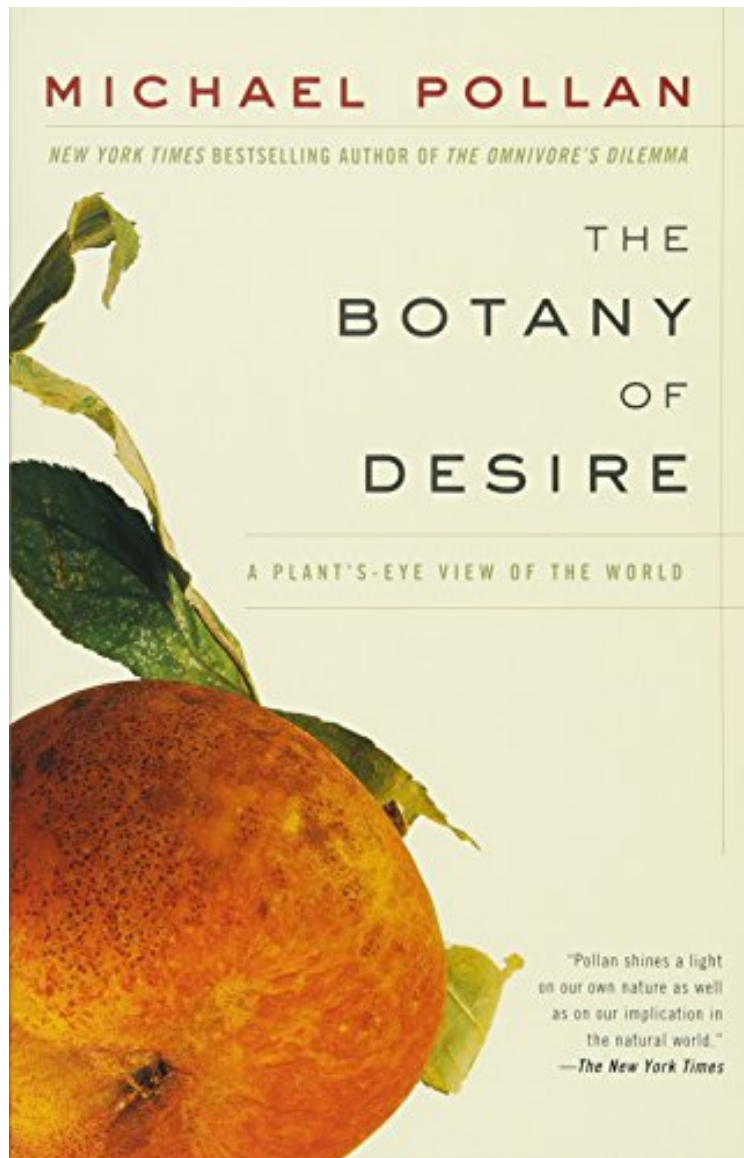


[Free] The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World

The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World

Michael Pollan

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Michael Pollan : The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Finished the book, then bought itBy ThoraThe Botany of Desire, A Plants-Eye View of the World by Michael Pollan (270 pages)I borrowed this book and, after reading it, decided I needed to buy a copy, as it's a book I want to keep and have available to loan out. Environmental journalist Michael

Pollan explores the relationship between humans and plants coevolution. He presents intriguing chapters on desires: Sweetness -- the apple (Johnny Appleseed and the evolution of the apple to today's highly domesticated fruit); Beauty -- the tulip (Bred to the Turks idea of beauty, the tulip took over and transformed Holland); Intoxication -- Marijuana (altered to satisfy human desires for intoxication, the marijuana plant has been bred to avoid detection. Small female clones are grown inside, under controlled conditions); Control --the potato (Why the Potato Famine caused devastation in Ireland and dangers of genetic engineered Monsantos NewLeafs. The NewLeafs are resistant to blight. The danger is that potato diseases resistant to today's chemicals will develop). 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Worth it! By Ivy Arrived on time, in new condition, and is filled with interesting and profound text. A great buy for anyone interested in agro-economy, botany, and the relationships between plants and people. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Michale Pollan brings a unique perspective on nature, food ... By Raquel Michale Pollan brings a unique perspective on nature, food, and animals. Very vivid imagery and inspires interesting conversation about our place in the world.

The book that helped make Michael Pollan, the New York Times bestselling author of *Cooked* and *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, one of the most trusted food experts in America Every schoolchild learns about the mutually beneficial dance of honeybees and flowers: The bee collects nectar and pollen to make honey and, in the process, spreads the flowers genes far and wide. In *The Botany of Desire*, Michael Pollan ingeniously demonstrates how people and domesticated plants have formed a similarly reciprocal relationship. He masterfully links four fundamental human desires: sweetness, beauty, intoxication, and control with the plants that satisfy them: the apple, the tulip, marijuana, and the potato. In telling the stories of four familiar species, Pollan illustrates how the plants have evolved to satisfy humankind's most basic yearnings. And just as we've benefited from these plants, we have also done well by them. So who is really domesticating whom?

.com Working in his garden one day, Michael Pollan hit pay dirt in the form of an idea: do plants, he wondered, use humans as much as we use them? While the question is not entirely original, the way Pollan examines this complex coevolution by looking at the natural world from the perspective of plants is unique. The result is a fascinating and engaging look at the true nature of domestication. In making his point, Pollan focuses on the relationship between humans and four specific plants: apples, tulips, marijuana, and potatoes. He uses the history of John Chapman (Johnny Appleseed) to illustrate how both the apple's sweetness and its role in the production of alcoholic cider made it appealing to settlers moving west, thus greatly expanding the plant's range. He also explains how human manipulation of the plant has weakened it, so that "modern apples require more pesticide than any other food crop." The tulipomania of 17th-century Holland is a backdrop for his examination of the role the tulip's beauty played in wildly influencing human behavior to both the benefit and detriment of the plant (the markings that made the tulip so attractive to the Dutch were actually caused by a virus). His excellent discussion of the potato combines a history of the plant with a prime example of how biotechnology is changing our relationship to nature. As part of his research, Pollan visited the Monsanto company headquarters and planted some of their NewLeaf brand potatoes in his garden--seeds that had been genetically engineered to produce their own insecticide. Though they worked as advertised, he made some startling discoveries, primarily that the NewLeaf plants themselves are registered as a pesticide by the EPA and that federal law prohibits anyone from reaping more than one crop per seed packet. And in an interesting aside, he explains how a global desire for consistently perfect French fries contributes to both damaging monoculture and the genetic engineering necessary to support it. Pollan has read widely on the subject and elegantly combines literary, historical, philosophical, and scientific references with engaging anecdotes, giving readers much to ponder while weeding their gardens. --Shawn Carkonen From Publishers Weekly Starred . On the sixth anniversary of its original publication, Pollan's scientific twist on the human/plant symbiosis makes its audio debut. Pollan preaches a unique sort of romantic environmentalism where humans and plants satisfy each other's desires for survival, enjoyment, satisfaction and escape. He uses the apple, tulip, Cannabis and potato to develop his ideas, offering the histories of each and how they developed reciprocal relationships with the humans with whom each interacted. Scott Brick exudes excitement and breathes life into the recording the timbre of his voice offering just the right touch of humor and depth. Listeners will feel like Brick truly loves the book and loves reading it aloud. It's a great combination for listeners: interesting subject, great writing and wonderful reading. Definitely not to be missed. (s, Apr. 9, 2001) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Library Journal Plants are important to us for many reasons. Pollan, an editor and contributor to Harper's and the New York Times Magazine and author of *Second Nature: A Gardener's Education*, muses on our complex relationships with them, using the examples of the apple, the tulip, the marijuana plant, and the potato. He weaves disparate threads from personal, scientific, literary, historical, and philosophical sources into an intriguing and somehow coherent narrative. Thus, he portrays Johnny Appleseed as an important force in adapting apple trees to a foreign climate but also a Dionysian figure purveying alcohol to settlers; tulips as ideals of beauty that brought about disaster to a Turkish sultan and Dutch investors; marijuana as a much desired drug related to a natural brain chemical that helps us forget as well as a bonanza for scientific cultivators; and

the potato, a crop once vilified as un-Christian, as the cause of the Irish famine and finally an example of the dangers of modern chemical-intensive, genetically modified agriculture. These essays will appeal to those with a wide range of interests. Recommended for all types of libraries. [For more on the tulip, see Anna Pavord's *The Tulip* (LJ 3/1/99) and Mike Dash's *Tuplipomania: The Story of the World's Most Coveted Flower the Extraordinary Passions It Aroused* (LJ 3/1/00). Ed.] Marit S. Taylor, Auraria Lib., Denver.- Marit S. Taylor, Auraria Lib., Denver Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.