

PROBLEMS IN AESTHETICS: THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE UGLY

Different philosophical traditions understood ugliness as either the “opposite” or “negative” of beauty, or as an “imperfection” or “disharmony” associated with “spiritual ugliness” or moral turpitude. But can ugliness be a pure aesthetic category, an aesthetic value independent of moral values? How is ugliness different from disgust? How does it differ from sublimity, an aesthetic category also associated with negative feelings? Although this course is primarily an exploration in the history of aesthetics it also addresses the issues in contemporary aesthetic theories because it raises the question about the relationship between ugliness and modernity, the question of whether modern and contemporary art presuppose ugliness rather than beauty.

Instructor: Prof. Lara Ostaric (lostaric@temple.edu)

Required Texts (available on Canvas unless ordered through the bookstore):

1. Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry Concerning Beauty, Order, Harmony, Design*, ed. by Peter Kivy, Nijhof, 1973.
2. Alexander Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry*, eds. Karl Aschenbrenner and William Holther, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1954.
3. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
4. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer, trans. Guyer/Matthews, Cambridge University Press, 2000.
5. Kant, *Lectures on Anthropology*, ed. by A.W. Wood and R.B. Louden, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012.
6. Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. Robert B. Louden, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007.
7. Lessing, "Laocoon or On the Limits of Painting and Poetry", in *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Winckelmann, Lessing, Haman, Herder, Schiller, Goethe*, ed. by H.B. Nisbet, Cambridge University Press, 1985.
8. Schiller, *Aesthetic Education of Mankind*, Dover Publications, Inc. 2004.
9. Schiller, "Letter to Goethe, July 07, 1797 in *Correspondence Between Schiller and Goethe from 1794 to 1805*, Peter Lang International Academic Publishers.
10. Friedrich Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, SUNY Press.
11. *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, Clarendon, Oxford.
12. Bernard Bosanquet, "The Aesthetic Theory of Ugliness," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1891.
13. Karl Rosenkranz, *Aesthetics of Ugliness: A Critical Translation*, trans. and ed. by Andrei Pop and Mechtild Widrich, London/New York, Bloomsbury, 2015.
14. Andrei Pop/Mechtild Widrich (eds.), *Ugliness: The Non-Beautiful in Art and Theory*, London: Pallgrave Macmillan, 2014.
15. Theodore W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, University of Minnesota Press, 2004.
16. Arthur C. Danto, *The Abuse of Beauty*, Open Court, 2003.
17. Caroline Korsmeyer, *Savoring Disgust*, Oxford University Press, 2011.

Books Ordered Through the Bookstore:

1. Schiller, *Aesthetic Education of Mankind*, Dover Publications, Inc. 2004.
2. Friedrich Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*, SUNY Press.
3. Arthur C. Danto, *The Abuse of Beauty*, Open Court, 2003.
4. Karl Rosenkranz, *Aesthetics of Ugliness: A Critical Translation*, trans. and ed. by Andrei Pop and Mechtild Widrich, London/New York, Bloomsbury, 2015.

COURSE REQUIRMENTS:

(1) Paper(s) (60%):

You have the option of writing either (1) 2 papers each approx. 3000 words long, using only the readings for the course OR (2) 1 longer paper, approx. 5000 words long with additional research of the secondary literature on your topic.

(2) 10 1-page response papers (25)%:

Your 1-page papers should consist of a short exposition and an evaluation of the author's main ideas. The papers are always on the readings for the upcoming class.

(3) Attendance and Participation (15%):

You are expected to come to class regularly, on time, prepared and ready for discussion. Attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend for some legitimate reason (e.g. illness, family emergency) you must notify me in advance. Excuses after the fact will not be accepted. You can have up to two unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence will negatively affect your participation grade and your final grade.

Attendance Policy:

I will be taking attendance at each class. Students who must be absent from a class should inform me by email prior to the class that they will miss. More than 2 unexcused absences will negatively affect your participation grade. I reserve the right to fail any student with excessive absences (more than 4 absences). Late arrival or early departure will count as half an absence unless excused before the beginning of class.

Academic Honesty:

All students are expected to be familiar with Temple University's policies on academic honesty. For reference, see the "Temple University Student Code of Conduct" at <http://policies.temple.edu> (policy number 03.70.02)

Academic Rights and Responsibilities Policy:

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has adopted the policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities posted at <http://policies.temple.edu> (policy number 03.70.02)

Incomplete Policy:

I follow the incomplete policy of the College of Liberal Arts. It is stated at <http://www.temple.edu/cla/Advising/Faculty/incomplete.asp>

Incompletes are granted only in documented cases of interfering circumstances beyond the student's control (such as illness, disability or family emergency). Incomplete contracts should be completed and signed preferably by the last day of classes.

Disability Statement:

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirement for participation. Any student who has a need for special accommodation because of a disability should contact me to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. I will work with Disability Resources and Services (215-204-1280; 100 Ritter Annex) to coordinate

reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Please register with Disability Resources and Services *in advance*, if you have a relapsing/remitting disability and there is a possibility it may interfere with your work this semester.

Schedule of Readings:

I THE FORMALISM OF UGLINESS

- Week 1 01/14 Hutcheson, *Inquiry*
 01/16 Hutcheson, *Inquiry*
- Week 2 01/21 Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry*
 01/23 Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry*
- Week 3 01/28 Kant, *KU*
 01/30 Kant, Lectures on Anthropology

II UGLINESS AND SUBLIMITY

- Week 4 02/04 Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry*
 02/06 Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry*

III UGLINESS AND GENRE

- Week 5 02/11 Lessing, *Laocoon*
 02/13 Lessing, *Laocoon*
- Week 6 02/18 Lessing, *Laocoon*

IV UGLINESS AND MORALITY

- 02/23 Schiller, "On the Aesthetic Education of Mankind"
- Week 7 02/25 Schiller, "On the Aesthetic Education of Mankind"
 02/27 Schiller, "On the Aesthetic Education of Mankind;"
 Schiller, "Letter to Goethe, July 07, 1797"

- Week 8 03/03 SPRING BREAK
 03/05 SPRING BREAK

V UGLINESS AND MODERNITY

- Week 9 03/10 Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*
 03/12 Schlegel, *On the Study of Greek Poetry*

Week 10 03/17 Hegel, *Lectures on Aesthetics*, selections from Introduction
 03/19 Hegel, *Lectures on Aesthetics*, selections from Introduction

Week 11 03/24 Bosanquet, "The Aesthetic Theory of Ugliness"
 03/26 Rosenkranz, *Aesthetics of Ugliness*

Week 12 03/31 Rosenkranz, *Aesthetics of Ugliness*
 04/02 Rosenkranz, *Aesthetic of Ugliness*

Week 13 04/07 Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*
 04/09 Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*

VI CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON UGLINESS

Week 14 04/14 Danto, *The Abuse of Beauty*
 04/16 Danto, *The Abuse of Beauty*

Week 15 04/21 Korsmeyer, *Savoring Disgust*
 04/23 Korsmeyer, *Savoring Disgust*