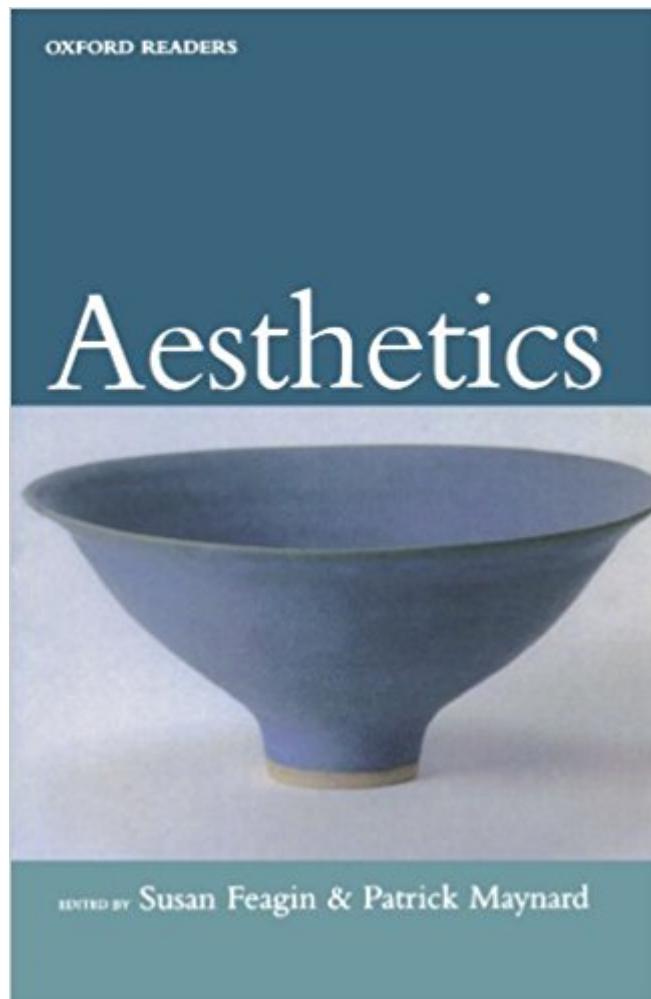


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# Aesthetics (Oxford Readers)



## Synopsis

Can we ever claim to understand a work of art or be objective about it? Why have cultures thought it important to separate out a group of objects and call them art? What does aesthetics contribute to our understanding of the natural landscape? Are the concepts of art and the aesthetic elitist? Addressing these and other issues in aesthetics, this important new Oxford Reader includes articles by authors ranging from Aristotle and Xie-He to Jun'ichiro Tanizaki, Michael Baxandall, and Susan Sontag. It focuses on why art and a variety of aesthetics matter to us, and on how perceivers participate in and contribute to the experience of appreciating a work of art. With its multicultural and multidisciplinary scope, this volume shows how anthropology, art history, Chinese theories of painting, and other perspectives both enrich and provide alternatives to classic philosophical accounts of art and the aesthetic.

## Book Information

Series: Oxford Readers

Paperback: 432 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press (April 9, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0192892754

ISBN-13: 978-0192892751

Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 1 x 5.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #242,116 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Philosophy > Aesthetics #196 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Aesthetics #445 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Art History

## Customer Reviews

Susan L. Feagin is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, specializing in aesthetics. She has been on the board of trustees for the American Society for Aesthetics, and was president of the Central States Philosophical Association in 1996. She is a contributor to the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, *Philosophy and Literature*, *Philosophical Studies*, and *The American Philosophical Quarterly*. Patrick Maynard is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Western Ontario, where he teaches aesthetics and the history of philosophy at all levels. He is guest editor for the *Journal of*

Aesthetics and Art Criticism. He is a contributor to the TLS, LRB, and Current Anthropology.

Fast shipping! great product! thank you!

WONDERFUL BOOK, I GOT THIS BOOK FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF ART CLASS AND THE CLASS WAS AWESOME,, BUT THE DUMB PROFESSOR WHOM FAVORITIZES MALES.... GAVE ME A NON DESERVED C

It's good but Damnnn.....56 buck-a-roos what the f---? Guess its cause its a uni book. I had to buy it for the class of the same title. Be prepared to read a sentence like 6 times before you start to get it. Makes for lengthy reading. My prof did clarify things in class that I couldn't understand on my own. Lots of writers and philosophers. Spending a few months alone on a deserted island...this will keep you busy.-Ace

This was the textbook for Philosophy of Art, and I must admit I got quite a bit out of it. Maynard and Feagin introduced me to the ideas of Hegel, Kant, Dewey, and other prominent philosophers. The essays inspired me to think more deeply about referentialism in art, organic unity, expression, and aesthetics. These are really all things which an artist ought to consider, and this book is a good introduction. "But," I asked myself a number of times, "where are the artists?" Only a handful of the articles were written by artists, and they were either short, or written by fiction and poetry authors. It seems to me that those who actually create art would be in a better position than a philosopher to address certain aspects of aesthetic theory. There are quite a few artists (as far as I can find) who have discussed their artistic philosophies in books, interviews, articles, etc. A book professing to address theories of art and aesthetics would do well to call on a few artists. Of course, this is probably argumentum ad hominem.

This is more than just the result of the growth in academic specialization. No one comes out of a Ph.D. program in philosophy without some grounding in metaphysics and epistemology, logic and philosophy of science, the history of philosophy and ethics. Metaphysics and epistemology, like logic, are defined as 'core areas' of philosophy. History and ethics, while not core areas, belong nonetheless to the 'essential perimeter' of the field. It is difficult - indeed, in most programs, impossible - to get a Ph.D. without doing work in these areas. They are areas in which everyone is expected to have opinions and be able to discuss at least the standard problems. Because the same

is not true of aesthetics, the vast majority of philosophers enter the profession with little or no knowledge of the methods or questions of the field. As a result, philosophers generally either ignore issues of art and aesthetics or think of them as having little or no bearing on the central concerns of the discipline. Most systematic philosophers pass entire careers without ever turning their attention to questions of art or beauty. Davidson and Goodman are rare exceptions. Nor is this lack of interest in aesthetics - or the related absence of aesthetics from the pages of the most widely read and prestigious philosophy journals - likely to raise any eyebrows. And so, when philosophy departments sit down to determine the fields in which they wish to hire, it should come as no surprise that it doesn't occur to anyone to think of aesthetics. Marginalization begets marginalization. So much for the de facto standing of aesthetics. What are we to make of this situation? This leads to the third question mentioned above: what is the proper standing, the true value or significance, of aesthetics? Perhaps the most common answer to this question is that aesthetics, properly understood, just is philosophically marginal. The view that the de facto standing of aesthetics is indeed its proper standing is held not only by philistines who don't care about art - "this is all aesthetics deserves" - but also by those, like Stanley Cavell and Ted Cohen, who care about art a great deal - as Cohen puts it, "it is here, despite the precariousness of its position, that aesthetics is at its best."

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