What Is Art?
The Role of Intention, Beauty, and Institutional Recognition

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Abstract

In two experiments (N=888), we explore to what extent the folk concept of art is compatible with the leading philosophical definitions of art, and whether it is an essentialist or a non-essentialist concept. We manipulate three factors: whether an object is created intentionally, whether it has aesthetic value, and whether it is institutionally recognized. In addition, we also manipulate the artistic domain (visual art or music). The results suggest that none of the three properties is seen by the folk as necessary for an object to be considered art, which suggests that the folk concept of art might be a cluster concept.

Keywords: definition of art; intention; beauty; institutional recognition; experimental aesthetics; experimental philosophy

Introduction

The search for the most accurate definition of art has been one of the main themes in philosophical aesthetics over the past century. Finding an acceptable definition of art, however, proved to be very difficult. In light of this, a second issue has recently gained more attention: is art really something that can be defined? What *kind* of definition, if any, would it have? There are three categories of theories of art: essentialist definitions, disjunctive theories, and cluster theories of art. Essentialist definitions specify individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for an object to be art, while anti-essentialist accounts of art claim the opposite: there are no individually necessary properties. There are two kinds of non-essentialist theories: disjunctive and cluster accounts of art. Disjunctive accounts state that there are individually sufficient and jointly necessary properties. Cluster accounts of art are similar to disjunctive theories, but they see the set of properties that make an object art in a different way: none of the properties are individually sufficient.

Although most aestheticians believe that the correct definition of art is at least partly descriptive, that is, it must be coherent with the actual folk beliefs about art rather than how people *should* think about art, to date, very limited research has been reported on ordinary intuitions as to what people consider art.

To that end, our paper aims to answer two questions: (1) whether the folk concept of art is an essentialist, disjunctive or cluster concept, and (2) to what extent aesthetic value, institutional recognition, and intentional creation are important for judgments on what is art. While these three factors are discussed as the most important properties of art by many philosophers, it is unknown how the folk see the relative importance of these factors.

Three types of accounts of art

Let us briefly outline a few essentialist definitions of art. Historical definitions focus on how a work of art relates to some previously established artworks. For instance, they involve a requirement for an artwork to bear a deliberate resemblance to certain recognized earlier works of art (Carroll, 1993). According to the intentional-historical definition, an artist must intend the work of art to be treated similarly to other objects in this category. Whether something qualifies as art depends on what has historically been considered to be so, as well as whether the creator intended the work to be considered in the same way as some prior art that they are familiar with (Levinson, 2002). For example, a painting would have to be considered "with attention to color, with attention to painterly detail, with awareness of stylistic features, with awareness of art-historical background, with sensitivity to formal structure and expressive effect, with an eye to representational seeing, with willingness to view patiently and sustainedly, …" (Levinson, 1989). Functional accounts hold that art must be defined in terms of its purpose. This means that each piece of art must fulfill a particular purpose to satisfy some particular need that can only be fulfilled by engaging with art. The most typical example of functional definitions of art is the aesthetic view. This theory holds that the purpose of art is to address our need for aesthetic experiences (Beardsley, 1982; Zangwill, 1995). There are also functional definitions that do not specify one particular function that art must fulfil (e.g., Stecker, 2005). According to procedural-institutional definitions, by contrast, an object only acquires the status of being art when it is granted to it by a person in a position of authority (Danto, 1981; Davies, 2004; Dickie, 1974). The process of having the object made by an artist, displayed to the art world, and discussed by art historians and critics is mentioned by those who support this account. Objections to all the above-mentioned definitions typically use counterexamples to show how over- or underinclusive the respective theory is.

Each of the definitions that have been discussed above is essentialist, as all of them invoke necessary and sufficient conditions for an object to qualify as an artwork. Anti-essentialism, which is based on Wittgenstein's notion of

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"family resemblance," contests this theory (Dean, 2003; Weitz, 1956; Wittgenstein PI, 2009: 67; Ziff, 1953). According to the anti-essentialist view, every artwork shares at least one property with other objects that are regarded as works of art, but there is no single common property.

One of the authors who defend cluster accounts of art is Gaut. He lists the following properties as counting towards an object being a work of art: (1) possessing positive aesthetic qualities; (2) being expressive of emotion; (3) being intellectually challenging; (4) being formally complex and coherent; (5) having a capacity to convey complex meanings; (6) exhibiting an individual point of view; (7) being an exercise of creative imagination; (8) being an artifact or performance which is the product of a high degree of skill; (9) belonging to an established artistic form; and (10) being the product of an intention to make a work of art (Gaut, 2000: 28). A similar list of properties is offered by Dutton (2009).

The third type of accounts of art is disjunctive definitions (Davies, 2015; Hazelwood, 2021; Longworth & Scarantino, 2010; Stecker, 1994). They usually consist of the same properties as those listed by the cluster theorists but take a different form. Disjunctive definitions consist of a disjunction of sufficient conditions, but no conditions are individually necessary: instead, those properties are individually sufficient and disjunctively necessary. To illustrate, Davies offers the following definition: an object is art "(a) if it shows excellence of skill and achievement in realizing significant aesthetic goals, and either doing so is its primary, identifying function or doing so makes a vital contribution to the realization of its primary, identifying function, or (b) if it falls under an art genre or art form established and publicly recognized within an art tradition, or (c) if it is intended by its maker/presenter to be art and its maker/presenter does what is necessary and appropriate to realizing that intention (2015)." Although the difference between cluster and disjunctive theories is very subtle, disjunctive theories require their conditions to be individually sufficient, whereas it is not the case in cluster theories.

The most influential essentialist accounts

Three essentialist accounts of those discussed in the previous section are the most influential: the institutional account (Dickie, 1974), the aesthetic account (Beardsley, 1982) and the intentional-historical account (Levinson, 1979). According to Dickie's institutional theory, an artwork is "(1) an artifact, (2) a set of the aspects of which has had conferred upon it the status of candidate for appreciation by some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the art-world)" (Dickie, 1974). According to Beardsley's aesthetic definition, an artwork is "either an arrangement of conditions intended to be capable of affording an experience with marked aesthetic character or (incidentally) an arrangement belonging to a class or type of arrangements that is typically intended to have this capacity" (Beardsley, 1982). Levinson proposes the intentional-historical definition and claims that "X is an art work at t = df X is an object of which it is true at t that some person or persons, having the appropriate proprietary right over X, non-passingly intends (or intended) X for regard-as-a-work-of-art, i. e., regard in any way (or ways) in which objects in the extension of 'art work' prior to t are or were correctly (or standardly) regarded" (1979).

There are three reasons why we should have a closer look at those three theories of art. First, according to Davies (1990), there are two views on how to define art: procedural and functional, and all other options are reducible to one of the two. Dickie's and Beardsley's theories are the most typical instances of the two approaches. Intentional creation is almost universally held by philosophers to be a necessary condition for being art (Uidhir, 2013). It is popular not only in philosophy, but also in psychological literature: Levinson's theory of art has been extended by Bloom (1996) to other kinds of artefacts and is highly influential in the literature on artefact categorisation. Levinson's intentional-historical theory thus seems to be important to include among the definitions that should be tested. Second, intentional creation, beauty, and institutional recognition are properties that frequently appear in cluster and disjunctive theories. For instance, they are listed among the qualities that "count towards being art" in both Gaut's (2000) and Dutton's (2009) lists, in the disjunctive theory of art (Longworth & Scarantino, 2010), and they are also discussed by Stecker (2000) and Hazelwood (2021). Moreover, they correspond to the three disjuncts in Davies' (2015) disjunctive definition of art. Third, the following sections will present an overview of the empirical research and will reveal that the three definitions are also significant from a psychological point of view.

The role of empirical research

Many aestheticians claim that the definition of art must be coherent with ordinary intuitions (Kania, 2011; Stecker, 2000; Davies, 1991). However, there are only a couple of studies in experimental philosophy of aesthetics that are related to the concept of art. To date, most work in experimental aesthetics has focused on the following topics: imaginative resistance (Black & Barnes, 2017, 2020; Campbell et al., 2021; Liao, Strohminger & Sripada, 2014; Kim, Kneer & Stuart, 2019), aesthetic adjectives (Liao, McNally & Meskin, 2016; Liao & Meskin, 2017) aesthetic objectivism/subjectivism (Bonard, Cova & Humbert-Droz, 2022; Cova et al., 2019; Cova & Pain, 2012; Rabb et al., 2020), ontology of musical works (Bartel, 2018; Mikalonytė, 2022; Mikalonytė & Dranseika, 2020; Mikalonytė & Dranseika, 2022; Puy, 2022), interaction between people's aesthetic and moral qualities (Doran, 2021), or experience of guilty pleasures (Goffin & Cova, 2019). For a review, see Cova (in press).

Currently, there are only three studies directly related to the concept of art. Mikalonytė and Kneer (2022) found that people consider AI- and human-created objects *art* to a similar extent; however, they are less inclined to consider AI-equipped agents as artists. People are also not very inclined to ascribe intentions to AI-driven robots. If art can be created

by an agent who is not capable of having artistic intentions, it seems that the folk concept of art does not include intentional creation as a necessary condition.

Kamber (2011) tested a large number of definitions of art by presenting the study participants with a number of pictures and asking the participants whether this is art. Kamber's approach was to examine a variety of "hard cases" discussed by philosophers of art, such as an aesthetically bad painting or a poem lacking secondary meaning, institutionally recognized nontraditional creations (such as Duchamp's Fountain), commercial illustrations, institutionally recognised (v. anonymous) photographs, or objects as they were regarded before the social art-making practices appeared. The results suggest that none of the art theories succeeds in tracking intuitions. In another study, Kamber and Enoch (2018) asked participants to justify their decisions by rating a set of fourteen possible reasons why an object is or is not art. They found that reasons mentioning the creator's intentions and aesthetic value were the most popular, but, again, the results did not fully comply with any of the common definitions of art.

Empirical work relating to the three core factors

Aesthetic value

Pignocchi (2014) hypothesizes that people are willing to use the concept of art for artefacts that have been created with an intention to fulfil a function that is typical for other artworks. There are two crucial factors in the judgments on whether an artefact belongs to the realm of art: functions (an object must fulfil a function that other artworks normally fulfil) and intentions ascribed to the object's creator. Art can have many functions, but the most typical one (according to Davies) consists in inducing an aesthetic experience.

Many studies in psychology have shown that artefacts tend to be explained and categorised in terms of their functions and creator's intentions; under certain conditions, not only artefacts, but even natural objects tend to be explained in terms of their purpose (Boyer & Barrett, 2004; DiYanni & Kelemen, 2005; Kelemen, 1999; Kelemen & Rosset, 2009; Kelemen, Rottman, & Seston, 2013; Schachner et al., 2017).

Kamber and Enoch (2018) found that Beardsley's aesthetic definition is more coherent with the intuitions of art professionals than other definitions they have tested. Unless the folk concept of art and the expert concept of art are entirely dissimilar, the folk should see the aesthetic value of the work as an important factor. Pelowski et al. (2017) found that the classification of objects as art or not art is strongly correlated with liking them. If people are more likely to classify an object as art when they like it, this is another reason to predict the significance of the aesthetic definition of art: it means that categorization may depend on aesthetic evaluation.

Institutional recognition

There is also some empirical support for the institutional theory of art. McCallum, Mitchell, and Scott-Phillips (2019) explain the way institutional theory works through the lens of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986). According to relevance theory, communicative acts are associated with two kinds of intentions: an informative intention (the intention to inform the audience of something), and the communicative intention (the intention to make the audience aware of one's informative intention). When an object is presented as an artwork, for example by putting it into a gallery, this presentation works as an ostensive act. It draws the viewer's attention to the object and suggests that it is worth the viewer's effort to process it. In the context of the institutional theory of art, McCallum, Mitchell, and Scott-Phillips call this ostensive act "presentation as a candidate for appreciation".

Kamber's results provide some support for both functional and institutional theories: more than half of the 2011 study participants were willing to categorise institutionally recognised but not aesthetically moving objects as art. However, other cases included in that study show that aesthetic value might be an important factor, which suggests that neither institutional, nor aesthetic theory can fully track folk intuitions. Both institutional and functional factors are likely to be important for categorisation judgments. The latter hypothesis is supported by the results of a recent study by Liao, Meskin, and Knobe (2020). Art, according to these authors, is a dual character concept, i.e. a concept sensitive to both descriptive features and the values that these descriptive features realise. In art contexts, the descriptive set of criteria is associated with institutional recognition: art is whatever is exhibited in a museum or discussed as such by art professionals. However, in the evaluative sense, the same object might not be considered art "when you think about what art really is," in other words, when you ask yourself whether the object realises the set of values that art must realise. It seems that both aesthetic and institutional factors matter in judgments on what is art.

Intentional creation

Artworks and other artefacts tend to be interpreted and categorised by making inferences about the mental states of their creators. Bloom hypothesizes that our intuitions as to which objects count as members of a specific artefact type are determined by whether it was created with the intention to belong to that artifactual type (Bloom, 1996), even if there's no direct connection between the intention and the object's appearance or function. If this hypothesis is correct, whether an object was created with an intention for it to be art must have an influence on people's judgments of its status as art.

Several studies support this view: inferences about creator's intentions do play an important part in what people categorise as art (Jucker et al., 2014, Newman & Bloom, 2012) – they might be even more important in the categorisation process than the object's appearance (Newman & Smith, 2018). Kamber and Enoch (2018) asked their study participants to select reasons for their judgments of why

something is or is not art, and among the most often selected, there were reasons related to the creator being conscious and possessing artistic intentions. However, Mikalonytė and Kneer (2022) found that an object does not necessarily have to be created intentionally to be considered art. Thus, the exact role of intention remains unclear.

Experiments

We explored the extent to which the three most influential definitions of art – intentional, aesthetic, and institutional – are consistent with folk judgments of art. To this effect, we manipulated all three features in a between-subjects design, i.e. (i) whether or not the object was created intentionally, (ii) whether or not it is beautiful, and (iii) whether or not it received institutional recognition. As a secondary core dependent variable, we explored to what extent people were willing to deem the creator an artist.

Participants. We recruited 1511 participants on Amazon Mechanical Turk. The IP address was restricted to the United States. In line with the pre-registered criteria,[1] participants who were not native English speakers, failed an attention check, or took less than twenty seconds to answer the main questions (including reading the prompt) were excluded, leaving a sample of 888 participants (female: 48%; age M=44 years, SD=14 years, range: 19–90 years).

Methods and Materials. We ran two experiments, one focusing on paintings, one on musical works. Each explored people's concept of art in a between-subjects 2 (intention: intentional v. accidental creation) x 2 (beauty: beautiful v. not beautiful) x 2 (institutional recognition: present v. absent). For each artistic context, there were thus 8 conditions in total, to one of which participants were randomly assigned. The painting scenario, to give an example, was composed of the following elements (labels in bold excluded, stating either the presence (+) or absence (-) of the key features):

Intention
[+] A person decides to create a painting. She takes an empty canvas and applies paint onto it.
[-] A person accidentally brushes against some jars of paint that spill onto an empty canvas.
Beauty
[+] The resulting object looks beautiful, featuring an elegant interplay of different lines of paint. It captures the viewers' attention and evokes awe and wonder.
[-] The resulting object looks ordinary and uninteresting. It leaves the viewers bored and unimpressed.
Recognition
[+] Soon this object gets recognized by art critics, finds its way into a museum and some years later it appears in art history books.
[-] This object never gets exhibited in art galleries or museums, and it never receives any attention from art critics.

Having read the scenario, participants had to rate to what extent they agreed with the following claims on a Likert scale anchored at 1 with "completely disagree" and 7 with "completely agree" (labels in brackets omitted):

(1) "The object is art." [Art][2]
(2) "The object was made by an artist" [Artist]
(3) "The person wanted to make a painting" [Desire]
(4) "The person believed they were making a painting" [Belief]
(5) "The person intentionally made a painting" [Intention]

Results

We ran ANOVAs with artistic intention (yes v. no), beauty (yes v. no), and institutional recognition (yes v. no) as factors, and also included artistic domain (visual art v. music) as a fourth factor. For judgments as to whether the object is art, beauty had the most pronounced effect ($F(1,872)=54.54$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.06$). Intention ($F(1,872)=36.49$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.02$) and recognition ($F(1,872)=36.41$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.02$) also proved significant, and so did domain, though its effect size was marginal ($F(1,872)=12.84$, $p=.029$, $\eta_p^2=.01$). Detailed results can be found in the Appendix on the project's OSF page.

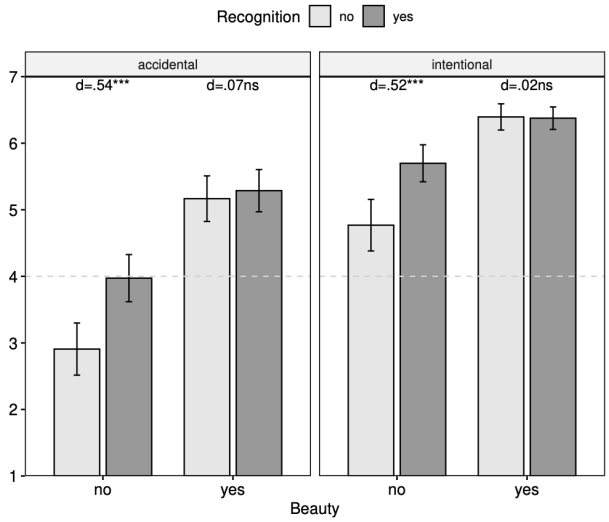

Figure 1: Mean ratings for art judgments across conditions. Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals. *$p<.05$; **$p<.01$; ***$p<.001$.

[1] https://aspredicted.org/33x3i.pdf and https://aspredicted.org/a4ce4.pdf. For both studies (here analyzed together), the preregistrations, Qualtrics files and data are available on OSF under https://shorturl.at/hxJQX.

[2] Two reviewers noted that our results might have been different if the participants were asked about an *artwork* rather than *art*, which is true. By asking what is art, however, we aim to inform the philosophical discussion on what is art, and follow the methods of previous studies (e.g. Mikalonytė and Kneer, 2022; Kamber, 2011).

All interactions were nonsignificant or had very small effect sizes. Aggregating subsamples revealed close-to-large effect sizes for intention (Cohen's *d*=.79), beauty (*d*=.78), and small effect sizes for recognition (*d*=.26) and domain (*d*=.20). Detailed results, collapsing across domains, are graphically represented in Figure 1. Except for the two conditions lacking both beauty and intention, mean ratings for all conditions were significantly above the midpoint (one sample t-tests, all *p*s<.001, two-tailed).

As concerns judgments regarding the agent's status of being an *artist, beauty* proved significant ($F(1,872)=24.88$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.03$), so did *intention* ($F(1,872)=24.20$, $p<.001$, $\eta_p^2=.03$), *recognition* ($F(1,872)=6.03$, $p=.014$, $\eta_p^2=.01$) and *domain* ($F(1,872)=6.97$, $p=.008$, $\eta_p^2=.01$). All interactions were again either nonsignificant or had very small effect sizes. Aggregating subsamples revealed a large effect size for *intention* (*d*=1.26), medium-sized effects for *domain* (*d*=.50) and *beauty* (*d*=.39), and a small effect size for *recognition* (*d*=.17). Detailed results, collapsing across domains, are graphically represented in Figure 2. Only in the conditions in which the agent acted intentionally were mean artist judgments significantly above the midpoint of the scale (one-sample t-tests, all *p*s<.001, two-tailed).

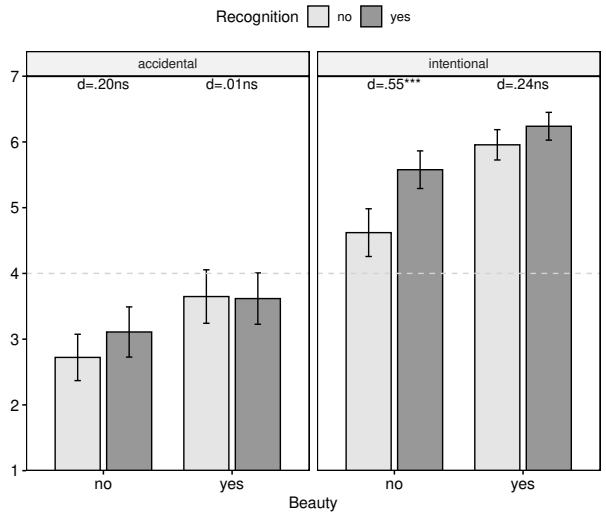

Figure 2: Mean ratings for artist judgments across conditions. Error bars denote 95% confidence intervals. **p*<.05; ***p*<.01; ****p*<.001.

Aggregating across conditions, the secondary DVs we tested (belief, desire, and intention) all show pronounced correlations with the core DV *art* (all *r*s>.57, all *p*s<.001), and, importantly, much higher correlations with the DV *artist* (all *r*s>.76, all *p*s<.001). This further demonstrates that the status of being an artist is strongly tied to the creator's mental states, whereas the merely mid-sized correlations between mental state and an object's being art partially challenge the intentional-historical definition of art.

Table 1: Correlations between primary DVs (artist, art) and secondary DVs. 95% CIs in brackets. * Indicates $p < .05$, ** indicates $p < .01$, *** indicates $p < .001$.

Variable	Artist	Art	Desire	Belief
Art	.62*** [.56, .68]			
Desire	.81*** [.78, .84]	.57*** [.51, .63]		
Belief	.80*** [.76, .83]	.59*** [.52, .64]	.97*** [.96, .97]	
Intent	.76*** [.72, .80]	.58*** [.52, .64]	.91*** [.90, .93]	.94*** [.93, .95]

Discussion

We have explored (1) whether three potential key properties of art – intentional creation, aesthetic value, institutional recognition – are seen as necessary for an object to be art, and (2) whether the folk concept of art is an essentialist one, with individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions, or a non-essentialist one, where only one of several conditions must be satisfied.

Regarding our first question, none of the three conditions were seen by the folk as individually necessary. In both visual art and musical contexts, beauty and intentional creation alone were enough for the ratings of art to be above the midpoint of the scale. This suggests that each factor was seen as sufficient for an object to be art. While beauty had a strong effect on ratings in both contexts, the effect of intentional creation was more pronounced in the second experiment featuring musical work. The third factor, institutional recognition, by contrast, had a much weaker impact on judgments of art. In the visual context, it was not sufficient by itself, although in the musical context, ratings were above the midpoint. We also found an interaction between beauty and institutional recognition. For those objects that were not beautiful, institutional recognition significantly raised the ratings of art.

Regarding our second question, the results suggest that the folk concept of art is not an essentialist one. It seems that the folk concept of art is a cluster concept, and all three properties tested are part of the cluster. It is enough for one (or several) properties from the cluster to be present for the folk to recognise an object as art.

The hypothesis that the folk concept of art is a cluster concept is supported by two findings: context-sensitivity of the properties, as well as the beauty and institutional

recognition interaction. In different situations, each of the three properties has a different impact, which is consistent with the predictions of cluster theories. Across different contexts what constitutes art may depend on different factors. Unlike a simple disjunctive definition, which requires its conditions to be individually sufficient, cluster theories do not pose this requirement. The latter theory is thus more compatible with our results.

Judgments concerning the status of being an *artist* were largely consistent with those concerning *art*, i.e. when the creator was judged an artist, her creation was judged art. We found one exception in the first experiment with visual art: beautiful, accidentally created objects were seen as art, but the agents who created them were not considered artists. It is surprising that the folk consider objects art that were not created by artists and were not even created intentionally. This finding goes against the standard view in philosophical aesthetics, which holds that for any artwork, intentional creation is a must (Dutton, 2009; Mag Uidhir, 2013). If artworks are artefacts, like all artefacts, they must be the product of intentional action. As mentioned above, the role of intention has been emphasised in the psychological literature (Bloom, 1996; Jucker et al., 2014; Kamber & Enoch, 2018; Newman & Bloom, 2012; Newman & Smith, 2018). Our results are also surprising because being an artist and being the source of art-making intentions is tightly related: In Christy Mag Uidhir's words, "if what it is to be an artwork is to be the product of a successful art-attempt, then presumably what it is to be the artist of a particular artwork is to be the source of the intentions directing the actions constitutive of the successful art-attempt of which that particular artwork is the product. From this it follows that an artwork must have an artist." (2013: 45). Our findings confirm that being an artist and being the source of creative intentions is tightly related: only in those cases where the agent acted intentionally, the ratings of *artist* were above the midpoint. However, our results do not support the standard view that any artwork must be intentionally created by an intentionally acting artist.

Perhaps our findings are less astonishing when we think about artworks created by AI-equipped robots: although people refuse to consider AI-creators artists or ascribe artistic intentions to them, their creations are deemed art to a similar extent as human-made artworks (Mikalonytė & Kneer 2022, also see Demmer et al. 2023). While the latter results might be explained by people's potential tendency to view human developers who create AI-driven systems as the source of artistic intentions, the results of the present study suggest that people might be open to the idea of art without an artist.

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Limitations

Our studies have several limitations. First, they only concerned paintings and musical works. It would be interesting to explore other artistic domains, such as literature or cinema. Second, cluster accounts of art list more than three properties of art: others remain to be tested in future studies. Third, future research would benefit from including non-WEIRD populations (De Block & Kelly, 2022; Henrich, Heine & Norenzayan, 2010). While some philosophers argue that experimental philosophy findings in many fields are stable across cultures (Hannikainen et al. 2019, 2022; Kneer 2021; Knobe 2019, 2021; Lin et al., 2019; Rose et al., 2019; Sarkissian et al., 2011), in experimental philosophy of aesthetics, there are only two cross-cultural studies to date (Bonard, 2018; Cova et al., 2018). Fourth, more research is needed to better distinguish between cluster and disjunctive concepts. Possible directions might include deeper investigations into context-sensitivity of the concept of art. Fifth, although the use of textual vignettes helps to control the factors being manipulated, it does not allow real aesthetic experiences. Therefore, future studies should supplement vignettes with visual or aural stimuli (see Puy, 2022; Weinberg, 2018).

Conclusion

Although it is notably difficult to identify a convincing definition of art, the question we set out to investigate in our studies principally concerned the kind of theory that we should be looking for. Must the correct definition specify individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions, or a disjunction of sufficient conditions? If there is a set of conditions where at least one of them must be satisfied for an object to be art, is the set of properties determinate or is it open?

We investigated three properties of art and found out that none of them is seen by the folk as individually necessary. There are many other potential properties of art that must be explored in future studies, such as being intellectually challenging or formally complex. It remains a possibility that the folk concept of art is an essentialist one, but the necessary and sufficient condition is not among the ones tested in our studies. However, given that the most promising candidate, that is, intentional creation turned out not to be considered necessary, it seems unlikely that any of the other candidates would be.

Since the application conditions for the concept of art seem to be context-sensitive, the folk concept of art might turn out to be a cluster concept. It remains an open question to what extent the best definition of art should cohere with folk intuitions, but if it must be coherent at least to some extent, cluster accounts of art appear to be the best option.

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