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MARCIA MUELDER EATON

Chapter 1 : Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art : Matthew Kieran :

Eros, Beauty, and Ugliness. Ken-Ichi Sasaki - - Nordic Journal of Aesthetics 19 (35).

Against Enlightened Empiricism David Davies. References and Suggested Reading. Terrible Beauties Carolyn Korsmeyer. A Question of Content Noel Carroll. Art and Cognition Berys Gaut. Cognitive Values in the Arts: Marking the Boundaries Peter Lamarque. Weinberg and Aaron Meskin. There are no Aesthetic Principles Alan H. Matthew Kieran How are artistic experience and value inter-related? Aesthetic Empiricism and the Challenge of Fakes and Ready-mades: Beauty and Ugliness in and out of Context: A Question of Content: The Aesthetic State of Mind: Gary Iseminger References and Suggested Reading Should we value works as art for what we can learn from them? Visual Communication and the Nature of Depiction: The Domain of Depiction: Musical Expressiveness as Hearability-As-Expression: Jerrold Levinson References and Suggested Reading In what ways is the imagination involved in engaging with art works? Genuine Rational Fictional Emotions: Derek Matravers References and Suggested Reading Is artistic intention relevant to the interpretation of art works? Interpretation and the Problem of the Relevant Intention: Nathan References and Suggested Reading Are there general principles of evaluation? There are no Aesthetic Principles: Iron, Leather and Critical Principles: George Dickie References and Suggested Reading What are the relations between the moral and aesthetic values of art? Artistic Value and Opportunistic Moralism: Ethical Criticism and The Vice of Moderation: The accessibility of these discussions makes them ideal for classroom use, while their range and depth make them equally of interest to philosophers who work in the field. It also provides an excellent central text for a cutting-edge course on the subject. These lively debates by some of today? The accessibility of these discussions makes them ideal for classroom use, while their range and depth make them equally of interest to philosophers who work in the field.? Susan Feagin, Temple University? By virtue of its astute selection of topics and distinguished contributors, this volume will help to advance debate on a number of central issues in contemporary aesthetics. It also provides an excellent central text for a cutting-edge course on the subject.? Paisley Livingston, Lingnan University.

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Topics addressed include the nature of beauty, aesthetic experience, artistic value, and the nature of our emotional responses to art. Each question is treated by a pair of opposing essays written by eminent scholars, and especially commissioned for the volume.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers. No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Bloomsbury Academic or the author. Jacobs, Jason editor of compilation. Peacock, Steven, editor of compilation. Generally, those scholars working comfortably under its aegis take the attitude that television has the potential for artistic integrity and achievement, and regard a range of though not all television programmes as worthy of the kind of study that closely examines aspects of style. Further, in an important sense, the term functions as a signifier of difference and distinctiveness within the field of television studies, wherein approaches that focus on sociological, ideological and broader cultural matters, but which neglect stylistic analysis and reject aesthetic evaluation, have been historically dominant. The term takes on a declarative function. The essay is, of course, far from comprehensive. It tackles a handful of the most pressing questions for the field of television aesthetics, and raises some possible avenues for future exploration. Media studies versus television aesthetics At this time, television aesthetics is undertaken solely within television studies, and has made no incursion into philosophical aesthetics. As the topic gains greater visibility, perhaps we will encounter concern or objections from aestheticians regarding the appropriateness of taking such an approach to television, but as it stands the wariest responses to this nascent field come from within television studies itself – especially from those scholars working comfortably within the traditions of media and cultural studies. While an increasing number of scholars embrace the fresh perspective and opportunities inherent within television aesthetics, there is also distrust from some quarters. In a subject area that, generally speaking, exhibits an easy-going, all-embracing pluralism, television aesthetics triggers exceptionally strong objections from its dissenters. This is not the place to explore or respond to his arguments in detail, but a necessarily cursory summary highlights some important points. First, he offers a conceptual proposition: This essay does not examine or engage with his argument in detail; it is not a refutation. Second, building on this characterisation of television aesthetics, he moves to his overriding argument, which is a widespread ideological concern: It must be observed that the popular aesthetics he recommends is not so new: It is also noteworthy that when Hills approvingly cites specific philosophers, they are of the continental, rather than analytical Anglo-American school: Deleuze is a particular favourite. Just as in philosophy itself, the continental approach is presented as not only alternative but even oppositional, and is characterized as more post modern, pluralist and politically correct than the analytic version. More broadly, sceptical scholars fear that aspects of aesthetics are reactionary, harking back to old methods and values that have no place in the study of a popular, mass medium. Formal analysis suggests a carrying over of concerns from literary and visual arts scholarship, with a tendency towards a finessing of points about aesthetic organisation that might be judged as only of marginal, elaborative interest on an agenda defined by political and sociological investigation, some of it carrying a sense of urgency. Power, Form and Subjectivity Manchester: Manchester University Press, , The term itself was in circulation in the late s, but demarcated a very different object: The approach as we now recognize it was being taught by Jason Jacobs at the University of Warwick from to , within the context of a film aesthetics course, during which time some initial work was also published by various scholars. Within that field, enduring questions about formal analysis, criticism, interpretation and evaluation, including the issue of formalism and its limitations, are explicitly addressed and robustly debated. Thus as television aesthetics develops, and more work is published that draws upon and expands this exciting and thoughtful

field, it can be hoped that much of the trepidation and distrust outlined above will dissipate. There is no need to supplant one with the other. But certainly we television aestheticians must continue to elaborate our aims, and develop and debate our core principles. Here, the field is repeatedly revitalised, ideas honed, reconsidered, and occasionally abandoned, because of dialogue, disagreement and debate between individual writers. This essay is merely an initial, exploratory incursion into the land that lies between the study of television and aesthetics. Too few scholars have yet attempted to address, or even formulate, such questions. Obviously, there is debate on ideological matters, relating to for instance the study of race or gender, which takes place in cultural studies, feminist studies and the like. Those debates can and do impact upon the approaches taken to programmes by television scholars. Instead, a profusion of different and varied ideas and approaches is regarded as *bonum per se*. Analytical philosophy is comparable, though, with other humanities, and offers valuable models for argumentation and debate. In comparison, edited collections in media studies et al. Both models are valuable, but at the moment the latter dominates television studies. It is true that the criteria being employed by these scholars need, often, to be stated more overtly. Philosophical aesthetics has historically been concerned with difficult questions regarding definitions of art; the nature of our engagement with art; questions of taste; and the interrogation of art in terms of beauty, truth and values. Collingwood, in his classic *The Principles of Art* (1938), ed. Cyril Barrett, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958, viii. Cambridge University Press, Collingwood argues that when art is thus identified with amusement, aesthetic criticism is impossible. However, logically speaking, the acceptance of television as a medium designed primarily for entertainment rather than art does not render untenable the taking of an aesthetic attitude towards specific programmes. There is no ontological or medium-specific reason why a true artwork cannot exist within the medium. We could expect rare exceptions. Note also that Collingwood makes no distinction between genres, types, artists or media. We could find good, bad and non-art. Carroll was one of the first philosophers whose work on the moving image helped to showcase the value of aesthetics for approaching conceptual questions within film studies. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938. For example, he argues that the artist creating true art is primarily concerned with expressing emotion to himself, rather than arousing emotions in an audience. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art*, 1938. "What is an aesthetic situation? Is it in the object or in our experience?" *Philosophy Looks at the Arts: Contemporary Readings in Aesthetics* New York: Urnson goes on to show that the aesthetic is not found, either, in any emotion felt or caused in the onlooker. Is there a specific way of looking, hearing, and perhaps also feeling and imagining, which can be called aesthetic? For the moment, we can consider just a few ways in which this unique experience has been defined and conceptualized, and how it might pertain to the case of television. Clearly, there exist innumerable potential artworks,³³ and an equally vast range and variety of responses to them. Perhaps one might begin by considering the aesthetic experience to be a delight in art; certainly there is more often than not an assumption that the aesthetic experience is fundamentally a positive one. More specifically, though, and pertinently for television aesthetics, scholars have tried to distinguish aesthetic experience from enjoyment gained from entertainment or other sources of pleasure. Though the topic is contentious, it is possible to outline in a rudimentary fashion some of the key features that have been posited. First, sense experience and perception are key: Second, the observer experiences a specific kind of fulfilling emotional engagement with the work. This engagement has been characterized in different ways. *Introductory Readings in Aesthetics* New York: The Free Press, 1963, 3. This section of my essay particularly is painted with broad brushstrokes, offering a general introduction and overview, rather than a detailed analysis which is a separate project. *A Very Short Introduction* Oxford: Put simply, the observer apprehends formal qualities within the work that give rise to the response. Hospers, quoted above, answers his own question about aesthetic experience by defining it as the experience we have during periods in which we sustain an aesthetic attitude. This attitude, indeed, is frequently regarded as indissolubly connected with the definition of ³⁵ Denis Dutton, *The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, Chatto and Windus, *Television* clearly crosses the boundaries of both types of art. The nature of the appropriate aesthetic attitude itself is

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again a matter of contention. The recommended stance of disinterest or distance is not meant to suggest coolness or remoteness, but rather implies an informed approach to the artwork, free from distraction, appreciating it for reasons that are: A Very Short Introduction, Penguin, . However, the most valuable and potentially reassuring feature of these accounts of aesthetic attitude is the emphasis they place on the active decision of the observer to take up an appropriate position of engagement. A matter of choice An awareness of the notion of aesthetic attitude is crucial in understanding the foundations and principles of the aesthetic approach to television. Open University Press, , Blackwell Publishing, , Reflections on the nature of aesthetic experience, combined with the analyzes of amusement art, entertainment and junk fiction above, raise interesting questions about the kind of criticism found in this volume. The chapters herein function to suggest an aesthetic attitude to television texts is not only possible but valuable. But to what extent are we, as scholars, able to justify the very basis of our work: If not, with what strength can we persuade others to concur with our approach and analyzes? Given that television seems to mediate against profound aesthetic engagement, are we being deliberately contrary or, worse, self-indulgent in our approach? Such questions need to be admitted and addressed by individual writers. The function of criticism and evaluation in television aesthetics Arguments regarding the purposes of close critical analysis and evaluation may have been made and won in other fields, but as television aestheticians 48 Matthew Kieran, Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, , 6. The kind of critical work proffered by television aestheticians and included in volumes such as this one serve two key purposes in this regard.

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Chapter 6 : Staff View: Contemporary debates in aesthetics and the philosophy of art /

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