



## Green Nature/Human Nature: THE MEANING OF PLANTS IN OUR LIVES (Environment Human Condition)

*By Charles A. Lewis*

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

..focuses upon the impact and influence of vegetation..on human health and well-being. Compiling over thirty years of research conducted by researchers and practitioners in the fields of environmental psychology, horticultural therapy, landscape architecture and cross-disciplinary areas of research such as environmental behavior, Lewis weaves together the work of Stephen and Rachel Kaplan, Roger Ulrich, Mark Francis and others, with anecdotes from the author's thirty plus years in the field. These anecdotes, many of which relate the reactions or experiences of urban gardeners, children, senior citizens, and prisoners in a county jail, serve as persuasive evidence regarding the impacts of plants on human well-being.(Landscape Journal, Vol 16, No 1, Spring 1997 (Stanton I. Jones)) -- (*Landscape Journal, Vol 16, No 1, Spring 1997*)

..this marvelous and pathmaking book tells us exactly why "green nature" - plants, flowers, gardens, parks, landscape vegetation - is an essential part of our lives. Green Nature/Human Nature is not only an excellent synthesis of both qualitative and quantitative research that documents the bond between people and plants, it is a synthesis of the life's work and thinking of one of the most important figures in people-plant relationships. Charles Lewis virtually founded the field of green psychology and, along with colleagues Rachel Kaplan, Roger Ulrich, Diane Relf and others has made it a legitimate for of science and design. As a result of three decades of their work, we now have an empirical and firm theoretical basis that nature is as important to human experience as food, rest and learning...This is an accessible and readable volume that will warm the hearts and inform the minds of all gardeners. I suggest you take a copy into the garden, read a few pages, ! look around, and join Lewis in his insightful and enjoyable tour of the significance of what you see. (Community Greening Review, 1997 (Prof. Mark Francis)) -- (*Community Greening Review, 1997:Prof. Mark Francis*)

I think you have really captured the essence of what is most important about plants for people, and in saying how much I appreciate your contribution, I also want to thank you for having devoted so much of your life to exploring these relationships so fruitfully.(Missouri Botanical Garden (letter from Dr. Peter Raven, Director.)) -- (*Missouri Botanical Garden: letter from Dr. Peter Raven, Director.*)

What Lewis presents in this book is an interesting and important approach to life and our interaction with plants, nature and our fellow humans. Technology and urban life have strengthened the misconception that we are in control of nature, that nature is here to serve us. We must consider ourselves as a part of nature, not apart from nature. Within the pages of this book, Charles Lewis clearly addresses this important, personal relationship to nature.(Public Garden, July 1997 (Prof. Frank W. Telewski)) -- (*Public Garden, July 1997: Prof. Frank W. Telewski*)

### **From the Inside Flap**

Why do gardeners delight in the germination and growth of a seed? Why are our spirits lifted by flowers, our feelings of tension allayed by a walk in forest or park? What other positive influences can nature have on humanity?

In Green Nature/Human Nature, Charles A. Lewis describes the psychological, sociological and physiological responses of people to vegetation in cities and forests, as well as in horticultural therapy programs in hospitals, geriatric institutions, physical rehabilitation centers, drug rehabilitation programs and correctional institutions. He presents an evolutionary basis for the human attraction to plants. People-plant

interactions are presented from two perspectives: participatory, in which the individual is involved in planting and maintaining the vegetation, and observational, in which the individual bears no responsibility for establishing or maintaining the vegetation.

In what amounts to a straightforward catalog of well-documented and tangible benefits, Lewis brings the latest and best research into plant/human interaction to bear on questions of how green nature is intertwined with the human psyche and how that interaction can lead to enhanced well-being and an appreciation of the human dimension in environmental concerns.

Lewis's work will be essential reading for anyone interested in plants and how they affect people.

#### About the Author

Charles A. Lewis was graduated from the University of Maryland, received his MS from Cornell University and has worked as a plant breeder, garden center operator, and director of the former Sterling Forest Gardens in Tuxedo, New York. He was Horticulturist, Administrator of Collections, and Research Fellow at the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois. His work in people/plant interactions has been honored by such organizations as the American Horticulture Society, American Horticultural Therapy Association, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Swarthmore College, American Association of Botanical Garden and Arboreta, New York City Housing Authority, Chicago housing Authority and the People Plant Council. He now lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico and consults on people/plant interactions. He has published widely in professional journals and popular magazines and newspapers.

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