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Johnson, Nathanael. All Natural: a skeptic?s quest to discover if the natural approach to diet, childbirth, healing, and the environment really keeps us healthier and happier

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Johnson, Nathanael. All Natural: a skeptic?s quest to discover if the natural approach to diet, childbirth, healing, and the environment really keeps us healthier and happier

Johnson, a self-described skeptic, was raised by back-to-nature, hemp-and-granola hippie types. He grew up not wearing diapers, eating according to whatever nutritional trend his mother was onto that week, and subjected to an array of natural cures. But it is the nature of children to rebel, and Johnson's rebelling took the form of an acceptance of modern technology, food culture, and medicine. However, he couldn't really shake his roots and set out to do the research, do the leg-work, investigate the growing resistance to a technological way of life, and figure out just what is better for humans in the long run: Science, or nature? He doesn't find many definitive answers in this always fascinating look into contemporary American culture. While modern medical care definitely means that the average pregnant woman is better off than her ancestors would have been, a growing reliance on Caesarian sections is leading to a new increase in maternal mortalities. Johnson finds similar seeming contradictions in all of the areas he investigates, laying out both his surface level findings and then digging beneath to expose possible reasons for the situation as it exists today.

Johnson owes an obvious debt, both in style and in content, to Michael Pollan, and indeed cites Pollan as not only an influence but a supporter of his work. Fans of Pollan's*The Omnivore's Dilemma*will find much of interest here.

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