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Landscapes of fear

Yi-fu Tuan

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Landscapes of fear Yi-fu Tuan
To be human is to experience fear, but what is it exactly that makes us fearful? Here is one geographer's striking exploration of our landscapes of fear as they change throughout history. Yi-fu tuan investigates landscapes of the natural environment which are threatening, and landscapes filled with the dark images of the mind; fears of drought, flood, famine, and disease, shared by all members of a community, and fears of the particular ghosts which haunt the individual imagination.

In this lucidly written ground-breaking survey, Professor Tuan delves into many cultures and reaches back into our prehistory to discovery what is universal and what is particular in our inheritance of fear. Starting with fear in animals, he raises and explores a variety of questions. What is specifically human about fear? To what extent are we born with certain fears? Is there or has there ever been a 'fearless' society?

Professor Tuan examines the specific forms fear takes in the mind of the child, among hunters and agriculturalists, inside the walls of a medieval Chinese city, among Navaho Indians and American immigrants. He explores the ways in which authorities create landscapes of terror to instill fear in their own populations; and he proves the most basic of all contradictions between the need for human security and the fear of human nature.

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