Pesticides, a Love Story: America's Enduring Embrace of Dangerouschemicals

By Michelle Mart

University Press of Kansas. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Pesticides, a Love Story: America's Enduring Embrace of Dangerouschemicals, Michelle Mart, Presto! No More Pests!" proclaimed a 1955 article introducing two new pesticides, "miracle-workers for the housewife and back-yard farmer." Easy to use, effective, and safe: who couldn't love synthetic pesticides? Apparently most Americans did--and apparently still do. Why--in the face of dire warnings, rising expense, and declining effectiveness--do we cling to our chemicals? Michelle Mart wondered. Her book, a cultural history of pesticide use in postwar America, offers an answer. America's embrace of synthetic pesticides began when they burst on the scene during World War II and has held steady into the 21st century--for example, more than 90% of soybeans grown in the US in 2008 are Roundup Ready GMOs, dependent upon generous use of the herbicide glyphosate to control weeds. Mart investigates the attraction of pesticides, with their up-to-theminute promise of modernity, sophisticated technology, and increased productivity--in short, their appeal to human dreams of controlling nature. She also considers how they reinforced Cold War assumptions of Western economic and material superiority. Though the publication of Rachel Carson's Silent Spring and the rise of environmentalism might have marked a...

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