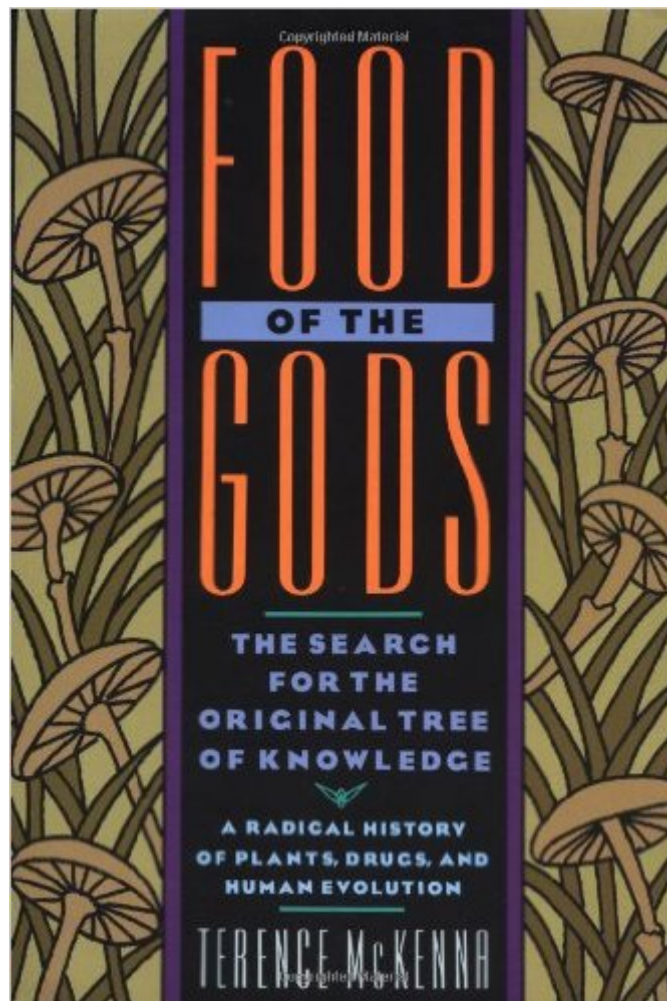


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Food Of The Gods: The Search For The Original Tree Of Knowledge A Radical History Of Plants, Drugs, And Human Evolution



Synopsis

An exploration of humans' symbiotic relationships with plants and chemicals presents information on prehistoric partnership societies, the roles of spices and spirits in the rise of dominator societies; and the politics of tobacco, tea, coffee, opium, and alcohol.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Food of the Gods explores mankind's connection with the Earth as an organism. The author's speculations on our long lost mutualist relationship with plants has deep implications in science and offers sound insight into modern conditions of human iniquity. To give you an idea, McKenna postulates that:- The loss of the feminine in today's 'dominator' cultures has been further catalyzed by our abuse of plants, drugs, and nature as a whole- The psychedelic experience, with its ego dissolving effects represents an important component of the symbiosis of man on Earth- The striking similarities in the chemical structures of neurotransmitters in the brain and indole compounds in hallucinogenic plants are no coincidence Despite the exhaustively researched and largely scholarly presentation of this work, unfounded criticism ensues when the subject matter stands as evidence in the indictment of many commonly held belief systems. However, most often the tone of McKenna's opponents carries the confident smirk of one safely distanced from his fierce intelligence, by their lack of experience with psychedelics. Terrence McKenna didn't write for the amusement of those unfamiliar with the psychedelic experience. It was well within his mental capacity and scholarly abilities to legitimize his work for an audience of intellectual indifference. I won't say it's

easier, but it certainly displays less integrity and truth of cause for one to cater to the lowest common denominator when attempting to relate ideas of this scope, even if they are only speculative. Neither was it that the uninitiated were intentionally ignored and his priceless intellectual contribution was meant to be out of reach from common people, in an extension of Huxley's philosophy which he is often mistaken for representing. Rather, his weakness seems to be his naivety in assuming that people inexperienced with psychedelics would approach his work with the unbiased mindfulness due of a reader of any great work of cultural and spiritual diagnosis. The fact is that any intelligent, honest approach to this work will inevitably lead one to an intersection with a reality that cannot be negated. Those who are experienced with psychedelics are likely to find in this book truths which they will integrate without hesitance - truths with implications profound enough to dissolve many of the illusions that largely pass as fact. This book is a powerful catalyst of intellectual growth for anyone engaged in the pursuit to understand this world.

Terence McKenna (*Food of the Gods*), Julian Jaynes (*Evolution of Consciousness ...*), Camille Paglia (*Sexual Personae*), and Ruth Eisner (*Chalice & the Blade*) all look at the same evidence, and come to radically different, but equally radical, conclusions about the origins of what we call civilization (while trying to keep a straight face). Reading all three is an interesting, fun, and maybe useful exercise in juggling different world views. Ask yourself: why did each of them see the same evidence differently? Or, perhaps, it's just a matter of trying to make too much soup from too little stock. The reason we CALL prehistory "pre-history" is that there's so little history to work from, so each brilliant (or not) author gets to project their own interpretation of what they'd LIKE the evidence to mean. In McKenna's case, by the end of the book, it is obvious what he wants the evidence to mean. Terry McKenna wants us all to get off of what the Church of the SubGenius calls "Conspiracy Drugs," the ones that America got rich off of, like tobacco, caffeine, white sugar, distilled alcohol, and television. If we need to get high or drunk or trashed or whatever, he says that we need to go back to the drugs that first made human beings strong, fast, smart, sexy, and spiritual: organic psychedelics. Of COURSE this is a weird and controversial view point. That's half the fun of this book. You know that only the trippers and the stoners are going to come out of the back end of this book fully convinced. But even if you're not one, you just might find yourself a teensy bit convinced, and that, my friend, is a strange sensation. Besides, it's a rollicking fun read.

Food of the Gods by Terence McKenna is an excellent addition to anyone's "alternative anthropology" library. New ideas regarding the origins of intelligent life are always very interesting.

Mckenna also has some valuable sociological insights regarding the history of drug abuse, and reminds us that sugar, coffee, and chocolate are potent psychoactive substances that are just as addictive and just as unhealthful as tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) or psilocybin. It is refreshing to see someone try to level the playing field with regards to drug use, and finally admit that almost every adult in the entire western world is highly dependent on a variety of different drugs. It seems that Mckenna is taking a step in the right direction from a civil rights standpoint by lessening the taboos associated with certain drugs that are associated with the counter-culture, while reminding us of the caffeine and sugar addiction epidemic that is going on right under our noses. This book made me realize that drugs which are widely accepted and advocated by civilized society are not that much different from those which are outlawed. Overall, this is a fascinating anthropological and counter-cultural manifesto. Highly recommended.

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