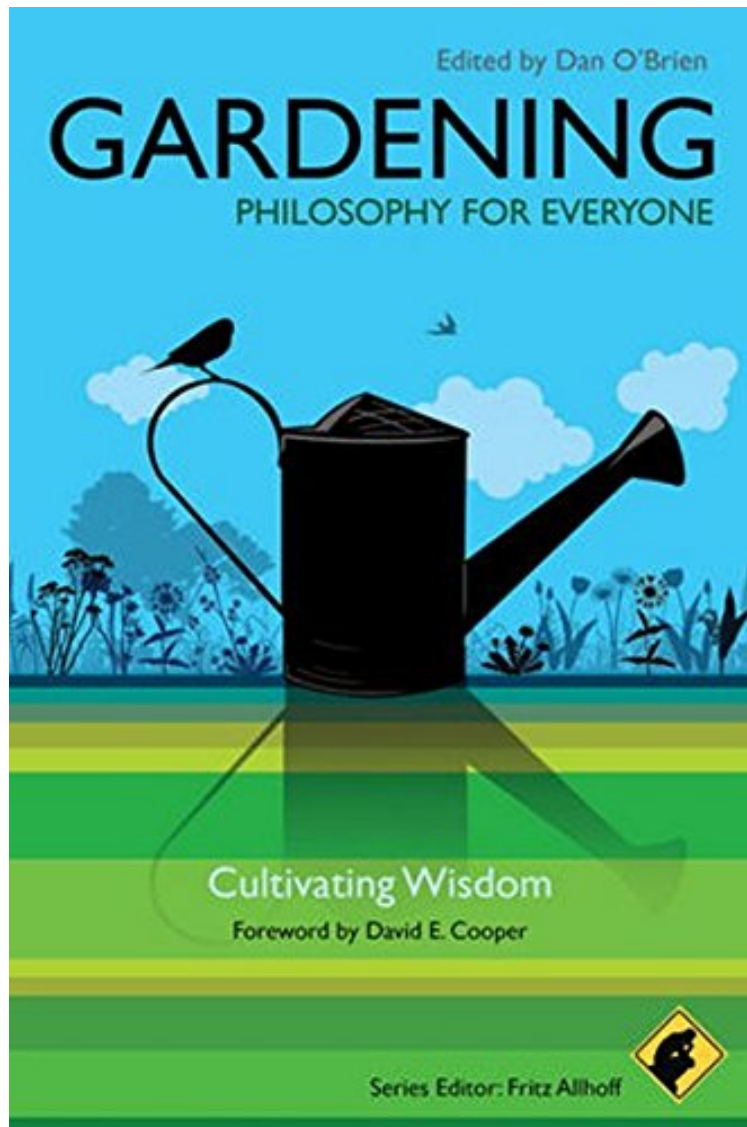


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Gardening: Philosophy for Everyone- Cultivating Wisdom

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From Wiley-Blackwell : Gardening: Philosophy for Everyone- Cultivating Wisdom before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gardening: Philosophy for Everyone- Cultivating Wisdom:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. There is More to Gardening Than Growing PlantsBy allanbecker-gardenguruHere is a gardening book unlike any other. If someone had told me that, with an overview of the philosophies that propelled civilization, we might arrive at a better understanding of the role that gardens have played in our history, I wouldn't have believed it. And yet, here it is - a collection of essays to reminder us that there is more

to gardening than just growing plants. Wiley-Blackwell is the scholarly division of John Wiley and Sons. Under the guidance of editor, Fritz Allhof, Assistant Professor in Philosophy at Western Michigan University, the publisher has produced a series of books titled *Philosophy for Everyone*. Each volume in that series undertakes an overview of different topics essential to contemporary civilization. Subjects, ranging from motherhood to cycling and from Christmas to porn, are examined from the perspective of the erudite scholar. Dan O'Brien, Research Fellow at Oxford Brookes University, is the editor responsible for this volume on gardening. He targets not only the green-thumb thinker but any reader who is fascinated by the historical evolution of civilization. In this multi-faceted collection of essays, all related to gardens and gardening, the contributing writers draw upon their knowledge and strengths in the disciplines of history, theology, archival studies, music theory, art history, anthropology and the classics. A five-part book, it begins with a section titled *The Good Life*. This thematic umbrella allows Isis Brooks to discuss the rewards of gardening on a physical and philosophical level. Meghan T. Ray adds an article about the ethics of gardening in Ancient Greece and Rome, Mathew Hall questions the exclusion of plants from gardening ethics, and Helene Gammack examines historical trends in agricultural self-sufficiency. Part Two, *Flower Power*, focuses on the strength of the garden as a cultural and a political statement. Jo Day considers the ancient gardens of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Crete and examines their function as symbols of political and spiritual power. Michael Moss scans the history of the British Empire from the vantage point of vegetable consumption, Laura Aurricchio writes about Lafayette's garden in France, influenced both by British gardening methods and plants from America and Elizabeth A. Scott argues that allotment gardens helped stimulate the political activism of lower-income citizens in the UK. In Part Three, *The Flower Show*, writers examine the subject of the garden-as-spectacle. Eric MacDonald discusses gardening and gardens as a source of enchantment while Ismay Barwell and John Powell take the reader on an intellectual journey. They submit that while gardening is an artistic expression similar to other plastic arts, it differs from them in one substantial way. Gardening presents the passage of time visually, in the same way that music does so audibly. Finally, Gary Shapiro surveys the philosophy that inspired the design and function of Central Park, in New York City. The metaphysical garden or, *The Cosmic Garden*, is the focus of Part Four. Here, Robert Neuman explains how the gardens at Versailles conveyed an illusion of royal grandeur, Mara Miller examines a garden's ability to structure time, and Dan O'Brien, following the ideas of philosopher David Hume, argues that, by functioning as a refuge away from deep thought and reflection, a garden can play a therapeutic role. In the final section, *The Philosophers' Gardens*, Susan Toby Evans writes about the gardens of the Aztec-Philosopher Kings, Gordon Campbell surveys the gardens of Epicurus and the golden age associated with his writings, and Anne Cotton analyzes Plato's drama, *Phaedrus*, in which Socrates compares philosophical development to the growth of plants in the garden. Reading this book has been an experience so enchanting, that I am eager to revisit each of the essays, to re-submerge myself in their expertise. If one is a gardener, this is a publication reserved for cold winter nights or long plane rides; for the non-gardener, it is an engaging private symposium. One might also call it "variations on a theme of gardening", enriched by diverse intellectual disciplines and unexpected perspectives of the contributing authors.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful, Readable Book with a Few Oversights
By Mark K. Fulke
I very much enjoyed this book, and recommend it for its insightful presentation of an area of philosophy that can stimulate our contemplative gardening practices. There was so much covered that I regret saying that the fact that there was no considerable consideration of a few works and authors--Milton's "Paradise Lost," Virgil's "Georgics," and the writings on gardening and contemplation by May Sarton. An enjoyable read nonetheless with lots of recommendations to read next! As a fellow professor, I am looking forward to the class where I assign the readings in this volume!

Plant Dreaming Deep
1 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Blah
By Outdoor Intellectual
The editor seems unwilling to explore the darker side of gardening. Does Gardening reinforce a domineering attitude towards nature, etc? There is a prevalent trend of thought in environmental philosophy that sees gardening as emblematic of humanity's conquest of the natural world, yet this is not even touched upon in this volume. O'Brien seems content to recycle truisms.

Philosophy and gardens have been closely connected from the dawn of philosophy, with many drawing on their beauty and peace for philosophical inspiration. Gardens in turn give rise to a broad spectrum of philosophical questions. For the green-fingered thinker, this book reflects on a whole host of fascinating philosophical themes. Gardens and philosophy present a fascinating combination of subjects, historically important, and yet scarcely covered within the realms of philosophy. Contributions come from a wide range of authors, ranging from garden writers and gardeners, to those working in architecture, archaeology, archival studies, art history, anthropology, classics and philosophy. Essays cover a broad spectrum of topics, ranging from Epicurus and Confucius to the aesthetics and philosophy of Central Park. Offers new perspectives on the experience and evaluation of gardens.

Intriguing ideas combined with a philosophical method of inquiry bring the benefits of gardening into the 21st century. Gardening *Philosophy for Everyone: Cultivating Wisdom* produces what the title suggests it cultivates and grows the body of knowledge about gardening, exploring the value of gardening past and present for multiple disciplines. (Journal of Therapeutic Horticulture, 1 November 2012) "So pull up a chair, relax under a shady canopy and delve into

the fascinating garden-related philosophies contained in this most interesting read." (Australian Horticulture, 1 March 2011) "A good mix of topics, ideas and arguments - a very good and meaty read." (Gardensandpeople.co.uk, 1 March 2011) "Reading this book has been an experience so enchanting, that I am eager to revisit each of the essays, to re submerge myself in their expertise. If one is a gardener, this is a publication reserved for cold winter nights or long plane rides; for the non-gardener, it is an engaging private symposium. One might also call it "variations on a theme of gardening", enriched by diverse intellectual disciplines and unexpected perspectives of the contributing authors." (Gardenguru, 29 March 2011) "Reading this book has been an experience so enchanting, that I am eager to revisit each of the essays, to re submerge myself in their expertise. If one is a gardener, this is a publication reserved for cold winter nights or long plane rides; for the non-gardener, it is an engaging private symposium. One might also call it "variations on a theme of gardening", enriched by diverse intellectual disciplines and unexpected perspectives of the contributing writers." (Bookpleasures.com, 26 March 2011) "There's nothing too 'difficult' philosophically in this book, so definitely one for any thoughtful gardeners, philosophers or not." (Wittgenstein's Watering Can, 21 April 2011) "Finally, we have a book which celebrates and examines the topic of gardens and gardening in a way that involves more than simply helping pick the perfect plant for your shady nook." (A Garden of Possibilities, 18 April 2011) "The book is comprised of numerous essays by different authors, each with their own unique angle. I am very impressed that Permaculture is mentioned at least once by name, and hunter-gatherers, foragers, and horticulturalists, are discussed in many of the essays. Also, each author brings their own definition of gardening, and some of them are broad enough to include the most cutting edge forest gardens as well as many primitive peoples' land management techniques. Even the essays with a more narrow view of what a garden is had interesting thoughts of our interaction with plants and how that impacts us philosophically." (Nathan Carlos Rupley, 15 April 2011) "Editor Dan O'Brien has assembled a collection of essays, among which are Mara Miller's reflections upon the many layers of time and change inherent in gardens, and the ways in which they affect persona experiences, which illuminate how these may play into design considerations". (Garden Design Journal, 1 April 2011) "Gardening is not absent from philosophy; after all, Voltaire's *Candide* ends with the admonition to cultivate our garden.' This book examines how gardening is like philosophy and vice versa. Much space is also given to political philosophy and some fascinating explorations into the political and philosophical ramifications of historical gardening in London and Aztec Mexico. The series is likely to appeal to armchair philosophers and undergraduates alike, and this volume will give gardeners of an intellectual bent a philosophical justification for their hobby." (Library Journal, March 2011) "A new book on the philosophy of gardening - edited by Dan O'Brien and Fritz Allhoff - has been written by and for the green-thumbed thinker, the practical gardener, the salad gardener, the architect, the archaeologist, and the artist at work among the ferns". (Horticulture Week, 12 January 2011) "Either way, it is an engaging and enjoyable read, and readers of the ERB will certainly want to stay tuned for future volumes in this diverse - and apparently all-encompassing - series!". (Englewood of Books, 28 December 2010) "Another essay takes a slightly different slant on Miller's theme, showing how gardens exist as patterns in time, just as music does. Overall, too many of these essays treat of the garden as a metaphor rather than as an actuality. But such books are rarely seen, and this one provides more than enough food for thought amid acres of identikit 'your kitchen-garden' and allotment books." (The Telegraph, 7 December 2010) From the Back Cover Gardens and contemplation have been closely connected since the dawn of philosophy, with many drawing on their beauty and peace for philosophical inspiration. Gardens in turn give rise to a broad spectrum of philosophical questions. For the green-fingered thinker, this book unearths a whole host of fascinating philosophical themes, including: Epicurus and gardens for happiness Plato and gardening as the care of the soul The philosophy of Central Park Kitchen gardens and the history of self-sufficiency The aesthetic and ethical dimensions of gardens Gardening Philosophy for Everyone proffers intriguing insights into the historical and continuing deep-rooted connection between philosophy and gardens. About the Author Editor Dan O'Brien is a Research Fellow at Oxford Brookes University, an Honorary Research Fellow at Birmingham University, and an Associate Lecturer with the Open University. He is the author of *An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge* (2006) and *Humes Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding: A Readers Guide* (with Alan Bailey, 2006). In addition, he has recently edited a special volume of *Philosophica* on the epistemology of testimony. Series Editor Fritz Allhoff is an Assistant Professor in the Philosophy Department at Western Michigan University, as well as a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian National University's Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics. In addition to editing the *Philosophy for Everyone* series, Allhoff is the volume editor or co-editor for several titles, including *Wine Philosophy* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), *Whiskey Philosophy* (with Marcus P. Adams, Wiley, 2009), and *Food Philosophy* (with Dave Monroe, Wiley-Blackwell, 2007).