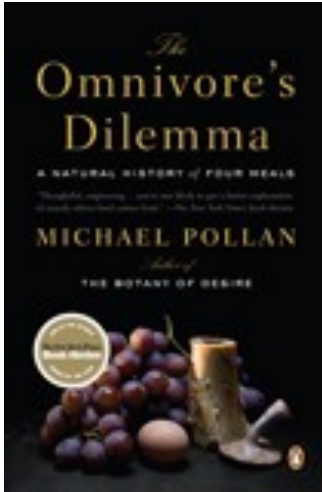


# Lillie M. Evans Library District Book Club

January 31, 2011



## Biography:

Born in 1955, Michael Pollan grew up in Long Island, New York. He was educated at Bennington College, Oxford University, and Columbia University, from which he received a master's degree in English. A former executive editor of *Harper's Magazine*, he is currently the John S. and James L. Knight Professor of Journalism at the University of California at Berkeley. His essays have been widely anthologized, and he is a regular contributor to *The New York Times Magazine*. He is the author of five books, and *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* was named one of the ten best books of 2006 by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Michael Pollan lives in the Bay Area with his wife, the painter Judith Belzer, and their son, Isaac.

## Similar Books:

[Animal, vegetable, miracle](#) by Barbara Kingsolver  
[The botany of desire](#) by Michael Pollan  
[Fast food nation](#) by Eric Schlosser  
[Harmony](#) by Charles, Prince of Wales  
[Heat](#) by Bill Buford  
[What to eat](#) by Marion Nestle

## Similar Authors:

Katz, Sandor  
McWilliams, James E.  
Nestle, Marion  
Pence, Gregory E.  
Schlosser, Eric  
Singer, Peter

## Questions from the Publisher's Reading Guide:

1. Michael Pollan approaches eating as an activity filled with ethical issues. Do you agree that the act of eating is as morally weighty as he says it is? What questions concern you most about the way you eat or the way your food is created?
2. Pollan argues that capitalism is a poor economic model to apply to the problems of food production and consumption. Do you agree or disagree, and why?
3. Pollan also shows a number of instances in which government policies have apparently worsened the crisis in our food culture. What do you think should be the proper role of government in deciding how we grow, process, and eat our food?
4. How has Michael Pollan changed the way you think about food?
5. Which of Pollan's recommendations would you be least likely to accept, and why?
6. Do you think that the way Americans eat reveals anything about our national character and broader shared values? How is Pollan's writing a statement not only about American eating, but about American culture and life?
7. In both *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *In Defense of Food*, Pollan quotes the words of Wendell Berry: "Eating is an agricultural act." What does Berry mean by this, and why is his message so important to Pollan's writing?
8. In each part of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, Michael Pollan has a particular friend to help him understand the food chain he is investigating: George Naylor in Iowa, Joel Salatin at Polyface, and Angelo Garro in northern California. Which of these men would you most like to know personally, and why?
9. What, in the course of his writing, does Michael Pollan reveal about his own personality? What do you like about him? What, if anything, rubs you the wrong way?
10. If Michael Pollan were coming to your place for dinner, what would you serve him and why?