



Enduring Roots: Encounters with Trees, History, and the American Landscape (Studies in Modern Science, Technology, and the Environment)

Gayle Brandow Samuels

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Trees are the grandest and most beautiful plant creations on earth. From their shade-giving, arching branches and strikingly diverse bark to their complex root systems, trees represent shelter, stability, place, and community as few other living objects can.

Enduring Roots tells the stories of historic American trees, including the oak, the apple, the cherry, and the oldest of the world's trees, the bristlecone pine. These stories speak of our attachment to the land, of our universal and eternal need to leave a legacy, and demonstrate that the landscape is a gift, to be both received and, sometimes, tragically, to be destroyed.

Each chapter of this book focuses on a specific tree or group of trees and its relationship to both natural and human history, while exploring themes of community, memory, time, and place. Readers learn that colonial farmers planted marker trees near their homes to commemorate auspicious events like the birth of a child, a marriage, or the building of a house. They discover that Benjamin Franklin's Newtown Pippin apples were made into a pie aboard Captain Cook's *Endeavour* while the ship was sailing between Tahiti and New Zealand. They are told the little-known story of how the Japanese flowering cherry became the official tree of our nation's capital—a tale spanning many decades and involving an international cast of characters. Taken together, these and many other stories provide us with a new ways to interpret the American landscape.

“It is my hope,” the author writes, “that this collection will be seen for what it is, a few trees selected from a great forest, and that readers will explore both—the trees and the forest—and find pieces of their own stories in each.”

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