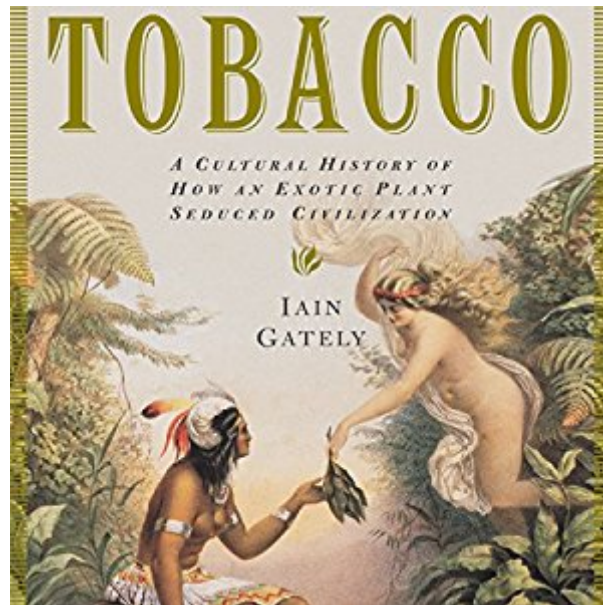


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# Tobacco: A Cultural History Of How An Exotic Plant Seduced Civilization



## Synopsis

Tobacco was first cultivated and enjoyed by the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas, who used it for medicinal, religious, and social purposes long before the arrival of Columbus. But when Europeans began to colonize the American continents, it became something else entirely - a cultural touchstone of pleasure and success and a coveted commodity that would transform the world economy forever. Iain Gately's Tobacco tells the epic story of an unusual plant and its unique relationship with the history of humanity, from its obscure ancient beginnings through its rise to global prominence to its current embattled state today. In a lively narrative, Gately makes the case for the tobacco trade being the driving force behind the growth of the American colonies, the foundation of Dutch trading empire, the underpinning cause of the African slave trade, and the financial basis for our victory in the American Revolution. Informed and erudite, Tobacco is a vivid and provocative look into the complex history of this precious plant.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 12 hours 35 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audible Studios

Audible.com Release Date: August 13, 2015

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B013V9YB6K

Best Sellers Rank: #168 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > World #687 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Customs & Traditions #725 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Colonial Period

## Customer Reviews

The content of the book is very informative and intriguing, but I refuse to elaborate because I might spoil it for others. I highly recommend this book to tobacconists.

I enjoyed Tobacco very much, and read it over the course of three evenings. I learned a great deal from it. The first 200 pages deal with tobacco's history prior to the 20th century - its use for religious and medical purposes, and the two most common methods of use, pipes and snuff. The remaining

150 pages concern 20th century cigarette use, including the final two chapters which deal with lung cancer and government anti-smoking policies. I highly recommend this book, but find two faults: 1) There is very little discussion of cigars. 2) This is an American printing of a British book. I would have liked to have read much more about the American tobacco industry of the 20th century.

I work at the largest cigar lounge in Texas and I read this book to become more familiar with tobacco in general and cigars in particular. The author is decidedly opinionated, well versed on the subject, mildly cynical, amusing and always interesting. I read several chapters at the lounge while relaxing and enjoying bourbon and cigars on my day off. As for tobacco's dangers; well, I ride motorcycles, enjoy well made firearms and smoke cigars. All of which are individual activities and not for everyone. It comes down to a personal choice as to how you wish to live and enjoy life. Just remember, moderation in all things is a good guide to life. If you have an interest in the history of tobacco and its use, I believe you would find the book a fine intro and overview of a fascinating and controversial subject.

I really do not understand the objections that other reviewers had to this book. Gately put together a lively, enchanting narrative concerning the history of tobacco. He covers a great many things and does not fail to include the words of those who once sung its praises. That's what should be done whenever one wishes to tell a "complete" story about anything. He does not self-censor his prose which is exactly what those of us most interested in the truth deeply desire. This book isn't titled "Quit Smoking," it's a cultural history of tobacco. Anyway, Gately presents statistics and analysis elucidating the dangers inherent to using the infamous weed. He outlines the positions of the state and depicts lung cancer as the private hell it clearly is. Smoking is a personal choice and there's no reason to ban it as the prohibition of substances has not met with much success over the years. I'm sure the author would agree with my conclusion but that does not mean he is depicting tobacco in a favorable light. This book was a serious page-turner and I enjoyed it very much. I recommend it without reservation.

One of the best books about tobacco, with so many interesting data. The author gives you a complete (general) historical vision on a very entertainment text, which gets to the point of the title. You may not agree with all the author's opinions, the tobacco modern conflicts make it a controversial theme, but the work is about tobacco history, is not a "pro" or "anti" smoking kind of book. A very pleasant reading. I recommend you this book if you are interested in tobacco, and if you

enjoy reading history books.

Great book if you want like me to know the history behind the tobacco plant .I was very pleased at the depth of knowledge that I have learned.good history on the beginnings of the tobacco industry here in the u.s.overall very interesting readM

Great book if you're curious about or have an interest in Tobacco. The book is written by someone who has a genuine love for the plant so theres no "anti-tobacco" bias or nonsense.

Well researched great presentation wanted a bit more about pipes though, a more thorough discussion of the European tobacco houses would been nice

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