

Enhancing Life Bibliography

- Butler, Judith. *Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015. Building on and, in some sense, modifying her previous work on gender, performativity, and precarity, and offering a series of meditations that engage Arendt on appearance and political assembly, Butler continues to explore what is entailed in “living a more livable life.” She suggests that “only through a concept of interdependency that affirms the bodily dependency, conditions of precarity, and potentials for performativity can we think a social and political world that seeks to overcome precarity in the name of livable lives.”
- Čapek, Karel. *The Gardener’s Year*. Illustrated by Josef Čapek. Translated by M. Weatherall and R. Weatherall. Introduction by Verlyn Klinkenborg. 1929; New York: Modern Library Edition, 2002. A charming and orienting account of the experience of life as viewed from the perspective of the gardener, written by the Czech writer and dissident most famous for coining the term “robot” in his 1921 play, *R.U.R.* “Your relation toward things has changed,” he writes of becoming a gardener. “If it rains you say that it rains on the garden; if the sun shines, it does not just shine just anyhow, but it shines on the garden; in the evening you rejoice that the garden will rest.”
- Carruthers, Mary. *The Experience of Beauty in the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. The author of the classic study of the training and uses of memory in medieval culture turns to the intersections of sensory, aesthetic, moral, and theological understanding in the human crafting of artefacts. Her exploration of the sensory and practical basis of knowledge in the Middle Ages can be instructive for thinking about contemporary arts of enhancing life.
- Harrison, Robert Pogue. *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. An extended essay by a Stanford scholar and cultural critic that examines gardens, from Even and Eden, Plato, Boccaccio, and monastic gardens to “Homeless gardens,” in relation to cultivation of the human condition. Citing Voltaire’s *Candide*, Harrison observes, “It is *because* we are thrown into history that we must cultivate our garden.”
- Nightingale, Andrea. *Once Out of Nature: Augustine on Time and the Body*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. Offering a close reading of Augustine on time and embodiment, Nightingale explores Augustine’s portrayal of humans as living in and out of time—present in earthly experience and away from present experience in the mind, memories, and God. She connects Augustine’s views with contemporary debates about transhumans and invites consideration of “the boundaries of the human.”