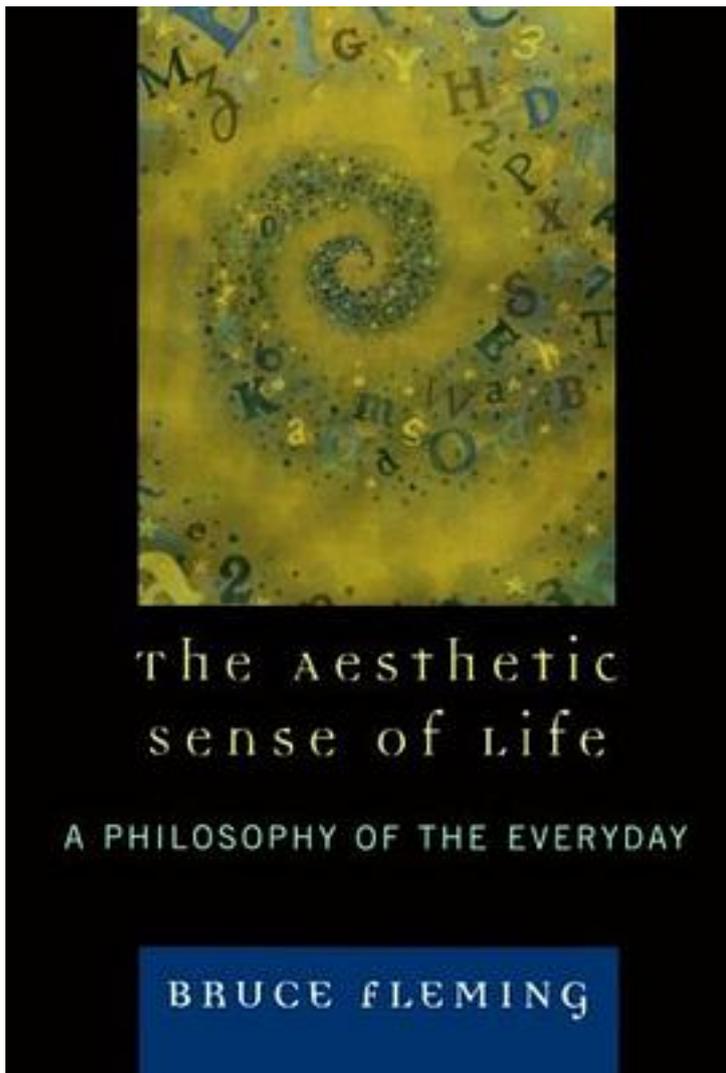


The Aesthetic Sense of Life



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The Aesthetic Sense of Life is a fast-moving book about how to see the world and get value from living every day with the "everyday." Do the infinite number of sensations we're surrounded with every day have intrinsic value? If not, what gives them value? Who appreciates the sunrise if we don't? Is it enough for just us to appreciate it? Or do we have to share it? The Aesthetic Sense of Life considers and answers to questions such as these in clear, readable prose, offering a way of looking at life that makes clear its value and its meaning. The aesthetic sense of life is neither the viewpoint of the saints-for whom the sensations of the world are mere murmuring and illusion-nor the viewpoint of those completely fulfilled by their things, their gadgets, the particulars of their own lives. Most of us fall in the middle between these two extremes: we appreciate, say, a good cup of coffee, a power tool, a new set of towels, or a juicy steak, but don't think the answer to the riddle of existence is to be found in any of these. We appreciate them without thinking them sufficient. What's missing from them? What's missing is this: a sense that they can give meaning to life. The Aesthetic Sense of Life proposes that meaning is found not in these particulars, but in consciousness of the patterns they form. The feel of our towels or the taste of our coffee is just for us. Others have their own sensations, so they don't need ours. What we can share with other people, and thus use to re-establish the bonds of human warmth, are the patterns made by these particulars, something others can appreciate as well. Awareness of these patterns constitutes the aesthetic sense of life, which gives richness and meaning to the everyday.

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