

**THE SCIENCE OF SCENERY: HOW WE SEE SCENIC BEAUTY, WHAT IT IS, WHY WE LOVE IT, AND HOW TO MEASURE AND MAP IT** Andrew Lothian. 2017. CreateSpace Amazon. 492 pages. Softcover ISBN: 978-1534609860 <https://www.amazon.com/Science-Scenery-scenic-beauty-measure/dp/1534609865> and <https://scenicsolutions.world/science-of-scenery-book/>

### **Richard C. Smardon**

Andrew Lothian's *The Science of Scenery*, published through Amazon's CreateSpace self-publishing service, is described in Ian Bishop's foreword as "a major contribution in consolidating all we have learned over the last millennia and provides a terrific starting point for those concerned about the future of our landscapes." Lothian grew up in Adelaide, Australia, and traveled extensively throughout that country. After receiving a town planning diploma, he traveled to Europe and did postgraduate work at Salford University in Manchester, where he became enthralled with the Lake District landscape. He started his doctoral work at the University at Adelaide in 1992 and focused on landscape scenery assessment. He has been involved in multiple landscape assessment consultancies, many of which are on his website (<https://www.scenicsolutions.world/>).

The book is divided into five parts: Introduction, Part I: How We See Scenic Beauty, Part II: What and Why We Love Scenic Beauty, Part III: How to Measure and Map Scenic Beauty, and Part IV: The Future of Scenic Beauty (a single chapter of prospect and retrospect).

Part I comprises chapters 3 through 15 and offers a historical progression of early scenic beauty values, aesthetic philosophy, and landscape perception. This includes development of the Western cultural landscape aesthetic from classical Greek and Roman times to the current era. This has not been done in such a comprehensive fashion from this reviewer's perspective. The only other comparable book for this type of landscape aesthetics is Carlson and Lintott's *Nature, Aesthetics, and Environmentalism* (2005), an edited series of essays on North American landscape aesthetic values.

Part II comprises chapters 16 through 20 and is a summary of landscape quality theory and research. This is an exhaustive summary of some 1,300 landscape research articles and is well presented in many summary tables and in the text. There are many other publications that address the theory of landscape assessment research, but none that compile the amount of landscape assessment research contained here.

Part III contains two methodologically oriented chapters. Chapter 21 on how to assess landscape quality is based primarily on the author's Community Preference Method. This reviewer would have liked this part to include a bit more on other landscape assessment approaches, such as the scenic beauty estimation model developed by Terry Daniels. (Note by Lothian: Chapter 19 specifically covers the range of landscape assessment methods, and Daniels' work is covered on pp 299-301).

Chapter 22 on visual impact and landscape change is partially based on the author's work while providing a valuable overview of other literature. The only other landscape quality assessment and visual impact assessment method guidance that is broadly applicable to Europe is by the UK Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2003). The publication, *Visual Resource Stewardship Conference Proceedings: Landscape and Seascape Management in a Time of Change* (Gobster &

Smardon, 2018) provides the most recent landscape quality assessment and visual impact guidance for the United States. Much of Lothian's Chapter 22 addresses the visual impact issues of renewable energy development. Apostel *et al.* (2017) address the visual impact assessment of renewable energy development in Australia, Europe, and North America.

Part IV contains just one chapter on the future of scenic beauty. It summarizes the whole book and provides a prospectus of what could be done to protect landscape quality using the framework of the European Landscape Convention.

This reviewer found the book commendably comprehensive in its scope and thoroughness in referencing landscape quality studies. The book primarily covers Europe and Australia, where the author has done landscape research and consultancies, with some additional content about the United States. The color graphics, such as photos and tables, are of consistent quality and layout. There are a few misspellings and text layout errors, but these do not distract from the author's overall contribution.

By itself and in concert with the other publications mentioned here, this book is valuable to landscape managers and practitioners in public and private realms as well as being a reference book for planning, geography, and landscape architecture courses at the upper undergraduate and graduate levels. It would appeal to individuals interested in landscape assessment science, history, and application.

## REFERENCES

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- Gobster, P. H., & Smardon, R. C. (Eds.) (2018). *Visual resource stewardship conference proceedings: Landscape and seascape management in a time of change*. Gen. Tech. Rep. NRS-P-183, Newton Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. doi: 10.2737/NRS-GTR-P-183
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