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"Artefacts and Functions: A Note on the Value of Nature"

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Katz, Eric. "Artefacts and Functions: A Note on the Value of Nature." *Environmental Values* 2, no. 3, (1993): 223–32. doi:10.3197/096327193776679909 .

This paper examines and compares the ontological and axiological character of artefacts—human creations—with nonhuman natural entities. The essential difference between artefacts and natural entities is that the former are always the result of human intention and design, while the latter are independent of human purpose. Artefacts have functions; natural entities do not. The connection to human intentional purpose implies a different kind of value for artefacts. Artefacts are evaluated solely by their instrumental (and anthropocentric) use, while natural entities can be appreciated for their independent and autonomous existence.This distinction has normative implications, especially for environmental policy and the development of an environmental ethic. Intervention in natural processes, even to "improve" nature, must be limited, for human action changes natural entities and systems into artefacts. A moral imperative requires respect for the autonomy of nature and resistance to the human domination of nature.

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"Artefacts and Functions: A Note on the Value of Nature"
Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/5496
Print date: 10 November 2026 01:09:20