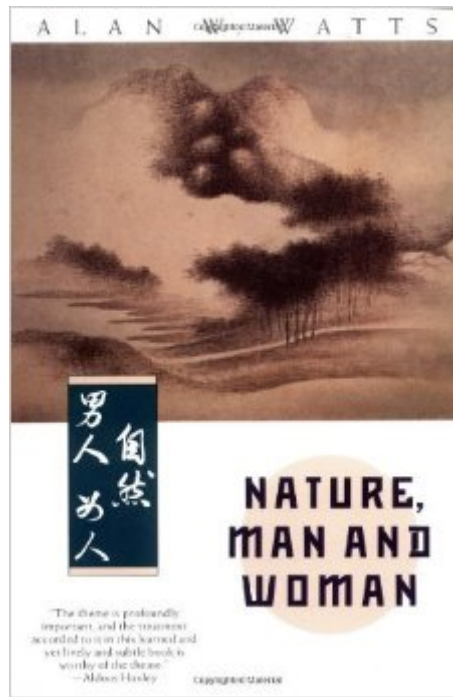


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Nature, Man And Woman



Synopsis

In *Nature, Man and Woman*, philosopher Alan Watts reexamines humanity's place in the natural world and the relation between body and spirit in the light of Chinese Taoism. Western thought and culture have coalesced around a series of constructed ideas that human beings stand separate from a nature that must be controlled; that the mind is somehow superior to the body; that all sexuality entails a seduction that in some way underlie our exploitation of the earth, our distrust of emotion, and our loneliness and reluctance to love. Here, Watts fundamentally challenges these assumptions, drawing on the precepts of Taoism to present an alternative vision of man and the universe—one in which the distinctions between self and other, spirit and matter give way to a more holistic way of seeing.

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Customer Reviews

For a more formal account of the Chinese philosophy of Nature you may want to look to Mr. Watts book, "The Way of Zen", or to Joseph Needham's "Science and Civilization in China". This book is about the problem of man's relationship with Nature. A problem that gives rise to the problem of man's relation to woman and to himself. This book was published in 1958. I am certain that today Alan would have taken a more egalitarian approach to the subject of Mankind's alienation from Nature. Even our sages are to an extent the product of their immediate environment. Nurture is the yang to Nature's yin. In my opinion this book should be read by every High School student in America, .. by everyone. The Taoist philosophy of Nature is more than a theoretical system, it is

primarily a way of life in which the original sense of the seamless unity of Nature is restored without the loss of individual consciousness. To follow the watercourse way of Taoism is like a hand that has been reunited with its body. It is still a hand, but now it is part of something bigger than its narrow sense of self. For the Taoist the mystery of life is not so much a problem to be solved intellectually as it is a reality to be experienced intuitively. Intuition is of a higher order because it includes the rational mind. Synthesis is the product of the whole person. The left and right hemispheres of our brains working as one. Nature is a synergetic whole that is greater than the sum of its parts, a synergetic organic unity. Nature, though it has mechanistic characteristics, is not a machine. We are a microcosm of the macrocosm, Nature in miniature. Nature is not made up of space and matter. Nature is an energy field of varying density. Nature is whole, more a volume than a line.

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