IDH 3005-3006 – HONORS SEMINAR: 
AESTHETICS, VALUES, AND AUTHORITY 

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Biscayne Bay Campus 

Fall: TR 1400-1515 (twice a week, single class periods) 
Spring: T 1400-1645 (once a week, double period) 

This seminar takes its title literally to explore the questions, What is art? What is beauty? How do we know? and Who decides? In searching for answers, over the course of the year we will examine hard questions in aesthetics (including current controversies), the psychology of perception and creation, issues of changing tastes and evaluations, and the roles of ethics, politics, religion, and ideology in shaping our ideas about works of visual art, literature, music, drama, and film. We will consider what is meant by "high" and "low" culture, and (in the spring semester) examine several texts of mystery, suspense, and detection that have found their way into both categories. Guest lectures will add to our understanding, and class discussion at all times is intended to be lively! Writing assignments in the fall will include reading-response journals, a short paper, and a team project. In the spring, through major projects in addition to readings and films, students will carry out their own investigations into areas of the arts and society that most intrigue them. 

Books for Fall Semester: 
Margaret P. Battin et al., Puzzles about Art (St. Martin's) 
E. H. Gombrich, Art and Illusion (Princeton) 
Lawrence W. Levine, Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America (Harvard) 
Linda Nochlin, Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays (Harper & Row _Icon) 
William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet (Penguin-Pelican Shakespeare) 

Books for Spring Semester: 
Margaret Battin, et al., Puzzles about Art (St. Martin’s) 
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories, Volume 1 (Bantam) 
P. D. James, Innocent Blood (Scribner) 
Bram Stoker, Dracula, (Broadview) 
Jane Tompkins, West of Everything (Oxford)