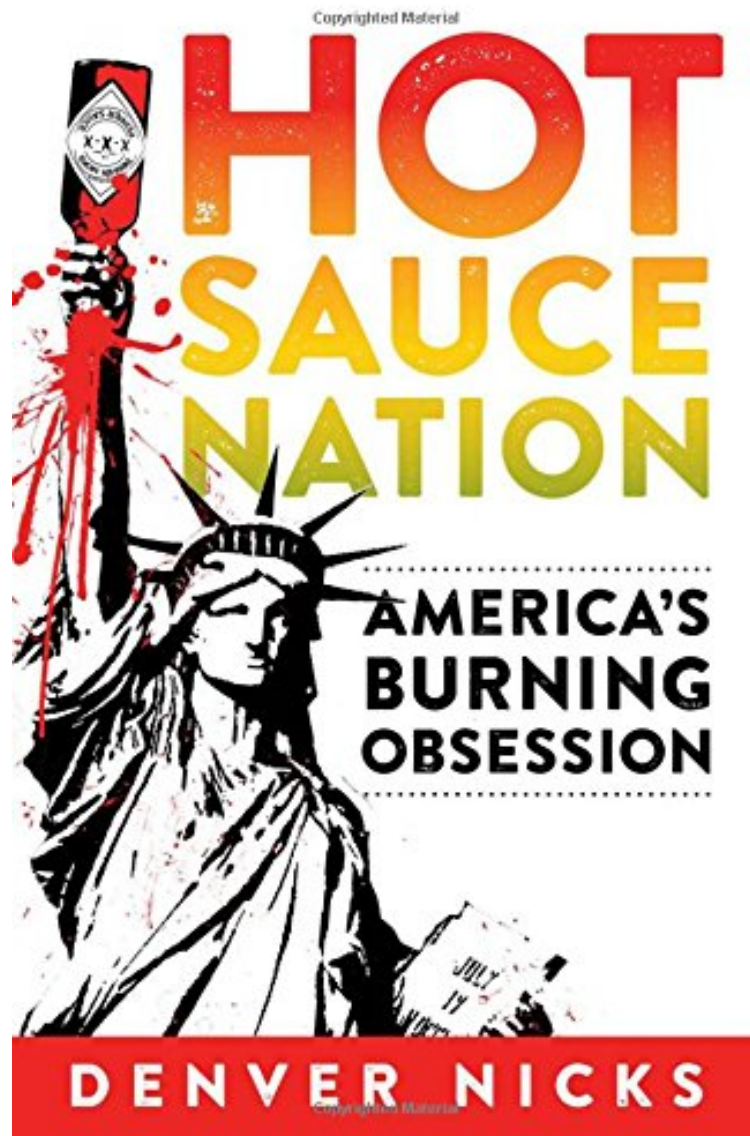


[Free download] Hot Sauce Nation: America's Burning Obsession

## Hot Sauce Nation: America's Burning Obsession

*Denver Nicks*

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**Denver Nicks : Hot Sauce Nation: America's Burning Obsession** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hot Sauce Nation: America's Burning Obsession:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. As any good history professor will professthe matter-of-fact recounting of an event isnt ...By DanielWhittleI used to be a reader. In home school there was little else to do. By the time I started public school in 8th grade, I had read everything I would be assigned to read through senior year AP English, with the exception of The Handmaids Tale. After high school, I became so engrossed in playing/listening

to/seeing music that books were largely a thing of the past. I can sum up the books I have read, post-2001, in a few simple categories: music biographies, books about dragons, clever books by fashionably eccentric hit-or-miss authors (Palaehniuk/Vonnegut/BEE), and books by Denver Nicks. I knew Denver from college and he introduced me to Fugazi via a decently played riff on his acoustic guitar, so any time he writes a book, I make a point to read it. In 2012, Denver Nicks wrote *Private: Bradley Manning, WikiLeaks, and the Biggest Exposure of Official Secrets in American History*. In 2016, he followed that up with *Hot Sauce Nation: Americas Burning Obsession*. A book wrought with exclusive insight and access to an important and intriguing story of national security has been followed up by a book about hot sauce. When one begins reading a book about hot sauce, there are absolutely limits of expectation. A written history of the cultivation of peppers/chiles/chilis in America sounds ironically drab for such a fiery topic. As any good history professor will profess the matter-of-fact recounting of an event isn't nearly as important as the context in which it occurred or how we view our present through these new viewpoints. Nicks has managed to sneak a road novel into a hot sauce history class. History can be boring and road novels are often self-indulgent and yet this combination is delightfully neither. For every passage relegated to the origin of different chilis, Nicks provides context for what that history actually means. The spotty bits of American history wars, slavery, things like that brought seeds and recipes along with them. The seeds and the recipes are factual and tangible but the traditions and stories surrounding those seeds and recipes are far more interesting because they reveal actual culture. Tracing lineage is one thing but hearing stories from great-grandparents is another thing entirely and Nicks weaves these threads together into a compelling saga. Nicks doesn't describe a scene with flowery prose to create a sense, of the reader being there. He simply tells a story about how it was, the kind of story you hear over a few drinks with a friend. Immigration, politics, economics, cross-pollination, ennui, and bravado are all reasons posited for the obsession the US has had regarding hot sauce over the last fifteen years. As the page numbers started creeping towards the bibliography section, I couldn't help but wonder if I had just read a very amusing travel log of little impact. In that moment, this collection of vignettes turned into something much greater than the sum of its parts. Nicks hides the thesis until the end. In the span of the last few, incredibly beautifully written pages, he confronts us with philosophy and existential crisis and the role that hot sauce can play in literally changing the way you look at life. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. exploring the science and psychology around hot sauce and the people who love it along the way By Clay Dillow If a condiment seems an unlikely jumping off place for a historical and cultural narrative, Nicks reminds us that there is perhaps nothing in the canon of flavor and cuisine more American than the chili pepper. *Hot Sauce Nation* traces the chili pepper from its pre-Columbian roots to its place on dinner tables across the globe, ultimately exploring the question that even the most passionate hot sauce connoisseurs struggle to answer: Why do we derive so much pleasure from something that brings us so much pain? Nicks quickly carries the reader through the chili's lengthy legacy in American and global cuisine, exploring the science and psychology around hot sauce and the people who love it along the way. A pleasure to read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. HIGHLY RECOMMEND By Ben Usie Denver Nicks once again manages to humanize and electrify his subject beyond the seemingly mundane facts that one imagines could encapsulate said subject. He can infuse progressive politics into traditional heritage. He celebrates diversity and digs through white-washed American History to give credit where credit is due, praising people of African descent for their endless contributions to Culture. He examines the growingly mainstream hot sauce economy through the lense of the wonderful weirdos that have helped to popularize these bottled concoctions. He travels the chili trail through America and beyond to celebrate the little things we all have in common and the differences that make us unique. He examines humanity as the only animal that derives pleasure from pain, while searching thru the wonderful "word-of-mouth" history that one can only access by travelling on the ground and interacting with the people of the world. There's no better time to be reminded of the beauty and diversity that has prospered in this ever-changing Nation. I look forward to being charmed and educated by whatever subject Nicks sets his sights on next.

*Hot Sauce Nation* is a journey of discovery, delving into history, culture, immigration patterns, and the science of spice and pain. Through the stories of hot sauce makers and lovers, it explores the unique hold the dark prince of condiments has over the American heart.

"If you've ever wondered how such massive flavors and such paralyzing pain gets decanted into those little bottles, this is the book you've been waiting for. Denver Nicks weaves history, science, culture, and little bit of a lot else into a tidy, fun-to-read bundle. Enjoy this book by the drop or the spoonful." Wayne Curtis, author of *And a Bottle of Rum: A History of the New World in 10 Cocktails*