

Professor Elisabeth Camp

Class meetings: Mondays and Thursdays 11:30-12:50, Campbell Hall A5

Office Hours: Mondays 3-4, and by appointment

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Required Texts: All readings, handouts, announcements, etc. will be posted online at Sakai:

<https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal>

Course Description

What is art? Why do we care about it? As far as we know, every human culture makes art, though in very different ways; and most people engage passionately with art in some way, whether Beyoncé or Beethoven. Is there some distinctive quality that all works of art have, which makes them art? Do they have a special kind of meaning? What makes art good or bad: should it be beautiful? original? morally uplifting?

To ask these questions well, we need to test our answers on actual artworks. I'll therefore be asking you to spend as much time with art as possible this semester, and to apply the questions and theories we discuss to actual art in your papers and online discussion.

Course Goals

Students in this course will learn to:

- understand the benefits of, and challenges to, the traditional philosophical method of conceptual analysis through necessary and sufficient conditions.
- appreciate the diversity of art: 'high' and 'low', within and across cultures, and across media.
- apply questions about aesthetics and theories of art and in engaging with actual artworks.

(This will enable you to satisfy Core Curriculum goal **AHp**: to analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.)



In pursuing these course-specific aims, students will also acquire the following general skills:

- the ability to engage in close reading of sophisticated arguments from a range of disciplines.
- the ability to articulate clear, structured, well-supported arguments for your own conclusions.
- the ability to engage in respectful, reasoned, and passionate debate with your peers about complex topics that lack clear answers.

(These will enable you to satisfy Core Curriculum goal **AHo**: to examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.)

Course Requirements

- Daily readings, to be completed before class, and brought to class.
- Attendance and participation in class (10% of course grade).
- Weekly forum posts (20% of course grade).
- One museum visit and report (5% of course grade)
- One in-class debate (10% of course grade).
- Two short papers, 2-3 pages (15% each of course grade).
- A final paper, 5-6 pages (25% of course grade).

Attendance and Participation

In this class, we'll explore a core set of questions through some rich and often challenging readings, as a group. The class as a whole depends on your active participation. This means you need to do the reading, show up to class on time, pay attention to the class (not your phone!), and engage in a respectful way with your peers.

If you expect to miss a class, use the University absence reporting website: sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/. Let me know if you need to make a religious or other accommodation.

A productive intellectual community depends on good practices for inclusive discussion. Here are our department's norms for discourse: philosophy.rutgers.edu/about-us/discourse

Forum Posts

As part of establishing an inclusive conversation, and to make our meetings as rich and focused as possible, we will have a discussion online each week.

You are required to post a **brief** comment and question (1 paragraph) **once** a week. The main point of your post is to *pose a question* for in-class discussion. You should *motivate* your specific question, by explaining why someone else should care about it. You should *contextualize* it, by citing specific passages of the assigned reading. And you should sketch out a *next step* for addressing your question, by setting out some possible answers, suggesting how to find out the answer, etc.

Posts will be graded on a 3-point scale:

- 1 point** for posting by **Saturday** night, in a way that demonstrates you've done the reading;
- 1 point** for being one of the first 2 posters, OR for responding substantively to someone else's post;
- 1 point** for contributing an original insight about the material.

You can **miss or drop 2 posts** over the course of the entire semester without penalty. Come to class prepared to discuss your question!

Papers

The first two papers will be short and highly structured; the third will ask you to provide your own take on an issue from the course. Papers should be **blinded** and submitted as .pdfs through Sakai **before the start of class** on the due date. Except in extreme conditions, extensions must be granted well before the due date; **late papers** will be downgraded 1/3 grade per day.

Other Expectations and Resources

I expect you to be familiar with and to abide by RU's policy on academic and intellectual integrity: academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy. Judgments about plagiarism can be subtle; for tips about how to take notes so that you don't plagiarize by accident, consult http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/avoid_plagiarism
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources-for-students>

If you need special accommodations because of a disability, please follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

One of my sayings: Being a person is hard! But it's one of your jobs.

I can be more helpful in making accommodations in light of life's inevitable complexities if you are proactive in telling me about them and demonstrate that you are addressing them in a responsible way.

If you are struggling with mental health, or just need some extra assistance dealing with life, check out [Just In Case Web App](#), Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS, rhscaps.rutgers.edu), Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA: vpva.rutgers.edu/), Scarlet Listeners (scarletlisteners.com), or some other source of support. You don't have to tough it out on your own!

Some useful online resources for philosophy and art:

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

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

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

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

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Th 9/6 Introduction (bring art!)

What is art? What does it do?

Mimesis, Catharsis and Expression

M 9/10 Plato: *Republic* II, III, X (excerpts)
 Th 9/13 Aristotle: *Poetics* §§4-7 (excerpts)
 M 9/17 R. G. Collingwood: *Principles of Art*, ch. 7
 John Dewey: *Art as Experience* (excerpts)

Pleasures, Forms and Rules

Th 9/20
 M 9/24 Emmanuel Kant: *Critique of Judgment* §§1-9, 14-16, 43-45
 Th 9/27 **NO CLASS**
 M 10/1 Clive Bell: "The Aesthetic Hypothesis" (excerpt)
 Clement Greenberg: "Modernist Painting"
 Th 10/4 Arthur Danto: "The Artworld"
First paper topic handed out

What determines artistic value?

Expertise and accessibility

M 10/8 David Hume: "On the Standard of Taste"
 Th 10/11 Emmanuel Kant: *Critique of Judgment* §§32-42
 F 10/12 **First paper due**
 M 10/15 Hume and Kant
 Th 10/18 Kendall Walton: "How Marvelous! Toward a Theory of Aesthetic Value"
 M 10/22 Milton Babbitt: "Who Cares if You Listen?"
 Gene Weingarten: "Pearls Before Breakfast"
 Podcast on Philosophy of Wine

What meaning?

Th 10/25 Jerome Stolnitz: "On the Cognitive Triviality of Art"
 M 10/29 Cleanth Brooks: "The Heresy of Paraphrase"
Second paper topic handed out

Whose meaning?

Th 11/1 William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley: "The Intentional Fallacy"
 M 11/5 Alexander Nehamas: "The Postulated Author"
Lunch with Ann Cooper Albright (optional)
 Th 11/8 Kwame Appiah: "Is the Post in Post-Modern the Post in Post-Colonial?"
F 11/9 Second paper due

Originality, tradition, and genius

M 11/12 Emmanuel Kant: *Critique of Judgment* §§46-50

Th 11/15 T. S. Eliot: "Tradition and the Individual Talent"
Linda Nochlin: "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?"

M 11/19 Roundtable: "Is Cultural Appropriation Ever Okay?"

IN CLASS DEBATE

Th 11/22 NO CLASS

Does morality matter?

M 11/26 Ken Walton: "Morals in Fiction and Fictional Morality"

Th 11/29 A. W. Eaton: "Robust Immoralism"

Shen-Yi Liao: "Moral Persuasion and the Diversity of Fictions"

Aesthetics out in the world

M 12/3 Yuriko Saito: "Everyday Aesthetics and Artification"

Nick Riggle: "Street Art: The Transfiguration of the Commonplaces"

Th 12/6 Holly Brubach: "Beauty Under the Knife"

A. W. Eaton: "Taste in Bodies and Fat Oppression"

M 12/10 *Review and Conclusion*

Final paper topics handed out

Th 12/20 **Final paper due**