

**FIELDING GRADUATE UNIVERSITY
HOD DOCTORAL PROGRAM
ASSESSMENT CONTRACT**

KA-704: AREA OF SPECIALIZATION



**STUDENT: E. CHRISTOPHER MARE
FACULTY MENTOR: ROBERT SILVERMAN, PH.D.
FACULTY ASSESSOR: FREDERICK STEIER, PH.D.**

**ASSESSMENT BEGIN DATE: 3 SEPTEMBER 2010
ASSESSMENT COMPLETION DATE: 15 APRIL 2011
AGREEMENT IS FOR CREDIT**

INTRODUCTION

This study is being initiated in conjunction with the presentation of a Fielding “Sustainability Seminar” to be held at OUR Ecovillage on Vancouver Island, BC. The event is being billed as “The 3rd Annual Fielding Village Gathering,” which caught my attention since I started in 1994 to define academically a new field of study: “village design.” In my opinion, the ‘sustainability’ discussion becomes loose and rambling without delimiting a context, a specific scale in which to envision and apply ideas. I believe the most effective context in which to frame the sustainability discussion is *village* scale, with all that implies. This is the perspective I will share at the seminar.

Since the general theme ‘sustainability’ and the posited solution ‘village design’ have been the focus of my study for so long, I believe I am justified in calling this my “Area of Specialization.” In fact, I may have graduated from the sustainability discussion many years ago. I remember writing a short essay back in 1998 in which I argued that ‘sustainability,’ in itself, is not a desirable goal: the so-called ‘sustainability movement’ is merely applying the negative feedback to bring the current world system back into alignment with biospheric realities. Far more exciting possibilities arise by placing our aspirations *beyond* sustainability, toward personal and planetary plenitude, imagining the conditions in which human and other beings may thrive, and so actualize their full potentials.

Through my research in ‘beyond sustainability,’ I have come to regard ‘beauty’ as not only the most desirable of goals but also the very catalyst that may shift consciousness out of unsustainable habits of attitude. This striving for beauty, for perfection, for immortality – and how to make that the basis of village design – I wish to include as the focus of my KA-704 study. I have approached faculty Fred Steier as the assessor for this study because of his reputation for systems background and also because he is scheduled to be at the seminar – thus I anticipate the chance to discuss and refine further these ideas.

LEARNING GOALS

- Explore various theories of ‘aesthetics’ and become familiar with their philosophical underpinnings.
- Research the effects that beauty may have on the psychology of consciousness. Have there been studies already conducted that may set a precedent?

- Define beauty in terms that may be useful as design criteria for the village designer. Is it really all “in the eyes of the beholder?”
- Discover whether there is a relationship between perceived beauty and the proportions of the Golden Mean.
- Discover whether it makes sense to situate beauty somewhere on the Chaos-Cosmos continuum.
- Referencing *A Pattern Language* – are there existing patterns whose purpose are to render beauty into a design? If not, what would these patterns look like?
- Prepare to make a case for supporting the vernacular assertion, “if it ain’t beautiful it ain’t sustainable,” thus giving beauty its proper place in the sustainability discussion.
- Practice walking a thin line between the poetic and the empirical, the mythic and the rational, as I begin to write about my findings.

READINGS: TEXTS AND JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Adorno, T.W., edited by R. Hullot-Kentor (1997) *Aesthetic Theory*. University of Minnesota Press; Minneapolis
- Alberti, L.B., translated by J. Rykwert, N. Leach, and R. Tavernor (1988) *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*. MIT Press; Cambridge
- Alexander, C, Ishikawa, S. and M. Silverstein (1977) *A Pattern Language*. Oxford University Press; New York
- Alexandrakis, A. (2006) “The role of music and dance in ancient Greek and Chinese rituals.” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 89-112
- Ames-Lewis, F. and M. Rogers, editors (1998) *Concepts of Beauty in Renaissance Art*. Ashgate; Brookfield, VT
- Armstrong, T. and B. Detweiler-Bedell (2008) “Beauty as an emotion: The exhilarating prospect of mastering a challenging world.” *Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 305-329
- Bernardete, S., translator (2001) *Plato’s “Symposium.”* University of Chicago Press; Chicago
- Bueno, O. (2009) “Functional beauty: Some applications, some worries.” *Philosophical Books*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 47-54
- Cropley, D. and A. Cropley (2008) “Elements of a universal aesthetic of creativity.” *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 155-161
- Decaroli, S. (2006) “The Greek profile: Hegel’s aesthetics and the implications of a pseudo-science.” *The Philosophical Forum*, Vol. 37, No. 2, 113-151

- De Mezieres, N.L.C., translated by D. Britt (1992) *The Genius of Architecture; or, The Analogy of that Art With Our Sensations*. The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities; Santa Monica
- Diessner, R., Davis, L. and B. Toney (2009) "Empirical relationships between beauty and justice: Testing Scarry and elaborating Danto." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 249-258
- Donoghue, D. (2003) *Speaking of Beauty*. Yale University Press; New Haven
- Dutton, D. (2009) *The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure, and Human Evolution*. Bloomsbury Press; New York
- Eco, U., editor (2004) *History of Beauty*. Rizzoli; Milan
- Espejo, R., editor (2010) *The Culture of Beauty*. Greenhaven Press; Detroit
- Gelernter, M. (1995) *Sources of Architectural Form: A Critical History of Western Design Theory*. Manchester University Press; New York
- Graves, M. (2009) "The emergence of transcendental forms in human systems." *Zygon*, Vol. 44, No. 3, 501-532
- Hart, D.B. (2003) *The Beauty of the Infinite*. W.B. Eerdmans; Grand Rapids, MI
- Hegel, G.W.F., translated by T.M. Knox (1979) *Hegel's Introduction to Aesthetics: Being the Introduction to the to the Berlin Aesthetics Lectures of the 1820s*. Oxford University Press; New York
- Herron, E.C. (2009) "Feeling, art, and sustainable civil society." *Jung Journal*, Vol. 3., No. 4, 112-123
- Huntley, H.E. (1970) *The Divine Proportion: A Study in Mathematical Beauty*. Dover Publications; New York
- Jantsch, E. and C.H. Waddington, editors (1976) *Evolution and Consciousness: Human Systems in Transition*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company; Reading, MA
- Joye, Y. (2007) "Architectural lessons from environmental psychology: The case of biophilic architecture." *Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 305-328
- Kant, I., edited by P. Guyer (2000) *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Cambridge University Press; UK
- Kemal, S. and I. Gaskell, editors (1993) *Landscape, Natural Beauty, and the Arts*. Cambridge University Press; New York
- Lawlor, R. (1982) *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice*. Crossroads; New York
- Lundy, M. (2001) *Sacred Geometry*. Walker & Co.; New York
- Makkai, K. (2009) "Kant on recognizing beauty." *European Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 18, No. 3, 385-413
- Martindale, C., Locher, P. and V.M. Petrov, editors (2007) *Evolutionary and Neurocognitive Approaches to Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. Baywood Publishing Company; New York

- McManus, I.C., Cook, R. and A. Hunt (2010) "Beyond the Golden Section and normative aesthetics: Why do individuals differ so much in their aesthetic preferences for rectangles?" *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 113-126
- Meskin, A. (2004) "Aesthetic testimony: What can we learn from others about beauty and art?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. LXIX, No. 1, 65-91
- Nehamas, A. and P. Woodruff (1997) "Phaedrus," in J.M. Cooper, editor, *Plato: Complete Works*. Hackett Publishing Company; Indianapolis
- O'Connor, J.D. (2008) "Theological aesthetics and revelatory tension." *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 89, No. 1022, 399-417
- Palladio, A., translated by R. Tavernor and R. Schofield (1997) *The Four Books on Architecture*. MIT Press; Cambridge
- Palmer, L. (2008) "Kant and the brain: A new empirical hypothesis." *Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 105-117
- Papanek, V. (1985) *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*. Academy Chicago Publishers; Chicago
- Papanek, V. (1998) "Toward the spiritual in design," in J. Dubuffet, et al. editors, *Beauty is Nowhere: Ethical Issues in Art and Design*. G+B Arts International; Amsterdam
- Parsons, G. (2007) "The aesthetics of Nature." *Philosophy Compass*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 358-372
- Perlovsky, L.I. (2010) "Intersections of mathematical, cognitive, and aesthetic theories of mind." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 11-17
- Rusbult, C. Kubacka, K.E., Kumashiro, M. and E.J. Finkel (2009) "The part of me that you bring out: Ideal similarity and the Michelangelo phenomenon." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 96, No. 1, 61-82
- Santayana, G., edited by W.G. Holzberger and H.J. Santkamp (1988) *The Sense of Beauty: Being the Outlines of an Aesthetic Theory*. MIT Press; Cambridge
- Scruton, R. (1979) *The Aesthetics of Architecture*. Princeton University Press; New Jersey
- Scruton, R. (1999) *The Aesthetics of Music*. Oxford University Press; New York
- Scruton, R. (2009) *Beauty*. Oxford University Press; New York
- Silvia, P.J. (2010) "Confusion and Interest: The role of knowledge emotions in aesthetic experience." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 75-80
- Steadman, P. (1979) *The Evolution of Designs: Biological Analogy in Architecture and the Applied Arts*. Cambridge University Press; UK
- Taylor, S.S. and H. Hansen (2005) "Finding form: Looking at the field of organizational aesthetics." *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 6, 1211-1231
- Tinio, P.P.L. and H. Leder (2009) "Natural scenes are indeed preferred, but image quality might have the last word." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 52-56

- Vitruvius, translated by M.H. Morgan (1960) *The Ten Books on Architecture*. Dover Books; New York
- Wenzel, C.H. (2009) "Kant's aesthetics: Overview and recent literature." *Philosophy Compass*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 380-406

LEARNING PLAN AND DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

OVERVIEW PHASE: This component of the KA-704 study will be initiated at the Sustainability Seminar at OUR Ecovillage from September 3-6, 2010. I intend to engage faculty and peers with the nascent ideas developed in the Learning Goals portion of this Contract. I expect some of my goals to be modified following the experience of the Seminar; new perspectives also are bound to be inaugurated accompanied by associated recommended readings. I think attending a seminar is a great way to launch a new study.

IN-DEPTH PHASE: For completion of this Phase, I will delve deeply into the literature cited above, including any new recommended readings or sources that appear during research. I will give myself the duration of Fall quarter to ingest the readings. Autumn-time is my most productive season for reading: as the weather turns cloudy, cool, and wet and as the daylight grows ever dimmer, I find it easy, even natural now, to assume a half-lotus with a stack of books in front of me, a cup of tea by my side, and all through the day and into the night exercise my mind by investigating and cross-referencing sources.

APPLIED PHASE: By the end of Spring quarter, I will have reached a tentative stage of completion in my study of 'beauty' and how it may be related to aspirations 'beyond sustainability.' I then will write a 20-30 page article with the full intention of submitting the piece to a journal for publication. That means that part of the challenge for this Phase, in addition to conceptualizing the synthesized subject matter of the article, will be practicing how to write journal-style. Two likely destinations for submission are the journal *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* and the journal *Environment-Behavior Research*.

Please note: I would like to consider this Assessment Contract an initial proposal. New ideas and perhaps direction surely will emerge during the Seminar. The initial goals stated herein, therefore, may very well undergo modification as the study progresses. For example, I'm already thinking that, if there is enough time and money, it would be very interesting for the Applied Phase to undertake a phenomenological study of Venezia, to see if I can gauge the effect of beauty on consciousness. I was fortunate enough to have studied Firenze last Summer. The astounding ubiquitous beauty of the place often brought tears to my eyes.

SPECIFIC SCHOLAR-PRACTITIONER SKILLS TO WORK ON

- Synthesis of ideas
- Appropriate use of reference format
- Appropriate use of primary and secondary references
- Through skillful dialogue, utilizing the seminar as an auspicious launch pad for this study
- Preparing and organizing my ideas and writing so that they may be submitted to a journal

EXPECTATIONS OF FACULTY ASSESSOR

- Clear and explicit communications regarding faculty expectations at the outset of this study
- Reasonable expediency in evaluating materials at the scheduled completion of this study
- Honest, constructively critical, growth-oriented objectivity when evaluating materials