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A historical dictionary in an area of philosophy presents some difficulties. The chronology can be little more than a list of significant works that have marked the development of aesthetics. Ideas do not have specific dates. They emerge gradually, recur, and shift with different writers and artists. Moreover, when one approaches the recent history of aesthetics, a chronology would have to be either very limited or very extensive. The one provided here is the former and is intended to be representative of problems and areas in aesthetics.

As one moves closer to the present, it becomes more difficult to assess what should be included. For example, it is impossible to detail all of the 20th-century work on aesthetics in this context. The anthologies included in the Bibliography will provide a more detailed guide. The names mentioned in parentheses in the Introduction are neither exhaustive nor definitive; they are intended to give some indication of the range of academic philosophical aesthetics without implying that other philosophers might not have an equal claim to attention. For works by the philosophers mentioned, refer to the Bibliography. Some leading figures in 20th-century philosophical movements are dealt with in separate dictionary entries, but most strictly academic philosophy of art and aesthetics is covered topically, and the philosophers themselves are mentioned only in the Bibliography, which gives a representative selection of works on each topic. A selection of recent work (1990 and after) is also provided in the Bibliography.

Each entry provides cross-references to other entries in boldfaced type. Many of the cross-references are to entries that deal with broad concepts or topics. The way that the reference appears in other entries will vary according to its grammatical position. So the dictionary entry on ‘beauty’ will also be cross-referenced by the words ‘beautiful,’ ‘beauties,’ and even ‘beautifully’ in bold when those words appear in
other entries. The dictionary entry may also become part of a compound. For example, a dictionary entry for 'psychology of art' may be cross-referenced when the terms 'psychology' or 'psychological' appear in other entries. Looking up the word in bold should make it clear what the primary entry is.
## Chronology

### I. CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL AESTHETICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>Plato (427–347 BCE)</td>
<td>Platonic dialogues Republic, Ion, Symposium, and Phaedrus</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aristotle (?–323 BCE)</td>
<td>Poetics, Rhetoric</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agesander, Athenodorus, Polydorus (ca. 2nd c. BCE)</td>
<td>Laocoön statue group</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Horace (65–8 BCE)</td>
<td>Ars Poetica (Epistle to the Pisos) (c. 13 BCE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vitruvius (1st c. BCE–1st c. CE)</td>
<td>De Architectura</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Longinus (1st c. CE)</td>
<td>On the Sublime</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quintilian (ca. 35–ca. 95)</td>
<td>Institutio Oratoria</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plotinus (204–270)</td>
<td>Enneads</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Augustine (354–430)</td>
<td>De Musica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abbot Suger (1081–1151)</td>
<td>Construction and ornamentation of St. Denis</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hugh (1096–1141) and Richard (? – 1173) of St. Victor</td>
<td>Allegorical interpretation; commentary on Celestial Hierarchy of Pseudo-Dionysius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St. Bonaventure (1221–1274)</td>
<td>Retracing the Arts to Theology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>St. Thomas Aquinas (1226–1274)</td>
<td>Summa Theologica</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dante Alighieri (1265–1321)</td>
<td>Divine Comedy and Letters</td>
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### II. RENAISSANCE AESTHETICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Writer</th>
<th>Work</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renaissance</td>
<td>Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472)</td>
<td>On Painting (1435)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Leonardo Da Vinci (1452–1519)</td>
<td>Trattato della pitura (1482–1499)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574)</td>
<td>Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects (1550/1568)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andrea Palladio (1508–1580)</td>
<td>The Four Books of Architecture (1570)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philip Sidney (1554–1586)</td>
<td>An Apology for Poetry (1583)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Giovanni Battista Armenini  
(1530–1609)  
*On the True Precepts of Painting* (1586)

Federigo Zuccaro (1543–1609)  
*Lamento della Pittura* (1605)

### III. EARLY MODERN AESTHETICS

#### Neo-Classicism

Nicholas Boileau (1636–1711)  
*L’art poétique* (1674)

René Le Bossu (1631–1680)  
*Traité du poème épique* (1675)

John Dryden (1631–1700)  
“Preface” to Charles de Fresonys’s *De Arte Graphica* (1695)

Jean-Baptiste Dubos (1670–1742)  
*Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting* (1719)

A. G. Baumgarten (1714–1762)  
*Aesthetica* (1750)

Johann Joachim Winckelmann  
(1717–1768)  
*History of Ancient Art* (1764)

G. E. Lessing (1729–1781)  
*Hamburg Dramaturgy* (1767–1768)

#### The French Enlightenment

Roger De Piles (1635–1709)  
*Discourse on Painting* (1708)

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1685–1764)  
*Treatise on Harmony Reduced to its Principles* (1722)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778)  
*Letter to d’Alembert on the Theatre* (1758)

Voltaire (1694–1778)  
*Philosophical Dictionary* (1764)

*Denis Diderot* (1713–1778)  
*Salons of 1765 and 1767 and Encyclopédie*

Jean D’Alembert (1717–1783)  
*Editor of the Encyclopédie* (with Denis Diderot)

#### British Sentimental Aesthetics

Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713)  
*Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711)

Joseph Addison (1672–1719)  
*Spectator essays on the pleasures of the imagination* (1712)

Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746)  
*An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725)

David Hartley (1705–1757)  
*Observations on Man* (1749)
### CHRONOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Hogarth (1697–1764)</td>
<td><em>The Analysis of Beauty</em> (1753)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Hume (1711–1776)</td>
<td>“Of the Standard of Taste” (1757)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Burke (1729–1797)</td>
<td><em>A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful</em> (1757)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexander Gerard (1728–1795)</td>
<td><em>Essay on Taste</em> (1759)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adam Smith (1723–1790)</td>
<td><em>Theory of Moral Sentiments</em> (1759)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696–1782)</td>
<td><em>Elements of Criticism</em> (1762)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Priestley (1733–1804)</td>
<td><em>A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism</em> (1759/1777)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Reid (1710–1796)</td>
<td><em>An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense</em> (1764)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792)</td>
<td><em>Discourses</em> (1769–1790)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Blair (1718–1800)</td>
<td><em>Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres</em> (1783)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dugald Stewart (1753–1828)</td>
<td><em>Philosophical Essays</em> (1810)</td>
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### IV. 19TH-CENTURY AESTHETICS

#### Kant and Romanticism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Work</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)</td>
<td><em>Critique of Judgment</em> (1790)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805)</td>
<td><em>On the Aesthetic Education of Man</em> (1794)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedrich von Schelling (1775–1854)</td>
<td><em>System of Transcendental Idealism</em> (1800)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. W. von Schlegel (1767–1845)</td>
<td>The journal <em>Athenaeum</em> published between 1798 and 1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829)</td>
<td><em>Preface to the Lyrical Ballads</em> (1800)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Wordsworth (1770–1850)</td>
<td><em>Biographia Literaria</em> (1817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834)</td>
<td><em>Defence of Poetry</em> (1821)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Hegel and Cultural Aesthetics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831)</td>
<td><em>Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences</em> (1817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art</em> (delivered between 1818 and 1829; collected and published posthumously in 1835)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHRONOLOGY

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860)  
The World as Will and Idea (1818)

Richard Wagner (1813–1883)  
The Art Work of the Future (1850)

Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904)  
The Beautiful in Music (1854)

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900)  
The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music (1872)

John Ruskin (1819–1900)  
Modern Painters (1843)

Art for art’s sake (aestheticism)

Théophile Gautier (1811–1872)  
Emaux et camées (Enamels and Cameos) (1852)

Walter Pater (1839–1894)  
Studies in the History of the Renaissance (1868)

Oscar Wilde (1854–1900)  
“The Decay of Lying” (1889)

Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910)  
What is Art? (1897–1898)

V. 20TH-CENTURY AESTHETICS

Psychology and Aesthetics

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939)  
The Interpretation of Dreams (1900)

Edward Bullough (1880–1934)  
“Psychical Distance’ as a Factor in Art and as an Aesthetic Principle” (1912)

Bloomsbury

Roger Fry (1866–1934)  
Transformations (1925)

Clive Bell (1881–1964)  
Art (1913) (Significant Form)

Futurism

F. T. Marinetti (1876–1944)  
“Futurist Manifesto” (1909)

Dada

Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968)  
“Fountain” (1917)

Surrealism

Andre Breton (1896–1966)  
Surrealist Manifestos (1924–1934)
Idealism

Benedetto Croce (1866–1952)  The Aesthetic as the Science of the Expression and the Linguistic in General (1902)
Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923)  Three Lectures on Aesthetics (1915)

Neo-Kantianism

Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945)  The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms (1923–1929)
Susanne Langer (1895–1985)  Feeling and Form (1953)

Pragmatism

John Dewey (1859–1952)  Art as Experience (1934)

Marxist Aesthetics / Frankfurt School / Critical Theory

Walter Benjamin (1892–1940)  The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction (1936)
Theodor Adorno (1903–1969)  Aesthetic Theory

Phenomenological and Existentialist Aesthetics

Martin Heidegger (1889–1976)  Being and Time (1927)

The Rule of Metaphor (1975)
### Art and Aesthetics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heinrich Wölfflin (1864–1945)</td>
<td><em>Principles of Art History</em> (1915)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Le Corbusier (1887–1965)</td>
<td><em>Towards a New Architecture</em> (1923)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudolf Arnheim (1904–)</td>
<td><em>Art and Visual Perception</em> (1954)</td>
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### Film Aesthetics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948)</td>
<td><em>The Montage of Attractions</em> (1923)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>André Bazin (1918–1958)</td>
<td><em>Cahiers du cinéma</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley Cavell (b. 1926)</td>
<td><em>The World Viewed</em> (1971)</td>
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### Analysis, Language, and Aesthetics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Prall (1886–1940)</td>
<td><em>Aesthetic Analysis</em> (1936)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris Weitz (b. 1916)</td>
<td>“The Role of Theory in Aesthetics” (1956)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Danto (1924–)</td>
<td>“The Artworld” (1964)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Margolis (1924–)</td>
<td><em>The Language of Art and Art Criticism</em> (1965)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Dickie (1926–)</td>
<td><em>Art and the Aesthetic</em> (1974)</td>
</tr>
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Dictionary

– A –

ABHINAVAGUPTA. See INDIAN AESTHETICS.

ABSOLUTE BEAUTY. Theories of beauty in the 18th century distinguished between absolute beauty and relative beauty. For example, an object might, in and of itself, be lacking in beauty. It could be ugly or simply indifferent. Nevertheless, an imitation of that object causes pleasure if the imitation is well executed. The imitation in such a case would be said to possess relative beauty. On the other hand, an object that gives pleasure as a result of its own qualities is said to possess absolute beauty. According to Francis Hutcheson, for example, absolute beauty is “original”; it arises from qualities that affect human senses in a pleasing way. But relative beauty is “comparative”; it requires a relation not only to a human mind but also between two objects. If that relationship is pleasing, then the objects are perceived as relatively beautiful based on the accuracy of the relationship—even if neither object possesses the qualities of original beauty. The qualities that produce absolute beauty were variously identified, beginning with classical theories of beauty based on order, harmony, or certain ratios of part to whole and later on empirical theories that identified causal properties such as uniformity amidst variety (Francis Hutcheson) or a sensuous line (William Hogarth). See also BEAUTY.

ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM. Abstract expressionism was a diverse artistic movement centered in New York City in the 1940s and 1950s. It was driven by the aesthetic theory that painting was not limited to representation. It included “action painting,” such as...
Jackson Pollack’s splatter paintings, and the non-representational expressionism of Wassily Kandinsky. Abstract expressionism and subsequent non-representational art movements essentially opposed any compromise with aesthetic theories of imitation.

**ABSTRACT FORM.** All art is formal in some sense, but abstract form attempts to eliminate all traces of representation. Only color, line, and spatial arrangement are aesthetically significant. Aesthetically, the claim is that only form counts, so art that shows only the abstract form is a purer form of art than art that depicts objects. See also FORM; FORMALISM.

**ADDISON, JOSEPH (1672–1719).** Joseph Addison was the son of a clergyman and the protégé of the earl of Halifax who sponsored his travels in France where he became acquainted with French literary critics and theorists. Addison wrote Latin poetry and a play, *Cato*, that was well received, and he became a member of parliament and secretary of state, but it is primarily his essays published in the *Spectator* in association with his friend Richard Steele that he is known.

Addison is credited with being the first real writer on aesthetics in the British 18th century, though that distinction might more properly be accorded to Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury. Addison contributed essays on genius and wit, which he defined as “a resemblance and congruity of ideas . . . that gives delight and surprise to the reader” (*The Spectator*, No. 62, 11 May 1711), as well as critical essays, but his reputation as an aesthetic philosopher rests primarily upon his essay on taste (no. 409, 19 June 1712) and the series of essays on the pleasures of the imagination (Nos. 411–421, 21 June–3 July 1712). Addison regards taste as an accomplishment of a gentleman that rests on both innate ability and an acquired, cultivated manner. It is “that faculty of the soul which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike” (No. 409). One knows whether one has taste by checking one’s responses to the classics against those of others known to have taste. The imagination, in turn, is the calling up of pleasurable ideas, either immediately or by means of works of art. The imagination is fundamentally a faculty based on sight, which responds to beauties of both art and nature. Addison’s treatment of the imagination stresses the
response of a viewer and the mental states and pleasure that are produced. Imagination is contrasted with understanding, which weighs relations of ideas more coolly and rationally. The objects of the imagination are the great, the beautiful, and the new. Addison goes on to contrast the pleasures of nature with the secondary pleasures of the imagination, which depend on art, and to analyze the critical sources of imaginative pleasure, particularly in poetry.

The ideas expressed in the essays on the pleasures of the imagination were not new. Addison himself acknowledged his debt to John Locke, whose theory of ideas provided the basis for Addison’s theory of the imagination as the ability to combine and receive pleasure from ideas. In the early 18th century, no distinction was made between the imagination and fancy, so imagination remains an essentially combinative power. It is a faculty of the mind that acts on received ideas. Addison places considerable emphasis on the pleasure associated with mental activity itself, however, and that subjective pleasure proves to be one of the leading aesthetic theories that is successively developed and extended throughout the century. The essays on the pleasures of the imagination differ from the more occasional critical essays elsewhere in The Spectator in offering a sustained argument that must have challenged Addison’s readership, most of whom probably first encountered such aesthetic speculation in this context.

ADORNO, THEODOR (1903–1969). Theodor Adorno, together with Max Horkheimer, founded the Institute for Social Research, which is the center of what is called the Frankfurt School of social and political philosophy. Others associated with the school included Walter Benjamin, whose “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” has been especially influential, and Herbert Marcuse, but it was Adorno who was most extensively engaged by aesthetics. The Frankfurt School began with a Marxist analysis of culture as a commodity and a social force, but it went beyond conventional Marxist ideology and political economics in its views of art. Adorno, in particular, gave art both a positive and negative dialectical role in the development of culture. His Aesthetic Theory, which was incomplete at the time of his death, appeared posthumously in 1970.

Adorno was trained in music and was an advocate of the twelve-
tone music of Arnold Schönberg and Anton Webern. On the one hand, he viewed the commodification of music as a form of fetishism. Music is turned into a kind of object by listeners who neither understand it nor are able to separate it from their psychological regression. On the other hand, the kind of music written by Schönberg can act as a critique of culture and the cultural exploitation of feeling. An internal cultural dialectic undercuts the work of art as fetish. Adorno is not optimistic about the arts or their ability to transcend their reduction to bourgeois commodities, but he acknowledges an aesthetic possibility that depends on the revolutionary character of art itself. It is anti-aesthetic in the sense that it opposes the satisfaction of desires and the pleasure principle that traditional aesthetics succumbs to, but it does not reduce aesthetics to nothing more than a form of politics or economics. Art is at once a social phenomenon and a critique of society.

AESTHETIC ALIENATION. In Romanticism, artistic independence, especially from utilitarian and bourgeois conformity, led artists to embrace their own alienation as a sign of their artistic vocation. To be an artist was to be outside the confines of bourgeois values. In historicist and sociological aesthetic theories, aesthetic alienation follows from the separation of an artist as a producer from his or her class. Art is a product of labor, and as such, it belongs to an economic structure that is divided along class lines. Where the consumer of art belongs to a different class from the producer, aesthetic alienation results.

AESTHETIC APPRECIATION. See APPRECIATION.

AESTHETIC ATTITUDE. When aesthetic experience is identified as a unique form of experience, the question arises of how that experience is to be achieved. In its earliest 18th-century forms, aesthetic experience was simply any pleasurable experience related to the faculty of taste. It was virtually synonymous with sentiment. Immanuel Kant’s separation of the judgment of taste from all conceptual, theoretical, and practical judgments gave aesthetic experience a more distinctive role. It was disinterested, and the pleasure it produces was characterized as a form of delight that distinguishes the beauti-
ful from the merely agreeable. From that separation, it is a short step logically to the claim that such experience requires a distinctive approach to its objects. Kant did not make that step; aesthetic experience remained a pre-conceptual form of apprehension that underlies all subsequent ways of shaping experience to human intellectual capacities. Kant’s followers, however, were prepared to find special ways to apprehend both art and nature aesthetically.

An aesthetic attitude has been variously characterized. It suggests a form of contemplation that sometimes verges on mystical experience. Or it may be less mysteriously described as a response to the formal properties of perception without consideration of the actual material or utilitarian ends. So in one example, viewed aesthetically, it does not matter whether a statue is made of bronze or cheese; only its appearance counts aesthetically, and everything else about it is ignored. The extreme psychological form of aesthetic attitude theories describes the attitude as one that distances or “puts out of gear” all practical concerns. Edward Bullough describes an aesthetic attitude toward a storm at sea as one that is oblivious to the dangers and the necessity for taking action.

Aesthetic attitude theories divide roughly into two groups. One considers an aesthetic attitude as a natural form of apprehension. Some objects and situations naturally call forth the kind of disinterested, distanced apprehension that produces aesthetic experience. So an aesthetic attitude is appropriate to some situations or objects and inappropriate to others. The other kind of aesthetic attitude theory considers an aesthetic attitude as a form of perception that is voluntarily assumed by the perceiver; one chooses, so to speak, to perceive aesthetically. Anything can be perceived in that way, though the powers to perceive aesthetically are not equally distributed. Some individuals, most notably artists, have great powers of achieving the required way of perceiving; and some objects, most notably works of art, are specifically designed to facilitate an aesthetic attitude. The function of the proscenium arch in the theater, for example, aids the audience in approaching a play aesthetically, and museums are designed to promote the kind of looking that aesthetic experience requires by controlling the viewing conditions.

One consequence of aesthetic attitude theories is that criticism comes to be regarded as an aesthetic obstacle. To be critically en-
AESTHETIC CONCEPTS. A central thesis in most modern aesthetic theories is the subjectivity of aesthetic experience. From one standpoint, then, an aesthetic concept is a contradiction in terms. Immanuel Kant distinguished aesthetic judgments from all others precisely because aesthetic judgments fall under no concept. So to speak of an aesthetic concept is to deny just what is distinctive about aesthetic experience. Nevertheless, it would seem odd to say that such words as ‘beauty’ and ‘taste’ have no conceptual content. Whatever the objects with which aesthetics is concerned are—beauty, taste, the fine arts, or nature—the aesthetic dimension is the felt experience, even if there is an objective reference. That is, even if one holds that beauty is an objective property of some objects or that some real properties of objects are the cause of beauty, it is still the felt quality itself that defines an experience as aesthetic.

Many theories are then led to the conclusion that some concepts can only be referred to that experience. An aesthetic concept is one that cannot be defined independently of aesthetic experience. Typically, it is held that such concepts as balance, grace, and elegance, when they are used in aesthetic contexts, function differently from concepts that can be applied according to rules and that have necessary and sufficient conditions. Aesthetic qualities are like so-called secondary qualities, such as colors, in that their felt quality is more...
than their causal properties, but aesthetic qualities are also distinct from other secondary qualities because they do not have a well-defined set of causal properties with which they are associated. Not only such concepts as squareness but also such empirically determined concepts as blueness can be identified independently of the experience of a particular observer or perceiver, even if blueness itself is qualitatively distinct from its concept. But, it is held, a concept such as gracefulness, when applied to a work of art, not only is not governed by rules of application but also is open with respect to the set of properties that a normal observer will find graceful. Beauty itself can then be understood as an aesthetic concept and freed from the metaphysical postulates of a non-natural ontology.

Aesthetic concepts are variously understood. They are open in the sense that a central set of properties is recognized as paradigmatic, but no set of properties is either necessary or sufficient for the application of the concept. Such concepts as games or baldness are typical examples of open concepts. Everyone recognizes central instances of a game, but no set of properties is common to all games. Such open concepts were discussed extensively by Ludwig Wittgenstein, though the recognition of their importance to taste can be found much earlier in the work of Dugald Stewart. The characterization of aesthetic concepts as open concepts was defended by Morris Weitz. Frank Sibley and others go farther and argue that taste concepts, while they may have defeating conditions, lack even the sufficient conditions that open concepts may have. A figure that is all sharp angles cannot be described as graceful, but not even the flowing lines that William Hogarth identified as the line of beauty are sufficient to determine that a figure is graceful. One can only look and see whether the experience itself justifies the application of the concept to the figure.

AESTHETIC EMOTION. ‘Aesthetics,’ from the Greek word aisthesis, which means roughly ‘feeling,’ has its origins in the German rationalist tradition associated with G. W. von Leibniz. In that tradition, clear and distinct ideas are capable of rational definition and thus can form the basis for deductively certain relations of ideas. But the feelings associated with such ideas are not similarly clear and distinct. They are “obscure and confused” in the sense that they do
not provide rational definitions or clearly delineated ideas of their own. Alexander Baumgarten introduced the term ‘aesthetic’ to describe such obscure ideas, and Immanuel Kant adopted the term to describe the intuitive apprehension that is pre-conceptual. As such, aesthetic feeling was an essentially epistemological concept.

Earlier 18th-century discussions of beauty had already classified beauty in terms of a feeling of pleasure and a peculiar emotion. In David Hume’s system, for example, beauty is a calm emotion based on impressions and ideas that arise from pleasurable experiences. In general, the shift from beauty as a metaphysical other to beauty as an emotional response was widely accepted. The easy move from ‘feeling’ to ‘emotion’ suggested that the aesthetic ideas of Baumgarten and Kant were themselves emotional states, and aesthetic emotion became the standard explanation for the entire class of phenomena associated with art and beauty, largely replacing discussions of beauty itself.

Aesthetic emotion takes many theoretical forms. Its common characteristics are that it is pleasurable, significantly different from other emotions in some way, and usually calm or contemplative as opposed to other related emotions, such as the sublime, though increasingly aesthetic emotion became the generic description that subsumed other aesthetic qualities including the sublime, the picturesque, novelty, etc. Retrospectively, aesthetic emotion could be applied to earlier neo-Platonic states of contemplative ecstasy. What in earlier theories amounted to access to an alternate, higher reality becomes, when described in terms of aesthetic emotion, a state of mind. In Romantic theory, it is, in William Wordsworth’s phrase, emotion recollected in tranquillity. Aesthetic emotion is also associated closely with theories of expression, particularly as the feeling of satisfaction that accompanies the successful formulation of ideas expressive of the mind’s own powers or states.

Theories of aesthetic emotion move aesthetic theory from its rationalist and empiricist epistemological formulations in the direction of a psychological description of certain mental states, therefore. Various descriptions could then be offered of those psychological states, and as such, they could be either involuntary, achieved by a kind of sympathetic magic inspired by the genius of the author, or voluntary, achieved by a mental discipline or form of aesthetic attitude.
AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE. Art would appear to be a universal cultural phenomenon. The concept of art, however, changes as the role of art changes. The fine arts—painting, poetry, drama, music, dance, etc.—only gradually are detached from other institutional and cultural roles. Beginning sometime in the late Middle Ages, Western fine arts acquire an independence from court patronage and religious worship that separates the concept of art from crafts and skill. By the late 17th and 18th centuries, fine art is considered to be something valuable for its own sake instead of a subordinate means to some other value, such as worship, contemplation, glorification, or simply entertainment.

With that shift, there is a corresponding shift in the concept of what is the object of art. What emerges is the thesis that the experience itself is the object of art. That experience is defined in the following ways: it is valuable in itself and not simply as a means to some other end; it is not utilitarian; it is pleasurable; and it has a qualitatively different kind of feel or pleasure. Such experience is first of all sought by looking for qualities or objects that are uniquely able to produce it. Francis Hutcheson, for example, defines it as the compound ratio of uniformity and diversity. William Hogarth identifies it with a smooth transition, exemplified in drawing by a gently curving line. David Hume thinks of it as a “calm passion,” and Edmund Burke identifies it with a soft, gentle emotion (beauty) or a form of excitement (the sublime), both of which have sexual overtones. Others simply regard the experience as so different that it cannot be defined, attributing it to a je ne sais quoi—"I know not what"—that some objects possess. The most influential definition emphasized the purely intuitive nature of the experience. Immanuel Kant gives the definitive formulation of aesthetic experience by distinguishing it from all practical and conceptual forms of experience. Aesthetic experience is that experience that falls under no concept and is the product of a free play of the imagination. Its qualitative feeling is one of delight that distinguishes beauty from the merely pleasant or agreeable. In that form, aesthetic experience becomes the new defining quality for an autonomous art and aesthetic appreciation of nature.

It is important to distinguish the theories and concepts centered on aesthetic experience from the phenomena that those theories and
concepts claim to describe. Although the concepts of fine art and of aesthetic experience are relatively late, Western European formulations, they are applied to all earlier forms and non-Western cultures. A Greek tragedian, a medieval monk, or a Chinese calligrapher do not appeal to aesthetic experience to describe what they do, but the theories that evolve after Kant can claim that nevertheless, the experience of tragedy or an illuminated manuscript or a scroll produces such experience either under a different name or with no name at all.

Aesthetic experience is not the only way to experience art, nor is it exclusive of other ways. One may have such experience either simultaneously with or as an alternative to other, more prosaic forms of experience of the same object or situation. At the same time, the existence of the concept of aesthetic experience is the product of a shift in the role of the arts as artists become more autonomous in their own right and assume a more entrepreneurial professional status. In turn, the existence of a concept of aesthetic experience influences the development of the arts. “Fine art” is produced for a different audience and requires different forms and materials. So one is justified in saying that aesthetic experience is not only a description of the experience of art and nature but also a force in shaping art and attitudes toward nature. That is the sense in which aesthetic experience becomes the defining characteristic of the arts themselves.

It is also important to note the shift that the concept of aesthetic experience produces in the relation of art and nature. As long as the arts are regarded as the work of skilled craftsmen produced according to a predetermined form and for an extrinsic end, art and nature are distinct. Natural beauty requires no craft; the arts, in relation to natural beauty, can never be more than an imitation. They may be superior because they are closer to the ideal than nature (Aristotle, Plotinus) or they may be inferior because they can never match their original (Plato), but in either case, they are distinct. Their end is determined by what they are made to do—their formal and final causes. The concept of aesthetic experience, however, defines both art and nature as means to a common end—the kind of experience that is pleasurable in a unique, autonomous way, independent of the concepts or even the existence of its actual objects. As long as the audience has the experience, it does not really matter what produces it or even whether its objects really exist or are only imagined. The expe-
rience and not the thing is the end of art, and nature may equally be the cause of such experience.

In the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, a noticeable shift takes place in the relation of art and nature. In the beginning, art, which was still under the influence of theories of imitation, sought to follow nature. Gradually, as imitation is replaced by expression as the basic theory of art, nature comes to be experienced as a form of art. In the picturesque, the object is for nature to be viewed as art. In landscape gardening, one shapes nature to an artistic vision. In viewing natural scenery, one recognizes the divine artist at work. This shift is possible because it is the experience itself that defines art and not the other way around.

Theories of aesthetic experience are closely associated with and tend to produce idealist theories of the aesthetic and art. The most important of these are theories of aesthetic expression that think of art as the expression of mental activity on the part of the artist and/or the audience. If it is the experience itself that is important, and if experience is an essentially individual and subjective mental state, then it follows that aesthetic experience is just the mental state itself. That state may be both psychologically and metaphysically unique. The purpose of aesthetic and critical theories is to define that state and describe its production. The purpose of art is simply to produce such states. An artist is one who transforms his or her own experience into a work of art and conveys to an audience that experience so that the audience subjectively experiences what the artist “expresses” in the work of art. The complexity of such theories of expression and the distinctions that they require occupy criticism and philosophy from the 18th through the 20th centuries. What all such theories have in common is a concept of aesthetic experience. See also AESTHETIC PROPERTIES.

AESTHETIC EXPRESSION. See EXPRESSION.

AESTHETIC JUDGMENT. See JUDGMENT.

AESTHETIC OBJECT. Theories of the aesthetic object take many forms. At its simplest, an aesthetic object is whatever is the object of an aesthetic experience. Aesthetic objects then would be things like
works of art and **beautiful** objects. But that simple **definition** raises numerous problems. It is open to an immediate charge of circularity if an aesthetic experience is the experience of a work of art or a beautiful object and an aesthetic object is the object of such an experience. The most common move, therefore, is first to try to characterize aesthetic experience independently and then to understand aesthetic objects as a subordinate concept. But if aesthetic experience can apply to almost any object experienced in the special way described by various theories of an **aesthetic attitude** or aesthetic **perception**, then the concept of an aesthetic object becomes so broad as to be virtually coextensive with any object.

The alternative is to make the concept of an aesthetic object primary. Then aesthetic experience can be defined as the experience of an aesthetic object, and works of art can be identified as a sub-class of aesthetic objects. The most common theory of an aesthetic object along these lines, advocated by **Monroe Beardsley**, among others, understands an aesthetic object to be the object of perception. Physical objects (stones and painted canvases, for example) and theoretical objects (numbers and concepts) have their own uses, but the perceptual object is not identical with the physical object or the conceptual object that is perceived. One can identify the perceptual object itself. Its existence depends on a perceiver, though it may be possible to describe a perceptual object in ways that distinguish the object itself from the subjective states of the perceiver. If, in addition, that perceptual object is considered for its own sake and not as the means to some other end, then it qualifies as an aesthetic object. Understood in that way, aesthetic objects are perceptual ends in themselves, although that end may be characterized in other ways as well—e.g., as pleasant or intrinsically meaningful or as the product of an **intention** to produce an aesthetic experience. It is easy enough to slip back into circularity by re-introducing the concept of the aesthetic in an attempt to distinguish perceptual objects that count as aesthetic objects from other perceptual objects.

In addition to approaching aesthetic objects in terms of perception, aesthetic objects are sometimes identified as **formal** objects. Paintings, for example, may be figurative, but they can also be abstract. In both cases, the formal properties can be regarded independently of what is represented or what is physically describable. The claim by
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art critics and theorists, such as Clive Bell and Roger Fry, was that the significant form itself was the only aesthetic object. Everything else in a work of art was merely a means to that formal end. If the means is confused with the end, then the aesthetic object is lost. Such theories work best for painting and music, where formal properties can be identified independently, but they are more difficult to apply and seem more problematic when literary works are considered. The form of a poem or novel seems insufficient by itself to identify its aesthetic qualities.

Attempts to make aesthetic objects the focus of aesthetic theory are most prominent in continental phenomenological theories such as Roman Ingarden’s analysis of the literary work of art that claims to be able to distinguish a phenomenological object from the larger context of conscious experience by some methodological procedure of “bracketing.” If that procedure is successful, then the object, which remains embedded in an actual consciousness, is nevertheless independently describable.

Again, there are two alternatives. In ways that hark back to Immanuel Kant’s identification of the aesthetic with any pre-conceptual and pre-theoretical apprehension of something, all purely phenomenological objects can be taken to be aesthetic. Then beauty and works of art are particular kinds of aesthetic objects, depending either on the kind of pleasure that they produce or the kind of experience that they seek to produce. One is led back to descriptions of felt experience that is aesthetic. Alternatively, the arts and beauty can be regarded disjunctively as including many different kinds of things—painting, scenery, music, architecture, etc.—and the phenomenological objects in each case are aesthetic objects. One is then led to seek some other way of defining the relevant members of the disjunctive set. Such a view is compatible with social and institutional theories of art, for example.

AESTHETIC PLEASURE. Although the earliest usages of ‘aesthetic’ refer only to a kind of mental activity that is merely felt and thus does not provide rational clarity, it was quickly assumed that the feeling in question was pleasurable. Part of the explanation for this assumption was the corresponding belief that mental activity itself was pleasurable. The mind becomes melancholy when it is not occu-
pied. As discussions of sentiment and taste developed, it was frequently asserted that aesthetic pleasure was a unique pleasure that differed from other sentiments and forms of gratification, especially those that were “interested” in the sense of involving the satisfaction of some other desire or need. Immanuel Kant distinguished the pleasure in the beautiful from other pleasures; aesthetic pleasure does not depend on the existence of its object, and Kant gives it the name of delight as opposed to the merely agreeable.

Within theories of taste, aesthetic pleasure comes to be regarded more narrowly as other forms of sentiment are recognized. In particular, the sublime stimulates a feeling of awe and fear, and ugliness a feeling of disapprobation or disgust. Nevertheless, even the sublime is attractive, so a secondary problem arises over how one can take pleasure aesthetically from sentiments that are not, in themselves, pleasurable. The problem receives considerable discussion in terms of the pleasure of tragedy, and various theories are offered as to why tragic drama produces a sentiment of pleasure at the same time that it arouses pity and fear.

Another problem for theories of aesthetic pleasure is distinguishing the effects of refinement. What is pleasurable to an unrefined taste can be painful to a refined taste. If aesthetic pleasure is simply a hedonistic accompaniment, then it would seem to be a disadvantage to have a more refined taste. This is a version of the larger problem for any value theory that reduces value to pleasure. Why, Edmund Burke asks, would not a happy pig be preferable to an unhappy lover.

More recent theories of aesthetic pleasure recognize the complex psychology of pleasure and find the reduction of all feeling to pleasure and pain insufficiently fine-grained. For example, while finding an adequate mental expression for one’s intuition may be satisfying in a deep way, it is not simply pleasurable. So aesthetic pleasure is less important than the epistemological function of aesthetic intuition. Modernist art has rejected the idea that art should be beautiful and that aesthetic experience should be pleasant, though some usages retain the older assumption that the aesthetic is pleasurable and thus simply reject the idea that art appeals to the aesthetic at all.

AESTHETIC PREDICATES. Much of recent analytical aesthetics can be treated as a part of the philosophy of language. Aesthetic con-
cepts and aesthetic qualities are linguistic predicates, and their analysis determines the forms of predication and the conditions of application of such predicates. See also AESTHETIC CONCEPTS; AESTHETIC QUALITIES.

AESTHETIC PROPERTIES. In order to identify or define aesthetic experiences, aesthetic objects, or feelings, an attempt to specify some properties as sufficient for producing the experience or for defining beauty or a work of art has occupied many philosophers. In classical and Renaissance art theory, a ratio of size—$A:B::B:A + B$—in visual objects was believed to be the property that beauty possessed. In the 18th century, Francis Hutcheson argued that a compound ratio of uniformity and variety produced the sentiment of beauty in the mind of a perceiver. William Hogarth maintained that a “sensuous line”—one that moves in a gentle curve—was the line of beauty in painting and engraving. Such attempts to identify specific aesthetic properties led to counter-examples that purported to demonstrate that the property in question was neither necessary nor sufficient to produce the experience of beauty or to define a beautiful object, depending on whether beauty was believed to be a subjective response or an objective reality.

Aesthetic properties are most centrally associated with essentialist theories of art. Some properties of objects are sought that will be either necessary or sufficient (or, ideally, both) to define or identify works of art. Aesthetic properties need not be regarded as either necessary or sufficient, however. It might be, simply, that in certain circumstances certain properties of an object will produce an aesthetic experience. In that case, aesthetic properties are understood to be contingent on some other conditions. Criticism of the arts includes the attempt to show what properties in a particular work are its aesthetic properties. For example, the property of balance in a portrait might be among its aesthetic properties, but balance in a different kind of painting might simply be boring or even anti-aesthetic. Attempts to describe the aesthetic properties of a particular work of art or a particular experience, therefore, assume a causal relation between some object or situation and an end result, such as a feeling of beauty or simply an aesthetic experience. If aesthetic experience depends only on an attitude assumed by someone toward something,
however, then no properties in and of themselves will be aesthetic. If one rejects the uniqueness of aesthetic experience, then one will also reject the uniqueness of aesthetic properties, but one might still pursue the critical task of showing what properties of a work of art are especially relevant to its proper appreciation. See also AESTHETIC QUALITIES.

AESTHETIC QUALITIES. Aesthetic qualities are typically such qualities as beauty, grace, elegance, sublimity, grandeur, and so forth. In the history of aesthetics, the debate over aesthetic qualities arises out of the shift to an empiricist, subjectivist understanding of claims about beauty and its related descriptions. Prior to that shift, aesthetic qualities, though they would not have been called that, could be referred to metaphysically independent objects—the beautiful, the harmony of the universe, and so forth. Once aesthetic qualities are understood in terms of individual experience, they are first of all qualities of that experience that must be felt and that cannot be completely understood independently of their felt quality. Typically, they are characterized in emotional terms. So sublimity is experienced as a form of fear or awe. Beauty is experienced as a kind of pleasure or a contemplative state of satisfaction. At the same time, one of the tasks of aesthetics has been to relate aesthetic qualities to properties of objects either causally or attitudinally. So sublimity is related causally to greatness of size or unlimited expanses. Beauty is related to calm emotions or moderate mental exercise. Some properties of such objects as a compound ratio, \( \frac{A:B}{B+1} \), or a gently curving line are thought to be causally productive of beauty in a normal perceiver.

The problem for any theory of aesthetic qualities is that counterexamples are easy to come by for all suggested relations. So aesthetic qualities are frequently characterized as open or only paradigmatically describable. That is, typical instances of gracefulness in painting can be exhibited, but no particular set of properties is necessary and sufficient for the quality. At one extreme of theory, it may even be denied that the typically aesthetic qualities are specifically aesthetic at all. When one describes a work of art as graceful, for example, one is merely praising it in a certain way and relating it to other
similar works of art. See also AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE; AESTHETIC PROPERTIES.

AESTHETIC VALUE. Theories of aesthetic value parallel theories of moral value in many respects, but in others, aesthetic value presents distinct problems. Basically, one may hold either an objective, realist theory of aesthetic value, or one may believe that aesthetic value is essentially subjective and emotive. The realist about aesthetic value believes that some objects, properties, or states of affairs are objectively more beautiful or more aesthetically valuable intrinsically. Even if no one experiences them, some things or worlds are better than others. It does not follow that such worlds must have objectively identifiable properties, however, though they may. One may hold that aesthetic value is intrinsic to some worlds even though it is a “non-natural” property. Historically, value was ascribed to objects or worlds that were intrinsically well-ordered, beautiful, harmonious, or otherwise more desirable on the basis of real properties that they possessed. Classical theories of beauty typically assigned value to beauty in and of itself quite apart from any experience of it. An emotivist about aesthetic value, on the other hand, holds that nothing is aesthetically valuable in and of itself. The physical (or metaphysical) world is value-neutral. Value attaches only to experience, and most theories then would limit it to human experience.

As with theories of moral value, realist and emotivist theories of aesthetic value also consider what kind of things are valuable. One might be a realist about beauty, so that the beautiful is something in and of itself. But one might also hold that what is objectively valuable is only contingently determined. What is good for the whole of a society or for the survival of the species is aesthetically valuable to that society or species but not to others. Evolutionary theories of aesthetic value can be objective, therefore. Similarly, one can be a subjectivist about aesthetic value and differ about what that subjective value consists in. Some hold that it is simply pleasure; others that it is a particular kind of pleasure that is qualitatively different from other pleasures or that it is a form of utility.

Theories of aesthetic value are complicated because one of the fundamental principles of modernist aesthetics is that any aesthetic experience itself is distinct from moral, practical, or theoretical for-
mulations. One cannot reduce aesthetic value to moral value, even if some aesthetically valuable experiences are also morally significant. So while one might hold that aesthetic value is a real property of some things or some situations, if one is a modernist, then there is no way to know that reality other than directly experiencing it, and there seems to be little difference between such realism and the subjectivism that holds that it is the experience itself alone that is valuable. For example, Thomas Reid held that beauty was a reality and that its value is a consequence of what it is, while David Hume held that beauty was not a quality of things at all but an emotion or sentiment that was pleasing, but both Reid and Hume were empiricists and considered that only individual experience provided data about aesthetic value. Reid’s realism, therefore, requires a direct perception of the non-natural qualities, and Hume’s qualified skepticism admits common agreement about what will be experienced as beautiful.

Aesthetic value is typically “about” pleasant or beautiful objects or experiences that are felt as pleasant. There can be negative aesthetic values, however. Ugliness is not just a lack of beauty, and some positive aesthetic values, such as the sublime or the tragic, are emotionally distinct from pleasure.

AESTHETICISM. The coinage of the term ‘aesthetics’ in the 18th century by A. G. Baumgarten and its subsequent adoption by Immanuel Kant in his Critique of Judgment referred to a broad area of perception that included feeling and the senses. Its usage in Romanticism narrowed it to the special feeling produced by beauty and closely related to the contemplation of the beautiful in art. Art, however, had many uses; it was didactic, hortatory, religious, political, and practical.

Within the 19th-century art world, some artists and connoisseurs felt that these other uses of art detracted from its primary purpose, which was to produce the special aesthetic experience that could not be felt otherwise. “True” art existed for its own sake. Artists and art appreciators were expected to live a distinct life that was devoted to the cultivation of aesthetic experience. They were “aesthetes” and they tried to live according to a special aesthetic creed. So aestheticism is the belief that one can shape life around the cultivation of aesthetic experience as one’s principal value. Romantic poets, partic-
ularly of the German “Sturm und Drang” school, and intellectuals were willing to adopt the attitudes of aestheticism in their lives as well as their art. Life itself became a form of art, with a corresponding disdain for bourgeois values and styles of living. There is something artificial about aestheticism—intentionally so—but it represents one clear version of an aesthetic attitude.

AGREEABLENESS. Aesthetics, especially the theory of beauty in Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, distinguishes two forms of pleasure. The pleasure of beauty appeals directly to subjective response and fulfillment. It is enough to have the feeling; no existence of an object is implied. The pleasure of agreeableness responds to the fulfillment of some desire. It follows that beauty is self-fulfilling. It does not depend on anything else. Agreeableness depends on a pre-existing desire. For something to be agreeable, it must satisfy that desire, so it implies the existence of its object.

AISTHESIS. The Greek term aisthesis (αισθησις) means feeling or perception and in some contexts simply experience or intellectual or moral perception. It is the basis for the coinage of the term ‘aesthetic’ by A. G. Baumgarten. Baumgarten derived the term from the Greek aisthanomai (αισθανομαι), which, in his *Aesthetica* (1750), means to possess the power to perceive or understand. He took it to designate the outer, external, or bodily sense as opposed to the inner sense of consciousness. Thus aesthetics is the realm of the sensate, of sense perception and sensible objects. The context for the introduction of the term is the attempt to locate feeling and sense perception in the larger rational scheme that holds that only the clear and distinct ideas known to reason constitute knowledge. In such a scheme, feeling is inferior. The pressure of empirical investigations and the new science mean that sense perception must be accounted for, however. Originally, then, ‘aesthetics’ is a preliminary form of perception or understanding that should be replaced by the clarity of rational perception.

‘Aesthetics’ does not become the preferred term for all of the study of beauty or feeling until Immanuel Kant adopts it. In Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* it retains its basic meaning as a form of perception, but it is understood as a pre-conceptual form of perception, so it is not inferior but foundational. It also provides the essential difference
that **defines** beauty, and from there it develops in the 19th century into its own independent field of experience.

**ALBERTI, LEON BATTISTA (1404–1472).** Alberti was an Italian humanist and **classicist** whose treatise *On Painting* was the first formal investigation of **painting** as an independent art **form**. It formulated the Renaissance view of painting as an individual form of **expression** and **style**. Alberti also wrote a treatise on **sculpture** and one on **architecture**. All three treatises appeal to the mathematical nature of **harmony**, **proportion**, and balance as governing the arts. Later in his life, after the age of 40, Alberti became a prominent architect in his own right.

**ALISON, ARCHIBALD (1757–1839).** Archibald Alison was educated at Balliol College, Oxford, and was ordained in the Church of England. He pursued an active ministry in Edinburgh and was related by marriage to James Gregory, who belonged to the circle of **Thomas Reid**, the leading figure in the Scottish **common sense** school of philosophy. Alison’s *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* was published in 1790. It went through several editions in the first half of the 19th century but was eclipsed in aesthetics by Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, which was published in the same year.

Alison anticipates many of the themes and ideas also taken up by Kant and 19th-century aesthetics while remaining closely related to the 18th-century tradition of essays on **taste**. Earlier theories of taste in the empiricist tradition regarded **beauty** as an **emotion** felt in the mind, but they usually took it to be based on a simple **idea**. Hence, it could be regarded as the product of an **internal sense** directly analogous to the external senses. Alison disagreed. He accepted that beauty was an emotion felt by the mind and that it was essentially pleasurable, but he regarded the ideas that produced that emotion and the emotion itself as complex, not simple. Beauty and the other emotions of taste—**sublimity**, **novelty**, etc.—were the product of mental activity rather than the product of a passive, sense-like reception. The necessary faculties for perceiving emotions of taste were the **imagination** and **association**. The imagination acts to produce new ideas by a process of combination. Association guides that production by linking ideas into complexes of related ideas. When the imagination
and association produce **pleasure** of a particular kind, we have the emotion of beauty. Similarly, sublimity is a complex emotion produced by associations with vastness and the imaginative extension of the mind itself beyond its own limits.

According to Alison, the emotions of taste are produced only by a **disinterested** activity that parallel’s Kant’s use of that concept. Earlier references to disinterestedness were limited to avoiding prejudice or self-interested attachments. Alison and Kant treat disinterestedness as a condition of the operation of a mental faculty. Alison, however, treats it as a **psychological** rather than an epistemological condition. Because the object of the emotion is the **feeling** itself, Alison concludes that the emotions of taste have as their objects the mind itself, and he characterizes this as a form of mental **expression**. Beauty is an expression of the mind’s own powers recognized in the imaginative associations that it can make. While his theories of the mind and its expression through imaginative action suggest **Romantic** theories of art, Alison remains closely tied to earlier **neo-classical** theories of art that regarded art as an **imitation** of nature. For Alison, artists are only capable of expressing what nature provides; they are not **creators**. So he stops short of the emerging Romanticism that transforms nature into art and the artist into a second creator.

**ALLEGORY.** As a literary **genre**, allegory includes **forms** where a symbolic figure stands for a larger concept, principle, or **value**. It is significant in aesthetics as a part of a theory of **symbolism**. **Medieval** literary symbolism included literal meaning and a threefold allegorical scheme that included a direct allegory, a moral meaning, and a universal or **anagogical meaning**. The four-fold scheme was adopted by **Dante** in his *Divine Comedy*. The theory of symbolism has been adapted by some modern literary **critics** and theorists to analyze and classify texts formally.

**ALLOGRAPHIC ART.** Some artworks exist only as a single original. Others have multiple instances, each of which counts as an instance of the work. They depend on a system of **notation** that allows the work of art to be reproduced and were called allographic art by **Nelson Goodman**.
ANAGOGICAL MEANING. As part of a theory of symbolism, anagogical meaning is the interpretation that provides part of an allegorical meaning of the symbol. In the four-fold medieval scheme, in addition to the literal meaning, the allegorical meaning consisted of a direct allegory, a moral meaning, and a universal meaning. For example, Dante described the anagogical meaning of the flight of the Israelites from Egypt as the passing of the soul from this world to the next.

ANALOGY. Analogy enters into aesthetic theory at a number of points. Medieval philosophy appealed to an analogy of being. Individual things both were and were not real at the same time. Something could be unreal in the sense of not being a universal and yet real in the sense of participating in being itself. Truth depended on an analogical relation between what was said and what was the case. So the interpretation of texts allowed multiple levels of meaning depending on the analogical relations. Modern theories of symbolism and metaphor also make use of a theory of analogy but limit it to language. Metaphor either discloses or establishes an analogy between what is said and what is meant, between an object and a symbolic expression.

ANCIENTS AND MODERNS. In 17th- and 18th-century criticism, the relative priority of classical writers and artists in relation to “modern” writers and artists was a subject of extensive debate. Knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics was a standard for an educated class. Classical authors from Plato and Aristotle through Cicero, Seneca, and Tacitus provided the models for proper language. The Renaissance rejected medieval Latin and sought a purer form in Cicero and the rhetorical rules propounded by Quintilian. Tragedy and comedy were measured against classical models. It was widely accepted that contemporary writers could only approach but never excel their classical sources. The work of Johann Joachim Winckelmann held up Greek sculpture as the standard of beauty, and all things Greek were praised for their grace, elegance, and serenity. So particularly in literature and sculpture, the ancients were accorded priority and respect.

At the same time, the new science of Copernicus, Galileo, and
Isaac Newton suggested that knowledge in the modern world far surpassed anything known in the classical world. In science and the empiricist and rationalist philosophy of René Descartes, John Locke, and G. W. von Leibniz, it was the moderns who were accorded priority. Aristotle was associated with medieval scholasticism, and modern knowledge rejected Aristotelian science and method.

**Painting** presented particular problems because, although the classical descriptions of painting praised the skills of such painters as Zeuxis for their ability to imitate nature, in fact, little painting survived. The Renaissance painters who developed theories of perspective and color and excelled at painting such “serious” subjects as religious and historical scenes were the real standard. Moreover, the very classicism that promoted the ancients in literature and sculpture gave a prestige to Italian painting as the inheritor of the classical tradition. The debate over the relative priority of the ancients or moderns thus became complicated by a second debate over the priority of Raphael and Michelangelo or Peter Paul Rubens.

The debate over the ancients and moderns was more than a critical debate, however. It also implied theoretical choices. **Taste** was never simply an artistic preference. It was a sign of education and social status. So a theory of taste had to take sides in the debate over the priority of the ancients or moderns. If taste were truly subjective, then a preference for modern art (i.e., the contemporary art of the 17th and 18th centuries) could not be disregarded. But if taste responded to real qualities of beauty in objects, then those objects that had been universally accepted through the ages must be regarded as the standard. Moreover, art theory valued both nature, which implied a theory of art as the imitation of nature, and sentiment or feeling, which implied that beauty was an emotion felt in the individual mind. Realistic imitation and classical control were regarded as the great achievements of ancient art. Sentiment, with its emphasis on feeling and emotion, was inherently anti-classical. It did not follow that all sentimentalists in art theory were anti-classical, but the complications reached far beyond which artists were most valued.

**ANTI-ART.** In the 20th century, art expanded to include many things that were not considered art before. This expansion was motivated partially by new theories of art and partially by the exploration of
alternative media. One consequence was that existing art itself could be used as the basis for a kind of counter-art or anti-art—art that was intentionally not what art had been and that looked like a parody of existing art. Anti-art had its origins in the Dadaist movement and is also applied to pop art. See also CAGE, JOHN.

APOLLONIAN FORM. Friedrich Nietzsche distinguished between Dionysian and Apollonian form in The Birth of Tragedy. Apollonian form—the art that is symbolized by the god of light and music, Apollo—is classical, controlled, and rational, though it may have a dark side. Nietzsche argued that it lacks the connections to the deeper urges of the psyche that are the true origin of art.

APPRECIATION. In its most general sense, appreciation is applied to the subjective apprehension of aesthetic qualities. When one responds to such qualities as beauty, grace, elegance, or novelty, one’s experience is characterized as appreciation. Appreciation is a more general and less committed response than pleasure. One might appreciate the sublime while acknowledging elements of fear in the experience. Works of art that one would not characterize as beautiful or pleasant may nevertheless be appreciated.

‘Appreciation’ becomes an important theoretical concept in 20th-century attempts to avoid the circularity that threatened earlier aesthetic attitude theories. If one can only identify an aesthetic attitude as a response to aesthetic properties or to works of art, and if one can only tell which properties are aesthetic or which objects are works of art by assuming an aesthetic attitude toward them, then an aesthetic attitude depends on knowing which properties or works are aesthetic, and knowing which properties or works are aesthetic depends on knowing that one has an aesthetic attitude. George Dickie proposed a way out of this circularity in what he called an institutional theory of art. Central to that theory is that some objects can be presented as “candidates for appreciation.” That does not imply that they are actually appreciated, so no circularity attaches to the candidacy and no special attitude or aesthetic stance is presumed. It is sufficient for something to be a candidate for appreciation that it be put forward within the context of the art world.

A basic problem for any theory that depends on appreciation, how-
ever, is that some things are simply not appreciatable. They may be too horrible or too morally offensive to be appreciated. Nevertheless, such things can be incorporated into works of art, sometimes precisely because they are shocking or make a moral point. Such things are not plausible candidates for appreciation in any ordinary sense. Appreciation then becomes either too vague or its meaning is too specialized for it to offer an alternative to earlier aesthetic theories. One is back to trying to distinguish different kinds of experience that are aesthetic in some difficult-to-define way.

**Appropriation.** The appropriation of the work of one artist by another has become an accepted technique in some contemporary art circles, and it raises aesthetic issues. Artists have always quoted and imitated other artists. During much of the history of literature, no sharp line was drawn between translation and imitation in poetry. T. S. Eliot claimed that all writers borrow from earlier writers and that this is one of the ways that the tradition is adapted.

Recently, however, some artworks directly appropriate another artwork, especially in the visual arts. This raises questions, as it is intended to, about the value of originality. The difference between plagiarism and appropriation depends on the appropriation being recognized; it is part of the point of the new work. It must also be the case that the appropriation makes some new contribution—it produces, in some sense, a different work. Part of this difference may simply come from a different historical setting, however. One well-known example current in aesthetics (discussed by Arthur Danto) asks whether a literary work that is word for word the same as an earlier work is in fact the same work. It can be maintained that the difference in author and the history of the work can be sufficient to constitute a different work, even if there is no difference in the words at all.

Appropriation also raises questions in aesthetics about the legal status of works of art. Copyright is a relatively recent legal innovation; it only arises in the 18th century when artists began to reproduce and sell their own works. If appropriation creates a new work, it is not clear whether that is sufficient to grant a new copyright. The law has been fairly broad, however, in allowing one artist to use the
work of another for new work, particularly in the case of satire and parody.

**AQUINAS, THOMAS (1226–1274).** Thomas Aquinas was the leading Dominican theologian in the movement to adapt the metaphysics of Aristotle to Christian theology. However, Aquinas did not simply abandon the earlier neo-Platonic metaphysics. He developed an elaborate synthesis that understood being or reality as multi-dimensional but that limited our natural knowledge to those things that combine form and matter. One of the consequences of Thomist theology was a theory of symbolism and meaning that informed medieval and early Renaissance aesthetics and art theory. Artworks, like all of reality, have multiple meanings and disclose different layers of reality.

The theory of beauty advanced by Aquinas identified three elements: integrity or perfection, proportion or harmony, and clarity, which included color. Beauty retains the hierarchical structure it has in neo-Platonism, but it refers directly to human experience. See also MEDIEVAL AESTHETICS.

**ARCHETYPE.** Aesthetic archetypes are the originals from which other works of art are derived. In an imitation theory of art, there must be some archetype that serves as the original from which artists work. Archetypes are also the original forms of creation that are disclosed in myths, which provide the basis for literary works, such as epic poetry and tragedy. Those mythological archetypes are understood psychologically in 20th-century psychoanalytic theory, and that theory is often applied to the interpretation of art. The unconscious mind is accessed by means of archetypal symbols that both reveal and conceal their true meaning. Artists tap into that symbolism and give it a concrete form in their works of art, sometimes consciously, but also sometimes still unconsciously.

**ARCHITECTURE.** Architecture has occupied an important place in aesthetics because buildings clearly serve an artistic function in many cultures and because they have survived as monuments. Greek and Roman architecture, along with the sculpture that adorned it, provide the most extensive examples of classical art. Gothic architecture, exemplified in the great cathedrals, preserves the medieval
spirit in concrete form. The Renaissance preference for things classical over things medieval helped produce a new, neo-classical architecture, and the centrality of architecture to the expression of a culture continues through a neo-Gothic revival in the 19th century, modernism, and recent postmodern eclecticism. So architecture is not only one of the fine arts among others; it is also a way that one identifies a cultural aesthetic.

Nevertheless, the aesthetics of architecture raises several questions and problems. First of all, aesthetics has tended to identify beauty and more recently aesthetic experience with contemplation independent of all utility. Yet architecture is intrinsically useful in its origins. Even ornamental monuments have their function, and to separate architectural form from function seems much more problematic than it would be in other art forms. Second, because aesthetics arises from attention to feeling and emotion, the concrete nature of architecture does not fit well with other aspects of aesthetic theory. A building cannot be made to conform to a theory of imitation, for example, simply because buildings do not imitate nature in any of the usual senses of imitation. Plato and Aristotle might regard a building as an imitation in the sense of that it is a made thing that imitates the architect’s ideas, and temples were believed to conform to a divine archetype laid down by the gods, but that is a reason to disregard the actual concrete building. The true temple belongs to the mind or to sacred space, not to its stones and profane location. Third, architecture raises questions about the relation of material to object. The beauty of architectural materials depends on the reality of their qualities in a way that even sculpture does not. A reproduction of a marble statue may preserve all of the aesthetic features of the original even though it is cast in some other material. But the marble or granite of a building needs to be more than a mere façade if it is to be truly architectural and not merely ornamental. Finally, architecture remains within the realm of craft after the other fine arts have been separated from their roots in crafts and guilds. One still attends schools of architecture, not schools of fine art, to learn how to build buildings. Historically, the evolution of the concept of fine arts has to be separated from the useful arts and crafts in order for an aesthetic to emerge. That cannot be the case with architecture.

The tendency within aesthetics, therefore, is to distinguish the
form of buildings from their uses and to treat function as a dual category. On the one hand, function is the practical use that is made of a building. On the other hand, function is the look that function gives to a building, a look that depends on its form as well as its actual use. So a building with square doors looks odd because the function of doors is expected to conform to their use as entries for humans who are taller than they are wide, but it is the look and not the use itself that is the aesthetic feature. Similarly, neo-classical architecture in the style of Andrea Palladio preserves a look that refers one to a classical image of grace and simplicity apart from any usefulness that columns and porticoes might have. The aesthetics of architecture often makes a distinction between the ornamental and the structural just because different aesthetic principles seem to be called for in each case. In many ways, therefore, an “aesthetics” of architecture stretches the meaning of the term ‘aesthetic’ in unique ways.

ARISTOTLE (?–323 BCE). Although nothing in Greek philosophy can be identified specifically as “aesthetics,” a number of areas have direct bearing on the philosophy of art. In particular, Aristotle’s Poetics has exerted a major influence on literary theory, especially the theory of tragedy. Classical theories apply to art in two areas: a theory of beauty and a theory of imitation. Plato in Republic, Book X famously reduced art to the status of an imitation of an imitation—removed from the dependent reality of actual things as those things are removed from the ultimate reality of forms. Aristotle, however, used ‘imitation’ in a somewhat different sense. Reality continues to be found only in forms, but those forms can only manifest themselves in individuals. Individuals are either natural or made. So instead of reducing art to a mere imitation of imitation, art becomes one among other made things. The Poetics considers what kind of making is involved in drama and follows the analysis to the production of a specific kind of drama—tragedy. Drama is an imitation, a making, of an action, in a way that presents the action before an audience. One may then ask what kind of action is presented, and a tragic action is defined as one that presents a good man who, in spite of his goodness, is brought to an end that is both piteous and fearful in such a way that both the pity and fear are “catharted” through the action itself. In the course of the analysis, Aristotle argues that tragedy, because
of its universality, is more important than history, which is bound to repeating actual events, and that a tragic action must be based on a probability that is more universal than such actuality. What could happen, not what actually happens, carries the tragic meaning.

Aristotle’s *Poetics* is a rather brief treatise, and it has engendered discussion of considerable influence in the history of aesthetics. First of all, it shifts the meaning of imitation from a negative to a positive activity. A poet is not a blind tool of the gods or a producer of false appearances but a maker. All subsequent imitation theories exploit that defense, based on Aristotle, against the accusations of later Platonists. Second, tragedy is identified as the highest form of literature after epic poetry. Tragedy, according to Aristotle’s analysis, transforms fate into a triumph of human meaning in the face of disaster. A persistent problem remains about how one can rejoice in what is also the destruction of the tragic hero, and through the ages, philosophers of art have struggled to provide answers that go beyond Aristotle’s cryptic reference to catharsis. Part of any answer turns on how one understands ‘catharsis’ since Aristotle actually says very little about what takes place and some of that is puzzling—including his claim that the paradigm of tragedy, Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*, is only the second best kind of tragedy, the best being one in which the catastrophe is avoided.

The two principal lines of development have taken catharsis to be either a change that takes place in the audience, a kind of ritual purging of fear and pity by the distanced dramatic experience of them, or a change that takes place in the plot itself whereby the events that were experienced as piteous and fearsome are resolved in a way that produces a transcendent outcome. According to the first, for example, one both identifies with Oedipus in his struggles and is freed from them by experiencing them vicariously in a way that produces no actual harm. In general, ritual events were regarded in archaic religious cultures as both important to revealing the gods and very dangerous unless one had the protection of the cult. Understood in that way, the drama itself is a ritual activity, and catharsis is the outcome because the drama, being an enactment, is protected. According to the second, however, it is not the psychology of the audience but the manipulation of the plot that produces the change. Oedipus is indeed destroyed, but he also achieves a resolution for Thebes that frees the
city from the curse that has been placed upon it. He is at once sacrificial victim and hero. Much of later theory of tragedy can be traced back to these to alternative readings of Aristotle.

In a wider sense, Aristotle’s methods, not just in the Poetics but also throughout his philosophy, lay out one of the classical alternatives for a philosophy of art. Plato and Plotinus present the other. Aristotle’s method divides any subject according to its widest definition in terms of its formal, material, final, and efficient causes. So a method is available that can define any object, including works of art. Neo-Aristotelians who do not subscribe to the underlying metaphysics of Aristotle can still apply that method in seeking essential definitions of art and in developing critical methods of interpretation. To them, Aristotle’s Rhetoric and Metaphysics are more important than the specific analysis of tragedy given in the Poetics.

ARMENINI, GIOVANNI BATTISTA (1530–1609). Armenini was an Italian painter whose treatises on painting provide one of the links between earlier Renaissance theories of painting and the mannerist exploitation of individual style as a value in itself. His De’ Veri Precetti della pittura (On the True Precepts of Painting, 1586) describes the selection of ideal features from several sources to produce a perfect combination but claims that such selection also depends on the possession by the artist of a singular manner of his own. That manner constitutes taste in the extended sense that became important to aesthetics.

ARNHEIM, RUDOLF (1904–). Rudolf Arnheim is a psychologist whose work on visual perception based on gestalt psychology has been applied to pictorial arts and film. His major works include Film als Kunst (Film and Art, 1932), Art and Visual Perception (1954), and Visual Thinking (1969). Arnheim uses the schematic structure of perception to understand how images construct meaning.

ART EDUCATION. Art education is a sub-discipline within aesthetics that is concerned both with the practical aspects of promoting aesthetic appreciation and the theoretical aspects of what can and cannot be taught. If art requires a direct subjective response by a viewer, then that response itself cannot be conveyed independently of the ob-
ject. Famously, there is no disputing about taste. At the same time, taste and aesthetic judgment have been regarded as learnable. The question then becomes what and how one can learn to appreciate and to judge works of art, and that is the subject matter of art education.

A first step is to widen experience itself. So one element in art education is to expose students to a variety of artistic experiences. Sometimes this can be controversial since students may resist what is too new or difficult, and societal values may be contravened. Simply exposing students to works of art is not likely to be sufficient, however, so art education seeks ways to improve the responses of students. In classical and neo-classical aesthetics, that improvement might be sought through the inculcation of rules. One could learn what to appreciate and how to appreciate it by learning the rules of art. Rules, however, prove difficult to find, and art changes in ways that defy established rules. Art education, therefore, turned to the response itself. Aesthetic attitude theories implied an educational program. One could learn to assume a special attitude toward works of art, and in that attitude the experience of the work would be enhanced. Only those who are skilled in perceiving the work properly can be said to be aesthetically engaged. Trying to teach a response, however, whether it is a “distanced” aesthetic attitude or some other way of responding, proves as difficult as providing rules. Not only does art change in ways that make any single attitude inappropriate, but even figuring out how to assume the attitude also proves difficult.

Contemporary art education seeks to combine many of the past techniques without making any of them the sole means to learning about art. Museums and schools have established interactive ways of increasing exposure. Rules, while they have not been abandoned, become models. No way of viewing is canonical, but it is recognized that a degree of openness is necessary to the experience of art. Studies in the theory of interpretation also enter into the mix to expand historical horizons of understanding. Current art education is quite eclectic, therefore.

ART FOR ART’S SAKE (L’ART POUR L’ART). The slogan “art for art’s sake” is associated primarily with the 19th-century art movements that accepted the autonomy of art. The claim is that aesthetic experience is both unique and uniquely valuable. While art
ART MARKET may have other uses and effects, it is the task of the artist to produce art for the sake of its own unique experience and values. The slogan also makes a polemical point. Artists cannot and should not be held to the same standards of social usefulness that are applied to ordinary mortals. They may be social outcasts or morally disreputable without that affecting their status as artists.

ART MARKET. At a certain stage in a culture, a market for artworks tends to arise. It requires collectors and connoisseurs who desire the status that art brings in addition to artists. An art market competes with other forms of economic support, such as patronage, for the production of works of art, and it may eventually replace them. The creation of an art market tends to produce (or arise from) artists who are individually identified and who have styles that can be identified as well. A secondary network of dealers and specialists becomes part of the art market, and forgeries and fakes also appear in response to demand. In Europe, the rise of an entrepreneurial middle class in the 17th and 18th centuries, combined with the spread of literacy and the ability to reproduce artworks by printing and engraving, produced an active art market that changed the way that artworks were regarded. Artists became increasingly independent of patronage, and critics who served as arbiters of taste and guided public consumption also became entrepreneurs in their own right. The fine arts were established as cultural forms distinct from crafts and craftsmanship. See also ART WORLD.

ART NOUVEAU. The stylistic movement at the end of the 19th century known as art nouveau reacted against historical classicism in architecture and design. It emphasized flowing lines and motifs based on flowers and leaves in decoration. Art nouveau represented an aesthetic reaction against formalism.

ART WORLD (ARTWORLD). The phrase ‘the art world’ is associated with the institutional theory of art and with some forms of historicism in aesthetic theory. It was the title of an influential essay by Arthur Danto and was adopted by George Dickie in his early version of the institutional theory of art. Danto argued that the existence of an art world determines art theory, not vice versa. Some the-
oretical concepts only become possible when changes in the art world give them application; so art theory is itself an historical phenomena. The institutional theory of art holds that the art world makes possible some performative acts that actually create works of art. The art world is made up of artists, critics, museum directors, art dealers and anyone who is prepared to assume the role of art appreciator. At least from a classificatory standpoint, anyone in the art world can confer the status of work of art on objects. So artists, while they are the paradigm for art makers, do not have a unique claim as producers of art, and critics play a positive role in producing as well as promoting art. Many things that would not normally be considered art can be included in the art world provided some member of the art world is willing to put them forward. The concept of an art world in general parallels the rise of the fine arts as a separate cultural form, but the special powers attributed to it require that it have a more definite identity. The difficulty has been to specify that identity without circularity. See also ART MARKET; COLLECTORS.

ARTIFACT. That a work of art is an artifact is one of the most general defining features of works of art. Something must exist for there to be a work of art. Simply imagining writing a novel or painting a painting is not sufficient to produce a work of art. This becomes crucial because some influential theories of art identify the work of art itself with the expression in the mind of an artist of some idea or intuition. Such expression, in itself, it would seem, might remain essentially private. Even those theories require that the expression take form, however; it cannot remain nebulous and undefined. So the artifactuality of art—its existence as a physical canvas, text, score, or performance—seems essential to something being a work of art.

The necessity of an artifact can be challenged in several ways, however. Works of art continue to exist after their original artifactuality has been destroyed—as reproductions, descriptions, etc. So while there is some surviving artifact, it is not the work of art itself. Moreover, recent art has worked very hard to produce works of art without any artifact as such. Conceptual art requires only an idea or description, not an actual thing. Some kinds of anti-art attack the existence of earlier works. The new work is the destruction, not the creation, of something. If these seem extreme cases, they point out
the difficulty in supplying necessary conditions for something to be considered art.

ARTIFICIAL SIGNS. See NATURAL SIGNS; SIGNS.

ASPECT SEEING. Theories of aesthetic perception often refer to the ability to see different aspects of the same figure. The same lines on a surface may be seen as different objects. A frequently cited example is a figure that may be seen as either a duck or a rabbit. It is often used by philosophers of art influenced by Ludwig Wittgenstein to explain how one sees pictures as representations. True aspect seeing requires that one be able to voluntarily switch between aspects, but one cannot see both aspects at the same time. That leads to the conclusion that seeing is not a simple act of an innocent eye but that it involves mental activity and choice.

ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS. In early empiricist epistemology, the association of ideas was invoked to explain how otherwise independent, atomistic ideas can be influenced by other equally atomistic ideas. If, as John Locke argued, all of our experience can be traced to simple ideas produced in the mind by experience, a means of relating those ideas to each other must be found. Most of our actual ideas are not simple but complex, so it is necessary to explain how complex ideas can come about. John Gay and others suggested that the similarity between ideas might be sufficient that one idea would automatically suggest another that was similar to it so that the two ideas would be linked in the mind. Experience would produce such associations. Touching a glowing metal surface and pain are quickly associated so that one pulls away even without touching. Complex ideas depend on the associations provided by experience.

David Hartley developed the association of ideas into a complete theory of how the mind works. Hartley believed that ideas were associated according to mechanical principles based on the nervous system. Vibrations produced by one idea would set off sympathetic vibrations so that very similar ideas were generated mechanically. David Hume resisted such mechanical explanations but nevertheless utilized association of both ideas and original impressions in his explanation of how the mind composed complex ideas from the original
impressions provided by experience. Association of ideas remained a staple of psychological explanation throughout the 19th century, and in some ways it continues to be a part of folk psychology.

Association of ideas became important to aesthetics first of all as an explanation of why some expected aesthetic responses did not occur. The empiricist project called for establishing causal connections between observations and consequent experience and between properties and effects. In aesthetics, that meant looking for qualities or properties that produced the subjective response of beauty. Francis Hutcheson, for example, proposed that uniformity amidst variety produced beauty. But the effect was not always as expected. Hutcheson appealed to the association of ideas to explain the difference. One might have negative associations that would impede the expected response to beautiful objects. Having been frightened by a horse, one might not respond appropriately to an otherwise beautiful painting of a horse. In that sense, the association of ideas was largely a negative, secondary force.

The association of ideas also became important as a positive explanation of how and why some things have the aesthetic properties that they have. Archibald Alison developed an extensive theory of aesthetic responses and properties, but he did not believe that there were any special intrinsic qualities of beauty. Rather, some things appear as beautiful because they have either natural or cultural associations with other things that are pleasant. Spring and flowers are pleasant in themselves as a relief from winter and as a rebirth of life; art that depicts spring and flowers is pleasant because of the associations, except that it is freed from the limitations of the actual events. Such associations are always complex and can develop extensive patterns. One can also use such associations to explain cultural differences in what appears as beautiful.

The difficulty in aesthetic theories of association are twofold. Association of ideas as a psychological theory tends to be limited to folk psychology. Other mechanisms provide better explanations at the level of empirical investigation. And the theory of association is inherently vague. While some associations seemed natural, there is no reason that one might not form any associations, and then the problem of what is aesthetically pleasing becomes totally subjective again. Sadism would be as aesthetically legitimate as delight in
beauty if that is the way that the associations were formed. So association of ideas offers more of an appearance of an explanation than a true explanation of why some things are beautiful or aesthetically pleasing and others are not.

AUDIENCE. One type of aesthetic theory focuses on the response of an audience. The audience may be an individual, even the artist himself or herself, but theories of response point out that a work of art for which there is no audience is not a work of art. An artist produces a work for some audience, so audience response is essential to the very concept of a work of art. ‘Audience’ is being used in such cases in a very broad sense. The audience for a work is anyone who is prepared to respond to the work or to whom the work is addressed. Not all audiences are present at a public performance. So the audience for a novel is a reader who reads in private.

The necessary existence of an audience does not imply, however, that a work of art is reduced to the psychological response of the audience. Any real audience may be more or less well prepared to respond to a particular work of art. If the audience laughs in the wrong places, for example, it does not follow that that is the fault of the work of art. Some theorists have even argued that it is a sign of real art that it must create its own audience. If an audience already exists, then works aimed at it are not truly creative. They only imitate what has already been done and manipulate predetermined responses. In that case, the underlying theory is that art itself must be creative and not an imitation.

Historically, the changes in an available audience mirror changes in the kinds and status of art. If the audience for art is limited to patrons, then art itself is directed toward the extrinsic ends dictated by patronage. If the artist is an entrepreneur, then art is aimed toward a market. The development of an art market independent of craft and patronage marked a shift in art theory as well as a shift in the available audience. Much mass art is dependent on an accurate assessment of what an audience will respond to.

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (354–430). As one of the Latin fathers of the Christian church, Augustine exerted influence over Christian theology throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. He was strongly in-
fluenced by the writings of Plotinus, and his emphasis on the absolute power of grace led him to oppose and defeat the competing dualistic, gnostic movements at the time as well as rejecting the emphasis on free will and good works advocated by a rival, Pelagius. Aesthetically, Augustine was particularly impressed by the proportion and order of numbers, and he composed a work, De Musica, that extended harmony to all forms of beauty. In his later ecclesiastical career, Augustine became more concerned about the moral effects of art, particularly the theater, which he saw as binding the soul to worldly pleasure. That led him to a condemnation of art. See also MEDIEVAL AESTHETICS.

AUTHENTICITY. Issues about authenticity arise when art is viewed cross-culturally or historically. For example, in music, a performance now is directed toward an audience that has musical expectations conditioned by present-day music, and the music can be performed on instruments that may not have existed when it was composed. Alternatively, the music may be performed on period instruments and under conditions that, as nearly as possible, reflect the instructions of the composer and the expectations of his or her audience. The question then arises whether both performances are equally authentic. If authenticity is defined in terms of the intentions and expectations of its composition, then one gets one answer. If authenticity is defined in terms of the performance that best presents the aesthetic potential of the work, then one may get another answer altogether.

The issues of authenticity can be quite complex because conditions of performance change in ways that could not have been anticipated when the work of art was created. For example, it is possible with current technology to change movies filmed in black and white into color. Had the movie industry—the producer and director—had color available, who can say whether they would have chosen to make a particular film as they did. Certainly there are differences in the final work, but it is not clear that one will get the same answer in every case when one asks which version of a film is the authentic one.

Similar issues arise in virtually every art form. The Greeks painted their statues. Does that mean that only a painted statue is an
authentic Greek statue? Interest in traditional cultures and their art has expanded as our ethnocentric horizons have broadened. Is a performance by native dancers directed to a Western tourist audience inherently inauthentic?

Many of the questions about authenticity lead to the heart of questions about the nature of art. Two kinds of issue seem particularly closely linked to questions of authenticity. First, there is the question of what art is—its definition, if it has an essential definition, or its status, if it is a contingent cultural product. If art is an imitation—of nature, transcendent beauty, or just a made thing—then authenticity would seem to follow from the quality of the imitation, and that was true of much discussion of art prior to the 18th century. A good work of art was one that provided a good imitation, and an authentic work of art would be one that imitated accurately. So if the quality of an imitation could be improved, then the work would be more authentic, even if the original intent of the maker was violated. Subsequent artists thought it quite legitimate to improve on the imitations of their predecessors. If, on the other hand, art is the expression of a mind, especially the mind of the artist, then authenticity attaches to the artist-work connection. In the case of performances, it is not the performance that appeals to the audience best or that represents best what is performed but the performance that comes closest to the artist’s mind, usually understood as the artist’s intentions, though ‘intention’ presents additional problems.

Second, there are questions about the nature of aesthetic value. Authenticity implies a value judgment. The authentic is better than the inauthentic. If, as in many modern aesthetic theories, aesthetic value is essentially what pleases, then an audience cannot be wrong, at least over an extended period of time. What pleases and has always pleased is what is aesthetically good, and authenticity follows. The potential to please and to continue to please carries with it its own authenticity. Authenticity is more than a matter of empirical judgment, therefore. It carries with it a considerable theoretical commitment.

‘Authenticity’ is a particularly important term in aesthetic theories that locate art in a social, cultural, or economic context. If art is a product of labor, and if it is part of either an economic base or a cultural superstructure built on that economic base, then the role of art is determined by the place of the artist in that socio-economic
scheme. For Marxist aestheticians and for critical theorists influenced by Marxism, authenticity is determined by whether a product correctly expresses its role in the dialectical movement. That role may be determined in several ways—as a function, as an expression, or as a structural element. In any case, authentic art is art that is on the positive, progressive side of the dialectical or historical movement of culture toward greater freedom. Inauthentic art is part of the resistance to such movement; it is on the side of repression, or it is itself repressive, as when an art form serves the function of condemning freedom.

**AUTOGRAPHIC ART.** Some artworks exist primarily only as a single instance, an original. A painting, for example, is singular; it may be copied and reproduced, but every copy is an imitation, not the thing itself. As a consequence, such works can be faked or forged. Nelson Goodman called such works autographic art in contrast to works that have multiple instances depending on a notation, which he called allographic art. See also GOODMAN, NELSON.

**AUTONOMY OF ART.** The idea that art is autonomous, that it is not part of something else or dependent on something else, is a modern concept. Classical and medieval art is always related to something or some use, even if art itself has intrinsic value. Collectors and connoisseurs might look to art for art’s sake, but the art itself is religious or decorative or useful. Along with the idea that art is related especially to a kind of feeling that it produces, the modern period postulated that that feeling was unique and only possible if art was not dependent on its usefulness or other ends, even if it might still be used for those ends. Thus the autonomy of art became the defining characteristic that separated art from craft and depended on the special aesthetic feeling sought for its own sake. Immanuel Kant’s distinction between the concept free, disinterested experience of beauty, with its unique delight, and all theoretical and practical experience, which falls under concepts, enshrines the autonomy of the aesthetic experience and of art as the special means to the creation of that experience.

Subsequent neo-Kantian theories of art assign to art the symbolic function of creating perception and knowledge. Benedetto Croce
and R. G. Collingwood make a sharp distinction between art, which is truly autonomous because it expresses what cannot be understood prior to that expression, and craft and entertainment, which subordinate their productions to some preconceived and predetermined end. The autonomy of art is also associated with such slogans as art for art’s sake that separate aesthetic value from utility.

The autonomy of art is challenged in recent art theory by both historicist and social theories. The kind of autonomy envisioned by modernist art theory is ahistorical. It does not take account of the knowledge required to create or understand art. Political and sociological theories recognize that art is always embedded in a situation, and they claim, therefore, that autonomy is a myth. Marxism, feminism, and psychoanalytic theories of art all appeal to the underlying situatedness of art to deny autonomy.

AVANT-GARDE. In practice and theory, the avant-garde is a self-conscious stance on the part of artists who reject current practice and declare themselves in advance of expectations. The avant-garde in any art believes that creative practice must create not only a work of art but also an audience for that work. To produce only works that fit in with current practice is merely to imitate, not to create. Further, the avant-garde in any field of art places itself outside of the mainstream as artists. It is not just newness or originality that is valued; one must also reject what has gone before.

Avant-garde movements were especially prominent in the first part of the 20th century in poetry and the visual arts. Middle-class values were felt to be stifling, and only by rebellion could art progress. Prominent avant-garde movements included surrealism and futurism in both poetry and painting and Dada in literature. The existence of an avant-garde defines bourgeois and academic art by its mass appeal. In contrast, avant-garde art is “dehumanizing,” which means that it rejects the humanistic values of the masses. Futurism exalted the destructiveness of war and the dehumanized machine. Dada embraced nihilism, appealing to nothingness. Surrealism rejected normal reality itself to represent dreams and the psychological unconscious.

In its broadest sense, an avant-garde can be any movement in the arts that rejects its predecessors and seeks to be ahead of its time. In
aesthetics, however, the existence of an avant-garde only appears when art theory has shifted from the production of specific art objects for a specific audience to the idea that art must be creative, original, and for an ideal audience that may not even exist. So an avant-garde in aesthetic theory belongs to the modernist view that art must be independent and self-sustaining rather than having some larger social or cultural use.

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BACHELARD, GASTON (1884–1962). The French philosopher Gaston Bachelard turned in mid-career from an established position as a philosopher of science to develop a poetics of the imagination on phenomenological lines. The poetic image that Bachelard seeks to explain is free of the kind of causality pursued by science. A kind of material psychoanalysis is of some use, but what he seeks is more immediate. It has the characteristics not of the psychoanalytic dream but of a free daydream. In The Poetics of Space (La Poétique de l’espace, 1958/1964), for example, each spatial image—house, nests, etc.—is freed from its utilitarian role to reveal its imaginative force. Bachelard’s is a kind of free aesthetics outside the confines of rational limits.

BAILLIE, JOHN (?–1743). Dr. John Baillie wrote An Essay on the Sublime that was published in 1744 after his death of spotted fever while serving with the British army in Flanders. The essay attracted some attention as did his play, The Married Coquet. His treatment of the sublime follows Longinus and remains within the neo-Platonic tradition of the sublime as an elevation of the soul by the love of intellectual forms, but it evidences the increased attention to the sublime as a different emotion from the beautiful and a move in the direction of a psychological theory of the sublime. In spite of his acceptance of Longinus and Longinian rhetorical rules, Baillie traces the sublime to the mind’s expansion and explains that expansion in terms of the extent and vastness of ideas.

BAKHTIN, MIKHAIL MIKHAILOVICH (1895–1975). Mikhail Bakhtin was a Russian literary theorist and linguist whose work was
imitated according to its own reality and nature imitated in its relation to human interests. The former is conditioned and judged by its truth or falsity. An imitation is more or less like its original. But art imitates nature as it affects human beings. Among the possible relations are fulfillment of desires, and among those desires is the desire for pleasure itself. So where sentiment is itself the object of the imitation, one finds the fine arts. The significance of this separation is not only that the fine arts are distinguished from their utilitarian cousins, which are also imitations but which satisfy other needs and desires, but also that the move to sentiment itself is embraced as an end.

In addition to the practical arts and fine arts, Batteux also discusses a third class that combines elements of both. Eloquence and architecture, for example, appeal to one’s sentiment as well as meeting practical needs. Batteux remains a traditional imitation theorist who seeks an essential nature in most respects, and his appeal to nature as the source of art assigns priority to beautiful nature. Beautiful nature is ideal, and art that imitates it seeks that ideal. He introduces genius as a perception of the ideal in beautiful nature. He also continues to appeal to rules, though he notes the insufficiency of the multiple rules that have been generated and instead gives priority to taste as the sentimental response to beautiful nature. Rules are limited to bringing particular responses into a coherent order rather than prescribing practice or generating natural laws. Batteux thus provides an important mid-18th-century bridge between the neo-classicist aesthetics of rules and imitation theory and the emerging aesthetics of sentiment and taste.

**BAUHAUS.** Between 1919 and 1933, the Bauhaus School in Germany combined modernist architectural theory with practical instruction that influenced the development of not only architecture but also design theory. The various Bauhaus artists, beginning with the architect Walter Gropius, shared certain general stylistic features, particularly a modernist commitment to expressive form, but the movement and school itself were diverse and internally divided.

**BAUMGARTEN, ALEXANDER GOTTLIEB (1714–1762).** The German philosopher A. G. Baumgarten sought to develop a science of the sensible to complete the project begun by G. W. von Leibniz...
to produce a complete picture of rational knowledge. A basic distinction between clear and distinct ideas on the one hand and confused, obscure ideas on the other, going back to medieval discussions of universals, continued to be a part of rationalist epistemology. Such empiricists as John Locke held that only individual ideas based on the senses were clear and distinct, but Leibniz and his followers reversed that priority. Clear and distinct ideas were ones that could be understood completely independently of existing instantiations. A clear and distinct idea of a square applies only to the geometrical square, not to a square perceived by the senses.

That leaves the whole realm of sense data unincorporated into knowledge. Baumgarten applied the term ‘aesthetics’ to the sensible realm and argued that while its ideas are confused, they are nevertheless part of knowledge. Moreover, they are the most accessible ideas, and their accessibility makes them important to all but the most advanced thinkers. Baumgarten applied this scheme to poetry and poetic language in his Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus (translated as Reflections on Poetry), and he suggested ways that it would also apply to painting, sculpture, and music. His goal was a science of the perceptual realm that would parallel the more precise sciences of metaphysics and logic.

Because he introduced the term ‘aesthetics’ and because he considered the arts, particularly the verbal arts, to be knowledge-producing, Baumgarten can be credited as one of the founders of aesthetics as a discipline. Baumgarten’s theory of the aesthetic remains essentially quantitative rather than qualitative, however. More perspectives provide more data, and they can then be synthesized into an ideal view that does not depend on any particular view. The way that aesthetics contributes is by presenting more sensate data than any single real experience can. It is rather like a geometrical drawing that can show multiple sides of a cube, whereas a real sensate view would be able only to see one perspective. Aesthetics results in a useful step toward knowledge, not just a mere sense perception, but it is ultimately dispensable. Aesthetics begins with feeling because all sense is a form of feeling, and aesthetics is about pleasure because sense perception that leads to knowledge is pleasant, but feeling itself is not the object. When Immanuel Kant takes up the questions of beauty and taste
and attributes them to an aesthetic perception, he is going in a fundamentally different direction than Baumgarten had in mind.

BAZIN, ANDRÉ (1918–1958). André Bazin was one of the leading film critics and theorists of the 20th century. He was concerned to establish film as a significant art form. To give film that status, he proposed what is called auteur theory. According to auteur theory, the director is the real creator of the film, but it is not a single film that he or she authors but a body of work. Bazin’s author is not an original genius, like a writer, but a product of complex creative mechanisms that include the whole filmmaking process. The unity of a directorial style creates an authorial persona.

Bazin also believed that film is basically objective—not in the sense of denying subjectivity but in the sense of having an origin in an object. It is that objectivity that distinguishes film from literature and that gives the director, independently of any screenplay, the leading role in filmmaking. Bazin advanced his ideas primarily through journalism and particularly Cahiers du cinéma, which he co-founded.

BEARDSLEY, MONROE (1915–1985). Monroe Beardsley was one of the leading American philosophers who worked in aesthetics in the 20th century. With William Wimsatt, he was the author of “The Intentional Fallacy,” the thesis that opposed literary critical methods based on history, biography, and psychoanalysis. Beardsley defended aesthetic experience, which he identified as a form of perceptual experience. His textbook, Aesthetics (1958), which was considerably more than a traditional textbook, defined aesthetics as “metacriticism.” It influenced a generation of philosophers by showing that aesthetics could be done within the respectable tradition of analytic philosophy.

BEATTIE, JAMES (1735–1802). James Beattie was a student and later colleague of Alexander Gerard at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where he became professor of moral philosophy. He belonged to the circle of Scottish common sense philosophers centered on Thomas Reid. He took the role of defender of religion against what he considered the skepticism of David Hume, who once referred to
him as that silly, bigoted fellow. He was an accomplished poet, and his Essays on Poetry and Music as They Affect the Mind (1762) argues that the end of poetry is primarily to please while instruction is only a means to that pleasure. Music is not an imitative art and can imitate only by means of secondary associations. Beattie is not especially original, but his defense of poetry and music as moral forces within a purely subjective, affective theory in spite of his fear of skepticism shows how successful the shift to sentimentalism in 18th-century British aesthetics had become.

BEAUTY. Before theories of aesthetic experience and taste emerged in the 18th century, ‘beauty’ was the dominant term for those philosophers who discussed individual arts and the harmony and order of the cosmos. In fact, beauty was principally a metaphysical term and only secondarily a description of a response to art or nature. In classical philosophy, beauty was identified with order and the reality of forms. Its opposite, ugliness, was chaotic, a return to the pre-cosmological disorder from which the gods brought forth the cosmos itself. The connection between beauty and art, for example, depended on art representing form freed from the contingency of nature and individual variation. Early classical statuary was formally and repetitiously posed. As it developed from the archaic period into the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, it increasingly idealized the human form. When, in late classical and Hellenistic art, sculpture began to show individual emotion, age, suffering, and “realistic” presentations, philosophers in both the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions saw such realism as a decline. To them, it did not seem real at all in the important sense. Plotinus (204–270), in his treatise on beauty, sought to return beauty to its place as an intelligible rather than a physical element in the cosmos. The signs of physical beauty, such as balance, must give way to the unity of single forms, but, as a consequence, physical beauty is never more than the first step up a ladder of being.

Classical theories of beauty, therefore, emphasize harmony and relations that demonstrate order. Beauty itself is a characteristic of pure form and a reality in its own right. The beauty of individuals depends on their exhibiting their supporting form and their participating in the reality of beauty itself. Nature is regarded as beautiful when it is
thought of as a force bringing order, but when it is regarded as a physical state, it is not only not beautiful, it is something that must be overcome. Art is beautiful if it frees form from the limitations of physical existence, but art is limited to a low level of imitation, even if that imitation is regarded as a positive move toward real beauty.

In the Renaissance, the individuality of artists competes with the idealizing tendencies that continued to dominate the arts, but gradually, by the later 17th century, individual experience was regarded as the reality and beauty shifts from a metaphysically transcendent reality to a feeling or emotion. Beauty is in the mind of the beholder and its value depends on its felt qualities.

A wholly different approach to beauty becomes evident in aesthetics. The question becomes what kind of experiences or properties of objects are most likely to produce the emotion of beauty. If those experiences can be reliably stimulated and rules or laws can be developed that will predict responses, then the arts can produce the desired results. Initially, nature provides the model. Follow nature and imitate what nature has already done better than any artist to produce the experience of beauty. Beauty can still maintain some of its metaphysical significance in that way. Increasingly, however, both artists and philosophers concluded that beauty belonged to the mind, not to nature, and the artist replaced nature and expression replaced imitation as the path to beauty. Beauty becomes one among a number of aesthetic effects, competing with sublimity for priority in the arts.

Aesthetics in the 20th century largely rejected the metaphysical pretensions of beauty, and the term tends to drop out of the philosophy of art. Art is about aesthetic experience or aesthetic experience is about art, and beauty is, at most, one among many possible effects. The reaction against beauty is also motivated by a rejection of the essentialism that sought definitions of primary aesthetic terms. Beauty, even more than goodness, seemed reducible to emotive paraphrases, such as “gives pleasure” or “should be liked.” Post-Kantian theories of beauty still emphasized order, but now it was the feeling of pleasure that accompanies creating or discovering order and being able to express it symbolically in either language or art forms that constituted beauty. Beauty becomes, in effect, the felt accompaniment of ordering expression, and the importance of art lies in its ability to express what is otherwise inexpressible.
Reaction against the positivist reduction of all moral and aesthetic language to emotive language has produced some willingness to return to theories of beauty, but at the same time, art is obviously the more extensive term in recent aesthetics. Not all art is beautiful, and beauty, whatever it is, is not an ultimate reality. One may hold a "non-natural" theory of beauty that denies that beauty can be reduced to either natural causes or emotive values, or one may hold a "naturalistic" theory of beauty that sees its effects as the result of predisposed survival values for the species, but such theories rest on pragmatic choices and empirical observation and not on metaphysical realities.

**BELL, CLIVE (1881–1964).** Clive Bell was an English art critic and theorist who popularized the aesthetic ideas of the Bloomsbury group that was centered around Leonard and Virginia Woolf. Bell followed his older friend, the painter and critic Roger Fry, in advocating the work of the French post-impressionist painters in England. Together, they combined an almost religious devotion to aesthetic experience with a critical formalism about visual art. All that a critic really needed, according to Bell, was sensitivity to spatial form and color, unimpeded by cultural prejudice. He called this formal property significant form and distinguished it sharply from the attention to content that was characteristic of British painting at the time. Bell rejected all ordinary sentimental effects in painting as mundane and anti-aesthetic. Only the response to significant form mattered, and he was willing to extend its significance beyond art to metaphysics—it was the ultimate value.

**BENJAMIN, WALTER (1892–1940).** Walter Benjamin worked primarily as a journalist, first in Berlin, then after he fled Germany in 1933, in Paris. He committed suicide in 1940 after the fall of France to avoid capture by the Gestapo.

Benjamin’s thought was related to the form of critical theory known as the Frankfurt School, though he was never a member and entered into controversies with some of the Frankfurt School critical theorists over the role that art should play in political action. They shared a form of cultural Marxism that looked to the material condi-
tions of production as the motive force in history. Art arises from that socio-economic complex; it is never autonomous or purely aesthetic.

Benjamin argued that a basic distinction in the form of art depends on the means of production. Cult art arises within some class or elite; it is produced for that class which alone is in the position to use it. Mass art depends on the ability of art to be produced mechanically and essentially anonymously. It is not restricted to a single class and is accessible without the special education required by cult art. In a famous essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Benjamin argues that a basic change has taken place historically and culturally that reverses the positions of cult art and mass art. Mass art, exemplified best in film, can now become the dominant art form, and that changes the whole aesthetic and political function of art.

BERGSON, HENRI-LOUIS (1859–1941). The French philosopher Henri Bergson’s philosophy of vitalism opposes the mechanistic, material conditions of life to the intuitive, deeply seated forces of the human spirit (an élan vital). His view of time as a psychological as well as a material condition was formulated in the distinction between felt time or duration and mechanical time that is measured.

His views intersect with aesthetics at two points. His theory of comedy, set out in his essay, “Laughter” (1901), derives a kind of humor from the puppet-like behavior of mechanism. His later book, The Creative Mind (1937), extends vitalism to art as a form of intuition. Art is neither expression nor imitation but the creation of intuitive signs. Bergson’s philosophy is not a part of mainstream aesthetics, but his influence, especially on Marcel Proust, whose fascination with time as memory echoes Bergson, is substantial.

BHARATA. See INDIAN AESTHETICS.

BIO-AESTHETICS. The psychological view of aesthetic experience as a state of mind achieved either by conscious choice or by inspiration suggests that in some sense aesthetic experience has a biological basis that can be explored scientifically. Like all biological functions, aesthetic experience may be viewed as having survival value. For example, it encourages contact with things that are beneficial and en-
BLOOMSBURY. A group of artists and art critics centered in the central London Bloomsbury district exerted considerable influence in aesthetics as well as literature and criticism in the 20th century prior to World War II. The group centered around the novelist Virginia Woolf and her husband, Leonard, and included Virginia’s sister, the artist Vanessa Bell, her husband, Clive Bell, the artist and critic Roger Fry, and the biographer, Lytton Strachey. It also included such intellectuals as John Maynard Keynes and, by a kind of generational extension, G. E. Moore. Moore’s influence while the younger Bloomsburians were at Cambridge was central. Moore’s combination of moral realism and intuitionism in his Principia Ethica was a kind of founding document for the group.

Bloomsbury’s aesthetics emphasized the autonomy of art combined with the power of aesthetic emotion. An aesthetic elitism that was expressed in sexual freedom and artistic experimentation was also prominent. Clive Bell’s book, Art (1913), set out the group’s doctrine of artistic formalism combined with the emotional independence of aesthetic experience. Significant form, as Bell called it, attributed an almost religious force to the emotions produced by pure art, which are different from all ordinary emotions.

BOILEAU-DESPRÉAUX, NICHOLAS (1636–1711). Nicholas Boileau wrote a philosophical poem, L’art poétique (1674), that translated Cartesian rationalism into poetic practice. The rationalism of René Descartes was quite different from the medieval version of Aristotelian rationalism. In many ways, it is closer to empiricism because both rely on experience to provide ideas and correction. Cartesian rationalism stresses that the standard is the clarity and distinctness of the ideas, however, and the paradigm for clear and distinct ideas is mathematics, which can be judged by its own rules. Boileau’s poem is part polemic against mediocre writers, part instruction on how to achieve poetic clarity. Nature is the source of ideas, but art depends on its own rules. Without rules, genius may achieve only limited clarity. The rules of art are not external, but like mathematical rules, they are internal to the particular art form. To ignore them is to ignore the very basis for art. Boileau also translated Longinus’s On the Sublime and argued for a version of the sublime distinct from mere rhetoric. Both the beautiful and the sublime are
audience rather than the depiction of events in a play. Brecht’s theatrical experimentalism sometimes conflicts with his dramatic theory, and his influence is still a matter of debate.

BRETON, ANDRÉ (1896–1966). André Breton was a French poet whose surrealist manifestos on “psychic automatism” influenced aesthetics. Surrealism abandoned the “sense” of poetry in much the same way that post-impressionist painting abandoned realism and perspective in painting. Instead, poems were conceived of as a poetic surface that operates like a dream. Their symbolism appeals to the unconscious mind rather than the logical mind of waking reality. Aesthetically, Breton appeals directly to his audience through his prose manifestos. Theory becomes a part of the work of art itself instead of something that either precedes or is derived from the work. Similarly, the life of the poet becomes part of his work.

BRIGHTNESS. Among the aesthetic properties attributed to beauty is brightness, which is a property of color. In medieval and Renaissance aesthetics, aesthetic properties were believed to belong to some materials themselves. Pigments that produced bright colors were intrinsically beautiful. The clarity and brightness of colors enhanced the beauty of a painting or a statue (which was usually painted in classical Greece and the Middle Ages), and thus clarity and brightness were accepted as properties of beauty itself.

BURKE, EDMUND (1729–1797). The Anglo-Irish politician Edmund Burke is known best as a political theorist and practical politician, but he also produced one of the more significant works of aesthetic theory in the mid-18th century. A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful was published in 1757, and an additional essay on taste was added to it in 1759. Its composition undoubtedly can be traced to Burke’s student days at Trinity College, Dublin.

Burke’s theory is essentially a theory of aesthetic emotions, though of course the word ‘aesthetic’ is anachronistic with regard to any 18th-century British writing on taste and beauty. In his Philosophical Enquiry, Burke produces an introspective psychology that begins with a threefold distinction: pleasure and pain are simple
emotions, undefinable and independent; to them is added a state of indifference that is different from both. The **sublime** is the name for a sub-class of emotions, and the larger class itself is defined by self-preservation. Beauty is also a name for a sub-class of emotions, and the class is defined by social emotions, particularly those that are sexual. The qualities that produce beauty are smallness, smoothness, delicateness, and milder **colors**. So the claim that beauty is a quality in bodies acting mechanically is only an empirical generalization based on the introspectively observed emotions that bind the sexes and society together. Burke seeks a natural law in what he takes to be the Newtonian mode to describe this psychological state.

In general, Burke was trying to follow John Locke and Isaac Newton. He is not defining beauty so much as describing it. But he remains **Aristotelian** in his arguments—that is, he classifies emotions according to certain established categories. The organization of the *Enquiry* is significant. It begins in Part One with the formal cause of aesthetic emotions: pain and pleasure. Within that formal cause, Burke traces the efficient causes (**sympathy, imitation, ambition**), the material causes (beauty and sublimity), and the final causes (self-preservation and societal preservation). In Parts Two and Three on the sublime and beautiful respectively, he deals with the material causes of the emotion itself, and in Part Four, he turns to the efficient cause. Part Five turns to the effects—particularly of words—and thus to the final causes of aesthetic emotions. Thus in spite of the apparent reliance on **ideas** and their combination in the mind in Locke’s manner, Burke’s own organization betrays the essentially Aristotelian methodology of his analysis. Burke is trying to be scientific, but his science is much more that of Aristotle in Lockean dress than it is that of Newton.

Burke’s *Enquiry* is interesting as an aesthetic theory because it does not subscribe to **neo-classical aesthetic values**. Burke anticipates—and certainly contributes to—emerging **Romantic** formulations. Either pleasure or pain is preferable aesthetically to indifference. He rejects the more common qualities of beauty and the sublime and argues for a strongly emotional reading that makes pain and terror **aesthetic qualities**. Burke follows a radically introspective method, and he thus emphasizes the interiority of the criteria for the sublime and beautiful. All of this is based directly on sensations. Burke’s emo-
tries. There is also a strong resistance in traditionalist Islamic thought to figural representation, which, it is feared, will too easily violate specific prohibitions against idolatry. All of these factors work together to give importance to a decorative form of writing that promotes the beauty of Arabic words.

The link between calligraphy and sayings from the Koran is tenuous, however. Decorative calligraphy has little to do with the meaning of the phrases themselves, and in some instances, calligraphy uses only letters and meaningless combinations of letters. It is difficult to extract an aesthetic from the calligraphic practices, therefore.

Calligraphy is also important in Chinese and Japanese aesthetics. There it is more closely related to the indirect expression of poetry and Zen practices. Masters of calligraphy are among the most important artists, and all of the phenomena of fine arts, including collecting and the forgery of master works, appear in relation to calligraphy. Calligraphy is closely related to painting. Both attempt to present a single moment of rest that is suggestive. The aesthetic principle at work emphasizes the beginning and end of an experience, not its climax or high point. Representation is a form of energy, an expression of the essence of a reality that manifests itself through concrete things and actions, including the actions of the artist. So the masters of calligraphy are artists rather than craftsmen, and their art implies an aesthetic of indirect representation.

Finally, calligraphy appears in some recent street art and murals. Like Islamic calligraphy, graffiti and spray-painted murals often utilize letters simply for their decorative potential without too much regard for any meaning. Unlike Islamic calligraphy, however, street calligraphy is very assertive of individual identity and individual artistic ability and skill. It is, in a sense, a postmodernist art form that abandons fixed meaning while asserting the subjective ego of the individual artist. See also DECORATIVE ARTS.

CAMBRIDGE NEO-PLATONISM. See MORE, HENRY.

CAMP. In reaction against the idea of the fine arts as elite cultural icons, some artists in the 20th century intentionally exploited popular arts as a comment on the pretensions of art. Camp takes popular art that is bad even by popular standards and presents it as if it were fine
art. The effect is at once comic and satiric. For something to be camp, it must be obviously bad or exaggerated, but it also must be presented with seriousness as if it were what it is not. As a result, some camp effects are unintentional. The line between camp and just bad art is difficult to define. Aesthetically, camp is a form of commentary on other art and a debunking of the claims for aesthetic experience.

**CANON.** At various times in the history of art, a body of work has been held up as the standard by which other works in that genre are judged. This body of work forms a canon, a model that defines the genre by example. Sometimes the canon was implicit, as in Aristotle’s adoption of the work of Aeschylus and Sophocles as the standard for tragedy. Sometimes, the canon is culturally definitive, as in the case of Homer and Hesiod for classical Greece or the books of the Old Testament for Judaism. Sometimes, the existence of a canon has to be created as a part of a critical movement. Shakespeare in his own day was a prominent dramatist, but his canonical status for English drama was the work of such 18th-century critics as Samuel Johnson.

The very existence of a canon implies an art-theoretical aesthetic decision. If the standard for judging artworks includes the belief that that is best which is consistently valued across time by all audiences, then a canon must be a part of that test. Moreover, the existence of a canon implies that models of a genre appear at certain favorable moments and those models are the forms for that genre. So an historical view of art and its possibilities is presumed. The elevation of certain works to canonical status acts as a conservative force, so art history looks back to its models.

The aesthetic implications of a canonical view of art history are resisted on two grounds. A progressive or transcendent view of history according to which what is new inevitably surpasses what it replaces has no place for an authoritative canon. So avant-garde movements deny the authority of canonical works. Equally, the attempt to enshrine certain works or artists may be seen as repressive. If one looks to the past for canonical works, those works will reflect the limitations of their own times. Dead white males will be the canonical artists of the West, for example, to the exclusion of groups both past and present that are underrepresented. Therefore, postmod-
ern aesthetics is suspicious of any aesthetic theory that implies a can-
onical status.

CASSIRER, ERNST (1874–1945). Ernst Cassirer was a philosopher
who fled Germany when the Nazis came to power in 1933 and eventually taught at Yale and Columbia universities in the United States. Cassirer’s philosophy is based on a neo-Kantian theory of symbols. Whereas Immanuel Kant argued that basic categories of knowledge are intrinsic to human consciousness, neo-Kantians identified those categories with the operation of language and symbol systems. Thus Cassirer’s major work, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms (1923–1929), traces the way that symbolic forms shape all areas of knowledge. Art, as a primary source of symbolic action, and myth, the cultural expression of symbolic form, are epistemologically central. Without symbols, there is no thought. Cassirer also was a distinguished historian of philosophy with particular emphasis on the Enlightenment, from which so many modern aesthetic concepts derive. Cassirer’s aesthetics is similar to that of the major American neo-Kantian aesthetician Susanne Langer, whose Philosophy in a New Key (1951) and Feeling and Form (1953) carry to its conclusion the distinction between discursive and presentational forms that is only implicit in Cassirer’s work.

CATHARSIS. The term ‘catharsis’ (sometimes also transliterated from the Greek as katharsis) is introduced by Aristotle in his Poetics where, in Chapter Six, he speaks of the tragic emotions, pity and fear, and their catharsis. Tragedy is defined as that dramatic form that arouses pity and fear and through the pity and fear achieves their catharsis. This single reference has generated a continuing debate and literature. ‘Catharsis’ can mean either ‘purgation’ or ‘purification.’ Aristotle’s use of it undoubtedly has something to do with the ritual role of tragedy, which was performed in ancient Athens as a part of a religious festival. Just what catharsis is and how it is brought about has been the problem, and Aristotle’s text does not supply sufficient detail to clearly settle the issue. The most common interpretation for a long time was that the audience experienced the tragic emotions and was purged of them by their experience of the play. The parallel to ritual was the vicarious participation of the worship-
pers in the sacrifice performed and their subsequent release from the guilt or pollution that the ritual redeemed.

That line of interpretation has been challenged, however, because Aristotle’s account of pity and fear does not seem to be specifically about emotions in the audience. Rather, Aristotle describes a certain class of events—blood guilt within close family relations—that is a source of pollution and must be redeemed within the course of events in the plot. Those events would then be the events of the play itself, and it is not the audience but the plot to which catharsis refers. Tragedy so organizes the plot that the piteous and fearful events overcome the pollution that produced them. The effect on the audience is secondary, though it need not be irrelevant.

Part of the reason that catharsis has played such a disproportionate role in aesthetic theory is that it raises all of the questions about what aesthetic emotions are and where they are to be located. The alternatives are that they are real emotions felt by an audience or that they are symbolic representations or expressions incorporated into the work of art. On the first view, aesthetics is a psychological field. People have feelings that have effects on them that they ultimately find pleasurable, even though the events themselves are ones that produce unpleasant feelings. On the second theory, however, aesthetics is epistemological. One knows some kinds of things—the passions and truths about the passions—only by being able to represent them artistically. Either one defines aesthetic emotions in terms of the real experiences of audience members or one defines them in terms of their ability to produce conceptual structures. Either way, catharsis is considerably more important than one reference to it in a single Aristotelian treatise would lead one to expect.

CENSORSHIP. The issue of censorship in aesthetic theory reflects something of the status of art and artists. Prior to the Enlightenment with its emphasis on tolerance and freedom of expression, it would have been common to accept that some level of censorship of the arts was appropriate. The arts played a defined social role, and it was the obligation of social authorities to protect that role. Art could only function if it was appropriate to its intended audience. Where art was fundamentally religious, religious authority had a responsibility to censor what was inappropriate. That did not mean that individual art-
ists did not look for ways around censorship. In a famous case for which the transcripts survive, Paolo Veronese ingeniously defended his painting of the Last Supper against charges that it was disrespectful by claiming that the painting was simply a picture of a feast that depicted events as they might have been with the inclusion of other figures demanded by the balance of the painting. Aesthetic considerations should be allowed to trump religious doubts if they do not actually offend against the truth.

If art was for the benefit, dynastic or personal, of patrons, the effective forms of censorship might simply be restrictions on where it was seen. What was painted for the public rooms would differ from what was painted for private chambers. If art was political, then the political authorities expected to have the final say on what could or could not be presented. The most vigorous defense of censorship is found in Plato’s work where the limitations on the ability of poetry to speak the truth means that it must be rigorously restricted in its subject matter to what will promote virtue.

When artists began to assert their individuality in the Renaissance and then to appeal to a mass audience, the whole issue of censorship reflected the different status of art and artists. On the one hand, self-censorship became common. If an artist depends on being able to sell his or her work, then what offends the public will not sell. So one sees guilds and production codes developed to protect the art market. On the other hand, as artists become regarded as self-expressors and voices of a higher set of cultural values, they resist limitations on what they can do. Censorship itself becomes one of the forces to be resisted and changed by an avant-garde in the arts. Modernist values accept that both individual expression and a freedom of expression in the quest for truth cannot be limited by the status quo. Censorship changes from a standard often higher than what it censors to a form of repression of the originality and creativity of the arts.

The methods of censorship are often subtle in contemporary aesthetic theory. They include gender concerns and political agendas as both are incorporated into the rejection of laissez-faire individualism. Inciting overt censorship often is a means by which art movements actually promote their own agendas. One of the functions of art movements has always been to shock the bourgeoisie. An understanding of the psychology of mass art makes issues of censorship
much more complicated because what appears as censorship may be subtle manipulation of an audience, as some contemporary music demonstrates.

CHARACTER. The separation between aesthetic taste and moral judgment only occurs relatively late in the history of aesthetics. Prior to Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Judgment, which argues that taste is a judgment prior to all interest, including an interest in the existence of its objects, a close relation was presumed between judgments of taste and the character of the one making the judgment. Taste was presumed to reflect character, and to have good taste was to occupy a particular level of society. Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, in particular, identified taste with the formation of character. The close relation depended on the parallel existence of a moral and an aesthetic sense, each of which judged the goodness or beauty of something by responding with a feeling of pleasure or benevolence in the presence of the good or the beautiful. That sense, however, was not regarded as simply inborn or innate. Rather, it was the product of experience and education applied to a capacity. The result was a “character” that provided stable judgments. In the absence of character, mere taste would vary capriciously. Character, therefore, is the lasting identity formed by experience and education that judges moral and aesthetic value.

CHINESE AND JAPANESE AESTHETICS. When one moves out of the Western philosophical tradition of aesthetics, the application of the term ‘aesthetic’ becomes problematic. Art seems to be a cultural and perhaps even an evolutionary universal for the human species. The same might be said of beauty and related responses to nature and one’s environment. (Which comes first—culture or nature—is something of a chicken and egg question, though philosophers have strong opinions on the subject.) The kind of analytical thought about beauty and art that is characteristic of Western aesthetics from the 18th century on and that has its roots in the Renaissance is less obviously present in other contexts, however.

One needs to distinguish at least three different senses in which one may speak of aesthetics outside the modern Western tradition, therefore. First, there is the sense in which aesthetics is an experien-
tial response. Wherever art and beauty are found, there is the corresponding experience of them. In that sense, the characteristic responses are themselves the aesthetic. The differentiation between cultures will arise from the characteristic art forms and culturally evolved beautiful objects. If art is primarily a religious form, for example, then the corresponding aesthetic will also be religious. If a culture finds body decoration beautiful, there is a corresponding aesthetics of body embellishment. Second, thought about art and beauty, even if it is not analytical in our philosophical sense, constitutes a body of secondary literature that is aesthetic in nature. Critical writings, manuals of instruction in the arts, and art about art, such as Alexander Pope’s Essay on Criticism, all are of aesthetic interest, perhaps without being overtly philosophical. Finally, there are philosophical texts that we recognize as formally aesthetic. Such texts need not use the word or even the concept in its modernist form, but they are clearly aesthetic. Plato’s Symposium and the sixth Ennead of Plotinus would be examples.

When one turns to Chinese and Japanese aesthetics, therefore, one must be clear about what is being referred to. In China and Japan, a highly developed artistic culture and a sophisticated critical literature have a history that stretches back well over two thousand years. The kind of philosophical aesthetics characteristic of the West is not evident, however, except in the recent past where it is simply an additional development of what is now a global philosophical world. Of course, even the Japanese interest in Immanuel Kant, G. W. F. Hegel, existentialism, and analytical aesthetics is colored by the Japanese experience of art and nature. For a characteristic Chinese or Japanese aesthetic, however, one must look to the broader senses of the term.

Chinese art developed around the parallel forms of calligraphy and painting. Japanese art was heavily influenced by Chinese art until sometime after the seventh or eighth centuries CE, when Japanese poetry became the central form. In both cultures, the form of the art dictates the aesthetic response and is consistent with religious developments. Confucianism in China values the past, moral responsibility, and a distinct class system based on greatness of mind and spirit. Aesthetic experience that corresponded to those values gave the highest place to disciplined, formally elegant art that is at once polite and spiritually enlightened.
Two characteristics deserve special mention. First, Confucian values that stressed the gentlemanly virtues of humanity and greatness of mind supported an early Chinese separation between fine art and craft. Beginning in the third century BCE with the establishment of the Chinese empire, calligraphy and painting can be distinguished from other arts, such as porcelain and sculpture, that are too close to craft. This implies an aesthetic stance based on the distinction, though it is not the disinterested stance of Western post-Kantian aesthetics. It is closer to the Renaissance ideal of the artist as an independent cultural creator. Second, representation is the central goal of Chinese painting and the calligraphic adaptation of painting, but it is not representation for its own sake, such as is found in Western theories of imitation that stress the pleasure provided by an accurate imitation of something in a different medium. Instead, representation is a form of energy, an expression of the essence of a reality that manifests itself through concrete things and actions, including the actions of the artist.

As Buddhism joins Confucianism and neo-Confucianism as religious influences in China, the potential for art to express the duality of this-worldly and other-worldly or anti-worldly separation develops. Aesthetic experience is closely related to the ritual-like functions of art to define a sacred realm. At the same time, the concreteness of Chinese painting and its traditions of realism keep this aesthetic rooted in this world. It is in this form that the Chinese influence is assimilated by Japan after the third century CE. Chinese was the first written language in Japan, and as the court language, it was both difficult and stilted. But women, who were not expected to learn Chinese, came to play a major role in aesthetic development. Vernacular literature was developed by women writers (e.g., Lady Murasaki’s Tales of Genji) and expresses what to some seems a consequent “feminization.” Poetry, in such forms as haiku (the 17-syllable form that attempts to capture a single emotional moment that opens into a metaphysical otherness), becomes the central aesthetic form. The influence of popular Buddhism beginning in medieval Japan contrasts the illusion of the present with an ultimate reality.

The long history of Japanese art is noteworthy for at least four things: the continuity with and yet transformation of its Chinese roots, the importance of poetry as the root art form, the role of
women in the early period due to their freedom to use the vernacular instead of the awkward court Chinese, and the concrete evocative nature of emotion, especially evident in haiku, that in many ways parallels the Western aesthetic attitude. From this artistic background, one can identify something like a formal aesthetic that is expressed in critical writings and essays, such as Yoshido Kenko’s *Essays in Idleness*, that approach a poetic form of their own. Four aesthetic principles can be identified: suggestion (an emphasis on the beginning and end of an experience, not its climax or high point); irregularity (not uniformity); simplicity; and perishability. Something like an aesthetic attitude is evident. The experience has its own unique qualities that distinguish it from the ordinary.

The Japanese version of an aesthetic attitude closely resembles a neo-Platonic form of contemplation, especially as such contemplation was experienced in the West by 19th-century Romanticism. It is not a way of experiencing something so much as a form of experience that is itself transcendent, though it is occasioned by some concrete thing. Such an attitude is not itself about the emotions of happiness, sadness, etc. It is a separate emotional experience of its own. Kenneth Yasuda calls it a haiku attitude. “When one reaches the state where he is unattached and signs naturally, he can produce true haiku. The haiku composed under this condition transcend what we call the subjective or objective attitude.” (Otsuji [Seki Osuga], *Otsuji Hairohn-shu* [Otsuji’s Collected Essays on Haiku Theory], ed. Toyo Oshida, 5th ed. [Tokyo: Kaede Shobo, 1947], p. 31, cited by Kenneth Yasuda, “‘Approach to Haiku’ and ‘Basic Principles,’” in *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture*, ed. Nancy G. Hume [Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1995], p. 135). In this it is different from Western aesthetic attitude theories that take the aesthetic as a special mode of experiencing something more or less in itself. It can be characterized as a form of beauty (sabi) that combines loneliness with self-transcendence.

The Japanese form of aesthetic experience leaves behind the thing experienced even as it retains its concrete presence. It also brackets out any logical or individual awareness—one’s aesthetic attitude in this mode is not individual at all. Like the neo-Platonists, it absorbs the individual in an organic unity—the neo-Platonic “One” or the Zen Buddhist “no mind” or mushin (Graham Parkes, “Ways of Japa-
nese Thinking,” in Hume, p. 88). Unlike neo-Platonism, however, the Chinese and Japanese transcendence of the individual is social and this-worldly rather than an escape from the world. In the aristocratic Noh drama, this attitude combines elegant, mysterious beauty (Yugen) with a kind of sadness. In the tea ceremony, a particular beauty (wabi) is both formal and reductive, gaining its elegance from poverty. Simple and even rustic objects acquire this special beauty when located within ceremonial ritual.

Both the classical art of Japan and its conscious theorization by its practitioners thus show evident links with what anthropologists classify as an ahistorical ontology of the sacred and profane. Such an ontology is characterized by the solution of continuity between the ordinary, temporal world and the timeless realm of the sacred. One moves from one realm to the other only with care and by means of some protected ritual. Without proper care, the movement can be dangerous. (Perhaps this is one way to regard the novelist Yukio Mishima’s suicide.) In archaic cultures, the movement is religious and controlled by a priesthood. But something similar is achieved by the special aesthetic experience that is mediated by art. Romanticism in the West and the classical art world of China and Japan share that form of aestheticism, though they differ in the characterization of the experience itself and in the cultural forms that it takes. The Romantic artist as creator contrasts with the social reality that subsumes the artist in Japan. So one should not equate Romanticism and the Zen elements of Japanese aesthetics, for example. But they share a fundamental duality of experience—all experience is both sacred and profane; and they share a value system that places reality in the sacred and not the profane, historical world.

CLARITY. Clarity was one of the characteristics of beauty in medieval aesthetics. Thomas Aquinas included it along with integrity or completeness and proportion or harmony as the necessary conditions of beauty. Clarity refers to the principal sense, sight, that responds to color. So clarity includes the brightness and purity of color.

Clarity is also a characteristic of ideas that is adopted by René Descartes and Cartesian rationalists as a condition of knowledge. Ideas of sense are “confused” because they are subject to doubt aris-
ing from their limited, perspectival source. Rational examination produces clear and distinct ideas from that confusion. Since aesthetics deals directly with ideas of sense, its ideas are always confused. True beauty can be achieved only by moving from the confused ideas to clarity, so beauty belongs to the intellect.

**CLASSICISM.** Classical models derived from the Greek and Roman world as they were known to Western Europe defined high culture until well into the 19th century. Education in the humanities was based on a knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics, and the visual arts took Greek sculpture as the highest form of art that set the standard for all subsequent efforts. The classics provided a well-defined canon of paradigmatic works that established the rules of art.

Renaissance art theory self-consciously looked back to classical Greek and Roman models and rejected medieval, particularly Gothic, styles. That broad judgment, however, must be qualified because neither the Renaissance idea of classical models nor Renaissance practice itself was strictly historical. Classicism was more of an ideological shift than a true return to classical practice. In the 17th and 18th centuries, debates over the relative priority of classical arts (the ancients) and contemporary science and the arts (the moderns) divided aesthetic theory. Under the influence of archeological discoveries and a new art history, led by the work of J. J. Winckelmann, classical art was conceived of as stylistically restrained, graceful, elegant, and emotionally controlled. That stylistic choice informed a new classical emphasis in the arts that can be labeled neoclassicism. It emphasized the authority of Aristotle in drama, of the priority of the imitation of nature in the visual arts, and of rhetorical formalism in poetry, where the French Alexandrine and the English iambic pentameter rhymed couplet were the poetic models. The influence of classicism was always under attack, however, as new art forms such as the novel emerged, and it was always subject to modification in accord with actual contemporary practice and taste.

Classicism in its broadest sense represents one pole of a continuing aesthetic debate over the relative importance of tradition and innovation in the arts. Classicists emphasize the relation to the past. In T. S. Eliot’s phrase, all poets steal from their predecessors, and A. N. Whitehead commented that philosophy is essentially a set of foot-
notes to Plato and Aristotle. The existence of a set of classics is essentially conservative. Modernists, on the other hand, emphasize the originality, openness, and creativity of the arts, which consistently resist reduction to any set forms or expectations.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE ARTS. Individual arts have developed according to their own possibilities and uses. Music, architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, drama, oratory, and other arts each have a history that goes as far back as history itself. At the same time, different ways of classifying the arts have been a part of aesthetic theory. For extended periods, some arts have been classified as crafts along with “useful” crafts. They were supported by guilds and organized according to economic or social needs. Other arts, especially drama and music, were classified as part of ritual performance. They were performed by and for initiates. Architecture and sculpture have always occupied a civic place. Only in certain situations has a separate classification of some arts as fine art entered the picture. In the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe, changes in the available audience and the status of individual artists helped to establish a classification of fine arts in contradistinction to useful arts, such as weaving, ceramics, and metalworking, and to decorative arts, such as fashion design. More recently, some of those arts have been reclassified and mass arts such as movies (see FILM) have raised borderline cases.

The issues of classification for aesthetics include whether the fine arts require a different form of attention or appreciation, whether popular arts can also be fine arts, and whether the whole system of classification created by modern, Western aesthetics is itself inimical to the arts themselves and does violence to both the independence of art and the authenticity of art in non-Western cultures. Twentieth-century social and political critics, including Marxist aestheticians, argue that the classification of the arts into useful and fine arts is itself a political strategy that works against the revolutionary impact of art. Avant-garde movements resist classification as conservative and anti-art.

A deeper theoretical issue also concerns whether there is even such as thing as “art” generically or whether there are only individual arts defined by their media and audience. This latter question has occupied aesthetics in several ways since the 18th century. G. E. Lessing,
for example, argued that differences in the arts dictated differences in what they could do aesthetically. Instead of all arts sharing a single effect, painting is capable of presenting a pregnant moment while poetry can present temporal movement. Issues of classification thus have significant theoretical importance.

**CLIMATE AND ART.** In the 18th century, theories of art and aesthetic experience attempted to follow the scientific principles that were successful in chemistry and physics. They sought causal explanations based on natural phenomena. A frequent correlation was made between climate and art. The colder northern climates were believed to produce art that was less emotional; the warmer southern climates produced art that was emotionally heated. Other correlations between climate and aesthetic response were also proposed. *Style* was believed to be affected by climate, and *tastes* differed according to the climate. The underlying hypothesis was that since tastes obviously differed and could be associated with national characteristics, there must be some natural explanation. With the separation of aesthetic experience from ordinary experience after *Immanuel Kant*, such speculative scientific aesthetics largely disappears.

**COGNITIVE JUDGMENT.** The identification of aesthetic judgments as subjective—either because they are based solely on *feeling* or because they are independent of *rules* and require direct experience—raises the question whether they can be true or false at all. One line of aesthetic theory has held that such judgments are non-cognitive. They have the status of *expressions of emotion*, recommendations, or imperatives. The alternative is that aesthetic judgments have some cognitive element beyond their mere descriptive power. When one says that Milton is a better poet than Ogilby, one is not just describing what most people think or asserting that one values Milton more highly. One is actually saying something about the poetic qualities of each poet’s work. For that to be the case, at least some *aesthetic predicates* must be capable of being assigned *truth* values when they appear in propositions that assert judgments. This kind of aesthetic cognitivism has a broad common sense appeal, but it is difficult to provide a sound philosophical account of its claims.
of mere words. He finds hints that Kant would have said more had he dared, and he accepts the more visionary idealism that he finds in Fichte and Schelling.

In the last analysis, Coleridge moves beyond aesthetics to a form of spiritual realism. His practical importance to the aesthetics of the imagination and self-expression is limited, therefore. All of the characteristics of a Romantic aesthetics are present: the importance of passion and intuition, the cult of genius, the elevation of originality to a primary position of value, and above all the self-absorption that seeks a heightened spirituality and self-transcendence. But in Coleridge’s thought, these are transformed into a quasi-religious awareness that leaves practical aesthetics behind.

COLLAGE. Collage uses ordinary materials assembled on a surface to construct a work of art. The Dada movement used collage to avoid the kind of artistic materials approved by mainstream art. Aesthetically, collage challenges the assumptions that go back to Renaissance painting that the materials of painting have aesthetic properties themselves.

COLLECTORS. Art collectors are an important part of the art world. Collectors have exerted considerable influence in establishing styles and promoting particular artists. Initially, collecting was part of a patronage system. It was a way of showing the power and prestige of the collector, and it was one of the obligations of wealth. What was collected was what was already valued. The first art collections were likely to be based simply on the intrinsic worth of the materials—gold, silver, and jewels. Collecting is also a way of establishing and promoting a public taste; collectors in effect say what is worth collecting. More recently, collectors have assumed a role within the avant-garde of art. Collectors attempt to anticipate what will become the next movement, and by collecting they influence that decision. John Ruskin, for example, argued that, necessarily, good art is difficult at first and that it is the critic and collector who is able to move in advance of the common public taste. Collecting seems to be a cultural stage that goes along with a certain entrepreneurial status in the arts and a degree of wealth in those who appreciate art. See also MUSEUMS.
COLLINGWOOD, ROBIN GEORGE (1889–1943). R. G. Collingwood was an Oxford philosopher and historian who situated philosophy within a form of historical idealism. He was one of the leading exponents of the theory that art is an expression of mental states. His major work in aesthetics is *Principles of Art* (1938). There he argues that art is not limited to formal art objects. It is first of all a kind of mental expression that brings form to thought. Artists are able to exhibit that mental expression in a concrete work that allows others to repeat their expression. It is not the emotions of an artist but the very ideas that are the basis for art, and in some sense, every thinking being is an artist. At the same time, Collingwood distinguishes between the mere arousal of emotion, on the one hand, and the duplication and exploitation of expression for other ends, on the other hand. Neither is art. Arousal is a mere physiological state; it lacks the ideas that are essential to art. The exploitation of art for other ends leads either to craft, magic, or amusement. All have preconceived ends and are distinct from art proper. For Collingwood, art proper is a basic cultural value that gives meaning to life. Craft, magic, and amusement lack that value. Collingwood’s aesthetics is similar to that of Benedetto Croce.

COLOR. Theories of beauty often referred to color. Color, brightness, and clarity were considered in classical and medieval theories of beauty as properties of beauty that appealed to the senses. Part of the basis for this appeal was undoubtedly the psychological pleasure that color produced, but color also had symbolic and metaphysical properties that made it a suitable candidate for a beauty-producing property. The immediacy with which color is perceived and its relation to light and illumination, which are properties that metaphysically were believed to be necessary conditions for knowledge, made color an important aesthetic property. On the other hand, theories of beauty that emphasized harmony and relations had difficulty in treating color as a beauty-producing property because it is a simple property. For similar reasons, some later empiricist theories of beauty also denied that color itself was beautiful. If beauty depends on uniformity amidst variety or some other relation of ideas, then a simple perception of color, by itself, will not be beautiful.

Color also has played an important role in the development of aes-
thetic appreciation. It is one of the properties that can be utilized in art to enhance appeal. Greek statuary was vividly colored. Renaissance treatises on painting appealed to color as one of the artist’s tools to produce the effects of art. Some Renaissance painters, such as Raphael and Titian, were known particularly as colorists. Twentieth-century expressionist painting treated color as itself a subject for painting, as in the color panels of Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman.

COMMON SENSE. A common sense or sensus communis appears in aesthetics under several guises. In classical and medieval philosophy, sense data was assigned to particular senses, of which sight and touch were the principal senses. But that what one touched was also what one saw requires that the sense data from both senses be unified in a single object. That is the role assigned to a common sense. Because ultimately sense data is only a limited means to knowledge of a singular form, the common sense is superior to each individual sense.

The medieval common sense reappears in Immanuel Kant’s critical philosophy, where it plays the role of linking individual perceptions to intersubjective consciousness. One perceives according to transcendental categories of space and time. But those categories owe nothing to individual consciousness, so they imply a common sense that assures that what one person perceives bears at least that transcendental relation to what another perceives. At about the same time, Thomas Reid in Scotland posited a common sense as the foundation of perceptual realism. Reid meant that there are some things that one cannot not believe—they rely not on individual subjective perception but on one’s common sense. All three senses of ‘common sense’ bear directly on aesthetics because each overcomes the potentially isolating character of feeling and sentiment. Our aesthetic experiences are subjective, but they are not impossible to share.

COMPOSITION. Composition is one of the formal aspects of painting appealed to by theories of aesthetic value. Formal properties are those that inhere in the work itself as a result of the relation of its parts. For formalists, these relational properties are the only ones that count in determining the quality of a work of art. Various theories of composition have been proposed. They appeal either to what is appropriate to the subject, to rules of composition, or to psychological-
cal theories of response. For example, what is appropriate for a genre painting would be improper in an historical painting. In some religious paintings, it was a compositional rule that a saint should be larger than the portrait of the donor who appears in the same painting. Rules included proportions that were “right” for the human body. A ratio of height to arm-span must be ideal if it is not to appear distorted and ugly. And psychological theories of response claimed that some compositions were inherently interesting while others would lack sufficient difference to avoid boredom. A single horizontal division of the picture plane would be boring, for example, while a pyramidal central subject would hold one’s attention. Similar compositional observations might apply in other art forms, such as poetry, but they have their strongest appeal in the visual arts where pointing them out often does allow one to perceive qualities in a painting that would otherwise escape notice.

Composition has a different meaning when applied to music. The composer is the artist in one sense while the performer is the artist in another. The relative authority of composer and performer is a subject of debate in aesthetic theories of music and varies with the musical genre. Composition may be opposed to improvisation. In some musical forms, composition is very limited, but even the most tightly composed piece may leave room for the performer to express differences of interpretation and variations on the score.

CONCEPTUAL ART. Traditional art objects are the product of an activity of someone, the artist, acting on some material, the medium, to produce something, the work of art. Within that schema, many variations are possible. The role of the artist may be minimal, as in the case of “found” art, where the only action by the artist is selection and display, or the artist may not be a single individual, as in the case of film or architecture, which depends on many different people acting in concert. And the material may be idealized, as in the case of imagined works, or ephemeral, as in the case of performances. But in every case, the presumption is that something more or less substantial results.

In conceptual art, that presumption of substantiality is pushed to its limit. It is not just that the performance may be improvised so that it cannot be repeated or that the object may be temporary or con-
stantly changing as in the case of some environmental art or installations. In conceptual art, there is no substantive thing that one can point to as the work of art. The art lies in the conception itself. The idea or thought or imagined moment is all that there is. Conceptual art might include a set of instructions or the creation of a situation, but the instructions or situation are not the work itself.

Conceptual art should be distinguished from merely imagined art. A poet who does not actually produce a poem may imagine the verses. Samuel Taylor Coleridge claimed to have forgotten much of “Kubla Khan.” But in that case, the poem just does not exist. It is lost or forgotten. In conceptual art, the non-existence of any object is essential to the work. If something were instantiated miraculously it would no longer be conceptual art.

In aesthetic theory, the possibility of conceptual art challenges the ontological assumptions about what art is. The question is not whether conceptual art is good art or bad art but whether it is art at all. Two possibilities are usually considered. If one holds that conceptual art is not art at all, then one might argue that it is something like a commentary on art. Its very point is theoretical or interpretive rather than artistic. On the other hand, if one holds that conceptual art is in fact an art form, then one might argue that traditional art objects are only one among several ways that art appears. Historicist, social, and political theories of art as well as some avant-garde artists sometimes argue that true art exists only in the interaction of history and culture. All art is constantly changing and interacting with its historical situation, and conceptual art is only making evident what is true of all art.

CONDILLAC, ETIENNE DE (1715–1780). Condillac’s version of French Enlightenment aesthetics is found primarily in his Essai sur l’origine connaissances des humaines (Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge, 1746) in which he combines John Locke’s theory of ideas with a Cartesian quest for clear and distinct ideas. Condillac finds the origin of knowledge in language that evolves from gestures into conventional language that expresses emotions and allows memory to recall ideas at will. The transition from gesture to convention requires a non-literal stage of language, and that is the origin of the fine arts, which evolve from dance and music through

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poetry to painting. Condillac’s genetic explanation subordinates the fine arts to the clarity of logic and science, however, and like A. G. Baumgarten, who introduced the term ‘aesthetic’ for feeling and sense, it follows that aesthetics should be replaced finally by a clearer insight that can only be supplied by reason.

CONFUSED KNOWLEDGE. Medieval philosophy distinguished between confused knowledge that resulted from the senses and clear knowledge that was known by the light of reason or divine illumination. The perception of an object, for example, must be confused because the object can be seen from only one perspective at a time. But the light of reason can allow one to imagine all sides of the object. The distinction is carried over into the Cartesian version of the theory of ideas. Only clear and distinct ideas are certain, and, therefore, they are the only true knowledge. Sensate knowledge is merely probable. When aesthetic ideas, which are feelings and emotions, come to be fitted into this scheme, they can serve only as confused knowledge, though early modern aesthetics in the rationalist tradition gives them a positive role as a means to rational knowledge.

CONNOISSEURSHIP. Connoisseurship plays an important but ambiguous role in the history of aesthetics. The existence of connoisseurs marks a cultural stage where sufficient wealth and leisure exist to support the fine arts independently of their serving a useful function, and that stage may be regarded positively or negatively in itself depending on one’s aesthetic ideology. In its positive sense, connoisseurship denotes those who are knowledgeable about the arts and whose judgment should be respected. Connoisseurs are the consumers of art. Without them, there would be no art market and the fine arts would remain tied to craft and patronage. However, connoisseurship also came to have negative connotations. It suggested elitism and often a false taste because the connoisseur is not an artist and can have only a limited knowledge of what the arts are about. Connoisseurs presume to dictate public taste and to limit creativity by artists thereby.

CONSERVATION. Conservation is the process by which works of art, particularly paintings, are preserved. It raises interesting questions
for aesthetics because some works of art change in the course of their existence, and it may be considered that those changes are part of the work of art itself. To return the work to its original state is to undo something that is essential to the work. **Sculpture**, for example, acquires a patina; to remove it is to change the work. Paintings, when they age, acquire a crackle and the varnishes and paints change. It is sometimes not clear whether the conservation and restoration of the painting loses something essential to it.

There are also significant questions about what should and should not be preserved. At one time, it was common to repair paintings by in-painting—filling in lost parts with new color. It has become evident, however, that such in-painting obscures the history of the painting and may distort the original in ways that cannot be undone if mistakes are made. It has become common now to document carefully all such restoration and to do it in a way that can be identified and undone should that become desirable.

The underlying issue is whether a work of art is essentially an **aesthetic object** that exists perceptually for an **audience** or whether it is also a physical object with its own history. If the former, then only the perceptual object counts; if the latter, then changes to the physical object must be counted as changes to the work of art. A physical object has an historical existence different from a purely perceptual object. At one aesthetic extreme is the perceptual thesis. At the other aesthetic extreme is a kind of aesthetic **naturalism** that says that works of art, like other objects, have a limited life span and should be allowed to age and die.

**CONSTRUCTIVISM.** Constructivism is the art movement associated with an exhibition in Russia in 1920 that exhibited three-dimensional works of art made from such materials as wire and metal not normally associated with **sculpture**. It is one of several **modernist** art movements that challenged the aesthetic assumption that works of art exhibit the special, pre-existing **aesthetic properties** of materials. By using ordinary construction materials and techniques, works of art are made without appealing to special aesthetic properties of the material. Such art may be thought to transform the material that it uses, but its purpose is equally to shock its **audience** into viewing its
materials in a new way and to blur the line between fine art and the material world.

CONTEMPLATION. Classical and medieval theories of beauty depended on some form of participation in the beautiful, which in itself was believed to be a reality independent of any individual. In the theories of Plato and Plotinus, beauty is essentially a part of an intellectual reality, so participation in that reality by any individual is an intellectual act. Contemplation is the means by which one is able to ascend from the physical reality of the body and senses into the intellectual realm that includes beauty. Some forms of contemplation, particularly the medieval theories of Bonaventure and Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, were believed to involve a loss of individual self-awareness that approached a mystical experience. Contemplation need not take that extreme form, however; according to Plotinus, for example, it could be achieved by intellectual discipline.

Platonism and neo-Platonism in some form continued to be influential well into the modern period. Romanticism in both religion and aesthetics valued contemplation as a means to perceive beauty. The difference lay in the understanding of what contemplation involved. The model shifted from participation to perception. Contemplative states were believed to allow a different or more direct perception of beauty than ordinary perception, which was dependent on everyday categories and expectations. Contemplation was itself understood as a form of sense based either upon introspection and reflection—the mind aware of its own powers of expression—or upon a special sensibility associated with genius. Therefore, some form of contemplation could be incorporated into theories of aesthetic experience and an aesthetic attitude.

CONVENTIONS. One of the persistent debates within aesthetics is whether aesthetic predicates, such as ‘beautiful,’ apply to either natural or non-natural properties or whether they are conventional extensions of language. If beauty is a natural property, it should be possible to describe it scientifically or to define it. If it is a non-natural property like greatness, which is relative to its application, it should still be possible to perceive it in some way. Some philosophers have held that both moral properties and aesthetic properties are non-
natural in that way; the relation of parts to a whole and of an individual to his or her society and culture is such that some relations are intrinsically better than others and those are the ones that we recognize as morally good or aesthetically beautiful. In opposition to this aesthetic and moral realism, it may be argued that all aesthetic and moral properties are the result of conventions that arise within culture or language. What we come to call beautiful or morally good will vary depending on the implicit conventions that arise within a culture as they are incorporated into language. An early modern distinction between artificial and natural signs followed somewhat the same lines of argument.

Regardless of whether aesthetic predicates are conventional or not, conventions play a significant role in the practice of individual arts. Iconography and symbolism depend on conventional associations. These range from the elaborate, multi-layered allegorical symbolism of Dante’s Divine Comedy to the mustache and black hat of the early movie villain. Conventions allow an audience to identify roles, to perceive in defined ways, and to find meanings that are not overtly stated. They are a necessary part of the rhetorical strategy in the literary arts. In the visual arts, they organize perception. In music, they provide order. Although some conventional expressions may have their roots in natural signs, such as a smile, most have to be learned. One of the principal roles of conventions in the arts is simply to make their own organization learnable. One is able to learn the conventions of an art form because those same conventions are schematic and orderly.

COUSIN, VICTOR (1792–1867). Victor Cousin’s primary claim to aesthetic importance rests on his influence on the arts through his reform of the French educational system. He was familiar with a wide variety of philosophical movements, including Immanuel Kant’s aesthetics and the common sense philosophy of Thomas Reid, all of which he combined with a neo-classical taste and Platonism in what he called eclecticism.

CRAFT. The distinction between the fine arts and craft is not a universal one. Classical and medieval aesthetics made no distinction between art and craft. The sense of art was that implied by a term like
‘artisan’—one who makes something. The distinction arises at certain points in the history of art, including the later 17th- and 18th-century Western European arts.

The distinction depends on a number of factors that include the rise of connoisseurs, critics, and collectors of art, the availability of a kind of art market, and the existence of an audience that values contemplation of artworks in aesthetic ways for their own sake. When some or all of those conditions are satisfied, some art forms achieve an autonomy as art and others continue to be valued primarily for their usefulness. The distinction is never absolute, however. Craft work may be beautiful, and the fine arts have their economic and social uses. The distinction is also not absolute with respect to individual arts. The fine arts in the West are usually taken to include at least painting, sculpture, the literary arts, music, and dance. At various times, however, landscape gardening, jewelry, and calligraphy have been regarded as fine arts.

Crafts are either defined by their usefulness or they are created at a less sophisticatedly developed level of accomplishment. Crafts are learnable, and they support a structure of guilds, unions, apprenticeships, or academies. That leaves considerable room for borderline cases and for the migration of individual works from one category to the other. For example, painters’ studios included both master artists who created the work itself and apprentices and technicians who painted the backgrounds and draperies. Today, mass art in general and films in particular produce work that is either craft or art or both.

The distinction between art and craft was given a special theoretical place in 20th-century expressionist aesthetics. R. G. Collingwood and Benedetto Croce utilize the distinction between art and craft to define art. Craft is imitative or at least non-creative. It follows models to achieve a predetermined end or effect. Art, on the other hand, is expressive and creative. Prior to its achieving its form, its ends remain unknown. So art is related to knowledge and discovery. Craft is a form of entertainment or propaganda.

CREATION/CREATIVITY. Creativity is one of the principal values of modernist aesthetics, but it should be remembered that it was not self-evident to earlier philosophy that creativity is a good thing. In classical and medieval aesthetics, the only creativity belongs to the
original creation. All subsequent activity can, at most, produce new instances that are more or less faithful to the original. Even apparently new things were believed to be only emergent from an original seed. Art, in such a schema, would never be creative.

Creativity becomes important in aesthetics when art and beauty are reconceived as experiences of individuals. Then the division between what is truly creative and what is merely a repetition marks the difference between artists who make the rules and their imitators who simply follow the rules of art. Creativity is associated with originality and novelty, two of the effects of mental activity that produce pleasure. Creativity is most highly valued in Romantic aesthetics where the artist is a second creator with unique powers to shape reality.

Creativity proves quite hard to define in contemporary aesthetics. Artists are said to be creative if they are not bound by convention or rules, but art continues to draw on both conventions and the existence of other artworks in an art world. Psychological theories of creativity look for the ways that established expectations are changed, but change is never absolute. It always bears some relation to what went before. Radical creativity in the arts may be valued for its unorthodox style, but it continues to refer to what it changes. Moreover, the cult of creativity associated with artists can be seen as one more bourgeois manifestation of individualism that works against historical progress and social unity.

**CRITICISM.** The role of criticism in the history of aesthetics is directly related to the perceived function of art. In one sense, criticism is a natural product of thinking about art. Plato’s dialogues, particularly his *Ion*, and Aristotle’s *Poetics* are both works of criticism. Rhetorical treatises during the classical and medieval Latin periods are equally works of criticism. Chinese and Japanese literary traditions produced critical works. Such works comment on the existing literature and provide guidance to artists and orators.

Criticism as a more or less independent function is the product of the emergence of an art-consuming public in the later 17th and 18th centuries, however. In the context of the belles lettres tradition, it was possible for criticism of the literary and visual arts to take on a status of its own as a literary form. Such creative writers as John Dryden and Joseph Addison in England and Charles Batteux, Bernard
Fontenelle, and Denis Diderot in France produced a significant body of work at the turn of the 17th century that was itself both literature and criticism.

Criticisms in the 18th century served to guide taste and the emerging art market as well as to advance theories about the nature of the arts being criticized. Critics were responsible for the formulation of the rules and standards that guided neo-classical art. Nineteenth- and 20th-century critics exercised considerable influence over the visual and literary arts. The formation of literary and artistic groups and schools was as much the result of critical thought as of artistic interaction. Twentieth-century art movements often coalesced around critical manifestos.

On the other hand, a tension between critics and artists has also existed virtually from the beginning. Plato’s condemnation of most forms of art as secondary imitations was met by defenses of the arts, beginning with Aristotle and his followers and continuing through such critical works as Philip Sidney’s Defense of Poetry. Two issues dominate this antagonism. First, critics seem to presume to dictate to artists what can and cannot be done, a prescription that is resented and resisted. Second, although many critics, including Plato himself, were also artists, it was often argued that artists, who actually produce works of art, must be ranked higher than critics, who can only respond to those works parasitically. Those who lack the ability to produce art should be debarred from criticizing what they cannot themselves do, it was felt.

A further issue for criticism concerns just what the critic is and is not able to do. The interpretation of a work of art, whether visual, musical, or literary, is a critical act that involves both understanding and representing what the work itself is and means. Therefore, it requires a theory of meaning. Critics are drawn into the theoretical debates about art to the point that theory is sometimes characterized as metacriticism. Critical principles vary from extreme contextual approaches that treat works of art as part of some larger social or cultural complex, through psychological, historical, and biographical approaches, to formalist critical theories that insist that only what is internal to a work of art itself and can be demonstrated to belong to it should be considered in interpretation.

But critics are not limited to interpretation. They also exercise...
judgment at both the categorical and evaluative levels. Critics attempt to locate objects, particularly controversial objects, in relation to recognized categories of art, and they attempt to determine the success or failure, the degree of excellence that genres and individual works possess. Therefore criticism is embedded in the culture of the modern and postmodern art world.

CROCE, BENEDETTO (1866–1952). Benedetto Croce was an Italian philosopher, critic, and political activist who formulated an aesthetic philosophy based on the historical idealism of Giambattista Vico (1668–1744) and the neo-Kantian idealism that identifies language and thought. For Croce, language is the origin of thought, but language must be understood broadly and historically. To think is to have a language of thought, which may precede the actual language used in history. Art is a form of language, and artists are those who can express ideas in some concrete form. Croce then distinguishes between art and secondary imitations and uses of an existing language. The former is creative; the latter uses the resources of art and language to achieve preconceived ends. Immanuel Kant had identified beauty as a pre-conceptual intuition; Croce takes that to mean that beauty is the act of expression itself. Prior to that act, nothing can be known, and when the mind brings some idea to expression, it experiences a quality of the idea as beauty. Actual works of art are less important than the act of expression itself, which is the true art. Thus Croce’s idealism locates art within the mental world of artists and art appreciators.

CROUSAZ, JEAN PIERRE (1663–1750). J. P. Crousaz was professor of philosophy and mathematics at the Academy of Lausanne in Switzerland. His Traité du Beau (1715) is an early attempt in the Cartesian tradition to locate the phenomena of beauty within the emerging rationalist/empiricist philosophy. His procedure was to seek causal relations through introspective examination of the subjective experience of beauty. The evidence for beauty is found in sentiments, which are distinguished from ideas of objects. But beauty belongs to objects, not to the sentiments themselves. So a purely intellectual knowledge of beauty is possible. This leads Crousaz to an aesthetic occasionalism. The felt beauty of sentiment does not conflict with
rational principles of beauty, but the relation is not necessary. Rules remain, but they are relative.

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DADA. Dada was an art movement from 1916 to 1924 that challenged the art establishment. Its name signifies its commitment to meaningless art, and its practice was to dissolve expectations and produce work that could not be categorized as beautiful or aesthetic. Its significance continued after the initial movement itself broke up, and Dada continued to mean the outrageous anti-establishmentarian art that developed from it. Among the important artists who are associated with Dada are Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia. Art movements like Dada have forced aesthetics to rethink the meaning of ‘art’ and to expand the art world. See also ANTI-ART.

D’ALEMBERT, JEAN LE ROND (1717–1783). Jean D’Alembert was one of the leading scientific and mathematical thinkers of the French Enlightenment. Together with Denis Diderot, he was the editor of the Encyclopédie, for which he wrote not only mathematical articles but those on music theory and practice. He withdrew from the Encyclopédie project in 1758 because of official criticism of his views.

D’Alembert defended a philosophical or scientific discussion of taste but limited it to those objects in works of art “which are adapted to excite pleasure or disgust, in minds that are susceptible of delicate sentiments and perceptions” (“Reflections on the Uses and Abuses of Philosophy in Matters of Taste,” in Alexander Gerard, An Essay on Taste [Edinburgh: printed for A. Millar, London, and A. Kincaid and J. Bell, Edinburgh; facsimile edition New York: Garland Publishing, 1764/1970], p. 225). Taste is governed by principles as in any scientific investigation, but its principles are available to introspection. Reflection enables the mind to distinguish true sources of pleasure from defects. So D’Alembert in effect mounts a defense of philosophical criticism against the charge that it conflicts with sensibility and feeling. Nevertheless, conflicts remain and philosophy may make “rude” pleasures less enjoyable. So D’Alembert’s conclusions
ture photography, we simply do not know what a dance looked like after the performance was over, and even before, we have only a singular instance. Dance shifts the primary focus from a composer or writer to a performer. Choreographers may guide the development of a particular dance or a dance style, but performers instantiate the dance. A drama or musical work can continue to exist in the mind alone, but without dancers, there is no dance.

The place of dance in the art world has been controversial. Leo Tolstoy condemned ballet as a perversion of the body and of folk unity. Dance, in the form of modern dance and ballet, continues to have to compete with popular dance forms in mass culture, forms that themselves provide borderline cases for attempts to identify art. Dance, however, seems firmly established in high culture as one of the performing arts, along with drama and musical performance.

DANTE ALIGHIERI (1265–1321). Dante’s Divine Comedy is at once the climax of medieval literature and the announcement of the Renaissance. It is based on the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas and extensive classical learning, but it is written in the vernacular Italian and not Latin. Beauty is a saving grace that begins with Dante’s ideal lover, Beatrice, and rises to a vision of the divine. The elaborate allegorical structure of the 100 Cantos of the Comedy is explicated by Dante himself in his letters. Allegorical interpretation is the medieval way of synthesizing the secular and sacred. It applies to things as well as words and is a basic part of medieval aesthetics that continues into the Renaissance and beyond.

DANTO, ARTHUR (1924–). Arthur Danto is an American academic philosopher and art critic whose concept of an art world has influenced much contemporary aesthetics. His work includes problems of the definition of art, the relation of art and theory, and the role of avant-garde art. Danto is also a practicing art critic whose work appeared regularly in The Nation.

DECADENCE. In some art movements, decadence becomes a positive aesthetic value. In early modern aesthetics, moral value and aesthetic value are closely related. The feelings of approbation that are characteristic of good taste are also feelings of approbation or benev-
oherence that are characteristic of virtue. So a person of good character will approve equally of morally good and aesthetically good works. When aesthetic value and moral value are separated, however, it becomes possible to have one without the other. Aesthetic values then are strictly amoral; nothing is implied one way or the other morally when one appreciates a work of art. But if works of art and traditional aesthetic values are part of an established art world, then one way to break free of that world is to embrace what it rejects. Decadence becomes a form of artistic rebellion against the restrictions of existing art.

DECENCY. Decency is an aesthetic property as well as a moral virtue when moral value and aesthetic value are closely identified, as they were in early modern aesthetics. A work that is indecent cannot be in good taste aesthetically. The rejection of the connection between moral and aesthetic value means that standards of decency applied to works of art come to be seen extrinsically. Censorship on the basis of indecency is opposed on the ground that aesthetic value can override moral judgments in works of art because they are wholly different values.

DECONSTRUCTION. Deconstruction is a term that has almost as many meanings as it has practitioners. It applies to a range of critical theories and practices that have their origins in the phenomenological and existentialist traditions, but deconstructionists resist methodological definitions as a matter of principle. They accept the phenomenological premise that all analysis of the human sciences, including the fine arts, must be directed at the interplay of an object and a mind, but whereas phenomenology limits that analysis to consciousness and strives for a description that is free from individual psychological limits, deconstruction allows a wide range of unconscious mental interactions and denies that any description can ever be universal. With the existentialists, deconstructionists accept that all of the interplay of an object and a mind is existentially situated and cannot be separated from that existential moment, but deconstructionists find that play expressed in texts and symbols and not limited to individual minds. So deconstruction must exhibit the texts
and symbols in such a way that they expose their meaning without being able to detach that meaning from the expression itself.

Two lines of deconstruction are prominent. The first depends on language as the primary form of expression. Since it is denied that language has any meaning apart from its engagement with a mind and a situation, however, it is impossible to state the meaning independently of the language itself. The means of deconstruction, therefore, must involve the play of language upon itself, the engagement of the actual reader or listener with the language at the moment of expression, and the conscious or unconscious employment of language as a form of existence. That means that all texts have an autonomy that must be “deconstructed” in order to be fully understood. The alternative approach depends on psychological and particularly psychoanalytical methods to display the textual play and thus to exhibit the meaning in the interaction of mind and object. Meaning is not limited to language. All situations are subject to the deconstruction that will exhibit their meaning.

When applied in aesthetic contexts, deconstruction emphasizes the artist-audience and the text-audience relationship. The kind of contemplation that traditional aesthetics looked for does not exist according to these methods. All interplay between a text and its audience must take place in a political, social, and psychological context that can be explored but never reduced to a context-independent form of statement. All attempts at absolute or unequivocal critical analysis are themselves subject to deconstruction. So issues of textual meaning, standards of taste, and essential definitions of art are viewed as themselves art-like in their attempt to engage a text. The aesthetics of deconstruction defies theoretical formulation while producing an extended theoretical text based on its own encounter with the arts.

DECORATIVE ARTS. The main artistic traditions and forms that concern aesthetics and the philosophy of art have evolved into the fine arts traditions: music, poetry, narrative fiction, painting, etc. Because the fine arts themselves are a relatively late cultural form, however, they are not the sole source of aesthetic expression. In many cultures, decorative arts precede the fine arts, and even after the emergence of autonomous art forms, decorative arts continue to flourish.
Decorative arts may be divided into two categories: those that are valued purely for their intrinsic beauty and those that are subordinate to some other artistic uses. Calligraphy, for example, had both an intrinsic appeal, especially in Chinese and Japanese art, and a role in architectural ornamentation, especially in Islamic art. Modern decorative arts include furnishings, jewelry, and textiles, as well as ornamentation. They have been recognized by the art world as aesthetically significant in their own right and are represented in museum collections. Aesthetically, decorative arts challenge the distinction between useful and fine arts and demonstrate the fluidity of aesthetic boundaries.

DECORUM. Decorum is the standard applied to art and taste that finds enthusiasm and extreme forms of expression or sentiment bad and recommends following rules that are both social and artistic. It was a neo-classical virtue and was abandoned in the reaction against the restrictions of neo-classical rules.

DEFINITION. Issues of definition concern primarily the concept of art itself. Those who try to define ‘art’ maintain that some essential properties that serve as necessary and sufficient conditions for the use of the term must exist. If they do not, then when we speak of art, we are using an empty term. Essentialist definitions of ‘art’ have tended to center on either its character as an imitation of something else in some medium or material or on its mental character as an expression of either individual minds or of mind itself.

Essentialists are not only trying to define the term ‘art,’ however. They also believe that art is the kind of thing that must have a definition—either it is a physical reality, or it is related to some intellectual reality. In either case, when we talk of art, we are talking about something that exists autonomously. The anti-essentialists about art begin with a critique of attempts to define the term ‘art.’ They point out that many meaningful terms are not subject to definition by necessary and sufficient conditions. Many are what are called open concepts that operate on the basis of shared similarities across a range of instances so that no single instance need have any property in common with all other instances. ‘Game’ is frequently cited as an instance of such a concept. Extreme anti-essentialists may also argue that ‘art’ is
not the kind of term that needs a definition. When we call something art, we are not classifying it but describing and praising it. Our art-language is either emotive or prescriptive. Art breaks through expectations, and even paradigm instances may be rejected. If the paradigm instances of painting are the genre paintings, landscapes, portraits, and religious and historical paintings of high Western art, then the Brillo boxes of pop art and the color panels of abstract expressionists are not just extreme cases but actual denials of what had been the paradigm. Such dialectical definition leads away from the whole definitional enterprise as conceived by essentialist and anti-essentialist positions.

In 20th-century philosophy, other attempts at definition have attracted attention. An institutional theory of art posits a relational definition. For example, ‘art’ refers to anything offered as a candidate for appreciation by a member of the art world (George Dickie). What is chosen need have no essential properties that make it art at all, and it need not even be clearly related to other existing artworks. But it must have a relation to an art world, and that art world must be able to exercise some authority. The term ‘art’ is defined by its relation to an art world. Another alternative comes from the phenomenological tradition begun by Edmund Husserl. Instead of definitions, phenomenology offers descriptions that are drawn from existing instances but are supposedly freed from the contingency of their existential location. What makes ‘art’ meaningful, then, is its ability to constitute a mental grasp of something as art.

In the complex philosophical world of 20th-century aesthetics, the important distinctions among different approaches to definitional questions turn on issues of linguistic function and description rather than the metaphysics of art objects. The alternatives are to look at the function of the word in its widest use or to look at the historical evolution of the word. The latter possibility may center on an historical, social, or economic history without which the word ‘art’ would be meaningless but within which it may change as the dynamics of history itself change. Art that became autonomous when the fine arts were separated from craft and patronage may be something wholly different when the economic base has shifted so that autonomy functions differently. Definitions of art influenced by Marxism and critical theory follow that path.
DELICACY. Delicacy is one of the abilities that contribute positively to aesthetic judgments while potentially presenting problems as well. Delicacy in aesthetics is normally treated as a capacity that belongs to the senses, which are either conceived as extensions of our sense organs or as special internal capacities to perceive aesthetic qualities. In the simplest physical cases, a delicacy of the sense organs implies an ability to discriminate qualities. Perfect pitch is an instance of delicacy of hearing. Ability to discriminate colors requires a delicacy of vision, and the color-blind are not good judges of anything but monochrome painting and photography. By extension, delicacy of the senses also applies to one’s ability to discriminate among artistic objects and performances. If one lacks delicacy of taste, in its aesthetic sense, one will not be a competent judge because one’s experience will be limited. The existence of a delicate sensibility is often considered on the analogy of the ability to distinguish small differences in physical taste. David Hume compares it to wine tasting in his essay “Of the Standard of Taste” and includes delicacy among the qualifications of a true judge of taste.

Delicacy is also recognized to raise aesthetic problems, however. One who has a delicate sensibility will not experience pleasure at even a competent but mediocre performance, for example, and a bad performance will be positively painful. Hume tries to resolve this problem by arguing that delicacy of the passions is often a disadvantage because it leads to socially disadvantageous sensitivities to slights and minor failures as well as making it more difficult to enjoy what most people enjoy. But, Hume argues, delicacy of taste is different because it leads to sound judgment and because its pleasures are more directly under our control. One must often be placed in a position where delicacy of passion will be painful because one cannot avoid being disappointed, but delicacy of taste, which discriminates finely, also limits the chances of disappointment.

DENNIS, JOHN (1657–1734). John Dennis was an English poet, playwright, and critic who was engaged in a number of critical controversies, most notably with Alexander Pope. His A Large Account of the Taste in Poetry, and the Causes of the Degeneracy of It (1702) is one of the early attempts to establish the basis of taste. Dennis requires three things for good taste: natural ability, education, and application.
Given the unfavorable reception of his own plays and Pope’s criticism, he concludes that all three were lacking in his own day!

**DEPICTION.** Theories of depiction consider the ways in which representation works in the arts. Several issues arise. First, the move from three-dimensional visual perception to depiction in two dimensions on a plane surface is not as simple as it seemed to early artists. To some extent, depiction is conventional. A drawing only looks like what it depicts if one knows the conventions of representation. Depiction also depends on learned visual responses that are not conventional but are psychologically programmable. This became evident as systems of perspective were developed in the early Renaissance.

Second, depiction is not just a matter of making a representation look like what it represents. A single point of paint can depict something even if it in no way looks like what it depicts. Third, depiction may not be unambiguous. Well-known cases of aspect seeing indicate that the same marks on a surface can be seen in more than one way. The same lines can be seen as either a duck or a rabbit in one often cited case. The shift from one aspect to the other is voluntary; one can see either, but not both simultaneously.

The problems about depiction are most evident in the visual arts, but other art forms also depict what they refer to. In the arts that depend on language, for example, something may be depicted, and some of the same issues arise. Language depicts conventionally, but in both poetry and prose art forms, depiction may also utilize the sounds of words themselves to depict naturally. Music is less obviously a medium that utilizes depiction, but program music at least claimed to be able to depict the situations referred to by the music. “Spring” and “Fall” require different musical tonalities, for example. Music is also often said to depict emotions.

A deeper issue involving depiction concerns whether and how the arts must involve depiction. If art is an imitation of something, then an element of depiction is essential to the process of making art. If, however, art breaks with imitation, as much modern and contemporary art does, the quest for what is depicted may be frustrating and counter to the artistic effort. Viewers are often cautioned against looking for what is represented in painting, for example. Formal properties take precedence over depiction. Similarly, foot-tapping to
the music and imaginative flights of association are decried by advocates of “pure” music.

DERRIDA, JACQUES (1930–2005). Jacques Derrida became the leading literary theorist in a movement that changed the meaning of “literary theory.” Theory ceased to be the logical and rational discussion of a subject, what Monroe Beardsley called metacriticism in the arts, and became a kind of play between art or “text” and thinking itself. Derrida’s influence on aesthetics, therefore, cannot be reduced to a systematic statement because Derrida himself is not a thinker in the philosophical sense but is engaged in an act of thinking that is more art-like than philosophical.

The roots of the postmodern movement that Derrida led and became emblematic of are in the continental phenomenology and existentialism of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, but Derridian theory rejects the analytical nature of that philosophy in favor of a neo-Romantic art that owes a great deal to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Derrida and his followers are sometimes also classified as “post-structuralists” because of their concern with language as sign and signifier, but that classification can be misleading. At most, Derrida and the French postmodernists are on the fringes of aesthetics because they choose to operate within the context of literary rather than philosophical discourse.

DESIGN. There are two senses in which design is important in the history of aesthetics. First, design is a formal property of works of art. Design refers to the ways that the medium may be arranged to achieve aesthetic ends. In the visual arts, in particular, the design of the work is equivalent to the arrangement of the aesthetically relevant properties—color, shape, texture, etc. Design implies a certain intentionality on the part of the artist. Even if one believes that the design only emerges in the process of creation and is not preconceived, it is not random. The most free-form splatter painting still involves design. Some arts and genres rely heavily on design features. Others minimize overt design in the interests of other expressive features. In either case, design is a factor, even if negatively conceived.

Design has a second aesthetic sense as well. In the decorative
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arts, design is a principal end of works. Furniture, fashion, and landscape gardening all are arts of design. At some point, the move from practical or useful arts or crafts into the aesthetic realm takes place. Then design becomes an aesthetic property in its own right. The design of a work is more important than either its use or its particular instantiation. Many different chairs may incorporate the same design, and if they are part of the art world, then it must be the design itself that is the aesthetic object. The line between art and craft in such cases may be quite indistinct. When an architect designs the furniture to go with a building, the design is both part of the building’s practical use and an aspect of its aesthetic quality. Design implies a skill on the part of a maker. It can be taught and learned. But design also implies a qualitative judgment. An end may be accomplished by many different tools utilized in many different ways. It is the design to which aesthetic properties are ascribed. An elegant vase or a beautiful car acquires its elegance or beauty by virtue of its design.

DESIRE. In aesthetics, desire is often opposed to disinterested attention to an object. The distinction considers that desire implies that something will fulfill the desire, and that fulfillment implies the existence of the object of desire. Disinterested attention, on the contrary, is conceived as attention to something where the attention or perception is self-fulfilling. In that case, the actual existence of the object is immaterial. All that matters is that it exist as an object of attention or perception. Desire for ice cream can only be fulfilled by real ice cream, but the existence of a landscape is immaterial to its aesthetic perception (though not to the gardener).

The usage is obviously somewhat artificial, but it marks one of the important distinctions in modern aesthetics. It has its origins in the work of Immanuel Kant who also makes a similar distinction between delight, which is the response to beauty, and agreeableness, which is the response to an object that fulfills a desire. The psychology of desire, including its sexual connotations, also plays a role in distinguishing aesthetic contemplation from physical attachment to objects. In that sense, it can be found even earlier in the history of aesthetics. In neo-Platonic theories of beauty, desire attaches one to the world of the senses. Freedom from desire allows one to contemplate beauty in its intellectual forms and thus to free oneself from
desire. A similar dialectic can be found in Indian, Chinese, and Japanese aesthetics that follow Buddhist teachings.

DESSOIR, MAX (1867–1947). At the end of the 19th century, aesthetics was fragmented between art history, the new psychological theories of art, and the cultural “sciences.” Max Dessoir, who founded the first journal for aesthetic theory, the Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft, sought to bring systematic order to the discipline in Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft (Aesthetics and the Theory of Art, 1906). Dessoir distinguished between the science of the arts, which has to do with the creation of art, and aesthetics, which has to do with feeling and reception.

DE STIJL. De Stijl was the name of a journal founded by Theo van Doesburg in 1917; the name was applied to movements in architecture and painting that emphasized geometric shape and simplicity. It was related to cubism. De Stijl is associated with the Bauhaus movement, and its most prominent painter was Piet Mondrian. Such movements as De Stijl changed aesthetic expectations in the first half of the 20th century from representational realism to formalism.

DEWEY, JOHN (1859–1952). John Dewey is known primarily as a social philosopher with an extensive influence on the philosophy of education. His philosophical approach is related to pragmatism, particularly in his treatment of truth as an instrumental value. His contribution to aesthetics, Art as Experience (1934), distinguishes between experience broadly conceived and an experience, which coalesces the extensive and open range of experience into discrete and identifiable units. Art is one of the primary ways that we arrive at an experience. The focus of aesthetics, therefore, is neither on emotion as such nor on artifacts as objects but on a relation between works of art and individuals that occurs in experience to produce an experience. Dewey continues to think of aesthetic qualities and aesthetic experience as distinct kinds of appreciative experience, but he identifies them with the move from inchoate experience to clarified experience. So at bottom, all experience is potentially aesthetic.

DIALECTIC. Dialectical systems in the history of aesthetics are found in both classical and contemporary contexts, though the kind of dia-
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lectic differs greatly. In classical aesthetics, especially the aesthetics of Plato and Plotinus, the dialectic is fundamentally between the sacred and profane worlds. The sacred is characterized by its atemporal otherness and its spatial omnipresence. It is the time of the beginning, of the origin of things, and that sacred time is present to all profane or historical time. Metaphysically, it is the realm of being and true reality. It is known through the creation narratives and other myths, and it is accessible through ritual. In contrast, the profane world is the world of linear time and spatial exclusion. It is dependent in the strongest sense on maintaining a relation to the origins and without that relation descends into non-being or chaos. The relation between the sacred and profane is dialectical because neither can exist without the other. The sacred must produce the profane by a process of emanation, while the profane exists only in a dependent relation that requires that it return to its origins.

Variations on this basic dialectical schema are found throughout ancient philosophy and religion in both the Greek and Eastern worlds. It is given its characteristic aesthetic formulation in the work of Plato, where the dialectic is between individual thought and an archetypal reality, and particularly in the work of Plotinus. Plotinus describes a hierarchical structure that reaches from the material world, through individual minds, to an intelligible world that is ultimately beyond existence altogether. Beauty belongs to the upper levels of this hierarchical structure and is accessible through an intellectual purification that allows individual minds to participate in the beauty of the singular reality of the One. Works of art occupy different places in this dialectical structure, depending on how close they are to the material or intellectual realms.

The archaic dialectic contrasts with the early modern dialectic, which is more historical and progressive. In the work of G. W. F. Hegel and his successors, especially the Romantic theorists and poets, the dialectic operates between what is and what will be, a movement of spirit that is seeking ever more idealized versions of its own essence. This movement manifests itself through art and religion and is realized in history, which is sometimes identified with the history of a particular folk. The aesthetics of this dialectic views art as one of the primary means by which one is enabled to experience the
workings of spirit itself. Artists are the unacknowledged creators through whom the dialectic is working itself out.

The Hegelian version of this dialectic is inverted in the 19th century by Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx and given a more concrete analysis in terms of economic forces and class struggle. In that form, dialectic can be further modified in critical theory so that the actual role of art in the dialectical movement becomes a matter of debate. Art may play either a positive role as a revolutionary force or a negative role as a form of reaction depending on how art is conceived. More analytical theories of aesthetics usually reject dialectical movement as needlessly metaphysical, but it exerts some influence over the analysis of art movements in the 20th century, particularly the movements that react against traditional representational painting and narrative fiction.

DICKIE, GEORGE (1926–). George Dickie is a contemporary American academic philosopher whose work has been primarily in aesthetics. He proposed the institutional theory of art, which reopens the question of whether ‘art’ can be defined by shifting attention from essential properties of a thing to the relational properties made possible by the institutions of the art world.

DIDACTICISM. Justification for the arts has often turned on their usefulness as means of instruction. Plato allowed the arts of imitation into his ideal state, the Republic, only if they were useful in the instruction of the young. An element of didacticism runs throughout the history of aesthetics. Religious art—particularly painting and stained glass—had as a primary purpose the instruction of the faithful, especially in situations where a lack of literacy and the threat of heresy made written theological instruction impractical or dangerous. During the neo-classical period, a standard formula called for the arts to instruct through pleasing. The belief was that ideas that would be too difficult or too unattractive in and of themselves could be made effective and accessible if they were incorporated into works of art that pleased their intended audience. Such didacticism was not limited to fables and moral tales. It also worked through poetry, painting, and even music.

Didacticism comes under attack as the responses to art are sepa-
rated into a separate aesthetic realm of experience. Any theory of art that depends on utility, especially overt instruction, is considered by Kantian and post-Kantian aesthetics to violate the autonomy of art and the special conditions of aesthetic appreciation. If art is expected to instruct, then it is subordinate to a predetermined message. That contradicts the definitions of art that are based on the freedom of beauty and taste from concepts and theories. Nevertheless, didacticism continues to be one of the ends for which art is created. Movements in art seek to inculcate their vision even as they reject alternatives. Avant-garde movements are often aggressively didactic in their manifestos. Social and critical theories of art also reinstate didacticism as a primary function of art and artists. Art is seen either as a way of pacifying an exploited population—an opiate that, along with religion, provides bread and circuses; or it is seen as propaganda that can be used to promote the aims of the more advanced part of society and communicate with the masses. In the historical dialectic of social and economic forces, art inevitably either promotes the regressive or progressive tendencies. Socialist realism, for example, was explicitly didactic in its aims to promote class solidarity against the forces of reaction. Some current views of art as a part of education also emphasize its didactic potential without subscribing to any particular political or social theory.

DIDEROT, DENIS (1713–1778). Denis Diderot is known as one of the leading voices of the French Enlightenment and as the editor and one of the principal contributors to the Encyclopédie. That project, which reflected the vision of the French philosophes, occupied 20 years of his life and brought him to assemble knowledge across all fields of human endeavor and to change the way that a wide public thought. It was scientific, religiously unorthodox, and “advanced” in the arts. Diderot was also a novelist, dramatist, and major contributor to the art criticism of the 18th century, however, and it is in those capacities that he is important to the history of aesthetics.

Early in his career, Diderot read and translated the work of the third Earl of Shaftesbury and adopted the sentimental approach to both art and morals that Shaftesbury advocated. Later, however, Diderot rejected the sentimentalism of Shaftesbury and argued for a more objective, action-oriented form of moral judgment.
counted was what one did, not what one intended. He remained committed to a social rather than individual view of moral values, however. In the arts, Diderot was equally committed to combining social awareness and action. His plays and narrative dialogues reflect his view that social identity is more important than the isolated Cartesian ego, and his practical criticism was intended, like the *Encyclopédie* itself, to change public taste.

In Paris in the early 18th century, the French Royal Academy sponsored annual or biennial exhibitions of painting by the approved artists. These Salons shaped taste, provided a direct access of artists to a new art market, and involved all levels of society in the arts. Criticism of the early Salons was public and popular, but it offended both the artists and their patrons and was often suppressed. Diderot took up the tradition of criticism in an almost clandestine way. His close friend, Friedrich Melchior Grimm, circulated a kind of journal, the *Correspondence Littéraire*, in manuscript form limited to a very select list of less than 30 subscribers that included many of the princes of Europe. At Grimm’s instigation, Diderot provided criticism of the Salons beginning in 1759.

The criticism of the Salons of 1765 and 1767 grew into book-length manuscripts. They were not printed within Diderot’s lifetime, but they exerted influence in several ways. They effectively provided a critical catalogue that allowed Diderot to promote certain artists with some of the most influential buyers of art, and they formed critical tastes at the courts of Europe. Diderot defends naturalism and genre painting, including portraiture and landscape painting, against the artificial restraints of the dominant history painting most highly valued by the Academy. He believed that art is a didactic imitation of nature, but he viewed it as expressive of true nature, so the artist’s primary role is to express and not simply to copy nature. Diderot’s judgments and criticisms remain very specific. He implicitly belongs to the empiricist, anti-classical school of aesthetics that rests judgment primarily on the response of viewers, but he is concerned equally to educate those viewers and give them a voice against the established verities of aristocratic taste. But Diderot clearly does not believe that the public is always right or that any opinion is as good as any other. Critical judgment is both affective and rational, and while the former is more immediate, the latter is more likely to be
expressed in a way that will affect taste. Diderot’s own practice aims at both.

**DILTHEY, WILHELM (1833–1911).** The German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey based his philosophy on a theory of *poetry* and its *interpretation*. His primary importance is in developing a theory of interpretation, *hermeneutics*, that looks back to the biblical hermeneutics of Friedrich Schleiermacher and forward to the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Martin Heidegger, but Dilthey’s own methods of historical interpretation of *texts* also have been important to aesthetics. For Dilthey, understanding a text requires an historical sensibility and a changeable relationship. It is neither strictly linguistic nor exclusively *psychological*. So aesthetics that is too *subjective* loses the significance of artworks, but unlike the transcendental aesthetics of G. W. F. Hegel and the *Romantics*, artworks remain grounded in temporally conditioned responses that are local.

**DIONYSIAN FORM.** Friedrich Nietzsche distinguished between Dionysian and *Apollonian form* in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Dionysian form is symbolized by Dionysius, the god whose rites led his worshippers into ecstasy and madness. Nietzsche argued that Dionysian form is more primitive than the controlled, *classical* art of Apollo, though Apollo, too, has a dark side. True art must recognize and return to its Dionysian roots.

**DISGUST.** Aesthetics sometimes seems to deal only with positive *emotions*. *Beauty* and its associated predicates are affectively pleasant. Yet it is obvious that not all artworks produce such pleasant emotions. Many works of art, especially in the visual arts and literature, depict objects and events that are unpleasant. Some, such as *tragedy*, have a supervenient quality that may be characterized in positive terms, but others are difficult to accommodate. Many works are correctly characterized as disturbing, *ugly*, and disgusting.

One way to deal with such works aesthetically is to separate their emotional effects from their *aesthetic properties*. An alternative, however, is to expand the aesthetic categories themselves. Rather than identifying the aesthetic with a set of *pleasurable* emotions, the aesthetic can be considered more broadly to include all emotional
effects that are sufficiently distinguished from their consequences and ordinary applications. Such a move was already implicit in the early modern distinction between the beautiful and the sublime, which was felt as awesome and fear-producing, properties not specifically associated with beauty. The multiplication of aesthetic predicates creates room for such predicates as ugly and disgusting to function aesthetically in their own right.

Disgust is a strong emotional response closely related to the concept of ugliness. It raises a special set of problems, however, because disgust may be strong enough to make the distinction between aesthetic experiences and non-aesthetic experiences impossible. If something is truly disgusting, then to treat it with the kind of neutral aesthetic distance called for by many 19th- and 20th-century aesthetic theories can seem either psychologically impossible or so morally perverse as to be abnormal or mad. The work of the Marquis de Sade might be an example. Therefore, the existence of disgust as an aesthetic emotion works against those kinds of aesthetic theories. In more dialectical theories that are not committed to aesthetic distance, disgust can be a positive force toward actions. What is disgusting may play a positive role by increasing awareness of social or economic restrictions and injustice.

DISINTERESTEDNESS. Disinterestedness began to appear as an important term in 18th-century aesthetics, but it was not until it was fully developed in Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Judgment (1790) that it takes on its characteristic aesthetic form. Beginning with the third Earl of Shaftesbury, disinterestedness is a condition of a proper judgment of taste. In Shaftesbury’s work, ‘interest’ has the fundamental 18th-century meaning of advantage or support from someone more highly placed. A patron would be expected to exert his interest in support of his clients. Someone who expects to profit or receive support has interest. So disinterestedness is the situation where judgment is not influenced by expectations of advantage or support. A judgment of taste should be disinterested in that limited sense. Otherwise, taste will be misled. But through most of the 18th century, disinterestedness is a limited, largely negative condition. It simply means that one is not overly partial to one’s own relations and friends.
Kant expands the sense of disinterestedness to apply it to all questions of existence or conceptual subordination. A disinterested aesthetic judgment is one to which no aesthetic concept or rule dictates the result and for which no desire must be fulfilled. A disinterested judgment is limited to purely subjective judgments of taste, therefore. Only the immediate feeling or intuition contributes to a judgment of taste. Such judgments are limited to aesthetic perception, and the beautiful is defined as that experience that depends only on a disinterested perception.

For Kant, disinterestedness, beauty, and judgments of taste are part of a larger system of knowledge that also includes moral and theoretical knowledge. Disinterested judgments and perceptions are distinguished from practical and theoretical judgments and perceptions by their combination of universality and subjectivity. When one judges that something is beautiful or when one perceives aesthetically, the experience that one has is purely subjective, but it is not limited by its subjectivity. It is also universal in that none of the limitations imposed by subjectivity apply to it. Neither the concepts that one has acquired nor the desires and interests that one has in the existence of the object are part of the purely subjective experience. Aesthetic experiences are linked to art by the free play of the imagination and genius. But in a deeper sense, the possibility of disinterested judgment is a condition of all knowledge.

After Kant, however, disinterestedness takes on a psychological meaning. It is a condition of perception that allows any object, including imaginary objects, to be experienced aesthetically. So disinterestedness becomes a necessary condition for aesthetic experience. It is the fundamental condition that distinguishes an aesthetic attitude from ordinary attitudes, and it is a necessary condition for a voluntarily assumed relation to art and the world that produces aesthetic experience. Disinterestedness became one of the defining conditions for much of 19th- and 20th-century aesthetics.

Disinterestedness is never completely dominant, however. G. W. F. Hegel and Hegelians question whether the kind of neutral, completely disinterested attitude is possible within the dialectic of history, and socio-economic theories of art deny that disinterestedness is even possible. In later 20th-century aesthetics, the psychological theories based on disinterestedness are also challenged as
misleading about what art is and how it can be perceived. A pure aesthetic attitude is regarded by some as simply a myth. Art has many different functions and can be perceived in many different ways, all of which involve some form of relation to a larger art world.

DISTANCE. See PSYCHICAL DISTANCE.

DRAMA. Aristotle defined drama as an imitation of the actions of men where the actions are played out before an audience rather than being narrated. So very early in the history of the arts, attempts were being made to distinguish individual arts in terms of the different mediums, forms, and ends that they supposed. Drama was central because it is closely related to ritual, which is also an enactment of actions, specifically those of the gods at the origins of things and of their relation to men. So drama is one of the earliest art forms to attract philosophical interest.

The long critical and philosophical interest in drama does not mean that it was always regarded aesthetically, however, nor that it was conceived of as one of the fine arts. Both the aesthetic autonomy of drama and its incorporation into a generic conception of fine art required a long evolution of performance and cultural expectations. These changes have taken place not only in Western art but also in Indian, Chinese, and Japanese art, each in its own cultural setting. What distinguishes drama, therefore, is not just that it is a performance art that shows actions before an audience but also that it is a central instance of art that has the potential to be performed and appreciated for its own sake. When and how that potential is realized has varied, but drama is now well established as one of the paradigm instances of fine art.

Dramatic representation is not limited to conventional forms, however. The development of new means of production has meant that drama now encompasses the art of film, which has very different conditions of production and exhibition, and many experimental forms that stretch the definitions of performance. For example, improvisation, which can trace its roots to mime and street performances, now breaks down the boundaries between theater and audience. Mixed forms, such as opera and musical theater, expand
the limits of dramatic performance. As with most genres of the fine arts, the actual generic conditions prove quite elastic.

DRYDEN, JOHN (1631–1700). John Dryden was among the leading poets and playwrights of the English Restoration period. He was also a critic, and his “Preface” to Charles du Fresnoy’s *De Arte Graphica* (1695) is one of the leading documents in the neo-classical tradition of comparisons of poetry and painting. Dryden approaches both in terms of their ability to please and instruct, giving poetry the preference in instruction. He also compares them extensively in both their method of imitation and the kinds of things that they can imitate. Poetry had a long history of acceptance as an art; painting, which was regarded as a craft, aspired to the status of poetry, and Dryden, for the most part, accedes to that desire by showing how both follow parallel rules of composition.

DUBOS, JEAN-BAPTISTE (1670–1742). The Abbé Jean-Baptiste Dubos’s *Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting*, originally written in Latin, appeared in French in 1719 and was translated into English in 1748. Dubos is more important to the development of the subjectivist, sentimental aesthetics of the 18th century than as a critical thinker in his own right. He combines a theory of imitation with a distaste for any connected inference. His appeals to sense are naturalistic, naïve, and would, if developed, lead directly to a critical subjectivism. He dismisses all argumentation. Dubos acknowledges that the result of relying on sense will be differing tastes. ‘Taste’ is essentially just pleasure.

In spite of his reliance on sense, Dubos rested his theory of art firmly on a theory of imitation. Sense perceives objects, broadly construed to include actions and even passions themselves. Different objects are suitable to produce different emotions. So the basic task of an artist is to choose the right objects and present them in a way that will ensure their effect even though they are weaker, artificial versions of the originals. Thus, Dubos’s theory of the passions reduces to a theory of imitation. What makes Dubos important is not that he has any worked out psychology of the passions but that he is prepared to grant them a greater authority than any of his rationalist contemporaries. Passion can accomplish what reason cannot. The real
authority of the passions comes simply from their organic basis. Reason itself is artificial and cannot prevail over “nature.” This naturalism, rather than any coherent theory, is the most striking characteristic of Dubos’ theory of art.

Dubos relies heavily on a concept of genius that remains essentially vague. Genius is closely related to delicacy of taste. That is, genius is fundamentally an ability to perceive and discriminate. It is thus related to the discriminatory powers of taste that are also powers of judgment. Since, for Dubos, the production of art is essentially choosing objects, the role of genius is to perceive what can be chosen effectively.

The grounds for judging remain the senses. Art is supposed to move us emotionally, so what does is good and what does not is bad. We cannot be wrong about whether we are moved because that is a matter of direct sense, and that art is that which moves becomes a stipulative definition. So public sentiment cannot be wrong, but it may be difficult to arrive at a stable judgment, which can only arise over time. That is accomplished by a kind of disinterested persuasion that arises as the public is able to set aside those elements that would mislead judgment. Dubos’s optimism and trust in the final public judgment is reinforced by his distrust of abstract reasoning. In the end, public taste will be correct; genius will find its way; and facts will triumph over speculation.

**Duchamp, Marcel (1887–1968).** Marcel Duchamp was a French painter whose work became heavily involved in theoretical programs. Some of Duchamp’s works have taken on the status of classics in aesthetic discussions about the nature of a work of art.

Duchamp worked in a number of experimental styles that were descended from cubism and futurism; he was associated with both Dada and surrealism at various times. He became increasingly occupied with theoretical issues and used his artwork to make theoretical points, particularly against the assumptions that art should produce aesthetic experiences. He believed that aesthetic qualities were less important than the aesthetic decisions that an artist made, and those decisions could be expressed only by combining ideas and artifacts. He used ready-mades—artworks created simply by adapting and exhibiting some utilitarian object—to make his theoretical
Emotion plays a central role in aesthetics in three basic ways. First, emotion is an effect of art, which stimulates emotional responses. Second, in some theories of beauty, beauty itself is identified as an emotion. Third, some aesthetic theories are built upon the foundation of a specifically aesthetic emotion.

As an effect of art, emotion has been regarded both positively and negatively. In classical theories of the arts, especially those derived from Plato’s work, emotion is largely a negative effect. It interferes with reason and should be controlled. Insofar as works of art are imitations that appeal to the emotions, they are suspect. Not only are their effects bad in particular cases where emotion is given priority over one’s rational soul, but they are also bad because they tend to weaken the soul’s control over the body and senses generally. One who indulges the emotions in some cases will not learn to control them in more difficult cases. Aristotle’s Poetics also identifies emotions as the result of tragedy, but they can be purged by the process of catharsis either in the course of the play itself or of the audience’s experience of the play. Emotions need not always be negative in classical theories of the arts, however. They may also play a role in inspiration, which, while it is not under one’s own control, nevertheless may be a form of communication with the gods. Emotions can also be a starting point for a kind of intellectual ascent that eventually leaves the emotions behind.

In the 18th century, the classical hierarchy of beauty became more problematic under pressure from both rationalist and empiricist theories that privileged individual experience and reasoning. In that context, it became common to regard beauty as simply an emotion that was pleasant. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and the causal relations that produce the emotion are dependent on some property or combination of properties that humans are disposed to respond to as beautiful. As an emotion, beauty is only one of many responses that are causally produced, though it continues to be the generic term that covers many specific responses, such as elegance, novelty, and grace, all of which are felt emotions that are produced by aesthetic properties of objects. Other responses, such as the awe and fear produced by the sublime, are equally emotions that exist only as responses to properties and causes that affect the senses. Aesthetics as
such was developed to include the range of emotional responses within the larger context of knowledge.

The difficulties raised by the subjective nature of theories of beauty and taste that identify aesthetic qualities with emotional responses quickly led to the postulation of a uniquely aesthetic emotion. Its emotional uniqueness distinguished it from other pleasant emotions that were the fulfillment of desires, and it required a special set of circumstances—disinterested attention or perception—for its production. Immanuel Kant pointed out that it is coherent to say of something that I like it but that others may not, but to say that something is beautiful implies a feeling for it that one expects everyone to share. Other ways of distinguishing aesthetic emotions from ordinary ones are based on the purely formal nature of the aesthetic emotion. In early 20th-century aesthetic theories, such as that of Clive Bell, it was common to say that aesthetic emotion responded to the formal properties of works of art while more mundane emotions were aroused by the representational elements or by appeals to personal associations.

The place of emotion in aesthetic theory continues to be a subject of debate. Important distinctions between the actual arousal of emotions and the expression of emotion in the work itself differentiate between the psychological and aesthetic responses to works of art and lead to complex theories of aesthetic expression. It is also possible to deny that emotion is the appropriate response to art at all. Some theories of art understand art as itself a form of action or as leading to actions.

Emotion in art and especially in fiction has been one of the important topics in 20th-century analytical aesthetics because emotional responses seem in some cases to be odd or irrational. One responds emotionally to fictions even though one knows that the object of the emotion does not exist, and one responds to fictional situations in ways that make the emotion itself problematic. It is odd to voluntarily seek an emotional response, such as horror, which is in itself unpleasant. A number of different theories try to account for the anomalies of emotional response in the arts. Among the most important is the theory of quasi-emotions and make-believe proposed by Kendall Walton.
EMOTIVE LANGUAGE. One line of aesthetic theory, particularly prominent in the mid-20th century, argued that aesthetic predicates and the judgments that they involved were emotive uses of language. Emotive language expresses attitudes without making truth claims. Its simplest forms are exclamations, but it includes any sentence or phrase that involves a meaningful linguistic act but for which nothing counts as evidence for or against its being true. On the emotive theory of aesthetic language, a sentence like “Mondrian’s paintings are forceful expressions of power” recommends a way of looking at Mondrian’s paintings but is neither true nor false. “Mondrian is a great painter” asks that others value Mondrian as the speaker does. In neither case, the claim is, does it make sense to ask whether the sentences are true or not.

EMPATHY. In later 19th- and early 20th-century aesthetics, aesthetic experience was often approached in psychological terms. These psychological theories attempted to define what was unique about aesthetic experience and to identify ways that an individual could have such experiences. The theory of aesthetic empathy was proposed to account for the distinction between a psychological ego that was attending to its own being and the kind of absorption in an object that one could feel as contemplation of that object. ‘Empathy’ was an attempt to translate the German word, Einfühlung, feeling, as it was used to associate human responses with their aesthetic objects. Aesthetic response was believed to be more than mere sensation; it is a feeling that is at once subjective and identified with an object. The wind sings, though, of course, it does not really sing. One may hear the wind as a noisemaker, or one may hear the wind sing. In effect, the psychological response that bridges the gap between objects like the wind and the feeling that we ascribe to it allows us to justify that response in spite of the fact that the objects do not feel anything. An aesthetic object is any object when it becomes the object of empathetic feeling. The empathy we feel for an aesthetic object is identified as the aesthetic response itself.

Works of art can be perceived in many ways. In order to experience them aesthetically, the theory of empathy holds, one must literally feel the object in the special way that perceives it aesthetically. The feeling belongs to the self or ego, but that ego is absorbed into
its contemplation of the object. So there are two kinds of feeling. Feeling that is self-aware and self-centered has as its object itself and its **appropriation** of the objects of sense. But a feeling of empathy with some object dissociates one’s real self in the contemplation of the object. The self remains intensely subjective—a feeling—but it is a feeling not of one’s body but a feeling into the aesthetic object. The theory of aesthetic empathy is associated particularly with the work of Theodor Lipps and Vernon Lee.

Theories of empathy, which note a transference of emotional identification across boundaries that divide ego from object, claim to provide a psychological description of aesthetic response. Empathy cannot solve all of the problems raised by emotional responses, however. Aesthetic empathy has difficulty accounting for responses to art that do not fit the contemplative, aesthetically **autonomous** pattern of response. The solution to this difficulty proposed by aesthetic theories of empathy is to identify empathy itself as primarily an aesthetic response so that the ability to empathize is, by definition, the **aesthetic attitude**. In effect, all other responses are simply ruled out as aesthetic by definition. So according to a theory of aesthetic empathy, psychology must include aesthetic attitudes in its scientific descriptions if it is to provide a complete psychological description of feeling.

**END OF ART.** Historicist theories of art, especially those influenced by the dialectical theories of G. W. F. Hegel, consider art as a cultural stage. It follows that cultures can move beyond the stage in which art is created, therefore. Particular art movements have succeeded each other as the materials, skills, and goals of art changed. At each move, the earlier movements may continue to be appreciated and even practiced, but art itself changes. In painting, the move beyond realism to abstraction and then to concrete and conceptual art can be seen as exhausting art itself. Painting, as it has been understood, comes to an end, and whatever remains is little more than commentary on earlier forms. The end of art thesis is associated with the work of Arthur Danto, but the claim is subject to numerous qualifications and should not be taken too literally.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ART/AESTHETICS.** The aesthetics of nature has a long history. Natural objects provide paradigm cases of beauty.
Some aesthetic experiences, such as the experience of the picturesque, are specifically about natural scenery. Landscape is a genre of painting, and the imitation of nature was, for much of the history of aesthetics, taken as part of the definition of art. But when the priorities were reversed and the paradigm cases for aesthetic experience were drawn from the arts, new aesthetic problems were raised. If the picturesque is really about seeing nature as a kind of landscape painting, what kind of aesthetic responses are left for nature itself?

Environmental aesthetics has been the contemporary response to that question. Two lines of thought have emerged. The first looks at nature as an independent source of aesthetic experience. The responses to nature should not be assimilated to art but recognized as aesthetic in their own right. The second looks at the ways that the categories and language that have their origin in the fine arts can be transferred to environmental perception. So the first would argue that indeed there is a kind of aesthetic experience that is different, but nature, as much as art, is an appropriate object. In fact, natural objects, particularly when they are not over-contaminated with human interference, should be paradigms for the kind of aesthetic attitudes that produce aesthetic experience. When one goes hunting, one has an end in mind; when one walks in the woods, one is freed from such goal-directed experience. The second, however, recognizes that to regard nature as an aesthetic object, it is first necessary to bring some kind of aesthetic categories to the experience. One must see nature as aesthetic, but that does not require that one see it as art. The language of beauty may have its origin in the fine arts, but its extension to nature does not imply that nature is a form of art. Rather, one learns to see nature aesthetically by means of the aesthetic predicates one first learns from the arts without assimilating nature to art.

Environmental aesthetics also draws upon movements in the art world that take nature as itself the material for art. If art is the imitation of nature, then the material in which one imitates is not the same as what one imitates. Landscape gardening changes that somewhat because now natural objects—plants and streams and hills—are the material that is shaped. But in landscape gardening, the garden was made to look like a picture—nature imitating art. Environmental
art recognized that there was another possibility. Nature itself might be treated as the material and shaped into forms for its own sake and not in imitation of something else. One shaped natural objects as if they were the raw material of art. Environmental aesthetics provides the theory behind such artistic experiments.

**ESSENTIALISM.** Essentialism is the metaphysical position that something has an essence. In medieval Aristotelianism, an essence was the defining property of something, that which identified its combination of form and substance. Universals have an essence, and individuals embody that essence in some substantial form. It follows that for essentialists, the universal, art, must have a defining property. If art is a real universal, then its essence is given by its defining properties. For example, art might be defined as an imitation of beauty, and beauty as that which has the properties of perfection of its kind, harmony or proportion, and clarity.

Contemporary analytic philosophy does not subscribe to the metaphysics of form and substance, but it continues to understand essence in terms of defining properties. Essence then applies to terms, not directly to things. So anything that has an essence can be identified by a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the term. What one seeks are the necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the term ‘art’ to objects in the world. If one believes such conditions can be specified, even if they are not actually known, then one is an essentialist about art.

**EXISTENTIALIST AESTHETICS.** Existentialism developed out of the early 20th-century phenomenological movement. Whereas the phenomenology developed by Edmund Husserl and his followers claimed to be able to separate consciousness as such from its objective and egoistic psychological manifestations in order to describe a pure phenomenon as such, existentialists denied that the separation could be complete at the egoistic pole of the relationship. All thought or consciousness must remain embedded in the existence of a real ego, though psychological science may be able to describe the objective workings of egos as objects.

Existentialist aesthetics accepts the premise that an ego can never detach itself from its particular existence in the way that 19th- and
early 20th-century theories of aesthetic experience required. So if there is such a thing as aesthetic experience, it must be understood as the experience of some objects or situations rather than as a detached psychological state. The kind of objects required are works of art, and the situations are the performances or apprehension of works of art.

In existentialist aesthetics, art only exists in a concrete experience of it by someone. Anything prior to its existential appropriation is merely a possible occasion for art. Aesthetics can say something about works of art, and it can say something about how works of art are experienced, but it can never generalize or define art, which must always be engaged with an existing audience and is thus constantly changing as the audience for art changes. Existentialist aesthetics provides an aesthetics of response in a very different sense than that proposed by earlier Kantian and post-Kantian theories of aesthetic feeling or intuition, therefore. An artist is not an autonomous aesthetic creator but an ego engaged in projecting his or her own consciousness onto an audience. The audience is not the detached appreciator of the artist’s mind but the alternative consciousness that is struggling to impose its own consciousness on the work of art. The work of art itself is a concrete thing that must be perceived in order to exist as a work of art. Works of art may be political or personal, but they are never detached, autonomous forms.

Existentialist aesthetics takes many forms, but it should not be conflated with the entire post-phenomenological tradition that has developed in Western Europe. Many variations within existentialist aesthetics are possible. Some emphasize political forms of engagement while others are radically anti-communal and emphasize the isolation of the individual ego. Jean-Paul Sartre’s philosophy, at various times, might be taken to exemplify both options. But they all have in common the premise that a real, “existential” ego is inescapable. Other forms of aesthetics that are influenced by the phenomenological tradition deny that premise and instead take the reality of being as such as the inescapable condition of consciousness, and individual egos are instances of the working out of being itself in and through actual consciousness. That leads in a very different aesthetic direction often associated with the work of Martin Heidegger and subsequent postmodern aesthetic theories influenced by Heidegger.
EXPRESSION. In the history of aesthetics, theories of expression gradually replaced theories of imitation as the fundamental description of works of art. Expression theories began to appear prominently in the latter half of the 18th century. They arose from the belief that beauty is a secondary quality, like color, that is experienced as an emotion or feeling by individuals and is only causally related to properties of objects that are suited to produce the emotion. The causes may not be directly known at all. In that case, mental activity, not objective properties, is the realm of aesthetic experience. When that mental activity itself becomes the object of attention, one has a theory of aesthetic expression. Expression can then be defined as the mind’s awareness of its own activity and the projection of that activity into intersubjective contexts. So works of art are understood as expressions of the mind of an artist, and aesthetic experience is understood as the apprehension of one mind by another. Artists express their own mental activity; audiences secondarily experience the mind of the artist.

Not all mental activity counts as aesthetic expression. One must distinguish between the causal effects that follow from mental stimulation and the imaginative expression of ideas. The former is often called arousal. It is a kind of response to a stimulus. Someone actually experiences anger when stimulated in the appropriate way. In contrast, expression occurs only when one reflects on one’s own mental activity and grasps it imaginatively in a way that can be shown to another. For expression to occur, neither the artist nor the audience need actually experience the emotion in order to express an emotion. It is enough that the mental activity is represented. Patriotic music may arouse the audience, but the excitement produced by a symphony is of a different order, or so it is maintained by expression theories.

Various ways have been suggested to further distinguish aesthetic expression from other similar but different psychological states. Benedetto Croce and R. G. Collingwood make the distinction in terms of knowledge, for example. Expression is a kind of mental discovery, a way of making something known that was not and could not be known apart from the expressive formulation. The alternative is a mere transmission of what is already known. That tends to extend aesthetic expression to include all acts of knowing. The only thing
unique about art is its facility in achieving expression and its relative \textbf{autonomy}. Scientific knowledge approaches expression but must operate within established systems. An artist is imaginatively free to break the boundaries of experience. Thus expression theories make considerable use of concepts of \textbf{originality}, of \textbf{creation}, and of \textbf{imagination}, which is distinguished from the mechanical operations of \textbf{fancy}.

\textbf{EXPRESSIONISM}. Expressionism is the theory that art is the \textbf{expression} of some mental state, usually the mind of the artists. It may be either directly dualistic, characterizing \textbf{aesthetic experience} as a special mental state, or expression may depend on some \textbf{symbol} system, including \textbf{musical} expression, language, and \textbf{myth}. Expressionism competes with and largely replaces theories of art as \textbf{imitation} in the course of early modern aesthetics. \textit{See also} \textbf{EXPRESSION}.

\textbf{FAKES}. \textit{See} \textbf{FORGERIES}.

\textbf{FANCY}. Fancy appears frequently in the history of aesthetics as a faculty of the mind that combines images or \textbf{ideas}. The faculty accounts for the existence of beings that are otherwise unreal. A centaur is a combination of man and horse produced by fancy. Fancy becomes particularly important in the 17th- and 18th-century empiricist theories of ideas. Individual ideas arise from experience, and a primary tenant of empiricism is that ideas have no other source than experience. Yet clearly there are ideas of unicorns and centaurs but no sense experience of such creatures. The explanation is that the mind, by reflection on its own past experience, is able to reconfigure ideas held in memory into new ideas, the only experience of which is mental. \textbf{Poets} and madmen are particularly good at such exercises of fancy.

At that point, there is little difference between fancy and the faculty of \textbf{imagination}. At most, fancy is a concrete form of imagination, given to combinations that produce specific images, while imagination is more inclusive and free \textbf{playing}. Gradually, however, a distinction between imagination and fancy emerges in aesthetic the-
ory. Fancy is limited to a recombination of existing images and ideas. Imagination, however, is conceived of as a creative power. Imagination repeats the divine creative act and brings into being not just secondary combinations but new images and ideas. It is the concrete embodiment of spirit for the Romantics, for example. Poems then can be distinguished on the basis of their creative imagination or merely fanciful embroidery. What had been merely an idea ne’er so well expressed becomes a new creation, never before thought. Artists are those who have exceptional powers of imagination.

**FEAR.** Fear is the emotion that, along with pity, is supposed to be aroused and then purged (catharted) in tragedy according to Aristotle. Exactly what tragic fear is remains a problem, however. It can be explained both as our own imaginative anticipation of an impending threat and as a way of organizing the plot so that the characters in the drama are the ones who feel fear. In the one case, it is a real emotion; in the other, it is only represented.

Fear is also one of the emotions associated with the sublime. When beauty is identified as a pleasant emotion, other emotions that are not so obviously pleasant, or at least not pleasant in the same way, are given a different analysis. The sublime is the emotion aroused by fear that is limited by imitation or art. In a storm or on the edge of a precipice, one experiences fear. When that experience is transferred to art, the fear remains but it is distanced and qualified by the art so that it is experienced aesthetically as the sublime. Not everyone agrees that the emotion of the sublime is that of fear, however. Alternatives suggested included awe and simply being overwhelmed by vastness or greatness.

Finally, fear is prominent in aesthetic discussions of the effects of fictions. There is a puzzle about why one fears something that one knows does not exist and that one does not believe can harm one. Kendall Walton has proposed that such fictional situations can be explained by distinguishing an actual emotion, fear, from a make-believe emotion, which is only quasi-fear. The difference is in the existential belief and the corresponding behavior. Both share some physiological symptoms, but quasi-fear is limited behaviorally. *See also* CATHARSIS.
FEELING. In its most general sense, feeling is what aesthetics is all about. Long before the coining of the term ‘aesthetics,’ feeling was central to theorizing about the arts. Aristotle identified the feelings of pity and fear as tragedy’s center, and Plato objected to artistic imitation because it appeals to feelings rather than the rational mind or soul. Classical rhetoricians instructed orators on how to appeal to the feelings of their audience, and poets take their cue from the orators. When rationalism and empiricism refocus attention on individual experience, feelings are the one aspect of experience that does not fit neatly into their schemes, which leads to the formation of a separate science of feeling that is called aesthetics.

Feeling is the generic term that distinguishes subjective experience from objective perception. Feeling is also the interior object of reflection. One perceives objects but feels emotions and powers of the mind. No sharp distinction can be formulated between the way that various interior, reflective ideas are categorized in 17th- and 18th-century aesthetics. Beauty, for example, is variously described as a feeling, an emotion, a sentiment, or a passion. What is agreed is that beauty, like secondary qualities, belongs to the perceiver, not to the object. Thus beauty belongs to the realm of feeling. Other feelings are equally important, however. Fear, awe, and terror belong to the sublime. Pity and fear are the feelings of tragedy. Surprise is a feeling that produces ideas of novelty. All are “about” the mind itself and its operations. Feelings are also essentially hedonic—every feeling is either pleasant or painful to some degree. That leads to the problems about how feelings are related to their intentional objects, since even though feelings are subjective, they still take objects in most cases. Beauty is a feeling, but it is causally related to some objects and not to others. One is angry about something, loves something or someone, etc. Yet the feelings produced by works of art do not follow the same rules as the feelings produced by real situations. So tragedies are pleasant, not painful on the whole.

The emphasis on feeling in aesthetics raises problems about sentimentality, which is the focus on sentiment and feelings of a certain type as an end in itself. Sentimentality is the production of “soft” and tender sentiments—love, tears, pity, and sympathy. It is not necessarily a bad thing. Much of the later 18th century seeks sentiment as a proof of benevolence in human nature. But gradually, sentiment
Feminist scholarship begins with the thesis that gender is more than a biological fact. Gender, it is held, is embedded in language, thought, and culture. It is also believed that historically, masculine bias is equally embedded and that the disclosure of that bias reveals gaps in our understanding.

In aesthetics, feminist scholarship challenges the traditional identification of the aesthetic with neutral or disinterested forms of attention by insisting on psychological perspectives based on gender and cultural, social, and political roles assigned by a dominant, male hierarchy. The idea of an audience perspective that can be generalized on the basis of a single human nature is challenged by the hypothesis of a necessarily biased, gendered consciousness and perception. The "gaze" of an audience must take a form that includes gender. The insistence on the reality of gender is usually coupled with a claim that the male gaze is inherently repressive. Artists are identified by their often-unconscious gender identities so that artistic practice is forced into roles pre-established by aesthetic concepts that are themselves gendered. The subject matter and the formal presentation of works of art embody the gendered identity of the artist. So, for example, paintings typically present the female form as an object of desire and the male gaze as a possessive, aggressive apprehension, even in non-figurative painting. In general, the politics of feminist aesthetics adopts the stance that confrontation with past repression is a necessary corrective to traditional aesthetic scholarship.

Feminist aesthetics undertakes a number of specific reevaluations of both theory and practice in the arts. The predominantly male canon in individual arts is challenged by a kind of historical archeology that seeks female artists who have been lost, overlooked, or in-
sufficiently appreciated as well as by the theoretical challenge to the very existence of a canon as itself an instrument of male domination. The fundamental concepts of traditional aesthetics—beauty, the sublime, taste—are reconstructed in the light of their gendered biases. Critical standards and judgments are reversed on the basis of the hidden gender bias built into forms of appreciation. And new forms of art are embraced as alternatives to a presumed conservative bias in the relation of art to tradition.

The challenge that feminist aesthetics poses to traditional aesthetics is at once revolutionary in its adoption of methods from related disciplines, such as literary theory and psychoanalysis, and transitional in its assumptions that gender inevitably means gender bias. The historical fact of male domination in cultural and political forms is read as the methodological basis for a philosophy of art. In that context, it may not yet be possible to ask what an aesthetics that does not assume gender neutrality will look like if male domination is not taken as a foundational assumption. The extension of feminist scholarship to the realms of logic and analysis means that no common philosophical methodology is currently available, an assumption that can, in some cases, present even feminist scholarship with a paradox of assertion—any assertion, even those of feminist scholars, is subject to psychological deconstruction. The appeal of feminist aesthetics is that art offers a revisionary form of expression that can escape that paradox.

FICTIONS. Fictions enter into the history of aesthetics in two related ways: as a literary genre and as a linguistic problem. As a genre, fictions have evolved from early fables and tales into the extended narratives that led up to the novel in the 18th century. The rise of the novel as a significant literary genre is undoubtedly related, more or less directly, to the parallel rise of historical thinking and the writing of secular history. Many early novels are pseudo-histories built around a narrator who is presumed, in one way or another, to be in a position to have left a record. Such devices as letters and memoirs as well as a secondary narrator as historian served to bridge the distance between actual and imagined history, real and fictional narratives. The continued evolution of the novel into a variety of narrative forms shows the flexibility of the form.
The problems raised by fictions in aesthetics are complex. They begin with problems of reference—how is it that one is able to refer to a fictional character or posit a fictional narrator. There must be a complicity between author and audience to imagine or pretend that the narrator is speaking or writing, even if the narrator is a third-person persona assumed by the author. Where that complicity breaks down—in violations of narrative consistency, for example—the narrative ceases to function effectively. Yet the establishment of agreed constructions of meaning in the absence of true reference requires conventions that are themselves difficult to establish and maintain.

The response to fictions is equally puzzling to many in philosophical aesthetics. Emotions that normally presume a real relation persist where no such relation is possible. One feels sympathy for a real person on the basis of shared emotions. No such sharing is possible for a fictional character because a character cannot feel anything. The representation of emotions in a fictional character is often sufficient to provoke a response as if the character were real, but the basis for the response must be different. Various solutions have been posed beginning with the “willing suspension of disbelief” and more recently with a distinction between make-believe and reality, real emotions and quasi-emotions. Some continue to maintain that at bottom, fictions are a source of incoherence in our beliefs that we simply must acknowledge.

It is even difficult to provide clear characterizations of what constitutes a fiction. Although it might seem that it would be enough to say that a fiction is something that does not exist, sentences in fictional narratives do not carry any markers that identify them as fictional. If reference to fictions is problematic, such sentences become equally problematic, whether they are used in a narrative or simply in ordinary contexts. Still another problem with fictions is to establish fictional identities. Sherlock Holmes was created by Conan Doyle and apart from narratives does not exist. Yet Holmes has taken on a life that extends beyond Doyle. References and facts “within the world of the work” are both limited to the work and transcend it in complex ways. Some “facts” within fictions do not have the same degree of specificity as facts outside of fictions. Lady Macbeth, famously, had children, but no precise number. (It is not that we just do not know
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE. Figurative language normally has been contrasted with literal language, though both prove difficult to define precisely. Literal language has a truth value and reference, for example, but some theories of metaphor assign truth values and reference to metaphorical language as well. In aesthetics, figurative language includes the theory of metaphor and other tropes that are important in the literary arts. In some theories, figurative language is taken as the origin of language, and poetic or figurative language and thought are the first forms of art. In recent literary criticism, irony has characterized much of modern literature.

FILM. The aesthetics of film provides a particularly interesting area of study because we have the entire history of film available. Most art forms have emerged from a background that is both pre-aesthetic and prehistorical. Paintings evidently existed in prehistoric times. Music existed long before there was any way to preserve it. Narratives, in the form of myth, are part of the origin of culture. Sculpture served magical and ritual purposes long before it was regarded as art. But film appears only when the mechanical means make it possible at the end of the 19th century.

Early film focused on the sheer magic of moving pictures—things that could be seen to move; but almost from the beginning the possibility of using film as a narrative device with its own formal possibilities was evident. Film as art is not limited to film narrative, but it is film narrative that has been especially central to the development of film.

Film also poses aesthetic problems in other ways. Filmmaking is a corporate or communal process that depends on many people and seems to lack an “author” in the normal sense. At various times, the producer, the director, an actor, the writer, or even the editor has seemed the best analogue to the author in narrative fiction, but none has the same kind of original control that artists were acknowledged to have in painting, music, sculpture, or fiction.

Film also poses problems in determining the representation of reality. At first, it seemed that the camera was a mere device to repre-
sent a reality that was placed before it. It soon became evident, however, that editing and context could radically change what was being viewed. Even documentary films are edited to present their subjects in a particular light with a particular meaning.

The psychological relation of the **audience** to film is also problematic. Other art forms have been said to have an “aura” of their own; film, which is projected in a darkened auditorium by mechanical means, has a different relation to its audience. The audience is at once controlled and controlling—it is forced to certain things and denied others, but its **gaze** is a result of the psychology of the viewer and the conditions of viewing, neither of which can be controlled absolutely by the filmmaker. Filmmakers have resorted to previews and test audiences to determine what a film really is doing. Much contemporary film theory draws upon the psychology of audiences, particularly the psychology of gender, to understand the workings of film.

Another problem that film as art poses with particular acuteness is the line between **mass art** and **fine art**. Fine art emerges from popular and utilitarian forms under certain cultural conditions. With film, we see not only that emergence repeated but equally, the reassertion of the priority of popular forms. The best films are not made as art in the way that painters or sculptors set out to make art. Popular films are recognized as great art, nevertheless. The distinction between entertainment and art that was so important for early 20th-century aesthetics seems inapplicable to film.

**FINE ARTS.** The fine arts are distinguished from practical arts, decorative arts, and entertainment. Considerable overlap is possible. Works that begin life in one of the other categories may be taken up by the **art world** into the fine arts. A utilitarian pot, a decorative mural, or a popular **drama** may be “recognized” as an instance of fine art, for example. **Genre** distinctions also are flexible. **Film** is sometimes fine art, sometimes not. At different times, the extent of the fine arts will also vary. In the 18th century, for example, **landscape gardening** was treated as fine art. In the contemporary art world, **performance art** and **conceptual art**, which would have been unrecognizable as art to earlier audiences, are included. The core fine arts include **painting**, **sculpture**, **dance**, **poetry**, drama, prose
fiction, and music. Architecture, film, photography, landscape gardening, and many crafts cross lines of identification. Whether something is identified as fine art is often a matter of critical disagreement, and how ‘fine art’ is to be understood is a matter of considerable theoretical discussion.

The concept of ‘fine art,’ as opposed to craft and technical skill, has been identified as a result of changes in the art world. The Western concept comes into use in the 18th century. That does not mean that artworks are not found in all cultures or that critical and theoretical discussions of art are not equally widespread. But the specific concept, with its theoretical implications about what counts as art and how art should be appreciated, seems to be culturally relative.

In a broader sense, the fine arts are the product of stages in a culture when connoisseurs, collectors, and an art market as such appear and artists themselves are recognized and valued as individual makers. The ability to produce fine art may also depend on the existence of theoretical concepts of art that inform the actual production of works of art. Some philosophers, beginning with G. W. F. Hegel, see art as a whole as a stage in the history of human spirit so that art has a beginning, and, potentially, an end.

FOLK ART. The existence of artists who are identified as artists and who are regarded as aesthetic creators is not limited to Western culture, but folk art is much more widespread than the kind of self-conscious artistic making that we know as fine art. Folk art may still be the product of individual artists, but they will usually be working within a tradition that does not presume such self-consciousness. Folk art may also be the product of communal efforts and extensive variation upon a single theme. For example, true folk music (as opposed to the commercial folk music of the 20th century) is both individual and traditional at the same time. The idea of a composer or original artist has little application, yet style and variation may be highly individualized.

Folk art raises interesting aesthetic questions about how art is distinguished from craft and entertainment and about how one properly appreciates individual works. Folk art that is transferred to a museum arguably is also changed. The expectations about purely aesthetic appreciation do not apply well to folk art. Questions about
authenticity also arise. Folk art that is produced, performed, or displayed for a different audience than the tradition that produced it is not so clearly “authentic” as the work that remains independent of the influences of other cultures and expectations. The line between authentic folk art and a self-consciously produced version, even if it is fully the product of a folk tradition, can be hard to draw.

FONTENELLE, BERNARD LE BOVIER (1657–1757). The French philosopher-scientist Bernard Fontenelle was an exponent of the new science as well as a critic and Cartesian philosopher. He took the side of the moderns in the extended argument over the relative priority of the ancients or moderns in science and the arts. He also showed a considerable skepticism about the application of rules to the literary arts both as a poet and as a critic. Fontenelle was influential in bridging the gap between Cartesian philosophy and the Enlightenment and was frequently quoted on subjects related to art and aesthetics.

FOOD. Traditionally, aesthetic experience has been distinguished from other forms of pleasurable experience including experiences where the object satisfies some desire or is consumed in the process. That meant that though one might speak of cooking as an art and gastronomy might share many characteristics with art appreciation, food and cooking were not considered aesthetic. The distinction can be hard to maintain, particularly since the metaphor of taste in the arts appeals to the same sensual pleasures as taste for food. Both are immediate and exercise judgment, and both have the same problems of subjectivity and competing claims for natural talent and educated improvement. Recently, food has become more interesting to aestheticians because of its cultural connotations as well. Carolyn Korsmeyer has argued that the privileging of sight and hearing as aesthetic senses is not justified and that taste is capable of cognitive exploitation aesthetically.

FORGERIES. Forgeries and fakes are a sub-class of copies and imitations in the art world. Not all copies and imitations are forgeries or fakes. For a long time, imitation was an accepted form of artistic making. Only when the copy or imitation is passed off as something
it is not—as belonging to a different historical period or as having been produced by someone else—does it count as a fake or forgery. Even then, a forgery could, in principle, have aesthetic merit of its own.

The existence of fakes and forgeries in the art world raises both practical and theoretical issues in aesthetics. For many aesthetic theories, especially those that regard works of art as causes of aesthetic experiences, the only difference between a fake and the original work of art would lie in its causal efficacy. If the fake produced the same aesthetic experience, then aesthetically, there would be no difference. A perfect copy would be as good as the original from an aesthetic standpoint. The counter-intuitive nature of this conclusion forces such theories to claim that there must be some difference between original and copy, no matter how slight. But that seems equally counter-intuitive. Moreover, even if the forgery is recognized as such, it could have its own aesthetic value. Yet the fact that it is a forgery seems to reduce that value. Museums, when they discover that a work is a forgery, do not move the work to a different gallery but typically remove it from exhibition altogether. Yet copies, when properly identified, are frequently given a place in the same gallery with originals from the same period. If it were not for Roman copies, we would know little of Greek sculpture.

Another theoretical problem arises when one asks how forgeries are produced. Nelson Goodman has argued that different conditions of production and materials produce different kinds of art. Some works of art have a single instance (paintings, sculpture). Others have a definitive original but are reproduced (novels). Still others have a notation that provides an original but the work only exists as a performance (music). There are works of art for which there is no definitive notation (dance) and works that can be appreciated both as text and as performance (drama). Not all of these kinds of art can be faked in the same way. A work of art that has a single physical original—a painting, for example—can be copied, and the original and copy are two distinct objects. If the copy is passed off as the original, then it is a forgery. But a work of art that is given as a score but that exists primarily as a performance cannot be copied in the same way. Copies of texts and scores and differences in performances are variations on the same work, not distinct objects. One can-
not forge Ludwig von Beethoven’s *Fifth Symphony*, though one can perform it badly. So the very existence of forgeries says something about the kind of work of art one is dealing with.

A related problem arises when the historical context is included in the identity of a work of art. A contemporary of Johann Sebastian Bach could falsely attribute his or her work to the master, even if it is not possible to forge a particular Bach fugue. But if the misattribution were discovered, the work would still count as an 18th-century work and might be appreciated as such. If someone today composes a work in the *style* of Bach, it can no longer be appreciated in the same way. It would be a pastiche, an imitation, and not just a misattribution. Along the same lines, aestheticians have discussed cases where a literary work is produced that is word for word the same as an earlier work, even though there is no connection between the two works; the second is not a copy of the first though it is verbally identical. It can be argued that the second work is a wholly different work because it belongs to a different historical context and has different possibilities.

The art-historical nature of fakes and forgeries is also significant. There have been famous cases where a forgery went undetected for some time because the forgeries were themselves taken as paradigms for an artist’s style. When other evidence discloses the forgery, the stylistic differences that seemed minor appear much more strongly. One of the arguments against the aesthetic equality of a forgery and an original is that the forgery creates a misleading *perception*. It is not just that one is misled factually; one is misled in the way that one sees a painting.

The very existence of forgeries indicates that art has the status of a collector’s item. As long as works of art serve a primary purpose that is “non-aesthetic”—as utilitarian objects or as religious or secular status symbols or forms of instruction, then there is little impetus to forgery. There may be copies and imitations, but it will not matter very much as long as the work serves its purpose. If what one wants is a fresco of the *Last Supper*, then the quality of the work may matter, but the artist does not. But if one wants a *Leonardo Da Vinci fresco of the Last Supper*, then the identity of the artist matters a great deal. When collectors begin to value works for their aesthetic value and associate that value with particular artists, forgeries begin
to appear. So the existence of forgeries is one indication of the existence of an art market and of an independent art world.

**FORM.** In a number of areas, aesthetic theory formulates a distinction between form and content. Form consists of those elements of the work of art that determine the manner and mode of presentation. In the visual arts, form consists principally in such elements as line, spatial arrangement, and color insofar as they can be distinguished from content and depiction. In the literary arts, form includes structural elements, such as narrative voice, and linguistic elements, such as sound and repetition, that can be distinguished from meaning. In music, form depends on the musical elements of harmony and rhythm. Form provides the shape of the work of art and can be common to a number of different works that have little or nothing in common in their content.

The distinction between form and content is to some extent artificial, however, and it has been challenged altogether. Without form, content cannot be presented, and the idea of pure form without content is an abstraction. Some works of art clearly depend more directly on formal properties and may attempt to do away with representational content altogether. This is particularly true of some visual art, such as color panels and abstract expressionism, and it is frequently maintained that music incorporates representational content only secondarily.

The distinction between form and content has led some aesthetic theorists to maintain that form is all that counts aesthetically. They do not deny that many works of art have a representational content, but they deny that that content has any aesthetic relevance. The task of an aesthetic appreciator is to develop a sensitivity to form and to learn to ignore the representational aspects of a work of art. Such theories have considerably more plausibility in the case of visual art and music than in the literary arts.

**FORMALISM.** Formalism is the theory that uniquely aesthetic responses to works of art are the result of the formal properties of the work, which act independently of any representational content that may also be present. In the visual arts, such formal properties include the arrangements of space, line, and color. In music, they are the
arrangements of sounds, particularly harmony, rhythm, and tempo. Formalism may also be applied to literary arts, but there it is more difficult to exclude the content since that includes the meaning of the words. Nevertheless, literary formalists believe that the formal arrangements of the sounds of words and of such elements as plot structure and narrative voice are the source of whatever aesthetic properties the literary work possesses.

Formalism may be either a causal response theory, in which case one need not be aware specifically of the formal properties for them to have their effect, or formalism may be an aesthetic attitude theory, in which case one is asked to pay attention to the formal properties, perhaps to the exclusion of other considerations, in order to appreciate the work of art. Formalism was particularly prominent in the theories advanced by Clive Bell and Roger Fry when they promoted appreciation for post-impressionist painting.

FOUND ART. The 20th century saw an explosion of experimental and avant-garde art movements that consciously challenged the aesthetic assumptions of the art world. One of those assumptions was that art was created by someone; for every work of art, there was an artist. Moreover, many of the aesthetic values of art were connected to the act of making. Artists were thought of as those who could recognize and reveal the aesthetic potential of their materials, and the mind of the artist was itself one of the objects of aesthetic appreciation. Found art challenges all of those assumptions by taking objects that are either natural or have been made for some other purpose into the art world. An artist is not a necessary condition for found art, and when found art is exhibited, there is no mental act of creation that precedes the art object. It may be, of course, that someone selects and exhibits the object, but that someone may be a gallery owner or museum director, neither of whom claims to be the artist. And while the principle of selection may be based on aesthetic appeal, it can also be based on theoretical commentary. Not all found art looks particularly appealing aesthetically.

FRENCH ACADEMY (ACADÉMIE FRANÇAISE). The French Academy (The Royal Academy until 1793) was established in 1635 as a guardian of artistic and linguistic order. It remained conservative
in its judgments. It provided the model, however, for other national academies and royal societies that together promoted exchanges and publications in both the arts and sciences.

FREUD, SIGMUND (1856–1939). As the founder of the psychoanalytic movement, the Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud, along with his sometimes collaborators and competitors Carl Jung and Alfred Adler, changed the way that the mind was conceived. Instead of conceiving of human nature as a union of mind and body, in which the mind was the repository of ideas and the body of material causes, Freud divided the mind itself between a conscious and an unconscious mind, each of which exerts sometimes conflicting influences over the body and its actions. Psychoanalysis can be viewed as a way of accessing the unconscious mind and correcting and controlling its influences.

Freud himself was interested in cultural subjects, particularly religion and symbolism; his view of art was primarily concerned with what it could reveal about the unconscious mind, however. His most influential work for aesthetics is probably The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), but he also wrote several studies of art and artists, including essays on King Lear and The Merchant of Venice, “The Moses of Michelangelo” (1914), and a book, Leonardo Da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood (1910).

Freud’s influence on the arts and on criticism goes far beyond his own limited interests in the arts. Such art movements as Dada and surrealism draw explicitly on the symbolism of dreams first explored by Freud, and all of the arts, including dance and music, exploit symbols first explored by psychoanalysis. Literary criticism accepts that characters in fiction, drama, and film can be subjected to the same psychoanalysis as real people. Not all of the motives in narrative art will be conscious either to the characters or to the author. The way that audiences appropriate a work of art will also be influenced by unconscious as well as conscious responses. The creative process itself is the subject of forces beyond the conscious control of the artist.

The greatest influence of Freud and the psychoanalytic movement on aesthetics, however, is to change the terms of psychological analysis. Much of early modern aesthetics depends on theories of expression...
sion and association that are understood in naturalistic and mechanistic terms. Freud showed that there is more to the feelings and emotions that make up aesthetics than those relatively simple psychological theories can explain.

FRY, ROGER (1866–1934). Although he was a generation older than many of its other members, Roger Fry was closely associated with the London circle of friends known as the Bloomsbury group, centered on Leonard and Virginia Woolf. Fry was a painter and art critic who introduced and promoted the post-impressionist work of Paul Cezanne in England. Fry’s aesthetics, developed in such works as Transformations (1925), emphasized the formal aspects of painting over representational content. His views were further developed by Clive Bell, whose theory of significant form assigned all aesthetic effects to the formal properties of paintings.

FUNCTION. At various times, the function of a work of art has been identified both as the source of its aesthetic properties and excluded from having any aesthetic relevance in relation to form. Until the emergence of formalist aesthetics and related concepts of fine art that was to be appreciated for its own sake, the function of a work of art would have been understood as the ends for which it was produced. In Aristotelian theories of tragedy, for example, the function of a tragedy was defined as the catharsis of the emotions of pity and fear. Function in that sense was closely related to the uses to which art could be put by those who could support the arts. The functions of art included inspiring religious devotion, enhancing the stature of a patron, and establishing the legitimacy of a ruler or office. Beginning in the 18th century, however, the fine arts were increasingly identified as being ends in themselves. Whatever function they might continue to have was in addition to their purely aesthetic function, which was to please and instruct. In more recent aesthetic theories, the uniqueness of individual works of arts and the autonomy of aesthetic responses is often taken to mean that any extrinsic function is either irrelevant or inimical to achieving an aesthetic appreciation. A specifically aesthetic function is taken to be the only legitimate end for which art is intended.

Function is most closely associated with architecture and design.
The function of a building cannot easily be separated from its design, and design features relate to the appearance of a work of art aesthetically. Although some formalists might insist that only the appearance of a building counts toward its aesthetic appreciation, most theories of function would hold that the ability of a building to serve the function for which it was designed is part of its identity and in fact may influence how it appears. That some things “look” a certain way as a result of their presumed function is an aesthetic property. A door that is square or round looks strange because it does not fit the two-dimensional rectangular shape of its users. A car that looks fast, even though it lacks a motor, derives its aesthetic properties from its appearance that is related to its presumed function. See also FUNCTIONALISM.

FUNCTIONALISM. Functionalism is the theory that the function of a work of art influences or wholly determines its aesthetic properties. Some works of art are clearly designed to serve a function. Most prominently, buildings are functional, but so are mechanical objects and everyday utilitarian objects. It is now common to include such objects within the art world, and there are museums of design connected with the display of modern art. In classical art theories based on Aristotle’s metaphysics, function was one of the causes of a work of art that determined its identity along with its material, its form, and the way that it was made.

On their face, functionalist theories of art belong to the period prior to the emergence of theories of aesthetic experience and autonomous fine arts. It was assumed that all art had some function and that its ability to achieve its function determined whether it was a good work of art or not. If art is an imitation of reality, for example, then good art is that which best imitates its object, whatever the accepted sense of ‘imitation.’

When art is regarded as an end in itself, its extrinsic functions are not so obviously part of its identity or value. However, functionalism also accommodates aesthetic attitude theories by assimilating function to appearance. Functionalism holds, in those cases, that there is an intrinsic relation between function and aesthetic properties that depends not on the actual achievement of the function but on the way that the appearance of the work embodies its function. So a car can
look fast even though it does not run. Its function produces an aesthetic property—“looks fast”—that is related to its appearance and to what it would functionally achieve if it were functional. A building that is intended to house human beings will appear comfortable to their needs. The maxim in such cases is that form follows function.

FUTURISM. Futurism was one of the avant-garde art movements that arose in the first half of the 20th century. Futurism was primarily an Italian movement centered around F. T. Marinetti whose “Futurist Manifesto” (1909) set out a program that utilized mechanical force and motion. Futurist art attempted to capture motion in two- and three-dimensional artwork. Futurism also endorsed war as a way to overcome the bourgeois art of the academies and embraced industrial mechanism as a cultural force. As a result, it was sympathetic to fascism.

GADAMER, HANS-GEORG (1900–2002). Hans-Georg Gadamer was the student of both Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. From Husserl, he gets the basic phenomenological method that locates all philosophical thinking in an analysis of consciousness. From Heidegger, particularly Heidegger’s The Origin of the Work of Art, he gets the question of how truth is to be reconceived to acknowledge the subjectivity of aesthetic experience without losing truth altogether. Like Heidegger, Gadamer understands truth as implicit in art rather than as a discrete propositional content about art. Unlike Heidegger, however, Gadamer is prepared to remain within the phenomenological tradition and subject the historical encounter with truth in art to analysis. The result is Gadamer’s Wahrheit und Methode (Truth and Method, 1960; English 1975), which is his major contribution to aesthetics. Gadamer presents a form of hermeneutics in which all encounters with art take place within an historical “horizon” that both preserves and changes the work of art itself so that interpretation is an ongoing process rather than a fixed result.

GARDENING. Landscaped gardens appear in both the Western fine arts tradition and Chinese and Japanese aesthetic traditions. In
Western art, landscape gardening emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries as part of the movement to assimilate art to nature and nature to art. Landscape painting depicted not actual scenes but idealized landscapes that appealed to the emerging aesthetic sensibilities. They were designed to evoke the experiences of beauty and the sublime in ways that undisciplined nature by itself could not. In turn, a taste for such scenery led travelers to search out scenes that produced the same aesthetic effects. The quest for picturesque nature followed the taste established by art. Nature imitated art. It followed that nature could be shaped into art as if nature itself were a raw material. Formal gardens imposed order and produced effects associated with the beautiful. Then as the taste for the picturesque shifted to wildness, such principles were also incorporated into gardens. It was not uncommon for gardens to include specially built “ruins” to evoke a certain emotional response, for example.

In Chinese and Japanese aesthetics, the emphasis on harmony and the integration of human emotions into a oneness with universal being is also reflected in gardening, which can embody design and naturalness in especially harmonious relations. Just as Western gardens were designed to achieve experiences of beauty and the sublime, so at a much earlier date Chinese and Japanese gardens were designed for meditation, stillness, and repose. Western interest in “oriental” art imported the idea of the garden as a special art form. Gardening has continued to exert an influence through the expansion of Japanese design principles.

Gardening also influences contemporary aesthetics through environmental art. Nature continues to be both an object in its own right that can be appreciated aesthetically and a material that can be shaped into aesthetic objects. Earthworks and environmental sculpture and construction are an extension of the 18th-century incorporation of gardening into the fine arts.

GAUTIER, THÉOPHILE (1811–1872). Théophile Gautier was a French poet and critic who was part of the art for art’s sake movement and influenced later symbolist theories of art. For Gautier, beauty is a direct product of art, and for the artist, language is a tool to be used as a painter uses brushes and a sculptor a chisel.
GAZE. In feminist film theory, the gaze is the gendered way of viewing a film. The term is borrowed from psychoanalysis where it refers to a kind of voyeurism—a looking at something as a sexual object without the knowledge of the object. According to feminist film theory, films involve voyeurism because the audience is in a position of sitting in a darkened theater and looking at something that, by its very nature as a film image, cannot know that it is being observed. Most films are made by males and exploit their female objects, so the audience is placed in the position of a male voyeur. In principle, there could be a female gaze, but that possibility is seldom explored.

GENIUS. The meaning and use of ‘genius’ shifts widely through the course of the history of aesthetics. In classical aesthetics, its meaning in relation to art is derived from its basic sense of a tutelary spirit that guides and characterizes an individual. Each person has his or her particular genius, and places also can have a genius. Artists are guided by their genius, so in the arts, genius includes inspiration. The sense of genius gradually expands in the Renaissance to apply to the individuality of artists as opposed to their craft and guild identities. So genius becomes the particular individual talent of an artist. It remains, however, an essentially psychological description that could apply equally to anyone who is sufficiently distinguished individually to merit separation from the collective. In the 17th and 18th centuries, genius takes on the special meaning of learned without need for instruction—the native genius that one is born with in contradistinction to the acquired characteristics that one gains through education. For rationalists, genius is an inborn, innate ability. For empiricists, who rely on experience as the source of all knowledge, genius is the disposition to learn directly from experience without special instruction by a master. For both, art requires rules, but the source of the rules themselves varies as does the ability to apply them in new situations. The latter requires genius.

With Immanuel Kant and the Romantic theorists, genius assumes a special meaning of one who is independent of rules and precedents. Ordinary folk, including artists who are followers of a particular style or manner of making art, must continue to work according to models and rules. But a genius “gives the rule to art”; that is, genius is the special ability to create art without dependence on
rules or prior models. So genius is related to originality, another of the cardinal artistic virtues of Romanticism. Genius continues to be used aesthetically in this sense to characterize any talented artist, especially one who breaks with established practice and tradition. Artists are divided into two classes: those who follow rules or styles and work within a tradition and those who break with established rules and thus innovate in the arts. For some, only those who have genius are truly artists.

Genius throughout its history continues to have overtones of divine inspiration and guidance. Psychologically, it is a creative force. Because it deviates from norms, it also approaches the psychologically abnormal and sometimes approaches a form of madness. Geniuses are those who do not acknowledge the restraints or rules, and thus if extended outside of art, they become deviant. To analytical aesthetics, however, theories of genius tend to suggest obscurity and imprecise definition. Whatever cannot be explained is too often attributed to “genius” and thus is philosophically suspect.

GENRE. The existence of works of art as a general class gives rise to an internal distinction between genres—those special characteristics that define subsets of works of art. The fine arts are distinguished from the practical arts and crafts. Within the fine arts, distinctions in the manner, medium, and mode of production identify particular arts—literature, the visual arts, music, the performing arts, architecture, etc. And within each particular art form, further distinctions in genre are possible. So within the literary arts, genres include drama, fiction, and poetry, and fiction can be divided into short stories, novellas, novels, tales, etc. Poetry gives us epic, lyric, and other forms. The lines between genres are not hard and fast, and mixed genres and new variations are continually appearing in the arts. Opera is both a musical, a narrative, and a dramatic genre. Epic poetry has both narrative and poetic form.

The importance of genres lies in their ability to suggest similarities of form and to guide analysis and interpretation accordingly. In the 18th century, the rules derived from particular genres were considered prescriptive. One could do only what the genre rules permitted. There remains a certain sense to that requirement in spite of the move away from prescriptive rules. A narrative should have a beginning,
middle, and end, Aristotle observed. Now it may be possible to so structure a narrative that that linear order is not necessary, but it is still the case that whatever rules the narrative itself imposes must continue to be observed unless they are superseded by some other set of meta-rules. Music is no longer governed by strict rules of harmony, but even atonal music accepts some self-imposed structure that must then be observed.

The whole structure of genres and sub-genres can be challenged, however, on the grounds that it implies a unity of the arts that should not be taken for granted. The basically Aristotelian classification by division assumes that there is something to divide. If that is not the case, then instead of genres, one has independent art forms, each with its own structure, audience, and implicit rules. In that case, genres would be no more than analogies based on resemblances, and different resemblances might be noted and different groupings argued for according to whatever different interpretive strategies one wished to pursue.

GENTILE, GIOVANNI (1875–1944). Giovanni Gentile was an Italian neo-idealist colleague of Benedetto Croce until they broke and became bitter enemies after Gentile assumed the position of apologist for Benito Mussolini’s fascism. Gentile’s idealism denies the separation of mind and world, so all art is essentially ideal. Beauty is the mind’s own world-shaping abilities coming to expression.

GERARD, ALEXANDER (1728–1795). Alexander Gerard, who was professor of moral philosophy at the University of Aberdeen and a member, along with James Beattie and Thomas Reid, of the Philosophical Club there, belongs to both the moral sense and the common sense schools of Scottish philosophy. In aesthetics, his two major works, An Essay on Taste (1759) and An Essay on Genius (1774), make use of the prevailing ideas of association and internal sense to identify a sense of beauty and multiple related senses including novelty, sublimity, imitation, harmony, ridicule, and virtue. The multiplication of senses indicates that Gerard is using ‘sense’ in a much looser, more metaphorical way than earlier sense theorists, such as Francis Hutcheson. Association works to form ideas of beauty, and imagination constructs combinations according
to associative patterns. The imagination is a faculty of perception, and it is a mental power that is independent of sense. Taste is a form of judgment, but it responds to real properties of objects. Genius is a mental habit that guides taste, but it is not itself free from rules.

In addition to continuing to use association and internal sense theories, Gerard is associated with the common sense school of Thomas Reid in opposing what he understands as the relativism and skepticism of David Hume. Like Reid, Gerard distinguishes mental from sensual powers and like Reid, he holds that our mental powers are themselves sources of pleasure and are essentially reliable when suitably restrained. The faculty of imagination exercises the mind; and, when that exercise falls within a moderate range, it is experienced as pleasurable. If it is either too languid and easy or too excited and difficult, discomfort (or simply indifference) results. Imagination and association combine to explain judgments of taste. Gerard sides with Reid against Hume in holding that judgments of taste are based on real properties that are reliably perceived when common sense is observed. Therefore, Gerard is a transitional figure who is moving away from earlier taste theories in the direction of the theories of mental activity and expression developed by Reid, Archibald Alison, and Dugald Stewart.

GESTALT. Gestalt theories in psychology show that perception is not atomistic—moving from individual observations to construct a whole—but holistic, responding at once to an overall pattern or organization. So one does not see a combination of lines but a picture of a rabbit or a duck. Only by an effort of abstraction can one distinguish the individual elements that make up the picture, and even then the combination is distinct from the sum of the individual parts as the visual interchange of ambiguous figures shows.

Gestalt theories of perception are important to aesthetics because they account for the way that perception of aesthetic objects can be more than the sum of individual responses. For example, it is held by aesthetic attitude theories that in order to perceive an object aesthetically, one must perceive it in a way that is distinct from the ordinary modes of perception. In a classic example, one experiences a storm at sea aesthetically only by perceiving the storm independently of its dangerous and threatening aspects. Similarly, one perceives a work
his own sketches, mark a significant expansion of the range of the aesthetic audience in the 18th century.

GOETHE, JOHANN WOLFGANG VON (1749–1832). Goethe was primarily a writer whose early poetry and prose works belong to the German Romantic movement and who later moved in the direction of a neo-classical naturalism. His influence on aesthetics is indirect through those works, through his theories of language, and in his later career, through his position as one of the arbiters of German taste. Goethe was interested in science and had his own idiosyncratic theories of causation, biological evolution, and color. He regarded beauty as a quasi-scientific form of perception.

GOLDEN SECTION. See PROPORTION.

GOMBRICH, ERNST HANS JOSEF (1909–2001). E. H. Gombrich was a cultural historian and theorist whose interdisciplinary theories of the visual arts and art history combined psychological, historical, and philosophical analysis of the conditions of production in the visual arts. Gombrich argued that art history, particularly a history of style, was only possible if one recognized the way that reality is represented visually. There is no “innocent eye.” Artists construct representations in accord with their own visual conventions and those made possible by their materials and cultural forms. Representation is not merely conventional; it may be more or less accurate, for example. But all representation depends on ways of seeing that are structured schematically.

GOODMAN, NELSON (1906–1998). Nelson Goodman was the Harvard philosopher of science, language, and art whose work on the Languages of Art (1968) introduced a nominalist view of language as symbolic action into aesthetics. Language does not represent and refer independently of its own actions. Language creates the referential relation. Art is one of the principal ways that symbol systems can act creatively. The languages of art do not describe an extra-linguistic reality but are ways that habit and experience structure reference. Therefore, reference and style in art depend on ways of making worlds that we are able to accept. Goodman’s theory of
symbols and symbolic action is at the other extreme from the kind of neo-Kantian symbolic action argued for by Ernst Cassirer and Susanne Langer, however, because for Goodman, the ontological particularity of reference is never in doubt. Only individuals can be referred to. To say that language and art make worlds is not a form of idealism but a way of projecting a concrete reality that cannot be construed independently of language.

GOTHICISM. Gothic art covers the period from about 1150 to the Renaissance—the later 14th century in Italy and as late as the 16th century in northern Europe. As a style-term in art history, ‘Gothic’ refers most directly to the cathedral architecture that succeeded the Romanesque style—an emphasis on height, openness, and the pointed arch succeeding the rounded arches and heavier basilicas of the Romanesque style. However, it has been extended to painting and sculpture that accompanied the Gothic cathedral.

Renaissance art rejected the Gothic style along with the whole medieval culture as barbaric. In the 18th century, the emotional attraction of the sublime found expression in the Gothic novel, and Romanticism continued to exploit the relation of the Gothic to the sublime. Gothic in that context meant a dark, mythical supernaturalism. In the 19th century, there was a Gothic revival that was known explicitly as Gothicism. Victorian Gothic architecture mimicked Gothic architectural style, and a kind of nostalgic, romanticized medievalism in painting and literature appealed to the emotional reaction against industrialization and mechanism. In England, Gothicism was a part of the creed of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the craft movement associated with William Morris.

GRACE. See AESTHETIC CONCEPTS; AESTHETIC PROPERTIES; AESTHETIC QUALITIES.

GRACIAN, BALTHASAR (1601–1658). The Spanish Jesuit scholar and courtier Balthasar Gracian’s manual of behavior, The Art of Worldly Wisdom, was an influential guide to effective court behavior based on pragmatic considerations. Among its instructions are references to developing taste in the sense of an individual faculty of judgment. Gracian’s view of taste spread the concept, which had
originated in the mannerist tradition of painting, and helped to make it into the dominant faculty in the arts.

GREENBERG, CLEMENT (1905–1994). The American art critic, Clement Greenberg, was instrumental not just in establishing abstract expressionism as a force in the art world but also in providing it with a theoretical justification that amounts to an aesthetic theory. Greenberg’s early criticism defends art against its capitalist exploitation and degeneration into a mere commodity. His formalism provides the basis for his arguments that abstraction in art succeeds in overcoming that degeneration. Greenberg’s combination of formalism and Marxist analysis has seemed to many an oddly apolitical view of art, however. Greenberg’s later work tends in a Kantian direction, therefore.

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HAMANN, JOHANN GEORG (1730–1788). J. G. Hamann was a German Enlightenment writer whose varied career produced a limited but influential body of work. His principal work on aesthetics, Aesthetica in Nuce (Aesthetics in a Nutshell, 1762), was acknowledged later as an important influence by J. W. von Goethe and Friedrich and August Schlegel. J. G. Herder was his student for a time. Hamann presents a confused and sometimes contradictory combination of Baconian science, mystical religion, and sentimental enthusiasm. He rejects classical rules in favor of inductive examination of the arts. His religious conversion led him to a form of pantheism, and his sentimentalism led him to advocate a freedom of artistic expression and pursuit of sensuous experience to which he gave a metaphysical interpretation. Sensuous experience must be pursued for its own sake. That was the creed of the German Sturm und Drang movement exemplified in the work of the young Goethe. However, for Hamann, nature and experience are also a revelation of the divine, which speaks through nature as a hidden book. That requires a kind of science to interpret the hidden meanings. So Hamann remains an Enlightenment figure for all of his association with Romanticism.
ing to a fourfold causal scheme—it is a habitual power of man that acts on a contingent subject matter for the sake of elevating human faculties. Its ends are simply to produce some energy or work. Each individual art imitates (that is makes something) according to the nature of its materials. Only music differs in this respect. It arouses emotions and thus is linked to poetry. Harris provides one of the more philosophically sophisticated justifications of neo-classicism, but his theorizing remains both abstract and general.

HARTLEY, DAVID (1705–1757). Eighteenth-century philosophy made use of a theory of association of ideas to explain how the individual ideas produced by experience come to be related to each other and form more complex chains of ideas. Some theory of association is found in almost all of the British empiricists who follow John Locke’s “way of ideas,” beginning with Locke himself. Most of the early theories of association, however, are limited to explaining relations of ideas themselves. The underlying assumptions are mechanistic, and Hartley develops those mechanistic premises into a psychology of the mind.

Hartley was a physician and Christian apologist. In his Observations on Man (1749), Hartley proposed a theory of vibrations according to which ideas produce vibrations in a subtle matter. Those vibrations stimulate other vibrations, and when the vibrations are close together, either spatially, temporally, or in terms of their frequency, they produce correspondingly related ideas. Hartley’s work was influential on the scientist and controversialist Joseph Priestley, who edited a condensed version of Hartley’s work and used it to argue for a form of determinism compatible with his tolerant, Socinian (i.e., anti-supernatural) Christianity. Priestley also applied the same associationism to rhetoric and the arts. Associationism, without much of Hartley’s speculative physiology, subsequently became one of the major influences on theories of taste and aesthetic expression, where it was used to link artificial and natural signs to psychological states and emotions so that art could be expressive of the mind itself.

HEGEL, GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH (1770–1831). G. W. F. Hegel was born in Stuttgart, Germany. He studied theology at Tüb-
ingen, and from 1793 until 1800, he was a private tutor to aristocratic families. He then lectured at the University at Jena until 1807. He became professor of philosophy at Heidelberg in 1816 and moved to the University of Berlin in 1818 where he remained until his death of cholera in 1831. Hegel belonged to the first generation of scholars after Immanuel Kant. His contemporaries included Friedrich Schelling (1775–1854) and the poet Friedrich Hölderlin. Schelling preceded Hegel at Jena and succeeded him to the chair at Berlin after Hegel’s death. Schelling was the first to write a philosophy of art, but Hegel came to dominate the systematization and idealization of Kantian philosophy. Hegel’s writings are voluminous. They include The Phenomenology of Mind (1807), The Science of Logic (1812–1816), The Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Outline (1817), and The Philosophy of Right (1821). After his death, his friends and students at Berlin published 18 volumes of his works and lectures, including his Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art.

Hegel’s form of idealism rejects the Romantic subjectivism that identified the ideal or absolute spirit with subjective feeling. For Hegel, the ideal or absolute Idea is a reality that realizes itself in both the empirical and historical worlds. Within history, art is the cultural products of a people and forms the fine arts. They are a manifestation of a collective spirit. But art is only a first step and leads finally to a transcendent form in religion. Art is only possible as a contemplation of the ideal itself. The idea acquires a sign, which expresses that idea, and the showing of that idea is beauty (para. 556 of the Encyclopedia). Form is an expression of Idea, and beauty is ideas that have come to expression. Art is thought of in this context not as specific forms directed externally toward objects—imitations—but as a necessary part of the process or activity of consciousness. Architecture, music, paintings, and poems are only symbols of an expressive structure that is implicit in consciousness itself. Hegel consequently can link particular styles of fine art to stages in the historical manifestation of consciousness. They are never merely accidental. They follow from the ways that the mind can actualize itself.

The cultural manifestations of art lead to the particular ways of experiencing beauty. We experience beauty as something immediate and sensual. Sense is communal—individual senses are united into a single image, and sensual life is common to all. We live and see the..................16039$ $CH1 07-25-06 10:26:31 PS
same things; our sensual life forms a community of consciousness. Art, in the sense of fine art, is the focus of sensual immediacy. Hegel’s thought thus is linked to earlier aesthetics that sought to reconcile the sensual with the universal, the individual with the harmonious perfection of reason. However, he relocated the sensual in his larger scheme so that it is a means, not an end in itself. The end is the ideal that art manifests.

Art is more extensive and universal than the sensuality of beauty, but art is still limited. Art is an expression of individual minds rather than a direct expression of mind itself. Works of art are made by artists. That implies technical activity and the separation of the work from the maker. At the same time, something in the making and the product is greater than the individual artist. Art requires enthusiasm and genius. The artist is master, but only in transmitting the immediacy of form to something made. Hegel’s artist is a part of the dialectic of spirit, not an independent producer of things. The artist’s work is always more than what the artist intends it to be. Art begins in symbolism, and its first phase historically is symbolic art. When art progresses beyond imitation and symbolism, it brings together self-consciousness and form without the sense of opposition between the idea and its expression. Hegel called that classical art. The immediacy of classical art is a way of transcending the limitations imposed by art’s specificity.

Hegel adds a third category of fine art to classical and symbolic art. He calls it Romantic art. Romantic art subordinates anything external such as the appearance of an object and an object’s beauty to the significance that can be understood only by an inward turn of the spirit. But when this inward turn is complete, religion replaces art. Thus, Romantic art is a move toward a higher manifestation of absolute mind, but it must itself finally be transcended in religion. Beautiful art is still concrete; therefore it is not yet absolute. As an idea is manifested in religion, religion loses its dependence on beautiful art. It does not need the imaginative visibility of art any longer. Beautiful art is more successful than symbolic art—it makes whatever is natural into an expression of spirit. But religion that depends on art is moving in the wrong direction; it is declining. For Hegel, Romantic art and beauty are superior to the kind of religion that is itself a concrete form and depends on ritual and dogma. But religion itself is a
higher form than art because it is the manifestation of spirit itself. Art is never as free as religion in that sense. Beautiful art has its future in true religion.

HEIDEGGER, MARTIN (1889–1976). Martin Heidegger’s philosophical career began as a student of the founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, whom he eventually succeeded as professor of philosophy at the University of Freiburg. Heidegger broke with Husserl both personally and philosophically, however, and his subsequent reputation was marred by his membership in the Nazi party, which he joined when he became rector at Freiburg in 1933. Heidegger’s early masterwork, Being and Time (1927), remained an incomplete project, and his later work turned to language and poetry for its focus and inspiration.

Husserl’s phenomenological method sought to analyze consciousness in terms of its ego and object poles without becoming enmeshed in psychological theory. It involved “bracketing” the natural standpoint in order to disclose the essential content—the ideas—that make up consciousness. All consciousness is a consciousness of something, and both the conscious stance and the object of consciousness were analytically accessible according to Husserl. So Husserl’s phenomenology is a form of philosophical analysis, albeit one that does not depend on propositional truth claims.

Heidegger began with the same attention to conscious thought, but he found Husserl’s bracketing methodology impossible to carry through consistently. Instead, Heidegger concluded that Being, the unanalyzed reality of existence, imposes itself on all thought, and the ego is a form of Dasein—being there—that is thrown into contact with Being and exists only in the face of its own temporal limitations, being toward death. Individual egos indeed disappear in this philosophical picture, but their radically contingent correlates are subject to the conditions of Being. While Heidegger follows Husserl in rejecting psychologism, he adopts a genetic method that seeks to elucidate Being by going back beyond the rationalism of Western philosophy to pre-Socratic Greek thought where Being was still directly present to consciousness. Heidegger depends heavily on the kind of philological methods that he learned from G. W. F.
Hegel and Friedrich Nietzsche for this return to a philosophical prehistory.

In his later philosophy, the emphasis on language as the “house of Being” increases, and Heidegger finds in the poetry of Friedrich Hölderlin the combination of cultural leadership and linguistic vision that he believed is necessary for philosophy to progress beyond its Western cultural detour into subjectivism. Heidegger’s philosophy at this point owes much to Hegel’s progressive view of the history of culture and to the German Romantics as well as to Nietzsche’s dialectical opposition of primordial, Dionysian urges to the overlay of Apollonian culture. Heidegger interprets that movement in terms of his own analysis of Being and Dasein working out an essentially apersonal movement. At some points, at least, Heidegger does look for a political version of this movement.

Heidegger’s own view of aesthetics is essentially negative. The whole aesthetic movement based on feeling and emotion is seen as an inauthentic response to the crisis in which Dasein finds itself. Heidegger’s most direct treatment of this anti-aesthetic philosophy of art is in the essay *The Origin of the Work of Art* (1935). There the contrast is between earth and world; poetry occupies a kind of “rift” in the earth—an oracular voice speaking from the depths like the Delphic oracle. Again, Heidegger’s view of poetry is influenced by German Romanticism; poetry is not specific poems but a kind of language that is not limited by conceptual rationalism. Aesthetics surrendered art to personal emotion in the 18th century according to Heidegger. Poetry and art must free themselves of that limitation if they are to advance Being, particularly through the formation of a German culture. When Heidegger considers a specific painting, such as Vincent Van Gogh’s painting of a pair of peasant work shoes in *The Origin of the Work of Art*, he sees it not as an occasion for individual appreciation but as an instance of ordinary objects being re-united with art. So Heidegger looks back to Plato’s rejection of the emotionalism of art and to pre-Socratic poetry and language that directly embody the movement of Being. At one point, Heidegger, like the futurists, considers that technology may aid that movement, but he ultimately rejects the mechanical nature of technology in favor of a Greek union of art and craft in *techne*, the know-how of making that applies equally to poets and craftsmen. Heidegger’s view of art
is object-directed, therefore, in opposition to the subjectivism of traditional aesthetics with its emphasis on individual feeling, but aesthetic objects are not individual works of art but means by which language and Being are able to become concrete in culture.

Heidegger’s influence has been extensive, though his own later work remains rather oracular. French existentialism and post-structuralism owe something to Heidegger’s way of denying the total suspension of existential commitment called for by phenomenology, and Heidegger’s turn to language and poetry as ways that the dialectic of culture works itself out has influenced a revival of hermeneutics from its origins in biblical interpretation. It is questionable, however, whether Heidegger’s own philosophy of art (if his rejection of traditional aesthetics allows that phrase) ever transcends his Hegelian and Romantic politics.

HERDER, JOHANN GOTTFRIED (1744–1803). J. G. Herder’s philosophical and critical work belongs to the empiricist tradition of 18th-century aesthetics but exerted considerable influence on the German Romantic movement. Herder was born in East Prussia, where his father was a clothmaker and teacher. As a student of Immanuel Kant’s at Königsberg, he adopted the philosophy of the earlier, pre-critical Kant against the metaphysics of Leibniz and Christian Wolff, though he rejected and attacked the later, critical phase of Kant’s philosophy. In 1776, Herder was appointed General Superintendent of the Lutheran clergy in Weimar and increasingly turned to theology. Herder exerted a major influence on later historical nationalism and the kind of historical evolution found in G. W. F. Hegel and Friedrich Nietzsche, though whether he himself should be placed among the advocates of a German cultural “mission” is open to question.

Two significant achievements of Herder’s philosophy are relevant to aesthetics. Herder sought to provide a kind of natural history of culture based on language. His philosophy was organicist and naturalistic in the sense that art emerged from an inner organic need for expression. But he differed from the other writers of the German Enlightenment on the role of language and history. Enlightenment naturalism was international and humanistic; it believed that human nature was essentially the same before it was overlaid by civilization.
Herder’s historical awareness opposed the assumption of a uniform human nature. Instead, each culture, influenced by such factors as climate, develops its own sense of beauty and its own literary standards that are embodied in its language. The promotion of classical Greece and Rome to the level of an ideal to which all art must approximate is replaced by a form of cultural particularism that recognizes divergent standards. General laws of art that apply to all humanity can arise inductively only from an examination of many different artistic ends that are determined by specific cultural conditions. It was this linguistic nationalism with its implicit appeal to a nationalistic spirit that influenced the Romantic movement. However, Herder himself remained an 18th-century empiricist.

Herder’s most direct consideration of aesthetic topics occurs in his *Kritische Wälder (Critical Forests)*, the first three of which were published anonymously in 1769. In addition to a criticism of G. E. Lessing, they contain attacks on a number of minor German literary figures. Against Lessing, Herder argues that instead of natural and artificial signs, inductively the most basic division in the arts is between rest and motion, static and kinetic energy. Ontologically, then, the arts are distinguished by forms Herder derived from Kant—space, time, and force. The visual arts are spatial; music is temporal, and poetry depends on force. Herder’s positive aesthetics is found primarily in the fourth *Kritische Wäldchen*, however, which was published only posthumously and had no significant influence on the development of German aesthetics as a result. Herder also entered into the debates about the relative importance of the senses and used the division between sight and touch to distinguish painting from sculpture. The visuality of painting limits it; sculpture, which depends primarily on touch, is a more real representation.

**HERMENEUTICS.** The theory of interpretation of literary texts is central to practical aesthetics. Hermeneutics arose in the 19th century as the theory of interpretation of biblical texts. It was a standard part of the training in Protestant theological education. The techniques employed were developed by Wilhelm Dilthey as a more general philosophical method that emphasized that all philosophy is a form of interpretation. Hermeneutic methods could also be applied to secular interpretation, therefore. However, the term is most extensively
applied in aesthetics to the theory of interpretation that was developed on the basis of phenomenological and existential philosophy on the continent.

Hermeneutics begins with the phenomenological thesis that all interpretation requires both an interpreter and something to be interpreted. They cannot be completely separated. So the meaning of a text is not a fixed, objective set of propositions but an interaction of the interpreter with the text. An interpreter brings to a text a set of questions and a way of understanding. A text poses a problem of understanding. Both also have an historical background. Interpreters do not approach a text from a timeless, absolute standpoint but from the historical point that they occupy. And a text is not a fixed meaning established timelessly but a changing linguistic complex that acquires meaning as its history unfolds. Hermeneutic interpretation has both an ego and an object pole, therefore, and it must take account of the history of both text and interpreter. Meanings are not quasi-objects to which a text refers but constructions based on a real-time encounter. The meaning of a text is never finally fixed, but it is also never independent of the constructions already achieved. So one cannot make a text say just anything, but one cannot fix the meaning absolutely either.

As a philosophical movement, hermeneutics has been influenced strongly by the post-phenomenological philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur. Both owe much to the phenomenological method advanced by Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the 20th century. Husserl proposed to analyze “consciousness” in a way that would reveal both its ideational and its ego-poles. Hermeneutics begins at that point and approaches texts as instances of a potential consciousness. Gadamer argues that all interpretation takes place within a moving “horizon”; interpretation is both subjective and objective, but its objectivity must be achieved within an historical consciousness. Ricoeur has developed an extensive dialogue with the analytical tradition that understands interpretation as a linguistic phenomenon in its own right. Text and interpretation are both instances of language that influence each other.

HISTORICISM. Aesthetic theory, like much of philosophy, operated throughout much of its history on the assumption that interpretive
statements and normative judgments occupied an essentially timeless logical realm like logical propositions themselves. The meaning and value of a work of art was determined by its aesthetic properties. Even if those properties served only to produce a subjective response, that response was taken to be correct or incorrect, good or bad, on the basis of fixed characteristics of human nature. Variations according to age or culture could affect response, but the meaning of a work of art and its value would continue to be the same once conditions of reception were taken into account. Recently, however, various forms of historicism have emerged to challenge the assumptions that meaning and value are timeless. Historicist premises maintain that every work of art is located in a temporal continuum that must be assessed along with the other properties of the work of art.

In its most basic sense, historicism recognizes that not all works of art are possible at all times. Changes in the means of production and the reception conditions change the possibilities open to art. It has become commonplace to speak of an end of art, for example, and to relate the production and definition of art to conditions in the art world that change. Some of the theories along these lines owe much to 19th-century Hegelianism that theorizes that culture and the human spirit itself undergo an historical movement. More recent forms of historicism maintain that historical contingency goes to the very heart of what art is about. A work of art is formed out of historical materials. It does not have a single meaning or even a fixed form. Works of art are effectively born and die just as any other organism. Moreover, there is a kind of evolution of art that responds to historical changes.

Historicism raises two possibilities for interpretation and value. One is that one can effectively adopt more than one historical stance toward works of art. So one might appreciate Hamlet in Elizabethan terms and at the same time appreciate it in the light of Freudian psychological insights. No one interpretation is “right” independently of the historical assumptions that are being applied, and the value of a work will vary with the available interpretations. The other alternative is that if one’s historical stance is inescapable existentially, it is not really possible to avoid bringing one’s own historical position into an interpretation. In that case, all interpretive statements and value judgments are relative to a particular time and place. One may
have historical information that changes one’s perception of a work of art, but even that information is relative to one’s historical position. For example, Leni Reifenstahl’s Nazi propaganda documentary, *Triumph of the Will*, has a different meaning and value as a result of what one now knows about Nazi Germany. The scenes of joyous celebration cannot be seen in the same way that they were intended or viewed when the film was first presented. Extreme forms of historicism stress both the importance of historical information and the relativism that results from historical location.

HOGARTH, WILLIAM (1697–1764). Hogarth is principally remembered as an English master painter and engraver whose satirical style was didactic and moral. His series of engravings, *The Harlot’s Progress* (1732), *The Rake’s Progress* (1735), and *Marriage a la Mode* (1745) established his reputation. Hogarth is an important figure in the emergence of an entrepreneurial class of artists who made their living directly from the sale of their work to the public by appealing to a popular audience. As an engraver, he campaigned for strong copyright protection for the reproduction of artworks, a development that made it possible for artists and engravers to maintain control over the sale of their work.

Hogarth’s principal contribution to aesthetics is *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753) in which he attempts to explain the principles that lie behind the production of beautiful objects. His thesis is that certain formal shapes and lines act in such a way that the normal response to them is one of pleasure. He thus accepts the empiricist view that beauty is a secondary quality that belongs to the perceiver rather than a metaphysical reality. At the same time, Hogarth’s analysis of beauty is practical and rule-governed. One finds only those things that conform to certain psychological principles beautiful, and those principles can be explained and employed for effect by artists. The kind of mono-thesis that Hogarth advanced—beauty is the product of a sensuous line that curves smoothly in an S-shape—represents a characteristic 18th-century attempt to match aesthetic principles to physical models. His claim that a single principle informed all beauty was widely parodied by those who proposed counter-examples to Hogarth’s shapes that were commonplace or ugly. Nevertheless, *The
Analysis of Beauty exerted considerable influence in both the practice of the visual arts and in the development of aesthetic philosophy.

HOME, HENRY. See KAMES, LORD.

HORACE (65–8 BCE). Horace was one of the most important Latin poets, and his poetry was known to every classically educated schoolboy and adult as long as a classical education was the standard. His influence in aesthetics was significant, especially in the Renaissance and early modern periods when the role of rules in the arts and of the relative merits of poetry and painting were leading aesthetic topics. He is one of the most often cited authorities in neo-classical critical and theoretical discussions of the arts. His Epistle to the Pisos or Ars Poetica (ca. 13 BCE) is a poetic set of instructions in rhetoric and composition that was appealed to repeatedly in later periods for its sanction and application of rules to the arts. It also introduced the phrase Ut pictura poesis (as a painting, so a poem), which became a standard topic in the discussions of the relation of the arts in the 17th and 18th centuries.

HORROR. Theories of horror have played an important part in recent theories of aesthetic emotions, fictions, and theories of mass art. The reaction of horror in aesthetic situations seems to contradict normal emotional expectations. It is identifiably the same emotional reaction (fright, heightened pulse rate, etc.) and the causes are equally identifiable (shock, physical threat, the abnormal or supernatural, etc.), but the behavior provoked is different. People actively seek horror movies and the thrills that they provoke. This has led to a distinction between the aesthetic emotion of horror and the “real” emotion that is behaviorally distinct. The difference turns in part on a difference in the emotion itself, but it also signals a difference in the cause. The fictionality of the horrific events is typical of the line between fictions and reality that marks aesthetic situations, particularly in film, drama, and the novel. Horror is one of the paradigm instances of a mass art that does not require that its effects be “aesthetic” in the sense of being beautiful.

HUME, DAVID (1711–1776). David Hume’s contributions to the development of early modern aesthetics are important but scattered. He
originally projected a treatment of criticism as part of the Treatise of Human Nature (1739–1740), but the reception of the first three books of the Treatise discouraged him and the projected work was never completed. Nevertheless, there are enough references to beauty and taste in the Treatise and in its two redactions, the Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding (1748) and Concerning the Principles of Morals (1751), to constitute a virtual aesthetic theory that is supplemented by the essays “Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion” and “Of Eloquence” (1741) and “Of Tragedy” and “Of the Standard of Taste” (1757).

Hume worked in the tradition begun by Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson, both of whom accepted that sentiment and taste are sources of aesthetic value and judgment independent of reason and rules. Hume goes farther, however, in arguing that beauty is nothing but the sentiment or emotion experienced by the beholder of natural or artistic beauty. He differs from Hutcheson in relying less on an internal sense and more directly on sentiment itself. For Hume, all experience can be traced back to original impressions that are repeated and retained as ideas. Beauty is a secondary impression, that is, one that depends on reflection upon the ideas provided directly by sense. It is also intrinsically pleasant and a “calm” passion. Hume does not mean to deny that there are qualities of objects that cause sense impressions and that those qualities can be called beautiful. But beauty itself is nothing more than the pleasant feeling or sentiment that is aroused by the original impressions.

Taste is a form of judgment that depends on the experience of beauty and thus taste is equally subjective. Famously, Hume accepts that there is no disputing about taste since there can be no right or wrong, true or false, with respect to feelings themselves. Nevertheless, taste is judgmental, and it would be equally foolish to deny that judgments of taste make real distinctions between good and bad works of art. To avoid this paradox, Hume distinguishes a delicacy of taste from delicacy of passion and a good judge or critic from a less accomplished one. Delicacy of taste is a source of pleasure because it provides access to the pleasant sentiments of beauty and remains within one’s control. Delicacy of passion, however, makes one sensitive to extreme emotions that are unpleasant and subjects one to
demands that cannot be controlled and desires that are unlikely to be met in the ordinary course of life.

Because taste cannot be confirmed or condemned directly, because all taste experiences are subjectively equal, Hume turns to the qualities of critics that are subject to empirical examination in order to discern which judgments of taste are likely to survive the test of time and produce models for further artistic achievement. In “Of the Standard of Taste,” five such characteristics are listed: “Strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character” (“Of the Standard of Taste,” in Essays Moral, Political, and Literary, ed. Eugene F. Miller [Indianapolis, Ind.: Liberty Classics, 1987], p. 241). The standard of taste is the joint verdict of such critics, and the rules of art are those that can be empirically derived from the models identified by such critics, verified over time.

Hume’s aesthetics is thus conservative in that its judgments and established models are confirmed only retrospectively. It is subjective in that it rests on sentiment itself. Hume acknowledges that there are limitations on the universality of taste since human sentiments differ with age and experience, but he is sufficiently confident of the underlying uniformity of human nature to expect that variations will be limited. The outcome of Hume’s aesthetic thought is thus more limited than the aesthetic autonomy sought by Immanuel Kant, who bases his theory of beauty, taste, and the sublime on a pure intuition transcendentally derived.

HUMOR. Humor has a long history in aesthetics. Legend has it that Aristotle dealt with comedy in a lost treatise that parallels his treatment of tragedy in the Poetics. Comedy is one of the archetypal dramatic forms; it organizes the plot to bring about a reconciliation of opposites and a reestablishment of social norms and harmony. But humor is a broader psychological phenomenon that is of aesthetic interest because of the way that it correlates a playful response with a seemingly incongruous event. Forms of humor range from the physical comedy of slapstick to the intellectual play of wit and satire.

Aesthetic theories of humor, like so much else in aesthetics, begin with a response to Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes incorporated laughter
into his egoistic theory of human mental behavior. All mental motion, according to Hobbes, is based on the ego’s seeking to satisfy its own desires. Apparent altruism is founded on the self-satisfaction one experiences from being generous, so self-interest is the sole underlying motive for every action. Humor and laughter are a response to the discomfort of others that one experiences as pleasurable just because the discomfort is not one’s own. One enjoys the superiority of one’s present state to that of others or to one’s own previous state. Laughter is a psychological response of relief and a glory in eminence.

Hobbes’s theories were widely opposed because of their denial of benevolence. Sentimental aesthetics, beginning with Francis Hutcheson, offered an alternative theory of laughter and humor. According to Hutcheson, laughter is closely related to ridicule, which is the recognition of incongruity. Association operates to make the incongruous humorous. On Hutcheson’s theory, therefore, it is not superiority but incongruity that stimulates laughter, and that incongruity may be either natural or the result of associations that are created for the purpose of producing laughter. For Hutcheson, the end of laughter is to correct false impressions by exposing them to ridicule.

Subsequent theories of humor follow one or the other of these basic lines—either relief by comparison in which one is relatively superior to the humorous situation or amusement at the incongruity that produces feelings of surprise, novelty, or wit. On the one hand, one is led to comedy by the psychological overcoming of discomfort. On the other, one is led to an almost literal “sense” of humor that enjoys a pleasant mental stimulation. Each line of thought accounts naturally for some kinds of humor. Both are part of a psychological aesthetics of expression understood as a form of mental exercise.

HUSSERL, EDMUND (1859–1938). The German philosopher Edmund Husserl was the founder of the philosophical movement known as phenomenology. It is a method of analysis based on isolating the ego and object poles of consciousness. Husserl did not consider aesthetic issues himself, but his followers have developed an analysis of art and aesthetic experience. See also HEIDEGGER, MARTIN; INGARDEN, ROMAN; MERLEAU-PONTY, MAURICE; SARTRE, JEAN-PAUL.
HUTCHESON, FRANCIS (1694–1746). Francis Hutcheson was born in Ireland and educated at Glasgow, where he returned as professor of moral philosophy. He has some claim to being the first in the British tradition to write systematically on aesthetics, although he acknowledges the third Earl of Shaftesbury as the source for his ideas on beauty. Hutcheson’s aesthetic writings began while he was in Ireland before his return to Glasgow. A series of letters to Gilbert Burnet and letters on laughter to the Dublin Journal were followed by An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue in 1725. After his appointment to the chair in moral philosophy at Glasgow, Hutcheson focused on moral and educational philosophy.

Hutcheson follows Shaftesbury and John Locke in identifying sentiment as the mental analogue of sensory secondary qualities. Whereas the external senses supply us with ideas of both primary and secondary qualities of objects, sentiment or simply feeling supplies us with ideas of beauty and virtue. Hutcheson does not distinguish sharply between aesthetic and moral sentiments. In each case, Hutcheson assumes that there are properties of objects that stimulate ideas that we experience as beauty or virtue. In both cases, the experience is pleasurable, and its pleasure is a characteristic of its identity. In both cases, something analogous to external sense is at work. Hutcheson follows Locke in calling this an internal sense, but he differs from Locke because Locke’s internal senses were limited to reflection on the powers of the mind itself. Hutcheson also calls internal sense reflective, but the internal senses are the source of a different kind of idea. So Hutcheson can look for particular occasions that uniformly produce particular sentiments of pleasure. Beauty is nothing but such sentiments when they are occasioned by uniformity amidst diversity, and Hutcheson considers the possibility that what he calls the compound ratio of uniformity and diversity determines the degree of beauty. A square is more beautiful than an equilateral triangle because both have equal uniformity (equality of sides) but the square has greater diversity (four sides instead of only three). Such speculation is not essential to Hutcheson’s sentimental thesis, however.

Hutcheson also follows Locke in accounting for the relation of ideas primarily by a theory of association. Individual ideas are linked together by either similarity or contiguity. Both are the prod-
uct of experience alone. In the case of beauty, immediate perceptions are instances of absolute beauty, but most perceptions are linked together so that the associations produce a secondary beauty. For Hutcheson, association accounts for the variations and disagreements that one observes in judgments of beauty and taste. Internal senses are subject to the associations that the original external senses bring with them, and those associations act to make some things seem pleasant that would not be so in themselves and others that would be pleasant seem unpleasant. Because beauty just is the experience of such qualities, one does not have the same kind of empirical reliability in aesthetics and morals that one has in perceiving the physical world. It does not follow, however, that one’s sentiments cannot be corrected and educated, and when they are one will approach more nearly to true judgments of beauty and virtue.

Hutcheson exerted considerable influence on subsequent British aesthetics, particularly the implicit aesthetics of David Hume and Adam Smith. However, Hutcheson remains closer to Locke and to his Scottish Calvinist tradition. Ultimately, both beauty and virtue are determined by an overall divine plan so that our sentiments are not selfish or self-centered but a response to the good of the whole.

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ICONIC SIGNS. Iconic signs are those that bear a one-to-one relation to what they depict. A paradigm of an iconic sign is an architectural drawing or a wiring diagram. Iconic signs need not resemble what they depict, however, though they may. The schematic figure of a man and woman both resembles and depicts iconically. On the other hand, at the digital level, there is no resemblance between the sequence of ones and zeros that allows a digital photograph to be transmitted and reconstructed. The distinction between iconic and non-iconic signs was important to aesthetic theories as a way to explain realism of form. Representational realism required some degree of iconic relation in contrast to linguistic realism that depended on conventional or artificial signs. The distinction has been challenged recently, however, most notably by Nelson Goodman, who argues that
representation depends on the way symbols are used in certain contexts and not on the internal structure of the symbols.

**ICONOCLASM.** An icon is a religious symbol that both depicts something and shares in its power. Icons are a stimulus to worship, therefore. Because they represent the sacred in concrete form and often refer to specific saints, they were suspect on the grounds of idolatry. Iconoclasm denounces the use of icons. Both Jewish and Muslim theology forbade any images of the divine. In the eighth and ninth centuries CE, Byzantine Christianity saw a radical outbreak of iconoclasm that led to the widespread destruction of icons and religious images. Subsequently, there have been periodic returns to iconoclasm in Christianity, most notably during the Puritan revolution in England. At bottom, iconoclasm is a philosophical and aesthetic disagreement over what images depict and the power of images. The iconoclast denies the distinction between an image’s aesthetic effects and its religious effects. Iconoclasm has come to be used much more generally, therefore, to refer to the breaking of images in whatever context they occur and thus to a general destruction of accepted symbols.

**ICONOGRAPHY.** Iconography is the identification of symbols and their meaning, particularly in painting. The iconographic symbol may be conventional or representational. White as a representation of purity, for example, is conventional. The wings and halos of saints are representational. Erwin Panofsky drew a distinction between iconography as the identification of such symbols and iconology as the interpretation of their meaning.

**IDEAS.** It would be virtually impossible to survey all of the senses of ‘ideas’ in the history of philosophy. In classical philosophy, an idea was the reality—that which defined something, its singular original. So art either was an imitation of the idea of something (Plato) or a way to separate the idea from its sensual imprisonment (Plotinus). In early modern philosophy, ideas were the mental product of the senses. For John Locke and his successors, an idea was the mental object perceived by the mind. It presumably was related causally to something, but an idea was all that could be known directly. It fol-
allowed that beauty was only a secondary quality, an idea in the mind. For Romanticism and 19th-century idealism, ideas were once again the reality, but instead of being forms they were immanent in history and objects. Art was a way that ideas could manifest themselves in the history and culture of a people. In early 20th-century phenomenology, ideas are the object of consciousness. Art, like any mental product, can be analyzed in terms of its ideational structure. Contrasting with that kind of ideational realism, the analytical tradition identified ideas with the content of propositions, so they are essentially linguistic or logical entities. Art is an artifact, and criticism and interpretation are the real objects of aesthetic analysis.

The common thread that runs through the history of aesthetic ideas is that they are a mental or subjective reality. It follows that as long as ideas are central to aesthetics, aesthetic ideas can be assigned some kind of autonomy. In mainstream 19th- and 20th-century aesthetics, aesthetic ideas were usually the product of aesthetic intuition, an aesthetic attitude, or some form of unique aesthetic experience. The alternative to centering aesthetics on ideas was a social or material aesthetics that identified art as a product of social institutions or labor.

ILLUSION. Illusion, as distinct from deception, has been a controversial part of art theory virtually from the beginning in classical Greek philosophy. For Plato, any imitation involves illusion. Imitation theories of art tend to include some degree of illusion as essential to art. The question becomes what kind of illusion and how the illusion is related to perception on the one hand and representation on the other. The perception of a two-dimensional surface as a picture of something three-dimensional must involve some degree of illusion, it is argued, but to take something as representing something else need not. A white dot in a painting may represent the legs of a fallen Icarus without any visual illusion. Illusionists, however, maintain that even in that case some illusion is created by the imagination. The extreme forms of illusion in art, the trompe l’oeil effects achievable in painting and architecture, for example, become aesthetically interesting when they are recognized as illusions. Then they have an appeal distinct from their deception of the eye.

Illusion also enters into the many different forms of aspect seeing
that have been of interest in aesthetics. Some of the complications in such cases, however, depend on distinguishing the duality of aspects (figures that can be seen as two different things) that is voluntary but mutually exclusive (one cannot see both at once, but one can control which is seen) from strict illusions that depend on the imagination to transform one thing into another. Imaginative illusion in painting is more like the latter; a flat figure remains what it is but creates the illusion of a figure comparable to the visual impression created by the figure yet distinct visually from it. Theories of illusion were particularly important in the work of E. H. Gombrich.

**IMAGINATION.** Imagination first becomes important in the history of aesthetics as a source of pleasure resulting from the mind’s ability to rearrange ideas. The pleasures of the imagination are a combination of mental stimulation, the exercise of the mind’s own powers, and a way of fulfilling certain kinds of desire. Early in the 18th century, it was common to identify art with such pleasures. Imagination, however, was still a rearranging of ideas; it could do nothing until the ideas were available. So one could imagine a centaur only if one had experience of horses and men riding them. Then the ideas of a horse and a rider could be combined to produce the imaginary creature. A function of art was to exploit such imaginative rearrangement to produce both pleasure and edification. Imagination was both limited and dangerous, however, because it produced fictions. Uncontrolled, it would lead one into madness.

A major shift in the way imagination works in aesthetics occurs when imagination is separated from fancy and reconceived as a creative power. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, following German Romantics such as Friedrich Schelling, proposed that the imagination is a secondary form of creation that repeats the infinite creation of the original creative force. Artists were then empowered as creators to the extent that they were able to exercise their imaginative powers. True artists had imagination and genius; all others could only imitate that creative power.

A third shift occurs as modern psychology redefines the powers of the mind. Imagination loses its transcendental, mystical aura, but it distinguishes a kind of mental activity that is distinct from ordinary perception. Artists are those who are especially good at aesthetic
perception and are able to incorporate it into objective forms that are accessible to other, less imaginative perceivers. In this sense, imagination is a distinctive psychological ability closely related to aesthetic intuition and an aesthetic attitude. In each case, imagination is a force or power that belongs to the mind. It either implies a mind-body dualism or makes use of some mentalistic language. If one is a thorough-going materialist or naturalist, the reliance on imagination seems like a denial of the fundamental nature of art.

IMITATION. Theories of imitation are one of the two major ways of conceiving of art, the other being theories of expression. Art understood as an imitation begins with certain seemingly obvious facts: 1) Works of art are things. An imitation, in Aristotle’s sense, is a made thing. Since it seems obvious that works of art are those things made by artists, it follows that works of art are imitations. 2) Works of art are like something else. To be a work of art is to reproduce some reality. So works of art are likenesses in some sense and thus imitations. A good work of art is one that is a closer likeness of its original (though not necessarily a simple reproduction). 3) Works of art are designed to give pleasure. Imitation is a pleasant activity. Works of art provide the kind of pleasure that imitations provide, so works of art are imitations. Thus, for most of its history up to the 18th century, to say that a work of art was an imitation was a commonplace.

To be an imitation was not necessarily a good thing, however. It implies a limitation since something that is imitated must take precedence. One line of aesthetic thought, therefore, stresses the distance between a work of art and that of which it is an imitation. Plato famously classified art as a third-order imitation since it was neither the ideal form nor the actual thing. A good part of early aesthetic theory is a defense of art against Plato’s charges. Beginning with Aristotle, a principal line of defense was that imitations are useful in themselves apart from their status as derivative versions of something else. Tragedy produces a positive effect—catharsis. Or, as Plotinus argued, art can extract the ideal from its sensuous limitations. Rather than placing art at a third remove, art can be thought of as imitating the reality itself without the limitations of bodies. No one thing can be as beautiful as an ideal imitation that can combine the best of many actual things. Further, imitations are pleasing in themselves.
The act of imitating requires mental exercise, skill, and knowledge, all of which are pleasing. Finally, imitation is a form of learning or instruction. One learns by imitating, and an imitation, like a plan or drawing, conveys knowledge of its object. Theories of allegory use art to instruct by imitating directly the virtues and vices. In the 18th century, imitation was thought of as a way to instruct by pleasing. It followed, of course, that the imitation had to be accurate itself if it was to achieve its purpose.

Theories that art is an imitation of something else in some sense do not disappear all at once, and they remain embedded in concerns with the ways that art can be representational. Gradually, however, an alternative way of thinking of art displaced the obvious claims of imitation. When art is thought of as a mental activity, then it is what art expresses, not what it imitates, that is primary. Imitation is relegated to a secondary role as one means, say natural signs, by which art can express the experience of the artist or of the ideal working through art. Beginning in the latter half of the 18th century, art as a form of experience or intuition becomes a serious competitor to imitation theories, and with the rise of aesthetic attitude theories, art was reconceived as whatever can produce the uniquely aesthetic experience. See also MIMESIS.

**IMPRESSIONISM.** Impressionism is the 19th-century movement in art that attempted to reproduce visual effects of light and color directly. Among its most prominent practitioners were Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, Camille Pissaro, and Claude Monet. In one sense, it is the culmination of realism in painting since it seeks to directly reproduce what is seen. In another sense, however, it abandons the ideas of realistic illusion and perspective and shifts the focus to the painted surface.

Because impressionism is one of the art movements that took seriously the relation of painting to aesthetic theory and because it involves a rejection of the established aesthetic principles of mid-19th-century narrative art, impressionism has played a major role in modern aesthetics. Its theory of visual effects can be regarded as promoting aesthetic ways of seeing over ordinary ways, and its effects can be equated with aesthetic experience itself. A number of aes-
treatment of dance by Bharata in the fourth or fifth century CE. It is developed in the 10th century CE by Abhinavagupta, who focuses on dramatic performance. This leads Abhinava to distinguish three kinds of rasa on the basis of the three principal art forms. Pictorial rasa is the experience of resemblance. It corresponds more or less to Aristotle's use of imitation, which is pleasurable depending on the degree of experienced resemblance, even if the subject matter itself is unpleasant and the resemblance is conventional or stylized. Dramatic rasa is the experience of the emotion made available by a spatiotemporal form of representation. Pictorial representation is limited, but dramatic representation can express emotions and represent events and situations that go beyond actual reality. It has emotional impact that goes beyond the mere events depicted. Poetic rasa, which Abhinavagupta derives from Anandavardhana’s ninth-century CE treatise, is revelatory. It provides a concrete form for a meaning that cannot be literally expressed. The three kinds of aesthetic experience are distinct, but each is a species of the same form of meaningful experience that is both enjoyable and revelatory. Jointly, the forms of rasa account for the importance of their art forms in Indian philosophy, which does not sharply distinguish philosophy from religious meaning.

INGARDEN, ROMAN (1893–1970). Roman Ingarden was a Polish philosopher who studied under the founder of the phenomenological movement, Edumund Husserl. Ingarden became one of the leading practitioners of the phenomenological method in literary aesthetics. His Das literarische Kunstwerk (The Literary Work of Art, 1931) approaches literary works in terms of their conscious appropriation by a reader, but Ingarden recognizes that the intentional object depends on a realist understanding of the ontology of that object. A literary work is neither pure text nor subjective occasion. It exists as an object for a reader with both an objective and subjective moment. Ingarden’s analysis tends to be formalistic. The form of the work of art is found in the ways that it posits objects in a logical space created by the work and realized by a conscious ego. It consists of different strata that range from the material to the ideal but are never independent of the whole, which is both real and unreal.
INNER SENSE. During the 17th and 18th centuries, metaphysical theories of beauty that considered beauty to be a separate reality were challenged and gradually replaced by empirical theories. Rationalist versions continued to hold that the qualities in question were themselves definable by reason and were independent of the particular observer. John Locke and his empiricist followers, on the other hand, reduced beauty to the response of individual observers. Beauty was at most a secondary quality analogous to colors. Nevertheless, theories of beauty continued to attempt to define the uniformities of response that gave coherence to individual responses. While it could be admitted that beauty was nothing but an idea raised in the experience of an individual, still some objects were recognized as beautiful and others as ugly or indifferent.

Locke divided experience into ideas caused by the external senses and ideas that were caused by reflection on the mind’s own powers. These latter he called internal senses. They included such powers as memory and the ability to compare ideas of sense. For Locke, therefore, inner sense was important but limited to reflection. Francis Hutcheson and others, particularly in Scotland, shifted the meaning of ‘inner sense’ to emphasize the analogy with the external senses. If the eye perceives color, the inner sense perceives virtue and beauty. Inner senses tended to multiply. In addition to an inner moral sense or conscience and an inner sense of beauty or taste, one finds a sense of novelty, a sense of the sublime, and a number of other specific inner senses being postulated. The inability to find the kind of sense-based uniformities and definitions that Newtonian science had produced so successfully eventually led to the abandonment of inner sense in favor of other, more active theories of aesthetic perception. The basic reliance on sense and mental powers that was central to inner sense theories remained, however.

INSPIRATION. The idea that works of art are inspired appears in several rather different ways in the history of aesthetics. In his dialogue Ion, Plato considers the possibility that poems and their interpretation are guided not by reason but by inspiration. The gods take over and use the poet or the reciter of poems as a divine mouthpiece. The poet or reciter does not know, in Plato’s strong sense of knowing, what he is saying. Divine inspiration is not necessarily a good thing,
however, since the gods are notoriously unreliable from a human standpoint. Plato’s theory is only one version of the idea that poetry is a form of divine madness. In ritual and drama that is part of a religious festival, ecstatic possession is a state at once dangerous and potentially illuminating. It is dangerous because any contact with the sacred is more than a human can bear unless protected by ritual; it is illuminating because only the sacred bears the reality of things. All else is appearance. Art—particularly poetry, drama, and music—is closely related to sacred forms in pre-modern cultures and thus carries with it both the dangers and knowledge of sacred reality.

Something of the same sense of inspiration reemerges in later 18th- and 19th-century art theory. In Romanticism, artists again claim inspiration and believe that some greater spiritual movement is working through art in culture. The inspiration is fundamentally different, however, in that it is not subsumed under ritual. Artists are individuals whose inspiration arises from their own genius, even if it is religious in origin. Inspired art becomes an end in itself that replaces religious observations rather than being a part of them.

Theories of inspiration are still encountered in contemporary art movements, but the inspiration is almost wholly psychological. The overtones of divine madness have faded. If genius is closely related to madness, it is because the line between normal insight and avant-garde creativity is hard to define. What appears to be abnormal psychologically may turn out to be an anticipation of new forms of creativity, but it may equally turn out to be only abnormal.

INSTITUTIONAL THEORY OF ART. The institutional theory of art is a response to challenges to the traditional modes of definition that have become increasingly suspect in contemporary art theory. Standard theories of definition begin with a quest for necessary and sufficient conditions for some artifact being a work of art. Definitions along those lines propose that either the quality of beauty or the expression of a particular kind of emotion are the conditions that all and only art satisfies. A single property, such as uniformity amidst variety, or some set of functional properties, such as the successful production of aesthetic experience, fit the standard form.

Beginning in the late 18th century, however, it was observed (by Dugald Stewart, for example), that no single property need be com-
mon to all works of art. The recognition that art might include overlapping conditions such that no one property was common to all works of art still allowed that such open sequences might be categorized under a single defining characteristic. So significant form, for example, might be produced in a number of ways, but all and only works of art have significant form. Nevertheless, even the openness of conditions is suspect under the pressure of contemporary art movements that challenge all rule-governed restrictions, including functional appeals to aesthetic experience.

One response is to give up strict notions of definition. Another, however, is to distinguish two senses of ‘art’—a classificatory sense and a normative sense. At least for the classificatory sense, it is argued, it is both necessary and sufficient that some artifact be presented in a functioning institutional setting as a “candidate for appreciation.” It is not necessary that the artifact actually be appreciated; it is sufficient that the institutional setting has sufficient force to make it a candidate. A definition along these lines appeals not to properties of the object, which may be quite ordinary, but to the relations in which it stands to other objects, particularly those that are already recognized as part of the art world. The theory is thus able to supply a kind of necessary and sufficient condition while remaining open to new and unanticipated kinds of art. This was the institutional theory originally presented by George Dickie. It was subject to a number of technical objections and to resistance from those who continued to hold that without aesthetic experience there could be no art, but modifications that weaken its claim to supply necessary and sufficient conditions have made it a continuing contender in the attempts to describe what art is and is not.

INTENTION. In the philosophy of language, meaning is related to the intention of the speaker. Exactly what that relation is, however, is difficult to define. Propositional content, whether defined logically or in broader referential terms, does not depend directly on the speaker. On the other hand, who is speaking and listening and the beliefs of the speaker and the hearer both enter into the meaning of a speech-act. If A says to B, P: “I will be at home Tuesday,” the meaning of the sentence includes an indexical reference to the speaker (I) and established semantic content determined by the language spoken. But
the meaning also includes the belief that A intends B to believe what A is saying and B’s belief that A is speaking literally and truthfully.

None of these conditions transfer simply and directly to works of art. There is an artist and an audience, but what the artist produces, even if it is a literary work of art, is not straightforwardly propositional. It is either fictional or formally structured in some other way (depiction, expression, etc.). And the artist is not directly present to the audience, nor is the audience fixed in relation to the artist. If such were the case, art could only exist at one time and place. It was common, therefore, to rely on the intention of the artist to fix the meaning of a work of art. Art could have many meanings, but the central and controlling meaning would have to be what the artist intended.

The problems with such intentionalism in the arts are numerous and obvious. The intention of the artist cannot be directly known. Even if there is external data on the artist’s intentions, access to it may be limited or destroyed altogether. Yet the work of art persists. Moreover, there is a clear difference between the meaning of a text and the psychological states that produce it. That does not change when the text is an artifact that is a work of art. Whatever relation exists between psychological states and artifacts, they are not identical or even of the same ontological type. Finally, there are numerous examples where the work of art means either more or less than its maker could possibly have intended. Pure intentionalism about art seems very problematic, therefore.

On the other hand, the assumption that the artist’s intentions have some privileged relation to what is produced together with the need to distinguish the meaning of a work of art from whatever subjective interpretations can be imposed on it is equally obvious. The very concept of an artist implies some intentional relation between maker and artifact. A theory of interpretation that takes account of both intentions and the autonomy of works of art must distinguish between a pure psychological intention and the “intentionality” that belongs to language as such.

One significant attempt along these lines in literary criticism led to the postulation of what became known, somewhat misleadingly, as the intentional fallacy. Monroe Beardsley and William Wimsatt argued that one could not appeal directly to any psychological conditions or biographical facts in interpreting a literary work of art. Only
what was directly expressed in the text itself could count toward a “correct” interpretation of a literary text. The objection to this strong anti-intentionalism was simply that it presupposed that there was such a thing as a correct interpretation fixed independently of author and interpreters. On the other hand, the strong statement of the intentional fallacy is misleading if it is taken to exclude all external information. Strictly speaking, only those intentions of the author that cannot be linked to something in the text are excluded, and as with all language, one depends on a considerable network of linguistic information and cues to understand what is written. The apparent absolutism of the claims for “the text itself” is also somewhat misleading since literary interpretation allows for a wide range of interpretive tropes that include ambiguity, metaphor, and irony. (The last was one of the principal features of the critical method practiced by Wimsatt and his colleagues in literary criticism.) Still, a strong intentionalism about meaning continues to be contested by methods of interpretation that rely on either existential context or historical analysis.

INTENTIONAL FALLACY. In 1954, W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley published an article called “The Intentional Fallacy” that became a touchstone of formalist criticism. What was called the “New Criticism” of the time stressed the formal aspects of a literary work, particularly verbal forms, such as metaphor and irony. They rejected the use of any external information that could not be located directly in the text, especially biographical and psychological information about the author. Wimsatt and Beardsley applied this strategy of interpretation to questions of authorial intention. They argued that “the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art” (“The Intentional Fallacy,” in Philosophy Looks at the Arts, ed. Joseph Margolis [Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987], p. 367). The intentional fallacy is only a fallacy, of course, when intention is used as a standard or when it is external to the work itself. Any information that informs the reader about the meaning of the text itself is of legitimate use. An authoritative interpretation is still sought in criticism, but that authority cannot rest on the intentions of the author.
The claims that reliance on authorial intention led to a fallacy were strongly resisted from two directions. On the one hand, it seemed to grant too much to criticism, which was too variable to provide a single, authoritative interpretation. On the other, it seemed to ignore the social, cultural, political, and psychological aspects of literature. The extreme formalism of the New Criticism has largely been superseded by more eclectic approaches and by a more sophisticated philosophy of language, but the influence of the intentional fallacy in countering extreme forms of socio-political and psychological interpretation continues to be an issue.

**INTERPRETATION.** The theory of interpretation in aesthetics is primarily concerned with the principles that apply to literary texts, but it extends across the entire field. Its earliest roots are in Plato’s dialogue *Ion*, which deals with the interpretation of poetry by a reciter, and in classical rhetorical theory. In later classical and medieval aesthetics, allegorical interpretation was formalized to account for multiple levels of meaning in a single text. In the 18th century, ‘criticism’ was the term applied most generally to what now falls under aesthetics. In the 19th century, biblical interpretation—hermeneutics—overlapped with the interpretation of literature, and hermeneutics as the theory of interpretation emerged in 20th-century continental philosophy as a general theory of textual response. Because of the extensive overlap with the philosophy of language and the theory of meaning, especially of semantically non-standard language, such as metaphor, interpretation plays an important cross-disciplinary role in aesthetics. Principal analytical theories of interpretation distinguish between theories of meaning and theories of evaluation and between descriptive and normative claims. In both cases, however, a theory of interpretation must include the kinds of reasons that can be given for an interpretive statement and the nature of such statements in the first place.

Classical rhetoric treated interpretation under the general theory of persuasion. The task of an interpreter is to produce a response from an audience that is consistent with the text and the interpreter’s goals. It can be presumed that a poem has a meaning, but that meaning must be interpreted for an audience, which is to say, the audience must be brought to experience the poem as the interpreter presents
it and be persuaded by that interpretation. The problems with such interpretation, as Plato saw, are that the interpreter need not actually understand that which is being interpreted. Any claims that an interpretation constitutes knowledge are themselves subject to interpretation. Persuasion does not in and of itself constitute knowing anything. Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* tried to link persuasion and truth and in so doing set a standard problem for all subsequent theories of interpretation.

Allegorical interpretation arose because the same text, particularly biblical texts, might have more than one meaning. The literal meaning accounts only for the direct factual level of presentation. A range of allegorical meanings extend the literal meaning to symbolic, moral, and universal levels.

When criticism as such began to play an important cultural role in the 17th century, the status of a critic’s claims became central. Critics did at least two different things. They informed the new reading public about what a text said, and they made claims about how good it was. An important sub-genre, for example, was the epitome or abstract that conveyed the sense of difficult philosophical and religious texts to a wider public. And equally important were the critical wars that resulted from the extensive polemical literature of the 17th and 18th centuries. Empiricism and rationalism alike laid claim to scientific truth, but the status of critical claims did not easily fit into the scientific model. Tests, observation, and induction that applied so well to observation and sense data did not prove so successful when applied to matters of taste.

The most important texts that required interpretation were not poems but the biblical texts, particularly in the Protestant tradition with its emphasis on direct access to the sacred texts by a lay audience. Within Protestant biblical theology, a complex theory of interpretation of biblical texts was developed. It included philological and historical investigations as well as principled assertions of authority and inspiration. All interpretive claims were in play, however, because no single authoritative interpretation was theologically acceptable. “The word” had to be self-validating because it was divinely inspired and provided the only standard that could be agreed upon universally. As artists, particularly poets, also began to claim a quasi-religious inspiration, the same problems arose with respect to the in-
terpretation of poetry. The response was to extend the theory of bibil-
cal interpretation to secular texts. Historical and philological studies
became a part of the apparatus of literary interpretation.

Reaction against the academic nature of criticism took two forms.
Within the plain sense/common sense school, it was maintained that
texts could speak for themselves and needed no interpretation. A text
meant whatever a reader, guided by common sense, took it to mean.
Alternatively, a text meant whatever it itself meant. That is, one did
not need to look to abstruse historical and philological studies (and
later, to psychoanalytic studies) to understand a text. Literary texts
contained within themselves all that is required for them to be under-
stood. By extension, all art is self-interpreting. Painting appeals di-
rectly to vision; music is guided by its implicit formal structure. In
that case, interpretation becomes a matter of communication either
between artist and audience or more directly between artwork and
audience.

The difficulties that remain for any theory of interpretation are to
link a theory of meaning with a theory of response by an audience.
Two fundamentally different approaches are explored in contempo-
raty aesthetics. The first understands meaning in terms of a theory of
truth. The meaning of a text is just whatever truth-claims it makes,
and in order to discover the meaning, one must understand the truth-
conditions. For literary texts and artworks generally, this poses prob-
lems because they do not obviously assert anything except in some
rather banal senses. It is quite possible, however, to extend truth-
conditional theories of meaning to artworks by extending the theory
of interpretation to include semantically non-standard presentations
either by broadening the sense of ‘meaning’ or by a process of para-
phrase and situational semantics.

The second fundamental alternative is to understand meaning itself
not in terms of truth conditions but in terms of existential encounter.
The meaning of a text or artwork, on that theory, is found in the way
it is appropriated by and affects an audience. Both text and audi-
ence are changed in the encounter, and that change is the fundamen-
tal meaning of the text. It follows that meaning cannot be fixed in
absolute terms and that interpretation always takes place in an histor-
ically situated occurrence. Propositional meaning is a consequence
derivable from actual meaning rather than the cause of meaning. The
former approach is sometimes misleadingly called ‘analytical’ and the latter ‘existential’ or ‘continental,’ but both have applications within all contemporary theories of interpretation.

INTUITION. In general, intuition is a form of direct perception or knowledge. In aesthetics, it leads to the claim that perception of artworks comes directly from sense, as opposed to being the result of rational inference. Further, aesthetic intuition is a form of knowledge equivalent to direct perception in other areas. It does not require validation by general principles of reason. The advocates of aesthetic intuition belong to the empiricist school that has its origins in the early 18th century. Sentiment or feeling in the arts, like conscience in morals, is a matter of direct intuition.

Aesthetic intuition finds its strongest advocate in Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Judgment. There, aesthetic intuition is defined as the pre-conceptual, pre-theoretical form of experience that is subject only to the demands of human cognition. Thought and knowledge require two separable (but not separate) conditions—experience that is intuitive and categorical organization that makes the intuition possible. When one isolates the conditions of experience themselves, one has the kind of experience that does not depend on preconceived theories or practical ends. It operates at the level of pure imagination and independently of all existential claims. Art is the direct product of such intuition, but all experience is based on its possibility.

Kantian aesthetic intuition is incorporated into much of 19th-century aesthetic attitude theory and 20th-century aesthetic psychology. One finds descriptions of aesthetic distance, aesthetic surface, and aesthetic perception, for example, all described as fundamentally autonomous kinds of intuition. Whereas for Kant aesthetic intuition is prior to all subsequent knowledge claims, which depend on aesthetic intuition, the aesthetic adaptations that follow stress the autonomous nature of the intuition. Either aesthetic experience is understood in non-cognitive terms or it is defined as a special kind of knowledge. The difficulty for these more recent theories of aesthetic intuition is that they escape most of the standard tests for knowledge claims.

IRONY. Irony plays a role in aesthetics considerably greater than just a rhetorical trope. At its simplest, irony is the rhetorical device of
saying one thing in such a way that the opposite is implied, for example, “Really?” when what is meant is not really. But irony as a literary device allows authors to present a worldview that the writer’s audience may not accept in a way that establishes its possibility. In that sense, Jane Austen and Voltaire are masters of irony. Irony then becomes a critical term when that literary skill is viewed as the central value in evaluating a work of art as it does in the formalist textual criticism of the so-called New Criticism of the mid-20th century. Irony also plays an important role in dialectical theories of art because of their inherent toleration of opposing forces as necessary to the advancement of the arts. The relation between an artist and his or her own time may then be viewed as ironic, for example.

ISLAMIC AESTHETICS. Islamic aesthetics is something of a misnomer for several reasons. First, one should not assume a uniformity of Islamic art. Islam extended at one time or another from Spain to Indonesia and the Philippines, and it is a significant religious presence in many countries independently of its political influence. There is no specifically Islamic aesthetics based on the Koran, and the art of predominantly Islamic countries has followed different traditions. What is true of Moghul India does not apply to medieval Syria and Iraq. Second, Islam is a religion, but the aesthetics of predominantly Islamic countries is not always or even predominantly religious. One may speak of the aesthetics of the Latin Middle Ages as an extension of Christian theology because it was Christian philosophical theology that developed classical philosophy in Europe in the Middle Ages. The same is not true of even medieval Islam, however. Christian Byzantium and Arabic Islam continued the classical Greek and Roman philosophical traditions much more directly than the western Roman empire, which had to re-import Greek learning and Aristotelian philosophy by way of Arabic translations and commentaries. So aesthetic philosophy in Islam remained neo-Platonic or Aristotelian rather than uniquely Islamic, though significant modifications were forced by Islamic religious positions. After the relative foreclosure of independent philosophical thinking in the Middle East and North Africa in the 13th and 14th centuries under the pressure of conservative, traditionalist religious forces and the defensive reaction to Christian aggressiveness, there is nothing like the sustained philo-
but a practical consequence of working artists in an art world that is
dependent on the royal courts and their religious influence.

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JAPANESE AESTHETICS. See CHINESE AND JAPANESE
AESTHETICS.

JE NE SAIS QUOI. Je ne sais quoi literally means “I know not what.”
It came to be used in place of an explanation in early modern aesthet-
ics for that in a work of art that causes the pleasurable response of
beauty. Causal explanation was the standard for both empiricist and
rationalist theories of beauty and taste, but many writers, while ac-
knowledging that there must be some cause, admitted that they did
not know what it was and doubted that it could be discovered. Hence
the cause was simply I know not what. The phrase may have been
introduced by Nicholas Boileau in his philosophical poem L’art poé-
tique (1674).

JOHNSON, SAMUEL (1709–1784). As a critic, poet, biographer,
and the compiler of a famous dictionary, Samuel Johnson achieved
the status of the leading English literary man of his age. The club
that he formed with Joshua Reynolds included David Garrick, Ol-
iver Goldsmith, and Johnson’s eventual biographer, James Boswell.
Johnson himself was immensely influential, but his writings contrib-
uted little directly to aesthetics. His taste was conservative and neo-
classical but marked by extreme intelligence and a deeply felt per-
sonal melancholy that infected all of his writings. In his philosophi-
cal tale, Rassalas (1759), he provides an account of the imagination
as a powerful force that can mislead as well as inform the mind. His significance for aesthetics is to be found more in his example and
influence. Reynolds drew on Johnson’s views for his Discourses,
which are among the best 18th-century treatments of painting, and
Johnson himself exemplifies the new man of letters who lives by his
pen.

JONES, INIGO (1573–1652). Inigo Jones was an important English
architect who brought the neo-classical Renaissance style of Andrea
Palladio to England in 1616 with his designs for the Queen’s House in Greenwich. Palladian architecture utilized motifs from classical architecture, particularly the frontal façade and columns. Jones’s adaptations were influential not just in moving English architecture away from Jacobean style but also in establishing neo-classical taste in all of the arts. In a sense, architecture led the other arts into a different aesthetic world in which classical models and Renaissance values of individuality and idealized beauty were to dominate for the next 250 years.

JUDGMENT. Aesthetic judgment becomes an issue when the subjectivity of aesthetic experience raises the question of whether and how normative statements about beauty or works of art can be more than matters of personal preference. Initially, the problem is approached on the model of other empirical claims in the new science of the 17th and 18th centuries. Propositions that describe secondary qualities, such as colors and tastes, can be tested even if their causal relations are not the same as the quality as experienced. So aesthetic judgments are modeled on sense theories, and internal senses, such as a sense of beauty, are sought. Aesthetic taste is a form of judgment in criticism and aesthetics that is supposed to work just as the external sense of taste works. The difficulty, of course, is that inductive investigations of judgments of taste do not reveal the same kind of uniformities that external taste exhibits. It has to be acknowledged that judgments of aesthetic taste are more variable than their external sense analogues. So one is faced with a paradox or antinomy: there is no disputing about taste; but equally, judgments of taste claim an authority or universality that it is sometimes absurd to deny. David Hume asserted that to prefer Ogilby to Milton was as absurd as to say that a mole hill was greater than a mountain. Immanuel Kant made the universality of judgments of taste a defining characteristic of them. They are just those judgments that are at once subjective and universal.

The failure of simple empirical claims for aesthetic judgments has led to a more searching investigation of the nature of the judgments themselves. By the end of the 18th century, Dugald Stewart had noted that judgments of taste need not be based on a single set of properties in order to be valid. An overlapping series of properties is
sufficient. More recent philosophical discourse leads to the claim that aesthetic judgments belong to a class of judgments based on “open” concepts—concepts that do not have simple defining properties but that allow for borderline cases and additions. Aesthetic judgments, conceived in that way, can be contested without one being committed to a single definitive standard. If A is a central case of a good work of art—an acknowledged instance, such as the *Mona Lisa*—then if B shares enough properties with A, then B will also be a good work of art, even if B is substantially different in significant ways providing B does not possess some defeating properties. C may share sufficient properties with B, and so on until one has a set that includes things that do not share any properties with every member of the set. The set of things that can be recognized as good works of art changes as new instances are added, but not everything can be included. One must work out from paradigm instances.

An alternative approach to aesthetic judgments depends on describing the normative conditions that apply not directly to the thing but to the audience. Various forms of response theories claim, in effect, that while any response is subjective and unassailable in and of itself, human nature or historical conditions are such that the conscious perception of some things and the phenomenological description of that response are the kinds of things that make aesthetic judgments possible. Such descriptions are variously founded: individual psychology, cultural determinism, political determinism, and existential situations all contend as the basis for aesthetic judgments.

At one extreme, aesthetic judgments are taken to be merely non-cognitive expressions of personal preferences. If one finds something to be pleasurable in the way that aesthetic pleasure requires, then it is so. Nothing further is required, nor can any inferences be drawn about what will please someone else. At the other extreme, aesthetic judgments are taken to be normatively absolute. Whatever is good is good, whether anyone likes it or not. Its good-making features are part of its ontology. Somewhere in between, most theories of aesthetic judgment seek to reconcile the antinomy noted by Kant. Aesthetic judgments are subjective, but they are defined by the continued universality of their claims.

**JUNG, CARL G. (1875–1961).** Along with *Sigmund Freud*, the Swiss psychologist C. G. Jung was one of the founders of modern
psychoanalysis, which posits an unconscious as well as a conscious mind and seeks to treat abnormal behavior by bringing unconscious conflicts to consciousness. Jung broke with Freud over the basis of unconscious desires, Freud locating them in sexual energy and Jung in an archetypal collective unconscious. Jung’s treatment of archetypes and their symbolic expression influenced artists and art critics who found in them new forms of expression. His influence on aesthetic theory is more indirect, but his theories of symbolism offer another way to account for the expressiveness of symbols.

KAMES, LORD (HENRY HOME) (1696–1782). Henry Home was one of the leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment. He was trained as a lawyer and became a judge in the highest courts of Scotland, which resulted in his elevation to the title of Lord Kames. He was a significant legal theorist, a speculative historian, and a notable agricultural improver. His philosophical importance rests on his alliance with the moral sense school of philosophy, following the third Earl of Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson but opposing what he takes as the moral and religious skepticism of David Hume.

Kame’s aesthetic theories grow out of his moral theory, which he developed in response to Hume’s moral sentimentalism. His principal philosophical work is his Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion (1751). Kames agrees that morality is based on sentiment and not on self-interest or a priori principles. But he holds that a moral sense is sufficient to determine independent ethical principles of the same order as other inductive principles based on secondary qualities. He resists Hume’s conclusions that no moral necessity can be observed on the grounds that our senses, empirically corrected and educated, provide a reliable moral certainty. In some ways, Kames is in agreement with Thomas Reid in holding that common sense trumps all skeptical doubts about perception, and Kames is prepared to extend common sense to morality. His aesthetic positions are parallel to his moral sense. Beauty is also a real property, although it is only accessible by appropriately corrected senses.

Kames’s Elements of Criticism (1762) develops the practical side
of his aesthetic principles. Rhetorical and compositional principles follow from a sense of beauty that is at least as widely shared as other human characteristics. Whatever variations occur are attributable to differences in education and culture, but they can be overcome by attention to the basic rules of rhetoric. Elements of Criticism assembles extensive examples to support these conclusions and to inductively establish good taste. Kames does not appeal to association, however, as the mechanism for explaining the workings of the sense of beauty nor even to account for negative variations as John Locke and Francis Hutcheson did.

Although Kames remained on friendly terms with David Hume, his intention was to oppose Hume’s skepticism about divine providence and views on the contingency of perception. His reliance on a form of sense empiricism and on the extension of empirical induction to moral and aesthetic questions led him to a form of “necessesarianism,” one of the forms of compatibilism on the question of free will. He was identified with Hume in this regard and was vigorously opposed by the clerical establishment.

Kames is more learned than original in his philosophical and aesthetic writings. His commitments precede his examination and the result is that he is not always able to reconcile the kind of sense theory that he accepts with the theological and epistemological commitments that take priority.

KANT, IMMANUEL (1724–1804). The Prussian philosopher Immanuel Kant is one of the dominant figures in the history of metaphysics and epistemology. His “critical philosophy” developed in his three great critiques, the Critique of Pure Reason (1781), the Critique of Practical Reason (1788), and the Critique of Judgment (1790), changed the way that philosophy was done.

Kant accepted the part of the empiricism of John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume that denied the existence of innate ideas, but he also accepted that reason plays an independent role in human knowledge. If reason does not give us ideas directly, then its role must be to shape knowledge according to rational conditions. Human knowledge is not directly about things in themselves but about things as they can be grasped by perception ordered according to pre-established categorical possibilities that determine the limits of
knowledge. Space, time, and causality are conditions for knowing and not things that are known in the same way that propositions about individual things are known.

Kant’s “transcendental idealism” takes the empiricist and rationalist “ideas” and relates them to ideal forms of knowing that can be derived from the activity of knowing itself. Within that schema, aesthetic intuition plays a pre-cognitive role as the fundamental movement of the mind in contact with the world of perception. Kant adopts the term ‘aesthetics’ from earlier rationalist philosophy, particularly A. G. Baumgarten, but he expands its role and locates aesthetic perception at the very foundation of perception itself.

Kant did not begin with the intention of developing a separate aesthetics. He did not believe that taste was sufficiently principled to supply the kind of a priori principles required for knowledge. His first aesthetic work, Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime (1763), is “pre-critical” and takes a very different view of aesthetic phenomena. Two feelings—the feeling of beauty and the feeling of the sublime—relate dispositions to objects. The beautiful is charming, pleasant, attractive; the sublime is terrifying, noble, or splendid. Kant is more interested in the sublime, which is more closely related to virtue and principled action. The whole of the Observations is descriptive, however. It says little about the epistemology or ontology of the beautiful or sublime. Instead, Kant is content to offer rather broad characterizations of the feelings themselves and the way that they appear in individual and national character. The judgments that Kant offers on beauty and the sublime are rather traditional, in line with his Pietist upbringing.

Kant’s thought turned in a radically different direction in the Critique of Pure Reason. He sought to establish a scientific metaphysics that would provide a foundation for a limited necessary knowledge consistent with but not dependent on experience. Against the rationalism of G. W. von Leibniz and Christian Wolff, Kant argues that necessary or a priori knowledge is purely formal. It arises from the conditions of thought itself. Against the empiricism of Locke and Hume, Kant argues that experience by itself is insufficient to provide knowledge at all. Only when experience is formed by reason does it satisfy the conditions of knowing and escape skepticism. Central to this scientific metaphysics is a transcendental aesthetic, which is
Kant’s way of founding knowledge on sensibility without conceding to sense the independence that leads to skepticism. Kant borrows the term ‘aesthetic’ from Baumgarten but shifts it to his own account of sensibility and the conditions of knowledge. Fundamentally, the *a priori* conditions of space and time control sensibility and not the other way around. This sense of ‘aesthetic’ has little to do with art or beauty, and at this point, Kant did not believe that a science of taste is possible.

Kant initially believed that the first two *Critiques* completed his scientific metaphysics. They covered all that can be said or known in the areas of pure science and in the practical application of that science to *morality*. Beauty and taste fell outside of that knowledge. Yet, Kant had long considered feeling and taste important, and in a letter written after the publication of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, he announced his discovery of a new sort of *a priori* principle that completed the schema of *a priori* principles of the faculty of cognition and the faculty of *desire*. These new principles were those of beauty, taste, and purpose. Although they come last in the development of Kant’s philosophy, they are first in the epistemological sense that they account for the sensibility and feeling without which cognition and desire would not be possible. The principles of taste and beauty that Kant explicates turn on two facts: taste and beauty are purely *subjective*, matters of sensibility alone; but they are also universal in their application, because they precede any conceptual formulation that would subject them to limitations. From this beginning, Kant is able to describe beauty as the feeling of delight in the sensible itself, a feeling that is contrasted to the feeling of *agreeableness* or liking that comes from the fulfillment of desires and the satisfaction of concepts.

These principles of beauty and taste provide a new sense of ‘aesthetic’ that becomes the foundation of our modern use of the term. The aesthetic is that sensibility that is free of concepts, independent of the existence of its object, and *disinterested* in its application to any object. Kant can then go on to relate that newly principled *a priori* foundation of sensibility to the teleology of thought. Purposes follow from an initial purposiveness without purpose that is based on the formal structure of sensibility. The aesthetic *imagination* can *play* freely before it is constrained by concepts. *Genius* can provide
rules before there are any rules to follow. Art is the product of genius and imagination, therefore, and taste is the ability to respond to beauty and the works of genius. Beauty, whether natural or in art, depends on the freedom of taste to produce universal claims based on a subjective sensibility.

It is impossible to encapsulate the complexity of Kant’s metaphysical and aesthetic principles, but they transformed the way that the arts and beauty were located philosophically. Instead of taste being a subjective judgment that needs standards, taste becomes the subjective universal that precedes and conditions all cognition and judgment. The basic principles of imaginative free play and disinterested sensibility establish a new science of aesthetics. One aspect or another of Kant’s thought is taken up and made central by subsequent aesthetics. The movement of the imagination is central to Romanticism. Disinterestedness is the condition that psychological aesthetics depends on to produce aesthetic experience. And interior purposiveness without purpose, incorporated into the history of a culture or people, guides the aesthetics of G. W. F. Hegel and later cultural anthropology. All are partial compared to the comprehensiveness of Kant’s complete system.

KEATS, JOHN (1795–1821). John Keats is among the most important English Romantic poets, but his comments on poetry and aesthetics are scattered and minimal. He is known primarily for one small section in a letter—his description of negative capability. Even that comment is so brief that it remains enigmatic. Keats seems to mean that true poetry, as opposed to the wit and self-importance of some of his contemporaries, must involve a loss of self in the expression of the poetic subject. The object of poetry is the poem, not the poet. In the face of the self-absorption of much of Romanticism, this negative capability stands out as a unique virtue.

KIERKEGAARD, SØREN (1813–1855). In a series of works between 1843 and 1846—Either/Or (1843), Philosophical Fragments (1844), Stages on Life’s Way (1845), and The Concluding Unscientific Postscript (1846)—Søren Kierkegaard developed an anti-Hegeleian inversion of G. W. F. Hegel’s dialectic that includes an aesthetic stage in the movement of spirit. Whereas Hegel treated the
aesthetic moment as something positive that leads one beyond religion toward absolute spirit even though it must be transcended by that spirit, Kierkegaard found in aesthetic experience a paradoxical challenge necessary to religious experience. Religious experience is the dialectical opposite of aesthetic experience. In both cases, however, ‘aesthetic’ takes on a special meaning having little to do directly with art or nature. The aesthetic is a force, a spiritual moment. For Kierkegaard, it is more negative than positive; it is necessary because its temptations must be overcome, but without it, true religious experience and life is impossible. The difficulty with this reading of Kierkegaard, however, is that his own use of poetic figures, indirect presentation through differing voices, and, particularly, ambiguity and irony lead one to exactly the questioning of progressive movement that Kierkegaard objected to in Hegel and the Romantics.

Kierkegaard was relatively obscure during his lifetime, but he has become a major figure in Protestant theological circles, and his passionate view of life lived precariously above an abyss echoes existentialism. For all of that, the idiosyncratic nature of his use of aesthetics has relatively little influence in mainstream philosophical aesthetics.

**KITSCH.** Kitsch is a form of pseudo-art that appeals to easy sentimentality or popular taste. It includes things like greeting card verse, the kind of paintings reproduced and hung on motel walls, and paintings of Elvis on black velvet, but it also may include works that occupied a place in the art world for a time only to be rejected. To call something “kitsch” implies that it is artistic trash or rubbish. Some decorative arts that were taken seriously at one time now would likely be called kitsch as would most socialist realist and fascist art.

Kitsch is of interest to aesthetics because it mimics art. It appeals to feeling; it is as difficult to define as the art it mimics; and the feeling it evokes can claim the same subjective appeal as art. So the existence of kitsch poses a challenge to traditional aesthetic theory. One of the major objections to kitsch is that it replaces art and corrupts taste, but that worry is difficult to defend on the basis of anything but an elitist conception of fine art.

**KNIGHT, RICHARD PAYNE (1751–1824).** Richard Payne Knight was a wealthy English landowner and amateur philosopher and critic
who advanced a number of eccentric views on antiquity and religion. (He denied the authenticity of the Elgin marbles, for example.) His aesthetic interests arose from his own picturesque development of his estates and his disagreements with his neighbor and friend, Uvedale Price.

In a long philosophical poem, The Landscape (1793), Knight opposed the landscaping principles of the leading landscape gardener of the day, “Capability” Brown. Brown sought to “improve” nature by giving it an order that emphasized planned views. Knight and other defenders of the picturesque preferred roughness, naturalness, and a sometimes artificially cultivated wildness. In his Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste (1805), Knight attacked the views of Edmund Burke on the sublime. Knight’s disagreement with Burke was over the role of the senses in the sublime. Knight denied that there were secondary senses of taste and the sublime that acted directly as forms of perception. He also disagreed with Price for the same reason. Both Price and Knight defended the picturesque, but Price treated it as a combined sense while Knight denied that separate senses could be combined independently of education and experience. Knight is one of the last of the 18th-century writers on taste. His views were already somewhat anachronistic, having been superseded by the associationist and expressionist aesthetics that was being developed by Thomas Reid, Dugald Stewart, and especially Archibald Alison.

LANDSCAPE. Landscape as an aesthetic object appears in both Western and Chinese and Japanese aesthetics. In the latter, it expresses an idealized oneness with nature that is achieved through formal presentation wedded to naturalistic representation. Its object is contemplation and the unity of the mind and a transcendent world. In Western aesthetics, landscape becomes an aesthetic object with the rise of the picturesque, the adaptation of natural scenery to the standards of beauty exemplified in paintings. There too, there is an element of idealization. A painted landscape need not actually exist. Once those idealized landscapes had become common and estab-
lished a form of aesthetic perception, it then became possible to move back to nature by so arranging a landscape that it becomes a kind of natural painting. The taste changed over time from formal landscape to a wilder, more naturalistic form, but that wildness was equally something that had to be cultivated artificially on the basis of pictorial expectations.

Contemporary environmental art also uses landscape as a material. Two very different approaches are evident. One finds in pre-existing landscapes the material for aesthetic appreciation when properly approached. Landscape is not formed according to artificial aesthetic principles but is approached according to the principles of aesthetic appreciation. The alternative is to use landscape itself as a material and to manipulate it for artistic purposes. Large earthworks and installations shape the landscape to produce effects, though sometimes those effects are either temporary or only accessible by special means, or both. See also GARDENING.

LANGER, SUSANNE (1895–1985). The American philosopher Susanne Langer developed the neo-Kantian theories of symbolism earlier presented by Ernst Cassirer in her influential works Philosophy in a New Key (1942) and Feeling and Form (1953). Langer did more than just draw on Cassirer’s theories that language and symbol systems are the way that the mind construes reality, however. She developed a distinction between discursive and presentational forms that allowed her to include non-representational art and music within the larger theories of symbolic action. Music is a symbolic way that emotions are expressed even though it does not have a discursive vocabulary. The links that she established between religious symbolism, cultural forms, and art extended neo-Kantian philosophy and essentially made aesthetics an epistemologically central form of philosophy.

LAOCOÖN. The Hellenistic statue group that shows the Trojan priest Laocoön and his two sons entangled in the coils of a serpent played a significant role in early modern aesthetics. Laocoön was being punished by the gods for warning the Trojans not to take in the Trojan horse. The statue was mis-attributed to an early classical period in the 18th century. The expression on the face of Laocoön was
taken by J. J. Winckelmann to represent the ideal of classical restraint in contrast to the later emotionalism of Virgil when he describes the same scene in the Aeneid. G. E. Lessing, in a famous essay, opposed Winckelmann’s interpretation, not because he disagreed with Winckelmann’s interpretation of the expression, but because he saw in it a basis for his argument about the difference between sculpture and painting, on the one hand, and poetry, on the other. According to Lessing, it was not Greek virtue as such that restrained the artists in this case. Rather, Lessing argued, artists are constrained by their medium. The restraint shown by the Laocoön sculptors is a product of their awareness of the rules of their media. Virgil, as a poet, is bound by different rules. The sculptor can only represent a single moment of high tension, while the poet can provide a temporal sequence.

LAUGHTER. Laughter is a part of the history of aesthetics because it appeals directly to sensibility or feeling without reflection, though its related manifestation, wit, depends on just such reflection. Laughter is, first of all, an autonomic response to a situation. Various theories have been offered about what triggers that response: incongruity, a feeling of superiority, or novelty, for example.

From the standpoint of aesthetics, however, the significance lies not in which psychological theory is correct (if any is) but in the kind of response that is produced. Laughter has the characteristics one associates with aesthetic experience. It is pleasant and produces the kind of pleasure that is independent of ends. Laughter is a sensibility, a faculty for finding enjoyment that applies equally to representations and real situations, but it requires the detachment of the response from reality and its consequences. One laughs at the clown only as long as the pranks and pratfalls do not really hurt anyone. Otherwise, laughter becomes morally offensive and it ceases to be pleasant.

Laughter also plays a role as a form of critique of taste. Taste itself is subjective; as a feeling, it cannot be anything other than what it is. Rules do not apply, or if they do, they do not convince someone whose taste does not conform to the rules. But if one holds up that taste to criticism in the form of ridicule and raillery, then laughter effectively changes the judgment implicit in taste. If one laughs at
one’s own taste, then that laughter acknowledges the deficiency of the original taste.

Laughter is a part of theories of aesthetic humor, and it is also part of the attempt to naturalize aesthetics in terms of evolutionary development. Laughter seems to be one of those universal reactions that suggest that some aesthetic responses are rooted in our evolutionary prehistory.

LE BOSSU, RENÉ (1631–1680). In his Traité du poème épicque (1675), the French critic Le Bossu combines a Cartesian view of nature with an Aristotelian view of poetic rules. His subject is the passions and how they are to be dealt with in poetry. Reason guides the artist in the exercise of the passions. One begins by creating a bond with the passions of the audience and moves them toward the passions of the poem. Le Bossu has in mind a kind of emotional chemistry premised on working backward from the desired effects to a sufficient cause.

LE BRUN, CHARLES (1619–1690). Charles Le Brun, a follower of Nicholas Poussin, was court painter to Louis XIV and as head of the Goeblins works, responsible for the design and production of royal furnishings. As director of the Royal Academy of Painting, he exercised considerable control over the arts in 17th-century France. His Méthode pour apprendre à dessiner les Passions (1698) laid down rules for the expression of emotions in painting on the basis of René Descartes’ treatise on the passions. Descartes had developed a kind of mechanics of the passions that purported to show how each individual passion was brought about and what it consisted in. Le Brun applied this to painting to show how a single external scene could incorporate the mechanical causes and thus produce the passion in pictorial form. Behind this effort lies the confidence that painting is a form of expression of the passions that is subject to both rules of production and critical rules of evaluation.

LE CORBUSIER (CHARLES-ÉDOUARD JEANNERET) (1887–1965). The Swiss-born architect Le Corbusier was one of the leading proponents of architectural modernism. He explained his aesthetic principles in the avant-garde journal L’esprit nouveau (1920–1925)
Like other modernist architects, Le Corbusier experimented with new materials, including reinforced concrete, and with flowing shapes and free movement of both form and access. Le Corbusier is much harder to categorize than others in the architectural modernist movement, however. He retains an experimentalism and a free play with forms but avoids stylistic repetition. His aesthetic positions are less doctrinaire as well, and they are subordinate to his buildings.

**LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452–1519).** In addition to his accomplishments as a painter, architect, engineer, sculptor, and natural scientist, Leonardo wrote one of the important Renaissance treatises on painting, his *Trattato della pitura*, a collection of observations composed during his stay in Milan between 1482 and 1499. Leonardo considers painting a science because it conveys experience directly, and he considers it superior to poetry because it depends on the more direct and superior sense, sight, while poetry must depend on a secondary system of signs, words. Not only do Leonardo’s observations show the Renaissance valuation of direct experience, but his taking the side of painting against poetry marks the aesthetic revision of the place of the arts themselves. Poetry alone among the arts had classical sanction as an art related to the gods by inspiration, while painting was a craft. Leonardo’s reversal of that relation is only possible with the reversal of the role of the artist as well. Painters do not just claim an equal calling as inspired; they claim a superior place on the basis of their own skill and the superiority of their concrete medium.

**LESSING, GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM (1729–1781).** G. E. Lessing was a German dramatist, critic, and philosopher whose work influenced the development of modern aesthetics. Lessing is best known for a controversy in which he challenged the classicist interpretation of a statue group, the *Laocoön*, offered by J. J. Winckelmann. Winckelmann’s interpretation of the group, which shows Laocoön and his sons entangled in the coils of a giant serpent, was influential in establishing an ideal view of Greek art as superior because of its restraint and classical control. Lessing had never actually seen the statue and accepted Winckelmann’s description of it as showing a restrained, classical vision of extreme suffering (most recent criti-
cism disagrees with this description), but he disagreed about the source of that vision. Lessing attributed it not to a superior Greek classicism but to the conditions of the medium. Sculpture is limited to the representation of a single, “pregnant” moment. The passage in Virgil’s Aeneid to which Winckelmann contrasted the statue is different because poetry can represent temporal movement and thus greater emotional suffering. So the sculpture is restrained because it cannot do what poetry can do; it is the more limited form.

Lessing’s own aesthetic theory of the pregnant moment and the difference between poetry, painting, and sculpture owes a great deal to the theory of natural and arbitrary signs of Moses Mendelssohn. Poetry is superior to painting because the medium of poetry, language, has greater expressive powers than painting and sculpture. Painting is limited to natural signs, which are those that actually depict something. Poetry makes use of artificial or conventional signs in language, which are able to represent temporally and conceptually. Poetry can express a greater range of emotions as a result.

Lessing remains close to the rationalist aesthetic as it was developed by A. G. Baumgarten and Georg Friedrich Meier. Feeling and sensibility are confused perceptions and beauty is subject to rational rules. Lessing is much more practical and less dogmatic than his rationalist sources, however. He is prepared to modify his critical judgments on the basis of perceived effects. His own dramatic works exhibit a feeling for comedy and tolerance. His influence on the German theater through his critical essays in the Hamburg Dramaturgy (1767–1768), which develops a practical aesthetic largely based on his own theatrical experience, is considerable. According to Lessing, art is neither pure sensate representation nor absolute truth. The former is too chaotic, too confused. The later is beyond our finite limits. Lessing’s use of the theory of natural and arbitrary signs, his combination of imitation and expression, of rules and genius, of feeling and absolute form may not always be consistent, but it is central to the mid-18th century German development of aesthetics.

LOCKE, JOHN (1632–1704). John Locke’s influence and philosophical reputation in the later 17th- and 18th-century Britain is second only to that of Sir Isaac Newton. Locke was an associate and family retainer of the first Earl of Shaftesbury. He provided much of the
liberal political theory that supported the Glorious Revolution against the absolutism and Catholicism of James II, and he was active in formulating the doctrines of tolerance and constitutional monarchy that informed the early colonial period.

The line of empiricist philosophy founded by Locke competed directly with the rationalism of René Descartes and G. E. Leibniz. Locke rejected any appeal to innate ideas, though that did not mean that some kind of innate capacities did not characterize human nature. All knowledge consists of ideas derived from experience or reflection on the powers of the mind itself, and reason is limited to what can be derived from the comparison of ideas. Imagination and association can extend ideas beyond their original occurrence, but they can never produce wholly new ideas independently of experience. Secondary qualities, such as color perception, are mental events that do not resemble their causes in things. Moral qualities are like secondary qualities in that they belong to the mind.

Locke himself has little to say about the arts or taste, but he was instrumental in designing the education of the third Earl of Shaftesbury, who, while he rejected much of Locke’s explicit teaching, nevertheless adopted the theory of ideas as it applied to beauty and morality, interpreting them as sentimental responses that carried their own aesthetic and moral weight. Francis Hutcheson explicitly acknowledged the influence of Shaftesbury and Locke when he composed his Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, which is the first systematic treatise in modern aesthetics; and Locke’s influence on the philosophy of David Hume, including his theories of taste, is obvious, as it is on lesser writers on taste and criticism, such as Joseph Priestley. Each of these writers adopts Locke’s empiricist version of the theory of ideas, which claims that all knowledge is limited to knowledge of ideas themselves as they are produced by experience. Beauty and virtue are ideas. What relation they have to their causes is the subject of debate, but that they are known only by experience, that they are ideas in the mind and not primary qualities of bodies, and that they are known only by the feelings or sentiments that they raise in perceivers are the common themes that run through all of Lockean-influenced aesthetics in the 18th century.
LONGINUS. The author of the treatise “On the Sublime” was until this century identified as Cassius Longinus (?–273 CE). Internal evidence makes it more likely, however, that the work belongs to an unknown author of the first century CE. It can be traced to a manuscript of the 10th century and became influential based on a Renaissance edition published in 1554 and translations into English (1652) and French (1674). Interest in the sublime as a critical term in the 18th century raised “On the Sublime” to prominence as the classical source for the modern critical use of the term. The treatise itself, however, is primarily a rhetorical work that is directed toward oratory, and its use of the term ‘sublime’ differs significantly from the 18th-century usage. The treatise is also incomplete. It breaks off before dealing directly with the passions. In “On the Sublime,” the sublime is a form of elevated language that transports the audience in contrast to the language of argument that depends on persuasion and reason. It produces a kind of ecstasy. Its source is nature and the natural or innate ability that only genius can exhibit. The danger is that it will be undisciplined. At one extreme, attempts at the sublime produce an excessively florid, swollen language. At the other extreme, the low or mean produces mere learning or frigidity of language. In all three instances—tumidity, sublimity, and frigidity—it is the language itself that achieves the effects. One cannot depend on nature alone, therefore, and the body of the treatise is taken up with developing the rhetorical rules and examples for language that will produce elevation without either excess or pedantry. Nature does not act at random, and the rules of art are nature’s own rules. The treatise lays out five principal sources of elevated language: the power of forming great conceptions, emotion or inspired passion; the due formation of figures; diction (including the choice of words); the use of metaphor and the elaboration of language; and dignified and elevated composition. The first two are innate or natural; the last three depend on rhetorical rules and training. Imagination serves to present what is seen, vivid description. The object is to achieve an intended effect, a vivid impression that carries the audience along without conscious thought to a single, united result that is organic, like the body itself.

The appeal to rules and to nature found a new response in the 18th-century desire to extend Newtonian science into the arts. Longinus
(or pseudo-Longinus, if one prefers) offered both a naturalism and a rule-governed account of the sublime. The 18th-century sublime is an altogether different emotional response, however. Whereas the emphasis in “On the Sublime” is on elevation of language, the 18th-century writers on the sublime are seeking a form of experience that is directly perceived. Its sources are nature and the naturally wild or Gothic, and its characteristics include awe, terror, and even pain. The tendency is to view the sublime as a wilder, more exciting alternative to beauty. This contrasts with the essentially rhetorical, linguistic emphasis in Longinus.

LUKÁCS, GYÖRGY (GEORG) (1885–1971). György Lukács was one of the leading Marxist philosophers of art. His most important early work, The Theory of the Novel (1916), defends the realistic 19th-century novel as a positive historical force because of its form—even though its content is bourgeois and capitalist. Lukács engaged in an extended and bitter controversy with Bertolt Brecht over the nature of Marxist literature and the meaning of realism because of Brecht’s experimentalism and Lukács’s adherence to a historical formalism. Lukács exerted a considerable influence on the Frankfurt School critics, especially Theodor Adorno.

MAKE-BELIEVE. Among the puzzles of contemporary aesthetics is what one is to make of responses to fictions, particularly fictional characters. Reference to fictions is problematic in any event since reference normally implies something that is referred to. In ordinary cases, sentences that refer to non-existent beings are false because they consist of the conjunction of a hypothetical proposition with a false antecedent and an existential claim that is false. In the case of fictional characters in narrative genres, it is not enough to say that the sentences are simply false, however. We use them and respond to them as if they were true. Instead of abandoning what we know to be false, we go right on using the sentences and treating them as referring.

The kinds of things that one can say about fictional characters and
the rationality of one’s responses to them continue to raise questions. For example, Lady Macbeth has children according to Shakespeare’s play, but in the absence of specific information in the text, there is no exact number. So one has the seeming paradox that she has children but no specific number of children, which is rather different from just saying that we do not know how many children she has. Similarly, we react emotionally to the murder of the King, the appearance of his ghost, and the witches, yet we do not believe in the existence of anything of which we are afraid. It seems odd or even irrational to fear fictions that cannot harm us when we know that they are fictions.

One way of dealing with such problems has been proposed by Kendall Walton, who distinguishes make-believe from actual emotions. One establishes a game, which has its own rules, that allows just the kind of limited reference that fictions require and that produces not real emotions but make-believe emotions. Within a game of make-believe, one accepts the rules of the game and pretends to refer while knowing that one is not actually referring to anything. Within the game, one has all of the make-believe emotions that the game requires, but those emotions are limited by the rules of the game. One can enjoy being frightened because the make-believe fright does not have the real-world consequences and one knows the difference. Walton’s ideas of make-believe have been developed by a number of other philosophers in both aesthetics and the philosophy of language.

MANNERISM. Mannerism is the loosely defined 16th-century style of painting (roughly 1520–1590) that values individual virtuosity in color and formal design. The term is extended to other arts that show similar individuality of style and exaggeration. Mannerism is important in aesthetics because of its emphasis on the individuality of the artist and the marked shift from the High Renaissance use of classical models and harmony to originality as a value. Mannerism is the first style to make the individual taste of the artist important, and the contemporary descriptions of mannerism use ‘taste’ in its extended sense as an aesthetic faculty or sense for the first time.

MARGOLIS, JOSEPH (1924–). Joseph Margolis is an American academic philosopher whose prolific works range over a number of aes-
thetic problems including the ontology and interpretation of art. He has been particularly important in seeking to open a dialogue with continental philosophy from his own analytical perspective.

**MARXIST AESTHETICS.** Marxist aesthetics, like the Romanticism against which it originally reacts, is varied in the positions that it holds. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were interested in literary criticism, and Marx, who studied under A. W. Schlegel at Bonn, projected a work on aesthetics that was never written. Marx admired Greek classicism and, at least in his early writings, was sympathetic to a form of aesthetic pleasure. Marx and Engels collaborated on two major critiques of contemporary literary works—a novel by Eugène Sue and Ferdinand Lassalle’s drama *Franz von Sickengen*—in which they criticized the social attitudes of the works because they failed to attack the root economic and social causes of the problems they addressed. Marx also defended the realism of Honoré de Balzac as ultimately critical of the monarchical class even though Balzac himself intended its defense.

Aesthetics and criticism influenced by Marx go in a number of different directions, however. In the Soviet Union, Marxist aesthetics took the form of party and political loyalty and advancement. The sole function of art was to advance revolutionary unity and oppose reaction. Other Marxist writers were more sympathetic to the independence of the arts, however. Bertolt Brecht and György Lukács entered into a controversy in which each criticized the other but in which both held Marxist positions independent of the orthodox political interpretations of Soviet aesthetics. Brecht sought an anti-Aristotelian theater that rejected traditional aesthetic distance and forced the audience to commit and confront itself. Lukács advocated an open, anti-fascist aesthetic that maintains a dialectical relation with earlier literary forms that Brecht wished to reject altogether. To Lukács, Brecht seemed too alienated and formalist; to Brecht, Lukács seemed too willing to compromise with traditional aesthetic pleasures.

Subsequent Marxist-influenced aesthetics, particularly recently, moves away from the strictly political issues that dominated the mid-20th century to analyze the complex relations of economic class, political influence, and socially conscious art. It divides between a form
of aesthetics that is essentially analytical (in the Marxist, dialectical sense) and a normative theory. The Frankfurt School philosophers, particularly Theodor Adorno, reconfigure the classical Marxist terminology and categories in ways that shift art and aesthetic experience from secondary, reactionary roles to avant-garde consciousness without abandoning the critique of contemporary culture and its capitalist structure.

Certain common themes run throughout Marxist aesthetics. It is, first of all, anti-Hegelian. G. W. F. Hegel locates art at a level below religion and philosophy in the development of spirit. History is a working out of ideal forces through cultural forms, and art plays an important but ultimately supersedable role in the progress of the spirit. Marxist aesthetics rejects Hegel’s idealism while continuing to assert a progressive history moving toward an as yet not fully recognizable end. The forces that drive history are economic and material rather than spiritual. Art plays a role as manifestation of the current state of the culture but also at least potentially as an anticipation of the next stage.

Marxist aesthetics is also anti-Kantian. Immanuel Kant’s transcendental idealism located the aesthetic at the pre-conceptual base of all structured consciousness. Knowledge depends on the formation of intuition into perceptual forms, and aesthetics is at once intuition and a peculiar delight in that intuition. So art, as the direct result of aesthetic intuition and as its formal embodiment, is culturally autonomous. Marxist aesthetics rejects that autonomy. In some Marxist-influenced theories, aesthetic pleasure continues to play a role; in others, it is rejected altogether as an illusion. But in either case, art must be the result of social and cultural forces. It is a product of labor subject to the laws of its production. It can never be autonomous, therefore, and it must always be a part of the moral and political world of its creation.

Marxist aesthetics continues to be dialectical even though it shifts the dialectic from one of spirit and ideas to one of class and economic materialism. At any given time, a dominant class will control the means of production and impose its will on those that serve it. The dominant class must be conservative; its end is to maintain its own status. It is inevitably opposed by those it seeks to use, however, and the relation between the dominant class and an emerging class is
dialectical. Each defines and depends on the other. The conditions of the dialectic are material, however. Rather than the Romantic dialectic of creation and imitation, the basic terms of the dialectic must be material, and for Marxist aesthetics, that normally means economic and political terms. Art must be located within that dialectic, either as a commodity produced for an elite class or as a revolutionary art defined by but opposing the dominant class.

Marxist aesthetics usually begins with a distinction between the base and superstructure of a particular historical epoch. The base is the division between classes and the control of the means of production. It is essentially economic and material. The superstructure is ideological. It takes different cultural forms. Art would normally be part of the superstructure. It is an ideological expression produced as a commodity to support the leisure class of the time. As such, art and aesthetic experience are ideologically suspect. They are bound to exploitation and serve primarily as entertainment and excess. A Marxist aesthetician can also argue that art can play a role in the base, however, if it exposes the dialectical relations to criticism. It is even possible to see in art an anticipation of the otherwise utopian pleasures of a resolution of the dialectic.

Marxist aesthetics also depends heavily on a distinction between form and content. Formalism leads one back to the autonomy of art, so Marxist aesthetics normally favors content and condemns formalism as a denial of the social consciousness necessary to art. The extreme form of this distinction was exhibited in Socialist Realism that dictated that art must present the reality to be condemned in the starkest terms and the reality to be achieved in its ideological purity. The function of art should be limited to a kind of ideal materialism. Socialist Realism was an extreme political form, however. The same form/content distinction can also be found in the dialectic of between man as the maker of art and man as the experiencer of art. The only way that form and content can be unified is by the progressive dialectic in which art challenges art.

Marxist aesthetics is a form of historicism, therefore. It views art as a product of human labor that creates culture. Each period or epoch has its own art that cannot be recreated. Social progress and revolution proceed from the play of historical forces, and art both expresses and embodies those forces. History is at once an ideal
toward which humankind is moving and a real material and economic situation in which each human finds him or herself. Aesthetic activity is linked to its own historical epoch but also plays a role in the movement of history through successive revolutions. The uniquely Marxist form of this historicism remains essentially utopian and progressive. History has a direction and an end.

A number of problems occupy Marxist-influenced aesthetics. Because each historical period has its own art, it is difficult to account for the persistent influence and value of previous periods. Some Marxists simply reject all earlier art as superseded and irrelevant. Most, however, find some persistent value in earlier forms. Marxist criticism also has a tendency to be extrinsic. It approaches works of art first of all in terms of their relations to their audience as a collective class and to the political and social forces that produce them. In a purely extrinsic form of criticism, there is no room for aesthetic appreciation and contemplation in the traditional sense. Again, however, some form of intrinsic criticism finds a place in Marxist aesthetics, often as a form of aesthetic pleasure that anticipates the end of history. Extrinsic criticism subordinates the work to external political ends, but in Marxist aesthetics, the dialectic can be internal to a work. This is particularly true of literature, and the emphasis on content over form and the difficulty in assimilating music, in particular, to dialectical terms tends to favor literature as the predominant art form in Marxist aesthetics.

MASS ART. Prior to the formulation of the conceptual distinction between the fine arts and practical arts or crafts, theories of the arts were formulated in terms of the nature of the thing produced and its ends. Aristotle described things in terms of their causes, which were determined by the formal, material, efficient, and final relations that produced the thing. Everything that is made is made according to some formal or ideal pattern from some material by some process and for some use. The response of the audience, if it was considered at all, was only part of the use. Tragedy could be used to produce catharsis in an audience (though the catharsis might not actually occur except in the terms of the plot itself). Distinguishing conceptually between the fine arts and practical arts or crafts led to separate theories of the fine arts that emphasized the response of the audi-
ence—*aesthetic experience*—independently of how the object was produced or otherwise described. So an aesthetics of nature could arise in which nature is treated as the work of a divine artist, and ordinary objects could be taken up into the *art world* independently of what their worldly makers intended them to be.

The *autonomy* of the fine arts left a gap in the theory of the arts, however, when it came to popular arts. Popular arts do not produce the kind of aesthetic response associated with the fine arts, but they are not simply a means to some other end either. Attempts to reduce popular arts and *folk art* to mere entertainment or to their utilitarian or commercial ends ignores the extent to which they are ends in themselves with their own independent *values*. For example, one can acknowledge that Shakespeare’s plays and many contemporary movies are money-making enterprises that entertain audiences without giving up the idea that they are also art in their own right. So theories of the arts have attempted to locate popular arts within the art world rather than simply relegating them to the world of craft or entertainment.

One of the important distinctions that this expansion of the art world has produced is based on the means of production. Some art is produced in such a way that it can be replicated and distributed widely. *Films*, recorded *music*, and photographs, for example, are not just incidentally appreciated widely. It is intrinsic to their means of production that they can be appreciated at many levels and in many different venues. The earliest appearance of this phenomenon may be the development of engraving as a means of reproducing either *paintings* or works specifically designed to be engraved. Such works define a different audience, and the response of that audience is not limited to the kind of aesthetic detachment called for by the fine arts. Its appeal is to a consuming public that appreciates it at several levels at once.

The term ‘mass art’ was coined to provide a neutral description of the kind of art that falls between mere entertainment or practical arts and the fine arts as they were conceived by and for an educated elite audience. The term is particularly associated with the contemporary aesthetician Noël Carroll. Mass art is still art; it is not simply *design* or craft, and it is not mere entertainment, though it may depend on its ability to entertain to attract its audience. Mass art has its own unique means of production. Instead of the *Romantic myth* of the
artist as original creator, mass art allows collaboration, adaptation, and discovery. Instead of the elitism of educated response, mass art defines its own audience and directs its response. And instead of the detached, aesthetic response of an audience to the fine arts, the response to mass art is complex and multi-valenced. Mass art is not simply popular art, however. It may not be popular, as in the case of political or satirical art that offends to achieve its effect. Popular art is limited to a particular kind of response, but mass art may produce many different responses. The distinction is based on fundamental differences in the artwork itself, therefore. Mass art expands the field of aesthetics.

MEDIEVAL AESTHETICS. Strictly speaking, there is no medieval aesthetics. Not only would it be anachronistic to read modern concepts of aesthetic pleasure and aesthetic experience back onto the Latin Middle Ages, but the subordination of art and beauty to a comprehensive theological metaphysics precludes the kind of independent philosophy of art and beauty that we now associate with the aesthetic.

That said, the Latin Middle Ages—roughly from Augustine to the early Renaissance—provide extensive treatments of beauty as a metaphysical concept and a complex system of the arts that includes music, painting, sculpture, poetry, and architecture. Moreover, the attractions of beautiful objects were a challenge to the philosophical and theological presuppositions of the period. There is no reason to think that the underlying phenomena that modern aesthetics seeks to explain were not a part of the medieval experience. While there may have been no separation of the fine arts from arts generally that included craft and while artists were predominantly viewed as craftsmen prior to the rise of mannerist individualism, actual artistic achievements and appreciation of individual works by those who had the leisure to indulge such pleasures were very much a part of medieval culture.

Early medieval theories of beauty are founded on the work of Plotinus, whose sixth tractate, “On Beauty,” in the first Ennead sets out the basic hierarchical structure that subsequent neo-Platonic theories follow. Sensual pleasure is located at the bottom of that hierarchy. From that beginning, one can rise to the intellectual appreciation of
form and thence to participation in the unity that lies behind all diversity. Beauty is ultimately intellectual and free from the constraints of sense. Beyond beauty is pure unity, the One, from which all else emanates. Augustine adopts much of this neo-Platonic hierarchy and adapts it to a Christian schema that identifies the One with God. As a theory of beauty, it is essentially quantitative. Unity is the ideal form of forms, and whatever leads to unity participates in the beautiful. Thus proportion, symmetry, and harmony are not just quantitative values; they are also the metaphysical conditions of reality itself. Music is the model for the arts because it can be explained in terms of the mathematical relations of tones and chords. The music of the spheres is more than a metaphor; it is literally the organizing principles of the cosmos.

The practical application of this quantitative aesthetic extends to all of the arts. Manuals of the arts do two things: they instruct craftsmen in how to produce effective works, and they set out the mathematical rules for each art that will assure their success. Proportions are all important to the representation of the ideal human figure, the ideal building, and the ideal poetic form. There is, therefore, a kind of mechanics of beauty that can be learned. No distinction between the arts as something to be appreciated or contemplated and the arts as something to be used is needed. All contemplation is of the reality represented, and the use of all of the arts is to lead one to that contemplation.

At the same time, the quantitative aspect of neo-Platonic theories of beauty is challenged by the sensibility to qualitative values, especially color. Existing evidence indicates that medieval art was based on primary colors and contrasts, unlike the Renaissance schemes of chiaroscuro and shading. Medieval statues, like their Greek predecessors, were painted in vivid colors. The appreciation of color was vindicated by the priority assigned to the sense of sight among the senses. Sight, of all the senses, provides knowledge of its objects without the intervention of convention or inference. Color does not fit the requirements of symmetry and proportion because it is immediately felt without the necessity for a relation to something else. Plotinus rejected the reduction of beauty to symmetry for just that reason.

The qualitative theory of beauty finds its metaphysical foundation
in theories of illumination, therefore. Light is present all at once without the mediation of temporal motion or intellectual comparison. So light is also more than a metaphor. Illumination is the basic condition of understanding, a direct participation in the reality of its objects. As the necessary condition of sight, it is independent of specific beliefs. One may experience illumination on the basis of one’s human nature, and that illumination marks the intellectual ascent of the soul. Pure color, the pleasures of sight, and the kind of ecstatic vision sought by Bonaventure, the Victorines (Hugh and Richard), and Dante in the Paradiso all depend on divine illumination. Abbot Suger’s defense of the ornamentation of the church at St. Denis is based on the importance of light and illumination, and it also justifies the common view that painting and stained glass are the literature of the laity. The eye does not require learning.

From Augustine onward, however, there is also an ascetic resistance to the theory of beauty. To remain rooted in the lowest, sensual level of the hierarchy of being is to fail to free the soul from its bodily constraints. The attractions and pleasures of beauty hold one down. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), as the spokesman for the Cluniac Cistercian reform movement, is adamant in his opposition to the sensual pleasures of the eye and the mind. The arts are a form of temptation all too seductive to the fallen state of man. The suspicion of beauty and the arts exemplified by Bernard’s preaching and writings was common throughout the Middle Ages.

The neo-Platonic theory of beauty reached its highest state in the writings of Hugh and Richard of St. Victor where an ecstatic vision and contemplation is combined with an intellectual appreciation of order that can be worked out in Trinitarian terms. The increasing influence of Aristotle in the 13th century offers a different theory of beauty, however. Neo-Platonism does not disappear altogether, but Thomas Aquinas replaces the strictly hierarchical theory of beauty that makes sensual pleasure suspect with a more concrete Aristotelian causal structure that treats beauty as one of the most important ways that the mind grasps the world. Instead of illumination and quantitative rules, Aquinas formulates a theory of beauty as integrity or perfection, due proportion or harmony, and brightness or clarity (Summa Theologica, Q. 39, art. 8) that combines the basic elements already recognized into a single causal system. Thus, instead of hav-
ing to choose between the quantitative and qualitative aspects of beauty, Aquinas sees them as independent necessary causes of a single existential phenomenon, the experience of beauty.

The theory of beauty as a metaphysical reality is linked to the actual production of works of art only with difficulty. Art is subordinate to its intellectual and contemplative ends. Unless it leads to the divine, it fails to achieve its final cause. But running through medieval aesthetic theory is a sense that the world itself is always significant of more than its immediate appearance. So not only is beauty an end that can lead one to contemplation, the arts also must be a means to read from nature what is written there. In both painting and literature, an elaborate structure of allegorical meanings and iconic signs develops to present the hidden meaning of nature and history. Biblical interpretation throughout the Middle Ages is allegorical in the largest sense of that word. Christians read the Old Testament in the light of the New, and they read nature in the light of the final drama of salvation. Everything has multiple levels of meaning. Dante explains the allegorical nature of poetry and Scripture in terms of four compatible levels of interpretation. Every poetic or sacred text includes a literal, an allegorical or mystical, a moral, and an anagogical or universal meaning. Dante, like Aquinas, whose metaphysics he adapts, transforms the common allegorical method of reading a text into a fourfold causal structure that does not require one to choose between meanings. Meaning has become polysemous, and beauty, while still a vision produced by illumination, becomes equally polymorphous.

The one consistent feature of medieval aesthetics is its integration of beauty and the arts into a single metaphysical unity. That unity began to break down in the Renaissance as individual arts became independent and artists asserted their individuality and personal identity as artists. The conditions of production changed, the appreciation of the arts was put to different uses, and a new conceptual vocabulary was required. The medieval synthesis is replaced by an art world that demands its own identity. That in no way denigrates the force of medieval theories of beauty and the arts, however, nor does it deny the existence of artistic creation and a vibrant appreciation of the arts in the Latin Middle Ages.
MEDIUM. An artistic medium is whatever material is used to produce an artifact. Language, sound, color, and specific materials, such as marble and stone, are all regarded as artistic media. Aesthetically, the properties of the medium determine what is possible for the particular art form or genre. The relation between an artistic medium and its aesthetic possibilities has been challenged by avant-garde artists who turn to ordinary materials and found art to show that the media of art do not require special aesthetic properties.

MEIER, GEORG FRIEDRICH (1718–1777). The German philosopher Georg Friedrich Meier was a student of A. G. Baumgarten and, like Baumgarten, a follower of the rationalism of G. E. Leibniz and Christian Wolff. He regarded aesthetics as a form of sensual knowledge that is clear but not distinct and sought to formulate it along “scientific” principles.

MERLEAU-PONTY, MAURICE (1908–1961). Maurice Merleau-Ponty was a phenomenologist who was politically engaged on the Left in France. Merleau-Ponty goes beyond Edmund Husserl’s phenomenology to explore the lived world of perception in *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1945/1961). Consciousness is not just an ideal state subject to phenomenological analysis. It is also the pre-scientific form of lived experience. Like Jean-Paul Sartre, with whom he was associated for a time as editor of *Les temps modernes*, Merleau-Ponty believed that the existential presence of the body could not be bracketed completely. Consciousness is a material and historical phenomenon, not just an individual, isolated occurrence. Merleau-Ponty was particularly interested in painting and literature as forms of such experience. He found in impressionist and post-impressionist painting, particularly the work of Paul Cézanne, a way that lived experience is realized by presenting the perceptual, visual world before it is reduced by scientific and abstract categories.

METAPHOR. Strictly speaking, metaphor is a trope and belongs to rhetoric, not the philosophy of art. A metaphor is an implied comparison expressed by identity, a simile that has been reduced to a direct identification. So “Alexander is like a bear” becomes “Alexander is a bear.” Metaphors can take forms other than “A is B” as
well. So “Alexander growled” need not mean that Alexander literally made growling noises but that his speech was harsh and guttural. “Alexander advanced bearishly” uses an adverbial form, and “Brutish Alexander” uses an adjectival form. The rhetorical function of metaphor is both ornamental—to add interest—and persuasive—to lead the audience to think of two things together by associating the characteristics of one with the other.

Even in classical rhetoric, however, metaphor is more important than other tropes because of its implied metaphysics. To identify one thing with another is to say something about how the world is. So the comparison of two things of different kinds reduces one to the other. A theory of art as an imitation of a metaphysically different reality, such as Plato’s theory—a painting is an imitation of a thing that is in turn an imitation of the real form—implicitly makes all art into metaphor since a painting both is and is not the thing of which it is a painting.

When aesthetics was being formulated as a theory of feeling in the 18th century, metaphor also became central because it expresses the associations that link language and aesthetic qualities. In order to account for the associations between certain feelings and properties of objects, a theory of signs was developed. Some signs are natural and some artificial or conventional. Both link the properties of a thing with a feeling. For example, the sight of a newborn lamb is experienced as pleasant and expresses both rebirth naturally and Christian theology conventionally. The aesthetic feeling depends on associations, and those associations are expressed in the implicit metaphor of rebirth and the lamb.

In 20th-century aesthetics, metaphor and the philosophy of language come together in theories of aesthetic predicates. To say that something is beautiful or elegant or graceful is to speak metaphorically rather than literally because no essential properties define beauty, elegance, or gracefulness. The simple classical theories of metaphor as an implied comparison have to be modified. Two prominent theories of metaphor differ markedly in the way that they explain metaphorical expression. Max Black, Monroe Beardsley, and others treat metaphor as an interaction of a primary expression and a secondary expression in which each interacts to select properties of the other and change the meaning of both expressions. An alternative
approach explains metaphorical action as a kind of mythopoetic creation. The linkage of two things in a metaphor creates a new meaning. In a way, this is asserted to be the process by which all meaning is created. Language begins in metaphor and only gradually dissolves its metaphors into literal expressions. Numerous theories of metaphor develop around these polar alternatives. All art, and not just aesthetic predicators, becomes metaphorical, and the meaning of art parallels the meaning of its metaphorical expressions.

MIMESIS. Mimesis is the Greek word for imitation. It is used in two primary senses: as a representation of some ideal object (Plato) and as something that is made by some causal process (Aristotle). In either case, art was conceived as a form of mimesis.

MODERNISM. Aesthetic modernism covers a broad range of theoretical and stylistic positions. ‘Modernism’ is used quite broadly in literary studies. It covers many different forms of rejection of the classicism and neo-classicism that stressed didacticism and rule-governed approaches to literature. So modernism might include Romantic poetry that rebels against convention as well as avant-garde manifestos, experimental fiction, and various kinds of literary formalism. In painting, modernism encompasses the aesthetics of surface, non-representational painting, and most forms of rejection of academic realism. In these broad senses, modernism in aesthetics is defined as much by what it rejects as by any particular set of modern principles. ‘Modern’ has the sense of whatever is current, new, or innovative in the arts and theory of the arts at a particular time.

Modernism designates a more specific aesthetic approach in architecture. Architectural modernism rejected the historical period styles of previous architecture, particularly the use of ornamentation and the repetition of classical models. It sought to let the function of a building replace decorative motifs. In the years just before World War I, Adolf Loos and Peter Behrens developed an architectural style based on the logical, rational use of geometrical shapes, influenced to some extent by cubist painting. Glass, steel, and reinforced concrete were the preferred material. After World War I, modernism gained impetus under the influence of Walter Gropius and the Bauhaus movement in Germany. The Bauhaus sought to integrate all as-
pects of **design**, construction, and related arts into a single building program.

The use of machinery in the process and mass production were regarded as positive features. Modernism was particularly evident in large-scale housing developments and planned communities. Along slightly different lines, **Le Corbusier** produced fanciful, poetic constructions on **functionalist** principles, and Frank Lloyd Wright emphasized natural settings and horizontal lines in individual houses that integrated interior design with the setting and architecture. Modernism in architecture began as an attempt to escape the confines of historical influence and period styles, but as it developed, it became itself a more and more rigid style designed to express function and geometrical simplicity. It was criticized as “inhuman” for its geometrical rigidity and lack of accommodation to human scale, particularly in the large housing blocks that tended to reduce human interaction and in its mechanistic approach to planning and design.

The roots of modernism aesthetically are found in the individualism of early modern empiricism. While the connections are not always self-evident, the shift from authoritative, academic control of the arts to individual sensibility and **taste** freed the arts to pursue strictly aesthetic ends. The result was the kind of formal experimentation and individualism in the arts that appears as early as **mannerism** in painting and in the **novels** of Lawrence Sterne in the 18th century. Therefore, modernism is the **expression** of the priority of the individual artist and the freedom of the arts from external control and influence. As that individualism has become suspect in recent **sociological** theories of the arts and, paradoxically, in the denial of any foundational status to empirical evidence, modernism has been increasingly challenged by a **“postmodern”** sensibility that retains the **subjectivism** of modernism but rejects its confidence in individual autonomy and standards of **truth**.

**MONTESQUIEU, CHARLES DE SECONDAT, BARON DE LA BRÈDE ET DE (1689–1755).** Montesquieu’s primary importance lies in political philosophy and the philosophy of history. His contribution to aesthetics is limited but interesting. In “An Essay on Taste,” appended to the second edition of Alexander Gerard’s **Essay on Taste** (1764), fragmentary comments on **taste** assembled
posthumously from Montesquieu’s manuscripts suggest how his philosophy fits into the French Enlightenment adaptation of Cartesian dualism to the debates on the objects and nature of taste.

Montesquieu distinguishes between natural and acquired taste, but because both are essentially mental, they can interact. The pleasure produced by taste in either case is due to the activity of the mind itself. So Montesquieu focuses on mental effects and how different arts are able to stimulate mental activity. Taste is defined as “something which attaches us to certain objects by the power of an internal sense or feeling” ("An Essay on Taste," in Alexander Gerard, An Essay on Taste [Edinburgh: printed for A. Millar, London, and A. Kincaid and J. Bell, Edinburgh; facsimile edition New York: Garland Publishing, 1764/1970], p. 257). Beyond that, it is only necessary that the objects of taste are suited to exercise the mind when it is properly sensible. Variety, contrast, symmetry, surprise, sensibility, delicacy, and a je ne sais quoi that is closely dependent on surprise all contribute to the mental activity experienced as pleasurable provided that they are not overworked or reduced to affectation. Montesquieu was moving toward a natural psychology of taste, but he remained within the Cartesian dualist tradition and was limited by it.

MORALITY AND ART. In classical theories of beauty, beauty is moral as well as intellectual and aesthetic. What makes something beautiful is its goodness. Distinctions then can assign to art an aesthetic value on the basis of its moral goodness. If, as Plato argued, art is morally defective because imitation weakens moral character and misleads the intellect, then any sensual beauty is equally defective and misleading. It is not really beautiful. If, as Plotinus replies, art leads one up the ladder of Being toward beauty, then art serves a moral purpose. The close connection between art, beauty, and moral value would have been taken for granted up to and including most of the 18th century, though the relative moral value or disvalue of art might be debated. (Ascetics and religious puritans who distrust art are equally distrustful of all sensuous beauty and distinguish it from “true” moral beauty.)

The situation changed as arguments for the autonomy of art developed toward the end of the 18th century. If aesthetic experience is unique and autonomous, then aesthetic pleasure is morally neutral
in and of itself, though it may have extrinsic instrumental moral value. Moreover, if, as Immanuel Kant argued, taste and beauty are pre-conceptual in their claims to universality, then any moral value belongs to practical reason. Aesthetic judgment does not imply any moral judgment. Such moral independence of art continued to be challenged by G. W. F. Hegel and Karl Marx, however. If art is not detached from the progress of history and from social contexts, it cannot be autonomous in a way that detaches it from moral judgment.

Although both autonomy and historicism continue to exercise influence over theories of the relation of morality and art, a further distinction is often found in contemporary aesthetics. If fact and value are separated, as David Hume claimed, so that strictly speaking no “is” statement implies a corresponding “ought” statement, then it should be possible to distinguish claims that something is art from claims about its value as art, including any moral value that it may have. The former is a classificatory sense of the term ‘art’ while the latter is a normative or evaluative sense. It is a fact that something is accepted as art by the art world; whether it is good, bad, or indifferent, including morally good or bad, is a normative judgment. Institutional theories of art attempt to limit definitions of art to the classificatory sense, for example.

MORE, HENRY (1614–1687). Henry More was the most prominent philosopher/theologian of the 17th-century movement called Cambridge neo-Platonism. The Cambridge neo-Platonists advocated a tolerant, semi-mystical theology based on the ascent of the soul to God by means of contemplation and intellectual reflection. They were anti-dogmatic and sentimental in their religion. They influenced aesthetics indirectly through the third Earl of Shaftesbury, who edited the sermons of Benjamin Whichcote, one of the group.

MORITZ, KARL PHILIPP (1756–1793). Karl Philipp Moritz was a German novelist and philosopher with a particular interest in language and mythology. He argued that beauty is independent of all purpose, except the perfection of the work itself, which has its own internal ends. In at least some respects, his work anticipates and influences Immanuel Kant’s disinterested beauty and the German Romantics.
MORRIS, WILLIAM (1834–1896). William Morris was a leading member of the **Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood**, which sought to return art to an idealized and nostalgic pre-industrial medievalism based on a religious aestheticism. Morris founded a **craft** school that designed and produced **decorative arts** by hand. He also established the Kelmscott Press (1890), which produced handcrafted books and type faces. Politically, he opposed the social consequences of industrialization in England. See also ART FOR ART’S SAKE.

**MUSEUMS.** Museums appear wherever the collection of art as art occurs. Their origin may be in the treasuries and crypts devoted to sacred objects or royal collections, but there the collection is preserved without any need that it be displayed. Once the collecting of art moves to **connoisseurs**, then display for the sake of prestige or exchange becomes a factor. The earliest museums were private collections that enhanced the status of the **collector**, whether a private individual or a royal person. The purpose of the display was largely a matter of status. Private collections continued to attract visitors, and in at least some cases, their display was a kind of social obligation. The great houses of Europe often welcomed visitors for no other reason than that they might see the art collections assembled by the owners.

The true museum, however, evolves only when display takes on either a **didactic** or a purely aesthetic function. It is a quintessentially aesthetic institution. The modern art museum is a product of aesthetic theories. The distinction between **fine art** and **mass art** relegated the latter to the marketplace and the former to the museum. How works are viewed and how they are arranged says a great deal about what the works are. If art is made in order to be viewed aesthetically, then something like a museum setting is implied. Only when aesthetic **autonomy** and disinterested aesthetic pleasure became the norms was art separated from the context of its use. Display in a museum implies a way that art is to be viewed. One approaches under conditions designed to make direct contemplation possible. The implicit premise is that one ought to look at works of art as objects of aesthetic attention freed from extraneous distractions and non-essential, non-aesthetic input.

At the same time, museums of art take on an educational function.
They teach both how one is to view art—with the appropriate detachment and distance—and also what art is. To be included in a museum collection is a mark of status for the work of art and artist, a validation of the work’s place in the art world. Collections were initially displayed randomly or as reflections of the collector’s taste. Occasionally, this is still the case, as when a donor dictates that a collection remain together on display. More commonly, however, the display is intended to provide comparison and historical information. To some extent, the two roles of a museum come into conflict. Museums supply the very information that their manner of display implies is aesthetically irrelevant.

Museums also exercise considerable extrinsic influence over the workings of the art world. They play an archival and conserving role. Their ability to buy and sell produces an art market. They dictate what is and is not of “museum quality.” Most museums have collections larger than their exhibition space, and one of the most important decisions by a museum is simply what to display and what to store. Choice is required.

In all of these ways, the museum is the successor of the public exhibitions staged by Academies of Art that played a major role in establishing what official art would be. Equally, the rebellion against such endorsement and official sanction takes the route of counter-exhibitions. Salons des Refusés and alternative exhibitions challenge the official endorsement. Museums of “modern” art or contemporary art attempt to be part of the avant-garde themselves. Museum buildings are one of the major venues for architectural innovation. In a sense, museums have become a kind of quasi-public audience in their own right. As audiences have become more diverse and diffuse, museums have taken on the role of the educated elite audience. It could almost be said that without museums, the fine arts would have no place.

MUSIC. As a genre, music presents special aesthetic problems. Because of its mathematical form, music was the highest art form for those theories of art influenced by neo-Platonism. The purely intellectual nature of mathematics and the corresponding mathematical form of harmony and tonal relations suggested that music was closer to the ontological form of the cosmos and thus that it was nearer to
truth and being itself than art forms that depended on conventional relations. Augustine, in De Musica, and subsequent medieval philosophers found in music literally the music of the spheres, the order of the universe. On the other hand, pure music lacked the discursive content that poetry possessed and it lacked the natural signs that painting exhibited. So from a purely interpretive standpoint, music appealed to emotions and was associated with irrationality. Apollo and Dionysius represent two poles of music—the rational structure and the frenzied emotional sides of music.

Modern musical interpretation and theory have also divided between program music, which claims music represents emotional states and even discursive meanings, and pure music which claims that music should be appreciated in terms of its formal structure and direct tonal qualities alone. The difficulties for musical representation come from the inability to assign specific meanings independently of non-musical information, but pure music ignores the long association of words and music. Instrumental music originally accompanied words and ritual actions. Appreciation of it for its own sake is a relatively late development that breaks that long association.

A number of specific aesthetic problems arise from this basic polarity. Music is often said to express emotion or to be a symbolic form of emotion, but it proves difficult to explain more than very general relations between emotions and specific musical works. Some music seems happy or sad, but the extent to which those responses are conventional is an open question, and even if a psychology of musical response succeeded in associating some musical patterns with certain emotional qualities, the specific differences in musical works would be left unexplained. Yet those differences are the differences between great music and the banal.

Music also presents ontological problems. Music has developed a notation, but it is a notation that underdetermines a specific performance. Some musical forms require extensive improvisation as part of their form. Questions then arise about which is the musical work of art—the skeleton provided by the notation or the performance. If it is the performance, then differences in performance raise questions about whether there is a single musical work or only a family resemblance. Music cannot be forged in the way that a painting can be forged because differences from one performance to the next
provide variations rather than different works. There is no single original apart from the score, which may exist in further variations or be only directions for a performance. In that sense, a musical work is more like a novel or a poem than like a painting, but unlike a novel or poem, a musical work does not have a semantic content.

Music also exists across the boundaries between the fine arts and popular arts. To some extent, this is true of many art forms. Film, television, theater, literary works, and dance all exist as popular forms and as fine art. The problem is particularly acute for music, however, because music appeals more directly to sensual and emotional response. One may attempt to distinguish a popular novel from a literary work of art on the basis of the sophistication of its content and form, but if jazz and rap appeal to the same emotions as a sonata or symphony, then the distinction becomes more difficult. The aesthetics of music has been especially concerned with such popular forms.

Musical aesthetics also encounters problems about authenticity for the same reason. Music that belonged to a cultural setting can be detached and performed for a very different kind of audience in a very different kind of setting. If the aesthetic appeal of music is only to its disinterested performance, then such performances are autonomous, but if music is a part of its cultural context, then such performances are, at the very least, different, perhaps to the point of being different works.

Music has lent itself to a wide range of experimental forms that challenge traditional aesthetic assumptions. Silence as well as sound has been given musical form. Atonal patterns and dissonance challenge the assumptions not only that music is emotional expression but also the assumptions that aesthetic pleasure is the end to which music is directed. Music theory and musical aesthetics are currently among the most diverse and least settled areas of contemporary aesthetics. See also CAGE, JOHN.

MYTH. Myth enters the history of aesthetics by two paths: as the narrative element associated with ritual and the invocation of the sacred and as mythopoetic imagination. Myth, in its basic ritual form, may be considered as the story of the origins of things and of the intersection of the sacred with the profane world. Myths are the true stories
of the beginnings—“as it was in the beginning.” The origins establish the reality from which the profane world of space and time derives its being. To know those origins is the only true form of knowledge; all else is temporal flux. To be able to participate in them is the only way to regain contact with the sacred and to renew one’s existence. Myth lies behind much of the Platonic and neo-Platonic epistemology of art since myth is both recited and performed in a ritual context. The close relations of myth with drama retains the connection in classical art. Even Aristotle, whose Poetics is more empirical than the aesthetics of Plato and Plotinus, identifies myth as the basic stories from which poetry and tragedy should be derived.

The influence of classical mythology as a source for art survives through the Renaissance in attenuated forms. Myth loses some of the danger associated with contact with the sacred, but it continues to be both the account of the origin and the organizing principle for artistic form. The increasing secularization of early modern aesthetics, which shifts from a religious to an individual aesthetic, looks to history rather than myth. But history is still story, and part of the force of fictional narratives comes from their continuing ability to tell a story that is true in spite of its fictionality.

With the rise of imagination as a creative force instead of simply a recombination of ideas, imagination takes on the role of the mythical storyteller. For the Romantic aesthetic of later 18th- and 19th-century idealism, a mythopoetic imagination is at once the creator and the origin of aesthetic feeling. The importance of myth not only as a source of artistic symbolism but also as an account of the aesthetic force that empowers the creative artist is evident in the music, drama, painting, and novels that issue from Romantic idealism.

An aesthetics driven by mythopoesis reappears in 20th-century psychoanalytic theory and in theories of literary form. Myth is embodied in the modernist poetry of Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and W. B. Yeats, for example. Freudian and Jungian psychoanalytic versions of mythology understand it as the hidden drives from which the human psyche cannot escape. The aesthetics associated with these movements continues to draw on Romantic theories of the creative artist but locates the aesthetic response in the individual psyche. The result is a theory of mythopoetic symbolism that changes the basic expressionist aesthetic of 19th-century idealism into an aesthetic
epistemology. One only knows by means of symbols, and the symbols come from mythopoetic sources buried deep within our cultural and prehistorical linguistic being. Language is symbolic and mythic in the way it constitutes meaning. The mythopoetic aesthetic is never persuasive to more analytical and scientific forms of aesthetics, but it exerts considerable influence in modernist theories of the arts, particularly literary theory.

NARRATIVE. In one form or another, narrative has been a basic element of literary form since the days of oral poetry. A story must be told to have an effect, and the conditions of the telling are formally important. As Aristotle noted, differences in narrative determine genres. Tragedy is the representation of an action that is shown, not spoken, but it is still a form of narrative. Homer’s epics employ a sophisticated narrative strategy; in the Odyssey, Odysseus is a potentially unreliable narrator who spins tales of his travels to the court of the Phaiakians. Scheherazade staves off death by telling 1001 tales.

Narrative is not limited to literary fiction. Film narrative has its own narrative conventions, which include such devices as a subjective camera and voice-over narration. Dramatic narrative presents different problems on the stage. Experimental theater calls attention to the narrative conventions of traditional theater by breaking down the distance between audience and actors and dissolving the line between the stage and the audience. The very fact of visualization presents a different set of problems for film and drama. It is one thing to refer to a non-existent being; it is much more concrete and limiting to have to decide whether such a being can actually appear, as the difficulties with the staging of the ghost in Hamlet illustrate. George Bernard Shaw’s stage direction “Enter invisible” has challenged directors ever since.

Narrative aesthetics became most important with the rise of the novel, however. Novels present several narrative choices. A third person narrator may be either omniscient or limited. A first person narrator may be reliable or unreliable. The persona of the author may enter
Naturalism in aesthetics defines aesthetic experience in terms of natural causes of the same kind as other natural phenomena. The origin of aesthetic experience is taken to be innate to a species and not simply the product of culture. It contrasts to such theories of art and aesthetic experience as neo-Platonism that identify aesthetic experience with a distinct non-natural realm of beauty to which access is possible through art or contemplative ecstasy and to cultural theories that view art as the expression of cultural institutions.

Naturalism appears first in connection with 18th-century theories of beauty that assume a more or less universal human nature that can
be explored by the methods of the emerging physical sciences. Edmund Burke, in *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, identifies beauty as a social quality that is based on the passion of “generation” common to all animals. Similarly, the sublime is defined as a form of delight related directly to the value of pain in aiding self-preservation. “The passions belonging to self-preservation are the strongest of all the passions” (*A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* [1757], ed. J. T. Boulton [Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968], p. 51). In its most basic sense, then, aesthetic naturalism is a part of the empiricist thesis that aesthetic phenomena can be understood in purely human and scientific terms without reference to metaphysics, God, or a divine teleology.

The most prominent forms of aesthetic naturalism, however, understand beauty and art as natural forms that have survival value based on their ability to form social bonds. Art is a form of display that attracts the opposite sex, and it is a symbolic form that displaces more dangerous emotions. Ethnologically, art is universal. All cultures very early exhibit what we identify as art. In the basic anthropological versions of aesthetic naturalism, art is regarded as an epiphenomenon that develops as a response to more basic needs for attracting a suitable mate, forming social solidarity, and feeling in control of one’s environment. More recently, however, evolutionary theorists have argued for a specifically human evolutionary development based on a need for intimacy. Instead of simply promoting other survival values, art and aesthetic experience is viewed by Ellen Dissanayake as itself fulfilling a need for bonding and significant experience that is first exemplified in the mother-child relation.

A persistent problem for evolutionary naturalism in aesthetics is its tendency to identify art with its genetic origins. Even if art is a universal ethnological phenomena that fulfills a need—either as a means or as an end in itself—it would not follow that art in its evolved forms is simply identical with its origins. Thus Dissanayake must not only argue that there is a specifically human need that art fulfills but that the nature of art is to be found in its satisfying emotional effects. A close relation is formed between theories of art as the expression or even arousal of emotion and claims that art is a biologically natural response. Evolutionary naturalism also tends to
hold that such impulses to art are innate in some sense of a “hard-wired” propensity toward artistic expression. Thus aesthetic naturalism takes the side of nature rather than culture in explanations of aesthetic experience. Innateness is variously understood. It seldom means simply pre-existent ideas or aesthetic forms. But it does find common formal structures based in a human nature that is shared cross-culturally and thus produces similar expressions independently of cultural restrictions. Thus aesthetic naturalism is criticized by anti-essentialists both specifically with respect to essentialism about art and in a broader context with respect to essentialism about human (as opposed simply to biological) nature.

NATURAL SIGNS. It was common in early modern aesthetics to distinguish between natural signs and artificial signs. Natural signs are those that can be recognized and interpreted without having to be learned. Bodily responses, such as smiles, and realistic representations, such as paintings, are classed as natural signs. On the other hand, language, except for limited onomatopoeic words, is made up of artificial signs. Artificial signs are conventional and differ from one culture to another. The distinction was particularly important in the 18th century because of the debates over whether there were any innate ideas. Natural signs provided an alternative account of universal responses without appeal to innate ideas. The distinction also allowed for cultural differences within a uniform human nature and made possible comparisons of the different arts. Poetry and painting, for example, were distinguished on the basis of the difference in the signs that they used. The distinction has been replaced in more recent aesthetics by psychological theories of perception and language acquisition that hold that all signs have a conventional aspect.

NECESSITY AND PROBABILITY IN TRAGEDY. Aristotle’s Poetics makes a distinction between those events that seem probable and those that do not. Actual events are necessary simply because they occur. Whatever has happened must have happened. But that necessity need not seem probable. In the representation of the actions of men in a tragedy, it is more important that the events seem probable than that they actually happen or even that they could have happened. A probable seeming impossibility is preferable to an im-
probable seeming actuality because only the former will produce the necessary tragic effect. Aristotle argues that poetry, in its broadest sense, is superior to history just because poetry is free to represent the general and probable while history is bound to the actual. Underlying the distinction is the classical theory of universals that assigns a higher reality to the ideal than to the merely actual.

NEO-CLASSICISM. Neo-classical aesthetics relies on classical models and the rules that can be derived from them to determine what is and what is not art and to establish normative judgments. According to neo-classical aesthetics, in the sciences, the moderns may know more, but in the arts, the ancients have done all that can be done. For example, if the model for tragedy is Greek tragedy and if the rules of tragedy require that the protagonist be a human being above the norm but humanly limited, then neo-classicism determines that a drama that does not satisfy that condition cannot be a successful tragedy. The problem, of course, is that drama did not adhere to such rules. Neo-classicists also make certain assumptions about the purposes and limits of art. The neo-classical formula was that art instructs by pleasing. Art was expected to be both didactic or morally persuasive and to produce pleasure in the audience. Again, the difficulty for such aesthetic assumptions was that art simply was not always pleasing, and if it was pleasing, it might well not be instructive. The neo-classical critic or philosopher can only reject the work itself in such cases. Neo-classicism has about it an air of dogmatic authority, therefore.

Neo-classicism arose as a result of the Renaissance rejection of medieval art and a desire to return to classical Greek and Roman standards as they were perceived to have operated. It reached its peak of influence in the 17th and 18th centuries. Greek art was believed to be the highest form possible in the arts. Classical architecture, Greek and Latin rhetoric and poetry, and classical drama set the standards from which medieval style, particularly Gothic art, was considered a decline. Stylistically, this meant an aesthetic of regular forms in poetry, particularly the rhymed couplet in England; a use of classical themes in drama; and classical columns and a style based on the Greek temple in the design of buildings. Simplicity as it was thought to exist in Greek art was the standard, but that simplicity was
defined more by its rejection of medieval Gothic style and ornamentation than by a lack of complexity in neo-classical art and poetry, which could be quite difficult formally. The neo-classical rules and standards were to be enforced by such bodies as the French Royal Academy whose collective judgment determined what would or would not be admitted to the established art world.

Neo-classicism is in direct conflict with the kind of aesthetic autonomy that developed into Immanuel Kant’s theories of taste and beauty and their subsequent development into the 19th-century aesthetics of disinterested attention and detached aesthetic contemplation. For neo-classicism aesthetic standards are objective realities embodied in already existing works of art. For the competing empiricist and idealist aesthetics, no such standards are possible because aesthetic appreciation is, first of all, a subjective experience. Neo-classicism also runs into critical difficulty because influential critics noted that the exceptional works of art that establish the models and standards do not obey the derived rules of their genre. What makes them the models is precisely their transcendence of rules and norms. Neo-classicism gives way to idealism in the 19th century after Kant, but it was never a monolithic aesthetic movement. See also WINCKELMANN, JOHANN JOACHIM.

NEO-PLATONISM. Neo-Platonism is the intellectual theory developed on the basis of the works of Plotinus, whose Enneads included a section on beauty. Plotinus thought of himself as extending and correcting the work of Plato. Like Plato, he accepts that reality is essentially intellectual. It is to be found in the essential form or idea of a thing. For Plotinus, all of reality is linked to those essential forms in a hierarchical arrangement, the stages of which are intelligible realities except for the lowest material level. One can ascend through that hierarchy by mental discipline. As one does, individuality is left behind, and one approaches a participation in a single, unitary being. Beauty is a stage in that ascent, an intellectual reality that is only derivatively embodied in sensual beauty.

Plotinus influenced Christian philosophy and theology beginning with Augustine and through Augustine, the Latin Middle Ages until the shift to Aristotle’s metaphysics in the 13th century. Even then, neo-Platonism continued to exert a strong influence, in part because
of the acceptance of the writings believed to be by Dionysius the Areopagite as authentically first-century testimony by a disciple of Paul. (In fact, “pseudo-Dionysius” was a neo-Platonic text from the sixth century.) Neo-Platonic aesthetics is based on the theory of beauty as an intellectual reality and only with difficulty is able to supply a theory of actual aesthetic experiences as they arise from works of art.

Neo-Platonism is largely superseded aesthetically by rationalist and empiricist aesthetics that rejects its metaphysical and intellectuallist principles. It resurfaces, however, in some forms of 19th-century idealist aesthetics, and again in some forms of 20th-century mythopoetic aesthetics. There it is more concerned with the kind of spiritual or contemplative experience that Plotinus sought than with the metaphysical assertion of the reality of the world of forms and the unity of the One.

NEW CRITICISM. Literary criticism has, at various points in its history, focused on different aspects of literary works. Classical criticism was a part of rhetoric. Its object was to determine how oratory could influence an audience to adopt a position. That led to discussions of literary tropes and their effects that applied to poetry as well. In the 17th and 18th centuries, literary criticism sought the rules of art either on the model of the new science or on classical models. 19th- and early 20th-century criticism, influenced by the Romantic cult of the creative artist, was interested in the interior life of the artist and how society and individual artists interacted. Biography, history, sociology, and psychology all contributed to the interpretation of a literary work.

The criticism that reacted against biographical and psychological criticism was “new” in the mid-20th century. It sought to refocus attention on the form of the work itself and to exclude the kind of “extrinsic” information that was the staple of the criticism it opposed. To that end, the New Criticism centered attention on formal elements that had been a part of classical rhetoric, particularly metaphor and irony. It rejected biographical and historical information except as a means to the explication of the text itself. It was especially opposed to depending on the intention of the writer or the psychological facts of the writer’s life. New Criticism invented and
condemned two fallacies—the genetic fallacy, which confused the source of the work with its meaning; and the intentional fallacy, which confused facts about the author with the meaning of the work. Those were held to be relevant only if they were actually reflected in the text itself. In its most extreme pronouncements, the new criticism maintained that nothing about the author or the source of the work had anything to do with the work’s meaning. Among the prominent New Critics were Cleanth Brooks, William Wimsatt (who together with Monroe Beardsley introduced the genetic and intentional fallacies), and John Crowe Ransom.

The New Criticism is based on a linguistic theory of meaning that identifies the meaning of a sentence with its semantic properties alone. It also accepts much of the theory of meaning of logical positivism, however. Critical statements are true or false depending on their relation to what is actually expressed in the work, and a single critical interpretation is authoritatively available depending on the semantic meaning of the text. New Criticism also draws upon the aesthetics of artistic autonomy because the work itself is the end. Its critical judgments distinguish meaning and value. The instrumental value of a work of art does not imply anything about its aesthetic value.

The New Criticism produced significant detailed interpretations of literary works, especially poetry. Its practical criticism was much less doctrinaire than its sometimes polemical statements of critical principles. It has not been “new” for some time, and criticism has adopted its practical techniques while becoming much more eclectic and less authoritarian in its principles. Aesthetics has moved away from the sole reliance on aesthetic experience as a disinterested form of attention and the corresponding isolation of the meaning of a work of art from its cultural and historical situation, which has lessened the polemical interest of the kinds of rhetorical and formal criticism practiced by the New Critics.

NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH WILHELM (1844–1900). Friedrich Nietzsche was trained as a classical philologist and became a professor at Basel University in Switzerland in 1869. His first book, The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music (1872), broke with the tradition of classical studies that admired the ancient Greeks as the
model of a pure, rational art and philosophy. Nietzsche saw a deep ambivalence in Greek art and culture that paralleled that of human nature. One side, represented by Apollo, was rational and its art was controlled and refined. The other side, however, was represented by Dionysius and reached down into the darker, ecstatic, and irrational depths of the soul. The Birth of Tragedy was not accepted in academic circles, and Nietzsche’s health led him to resign his professorship in 1879. His subsequent works, which include Thus Spake Zarathustra (1883–1885), Beyond Good and Evil (1886), and the Genealogy of Morals (1887), complete the break with both conventional morality and conventional literary and philosophical form. Nietzsche was forging a highly idiosyncratic style of philosophy, which was frequently misunderstood in his own day. He was influenced by Arthur Schopenhauer and Richard Wagner but subsequently broke with Wagner and continued to live a largely solitary existence in Switzerland and Italy. In 1889, only two weeks after the completion of Nietzsche Contra Wagner, he collapsed into insanity and never recovered. His insanity is usually attributed to syphilis, though speculation about where and when he might have acquired it is fruitless.

Nietzsche’s classical studies led him to formulate his own version of the sacred–profane dialectic. When the route to the sacred is closed, one must approach it by negation. Thus Nietzsche rejects conventional religious Christianity and pronounces the death of God in order to generate a return to the sacred by descent instead of ascent, by means of Dionysius rather than Apollo. By opposing the self-sacrificing aspects of Christianity and affirming the power of the self, Nietzsche hoped to bring the self back into contact with its origins. Psychologically, Nietzsche returns us to the period before we became rational, intellectually controlled beings. His views of art are formed by that dialectic. G. W. F. Hegel had envisioned a positive role for art in a progression of the spirit through art and religion until it finally achieves the freedom of absolute spirit. For Schopenhauer, however, the progress of human culture was checked by the isolation of the individual spirit. The will was not so much a control of ideas as a manifestation of desires that could not be fulfilled. A deep sense of being alone was felt. Nietzsche shared that pessimism, at least
about the majority of humans. The only way forward was by finding the spirit in its most primitive forms.

Nietzsche wished to reestablish a genuinely classical form of art with all of its dialectical tensions, its darkness as well as its light, against what he saw as the deadness of science and cultural control. Nietzsche continued the Romantic emphasis on feeling and the role of the artist as a cultural leader and creator, but he rejected the psychology and autonomy of aesthetics that it implied. Art and aesthetic experience were not disinterested but dialectically committed. Nietzsche also rejects the historicism implicit in the Hegelian form of the dialectic and in Romantic idealism’s progressive view of spirit embodied in culture. Nietzsche views art as a continuing individual struggle, the product of the struggle between the exuberance and ecstasy of Dionysius and the controlled harmony of Apollo. Individuals have two sides to their personalities. They are both rational and irrational, controlled and impulsive. Art reflects that duality. Aesthetic experience involves both, but ultimately must embrace the Dionysian spirit because of the mechanistic nature of existing culture.

By rejecting the disinterested, detached emotion of modern aesthetics, Nietzsche’s inclusion of Dionysius in art appeals to the creative, avant-garde distrust of aesthetic classicism. To take Nietzsche as the exponent of an anti-civilized naturalism is to see only one part of his aesthetic, however. The other side of Nietzsche’s work seeks a way back to the full classical heritage, which includes both Apollo and Dionysius. Nietzsche objects to the whole modern, empiricist assertion of the self and its ideas as supreme. From that point of view, Nietzsche is really conservative rather than avant-garde. His way back is through negation and denial, but it is a genuine quest for an art that is in contact with the deepest psychological desires of every individual and culture.

NOTATION. In aesthetics, issues concerning notation arise in two ways. Some genres of art, most notably music and dance, present notational problems. Music pre-exists any notation that could record it. Musical notation began as a kind of reminder to the performer in ancient Greece and developed gradually through the Middle Ages into the modern system of notation. Attempts to develop a system of
notation for dance continue. In both cases, there is an implicit distinction between the notated score and the performance, and questions about the identity of the work arise. Once a defined system of notation is available, the work can be identified with the notated form. Alternatively, the work may be identified with a performance and the score considered as informational guidance to the performer. In that case, the identity of the work itself includes the possibility of variations, either intentional as in improvisation or accidental.

Notational issues also arise in distinguishing the kinds of art that are subject to notation. Nelson Goodman introduced a distinction between what he called allographic and autographic art that is based on the availability of a notational system. Music, literature, and, if a notation is available, dance are allographic. What counts as a genuine instance of the work is determined by the notated system. Any version that conforms to a score counts as an instance of the work. So a novel has many instances, all of which reproduce the same order of words, and a musical work has many instances, all of which conform to the same score. As long as the notational system is reproduced or performed, one has a genuine instance of the work. (Goodman required exact reproduction or spelling, but not everyone agrees that that is necessary.) In contrast, autographic forms of art have a single instance. Only the original painting or sculpture, for example, is the genuine work. Any other instances are copies or imitations of the original. Musical aesthetics, in particular, raises questions about just how and how far this distinction applies.

NOVELS. Narrative fiction is older than the novel as such. Myths, tales, and prose and poetic narratives appear in classical, medieval, and Renaissance literature. The novel as such only appears, however, when narrative fiction combines with individual experience and a sense of history in the 18th century to produce the kind of pseudo-histories and pseudo-memoirs that we call novels. The novel remains largely within the narrative rules that 18th-century fiction established even though experimental forms continue to appear. (The most extreme experiments abandon the linearity of narrative fiction altogether for either random order or existential interiority.) From the standpoint of aesthetics, the rise of the novel corresponds to the shift to individual aesthetic experience and particularly senti-
ment as the basis for art. Novels establish a point of view and exploit it to create for the reader a kind of direct access to a subjective consciousness, albeit a fictional one. The purpose is to arouse a sympathetic identification that produces a sentiment at once pleasurable and informative. The realism of 19th-century fiction does not really change the basic formula even though the sentiment is less overtly sentimental. It is still the creation of a perception of reality through the eyes of a narrative persona—either the protagonist or a third person omniscient narrative presence. Aesthetics must account for the ability of a fictional reference to create a real sentiment as well as exploring the conditions of presentation and response.

The novel is also important in the history of aesthetics because it marks the shift from an elite audience—a landowning aristocracy, squirearchy, or ecclesiatical establishment, primarily—to a middle-class reading public that demanded a different kind of experience. Early novels were viewed as subversive because they seduced the working classes and servants into time wasting and sentimentality. Novels appeal to individual experience and validate the individual taste that marks the rise of aesthetics. Novels also contribute to the development of literary criticism because the reading public demanded to be told in advance what it should invest its time in reading. Novels are a marketable commodity in a way that no other art form was prior to the development of mass art in the 20th century. Seventeenth- and 18th-century critics debated the relative priority of poetry and painting, but the novel quietly took over as the principal form of art accessible to all and capable of shaping taste.

NOVELTY. In early modern aesthetics, the shift to a theory of aesthetic senses began with a single sense of beauty. The tendency was to multiply senses, however, so a sense of the sublime and other aesthetic senses, including novelty, were added. Sense became little more than a term for any immediately felt specific pleasure. What made it aesthetic was the lack of any need for utilitarian justification. To feel in that way was sufficient in and of itself. Novelty was added to the aesthetic senses because the psychology of the day identified it as one of the pleasurable forms of experience. While novelty might have consequences and being surprised in the wrong way could be unpleasant, the feeling itself was believed to be pleasurable. Behind
this psychology lay the belief that mental activity itself was pleasurable; a mind at rest quickly becomes stagnant, and ennui is unpleasant. Novelty suggests that mental activity is a pleasant form of stimulation, even if its objects themselves are not pleasant.

From an aesthetic standpoint, however, the multiplication of senses quickly reduces the idea of an aesthetic sense to little more than a label for different kinds of pleasure. Moreover, novelty presents a further problem as an aesthetic sense because something can cease to be novel without changing any of its primary characteristics. If novelty is an aesthetic sentiment, then after a time the novelty and thus the sentiment should wear off as what was novel becomes commonplace. But typically, works of art continue to be valued and do not lose their ability to produce aesthetic experiences. So novelty does not fit the paradigm cases of aesthetic experience very well.

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ONTOLOGY OF ART. Ontology is the systematic theory of being, the ways that things exist. A major issue in aesthetics concerns the kind of thing that a work of art is, and initially that is determined by a larger ontological theory. Classical ontology, for example, treated existing individuals as dependent on a higher reality that was variously described as form, idea, the sacred, or just the One. Being belongs to universals, and individuals depend on universals. Within that ontology, works of art are derivative instances of individuals—imitations in some sense. For Plato, they are the non-functional representations of individuals; for Aristotle, they are made things that instantiate form; and for Plotinus, they are idealizations of individuals, which are material emanations of intellect. In each case, works of art are lesser forms of reality that depend not only on other objects but on their universal forms for their being. When classical ontology is replaced by a linear, historical, and empirical theory that assigns at least some independent reality to individuals, works of art occupy a different ontological place. They are artifacts of some kind, though in exceptional cases their artifactuality may be derivative as it is when natural objects are treated as if they are artifacts for artistic purposes. The question then arises what kind of artifacts they are.
Modern aesthetics approaches the ontology of art in terms of the different kinds of things that different forms of art require. **Paintings** begin as physical objects, and reproductions of paintings and descriptions of them supply limited access in the absence of the actual thing. **Music** begins as a score or **composition** but only comes into full being in **performance**. Literary works have a textual source but arguably exist only when they can be read. A **text** in an unreadable language is not fully a work of art; it is only a potential source. **Dance**, **architecture**, and **film** all present complex ontological problems about how the work of art is determined.

One of the basic distinctions that runs through ontological theories of art is that between a type and a token. A type may be thought of as the identifying instance of something. Tokens are multiple appearances of a type, each of which is a sufficient embodiment of the type to retain its identity. So a musical score may be thought of as the type for which different performances are tokens, and a literary text may be thought of as a type for which individual written or recorded copies are the tokens. In each case, the tokens count as instances of the work of art just in case they are instances of its type. The issue is somewhat more complicated when the work of art is itself both type and token. A painting has only one token, but it may have many other instances—slides, copies, etc.—by which it is referred to successfully.

The ontological status of works of art presumes that one can identify the work in some way. The identifying criteria do not settle the ontological status, however. One may agree that *Oedipus Tyrannus* is a work of art and still disagree about what kind of thing a **dramatic** work is. So ontological issues are different from issues of identity and **definition** although they overlap. Within works of art, ontological issues can also arise. Characters, for example, have identities that are determined by the works in which they appear, but their status as characters and their ability to transcend the particular works in which they first occur suggest that the ontology of **fictions** involves more than just the original identity of the characters. This has led to consideration that characters belong to possible worlds other than the actual world and that some kind of transworld identity can be invoked. The larger ontological question concerns possible worlds themselves—whether they are simply part of a logical system or whether
they have some kind of ontological status of their own. How one answers such ontological questions will affect how one views the ontology of works of art.

**ORIGINALITY.** It has not always seemed self-evident that originality is a characteristic of art or that it is an aesthetic virtue. If art is an imitation, then in some sense, it cannot be original. Either it reproduces some archetype, or it is made according to some schema or form. Originality is not necessarily a virtue if one is imitating something. Even if art is an expression of something first conceived by an artist or embodied in the culture of the time, it need not follow that art is wholly original. Early modern empiricism denied that there could be any ideas that were not first provided by experience, so to make art, one must first have experience. Artists have always lived and worked in a context that drew on existing forms and works. A purely original work of art would be unintelligible.

Originality becomes important as an aesthetic category when artists become the focus of their art. If what lies behind a work of art is the mind of the artist, then the quality of that mind determines the quality of the work of art. Genius is the ability of an artist to break with established rules and expectations to create new, original forms. Original work may have to create its own audience. Original work is aesthetically more valuable because the experience that it provides is more valuable. The kind of experience that can be had from many sources and that simply reproduces earlier experiences is less valuable than the kind of experience that introduces new ways of seeing and thinking. Art is given a primary role in creating a new vision. Artists are the unacknowledged legislators, Percy Bysshe Shelley claimed.

The primacy of originality in aesthetics is challenged in recent art theory in two ways. More and more art is seen as the product of multiple sources—combined efforts and social situations. That does not mean that originality plays no role, but it is no longer the quasi-divine form of creativity that it was for early modern and Romantic aesthetics. And art is understood as having multiple effects that include moral and practical concerns. Originality may serve those effects, but it need not be an end in itself.
(G. E. Lessing) in contrast to the temporal range of poetry. Painting, it was held, depends on natural signs—what things look like, while poetry uses conventional signs—language and symbols. Painters could reply with a system of symbols and iconography of their own. The underlying issue, however, was which form was emotionally more powerful.

More recently, the aesthetics of painting has raised issues about how painting is related to social and cultural issues. Feminist aesthetics has been particularly concerned with painting because of the prominence of the female nude, the potential voyeurism of painting, and the relative lack of female artists in the history of art. The history of art also reflects changes and theoretical challenges from within painting. Such artists as Jasper Johns blur the distinction between painting and a real thing by making a painting the same as what it is a painting of (a painting of a flag is a flag). Aesthetic speculation about the “end of art” calls attention to the limits of innovation. The aesthetics of the visual arts is presently in a state of flux and experimentation.

PALLADIO, ANDREA (ANDREA DI PIETRO) (1508–1580). Palladio was an influential 16th-century Italian architect. He developed a classical style with a typical front based on classical columns and symmetrical design. He systematized his theories in I quattro libri dell’architettura (The Four Books of Architecture, 1570), which exerted a continuing influence through the 18th century both directly on architecture and on neo-classical aesthetic taste. The Palladian style was imported into England by Inigo Jones in the 17th century. Its influence can be seen in the architecture of Christopher Wren as well, and it forms the basis for American Southern neo-classical architecture, including that of Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello.

PANOFSKY, ERWIN (1892–1968). Erwin Panofsky was born and educated in Germany, where he began his academic career as an art historian. He fled the Nazis in 1933 and eventually settled in Princeton. His work on perspective, symbolic forms, and the iconographic meaning of art crosses the lines between art history and aesthetics. His distinction between iconography, the history and formation of symbols in art, and iconology, their interpretation,
changed the relation between art history and aesthetics. Panofsky re-
jected narrow aesthetic boundaries for an historical and epistemolog-
ical interdisciplinarity that has influenced much of the subsequent
intersection of art history and aesthetics, including film aesthetics.
Among Panofsky’s many influential works are Idea: A Concept in
Art Theory (Idea: Ein Beitrag zur Begriffsgeschichte der älteren
Kunsthreorie, 1924/1968), “Style and Medium in the Motion Pic-
ture” (1947), and Meaning in the Visual Arts (1955).

PARAGON. A paragon is a comparison, most commonly of the prior-
ity of the symbolic forms of the visual arts with respect to the verbal
arts. Is poetry a higher form of art than painting because of its intel-
lectual content or is painting superior to poetry because it can depict
what poetry can only describe? Renaissance art theory particularly
engaged in the construction of such paragons.

PATER, WALTER HORATIO (1839–1894). As a critic, Walter Pater
speaks for the English Pre-Raphaelites and the art for art’s sake
movement. The Pre-Raphaelite poets and painters rejected the
mechanistic developments of the 19th-century industrial revolution
and the complexity that they associated with the art of Raphael,
which had become the model for the fine arts. They favored a sim-
plicity of line, color, and narrative and looked back to an idealized
Middle Ages.

Art for art’s sake as a slogan was anti-bourgeois. The English aes-
thetes, with the exception of Oscar Wilde, were less concerned with
offending against society, however, than with grasping immediate
experience fully. In the conclusion to his Studies in the History of the
Renaissance (1868), Pater despair of finding any permanence and
concludes that the experience of the moment is the only option. Art
offers the fullest experience, free of calculation and useful intent. He
denounces theory and praises passion. Therefore, his aesthetics is an
extreme form of the autonomy of art.

PATHETIC FALLACY. The pathetic fallacy involves attributing to an
inanimate object human feelings or actions. It is more descriptive
than the extended application of human characteristics in personifi-
cation. The pathetic fallacy was introduced by John Ruskin as a neg-
ative term for **poetry** that deviated from **truth** in the extended sense in which Ruskin applied truth to **style** and **representation** as expressions of a cultural idea. It is used more neutrally for any poetic **metaphor** that combines both human and inanimate objects.

**PERCEPTION.** Theories of perception influence aesthetics in the theory of the arts and as a fundamental category of aesthetic perception. In the visual arts and in the perception of sounds, the way that something is perceived may be the result of physiology, **convention**, or learned response. All play a role in the theory of how works of art can be made. **Classical architects** noted that it was necessary to adjust the **proportions** of buildings and columns to correct for the way that the geometry of vision worked. A column that was in fact the same size all the way up would appear out of proportion to the eye located at ground level. So the column had to be tapered to make it appear correct. Painters learned **perspective** in the early Renaissance by trial and error as much as by theory and geometry. Figures had to be foreshortened, and adjustments had to be made for the position that the **painting** would occupy.

Perception also has a conventional aspect. Some things are seen as something else. Extreme cases transform a single bit of paint into a figure that the eye recognizes as a **depiction** of something. And some responses are learned perceptually. Sounds are perceived as the sound of something and not just as noise. It makes a difference aesthetically whether the sound perceived as that of a bird turns out to have been artificially produced, even though there is no difference in the sound **per se**. The current ability to reproduce both sounds and images digitally opens the way for manipulation that is aesthetically significant. A single performer may play all of the parts of a **composition**, so that the work itself exists only in the electronically mixed combination. Early modern empiricism was fascinated by the question whether someone born blind would be able to perceive a sphere when first made able to see or whether, without the experience of touch and learned responses of depth perception, a sphere would only appear as a disk. As long as painting was almost exclusively **representational**, artists had to know the science of perception, the conventions that would be accepted, and the ways to manipulate learned responses.
An extreme case of perceptual illusion occurs in trompe l'œil painting. The eye is deceived by its own ability to correct what it sees combined with perspective and the use of light and shadow to produce an illusion of depth when in fact the surface is flat. Some of the most impressive Trompe l'œil effects are architectural and depend on the point of view of the viewer. Viewed at other angles, the illusion disappears. Aesthetics is replete with stories of artists who were able to produce such illusions by their skill. The Greek painter Xeuxis was reputed to have painted grapes so realistically that birds attempted to peck at them. Another artist painted a curtain and asked his competitor to draw it to reveal the picture that was supposedly behind the flat, painted surface. Aesthetically, the admiration for such skill depends not just on the illusion but on one’s knowledge that one’s eye is being fooled. The object itself is of only secondary aesthetic interest; the real aesthetic experience is in the admiration of the skill of the artist.

A number of aesthetic theories posit a special form of perception as productive of aesthetic pleasure. According to these theories, aesthetic perception requires some special way of seeing and produces an experience that is distinct from other, ordinary forms of experience. Two types of aesthetic perception can be distinguished in the history of aesthetics. The first is formal or metaphysical. It calls for one to be able to see form as such independently of its sensual material or causes, and it produces a state not unlike religious contemplation. The second is more directly psychological. It asks the viewer to assume a different psychological state with respect to something. Such perception is said to “put out of gear” the ordinary modes of perception or to “distance” the perceiver from the practical concerns of ordinary perception. In a famous example, Edward Bullough describes the perception of a storm at sea that sets aside the actual danger while retaining the stimulation and perceptual features in themselves. The difference from ordinary perception lies not in what is perceived but in how it is perceived. Theories of a special aesthetic perception have been criticized on the grounds that they confuse perception and attention. One can pay attention to different aspects of an experience without having to perceive differently.

In 20th-century aesthetics, perception has been an important topic particularly in relating art history to style. The existence of an identifiable artistic style is said to depend on the existence of perceptual
variations and conventions, for example. One learns to recognize baroque or mannerist style by recognizing the perceptual conventions incorporated into the painting, and without such conventions, overarching style terms would make little sense. There is no innocent eye.

Perception also is an important topic in film aesthetics, not only because one must learn to “see” according to the conventions of cutting, montage, and the direction of gaze but also because perceptual issues determine whether what one is seeing is in fact an image of reality or some more complex perceptual image. Early film was fascinated simply by the ability to record objects in motion, but almost immediately the narrative possibilities of film led to both expressionist images and staged scenarios.

PERFORMANCE. The existence of a performance implies something about the nature of a work of art and raises questions about both how it should be perceived and how it is related to its source and to other performances. Not all art is performed. Paintings, sculpture, buildings, etc., have a single instance that is created and stands as the work of art. Music and drama, on the other hand, exist to be performed. One may argue that the performance is the primary work of art, even if there is a score or script. Still other kinds of art seem to fall somewhere in between. Movies are “performed” in the sense that there are multiple copies that are intended for exhibition. On the other hand, they are all copies of a single master (setting aside questions raised by differently edited versions of the same film). Novels and poems also have a single text that exists in multiple copies and is intended to be read. But reading is not quite like performing a drama. The reader has an immediate control over and access to the appropriation of the text but the reading is only subjectively accessible. Even oral reading or recitation depends on the listener in a way that is different from the audience response to musical or dramatic performances. It makes sense to criticize a musical performance or the performance of a play in ways that one would not criticize listening. The elements of a performance are there publicly for comparison in ways that reading does not require. It is quite different to criticize someone for not listening carefully or for misunderstanding what was said than it is to criticize an actor’s performance or a musician’s skill.

Performance also raises interesting questions about the status of a
performance. What counts and what does not? A musical performance may be technically correct and still raise questions about what is going on. For example, performances on period instruments sound different from performances on modern instruments. The period performance is undoubtedly closer to the composer’s intention or vision of the piece, but the modern instruments may exploit the possibilities of the score better and bring out aesthetic effects that could not be achieved on the period instruments. Performances that are identical in all relevant respects except the audience may constitute different performances. Questions of authenticity are raised, for example, when the same work is performed by the same musicians in the same way for a native audience and for an audience of tourists.

Performance also leaves open questions about the relation of the work of art to its original source. At one extreme, the performance may be the only instance of a work of art. Pure improvisation and “happenings” are one-of-a-kind performances. At the other extreme, a score or script may be the determining factor in what counts as a performance of a particular work. Most (though not all) aestheticians would agree that a bad performance is still a performance of a particular work, but at some point badness simply takes over and the original work disappears. Artists can even exploit that fact to produce camp performances.

Critical issues about performances include what legitimately should enter into critical consideration and what constitutes a good or bad performance. Strong intentionalists, for example, are prepared to make use of such external criteria as the author’s intentions and the original context to criticize a performance. Others are more inclined to grant the performance some independence. It has become common, for example, to perform Shakespeare’s plays in non-Elizabethan settings. At some extremes, this produces jarring dis cords between the language and the setting. In other instances, it can bring out subtleties that are easily missed in more traditional performances. The relative importance of skill in performance will also vary. One expects skilled performance, but it may become an issue whether the skill of the performer or what is being performed is the object. Performances in opera that serve primarily to demonstrate the vocal range of the singers or that allow an aria to be repeated even though it interrupts the opera raise such questions.
Finally, the **ontology** of performance becomes an aesthetic issue. Not all performances are even directly accessible. It is possible to construct scenes and assemble musical performances with digital technology. Films can be colorized and photographs rearranged. In such cases, one asks just where the performance is located. Its multiple instances seem to replace a non-existent original. So-called **performance art** either exists in the performance, or in the record that is kept, or in some combination of the two. Aesthetics has considered all of these possibilities somewhere.

**PERFORMANCE ART.** Performance art substitutes a transient **performance** or event for the **creation** a physical **artifact**. In some cases, documentation of the performance may be considered part of the performance and performances may be repeated, but the essence of performance art is its improvisational and transitory character. When Chris Burden shot himself in the arm, for example, the performance was not likely to be repeated. Performance art is an instance of the **avant-garde** art that challenges the traditional understanding of the arts as ways of making something.

**PERSPECTIVE.** Perspective is the application of visual geometry to **painting**. It may involve any effects of light, space, and **color** that reproduce visual **perception** and it may utilize a number of different schemes to achieve different optical effects, but it is most commonly applied in linear perspective, which involves arranging the size of objects in relation to a vanishing point so that they appear to the eye as if the distance was receding toward that point.

Perspective is associated with **realism** in painting, but recent studies have shown both that realism is not limited to the use of perspective and that perspective is not simply a reproduction of reality but is itself a **conventional** way of seeing that has to be learned experientially. Perspective was described by **Leon Battista Alberti** in the 15th century and became widely known to painters in the early Renaissance. It was identified with aesthetic theories of art as **imitation**. Skill in perspectival **representation** was one of the standards applied to art from that time until **modernist** movements in the 19th century shifted the focus from the transparent representation of objects to the plane of the painting itself.
PHENOMENOLOGY. Phenomenology is the philosophical movement begun by Edmund Husserl, though as always, there are other sources as well as earlier anticipations of principal doctrines. Husserl proposed a kind of analysis that was to be directed at consciousness itself. By an analytical process of bracketing or setting aside the real conditions of some phenomenal occurrence, one is supposed to be able to isolate and identify the content of consciousness and the conditions of the appearance of that content in the mind of a perceiver in a way that is strictly independent of the external factors in the content and the subjective peculiarities of the perceiver.

Phenomenology is, therefore, an analytical technique that implies a great deal about what can be known and how it can be known. Phenomenology claims, for example, that the thing itself can be known because it must be present in consciousness. But it can be known only as something that is “unreal” in a sense; the ideas of Plato and Aristotle are at once vindicated and subordinated to the existential occurrence of the phenomenon, which is the only actual reality. Phenomenology produced three philosophical lines of investigation—those who attempt to retain its analytical form as described by Husserl and to extend it to other fields of interest; those who accept the priority of consciousness but seek to escape the limitation to phenomenal occasions; and those who accept the priority of consciousness but also believe that one cannot go beyond the existential situation. The latter two possibilities produced the different kinds of existentialism practiced by Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre, respectively, for example.

Phenomenological aesthetics begins either with the consciousness of a work of art or the consciousness of an aesthetic experience—either as produced by nature or by art. The phenomenological analysis of works of art tends to be formalistic since what appears in the analysis as aesthetically relevant is primarily the form of the work. Specific content will be “bracketed” as belonging only to that individual. Roman Ingarden’s analysis of the literary work of art shows a number of similarities to an Aristotelian analysis of formal properties of literature, for example. The phenomenological analysis of aesthetic experience, on the other hand, tends to produce a kind of psychology. One of the principles of phenomenology is that it frees the analysis of the particular psychological characteristics of the indi-
vidual perceiver. It is anti-psychological in that sense. On the other hand, aesthetic experience, at least since Immanuel Kant, has been taken to be a purely subjective form, so the phenomenology of aesthetic experience becomes a phenomenology of subjectivity itself. Mikel Dufrene’s phenomenology of aesthetic experience has many affinities with Kant’s aesthetics without committing to the kind of idealism Kant presumed.

The various forms of existential phenomenology depart from the basic phenomenological premises either in the direction of reinstating a kind of metaphysics of being itself (Heidegger) or in privileging the immediate experience of the individual confronted with a work of art so that all external existence tends to dissolve into perception (Maurice Merleau-Ponty) or into an existentially felt moment (Sartre). From there a multiplicity of complex aesthetic positions emerge in current continentaly influenced aesthetics. See also RICOEUR, PAUL.

PHOTOGRAPHY. The aesthetic status of photography raises a number of issues. All visual art involves the use of a medium, but photography interposes a mechanical means between the photographer and the final work. To some aesthetic theoreticians, that difference seems significant. Many photographs are intended merely to reproduce what appears on the film surface by means of the lens arrangements. In that case, claims to the status of art become problematic. Many photographs are clearly no more than incidental records or commercial products intended for a practical use. Even photographs that are intended for enjoyment are at most a popular sub-genre and do not rise to the level of fine art. Art photography points to several factors to counter this reduction: the photographer chooses what to photograph, controls the lighting, and controls the actual production of the photograph from the film medium. All of these elements can be managed in the same way that a painter manages brushes and pigments.

Questions still remain about the mechanical means of reproduction, however. Photography is a classic case of a reproducible art form. The singular nature of most visual art does not apply to photographs. The ability to reproduce photographs more or less at will changes the nature of the relation between audience and work and
PHOTOGRAPHY changes the role of the photographer as artist. The kind of status that attaches to paintings and sculpture by virtue of their singular relation to a creative mind is largely lost in photography, although the practice of numbering and signing individual prints attempts to retain something of the unique “aura” of singular works.

Much of the aesthetics of art photography depends on the ability of a photographer to manipulate the images in ways that go beyond the mere reproductive potential of a camera. From its earliest days, photography could make use of posed scenes, double exposures, and tricks in the printing process. With the addition of digital technology, the possibilities for manipulation to achieve specific effects have greatly increased. Not all such effects will be aesthetic, but where they are, photography can claim status as art on the basis of the same arguments that apply to any creative process.

Photography also contributes to aesthetics in other ways. It is the basis for filmmaking, where it can be combined with temporal extension to produce a narrative. The unique relationship between a photograph and what it is a photograph of introduces new possibilities to narrative in both documentary films and fictional narratives. Movies do not simply present real things. The world viewed in film is both formally and psychologically different from the real world. But the existence of real objects opens possibilities and sets limits. What one sees is different from what a character may merely think or imagine, and the actual existence of a visualized character determines much more definitively what the audience can imagine. One’s view is controlled by what is not shown as well as what is shown, and the choice of what to see rests with the film, not the audience. One can look away, but one cannot choose to look at what the film does not show.

Photography can also be a means to hybrid forms of art that mix media, and it can serve as a tool for the production of other art. A portrait painted from a photograph is still a portrait. The question of the expressiveness of photographs depends in part on what the intention of the photograph is. Both photographs and paintings involve choice, and a photographic portrait may incorporate as much expressive choice as a painting. Recent advances in the technology of film, of lenses, and of electronic devices have added to the potential expressiveness of photography. It is possible with super-fast film, for
example, to utilize lighting effects that would have been available only to a painter before.

PICTURESQUE. The picturesque is, literally, a scene that is suitable for a picture. The picturesque became a part of aesthetics in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries when paintings modeled scenes, particularly a kind of landscape, on ideal views of nature that were designed to produce specific aesthetic effects. Such painters as Claude Lorraine and Jacob Ruisdael imagined scenes of wild nature that dominate the human figures in the painting to produce feelings of awe and greatness. This effect is known as the sublime, but it becomes identifiable as its own distinct aesthetic effect, the picturesque, when it is produced by means of a kind of scenery.

Once the effect is sought, it is transferred to nature itself. Scenic touring looked for actual landscapes that approximated pictures. Gardens and scenic vistas were created to provide such scenes. The formal garden with its manicured and sculpted views was replaced by a wild naturalism, and if such naturalism was not readily available, it was artificially created. Ruins are a part of the picturesque, and if one did not have a ruin in the right place, one could always build one. There were cases of roads being intentionally made rough and of hermits hired to occupy a place in a scene.

The picturesque is a part of the aesthetics of feeling or sentiment. Aesthetics in the 18th century begins with a sense of beauty, but other aesthetic emotions were identified as well. The sublime is the strongest of these because it appeals to fear, awe, and greatness when they are sufficiently detached from real consequences so that they induce a kind of excitement or stimulation that is pleasant in itself. From there, the way is open to categorize still more aesthetic emotions—novelty, surprise, etc. The picturesque is among those additions.

The picturesque is also significant as a product of the change in the relation of art to its audience and the sociology of art. Aristocrats had access to the great courts and art collections of Europe, and it was common for a young noble to embark on a “grand tour” to complete his aesthetic education. Such touring was largely closed to the emerging middle class, but picturesque scenery provided a kind of bourgeois substitute. Accounts of scenic tours enter the literature
of the 18th century, and William Gilpin, among others, wrote aesthetic guide books to the picturesque that were influential in establishing certain parts of Great Britain as scenic destinations and determining what one looked for. The picturesque depends on just the detachment that aesthetic attention sought; it must ignore many of the actual consequences of its scenic views to achieve its desired aesthetic effects.

PILES, ROGER DE (1635–1709). Roger de Piles was an influential critic of painting and theorist of the French Royal Academy who defended the style and manner of Peter Paul Rubens against that of Nicholas Poussin. He translated De Arte Graphica by Charles-Alphonse Dufresnoy, and his own Discourse on Painting (Cours de peinture par principes, 1708) helped establish that painting, like poetry, was subject to neo-classical rules but that it has its own, equally effective, forms of imitation. Painting is a science supplemented by genius and enthusiasm. De Piles attempted to extend his maxims on painting to a mathematically derived table of painters based on their excellence in composition, drawing, coloring, and expression.

PLATO (427–347 BCE). Plato’s dialogues constitute the foundations of Western philosophy. Several dialogues deal with art and its effects. In the Republic, an account of an ideal state, Plato discusses art in terms of its effects on the soul. His conclusions are not very encouraging to artists. Art is an imitation of an imitation. Reality rests with the ideal form, which is singular. Its physical instances are themselves imitations of that form. They are judged on the basis of their ability to fulfill the functions of the ideal object. A good bed is one that can be slept in; a good musical instrument is one that plays true notes. Artists also make imitations, but their imitations are imitations of imitations. One cannot sleep in an artist’s bed. So art fails the test of usefulness.

The situation is even worse for artists, however. Imitation is seductive. It leads the soul to concentrate on the immediate pleasures of the imitation without regard to the reality of what is produced. The result is moral weakness. So to avoid that effect, one should avoid the kind of imitation that artists use. The only positive role that can
be assigned to the arts in the ideal state is to lead children and the weaker citizens to good habits by a kind of patriotic indoctrination. The very seductiveness of art leads Plato to conclude that poets should be banished from the republic.

The negative conclusions of the Republic are based on the ideal rationality of such a state, however. They are qualified elsewhere by somewhat different reflections on art. In Ion, Plato considers the claims that a reciter of Homer might have to acknowledge. Such reciters were a significant part of the still existing tradition of oral poetry, and their interpretations of the mythological texts were considered authoritative. Plato challenges Ion to demonstrate his knowledge, and Ion is ultimately forced to admit that he knows nothing more than how to recite. He gains no knowledge by interpretation of the texts that he recites. Plato does not conclude in this case, however, that the poetic texts and the myths they are based on are not authoritative. Instead he concludes that the gods speak through men who do not understand what they are saying. Ion is a mere mouthpiece through which the poems are conveyed. The question whether a more rational understanding of the poems of Homer would convey knowledge is largely evaded, though it is clear that they cannot supply the kind of practical guidance to the state that is attributed to them.

Finally, Plato also considers the role of poets as inspired in their own right. In Phaedrus, some poets are acknowledged to be divinely inspired by the muses. They are seized by an ecstatic madness, and their poems instruct us in the acts of the gods and heroes. Poetry that lacks such inspiration will fail, and the poet who is not also a madman is no poet. Further, in the Symposium, beauty, which begins with sensual and erotic beauty, can be a path that leads upwards beyond itself. So while art and artists are denied any direct knowledge of what they are doing and while their function in and of itself is misleading and rationally suspect, nevertheless art may be an instrument of elevation and instruction when it is linked to sacred forces.

Plato’s challenge to the arts stimulated responses down to and including the Renaissance. Two lines of response were prominent. One re-characterizes the act of imitation itself in more positive terms. Imitation can be regarded as a legitimate kind of making, and it can be viewed as a way to separate the ideal from its limitations in sense.
The other emphasizes the positive role that beauty and the arts can take in elevating the soul out of its sensual limits. Sensual beauty is a first step on a ladder of being toward ideal beauty. Both lines acknowledge the basic Platonic distinction between ideal form and sense and may be taken to dominate aesthetics until the break with Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysics after the Renaissance. See also CLASSICISM; NEO-PLATONISM; PLATONISM; PLOTINUS.

PLATONISM. Aesthetic Platonism is the general position that beauty is an ideal form and that art and artists are to be understood in relation to that ideal. It takes many forms and leads to sometimes paradoxical conclusions. Because art is not itself the ideal form, which must be a state toward which the soul ascends and gives up its individual limits in the process, art may be anchored in the sensual world. Its form of beauty holds the soul back and limits its ascent. But because art can separate itself from the limits of actual existence, it can also be viewed as a purified version of that existence. Some aesthetic Platonists argued, for example, that beautiful art is made by choosing the best features from many models to produce a vision of the ideal that does not fully exist in any single case. If art and sensual beauty can seduce the soul, they can also provide it with a vision of what it can become and draw it upwards toward the ideal beauty.

In the classical world, the positive features of Platonism for the arts are developed by Plotinus in a movement that is called neo-Platonism. (Plotinus considered that he was doing no more than correctly interpreting the “divine” Plato.) The negative aspects of Platonism are emphasized by religious asceticism, beginning with Augustine’s suspicions that the arts are a snare for Christians and traceable throughout the later classical period in iconoclasm and medieval Christian asceticism.

Neo-Platonism emerged as a positive force again during the Renaissance as a justification for the new artistic movements and the spirituality of individual artists. In 17th-century England, a school of neo-Platonist interpretations of Christian theology, the Cambridge neo-Platonsists led by Henry More, also provided a justification for the arts as a positive form of spirituality. Finally, neo-Platonic influences can be seen in the Romantic understanding of creativity and the movement of spirit through history. Neo-Platonism continues to
appear in some forms of aesthetic mysticism and spirituality, but its metaphysical presuppositions make it largely incompatible with empiricist and rationalist forms of aesthetics.

**PLAY.** Modern aesthetics draws on the concept of play in two ways: as a freedom from practical concerns and as a characteristic of human nature.

When aesthetic experience is identified as a disinterested form of experience that is concerned with neither the uses nor existence of its object, then the imagination is said to be playing freely. According to this line of thinking, the imagination is a creative faculty that converts the raw data provided by the external senses and consciousness into knowledge. If that knowledge is directed toward some end, then it is theoretically or practically committed. It may be concerned directly with its own states, however; its objects are then present in experience, but their uses and even their existence is of no concern to the imagination. In that case, the imagination may be said to play freely and the experience of that free play is aesthetic. It is pleasurable in the special way that aesthetic delight is pleasurable, and it is distinct from the pleasure that comes from the satisfaction of desires. In this sense, play is an essential element in aesthetic experience. The free play of the imagination and the theory of aesthetic experience that it implies is central to the aesthetics of Immanuel Kant.

After Kant, Romantic and idealist philosophy further extends the role of the imagination. Human beings are variously characterized, but they are distinguished from other beings by their ability to enter into a spiritual play. Humans are a homo ludens—a playing animal. The progress of the spirit and its freedom from the constraints of material being results from that ability to play. Artists as imaginative creators unconstrained by science or material reality can enter most directly into that state of play. So art is a form of play that advances the spirit.

Play also characterizes some recent theories of fiction, particularly the theory of fiction as make-believe advanced by Kendall Walton. To enter into a game of make-believe is to establish a form of quasi-reality that is dependent on playing and accepting the rules of a game. Children are especially good at such games, and their play pro-
vides the paradigms for what artists do when they create fictional worlds and ask their audience to enter into the game.

PLEASURE. Classical aesthetics defines art in terms of imitation, so the basic aesthetic categories are determined by the truth and accuracy of the imitation. Nevertheless, the act of imitation itself was believed to be pleasurable, so some degree of aesthetic pleasure is part of beauty. In fact, one of the problems about imitation is that its pleasantness may lead one to become too attached to the imitation and to ignore the true beauty of the intellect or soul.

When aesthetics shifts to feeling and sentiment in the 17th and 18th centuries, beauty is defined as a pleasurable sentiment. It is either a peculiar pleasure or it is simply a pleasurable sentiment that accompanies some kinds of sensation or some properties. Various theories describe the properties of beauty differently, but there is widespread agreement among empiricist philosophies of taste that beauty is a secondary quality that produces pleasure through the senses. As other sense theories develop and the range of aesthetic senses or effects expands, some qualifications on aesthetic pleasure are introduced. In particular, the sublime is pleasant, but it is a pleasure qualified by a kind of fear or terror. Aesthetic value remains essentially hedonistic, however. The function of art is to instruct through pleasing, and the pleasure art provides is essential to its value.

The exclusive focus on beauty as a form of aesthetic pleasure is less common in more recent aesthetics, which recognizes that the range of aesthetic effects is more extensive than simple pleasure. Ugliness, fascination, and absorption in a surface all are aesthetic effects that would not be described easily as pleasurable, and much contemporary art is intended to shock, produce change, or just to comment on other art. It is possible to say that something is aesthetically valuable but that I do not like it, but it would be odd to say that something is aesthetically pleasant but I do not like it. So aesthetic value is distinct from aesthetic pleasure.

PLOTINUS (204–270). Plotinus was a Greek-speaking Roman citizen born in Egypt. After the death of his teacher, Ammonias Saccas, Plotinus settled in Rome where he attracted a circle of wealthy, intell-
lectually inclined followers. His student Porphyry was responsible for collecting his writings, called The Enneads. An esoteric, almost mystical, element runs through Plotinus’s work. One of the speculative elements that Porphyry drew on had to do with the perfection of numbers. Six and nine were believed to be “perfect” numbers, and Porphyry seized upon that to organize Plotinus’s lectures into six groups of nine lectures each. (Ennead just means a group of nine.)

Plotinus’s influence led to the founding of the philosophical movement that we call neo-Platonism. Neo-Platonism blends elements of Plato’s teaching with more mystical doctrines that probably reflect a cult traceable back to the Greek philosopher-mystic Pythagoras in the fifth century BCE. Early neo-Platonism had many of the characteristics of a religion, but it lacked the ritual and cult apparatus that would have made it accessible to a wide audience. However, it was taken up and incorporated into other religions, including Christianity, and it exerted an influence far beyond the scope of its own devotees. Plotinus was a major influence on Augustine, and some writings of later neo-Platonists appear disguised in the Christian tradition as the work of early Christian disciples, such as Dionysius the Areopagite. The work attributed to Dionysius is in fact a sixth-century neo-Platonic text.

Plotinus taught an introspective, dialectical method, by which consciousness and the soul can be raised from their sensual existence to participate in the intellectual unity of reality itself. In the Sixth Tractate of the First Ennead, he applies that method to beauty. He begins with experience at the sensual level. His emphasis on experience gives Plotinus’s treatment of beauty a special importance to theories of art and the aesthetic. Beauty is one of the primary qualities of a higher consciousness. Beauty begins with sight. It begins, in other words, with the most important sense, the one that according to Aristotle all human beings take delight in. Plotinus analyzed the source of that beauty, and he rejected the most common classical conception of beauty as formal symmetry by appealing to a series of counter-examples. At this point, his argument is not at all esoteric; it is a model of rational philosophical style.

Rational arguments allow Plotinus to establish what beauty is not. When he comes to ask where beauty does come from, he turns quickly to communion with ideal forms. A dialectical relation is re-
quired for participation in these forms. Beauty depends not on symmetry but on order and harmony between what is experienced and its own orderliness. The relation is one of communion. Each of us is drawn up toward increasing order. At the same time, we are attracted to the less orderly world of sense in which we take delight because it is more controllable, it is easier, and it provides immediate gratification. We struggle between the attraction of the greater order of ideal forms and our selves, which are trapped in their own sensuality. Philosophy aids us in our struggle if we are capable of the discipline that it demands. Beauty is the reward that it holds out.

Characteristically, neo-Platonic thought identified reality itself not with concrete, ordinary things but with intellectual things that only a mind can grasp. Ideas are more real than what they are ideas of; universal ideas are more real than their individual formulations. Ultimately, only a unitary form can be real. Beyond that, unity itself abandons even the category of being. Beauty is the communication of the higher forms to the lower manifestations of those forms. So physical beauty communicates order and harmony to sensual experience. Intellectual beauty communicates order and harmony to ideas themselves. Higher forms of beauty can be grasped only because our minds ascend from the next lower stage to which beauty has been communicated.

Works of art play no role in the method or descriptions that Plotinus offers. Art would be one of the sensual elements left behind at the earliest stages. Thinkers and philosophers, not artists and makers of objects, are the seekers of beauty. If Plato expelled artists as dangerous and Aristotle analyzed their products to see what made them so effective, Plotinus simply leaves them behind.

However, only a slight twist of the arguments of Plotinus turns them into a positive theory of art. If some way to have the experience of beauty were provided, people would be aided in the ascent to intellectual beauty. Before long, artists claimed to be the ones who could provide that experience. They take the sensual world and turn it into imitations that are not limited by space, time, or decay. Moreover, they make it possible for everyone to have access by lifting perception out of the ordinary and showing us the extraordinary features of order and harmony hidden to the ordinary gaze. Poets and painters become the priests of the neo-Platonic religion. This neo-Platonic art
theory goes beyond the text of Plotinus, who seeks to account for beauty in terms of the ascending hierarchy of his larger system. But through the Renaissance and beyond, Plotinus provided the basis for an answer to Plato’s doubts about the dangers of imitation.

**POETICS.** Poetics is more than the theory of poetry; it includes all literature. Poetics is the theory of the structure of literary works. It includes rhetoric applied to literature as well as the rules for making literary works and the ways that those works function. The earliest poetics that has survived is the *Poetics* of Aristotle. Ostensibly an analysis just of tragedy, Aristotle’s treatise provides a model for poetics in general. Aristotle describes the material that makes up a tragedy (actions of men, shown on the stage), the means by which those actions are shown (the plot), the form that a plot takes (arousal of pity and fear), and the ends toward which tragedy aims (the catharsis of pity and fear).

Subsequent poetics follows Aristotle’s pattern of structural analysis, although the schema of material, efficient, formal, and final causes that Aristotle employs is not universal. What is very nearly universal is attention to the complex interaction of three elements: the making of a work of art (the poet or writer), the work itself (the text), and the effects that the work has on an audience. Each of those elements is given priority in one or another poetics. Formalism begins with the text and gives it priority. Historicism and intentionalism look to the writer first. And recently, what is called reader response theory gives priority to the kinds of response that an audience can have. Whatever the priority and starting point, however, all three elements are present in a complete poetics.

**POETRY.** Poetry is the literary genre that utilizes all of the elements of language to construct literary works of art. Those elements include sound, meaning, rhythm, and the full range of figurative language. Unlike prose works, which are based on semantic structures and organized around temporal narratives, poetry has a wider field of effects. It ranges from short, lyric or epigraphical poems to long narratives. The distinction between poetry and prose is blurred, at best, but poetry tends to utilize more of the linguistic elements at the same time or to display some aspect of language for its own sake.
The earliest poetry was evidently oral; it depended on formulaic constructions that aided in its preservation and recitation, and it drew on the connections between myth and ritual for its significance. Poetic forms have developed that utilize all of the varied potentials of language to tell stories, create emotional effects, and simply play with language itself. Poems range from the strict syllabic discipline of Haiku to the extensive constructions of blank verse epics, and the genre is elastic enough to include concrete poetry that abandons all but the suggestion of language and free verse that differs from prose only in the way that it is approached.

Significant shifts in poetry correspond to shifts in aesthetic theories and expectations. Classical poetry ranges from short odes and epigrams to epics, but it has at its heart the imitation of the myths and stories that organize the cosmos. When aesthetics shifts to theories of expression, feeling, sentiment, and the priority of the artist, poetry shifts correspondingly to forms that express feeling and sentiment or comment on such expression. Contemporary aesthetics is much more eclectic, and poetry, which is often experimental and free-form, reflects that lack of a single, dominant aesthetic theory.

POP ART. Pop art is one of the avant-garde movements in the 20th century that challenge the traditional concepts of art as the making of beautiful objects to produce aesthetic experiences. Pop art takes ordinary objects—either the object itself or realistic pictures of the object—and treats them as if they were high art. It thus makes a theoretical statement about the pretensions of high art and satirizes public taste. Pop art is associated with such works as the Campbell soup cans and Brillo boxes of Andy Warhol. It is essentially a continuation of the Dadaist challenges to the art establishment that used various ready-made objects in place of traditional art objects. Pop art has played a significant role in aesthetic theory because of its own theoretical claims and because it directly challenges the essentialism of attempts to define art.

POSTMODERNISM (POST-MODERNISM). Modernism is both a period and a style, so postmodernism is equally vague. If the characteristics of modernism are the rationalism and empiricism of science, then postmodernism is the rejection of the authority of science. If
modernism is the rejection of Aristotelian metaphysics, then postmodernism is the rejection of metaphysics altogether. In the arts, modernism is the turn to expression and the mind of the artists in place of the dominant imitation theories of art. Postmodernism owes much to the idealism of the Romantics and G. W. F. Hegel, but it rejects the metaphysics that go along with idealism. In architecture, modernism refers specifically to the kind of buildings that reject decoration and ornamentation in favor of a combination of form and function and a utilitarian use of concrete, glass, and steel. Postmodernism looks back to classical ornamentation and combines styles in an eclectic mix. In short, postmodernism is many things without being any one thing.

The most influential postmodernist theories are found in literary theory. There the influences on French philosophy of structuralism, phenomenology, and existentialism have combined to produce an approach to literary texts based on the interplay of language and audience reception. In place of authoritative interpretation, literary reading becomes a way of exhibiting one’s encounter with a text. Language does not have a univocal meaning but is a playful, shifting form of expression that denies the “logocentric” attempts to fit it into a logical straitjacket. Literary theory becomes a form of anti-theory because it denies the applicability of truth to literary texts. The denial is paradoxical because there is nothing to deny. Leading postmodernists such as Paul de Man and Jacques Derrida refuse to separate the text and reader, so attempts to pin down their readings into singular propositions are frustrated. Ambiguity of reading is also personal ambiguity, the instability of the post-Cartesian ego. Aesthetics has adopted some of the postmodernist approaches, but postmodernism remains more of a literary strategy than a philosophical aesthetics in spite of the attempts by a number of contemporary aestheticians to bridge the gap.

PRAGMATISM. Pragmatism is the predominantly American philosophical movement that judges truth and reality by what appears in practical circumstances rather than by some overarching metaphysical or epistemological theory. Pragmatism is empiricist in its acceptance of experience rather than ideal forms or innate ideas as the necessary starting point for philosophy, but pragmatism reacted
against the exclusively linguistic understanding of truth that had dominated philosophy since the beginning of the 20th century.

The founders of pragmatism included the psychologist William James and the logician C. S. Peirce. Both argue that truth is determined not just by the structural features of sentences or logical formulations but also by the actions that employ those formulations. For something to be true is for it to so structure actions and responses that it makes a world that conforms to those actions. More recent pragmatism has developed several forms of ontological relativity. Reality is not fixed externally but reflected in the kind of worlds that one can make. It is scientifically and ontologically spare in its postulations of absolutes. What is is what exists here and now, and any generalizations must be regarded as useful tools rather than metaphysical givens.

Pragmatism influenced aesthetics and art theory primarily through the work of John Dewey, whose book *Art as Experience* applies pragmatic restrictions to aesthetic theory. According to Dewey, it is an experience, not some generalized experience as such, that provides pragmatic knowledge. Art is the human form that gives us the kind of unique experiences that defy generalization and thus leads us to knowledge. True art is always individual, and it produces only the kind of individual experience that makes a world. One has art only in an encounter between a work and an audience. Neither the physical object nor the intentions of the artist are as important as the experience.

Dewey’s aesthetic pragmatism has been further extended in some recent aesthetics that is open to popular art and to a relativism of interpretation that refuses to subordinate any particular experience of a work of art to any other experience.

PRE-RAPHAELITE BROTHERHOOD. In 19th-century England, a group of poets and painters reacted against the industrialization and mechanism of English society and the academic and realist directions of Victorian poetry and painting by looking back to a nostalgic form of medieval and early Renaissance art. They self-consciously adopted the description as Pre-Raphaelites because they saw in the high Renaissance a mannerism and stylistic complexity that led to the social consequences that they opposed. As painters, the Pre-
Priestley’s concern in the Lectures on Oratory is practical and rhetorical. He is addressing students who will be ministers. But he is led to consider what good taste demands. He combines Hartley’s theories of association with John Locke’s theories of ideas to argue that taste and judgment are both the product of acquiring experience. A person of taste will have acquired many associations and will be an able judge of what is good and what is not. Those who have no such extended experience are excluded as fit judges of taste. Thus Priestley is eventually led back into his practical discussion of tropes and their effects. Priestley’s influence in aesthetics was limited. Many of his ideas were advocated more explicitly and influentially by Lord Kames and David Hume, among others. But Priestley is perhaps the most directly Lockean of the writers on taste and beauty in the 18th century.

PRIMITIVISM. As a style, primitivism either values untutored art or that art that strives to achieve the effect of being untutored. Art seems to have been present very early in all cultures. In its earliest forms, such as cave paintings and cult figures, it probably was the product of religious forces and sympathetic magic. But it is powerful aesthetically, nonetheless, and primitivism recognizes that power and attributes to it the essence of aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience takes us back to those primitive senses. For some aesthetic theories, then, aesthetic experience requires that one return to one’s psychologically primitive state, and art is a means to that return. The polish, artificiality, and sophistication of more recent art is a hindrance to aesthetic experience. Leo Tolstoy, for example, finds the essence of art in the folk art of Russia and rejects the fine arts as perversions of that primitive art.

Primitivism also focuses on form and the reflection of form in content. Primitive style does not depend on the kind of skilled performances that come with artistic education. The actual depiction or representation may be quite crude. The claim is that that reduction in representational skill frees the natural sense of form to emerge. Because one is not viewing or reading a work of art in terms of its naïve content, one is able to recognize the form of the work in its use of space and color. The artist is naturally able to present form because he or she is not preoccupied with his or her own skill. Educa-
tion and acquired skill are seen as threats to the primitive vision. The overlay of culture tames art and reduces it to the lowest common denominator in the culture. However, advocates of primitivism disagree about whether it is possible to return to the primitive level of creation self-consciously.

**PROPORTION. Classical** aesthetics depended on mathematical relations of proportion, harmony, and symmetry, all of which were believed to be properties of the ordered cosmos, to understand beauty. Beauty was a metaphysical property that exhibited that cosmic order. In both art and nature, therefore, certain mathematical relations defined what is beautiful. The golden section was the most important of those relations. It is the proportion that exists between two quantities such that the relation of the smaller to the larger is the same as the relation of the larger to the sum of both—A:B::B:A + B. See also RULES.

**PSYCHICAL DISTANCE. Edward Bullough** was an early psychologist of art as well as a professor of Italian language and literature. In the famous essay “Psychical Distance’ as a Factor in Art and as an Aesthetic Principle” (1912), he gave a psychological account of aesthetic experience in which he argued that both a kind of art and an aesthetic attitude toward art could be characterized by a mental attitude of separation from ordinary concerns and consciousness. One could “put out of gear” one’s ordinary mental states, and art could be characterized by its varying ability to promote such a state of mind, which was simply the optimum state of aesthetic experience. Bullough’s central example was the differing experiences of a storm at sea—the ordinary experience is characterized by fear and practical concerns for safety; but psychical distance could make the same situation one of exhilaration, awe, and something to be desired. Artists are those who are particularly good at achieving psychical distance in their own experience and making it possible for others through their works of art.

**PSYCHOANALYSIS.** Psychoanalysis has been employed in literary studies and in aesthetic theories, particularly in art history. The two most important lines of psychoanalysis for aesthetics stem from Sig-
mund Freud and Carl Jung, who started out as colleagues but moved in different directions in their exploration of the unconscious urges and structures of mental life. Freud looked to dreams and suppressed sexual drives, while Jung developed a theory of a collective unconscious that looked to cultural archetypes and myth. Freud wrote several studies of art and artists, particularly a study of King Lear and The Merchant of Venice, “The Moses of Michelangelo” (1914), and a book, Leonardo Da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood (1910). In both the interpretation of the works of art and the exploration of the creative life of an artist, Freud’s psychoanalytic method looks beneath the surface to the symbols and buried urges that form the characters and works. Jung, on the other hand, uses psychoanalysis to find the common themes that link disparate works and artists. Myth and archetypal thinking do not require actual connections because they are the psychical means of coping with a resistant reality.

Psychoanalysis has exerted considerable influence on a number of different aesthetic approaches. Beginning with the explorations of the sublime, psychoanalysis hypothesizes causal relations for phenomena that otherwise appear contrary to their effects. We enjoy melancholy and are attracted to death and the fearsome. In cultural theory, psychoanalysis discloses patterns within bourgeois society that parallel individual responses as well as explaining the contradictions in aesthetic alienation and self-deception. Individual desires have their political and social correlates. The same kind of psychoanalytical approach to consciousness finds uses in existentialist aesthetics where the individual struggles with bad faith and toward freedom. In art history, the existence of artistic styles can be made clearer if there are common features in the creative process that only psychoanalytic insights can expose. In literary criticism, psychoanalytic approaches assume that the characters in a novel or play can be approached psychoanalytically, even though they have no psyche strictly speaking and even though the author may have intended no such psychological content. Whether psychoanalysis is truly a science or not, it provides a kind of narrative explanation that has proved useful to criticism.

PSYCHOLOGY OF BEAUTY/ART. Aesthetics is divided between formalist or objectivist theories of beauty and art that hold that real
aesthetic properties exist and psychological theories of beauty and art that hold that beauty is a mental property and art is the embodiment of mind. Even in the 19th century when psychology was the philosophy of mind, before it was recognized as a separate science, it offered one competing theory of beauty and art. Mind was a separate reality, and its philosophy was part of metaphysics. When metaphysics became suspect, alternative theories of the mind based on the association of ideas and imagination produced theories of beauty and art that were still essentially psychological.

Classical theories of beauty and the arts recognize the psychological effects of artworks, but they regard them as reasons to distrust the arts. Even when the psychological effects are given a positive role, it is primarily as a means to some other end that will neutralize the psychological effects. In drama, for example, catharsis, whatever else it is, is a means to get rid of unwanted effects. Modern aesthetics, on the other hand, regards beauty as primarily a psychological effect, and art is understood as the means to that effect, so art is fundamentally a means for producing desirable psychological effects. Beauty is in the mind of the beholder, and a sense of beauty is a sensitivity to psychological states that are pleasant in themselves.

Psychology begins to be regarded as a natural science distinct from philosophy of the mind at the beginning of the 20th century. The psychology of beauty or art becomes directly important in the theories of an aesthetic attitude that dominate the theory of the arts at that time. Edward Bullough first published his work on psychical distance in psychology journals. Empirical psychology approaches beauty as something that must be felt and can be accounted for in terms of the psychology of an artist and audience.

Modern criticism of the arts also incorporates psychological theory. Psychoanalysis, both Freudian and Jungian, has produced critical theories of interpretation and of the creative act. For a Freudian, an artist is bringing to consciousness, often in symbolic forms, deeper urges and desires. For a Jungian, an artist is tapping into the archetypal subconsciousness of a culture.

Resistance to psychological theories comes from formalists and from historicist theories. Formalists wish to bracket the intentionality that produced the work and focus on the patterns of meaning formally present in it. Historicists are prepared to include external ele-
ments, but they deny that those can be reduced to individual psychological drives.

– Q –

QUINTILIAN (ca. 35–ca. 95 CE). Quintilian was the leading teacher of rhetoric in the first century Roman empire. Rhetoric was both a practical discipline and a guide to public life. Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* contains instruction in rhetorical technique, but it also includes a critical canon of orators, standards of taste and education, and instructions on the moral life. Classical rhetorical philosophy was one of the forerunners of modern aesthetics, and Quintilian was very influential in the Renaissance and early modern periods when rhetorical rules became a staple of critical judgment.

– R –

RAILLERY. In 18th-century aesthetics, raillery appears as a form of wit that can be used critically to expose false sentiment. Raillery is essentially a making fun of excess. By holding up such excess to ridicule and making it a subject of laughter, the danger of sentimentalism is exposed and the enthusiast is brought back to reality. The need for raillery arises because sentiment is independent of logical and rational criticism. It does no good to tell someone that they ought not to feel what they feel; such criticism will always be external and ineffective unless the person criticized is also made to feel differently as well. Because beauty is a sentiment and sentiment itself is the only judge of sentiment, raillery becomes a form of criticism. The third Earl of Shaftesbury made particular use of raillery as a critical principle. He and his followers were accused of being sentimentalists and sacrificing reason to sentiment. At the same time, they were free thinkers and were opposed to the kind of religious enthusiasm that appealed to sentiment. Their answer was raillery. Its object was to distinguish good taste from bad taste and to form character by testing it.
RAMEAU, JEAN-PHILIPPE (1685–1764). Jean-Philippe Rameau was the leading music theorist in the 18th-century French Cartesian tradition. His *Traité de l’harmonie réduite à ses principes* (*Treatise on Harmony Reduced to its Principles*, 1722) lays down rules for music derived from mathematical principles by deductive reason. Rameau was opposed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who objected to the lack of feeling and emotion in French music compared to Italian music.

RASA. See INDIAN AESTHETICS.

READER RESPONSE THEORY. Reader response theory focuses on the relation between a text and an audience. In literary theory, it rejects the autonomous status of textual meaning. All meaning is located in the response that a text produces in a reader. Until that encounter, a text is at most potentially meaningful. One of the most important forms of reader response theory is known as reception theory, particularly the work of Hans Robert Jauss. See also HERMENEUTICS.

READY-MADES. Ready-mades appeared in the avant-garde movements of the early 20th century as a challenge to the thesis that the work of art was the product of a creative act by an artist that produced a unique artifact. Artists influenced by the Dadaist movement demonstrated that art did not have to be “created” at all; it could be found or simply adopted. Nothing about the artifact was uniquely artistic. A snow shovel hung in an exhibition (Marcel Duchamp) became a work of art. Of course, ready-mades remain a part of the art world and required someone to act as artist, so they were never completely independent of artistic activity. Their object, however, was theoretical; they are a form of conceptual art that is important for what it says about art rather than for the kind of aesthetic properties that traditional art was supposed to require.

REALISM. Realism proves to be a remarkably contentious issue in the history of aesthetics. Classical art ostensibly valued realism, and the history of painting is replete with stories of the skill of artists in producing works of art so realistic that they fooled birds and other painters. Yet classical art, for much of its history, does not appear
particularly realistic to us. Greek vase painting and Egyptian statuary seem stylized and dependent on conventions. Trompe l’oeil realism—the kind of painting that fools the eye—is obviously dependent on psychological illusion and physical distortion. Realism, like beauty, can be in the eye of the beholder.

A common sense of realism contrasts it with abstraction. Realism in the arts is the way things appear, not the way they are. Realism can actually refer to either appearance or actual reality, therefore. Another important sense of realism in both the visual and literary arts contrasts it not with abstraction but with idealization or exaggeration. Novels are said to be realistic when they portray ordinary events and people in commonly identifiable situations in contrast to the kind of novels that produce comic effects by depicting absurd characters or heroic effects by depicting noble characters. Realistic painting depicts recognizable scenes from ordinary life and humans, “warts and all,” in contrast to idealized forms. Again, however, it proves difficult to draw a line between realistic and unrealistic art. 18th-century epistolary novels and early 20th-century stream of consciousness novels can claim to be realistic in what they depict, but they are also extremely stylized. It has been estimated that to produce some of the early epistolary novels, the characters would have to have spent most of every day writing letters. A simple first person narrator cannot possibly tell his story in the time allotted to his narration. We know that impressionist painting required considerable education to be viewed, yet the depiction of light is tangibly realistic in Claude Monet’s paintings, and the color impressions in pointillism are created by means of a scientific realism about color.

This has led some aesthetic theoreticians, such as E. H. Gombrich, to maintain that all realism is conventional. We see what we have learned to see as real. Before perspective became common and widely understood, 13th-century saints might have looked realistic; later, different conventions limit our realistic vision to perspectively sophisticated painting. The realism of earlier works requires that we view earlier art in its own way while our realism seems natural to us. One has to learn to see silent movies all over again because the conventions of acting were different. What appeared to move so naturally that the audience called out warnings to the characters now
seems mannered. Conversely, our own conventions are so embedded in our way of seeing that we are unaware of them.

Against the extreme conventionalism of some theories of representation, one must set two facts. First, it is often obvious which of two works is more realistic, and the distinction is a useful one that should not be lost. Second, not all aspects of representation are conventional. Accuracy in representation can be defined precisely. Photography reveals how horses move, and perspective depends on the geometry of vision. There are good reasons that some visual artworks appear more realistic than others, and the language of some literary works more accurately accords with linguistic usage than others. That one must learn to see or read in certain ways in order to perceive the realism of works of art does not imply that the works themselves are not more or less realistic. A digital photograph depends on an elaborate breakdown of an image into an electronic code and the reconstruction of that image. Viewed as a set of switches, it does not “look like” anything. Yet a digital photograph is more or less realistic depending on how it relates to what it is an image of.

One of the ambiguities of realism, therefore, is whether it refers to the look of something or the accuracy of its encoding of information. A photograph of a building that has been digitally manipulated will look more realistic than an architectural drawing, but the drawing will more accurately depict the way the building is constructed. Much of the aesthetic discussion of realism is an attempt to sort out such ambiguities, which depend on the psychology of perceivers and the semantics of symbol systems, visual or linguistic.

RECEPTION THEORY. Reception theory is a form of reader response theory in literary studies that arose in the second half of the 20th century. It reacts against the attempts to do literary theory and aesthetics on the basis of the work of art and the creative act of the artist in isolation; both remain partial unless they are engaged by an audience. Reception theory begins with the hermeneutical thesis that all encounters between a work of art and its audience are subject to the moving history of reception and response. The horizon of encounter is determined by the structure of expectations that change as the text is located intersubjectively. Reception theory is thus a form of historicism, but it looks on history as current history and not as a
fixed past. The work of art belongs not to the past but to the present and future. Reception theory rejects the Marxist and Frankfurt School forms of historicism because they limit the progressive and positive element in hermeneutics. The leading proponents of reception theory have been Hans Robert Jauss (Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics, 1982) and Wolfgang Iser (The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett, 1972).

REID, THOMAS (1710–1796). Thomas Reid was the founder of the common sense school of Scottish philosophy. He taught at the Universities of Aberdeen and Glasgow and published three major works—An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense (1764), Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man (1785), and Essays on the Active Powers of Man (1788). The primary thrust of his philosophy was to oppose the skepticism, as he viewed it, that was consequent on John Locke’s theory of ideas, particularly as it was developed in the philosophy of David Hume. Reid rejected ideas as intermediate mental objects altogether. If all the mind knows is ideas, then, he held, it can know nothing of the world. Instead, the mind grasps objects directly through perception. The mind also has a direct perception of itself as an individual self, and it recognizes moral and aesthetic objects perceptually. Reid’s theory of perception is complex, however. Perception is not equivalent to sensation. Instead, it is a combination of concepts and beliefs applied to sensation. So the mind is an active reality. Reid is a dualist about mind and body but a realist about perception.

Reid’s importance to aesthetics depends on his theories of perception and his conceptual realism. Taste in its aesthetic sense is among the first principles that the mind must accept in order to perceive at all. So taste is not simply a matter of preference; it is one of the active powers of the mind. Since taste is a principle of the mind that makes a kind of perception possible, Reid holds that aesthetic qualities are the real objects of taste. His realism extends to beauty, which is a real, complex property of objects. Art is a subordinate concept. A person of taste with strong powers of perception can become an artist, given the right training and cultural situation. The fine arts themselves are a product of the language of nature that is inherent in us.
So Reid’s theory of taste and the arts depends on his theory of natural and artificial or conventional signs. The former, we know innately; the latter, which include language, we learn from experience. Reid’s actual principles of taste are much like those of his contemporaries. They include novelty, grandeur or the sublime, and beauty. What is most significant, however, is that he locates them firmly among the natural, first principles of the mind.

Reid also sides with his friend Archibald Alison in holding that taste and beauty are essentially mental and can be perceived only as expressions of the mind. So while beauty and grandeur are secondary qualities of objects, the fine arts take the form that they do as expressions of the mind’s powers. Since Reid denies that mental objects are ideas, there is no distinction between expression and object. Material objects can never be mental, so beauty itself is a mental object, a power of the mind. It is exhibited in the arts. Reid is close to developing a full theory of art as expression, but his dualism and the innateness of his first principles limits what he can say about aesthetics.

RELATIVE BEAUTY. See ABSOLUTE BEAUTY.

RELATIVISM. Modern aesthetics might be said to begin with the recognition of the subjectivity of taste and beauty. It did not follow, however, that taste or beauty was relative. Instead, rules and empirical regularities were sought on the model of the natural sciences. Aesthetic relativism arises when taste and beauty fail to conform to those empirical expectations.

Pure aesthetic relativism accepts that aesthetic experience depends only on individual response. Whatever pleases aesthetically is, by virtue of its pleasing, an aesthetic property. One’s aesthetic experience cannot be wrong because no absolute standard for aesthetic experience exists. No contradiction arises if one person finds something beautiful and another finds it ugly or indifferent. Aesthetic relativism of this sort is quite common in popular culture where everyone claims to know what they like, but it is much less common philosophically. Even those who defend the complete subjectivity of aesthetic judgments tend to make a distinction between liking and finding something aesthetically pleasing.

Aesthetic relativism also arises with respect to aesthetic judgments
and propositions. There the position is that such judgments are not, strictly speaking, true or false. To say that something is aesthetically pleasing or beautiful is to express one’s disposition to find it so. Such judgments may be more or less warranted in various ways, however. Aesthetic naturalism holds that aesthetic judgments are the result of biological drives, perhaps combined with cultural utility. So, although the judgment that X is beautiful is not true or false, it will be widely held within a particular culture. Different cultures will evolve differently and so aesthetic relativism becomes a form of cultural relativism.

RELIGIOUS ART. During a long period of Western aesthetics from the disintegration of the Roman empire to the rise of secular culture in the Renaissance, religious art was the primary art form. The church was the one institution that had both the resources and the level of cultural sophistication to support an art world. That is not to say that other forms of patronage did not exist, but even then their function was partially determined by the religious nature of art. Music, painting, and poetry served to comment on or demonstrate the patron’s status, including his religious status. The primary art forms were those that served a religious function—church architecture and music, devotional painting, and sacred literature. Secular poetry, such as the Arthurian legends, was quasi-religious in its tone and intent. There were exceptions, such as secular poetry and music, of course, but the art world as such was primarily a part of the larger religious culture.

Religious art does not disappear with the change in the dominant cultural institutions. Much of Renaissance art is religious in nature, for example. But it loses its paradigmatic position. The dominance of religious art implies a particular aesthetic. It begins with a suspicion of the arts that can be overcome only by identifying them with a higher reality. It understands aesthetic experience in terms of contemplation and ecstatic vision. And it assigns a didactic and moral function to art, which is judged by its success in raising its audience to religious experience. When other forms of aesthetic experience are acknowledged in the Renaissance, religious art continues to compete, but its aesthetic justification shifts. Private aesthetic experience becomes a substitute for religious experience. One line of aesthetic theory that runs from the Romantics and Friedrich Schleiermacher...
through the early 20th-century aesthetics of Clive Bell finds in a kind of aesthetic experience the metaphysical significance that would have belonged to religious experience in an earlier age. Instead of religious art, one finds a religion of art. See also MEDIEVAL AESTHETICS.

**REPRESENTATION.** That the visual arts represented something could be taken for granted for most of their history prior to the 20th century. The issues were what the visual arts should represent and how they should do it. The subject matter of painting was determined by appropriateness and the demands of patrons. Classical style, for example, considered idealized representations as appropriate, but increasing demands for realism in the later classical period broadened the scope of what might be represented. Portrait painting and sculpture moved from representing the subject as an ideal figure to representing the subject as a real person with physical and emotional imperfections. Similarly, the representation of emotion became more acceptable in painting and sculpture. The means of visual representation also become increasingly sophisticated during the history of the visual arts. Representation includes both a conventional element and a natural visual element that depends on physiology and geometry. The visual arts learn to adjust the means to the end, whether that end is the representation of emotion or visual verisimilitude.

Similar shifts in representation may be traced in the literary arts. The conventional and ritual elements in early drama give way to an increasing realism of subject matter and naturalism of language in both drama and prose fiction. From representations that are limited to mythological subjects and dramatic situations, art moves to the representation of a wider range of ordinary situations. The means of literary representation also expand. Drama and narrative fiction are able to represent not only what is or might be said but, by the use of complex narrative shifts, multiple points of view and temporal complexity.

Music presents more problems with the concept of representation, however. While a number of aesthetic theories understand music as a representation of emotion, it is less clear whether representation implies a distinct semantics in music or whether it involves only a generalized representation that depends on changes of tempo, tone, and volume.
One of the principal aesthetic issues in each case, therefore, is whether specific aesthetic properties are representational or whether such aesthetic properties as gracefulness or seriousness are aesthetically autonomous. In other words, does the aesthetic experience of gracefulness correspond to some objective gracefulness in the object that is represented, or is the aesthetic experience simply a response to causal factors that are themselves without aesthetic qualities. Aesthetic theory also is concerned with the role that convention plays in representation. It is often the case that representation is established by conventional means; some aestheticians would hold that that is always the case. Others understand representation to have a natural basis, even if it is conventionally developed.

More recently, aesthetics has abandoned the assumption that resemblance is a starting point for aesthetic experience. Non-representational painting and sculpture, pure music, and poetry and prose that exploit language directly do not depend on representational elements. It follows that while aesthetics remains concerned with the possibilities of representation, aesthetic experience generally should not be understood as a result of representation. One may approach aesthetic experience in purely subjective terms, therefore, and the aesthetic questions change from what is appropriate to art and what means are available to represent that artistic subject matter to questions about how one enters into an appropriate aesthetic form of perception or how social and psychological demands are incorporated into an engaged art world.

RESPONSE THEORY. See READER RESPONSE THEORY.

REYNOLDS, JOSHUA (1723–1792). Sir Joshua Reynolds was the leading British painter of the 18th century. He belonged to the distinguished circle of artists, writers, and critics from provincial backgrounds that moved to London and succeeded in transforming the arts from a patronage and craft-driven institution into an autonomous cultural force. Reynolds was apprenticed to the painter Thomas Hudson, traveled and studied in Italy, and established himself as the leading portrait painter in London by the time he was 40. He was instrumental in the founding of the Royal Academy of the Arts, which he served as president from its founding in 1768 until his death in 1792. He was also a founding member of The Club, the circle that
centered on Samuel Johnson and included the actor David Garrick, Edmund Burke, and Oliver Goldsmith. Reynolds and his friends and associates succeeded in establishing the fine arts as a respectable, entrepreneurial class in British society. His funeral at St. Paul’s Cathedral was a state occasion; the pallbearers included three dukes, two marquises, three earls, and a viscount.

Reynolds was most successful as a portrait painter, although his own aesthetic theories gave precedence to heroic, historical painting. He was also a significant literary figure. He published three papers on the fine arts in Samuel Johnson’s The Idler, and as president of the Royal Academy, his annual and then biennial addresses, the Discourses, were collected and widely read. He also read and commented on Burke’s writings.

Reynolds’s 15 Discourses, presented between 1769 and 1790, are an intelligent and reasoned defense of neo-classical aesthetics. In them, Reynolds seeks the principles and rules of not just painting but taste and the fine arts more generally, but he is also both a practical artist and critic and an empiricist who recognizes that principles arise from practice and that the rules must give way to what is successful. Like his close acquaintance and intellectual leader, Samuel Johnson, Reynolds would not follow a priori rules when they conflicted with common sense.

Reynolds was also directly concerned to form the taste of a public and to instruct the students of the Royal Academy. His models are the works of Raphael and Michelangelo. The Discourses are not simply neo-classical expressions of taste, however; they also assign a central role to the imagination and are concerned to promote the status of artists and, following Jonathan Richardson, who was one of the early influences on Reynolds, the elevation of painting to the same standing as poetry in the arts. Reynolds’s criticism of other painters and schools of painting favors the classical works of Greece and the high Renaissance; he is less impressed with the detailed realism of Dutch painting, and he has little to say about the early Renaissance work of Giotto and Masaccio.

The Discourses were composed over a period of twenty years and show the inconsistency and shifts in emphasis that one would expect. They contain little that is philosophically original if compared to the aesthetics of Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, or Reynolds’s
friend Edmund Burke. But as a combination of philosophically in-
formed aesthetics and practical criticism by a leading artist, they are
unparalleled in the history of aesthetics, and they establish a prece-
dent for measured art criticism. Their influence in elevating the stat-
ure of painting and their success in forming public taste place them
among the leading aesthetic works of the 18th century.

RHETORIC. Aesthetics, prior to the empiricist shift in the 18th cen-
tury when the term and philosophical discipline first appear, was
most closely associated with classical rhetoric. Aesthetics amounted
to the critical principles that guided public response and the theories
of response that any form of artistic action might produce. Rhetoric
was the one discipline that approached those principles directly.
Rhetoric was first of all a practical discipline. Its function was to in-
struct an orator in what would be effective in moving an audience.
Its roots are found in the early Greek philosophy of Gorgias and his
followers who viewed philosophy as the art of persuasion and the
craft of argumentation. Their purpose was to instruct public orators
at a time when public persuasion was central to the practice of law
and governance. They were opposed by Plato, who saw in rhetoric a
willingness to sacrifice truth for effect, and by Aristophanes, who
parodies rhetoric in his play The Clouds. As long as the law and poli-
tics were primarily oral forms of argumentation, rhetoric was the
foundation of professional success. Aristotle placed rhetoric on a
systematic basis. It reached its highest development in the Latin
works of Quintilian and was incorporated into the medieval founda-
tions of education as part of the “trivium” of rhetoric, grammar, and
logic.

Rhetoric was always more than simply a practical form of instruc-
tion, however. It sought the principles of argumentation, so it was
closely related to logic, and it investigated the way that language
works. Its organization of figurative speech into tropes and the theory
of metaphor that arises from that tropology have continued to influ-
ence the history of aesthetics. Twentieth-century rhetoric expands to
include virtually all the uses of language and is thus directly related
to the philosophy of language. In aesthetics, theories of irony and
metaphor guided much of mid-20th-century literary aesthetics. More
recently, rhetoric has returned to its Greek roots and opposed what it
sees as the absolutism and logical rigidity of contemporary philosophy of language. It emphasizes the play of language, its interaction with other cultural forms, and the relativity of pragmatic usage.

RICOEUR, PAUL (1913–2005). Paul Ricoeur was a French philosopher in the phenomenological tradition. His phenomenology of language and interpretation led to a theory of narrative and of metaphor that combined analytical insights into the uses of language with a phenomenological analysis of the conditions of conscious meaning appropriation. The object of hermeneutics is not only the appropriation of a text through the linguistic analysis of its intentionality but also the appropriation of that meaning in one’s own life. Metaphor is a form of interaction, as analytical interaction theories demonstrated, but the interaction goes deeper into conscious appropriation. Ricoeur opposed the Frankfurt School, which criticized hermeneutics as politically and socially subject to bourgeois ideology, because narrative is a progressive life-exploration.

RIEGL, ALOIS (1858–1905). Alois Riegl was an Austrian art historian whose exploration and defense of some neglected traditions, such as later Roman art, led to a theory of aesthetic value. His own commitments were to realism and formal analysis, but he relativized formal analysis by means of what he called the kunstwollen, the will to art, that grows out of a particular artistic culture that expresses its own artistic aims. Riegl’s complex combination of a scientifically based art history, realism, representationalism, and expressionism has had varied influences ranging from proto-fascism to Marxist aesthetics depending on how they have been appropriated.

ROMANTICISM. ‘Romanticism’ has no univocal meaning in criticism or aesthetics; there are a number of different romanticisms, depending on the art form and historical usage. Romantic music is not the same as Romantic poetry or Romantic painting. As a general adjective, ‘Romantic’ may apply to virtually any artist or work of art that exhibits formal properties of individuality or emotional sentimentality.

In aesthetics, Romanticism is most often contrasted with earlier historical forms of art and criticism that emphasized reason, rules of
art, and imitation. Romanticism as an historical moment in aesthetics gradually emerges in the 18th century and reaches its zenith in the first half of the 19th century in England and Germany with the theories of such poet-philosophers as Friedrich Schiller, J. W. von Goethe, and William Wordsworth. Romanticism shifted the emphasis in aesthetics to originality of expression, individual creativity, and a rule-free understanding of genius. Immanuel Kant defined genius as the ability to give the rule to art where no rules can be formulated in advance. Samuel Taylor Coleridge spoke of a finite creativity that emulates the infinite creativity of spirit. Therefore, Romanticism in aesthetics is closely related to theories of artistic expression and artistic autonomy. The artist becomes the “unacknowledged legislator” of the world in Percy Bysshe Shelley’s phrase.

As a theoretical term in aesthetics, ‘Romantic’ shades into sentimentality and a dependence on depth of feeling. Above all, feeling must be strong enough to overpower reason and didactic art. To be romantic is to feel more than can be expressed so that a sense of the ineffable comes to lie behind more concrete forms. Romanticism appeals to a transcendental vision of hints and intimations. It is open to metaphorical and symbolic forms of expression and the use and reassertion of myth. As rule-governed theories of art became less influential and new theories of art became more interested in experimentation, Romanticism itself, which began as a rebellion against rules, came to be seen as less revolutionary than avant-garde movements. Its expressive suggestiveness came to be seen as vagueness and its historical influence waned. It remains closely associated with aesthetic theories of expression, however.

ROUSSEAU, JEAN-JACQUES (1712–1778). Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s influence in the history of aesthetics far outweighs his direct contribution. He rose from obscure origins to become one of the celebrated figures of the French Enlightenment, but his eccentricity (which approached paranoid madness) and the moral ambiguity of his personal life (he abandoned his children as a matter of principle) separate him from the Enlightenment figures with whom he ultimately quarreled.

His primary philosophical contributions are in political theory, found in his Discourse on the Origin of the Inequality of Man (1754).
and the *Social Contract* (1762), and a kind of personal self-assertion in his *Confessions* that is somewhat at odds with his political views. He opposed the Enlightenment project of progressive education and improvement through the elimination of superstition and the advances of science with a *primitivism* and *naturalism* that was more pessimistic than hopeful. Culture and society are a descent from the natural state of human origins, but one cannot return to those origins, so a degree of social control and contractual solidarity is necessary to achieve any tolerable society. At the same time, individuals, particularly superior individuals, such as Rousseau himself, are not bound by the norms of society and as a matter of principle must pursue their own *genius*. Rousseau’s social theory influenced later socialist and Marxist political theory, while his individualism found a sympathetic response in Romanticism.

In spite of accomplishments in the theory of *music*, for which he developed an unsuccessful new *notation* and wrote the *Encyclopédie* article, and his success as a *novelist* with *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) and *Emile* (1762), Rousseau is essentially opposed to the developing 18th-century aesthetics of *sentiment* and *taste*. His vitriolic *Letter to d’Alembert on the Theatre* is closer to Plato’s views on the dangers of art than to the new elevation of *feeling* of the third Earl of Shaftesbury and A. G. Baumgarten. Jean D’Alembert had argued in his article on Geneva for the *Encyclopédie* that a theater in Geneva would be a good thing morally and educationally. In the *Letter*, Rousseau replies that the theater itself, actors, and a public that is influenced by acting and *performance* are socially and morally pernicious. It will undermine the social order, elevate women over men, and cause workers to divert their energies. Geneva as a republic cannot tolerate a theater; the arts are possible only in a political system controlled by an elite, where they are an indulgence of that elite. Rousseau’s own positive views of natural *beauty* and a kind of enjoyment of primitive nature leave little room for art. Romanticism seized upon the positive evaluation of natural beauty and the individualism of its enjoyment, and socialism seized upon the views of art as a tool of social construction that should be limited and controlled by the state. Neither is consistent with Rousseau’s own ambiguous philosophy, which is pragmatic but essentially distrustful of art.
RULES. A quest for the rules of composition and of criticism was one of the major emphases of aesthetics in its early modern stages. Different kinds of rules were sought. Classical rhetoric lay down rules for effective oratory, and these were extended to art in the 17th century. Veneration for classical models and especially for the Poetics of Aristotle also produced rules. Renaissance painting explored rules for perspective and for the correct proportion of human figures. All of these precedents suggested to neo-classical artists and authors that art could be placed on a scientific footing with its own rules for effective composition. The attempt to apply such rules prescriptively, however, led to critical conflicts and absurdities. Shakespeare was a notorious violator of established rules. So neo-classical criticism, while it continued to acknowledge the need for rules, subordinated them to empirical response.

A similar need for rules in establishing a standard of taste arose from the antinomy of taste posed by David Hume and Immanuel Kant. On the one hand, taste is subjective; what gives pleasure cannot be wrong. On the other hand, some critical comparisons are so obvious and universal that to deny them is to court absurdity. Hume appeals to a different kind of rules, therefore. Rules are inductive generalizations rather than prescriptive standards, and the taste of a sound critic precedes rather than follows rules. Kant distinguishes taste from rules altogether; taste is pre-conceptual and cannot be derived from rules. Genius is the ability to supply rules for art in the absence of any established standard.

In 20th-century aesthetics, rules take on a different role in aesthetics. Under the influence of Ludwig Wittgenstein, philosophers identify aesthetic concepts as “open,” which is to say that they are not derivable from more general concepts and are not governed by necessary and sufficient conditions. Instead, they are based on a “family resemblance” that groups instances together without a single property that is common to all members of the group. Similarly, such aesthetic concepts as gracefulness are acknowledged to depend on a kind of direct experience that cannot be reduced to rules. At most, rules may serve as defeating conditions for the application of a concept. A jagged line cannot be described as graceful, but no positive rule determines what will be experienced as graceful.
plane. Ruskin goes on to distinguish five kinds of ideas—power, imitation, truth, beauty, and relation—that divide roughly into two classes. Power and imitation are mechanical ideas that contribute to skill. Truth, beauty, and relation are intellectual ideas, and they form the higher ideas that produce greatness in art. When these ideas are sensual and pleasurable, beauty is present. The highest forms of art express just such ideas of relation.

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SAINTE-BEAUVE, CHARLES AUGUSTIN (1804–1869). The 19th-century French critic Charles Sainte-Beauve sought to combine a classical humanism with a scientific naturalism in criticism. His approach is genetic in that he asks about the author and situation as a way of understanding a work of art, but his values are essentially the moral values of classical humanism. His scientific model is the organicism of biology rather than the mechanism of physics and chemistry. To judge a work is to know and judge the author. So criticism should be a science, but as a science it is limited by the sources available.

SANTAYANA, GEORGE (1863–1952). George Santayana was a Spanish-born American philosopher who taught at Harvard before resigning and returning to Europe. His The Sense of Beauty (1896) takes for granted a faculty that responds to beauty and an aesthetic sense, but his approach is descriptive and naturalistic. It presumes that aesthetic sensibility is a part of human nature that can be explored in different ways, including by science, but Santayana’s approach is not reductionistic. Beauty is a fundamental value that extends across the natural world. It is, in his phrase, “pleasure objectified.”

SARTRE, JEAN-PAUL (1905–1980). Jean-Paul Sartre was the leading French existentialist philosopher. His philosophy grows directly out of the earlier phenomenological movement of Edmund Husserl. Phenomenology maintains that consciousness can be analyzed in terms both of its ego-pole, the self, and its object pole, the idea. Together, they provide all that can be known. But consciousness must
be freed of its psychological limitations and temporal transience if it is to yield knowledge. That is the function of phenomenological analysis, which “brackets” the immediate reality of consciousness to disclose its essential, if “unreal,” nature and content. Sartre begins with the same premise about consciousness; it is our only access to reality. But Sartre denies that the bracketing process can ever free a conscious being from his or her own existential situation. The world has being in itself only because it lacks consciousness; the condition of consciousness is limited to being for itself. So existence is always the condition of conscious being. We are the product of our own transience, a continuing project that is constantly confronted with our own metaphysical nothingness. That is the condition of human freedom, and it can only be embraced as a created responsibility or denied in an act of self-deception that Sartre calls bad faith.

Sartre’s existentialist philosophy is worked out in his Being and Nothingness (1943), but it is equally explicated in his novel Nausea (1938) and his plays, especially The Flies (1943) and No Exit (1944). His most direct contribution to aesthetics comes in a series of essays, What is Literature? (1947). For Sartre, our existential situation means that one cannot avoid choice, and that applies to the writer as well. So literature cannot be detached art for art’s sake; it must be “engaged,” which means that it is a part of its social and political situation. All attempts to deny that engagement must fail, so that writers either choose to be involved politically and socially or, by denying what they cannot avoid, they become reactionary. It also follows that there is no such thing as “art” in general. What Sartre has to say about prose literature might be applied more generally to other arts, but it cannot be a metaphysical account of art. Aesthetic value cannot be anything but a writer’s choices of social responsibility, so there is no autonomous aesthetic value.

Sartre’s own engagement with French politics and culture during the German occupation and subsequently in his association with communism is never the result of a fixed ideology or an historical overview, both of which he explicitly rejects. His art and his philosophy cannot be atemporal. So in some sense, they are limited to his own time and place. Nevertheless, his is one of the principal challenges to aesthetic autonomy, and it continues to exert that influence.
SCHELLING, FRIEDRICH WILHELM JOSEPH VON (1775–1854). Schelling was associated with Johann Fichte and Friedrich and A. W. Schlegel at Jena in the development of German Romanticism and later at Berlin. Schelling’s philosophy continues the development of the transcendental idealism of Immanuel Kant, particularly the teleological elements of the Critique of Judgment, in the direction of an historicized naturalism, but Schelling rejects Kant’s limitations on what can be said and known about the noumenal world. Thus, Schelling is willing to engage in a positive metaphysics that goes far beyond the limitations imposed by Kant’s critical philosophy.

In Schelling’s thought, nature embodies an active spiritual force that can come to consciousness in some human acts. Art and artists are active agents in this process, which also progresses through historical stages. In a sense, Schelling goes far beyond Kant in his willingness to make metaphysical assertions about the nature of reality but lacks the genetic influence of G. W. F. Hegel on subsequent aesthetics. Schelling’s version of the historical movement of spirit is more mystical than the dialectic of Hegel, with whose philosophy Schelling is competing.

Schelling attempts a complete metaphysical system that inverts the empiricist assumptions of the 18th century. If ‘reality’ is empirical, then the Absolute or Ideal transcends that merely empirical reality. In many ways, Schelling’s metaphysics returns to the neo-Platonism of Plotinus. Unity is the ultimate reality, and individual thought is a manifestation of that ideal unity. But where Plotinus postulated a duality of material and intelligible realities in which the intelligible is further divided between soul, nous or mind, and the One, Schelling derives a three-fold metaphysics that simultaneously instantiates the actual world, the world of spirit, and those activities that participate in both. Art in its particularity—actual poems, paintings, and pieces of music—belongs to the actual, empirical world, but art in its larger sense participates in the world of spirit. Priority always rests with spirit. Beauty is the embodiment of the ideal. A genius is an individual who is able to exhibit the universal and infinite spirit, first of all in his own being.

Schelling’s view of history is periodic rather than progressive, and it depends on his view of mythology. Periods that have assimilated
a mythology naturally produce art on the basis of their naturalized participation in the ideal spirit. Greece and Rome were such periods. But when mythology is not a part of a culture’s formative spirit, art can only be produced by those special individuals who participate as individuals. Modern European culture lacks a collective mythology. Thus it requires the Romantic genius for art to find expression. The Greeks needed no individual geniuses; modern, Christian culture does.

Schelling’s importance to aesthetics is difficult to assess. His lectures on aesthetics in the first decade of the 19th century were popular and widely regarded, but they were not published until after his death. He was influential on other German Romantics, including J. W. von Goethe, the Schlegels, and Friedrich Schiller. But the abstract nature of his metaphysics meant that poets such as Goethe eventually turned to their own more concrete theories of beauty. Samuel Taylor Coleridge borrowed heavily from Schelling, but again Coleridge is not bound to the whole idealist system that Schelling propounds; he picks and chooses those aspects of the theory of the imagination that fit his own poetic agenda. It should also be remembered that such borrowing was a part of the collective spirit of 19th-century Romanticism. Schelling himself was primarily interested in art as an ideal phenomena, and he depended on A. W. Schlegel for more concrete historical material. Schelling’s metaphysics is largely surpassed in influence by Hegel’s more dialectical and progressive version that locates and subordinates art within an overall movement of history toward a realization of Absolute Spirit.

SCHILLER, JOHANN CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH VON (1759–1805). Schiller was a poet and dramatist who turned to philosophy during the middle period of his career when he became professor at the university in the central German city of Jena. He consciously acknowledges the influence of Immanuel Kant, but his letters On the Aesthetic Education of Man, along with Arthur Schopenhauer’s The World as Will and Idea, give the characteristic modern shape to aesthetic philosophy.

Kant’s Critique of Judgment had distinguished a third realm of knowledge based on pure intuition, which Kant called the aesthetic. It was neither practical nor theoretical; strictly speaking, it was free
of all concepts because it preceded concepts. **Taste** and **beauty** belong to that aesthetic realm. But Kant’s aesthetics is analytical. Schiller begins the translation of that analytical idealism into a more historical and **psychological** transformation of the individual. Confronted with the limitations of **sense** experience and the rationalism of formal **judgment**, neither of which satisfies the demands of humanity, Schiller projects a transformation of the merely animal and rational being into an aesthetic being. **Feeling** and the **imagination** free one from the constraints of both nature and law.

Schiller identifies two contrary impulses or forces—the sensuous impulse, which is physical, temporal, and successive; and the formal impulse, which is man’s rational nature (Letter 12). The sensuous impulse provides experiences that impose themselves from outside. On the other hand, the formal impulse gives us laws. That means that man’s physical nature is particular and contingent while the formal impulse is universal. The formal impulse thus corresponds to Kant’s subjective universality.

Neither the sensuous impulse nor the formal impulse is fully human, however. Schiller seeks a path to a goal—the ideal spirit of man. Thus, Schiller historicizes what is for Kant an analytic moment. The sensual or material impulse has as its object life; the formal impulse, beauty. But beauty of **form** is still passive. To become active, to actually produce beauty, a third impulse is required. Schiller adapts Kant’s free **play** of the **imagination** into an independent impulse—play, which is the freedom of the imagination (Letter 15). Play is not mere play but an escape from the limitations of sense and reason. It is realized in art, where alone man is fully human. Thus, art unites the material impulse and the formal impulse into a single reality. Beauty is not intermediate between the sensuous impulse and the formal impulse but the synthesis of them (Letter 18). Beauty is an ascent beyond, not an exclusion of, the restrictions imposed by nature and form.

Schiller goes on to give this aesthetic impulse a full metaphysical status. The finite mind exists by limitation, the passive reception of sense and form. The absolute mind, which is neither matter nor form, is distinguished from this finite mind (Letter 19). The will is the freedom to act instead of the passivity of the finite mind. Humanity follows from the awakening of experience and personality; but
humanity requires the assertion of this freedom. Therefore, the achievement of aesthetic freedom requires not passivity but contemplation (Letter 25). Nature is transformed from force to object. Freedom gives form to the formless. That is the role of imagination. Beauty is the work of free contemplation; it is both an object and a state of one’s personality.

The problem then becomes how one moves from an ordinary actuality to an aesthetic one. Schiller is moving beyond Kant’s transcendental idealism to a cultural program by which one may ascend literally to a higher form of society. An aesthetic culture demands superfluity. Humanity begins with embellishment and play that goes beyond necessity. Then the mind moves from the freedom of the imagination to aesthetic play. Objects please not because they satisfy a need but because they satisfy a feeling. That feeling defines what one has become. This is the realm of play and appearances, freed from the constraints of power and law. Beauty alone is universal—neither individual nor racial. Schiller’s vision of an aesthetic reality that can be realized in art and culture begins to take on a programmatic quality that will motivate Romanticism throughout the 19th century.

SCHLEGEL, AUGUST WILHELM VON (1767–1845). A. W. von Schlegel was the seventh son of John Adolph Schlegel, a Lutheran pastor and religious poet. His career began at Jena, where he was elected professor at the university, and culminated in an appointment at the University of Berlin. He traveled widely and played an active role in the political life of Europe, serving as secretary and counselor to the Crown Prince of Sweden. His literary career included writing drama, literary history, oriental studies, and lectures on the fine arts. Together with his younger brother, Friedrich, between 1798 and 1800 he edited the Athenaeum, which was the seminal journal of the German Romantic movement. He was also associated closely with Madame Germaine de Staël, traveling with her and assisting in her publication of De l’Allemagne and Considerations sur la Révolution Française.

The Schlegel brothers are the central figures in the German Romantic movement. At Jena, A. W. von Schlegel’s home was the locus of the circle of friends who actively promoted the movement and sup-
ported each other’s efforts. Their form of Romanticism took its origins from Kant’s aesthetic writings and the idealism of Johann Fichte, but it was also influenced by Benedict Spinoza and developed in the direction of an organic, dualistic idealism that contrasted spirit with the material world and sought an active development of the ego into a universal, transcendent state. Strictly speaking, this Romanticism, while it implied an aesthetic, was distinct from the developing aesthetic theory of the early 19th century as it was formulated after Kant in the work of Arthur Schopenhauer.

August Wilhelm’s Romanticism was more concrete and less visionary than that of his younger brother. While they share an extensive definition of poetry as a state of mind that goes beyond mere words, August Wilhelm also seeks rules of the fine arts and beauty that can be inferred from practice. Beauty has fundamental laws, the discovery of which depends on attention to the history of the arts. Criticism, which tended to be denigrated in other forms of Romanticism, plays a positive role in August Wilhelm’s thought; it serves as the connecting link between history and theory. Critics must be able to set aside their own historical position and prejudices in order to enter into the mind of the artist, whatever the artist’s historical position demands. At the same time, there is a positive historical movement in the arts that parallels the movement of cultural history. Germany is envisaged as the leader in this cultural progression. One might speak of a kind of messianic Romanticism with both of the Schlegel brothers. The role assigned to the critic by August Wilhelm approaches the kind of critical detachment that became central to later aesthetic theory, but it remains much more historically grounded, both in terms of the actual history of the arts and in terms of the role of the critic as an historical activist who promotes the positive movement of the spirit of poetry.

SCHLEGEL, FRIEDRICH VON (1772–1829). Friedrich von Schlegel was the youngest son of John Adolph Schlegel, a Lutheran pastor and religious poet. Together with his elder brother August Wilhelm, Friedrich formed a close-knit circle of friends in Jena, which became the center of the German Romantic movement. Both Johann Fichte and Friedrich Schiller were at Jena, and J. W. von Goethe and the poet Novalis were nearby. However, Friedrich left Jena in 1797 for
Berlin where he met his future wife, Dorothea Veit, and where he knew the Romantic theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher. After Fichte was accused of atheism and moved to Berlin, Berlin became a second center for the movement, which reassembled in Jena in 1799 at the home of August Wilhelm. The Schlegel brothers edited the influential journal the Athenaeum, and Friedrich contributed to it his Literary Dialogues and many of his aphorisms. In 1802, Friedrich went to Paris, where he lectured, and then to Vienna, where he continued to lecture and write while holding official positions at the Austrian court.

Friedrich Schlegel’s self-consciously labeled idealist Romanticism defines poetry as an extensive, mental state. The actual composition of poems and dramas, both of which were part of Friedrich’s work, were regarded as mere concrete manifestation of that Romantic state of mind. At bottom, a movement of spirit that is independent of material states is the source of poetry. That movement implies an historical movement, however, that takes the form of the history of the arts, the history of culture, and the history of a people. It is an organic form of idealism that sometimes has messianic overtones, particularly as to the destiny of the German people. Friedrich Schlegel, with his brother August Wilhelm, contrasts that Romantic movement to the 18th-century classicism and neo-classicism exemplified in the work of J. J. Winckelmann. What art lacks, Friedrich Schlegel argues, is a mythology of its own. Classical mythology supplied that source for a time but was exhausted and does not fit the spirit of the northern, German people. In its place, one must forge a new mythology, created specifically for the arts. Art is essentially a mental work, and a work of art is a way into the mind of an artist and ultimately into the single mind of the movement of spirit. The source of much of this idealist metaphysics is found in the work of Fichte and Schiller, but Friedrich Schlegel gives it its characteristic historical interpretation. The ego, Fichte argued, is active, seeking its ideal form, but for Friedrich Schlegel, ego and spirit are distinct realities that have their own history and actions.

Friedrich Schlegel rejects the term ‘aesthetic’ as it was used by A. G. Baumgarten and Immanuel Kant. For Baumgarten, the aesthetic is the lowest level of rational clarity, a confused form of perception. Kant transforms that perception into a pre-theoretical and
purely subjective form ofapperception. In contrast, Freidrich Schlegel’s aesthetic is active and ideal, not contemplative and disinterested or based on mere feeling. It is felt, but its object is spirit, not the feeling itself. The move is away from the subjectivism of Kant toward an objective, historical realization of aesthetic feeling. In the hands of some later thinkers, this historicism becomes a political agenda. The object of aesthetics is to transcend oneself in a union with the people or folk. For Friedrich Schlegel and his brother August Wilhelm, that means a Romantic circle of like minds that imply a single mind. For others, it means assimilation to a single mind and the spirit of a people.

The relation between the German Romantic movement and philosophical aesthetics is complex, to say the least. On the one hand, the transcendental idealism that is at the heart of the movement is influential in shaping both aesthetic theory and the aesthetic practice of poetry, music, and painting; on the other, the almost mystical quality of the Romantic movement as it is formulated by the Schlegel brothers rejects the kind of philosophical aesthetics that one finds in Schopenhauer and Hegel. Consequently, it is the latter that contributes most directly to 19th- and 20th-century aesthetics.

SCHLEIERMACHER, FRIEDRICH (1768–1834). Friedrich Schleiermacher was a German theologian closely associated with the German Romantic movement, particularly Friedrich Schlegel. Schleiermacher’s Speeches on Religion to its Cultured Despisers (1799) offers an intuitive theology that depends on direct experience independent of dogma. Its language is close to Romantic aesthetics and shows how aesthetic feeling and religious feeling may be assimilated to each other.

SCHOPENHAUER, ARTHUR (1788–1860). In The World as Will and Idea (1818), Arthur Schopenhauer developed a complete metaphysical system that he himself regarded as a synthesis of the work of Plato and Immanuel Kant. Both Plato and Kant, according to Schopenhauer, understand the real to be hidden from us; we have direct access only to appearances, not the things themselves. So Schopenhauer’s system is idealist in the sense that reality belongs to the Ideas, not to the appearances. Schopenhauer, however, believed that
we do have access to things in themselves because reality forces itself forward as pure will, so that the world is an insensate will driving everything. This is not an optimistic movement. Will is impersonal and uncaring. If its drives are fulfilled, the result is satiety and boredom; if they are not fulfilled, the result is pain. Animals feed upon the physical manifestations in nature, and humans feed upon animals as the will constantly produces its own life.

The objectification of the will is the Idea, things in themselves manifested to knowledge. As relations of ideas and the objectification of the will, knowledge is only one more form of the will. But if the Idea can be separated from desire and contemplated for itself, then personality and the will are set aside. That is the aesthetic, and its manifestation is art. Art reproduces the eternal Ideas grasped through pure contemplation.

Schopenhauer defines art as the way of viewing things that is independent of the principle of sufficient reason. Sufficient reason means rational explanation, experience, and science. It is the practical use of ideas. The alternative is to look at things simply as things, independent of their use, rational or scientific relations, and explanations. Such a way of viewing is impersonal in that it sets aside all desire and individual interest. It requires a special capacity, which is Schopenhauer’s definition of genius. Genius is the ability to take consciousness of things and so focus on the things that sufficient reason no longer is in play. This ability requires imagination, the ability to set aside both the individual quality and quantity of things to free them from the force of will. Imagination is thus a necessary condition for genius, but it is not sufficient, since imagination can also turn into abstraction and science. For genius, imagination remains focused on the individual Idea, though now as Idea, not as will. Art is the deliberate reproduction of that apprehension. Genius is the apprehension itself; art is the technical extension of that apprehension that makes it available to everyone else. Everyone, by virtue of being human and conscious, has some degree of genius that allows them to experience art. Genius, properly speaking, has a greater degree of the ability to apprehend the individual Idea and can reproduce it.

Aesthetic pleasure is the contemplation of the Idea in art or nature. The advantage of art is that the artist has already done the work of presenting the Idea, while nature remains entangled in the force of
the will. The artist “lets us see the world through his eyes” (The World as Will and Idea, trans. R. B. Haldane & J. Kemp [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1883], §37). So art is pure knowledge, the Idea itself, independent of the will, and art frees the self from the dominance of the will. As long as the will to live is productive, the self is miserable. Only in art is the self one with its objects and independent of the will. “The world as idea alone remains, and the world as will has disappeared” (§38).

Beauty is both knowledge and pleasure freed from the will. It is a form of aesthetic contemplation, and it is the result of viewing either nature or art as pure Idea. Beauty is the result of the significance and distinctness of the form of ideas themselves. But aesthetic contemplation can take another form as well. Some of the objects of contemplation are threatening to the human will. Their power is opposed to the human will, and the human will is either menaced or made to seem small and insignificant before those ideas. As practical knowledge, therefore, the will opposes them. But contemplated aesthetically, they are like other pure Ideas. They excite not pain but aesthetic pleasure. So in addition to the beautiful, aesthetic contemplation also arises from the sublime. Beauty is easy, but the experience of the sublime is more difficult because it must overcome the menace to the will.

Schopenhauer goes on to show how each individual art is adapted to manifesting a pure ideational knowledge of its objects and to promoting the aesthetic contemplation of them. Sculpture and painting present their objects at once as individual and idealized. Schopenhauer rejects the notion that an idealized work is a selection of the best parts of many objects; it must be the object itself that is freed from its contingent and practical limits. So idealization is not abstraction. Architecture has a dual function, and the aesthetic aim of architecture is the form of mass and volume. Poetry works through concepts, but they are concepts of objects, and poetry is distinguished by its ability to make concepts transparent to their objects. Music presents special problems for Schopenhauer, however, since it has no objects as such. He argues that the object of music is the will itself. The will as a manifestation becomes an object and is regarded in the same specially disinterested way as other aesthetic objects. It is at once the most powerful and most difficult aesthetic
form. The highest form of art is tragedy because art requires the loss of an individual self as the only means to aesthetic pleasure. As long as it is tied to the world, the self will be miserable, but it can only escape that misery by losing itself in its objects.

Schopenhauer’s complex system moves beyond Kant’s critical theory of aesthetic taste as concept-free judgment and beauty as the free play of the imagination to introduce many of the typical formulations of 19th- and 20th-century modernist aesthetics: disinterestedness, detachment of the self from practical awareness, and an autonomous aesthetic knowledge. Moreover, Schopenhauer provides a much more concrete treatment of individual arts than Kant or 18th-century theories of taste. But it should not be overlooked that Schopenhauer’s system remains a complete metaphysical system, and his aesthetics is only one part of that system. The movement of the will and the dualism of sense and Idea are central to his conclusions about art.

SCULPTURE. In the history of aesthetics, sculpture occupies a central place because it bridges a gap between painting and three-dimensional reality and because the survival of classical sculpture provided models for Renaissance and neo-classical art theory. Sculpture is at once a visual art and a spatial art. It requires a high degree of craftsmanship as well as artistic vision.

In the debates over the priority of various art forms that occupied much of the history of aesthetics prior to the 20th century, sculpture is linked closely with painting as a spatial form and is opposed to the temporal forms of poetry, drama, and music. At the same time, sculpture has advantages over painting in its ability to depict three-dimensional form while it is limited in its ability to idealize form. Painting is better able to depict an extensive scene and an idealized situation. Sculpture can idealize a single form and in such groups as the Laocoön present complex emotional situations, but its very physical nature limits its scope. Sculptural scene painting, such as the Parthenon frieze, tries to combine both.

The monumental character of sculpture has also given it a social and political prominence over painting. The relative permanence of classical sculpture made it the model for later artists who could know classical painting only from verbal descriptions. Contemporary
sculpture has further advanced the spatial character of the art form. Environmental sculpture and abstract sculpture are only possible when space and location themselves become a material for an artist, and found art is essentially sculptural. The kind of artistic commentary/jokes seen in Pablo Picasso’s transformation of objects into art and Marcel Duchamp’s exhibition of a urinal are particularly effective within the tradition of sculpture.

Sculpture presents some special problems for aesthetics. As painting moved into the museum where it could be contemplated according to the aesthetic theories of disinterested attention, sculpture was also collected. It is less obvious that sculpture is well-served by the museum, however, and one does not contemplate it in the same way that one contemplates a painting. For one thing, the very three-dimensional nature of sculpture requires a shifting of attention not called for in aesthetic attitude theories. Moreover, the physical nature of sculpture—the literal existence of the work—intrudes much more directly than Kantian theories of beauty allow. Sculpture so frequently serves a monumental or public function that it is difficult to separate that function from the sculpture as a work of art, and the need to actually produce an artifact requires a degree of social cooperation not required by the aesthetic objects of the 19th- and 20th-century theories of aesthetic experience. See also CRAFT.

SENSES. In much of classical and medieval philosophy, the senses are suspect. They are recognized as necessary for perception and practical knowledge, but they are regarded as limited and misleading. An ideal form is singular, and rational correction of the errors of perception subordinates the senses to reason. To the extent that art depends on the senses, art is also limited and misleading. At best, it can serve a preliminary role in one’s progress toward knowledge. The senses are fragmentary. Sight is the primary sense, though touch also occupies a central place because of its directness and its relative incorrigibility. Only a common sense can unite the disparate inputs of the external senses into some kind of unified perception that can begin to approach knowledge.

When the senses are transformed by the scientific revolution and empiricism into a necessary condition for knowledge, they also are transformed aesthetically. Aesthetics arises in the 18th century as a
defense of the senses. The products of the senses—sensation and feeling—have an immediate relevance to aesthetics. When they are pleasant, they simply are beauty rather than being some eliminable first step toward an ideal beauty. Sense is thus revalued aesthetically. It is the object of aesthetics, and all claims that there is a kind of aesthetic knowledge are based on sense. Aesthetic pleasure is a matter of feeling, and it is valuable in itself.

Fairly early on, the analogy of the external senses led to the positing of additional senses—a sense of beauty, a sense of the sublime, etc. These “internal” senses were variously characterized. They began in the work of John Locke as reflections on the powers of the mind, but in the later 18th century, they are taken literally as mental powers. Moreover, sense suggests that sensibility—the ability to feel strongly and perceive delicately—is an aesthetic virtue. Delicacy of the external senses may be a disadvantage because it is as likely to produce pain as pleasure, but delicacy of taste is within one’s control and is an advantage because it opens realms of pleasure that are closed to less sensitive perceivers.

Aesthetic senses revert to a metaphorical status in 20th-century aesthetics. It is still the case that feeling and a look-and-see limitation apply in aesthetics, but the idea that there are quasi-scientific senses that provide unique aesthetic data is changed by conceptual analysis to a linguistic focus. The use of language, not direct sensation, determines aesthetic perception, and aesthetic concepts that depend on experience do so in the context of describing that experience rather than directly perceiving aesthetic properties. Moreover, aesthetics has become aware of the extent to which perception itself is influenced by conventions, expectations, and cultural conditions. One does not just see; one sees something as something and what one sees is determined by more than a naïve sensation. Therefore, the psychology of perception that is important to aesthetics is considerably more complex than just looking and seeing.

SENTIMENT. The term ‘sentiment’ is used more or less interchangeably with ‘feeling’ in 18th-century aesthetics. Sense impressions and ideas all produce feelings. What one feels is the subjective side of any perception. So one’s sentiments are part of the experience of the world. Applied to art and nature, one’s sentiments make an aesthetic
experience what it is. If the sentiment is one of approbation or pleasure, that indicates that the experience is one of the beautiful. If the sentiment is one of uneasiness or pain, the experience is one of ugliness or deformity. If the sentiment is one of awe or fear, the experience is one of the sublime. The characterization of sentiments follows the differentiation of aesthetic predicates or properties, and as it becomes more fine grained, corresponding senses were sometimes proposed. So in addition to a sense of the beautiful, one finds references to a sense of novelty or of disgust, etc.

Sentiment is a subjective state of the mind, so when aesthetic properties are characterized as producing sentiments, aesthetic feelings are being acknowledged as belonging essentially to the mind, though it is usual to link them to some causal theory of properties that produce them. The key is that the aesthetic properties are the sentiments aroused themselves, not the causal properties that are not taken to be like them. A complicating factor is that sometimes the ideas or feelings produced are said to resemble their causes, and if feelings, which are mental, cannot resemble things, which are physical, then skepticism about aesthetic properties seems to follow.

That skepticism was a basic problem for 18th-century theories of taste. Taste is identified as a feeling that involves a judgment. A taste for the beautiful is an ability to judge correctly that something will produce the requisite sentiment. Good taste responds appropriately; bad taste responds eccentrically and cannot be relied upon. But if sentiments do not resemble their causes, then no standard of taste is possible. Anyone’s taste is as good as anyone else’s. That led to the kind of paradox proposed by David Hume and Immanuel Kant—judgments of taste are at once purely subjective and thus not grounded in any objective properties, and they claim to be real judgments that are right or wrong. Aesthetics has continued to struggle with that antinomy throughout its history.

Sentiment should not be confused with sentimentality. Much of 18th-century art appeals to sentimentality, which is best understood as strong feeling that results in outward symptoms, such as tears and emotional behavior. Sentimentality may be sought because strong feeling, even if it is in itself unpleasant, carries with it a kind of pleasure. That, too, produced a paradox: one enjoys what is intrinsically unpleasant in some cases, such as tragedy. But sentimentality goes
beyond the bounds of good judgment while sentiment in the form of moral sentiment and aesthetic taste is the basis for judgment. Sentimentality has continued to function as an aesthetically negative criticism, but sentiment, in the sense that early modern aesthetics used the term, has largely been replaced by different analyses of aesthetic experience.

SHAFTESBURY, ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, THIRD EARL OF (1671–1713). Anthony Ashley Cooper was the grandson of the first Earl of Shaftesbury and was educated under the guidance of the first earl’s friend and advisor, John Locke. His father, the second earl, was apparently deficient in some respect, and it was the third earl who was expected to assume the public responsibilities of the family. The first earl was an active politician and colonial entrepreneur. He founded the colony of South Carolina and was instrumental in the overthrow of the Catholic James II and the installation of William of Orange and his wife Mary on the British throne. The third earl served for a time in parliament, but his health was never good and his inclination was more strongly toward letters and philosophy. He published a number of essays on the arts, morality, and taste that were collected under the title Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times (1711). A second collection, known simply as Second Characters, was prepared before Shaftesbury’s death in 1713, but it was not published until 1900.

Shaftesbury’s philosophy of art parallels his moral philosophy. Both are based on sentiment, which is given judgmental priority over reason. In the absence of an appropriate sentiment, no judgment can be arrived at. Appeals to authority and to rewards and punishments in morality lack effect unless one actually feels the rightness of the action or the beauty of the work. If one does have that feeling, then no reasons are required. At the same time, Shaftesbury does not rely on what he calls mere feeling. Sentiment itself must be rigorously examined by methods that include raillery and wit. These, and not syllogistic reasoning, will expose those feelings that cannot stand examination. At some points, Shaftesbury seems to imply that disinterestedness is one of the requirements for reliable feeling, but he has in mind a lack of selfishness rather than the kind of conceptually de-
tached contemplation that later aesthetics characterized as a disinterested aesthetic attitude.

Shaftesbury was an empiricist in the sense that he relied directly on individual sentiments and feelings to provide judgments in the arts and morality. Beauty is a feeling; virtue is a feeling. But Shaftesbury was also classically educated, and his appeals to sentiment are to a kind of reliable indication of what is good for the organic whole to which one belongs. So in a sense, the individualism of his empiricism is combined, not always consistently, with a kind of organic neo-Platonism that refers all feeling to the good of the whole. Shaftesbury’s opponent is Thomas Hobbes, who was believed to reduce all morality to selfish egoism. Shaftesbury argues that benevolence and taste are as characteristic of human beings as selfish desires, and that education and criticism can strengthen them. A person of good taste is a moral person as well.

Shaftesbury can legitimately be identified as the founder of modern British aesthetics. He directly influenced Francis Hutcheson’s An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (1725) and David Hume’s Treatise on the Human Understanding (1739–1741). He was considered a effusive sentimentalist by his 18th-century critics, but his work began the transformation of aesthetics from its reliance on classical rules and models to a sentiment-based, subjective investigation of the mind itself.

SHELLEY, PERCY BYSSHE (1792–1822). In addition to his place as a leading Romantic poet, Shelley provided one of the best manifestos of English Romanticism. His Defence of Poetry (1821, published 1840) links neo-Platonism to an organic vision of the mind. In it, Shelley distinguishes two mental operations or kinds of mind. The first is analytical; it works by division and reason. The second is synthetic; it works by combination and depends on the imagination. Poetry, then, is the expression of the imagination. Its origins are the origins of language and thought. Following in the tradition of Sir Philip Sidney’s defense of poetry, Shelley makes the claim not just that poetry is moral but that morality and religion depend on poetry. He is led, therefore, to claim that written poems are already a decline from the original imaginative synthesis and in his famous phrase, “Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration. . . .
sacrificed significant form to telling a story that appealed not to one’s aesthetic sensibility but to one’s ordinary, everyday emotions. Significant form according to Bell is a visual structure that one responds to directly and immediately independently of any recognition of what is being depicted. Some formal arrangements just have that kind of power; it is impossible to account for them independently of direct perception. Most people either lack the aesthetic sensibility needed or if they have it, they do not pay attention to it but wallow in the ordinary emotions that Victorian art was particularly good at evoking. Bell acknowledged that in principle, even the kind of narrative art he opposed could possess significant form, but in practice he believed it was not likely. Bell’s thesis is part art history, part critical polemic, and part aesthetic theory. It helped a generation in England appreciate post-impressionist art, but as a general aesthetic theory, it is obviously overstated.

SIGNS. When aesthetics began to develop a theory of art as the expression of emotion and the mind of the artist, an account was required of how essentially mental states could be expressed. Part of the argument against earlier empiricist theories of taste was based on the impossibility of there being a resemblance between an idea, which was mental, and an object, which was physical. If ideas do not resemble physical objects and the mind has only ideas as its objects, then a skeptical gap between mind and world appears, and that skepticism extends to principles of taste. If beauty is only in the mind, then there need be no common ground for saying that one work of art is better than another since everything will depend on the particular perception of individual observers.

The expression theory of art claimed that part of the answer was that works of art themselves were essentially mental—expressions of the mind of an artist (or God, in the case of nature), and that perceivers of works of art essentially shared in the mental states originally belonging to the artist. Some means for that sharing was necessary, however, and part of the answer to it was a theory of natural and artificial signs.

Natural signs are those that we are innately conditioned to respond to. They include such things as smiles and harmonious sounds. Artificial signs depend to some degree on conventions. One learns them
culturally, though the learning may be unconscious and very early in one’s education. Language, except for such sounds as exclamations, is made up of artificial signs. Artists are particularly capable of using natural and artificial signs to express the emotions that they feel and make them available to others.

After Immanuel Kant identified taste and beauty as subjective universals that had their own autonomy, a theory of signs and symbols developed in aesthetics that attributed the ability to understand and express anything at all to the ability to function as a symbol-using animal. This aesthetic theory, sometimes called neo-Kantianism, distinguished not between natural and artificial signs but between signs and symbols. Signs are limited to conventional relations; a red light is a sign to stop. It could just as easily have been green that meant stop and red that meant go. But symbols are the necessary condition for any thought. They allow conceptions to be formed. So Kant’s aesthetic intuition, which is pre-conceptual, becomes the basis for all knowledge as it is formed into symbol systems. Language is a symbol system, and art develops its own symbol systems, some of which are independent of language. Music, for example, is thought of as a symbol system for the expression of emotion independently of discursive forms.

The distinction between sign and symbol extends to the expression of emotion. Symbolic expression, which is a kind of knowledge, is distinguished from the arousal of emotion, which is actually having the emotion. Artists express emotion; they need not arouse the emotion in themselves or in others in order for it to be understood symbolically. Among the leading exponents of this neo-Kantian aesthetic were Ernst Cassirer and Susanne Langer, both of whom speak of a language of forms and trace language itself back to myth and symbolic development through metaphor.

Contemporary aesthetics has also been influenced by the theory of signs called semiotics. Semiotics classifies signs by their structural organization and infers from that organization the meaning of the sign and its role in a culture. In semiotics, signs are not limited to language or even to formal symbols. While some signs have denotations and connotations that can be specified, culture itself is made up of a set of signs that include concrete objects, cultural artifacts, and psychological states. Meaning is a product of semiological relations
and can be explicated by semiological analysis. Art is a part of a larger semiotic system, therefore, and aesthetics is the interpretation of signs.

SINCERITY. Sincerity as an aesthetic property arises from the relation of the artist to the work of art. It is a result of the attempts by an artist to express something, usually the artist’s own mental states, images, or ideas. True art, on that kind of expression theory, requires sincerity because only the artist who is sincere will express what he or she really feels. The alternative is a kind of imitation, a false art or entertainment that is determined by extrinsic ends. The artist who makes such work is guided not by the need to express something but by the desire to achieve some predetermined end and to please an audience by giving it what it wants. According to theories of expression, what is produced in such cases will be pseudo-art; it may have the forms of art, but it will lack the expressive properties of true art.

SMITH, ADAM (1723–1790). The Scottish philosopher Adam Smith is known primarily as an economist and the founder of modern mercantile capitalism, though he wrote prior to the full development of the industrial revolution. His Wealth of Nations (1776) advances the thesis that wealth derives not directly from the possession of land and what it will produce but from the labor that is required for the production of goods. Moreover, individuals, guided by self-interest, will unconsciously direct an economy toward its optimum production. Smith was not a simple laissez-faire economist, however. He was the close friend of David Hume and a leading figure in his own right in the Scottish Enlightenment. His Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759) responds to Hume’s moral theories both critically and positively. It advances the empiricist theory of ideas and includes both moral and aesthetic ideas in its scope.

Smith held that individual ideas can only be shared by a sympathetic response that works at several levels. One person shares the ideas of another by a kind of direct sympathy, but that sympathy is only possible because one recognizes one’s self in the other. So the self is dual—it is both subjective and objective, viewed both from within and as it appears to others. Hume had limited all knowledge to impressions and ideas, which he described as images of impressions.
retained in the mind. All ideas arise from impressions, and without an impression, there can be no idea. The outcome of this theory appeared to be solipsism—one can only know one’s own ideas; anything else involves an absurdity. But Hume postulated a sympathetic repetition of ideas, so that the impressions that one person had could be repeated as ideas by a different person without the necessity of new impressions. That kind of mechanical sympathy allowed Hume to account for intersubjective contact between persons.

Hume also spoke of sympathy more generally, however, as the kind of fellow-feeling that is aroused in one person by his or her perception of another. Smith objected that the first form of sympathy was not possible without the second and that the second implied a theory of moral and aesthetic sentiments. One can only respond to another if one can put oneself in that other’s position. In so doing, one judges oneself as the subject for another, so there is a kind of sympathetic reflection of judgments. One appears to one’s self through the eyes of another. To be the kind of person with whom another can sympathize depends on both self-approbation and the approbation of the self as it appears disinterestedly to another. Moral judgments are nothing more than the sentiment aroused in such sympathetic reflection, and taste is nothing more than a comparable sentiment produced by an artist.

Smith’s aesthetic theory moves in the direction of a mental sympathy between artist and audience, therefore, and it shares something with the slightly later Scottish Enlightenment aesthetics of Dugald Stewart and Archibald Alison, both of whom identified aesthetic experience as an expression of a mind. In this respect, Smith differs from Hume, who regarded taste as an essentially social or artificial response. Smith, however, shares with Hume the view that aesthetics belongs to the social world, and his theory of sentiments does not move to the mental dualism and idealism of the emerging Romanticism and idealism in aesthetics.

SOCIETY AND ART. Modern aesthetics has divided between autonomous and socially engaged theories of art. The former views aesthetic experience as a unique form of experience with its own values, usually a form of pleasure, and its own independent sources, which are works of art and nature appreciated disinterestedly. The
latter regards aesthetic experience as continuous with other experiences and art as a product of a time and place that shape it. Art, on this view, is not primarily a form of pleasure-giving; it has the ends that are appropriate to its social setting.

Neither approach excludes the other altogether, however. Aesthetic autonomy must account for creativity and change in the arts. Not everything is possible at every time, so conditions for the production of art must depend to some extent on society. The claim is only that the appreciation of art is independent of the specific society. One may not be able to produce Greek tragedy now that is not a mere imitation, but one can still appreciate tragedy aesthetically in essentially the same way that it was appreciated when it was created because the aesthetic aspect of each play is independent of its own society. The situation is just the opposite for aesthetic theories that begin with society. Those theories must account for the fact that it is still possible to appreciate the work of dead artists with whom we have almost nothing in common. Part of the solution offered is that we do not in fact appreciate the same work; what we appreciate has changed because of its new social location. Greek tragedy today carries with it aesthetic properties that it did not have when it was first performed.

Prominent aesthetic theories that hold to aesthetic autonomy tend to focus on formal properties of art or on individual psychological states that can be presumed to be more or less universal to humans. Aesthetic theories that rely on the place of art in society include Marxist and socialist theories and those pragmatic theories that owe most to historicism.

SOCIIOLOGY OF ART. Regardless of which aesthetic theory one holds, art is clearly a social phenomenon. The sociology of art covers the ways that art and artists interact with other social institutions. It also extends to the way that art is used in a social setting. Such issues as catharsis, public display of artworks, the rights of artists and artworks, and the therapeutic uses of art all are studied by the sociology of art. The sociology of art impacts art theory when its social uses are advanced as defining characteristics of art or the art world. Then the issues become whether social structures are sufficient to define some artifact as art or to determine whether some activity is art-
making. At one extreme, the claim has been advanced that all art is essentially the product of cultural forces. Only certain things at certain times will be regarded as art, and the determining factors are dependent on how a society is structured. At the other extreme, social forces are regarded as extrinsic to the nature of art, which is autonomous and universal.

STAËL, MADAME GERMAINE DE (ANNE LOUISE GERMAINE NECKER, BARONNE DE STAËL-HOLSTEIN) (1766–1817). Madame de Staël was both a novelist and a patron of the German Romantics, particularly Friedrich and A. W. von Schlegel. Like them, she associated the new spiritual art that opposed classicism with national cultures. Her comparison of French and German culture, De l’Allemagne (1810/1813), helped to spread the Romantic doctrine of poetic sensibility and cultural progress.

STANDARD OF TASTE. In the 17th and 18th centuries, taste was the predominant aesthetic concept. Good taste and bad taste were judgments that were applied to individuals in all areas, not just in art. The subjectivity of such judgments followed from the empiricist distinctions between ideas and things and between primary and secondary qualities advanced by John Locke and his followers. At issue, then, was whether the judgments of taste could be more than individual preferences. Clearly, they operated as such in many instances, and it seemed absurd to deny that some judgments were better than others. On the other hand, it seemed equally absurd to believe that one could dictate one’s taste to someone else. At bottom, taste was directly related to individual sensations of pleasure and enjoyment, and if one felt pleasure from some work of art, one could hardly deny that sensation. If taste was to continue to function as a social judgment, therefore, some standards had to be applied. The 18th century, in particular, produced numerous essays on taste that sought a standard. Among the most prominent were essays by Edmund Burke, Alexander Gerard, and David Hume, but the topic was very widespread.

At one extreme, the position was that a standard of taste could be found in the objective reality of beauty and the rules of art. Some things were beautiful whether anyone appreciated them or not, and
their beauty provided rules that could be discovered in the same way that scientific rules were discovered by empirical investigation. The appeal to an objective beauty gained strength from surviving Platonic theories and from an appeal to common sense by Thomas Reid and his school. It was difficult to maintain, however, in the face of a lack of agreement about either the objects of taste or the rules of judgment.

At the other extreme, it was accepted that taste itself must be subjective and incorrigible. It could still be maintained that a standard of taste could be established, however. The standard could come from one or both of two sources—the agreement over time of judges and the agreement among themselves of a class of judges who were well qualified. The test of time identified some works as nearly universally appreciated, and good judges could be singled out on the basis of criteria independent of their judgments about particular works. Hume, for example, listed five criteria—delicacy of taste, good sense, extent of knowledge, comparative ability, and lack of prejudice—that a sound judge should possess, and the standard of taste was the joint verdict of such judges. The standard is not absolute, therefore, because it will only be evident when good judges can be found and identified and when they agree sufficiently to provide a standard judgment. Hume acknowledged that some factors—age and nationality among them—make a completely universal standard impossible. Nevertheless, he believed that his standard was sufficient to decide in contested cases.

When taste is replaced as the primary aesthetic category by aesthetic experience and an aesthetic attitude, the issue of a standard of taste becomes less central. The subjectivity of taste is still a problem and continues to be such throughout the history of aesthetics, but the cultural place of judgments of taste changes. It is less important to determine who has good taste if taste does not determine character and class. In a more open aesthetic environment, diversity of taste is acceptable in a way that it was not in the 18th century. Cultural standards are provided by other factors including the movement of art within culture and history and the ability of art to provide a kind of experience that is self-justifying and rewarding.

STEWART, DUGALD (1753–1828). Dugald Stewart was a student of Thomas Reid and one of the leading Scottish expositors of Reid’s
arrive at judgments of taste. The most important thing to note about Stewart’s theory of taste is how far he has moved away from the conditions that justified the metaphor in the first place. Between Stewart and earlier theories of taste a gap filled by discrete faculties has opened. Nineteenth-century, post-Kantian aesthetics attributed aesthetic response to a separate mental operation. Stewart is at least moving in that direction.

STOKES, ADRIAN DURHAM (1902–1972). Adrian Stokes was an art critic and connoisseur whose idiosyncratic interpretation of Renaissance painting and sculpture arises from a sense of the materials of art as themselves expressions of form. Stokes worked in the personalistic, impressionistic tradition of Walter Pater and John Ruskin that he combined with a knowledge of psychoanalytic theory that he applied directly to the works of art rather than to the artist.

STRUCTURALISM. Structuralism refers to the range of theories that understand meaning as the construction of internal structural features. It has been prominent in anthropology where the meaning of cultural concepts and forms is derived from the structure of cultural activities and institutions independently of universal assumptions. Every culture has its own structure and thus its own way of determining the meaning of its concepts. Structuralism can also be extended to language generally, so the meaning of a concept or term in a particular language is determined by the uses and assumptions of that language. From there, one is led in aesthetics to claims that aesthetic concepts are culturally dependent on mythological, linguistic, and artistic structures that can be investigated by an inductive collection of data.

Structuralism in aesthetics has been superseded by what is sometimes called post-structuralism, the theory that art and aesthetic response is relative to the play of language within a culture and cannot be compared cross-culturally to any absolute or objective standard. What counts as aesthetic experience or beauty can only be understood by an immersion within a culture, but that immersion is limited by one’s own cultural starting point. One can never truly understand the aesthetics of a different culture and consequently can only construct new hybrids by a kind of intellectual play. In literary criticism,
the theory is particularly associated with the work of Paul de Mann and Jacques Derrida.

STYLE. Style is a critical concept that has aesthetic implications. Theories of style identify both historical variations within an artistic genre and intrinsic elements. In art history, for example, ‘mannerist,’ ‘realist,’ and ‘expressionist’ are style terms. In music, ‘classical,’ ‘baroque,’ and ‘atonal’ are style terms. In literature, ‘realist’ and ‘allegorical’ are style terms. (These examples are by no means exhaustive. It would be difficult to list all of the style terms that have been used in criticism and aesthetics.) What each term assumes is that works of art share common features within an historical period that transcend the individual identity of particular works or the works of particular artists. Some of the terms, ‘realism,’ for example, may transcend genres and art forms.

An underlying assumption is that style is a response to formal problems presented by an artistic medium or genre and that once a solution is arrived at, it may be deployed widely by different artists. Further, style is one way that historical periods within the arts are defined, so there is a certain circularity in the use of style terms. A period is defined by its style, and the style is defined historically by its appearance in art history. A peculiarity of style is that once a style develops, it seems to belong to that period and can be exhausted as its expressive potential is exhausted. So although it is possible to understand and adopt the styles of earlier periods, what results if one works in that style is imitations or pastiches rather than new work. The origin makes a difference in how a work in a particular style is evaluated. A newly discovered baroque work will be regarded differently from a work in a baroque style composed by a modern composer.

Style is also used to characterize intrinsic formal elements within a work in contrast to content and extrinsic effects. A realistic film, for example, uses the film images in a different way than a surrealist film, but both might be anti-clerical in their content and intended to achieve the same explicit political effects. Some formalist aesthetic theories argue that particular stylistic elements—irony, for example—have identifiable aesthetic effects that follow rules of composition. It was held at one time, for example, that a playwright should not mix comic and tragic scenes. Such stylistic rules are faced with
counter-examples, but they have at least empirical force as generalizations. It is difficult to change narrative voice, for example, in a novel without disrupting the narrative itself.

SUBJECTIVISM. Modern aesthetics is dominated by a form of subjectivism. Aesthetic experience is identified as pleasurable, even if it involves other emotions that are painful or uneasy. But emotions are subjective. So aesthetic experience is fundamentally subjective to the extent that it is emotional. In fact, the term ‘aesthetics’ comes into use as a designation for a class of feelings or emotions. Classical aesthetics, which, of course, did not use the term ‘aesthetic,’ was distrustful of emotion and accepted a metaphysical view that allowed beauty to be regarded as an extra-mental reality.

The fundamental subjectivism of aesthetics can be qualified in several ways. At one extreme, aesthetic experience can be regarded as purely subjective, not only in its phenomenal occurrence but also in its characterizations. Beyond a felt quality of pleasure, it is simply whatever one feels as pleasurable in a certain way. One can no more compare aesthetic pleasures than one can compare tastes for ice cream. But aesthetic subjectivism need not go to that extreme. Different ways have been proposed to avoid some of the consequences of extreme subjectivism. It is noted, for example, that biologically, tastes have uses; they produce avoidance reactions to what is unhealthy and promote the desire for what the body needs. Similarly, aesthetic pleasures may have biological or cultural foundations. Or, as early modern aesthetics hoped, it may be possible that the uniformity of human nature is such that empirical laws can be discovered about aesthetic pleasure. Psychology can identify different kinds of responses and correlate them with aesthetic responses.

Subjectivism is most threatening in the area of normative judgments in aesthetics. Early modern aesthetics, which adopted the subjective analogy of aesthetic qualities to secondary qualities, was extensively occupied with the need for a standard of taste as a result. It was considered both absurd and culturally threatening if all tastes were reduced to an equal status. Even if the elitism of standards of taste is avoided, it is still difficult to accept that some works of art are not better than others on something other than the grounds of widespread approval. We are not inclined to say that simply because Star
Wars is more popular than Citizen Kane, it is a better film. Yet if the only ground for aesthetic judgments is the subjective response, no other conclusion would seem to follow. Similarly, if propositions in aesthetics are purely subjective, then they do not have truth values in any traditional sense. The possibility of aesthetic theory comes into question. Not all aestheticians regard this as a bad thing, however.

SUBLIME. In the history of aesthetics, there are many theories of the sublime. Three deserve special attention. First, in classical rhetoric, the sublime is an effect that an orator may achieve by deploying certain tropes, such as metaphor, to elevate the style of the piece. Sublimity is then a rhetorical effect that transports the audience beyond reason and persuades by carrying the audience beyond itself. It is a style of argument that is opposed to syllogistic or deductive reason. The Roman rhetorical treatise attributed to Longinus, On the Sublime, uses ‘sublime’ predominantly in this sense.

However, Longinus also at least hints at a different, more psychological usage that takes the sublime to be a transcendent state in its own right. As such, it is a form of ecstatic transcendence. When the Longinian treatise was translated into the vernacular in the late Renaissance, that aspect appealed to the emerging art world. In France and England, the sublime came to be understood as a subjective mental response that served as a counterpoint to the neo-classical emphasis on rules and the calm, rational pleasures of beauty. The sublime was understood as either an object that was too vast or extensive to be grasped directly by the mind or as the subjective state that such vastness or grandeur provoked. Edmund Burke, in his A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757), distinguished the sublime from the beautiful altogether, so that there were then two independent aesthetic effects that were essentially opposed to each other. Burke attributed the sublime to the physiological desire for self-preservation, and the corresponding emotion of fear aroused by threats to one’s being. Beauty, on the other hand, arises from the opposite emotion of love and generation. Burke’s division is, perhaps, too simplistic even for the 18th century, but his identification of the sublime with terror and pain and his restriction of beauty to relatively small and pleasant objects shaped subsequent aesthetic theories that sought the sublime in awe-
inspiring or terrible objects. The distinction between the sublime and the beautiful was further elaborated by the introduction of a third effect, the picturesque, which, Uvedale Price argued, was distinct from both. The sublime, either as a set of aesthetic objects, such as wild landscapes, towering mountains, the ocean, storms, and deserted places, or as the subjective states inspired by such objects, formed the basis for a significant change in aesthetic expectations from the classical ideal of beauty to the Romantic emphasis on individual emotion and transcendent experience.

A third stage in the aesthetic use of ‘the sublime’ is found in Immanuel Kant’s analysis in the Critique of Judgment where the analytic of the sublime identifies a form of aesthetic judgment distinct from the beautiful. Like judgments of beauty, the sublime is a reflective judgment that is independent of concepts and thus of all moral significance. However, the sublime arises from the unrestricted play of the imagination and therefore leads to a transcendent state of pure spirit. The sublime is the absolutely great and limitless. Kant further distinguishes two ways in which the reflective judgment can be great: the mathematical sublime depends on greatness of quantity; the dynamic sublime on greatness of form or power.

Variations on these three basic senses of the sublime are too numerous to trace. At one extreme, the sublime is a metaphysical term for aesthetic transcendence. It is in this sense that 19th-century Romanticism sought the sublime in extreme states, danger, and religion. At the other extreme, to call something sublime is merely to praise it in a way that emphasizes its power. The same poets may be called sublime in both senses. Shakespeare and Milton, for example, were almost universally agreed upon as the sublime poets of the English language, but the emphasis might fall on their originality, native genius, the power of their conceptions, or simply their place and influence in literary history. The sublime, therefore, is at once one of the most important and one of the most elusive of aesthetic concepts.

SUGER, ABBOT OF ST. DENIS (1081–1151). Abbot Suger’s building of the Abbey Church of St. Denis exhibited the medieval aesthetic of concrete praise of God through building and ornamentation. Suger was an accomplished fund-raiser and an influential adviser to Louis VI and Louis VII. His account of the building and decoration
of the church amounts to a justification of beauty in the face of the asceticism of such Cistercians as Bernard of Clairveaux. It also shows the blurred lines between physical beauty, the worth of the materials themselves, and the spiritual beauty that was supposed to result from the contemplation of the church’s treasures.

SULZER, JOHAN GEORG (1720–1779). The German philosopher J. G. Sulzer stands as a mediator between the later rationalism of A. G. Baumgarten and Christian Wolff and the sentimentalism of British aesthetics. His four-volume encyclopedia, Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Kunst (General Theory of the Fine Arts, 1771–1774), places taste and beauty between the physical senses and a higher moral beauty, but unlike Baumgarten, he locates the beauty of the arts in feeling itself. Sulzer still subordinates aesthetic feeling to moral virtue, but he is closer to the later aesthetics of feeling because it is pleasure that defines beauty.

SURFACE. The idea of an aesthetic surface arises from painting. Naturalistic or realistic painting can be said to be transparent to its object; one learns to see what is being painted, not the painting itself. In contrast, much modern art depends on recognizing the surface itself; a painting is first of all a work of art, not a means to some other object. “Aesthetic surface” became a theoretical concept in mid-20th-century aesthetics as a way to describe the work of art appropriated in aesthetic experience. Immanuel Kant had denied that the intuitions of taste and beauty depended on the existence of the object; the experience remains even if the object is only imagined. An aesthetic surface, then, is the perceptual object available for aesthetic experience independently of any further consideration of the modes of existence of the object.

SURREALISM. Surrealism was one of the avant-garde movements in early 20th-century art. It evolved in the mid-1920s from Dada and attracted poets, painters, sculptors, and filmmakers. It was based on psychoanalytic theories of a dreamworld or alternate reality that could be brought to consciousness in works of art. Surrealist poetry used symbols derived from the interpretation of dreams and automatic writing to let the unconscious world appear. Surrealist paint-
SYMBOLISM. Symbolism in the arts is a standard method of expressing ideas or of relating images. Classical and medieval theories of symbolism recognized that many works contained multiple levels of meaning. One and the same thing could be regarded literally, allegorically, anagogically or universally, and morally. Symbols are also regarded as both natural and conventional. Some things naturally suggest others; some depend on conventional relationships. White hats may be symbols of the good guys in westerns, but white also naturally expresses a lack of color and thus of purity. Symbolism as a predominant feature of some art forms separates them from other forms that claim realism or literalism, though much art theory has concluded that even realism must employ conventional understanding and is thus symbolic.

In aesthetics, theories of symbolism contribute to theories of genres. The ability to use symbols in certain ways depends on or defines the way that an artistic medium is deployed. Aesthetic theories of symbolism also consider theories of meaning. Certain aesthetic distinctions between symbols and signs depend on the distinction between conventional and natural symbols. A theory of music as emotional symbolism developed by Susanne Langer, for example, argues that the movement of musical tones—high, low, loud, soft—naturally corresponds to the emotional movements of the human psyche and thus makes musical expression possible. Symbols can express by indirection that for which there is no literal language. One line of aesthetic theory proposed by Benedetto Croce and R. G. Collingwood argues that the symbolic expression made possible in art is fundamental to knowledge, so that art is definable as the symbolic expression of human emotion and all language is a form of art.
SYMMETRY. Symmetry was one of the classical properties of beauty, along with harmony and proportion. It depends on the importance of mathematical relations in classical aesthetics. Beauty was believed to be a quality of the cosmos itself; it was the order that brought a cosmos out of the chaos at creation. Its properties were the mathematical ratios built into the ordering process. Symmetry was challenged by Plotinus, however, because it requires difference and the true form of beauty in neo-Platonism is unity or the One. Symmetry continues to be an important aesthetic predicate, particularly in formalist art criticism, but in that context it is an empirical property that produces a pleasing psychological effect.

SYMPATHY. Theories of sympathy take two forms. One is essentially epistemological. Sympathy is the ability to have an experience on the basis of someone else’s initial experience. You cut your finger; I wince. Sympathy in this sense assumes that common experiences are sufficient to allow transference on the basis of cues. It was important in early modern aesthetics, particularly the theory of ideas developed by David Hume, that some sort of transference be possible in order to avoid solipsism. Hume held that all ideas are based on original impressions, so unless one actually had an impression, one could not have an idea. But that would mean that the ideas of others were inaccessible since one could not have their impressions. Hume allowed, therefore, that sympathy was sufficient for the repetition of ideas in one person on the basis of impressions that were original only to another.

The idea of sympathy was extended to moral and aesthetic judgments by Adam Smith, among others. Smith noted that sympathy in the somewhat different sense of a fellow-feeling or identification with the situation of another was sufficient to show that what the other did was something that one could identify with and therefore that it implied approbation. Moreover, by identifying sympathetically with the other, one assumes the other’s point of view, so a degree of objectivity is introduced into otherwise merely subjective judgments. Moral sympathy depends on that ability to free oneself of one’s subjective limitations, and aesthetic sympathy depends on the disinterested adoption of a universal point of view toward works of art. Smith’s disinterested sympathy is more limited than later theo-
ries of disinterested attention, however, because it still presumes that sympathetic identification is simply a shared psychological state and not a disappearance of the ego with its desires and interests.

Sympathy continues to play a role in aesthetic theory as a kind of transference of felt properties to others. It is related to theories of aesthetic empathy, which also hold that aesthetic properties of inanimate objects are experienced as such by a transference of psychological states. Sympathy is distinguished from empathy, however, as a mimicry of a prior empathy, so empathy is the aesthetic attitude and sympathy is one way that it can be extended to certain kinds of objects.

SYNAESTHESIS. Synaesthesia is the attribution of emotional qualities to empirical properties, such as color. It has its foundation in empirical psychology, which can demonstrate regularities in association. In aesthetics, synaesthesia is one way that aesthetic theory accounts for the emotional relations between empirical properties and aesthetic experience.

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TAINE, HIPPOLYTE ADOLPHE (1828–1893). The French critic Hippolyte Taine’s approach to aesthetics and criticism was scientific, naturalistic, and deterministic in the way that 19th-century positivist philosophy understood those terms. In his History of English Literature (1863–1867), his Philosophy of Art (1865), and his The Ideal of Art (1867), Taine views the arts as the organic result of psychological forces exactly analogous to the forces of physics and chemistry. He identifies three fundamental forces. The first is what he calls race or national character. It is the collective psychology of a culture. The second is environment, which includes all of the natural conditions like climate that affect the production of art. The third is the epoch, the accumulated history and production of the arts that influence what can be done now. These factors work together to produce a deterministic system that, because it is psychological, can only be discerned in its outlines. One art form may predominate or find the conditions right for producing great art while others are in decline or
disappear altogether. For Taine, this history is the subject of criticism, and its production is the aesthetic reality of a time and place.

Nevertheless, in spite of the mechanistic, deterministic framework, Taine also viewed individual works of art as the expression of individual minds. Works of art are the monuments of great feeling. One reads literature or admires painting or music because they take one into the mind of the artist. Art itself is about feelings. Its production is a natural science. And criticism is the production of a natural history of the arts.

TASTE. ‘Taste’ was the predominant term for aesthetic experience or aesthetic feeling in early modern philosophy prior to the adoption of the term ‘aesthetic’ by Immanuel Kant, who took it over from Alexander Baumgarten. Theories of taste are much more extensive than purely aesthetic theories, however. Good taste applies to moral judgments as well as judgments about beauty and art, and it applies especially to character. To have good taste is to be a certain kind of person—one who will respond immediately to what is beautiful in art and what is moral in action. So taste implies an immediacy of judgment based on direct experience.

Taste is also purely subjective, however; it is experienced as a feeling, and while one may be able to judge extrinsically who has taste, unless one feels it directly, the judgment will remain only an extrinsic judgment. One would know that someone probably had good (or bad) taste, but not what the experience itself was. Thus the concern to overcome this subjectivity and the consequent uncertainty that it introduced into moral and social judgments led to attempts to formulate standards of taste. Because taste indicated social standing, it also sometimes became a negative term when a person desired to be thought a person of taste on the basis of outward appearances. The attempt to exhibit taste could lead to false or imitative exhibitions of judgment and the waste of money on the outward signs of good taste, such as art, by those who lacked the experience itself.

Theories of taste are often extended backwards to classical rhetoric and Renaissance individual artistry, but strictly speaking, it is not until feeling itself is recognized as aesthetically important that taste in the metaphorical sense that implies judgment is used. Classical references to taste in the arts and oratory treat it not as an immediate
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sensate judgment but as a simple analogy that explains why one needs a common sense to combine the five external senses. Taste is the most immediate sense, and therefore stands for the immediacy of all senses that must be combined by a common sense into a single experience.

Taste continues to occupy more recent aesthetics because aesthetic predicates, such as ‘graceful’ and ‘garish,’ defy direct definition. Their application depends on the kind of direct experience that the metaphor of taste points out. However, the extended judgmental implications of taste that apply it to moral judgments and to personal character have largely disappeared, except in the common reference to bad taste as something vulgar.

TENOR AND VEHICLE. In the theory of metaphor, metaphors can be regarded as consisting of two parts—the words that make up the metaphor and refer to the principal subject and the connotations and meanings that can be derived from those words. The words of the metaphor form a vehicle that interacts with the meanings of the words. The metaphor is the complex whole. The meaning in the metaphor is no longer limited to the literal meaning of the words. Metaphorically, the words acquire an additional meaning or significance, which is their tenor.

The problem with the tenor/vehicle distinction, which was proposed by I. A. Richards in The Philosophy of Rhetoric (1936), is that even the literal meaning consists of a tenor and vehicle, and attempts to state the tenor independently of the metaphor itself beg the question. If one can state the tenor, then it is simply a paraphrase, which most theories of metaphor deny. If one cannot state the tenor, then it has not explained how the metaphorical meaning differs from the literal meaning.

TEXT. Aesthetics considers texts in a broad and a narrow sense. In the narrow sense, a text is a representation in the form of language or some other notation. It raises questions about reference and ontological identity. Literary texts are the most obvious kind of texts, and their aesthetic significance depends on their effects. On the one hand, the text is itself an object that has an effect based on its formal properties; on the other, the text has a meaning or content that depends on
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how the individual textual elements—words, and larger units, such as metaphors and images—refer without losing their textual independence. The identity of a text is also difficult to define. Any change in the text might be thought to produce a different text, but in most cases, that seems implausible. A single misprint does not make a different novel. Moreover, literary texts can at least be imagined that are verbally identical and yet, because of different extrinsic factors, such as authorship and historical location, constitute different works of art. The complex issues of textual analysis make up much of 20th-century literary aesthetics.

In the broader sense, ‘text’ can be applied to any work of art and to any combination of a work of art and an audience. One can say that every performance of a play or a piece of music is a text because it produces an effect by means of an extended representation. Even buildings can be treated as texts and “read” for their artistic and cultural significance. Text theory in this sense focuses attention on the interplay between some artifact and an audience, and every such interaction produces a unique situation. Aesthetics becomes hermeneutics—the interpretation of texts in the broadest sense. See also POSTMODERNISM.

TOLSTOY, LEV (LEO) NIKOLAYEVICH (1828–1910). Count Lev Tolstoy was born into a noble Russian family with extensive estates. His early life vacillated between attempts to reform the system of serfdom and the life of a rich Russian nobleman. His great novels, War and Peace (1865–1869) and Anna Karenina (1875–1877), followed. Late in the 1870s, he underwent a religious conversion that led to his eventual excommunication from the Russian Orthodox Church in 1901. He sought to practice a life of simplicity, non-violence, and religious purity but still tried to impose his views on his family and others. During this period, he rejected the aesthetics of high art, including his own, and explored domestic tragedy. His principal work in aesthetics, What is Art? (1897–1898), belongs to the late, religious period of his life. He finally broke with his own family and died alone in a railway station after leaving home.

In What is Art? Tolstoy rejects the bourgeois system of fine arts in favor of popular art that is accessible to all and that carries out his religious vision of humility and non-violence. He understood aes-
**Thematic experience** as a unique kind of experience based on a deep, quasi-religious feeling. He also accepted something of the 19th-century Hegelian understanding of history as a force that moves toward a higher end beyond the individual, however, so art is the embodiment of the spirit of a culture and age. What is Art? attempted to reconcile aesthetic feeling with Tolstoy’s social and religious consciousness.

In place of the distinction between fine art and popular art or entertainment, Tolstoy distinguished between art and counterfeit art. Counterfeit art plays on the mind to excite it and provide diversion. Such diversion is only momentary, however, and leads nowhere. It must be contrasted with true art, which unites and moves individuals from their personal isolation to a communal feeling. Aesthetic feeling thus is contrasted to the momentary and individual feeling of counterfeit art.

The distinction between art and its counterfeits requires that we have criteria so that we can know the difference. Tolstoy claimed that all true art is infectious and that counterfeit art is not. By the infectiousness of art, Tolstoy means a kind of common feeling, a shared emotion, that connects one personality to another by means of some object or performance. Without that root in personality reaching out to other persons, only imitations of art can result. The subject matter of aesthetic feeling, therefore, has two criteria. It must move humanity forward, and it must express the fundamental character of human nature. Art that tries to hold on to past forms becomes mannered. It concentrates on style and more and more more elaborate exhibitions of skill. It is neither forward looking nor humane.

Tolstoy was pessimistic about the state of art in his own time. It had, in his opinion, lost its connection with humanity. Most of what we take as exemplary instances of art were, to Tolstoy, counterfeit art or even worse. His specific judgments are extreme, and they offend our common sense of what art is. Nevertheless, Tolstoy captured much of the complexity of 19th-century idealism and gave it a clearer, more concrete form than its speculative German cousins. For Tolstoy, art was social and aesthetic, historically motivated, and religiously transcendent. His theory singles out some of the most important themes of Romantic and idealist art: sincerity, personality, religious feeling, and a spirit of the age.
TRAGEDY. Not only is tragedy an important genre in drama, it is also the dramatic form that has played the largest role in aesthetic theory generally. Beginning with Aristotle’s Poetics, problems about the effects of works of art on an audience, about the sources of art, about the role of rules in making and judging art, about defining art, and about the relation of art to history have all been explored by using tragedy as the specific case study. Aristotle, for example, defined art as an imitation and tragedy as a specific kind of imitation—one that imitates the actions of men of a certain stature to produce pity and fear in the audience and the “catharsis” of those emotions. Catharsis, in turn, can be understood both in terms of the effect on the audience and also in terms of the changes brought about within the plot. Aristotle described and ranked tragic plots in terms of their relation to established myths, and he compared the plot of a tragedy to what is possible as well as what actually happens. Possibility takes precedence over actuality in tragedy, which is more philosophical—that is, more general and universal—than history. From the Poetics, critics derived rules for the composition of a successful tragedy and implicitly argued that such rules can be derived for other art forms. In all of these cases, the problems raised by tragedy are in fact quite general problems for all forms of art.

Tragedy also has been central to critical questions in aesthetics. Tragedy poses the problem of how one can approve of actions—for example, the death of Hamlet—that one would not approve of outside the tragedy. And attempts to account for the effects of tragedy psychologically have raised the question of how psychological theories can be applied to works of art before the discovery of those theories. Hamlet exhibits all of the characteristics of a Freudian Oedipal complex, but Shakespeare would not have thought in those terms. One consequence, therefore, is that multiple critical interpretations, some of which are incompatible with each other, arise. Tragedy also raises the question of where art crosses the boundary with reality. Romantic tragedy was sometimes played out by artists who attempted to live their tragic ideals. In practice, however, we respond differently to real events and tragic representations, and that raises the aesthetic question about the boundaries between art and life.

As an individual genre within drama, tragedy has been distinguished from comedy and from melodrama by the structure of the
plot. Comedy resolves the plot by reconciling the protagonists. Melodrama and romance build the plot around the threats to ordinary protagonists who triumph over difficulties while tragedy requires a hero of greater stature who is overcome by fate, usually through his own actions.

A continuing problem about tragedies arises because they seem to be possible only at certain cultural stages. For tragedy, there must be an overarching belief structure that imposes some imperatives. For the Greeks, it was fate, personified in the old gods and the furies; some things, such as incest and patricide, were prohibited absolutely, but conflicts between them were possible. Typically, the tragic hero was confronted with an impossible choice. In Elizabethan tragedy, the demands of Christian belief and dynastic imperatives created the conflict. In the absence of such absolutes, one can only create pathos and melodrama. Nevertheless, even where such absolutes are not available, the older tragedies continue to exert their power aesthetically.

TROMPE L’OEIL. Trompe l’oeil (to deceive the eye) painting utilizes perspective and shading to produce effects that are mistaken for what they depict. The technique applies to some small details and has been used prominently in architectural effects that, viewed from all except extreme angles, appear to be three dimensional. Aesthetically, trompe l’oeil effects were regarded as instances of great skill when the standard of painting was realistic imitation. A number of stories are told of artists whose effects were so realistic that they fooled animals and other artists. For example, the Greek painter Xeuxis was said to have painted grapes so real that the birds pecked at them. The paradox of trompe l’oeil effects aesthetically is that their aesthetic effect depends on their being recognized as imitations.

TRUBLET, NICOLAS CHARLES JOSEPH, ABBÉ (1697–1770). Trublet was a friend of Bernard Fontenelle and the author of Essais de littérature et de morale (1735), in which he argues that taste is not reducible to subjective pleasure because, unlike physical taste, it can be changed by education. Truth and rules are necessary to distinguish art from mere sentiment, and only those who understand can feel the beauty of much of art. Voltaire regarded Trublet as one who compiles, compiles, compiles.
The issues about truth in aesthetics divide between problems about truth theory generally and its relation to meaning and problems specific to aesthetics that arise because of the fictional or imaginary status of aesthetic objects. The two sets of problems have interacted in complex ways in the history of aesthetics.

Works of art have been called lies and artists liers. For that to be the case, truth values must apply to works of art. Particularly in the case of literary works, the fictional nature of the works raises questions about whether truth values apply at all. A sentence in a novel, play, or opera does not have the same kind of extra-literary reference that ordinary language has, but it also is not simply arbitrary. Some theories distinguish between the truth of a sentence within the world of a work and in actuality, but that presumes that some sense can be made of truth values within the world of the work. Intuitively, the distinction is between saying that Holmes and Watson are friends (true) and saying that Holmes and Moriarity are friends (false), but complications ensue when one asks what the truth criteria are and how they are to be applied. Are the statements within the work being evaluated within the work or are they about the work, so that there is an implicit paraphrase that refers to the work? And if the latter is the case, how is that paraphrase arrived at for fictional references? This has led some aesthetic theories to deny that truth is applicable within works of art at all; at most, there is some kind of quasi-statement. The difficulty, then, is that the meaning of the sentences within the work no longer depends on truth. Alternatively, different semantic theories, such as possible world semantics, have been employed to explain how one moves from one possible world to another in terms of truth values.

It has also been maintained that issues of truth apply only to the larger derived meanings of the work as a whole. While works of art themselves are neither true nor false, they imply true or false claims about the world. A film with a completely fictional setting and characters may convey something that is true or false about the world. One is then led to questions about the truth or falsity of interpretive statements. They too can be challenged. To say that a work of art means X or that it expresses Y seems to be to assert a straightforward proposition about something. But, it can be argued, such apparent statements are based on subjective feelings and as such cannot be
true or false. They are disguised emotive claims or recommendations for interpretation.

Some of the same kind of questions arise with respect to aesthetics theories generally. Theoretical statements seem to express propositions about art or aesthetic experience. But, just as theoretical statements in the natural sciences can be regarded as instrumental predictions, so theoretical statements in aesthetics can be regarded as instrumental predictions about how audiences will respond. The claim that aesthetic experience is the result of an aesthetic attitude, for example, predicts that some class of individuals will have experiences of an identifiable kind under certain circumstances. The prediction may be more or less accurate, but only a specific proposition—A experienced X under conditions Y—is true or false, and it is about A’s experience, not about the theoretical statement.

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UGLINESS. Most aesthetic theory has begun with considerations of beauty. For metaphysical reasons, classical aesthetics attributed being or ontological priority to beauty. The alternative to beauty was nothingness—a state of non-being that lacked contact with the source of being. Ugliness was not something that one desired or that one could experience in the same way because it lacked the kind of metaphysical status that produced experience. When that metaphysics became less self-evident to philosophers, it was still the case that beauty was the starting point. Beauty was understood as an emotion, a feeling of pleasure like the ideas that one has of secondary qualities, such as color. Beauty is less central to aesthetics in that case because it is the experience or feeling that is important, but it was still common to treat beauty as a general aesthetic property.

Ugliness, on the other hand, has received less consideration in modern aesthetics. It can be regarded as a separate experience, but in that case it is not aesthetic. Or it can be regarded as the opposite of beauty, a privation or lack of beauty, but that makes less sense in the positive, empiricist understanding of feelings than it did in the metaphysical theories of beauty. In either case, ugliness is not something that is desirable aesthetically, although it may be instrumental
in art. One of the common ways to describe aesthetic properties was in terms of harmony, fittingness, and pleasure. The ugly is then deformity, inappropriateness, and that which produces pain or uneasiness. It is not aesthetic but anti-aesthetic.

It can be maintained, however, that ugliness is itself an aesthetic property. For one thing, aesthetics was invented as the science of feeling, and ugliness is as subjectively accessible and relevant as beauty. In that case, it is perceived in the same way that other aesthetic properties are perceived, and as such it is available to artists as a part of their medium. Some paintings, for example, that are considered very valuable aesthetically can only be described as ugly. The connection between aesthetics and pleasure is reduced to a contingent one. Not all aesthetic experiences are pleasant, and not all works of art that are aesthetically valuable are beautiful. So some aesthetic theories include a theory of ugliness along with other aesthetic properties.

UNIFORMITY AMIDST VARIETY. Both uniformity, or harmony, and variety, or novelty, were traditional properties ascribed to beautiful objects. Uniformity was understood as the fittingness of parts of an object to each other. It did not mean sameness but an agreement of parts. A dramatic work possessed uniformity in this sense if it does not mix effects. A painting possesses uniformity if all of its figures are of the same type and stature. What was to be avoided was the jarring effect of comic and tragic scenes in the same play or figures that were out of proportion either to each other or to their parts. Similarly, variety meant sufficient difference to avoid boring sameness. Colors, therefore, should be harmonious but not blandly undifferentiated.

Uniformity amidst variety became an aesthetic formula when it was proposed by Francis Hutcheson in An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue (1725) as the property that produces the feeling of beauty in anyone with a normal sense of beauty. Hutcheson was adopting the traditional characteristics of uniformity or harmony and variety, but he related them to specific empirical conditions. The sense of beauty is an internal sense that responds reflectively to ideas provided by the external senses. As such, its function is to compare and respond to complex relations to produce an idea of its own, the idea of beauty. For Hutcheson, then, some
underlying ideas are necessary for the sense of beauty to function, and he believed that what he called a compound ratio of uniformity and variety in those ideas was the causally effective condition for the sense of beauty to operate. Uniformity referred to relational properties like equality of the sides of a figure, and variety referred to the differences that the figure included. For Hutcheson, beauty requires both; neither by itself is sufficient. So an equilateral triangle will be experienced as more beautiful than an irregular one because it is more uniform with equal variety, but a square, which has greater variety, will be experienced as more beautiful than a triangle. Hutcheson’s simple ratio is in fact difficult to apply and empirically questionable, but what was significant was the way that he transformed the traditional values of uniformity and variety into strictly empirical properties that fit into the scheme of aesthetic ideas he was developing. Subsequent empiricist aesthetics relied less heavily on finding a single set of relational properties that produced beauty but continued to think in terms of some underlying causal structure upon which aesthetic properties depend in intuitive ways.

UNITIES. Neo-classical aesthetics, which extended roughly from the late Renaissance through the 18th century, depended heavily on the formulation of rules of art that dictated artistic practice and guided taste. Many of these rules were derived from classical rhetoric, particularly the Poetics and Rhetoric of Aristotle and the Art of Poetry of Horace. They had the status of rational givens that could be violated only if some greater good was achieved. Even then, a violation of the rules would be regarded as a fault. Among the most prominent rules were the dramatic unities, which dictated that the plot of a play could not extend beyond a single day and that the action could not jump from place to place. The reasoning was that such violations of unity of action and place would create logical contradictions against which reason would rebel. The status of the unities was never absolute, however, and such critics as Samuel Johnson observed that the best dramatists, including Shakespeare, violated them with impunity.

UT PICTURA POESIS. Ut pictura poesis, which literally means as a picture, so a poem, was the formula, derived from Horace’s Art of Poetry, that links together poetry and painting. Poetry was the bet-
ter-established art because of its long classical history and the status of Homer and epic poetry. As painting became more important in the Renaissance, it was common to construct paragons, comparisons of poetry and painting, that sought to determine which was superior as an art. Thus, the attempt to assimilate painting to the status of poetry and to formulate a language of painting had both cultural and critical significance. It was part of the ongoing evolution of the arts from the status of craft to the developed concept of fine art that eventually emerged in the 18th century.

VALUE. Aesthetic value is regarded either as the normative properties that works of art or aesthetic objects possess in themselves or as the extrinsic values that works of art or aesthetic objects have in relation to other things, such as moral activities. A basic distinction is between normative aesthetic theories and what are sometimes called categorical theories. Normative theories say that a thing has a certain value or that it is more or less valuable than something else. Categorical theories do not judge value; they simply seek to classify something as aesthetic or non-aesthetic, art or non-art. The distinction can be challenged, however, since aesthetic categories seem to be intrinsically normative. That is, it seems odd to say that some object is an aesthetic object but the experience of it is not valuable in some sense (even if the object itself is ugly or painful). So to identify something as an aesthetic object or a work of art is to assign some potential value to it.

Whether extrinsic values can be aesthetic values is a separate question. For a good part of modernist aesthetics, aesthetic values, by definition, exclude practical and moral values because the aesthetic itself is defined as that experience that is universal, subjective, and disinterested. But utility has often been associated with works of art, and functionality seems essential to some forms of art, such as architecture.

Still another problem of normative theories in aesthetics is the apparent subjectivity of aesthetic experience. If the value is nothing more than the value of the experience as it is felt by someone, then
whatever is felt as valuable is so, and no comparison or contradiction is possible. The same thing may be valuable to one person and not valuable to another. Value attaches only to the subjective response, not to the properties of the object. That, in turn, makes it impossible to assign different values to works of art themselves except by a kind of inductive generalization—more people find A aesthetically valuable than B. However, intuitively, reducing aesthetic value to a majority vote or to a complete relativity of taste seems odd. Most of the critical statements that we make aim at some form of intersubjective validity. As Immanuel Kant observed, there is a difference between saying that I like something and saying that it is good or aesthetically valuable. When I assert the former, I feel no contradiction if you do not like it; when I assert the latter, I believe one of us is wrong and should experience it differently, which is itself a normative judgment.

Aesthetic value is particularly difficult to distinguish from moral value, and many of the value problems in aesthetics arise in that context. If aesthetic value is truly autonomous and unrelated to moral value, then it should not matter that some things that are morally objectionable can be appreciated aesthetically, and some philosophers hold that that is the case. No matter how sadistic or cruel something is, it can, in principle, if not in practice, be regarded as having a separate aesthetic value. This position goes against both ordinary intuitions and the history of aesthetics, however. Historically, moral and aesthetic value have been treated as parallel and reinforcing; to understand one is to understand the other, even if they are different responses to different properties. See also AESTHETIC VALUE.

VASARI, GIORGIO (1511–1574). Vasari was an Italian mannerist painter and architect, but it is primarily for his Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects (1550/1568) that he is of interest to aesthetics. Vasari surveyed both his contemporaries and the earlier Renaissance. His anecdotal approach and his perception of stylistic differences helped to establish a canon of Renaissance painting and a model of art history based on style. Vasari divided the history of Italian painting into three stages moving progressively from infancy to maturity (his own time). The standard for progress was naturalism of imitation derived from design. As a founder of
education, and it is subject to reason. Its objects are the real excellences and defects of works of art, so the controversy over whether taste is subject to dispute is dismissed by Voltaire. There is no disputing with those who lack taste, and whole nations may suffer from that deficiency, but good taste is governed by rules and reasons.

WAGNER, RICHARD (1813–1883). The German composer Richard Wagner’s well-known operas are directly related to his aesthetic theory and vice versa. The innovative nature of his total program led Wagner to establish his own theater for the production of his operas and to promote them himself.

Wagner began with the thesis that the individual arts are related to the senses, but that that separation must be overcome. The external man depends on sight; the inner man on tone. As long as art is related only to a single sense, it cannot unite man and world. The history of music is a history of overcoming that division through harmony, poetry, and eventually the combination of all of them. For Wagner, Ludwig von Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony takes orchestral music to a new level that combines voices and instrumental music. The final step is the kind of opera that Wagner himself comes to compose. This history of music parallels the history of humanity that begins in myth, endures separation, and through the power of music, returns to myth. This aesthetic program is worked out in The Art Work of the Future (1850) and Opera and Drama (1851). Wagner’s position changes somewhat, however, after his study of Arthur Schopenhauer’s aesthetics. Instead of a total musical synthesis, Wagner comes to see language and music or tone as the poles of Schopenhauer’s idea and will, each competing in a dialectical relationship. An element of tragedy is implicit in the dialectical separation of will and idea, and the mythic hero alone can overcome it in tragic form.

Wagner’s programmatic promotion of opera and a synthesis of music and thought provoked two extreme antagonisms. Friedrich Nietzsche began as a follower of Wagner but broke with him over the way that Wagner subordinated music to synthesis. And Eduard Hanslick rejected altogether Wagner’s synthetic program, insisting
that music was purely sound without discursive meaning. Both controversies were bitter. The later adoption of Wagner as a national composer by National Socialism may find some foundation in Wagner’s mythology and attitudes, but it takes his music out of the aesthetic context in which Wagner created it.

WILDE, OSCAR (1854–1900). Oscar Wilde was the most flamboyant and eccentric of the English aesthetes who advocated art for art’s sake. Wilde’s aesthetic is intentionally witty, paradoxical, and outrageous. In “The Decay of Lying” (1889) he inverts all of the accepted aesthetic principles of his day. Art does not imitate nature; nature and life imitate art. Art has neither moral nor aesthetic purpose; it is useless. Wilde was following in the path laid down by Walter Pater and John Ruskin, but he exploited their aesthetics to display his own wit. Wilde’s own poetry and plays were popular and witty without depth, with the exception of the moving “Ballad of Reading Gaol,” based on his own prison experience after his conviction for homosexuality. The heart of Wilde’s aesthetics is that life itself must become art. His own life was at least an attempt to carry through that thesis, though the results were more tragic than witty.

WINCKELMANN, JOHANN JOACHIM (1717–1768). Johann Winckelmann was the most influential art critic of the 18th century. His History of Ancient Art (1764) provided the basis for the elevation of Greek art as the standard for beauty and grace and the model by which modern efforts were to be judged. Winckelmann was the son of a German cobbler and never graduated from university. He held a number of positions as a librarian to a succession of patrons at German courts and in the Roman church and spent most of the latter part of his life in Rome after moving there in 1755. He was murdered in 1768 in Trieste while on his return from an aborted trip back to Germany.

Winckelmann’s praise for Greek sculpture and art and for what he considered its continuation in the work of Raphael and Michelangelo was based more on his reading and Roman copies than on direct experience, though after his move to Rome he had the opportunity to study some works unearthed by recent archeology. He never visited Greece. He characterized Greek art as having a noble simplicity and
a quiet grandeur, and that judgment established the neo-classical view that the superiority of classical art rested on its simplicity and emotional control. Winckelmann found those qualities exemplified in the Apollo Belvedere and, somewhat paradoxically, in the statue of Laocoön. That statue shows Laocoön and his two sons entangled in the coils of a serpent. Virgil had described the event in the Aeneid, and Winckelmann praises the statue for dignity under extreme duress in contrast to the emotionally wrought Roman description. His description contrasts with and contradicts his own distinction elsewhere between expression and beauty. G. E. Lessing accepted Winckelmann’s analysis of the statue, but argued that the difference lay in the potential of the medium, not the dignity and restraint of Greek art, and thus that Winckelmann was wrong to assign to the Greeks what was essentially a difference between poetry and sculpture.

Winckelmann’s aesthetic is a mixture of sentimentalism and neo-classical imitation theory that is not always consistent. He holds that a capacity to feel is necessary for the experience of beauty, but he also holds that that capacity must be taught by a process of exposure to the models of true beauty. Hence his elevation of the Greeks to be the standard is part of an educational project for his patrons. His judgments of particular works tend to be dogmatic and categorical. Raphael and Michelangelo are the inheritors of Greek simplicity and grace in painting, though they cannot match them in sculpture, but Bernini is rejected as forced and emotional. Beauty is distinguished from expression, which is a secondary excellence that imitates the actions of the mind. Stillness and repose are the emotions that are appropriate to the highest beauty. Winckelmann’s influence on a taste for things classical was extensive, but his own taste was eclectic. As an historian, he ranged across all of art, but his judgment is often based on secondary sources.

WIT. Wit was a central critical term in late Renaissance, neo-classical, and early modern aesthetics and criticism. It referred to an ability to make comparisons between objects that were not obviously related. It was closely related to the faculty of the imagination, and as imagination took on a larger role in aesthetics, wit became more important as well. Wit was particularly valued in poetry and some dramatic forms. It required intellectual agility and produced a feeling of supe-
riority as well as novelty and surprise. The metaphysical poets in the 17th century were particularly known for wit.

Wit could also be regarded negatively, however. It is inherently elitist, and it can be cruel in the way that it excludes those who lack wit and in the way that comparisons that wound are made. The elaborate and often artificial nature of wit led critics who valued simplicity and clarity to find wit mannered.

True wit was notoriously difficult to define, however, and attempts to describe it were one of the critical subjects of the Enlightenment. It was regarded as something that could be recognized immediately and intuitively without being subject itself to rules. In that sense, wit operated critically along with raillery as a way of testing otherwise questionable subjective responses. The third Earl of Shaftesbury appealed to wit as one test of subjective feeling. It could expose the falsity of some feelings by holding them up to ridicule or showing their true nature.

WITTGENSTEIN, LUDWIG (1889–1951). Ludwig Wittgenstein belonged to a wealthy and cultured Viennese family. His brother, Paul, was a pianist who lost a hand in World War I and for whom Maurice Ravel composed a piece to be played solely with the left hand. Wittgenstein himself was knowledgeable about music and architecture and designed a house for his sister. Wittgenstein’s early philosophy, set out in his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (1921), combined philosophical logic and the philosophy of language in a way that Wittgenstein thought solved the problems of meaning. Meaning is a logical picture of states of affairs. His later work the Philosophical Investigations (1945–1949; published posthumously, 1953) returned to the philosophy of language from a different perspective. It emphasized the use of language as a key to meaning and denied that meaning could be reduced to either psychological states or to logical expressions. Language is a kind of complex cultural game that establishes its own rules from which meaning derives. Both works are presented in discrete remarks that defy reduction to sustained argument. Nevertheless, Wittgenstein’s influence, through his students, transformed 20th-century analytical philosophy.

Wittgenstein’s contribution to aesthetics is difficult to summarize. Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology, and Reli-
gious Belief (published 1972) is made up of notes taken by students from lectures given in 1939. Culture and Value (published 1977) consists of aphorisms drawn from manuscript notes left by Wittgenstein and collected and arranged by G. H. von Wright. Neither collection presents either a sustained argument or a consistent view of aesthetics. Scattered throughout the Philosophical Investigations and the other posthumously collected remarks and notes are remarks that are suggestive for a way of doing philosophical aesthetics, but there is no sustained interest in aesthetics as such.

Still some conclusions seem evident. Wittgenstein approached art and aesthetics in terms of the language that is actually used to make aesthetic judgments and to describe works of art. He considers that aesthetic language belongs to contexts that cannot be detached and treated in isolation. Aesthetic language is always a part of some larger culture or use. Rules play a role in art, but they are like the rules of language. They are implicit rules of a game, not prescriptive rules of composition. So art is in some sense like language. It is a human product with multiple uses.

Many of Wittgenstein’s conclusions are negative. He denies that aesthetics can be understood in terms of interior psychological states. Theories, in the sense of overarching generalizations, are impossible. And aesthetic judgments cannot be detached from the expression of practical judgments. But it would be misleading to say that Wittgenstein had a deep interest in or made a significant contribution to the traditional questions of philosophical aesthetics. The collected remarks are those of a cultured Viennese thinker whose interest in philosophy is focused on language and meaning, and he draws on his knowledge of art whenever it seems helpful.

Wittgenstein’s subsequent influence, which is much greater than his direct contribution, is evident in two areas of aesthetics. A traditional problem of aesthetics has been to define ‘art’ in such a way that the connections between the different arts are evident and art can be distinguished from non-art, especially those things that may be mistakenly taken for art. Wittgenstein’s opposition to this kind of abstract theorizing led some of his followers to the conclusion that essentialist definitions of art—those that supply necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of the term ‘art’—are impossible. The argument was that while there may be a “family resem-
blance” or overlapping relations between paradigm cases of art, the concept itself is “open” and will be constantly expanding to take in new art forms. In a series of art objects, there may be no properties that all of the objects have in common.

Second, Wittgenstein’s interest in the way that language and context qualify all meaning led some of his followers to apply his insights about aspect seeing to aesthetic perception. Theories of perception had been central to aesthetics since its inception, and the 19th-century and early 20th-century aesthetic attitude theories identified aesthetic perception as a special way of seeing both nature and art objects. Wittgenstein had pointed out that all perception is influenced by context, particularly linguistic context and use. We do not just see objectively and then, in a separate act, interpret what we see. We see something as something—there is a single act of perception that is always complex and contextual. Attempts have been made by those influenced by Wittgenstein to apply this to aesthetic perception, either to argue that aspect seeing is itself inherently aesthetic or that aesthetic perception is a special kind of aspect seeing.

Both “neo-Wittgensteinian” contributions to aesthetics have been criticized in more recent aesthetics. The problem of definition persists as more sophisticated ways of deploying definitions have been formulated, and aspect seeing does not seem to be sufficiently distinctive to play the aesthetic role assigned to it. Wittgenstein’s influence continues, however, in a more general way. Wittgenstein’s critique of theory has made the kind of quasi-psychological theorizing that was prominent earlier impossible, and his recognition that language and meaning cannot be divorced from history and culture applies particularly to aesthetic judgments. Wittgenstein’s way of doing philosophy as a critique of linguistic culture appears in the expansion of aesthetics beyond its traditional philosophical boundaries.

**WÖLFFLIN, HEINRICH (1864–1945).** The Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin developed a theoretical approach to art history that combined formal analysis and a psychological analysis of a period with a comparison of styles. His classic work, *Principles of Art History* (1915), compares Renaissance and Baroque styles, and from that comparison, he derives two primary forms of artistic perception—the classical or linear style that is transparent to its objects and the