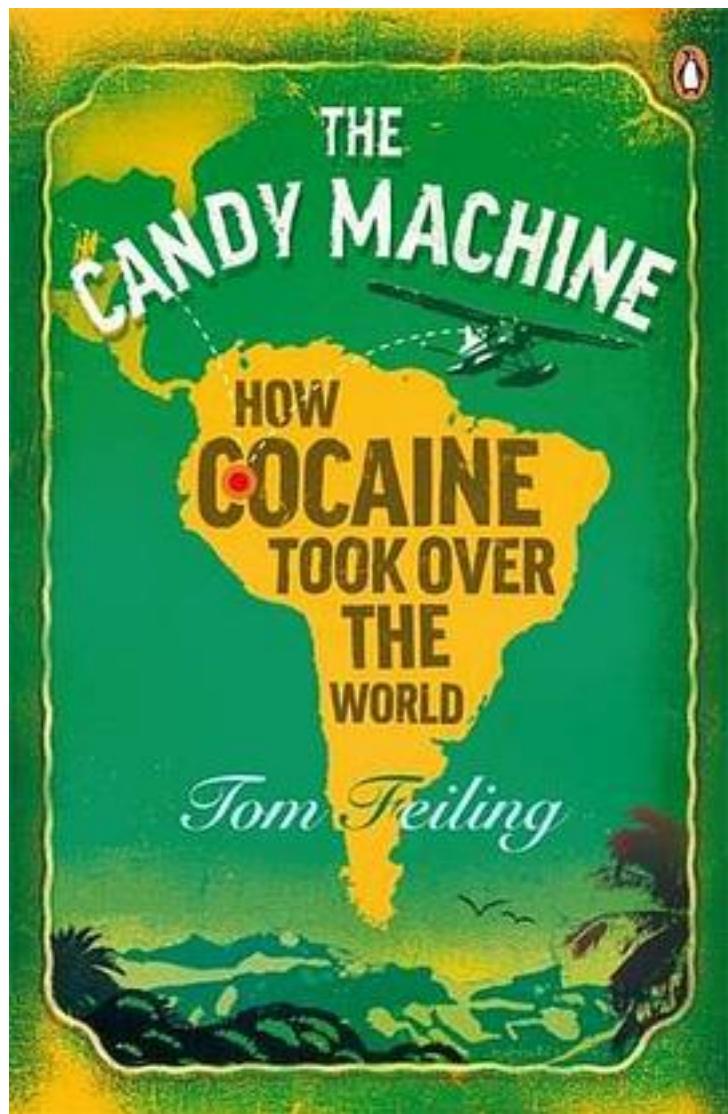


The Candy Machine



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Gabrielle unwinds at weekends with a line of coke – and also works for the Metropolitan Police, Juan Pablo is a drugs mule in Bogotá who gets his stash from a sweathouse. Ricky Ross, king of the 'Walmart of Crack', has made a fortune dealing. Belica started picking coca when she was eleven. Kurt Schmoke, former mayor of Baltimore, thinks legalization's the only way ...

Cocaine is big business, and getting bigger. Governments spend millions on an unwinnable war against it, yet it's now the drug of choice in the West. How did the cocaine economy get so huge? Who keeps it running behind the scenes?

In the Candy Machine Tom Feiling travels the trade routes from Colombia via Miami, Kingston and Tijuana to London and New York. He meets Medellin hitmen, US kingpins, Brazilian traffickers, and talks to soldiers and narcotics officers who fight the gangs and cartels. He traces cocaine's progress from legal 'pick-me-up' to luxury product to global commodity, looks at legalization programmes in countries like Switzerland, and shows how America's anti-drugs crusade is actually increasing demand.

Cutting through the myths about the white market, this is the story of cocaine as it's never been told before.

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