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“Stand still for a few moments before a tree, and the imagination that moves you will be as primary as that of early *Homo sapiens*”(Perlman, 1994).

The Impact of Ancient Tree Form on Modern Landscape Preferences

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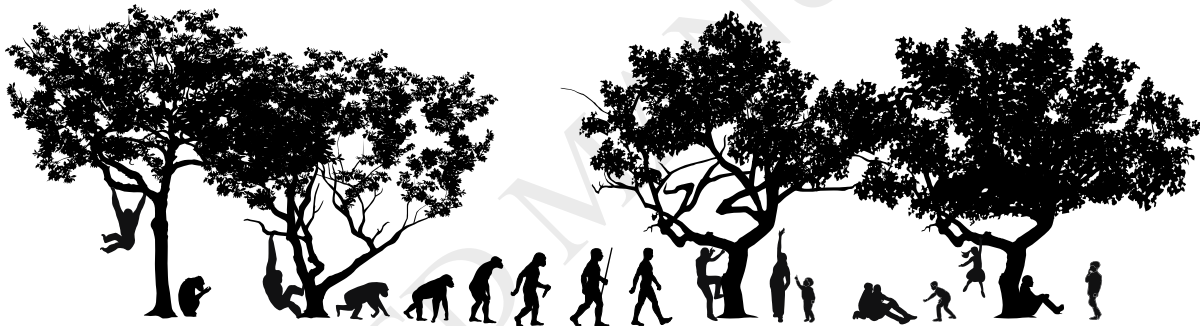
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Graphical Abstract



Highlights

- Evidence suggests that tree form has an emotional resonance for modern humans.
- Evolutionary psychology is helpful in explaining the origins of this affect.
- For most of primate history, tree canopy has represented habitat and safety.
- We still carry neural circuits that evaluate tree canopy.
- Aspects of contemporary aesthetics are based on ancient canopy preference.

Abstract

Empirical studies of the relationship between aspects of the landscape and human emotions have been fruitful over the last few decades. In fact, we are awash in data that describes a correlation between natural landscapes and positive human feelings. While this plethora of data has been useful to various disciplines, it has not lead to an explanatory theory as to why and how the landscape should have this affect This paper proposes that the discipline of evolutionary psychology provides an explanatory theory. Rather than a broad explanation, evolutionary

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