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Japanese Garden White Paper

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What is the Ethical Value of Carleton College’s Japanese Garden?

Carleton College has a Japanese garden called Jo-ryo-en, meaning the "Garden of Quiet Listening” located behind Watson Hall. It was designed in 1974 by Dr. David Slawson. The following paper analyzes the ethical value of the Japanese garden and its worth to the college. First, the historical and cultural values present in the Japanese garden have the instrumental value of helping the college fulfill its mission statement. Furthermore, by providing a space for nature appreciation, the garden helps its viewers develop an environmental ethic. The two major arguments against the Japanese garden are identified: the garden is a manipulation of nature and the garden is a form of cultural appropriation. The Japanese garden’s naturalness, local history, adaptation to the landscape, and universal appeal are offered as counterpoints to these arguments.

The ethical value of the garden for Carleton can be determined by studying its compliance with the college’s missions as an educational institution. If the garden helps the college be more successful in fulfilling its missions, the Japanese garden arguably has a significant instrumental and ethical value for Carleton, and its presence on campus is adequately justified. It is clear that Carleton’s mission statement aligns with the ethical, cultural, and historical values of the Japanese garden. The technical aspects of the garden make it a useful cultural and historical resource. The garden’s qualities fit the values of Carleton and a broader environmental ethic. The garden is an appropriate use of the college’s resources because it helps the college accomplish its mission.

There are five fundamental goals in Carleton’s mission statement: “The mission of Carleton College is to provide an exceptional undergraduate liberal arts education;” “The College’s aspiration is to prepare students to lead lives of learning that are broadly rewarding, professionally satisfying, and of service to humanity;” “Carleton strives to be a collaborative community that encourages curiosity and intellectual adventure of the highest quality;” “Carleton’s academic goals focus on developing the critical and creative talents of our students through broad and rigorous studies in the liberal arts disciplines;” “Carleton develops qualities of mind and character that prepare its graduates to become citizens and leaders, capable of finding inventive solutions to local, national, and global challenges” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007).

A Japanese garden can accomplish the first mission, “to provide an exceptional undergraduate liberal arts education,” in multiple ways (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007). The mission statement claims that this goal is met in part by “the creative interplay of teaching, learning and scholarship.” The Japanese garden is a valuable resource for learning about Japanese and Chinese culture and religion. Slawson perfected the garden art form in its homeland of Japan, under the revered garden-expert Kinsayu Nakane. Therefore, Slawson’s garden is authentic, properly reflecting the cultural and historical characteristics of a Japanese rock garden, called a karesansui garden. The methods and techniques used to reach the garden’s universal values are inevitably tied to cultural origins. These techniques make the garden a great resource for those knowledgeable of or interested in these cultural origins. Director of Asian Studies, Professor of Art History, Kathleen Ryor, believes the cultural origin of the Japanese garden is a valuable resource for the Art Department and classes such as “Gardens in China and Japan (ARTH 267).” In Carleton’s Japanese garden, the gravel streams and larger rocks are reminiscent of Chinese landscape ink paintings, especially in the spacing of objects known as the ma of the garden. Japanese aesthetics are clearly observable; the surrounding landscape and buildings (in this case the tea garden hut) are complemented by the garden. Dynamic positioning reveals a cultural consideration of rocks not as inanimate objects but rather as bones of the earth. The techniques used to create this impression reflect Japanese religion and culture. The application of Zen Buddhism to gardening reflects Japanese history. Japanese dry gardens, alternatively known as Zen rock gardens, are “complicated, artistic, philosophical, religious, and cultural phenomenons” (Wicks, 2004). Zen Buddhism preaches that meditation can be performed on any simple object, no matter if it is religious in appearance. Much of the meaning behind these gardens is manifested in their maintenance. With their fine patterns of sand and gravel, Japanese gardens require consistent and extensive management, a type of physical meditation that embodies Zen Buddhist philosophy. This practice of maintenance can be seen as both a cultural tradition and a spiritual exercise. It requires a training of significant intellectual and physical commitment. Carleton has hired a specially trained garden manager from the North America Japanese Garden Association to take care of the garden on a weekly basis despite the significant cost. Although it may seem as if only the manager is benefitting, the garden’s precise maintenance and growth over time foster contemplation of scale and the continuation of time for visitors as well. The garden is a more valuable resource than a textbook. This cultural benefit aligns with Carleton’s mission statement as do the garden’s universal values. Indeed, the Japanese garden helps Carleton reach its goals in many ways; it’s a multi-dimensional resource.

Furthermore, the first mission is achieved because the garden contributes to the valued “diverse residential community and extensive international engagements” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007). In *A Thousand Years of Japanese Gardens*, Samuel Newsom argues that having Japanese gardens in the West brings a new perspective concerning gardening and the viewing of nature. New viewpoints are an essential part of acquiring ethics; “Virtues are largely a matter of habit and good socialization. But the study of ethics is meant to help people reflect critically on the values and habits they’ve acquired, uncritically, from their upbringing” (Smith). This new perspective contributes to diversity on campus and teaches students an ethical lesson. Unlike many Japanese gardens around the world, the sole purpose of Carleton’s garden is not aesthetic or religious but those who wish to learn about Buddhism can expand on their knowledge and perspective through the philosophies associated with this art form.

The Japanese garden also fulfills Carleton’s mission to “be a collaborative community that encourages curiosity and intellectual adventure of the highest quality” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007). This mission promotes “quiet reflection and lively engagement” as well as “self-understanding and renewal” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007). The Japanese garden achieves both these goals. It may even lead beyond reflection to a form of self-awareness. The collection of materials “[Link] the viewer to a time before the soul of man. The stability of life is shown through a universal balanced ecology” (Engel, 1959). Japanese gardens are conducive to environmental ethics because they lead to a better understanding of and increased connectivity with ecology. The Japanese garden does this by idealizing nature and inspiring reflection. Knowledge of the environment and art is stressed in the mission statement as a necessary part of Carleton’s goal to “focus on developing the critical and creative talents of...students through broad and rigorous studies in the liberal arts disciplines” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007). The Japanese garden not only promotes the mission statement, it goes beyond reflection and provides “a spiritual exercise” (Bendik-Keymer, 2010). These aspects of the garden are comparable to what the mission statement describes as “intellectual adventure of the highest quality” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007).

The Japanese garden develops “qualities of mind and character” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007). The inspired “quiet reflection” and “self-awareness” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007) of the garden are not merely beneficial to the spiritually inclined; the garden rather provides any student with a chance to relax and restore. This is necessary because the academic environment of college is exceptionally stressful. “Japanese gardens have restorative benefits equal to or even greater than wild nature, especially in urban areas. From an ethical point of view, it is reasonable to conclude that well designed and maintained Japanese gardens are effective as healing, restorative places” (Slawson, 2014). Evidence shows that gardens have the ability to reduce stress (Slawson, 1995) as well as blood pressure, depression, anxiety and improve empathy, creativity, and attention span (Williams, 2012). Jay Appleton and Ulrich found that hospital patients get well faster with a view of a tree. In Japan, the government has coined the term “shinrin-yoku,” a healing practice which lets nature enter one’s body through all five senses; this is a profitable industry in Japan (Williams, 2012). “The enjoyment of scenery employs the mind without fatigue and yet exercises it; tranquilizes it and yet enlivens it; and thus, through the influence of the mind over the body, gives the effect of refreshing rest and reinvigoration to the whole system.” (Olmstead, 1952). Miyazaki explains that this may occur since humans evolved in nature, so it is where people feel most comfortable. “Throughout our evolution, we’ve spent 99.9 percent of our time in natural environments” (Williams 2012). In his gardens, Slawson aims to create “a whole other world…. [which provides] enough to see, experience, and think about so that it takes up a substantial portion of the available room in one’s head. Even a relatively small area can provide a sense of extent” (Slawson, 2014). His gardens have scope and connectedness. They allow visitors to find “soft fascinations” by reflecting on “clouds moving across the sky, leaves rustling in a breeze or water bubbling over rocks in a stream” (Slawson, 2014). He hopes that visitors will find it easier to function in his gardens than in civilized settings. Students need the garden to have the mental capacity to improve their minds and characters.

Student opinion on the garden still needs to be tested to prove the successfulness of the garden in fulfilling Carleton’s mission statement. Determining how students view the role of the Japanese garden reveals whether or not the potential value of the garden to the college is present in reality. To determine student opinion, an online survey was distributed to a random portion of Carleton students. Part of the survey focused on Carleton students’ use and perception of the garden. The first question was “Have you visited Carleton's Japanese garden (behind Watson Hall)?” Out of the 364 replies, 302 responded to this specific question: 220 students answered “Yes” (73%) and 82 answered “No” (27%). From this, it can be inferred that the majority of Carleton students have visited the Japanese garden. However, the results do not show a large enough majority so the garden could be publicized more. This survey focused on the environmental ethics of Carleton students in particular, but it would have been helpful to have asked this question to Carleton faculty as well as the community. It can be inferred though that students’ answers would correspond to those of faculty. Community members would probably be less likely to have visited the garden because of their distance from it. The follow-up was “If you answered “Yes” to the previous question, please offer one word that describes your impression of the garden.” Attached is a representation of the responses. The scale of a word represents its prevalence in the survey responses. There is a small showing of words related to smoking but overall, the largest words have positive associations. The garden was most commonly described as peaceful, tranquil, serene, and small. These favorable aesthetics develop understanding, contemplation, and an environmental ethic in students.

Of the ways in which the garden can contribute to the mission of Carleton, students seem to emphasize its potential to develop “qualities of mind and character” (*Information & Resources for Visitors: Mission Statement*, 2007). The prominence of words such as “peaceful” and “tranquil” and serene” in survey results suggest that students do actually consider the Japanese garden an oasis to restore intellectually and spiritually. These impressions and qualities are related to the type of contemplation and relaxation this garden is meant to naturally inspire in its viewers.

The most frequent words used to describe the garden in the survey results were the principles Slawson intended to evoke in his design. When visitors step into the intricately designed space, they are supposed to reflect on the beauty of nature, specifically in its harmony as well as on their relationship to nature and the world. The description of the Japanese garden found on Carleton’s website reiterates this, suggesting that “if so inclined, the visitor is encouraged to contemplate his/her life, this world and the relationship between them while gazing upon the garden in quietness” (*Carleton's Japanese Garden: The Garden of Quiet Listening*, n.d.).

Slawson aimed to encourage this contemplation by designing a beautiful, small, secluded garden which consumes the visitor in nature, prompting visitors to “submit to nature’s guidance” (Saito, 1998). By “listening to nature’s own story and appreciating it on its own terms, instead of imposing [a] story upon it,” visitors will hopefully begin to develop an awareness of the environment (Saito, 1998). This moral capacity allows visitors to overcome the limits of their own perspectives and be able to understand and sympathize with other beings. Appreciating nature and morals are intertwined. Visitors to the Japanese garden must be absorbed by the natural environment to truly appreciate nature and develop an environmental conscious.

Through its manifestation of a rich cultural, aesthetic, and philosophical understanding of nature, the Japanese garden helps students develop an environmental ethic. An ethic is created when one starts to understand how they define their relationship to various entities within their sphere of influence. Today, it is increasingly important to recognize duties not only to fellow human beings and human institutions but also to the land and the surrounding environment. Aldo Leopold stated that “education must precede rules” (Leopold, 1949). Leopold lamented that no rules have been written regarding one’s ecological conduct because society’s understanding of nature is still largely framed under an anthropocentric perspective. Thus, before people can develop their duties and obligations to the environment, they must have an accurate conceptualization of nature.

The Japanese garden represents a beneficial nature concept which is necessary for the development of an environmental ethic. Steve Odin argues that the East Asian and Japanese religio-aesthetic concept of the environment provides an alternative to anthropocentric views of nature (Odin, 1991). Naturalism, a philosophical view that regards human beings as part of nature, exists in many religious and cultural texts of East Asia, including Japan (Colwell, 1987). Zen Buddhism and Chinese Taoism, in particular, have served as the most important philosophical foundations of the Japanese garden.

A delicate harmony between humans and nature is found in Japanese culture and gardens. The origins of the Japanese philosophy of nature can be traced back to Chinese Taoism. The practice of ensuring that all objects are in harmony with their environment is known as feng shui. This idea permeates every aspect of traditional Japanese culture, including city planning, temple construction, ink wash painting, flower arranging, and gardening. Feng shuiidentifies a shared nature concept in East Asia, particularly in Japan.

According to Leopold, aesthetic appreciation of nature determines our ethical mode towards the environment, as long as our actions toward it are guided by genuine appreciation. Leopold writes, “It is inconceivable to me that an ethical relation to land can exist without love, respect, and admiration for land, and a high regard for its value” (Leopold, 1949). The same moral progression of thought is evident in Zen Buddhism and Japanese culture. In the book, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, Suzuki writes,

“Zen proposes to respect Nature, to love Nature, to live its own life; Zen recognizes that our Nature is one with objective Nature…in the sense that Nature lives in us and we in Nature. For this reason, Zen asceticism advocates simplicity, frugality, straightforwardness, and virility, making no attempt to utilize Nature for selfish purposes” (Suzuki, 1959).

Leopold and Suzuki suggest an environmental ethic can be guided by a strong aesthetic appreciation of nature. Therefore, Carleton’s Japanese garden is not only important as a work of art, but also significant as a source of environmental education for its students. Ultimately, the Japanese garden can help students develop an environmental ethic by providing a space for the appreciation of nature. This appreciation fosters a greater understanding of nature and contemplation about the relationship between humans and the environment.

Not all philosophers agree that Japanese gardens can inspire an appreciation of nature and environmental ethic; one major argument is that gardens are man-made creations and therefore, do not engross visitors in nature. Robert Elliott and Eric Katz would argue that the garden is not truly nature. Because it is so manipulated, they would state that it is just wild as a golf course. Although it is beautiful, it was created by humans, so it will always be an inferior replica of nature. The comparison between a garden and a reproduction of an art piece is often used to diminish the value of human-created outdoor spaces; because it is not equivalent to the original, it is is less valuable. Like Elliot and Katz, Henry David Thoreau criticizes gardens for being tame copies of the original. In his essay *Walking*, Thoreau asks “What would become of us, if we walked only in a garden or a mall?” (Thoreau, 1993) He finds that gardens impart their tameness to humans. To cultivate wildness in himself, Thoreau finds subsistence from swamps rather than cultivated gardens and dreams of living next to a swamp rather than a beautiful garden (Thoreau, 1993). Even though they attempt to emulate nature, he calls gardens a “poor apology for Nature and Art” (Thoreau, 1993). These philosophers seem to agree that gardens lose value because they attempt but do not succeed at emulating nature, making them neither wild enough nor alive enough; Elliot, Katz, and Thoreau find that cultivated lands like civilization suffocate us.

These counterarguments are based on dualism which is grounded in a strict dichotomy between humans and nature. Naturalism is a superior ethic to dualism. An idea of naturalism is that “wildness (opposed to wilderness) can be found anywhere,” even “in our own backyards…nature is all around us if only we have eyes to see it…American ways of thinking about wilderness encourage us to adopt too high a standard for what counts as “natural”…The tree in the garden is in reality no less other, no less worthy of our wonder and respect, than the tree in an ancient forest that has never known an ax or a saw…Both trees stand apart from us; both share our common world…If wildness can stop being (just) out there and start being (also) in here...then perhaps we can...live rightly in the world--not just in the garden, not just in the wilderness, but in the home that encompasses them both” (Cronon, 1996). Cronon’s argument points out Elliot and Katz’s failure to acknowledge the wildness found in everyday life. Arguably, appreciating wildness in all forms is a better environmental ethic. The Japanese garden is just as wild as the landscape and should therefore not be devalued because it was created by humans.

When the extent of human effects is considered, it becomes increasingly important to recognize nature in its multitude of forms. Martin Krieger points out in his 1973 article “What’s Wrong With Plastic Trees?” that America’s most well-known “wild” landscapes are carefully engineered such as Niagara Falls (Krieger, 2000). Indeed, human actions have affected almost every inch of the earth, especially when global warming is considered. Cronon points out that “People have been manipulating the natural world on various scales for as long as we have a record of their passing” (Cronon, 1996). In an age where every landscape has been affected by human actions, it is important to recognize nature in all forms; the real value of wilderness is found in its ecology and beauty which can be recreated and enhanced through human management (Smith).

Indeed, managed spaces can improve on natural beauty. Slawson argues that humans’ role “in the natural order is not to impose our will on nature” but instead to “understand [and enhance] the inner expression and meaning of natural phenomena” (Slawson, 2014). In his creation of the Japanese garden, Slawson drew on inspiration from the natural world to evoke “the beauty of nature in its myriad forms” (Slawson, 2014). In contrast to Elliot, Katz, and Thoreau’s views, he finds gardens to be more beautiful than natural scenery. The 11th century Japanese garden manual, Sakuteiki states that "even renowned natural scenery invariably has some 'worthless views existing close by…and in the case of a man-made landscape garden, since only the attractive or best parts of the places are studied and modelled after, meaningless stones and features are seldom provided along with man's work" (Shimoyama, 1976). The grated sand of the dry garden can symbolize flowing streams or another body of water. Shrubs and stones can represent a variety of natural landscapes such as mountains, hills, and cliffs. These elements are microscopic representations of nature; “The Japanese gardener goes to Nature for inspiration, but instead of becoming her slave sets about to make himself Nature’s master, yet not without manifestation of reverence” (Byers, 1917). Human management allows the garden to replicate and enhance the natural landscape.

Katz, Thoreau, and other critics describe gardens as human-centric. This dualist idea is unfounded because by developing contemplation in human visitors, the garden lets people experience nature for themselves without articulating its value (Saito, 1998). The garden may be meticulously constructed specifically for humans but Slawson finds that “something made by a human [can] foster a connection between humans and the environment” (Slawson, 2014). It is not “human-centric to respond with awe to a beautiful sunset or landscape” (Slawson, 2014). “All art is for the enjoyment, appreciation, and response of humans” (Slawson, 2014). It is a misinterpretation to assume humans are separate from nature. Native American and East Asian [cultures] believe that humans are part of nature and therefore, are able to emulate it (Slawson, 2014). Technology may cause society’s disconnect from nature. “[Humans] really need to be present in [nature], not distracted by [their] own great story of self” (Williams, 2012). “Modern life severs us from intimate contact with the natural world in the conduct of our lives. However, we can weave nature-evoking, restorative landscapes into the fabric of our daily activities” (Slawson, 2014).

 Another argument against Japanese gardens is that they are cultural appropriations and are therefore, ethically problematic. Some students answered “Random” when prompted to describe the garden in the survey, showing that many do not understand the significance of a Japanese garden in Minnesota. Unbeknownst to critics and some students, Japanese gardens have adapted to the local landscape of Minnesota through history and obtained a unique value. Kendall H. Brown argues that Japanese gardens are appropriate for Minnesota because of their historical presence in the United States (summarized here). It should be noted that they were formerly referred to as “tea gardens.” For over a century, Americans have wanted to physically recreate Japan in the United States through the creation of gardens. The first Japanese garden in the United States was constructed at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial International Exposition; this appearance was spurred by the formation of economic relations between America and Japan in the 1870s. Gardens were used to turn American cities into Japanese dreamlands. The Midwest had a multitude of early Japanese gardens; the idea that the prairie could be cultured by Japan had been around for decades. Some early examples of Japanese gardens in Minnesota were located in Como Park, St. Paul built around 1904 and Interlaken Park, Fairmont built around 1905. The Interlaken garden was encouraged by the City Beautiful movement; it was like an amusement park with arched bridges, gates, an island, and meandering paths. Japanese gardens were found on private estates as well as in public parks. One was constructed on Charles H. Mayo’s estate in Rochester around 1912 and another on James S. Bell’s estate in Minnetonka Beach around 1912. Minnesotans, especially women were struck by gardens and their larger ideologies. Japanese gardens were popular until World War II when America stopped embracing Japanese culture. However, Japanese Americans did construct gardens during WWII while in internment camps. During the late 1940s and 50s after the end of the war, the popularity of Japanese gardens resurged. Japanese American immigrants began to see Japanese gardens as a marker of their own cultural assimilation in America. The construction of friendship gardens was common with the government’s encouragement. There was a desire to re-embrace Japan using art and gardens. Simple, non-exotic, post-war gardens were built around Minnesota. The Ordway Japanese garden was built in Como Park in St. Paul around 1979; none of Como Park’s original park survives today, but this one does. Takao Watanabe designed a Japanese garden in Normandale in 1973 which still shows some exocitism and other pre-war styles. Carleton’s Japanese garden was built around the time of these others. Today, Japanese gardens can be found all over the country. Even Larry Ellison, one of the richest people in the world has a house within a Japanese garden. Their prevalence in the United States for the past 150 years and their popularity in modern times show that Japanese gardens are a significant part of American culture. They have existed in the United States longer than hot dogs and cotton candy. These are both foods considered to be very American, so shouldn’t society consider Japanese gardens to be part of America’s cultural history as well? The existence of Carleton’s Japanese garden in Minnesota is a continuation of a rich history of these gardens in North America. Therefore, the location of the garden should be accepted, and the Carleton community should learn how to incorporate the garden into their culture and world.

The Japanese garden reminds viewers of impressions of the natural landscape; drawing on the landscape makes the garden more suited to Minnesota. The garden’s “arrangements are nestled in harmony with the ‘borrowed scenery’ of the long arbor vitae in the background” (*Carleton's Japanese Garden: The Garden of Quiet Listening*, 2014). The product of making something that looks like Japan has already been accomplished so now designers focus on creating gardens that fit with the North American landscape (Brown, 2014). Slawson’s Accord Triangle: utilizing the site and surroundings, the client’s wants, and local materials makes the garden feel like “a natural outgrowth of its setting” (Slawson, 2014). The Sakuteiki states, “Think over the famous places of scenic beauty throughout the land, and by making it your own that which appeals to you most, design your garden with the mood of harmony, modeling after the general air of such places” (Shimoyama, 1976). Slawson has “moved toward taking the universal principles of the Japanese garden art form and interpreting them to show the beauty of native landscapes in North America and throughout the world” (Washington, 2013). Slawson admires how the beauty of plants improves in the context of their environment (Slawson, 2014). He finds that “Every region has its own plant palette which can be used to evoke the desired landscape experience. The moving, most deeply satisfying landscape gardens don’t come from our heads but come through our heart and senses through our experiences in the natural world” (Slawson, 2014). Slawson places gardens in fitting ecosystems: “trees from the deep mountains in the deep mountains of the garden, trees from hills and fields in the hills and fields” (Slawson, 2012). Because Japanese gardens mirror nature, his designs return to the natural habitat. He believes that “Every ecosystem on earth offers places of beauty worthy of recreating in the garden, and the possibilities are endless" (Slawson, 2014).

As shown, many argue that natural beauty, historical and cultural significance, and restorative properties exist in Japanese gardens. However, the garden must have a universal effect on people of all cultures to be truly successful. Slawson acknowledges that the term “Japanese garden” may be misleading and does not have a universal nature like “classical music” (Slawson, 2014). However, Slawson argues that Japanese gardens though “developed and refined in Japan [employ] universal principles to evoke landscape experiences meaningful to the client” and other viewers (Slawson, 2014). Some would argue that visitors cannot appreciate, understand, and enjoy the beauty of Japanese gardens if they do not have specific knowledge about Japanese language, history, and culture. Slawson states that this knowledge of Japan is not necessary “any more than it is necessary to enjoy the beauty of nature” (Slawson, 2014). Psychologists “have found that regardless of culture people are attracted to natural environments with certain life-enhancing properties” (Slawson, 2014). People from all over the world have an attraction to particular landscapes “genetically encoded over tens of thousands of years of prehistory” (Slawson, 2014). The elements and composition of the Japanese garden match those of genetically preferred landscapes closely. People of all backgrounds and knowledges will be affected by these elements that resonate for all humans (Slawson, 2014).

In conclusion, the Japanese garden’s existence on Carleton’s campus is justified by the following ethical values it possesses. First, the garden is a form of naturalness. Wildness should be valued in all variations. The garden should be judged as natural independent of its location and history. The Japanese garden is justified as well by its evocation of the landscape and adaptations to the ecology, climate, culture, and history of Minnesota. The garden is tied to a positive environmental ethic; the ideas of feng shui and Zen Buddhism found in the garden emphasize peace and harmony with nature. These aspects and the garden’s other effects have a universal influence on people all over the world. The survey results demonstrate this; students can enjoy and contemplate nature, relax, and learn about Japan while developing an environmental ethic. However, it should not be forgotten that among other uses, Japanese gardens were originally used for parties and enjoying life in general. Carleton should re-embrace the diverse and meaningful functions of Japanese gardens. The college can do this by celebrating events and points of transition in the garden whether it be a Girl Scouts event or a wedding. The garden could be opened up more to the community as a social center. The garden would also benefit with the mixing of artistic and cultural traditions. This was successful in Portland when Dale Chihuly’s art was placed in a Japanese garden (Brown, 2014). The introduction of new events and artistic and cultural elements will not diminish the traditional aspects of the garden. Because the garden is a useful restorative and learning environment for the college, fulfilling Carleton’s mission statement, it should be preserved, respected, and utilized more often and more creatively.

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