

Cocaina - a book on those who make it

Admirable on cocaine and catastrophe

"(...) I don't know of any other Swedish journalist that with the same ease as Magnus Linton can move between the reporter's presence, summaries of the fruits of academic labour and global political analysis: like a skilled driver, he manages to keep the style regardless of road conditions. There is something cinematic about his art of reporting: violent Spanish slang exploding the narrative, contrasted with nature poetry. It is a story about catastrophe, yet without phony advices or solutions. (...)"

Björn af Kleen in Sydsvenskan

A brilliant eye-opener

"(...) Cocaina describes a reality in a constant state of change and in his stories from different corners of Colombia, Linton manages to weave in complicated historical perspectives in such a matter of factly way that you don't even notice. He even manages to here and there illuminate the 'other' Colombia - the incredible country beyond drugs and violence that Linton himself would prefer to tell us about. It is in many way a brilliant book, based on stories that were not only difficult to write but also dangerous. (...)"

Lars Palmgren in Swedish Radio's P1:s Kulturlytt

A damn good book

"(...) The thing with Cocaina is that it is damn good without the author himself being too visible. Linton does not write himself into the story, he does not position himself on the issue of legalization, except in a sweeping formulation in the preface about how he 'neither wants cocaine in the grocery store nor to live in a drug-free society'. And this is certainly not a pamphlet about a drug, rather it is an exposé on Colombia: a well researched and loving portrait of a nation with an unusually violent contemporary history. (...)"

Philip Teir in Dagens Nyheter

The Politics of Cocaine

About the ones who are depending on drugs - to survive

"(...) I notice while reading that I forget that there are actually people who use cocaine, all the users and abusers are abstracted by the concept of 'demand'. This approach is admirable in all its stubborn consistency: we see the politics of cocaine much more clearly when we don't mix in the reasons why people take drugs, the misery and the moralizing. Some might argue this makes half the picture. Linton seems to suggest that the picture this way gets *concentratedly* clear, and I agree. (...)"

Ulrika Stahre in Aftonbladet

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A magnificent story with new dimensions

" (...) Among all the exciting different strands in Magnus Linton's story the most fascinating one is about how the USA's war on drugs in Colombia is no longer concerned with exterminating cocaine, but rather about using the drug as an excuse to maintain geopolitical power in the region. This dimension makes it all the much harder to propose a simple solution to the humanitarian catastrophe that is the global war on drugs. Magnus Linton is wise enough to not shrink his magnificently complex story to a package of simple solutions. (...) "

Johannes Forsberg in Expressen

With liberating lack of sentimentality

" (...)Linton skillfully switches between macro and micro perspectives. From portraits of partying backpackers and poor peasants growing coca, to the political game and its history and present. It is difficult to nail down power structures in both small and large contexts without becoming overexplicit, but Linton succeeds. A condition for this is the liberating lack of sentimentality that characterizes the book. Informed and straightforwardly, Linton tells us about the course of events and their history, without ever glorifying or victimizing anyone. At the same time the book is imbued with a strong pathos. The drug trade is an ever-present backdrop for a larger story on power, state and poverty. (...) "

Elin Grelsson in Göteborgs-Posten

Nails down the miserable situation

" (...) Cocaína is certainly a book worth reading. Linton recapitulates Colombia's modern history and nails down the destructive processes whose primary driving force is the demand for drugs. He does not, however, take a stand in the debate about liberalization. The miserable situation in countries like Colombia should, it seems to me, be taken into consideration when members of parliament and other commentators discuss the pros and cons of the Swedish prohibition policy."

Carl Johan Gardell in Svenska Dagbladet