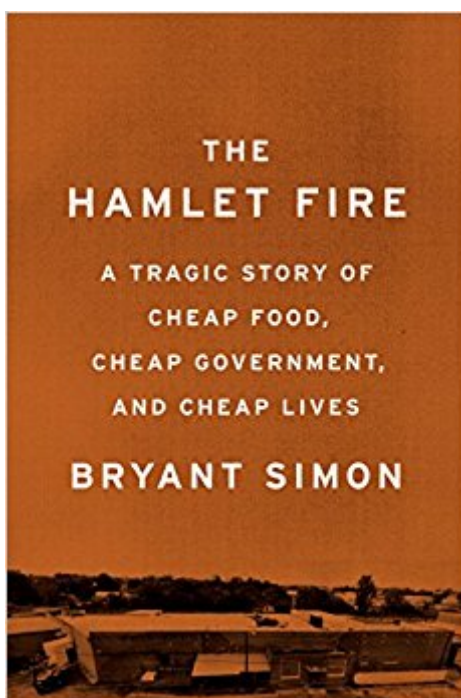


The book was found

# The Hamlet Fire: A Tragic Story Of Cheap Food, Cheap Government, And Cheap Lives



## Synopsis

For decades, the small, quiet town of Hamlet, North Carolina, thrived thanks to the railroad. But by the 1970s, it had become a postindustrial backwater, a magnet for businesses searching for cheap labor with little or almost no official oversight. One of these businesses was Imperial Food Products. The company paid its workers a dollar above the minimum wage to stand in pools of freezing water for hours on end, scraping gobs of fat off frozen chicken breasts before they got dipped in battered and fried into golden brown nuggets and tenders. If a worker complained about the heat or the cold or missed a shift to take care of their children or went to the bathroom too often they were fired. But they kept coming back to work because Hamlet was a place where jobs were scarce. Then, on the morning of September 3, 1991, the day after Labor Day, this factory that had never been inspected burst into flame. Twenty-five people—many of whom were black women with children, living on their own—perished that day behind the plant's locked and bolted doors. Eighty years after the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, industrial disasters were supposed to have been a thing of the past. After spending several years talking to local residents, state officials, and survivors of the fire, award-winning historian Bryant Simon has written a vivid, potent, and disturbing social autopsy of this town, this factory, and this time that shows how cheap labor, cheap government, and cheap food came together in a way that was bound for tragedy.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 320 pages

Publisher: The New Press (September 5, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1620972387

ISBN-13: 978-1620972380

Product Dimensions: 1 x 7 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: Be the first to review this item

Best Sellers Rank: #46,803 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #31 in [Books > Business & Money > Economics > Labor & Industrial Relations](#) #32 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Labor & Industrial Relations](#) #493 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > State & Local](#)

## Customer Reviews

Praise for Hamlet Fire: "A multidimensional volume about a fatal 1991 fire at a chicken processing

plant in North Carolina [that] connects the disaster in Hamlet to increasing consumer demand for cheap goods and cites disasters in other industries also driven by low prices. The Hamlet tragedy was not an isolated incident, Simon reminds readers, but part of a wider system of profit-driven labor exploitation."#151;Publishers Weekly (starred)"Engaging and humanizing . . . [Simon] uses the horrific event of a devastating accident at a chicken-processing plant in rural North Carolina to examine the consequences of the modern American convenience diet, where everything is expendable."#151;Booklist"A vivid, highly disturbing narrative with relevance to current discussions of economic inequality and workplace safety."#151;Kirkus Reviews"ln haunting and powerful prose, historian Bryant Simon lays bare just how costly it really is, just how ugly it truly is, when Americans insist on cheap. As his meticulously researched examination of the 1991 Hamlet fire makes so painfully clear, real peopleÃ¢ââoverwhelmingly poor and disproportionately black peopleÃ¢ââpay a high price indeed for this nationÃ¢ââs insatiable desire for cheap food and cheap government. But thanks to SimonÃ¢ââs careful reconstruction of the forces and circumstances that led so many to suffer in this one tiny North Carolina town, as well as his searing analysis of why those who lived and worked there mattered so little, readers are left with only one conclusion: America finally must commit itself to decent wages, safe workplaces, sufficient health care, and everything else that human beings need. And, if that costs us all a bit more, so be it."#151;Heather Ann Thompson, author of Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the Bancroft Prize for History "Bryant Simon plunges into the horror of an industrial fire and emerges with a gripping tale of capitalism gone wrong. Sifting through the wreckage, he unearths story after story of the unsustainable cost of cheap: a reckless economy, a cut-rate government, factory food, and disposable lives. SimonÃ¢ââs forensics are written with force, clarity, and gripping detail. The Hamlet Fire is a heartbreaking history of the hollowing out of the American dream."#151;Jefferson Cowie, author of StayinÃ¢ââ Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class "What appears cheap comes at an expensive costÃ¢ââ often life itself if life itself is worth valuing. But lives in the United StatesÃ¢ââ especially poor Black livesÃ¢ââ are as cheap as the food and the government that is not sustaining those lives, Bryant Simon reveals in absorbing prose and striking analysis. The Hamlet Fire presents the smoldering death day of those twenty-five small town North Carolinians not as an industrial accident. Simon heroically presents this tragedy as a regularity in the unknown life of present-day industrial America where Ã¢ââcheapÃ¢ââ lives lavishly and valued life is dead. The Hamlet Fire is an oracle."#151;Ibram X. Kendi, author of Stamped from the Beginning, winner of the 2016 National Book Award for nonfiction"Bryant SimonÃ¢ââs

The Hamlet Fire is a hard-hitting piece of investigative journalism that is steeped in economic history and cultural theory. It's also the story of a community that's fallen through the cracks of the prelapsarian American Dream, a community of people who read like tragic characters from a literary novel. This is a study of what happens when generational poverty meets capitalist greed, but it's also a testament to the strength of the American fabric that binds us all."#151;Wiley Cash, author of A Land More Kind Than Home and This Dark Road to Mercy

Bryant Simon is a professor of history at Temple University. He is the author of Boardwalk of Dreams: Atlantic City and the Fate of Urban America, and Everything but the Coffee: Learning About America from Starbucks. His work and commentary have been featured in the New Yorker, the Washington Post, the New Republic, and numerous other outlets. He lives in Philadelphia.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

The Hamlet Fire: A Tragic Story of Cheap Food, Cheap Government, and Cheap Lives  
Fire Encyclopedia: Kindle Fire Manual for the latest generation of Kindle E-Readers and Fire Tablets, Kindle Voyage, Kindle Paperwhite, Fire HD 6, Fire HD 8, Fire HD 10, and Fire HDX 8.9  
Food Truck Business: How To Start Your Own Food Truck While Growing & Succeeding As Your Own Boss (Food Truck, Food Truck Business, Passive Income, Food ... Truck Startup, Food Truck Business Plan,) Cheap Airline Tickets: Learn How to Find Super Cheap Travel Deals and Fly like a Pro (Cheap Flights & Travel for Free) All-new Fire HD8 and Fire HD10 Tips, Tricks, and Traps: A comprehensive user guide to the new Fire HD8 and Fire HD10 tablets  
Fire Stick: The Ultimate Fire Stick User Guide - Learn How To Start Using Fire Stick, Plus Little-Known Tips And Tricks! (Streaming ... TV Stick User Guide, How To Use Fire Stick)  
Fire TV: Fire Stick: The Ultimate User Guide to Fire Stick To TV, Movies, Apps, Games & Much More (how to use Fire Stick, streaming, tips ... (User guides, internet, free movie Book 2) How to Install Kodi on Fire Stick: Install Kodi on Fire Stick: Step-By-Step Instructions with Screen Shots! (2017 Kodi User Guide, fire tv stick, kodi book, kodi fire tv stick, kodi stick)  
Whole Food: The 30 day Whole Food Ultimate Cookbook 100recipes (Whole Food Diet, Whole Food Cookbook,Whole Food Recipes, Clean Eating, Paleo, Ketogenic) Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives (and Why We Don't Talk about It): How Employers Rule Our Lives (and Why We Don't Talk about It) (The University Center for Human Values Series) Sister Queens: The Noble, Tragic Lives of Katherine of Aragon and Juana, Queen of Castile  
Fire Encyclopedia: Fire TV and Fire Stick Manual (First Edition). Fire Stick: Start Using your Fire TV to the fullest: Best Ways to Unlock Fire TV Stick (the 2017 updated user guide,home tv,tips and tricks,digital ... prime,by echo,expert,internet) Fire HD 8 with Alexa: Unlocking Your All-New

Fire HD 8 Tablet with Alexa: The Ultimate User Guide on Everything You Need to Know About the Latest Fire HD 8 with Alexa Kindle Fire HD 8 & 10 Manual: All New Fire HD User Guide (Kindle Fire HD Manual) Cheap And Delicious: 40 Cheap And Delicious Easy Family Meals That Will Save You Time And Money In The Kitchen And Make Your Mouth Water With Delight! ... Cooking With Beans, Cooking With Potatoes) The Real Cost of Cheap Food (Routledge Studies in Food, Society and the Environment) Dirt Cheap Prepping: Top 25 Cheap Stuff You Need Prepare Now And Use During The Disaster Frommer's Sydney Free and Dirt Cheap (Frommer's Free & Dirt Cheap) KAUAI CHEAP VACATIONS: Free or Cheap Activities, Dining and Travel

[Contact Us](#)

[DMCA](#)

[Privacy](#)

[FAQ & Help](#)