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Joe Pappalardo

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Joe Pappalardo : Sunflowers before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sunflowers:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. What a SurpriseBy EquinoxWho knew sunflowers had such history. I certainly never guessed. Came across this item while searching for sunflower products as part of a sunflower-themed care package. Though purchased as part of a gift package, was quite surprised while perusing through the book before sending. Turns out there really is quite a history behind this delightful and sunny flower.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Sunflowers is Bloomin' Fascinating!By Karla HI read this book on a long flight and could not put it down! Who would of thought a book about flowers would be filled with so much history and drama?! From Native Americans to Peter the Great, from Italian oil empires to Wisconsin festivals, this book makes you appreciate the impact the flower has had on humankind from prehistoric times. Another interesting aspect of the book is the perspective of the botanists studying it as a natural hybridizer. The science part of this book is full of intrigue. The

economic and political impact of sunflower oil as a commodity is also interesting. The question becomes, "why aren't we planting sunflowers any where in the world people are hungry?" A truly fascinating read! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sunflowers with a Narrow Focus By A Chemist This book is a relatively narrow academic discourse on sunflower history intended for those who already have a good knowledge of the sunflower plant. As a general reader, this book did not hold my interest very well. The author has done his homework quite well and does incorporate some interesting human encounters, but the perpetual name dropping of obscure researchers and their penchant for publications is distracting. Another issue probably not a fault of the author is the poor, black-and-white quality of the photography for something as colorful as a sunflower is disappointing.

Pappalardo's unexpected and highly entertaining social history of this scandalous flower stretches from the Stone Age to the Space Age, from its healing role in Hopi tribal rituals to its covert involvement in the Cold War.

From Booklist What do Adolf Hitler, Josef Stalin, and Osama bin Laden have in common? OK, besides the obvious. Would you believe sunflowers? Ironic, isn't it, that this cheerful symbol of nature's purity and wholesome goodness has influenced plans for world domination wrought by modern history's most reviled despots? Few know that Hitler's invasion of Russia was largely motivated by a desire to deprive Stalin of a crucial source of cooking oil, or that bin Laden calculatedly established his nascent al-Qaeda in the Sudan through the creation of sunflower-oil production facilities. Fascinating as such arcana is, however, its secondary to the trove of entertaining lore Pappalardo spins throughout his engaging and expansive look at a flower so ubiquitous that its critical role in cultural development since the dawn of time often goes overlooked. A glib, upbeat writer and fiercely determined researcher, Pappalardo intrepidly investigates everything from the sunflower's genetic history and recent bioengineering discoveries to its influence on global economies from the U.S. to Uganda. --Carol Haggas "There is a time in every author's relationship with a topic when he crosses the line into obsession," says the affable Joe Pappalardo, who seems to find sunflowers everywhere: He claims Hitler invaded Russia because he wanted the country's sunflower oil and notes that another form of the weed, the Jerusalem artichoke, was rejected as a food source in 17th-century Europe (which is unfortunate, since its use could have averted the Irish potato famine). Though some of Pappalardo's interview subjects in *Sunflowers* exude a standard scholarly dryness, Pappalardo himself does not in this lively, compulsively readable account. B+ -- Entertainment Weekly, March 21, 2008 About the Author Joe Pappalardo is a contributing editor at Popular Mechanics. His work has also appeared in Smithsonian Air Space, Esquire.com, Time magazine, American Way, Mental Floss, and Maxim and he has appeared on C-SPAN, CNN, and Fox News Channel. He is currently the editor-in-chief at the Dallas Observer.