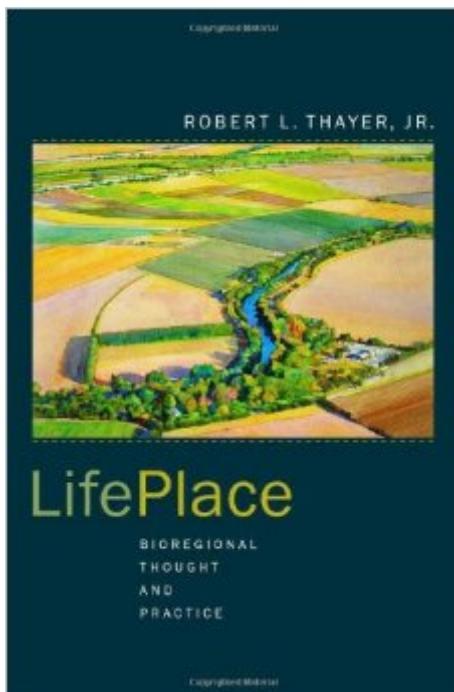


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LifePlace: Bioregional Thought And Practice



Synopsis

Robert Thayer brings the concepts and promises of the growing bioregional movement to a wide audience in a book that passionately urges us to discover "where we are" as an antidote to our rootless, stressful modern lives. *LifePlace* is a provocative meditation on bioregionalism and what it means to live, work, eat, and play in relation to naturally, rather than politically, defined areas. In it, Thayer gives a richly textured portrait of his own home, the Putah-Cache watershed in California's Sacramento Valley, demonstrating how bioregionalism can be practiced in everyday life. Written in a lively anecdotal style and expressing a profound love of place, this book is a guide to the personal rewards and the social benefits of reinhabiting the natural world on a local scale. In *LifePlace*, Thayer shares what he has learned over the course of thirty years about the Sacramento Valley's geography, minerals, flora, and fauna; its relation to fire, agriculture, and water; and its indigenous peoples, farmers, and artists. He shows how the spirit of bioregionalism springs from learning the history of a place, from participating in its local economy, from living in housing designed in the context of the region. He asks: How can we instill a love of place and knowledge of the local into our education system? How can the economy become more responsive to the ecology of region? This valuable book is also a window onto current writing on bioregionalism, introducing the ideas of its most notable proponents in accessible and highly engaging prose. At the same time that it gives an entirely new appreciation of California's Central Valley, *LifePlace* shows how we can move toward a new way of being, thinking, and acting in the world that can lead to a sustainable, harmonious, and more satisfying future.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In a narrative rich with the essence of the Sacramento Valley, Thayer crafts a compelling argument for a life lived closer to the earth. He begins this evocative book--which is part memoir, part lifestyle manual--by describing his home of the last 30 years as "a mail-order spouse whom I would grow to appreciate, then love." Most readers will forgive his reluctant love affair, for Thayer moved to California's monotonous, agricultural valley from the rugged, mountainscape of Boulder, Colorado. The author, a landscape architecture professor at the University of California, Davis, chronicles his growing connection with and attachment to a place some might find unlovable as an illustration of his point that every area possesses both unique potentials and limitations. He advocates for communities built upon new urbanist principles, art that is framed by region and education that is reflective of place. Drawing from personal experience, he offers a multitude of suggestions on how to reconnect with our immediate surroundings. He cautions against allowing our local communities to be supplanted by the hegemony of the global economy and champions relocalized trade. He takes exception to large, top-down organizations. "The truth," he writes, "which neither the traditional right nor left wishes to admit, is that broadly enfranchised, local grassroots efforts to identify with and care for natural regions are so powerful, so ultimately democratic, and so basically popular with the American people that they threaten the huge, entrenched political organizations on both sides." At its core, the book holds that a bioregional orientation is the only way to create true sustainability. Building upon the themes of other authors, such as Paul Hawken, Jane Jacobs and David Orr, Thayer shows readers how a deepened connection to the surrounding natural region can add meaning and texture to our often disconnected, modern lives.

I had to get this for a school book, but I loved it. Thayer's ideas on bioregional practices is very insightful. He writes in a way that you always learn something, but it's easy to read.

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