

Aesthetics of Everyday Life

Phil 200: Summer 2011

Instructor: Elizabeth Scarbrough

Class Times: M,T,W,Th,F

Instructor Office Hours: 11:50 am -12:50 pm TTh

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I. INTRODUCTION: THE AESTHETICS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

This topics-based course will focus on the aesthetics of everyday objects. Much of Western aesthetics has focused on the appreciation of fine art but there has been recent interest in extending this discussion to more pedestrian, or everyday, objects of aesthetic attention. This class will address such topics as:

- a) **The Art of Food:** Can we think of cooking as an art form, and dishes as artworks? Why is food considered a non-traditional object of aesthetic appreciation (following Kant)?
- b) **Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature:** How ought we aesthetically appreciate nature? Are models of art appreciation appropriate for appreciating nature?
- c) **Aesthetic Appreciation of the Built Environment:** Gardens, buildings and cultivated landscapes all express man's desire to tame nature. How ought we aesthetically appreciate these objects? Since we engage with the built environment much more often than pure nature (if such a thing exists), how ought we aesthetically appreciate it XXXX?
- d) **Aesthetic Appreciation of Rock Music:** What role does the high/low art distinction play in our culture? What does the widespread preference for rock music over classical music say about Western culture?
- e) **Enjoying Horror:** Horror is the most popular genre of film in the U.S.A., yet no horror movie has ever won an academy award. What does this say about our culture (again, 'high' v. 'low' art distinction). What are the unique aspect to enjoying a horror movie? Why do we still find these movies scary after multiple viewings? Why do we enjoy feeling scared, repulsed, etc.?
- f) **Human Beauty:** When we say a person is beautiful, what do we mean? Physical beauty? A beautiful soul? How is our perception of human beauty shaped by our culture? By erotic desire? What does personal style say about a person? Anything? Can one make their life into an artwork?

II. BOOKS AND READING SCHEDULE

ALL READINGS SHOULD BE DONE BY THE DATE ASSIGNED.

Required Books (3)

1. *Arguing about Art* (3rd Ed. Ed. By Alex Neill and Aaron Ridley)
2. *The Aesthetic of Everyday Life* (Ed. Andrew Light and Jonathan M. Smith)
3. *Beauty: A Very Short Introduction* (Roger Scruton, Oxford University Press)

Recommended Books (3) ¹

1. *Everyday Aesthetics* (Yuriko Saito, Oxford University Press)
2. *Beauty Matters* (Ed. Peg Zeglin Brand, Indiana University Press)
3. *Aesthetics: Classical Readings from the Western Tradition* (2nd Ed. Ed. Dabney Townsend, Wadsworth)

Abbreviations Used in the Syllabus

CR: Course Reserve

AA: Arguing about Art

AEL: Aesthetics of Everyday Life

B: Beauty: A Very Short Introduction

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF BEAUTY

B: Chapter 1 (Judging Beauty), Chapter 6 (Taste and Order), 8 (The flight from beauty)

CR: Selections from “The Critique of the Power of Judgment” Kant

CR: Selections from “On the Standard of Taste” Hume

PART 2: WHAT IS THE AESTHETICS OF EVERYDAY LIFE?

B: “Everyday Aesthetics” Chapter 4

CR: “Everyday Aesthetics” – Chapter 1- Yuiko Saito

AEL: “The Nature of Everyday Aesthetics” – Tom Leddy

AEL: Chapter 4 “Danto and Baruchello”

PART 3: THE ART OF FOOD

AA: “Food as Art” – Elizabeth Telfer

AEL: “How can Food be Art?” Glenn Keuhn (response to Telfer)

AA: “The Meaning of Taste and the Taste of Meaning” Carolyn Korsmeyer

AEL: “Sniffing and Savoring: The Aesthetics of Smells and Tastes” Emily Brady

PART 4: AESTHETIC APPRECIATION OF NATURE

B: Chapter 3 “Natural Beauty”

AA: “Aesthetic appreciation of the natural environment” Allen Carlson

AA: “On being moved by nature” Noel Carroll

AA: “Models of nature appreciation” Malcolm Budd

AEL: “The Aesthetics of Weather” Yuriko Saito

PART 5: THE AESTHETIC APPRECIATION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

AEL: “Building and the Naturally Unplanned” Pauline von Bonsdorff

AEL: “What is the Correct Curriculum for Landscape?” Allen Carlson

¹ All required reading from these books will be provided to you electronically on course reserves. These books are in Odegaard on course reserve hold as well.

CR: “Functional Beauty” on Architecture (Carlson and Parsons)

PART 6: POPULAR CULTURE: ROCK MUSIC AND HORROR FILMS

(Non-classical) Music

CR: “The Music of our Lives” Kathleen Higgins

AA: “The Decline of Musical Culture” Roger Scruton

AA: “Music’s worldly uses, or how I learned to stop worrying and to love Led Zeppelin”

Horror Films

AA: “Why horror” Noel Carroll

AA: “The paradox of horror” Berys Gaut

PART 7: HUMAN BEAUTY and SOMAAESTHETICS

Human Beauty

B: Chapter 2 (Human Beauty), Chapter 7 (Art and Eros)

CR: Selections from “Beauty Matters” –

a. Poem titled “What Is Beauty?”

b. “Foreword: Cutting Two Ways with Beauty” Eleanor Heartney

c. “Kantian and Contextual Beauty” Marcia M. Eaton

CR: “Personal Style” Ted Cohen

Somaesthetics

CR: “Somaesthetic and the Second Sex: A Pragmatist reading of Second Sex” – Richard Schusterman

CR: “Bound to Beauty: An Interview with Orlan” –Peg Zeglin Brand

Other Potential Areas of Interest

1. Male Beauty (Beauty Matters)
2. Aesthetics of Sport (AEL)
3. Jokes (See Ted Cohen)
4. Gardens (Stephanie Ross, Allen Carlson)
5. Aesthetics of Place (AEL)
6. Aesthetics of Urban Landscapes (AEL)
7. Green Aesthetics (See: Everyday Aesthetics by Yuriko Saito)
8. Aesthetics of Ambience (See: Everyday Aesthetics by Yuriko Saito)
9. Aesthetics of Cross-dressing (Beauty Matters)
10. Human Beauty and Racism (Beauty Matters)

III. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING PROCEDURES

THIS CLASS CAN BE TAKEN FOR OPTIONAL WRITING CREDIT. IF YOU WOULD LIKE WRITING CREDIT, YOU MUST COMPLETE THE FINAL ESSAY OPTION (NOT THE FINAL EXAM OPTION).

GRADING PROCEDURES:

Class Participation: 20 discretionary points

In Class Quizzes: (5 quizzes at 5 points each) 25 points
Reading Response Papers: (3 papers, 30 points each) 90 points
Final Exam / Paper: 25 points
Total Possible Points: 160

* I do not intend to curve the grades for this course, but I will, at my discretion, give a bonus of .1 to the final decimal grade of those students who show significant improvement over the course of the term.

Participation (20 points)

10 points are allocated toward active engagement in the class.

I expect students to be actively participating in class (which includes active listening). A portion of your grade is dedicated to your active participation. The use of cell phones in class is strictly forbidden. Laptop computers may only be used for academic purposes. Violating this “No surfing. No texting.” policy may result in a lowered participation grade.

In Class Quizzes (25 points)

There will be a total of 6 in-class quizzes – only 5 of which will count toward your final grade (your lowest grade on the quizzes will be dropped). The quizzes will not be announced in advance. If you are not there on the day we have an in class quiz, you cannot make it up.

Reading Response Papers (90 points)

There will be 3 reading response papers required for this class. Papers are expected to be 3-4 pages long.² Paper topics will be given out at the beginning of each topics unit.

Final / Final Paper (25 points)³

You have the option to take an in-class final exam (composed of short-answer essay questions) OR to revise one of your reading response papers in light of comments received. To opt for the final paper option, you must do three things: a) swap papers with a fellow classmate and write a 1-2 page “peer evaluation” of their paper, b) revise your own paper in light of *my* comments and those comments you receive from your peer, c) hand in a final copy of your paper with a brief statement of how you incorporated the comments you received.

If you would like to take the class for writing credit, you cannot utilize the final exam option.⁴

² Double-spaced, 12 point font, New Times Roman, 1 inch margins – please!

³ Late exams will not be given unless you have made prior arrangements with me. In cases of documented illness or emergency, contact me as soon as possible to make arrangements.

⁴ WC requires that you write a minimum of 10 pages through out the course, and that you hand in a draft that you receive writing feedback on.

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY: INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS*

COURSES, GRADING, ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the use of creations, ideas or words of publicly available work without formally acknowledging the author or source through appropriate use of quotation marks, references, and the like. Plagiarizing is presenting someone else's work as one's own original work or thought. This constitutes plagiarism whether it is intentional or unintentional. The University of Washington takes plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism may lead to disciplinary action by the University against the student who submitted the work. Any student who is uncertain whether his or her use of the work of others constitutes plagiarism should consult the course instructor for guidance before formally submitting the course work involved. (Sources: *UW Graduate School Style Manual*; *UW Bothell Catalog*; *UW Student Conduct Code*)⁵

Incompletes

An incomplete is given only when the student has been in attendance and has done satisfactory work until within two weeks of the end of the quarter and has furnished proof satisfactory to the instructor that the work cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond the student's control. (Source: *UW General Catalog Online*, "Student Guide/Grading")

Grade Appeal Procedure

A student who believes he or she has been improperly graded must first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the instructor's explanation, the student may submit a written appeal to the chair of the Department of Philosophy with a copy of the appeal also sent to the instructor. The chair consults with the instructor to ensure that the evaluation of the student's performance has not been arbitrary or capricious. Should the chair believe the instructor's conduct to be arbitrary or capricious and the instructor declines to revise the grade, the chair, with the approval of the voting members of his or her faculty, shall appoint an appropriate member, or members, of the faculty of the Department of Philosophy to evaluate the performance of the student and assign a grade. The Dean and Provost should be informed of this action. Once a student submits a written appeal, this document and all subsequent actions on this appeal are recorded in written form for deposit in a School file. (Source: *UW General Catalog Online*, "Student Guide/Grading")

Concerns About a Course, an Instructor, or a Teaching Assistant

If you have any concerns about a Philosophy course or your instructor, please see the instructor about these concerns as soon as possible. If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or not satisfied with the response that you receive, you may contact the chair of the program offering the course (names available from the Department of Philosophy, 361 Savery Hall). For your

* Adapted from material prepared by the UW Department of History and used with permission.

⁵ Elizabeth: I take academic honesty extremely seriously and will pursue sanctions against any student(s) caught engaging in any form of academic misconduct, in accordance with the University of Washington Student Conduct Code, which can be found at:

<http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html#020> You can find additional information about what constitutes plagiarism/academic dishonesty at:

<http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm#plagiarism>. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please ask me. Ignorance of policies regarding academic misconduct does not constitute a legitimate excuse for inappropriate behavior (*Ignorantia legis non excusat!*).

reference, these procedures are posted on a Philosophy bulletin board outside the Department of Philosophy main office on the 3rd floor of Savery Hall.

POLICIES, RULES, RESOURCES

Equal Opportunity

The University of Washington reaffirms its policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran in accordance with University of Washington policy and applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.

Disability Accommodation

The University of Washington is committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities. For information or to request disability accommodation contact: Disabled Students Services (Seattle campus) at (206) 543-8924/V, (206) 543-8925/TTY, (206) 616-8379/Fax, or e-mail at uwdss@u.washington.edu; Bothell Student Affairs at (425) 352-5000/V; (425) 352-5303/TTY, (425) 352-5335/Fax, or e-mail at uwbothel@u.washington.edu; Tacoma Student Services at (253) 552-4000/V, (253) 552-4413/TTY, (253) 552-4414/Fax.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as the use of one's authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations or to punish another for his or her refusal, or as the creation by a member of the University community of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment through verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. If you believe that you are being harassed, seek help—the earlier the better. You may speak with your instructor, your teaching assistant, the undergraduate advisor (363 Savery Hall), graduate program assistant (366 Savery Hall), or the chair of the Philosophy Department (364 Savery Hall). In addition, you should be aware that the University has designated special people to help you. They are: University Ombudsman and Ombudsman for Sexual Harassment (for complaints involving faculty members and teaching assistants) Susan Neff, 301 Student Union (HUB), 543-6028; and the University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office, 616-2028. (*Sources: UW Graduate School, CIDR, Office of the President*)

Office of Scholarly Integrity

The Office of Scholarly Integrity is housed in the Office of the Vice-Provost. The Office of Scholarly Integrity assumes responsibility for investigating and resolving allegations of scientific and scholarly misconduct by faculty, students, and staff of the University of Washington. The Office of Scholarly Integrity coordinates, in consultation and cooperation with the Schools and Colleges, inquiries and investigations into allegations of scientific and scholarly misconduct. The Office of Scholarly Integrity is responsible for compliance with reporting requirements established by various Federal and other funding agencies in matters of scientific or scholarly misconduct. The Office of Scholarly Integrity maintains all records resulting from inquiries and investigations of such allegations. University rules (Handbook, Vol. II, Section 25-51, Executive Order #61) define scientific and scholarly misconduct to include the following forms of inappropriate activities: intentional misrepresentation of credentials; falsification of data; plagiarism; abuse of confidentiality; deliberate violation of regulations applicable to research. Students can report cases of scientific or scholarly misconduct either to the Office of Scholarly Integrity, to their faculty adviser, or the department chair. The student should report such problems to whomever he or she feels most comfortable. (*Sources: UW web page (<http://www.grad.washington.edu/OSI/osi.htm>); minutes of Grad School Executive Staff and Division Heads meeting, 7/23/98*)

CALENDAR OF READINGS – READINGS DUE BY DATE WRITTEN DOWN

WEEK 1 – June 20-24		Introduction to the Course
Monday	June 20	No reading / Introduction to the course
Tuesday	June 21	B: Chapter 1
Wednesday	June 22	B: Chapter 6, Chapter 8
Thursday	June 23	CR: Kant
Friday	June 24	CR: Hume

WEEK 2 – June 27- July 1		What is Everyday Aesthetics?
Monday	June 27	B: Chapter 4, CR: Saito, Chapter 1 pgs 9-35
Tuesday	June 28	CR: Saito, Chapter 1 pgs 43-53
Wednesday	June 29	AEL: The Nature of the Everyday Aesthetic
Thursday	June 30	AEL: Danto and Baruchello
Friday	July 1	<i>Catch-up Day</i> <i>Discussion on how to structure a philosophy paper</i>

WEEK 3 – July 4 -8		The Art of Food
Monday	July 4	NO CLASS - HOLIDAY
Tuesday	July 5	AA: Food As Art
Wednesday	July 6	AEL: How can food be art?
Thursday	July 7	AA: The Meaning of Taste and the Taste of Meaning
Friday	July 8	AEL: Sniffing and Savoring: The Aesthetics of Smell and Taste

WEEK 4 – July 11-15		Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature
Monday	July 11	1st Paper Due / Catch-Up Day
Tuesday	July 12	B: Chapter 3 “Natural Beauty” AA: Aesthetic appreciation of the natural environment- Allen Carlson
Wednesday	July 13	AA: On being moved by nature- Noel Carroll
Thursday	July 14	AA: Models of nature appreciation – Malcolm Budd
Friday	July 15	<i>Catch-up Day</i>

WEEK 5 – July 18 -22		Nature / Aesthetic Appreciation of the Built Environment
Monday	July 18	AEL: “The Aesthetics of Weather” Yuriko Saito
Tuesday	July 19	AEL: “Building and the Naturally Unplanned” Pauline von Bonsdorff
Wednesday	July 20	AEL: “What is the Correct Curriculum for Landscape?” Allen Carlson
Thursday	July 21	CR: “Functional Beauty” on Architecture (Carlson and Parsons)
Friday	July 22	<i>Catch-up Day</i>

WEEK 6 – July 25-29		Rock Music
Monday	July 25	2nd Paper Due / CR: “The Music of our Lives” - Kathleen Higgins
Tuesday	July 26	AA: “The Decline of Musical Culture” – Roger Scruton
Wednesday	July 27	AA: “Music’s worldly uses, or how I learned to stop

		worrying and to love Led Zeppelin”
Thursday	July 28	TBD: Reading to be assigned
Friday	July 29	Catch-up / Show and tell: Bring in your favorite piece of music to analyze in reference to our readings. Must not be in the Western Classical Tradition.

WEEK 7 – August 1-4		Horror Movies / Human Beauty
Monday	August 1	AA: “Why horror” – Noel Carroll
Tuesday	August 2	AA: “The paradox of horror” – Berys Gaut
Wednesday	August 3	<i>FILM DAY!</i>
Thursday	August 4	B: Chapter 2 (Human Beauty), Chapter 7 (Art and Eros)
Friday	August 5	CR: Poem titled “What Is Beauty?”, “Foreword: Cutting Two Ways with Beauty” Eleanor Heartney

WEEK 8 –August 8-12		
Monday	August 8	3rd Paper Due: Bring two copies to class Peer review comment day.
Tuesday	August 9	CR: “Kantian and Contextual Beauty” Marcia M. Eaton
Wednesday	August 10	CR: “Personal Style” Ted Cohen
Thursday	August 11	CR: Somaesthetic and <i>The Second Sex: A Pragmatist reading of Second Sex</i> – Richard Schusterman
Friday	August 12	Peer Comments Due: Bring two copies to class <i>Catch-up Day</i>

WEEK 9-August 15-19		Human Beauty / Topic TBD
Monday	August 15	CR: “Bound to Beauty: An Interview with Orlan” –Peg Zeglin Brand
Tuesday	August 16	We will pick a topic from the list labeled “Other Areas of Potential Interest” and read two articles on that topic. Topic will be decided by democratic vote.
Wednesday	August 17	TBD
Thursday	August 18	TBD
Friday	August 19	FINAL EXAM / FINAL PAPER DUE