Professor Elisabeth Camp

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Texts: Coursepack, at Campus Copy Center, 3907 Walnut Street.
Puzzles about Art, at the Penn Book Center, 130 S. 34th Street.
All handouts, including paper topics, will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Description:
This course will investigate what art is and what role it plays in our lives. Is there some distinctive quality or function that all works of art have, which makes them art? Do works of art have a distinctive kind of meaning, which cannot be expressed in other terms? What criteria should we use in evaluating art: should art be beautiful, original, or morally uplifting?

In asking these questions, it’s important that we test our answers on actual artworks, so you should spend as much free time with art as possible. Your first writing assignment will require you to visit the Art Museum, and your other papers will ask you to apply the theories we’ve been discussing to specific works of art.

Course Requirements:
• One short writing assignment, 2 pages (5% of total course grade).
• Two short papers, 4-5 pages (25% each of course grade).
• A final paper, 7-8 pages (35% of course grade).
• Attendance and participation in lecture and section (10% of course grade).
• Daily readings: you should do the assigned reading before class.
  Always bring the coursepack to class.

I will also post study questions on Blackboard at the beginning of each week. They are intended to help guide you through the readings, and they’ll give you some sense for where we’ll be heading. You will be expected to post a response to one of these questions on the Blackboard discussion board before section each week. In addition, if you must miss either lecture or discussion, you should make up the absence by writing a short response (less than a page) to a question about the material 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:
  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
Schedule of Topics and Readings
(subject to revision: check Blackboard for updates)

Wed 9/5  Introduction

**What is art? What does it do?**
[read: Puzzles about Art ch. 1]

Mimesis and catharsis
**FRI 9/7**  Plato: Republic II, III, X (excerpts)
Aristotle: Poetics §§4-7 (excerpts)

**NOTE: NO CLASS** Mon 9/10 and Wed 9/12; visit Art Museum instead

Fri 9/14  Writing assignment due in section
Mon 9/17  Plato and Aristotle cont’d

Expression and inspiration
Wed 9/19  Plato: Ion (excerpt)
Shelley: “A Defense of Poetry” (excerpt)
Wordsworth: “Ode: Intimations of Immortality”

Varieties of pleasure
Mon 9/24  Kant: Critique of Judgment §§1-9, 14-16, 19-22, 43-45
Wed 9/26  Kant cont’d

Anti-essentialist definitions of art
Mon 10/1  Weitz: “The Role of Theory in Aesthetics”
Wittgenstein: Philosophical Investigations, §§65-75

Wed 10/3  Danto: “The Artworld”
Mon 10/8  Danto cont’d

First paper topics handed out

‘Where’ is art? What kind of meaning does it have?
[read: Puzzles about Art ch. 3]

Formalism and materialism
Wed 10/10  Bell: “The Aesthetic Hypothesis”
Kandinsky: “Reminiscences”, Malevich: “Suprematism” (excerpts)
Greenberg: “Modernist Painting”

Mon 10/15  NO CLASS

Art as idea
Wed 10/17  Collingwood: Principles of Art ch. 2 & 7
LeWitt: “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art”
Jamieson: “The Importance of Being Conceptual”
Vogel: “Swimming with Famous Dead Sharks” (handout)

First papers due
Medium and Meaning
Mon 10/22    Dewey: “Experience and Expression”
             Bosanquet: “The Importance of the Medium”
Wed 10/24    Brooks: “The Heresy of Paraphrase”
             Levinson: “Messages in Art”
             Ice-T: “High Rollers”

What determines aesthetic value?
[read: Puzzles about Art ch. 2]

Whose judgment matters?
Mon 10/29    Hume: “On the Standard of Taste”
Wed 10/31    Kant: Critique of Judgment §§32-42
Mon 11/5     Babbitt: “Who Cares if You Listen?”
             Tolstoy: What is Art? chs. 4-9; pp. 93-99; chs. 14-16; pp. 189-191
             Weingarten: “Pearls Before Breakfast” (on Blackboard)

Second paper topics handed out

Does morality matter?
Wed 11/7     Gaut: “The Ethical Criticism of Art”
             [read: Puzzles about Art ch. 5]

Watch A Clockwork Orange (outside of class)
Mon 11/12    Nussbaum: “Fancy”
Wed 11/14    Kieran: “Forbidden Knowledge”

Does originality matter?
Mon 11/19    Kant: Critique of Judgment §§46-50
             Eliot: “Tradition and the Individual Talent”
             Borges: “Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote”
             [read: Puzzles about Art ch. 4]

Second papers due
Wed 11/21    Goodman: “Art and Authenticity”
             Lessing: “What is Wrong with a Forgery?”
             Russell: “As Long as Men Make Art, the Artful Fake will be with Us”
             (on Blackboard)
Mon 11/26    Benjamin: “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”
             (excerpt)
             Nichols: “The Work of Culture in the Age of Cybernetic Systems”
             Tompkins: “The Turnaround Artist” (handout)

Why do we care about aesthetic judgment and criticism?
             Harrison: “Some Uses of ‘Good’ in Criticism”
             [read: Puzzles about Art ch. 6]

Wed 12/5     Review and Conclusion

Final Paper Topics Handed Out

Fri 12/14    Final Paper Due