Abstract

This thesis developed out of an attempt to fuse my hobby of tying fishing flies with my academic pursuits in art history. I have made fishing flies based on the especially fancy patterns from the Victorian period for a number of years and was always left wondering why it was they were so fancy. With this as a starting point this thesis seeks to place these objects within the world of craft, in an art historical discourse. Beyond this simple goal however, I also use these objects as a way to discuss issues around how craft, particularly handicraft, is treated in an academic context. Craft is positioned as a category of art proper, in order that it might be pushed to the margins of artistic production. Further, craft itself is broken down into categories that are considered along hierarchical lines of legitimacy. In the Victorian period handicraft (also known as domestic craft) is typically cast as the domain of women and does not have the same level of legitimacy as the production of the Arts and Crafts movement, for example. Victorian Salmon flies, despite not yet figuring in an academic discourse, share marked similarities with handicrafts of the Victorian period. And here, even though both women and men made flies, men were the predominant consumers of these flies and we can consider that perhaps our view of handicraft as an exclusively gendered space might be slightly misplaced. Though salmon flies have a place next to handicraft, I also argue through this thesis that salmon flies - and by extension handicraft - have much in common with object of the Arts and Craft movement, as well as those made by industrial production. These similarities are indicative of larger social concerns that apply to all manner of crafted objects. I propose an alternative reading of these salmon flies that is not dependent on adherence to preexisting craft categories. Rather I propose a phenomenologically-influenced reading of these flies that treats pleasure as an integral component of their function. In this, I draw on the writings of Martin Heidegger to discuss how these flies can allow the user to come to experience their place in the world. Finally, I suggest that this line of inquiry into these objects can be applied to other types of neglected handicrafts.
During the Victorian era, beauty was considered very highly and women even used lipsticks and other makeup cosmetics that were a similar tone to their skin so that they would not stand out and be noticed. But instead blend in. Beauty within the Victorian era was seen to be overdone by prostitutes who wore brightly coloured and bold make up thus why it was looked down on and considered forbidden amongst the majority of women. Victorian era beauty and makeup. If you were living in the Victorian era, beauty through the use of makeup was looked down upon once again as various religions cast them a Klimock, Jason (2014) Beyond Beauty: A Philosophic Consideration of Victorian Era Atlantic Salmon Flies. Masters thesis, Concordia University. Preview. This thesis developed out of an attempt to fuse my hobby of tying fishing flies with my academic pursuits in art history. I have made fishing flies based on the especially fancy patterns from the Victorian period for a number of years and was always left wondering why it was they were so fancy. With this as a starting point this thesis seeks to place these objects within the world of craft, in an art historical discourse.