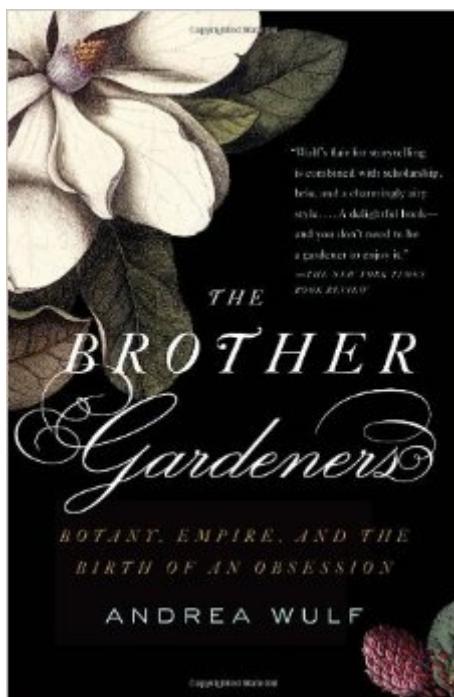


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The Brother Gardeners: A Generation Of Gentlemen Naturalists And The Birth Of An Obsession



Synopsis

Bringing to life the science and adventure of eighteenth-century plant collecting, *The Brother Gardeners* is the story of how six men created the modern garden and changed the horticultural world in the process. It is a story of a garden revolution that began in America. In 1733, colonial farmer John Bartram shipped two boxes of precious American plants and seeds to Peter Collinson in London. Around these men formed the nucleus of a botany movement, which included famous Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus; Philip Miller, bestselling author of *The Gardeners Dictionary*; and Joseph Banks and David Solander, two botanist explorers, who scoured the globe for plant life aboard Captain Cook's *Endeavor*. As they cultivated exotic blooms from around the world, they helped make Britain an epicenter of horticultural and botanical expertise. *The Brother Gardeners* paints a vivid portrait of an emerging world of knowledge and gardening as we know it today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Brother Gardeners: Botany, Empire and the Birth of an ObsessionOne of the best written and organized books that I have read in quite some years. What could be a pretty esoteric topic becomes a wonderfully interesting and germane story. To some extent it reminds me of Kurlansky's Cod although this work is even better written. The book comes alive because the author captures so well the personalities of the people involved. Bartram and Collinson are so human. And their problems in keeping up a relationship at such a distance is beautifully and sympathetically portrayed. Linnaeus is wonderfully and humanly portrayed. What a genius, what a jerk! Reminds me to some extent of Richard Wagner, one of my favorite composers, but one of the most egotistical and

sometimes downright nasty people that one is likely to meet. The same sort of self-aggrandizing individual as Linnaeus. Banks, who, at first, seems (and evidently was) completely heartless, becomes more humane as he ages. And I love the irascible Miller who is a genius in his own way and knows best about everything (which often he does), but can be irritating to those with less knowledge and ability, and too dogmatic to see the virtue of Linnaeus' system. And the charming Solander, who has the guts to abandon Linnaeus, is amusing as the scholar and drawing room raconteur (some great scenes when Banks saves his life and they enjoy the splendors--and women--of Tahiti together).

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