

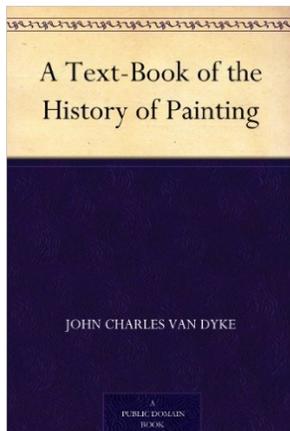


Faculty Review of Open eTextbooks

The [California Open Educational Resources Council](http://www.cool4ed.org) has designed and implemented a faculty review process of the free and open etextbooks showcased within the California Open Online Library for Education (www.cool4ed.org). Faculty from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California were invited to review the selected free and open etextboks using a rubric. Faculty received a stipend for their efforts and funding was provided by the State of California, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Textbook Name:

A Text-Book of the History of Painting



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Textbook Authors:
 John Charles Van Dyke

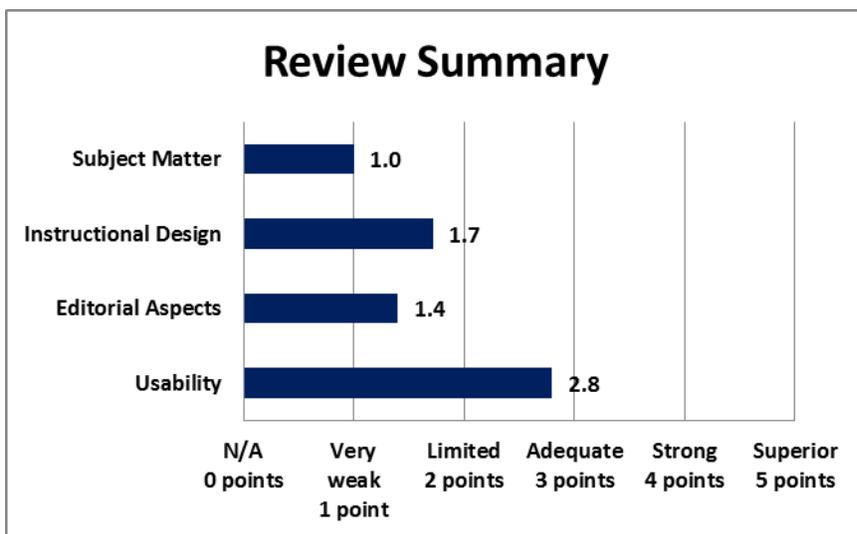
Reviewed by:
 Roland Betancourt

Institution:
 University of California, Irvine

Title/Position:
 Professor

Format
 Reviewed:
[Online](#)

A small fee may be associated with various formats.



Date Reviewed:
 August 2015

California OER Council eTextbook Evaluation Rubric

CA Course ID: [ARTH 110](#)

Subject Matter (30 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
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Is the content accurate, error-free, and unbiased?		X				
Does the text adequately cover the designated course with a sufficient degree of depth and scope?		X				
Does the textbook use sufficient and relevant examples to present its subject matter?		X				
Does the textbook use a clear, consistent terminology to present its subject matter?		X				
Does the textbook reflect current knowledge of the subject matter?		X				
Does the textbook present its subject matter in a culturally sensitive manner? (e.g. Is the textbook free of offensive and insensitive examples? Does it include examples that are inclusive of a variety of races, ethnicities, and backgrounds?)		X				

Total Points: 6 out of 30

Please provide comments on any aspect of the subject matter of this textbook:

- This textbook, published in 1909, is severely out of date and uses primitivist, orientalist language that is both offensive and wholly inappropriate for the subject matter.
- It is concerned with the "history of painting" alone, meaning that it does not address all the other forms of art, archaeology, and architecture that one would cover in a survey of art history.
- Additionally, it has strictly a formal approach to the subject matter, meaning that it therefore never brings in grounded historical context or even information beyond vague narratives of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of Christianity.
- It glosses over a thousand years of medieval history in Chapter IV, and even limits its concerns there exclusively with the Italian world. It is likewise replete with statements such as "But classic form was ever being encroached upon by oriental richness of material and color. The struggle was a long but hopeless one. As in Italy, form failed century by century. When, in the eighth century, the Iconoclastic controversy cut away the little Greek existing in it, the oriental ornament was about all that remained," which are not only offensive, but propagate damaging stereotypes. It is wholly unsuited as a text book.

Instructional Design (35 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Does the textbook present its subject materials at appropriate reading levels for undergrad use?			X			
Does the textbook reflect a consideration of different learning styles? (e.g. visual, textual?)		X				
Does the textbook present explicit learning outcomes aligned with the course and curriculum?		X				
Is a coherent organization of the textbook evident to the reader/student?				X		
Does the textbook reflect best practices in the instruction of the designated course?		X				
Does the textbook contain sufficient effective ancillary materials? (e.g. test banks, individual and/or group activities or exercises, pedagogical apparatus, etc.)		X				
Is the textbook searchable?				X		

Total Points: 12 out of 35

Please provide comments on any aspect of the instructional design of this textbook:

- The textbook is merely a digitized copy of a 1909 text on the history of painting with absolutely no adaptation to serve as a classroom text beyond a few links to better copies of images, which are often nearly as lacking as the original versions in the text.

Editorial Aspects (25 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the language of the textbook free of grammatical, spelling, usage, and typographical errors?				X		
Is the textbook written in a clear, engaging style?		X				
Does the textbook adhere to effective principles of design? (e.g. are pages laid out and organized to be clear and visually engaging and effective? Are colors, font, and typography consistent and unified?)		X				

Does the textbook include conventional editorial features? (e.g. a table of contents, glossary, citations and further references)				X		
How effective are multimedia elements of the textbook? (e.g. graphics, animations, audio)	X					

Total Points: 7 out of 25

Please provide comments on any editorial aspect of this textbook.

- The text is very dry and given that it is quite out of date, the language would certainly be off putting to students not only in terms of style but in its use of inappropriate, insensitive terms.

Usability (25 possible points)	N/A (0 pts)	Very Weak (1pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
Is the textbook compatible with standard and commonly available hardware/software in college/university campus student computer labs?				X		
Is the textbook accessible in a variety of different electronic formats? (e.g. .txt, .pdf, .epub, etc.)					X	
Can the textbook be printed easily?					X	
Does the user interface implicitly inform the reader how to interact with and navigate the textbook?			X			
How easily can the textbook be annotated by students and instructors?		X				

Total Points: 14 out of 25

Please provide comments on any aspect of access concerning this textbook.

- Since it is a Project Gutenberg text, the book does have options on how it can be viewed, such as HTML or Kindle. I used the HTML version since the Kindle copy was quite poorly done and not inviting for reading.

Overall Ratings	Not at all (0 pts)	Very Weak (1 pt)	Limited (2 pts)	Adequate (3 pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Superior (5 pts)
What is your overall impression of the textbook?		X				
	Not at all (0 pts)	Strong reservations (1 pt)	Limited willingness (2 pts)	Willing (3 pts)	Strongly willing (4 pts)	Enthusiastically willing (5 pts)
How willing would you be to adopt this book?		X				

Total Points: 2 out of 10

Overall Comments

If you were to recommend this textbook to colleagues, what merits of the textbook would you highlight?

- Its accessibility would be its only merit, though I would strongly discourage anyone from using this text in the classroom, particularly in the context of a course covering Prehistory to the Middle Ages since it is disproportionately focused on the Renaissance and exclusively considering painting.

What areas of this textbook require improvement in order for it to be used in your courses?

- All aspects from the text, content, and quality of images.

We invite you to add your feedback on the textbook or the review to the [textbook site in MERLOT](#)
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