

Professor Elisabeth Camp

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Course Description

In this course, we will examine a range of cases in which we experience or think of something 'under an aspect', in a way that appears not to be reducible to simply taking in or entertaining propositional information. We'll begin with the most familiar case: aspectual perception. As Wittgenstein says, when I come to see the duck-rabbit figure as a duck, "I see that it has not changed, and yet I see it differently." When I undergo such an aspectual shift, what changes, and what remains constant, in my perceptual experience? What implications does this have for an adequate theory of perceptual experience? Most cases of seeing-as involve the application of a concept, such as *duck*. However, when I hear a sequence of notes as a melody, the difference in my perceptual experience appears to be more structural than conceptual; and when I hear the melody as sad, the concept *sad* seems to have a very different sort of application than *duck* does in the case of the Gestalt figure. How should we understand these cases?

Next, we'll consider emotions, which fall in between actual perception and the more purely cognitive cases of 'seeing-as' that we will discuss in the second half of the course. Many people have the intuition that emotion is somehow perception-like; and some have articulated views on which emotions just are patterns of attention to situations in the world. How plausible is this?

In the second half of the course, we'll consider the a range of applications of aspects in thought. Many theorists have wanted to analyze metaphor in terms of 'seeing-as': when Romeo says that Juliet is the sun, they claim, his aim is to induce an overall perspective or way of thinking about Juliet in his hearers, rather than to communicate information about her. In what respects is this 'way of thinking' non-propositional? In what respects does it involve propositions? What are the implications of this for the claims that metaphors express propositional contents, and can be paraphrased? Likewise, understanding the narrative in a work of fiction or history also arguably involves an aspect: an overall sense of the story's arc, and not just a grasp of the sequence of events. In what ways is this similar to and different from the 'structural' and 'conceptual' aspects in perception?

Finally, we'll consider the role of aspects in ethics: what sense can we make of the idea that ethical virtue involves an appropriate perception-like engagement with situations in the world?

Course Requirements

Everyone registered for the course will be expected to lead discussion for one meeting; auditors are strongly encouraged to do so as well. This should involve a *brief* review of the main claims in the readings (absolutely no longer than 15 minutes); you should try to synthesize the readings into a single discussion about the topic we're considering that week. More importantly, you should come up with three or four questions about the material; some of these questions may be clarificatory, but at least some should be more substantive. I'll expect you to email a sketch of your review plus questions by the Sunday before the seminar, so that we can coordinate plans for the meeting.

All of the readings will be posted on Blackboard. The listed readings are provisional and subject to revision, including especially in the light of suggestions from you. If you find an especially useful or intriguing article or argument on one of our topics that's not listed, let me know. The readings listed without brackets are assigned; those in brackets are not, but merely recommended as additional background or further reading.

Your grade in the course will be a holistic function of your general participation, your presentation/discussion, and your paper. Papers should be 20-25 pp. long, and have an abstract. You must meet with me sometime during the term to discuss your topic; we'll spend the last class discussing your topics and outstanding questions that emerge over the semester.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Week 1 (1/16): **Introduction**

Week 2 (1/23): **Background:** The Standard Model

Searle: "The Nature of Intentional States"

Tye: "Visual Qualia and Visual Content Revisited"

[Crane: "Is there a Perceptual Relation?"]

Week 3 (1/30): **Seeing-as**

Wittgenstein: *Philosophical Investigations* II.xi, pp. 193-214

Scruton: "The Imagination II"

Palmer: *Vision Science*, ch. 6, esp. §§6.1, 6.3, 6.5

Köhler: "Some Tasks of Gestalt Psychology"

[Eger et al: "Mechanisms of Top-down Facilitation in Perception of Visual Objects Studied by fMRI"]

[Murray et al: "Shape Perception Reduces Activity in Human Primary Visual Cortex"]

[Nakayama et al: "Visual Surface Representation: A Critical Link between Lower-Level and Higher-Level Vision"]

Week 4 (2/6): **Structural Seeing-As**

Peacocke: "Scenarios, Concepts, and Perception"

Nickel: "Against Intentionalism"

Week 5 (2/13): Conceptual Seeing-as

Siegel: "Which Properties are Represented in Perception?"

Strawson: "Imagination and Perception"

[Prinz: "Beyond Appearances: The Content of Sensation and Perception"]

[Biederman: "On the Semantics of a Glance at a Scene"]

[Calabi: "Perceptual Saliences"]

[Sedivy: "Wittgenstein's Diagnosis of Empiricism's Third Dogma: Why Perception is not an Amalgam of Sensation and Conceptualization"]

Week 6 (2/20): Seeing Pictures

Wollheim: "Seeing-as, Seeing-In, and Pictorial Representation"

Wollheim: *Painting as an Art*, pp. 46-75

Dilworth: "A Double Content Theory of Artistic Representation"

[Lopes: "Depiction and Vision"]

[JAAC Symposium on Wollheim's "On Pictorial Representation"]

[Walton: "Depiction, Perception, and Imagination"]

Week 7 (2/27): Hearing Music

Scruton: "Imagination and Aesthetic Experience", esp. 121-128

De Bellis: "The Representational Content of Musical Experience"

Walton: "Listening with Imagination: Is Music Representational?"

[Eldar et al: "Feeling the real world: Limbic response to music depends on related content"]

Week 8 (3/5): Emotion

Goldie: *The Emotions*, ch. 2 & 3

Calhoun: "Cognitive Emotions?"

[De Sousa: *The Rationality of Emotion*, ch. 7]

[Solomon: "What is a 'Cognitive Theory' of the Emotions and Does it Neglect Affectivity?"]

3/12: NO CLASS: Spring Break

Week 9 (3/19): Metaphor

Davidson: "What Metaphors Mean"

Moran: "Seeing and Believing"

[Camp: "Perception and Seeing-As"]

Week 10 (3/26): Metaphor cont'd

Camp: "Making Claims and 'Seeing-as': A Pragmatic Theory of Metaphor"

[Camp: "Characterizations", "Thinking Under an Aspect"]

Week 11 (4/2): Fiction

Camp: "Perspectives in Fiction"

Goldie: "Narrative and Perspective; Values and Appropriate Emotions"

[Moran: "The Expression of Feeling in Imagination"]

Week 12 (4/9): **Narrative**

Carroll: "On the Narrative Connection" in *Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (2001)

Velleman: "Narrative Explanation"

[Mink: "History and Fiction as Modes of Comprehension"]

Week 13 (4/16): **Ethics**

McDowell: "Virtue and Reason"

Kupperman, "How Values Congeal Into Facts"

[Stampe: "The Authority of Desire"]

Week 14 (4/23): **Review**