

PHIL4323: AESTHETICS

Spring 2016

Tuesday/Thursday, 2:00-3:20

ENG/PHIL 163

Instructor

Darren Hudson Hick

www.tytoken.com

darren.hick@ttu.edu

Office: Eng/Phil 265E

Office hours: MW 1:30-3:00

Course Description

We spend a lot of our time with the arts—we read novels and poetry, we watch movies and television, we go to art galleries and the theater. Some works of art are simply distractions from our own lives. But others (and not always the ones we expect) raise important philosophical questions:

- If I weave a basket, is it art? If so, is it art in the same way that the *Mona Lisa* is art? What is the difference between art and craft?
- Why is a perfect copy of a novel like *Lord of the Flies* a genuine instance of the novel, but a perfect copy of a statue like Michelangelo's *David* is only a reproduction?
- Why do we get sad, excited, and frightened by what happens to characters in shows like *Breaking Bad*? After all, don't we know the characters are *fictional*?

These questions and many others besides will serve to frame discussion in the class as we investigate theories of art and beauty from the Ancient Greeks to the present.

Text

Darren Hudson Hick, *Introducing Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art* (Continuum, 2012)

ISBN: 978-1-4411-7103-0

Course Requirements

Your final grade will depend on the percentage you earn of the total points possible in the class: A+: 97-100; A: 94-96; A-: 90-93; B+: 87-89; B: 84-86; B-: 80-83; C+: 77-79; C: 74-76; C-: 70-73; D+: 67-69; D: 64-66; D-: 60-63.

Papers

You will have to write two 8-to-10-page papers during the course of the term:

- The first paper is due Tuesday, March 8, and is worth 20% of your grade. It must be written on a topic from Chapters 1-3 in the course text.
- The second paper is due Tuesday, May 10, and is worth 25% of your grade. It must be written on a topic from Chapters 4-7 in the course text.

For each paper, you must refer to at least two primary sources—either philosophy articles or scholarly books. My text does not qualify as a primary source, though I would suggest referring to articles and books cited in your text and recommended at the end of each chapter. The University Library has an impressive collection of books on the philosophy of art, and provides electronic access to a number of philosophy journals, including the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* and the *British Journal of Aesthetics*.

Assignments submitted late without explicit extensions or authorized excuses will receive a penalty of one letter grade (10%) per day late.

Papers will not be accepted via e-mail or fax.

Exams

There are two exams for this course: a midterm exam worth 20% of your grade, and a final exam worth 25% of your grade. The midterm exam will be held in class on Tuesday, March 8. The final exam will be held Friday, May 13, 4:30-7:00 pm.

Participation

The final 10% of your grade is your participation grade. Participation includes doing the assigned readings *before* the class in which the reading shall be discussed, taking active part in class discussion, and putting serious effort into your papers. Participation also includes attendance. For every class you miss without authorized excuse, your participation grade will be deducted 1 point (that is, 1% of your final grade, up to the 10% encompassed by the participation grade). See also “Classroom Courtesy” below.

Special Accommodations

- Students with disabilities that require special class or exam accommodations must present a form from AccessTECH Disability Support Program specifying the details during the first week of classes. Their offices are located in 335 West Hall. See www.accesstech.dsa.ttu.edu.
- You will not be penalized for any absences due to religious observances. However, it is your responsibility to inform me in advance of any intended absences for religious observance *as soon as possible* so that we can make other arrangements. As well, it remains your responsibility to have read the material assigned for that day and to obtain any notes from one of your classmates for classes missed.

Classroom Courtesy

Please be courteous to your fellow students and avoid unnecessary disruptions. Arrive on time, leave on time, and *turn off your cell phone during class*. Note that if your cell phone rings during class, *I will answer it*. Laptops are permitted in class, but please do not abuse this privilege. Text-messaging is *not* permitted during my class. If I see you text-messaging during class-time, your participation grade will be deducted 1 point. This is your only warning.

Academic Integrity and Irresponsibility

I take incidents of academic misconduct *very seriously*. These include but are not restricted to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and fabrication. Penalties are dependent on the nature of the misconduct, and may involve disciplinary proceedings with the Student Judicial Programs. Knowing what constitutes academic misconduct is *your responsibility*. If you have a concern about what constitutes academic dishonesty *prior to turning in an assignment*, please see me, and I will be happy to help you. For more information, see <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/studentjudicialprograms/academicinteg.php>.

The Writing Center

Particularly for new philosophy students, I strongly recommend that you work on your paper with a writing tutor. The Writing Center offers *free assistance* in room 175 of the Philosophy and English Building. See <http://english.ttu.edu/uwc01>.

Course Schedule

Topic	Date	Readings	Assignments
Introduction	(Th) Jan 21	<i>No Readings</i>	
Defining Art	(Tu) Jan 26	Chapter 1, §§I-III, pp. 17-22	
	(Th) Jan 28	Chapter 1, §§IV-V, pp. 22-27	
	(Tu) Feb 2	Chapter 1, §§VI-VII, pp. 27-34	
	(Th) Feb 4	Chapter 1, §§VIII-IX, pp. 34-40	
The Ontology of Art	(Tu) Feb 9	Chapter 2, §§I-III, pp. 45-54	
	(Th) Feb 11	Chapter 2, §§IV-V, pp. 54-63	
	(Tu) Feb 16	Chapter 2, §§VI-VII, pp. 63-68	
Interpretation and Intention	(Th) Feb 18	Chapter 3, §§I-III, pp. 72-78	
	(Tu) Feb 23	Chapter 3, §IV, pp. 78-83	
	(Th) Feb 25	Chapter 3, §§V-VI, pp. 83-90	
	(Tu) Mar 1	Chapter 3, §§VII-VIII, pp. 90-96	
Midterm Review	(Th) Mar 3	<i>No Readings</i>	
Midterm Examination	(Tu) Mar 8	<i>No Readings</i>	Paper #1 Due
Aesthetic Properties and Evaluation	(Th) Mar 10	Chapter 4, §§I-III, pp. 100-107	
	(Tu) Mar 22	Chapter 4, §§IV-V, pp. 107-116	
	(Th) Mar 24	Chapter 4, §§VI-VII, pp. 116-124	
	(Tu) Mar 29	<i>No Class</i>	
	(Th) Mar 31	<i>No Class</i>	
Emotions and the Arts	(Tu) Apr 5	Chapter 5, §§I-II, pp. 128-135	
	(Th) Apr 7	Chapter 5, §III, pp. 135-143	
	(Tu) Apr 12	Chapter 5, §IV, pp. 143-149	
Art and Morality	(Th) Apr 14	Chapter 6, §§I-II, pp. 153-161	
	(Tu) Apr 19	Chapter 6, §III, pp. 162-164	
	(Th) Apr 21	Chapter 6, §IV, pp. 165-170	
	(Tu) Apr 26	Chapter 6, §V, pp. 170-176	
Aesthetics Without Art	(Th) Apr 28	Chapter 7, §§1-II, pp.180-186	
	(Tu) May 3	Chapter 7, §§III-IV, pp. 186-196	
	(Th) May 5	Chapter 7, §V, pp. 196-202	
Final Review	(Tu) May 10	<i>No Readings</i>	Paper #2 Due

Final Exam scheduled for Friday, May 13, 4:30-7:00 pm.