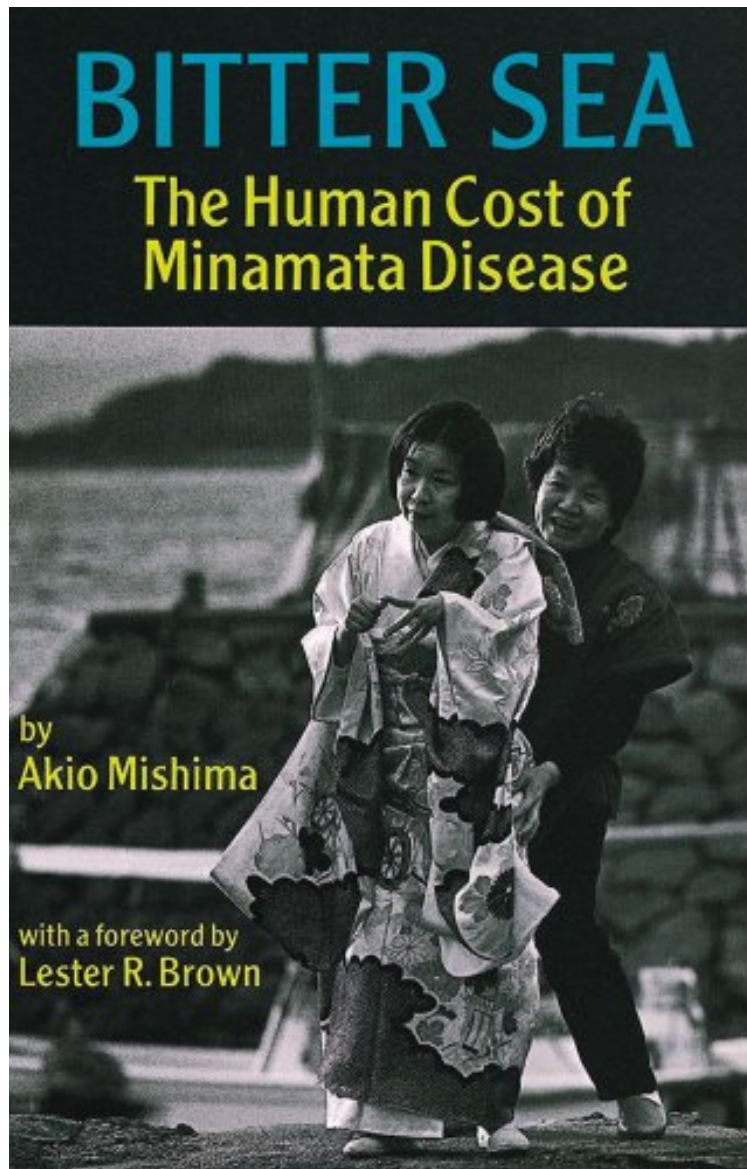


(Mobile pdf) Bitter Sea: The Human Cost of Minamata Disease

## Bitter Sea: The Human Cost of Minamata Disease

*Akio Mishima, Lester R. Brown*

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**Akio Mishima, Lester R. Brown : Bitter Sea: The Human Cost of Minamata Disease** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bitter Sea: The Human Cost of Minamata Disease:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Minamata bay and organic mercury poisoningBy Rodney E. ShackelfordThe book covers the effect of Minamata disease upon those who suffered organic mercury poisoning as a

result of eating fish from Minamata Bay in great detail. Similarly it goes into detail about how the Chisso Corporation (which was responsible for the polluting of the bay) consistently tried to first to cover up its responsibility for polluting the bay, and later its efforts to intimidate and discredit the victims of Minamata disease and their supporters. In this area the book does a very thorough job. The book however covers the cause of Minamata disease, organic mercury poisoning only peripherally. I found this to be a flaw in the book. Although met as a "human history" of the effects of the organic mercury poisoning of Minamata Bay, the book still needed to cover several things. For example, how the mercury moved through the food chain, and how it finally caused severe disease and deaths in humans should have been covered. Adding this information would have greatly improved the reader's understanding of Minamata disease and made the book much more powerful. Still the book is very good and largely does what the author intended - to show both the suffering of the Minamata disease victims, as well as the extreme corporate irresponsibility that led to so much human suffering and destruction of the environment. For those interested in a historical event which had a great effect on the environmental movement, as well as our understanding of how pollutants can move through the food chain the ultimately effect human health, I recommend the book.

The cause of Minamata disease a fatal illness that attacks the nervous system was first pinpointed in 1957 as organic mercury poisoning from effluent released by the Chisso Corp., a chemical manufacturer and the largest employer in the Japanese city for which the disease was named. For the next 20 years the company denied responsibility, and was joined by the government in its attempt to cover up the problem. One courageous woman, Michiko Shirashi, took up the cause of the people affected by the disease; her book, *Paradise of the Bitter Sea*, won nationwide recognition and support for the victims. Freelance journalist Mishima gives a gripping account of this long, bitter struggle, with Shirashi at the center. There were lawsuits that ran on for years, and sit-ins at company offices. Finally, there was some recompense for the victims and a start on cleanup. This story is dramatic evidence of the results of a national policy of prosperity at any cost; it permitted one company to irrevocably damage the waters around Minamata. Black-and-white photos.

From Publishers Weekly The cause of Minamata disease--a fatal illness that attacks the nervous system--was first pinpointed in 1957 as organic mercury poisoning from effluent released by the Chisso Corp., a chemical manufacturer and the largest employer in the Japanese city for which the disease was named. For the next 20 years the company denied responsibility, and was joined by the government in its attempt to cover up the problem. One courageous woman, Michiko Shirashi, took up the cause of the people affected by the disease; her book, *Paradise of the Bitter Sea*, won nationwide recognition and support for the victims. Freelance journalist Mishima gives a gripping account of this long, bitter struggle, with Shirashi at the center. There were lawsuits that ran on for years, and sit-ins at company offices. Finally, there was some recompense for the victims and a start on cleanup. This story is dramatic evidence of the results of a national policy of prosperity at any cost; it permitted one company to irrevocably damage the waters around Minamata. Black-and-white photos. Copyright 1992 Cahners Business Information, Inc. Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: Japanese