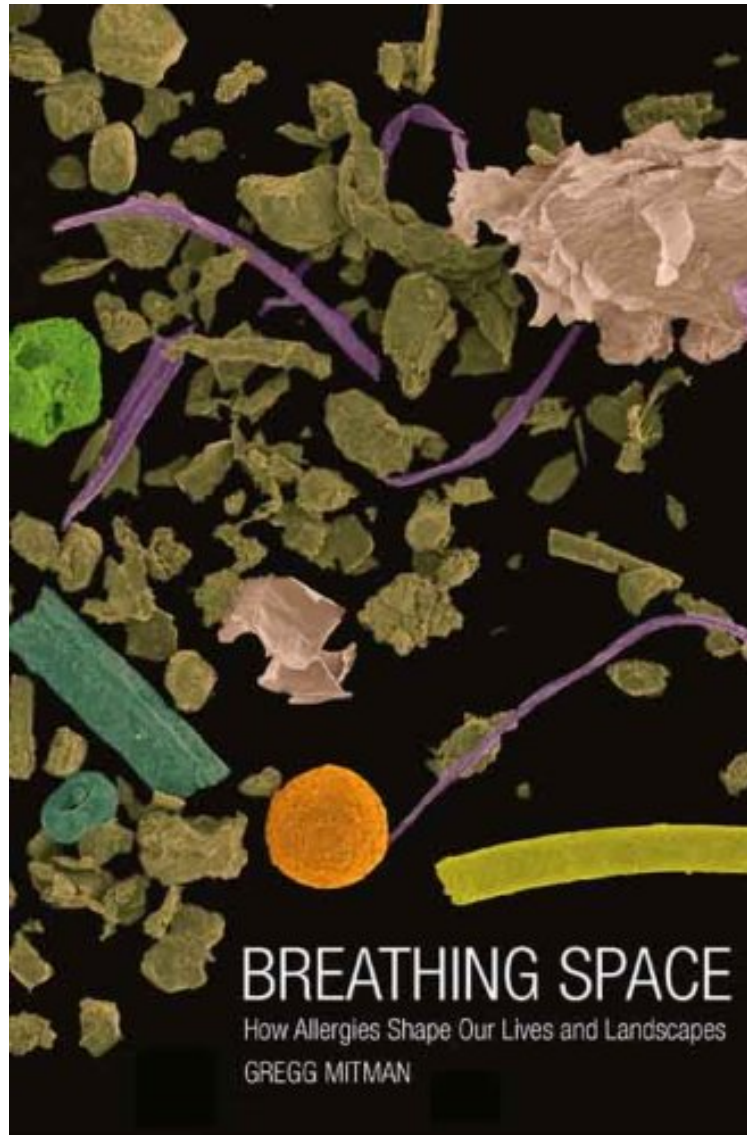


(Pdf free) Breathing Space: How Allergies Shape Our Lives and Landscapes

# Breathing Space: How Allergies Shape Our Lives and Landscapes

*Gregg Mitman*

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**Gregg Mitman : Breathing Space: How Allergies Shape Our Lives and Landscapes** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Breathing Space: How Allergies Shape Our Lives and Landscapes:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy N. Serranomasterful environmental history.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy C. KellyBook in great condition, thanks.8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. History of Allery and Asthma treatments 1800-presentBy Techie ReaderThis book gave

me an appreciation for all of the knowledge that has been accumulated from the 1800s to the present on coping and treating allergies and asthma. The book describes the late 1800s and early 1900s when fortunate allergy sufferers could travel to various locations during pollen season to escape the "hay fever" curse that visited them each year. The book covers: History and background of the treatment of allergies using "allergy shots" in the early 1900s. The benefit of air conditioning had for those fortunate enough to have it in the 1920s and 1930s. Correlations between "cockroaches" and asthma occurrence, and "dust mite" feces and allergy occurrence in sensitive individuals. Discusses how these links were found by various studies. The introduction of pollen/dust air filters to treat patients who were unable to afford air conditioning. The introduction of antihistamines and inhalers for the treatment of allergies and asthma. The development of dramamine to treat "sea sickness" and how it was derived from allergy/asthma medicines. As an allergy sufferer, I appreciated learning more about the history of allergy/asthma treatment. This book should be of interest to anyone suffering from allergies or asthma to give them an appreciation of how far we have come in the treatment of these conditions.

Allergy is the sixth leading cause of chronic illness in the United States. More than fifty million Americans suffer from allergies, and they spend an estimated \$18 billion coping with them. Yet despite advances in biomedicine and enormous investment in research over the past fifty years, the burden of allergic disease continues to grow. Why have we failed to reverse this trend? Breathing Space offers an intimate portrait of how allergic disease has shaped American culture, landscape, and life. Drawing on environmental, medical, and cultural history and the life stories of people, plants, and insects, Mitman traces how America's changing environment from the late 1800s to the present day has led to the epidemic growth of allergic disease. We have seen a never-ending stream of solutions to combat allergies, from hay fever resorts, herbicides, and air-conditioned homes to numerous potions and pills. But, as Mitman shows, despite the quest for a magic bullet, none of the attempted solutions has succeeded. Until we address how our changing environment—physical, biological, social, and economic—has helped to create America's allergic landscape, that hoped-for success will continue to elude us.

From Publishers Weekly Mitman and his son Keefe are members of the "tribe" of allergy medication users whose expenditures fuel a \$5-billion industry. Studying both the history and business of allergies, Mitman—a historian of science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison—traces hay fever from its first (erroneous) identification as an ailment of the wealthy in the 19th century up to the modern, booming antihistamine market. Since seasonal allergies were first identified, misconceptions have shaped their treatment. Early sufferers escaped to hay fever resorts in areas where their sinuses mysteriously cleared. Believing that the communion with nature had led to the reprieve, many escaped to country homesteads landscaped with the very plants whose pollen causes hay fever. As Mitman demonstrates, the story of hay fever is also the story of the development of nature tourism, urban planning and the postwar pharmaceutical boom. As Mitman demonstrates, Americans seeking relief have changed where they live, what they build their homes with, what they buy, what activities they participate in and even the chemistry of their own bodies—but still all you hear every spring is sneezes. In clear and detailed prose, Mitman offers a wide-ranging history of this ongoing struggle that's as much about 20th century American consumerism as it is about allergies. Illustrations. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Mitman directs steely, twentieth-century insight at popular misapprehensions, past and present, of the causes and cures of allergies, hay fever and asthma, in particular. He notes that in the latter nineteenth century, Americans considered hay fever a curse exclusive to white, upper-class males. They knew this because these "hay feverites" were the only persons who took lengthy, annual "hay fever holidays" at tony resorts in the White Mountains and on Mackinac Island. It was later recognized that allergies afflict poor, nonwhite populations with equal and sometimes greater ferocity. When asthma sufferers sought the healthy climate of Tucson, they imported Bermuda grass, evergreens, and sumac trees, to say nothing of industrial pollution and traffic congestion. Not surprisingly, allergy symptoms reprised. Chemical warfare brought its own problems when hay fever proliferated despite widespread, government-mandated herbicidal assaults on ragweed, and chemicals used to deliver breath-saving drugs were proven to be damaging to the ecology. Full of the wisdom of lessons learned as well as of noted authorities, Mitman's thoughtful presentation is nothing to sneeze at. Chavez, Donna Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "This is a pioneering text." Robert Fisher, University of Connecticut