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Cereal: Snap, Crackle, Pop Culture

By Ed Daly

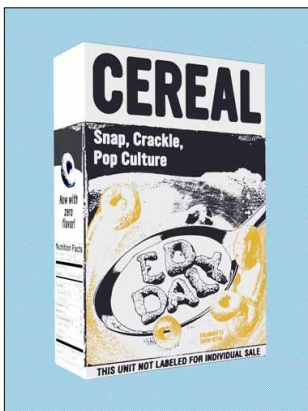
Cereal is the third most popular grocery item in the United States. Nearly half of all Americans start their day with it, but until now no one has looked this closely at the soggy, sugar and grain concoctions in their bowls. Like an irreverent Consumer Reports for breakfast, *Cereal: Snap, Crackle, Pop Culture* catalogs the cavity-inducing cereals of your childhood and the flavorless ones that never should have existed.

Author Ed Daly, the self-styled Wilt Chamberlain of cereal, made his way through the cereal aisle at his local grocery, sampling more than 80 boxes—including disturbing ones like Cupcake Pebbles, Cinnabon, and Hannah Montana cereals—so you don't have to. His mission began when he lost his Wall Street job at the height of the financial crisis. He decided to make the best of his multiple-bowls-per-day cereal habit by writing down his hilarious cereal ruminations. It was a grueling task, but he managed to turn hard-hitting questions like, "What lazy marketing executive OK'd this name?" and "How does this pass for food?" into biting, pop-culture steeped analysis.

The endless variations of rolled oats, grains, flakes, marshmallows, and puffs are accompanied by photographs of their packaging and organized by sugar content, from bland to diabetic coma. Daly's running commentary is both entertaining and informative, like this choice piece of advice: "If you're going to start your day eating wheat Chex, you might as well go watch a Frank Stallone movie marathon."

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Ed Daly

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