



The Demands of Beauty: A Kantian Account of the Normative Force of Aesthetic Reasons

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

My goal in this paper is to develop a Kantian account of the normative force of aesthetics reasons. While Kant himself would likely side with contemporary theorists who deny that aesthetic considerations, on their own, give rise to oughts and obligations, I argue that Kant's theory nevertheless gives us resources for explaining the normative force of aesthetic reasons. On this account, while aesthetic properties (in particular, beauty) give us merely enticing or inviting reasons, these reasons acquire greater normative force in the context of aesthetic communities. Insofar as we are members of such communities, we take on special obligations to attend to, appreciate, and preserve particular beautiful objects.

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KEYWORDS:

Kant; aesthetic reasons;
aesthetic obligations;
beauty; normativity

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Williams, Jessica J.
'The Demands of Beauty:
A Kantian Account of
the Normative Force
of Aesthetic Reasons.'
*Estetika: The European
Journal of Aesthetics*
LXI/XVII, no. 1 (2024):
pp. 1–19. DOI: [https://doi.
org/10.33134/eeja.355](https://doi.org/10.33134/eeja.355)

Kant frequently uses strong normative language in his discussion of pure judgements of taste in the third *Critique*. When someone feels pleasure in the beautiful, Kant claims that they not only expect 'the very same satisfaction of others' but also 'demand' it from them; they 'rebuke' those who judge otherwise and 'den[y] that they have taste' while at the same time 'requir[ing] that they ought to have it'.¹ At one point, Kant writes that 'the feeling in the judgment of taste is expected of everyone as if it were a duty' (CJ, 5:296).

Sometimes, what Kant has in mind is the normativity that is built into a pure judgement of taste. When we judge that something is beautiful, we think that everyone ought to agree with our judgement. This is because such judgements are not reports of our private preferences but claims about the appropriate affective response to an object (which we thus expect every judging subject who is suitably related to the object to have). According to Kant, judgements of taste, like cognitive judgements, have 'universal validity'. Thus, when others disagree with us, we rebuke them.

But sometimes Kant has in mind further normative claims: we ought to cultivate taste to appreciate beauty and we ought to value and preserve beautiful objects (and not just judge that they are beautiful). What grounds these further normative claims? The standard answer is that, for Kant, any duty or obligation to cultivate taste, appreciate beauty, and preserve beautiful objects (or at least avoid their wanton destruction) is grounded in *moral* considerations. This includes the intellectual or rational interest we have in the existence of natural beauty, because it reassures us that nature is amenable to our moral goals. It also includes our duty to cultivate feelings that promote morality. Because the appreciation of beauty gives rise to a love for objects that is divorced from interest, Kant thinks that the pleasure in beauty is conducive to morality, even if it is not itself a moral feeling.

If we connect this to the contemporary debate about aesthetic obligations – that is, the debate about whether distinctly aesthetic considerations can give rise to normative demands – then it looks like Kant would be in the camp of those who deny that we have aesthetic obligations.² Kant, in fact, seems to scoff at such an idea in the following passage: 'An obligation to enjoyment is a patent absurdity. The same thing must also be true of an alleged obligation in all actions that have mere enjoyment as their goal, however spiritually refined (or embellished) this may be, even if it were a mystical, so-called heavenly enjoyment' (CJ, 5:209n).³ This is a thought that many – theorists and ordinary folk alike – are apt to share. Aesthetic reasons, in the words of one contemporary aesthetician, 'entice us or invite us – they can never compel us'.⁴

While it is true that Kant himself might side with the sceptics about aesthetic obligations, I think his aesthetic theory nevertheless gives us resources for developing

1 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5:212–13, emphasis in the original. Hereafter: CJ.

2 For an overview of this debate, see Robbie Kubala, 'Aesthetic Obligations', *Philosophy Compass* 15 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12712>.

3 This remark is directed at those who think that happiness is an unconditional good for human beings. But one could also take Kant to be expressing the thought that *aesthetic* reasons could never have the force of obligations.

4 John Dyck, 'There Are No Purely Aesthetic Obligations', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 102 (2021): 592.

a non-sceptical account of the normative force of aesthetic reasons. On this account, aesthetic reasons (which I discuss in the next section) acquire greater normative force in the context of aesthetic communities, that is, actual communities in which judging subjects express their judgements to each other and engage in aesthetic discussion and aesthetic practices more generally. I will argue that, although aesthetic reasons do not give rise to obligations in the strict (that is, moral) sense, they are stronger than merely enticing or inviting reasons. The explanation for this has to do with the distinct kind of normativity that on Kant's account belongs to aesthetic judgement. Although judgements of beauty can never compel agreement, they nevertheless make claims on other judging subjects, and the norm of what Kant calls 'common sense' serves to structure the aesthetic communities in which judging subjects hold themselves and each other accountable for their judgements.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In Section II, I briefly explain the terminology from the contemporary debate over aesthetic obligations, before turning, in Section III, to the standard reading of Kant's account, according to which these obligations are grounded in moral considerations (and thus are not *aesthetic* obligations). Then, in Section IV, I develop a Kantian account of the normative force of aesthetic reasons that appeals to the distinct normativity of aesthetic judgements and the way in which this kind of normativity structures aesthetic exchanges with other judging subjects. I argue that, in addition to the moral reasons we have for appreciating and preserving beauty, Kant's account can accommodate distinctly aesthetic reasons for doing so that stem from our membership in aesthetic communities.

II. AESTHETIC REASONS AND NORMATIVE FORCE

What are aesthetic reasons? Some contemporary theorists distinguish aesthetic reasons from both epistemic and pragmatic reasons. According to Keren Gorodeisky and Eric Marcus, while epistemic reasons are reasons for belief and pragmatic reasons are reasons for action, aesthetic reasons are distinct in being reasons for feeling.⁵ To give an aesthetic reason (or reasons) for feeling is to cite the features of an object that explain (and justify) one's affective response; for example, the bold brushstrokes of the painting make it worthy of appreciation and explain why one appreciates the painting.

While some theorists follow Gorodeisky and Marcus in taking aesthetic reasons to concern feelings such as appreciation or valuing,⁶ others are happy to take aesthetic reasons to also include reasons for performing certain actions, such as going to a museum, taking the scenic route, or choosing a Honeycrisp apple over the alternatives.⁷ What makes these *aesthetic* reasons is that they are 'suitably related to'⁸ or 'centrally involve'⁹ aesthetic properties, for example beauty, sublimity, grace,

5 Keren Gorodeisky and Eric Marcus, 'Aesthetic Rationality', *Journal of Philosophy* 115 (2018): 117.

6 Dyck, 'There Are No Purely Aesthetic Obligations', 592.

7 Alex King, 'The Amoralist and the Anaesthetic', *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 99 (2018): 632–63; Dominic McIver Lopes, *Being for Beauty: Aesthetic Agency and Value* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

8 Daniel Whiting, 'Aesthetic Reasons and the Demands They (Do Not) Make', *Philosophical Quarterly* 71 (2021): 407.

9 Dyck, 'There Are No Purely Aesthetic Obligations', 594.

elegance, simplicity, or wit. For the purposes of this paper, I will take aesthetic reasons to include both reasons for feeling and reasons for action, although I agree that aesthetic reasons primarily favour appreciation (aesthetic judgement) and derivatively favour those actions that enable appreciation.

Although the task of precisely spelling out the role aesthetic properties play in grounding aesthetic reasons is a difficult one (and is fortunately not my task in this paper), most of us have a basic grasp of what it means for an aesthetic property to provide us with a reason to have a certain attitude or perform a certain action. The wittiness of the dialogue gives one a reason to appreciate the play. The beauty of the landscape along the coastal highway gives one a reason to take this route, other things being equal. The sublimity of the Everglades gives one a reason to preserve them for future generations. And we recognize the difference between aesthetic reasons and other – especially moral – reasons. We grasp the difference between committing to the preservation of a certain work of art because we think it is beautiful and committing to its preservation because we made a deathbed promise to do so.

Aesthetic considerations clearly provide us with reasons, but there is considerable disagreement over the normative force of these reasons. While most agree that moral considerations can give rise to obligations within the aesthetic domain (for example that one ought to read a novel because it will contribute to one's moral education, or one ought to save a painting because of its moral significance), some think that aesthetic considerations can sometimes, independently of moral (or other) considerations, give rise to duties and obligations, for example that one ought to appreciate, attend to, or preserve the painting because it is beautiful.¹⁰

But others think that aesthetic reasons, unlike moral reasons, do not on their own have the force of duties or obligations, where an obligation is taken to be a deontic requirement, which issues a demand. Indeed, some theorists have characterized aesthetic reasons as a species of enticing reasons.¹¹ Enticing reasons, in the words of Jonathan Dancy, have 'more to do with making an option attractive rather than demanded, required, or right'.¹² They are evaluative, rather than deontic.

John Dyck puts the point in terms of the following slogan: 'Beauty gives us *goods* without *shoulds*'.¹³ While it would be wrong not to do what one ought or should do (assuming one does not have a stronger reason *not* to do it), on this view, we do not do anything wrong if we do not do what we have aesthetic reason to do. If I take the interstate instead of the scenic route (even when all things are equal), I might have missed out on something good but I have not done anything wrong. If aesthetic reasons are merely enticing reasons, then they do not issue requirements; they do not compel us.¹⁴

10 See *ibid.* for an overview of various accounts of how aesthetic reasons can give rise to oughts and obligations.

11 Jonathan Dancy, 'Enticing Reasons', in *Reason and Value: Themes from the Moral Philosophy of Joseph Raz*, ed. R. Jay Wallace et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 91–118; R. Jay Wallace, 'The Deontic Structure of Morality', in *Thinking about Reasons: Themes from the Philosophy of Jonathan Dancy*, ed. David Bakhurst, Margaret Olivia Little, and Brad Hooker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 137–67; Dyck, 'There Are No Purely Aesthetic Obligations'.

12 Dancy, 'Enticing Reasons', 99.

13 Dyck, 'There Are No Purely Aesthetic Obligations', 593.

14 Little and Macnamara characterize enticing reasons as commendatory reasons, that is, reasons that 'normatively speak in favor of an action without placing one in need of

III. KANT ON AESTHETIC REASONS AND AESTHETIC OBLIGATIONS

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DOI: 10.33134/eeja.355

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III.1. THE NORMATIVE FORCE OF JUDGEMENTS OF BEAUTY

Kant would appear to side with those who classify aesthetic reasons as merely 'enticing reasons'. This is especially true if we focus on aesthetic reasons as reasons for feeling a certain way (later we will discuss what Kant has to say about aesthetic reasons for action). In the *Anthropology*, for example, Kant writes that 'beauty [...] carries with it the concept of an invitation to the most intimate union with the object, that is, to immediate enjoyment'.¹⁵ Kant's talk of an 'invitation' here is in keeping with the idea of a merely enticing reason. Furthermore, as we have already seen, Kant claims that 'an obligation to enjoyment is a patent absurdity' (CJ, 5:209n). One might object that, when Kant refers to 'enjoyment' in this passage, he primarily has in mind the sensual pleasure of the agreeable, and not the disinterested pleasure of the beautiful, which is a mental pleasure grounded in the harmonious free play of the faculties. What, then, of the feeling of pleasure in the beautiful? Does Kant think we ever have an obligation to feel the pleasure in beauty?

While Kant clearly thinks that judgements of beauty are normative, it is difficult to determine the normative force of these judgements. On the one hand, Kant distinguishes between the 'ought' of judgements of beauty and the moral 'ought' of obligation, arguing that, in the former case, unlike the latter, we can never compel or demand agreement. On the other hand, Kant uses language that evokes the normative force of the moral 'ought' when discussing judgements of beauty. Let's look at each of these points in turn.

First, Kant holds that judgements of beauty are normative and thus involve an 'ought'.¹⁶ When I judge that something is beautiful, I am claiming that others *ought* to feel pleasure in this object. In the 'Fourth Moment' of his analysis of judgements of beauty, for example, Kant declares that the beautiful is that 'which is cognized without a concept as the object of a *necessary* satisfaction' (CJ, 5:240, emphasis in the original). This alone might be taken as Kant ruling out thinking of aesthetic reasons as enticing reasons, since, as we have seen, enticing reasons are sometimes characterized as lacking the force of an 'ought' or a 'should'. Importantly, however, for Kant the normative force of the aesthetic 'ought' is distinct from the normative force of both cognitive and moral judgement. In all three cases, when I make a judgement, I take it that others ought to

justification to decline in the first place'. Commendatory force makes actions worth doing, rather than required. See Margaret Little and Coleen Macnamara, 'Non-Requiring Reasons', in *The Routledge Handbook of Practical Reason*, ed. Ruth Chang and Kurt Sylvan (London: Routledge, 2020), 398.

15 Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. Robert Louden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7:242.

16 Some scholars have suggested that Kant does not think that judgements of beauty involve a normative demand. Instead, they involve an expectation or prediction about how others will judge. See Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), chap. 7; Kathleen R. Harbin, 'Universality without Normativity: Interpreting the Demand of Kantian Judgments of Taste', *Dialogue* 59 (2020): 589–612. Such readings are hard to square, however, with Kant's repeated normative language. Furthermore, as Dunn argues, Kant's talk of normativity cannot simply be understood as a phenomenological description of the experience of beauty (as on Harbin's account), since this would fail to make sense of how Kant's discussion of judgement in the third *Critique* fits into his overall philosophical system. In particular, this reading cannot make sense of Kant's claim that judgement has its own a priori principle that provides the 'law for feeling'. See Nicholas Dunn, 'Kant and the Demands of Normativity: Response to Harbin', *Dialogue* 59 (2020): 613–19, esp. 618.

agree with me. But, in the case of cognitive and moral judgements, I can formulate the reasoning that underlies my judgement. I can appeal to the conceptual or moral rules in accordance with which my judgement has been made in order to 'compel' agreement. But judgements of beauty, for Kant, are not objective judgements. They are not about the properties of the object and thus cannot be grounded on concepts. Instead, they are grounded in the merely subjective feeling of pleasure in the experience of an object. This means that 'there can also be no rule in accordance with which someone could be compelled to acknowledge something as beautiful' (CJ, 5:215).

Of course, Kant argues that, although there is no *determinate* rule that can be cited in support of a judgement of beauty (which could thus be used to compel agreement), there is nevertheless an *indeterminate* and subjective principle that governs judgements of beauty, which he refers to as 'common sense' (CJ, 5:239).¹⁷ In making judgements of beauty, one presupposes that there is a common sense – roughly, a capacity one shares with other judging subjects for determining which objects are purposive for human faculties in general through the feeling of mental pleasure one has when experiencing these objects. And, although there is no determinate rule for making these judgements, Kant thinks that, when we make such a judgement, we take it to be an example of a rule that we cannot state (CJ, 5:237).

For Kant, the normativity of judgements must ultimately rest on a priori principles. But, because the a priori principle that governs judgements of beauty is a subjective principle that does not provide one with any determinate rules for making these judgements, this has consequences for their normative force.¹⁸ Unlike the cognitive and moral cases, where one does something *wrong* if one fails to judge or act as one ought, it is not clear that the aesthetic case involves any kind of failure. Some of Kant's remarks suggest that he does not think that one has done anything wrong (at least on aesthetic grounds) if one fails to feel the pleasure of beauty. On the contrary, in his discussions of the autonomy of aesthetic judgement, Kant emphasizes the importance of judging for oneself, even if this means disagreeing with others (CJ, 5:284). If one does not feel pleasure in the object, no matter how many other people find it beautiful or how many critics praise it, one should not assent to the judgement.¹⁹ (I will return to this issue in what follows.) As we have already seen, Kant denies that the aesthetic case involves compulsion or force. Instead, he characterizes aesthetic agreement in terms of 'consent' (CJ, 5:216).

17 The a priori principle that governs judgements of beauty and which thus grounds their normativity is the principle of purposiveness, which states that we must view nature as if it had been designed for our cognitive faculties, that is, as if it is a system that can be grasped by us (CJ, 5:180–81). This is the principle of reflective judgement. In the case of pure aesthetic judgements, it is through common sense that we *feel* the purposiveness of a particular object for our cognitive faculties. It is thus via common sense that the a priori principle of reflective judgement guides aesthetic judgements, which is why Kant also refers to common sense as the subjective principle of aesthetic judgement.

18 See Arata Hamawaki, 'Kant on Beauty and the Normative Force of Feeling', *Philosophical Topics* 34 (2006): 107–44, and Dunn, 'Kant', for discussions of the distinct normative force of aesthetic judgements.

19 Hamawaki, in 'Kant on Beauty', discusses a different kind of case, in which one still judges an object to be beautiful but no longer feels pleasure in it. It's not clear to me, however, that Kant would still think of this as an aesthetic judgement, since an aesthetic judgement must be made through the feeling of pleasure. If one no longer feels pleasure, then one might still make a theoretical judgement about the beauty of the object (that others, including one's past self, find the object beautiful), but one is no longer making an aesthetic judgement. Nevertheless, one might still feel a certain disappointment and failure in no longer being able to make the aesthetic judgement.

At the same time, however, Kant uses deontic language when describing judgements of beauty (the second point above). At the end of the 'Deduction of Taste', for example, Kant claims that 'the feeling in the judgment of taste is expected of everyone as if it were a duty' (CJ, 5:296). And, as we have already seen, Kant uses the language of 'demanding', 'requiring', and 'rebuking' (CJ, 5:212–13), all of which suggest that judgements of beauty involve something *akin* to the moral 'ought'.

On what I take to be a standard way of reading Kant, while there is no obligation to feel the pleasure of beauty in any *particular* case, Kant's deontic language can be explained by the fact that Kant thinks that we do have certain moral duties in the aesthetic domain, which primarily concern aesthetic actions that put us in a position to feel the pleasure of beauty in general.²⁰ This includes the duty to cultivate taste (which will require that one perform certain actions, such as seeking out and attending to examples of great works of art) as well as further duties to preserve objects of natural beauty (or at least avoid their wanton destruction). But, if the standard reading is right, then Kant does not think that we have distinct aesthetic obligations, only moral obligations within the aesthetic domain. That is, beauty itself only entices; it is morality that demands.

III.2. THE STANDARD READING OF KANTIAN AESTHETIC OBLIGATIONS

On the standard reading, the 'as it were duty' to feel the pleasure of beauty is not a duty to have any particular aesthetic response. Instead, as Henry Allison puts it, what Kant has in mind at the end of § 40 is 'the general capacity for aesthetic response, that is, taste, and that the duty, as it were, is to develop this faculty'.²¹ In the third *Critique*, Kant connects the 'as it were duty' to cultivate taste with the intellectual interest in (natural) beauty. In his writings on morality, Kant takes the duty to cultivate taste, to develop one's artistic talents, and to preserve (or at least avoid the wanton destruction of) natural beauty to be duties of virtue that we have to ourselves. Let's look at each of these in turn.

To explain why we think people ought to feel pleasure in beauty in general, Kant appeals to extra-aesthetic interests in beauty, where an 'interest' is the satisfaction we feel in an object insofar as it fulfils some need.²² In §§ 41–42, Kant considers

20 See Henry Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste: A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), chap. 10.

21 *Ibid.*, 220.

22 In the 'Deduction of Taste', Kant provides an argument in support of the universal validity of judgements of taste, which appeals to the subjective conditions of judgement in general (CJ, 5:290). Because we can presuppose the subjective condition of judgement in every judging subject, we can also expect that any judging subject can feel pleasure in objects that contingently accord with this condition (for example, those that enliven our faculties when we reflect on their form). As commentators have noted, however, Kant's argument (if successful) explains why every judging subject must be capable of feeling the pleasure in beauty, but it does not answer the further normative question of why we ought to exercise this capacity. See Dominic McIver Lopes, 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle: A Kantian Aesthetics of Autonomy', *Estetika* 58 (2021): 4; Rachel Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Biology: An Interpretation of the 'Critique of Judgment'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 335. Some commentators have tried to ground this further normative demand in the connection between judgements of beauty and cognition. See Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Morality*, 366–67; Melissa Zinkin, 'Kant and the Pleasure of "Mere Reflection"', *Inquiry* 55 (2012): 433–53. But, even if judgements of beauty promote cognition, Kant does not seem to think that considerations internal to judgement in general can ground any duty to cultivate taste in order to make such judgements.

two sources of our interest in beauty, one empirical and the other intellectual.²³ The empirical interest in beauty is grounded in our (natural) need for society with other human beings, and the intellectual interest in beauty is grounded in our (rational) need to presuppose that nature is amenable to the achievement of our moral goals.

Because we are by nature social creatures, we have an interest in forming and maintaining society with others. Judgements of beauty promote this interest, because when we make a judgement of beauty the feeling is one that is in principle communicable to others (*CJ*, 5:297). Sharing our feelings with others through shared judgements of taste forges and strengthens social bonds (a point to which I will return). Kant is well aware of how deep the human need to communicate our feelings with others runs. Indeed, he comes close to suggesting that the ‘as it were duty’ to make judgements of beauty (and to develop taste to do so) arises from this human need. He writes that ‘each expects and requires of everyone else a regard to universal communication, as if from an original contract dictated by humanity itself’ (*CJ*, 5:297).

Yet Kant does not think that the empirical interest in society grounds any duty (or even ‘as it were duty’) to make judgements of beauty or cultivate taste.²⁴ Although the inclination to society is as deep a natural inclination as human beings have, it is, at the end of the day, still merely empirical, and thus cannot ground any obligation or duty, which must be grounded on the moral law.²⁵ Kant thus thinks that only our intellectual interest in beauty (which is connected to moral considerations) can ground a duty to cultivate taste and ‘to take an interest in [the beautiful]’ (*CJ*, 5:302). In § 42 of the third *Critique*, Kant focuses on the way that natural beauty gives us a ‘trace’ or ‘sign’ that nature is amenable to our moral goals. In the experience of natural beauty, we feel that an object perfectly fits our faculties; it is *as if* the object were designed for us. This gives us ‘a sign’ that nature ‘contains in itself some sort of ground for assuming a lawful correspondence of its products with our satisfaction that is independent of all interest’ (*CJ*, 5:300). This is the same ground that we must appeal to (at least in thought) if we want to reconcile freedom and nature. That is, to see our moral goals (for example, the creation of a kingdom of ends) as realizable in a nature that is governed by mechanistic causal laws, we must assume that there is some ground for the correspondence of nature with our moral interests. The beauty in nature gives us a hint or trace of this ground, and in doing so fulfils a rational interest.

Elsewhere, Kant focuses on a slightly separate connection between beauty and morality – namely, the way that aesthetic feeling promotes moral feeling and thus moral virtue. In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant suggests that we have a duty to cultivate taste and to avoid the wanton destruction of beauty in nature because these are both expressions of the duty to perfect ourselves morally.²⁶ Part of moral perfection has to do with cultivating dispositions in ourselves that are conducive to moral action. Although for Kant feelings can never ground moral action, he also recognizes that

23 Although a judgement of beauty is grounded on a disinterested feeling of pleasure, Kant also thinks that further interests can be ‘combined’ with these judgements. See *CJ*, 5:296.

24 Allison, *Kant’s Theory*, 224–25.

25 In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant defines an obligation as ‘the necessity of a free action under a categorical imperative of reason’. He goes on to claim that ‘[n]o other practical doctrine can furnish instances of such imperatives than that which prescribes obligation (the doctrine of morals)’. Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 6:222.

26 Kant, *Metaphysics*, 6:392.

feelings have an important role to play in sustaining moral life (especially for creatures such as ourselves who are not perfectly rational). And, although Kant denies that we could ever have a duty to feel a certain way (since feelings are not actions that are subject to the will),²⁷ he does think that we have a duty to cultivate feelings that we already have when these feelings promote morality.²⁸ Because natural beauty promotes moral feeling, we have a duty to cultivate taste.

There are, in fact, several different ways in which the experience of beauty promotes moral feeling.²⁹ As we have just seen, one way that it promotes moral feeling is by providing us with a hint or trace that nature is amenable to our moral interests. But Kant also thinks that the feeling of disinterested pleasure in the experience of beauty promotes moral feeling. When he explains why the destruction of beautiful nature 'is opposed to man's duty to himself', Kant writes that it

weakens or uproots that feeling in man which, though not itself moral, is still a disposition of sensibility that greatly promotes morality or at least prepares the way for it: the disposition, namely, to love something (e.g., beautiful crystal formations, the indescribable beauty of plants) even apart from any intention to use it.³⁰

This is also why we have a duty to cultivate taste. The disinterested pleasure in beauty (and the disinterested love to which it gives rise), 'though not itself moral', is still favourable to morality; 'it promotes morality or at least prepares the way for it'. We thus have a duty to ourselves to cultivate this feeling.³¹

We can now sum up the standard interpretation of Kant's view of aesthetic obligations. Although Kant thinks that judgements of beauty are universally valid – everyone ought to agree with my judgement that an object is beautiful – he does not think that the 'Deduction' – which appeals to the subjective conditions of cognition in general – grounds any duty, or even an 'as it were duty' to feel the pleasure of beauty. At the same time, he does think that we have aesthetic obligations – to cultivate taste (and thus to make judgements of beauty) and to avoid the wanton destruction of nature – but these duties are grounded on moral, rather than distinctively aesthetic, considerations.

27 The duty to love one's neighbour, for example, is a duty not to feel love but to perform acts of beneficence (ibid., 6:401).

28 Ibid., 6:399–400.

29 Different scholars emphasize different respects in which beauty is favourable to morality. Some emphasize that it is because the experience of beauty is a 'symbol' of moral goodness that beauty is favourable to morality; see Donald Crawford, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974); Ted Cohen, 'Why Beauty Is a Symbol of Morality', in *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics*, ed. Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 221–36; Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Experience of Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); or that beauty in nature gives us a 'sign' that nature is amenable to the realization of our moral ends; see Anne Margaret Baxley, 'The Practical Significance of Taste in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*: Love of Natural Beauty as a Mark of Moral Character', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 63 (2005): 36. Others emphasize that it is because the disinterested pleasure of beauty 'raises us above sensual pleasure' (Allison, *Kant's Theory*, 229). Still others argue that beauty in nature and art can symbolize specific moral ideas and serve as a sensible presentation of ideas that would otherwise lack sensible content; see Kenneth Rogerson, 'Kant on Beauty and Morality', *Kant-Studien* 95 (2004): 338–54; Andrew Chignell, 'Kant on the Normativity of Taste: The Role of Aesthetic Ideas', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 85 (2007): 415–33.

30 Kant, *Metaphysics*, 6:443.

31 Allison, *Kant's Theory*, 235; Guyer, *Kant and the Experience of Freedom*, 318.

Let me begin by making it clear that I think that the standard reading is right as far as it goes. That is, Kant clearly thinks that we have certain moral duties within the aesthetic domain (to cultivate taste, to avoid the wanton destruction of beauty in nature). Furthermore, he would deny that non-moral considerations could ever ground a duty or obligation.

But moral considerations do not exhaust the reasons we have for performing certain aesthetic actions. As I see it, Kant's account of the distinct normativity of aesthetic judgement can help us to explain *why* we often take aesthetic reasons for both feeling and action to have the normative force that they do: one that is stronger than that of merely enticing reasons but which falls short of moral obligation. Indeed, acknowledging this level of normative force can help us explain the tension in Kant's characterization of the normativity of aesthetic judgement mentioned earlier, where Kant seems to claim that such judgements both do and do not involve a demand for agreement.

Furthermore, if we turn to the way that the principle of aesthetic judgement governs the actual aesthetic communities in which we find ourselves (the principle of common sense), we can explain why we think that others have reasons to attend to, appreciate, and preserve *particular* works of art and natural beauty, where this goes beyond the general moral duties that we have to cultivate taste or preserve natural beauty.³²

IV. AN ALTERNATIVE KANTIAN ACCOUNT: AESTHETIC COMMUNITY AND THE NORMATIVE FORCE OF AESTHETIC REASONS

I have two goals in this section. First, I want to construct a Kantian account of aesthetic community. Second, I will argue that it is because aesthetic reasons are exchanged in actual community with other judging subjects that they acquire their distinctive force, one that is stronger than that of enticing reasons but which falls short of moral obligation.

IV.1. KANTIAN AESTHETIC COMMUNITY: THE COMMUNITY OF JUDGING SUBJECTS

The idea of community is built into a judgement of beauty on Kant's account. As we have already seen, when one makes a judgement of beauty, one 'speaks with a universal voice' (*CJ*, 5:216). In so doing, one takes oneself to be speaking for and as a member of the universal community of judging subjects. I will refer to this as the 'a priori community of taste'.³³ Importantly, however, Kant also recognizes that we make aesthetic judgements in the context of the actual communities in which

³² That is, the moral duty to cultivate taste does not specify which beautiful objects I should attend to and learn to appreciate. Similarly, although I have a duty to avoid the wanton destruction of nature, it's not clear that this gives me a duty to preserve any particular objects of natural beauty.

³³ Here I am following Longuenesse, who refers to the 'a priori grounded community of judging subjects' in her interpretation of aesthetic pleasure as pleasure in the feeling of life, where this is not just the life of the mind but the life of spirit, in the sense of a 'universal community of judging subjects'. Béatrice Longuenesse, *Kant on the Human Standpoint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 200.

we find ourselves. That is, we communicate our judgements to the concrete human beings around us, where such aesthetic exchanges (which also occur in the context of particular aesthetic traditions) are required for the cultivation of taste.

There are two reasons why it is important to focus on actual aesthetic exchanges in addition to the *a priori* community of taste. First, an aesthetic judgement, when communicated to another judging subject, is not just a claim about the proper affective response to the object (namely, that it is beautiful and hence worthy of pleasure) but an invitation to the other subject to attend to and appreciate that particular object. When our judgements of beauty are shared, this creates affective communities organized around the shared appreciation of beauty. Second, Kant holds that we only cultivate taste in (actual) community with other judging subjects.

To better understand the first point, it will help to contrast cognitive and aesthetic judgements. When I make a cognitive judgement – for example, I judge that the table is 12 feet long – I expect others to accept (and hence agree with) my judgement. But I am happy (in most cases) if they accept this judgement on my (or someone else's) testimony. Because judgements of beauty are aesthetic judgements, that is, judgements that are based on feelings (of pleasure or displeasure), someone can only make an aesthetic judgement that agrees with my own if they feel a certain way when reflecting on the object in question. In a passage often cited in contemporary discussions of aesthetic testimony, Kant writes that 'what has pleased others can never serve as the ground of an aesthetic judgment' (*CJ*, 5:284).³⁴ But this means that the other cannot simply take my word for it if she is to make an aesthetic judgement that agrees with my own; she must experience the object for herself.³⁵ To express a judgement of beauty to another is thus to invite her to attend to that object (so that she may, ideally, share my judgement and hence my feeling of pleasure in it).

Kant recognizes that sharing our aesthetic judgements with others creates and maintains social bonds. He writes that '[b]eautiful arts and sciences [...] by means of a universally communicable pleasure and an elegance and refinement, make human beings, if not morally better, at least better mannered for society' (*CJ*, 4:433). He characterizes the refined human being as someone 'who is inclined to communicate his pleasure to others and is skilled at it, and who is not content with an object if he cannot feel his satisfaction in it in community with others' (*CJ*, 5:297). Kant's talk of 'feeling satisfaction in community with others' calls to mind Ted Cohen's characterization of an aesthetic community as an *affective* community: 'a group whose intimacy is underwritten by their conviction that they feel the same about something, and that that thing – the art – is their bond'.³⁶ While Kant would likely agree with Cohen's characterization of an aesthetic community as an affective community, what is central to a Kantian aesthetic community (at least one that is oriented towards beauty) is that it is not just about bonding through shared feelings;

34 For more detailed discussion of Kant's rejection of aesthetic testimony see Robert Hopkins, 'Kant, Quasi-Realism, and the Autonomy of Aesthetic Judgment', *European Journal of Philosophy* 9 (2002): 166–89, and Keren Gorodeisky, 'A New Look at Kant's View of Aesthetic Testimony', *British Journal of Aesthetics* 50 (2010): 53–70.

35 As Gorodeisky notes, 'the requirement to judge beauty directly', that is, through one's own feeling, 'is a non-epistemic requirement that governs what it takes to make an aesthetic judgment at all' ('New Look', 62).

36 Ted Cohen, 'High and Low Thinking about High and Low Art', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 51 (1993): 155.

it is also governed by the principle of common sense. Let us take a moment to unpack this claim.

As we saw earlier, Kant thinks that the normativity of aesthetic judgement – the claim that the feeling of pleasure is ‘necessarily’ combined with the representation of a certain object – depends on the assumption of a common sense; that is, it depends on the assumption that we share with other human beings the capacity to sense the subjective purposiveness of certain objects for human faculties in general through a feeling of pleasure in the harmonious relation of our own faculties.³⁷ Kant claims that common sense, thus understood, is the subjective principle of taste, ‘which as far as the unanimity of different judges is concerned, could demand universal assent just like an objective one, if only one were certain of having correctly subsumed under it’ (CJ, 5:239). That is, we can only take our own aesthetic response to an object to serve as a rule for others if we assume that it is the result of the exercise of common sense.

Importantly, Kant connects taste, or aesthetic common sense, with a more general notion of common sense. In § 40, Kant claims that taste is a kind of ‘*sensus communis*’, which he defines as a

communal sense, i.e., a faculty for judging that in its reflection takes account (a priori) of everyone else’s way of representing in thought, in order as it were to hold its judgment up to human reason as a whole and thereby avoid the illusion which, from subjective private conditions that could easily be held to be objective, would have a detrimental influence on the judgment. (CJ, 5:293–94, emphasis in the original)

Kant then articulates three maxims of common human understanding, which, although not part of the critique of taste, ‘serve to elucidate its fundamental principles’ (CJ, 5:294). The second maxim is one that Kant explicitly links with judgement, and it is the maxim ‘To think in the position of everyone else’ and thus to adopt a ‘broad-minded’ way of thinking (CJ, 5:294). One does this, for Kant, by ‘putting [oneself] into the standpoint of others’ and thereby reflecting on our own judgement ‘from a universal standpoint’ (CJ, 5:295).

There are special reasons why we must adopt this maxim of common sense when making judgements of beauty. As Samantha Matherne argues, we can easily mistake other sources of pleasure for pleasure in the harmony of the faculties, in which case we might think we are making a judgement of beauty but in fact we will have failed to do so because, in Kant’s words, we mistake ‘subjective private conditions’ for objective ones.³⁸ In this case, our judgement is not in fact an exercise of aesthetic common sense. This happens, for example, when we mistake the pleasure of the senses for the pleasure in the harmony of the faculties (and thus mistake the agreeable for the beautiful). Or when our own interests (for example, in social recognition) might cloud our judgement about the beauty of an object (as in Kant’s example of the

37 That is, certain objects bring our faculties into the kind of optimal relation that is felt with pleasure, and we thus judge that any judging subject ought to feel pleasure when reflecting on these objects.

38 Matherne reads Kant’s example of the young poet who continues to maintain that his poems are beautiful even though his friends judge otherwise not as an example of someone who judges autonomously but as an example of someone who mistakes private conditions for objective ones. It is only when the poet later changes his mind, because he has cultivated taste, that he counts as autonomous. Samantha Matherne, ‘Kant on Aesthetic Autonomy and Common Sense’, *Philosopher’s Imprint* 19 (2019): 1–22.

young poet). For Kant, we can correct for this kind of mistake by reflecting from a universal standpoint. Consider what Kant has to say about the ‘aesthetic egoist’ in the *Anthropology*:

The aesthetic egoist is satisfied with his own taste, even if others find his verses, paintings, music, and similar things ever so bad, and criticize or even laugh at them. He deprives himself of progress toward that which is better when he isolates himself with his own judgment; he applauds himself and seeks the touchstone of artistic beauty only in himself.³⁹

I take it that the principle of common sense is not only the principle of judgements of beauty; it also serves as the ‘ideal norm’ that governs our aesthetic exchanges with other judging subjects when we adopt the second maxim of common sense – to think from a universal standpoint – in our reflection on objects.⁴⁰

What does this mean to say that common sense is the ‘ideal norm’ of aesthetic community? To begin, this means that we do not ‘isolate’ ourselves from the judgements of others. By contrast, we hold ourselves and others accountable for our aesthetic judgements (insofar as we aim to make judgements of beauty).⁴¹ As Kant notes in the *Anthropology*, ‘the opposite of egoism is *pluralism*, that is, the way of thinking in which one is not concerned with oneself as the whole world, but rather regards and conducts oneself as a mere citizen of the world’.⁴² Thus, to be an aesthetic pluralist is to regard oneself as a member of the community of aesthetic judges.

This in turn means that we must take seriously the judgements of others and the aesthetic reasons that they offer in support of such judgements, for example that the oak is beautiful because of the intricate pattern of its bark or that one should appreciate the painting because of the powerful symbolism it deploys. This does not mean that we simply accept their judgements but it does mean that we at least *try* to share their judgements. When others disagree with our judgements, this does not mean we should abandon them but it does mean that we should reconsider them and their grounds.

Here, it is important to dispel a common misconception about Kant’s view. It is sometimes claimed that because judgements of beauty are non-conceptual judgements (that is, they are not grounded on a concept of the object) that we cannot offer reasons for our judgements.⁴³ But what Kant claims is not that we do

39 Kant, *Anthropology*, 7:129–30.

40 Lopes argues that we express aesthetic autonomy by adopting the three maxims of common sense as policies that guide our aesthetic life. See Lopes, ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’. Here, I want to emphasize that the second maxim of common sense is a principle that guides aesthetic community, when we strive to see things as other judging subjects do.

41 I take it that Kant also recognizes that there are affective aesthetic communities that are not governed by the principle of common sense. In the *Anthropology*, for example, Kant discusses ‘empirical judgments of taste’, that is, aesthetic judgements that do not make claims to universal agreement, but which are grounded on norms that arise within particular cultures, for example the norm among Germans to begin meals with a soup (7:240). What distinguishes between communities of the agreeable and communities of beauty is that the latter will be oriented around judgements that are taken to be universal and are thus governed by the principle of common sense.

42 Ibid., 7:130.

43 For a recent articulation of this claim, see Ido Geiger, *Kant and the Claims of the Empirical World: A Transcendental Reading of the ‘Critique of the Power of Judgment’*

not produce reasons for our judgements but that such reasons can never compel agreement. Indeed, it is hard to make sense of Kant's claim that we argue about matters of taste if we do not think of this as involving the exchange of aesthetic reasons.⁴⁴

Although Kant is clear that we should never assent to a judgement of beauty if we do not feel pleasure in the object,⁴⁵ we can still take seriously the judgements of others by attending to the objects to which they direct our attention and trying to see in these objects what they see. In this way, we 'make progress towards that which is better' by learning to reflect on objects from a universal point of view (one of the maxims of common sense) and thus gaining confidence that we are correctly subsuming our own judgements under the principle of common sense. The aesthetic egoist is one fails to adopt this norm.

This brings us to the second point above. For Kant, taste is something that we cultivate in community with other judging subjects. In lecture notes, Kant is reported to have claimed that '[t]he entire beauty of nature would be hidden from the solitary person, he does not reflect on it'.⁴⁶ Kant makes a similar claim in one of his own notes, when he writes that '[t]aste is generated only in society'.⁴⁷ In multiple places, Kant indicates that our capacity to judge well, which involves adopting a universal standpoint and thus 'broad-minded' way of thinking, requires engaging with the differing viewpoints of other judging subjects. Admittedly, in the third *Critique*, Kant presents adopting the universal point of view as something that the judging subject can do alone. We think in the position of everyone else by considering our judgement in relation 'not so much to the actual as to the merely possible judgment of others' (*CJ*, 5:294). However, as Kant makes clear elsewhere, our capacity to consider the possible judgements of others, and thus to think from a universal point of view, depends on actual exchanges with other judging subjects.⁴⁸ This is especially true in the aesthetic case, where we

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 214.

44 Kant discusses aesthetic disagreement in the 'Antinomy of Taste' (§ 56). Kant claims that, although we cannot dispute in matters of taste, precisely because no one can offer a proof that would compel rational agreement, it is nevertheless 'certainly possible and right to argue about it' (*CJ*, 5:388, emphasis in the original).

45 To accept the aesthetic invitations of those with whom one stands in aesthetic community does not mean that one simply agrees with their judgements. Instead, aesthetic invitations are always invitations for another to genuinely engage their own faculties and thus judge for themselves. Although we of course want others to share our judgements, we do not want them to simply voice agreement; we want them to feel what we feel.

46 Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Anthropology*, trans. Robert Loudon and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 25:179.

47 Immanuel Kant, *Notes and Fragments*, trans. Curtis Bowman, Paul Guyer, and Frederick Rauscher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), Note 803, 15:350.

48 In the essay 'What Does It Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking?', Kant poses the following question in response to the suggestion that, even if one does not have the civil freedom to speak and write, one still has the freedom to think: 'Yet how much and how correctly would we think if we did not think as it were in community with others to whom we communicate our thoughts, and who communicate theirs with us?' Kant continues by remarking that the 'external power which wrenches away people's freedom publicly to communicate their thoughts also takes from the freedom to think'. Immanuel Kant, 'What Does It Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking?', in *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 8:144. Arendt emphasizes the importance of actual communication in her interpretation of common sense. See Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 40–42.

lack any determinate rules for making judgements of beauty and can often be misled by private sources of pleasure.

Before going further, I want to distinguish different levels of aesthetic community in Kant's account. To begin, there is the a priori community that is built into a judgement of beauty; in making such a judgement, one takes oneself to speak with a universal voice. This is the minimal sense of community. But I think that we can take this community to be *realized* in the actual aesthetic exchanges in which concrete human beings engage, where we express our judgements to each other as invitations to attend to particular objects and where we offer each other reasons for our judgements (that is, we point to the properties of objects in virtue of which we find them beautiful). In striving to make judgements of beauty and to cultivate taste, we must, for Kant, adopt certain maxims that govern our aesthetic life and which require us to take seriously the judgements of others.

But I think Kant also recognizes more specific aesthetic communities that are organized around aesthetic education and the preservation of beautiful works of art. Kant emphasizes the role of 'masters' in stimulating the imagination of their students through instruction with great works, while also providing the kind of 'severe criticism' that will prevent them from merely imitating their predecessors (*CJ*, 5:355). Kant also emphasizes the importance of the humanist tradition in the cultivation of taste. He writes, '[t]he propaedeutic for all beautiful art, so far as it is aimed at the highest degree of its perfection, seems to lie not in precepts, but in the culture of the mental powers through those prior forms of knowledge that are called *humaniora*' (*CJ*, 5:355). In the *Jäsche Logic*, Kant is reported to claim that the *humaniora* 'concern instruction in what serves the cultivation of taste, in conformity with the models of the ancients' and 'includes, e.g., eloquence, poetry, wide reading in the classical authors, etc.'⁴⁹ In other words, Kant has in mind the humanists who preserve the models of the ancients for the cultivation of taste. We can think of artistic schools as well as those working in the humanist tradition as participating in aesthetic communities that are oriented towards the cultivation of taste and the preservation of the great works of art (especially the models of the ancients) that contribute to this end. Membership in these communities can generate further commitments to preserve certain aesthetic traditions and particular works of arts.

Let me now sum up what I take is central to the idea of a Kantian aesthetic community. First, Kant would agree that we form actual aesthetic communities around the shared appreciation of beauty and thus that aesthetic communities are affective communities (indeed, this is how beauty serves the empirical interest in society). Second, and more importantly, Kant holds that communities of beauty are governed by the ideal norm of common sense.⁵⁰ This means that, insofar as we strive to make judgements of beauty, we must adopt a universal standpoint, which in turn means that we must reflect on objects together with other judging subjects. To cultivate taste, we must

49 Immanuel Kant, *The Jäsche Logic*, in *Lectures on Logic*, trans. Michael Young (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 9:46.

50 There has been much discussion in contemporary aesthetics about aesthetic communities. See Alexander Nehamas, *Only a Promise of Happiness: The Place of Beauty in a World of Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Lopes, *Being for Beauty*; Kubala, 'Aesthetic Obligations'; and Nick Riggle, 'Toward a Communitarian Theory of Aesthetic Value', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 80 (2022): 16–30. Although I do not have space to further explore this point here, I take it that Kant's theory offers a distinctive account of aesthetic community as structured around two principles: the principle of autonomy and the principle of common sense.

engage with the judgements of others around us. Furthermore, when we reflect on objects with others, we hold each other accountable for our aesthetic judgements. This is the key to understanding the distinctive force of aesthetic reasons.

IV.2. THE NORMATIVE FORCE OF AESTHETIC REASONS

I have suggested that aesthetic reasons, as exchanged by judging subjects within a community, have a force that is stronger than that of enticing reasons but which falls short of the force of the moral 'ought'. I would like to say a bit more about this intermediate level of force and the way it is grounded in aesthetic community.

First, why are aesthetic reasons in an aesthetic community stronger than enticing reasons? The answer has to do with the degree of accountability that characterizes an aesthetic community that is governed by the norm of common sense. When others do not take up our invitations to attend to an object we find beautiful, or they do take them up but do not agree with our judgement, we expect some justification, or at least explanation, for the refusal or disagreement. This might also be true of enticing reasons, but we expect very little by way of explanation or justification when someone does not take up a merely enticing reason. We expect more in the aesthetic case. We might begin by questioning whether they have cultivated the taste to appreciate the object in question. Or we might question whether they have attended carefully to the object or try to draw their attention to the aspects of the object that contribute (in our own estimation) to its beauty. We feel disappointment when the normative expectations we have of others in our aesthetic community are unmet.

Why do aesthetic reasons fall short of moral obligations? Although the force of aesthetic reasons is, on this account, grounded in interpersonal considerations, that is, certain commitments we undertake as members of an aesthetic community of judging subjects to take seriously the judgements and reasons of others, such reasons can never compel agreement, as moral reasons do. There is no duty or obligation to feel the pleasure of beauty in a particular case, even if there is a normative expectation within the aesthetic community that one will try to do so. No one can be compelled to feel pleasure in beauty. We can only expect agreement 'from the consent of others' (CJ, 5:216). If we think that others have made a genuine effort to cultivate taste and try to share our judgements, we cannot blame them when they disagree, although we can exhort them to look again, to try to see what we see.⁵¹

Taking seriously our aesthetic judgements and aesthetic reasons is not a moral requirement but we nevertheless think that others have in some important sense failed to do what they ought to do when they do not take up our invitations to attend to objects.⁵² This, in turn, marks an interesting difference between cognitive

51 One might still think that, even if aesthetic reasons for feeling can never give rise to obligations, aesthetic reasons for action might still do so. In this case, the obligation would be to perform the actions that put one in a position to appreciate the object in question. On the one hand, I am tempted to say that we often do treat the cases where others do not try to perform the actions that would put them in a position to feel appreciation (and where they lack sufficient justification for not doing so) as having done something wrong, which suggests that aesthetic reasons for action might give rise to obligations (even if reasons for feeling do not). On the other hand, if aesthetic reasons for action are derivative of reasons for feeling, then we can explain why they do not give rise to obligations, since we do not have an obligation to feel a certain way, and aesthetic actions are (on this view) those that are merely preparatory to appreciation.

52 And when we think that disagreements reflect a failure to cultivate taste we take it that they have not only failed to fulfil a moral duty; we also think they have failed to act as members of an aesthetic community.

judgements and aesthetic judgements. In the cognitive case, I require that you judge correctly about *p* insofar as you take up the question of *p*. But, in the aesthetic case, it is not just that we expect others to agree with us *if* they were to consider the beauty of *p*. It matters to us that those to whom we express our judgements actually reflect on the objects we find beautiful and aim to share our judgements, because it is only in sharing our judgements of beauty that we can craft a shared orientation to the world as members of a community of judging subjects.

V. CONCLUSION

I have argued that, in addition to the moral reasons that we have to cultivate taste, appreciate beauty, and preserve beautiful nature, Kant's account of aesthetic judgement also gives us the resources for explaining the normative force of distinctly aesthetic reasons. We can explain this force by appealing to the way that the norm of common-sense structures the actual aesthetic community in which judging subjects exchange their judgements and offer reasons for them. As members of this community, we aim to share judgements of beauty. This gives us reason to attend to and to try to appreciate the particular objects that those in our community find beautiful. Furthermore, Kant acknowledges that more specific communities that are oriented towards aesthetic education. Members of these communities, as such, have reasons to preserve certain aesthetic objects and aesthetic traditions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I presented versions of this paper at the Southern Aesthetics Workshop at Auburn University in October 2021 and at the Berlin Summer Colloquium for Women Working in Early Modern Philosophy in June of 2022. I am grateful for the helpful comments and questions from participants at both workshops. I would also like to thank Anthony Cross and John Dyck for their helpful and encouraging comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:
 Williams, Jessica J.
 'The Demands of Beauty:
 A Kantian Account of
 the Normative Force
 of Aesthetic Reasons.'
*Estetika: The European
 Journal of Aesthetics*
 LXI/XVII, no. 1 (2024):
 pp. 1–19. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33134/eeja.355>

Submitted: 24 July 2022
 Accepted: 08 April 2023
 Published: 14 March 2024

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*Estetika: The European
 Journal of Aesthetics* is
 a peer-reviewed open
 access journal published by
 Helsinki University Press in
 cooperation with the Faculty
 of Arts, Charles University in
 Prague.