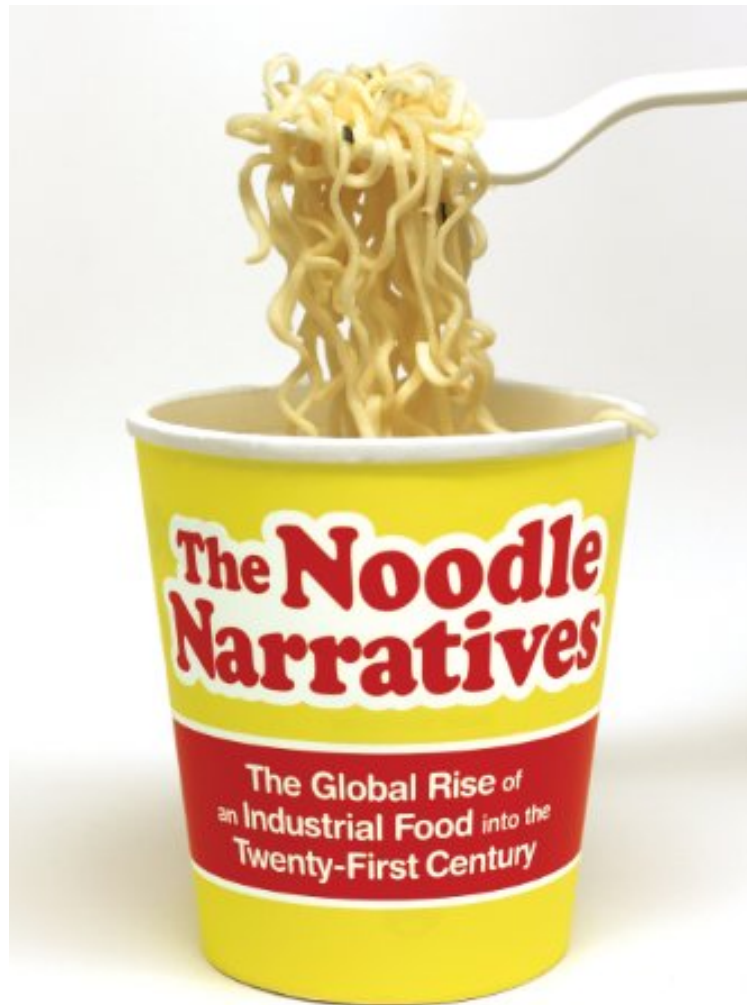


The Noodle Narratives: The Global Rise of an Industrial Food into the Twenty-First Century

Frederick Errington, Deborah Gewertz, Tatsuro Fujikura
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Frederick Errington, Deborah Gewertz, Tatsuro Fujikura : The Noodle Narratives: The Global Rise of an Industrial Food into the Twenty-First Century before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Noodle Narratives: The Global Rise of an Industrial Food into the Twenty-First Century*:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Instant noodles: potential solution to world hunger? By Jamie Li
The Noodle Narrative's three authors examine the role of instant noodles in people's lives across three very different

markets: Japan - the birthplace of instant noodles, where they occupy a space of cultural obsession spawning a slew of zany flavors; the United States - where instant noodles have come to represent a symbol of transition, in which one moves from less-fortunate circumstances to hopefully better ones (ie. college, prison, poverty); Papua New Guinea - a relative newcomer into the sphere of influence wielded by instant noodles where mostly poor people enjoy it for a taste of modernity meanwhile fulfilling aspirations of participating in global consumer culture. While Errington, Fujikura, Gewertz don't quite proffer instant noodles as the ultimate cure for world hunger, they argue that the flash fried noodle blocks do hold tremendous potential. That perhaps after some tweaks to its nutritional content - less sodium and fortified with vitamins and nutrients - it may become a much more viable solution. However, as with any dirt-cheap commodity available in nearly every international market, there comes a dark side. With instant noodles, it's palm oil. I wish the authors had elaborated more on palm oil exploitation (seeing as how I am an environmental studies major and all holla), but that discussion along with the discussion about instant noodles as a product of "big food" felt brief and glossed over given the global implications of an almost-too-convenient answer to such a massive humanitarian problem.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Everything you never wanted to know about cup of noodles

By UCLASteveRecommended by an anthropologist friend. Interesting piece of anthropology, and I will never look at cup of noodles the same again, but not very compelling overall.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. 3.5 stars

By Elizabeth RayThe Noodle Narratives is an interesting history of instant noodles, with chapters focusing on their "use" in the US, Japan, and Papua New Guinea. Although published by an academic press (with lengthy sections on notes and references), it is written in a style that is accessible to the casual reader, though it is sometimes a bit dry. The chapters which focus on the history, production, and consumption of instant noodles are the most enjoyable. The last couple of chapters which discuss the pros and cons of processed foods cover the same topics as many other food books, including a critique of Michael Pollen's food philosophies. Here the authors seem to be stretching to make instant noodles central to the discussion. This is a relatively short book with enough interviews and facts about instant noodles to appeal to anyone who has eaten a lot of ramen (which is pretty much anyone who has gone to college).

Tasty, convenient, and cheap, instant noodles are one of the most remarkable industrial foods ever. Consumed around the world by millions, they appeal to young and old, affluent and impoverished alike. The authors examine the history, manufacturing, marketing, and consumption of instant noodles. By focusing on three specific markets, they reveal various ways in which these noodles enable diverse populations to manage their lives. The first market is in Japan, where instant noodles have facilitated a major transformation of post-war society, while undergoing a seemingly endless tweaking in flavors, toppings, and packaging in order to entice consumers. The second is in the United States, where instant noodles have become important to many groups including college students, their nostalgic parents, and prison inmates. The authors also take note of "heavy users," a category of the chronically hard-pressed targeted by U.S. purveyors. The third is in Papua New Guinea, where instant noodles arrived only recently and are providing cheap food options to the urban poor, all the while transforming them into aspiring consumers. Finally, this study examines the global "Big Food" industry. As one of the food system's singular achievements, the phenomenon of instant noodles provides insight into the pros and cons of global capitalist provisioning.

From the Inside Flap "This magnificent book follows the invention, production, and consumption of the ever-popular instant ramen noodles around the world. Here we have ethnography at its best- the authors present a wonderfully appealing topic while also addressing the public issues and global inequalities surrounding it." Niko Besnier, Professor of Cultural Anthropology, University of Amsterdam

The Noodle Narratives calls long overdue attention to an ubiquitous industrial product hiding in plain sight. This creative and readable book delivers a welcome and original contribution to the history of food and the anthropology of globalization.

rdquo; Robert Foster, author of Coca-Globalization: Following Soft Drinks from New York to New Guinea