

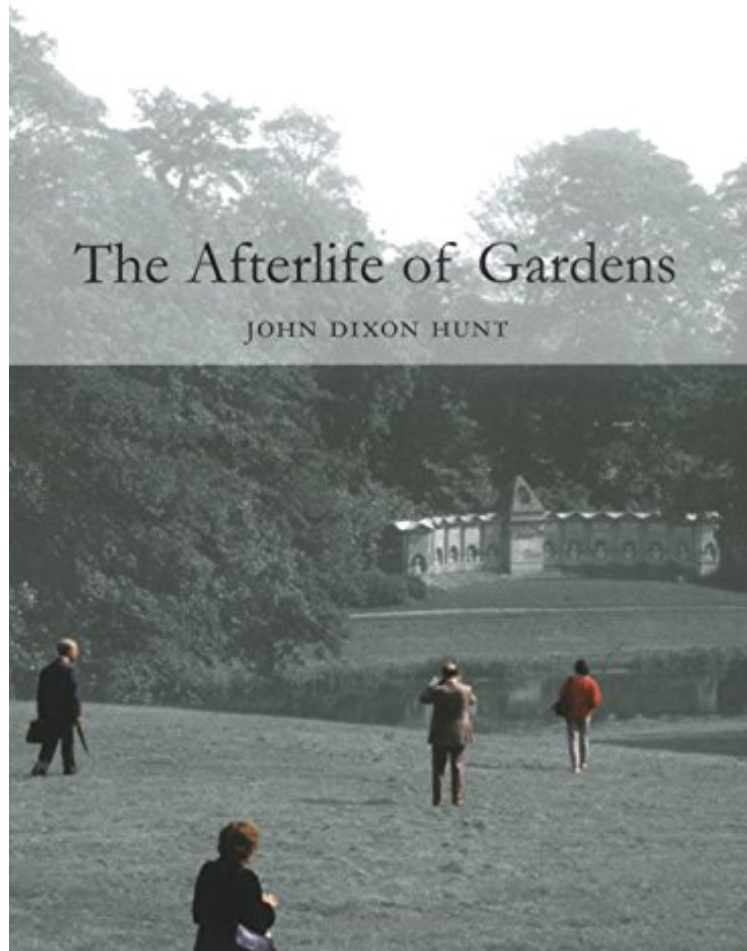
[E-BOOK] The Afterlife of Gardens (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture)

The Afterlife of Gardens (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture)

John Dixon Hunt

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John Dixon Hunt : The Afterlife of Gardens (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Afterlife of Gardens (Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture):

Most historical and critical discussions of gardens focus on their design. What happens after the completion of the design, however, is largely ignored, which neglects a much larger part of the site's interest and potential. For gardens, John Dixon Hunt contends, are experienced, often by a succession of visitors at different times and often from different cultures; this experience, though determined by the original design and its subsequent modifications, also augments the site's potentialities, and this "afterlife" of gardens comes to enhance the original moment of creation. One

way of exploring the experience of designed landscapes is to adapt literary reception theory to the study of gardens. Hunt argues that such an approach via the reception or experience of gardens enlarges how we should understand their significance and meanings. It is generally assumed that the experience of gardens became a prime ingredient of late eighteenth-century landscapedescriptive literature especially highlighted how visitors responded to their surroundings, reading inscriptions and recognizing the significance of carefully placed architectural items or *fabriques*. But there is considerable evidence for a much earlier interest in how experience came to constitute an essential aspect of a site beyond the intentions of the original designer or patron. Among other early examples, Hunt examines the book *Hypnerotomachia Polifili* (1499) to show how its protagonist is shown exploring and negotiating a series of strange and baffling landscapes. Through other inquiriesparticularly into the role of movement in such different situations as Versailles, and Chiswick or along modern highwaysThe *Afterlife of Gardens* provides a fresh approach to the study of designed landscapes that goes beyond their production and into how they exist and are understood by their users. In this ambitious new book the author shows how the complete history of a garden must extend beyond the moment of its design and the aims of the designer to record its subsequent reception. He raises questions about the preservation of historical sites, and provides lessons for the contemporary designer, who may perhaps be more attentive to the life of a work after its design and implementation. This book will interest all who have a professional interest in gardens, as well as the wide general audience for gardens and landscapes of past and present.

This intricately argued book (almost impossible to describe without oversimplifying) deals with cyberspace as well as the author's favourite 18th century and he stresses that response to gardens is visceral as well as intellectual. *Historic Gardens* John D. Hunt's book on the ways that gardens are (and have been) experienced by their visitors brings new insights to our understanding of garden history ... this book raises important, topical issues for all those concerned with the design, conservation and interpretation of designed landscapes. *Journal of the Garden History Society* From the Publisher John Dixon Hunt is Professor of the History and Theory of Landscape in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Design. He is the author of many books, including *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* and *Garden and Grove: The Italian Renaissance Garden in the English Imagination, 1600-1750*, both available from the University of Pennsylvania Press. About the Author John Dixon Hunt is Professor of the History and Theory of Landscape in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Design. He is the author of many books, including *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* and *Garden and Grove: The Italian Renaissance Garden in the English Imagination, 1600-1750*, the latter available from the University of Pennsylvania Press.