

# The Price of Sugar

Written by David Howard

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Cross-posted at [Film Radar](#).

Your Kool-Aid may contain slavery.

Bill Haney's "The Price of Sugar" is a shocking new documentary about monumental Human Rights abuses conducted by the Dominican Republic sugar barons. At its essence the film is a tale of the slavery of Haitian workers funded by the insatiable taste Americans have for sugar. In fact, the United States continues to pay twice the market value for this sweetener that is more common in the American diet than vegetables.

Narrated by Paul Newman, the film follows Father Christopher Hartley who, under Mother Theresa's tutelage, was assigned a parish near the Cane Fields.

Run by the viscous [Vicini family](#), the cane fields are populated by illegal Haitian trafficked by smugglers. What the priest discovers is a "life is cheap" culture of people who are paid about a dollar a day, with no access to health care and medieval living conditions. From the pulpit he organizes the workers and re-locates doctors from Boston to tend to the sick.

As can be imagined, this has made the Father extremely unpopular with the Vicini family who are portrayed as a model of Hollywood Style corporate corruption. The American oil and pharmaceutical industries are jaywalkers compared to this bunch. With the Media, U.S. and Dominicans politicians paid off, they blitz the local television with Nationalistic Stories blaming the Father for the Haitianization of this area. This is untrue as it is the Vicini themselves who bring the Haitians into town. This leads to violent protests and an eventual showdown with the local Dominican version of Dr. Laura.

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The most interesting aspect of this film is the “supporting cast” of local Haitians testifying for the project. With promises of good paying jobs they have been beaten and forced to work at gunpoint, while barely making enough to support their families.

When trafficked all government issued documents have been confiscated. For these illegal aliens, sneaking out of the country is more difficult than getting in.

The film does tend to pat itself on the back but in this case you can forgive it. Even the minimal improvements since the arrival of Father Christopher constitute a major victory.

The film does refer to U.S. politicians taking campaign contributions but never names. I wanted more information.

This “one man can make a difference” tale is both heartbreaking and inspirational; we may want to re-think our diets. Or at least buy American.

You can read more at [Thepriceofsugar.com](http://Thepriceofsugar.com)