

Professor Elisabeth Camp

Office: 426 Logan Hall

Office Hours: Wednesday 2-4 and by appointment

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TA: Kathleen Robel: krobel@sas.upenn.edu; sections Fridays 10 & 11

Assigned texts: *Puzzles about Art*, at the Penn Bookstore.

Coursepack, at Campus Copy Center, 3907 Walnut Street.

All handouts, including paper topics, will be available on the Blackboard course website.

Course Description:

This course will investigate what art is and what role it plays in our lives. Is there a distinctive quality or function which all works of art possess and which makes them art? Do they have a distinctive kind of meaning? What determines an artwork's meaning? Can it be expressed in other terms? Why do we care about an artwork's originality and authenticity? How should we evaluate art? Can it make us better or worse people?

In asking these questions, it's important that we test our views against actual works of art. I'll frequently bring (reproductions of) artworks to class, and I encourage you to as well. I may assign a trip to the Art Museum, and your papers will ask you to apply the theories we've been discussing to specific works of art.

Course Requirements:

- Two short papers, 4-5 pages (25% of course grade).
- A final paper, 7-8 pages (35% of course grade).
- Attendance and participation in lecture and section (15% of course grade).
- Daily readings: you should do the assigned reading *before* class. Always bring the coursepack to class, since we'll often be examining the text in some detail.

I will also post study questions on the course web site at the beginning of each week. These questions are not assigned, but they should help to guide you through the readings, and they'll give you some sense for where the discussion will be heading. If you must miss either lecture or discussion, you'll be expected to make up the absence by writing a short response (less than a page) to a question about the material we discussed that day.

Except in extreme conditions, extensions on papers must be granted well before the due date, and only at our discretion; otherwise, late papers will be downgraded 1/3 letter grade per day.

You are expected to be familiar with and to abide by Penn's policy on academic and intellectual integrity: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>.

Some useful online resources for philosophy and art:

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu>

American Society for Aesthetics: <http://www.aesthetics-online.org>

ArtLex (a dictionary of art): <http://www.artlex.com/>

ARTstor (a database of visual images): <http://www.artstor.org>

What is the meaning of art?*Formalism and Materialism*

Mon 10/30 Bell: “The Aesthetic Hypothesis”
Greenberg: “Modernist Painting”

Art as Idea

Wed 11/1 Collingwood: *Principles of Art* ch. 2 & 7
LeWitt: “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art”

Meaning and Medium

Mon 11/6 Dewey: “Experience and Expression”
Bosanquet: “The Importance of the Medium”
Wed 11/8 Brooks: “The Heresy of Paraphrase”
Levinson: “Messages in Art”

Second paper topics handed out***What determines the value of art?***

Mon 11/13 *Puzzles about Art* ch. 5
Hume: “On the Standard of Taste”
Wed 11/15 Kant: *Critique of Judgment* §§30-40

Do an artwork’s moral qualities affect its aesthetic value?

Mon 11/20 Wilde: “The Decay of Lying”
Devereaux: “Beauty and Evil: Reifentahl’s *Triumph of the Will*”

Screening of *Triumph of the Will* outside class time***Can art make us better — or worse?***

Wed 11/22 Nussbaum: “Literature and the Moral Imagination” ; excerpt from Intro
Nehamas: “Plato and the Mass Media”

Second papers due***Who and What Determines Aesthetic Value?***

Mon 11/27 *Puzzles about Art* ch. 6
Babbitt: “Who Cares if You Listen?”
Cohen: “High and Low Art and High and Low Audiences”
Wed 11/29 Sibley: “Aesthetic Concepts”
Mon 12/4 Savile: “The Test of Time”
Walton: “How Marvelous! Toward a Theory of Aesthetic Value”
Wed 12/6 *Review and Conclusion*

Final Paper Topics Handed Out

Fri 12/15 **Final Paper Due**