

Abstract

Environment, Aesthetics, and Well-Being

Edited by Arto Haapala, Kalle Puolakka, and Tarja Rannisto

This collection of essays looks at the issue of human well-being from the point of view of environmental aesthetics. Questions addressed include: What role do aesthetic values have in advancing well-being? Are there environments that are particularly supportive of well-being? What is the place of aesthetic factors in environmental and city planning? The authors of the first part of the book illuminate the relationship between aesthetics and well-being by discussing such notions and ideas as aesthetic well-being, interactive environmental planning, aesthetic quality in urban planning, aesthetic footprint, and ecological aesthetics. The authors of this part also engage with many topical questions in environmental and everyday aesthetics. For example, Yuriko Saito's idea of green aesthetics as well as Allen Carlson's science-based model of the aesthetic appreciation of nature are critically examined.

The articles of the second part approach the theme of the book through concrete case-studies on the effect of different environments on well-being. Examples include places in urban environments encouraging a slower way of life, changing rural scenery, and green spaces in both urban and natural contexts. Empirical data on the positive contribution green spaces have on well-being play an important role in some of the articles of this part of the book. As a whole, the book shows that aesthetics should not be seen as mere idle luxury; aesthetic values are an important factor of human well-being whose neglect, for example, in city and environmental planning can have direct negative consequences for human life.