Aesthetics Honours: Spring Semester 2021

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Course Description
The course will examine theories of beauty, the arts and the aesthetic in contemporary thinkers, while also considering historical treatments of these topics. Topics discussed will include aesthetic experience, beauty, art, the aesthetics of nature, literary interpretation, forgery, art and morality, and art and emotion.

Teaching will consist of online recorded lectures, and a weekly tutorial, for which there will be six groups, including an online group. Lectures will be the equivalent of two 50 minute lectures weekly, and will be released by noon on Thursday in each week. Students should read the primary reading each week before watching the lectures.

Tutorials begin in week 2. Attendance at tutorials is required. Times and places of tutorials are:
- Tuesday, 15.10, Rooms 3.10-11, Dugald Stewart Building,
- Wednesday, 11.10, Rooms 3.10-11, Dugald Stewart Building,
- Thursday, 12.10, online.
- Thursday, 14.10, Auditorium, Chaplaincy Centre.
- Friday, 13.10, Auditorium, Chaplaincy Centre.
- Friday, 14.10, Auditorium, Chaplaincy Centre.
Each tutorial will focus on the themes of the previous week's lectures.

Assessment.
Assessment will consist of:
- A midterm essay of no more than 1500 words (40%), due by noon on Thursday 25th February. Recommended questions will be announced on Monday 18th January.
- A final essay of no more than 2500 words (55%), due by noon on Thursday 15th April. Recommended questions will be announced on Monday 1st March.
- A participation element (5%): this will be based on attendance, engagement and contributions in tutorials. Tutors will announce more details at the beginning of term.

Lecture and tutorial content.
Two main readings are listed for each topic, which all should read before watching the lectures: these will also be used as a starting-point for discussion in tutorials. Most primary reading is available online through the University Library: where possible, it will also be made available on Learn. Additional reading, for those wishing to develop their knowledge of a topic further, will be recommended in the course of the term.

Week 1 Part 1. Introduction to Aesthetics.
(No required reading.)

Week 1 Part 2. Art: traditional theories (imitation, expression etc.).
1. C. Lyas, Aesthetics, Ch. 3.

Week 2. Art: institutional and artworld theories.
Week 3. Aesthetic experience and the aesthetic attitude.

Week 4. Beauty (and other aesthetic values).

Week 5. The aesthetics of nature.

2. J. Levinson, ‘Intention and Interpretation in Literature’. (In Levinson, The Pleasures of Aesthetics; will be available on Learn.)

Week 7. Art and morality.

Week 8. Forgery.
1. N. Goodman, Languages of Art, Ch. 3. (Will be available on Learn.)


Week 10. Tragedy and emotion.

Week 11 Part 1. A topic from historical aesthetics.
(This topic will not be examinable. The class will have some input into choice of topic.)

Week 11 Part 2. Overview of the course.
(Students will be invited to send in questions they would like to see discussed.)

Further recommended readings:
(Those available online through the University Library are listed first, but some are available only in print.)

Introductory works.
C. Lyas, Aesthetics. (Online.)
A. Sheppard, Aesthetics.
G. Graham, Philosophy of the Arts: an Introduction to Aesthetics.

Collections: (these contain many of the works listed above, as well as being generally useful).
P. Lamarque and S. Olsen, Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art. (Online)
J. Levinson, *Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*. (Online.)
D. Cooper, *Classic Readings in Aesthetics.*
A. Neill and A. Ridley, *Arguing about Art.*
O. Hanfling, *Philosophical Aesthetics; an Introduction.*

**Reference work (in encyclopaedia form).**
D. Cooper, ed., *A Companion to Aesthetics*. (Online.)