

## ARTH 383 - Art & Philosophy

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### Lecture 6 - The Sublime I

- Korsmeyer
  - dichotomy in aesthetics
    - ie. Descartes: mind (concept, knowledge, cognition) // body (sensation)
- 18th C subjective sensation > aesthetic intuition is a particular sensation
- Empiricists: can there be a standard of taste? how, if all knowledge is empirical? No a priori
  - what knowledge can be outside sensory experience?
- premodern philosophy (Descartes) > arousal of desire followed by satisfaction: eating
  - Kant: a man who's hungry will eat anything
    - only in absence of interest/desire can there be taste
  - Kant: difference between beauty and moral virtue
- gendered significance privileging noble senses (sight) vs. primitive/vulgar senses (smell, taste)
- taste cultivated through experience (empiricists) > not fixed
- Hume > conundrum: if all taste is relative, how can there be a standard of taste?
  - Hogarth > enumerate properties of beauty
    - beauty; all have curved lines
    - gendered, feminine
- Jean-Leon Gerome, The Slave Auction, 1884
- feminist critique of aesthetics
  - 1. who is the ideal judging person?
  - 2. in what way does aesthetic judgment imply a gendered aspect
- Burke: causal triggers of beautiful and sublime

- definite finite properties of objects
  - properties induce us feelings of beauty ( not the thing itself, empirical)
- automatic response to beauty/sublime > reflex to external stimulus
- beautiful induces pleasure, sublime induces displeasure (specific)
- Kant: Sublime is a 'pleasure in pain'
  - Lacanian
- beautiful > perpetuates life , feminine (Coursenian?)
- sublime > takes life , masculine
- connection between aesthetic pleasure and erotic desire
  - Kant: how to distinguish? Disinterest!
  - beauty and erotic desire come from different faculties, and can exist at the same time
  - left out of Kant
  - beauty > pure sensuousness is agreeable
  - desire > the good, want, useful
    - erotic desire
- personal > pathological
- universal > not pathological
- free beauty > nature, beauty without purpose, in itself
- adherent beauty > not pure, connected to concept
- works of art can only be assessed via roles of determinant/definitive concepts
  - except: the 'je ne sais quoi'
    - can't be articulated
  - (this is why Kant doesn't look at art, can't have pure aesthetic judgment)
- universality of taste > what do we communicate in judgment?
  - can't communicate agreeable/body (taste of food)

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- can only communicate higher sense like seeing/hearing for aesthetic judgment
- Korsmeyer: universality > who is the universal subject?
  - question of gender, class, race
    - exclusion of certain subjects being recognized in their capacity to feel/judge
      - best: white euro male > can distinguish between judgments
      - non euro are considered unrefined > inexperienced
- privilege to experience > well positioned in social hierarchy
- The Sublime (masculine): negative pleasure
  - everyone can experience beautiful (feminine taste)
  - connection to morality
- judgement of taste .. language of crit
  - negative value associated with effeminate