

Glenn Parsons

The Norms of Nature Appreciation



Thursday, March 15
3:15-4:45
Wachovia Auditorium
115 Beatty Center



About the talk: In recent years, philosophers have debated whether there are any normative constraints on the aesthetic appreciation of nature, such that certain forms of aesthetic appreciation of nature can be said to be defective or inappropriate. One view, defended by philosophers such as Yuriko Saito and Allen Carlson, holds that there are such norms, and further, that at least some of them rest on ethical or moral considerations. This view has been contested recently by Robert Stecker, who argues that there are no moral norms constraining the aesthetic appreciation of nature. In this paper, I consider Stecker's case and reassess the relevance of ethical considerations for the aesthetics of nature.

About the speaker: Glenn Parsons is Associate Professor in the Philosophy Department at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada. His work is in aesthetics, much of it in the aesthetics of nature. He is one of the foremost defenders of “Scientific Cognitivism”—the view that aesthetic appreciation of nature should be informed by scientific understanding. His books include *Aesthetics and Nature* (Continuum, 2008) and *Functional Beauty* (Oxford University Press, 2008), with Allen Carlson. He has written about architectural criticism, building the natural city, infant beauty, formalism, and the aesthetic appreciation of animals and of scientific experiments, among other topics. His undergraduate degree was at Acadia University in Nova Scotia and he holds a Master’s degree in Biochemistry and Ph.D. in Philosophy from The University of Alberta. He is currently working on a book on the nature of human beauty and another on the philosophy of design. For more information: <http://www.ryerson.ca/~g2parson/>

College of Charleston, Department of Philosophy, Visiting Speaker Series