

Eating Dirt: Deep Forests, Big Timber, and Life with the Tree-Planting Tribe

Charlotte Gill

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- Winner of the BC National Award for Non-Fiction
- Nominated for the Charles Taylor Prize for Literary Non-Fiction and the 2011 Hilary Weston Writer's Trust Award.

During **Charlotte Gill**'s 20 years working as a tree planter she encountered hundreds of clear-cuts, each one a collision site between human civilization and the natural world, a complicated landscape presenting geographic evidence of our appetites. Charged with sowing the new forest in these clear-cuts, tree planters are a tribe caught between the stumps and the virgin timber, between environmentalists and loggers.

In *Eating Dirt*, Gill offers up a slice of tree-planting life in all of its soggy, gritty exuberance while questioning the ability of conifer plantations to replace original forests, which evolved over millennia into intricate, complex ecosystems. Among other topics, she also touches on the boom-and-bust history of logging and the versatility of wood, from which we have devised countless creations as diverse as textiles and airplane parts. She also eloquently evokes the wonder of trees, our slowest-growing "renewable" resource and joyously celebrates the priceless value of forests and the ancient, ever-changing relationship between humans and trees.



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