

PHIL5314: CONTEMPORARY AESTHETICS

9:30-10:50 TR, Eng-Phil 264

Instructor

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Office hours: TR 11:00-12:30

Course Description

In this course, we will focus on contemporary philosophical problems in the arts, with particular focus on the interrelated roles played by art, artist, and audience, as well as by society at large. We will seek to answer such questions as: What makes art, art? How are the various arts different? How are they alike? Who is the artist? Who is the audience? Who determines what properties a work has, and if it is any good? Is art the proper subject of ethical inquiry? How should we think of government sponsorship and censorship of the arts?

Readings

Readings for this course will be available in PDF format on my website, www.tytoken.com. A ZIP file of all the readings can be provided on request to students with flash-drives.

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.

Assignments

You must complete two short assignments during the course of the term. One or both may be short (5-7 page) response papers on some particular reading(s) in the course. Papers are due within two weeks of that reading being discussed in class. Papers cannot be written on any of the final three readings in the class. In lieu of one response paper, you may elect to give a short (20-30 minute) presentation in class on the reading(s) to be discussed that day. Presentations should outline the reading and present issues for discussion. If you choose to do a presentation, you must provide at least one week's notice. Each short assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.

Term papers are due on the final day of class, and are worth 40% of your final grade. Papers should be between 15 and 20 pages in length and should be written on some topic covered in the course of the term. Students should make an appointment with me to discuss their papers earlier in the term.

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

Participation

The final 20% 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, putting serious effort into your papers, and attendance. 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 you are seen text-messaging during class-time, your participation grade will be deducted 1 point. This is your only warning.

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>.

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>.

Course Schedule

Topic	Date	Readings
Introduction	Thurs, Jan 14	<i>No readings</i>
What is Art?	Tues, Jan 19	Clive Bell, "Art as Significant Form"
	Thurs, Jan 21	Monroe C. Beardsley, "An Aesthetic Definition of Art"
	Tues, Jan 26	Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics"; Stephen Davies, "Weitz's Anti-Essentialism"
	Thurs, Jan 28	Arthur C. Danto, "The Artworld"
	Tues, Feb 2	George Dickie, "The New Institutional Theory of Art"
	Thurs, Feb 4	Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen, "Literary Practice"
	Tues, Feb 9	Jerrold Levinson, "Defining Art Historically"
Intention & Interpretation	Thurs, Feb 11	Anthony Savile, "The Test of Time"
	Tues, Feb 16	W.K. Wimsatt, Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley,

		“The Intentional Fallacy”; Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author”
	Thurs, Feb 18	Noël Carroll, “Art, Intention, and Conversation”
	Tues, Feb 23	E.D. Hirsch, Jr., “In Defense of the Author”
	Thurs, Feb 25	Jenefer Robinson, “Style and Personality in the Literary Work”
	Tues, Mar 2	Jerrold Levinson, “Intention and Interpretation in Literature”
	Thurs, Mar 4	Gregory Currie, “Work and Text”
	Tues, Mar 9	Robert Stecker, “The Constructivist’s Dilemma”
	Thurs, Mar 11	Berys Gaut, “Interpreting the Arts: A Patchwork Theory”
Spring Break	Tues, Mar 16	<i>No Classes</i>
Spring Break	Thurs, Mar 18	<i>No Classes</i>
The “Paradox” of Fiction	Tues, Mar 23	Plato, <i>Ion</i> ; Colin Radford, “How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?”
	Thurs, Mar 25	Eva Schaper, “Fiction and the Suspension of Disbelief”
	Tues, Mar 30	Kendall Walton, “Fearing Fictions”
	Thurs, Apr 1	Peter Lamarque, “How Can We Fear and Pity Fictions?”
	Tues, Apr 6	David Novitz, “Fiction, Imagination and Emotion”
Art and Society	Thurs, Apr 8	Mark Sagoff, “On the Aesthetic and Economic Value of Art”
	Tues, Apr 13	Berys Gaut, “The Ethical Criticism of Art”
	Thurs, Apr 15	Richard Serra, “Art and Censorship”; Mary Devereaux, “Protected Space: Politics, Censorship, and the Arts”
	Tues, Apr 20	Richard Shusterman, “Aesthetic Censorship: Censoring Art for Art’s Sake”
	Thurs, Apr 22	Noël Carroll, “Can Government Funding of the Arts Be Justified Theoretically?”
	Tues, Apr 27	Joel Feinberg, “Not with My Tax Money: The Problem of Justifying Government Subsidies for the Arts”
	Thurs, Apr 29	Ernest van den Haag, “Should the Government Subsidize the Arts?”
	Tues, May 4	Darren Hudson Hick, “Finding a Foundation: Copyright and the Creative Act”