

Moderate Moralism: The Aesthetic Virtue and Defect in Bob Dylan's 'Masters of War' and 'Neighbourhood Bully'

SUMAYA MONAIF ALOTAIBI
*Imam Mohammed bin Saud Islamic University,
Saudi Arabia
sumaya.monaif@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

No one can argue against the fact that the first thing that will keep the reader wanting to complete reading or to reread a literary text is the aesthetic experience that the work affords. This can be noticed when the perceiver faces any successful work of art. There is a sense of amusement and excitement (an aesthetic experience). This experience is emergent, formed as a result of the artistic value of the work. One of the elements comprising the artistic value is the moral dimension. Poems, and indeed any art work may hold moral value which will affect the experience of receiving them. The concept of moral value and its relation to aesthetic value in some art forms has been discussed by many scholars. This paper discusses the merit of Noel Carroll's theory, moderate moralism. It then displays the moral virtues and defects of lyrics from two Bob Dylan's songs, Masters of War and Neighbourhood Bully on the real readers' aesthetic experience by using insights from moderate moralism, to establish the relationships between moral defects and virtues and their aesthetic value.

Keywords: aesthetics; morality; Dylan; reader response; poetry

INTRODUCTION

The Victorian phrase, 'the sister arts' not only describes the interrelationship among music, painting and poetry but, can be extended to describe the interrelationship among all forms of art, since they share the same primary purpose which, is to afford the perceiver with an aesthetic experience. The feeling of what Kant calls the sublime emerges from "the mind of the perceiver" (Behrooz 2016, p. 184). Every dedicated artist's ambition is to afford a considerably impressive aesthetic experience to their audience through their artwork, which will guarantee that their works will be celebrated over time. The first thing that attracts the audience to a work of art and keeps them captivated is the extensive aesthetic experience that they have while engaging with it. This mysterious experience has intrigued both literary and aesthetic scholars in almost all epochs. This interest can be traced back to Aristotle's attentiveness to the audience's reaction to tragedy. In the late twentieth century, Wolfgang Iser's phenomenological theory proposed that instead of burying our heads in the text and scrutinising it, we should take a little step back so we can have a full picture of the expected encounter, which represents the experience that is promoted by its artistic value. He states that "the literary work has two poles, which might be called the artistic and the aesthetic: the artistic refers to the text that is created by the author, and the aesthetic refers to the realisation [of that text] accomplished by the reader" (Iser 1972, p. 279). Despite the late attention that is paid by literary scholars, the aesthetic experience was a top priority of aesthetic theorists and philosophers of art. In fact, in the last two decades, the experience of the perceiver of a work of art has been a key focus for aesthetics (Grethlein 2015, pp. 309-310). Noel Carroll delineates this great interest in aesthetic experience by saying that "[it] is the philosopher's stone, the charm that discloses all the secrets of the philosophy of art" (Carroll 2006, p. 69). Aesthetic theorists have scrutinized the aesthetic experience from many aspects thoroughly.

Works of art are intrinsically valuable since an artwork's most valuable aspect is the experience that the audience undergoes, not the result of this experience. Hence, it is supposed that artworks' long-term social or psychological effects would not be of issue. This

does not indicate an absence of consequences from the aesthetic experience. In fact, the depth of the aesthetic experience can be increased or decreased by an artwork's artistic elements, and how structure and content are represented. Part of this is its moral vision or content, a theme which generated heated debate among the aesthetic theorists in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This debate concerned whether a moral defect can be considered an aesthetic defect or not, which led to the development of many theories on this matter. One of these is moderate moralism, which has as its main notion that sometimes a moral defect is an aesthetic defect and sometimes a moral virtue can be an aesthetic virtue. This paper, grounded in the theory of moderate moralism, which will be discussed in the next section, shows how the moral virtues and flaws of an artwork influence the aesthetic experience of the 'real reader', using Bob Dylan's lyrics, *Masters of War* and *Neighbourhood Bully* as examples. It will use methodology borrowed from Iser's constructs of the implied reader and real reader which originate from his reader-response theory.

MORAL AND AESTHETIC VALUE

In 1996, Noel Carroll's article, *Moderate Moralism*, triggered the interest of many of philosophers of art in its bid to canvas the relationship between morality and art, especially between moral and aesthetic values. The relationship between moral merits or demerits and aesthetic value was consequently much debated, and mostly published in *The British Journal of Aesthetics*. The dominant arguments put forward, apart from those of moderate moralism could be ascribed to ethicism, autonomism, robust immoralism, cognitive immoralism, and anti-theory. What follows is an outline of the theorem for moral moralism, after which each of these alternative arguments are discussed in turn, to summarise this debate.

The main notion associated with moderate moralism, as mentioned above, is the idea that, in a work of art, a moral defect is sometimes an aesthetic defect and that sometimes a moral virtue can be considered an aesthetic virtue (Carroll 1998, p. 419). Carroll pinpoints his argument about the relationship between a moral defect and the aesthetic value of a work of art as follows:

The moral defect argument looks like this:

1. The perspective of the work in question is immoral.
2. Therefore, the work invites us to share a morally defective perspective.
3. Any work that invites us to share a morally defective perspective is, itself, morally defective.
4. Therefore, the work in question is morally defective.

This is the aesthetic defect argument:

1. The perspective of the work in question is immoral.
2. The immorality portrayed subverts the possibility of uptake.
3. Any work that subverts its own genre is aesthetically defective.
4. Therefore, the work in question is aesthetically defective. (Carroll 1998, p. 422)

Carroll states that a moral perspective cannot be considered a moral defect unless it is represented in a way that invites the audience to embrace it. In this case as Carroll says, it "subverts the possibility of uptake"; hence, it is an aesthetic flaw. He elaborates on these arguments as to how moral defects become aesthetic defects in the artwork in many articles that he wrote to defend his argument. He holds that the moral defect will be an aesthetic defect when it prevents the elicitation from the perceiver of certain emotions that are prescribed in the work of art for the perceiver in order to undergo the aesthetic experience (Carroll 2013, p. 271).

In fact, Carrol's main notion about moral merits and flaws concurs with what Wilde announces in the most examined preface of his novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, that "vice and virtue are to the artist materials for an art" (Wilde 1891, p. 3). Carroll agrees that

a moral defect can sometimes be aesthetically meritorious. Moralism or as Wilde calls it, virtue, is not a separate value but interdependent with other components that frame the artistic value of the work of art. Hence, the author suggests terming ‘moderate moralism’ as the equivalent of the term ‘artistic moralism’ and propose this term as a substitute to moderate moralism. In fact, ‘moralism’ itself is a misleading term since it suggests that moralism is there in the work for its own sake, but the fact is that it constitutes part of the artistic value of the work of art. Hence the term ‘artistic moralism’ is to be understood in this sense.

Ethicism is based on the notion that when the artwork represents a culpable attitude, thus having a moral defect, the ethical judgment of that artwork is an essential aspect of aesthetic evaluation (Gaut 1998, p. 182). Ethicist aestheticians assume the potential of the work of art to have an educative value, using this as a basis for ethical criticism. In 2009, Berys Gaut, in *Art, Emotion and Ethics*, stated that ethicism and moderate moralism agree in that sometimes ethical merits are aesthetically pertinent; and they also agree (“contra autonomism”) that sometimes such defects are aesthetically relevant (Gaut 2007, p. 50). He adds that ethicism and moderate moralism disagree over “under what conditions” ethical content can be a part of aesthetic evaluation (Gaut 2007, p. 50). In this book, he also introduces three new arguments on ethicism. The first is the moral beauty argument:

“Applying the moral beauty claim, we get the result that a manifested artist [the author as he represents himself through the attitude that he manifests in the work] with a morally good character has to that extent a beautiful character, and, since his or her character is by definition manifest in the work, the work has to that extent a beautiful feature, and hence an aesthetic value.”
(Gaut 2007, p.115)

The second of Gaut’s arguments is cognitive, arising from the claim that sometimes the moral knowledge that is conveyed through an artwork is aesthetically relevant (Gaut 2007, p. 138). The last is the merited response argument. He argues that an artwork’s ethical content is relevant to its aesthetic value when its ethical attitude is manifested in the responses that the work of art dictates its audience to have (Gaut 2007, p. 50). However, this argument does not hold true since when we evaluate artworks ethically, it means that we are setting ourselves back in time more than five hundred years to during the Middle Ages, an era when works of art were almost the only way to cultivate knowledge and educate people. Hence, it is not expected in contemporary context that any artists provide cognitive or moral knowledge for their audience since that is not the primary purpose of any artwork. Admittedly, some artists may have ideological and educative purposes which they want to transfer to their viewers, which cannot be done without kindling the audience’s interest in the work itself, through the process we call ‘the aesthetic experience’.

Conversely, the autonomists’ point of view, or what is called ‘autonomist moralism’, is the most radical one. They hold that there is no connection between moral value and aesthetic value. In addition, they deem these as utterly discrete realms; hence, a moral defect is never an aesthetic defect in any artwork (Anderson 1998, p. 152). In contradiction to this, George Dickie earlier states that “work’s moral vision [not value] is a part of the work” (Dickie 1964, p. 64). Thus, moral content, if there is any, cannot be called a value in itself since it is a part of the artistic value that shapes the work of art. Therefore, the structure of the artistic value is essentially bound up with other values to ignite the aesthetic experience rather than being *sui generis*. Moreover, in his book, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990), Terry Eagleton delineates the relation between the elements of artworks by contending that “the work of art appears free from the viewpoint of its particular elements, but these elements appear unfree from the standpoint of the law which superstitiously marshals them into unity” (Eagleton 1990, p. 347). So, the artwork is freed from the moral content dominating it’s a

viewer's entire aesthetic experience of it but this moral content cannot be separated from the other elements: a kind of unity creates the whole work of art.

A. W. Eaton presents her position about the relationship between aesthetic value and moral value in her article, "robust immoralism". This is based on the idea that a moral defect is sometimes "an aesthetic achievement" (Eaton 2012, p. 282). Eaton believes that a work of art that contain a moral flaw will be aesthetically meritorious when it drives its audience to adopt this flaw. She provides the example of what she terms "rough hero", a character in an artwork who is morally corrupted (Carroll 2013, p. 377). She deems that the artistic value of artworks she characterizes as *Rough Hero Works* lies in their ability to turn the audience's disapprobation against what they see as immoral into approval and admiration through evoking their sympathy for the rough hero (Carroll 2013, p. 376). She considers this corrupted character as morally defective but at the same time representing the overall work as an artistic achievement in the sense that the artwork makes the audience accept or tolerate something that they will not approve of in real life.

Mathew Kieran is among those who study the relationship between art and cognition. In his participation in the debate about art and morality he includes aesthetic cognitivism in his position, one which he names 'cognitive immoralism'. He articulates his position as:

"The argument is as follows: there are many different conceptions of the human condition, the nature of morality and the rightness, goodness or otherwise of many kinds of actions, attitudes and character traits. One of the things art is particularly good at is enabling us to engage with and understand different ways of conceiving of such matters. Thus, immoral works can afford us knowledge. We can come to understand better how and why people think or feel differently by engaging with works we deem to be immoral."
(Kieran 2003, p. 62)

Thus, he holds that immorality in artworks impart to us a deeper understanding of these moral defects. This could be so, but usually, as Carroll mentioned in his first article, moral cognition occurs as a side reaction in the work of art since, as mentioned, the work of art's primary purpose is to afford the aesthetic experience (Carroll 1996, p. 235).

On the other hand, Daniel Jacobson opposes Carroll's moderate moralism since, in his view, it cannot be considered a "true theory" of the relationship between morality and aesthetic value in artworks (Jacobson 2006, p. 346). He claims what he calls Carroll's "weak claim" does not provide "a general thesis about the relation of moral and aesthetic value" (Jacobson 2006, p. 346). Eaton refutes this claim in her article, *Literature and Morality*, stating that the study of aesthetics is not monolithic. However Jacobson concurs with Kieran that moral defects in a work of art play a role in enhancing our ability to "see things anew" (Jacobson 1996, p. 335).

MODERATE MORALISM IN *NEIGHBORHOOD BULLY* AND *MASTERS OF WAR*

A salient factor in Iser's reader-response theory is his categorisation of the readers of any text into two types: the implied and real reader. Iser describes the implied reader thus: "the term incorporates both the prestructuring of the potential meaning by the text, and the reader's actualisation of this potential through the reading process." (Shi 2013, p. 984). The real reader, in contrast, is the actual reader who will read the text. In Bob Dylan's lyrics, *Masters of War* and *Neighbourhood Bully*, moral virtues and defects apparently affect the aesthetic experience of the real reader. Both lyrics evoke reactions in the real reader toward moral virtues and defects, which illustrates Carroll's main notion about moral and aesthetic value: a moral flaw is sometimes an aesthetic defect in a work of art and sometimes a moral virtue can be considered an aesthetic virtue. In fact, both lyrics are "artworks that are designed to engage us morally" (Carroll 2001, p. 279).

From the opening lines, for the implied reader of Bob Dylan's *magnum opus*, *Masters of War* the atmosphere is set for a strong disapprobation of war makers. Ironically, the opening lines start with the imperative 'come', which is usually used by the military forces to force innocent people to follow their commands. This conveys a sense of condemnation of their deeds by treating the military the same way that they themselves did, when using their power to oppress civilians. Usually, wrongdoers try to hide their identity, but here the implied reader leaves no chance for them to do so by acknowledging that:

"You that build all the guns
You that build the death planes
You that build all the bombs
You that hide behind walls
You that hide behind desks
I just want you to know
I can see through your masks."
(Dylan 2016, p. 55)

The reiteration of the pronoun "you" is powerful in intensifying the meaning that "you", who build the guns, death planes, bombs, are masters of war and "you" are responsible for all the destruction that is caused by it. The implied reader terminates the stanza by asserting his knowledge of the masters of war's real identity even if they try to hide behind "masks". He continues his disapproval by stating that they "never done nothing" (Dylan 2016, p. 55). That indicates that they have not done any good deed. Here he is delineating their worthlessness and besides, that they have destructive intention to ruin the world. Their actions show how they are treating the world like "[their] little toy" (Dylan 2016, p.55). The adjective "little" here is significant since it shows obviously how they do not pay even slight heed to human beings. Often, war wagers do not reveal their real purpose for the war but in this lyric, the implied reader states:

"But I see through your eyes
And I see through your brain
Like I see through the water
That runs down my drain"
(Dylan 2016, p. 55)

He refers to seeing real intentions. The selection and repetition of the word "see" is powerful, since when we see something, it means that we recognise it physically before us, not like when we understand it in our minds. Henceforth, the word "see" here intensifies the meaning of the sentence so that we fully recognise the masters of war's real purpose. Moreover, in the fourth stanza, there is a remarkable image of who is going to pay with their life for the war:

"You hide in your mansion'
As young people's blood
Flows out of their bodies
And is buried in the mud."
(Dylan 2016, p. 55)

The reference to "young people" is noteworthy to convey the notion that those masters of war do not only destroy the present life in this world but also potential life since young people symbolise the future generation who are going to live in it and give birth to more life (Dylan 2016, p. 55). The psychological impact of war manifests clearly on the children; the implied reader goes further and sheds light on the impact of the war on the "unborn and unnamed" (Dylan 2016, p. 55). This disturbing image of the scared child implies the devastating impact of war on human beings. It also implies the horrible deed that is done by those masters. Moreover, the implied reader goes further when he employs religion in his condemnation:

“That even Jesus would never
Forgive what you do.”

(Dylan 2016, p. 56)

After this severe condemnation of the “masters of war”, he hopes “[their] death’ll come soon” (Dylan 2016, p. 56). This, together with the last two lines, that state that s/he will stand over their graves till he makes sure they are dead, represents his disapprobation of war and its masters. This last picture implies burning desire to stop wars everywhere. This entire denunciation is conveyed through a logical structure, aimed at provoking an aesthetic experience in the real reader.

Eileen John states that “works we find morally sympathetic have a statistically greater chance of showing up on ‘most valuable’ lists” (John 2006, p. 332). The moral virtue of pacifism, here illustrated by condemning war affects the reception of the real reader. In fact, the real reader’s viewing of the *Masters of War* asserts John’s and Carroll’s notion, that sometimes a moral virtue can be considered an aesthetic virtue. These lyrics were released in 1963, during the Cold War which is obviously referenced in the following lines:

“You fasten all the triggers
For the others to fire
Then you set back and watch
When the death count gets higher.”

(Dylan 2016, p. 55)

It is a common experience for most people to be morally upset about war and its consequences. Hence, from the beginning of the lyrics, the real reader, by catching the sense of condemnation that the implied reader has toward “[the]masters of war”, feels a state of enjoyment and excitement (an aesthetic experience) yearning to vent anger against those who are responsible for these immoral deeds. The real reader finds comfort in these lyrics. Undergoing this aesthetic experience is not restricted to a certain group of people or a certain historical period. For example, if we go back to during the time of World War I, these lyrics will impart almost the same aesthetic experience for readers disgusted with war, since condemning wars is a universal moral value that anybody embrace. These the lyrics are still celebrated. This aesthetic experience is formed by the moral virtue of condemning war, intertwined with other artistic aspects such as, imagery, and word selection. This partially asserts Kant’s controversial phrase “the beautiful is the symbol of the morally good” (Kant 1790, p. 227).

Comparatively, the real reader’s reception of Dylan’s *Neighbourhood Bully* is quite different, despite the fact that the implied readers of both lyrics are supposed to have certain emotional responses that trigger the aesthetic experience. Firstly, the implied reader’s reception of this work will be discussed, then the real reader’s view. In *Neighbourhood Bully*, the implied reader starts by describing a man “[He’s] just one man”; he is a lonely man among a lot of “enemies” surrounding him and claiming that he is in their land (Dylan 2016, p. 467). Selecting the plural word “enemies” is significant conveying that this person, a bully, is surrounded by many adversaries more powerful than him. He has “no place to escape, no place to run” (Dylan 2016, p. 467). Hence, he is helpless, he “just lives to survive” and yet his enemies “criticise him for being alive” (Dylan 2016, p. 467). As being alive is a basic right for any human being, this line emphasises the miserable life that this bully leads. This picture is supposed to arouse pity and sympathy for this oppressed man. The implied reader goes on delineating the history of this pathetic man who has “been driven out of every land” and seen his family “scattered” (Dylan 2016, p. 467). Even when he tries to do a favour and “[knock] out a lynch mob”, they condemn him (Dylan 2016, p. 467). In order to represent his innocence, the implied reader shows the real intention of the neighbourhood bully’s enemies by employing irony:

“Well, he’s surrounded by pacifists who all want peace
They pray for it nightly that the bloodshed must cease
Now, they wouldn’t hurt a fly. To hurt one they would weep
They lay and they wait for this bully to fall asleep
He’s the neighborhood bully.

(Dylan 2016, p. 467)

The “pacifists” wait for the neighbourhood bully to sleep, which indicates their desire to kill him. In this way, the implied reader wants to convey the idea that the neighbourhood bully is not only innocent, but also surrounded by bitter enemies threatening his life. Hence, he is not a bully, he is a good man who created a garden in the desert without any help. Despite this being a hard task, this bully managed to do so. This indicates the fact that he is a civilized man, but his enemies try to destroy his reputation. They want to strip him of his religion. Even the contract that he signed with them to show his good intention was worthless, showing that he is a peacemaker not a troublemaker. The implied reader ends the lyric with rhetorical questions:

“What has he done to wear so many scars?
Does he change the course of rivers?
Does he pollute the moon and stars?”

(Dylan 2016, p. 468)

The phrase “so many scars” is significant since it implies the sufferings of this innocent man. All this dedication to description in the lyrics is meant to elicit a certain kind of pity and sympathy for this man who seems innocent and at the same time oppressed by cruel people. This content intertwines with the structure to create the artistic value of the lyrics that afford the aesthetic experience.

As mentioned above, the real reader’s reception of *Neighbourhood Bully* is different from that to *Masters of War*. The real reader who is morally sensitive and indeed any reader, will recognize from the opening lines that, the poet refers to Israel specifically when he says, “His enemies say he’s on their land”. Despite the pathetic tone that is spread throughout the lyric, which indicates the invitation of the implied reader to the real reader to view Israel as an innocent country, the real reader cannot receive it in that way since s/he will very likely recall Israeli war crimes like the one that took place in Sabra and Shatilla in 1982, a year before writing these lyrics, and recently in its war against Gaza. Moreover, Hume states that “[w]here vicious manners are described, without being marked with the proper characters of blame and disapprobation, this must be allowed to disfigure the poem, and to be a real deformity” (Hume 1757, p. 232). Peter Lamarque comments on this sentence in saying that “it is not the ‘vicious manners’ themselves that disfigure the poem but the fact that they are endorsed ...by the poet” (Lamarque 2009, p. 290). Hence, Dylan’s endorsement of the Israeli war crimes in this lyric would prevent the ideally morally sensitive reader from finding pleasure in something that he sees as morally obnoxious. So, these lines could not afford aesthetic experience to its morally sensitive real readers because of its moral defect. In fact, these lines remind us of Leni Riefenstahl’s controversial movie, *Triumph of The Will*, that is often discussed by the philosophers of art. It is a propagandist movie for the Nazi party.

Moreover, as M.W. Rowe states “truth is always a virtue and falsehood always a vice” (Lamarque 2009, p. 229). In fact, the moral defect intertwines with the cognitive one. For example, throughout the lyrics, the implied reader conveys the idea that the “neighbourhood bully”, which the real reader recognises as Israel, is an innocent man and a peace maker. However, the real reader, either at the time of the release of the lyric in 1983 or in at the 21st century, is acquainted with all Israeli war crimes such as those mentioned above. Also, the lyrics state that the bully is alone, without any ally, but, in reality, this is not true. Israel is supported by many powerful countries. Hence, the real reader will not accept this proposition. This intertwining between the cognitive and moral defects intensifies the

disapproval of the morally sensitive reader to this work of art. Therefore, instead of reading these lyrics as a source of pleasure and enjoyment, the real reader, especially one who is morally sensitive, finds it a source of disgust, which will prevent her/him from gaining the aesthetic experience that the work of art is supposed to afford.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is obvious that the moral virtue and flaw have its impact on the aesthetic experience of the real reader of Bob Dylan's lyrics, *Masters of War* and *Neighbourhood Bully*. This underscore what Carroll's theory suggests: in a work of art a moral defect is sometimes an aesthetic defect in a work of art and sometimes a moral virtue can be considered as an aesthetic virtue. It appears that *Masters of War* will impart to its real readers the pleasant experience that everyone yearns to get from any work of art. It employs perfectly well a moral value that anybody would hold firmly and that intertwines with the structure to afford a pleasant aesthetic experience. On the other hand, despite the attempt of the implied reader of 'Neighborhood Bully' to elicit sympathy and empathy from its morally sensitive real readers, the latter see the lyric's endorsement of a moral defect as a source of disgust. This precludes affording an aesthetic experience that any real reader hankers to undergo when he reads a literary text. The distinctly different reaction of real readers to both literary works discussed indicate the importance of the aesthetic experience in reading a literary text.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, J. C. & Dean, T. J. (1998) Moderate Autonomism. *British Journal of Aesthetics*. Vol. 38. 150-166.
- Behrooz, N. & Pirnajmuddin, H. (2016) The Ridiculous Sublime in Don DeLillo's. *GEMA Online[®] of Language Studies*. Vol. 16. 183-197.
- Carroll, N. (1996). Moderate Moralism. *British Journal of Aesthetics*. Vol. 36, 223-238.
- Carroll, N. (1998). Moderate Moralism versus Moderate Autonomism. *British Journal of Aesthetics*. Vol. 38, 419-424.
- Carroll, N. (2001). *Beyond Aesthetics Philosophical Essays*. New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Carroll, N. (2006). Aesthetic Experience: A Question of Content. In Kieran, Mathew (Ed.), *Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and The Philosophy of Art* (pp. 69-97). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Carroll, N. (2013) Rough Heroes: A Response to A.W. Eaton. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Vol. 71, 371-376.
- Dickie, G. (1964). The Myth of Aesthetic Attitude. *American Philosophical Quarterly*. Vol. 1, 56-65.
- Dylan, B. (2016). *The Lyrics 1961-2012*. Simon & Schuster.
- Eagleton, T. (1990) *The Ideology of The Aesthetic*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Eaton, A. W. (2012) Robust Immoralism. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Vol. 70, 281- 292.
- Eaton, A. W. (2016) *Literature Morality*. *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of literature*. Noel Carroll and Jon Gibson (Ed.) Routledge Publishing.
- Gaut, B. (1998). The Ethical Criticism of Art. In J. Levinson (Ed.), *Aesthetics and Ethics Essays at the intersection* (pp. 182-203). New York, Cambridge university Press.
- Gaut, B. (2007). *Art, Emotion, and Ethics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Grethlein, J. (2015). Aesthetic Experiences, Ancient and Modern. *The New Literary History*. Vol. 46, 309-333.
- Hume, D. (1757). Of the Standard of Taste. In C. W. Eliott (Ed.), *English Essays from Sir Philip Sidney to Macaulay* (pp. 215-236).
- Iser, W. (1972). The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach. *New Literary History*. Vol 3, 279-299.
- Jacobson, D. (1996) Sir Philip Sidney's Dilemma: On the Ethical Function of Narrative Art. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Vol. 54, 327-336.
- Jacobson, D. (2006). Ethical Criticism and the Vice of Moderation. Kieran, Matthew (Ed.), *Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and The Philosophy of Art* (pp. 342-355). Blackwell publishing Ltd.
- John, E. (2006) Artistic Value and Opportunistic Moralism. Kieran, Matthew (Ed.), *Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and The Philosophy of Art* (pp. 331-341). Blackwell publishing Ltd.
- Kant, I. (1790). *The Critique of Judgement*. Hackett Publishing Company.

- Kieran, M. (2003). Forbidden Knowledge: The Challenge of Immoralism. In Jose Luis Bermudez & Sebastian Gardner (Eds.), *Art and Morality*. Routledge.
- Lamarque, P. (2009). *The Philosophy of Literature*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Shi, Y. (2013). Review of Wolfgang Iser & His Reception Theory. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. Vol. 3, 982-986.
- Wilde, O. (1891). *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Penguin Classics.