

Phil 366: Art and the Mind-Brain
Fall 2020

Meeting Time: MW 1-2:20
Mode of Instruction: Synchronous online
Instructor: Dr. Zoe Jenkin
Email: zoejenkin@wustl.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10-12, by appointment (online)

Course Description: In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the bearing of cognitive science on the perception and understanding of art. This interest has roots in tradition: historically, art, aesthetics, and vision science have often been linked. But the growth of knowledge in cognitive science has opened up new opportunities for understanding art and addressing philosophical questions. The converse is also true. The production, perception, and understanding of art are human capacities that can shed light on the workings of the mind and brain. This course considers questions such as: What is aesthetic experience? How do pictures represent? Does art express emotion? Can we learn from fiction? What is artistic expertise, and how do we cultivate it?

Format: We will meet synchronously on Zoom twice a week for lecture and discussion. Course materials, announcements, Zoom links, grading rubrics, discussion board, and office hours scheduling can all be found on the Canvas site. Office hours will be scheduled by appointment, with available times listed in advance.

Course Goals:

- You'll develop a working knowledge of some of the major topics in aesthetics and philosophy of mind.
- You'll become familiar with the experimental methodologies in the psychology of art.
- You'll hone your abilities to understand and explain theories, arguments, and empirical results.
- You'll learn to use empirical data to critically assess philosophical theories.
- You'll learn to construct arguments that incorporate both empirical and theoretical considerations.
- You'll develop your own views on how the human mind processes art and derives meaning.

Requirements:

Readings: There is a reading assignment for each class meeting. Readings include both philosophy and psychology articles, as well as both historical and contemporary texts. The lectures will presuppose familiarity with the assigned reading, so be sure to complete the assigned reading in advance of each lecture. Most of the readings are fun and captivating, but they can also be argumentatively tricky. I suggest reading each article twice, and taking notes on the most important considerations each author offers in support of their view.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. You are required to attend each meeting synchronously, unless in case of illness or another legitimate excuse. Any unexcused absences will detract from your attendance and participation grade. If you miss class, please

let me know as soon as possible (in advance if it is a pre-scheduled absence) and I can provide you with a recording of the course meeting.

Participation: We will have regular question and answer periods and group work during our meetings. If you do not feel comfortable asking questions in lecture, let me know and we can work out a substitute of additional participation in the Canvas discussion board (see below).

Discussion Board: We will use the Canvas discussion board to supplement discussion. We will use the Canvas discussion board to supplement discussion. Each week there will be a topic posted on **Wednesday**. It may be a question about the reading, a request for your own questions, a request for examples, or an open-ended topic. You are required to contribute one comment per week, by the following **Wednesday at midnight**. It can be as short as a sentence or as long as a paragraph.

Papers: There will be three papers for the course. Paper assignments will be distributed two-weeks in advance of the due date. The papers will be 1,000-1,500 words. There will be opportunities for peer-review throughout the semester. All papers should clearly and concisely argue for a position. You'll also submit a cover letter for each paper, including an abstract, your take on the strengths and weaknesses of the paper, and the improvements you've made from previous work.

Grading:

Attendance and participation: 10%
Discussion Board: 10%
Paper 1: 25%
Paper 2: 25%
Paper 3: 30%

Course Policies:

Academic Integrity: The WashU Academic Integrity Policy can be found at <https://wustl.edu/about/compliance-policies/academic-policies/undergraduate-student-academic-integrity-policy/>. Please read it in full. Students who violate the academic integrity policy will receive an F on any plagiarized work and risk failing the course.

Collaboration: While all work submitted should be your own, you should feel free to discuss ideas with your classmates, read each other's paper drafts, and offer feedback. Some of the best philosophy happens this way. If you use an idea that originates with a classmate, you can cite them in your paper.

Late Papers: For each day a paper is late, it will lose 1/3 of a grade (e.g. from A- to B+). After 10 days I will not accept late papers.

Extensions: Extensions will be granted for good reasons. Good reasons include illness, family issues, multiple simultaneous deadlines for other courses, and job interviews. If you ask for an extension well in advance (i.e. 2-3 days before the deadline), I will be more willing to grant it. In any event, please email or talk to me rather than just turning in the paper late.

Email: You are welcome to email me with questions about the course, but I won't discuss substantive philosophical issues over email. For such discussions, set up a time to meet in office hours.

Zoom Etiquette:

- 1) Mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- 2) Leave your camera on whenever possible. This helps everyone stay engaged, and improves discussion. It is fine to turn your camera off occasionally for a quick stretch break or snack, if you'd like privacy.
- 3) Limit distractions during class by turning off notifications on your computer and phone, just as you would during an in-person class.
- 4) Use the chat to raise your hand for questions. I will pause at dedicated points during lecture to answer questions, but it is fine to raise your hand any time.

Texts:

The following three books are available at the bookstore:

- 1) Winner, Ellen. *How Art Works*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- 2) Hume, David. *Selected Essays*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- 3) Carroll, Noel. *The Philosophy of Horror, or, Paradoxes of the Heart*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

The rest of the readings will be available on Canvas. If you have logistical or financial trouble obtaining the books, let me know and I can help find a solution.

Schedule:

Unit 1: Art and Experience

Mon., Sept. 14 Introduction

Wed., Sept. 16 Winner, *How Art Works*, ch. 1, "Perennial Questions" and ch. 2, "Can this be Art?"

Mon., Sept. 21 Liao, Meskin, & Knobe, "Dual Character Art Concepts"

Wed., Sept. 23 Dickie, "The Myth of the Aesthetic Attitude"

Mon., Sept. 28 Nanay, *Aesthetics as Philosophy of Perception*, ch. 2, "Distributed Attention"

Wed., Sept. 30 De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, "The Pleasures of Opium"

Paper 1 Assignment Distributed

Mon., Oct. 5 Sontag, "Against Interpretation"

Unit 2: The Eye of the Beholder

Wed., Oct. 7 Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, "Introduction: The Riddle of Style"

Mon., Oct. 12 Walton, "Categories of Art"

Wed., Oct. 14 Stokes, "Cognitive Penetration and the Perception of Art"
Paper 1 Due

Mon., Oct. 19 Barwich, "Up the Nose of the Beholder?"

Wed., Oct. 21 Reber, Schwarz, & Winkielman, "Processing Fluency and Aesthetic Pleasure: Is Beauty in the Perceiver's Processing Experience?"

Unit 3: Emotion and Purpose

Mon., Oct. 26 Winner, *How Art Works*, ch. 3, "Wordless Sounds"

Wed., Oct. 28 Hume, *Selected Essays*, "Of Tragedy"

Mon., Nov. 2 "Of Tragedy" continued
Paper 2 Assignment Distributed

Wed., Nov. 4 Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror*, ch. 1, "The Definition of Horror," 12-35.

Mon., Nov. 9 Carroll, *The Philosophy of Horror*, ch. 4., "Why Horror?" subsection "The Paradox of Horror," 159-161 and 178-190.

Wed., Nov. 11 Shimamura, "Muybridge in Motion"

Mon., Nov. 16 Winner, *How Art Works*, ch. 13, "The Lives of Others: Fiction and Empathy"
Paper 2 Due

Wed., Nov. 18 Pinker, *How the Mind Works*, ch. 8, "The Meaning of Life: Arts and Entertainment," 521-545.

Unit 4: Evaluation and Criticism

Mon., Nov. 23 No reading- watch *Exit Through the Gift Shop* in class

Wed., Nov. 25 No reading- *Exit Through the Gift Shop* discussion

Mon., Nov. 30 Matthen, "New Prospects for Aesthetic Hedonism"

Wed., Dec. 2 Hume, *Selected Essays*, "Of the Standard of Taste"

Paper 3 Assignment Distributed

Mon., Dec. 7 Lopes, “Feckless Reason”

Wed., Dec 9 Kolbel, “Faultless Disagreement”

Mon., Dec. 14 Winner, *How Art Works*, ch. 10, “Identical! What’s Wrong with a Perfect Fake?”

Wed. Dec. 16 Riggle, *On Being Awesome: A Unified Theory of How Not to Suck*, chs. 1 and 2

Paper 3 Due

University-Wide Policies

COVID-19

Any Danforth Campus student who is **currently diagnosed with COVID-19, is experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or has had direct contact with a person with a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 diagnosis must remain home and isolate themselves from others.** Students who have symptoms and/or do not pass the screening protocol described below must call the Habif Health and Wellness Center at 314-935-6666 for additional instructions.

Statement on Military Service Leave

Washington University recognizes that students serving in the U.S. Armed Forces and their family members may encounter situations where military service forces them to withdraw from a course of study, sometimes with little notice. Students may contact the Office of Military and Veteran Services at (314) 935-2609 or veterans@wustl.edu and their academic dean for guidance and assistance. See: <https://veterans.wustl.edu/policies/policy-for-military-students/>.

Preferred Names and Gender Inclusive Pronouns

In order to affirm each person’s gender identity and lived experiences, it is important that we ask and check in with others about pronouns. This simple effort can make a profound difference in a person’s experience of safety, respect, and support. See: <https://students.wustl.edu/gender-pronouns-information/> , <https://registrar.wustl.edu/student-records/ssn-name-changes/preferred-name/>

Reporting Sexual Assault

If a student discusses or discloses an instance of sexual assault, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if a faculty member otherwise observes or becomes aware of such an allegation, they will keep the information as private as possible, but as a faculty member of Washington University, they are required to immediately report it to the Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University’s Title IX Director, at (314) 935-3118, jwkennedy@wustl.edu. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555. Students who wish to speak with a confidential resource may wish to reach out to the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) at 935-8761 or by visiting the fourth floor of Seigle Hall.

Accommodations for Sexual Assault

The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations (e.g., a no-contact order, course changes) to students who are victims of relationship or sexual violence, regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. If you a student needs to request such accommodations, please have them contact the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) at rsvpcenter@wustl.edu or (314) 935-3445 to schedule an appointment with an RSVP confidential and licensed counselor. Information shared with counselors is confidential. However, requests for accommodations will be coordinated with the appropriate University administrators and faculty.

Accommodations for Disabled Students

Washington University in St. Louis supports the rights of enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity and, in compliance with federal, state, and local requirements, is committed to reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities. Disabled students for whom accommodations may be necessary must be registered with, and provide their instructors official notification through, WUSTL's **Disability Resources** (<https://students.wustl.edu/disability-resources/>). Once established, responsibility for disability-related accommodations and access is shared by DR, faculty, and the student. Please contact Disability Resources at 314.935.5970 or disabilityresources@wustl.edu.

Emergency Preparedness

Before an emergency, familiarize yourself with the building(s) that you frequent. Know the layout, including exit locations, stairwells and the Emergency Assembly Point (EAP). Review the "Quick Guide for Emergencies" that is found near the door in many classrooms for specific emergency information and instructions. For additional Information and EAP maps, visit emergency.wustl.edu. To ensure that you receive emergency notifications, make sure your information and cell phone number is updated in SIS, and/or download. The WUSTL app and enable notifications.

To report an emergency:

Danforth Campus: (314) 935-5555

School of Medicine Campus: (314) 362-4357 North/West/South and Off Campus: 911 then (314) 935-5555

Resources:

Disability Resources

At Washington University we strive to make the academic experience accessible and inclusive. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact Disability Resources at 314.935.5970, disabilityresources@wustl.edu, or visit our website for information about requesting academic accommodations. See: <https://students.wustl.edu/disability-resources/>.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center, located in Olin Library, offers free one-on-one writing tutorials to WashU students, as well as workshops designed to help students become better writers. The Writing Center staff can assist by providing feedback on the strength of an argument, clarity, and organization. Contact them at 935-4981 or writing@wustl.edu.

The Learning Center

The Learning Center works collaboratively with University partners to provide undergraduate students key resources, like academic peer mentoring, to enhance their academic progress. Contact them at learningcenter.wustl.edu to find out what support they may offer for your classes.

Mental Health Services

Mental Health Services' professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect a student's academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends and family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. For more information, visit: www.students.wustl.edu/mental-health-services/.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP)

The Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) offers support for those who have experienced sexual violence, sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking. RSVP can help those who are not sure what steps they wish to take to respond to their experiences. They offer confidential support and can help arrange for necessary classroom accommodations. To get help, contact the RSVP Center at 935-3445 or rsvpcenter@wustl.edu. Their office is located in Seigle Hall, Suite 435.

Bias Report and Support System (BRSS)

The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff, and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias, prejudice, or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University's Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. To report an instance of bias, visit www.brss.wustl.edu.

WashU Cares

WashU Cares, within the Health and Wellness Unit, provides resources to all students on the Danforth Campus who may be having a hard time. WashU Cares is committed to helping create a culture of caring. Through proactive, collaborative, and systemic approaches, they work with students to identify interventions, resources, and supports that allow them to be successful. If there is a concern about the physical or mental well-being of a student, please file a report on their website. See: <https://washucares.wustl.edu/>.

Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI)

The Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) supports and advocates for undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students from underrepresented and/or marginalized populations, collaborates with campus and community partners, and promotes dialogue and social change to cultivate and foster a supportive campus climate for students of all backgrounds, cultures, and identities. See: <https://diversityinclusion.wustl.edu/>