

Christel Fricke

Our first focus will be on the topic of the aesthetic judgment. This is a normative kind of judgment, and it has often been associated with the faculty of aesthetic taste: We rely on our aesthetic taste when we make aesthetic judgments. But what does that mean? What is taste as an aesthetically relevant sensitivity? What are aesthetic judgments about? And what is the standard of aesthetic judgments, the 'standard of taste' as David Hume has called it?

Aesthetic judgments are often defined in terms of judgments about beauty (or the lack thereof). Beauty is one of the three major values we care about, values which have occupied philosophical thought over centuries, the other two being truth and moral goodness. In the tradition of philosophical thought about our experience of beauty, it has been associated with both true knowledge and beliefs about moral goodness and their motivational impact. We shall discuss both conceptions of the experience of beauty, those that understand it as an experience which is epistemic in kind and those that relate it to our motivation to be morally good.

The authors we read include Pierre Bourdieu, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Peter Railton, Nelson Goodman, and Arthur Danto.