

## Sugar: capitalism at its most efficient and rapacious

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I [liked this paragraph in the Observer this morning](#):

*The 7UP tin is quite an artefact. It shows capitalism at its most efficient and rapacious: where ingredients — sugar, flavouring, water — costing almost nothing can be turned into a profit margin measured in the thousands of per cent. It illustrates the extraordinary diversion of farmland and forest into the production of the almost useless while nearly a billion people on the planet are starving. The can is an icon of the key dietary changes of the era, where we upped our simple carbohydrate intake — sugar — to the point that it started harming us in ways never seen before.*

The idea that capitalism kills some by excess and others by shortage seems to sum up rather too well the whole nature of the system. And it's true that some sit by and live off the fat of the land that the sugar produces.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: I have no problem with business. I do have a problem with unregulated business. And it is the job of the state to impose that regulation in the interests of the common good.

Such a good exists. Democracy can deliver consensus on regulation. The abuse created by markets can be tamed. The result is an enhancement in well being - but a reduction in the fat of the land for a few.

That's the fight that beating poverty - and business induced obesity - requires we undertake. And it's worth it - for the common good.