

# Story About Copper: The Metal That Runs The World



"Gold is for the mistress - silver for the maid - copper for the craftsman cunning at his trade."

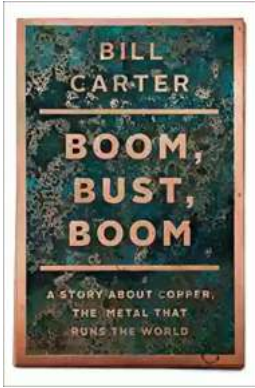
- Geoffrey Chaucer

Copper, the oldest metal known to humanity, has been an integral part of our civilization for thousands of years. From ancient civilizations to modern societies, copper has stood as a symbol of progress and technological advancement. This remarkable metal plays a vital role in various industries and continues to shape our world in more ways than we can imagine.

## Boom, Bust, Boom: A Story About Copper, the Metal that Runs the World by Bill Carter(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 1305 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 290 pages



## The History and Significance of Copper

Copper's history can be traced back to the early Bronze Age, around 3000 BC. It was one of the first metals used by humans, and its discovery revolutionized the way we live. Ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans prized copper for its malleability and its ability to conduct heat and electricity.

Throughout history, copper has been used to create impressive architectural structures, intricate artwork, and even currency. The Statue of Liberty, for example, is made of copper and stands as a symbol of freedom and progress in the United States.

In the modern era, copper's importance has only grown. It is now considered a critical metal due to its versatile properties and indispensable applications.

## Copper in Industry and Technology

One of the primary uses of copper lies in the electrical industry. Its exceptional conductivity makes it the ideal material for electrical wiring, transmission lines, and electronic devices. Without copper, our modern communication systems, power grids, and transportation networks wouldn't be possible.

Copper is also widely used in plumbing, heating, and cooling systems due to its corrosion resistance and excellent heat transfer properties. It is present in pipes, fittings, and various household appliances, ensuring the efficient flow and proper distribution of water and heat.

Additionally, copper's antimicrobial properties make it highly valuable in healthcare. Its ability to kill bacteria, viruses, and fungi makes it an essential component in medical equipment, hospital surfaces, and even textiles.

## **The Economic Impact of Copper**

The global copper industry has a significant economic impact. Its extraction, production, and trading provide employment to millions of people worldwide. Copper mining contributes to economic growth in various countries and generates revenue through exports.

Moreover, copper prices often serve as an indicator of global economic conditions. It is closely monitored by investors and analysts as it reflects the health of industries such as construction, infrastructure development, and manufacturing.

## **The Environmental Challenges**

While copper plays a crucial role in our civilization, its extraction and production come with their own set of environmental challenges. Mining operations can have adverse effects on local ecosystems, including deforestation, habitat destruction, and water pollution.

However, the industry has been actively working towards minimizing these impacts through sustainable mining practices and the advancement of recycling technologies. Recycled copper requires significantly less energy and produces

fewer emissions compared to newly mined copper, thus reducing its environmental footprint.

## The Future of Copper

As our society progresses technologically, the demand for copper is expected to continue rising. The rapid development of renewable energy systems, electric vehicles, and the ever-expanding digital infrastructure all rely on copper to function efficiently.

However, the availability of copper reserves is finite, and ensuring its future supply becomes increasingly important. Investing in innovative technologies for extraction, recycling, and reducing copper use in various applications will be key to sustaining our growing needs while minimizing environmental impact.

Copper truly is the metal that runs the world. Its rich history, versatility, and vital role in various industries make it an irreplaceable resource in our modern society. As we continue to advance technologically, it is crucial to strike a balance between harnessing the power of copper and preserving our environment for future generations.

So, the next time you see a copper wire or a copper roof, remember the incredible journey this metal has been on and the countless ways it has shaped our world.

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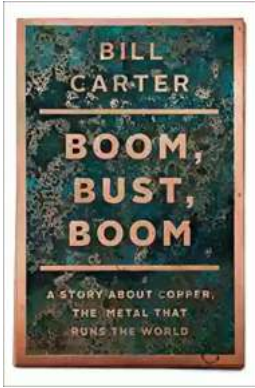
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From “a first-rate writer in the fascinating tradition of Junger and Krakauer” (Jim Harrison, author of *Legends of the Fall*), a sweeping account of civilization’s complete dependence on copper and what it all means for people, nature, and the global economy.

A SWEEPING ACCOUNT OF CIVILIZATION’S COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON COPPER AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR PEOPLE, NATURE, AND OUR GLOBAL ECONOMY

COPPER is a miraculous and contradictory metal, essential to nearly every human enterprise. For most of recorded history, this remarkably pliable and sturdy substance has proven invaluable: not only did the ancient Romans build their empire on mining copper but Christopher Columbus protected his ships from rot by lining their hulls with it. Today, the metal can be found in every house, car, airplane, cell phone, computer, and home appliance the world over, including in all the new, so-called green technologies.

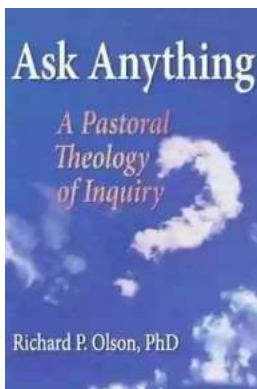
Yet the history of copper extraction and our present relationship with the metal are fraught with profound difficulties. Copper mining causes irrevocable damage to the Earth, releasing arsenic, cyanide, sulfuric acid, and other deadly pollutants

into the air and water. And the mines themselves have significant effects on the economies and wellbeing of the communities where they are located.

With *Red Summer* and *Fools Rush In*, Bill Carter has earned a reputation as an on-the-ground journalist adept at connecting the local elements of a story to its largest consequences. Carter does this again—and brilliantly—in *Boom, Bust, Boom*, exploring in an entertaining and fact-rich narrative the very human dimension of copper extraction and the colossal implications the industry has for every one of us.

Starting in his own backyard in the old mining town of Bisbee, Arizona—where he discovers that the dirt in his garden contains double the acceptable level of arsenic—Bill Carter follows the story of copper to the controversial Grasberg copper mine in Indonesia; to the “ring” at the London Metal Exchange, where a select group of traders buy and sell enormous amounts of the metal; and to an Alaskan salmon run threatened by mining. *Boom, Bust, Boom* is a highly readable account—part social history, part mining-town exploration, and part environmental investigation.

Page by page, Carter blends the personal and the international in a narrative that helps us understand the paradoxical relationship we have with a substance whose necessity to civilization costs the environment and the people who mine it dearly. The result is a work of first-rate journalism that fascinates on every level.



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