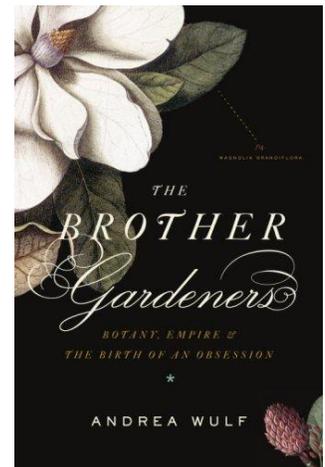


Reading Guide:

The Brother Gardeners:
Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession

Andrea Wulf (2008)



Thought Questions:

1. What do you think were the most important or far-ranging consequences of the plant exchange described in the book?
2. What is the most memorable thing you will take away from having read this book? What do you wish the author had explored more deeply?
3. What new perspective on American history did this book give you? On English history?
4. Who was your favorite historical character in this book, and why?
5. Were you glad you read this book? Would you recommend it to a friend? Why or why not?
6. If you also read *Founding Gardeners* by this author, which book did you think was stronger, and why? Where did you see connections to other books we have read?
7. Are there related books, museum exhibitions, websites, or other resources that you would like to share with fellow readers of this book?

Author Biography

Andrea Wulf was born in India and moved to Germany as a child. She lives in Britain where she trained as a design historian at the Royal College of Art. As well as *Founding Gardeners*, she is the author of *The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an Obsession* and the co-author of *This Other Eden: Seven Great Gardens and 300 Years of English History*. Her most recent book was *Chasing Venus: The Race to Measure the Heavens*. She has written for New York Times, the LA Times, Wall Street Journal, the Sunday Times and the Guardian and many others. (andrewulf.com)

If you liked *The Brother Gardeners*, you may enjoy these other books (descriptions courtesy of Amazon.com):

Green Retreats: Women, Gardens and Eighteenth-Century Culture by Stephen Bending (Cambridge University Press, 2013)

This book explores the world of eighteenth-century aristocratic women and the gardens they created, inhabited, visited, and imagined. It examines the physical spaces created by women and the role of the garden (both physical and imagined) in relation to female sociability, scandal, high politics and piety. Combining a survey of cultural representations of the woman in the garden with case studies of four major women gardeners, it offers comprehensive readings of letters, journals and diaries, novels, poetry and physical landscape. Detailed case studies include Elizabeth Montagu and the Bluestocking circle, the gardening neighbors Lady Caroline Holland and Lady Mary Coke, and the scandalous retirement of Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough.

A Rich Spot of Earth: Thomas Jefferson's Revolutionary Garden at Monticello by Peter J. Hatch (Yale University Press, 2012)

Monticello's impact on the culinary, garden, and landscape history of the United States continues to the present day. Including nearly 200 full-color illustrations, "*A Rich Spot of Earth*" is the first book devoted to all aspects of the Monticello vegetable garden. Hatch guides us from the asparagus and artichokes first planted in 1770 through the horticultural experiments of Jefferson's retirement years (1809–1826). The author explores topics ranging from labor in the garden, garden pests of the time, and the gardening traditions he adapted from many other countries.

Cultivated Power: Flowers, Culture, and Politics in the Reign of Louis XIV by Elizabeth Hyde (University of Pennsylvania, 2005 – part of a series "Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture")

Cultivated Power explores the collection, cultivation, and display of flowers in early modern France at the historical moment when flowering plants, many of which were becoming known in Europe for the first time, piqued the curiosity of European gardeners and botanists, merchants and ministers, dukes and kings. The cultural and increasingly political value of such qualities was not lost on royal panegyrists, who seized upon the new meanings of flowers in celebrating the glory of Louis XIV. Using previously unexplored archival sources, Hyde recovers the extent of floral plantations in the gardens of Versailles and further examines how the successful cultivation of those flowers made it possible for Louis XIV to demonstrate that his reign was a golden era surpassing even that of antiquity.