

Michael Pollan

Bestselling Author & Journalist

For more than thirty years, Michael Pollan has been writing books and articles about the places where the human and natural worlds intersect: on our plates, in our farms and gardens, and in our minds. His most recent book, *A World Appears: A Journey into Consciousness*, was published in 2026. Pollan is the author of nine other books, including *This is Your Mind on Plants* (2021), *How to Change Your Mind* (2018), *Cooked* (2013), *Food Rules* (2009), *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto* (2008), *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (2006), and *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World* (2001), all of which have been *New York Times* bestsellers; three of them were immediate #1 *New York Times* bestsellers. *The Omnivore's Dilemma* was named one of the ten best books of 2006 by both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. It also won the California Book Award, the Northern California Book Award, the James Beard Award for best food writing, and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. A revised, young readers' edition of *The Omnivore's Dilemma* was published in 2015. Pollan's 2001 book, *The Botany of Desire*, also a *New York Times* bestseller, was recognized as a best book of the year by the American Booksellers Association and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Pollan is also the author of *A Place of My Own* (1997) and *Second Nature* (1991). An expanded edition of *Food Rules*, with original illustrations by Maira Kalman, was published in 2011. *How to Change Your Mind* was named one of the *New York Times*' 10 Best Books of 2018. In 2020, Pollan published a new audio book titled *Caffeine*, available from Audible. *This is Your Mind on Plants* was a 2021 Washington Post notable book and one of NPR's best books of the year. *A World Appears* was named one of six finalists for the Kirkus Prize.

In 2023, Pollan co-produced and appeared in the film *Food Inc. 2*, which premiered at the 50th Telluride Film Festival followed by a limited theatrical release. Several of Pollan's books have been adapted for television. A four-hour Netflix miniseries based on *How to Change Your Mind* premiered in 2021, and a four-hour Netflix miniseries based on *Cooked* premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in February 2016. PBS presented a two-hour special documentary based on *The Botany of Desire* in fall 2009 and a two-hour PBS documentary based on *In Defense of Food* was broadcast nationally in December 2015 and was nominated for an Emmy. Pollan also appeared in the Oscar-nominated 2008 documentary *Food Inc.*, which was partly based on *The Omnivore's Dilemma*.

A contributing writer to the *New York Times Magazine* since 1987, Pollan's writing has received numerous awards, including the James Beard Award for best magazine series in 2003; the John Burroughs prize (for the best natural history essay in 1997); the QPB New Vision Award (for his first book, *Second Nature*); the 2000 Reuters-I.U.C.N. Global Award for Environmental Journalism for his reporting on genetically modified crops; and the 2003 Humane Society of the United States' Genesis Award for his writing on animal agriculture; the James Beard Foundation Leadership Award (2014); the Nierenberg Prize for Science in the Public Interest by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (2014); the Washburn Award for "outstanding contribution to public

understanding of science” from the Boston Museum of Science; the 2013 Premio Nonino, an international literary prize; the 2015 Washington University Humanities Medal, and the Lennon Ono Grant for Peace in 2010. In 2009 Pollan was named one of the top 10 “New Thought Leaders” by *Newsweek* magazine. In 2010 he was chosen by *Time Magazine* as one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Pollan’s essays have appeared in many anthologies, including *Best American Essays*, *Best American Science Writing*, and the *Norton Book of Nature Writing*. In addition to publishing regularly in the *New York Times Magazine*, his articles have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Harper’s Magazine* (where he served for many years as executive editor), *Mother Jones*, *Gourmet*, *Vogue*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Gardens Illustrated*, *The Nation* and the *New York Review of Books*. Pollan has received an honorary doctorate from the University of Gastronomic Science, in 2015-16 was a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard, and in 2022-23 was a Guggenheim Fellow.

In 2003, Pollan was appointed the John S. and James L. Knight Professor of Journalism at UC Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism and the director of the Knight Program in Science and Environmental Journalism. In 2017, he was appointed Professor of the Practice of Nonfiction at Harvard and the university’s first Lewis K. Chan Lecturer in the Arts. In 2020, along with Dacher Keltner and others, he co-founded the UC Berkeley Center for the Science of Psychedelics. The center conducts research using psychedelics to investigate cognition, perception and emotion and their biological bases in the human brain. In addition to teaching, he lectures widely on food, agriculture, health, and psychedelic science.

Michael Pollan, who was born in 1955, grew up on Long Island, and was educated at Bennington College, Oxford University, and Columbia University, from which he received a Master’s in English. He lives in the Bay Area with his wife, the painter Judith Belzer.