



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS PRESS

Aesthetic Educators, Aesthetic Experts, and Deferential Belief Formation

Author(s): Amir Konigsberg

Source: *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Spring 2016), pp. 34-45

Published by: University of Illinois Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jaesteduc.50.1.0034>

REFERENCES

Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:

https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jaesteduc.50.1.0034?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents

You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

University of Illinois Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*

Aesthetic Educators, Aesthetic Experts, and Deferential Belief Formation

AMIR KONIGSBERG

Introduction

Rational aesthetic deference becomes apparent when one person's aesthetic belief gives another person a *reason* to move his own aesthetic belief in the direction of the other person. It occurs when one person's aesthetic belief (for illustrative purposes, let this be *my* belief) gives another person (for illustrative purposes, let this be *you*) a normative reason to move your belief in the direction of mine, on epistemic grounds. In such a case, what the first person believes also provides a justification for the second person's aesthetic belief. This kind of justification is an indirect justification because it is based on reasons that merit deferring to someone else's judgment, rather than on reasons that support that judgment.¹

There are plenty of examples from everyday life that show that aesthetic deference is something that we do. I might, for instance, go to see a movie because a friend told me it was beautiful or buy an album because a colleague at work told me it was wonderful. Ordinary experience also suggests that, generally speaking, we are fairly comfortable with the idea of aesthetic experts or educators whose aesthetic judgments are often considered prescriptive from a normative point of view. What a well-known and esteemed art critic thinks about an exhibition, a book, or a dance piece, whether, for instance, it is fabulous, pretentious, striking, or kitsch, may thus impact our aesthetic beliefs about such things and determine what we do in relation to them—whether we go to see the exhibition or read the book. There is a wide variety of additional familiar examples that one could think of along these lines. But these will suffice for claiming that deferential belief formation is widespread.

Amir Konigsberg received his PhD from the Center for the Study of Rationality and Interactive Decision Theory at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. His interests include rationality, aesthetics, the intersections of cognitive science and artificial intelligence, and epistemology. Dr. Konigsberg has authored fifteen patents in the United States in various fields of technology and has published scholarly articles in the fields of aesthetics, epistemology, artificial intelligence, computer science, and controls.

Journal of Aesthetic Education, Vol. 50, No. 1, Spring 2016

© 2016 Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois

Nonetheless, while it may be common for us to defer our beliefs on aesthetic matters, this does not mean that the conceptual grounds for doing so are clear. In fact, there are reasons for thinking that aesthetic deference is not at all like ordinary kinds of epistemic deference that, under certain conditions, can be unproblematic. It is not, for instance, immediately obvious that deferring to others on matters concerning the aesthetic value of a work of art, a building, or a piece of music is the same as deferring on matters such as the correct time, the name of the capital city of Morocco, or any other such purely epistemic concerns in which knowledge acquisition is extended from one person to another person or source of information.

Most views on epistemic deference in the literature hold that it relates to the general conditions under which a person's beliefs can extend beyond the information that is directly accessible to that person, which principally relates to the extent that a person can rely on a source of information that is not she.² But different authors take this to imply different things. Some take epistemic deference to involve knowledge acquisition processes in which a subject (the deferrer) relies on an external source's (the deferree) testimony in order to extend her knowledge to facts with which she has no direct acquaintance. Others take it to relate to cases in which "one person uses the deliverances of some information source, perhaps the opinions of another person, as a model for what to believe."³ Some have gone beyond epistemology and taken epistemic deference to imply the substitution by a decision maker of someone else's judgment for his own.⁴ But it is generally true to say that epistemic deference relates to cases in which a person has a *reason* to move his belief in the direction of the belief of another person or information source when those are justifiably regarded as being in an epistemically advantageous position in relation to a particular matter at hand, either because of the other person's capabilities in arriving at truths on such matters or because of the access she has to relevant information. Consequently, a reason to defer to another person's judgment will typically be either that the person or information source in question has access to or understanding of some relevant knowledge or because of her judgmental capabilities in the relevant areas. The core question surrounding epistemic deference characteristically relates to what constitutes a *reason* for difference, which, in turn, addresses the conditions for epistemic reliability and knowledge extension.

Yet the problem with aesthetic deference is that its plausibility does seem to relate not only to the reliability conditions of extending knowledge but also to the intrinsic possibility that aesthetic knowledge *can* be extended. The problem of aesthetic deference concerns deferential aesthetic belief formation and the significance of extending aesthetic judgment through a vicarious reliance on someone else's—an expert, an educator—acquaintance with the object to which that judgment relates.

The problem with aesthetic deference and what I believe distinguishes it from epistemic deference is the notion of acquaintance and the role that it is traditionally thought to have in aesthetic belief formation. Aesthetic judgments are typically thought to require an acquaintance with their object. This means that they require a direct and unmediated experience of the object to which they relate. According to the acquaintance requirement, aesthetic judgments that relate to objects not on the basis of acquaintance but rather on the basis of testimony—namely, aesthetic and nonaesthetic information conveyed indirectly by the declarative descriptions of others—are considered problematic.⁵

In the remainder of the paper, I defend a position according to which aesthetic deference is, nevertheless, sometimes rational. There are two important claims that are implied by this suggestion. The first is that there is such a thing as aesthetic reliability, which can make a person's aesthetic judgment more or less reliable. The second is that aesthetic judgment need not be based on acquaintance. Nonetheless, I conclude by suggesting that there may be important nonepistemic considerations in light of which deference is problematic, but that this has nothing to do with the nature of testimonial knowledge or the reliability conditions of other people's judgments.

Addressing the first of these claims requires that we expound on what makes a person worthy of aesthetic reliability and trust, such that her judgments give us epistemic reasons to defer. Is this person someone who possesses aesthetic knowledge to an equal or higher degree than we do, or is it someone who is more capable of making aesthetic judgments? Addressing the second point requires that we consider whether we ought to defer to the judgment of such a person. It also requires that we consider to what extent this is possible if aesthetic judgments require acquaintance with their objects. In the next section, I propose a characterization of the aesthetic deferree, that person whom we might hold as deserving of trust and esteem with respect to her aesthetic judgments and to which we may, consequently, consider deferring to on epistemic grounds.

Aesthetic Experts and Aesthetic Educators

If there are people whose aesthetic judgments merit deference, then they must possess some kind of epistemic advantage in the realm of aesthetics. This advantage may be tied to the possession of aesthetic knowledge or experience or to a capacity for making aesthetic judgments. In each of these cases, the person must justifiably be thought to deserve trust and make it possible to rely on her judgments.⁶

So what does possessing aesthetic knowledge, experience, and judgmental capabilities amount to? Insofar as it relates to reliability, *aesthetic knowledge* relates to aesthetic judgments that have been reliably formed and that express true justified beliefs about the aesthetic quality of a particular object.

If John has aesthetic knowledge relating to Ω , he holds a reliably formed judgment about Ω that predicates an aesthetic quality α on Ω , and John believes this judgment to be a true justified belief about Ω . Saying that John has aesthetic knowledge about Ω means that he holds aesthetic beliefs about Ω , which he takes to be true and justified. And depending on his reliability, I too may take this knowledge as a basis of what to believe.

It need not be the case that I rely on *any* kind of aesthetic knowledge that a reliable person has; instead, I may rely only on a certain type of aesthetic knowledge or only on aesthetic knowledge that relates to a particular area—sculpture, for instance, or performing arts, and not, perhaps, aesthetic knowledge about painting. If I have a teacher whom I hold in high esteem when it comes to her knowledge of modern art, I may rely on what she believes in this area but not, for instance, in other areas, such as sculpture or classical art. Hence, for purposes of relying on aesthetic knowledge, it may be local aesthetic knowledge relating to a particular domain of aesthetics, as well as global aesthetic knowledge relating to overall aesthetic knowledge.

But there must seemingly be something about another person's aesthetic knowledge that makes it legitimate to *defer* to this person. One possibility is that he possesses aesthetic knowledge that you do not. Thus, if John knows that "the chair is majestic" and you do not—perhaps you only know that it is "dignified" and "lofty," or perhaps you do not know anything at all about it—then John is advantageously positioned when it comes to aesthetic knowledge about the chair.

A person may also have *experience* with aesthetic judgments such that this experience positions him in an epistemically advantageous position. Many writers seem to believe that experience privileges. And, in aesthetics, experience also seems to play an important role in establishing a person's privileged epistemic position. If a person has experience in making aesthetic judgments about, say, works of art of such-and-such a kind, then his aesthetic judgments in this area may be valued. One might, for instance, assign greater weight to the beliefs of a person who has a wide experience with aesthetic judgments, for instance, with both good as well as bad art, because one might believe that this kind of experience gives a more rounded and mature perspective on objects considered from an aesthetic point of view. So too, if a person is experienced in some area, then his aesthetic judgments in this area may be given greater authority because we assume that the person in question is "speaking from experience" and that he knows what he is talking about. In this sense, the view expressed by an experienced person may override a contrary view held by a person with no experience, even if both have made well-founded aesthetic judgments. Hence, there is a sense in which we value aesthetic experience—such as a familiarity with works of art and a repertoire of looking at things from an aesthetic point of view. And in cases where aesthetic experience is *justifiably* valued, deferential belief formation may be warranted on these grounds.

Lastly, a person's capacity for *making aesthetic judgments* may lead us to regard him as deserving of trust and esteem, such that, if we regard someone as having a good judgmental capability on aesthetic matters, this may give us reason to rely on his judgments in forming our own. So what might a commendable capacity for making aesthetic judgments amount to?

First, someone may simply be good at making aesthetic judgments. For instance, he may know to look at the right nonaesthetic (but aesthetically relevant) qualities—such as colors and composition. And he may know how to interpret these qualities in novel and insightful ways. Second, he may have a good sense for aesthetics, which provides him with a greater sensitivity for identifying aesthetic characteristics. Third, he may have a good performance record of making good aesthetic judgments. And by good aesthetic judgments, I mean judgments that have convinced others, met consensual aesthetic standards, or given other people insight to see things from an aesthetic point of view.

In sum, if there are people whose aesthetic judgments merit deference, then they must possess some kind of epistemic advantage in the realm of aesthetics. This advantage may be tied to the possession of aesthetic *knowledge* or *experience* or to a capacity for making *aesthetic judgments*.

Having established that, if there are people whose aesthetic judgments merit deference, they must possess aesthetic knowledge, experience, or judgmental capabilities that one has reason to rely on. In the next section, I discuss the acquaintance requirement for aesthetic judgment to see whether we ought to defer to the aesthetic judgment of such persons. In doing so, I also offer a distinction between two kinds of aesthetic knowledge corresponding to two ways in which aesthetic judgments can be understood and consider their aesthetic significance and how they relate to each other and to the acquaintance requirement.

Acquaintance

The acquaintance principle is much discussed in aesthetics. The original formulation of the principle appears in a passage in Richard Wollheim's *Art and Its Objects*:

Realism acknowledges a well-entrenched principle in aesthetics, which may be called the Acquaintance Principle, and which insists that judgments of aesthetic value, unlike judgments of moral knowledge, must be based on first-hand experience of their objects and are not, except within very narrow limits, transmissible from one person to another.⁷

The acquaintance principle can be taken to make claims about the expressive nature of aesthetic judgments and about their proper genesis. The central appeal of the acquaintance requirement is tied to a widely held belief

according to which there is an appreciative factor that underlies aesthetic judgments and involves first-hand aesthetic appreciation. This appreciative factor is assumed to be lost when aesthetic judgments are made indirectly, by deference, rather than acquaintance.

In view of the acquaintance requirement, the underlying concern with aesthetic deference is that the aesthetic judgments that are deferred to do not carry appreciation with them; hence, if one's judgments are based on testimony about some object's aesthetic qualities rather than on an acquaintance with it, they do not incorporate the appreciative dimension that acquaintance affords and that is constitutive of proper aesthetic judgment. The acquaintance requirement suggests that acquaintance enables aesthetic appreciation, which is what aesthetic judgments express. Hence, judgments based on other judgments, specifically, on judgments made by other people and not on acquaintance, do not carry appreciation with them and are, thus, improper.

Appreciative Aesthetic Knowledge

The idea of an appreciative aesthetic knowledge should be familiar. It suggests that there is a kind of aesthetic know-how of *what it is like* to appreciate aesthetic properties as they are realized in aesthetic objects. The appreciative aesthetic knowledge of Ω is what it is like to appreciate Ω aesthetically. Consequently, an aesthetic judgment such as " Ω is beautiful" expresses an appreciation of beauty as it is experienced in Ω . And an acquaintance with Ω is a necessary condition for being able to make such a claim. If the gracefulness of a line in a painting can only be appreciated through first-hand experience, not through any kind of description of it,⁸ appreciative aesthetic knowledge can only be arrived at by appreciation.⁹ Such a position has been widely endorsed in the literature. Paisley Livingston, for instance, suggests that

even the most genial descriptions cannot enlighten us regarding the specific splendors of works of Schubert, Villon, Balthus, *et al.*, if we have no prior acquaintance with these works (or adequate surrogates thereof). . . . [Moreover,] someone's descriptions can inform one perfectly well about how the work is surprising, but only through a first-hand, description-free experience can one fully gauge the work's surprise value.¹⁰

Predicative Aesthetic Judgments and Evaluative Verdicts

But appreciative aesthetic knowledge is not the only kind of knowledge that aesthetic judgments express. Our aesthetic judgments often also convey aesthetic information. Take the judgment that " Φ is beautiful." In addition

to its conveying an appreciation of what it is for Φ to be beautiful, it also conveys information about Φ , namely, that it is beautiful. In this case, it is still an aesthetic judgment about Φ since it conveys what you believe about Φ from an aesthetic point of view. The statement " Φ is beautiful" can be understood predicatively, articulating the existence of a predicative relation between beauty, an aesthetic property, and Φ , the object to which that property belongs. And there does not appear to be any kind of insurmountable barrier to knowledge of something's being beautiful being transmitted from one person to another. In supporting this claim, Malcolm Budd observes that "judgments of aesthetic properties are as transmissible from one person to another as are other kinds of judgment."¹¹

The idea of predicative aesthetic knowledge suggests that some aesthetic judgments can be based on this kind of predicative or declarative aesthetic knowledge. The guiding thought here is that, in the absence of acquaintance, holding aesthetic beliefs is possible in the same sense that, to borrow an example from Sibley, someone who has not heard a joke can still be justified in believing that it is funny. I may believe that a joke is funny because I have been told so, not only because I have experienced its humor.¹²

But if predicative aesthetic judgments are aesthetic in any interesting sense, they must seemingly express more than just information about a property, which happens to be an aesthetic property, possessed by some object. For this relation to express an aesthetic judgment, it must also be normative; it must establish that the object in question possesses a property that is good, or commendable, from an aesthetic point of view.

One way that a statement expressing a predicative relation can be normative is if evaluative aesthetic judgments can legitimately be derived from it. And assuming the reliability of the person expressing the judgment—a reliability that is based either on her knowledge or her competence or simply on an aesthetic sensibility that she shares—it would be unreasonable not to accept evaluative aesthetic verdicts based on them. In this sense, it seems plausible that evaluative verdicts may be legitimately derived from predicative aesthetic statements.

But this is not to say that predicative aesthetic judgments, even those made by the most aesthetically esteemed person, can enlighten us regarding the specifics of aesthetic appreciation of an object if we have no prior acquaintance with it (or with any kind of adequate surrogates). What I am suggesting is that aesthetic judgments made by others can legitimately enable evaluative aesthetic verdicts to be derived from them. And while those verdicts will be legitimate aesthetic judgments, they will not give us insight into the specifics of what it is like to appreciate the object related to from the particular aesthetic point of view. For this to happen, acquaintance is needed.

I still want to consider why acquaintance seems to play such an important role in aesthetic judgments, to the extent that some have thought that

we cannot form aesthetic beliefs without acquaintance. I also want to consider why aesthetic appreciation cannot be transmitted. Does, for instance, the acquaintance requirement entail that appreciative aesthetic knowledge can *never* be transmitted, or is it simply difficult to do so?

Rethinking Acquaintance

The acquaintance requirement appears to have something to do with an experiential dimension of aesthetic properties that is given first-hand, presumably by perception, and cannot be properly appreciated unless one is acquainted with the object in this way. Arguably, aesthetic judgments relate to properties that require this dimension. And the properties in question call for a first-hand perceptual relation that is satisfied by acquaintance and gives rise to the required appreciative aesthetic knowledge.

But if appreciative aesthetic knowledge is required because aesthetic properties need perceptual acquaintance to be appreciated properly, then the same should be true of judgments that relate to other kinds of perceptual properties, such as colors. Yet, presumably, no one thinks that you cannot form the belief that something is red by deferring to the judgment of another reliable and competent person that this is so, even though, in such a case you do not know exactly what it is like for Φ to be red without seeing Φ yourself.

A possible answer here might be that you do not need to be acquainted perceptually with Φ to believe that it is red because you know enough about red things to know what Φ being red means, perhaps because you assume that it is similar to other red things. But cannot the same be said of aesthetic properties? Can you not also say of Φ that it is graceful because you know enough about graceful things to know what Φ being graceful means? If I know enough about grace, why can't I know that something is graceful by deference?

Perhaps knowing that Φ is graceful by deference is different to knowing that Φ is red by deference because whether Φ is graceful is more complex and is perhaps also a matter of taste, whereas knowing whether Φ is red is a matter of basic perceptual competence. And basic perceptual competence is something we can most readily assume that other people have, whereas an equal appreciation of grace is not something that it is as easy to assume that other people have, or at least we can assume that there is greater variation in opinions about what it means for something to be graceful.

But if we assume sameness of sensibility between deferrer and deferee, can we not also legitimately defer on aesthetic matters? To deny this seems to deny too much. After all, rational aesthetic deference presumably occurs when a person has a *reason* to defer to the aesthetic judgment of another person. And the assumption of sameness of sensibility to the deferee is a plausible example for such a reason. You will not defer to the opinion of

someone whose taste you do not value but, rather, will defer to someone whose taste you do value, to the extent that you can rely on aesthetic judgments that person makes.

Hence, it is not clear why a judgment about perceptual properties such as color can be based on testimony, whereas a judgment about an aesthetic property such as grace cannot. If what is essential in aesthetic judgments is perceptual acquaintance with the objects to which those judgments relate, then, assuming sameness of aesthetic sensibility, judging that something is graceful by deference seems to be a genuine possibility that weakens the claim that one cannot form an aesthetic judgment without acquaintance.

However, if there is an appreciative quality that belongs to aesthetic judgments and this quality is not a perceptual quality but is, nonetheless, a quality that must be appreciated by acquaintance, then perhaps aesthetic judgments are simply judgments that one must simply arrive at for oneself. Before I proceed to explore the latter possibility, one last option should be explored relating to the difference between judgments about colors and judgments about aesthetic qualities.

Consider the distinction between information that is purely aesthetic—for example, “the building is beautiful”—and nonaesthetic information that is nonetheless aesthetically relevant—for example, “the structure is *symmetrical*,” “the structure is *warm*.” That the structure is symmetrical and warm may be why we think that it is beautiful. The latter kind of judgments might supervene on the identification of the former kinds of properties. And while deference about nonaesthetic information such as judgments about symmetry may be unproblematic, deference about purely aesthetic kinds of information may nonetheless require acquaintance. If judgments about nonaesthetic information that is aesthetically relevant are like judgments about color, then this might explain the difference between judgments about color and judgments about beauty. It suggests that “ Φ is red” is a judgment about a nonaesthetic property that is aesthetically relevant but does not require acquaintance, whereas “ Φ is beautiful” is a judgment about an aesthetic quality that does require acquaintance.

Autonomy

Moral judgments are sometimes thought to be autonomous. The autonomy of moral judgments suggests that they cannot be borrowed from someone else, since moral judgments are a matter that the individual must arrive at for himself.¹³ In what follows, I will outline the autonomy argument as it is thought to apply to moral judgments and import it into our discussion to see whether aesthetic judgments also require autonomy. If they do, then perhaps it is autonomy, rather than acquaintance, that makes aesthetic deference implausible, even if the reliability conditions exist for aesthetic

deference on epistemic grounds. If this proves to be a genuine possibility, then the problem of aesthetic deference does not so much relate to whether the deferrer can be in a strong enough epistemic position to attain aesthetic knowledge, but rather that there may be an important nonepistemic norm that, as Hopkins suggests, makes it illicit to form aesthetic beliefs based on other people's judgments.¹⁴

In discussing autonomy in relation to moral expertise and deference, Julia Driver states that autonomy is often considered crucial to moral judgment because the person who borrows a moral judgment holds it without grasping the *reasons* for that judgment.¹⁵ Borrowed moral judgments—that is, moral judgments that have been rationally deferred to—are based on indirectly justifying reasons instead of on directly justifying reasons.¹⁶ They are based on reasons that merit deference, such as that someone who justifiably counts as a moral expert, superior, or merely possesses some kind of relevant epistemic advantage holds them, and not on reasons that appreciate the normative force of the moral judgment itself. The autonomy requirement implies that moral deference is problematic because the autonomy of judgments requires that there be personal and direct insight into the reasons used to justify the moral judgment that one holds. The justification for a moral judgment must, consequently, be direct, rather than indirect.¹⁷

This position can be broken down into two distinct senses in which autonomy is required for moral judgment. The first is that a person who holds a moral judgment must do so for the *right reasons*, namely, those which justifiably support that judgment and allow one to be compelled by its normative force. The second involves a person needing to *make up her own* mind when it comes to moral judgments. The latter seems to be an important, albeit not a strictly epistemic, norm for aesthetic belief formation.

It seems that whether aesthetic judgments are different from moral judgments in terms of the autonomy requirement depends on whether grasping the reasons for an aesthetic judgment is necessary for appreciating its normative force. And it does not seem obvious that grasping reasons has the same role in justifying aesthetic judgment as it does with moral judgment. In fact, failing to grasp the reasons for an aesthetic judgment does not normally appear to affect the justification of holding it.¹⁸ As we saw above, part of the appeal of the acquaintance principle is that one needs to appreciate the object's aesthetic qualities for oneself. And if grasping reasons was necessary for aesthetic judgment, this could purportedly be done without acquaintance with the object of judgment, just like in cases of moral judgments. So, perhaps appreciating the reasons for a judgment is not a requirement for aesthetic judgment after all.

If we believe that indirect reasons for aesthetic judgment are not sufficient because of some kind of autonomy argument, then it is either because of the importance of grasping the reasons for the judgment for oneself or

because of the importance of some kind of nonepistemic acquaintance in aesthetic belief formation, something along the lines of needing to make up one's own mind on aesthetic judgments. In light of the fact that making up one's own mind does not refer to perceptual acquaintance of aesthetic properties or to direct appreciation of reasons, we are left with a somewhat cryptic requirement.

In sum, while aesthetic deference can be warranted on epistemic grounds—such as that someone else's judgment may be sufficiently reliable to provide indirect justification for deferring to that judgment, it may nonetheless remain unreasonable because of some kind of nonepistemic norm, such as needing to make up one's own mind. It does not seem to me that there is much more to say about the latter condition, other than that it is the opposite of what deference suggests, namely, not making up one's own mind but relying on someone else. And perhaps herein lays its strength.

Notes

1. In the remainder of the paper, I use the notions of belief and judgment interchangeably.
2. There does not appear to be a single view regarding epistemic deference in the philosophical literature. Instead, there seems to be a number of closely related discussions. See, for instance, David Christensen, *Putting Logic in Its Place: Formal Constraints on Rational Belief* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004); Elizabeth Fricker and David E. Cooper, "The Epistemology of Testimony," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (supplementary vol.) 61 (1987): 57–106; Sanford Goldberg, "Experts, Semantic and Epistemic," *Noûs* 43, no. 4 (2009): 581–98; Thomas Kelly, "The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement," in *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, vol. 1, ed. John Hawthorne and Tamar Gendler Szabo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 167–96; Arnon Keren, "Epistemic Authority, Testimony and the Transmission of Knowledge," *Episteme* 4, no. 3 (2007): 368–81; Christian List, "When to Defer to Supermajority Testimony—and When Not," unpublished manuscript, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2006; David Owens, *Reason without Freedom: The Problem of Epistemic Normativity* (London: Routledge, 2000); Christian Pillar, "Normative Practical Reasoning: Christian Pillar," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (supplementary vol.) 75, no. 1 (2001): 195–216; Matthias Steup, *Knowledge, Truth, and Duty: Essays on Epistemic Justification, Responsibility, and Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Roger White, "Epistemic Permissiveness," *Philosophical Perspectives* 19, no. 1 (2005): 445–59.
3. James M. Joyce, "Epistemic Deference: The Case of Chance," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 107, no. 2 (2007): 187.
4. See Paul Horwitz, "Three Faces of Deference," *Notre Dame Law Review* 83, no. 3 (2008): 1104–5.
5. It is worth pointing out that there is both a broad and narrow reading of the acquaintance requirement. The broad view suggests that acquaintance with the object is needed for aesthetic judgments to be valid; in this case, a person may be acquainted with the object without having an aesthetic acquaintance with it. So, I may have seen the view but not considered it aesthetically. The narrow reading of acquaintance would require that, for aesthetic judgments to be valid, one must be aesthetically acquainted with their object.

6. A person need not be generally *superior* in these capacities to warrant our deference; rather, she may be *locally* better in relation to some particular proposition in aesthetics. Additionally, such a person need not be better than us at all; she may just be *as good as* us. As long as we have reasons to rely on someone's judgment, her judgments can impact our own—either because that person happens to be in an epistemically advantageous position or because we exercise caution by counterbalancing our own judgmental verdicts by incorporating the verdict of other reliable people. Hence, for our purposes, it suffices that the person be reliable; for instance that she counts as a peer. A peer, as opposed to a superior or an expert, is not better but equal, and this in itself makes her as reliable as oneself. Nonetheless, whether or not the person in question is superior—for instance, if she is an aesthetic expert when you are not—will have normative implications with regard to your justification in terms of relying on her judgments and the weight that her judgments are granted. As a rule, the more superior the person is in the relevant capacities, the more justified one will be in trusting her judgment and giving it greater weight.
7. Richard Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 233.
8. The characteristic analogy illustrating this is that a fully determinate description of a graceful line in a picture does not entail its being graceful. See Frank Sibley, "The Inaugural Address: Particularity, Art and Evaluation," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (supplementary vol.) 48 (1974): 1–21.
9. Paisley Livingston makes this especially crisp by differentiating between knowing and gauging: "[S]omeone's descriptions can inform one perfectly well about how the work is surprising, but only through a first, description-free experience can one fully gauge the work's surprise value," in Livingston, "On an Apparent Truism in Aesthetics," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 43, no. 3 (2003): 277.
10. *Ibid.*, 276–77. Others share this view: namely, Malcolm Budd, "The Acquaintance Principle," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 43, no. 4 (2003): 392; Robert Hopkins, "How to Be a Pessimist about Aesthetic Testimony," *Journal of Philosophy* 108, no. 3 (2011): 138–57; Jon Robson, "Aesthetic Testimony," *Philosophy Compass* 7, no. 1 (2012): 1–10; Frank Sibley, "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic," *Philosophical Review* 74, no. 2 (1965): 135–59.
11. Budd, "The Acquaintance Principle," 392.
12. See, Sibley "Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic."
13. Anscombe believes that moral judgments that are not arrived at in this way lead to a "bastard sort of morality, marked by heteronomy." See G. E. M. Anscombe, "Authority in Morals," in *Ethics, Religion, and Politics: The Collected Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 45.
14. Hopkins, "How to Be a Pessimist about Aesthetic Testimony," 140.
15. Julia Driver, "Autonomy and the Asymmetry Problem for Moral Expertise," *Philosophical Studies* 128, no. 3 (2006): 622.
16. In referring to borrowed moral judgments as moral judgments that have been *rationally* deferred to, I wish to stress that, even if there are epistemic reasons that support the epistemic legitimacy of those judgments, that is, on epistemic grounds, these will still be indirectly justifying reasons for the deferred judgments, rather than directly justifying reasons.
17. Driver, "Autonomy and the Asymmetry Problem for Moral Expertise," 623–24.
18. *Ibid.*, 623.