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Aesthetic Disillusionment: Environment, Ethics, Art

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ABSTRACT: What happens when an object you take to be beautiful or aesthetically pleasing, no longer appears beautiful or pleasing when you learn something new about it? I am assuming a situation in which there is no direct change in the perceptual features of the object, and that what you learn is not the location of some new surface property but rather a bit of non-perceptual information. I classify episodes of dampened appreciation under the heading ‘aesthetic disillusionment’, and in this paper I explore the relationship between such episodes and the broader issue of ethical constraints on aesthetic activity and appreciation. Does it make sense to say that one should not, or ought not, take pleasure in certain objects or events? I think it does – but in a very particular, almost ecological way. The subsequent discussion focuses on ethical constraints as they operate on the aesthetic appreciation of objects and events within the natural environment.

KEYWORDS: Environmental aesthetics, life-denying processes, life values, nature and art

I

Before turning to the specific idea of aesthetic disillusionment, it is important to acknowledge that disillusionment often occurs on the heels of a more basic shift in aesthetic awareness. When something appears to be beautiful or aesthetically compelling under the assumption that it is a particular *kind* of thing, but it then turns out to be *another kind* of thing, we may experience what Dewey calls a “shift in appreciative perception”.

Suppose for the sake of illustration, that a finely-wrought object, one whose texture and proportions are highly pleasing in perception, has been believed to be the product of some primitive people. Then there is discovered evidence that proves it to be an accidental natural product. As an external thing it is precisely what it was before. Yet at once it ceases to be a work of art and become a natural ‘curiosity’. It now belongs in a museum of natural history, not in a museum of art. And the extraordinary thing is that the difference thus made is not one of just intellectual classification. A difference is made in the appreciative perception and in a direct way.¹

Before the shift, you take yourself to be appreciating a carving, and admire its “texture and proportions” as the intentional results of human effort. After the shift, these same textures and proportions are seen as the products of forces like abrasion or erosion. The object not only falls into a different category of origin, but its surface features are perceived in a new context as well. For Dewey, the idea of an object’s being art raises sympathetic responses in us which the idea of nature cannot – a complete inversion of Kant, for whom *nature* interests immediately. Nevertheless, the most compelling aspect of Dewey’s description of shifts is its emphasis on a change in understanding, or intellectual framework, and the effect of that change on our perception of aesthetic features or properties.

I take the aesthetic properties of an object or event to be those surface features that give the object or event its particular aesthetic character.^{2,3} Accordingly, although I shall not argue for the assertion here, I maintain that shifts in appreciative perception do not *necessarily* entail any changes in judgement, either positive or negative. Just because a patterned ‘art’ object turns out to be natural in origin, you will not necessarily feel disappointed once this is known.⁴ As Mary Mothersill argues in *Beauty Restored*, “assumptions about origin and causal genesis of some item at hand, however well attested and secure they may be, are grounded on inference, whereas taking something to be beautiful is not.”⁵ True, there are cases where aesthetic disillusionment is based *solely* on the fact that the item now has a different origin than was first supposed, but here I would argue that the original appreciation was not wholly aesthetic as such but was mingled with pleasure in *ideas* about the causal genesis of the object – about the *kind* of thing it was.

Kant offers examples of aesthetic disillusionment based on shifts of origin in *The Critique of Judgement*. In one of these, guests at a country house sit admiring the sounds of what they take to be a nightingale in the evening air. In the midst of their enjoyment the “jovial host” admits a charade and reveals a “roguish youth” who hides in a thicket and produces sounds with a reed.⁶ The guests, Kant claims, will no longer enjoy the sounds now that they are aware of their artificial origin. Kant does after all offer this example as part of nature’s ability, and art’s inability, to arouse “immediate interest”. Mothersill, however, constructs a Deweyan converse to Kant’s, where the audience at a recital of birdcallers learns that the ‘calls’ are actually the sounds of a *real* bird hidden offstage.⁷ Much like Dorothy and her travelling companions in *The Wizard of Oz* (when they discover “that man behind the curtain”), Mothersill’s audience experiences disillusionment once the truth is revealed. Yet, neither Kant’s example nor Mothersill’s (as she would readily admit) portray events which must, or should, lead to aesthetic disillusionment. If we bracket the deception involved, we might at Kant’s country house continue to enjoy the pattern of sounds under a new category of description, i.e., the skill of the roguish youth. Similarly, Mothersill’s birdsong may also elicit our admiration once its true origin is manifest. The point is, these examples do not reveal any causal or necessary relation between shifts and

disillusionment. More crucially, they lack any ethical imperative to cease taking pleasure in an object once the shift in awareness of origin occurs.

II

Some thinkers, most notably those who agree with the philosopher Allen Carlson, believe that there are ethical limitations on the appreciation of natural beauty, as well as artefacts within nature, because the earth gives home to many creatures other than human beings. On this view, ethics becomes a framework within which the aesthetics of nature operates.⁸ Some views of nature are deemed ethically more appropriate than others “in that they function as a better justification for preserving nature.”⁹ Values are determined, ethical imperatives follow, and aesthetic practices which violate these imperatives are not appropriate to the appreciation of either nature itself or of art, artefacts and events located within the natural environment.

In his article “Environmental Aesthetics and the Dilemma of Aesthetic Education”¹⁰ Carlson develops a theory of beauty originally suggested by John Hospers in *Meaning and Truth in the Arts*¹¹, in order to clarify the relationship between aesthetic appreciation and ethical values. There are, notes Carlson, two senses of a thing’s being aesthetically pleasing: a ‘thin’ sense and a ‘thick’ sense. The thin sense yields enjoyment “primarily in virtue of the physical appearance of the object”, including surface properties, form and design, while the thick sense “on the other hand, involves not merely the physical appearance of the object but also certain qualities and values which the object expresses or conveys to the viewer”.¹² The qualities and values are not those emerging from the personal history or preferences of the individual. Rather, “what is involved are the more general and deep-seated associations which are characteristically held in common by a community of individuals and by and large derived from what is perceived within that community of individuals to be the nature and function of the expressive object”.¹³ Carlson calls these community-directed expressions ‘life values’.

To illustrate the potential tension between thick and thin beauty, Carlson refers to the possibility of lifesized plastic trees, claiming that they might be acceptable in the thin sense but that in the thick sense they “represent bad life values” by expressing a combination of resignation and ingenuity (Carlson does not really explain why these qualities are bad). While he admits that it is false to assume a “positive correlation between an object’s being natural and its being aesthetically pleasing”,¹⁴ he does seem to claim the opposite, namely that artificial objects masquerading as or hiding among natural ones are aesthetically *displeasing*. Furthermore, they are displeasing in the thick sense of beauty, that which, for Carlson, contains considerations of environmental ethics and human values among other things. While Carlson recognises that plastic trees cannot be

rejected *simply* because they are not natural, he nevertheless attempts to construct a web of objects and values such that plastic trees *express* negative qualities no matter how, where or when they appear. Thus, they are to be rejected due to the connotations of their artificiality – no matter how compelling their formal appearance.

Artificial trees may, as Carlson insists, have bad life values, but he does not elaborate *how* or *why* this is the case with specific reference to plastic trees.¹⁵ By expanding Carlson's example of plastic trees into an illustration of my own (including a variation or two) I hope to demonstrate that nature's 'naturalness' is not a prerequisite of aesthetic pleasure, and that aesthetic pleasure in response to nature's beauty has more to do with the surface features of the natural environment than with our assumptions about its non-human genesis or the relation of that genesis to our community values. Nevertheless, there are ethical limitations on the establishment of plastic trees – limitations that are more forceful than those offered by Carlson's theory of 'life values' – and I hope to make these apparent as the example unfolds.

My example will include at least two factors which Carlson leaves out of his examination of plastic trees: the passage of time, and a context for experiencing the trees. Again, by citing ingenuity and resignation as the 'life values' expressed by plastic trees, Carlson implies that the mere *artificiality* of the trees renders them aesthetically inferior (in the thick sense) to real trees. In doing this he leaves himself open to critical opposition which might undermine an otherwise good idea. I attempt to strengthen his basic example in what follows. Picture if you will a wood in summer, fully green and scented with the last flowering of lilacs and wild garlic. In the wood is planted a plastic tree, a cleverly designed, tastefully scented, perfectly textured replica of the real thing. The plastic tree blends well with its neighbours at this time of year and no one can tell that it is not a real tree at this point.

Variation (1): A day tripper comes into the wood, stops for a rest and finds the place beautiful, including the trees in his immediate area. The plastic tree is among the trees found beautiful. The day tripper rests and savours the beauty, and eventually gets up and returns to a home well beyond the wood.

Variation (2): A wood dweller, over time and after many walks in the wood during summer and autumn, notices that the plastic tree remains unaffected by the seasonal changes and that it looks/feels/smells the same as it did in summer. She concludes that the tree is artificial. Here are some of her possible responses:

- A. The plastic tree looks/smells/feels out of place in a *displeasing* way; the wood-dweller feels distaste. (Thin beauty denied).
- B. The plastic tree offsets its neighbours in a provocative and interesting manner because of its having remained the same; the wood dweller feels a *pleasurable curiosity* about the tree. (Thin beauty affirmed).

- C. The tree offsets its neighbours in an interesting way but, despite recognizing a bold pattern, the wood dweller is repelled by it and feels no pleasure because of what the tree is and what its *associations* are for her. (Thin beauty and thick beauty denied).
- D. The tree offsets its neighbours and the wood-dweller feels a certain pleasure in the effect, but feels guilty for liking it, and thinks she ought not to take pleasure in it. (Thin beauty affirmed but thick beauty denied).

Variation (3): The day tripper returns late in autumn, discovers that the tree is not natural, and experiences any of the above reactions, with the added one that he feels disappointment simply because what he thought was natural is artificial.

Variation (4) If the day tripper feels disillusioned *simply because* the tree is not natural, we know that his initial pleasure was tied, at least partially, to the idea of being in nature (let's assume he won't even consider the new pattern once he knows the tree is fake). And, if the tree looks ridiculously out of place, then the situation is unproblematic: the scene has changed perceptually and is no longer pleasing due to shifts in surface features. However, if the tree offsets its neighbours in a pleasing way, a way that is not distasteful or ridiculous despite its artificiality, then Carlson's invocation of expressive 'life values' is ineffective: resignation and ingenuity might be subsumed under, or be a part of, the beauty of a plastic tree in its setting. Or, resignation and ingenuity may not be negative enough as qualities to counteract the formal impact of the tree and its setting. Carlson's assertions about life values are not explicit about why plastic trees should be unappealing or how their genesis informs our aesthetic perspective.

What is it about the tree that should displease? If it is aesthetically compelling (and not in a kitschy sense) despite its artificiality – perhaps it is the result of an arts council commission, a witty piece of environmental art that comments on the nature of seasonal change and acts as a pointer within it – then it cannot be the mere artificiality that makes it objectionable. Carlson uses the idea of *plastic* trees to make his point and it is here that we might find some clues about the relationship between ethical values and aesthetics.

We shall assume that Carlson's plastic, like many plastics, is a non-biodegradable substance which may rely on the use of questionably-obtained fossil fuels for its creation, and that it has carcinogenic properties under certain conditions. Generally plastic is not an ecologically sound substance since it does not break down in a manner conducive to the health of the planet or its creatures. It is also used in large amounts and is often wasted, a tangible legacy of the consumption and arrogance of our age (as Carlson would well agree). Carlson's tree offends or fails to appeal because it is a *plastic* tree, not because it is artificial and certainly not because it necessarily looks out of place in a displeasing way.

What if the tree were cleverly made of all-natural, biodegradable, ecologically inoffensive materials? Would it still connote bad life values? I think not:

in order to decide on the aesthetic quality of the tree in this case, we would consider how well it fits in with or complements its context throughout the seasons. If the result were pleasing – if the ecologically offensive but artificial tree were a good work of art – there would be no *ethical* reason to disparage it. Its artificiality poses no threat to the wood or to the planet as a whole. As for the intrusion of art into nature, we cannot object to the tree solely on this account, for art in the woods on a limited basis, is a benign phenomenon and a pleasing one at that. Human towns and cities are intrusions into what was once a wilderness. And, while we wouldn't want to populate all of our woods and wild areas with whimsically tasteful bits of art (or our motorways with plastic shrubbery, as Carlson notes), there is no blanket objection to doing so in some places. Each case must be decided, both ethically and aesthetically, on an individual basis. Carlson's attribution of resignation and ingenuity to plastic trees in general neglects the possibility that some artificial trees may yield genuine aesthetic pleasure without having any genuinely negative connotations.

If a biochemist comes in, tests the original plastic tree and allows that it *is* composed of environmentally damaging material, we might find ourselves unable to enjoy the tree any longer. A shift in our knowledge about the tree leads to an alteration within Carlson's 'thick sense' of appreciation. It can also lead either to our seeing the tree differently (we begin to focus on flaws or displeasing aspects) or, despite no changes being perceived in the tree itself, to our appreciation being blocked/overwhelmed/dissipated on emotional grounds. The 'thin' sense of appreciation is therefore affected.

It is also conceivable that a person might continue to enjoy the tree despite its now-apparent hazardousness. If enjoyment and appreciation are unimpeded by the knowledge of the tree's eventual threat, and this strikes us as unethical or inappropriate, we still cannot *force* someone to stop feeling pleasure: either one does or one doesn't (after, we assume, reflective consideration) enjoy the tree. Perhaps we might like to attach conditions, such that one might say "I do enjoy this tree and think it lovely despite its environmental threat, but I know that I shouldn't do so." As I shall argue next, this sort of approach is muddled because it fails to clarify what is really at stake and what tensions actually exist in such a situation.

An attitude that expresses continued enjoyment in an explicitly acknowledged destructive situation indicates a lack of harmony between the perception of beauty and the greater value of life itself. This disjunction between pleasure and the context of pleasure is at bottom irrational: to appreciate genuinely destructive situations is to approve them, and continued (or universalized) approval of this sort would lead, given what we now know through environmental science, to the destruction of life itself. Life provides the context and conditions for aesthetic pleasure. What Carlson means by bad life values in the thick sense of beauty is an object's negative connotations. I mean more: aesthetic life denial is the sense that an object or event, by its very composition, militates

against the peaceful continuance of planetary life. A plastic tree, being non-biodegradable, of fossil-fuel extraction, wasteful, and symbolic of consumer arrogance, is a distinctly destructive component in a dangerous way of living, a way of living that might ultimately lead to the end of living. And, as Carlson notes, “when we are actually *unable* to find an object aesthetically pleasing in the thick sense *because* of the (negative) nature of its expressive qualities, this often makes aesthetic enjoyment of this object in the thin sense psychologically difficult, if not impossible”.¹⁶

I think Carlson is correct here: appreciation of what might have seemed beautiful does become difficult in light of certain information: information that makes explicit the life-denying character of the object.¹⁷ Where Carlson emphasizes expressive qualities, however, I emphasize life-denying properties in the literal sense. Let us consider another example, a familiar one. I witness the detonation of a bomb over a distant city. If I feel pleasure in the sight without knowing the nature of its existence, then my pleasure is innocent and unblameworthy, since I do not and cannot know through perception alone the real nature of the residual cloud.

If, after I have engaged in an appreciative awe, my friend the physicist informs me, that the cloud is the aftermath of a human product that is or will be killing millions of people and other beings, I am again in a position to experience various feelings. An obvious response would be a dramatic shift in appreciative perception, one that not only disallowed seeing the cloud as beautiful but in fact made my perception of it unpleasant or horrific. The extreme life-denial of the event might quite reasonably lead to aesthetic disillusionment. However, if I still saw the cloud as beautiful after acquiring knowledge about its genesis and power, my response would almost certainly strike one as perverse. Carried to its causal conclusion the presence of the cloud leads to the destruction of aesthetic appreciation and to that of the support for appreciation - life itself. Finding beautiful that which will obliterate any possibilities for the perception of beauty is, I believe, irrational.

Yet, as Carlson argues, ethical constraints on aesthetic appreciation might not be an issue of knowledge so much as an issue of value. People are irrational all the time: seeing the cloud as beautiful might be disturbing but if one does see it as beautiful, what does this suggest? It could indicate an exaggerated sense of one's own experience of pleasure at the expense of the suffering of others. In such a case we would be inclined to say that the person not only possessed an underdeveloped sense of life's value but that he or she lacked a sense of proportion between aesthetic experience and its venue of life. Like Huysmans' hero in *À Rebours*, such a person would have life serve the aesthetic rather than the more ethically worthwhile converse.

Continued pleasure at the bomb cloud in spite of life-denial is ethically suspect because it elevates personal fulfillment over respect for life generally, and intellectually unsound since universal support of life-denying processes

leads to the cessation of aesthetic experience whatsoever. Though degenerative plastic trees are less obviously threatening than mushroom clouds, their implications are nevertheless clear. To approve of plastic trees in nature indicates approval of a practice – creating ecologically-unsound objects – which is life-denying and which may lead to the destruction of aesthetic pleasure itself.¹⁸

III

The perception of beauty forms one component of a fulfilling life. A commitment to life-enhancement will include aesthetic pleasure and intellectual clarity, along with respect for other species and the planet, in its agenda of things desired. Wittgenstein claims that ethics can be seen as an enquiry into what makes life worth living.¹⁹ Aesthetic pleasure is one thing that makes life worth living, though not at the expense of life itself. As Haig Khatchadourian points out, “enjoyment of the spectacle of evil is repugnant to the aesthetic life though it is unfortunately possible to derive a quasi-aesthetic pleasure from the contemplation of human vice and depravity”.²⁰ While it may be possible to enjoy artistic *representations* of vice and depravity, it is also possible to claim that we *should not* enjoy them when they are overtly life-denying.²¹ To this degree we can claim that there are ethical limitations on what *ought* to be enjoyed.

Mary Mothersill thinks that there is a limit to our tolerance: nothing can be beautiful unless it is a cause of pleasure but a work can also be painful enough to extinguish all thoughts of pleasure and hence beauty. She also thinks that no limits can be set in advance, when speaking of what things will mitigate beauty.²² Here I would suggest that Mothersill’s claim could do with a distinction between what *can* happen and what *ought* to happen. I believe we can say that artefacts which are literally life-denying *should* cease to give pleasure once their character is known. Such artefacts don’t *necessarily* dissipate pleasure, but often they will, and furthermore we expect such dissipation of pleasure in one who has a developed sense of life’s priorities. Another set of examples should illustrate what I mean.

If I am witnessing a spectacularly-coloured sunset from my kitchen window and am taking great pleasure in its beauty, how shall I respond when a friend drops in and informs me that the reason for all the colour is the proliferation of sulphur dioxide in the air? Suppose that the friend also tells me that the sulphur, the result of a factory operating up river, is a pollutant, one with grave consequences for the creatures in the marsh downstream. As Mothersill would agree, we cannot say that I shall, without question, be vexed or cease to feel pleasure. Perhaps I shall continue to admire the sunset despite my new knowledge. Yet I think we can say that I ought to feel vexation and a cessation of pleasure. The colourful spectacle which I admired springs from a process that is not only destructive but the outcome of free human choice or practice. To

continue to admire it would be to lend aesthetic approval to an unnecessary process which has life-denying consequences.

If, on the other hand, the friend informs me that the sulphur is the result of a volcano that has erupted unexpectedly, should I still feel vexation and a cessation of pleasure? I might, but the *imperative* to do so would not be present as it is in the previous case. Human beings have no control over the volcano and, while the consequences of a natural event may be drastic enough to militate against our perception of beauty, there is no 'obligation' for us to respond negatively. A factory that pollutes is a moral affront; a volcano that pollutes is regrettable but not blameworthy.

In the case of a volcano emitting sulphur into the air, it may not always be appropriate to dwell on the beauty resulting from the emissions, but neither would it be wrong: one could say, "what a beautiful sunset; what a shame that the beauty emerges from such a destructive event." However, to say the same in the case of a polluting factory seems hypocritical: the destructive event need not occur in the same way. To endorse destructive processes (aesthetic pleasure is a form of endorsement, of approval) which result in wanton environmental degradation, is to perpetuate a form of life-denial. One can sense the beauty of a volcano and feel compassion for those who must live with, or are destroyed by, the damage it leaves behind. The anger we ought to feel at a factory that inflicts the same damage should, in a person endowed with a sufficient idea of life's worth, obliterate any pleasure in its spectacle.

Individual aesthetic judgements are rooted in the perceptual features and patterns of the object's surface, but the practice of aesthetics, both productive and appreciative, takes place within a wider context of life-enhancing ethical considerations. That is, the manner and material of human presence in the natural environment, whether aesthetic, practical or whimsical, is subject to ethical appraisal.

I have tried to demonstrate that aesthetic disillusionment, while not a necessary result of a shift in awareness of origins, will often be present when the shift alerts us to the life-denying character of the aesthetic object or event under consideration. Furthermore, we expect aesthetic disillusionment from others when they are confronted with life-denying human products. While we can't force cessation of pleasure, or even predict it causally, we are justified in asserting that a person *ought* to cease to enjoy a life-denying spectacle of human origin. Therefore, ethical constraints do operate on aesthetic appreciation, though they are by no means strictly allied with all cases of aesthetic disillusionment – some cases will undoubtedly be subjective and non-binding (recall the example of Kant's nightingale in the country).

We can, however, identify the imperative against pleasure in response to destructive human artefacts or processes, by making reference to their life-denying character – a character located more precisely by the *literally* destructive aspects of an object, than by Carlson's too general expressive qualities.

Carlson makes a good attempt to explain our rejection of some artificial objects and his desire to protect the natural environment from the encroachment of human kitsch is admirable. But not all artificial objects or processes that inhabit or occur in the natural environment displease us aesthetically, even in the thick sense. Blanket objections to human activity or artefacts in nature eclipse a more thorough understanding of the balance between our aesthetic appreciation of individual objects or events, and the community in which we seek to sustain this appreciation. When making claims about aesthetic judgements, objections, limitations and associations in relation to them must be made clear. Only then will ethical constraints on aesthetic activity be manifest as something more than cultural fashion, political propaganda or the harness of ideological commitment.

NOTES

¹ Dewey, 1925, pp.48-9. Dewey wasn't the first person to discern shifts in aesthetic emphasis based on a change in cognitive context, or 'origin', but his description of the phenomenon is perhaps the clearest.

² I have argued elsewhere against Allen Carlson's assertion that aesthetic properties are the result not of perceptual features but of non-perceptual descriptions about origin.

³ In the case of literature, aesthetic properties are not located in the visual or aural surface of the text (i.e., the printed or uttered manifestation of the words) but in the meaning and tones conveyed by the words. While texts are physical insofar as they are printed, or manifested sensuously insofar as they are heard, their aesthetic impact issues most readily from the meanings they contain within a system of language.

⁴ An argument that the aesthetic properties of a thing do, indeed, change depending on whether it is natural or artificial, has been put forth by Allen Carlson, 1981, and again by him in 1986. A convincing rebuttal is offered by Yuriko Saito, 1984.

⁵ Mothersill, 1986, p.390. Mothersill also argues against the idea that shifts in appreciative perception necessarily yield disillusionment.

⁶ Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, Section 42, p.162.

⁷ Mothersill, 1986, p.342.

⁸ Saito, 1984, p.19.

⁹ Sepänmaa, 1986, p.145.

¹⁰ Carlson, 1976.

¹¹ Hospers, 1946, pp. 11-15.

¹² Carlson, 1976, p.75.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.73.

¹⁵ Carlson does suggest that plastic shrubs and trees can be appreciated through 'camp sensibility' but he also feels that such sensibility must by definition make us aware of expressive qualities of ordinary or conventionally unattractive objects such that we can enjoy them aesthetically. However, such sensibility is relevant only in the thin sense of beauty. The expressive qualities of plastic trees – resignation and ingenuity – may be "disconcerting enough to make such 'trees' difficult to enjoy aesthetically". Therefore,

if a camp vision of plastic trees brings out such expressive qualities, these qualities may prevent our enjoyment of the trees due to their disregard of nature, i.e., their bad life values.

¹⁶ Carlson, 1976, p.78.

¹⁷ I am grateful here to Paul Davis who has developed the concept of life-denial quite comprehensively in his unpublished 1988 paper. While Davis takes the idea in a different direction than I, by focusing on truth and falsity within representative art, we employ the concept in a similar way with regard to general ideas about life-denial: "Where an essential part of the aesthetic moment is the acceptance or reinforcement of beliefs or attitudes which are life-denying, then the aesthetic moment is itself life-denying". (Davis, 1988, p.3).

¹⁸ I realise that this has important implications for other kinds of artistic materials: the fact that I intend to create a work of art does not necessarily justify the use of materials which are noxious to the environment, even if such materials are used in relatively small proportions in individual cases.

¹⁹ Wittgenstein, 1965, p. 5.

²⁰ Khatchadourian, 1982, p. 96.

²¹ Cinematic or theatrical depictions of evil have long been sources of aesthetic pleasure without being life-denying.

²² Mothersill, 1986, p. 411.

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