

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER
ART 5336

Aesthetics and Criticism

T 6:00-8:40 p.m., FAC 1009
Spring Semester, 2009

Instructor: Dr. Jill E. Blondin

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Office: FAC 2019

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:20-10:50 a.m. and by appointment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The objective of this course is to acquaint graduate students with key concepts and critical theories in Western aesthetics and art history through reading assignments, leading class discussion, writing projects, and presentations. The class will investigate questions such as what is art? What methods are used to interpret works of art? How do we experience art? How do we learn from art?

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify major issues in the study of Western aesthetics
- Critically analyze scholarship in Western aesthetics and art history
- Articulate their knowledge and understanding of Western aesthetics
- Apply their knowledge about Western aesthetics to other fields of study

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Carolyn Korsmeyer (ed.), Aesthetics: The Big Questions, Blackwell Publishing, 1998.

Jerrold Levinson (ed.), The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics, Oxford, 2003.

Henry M. Sayre, Writing About Art, Prentice Hall, 6th ed., 2008.

Additional readings can be found on reserve in the library or will be distributed in class.

NOTE: Each student is expected to read AND to apprehend the assignments before each class meeting. If a student is not committed to completing these assignments, she or he should not take this class.

EXAMINATIONS: There will be no examinations in this class.

LECTURE CRITIQUE: All students must attend, "The Aesthetics of Fright: The Horror Film from Silents to 'Saw'," a lecture delivered by Dr. Rick Worland of Southern Methodist University (SMU) at **2 p.m. on Thursday, 5 March 2009**, and write a **3-4-page** critique of the talk. The short paper must summarize Dr. Worland's lecture as well as demonstrate an understanding of his argument and methodology. Students should also

indicate whether or not they agree with Dr. Worland. The lecture critique comprises 10% of the final grade and is due on **17 March 2009**. No late papers will be accepted. Listen closely and take good notes.

SEMESTER PROJECT: Details will be given in a separate handout.

PARTICIPATION: Individual participation is an integral part of this course. Participation comprises 40% of the final grade. *Since the class is conducted as a discussion and NOT as a lecture, it is expected that each student will contribute fully by asking questions and making comments.* To this end, each student is required to submit the thesis of EACH assigned article on the same sheet. Remember that the success of this class depends on the quality of this preparation.

LEAD CLASS DISCUSSION: Each graduate student is responsible for leading one class discussion. This assignment comprises 10% of your final grade.

COURSE GRADING:

Lecture Critique	10%
Semester Project	40%
Participation	40%
Lead Class Discussion	10%

DEADLINE FOR ALL REGISTRATIONS, SCHEDULE CHANGES, AND SECTION CHANGES: 26 JANUARY 2009

DROP DEADLINE FOR ALL FALL CLASSES: 25 MARCH 2009

GRADING SCALE:

100-98	A+	82-80	B-	69-67	D+
97-93	A	79-77	C+	66-63	D
92-90	A-	76-73	C	62-60	D-
89-87	B+	72-70	C-	59 ↓	F
86-83	B				

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated.

The following statement must accompany every assignment (**except the weekly questions**): "I have neither given nor received aid upon this assignment nor have I seen anyone else do so. This assignment is my work only; I have given credit to all of the sources that I have used." Each student is expected to place his or her signature and the date next to this statement and to return it to the professor. For papers, each student **MUST TYPE THIS STATEMENT ON THE COVER SHEET.**

PLAGIARISM OR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY OF ANY KIND WILL RESULT IN A GRADE OF "F" IN THIS COURSE.

Please consult A Student Guide to Conduct and Discipline at UT Tyler (available in the Office of Student Affairs) for university regulations regarding academic dishonesty: "3.22 Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

GRADE REPLACEMENT: If you are repeating this course for a grade replacement, you must file an intent to receive grade forgiveness with the registrar by the 12th day of class. Failure to file an intent to use grade forgiveness will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. A student will receive grade forgiveness (grade replacement) for only three (undergraduate student) or two (graduate student) course repeats during his/her career at UT Tyler. (2006-08 Catalog, p. 35)

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS: Students are expected to keep an extra hard copy of all assignments turned in to the professor. The professor will only accept **HARD COPIES** of written assignments. Do not e-mail any assignments to the professor.

CLASS NOTES: Students do not have permission to sell notes or tapes of class discussions.

FORMAT FOR ART HISTORY PAPERS: The format for all written assignments is outlined in a separate handout.

E-MAIL POLICY: Please feel free to e-mail me if you have a question, would like to set up an appointment, etc. All e-mails should be addressed to Dr. Blondin. During the semester, I will do my best to respond to e-mails within 24 hours of receiving them. Please note that I do not send grades to students via e-mail (this includes the final grade for the course).

BLACKBOARD: All course documents, including the syllabus and study sheets, will be available on Blackboard.

HANDOUTS: There will be several handouts distributed during the semester (including articles, assignments, study sheets, the "Format for Art History Papers", and the course syllabus). It is your responsibility to keep track of these papers. If you need to replace any course handouts, please consult another student in the class or check Blackboard. The professor will not issue extra copies.

CELL PHONES, LAPTOP COMPUTERS, AND OTHER PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES: All cell phones and portable electronic devices (iPods, handheld computers, etc.) must be turned off during class. If a phone rings during class, the student will be asked to leave for the remainder of class and will be considered absent for the day. Students are not permitted to use laptop computers to take notes.

LASER POINTERS: Students are not permitted to bring laser pointers to class.

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/StudentRightsandResponsibilities.html>

GRADE REPLACEMENT/FORGIVENESS: If you are repeating this course for a grade replacement, you must file an intent to receive grade forgiveness with the registrar by the 12th day of class. Failure to do so will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates will receive grade forgiveness (grade replacement) for only three course repeats; graduates, for two course repeats during his/her career at UT Tyler.

STATE-MANDATED COURSE DROP POLICY: Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the 12th day of class (See Schedule of Classes for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule include, but are not limited to, the following: totally withdrawing from the university; being administratively dropped from a course; dropping a course for a personal emergency; dropping a course for documented change of work schedule; or dropping a course for active duty service with the U.S. armed forces or Texas National Guard. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Registrar's Office and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Registrar's Office if you have any questions.

DISABILITY SERVICES: In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodation must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Support Services counselor. If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact Ida MacDonald in the Disability Support Services office in UC 282, or call (903) 566-7079.

STUDENT ABSENCE DUE TO RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE: Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

STUDENT ABSENCE FOR UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED EVENTS AND

ACTIVITIES: If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND FERPA STATEMENT: It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Tentative Schedule of Discussions, Reading Assignments, and Due Dates

Readings from Korsmeyer are in **BOLD**

Readings from Levinson are *ITALICIZED*

Jan. 13 Course Objectives and Overview
****SEMESTER PROJECT ASSIGNED****

Jan. 20 What is Aesthetics? The History of Modern Aesthetics

Reading: **Korsmeyer, 1-11**; *Levinson, "Philosophical Aesthetics: An Overview," 3-24*;
Paul Guyer, "History of Modern Aesthetics," 25-60

Jan. 27 What is Art?

Reading: *Robert Stecker, "Definition of Art," 136-154*; **John Dewey, "The Live Creature," 9-18**; **Arthur C. Danto, "The Artworld," 33-44**; **Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, "Crafty Women and the Hierarchy of the Arts," 44-55**; **Karen Hanson, "Dressing Down Dressing Up: the Philosophic Fear of Fashion," 59-71**

Feb. 3 Ontology/Medium; Representation in Art

Reading: *Stephen Davies, "Ontology of Art," 155-180*; *David Davies, "Medium in Art, 181-191*; **Plato, from The Republic, 184-194**; *Alan H. Goldman, "Representation in Art," 192-210*

Feb. 10 How Do We Encounter Art? Expression and Style in Art
****VISUAL ANALYSIS (SEMESTER PROJECT #1) DUE****

Reading: **Jerome Stolnitz, "The Aesthetic Attitude," 76-83**; **Marcia Muelder Eaton, "Locating the Aesthetic," 84-91**; **Hans-Georg Gadamer, from Truth and**

Method, 91-97; Gary Iseminger, "Aesthetic Experience," 99-116; Aaron Ridley, "Expression in Art," 211-227; Stephanie Ross, "Style in Art," 228-244; Lionel Shriver, "Missing the Mark," The Wall Street Journal, October 25-26, 2008, p. W3 (professor will distribute)

Feb. 17 Beauty in Art; How is Art Presented to the Public?

Reading: Nick Zangwill, "Beauty," 325-343; Gene Weingarten, "Pearls for Breakfast" (article from washingtonpost.com, 8 April 2007, professor will distribute); **Kevin Melchionne, "Artistic Dropouts," 98-103; Hilde Hein, "Museums: From Object to Experience," 103-15; Carol Duncan, "The MoMA's Hot Mamas," 115-27; Arthur C. Danto, "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial," 127-132**

Feb. 24 Aesthetic Evaluation: the Case of Richard Serra's Tilted Arc; Art & Politics
**** BIBLIOGRAPHY (SEMESTER PROJECT #2) DUE ****

Reading: **David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste," 135-150; Pierre Bourdieu, From Distinction, 150-155; Robert Stecker, "Value in Art, 207-224; Alan Wallach, "Editorial: Which Way the Tilted Arc?" 1985, in Patricia Hills, Modern Art in the USA: Issues and Controversies of the 20th Century, 442-445 (professor will distribute); Peggy Zeglin Brand, "Disinterestedness and Political Art," 155-171; Lydia Goehr, "Art and Politics," 471-485**

Mar. 3 High and Low Art: Aesthetics of the Everyday; The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

Reading: **Ted Cohen, "High and Low Thinking about High and Low Art," 171-177; David Novitz, "Aesthetics of Popular Art, 733-747; Crispin Sartwell, "Aesthetics of the Everyday," 761-770; Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 219-253 (professor will distribute)**

Mar. 5 **DR. RICK WORLAND'S LECTURE AT 2 PM**

Reading (in preparation for lecture and assignment): *Berys Gaut, "Film," 627-643; Michael Norman, "Carnage and Glory, Legends and Lies," 208-213; Noël Carroll, from The Philosophy of Horror, 274-283; Cynthia A. Freeland, "Realist Horror," 283-293*

Mar. 10 **NO CLASS/SPRING BREAK**

Mar. 17 The Aesthetics of Film; Horror in Art; discussion of Dr. Worland's talk and the reading from 5 March
****LECTURE CRITIQUE DUE****

Mar. 24 Tragedy and the Sublime in Art
ARTICLE CRITIQUE (SEMESTER PROJECT #3) DUE

Reading: Aristotle, from the Poetics, 231-236; Friedrich Nietzsche, from The Birth of Tragedy, 236-243; Aaron Ridley, "Tragedy," 408-420; Edmund Burke, from A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, 255-264; Immanuel Kant, "Analytic of the Sublime," from the Critique of Judgment, 264-273

Mar. 31 Painting, Architecture, Sculpture

Reading: Susan L. Feagin, "Paintings and Their Places," 213-222; Feagin, "Painting," 516-535; Gordon Graham, "Architecture," 555-571; Robert Hopkins, "Sculpture," 572-582, Witold Rybczynski, "When Buildings Try Too Hard," Wall Street Journal, 22 November 2008

April 7 Genius and Creativity

Reading: Philip Alperson, "Creativity in Art," 245-257; Immanuel Kant, from the Critique of Judgment, 298-305; Chuck Klosterman, "The DJ Auteur," New York Times Magazine, 18 June 2006; William E. Wallace, "Michelangelo, CEO," New York Times, 16 April 1994; Malcolm Gladwell, "Late Bloomers: Why do we equate genius with precocity?" The New Yorker, 20 October 2008 (professor will distribute all three articles)

April 14 Gender and Creativity; Feminism and Art History and Aesthetics
CORRECTED BIBLIOGRAPHIES DUE

Reading: Christine Battersby, from Gender and Genius, 305-314; Fredrika Jacobs, "Woman's Capacity to Create: the Unusual Case of Sofonisba Anguissola," Renaissance Quarterly 47 (1994): 74-101 (professor will distribute); Linda Nochlin, "Why Are There No Great Women Artists?" 314-23; Mary Devereaux, "Feminist Aesthetics," 647-666

April 21 The Role of the Artist; Interpretation in Art

Reading: Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" 324-332; Michael Baxandall, "Truth and Other Cultures," 338-344; Gregory Currie, "Interpretation in Art," 291-306

April 28 Art and Emotion; Art and Morality; CONCLUSION
INTERPRETATION (SEMESTER PROJECT #4) DUE

Reading: Alex Neil, "Art and Emotion," 421-435; Matthew Kieran, "Art and Morality," 451-470