tives that depended on it). At the end of his 1893 comments to Bertz about women's education, he expressed confidence that a naturally "conservative" nature would prevent any lasting form of "sexual anarchy" that might result from emancipating women's minds, presumably by reinforcing "natural" roles like motherhood (*Letters* 5:113). The fact that he feels compelled repeatedly to undercut female characters who dare to think and act independently of men suggests a lack of complete confidence in this solution, however. And as history would demonstrate, he was right to worry about whether men could so easily limit women's progress simply to what was convenient for male needs. In the end, whatever comfort Gissing may have taken from his confidence that nature would prevent women from departing from their biologically pre-determined roles as they progressed intellectually was more than outweighed by his pessimism over the inadequacy of cultivation and intellect to guarantee fitness in a newly democratized struggle for survival.

Works Cited/Consulted

Allen, Grant. "Plain Words on the Woman Question." *Fortnightly Review* 52 (1899): 448-58.

_____. "Woman's Place in Nature." *Forum* 7 (May 1889): 258-63.

Coustillas, Pierre. *London and the Life of Literature in Late Victorian England: The Diary of George Gissing, Novelist*. Ed. Pierre Coustillas. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 1978.

Darwin, Charles. *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection and The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex*. New York: Modern Library, 1936.

Gissing, George. *Born in Exile*. 1892. London: Everyman, 1993.

_____. *The Collected Letters of George Gissing*, Ed. Paul Matthiesen, Arthur C. Young, and Pierre Coustillas. 7 vols. Athens: Ohio UP, 1990-

_____. *The Emancipated*. 1890. London: Hogarth, 1985.

_____. *In the Year of the Jubilee*. 1894. London: Everyman, 1994.

_____. *The Letters of George Gissing to Gabrielle Fleury*. Ed. Pierre Coustillas. New York: New York Public Library, 1964.

_____. *New Grub Street*. 1891. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968.

_____. *The Odd Women*. 1893. New York: W. W. Norton, 1971.

_____. *The Whirlpool*. 1897. London: Everyman, 1994.

Greenslade, William. "Women and the Disease of Civilization: George Gissing's *The Whirlpool*." *Victorian Studies* 32.4 (Summer 1989): 507-23.

Grylls, David. *The Paradox of Gissing*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1986.

Halperin, John, *Gissing: A Life in Books*. New York: Oxford UP, 1982.

Harman, Barbara Leah. *The Feminine Political Novel in Victorian England*. Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1998.

Jann, Rosemary. "Darwin and the Anthropologists: Sexual Selection and Its Discontents." *Sexualities in Victorian Britain*. Eds. Andrew H. Miller and James Eli Adams. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1996. 79-95.

Korg, Jacob. *George Gissing: A Critical Biography*. Seattle: U of Washington P, 1963.

Ledger, Sally. *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism in the Fin de Siècle*, Manchester & New York: Manchester UP, 1997.

Romanes, George. "Mental Differences between Men and Women." *Fortnightly Review* 21 (May 1887): 654-66.

Russett, Cynthia Eagle. *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989.

Spencer, Herbert. "The Psychology of the Sexes." *Popular Science Monthly* 4 (1873-74): 30-43.

George Mason University

An Annotated Secondary Bibliography on *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1980-1999)*

Valentina Di Pietro

> Diversity of opinion about a work of art shows that the work is new, complex, and vital. When critics disagree the artist is in accord with himself.
>
> "Preface" to *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

This annotated secondary bibliography on *The Picture of Dorian Gray* surveys criticism published from 1980 to the present, and includes chiefly journal articles and book chapters. The few books dedicated solely to *Dorian Gray* are also summarized. The purpose of this bibliography is to illumine the "diversity of opinion" about the novel. Therefore, the project is directed towards criticism that provides fresh and groundbreaking approaches to a work that remains "new, complex, and vital."

Literary criticism on Oscar Wilde appeared quite late, some thirty years after his death, on November 30, 1900, because of the many scandals that made him an infamous case in English literary history. Public resentment resulting from the trials and Wilde's imprisonment lasted beyond the First World War, when gradually the literary and personal injustice inflicted on the writer was recognized. Early criticism consisted of biographies and analyses of Wilde's

*I would like to thank Clare Colquitt for all her help with this bibliography.

public and private personae.

Representative studies that concentrate on the life, not the art, are Arthur Symons's *Study of Oscar Wilde* and Frank Harris's *Oscar Wilde: His Life and Confessions*, both published in 1930, and George Woodstock's *The Paradox of Oscar Wilde*, which appeared in 1949. Interest in the writing itself grew during the 1950s and 1960s. At this time critics particularly focused on *De Profundis*, Wilde's autobiographical prison confession, and on comedies such as *Lady Windemere's Fan* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. However, as Michael Patrick Gillespie points out, criticism in the fifties often scrutinized the works in order to "reconstruct . . . the events of Wilde's life": "relatively little direct attention" was paid to his other writings, among them *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (*What the World Thinks Me* 24).

The novel, written in 1890, represents one of the most haunting, dazzling, and challenging narratives from the late nineteenth century. *Dorian Gray* wittily mirrors the vices and virtues of the Victorian age. The title character at once embodies the fashionable, refined, upper class gentleman and at the same time the fin-de-siècle, pleasure-seeking dandy. Under the evil influence of Lord Henry Wotton, his friend and mentor, Dorian Gray sells his soul for beauty and youth, and spends eighteen years devoting his life to pleasure while remaining handsome and healthy. However, the portrait of Dorian Gray as a young man, which is painted by his friend Basil Hallward, grows ugly and old. Increasingly threatened by his own picture, which incarnates his moral degradation, Dorian ultimately stabs it and dies. As his corpse rapidly grows "withered, wrinkled, and loathsome," the image becomes beautiful and young once again (274).

The Picture of Dorian Gray is of crucial importance because it represents Wilde's reflection on the relation between art and life, and his defiant "art for art's sake" credo. In fact, Wilde proposed himself as the spokesman for aestheticism, according to which the aim of art is to create works that are neither useful nor moral but simply beautiful. Unfortunately, Victorian society, overly concerned with the didactic function of literature, disagreed with the Irish writer's aesthetics. Wilde's contemporaries judged *Dorian Gray* harshly, finding the novel decadent, scabrous, and immoral because of the way in which Wilde foregrounds a young man's moral degeneration. As Norbert Kohl argues, Wilde is "a symbol of the conflict between the middle-class values of the nineteenth century and the artist's need for freedom, and his name will always be linked to the attempt to reconcile the individual's desire for self-realization with the public pressure to conform to social conventions" (1). Critical disdain towards *Dorian Gray* symbolized the anger aroused by a work of art that did not cater to Victorian society's values but revealed its insecurities and contradictions instead.

Wilde's tendency to blend art and life mirrors the obsession of early critics who initially focused excessively on the author rather than on the novel itself. In fact, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* has consistently stimulated curiosity about the author. Only in the 1980s did critics distance themselves from biographical criticism and approach Wilde's narrative from other theoretical perspectives, a shift that, Gillespie explains, was long overdue (*What the World Thinks of Me* 25-26). In this way critics have come to discover unexpected possibilities of interpretation.

Nevertheless, many critics like Dominic Manganiello and Elaine Smith still remain interested in Wilde's biography and focus their work on the relationship between Wilde's art and life. By contrast, Barri Gold, Deborah McCollister, and Liang-ya Liou concentrate on the male love triangle composed of Dorian Gray, Basil Hallward, and Lord Henry Wotton, emphasizing the morbid idolatry and the manipulative domination that characterize their relationship. Kerry Powell analyzes the role played by Dorian's picture; he considers Wilde's choice of the word *picture* instead of *portrait* as integrally related to the symbolism that pervades the novel. A related topic concerns the division of Dorian's character into his body (Dorian himself) and his soul (the portrait), as two entities that act independently.

Another major subject addressed by William Buckler and Joyce Carol Oates is the "immorality" of the novel. When *The Picture of Dorian Gray* first appeared in July 1890, it gained immediate notoriety for being "dirty, unclean, and poisonous," as the *Daily Chronicle* put it (qtd. in *Critical Heritage* 72). Wilde countered that his novel was not supposed to be moral but simply a beautiful work of art: "There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all" ("Preface").

Especially helpful is criticism by Gillespie, who is among the few to have dedicated entire books to *Dorian Gray*. According to this critic, the enduring appeal of the novel is due to the twists and turns in the plot, as when Dorian murders his friend Basil; to the intriguing and witty conversations that Wilde records between Henry and Dorian; and to the author's inclusion of supernatural phenomena, such as the metamorphoses of the portrait.

Norbert Kohl has also ventured several hypotheses that explain with admirable precision why Wilde's novel continues to inspire critics and readers:

> Perhaps the fascination lies in the original and highly dramatic mixture of supernatural fairy-tale—the magic portrait—and conventional moral issues. Or perhaps its source is the timeless fear of old age, with the dream of lasting youth and beauty. Or perhaps Dorian Gray's quest for unlimited and largely amoral enjoyment of all life's pleasures, together with the preservation of his good looks, makes him a symbol that represents the repressed longings and hidden desires with which all readers can identify themselves: to defy the ravages of time without ever changing, to live without growing old, to enjoy without having to bear the marks of one's dissolution.
>
> (139)

In *The Picture of Dorian Gray* fiction and reality, art and life, meld as Oscar Wilde prophesied. With skillful strokes of the brush, he masterfully composed a picture which generations from the past rejected with horror, and generations today enjoy with awe.

Most of the articles and book chapters annotated below were located through the *MLA International Bibliography* and *The Annual Bibliography of English Language and Liter-*

ature. Articles only peripherally concerned with *The Picture of Dorian Gray* were omitted.

Beckson, Karl. "Wilde's Autobiographical Signature in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *Victorian Newsletter* No. 69 (Spring 1986): 30-32.
Although the novel should not be read as an autobiography, recognition of its confessional qualities allows for greater understanding of Wilde's genius. Beckson emphasizes that Wilde's strong presence and "autobiographical signature" in *Dorian Gray* emerge particularly with the author's constant use of "the adjective *wild* (appearing twenty-seven times), the comparative form *wilder* (appearing twice), and the adverb *wildly* (appearing five times)" (30).

Bowlby, Rachel. "Promoting *Dorian Gray*." *Oxford Literary Review* 9 (1987): 147-62.
Focuses on Lord Henry Wotton's statement that "A cigarette is the perfect type of the perfect pleasure. It is exquisite, and it leaves one unsatisfied" (*Dorian Gray* 90). Wilde's novel and the cigarette in some ways function like advertisements since both promote "the perfect type of the perfect pleasure." The cigarette represents the perfect pleasure because it leaves the smoker perpetually unsatisfied; likewise, Dorian embodies the wish for never-ending pleasure that becomes true: "Dorian is like a walking advertisement, living proof that youth and beauty can, after all, be eternal" (152).

Brinkley, Edward S. "Homosexuality as (Anti) Illness: Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and Gabriele d'Annunzio's *Il Piacere*." *Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature* 22 (1998): 61-82.
Draws an original parallel between Wilde's and d'Annunzio's respective novels. The two female characters in the Italian narrative and the homosexual male in the English novel succumb because they threaten the heterosexist hegemony. According to Brinkley, the annihilation of Dorian Gray, the effeminate dandy, and the subjugation of d'Annunzio's Elena Muti and Maria Ferres to the superior male hero constitute "literary fascism" (80). Such fascism is necessary for the heterosexist social order "to maintain cultural order [and] to re-establish claim to cultural hegemony" (79).

Brînzeu, Pia. "Dorian Gray's Rooms and Cyberspace." Sandulescu 21-29.
Interprets the settings in the novel (e.g. the living room, garden, studio, attic, and clubs) as "the translation of linguistic structures into mental images, i.e. the transformation of words as verbal signs into images as iconic signs" (26). This "virtual" reading enables the reader to visualize the novel from the perspectives of the characters themselves. In this way, the reader follows the developing narrative from a three-dimensional perspective.

Buckler, William E. "*The Picture of Dorian Gray*: An Essay in Aesthetic Exploration." *Victorian Institute Journal* 18 (1990): 135-74.
Analyzes Wilde's aesthetic principles regarding "style, plot, construction, [and] psychology" (135). The Irish writer expected his readers to approach the novel from and artistic, not an ethical, point of view. The reader's task is to analyze the role of beauty, pleasure, and uselessness because virtue and vice, good characters and bad characters, are easily identified as such in the narration. Nevertheless, Dorian's life is undeniably a moral tragedy because, as Buckler asserts, "it is impossible to tell a story about the actions of human beings, real or imaginary, without a moral inhering in those actions" (136).

Carens, Timothy L. "Restyling the Secret of the Opium Den." *Reading Wilde: Querying Spaces*. New York: New York UP, 1995. 65-75.
In *Dorian Gray* Wilde dexterously refashions the "opium den narration," a genre designed to thrill and impress the late-nineteenth-century reader. Stresses, however, that Wilde "selects only those features [e.g., dangerous journeys in the East End, dark streets, mysterious individuals, opium preparation and smoking] of the conventional opium den plot that serve his own aesthetic" (72).

D'Alessandro, Jean M. Ellis. "Intellectual Word Play in Wilde's Characterization of Henry Wotton." Sandulescu, 61-75.
Argues that Dorian Gray's life is the material realization of Lord Henry's diabolic dialectic: "Under the influence of Lord Henry's wordplay, Dorian's innocence becomes experience, his kindness cruelty, his godliness devilishness" (72-73). When Dorian lives his life according to Lord Henry's evil and cynical anecdotes, his personal tragedy ensues.

Danson, Lawrence. "'Each Man Kills the Thing He Loves': The Impermanence of Personality in Oscar Wilde." Sandulescu 82-93.
Proposes a theory about Dorian Gray's ambiguous personality and multiple nature. Wilde rejects the scientific definition of personality as "the physiological unit of organic functions" (86) and advances his own view that designates "a special person with qualities different in kind or degree from those who, while demonstrably persons, are not quite personalities" (86). Dorian embodies this impermanent personality that charms and frightens the characters as well as the readers.

Dawson, Terence. "The Dandy in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: Towards an Archetypal Theory of Wit." *New Companion: A Journal of Comparative and General Literary Studies* 3 (1987): 133-42.
A detailed study of Dorian as dandy. Dawson finds common features connecting the dandy and the mythological figures of Dionysus and Apollo, including eternal youth, refreshing beauty, and power. He also affirms that Dorian the dandy is by no means the indolent, shabby, good-for-nothing social parasite condemned by prudish Victorians, but a charming, "supernatural," highly cultured creature.

Dewsnap, Desmond. "Oscar Wilde: Persona, Publicity, and the Fin-de-Siècle Author." *Postscript* 14 (1997): 105-23.

"Wilde's novel is best seen as an experiment in late Victorian relationships among author, audience, and text: observing Wilde's experiment allows us to observe the ways in which the poses of the modernist artist grew out of the structures of the turn-of-the-century cultural scene" (106). During the late nineteenth century, the relation between author and audience was foregrounded because literature was supposed to promote the middle-class values. Analyzes *Dorian Gray* as a product of the self-absorbed Wilde isolated in his "off-limits" studio and of the flamboyant aesthete camouflaged among Victorian gentlemen.

Elimimian, Isaac. "'Preface' to *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in Light of Wilde's Literary Criticism." *Modern Fiction Studies* 26 (1980): 625-28.
Analyzes Wilde's statements made in the "Preface" to *Dorian Gray*, prominent among them the idea that an author does not need to be sincere, coherent, and moral as long as he serves his artistic credo. Elimimiam also clarifies that early critics were particularly hostile towards *Dorian Gray* because they failed to notice the ways in which Wilde was truthful to himself and to his art.

Eusebi, Madame. "The Devil in *Dorian Gray*." *Mythes, Croyances et Religions dans le Monde Anglo-Saxon* 5 (1987): 83-89.
Examines the complex nature of evil in *Dorian Gray*. Wilde's representation of evil, which recalls biblical representations of the fall, is nonetheless quite unique. Evil acts subtly, slowly, and imperceptibly, because it is masked by Dorian's beauty, grace, and youth. The novel is about the devil whose presence is mediated by an enchanted heavenly atmosphere.

Gagnier, Regenia. *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1986. 49-99.
Chapter 2, a new historicist interpretation of the novel, focuses on the relation between Wilde's text and the political, social, and cultural context. In *Dorian Gray*, Wilde offers an alternative aesthetic ideology to Victorian middle-class conformism. Gagnier sees in this dialectic the principal cause of the harsh and offensive criticism that followed the publication of the novel. Reads Dorian Gray as an outsider whose sin was condemned by the ruling middle class. He represents the aesthete devoted to beauty and pleasure, not the Victorian gentleman concerned about social respectability and material success whose "morality" is a pose.

Gall, John. "The Pregnant Death of Dorian Gray." *Victorian Newsletter* No. 86 (Fall 1992): 55-57.
Dorian Gray represents "the merging of opposites through the breakdown of boundaries" (55). In the novel death and life, comedy and tragedy, actor and spectator blend indistinctly. According to this revolutionary point of view, Gall emphasizes themes of metamorphosis and change as crucial as the plot.

Gillespie, Michael Patrick. "Ethics and Aesthetics in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." Sandulescu 137-55.
Explores the "relation between an individual's spiritual disposition and the pattern of behavior that he chooses to follow" (137). Wilde unpretentiously proposes the aesthetic pattern (new Hedonism) as an alternative to commonplace values. *Dorian Gray* represents the new concept of "subjective ethics" (141) that validate not only Wilde's own values but the reader's as well.

_____. *"The Picture of Dorian Gray": What the World Thinks Me*. Twayne's Masterwork Studies Series No. 145. New York: Twayne, 1995.
An introductory overview designed for a general readership that focuses on the social, cultural, and political environment in which the novel was written, and on Wilde's ambiguous relationship with Victorian society. Surveys literary criticism from the time the novel appeared to the present; documents the wide-ranging theoretical approaches to the narrative and examines Wilde's narration technique and fundamental themes.

_____. "Picturing Dorian Gray: Resistant Readings in Wilde's Novel." *ELT* 35 (1992): 7-25.
To approach the novel exclusively from an intellectual perspective is "conservative" (7). Wilde's wit, wisdom, and art further open-ended interpretations. To read the novel as Wilde's mutiny against Victorian society, as his literary experiment in melding art and life, or simply as his constant attempt to do things just for the pleasure of it, is valuable but limiting. Reading the novel from one point of view alone denies the ways in which Wilde's work resists interpretive closure: "[Wilde] uses the complexity of his own personality to call attention to the multiplicity of possible responses to his work" (12).

Gold, Barri J. "The Domination of Dorian Gray." *Victorian Newsletter* No. 91 (Spring 1997): 27-30.
Analyzes the domination, psychological influence, and warped interdependence that bond Dorian, Basil, and Lord Henry. The characters are mutually/reciprocally subjugated, and one is the parasite of the other. Basil exists because of Dorian, Dorian grows in the shadow of Lord Henry, and Lord Henry lives vicariously through Dorian's new hedonist existence.

Gonzales, Antonio B. "The Mirror of Narcissus in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." Sandulescu 1-12.
Dorian Gray recalls Ovid's myth of Narcissus, who is only "able to love his own reflection, the fugacity of a shadow" (1). The picture's domination over Dorian is a metaphor for the loss of identity and personality in Victorian society: "Narcissus, as an aesthetic symbol, epitomizes from an anthropological and mythological perspective the search for identity, the impossible wish to integrate oneself with his own reflection" (3).

Hassler, Terri A. "The Physiological Determinism Debate in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *Victorian Newsletter* No, 84 (Fall 1993): 31-35.
This branch of determinism claims that events occur according to the biological properties of the body and the material world. In *Dorian Gray* this "physiological determinism" occurs when the title character loses his soul to remain just a body. His entire existence is reduced to "vibrations, nerves, fibres, cells" (32). This is why once Dorian's physical impulses are over, his life miserably ends.

Kohl, Norbert. *Oscar Wilde: The Works of a Conformist Rebel*. Trans. David Henry Wilson. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989. 138-75.

Chapter 5 successfully interlaces criticism of the novel with discussion of the author's life. Analyzes thoroughly the plot, characters, main themes, criticism, social and cultural background. Useful as an introductory text for beginning readers.

Lawler, Donald. "The Gothic Wilde." Sandulescu 249-68.

Explains how Wilde incorporated Gothic features into *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Salomé*, and *The Sphinx*. Wilde's experiential Gothicism is present when Dorian sells his soul and his portrait gruesomely deteriorates. Indeed, Wilde masterfully adapted the Gothic tradition in his novel: "In doing so, Wilde displayed his exceptional powers of inventive synthesis, theatrical intuition, and stylistic ingenuity to their best advantage" (250).

_____. *An Inquiry into Oscar Wilde's Revisions of "The Picture of Dorian Gray."* New York: Garland, 1988.

The Picture of Dorian Gray first appeared in June 1890 in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*. Wilde revised his work twice before its publication in book form in April 1891. The book version was amplified with the "Preface" and six new chapters. Lawler clarifies that Wilde's revisions were not merely formal but motivated by the necessity to "suppress an underlying moral which Wilde considered too obvious and distracting" (2). The main changes in the narrative such as the story of Dorian's origins, the detailed description of his life, the James Vane episode, are crucial because they affect the aesthetic nature and message of the novel.

Liou, Liang-ya. "The Politics of a Transgressive Desire: Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *SEL* 6 (1994): 101-25.

Emphasizes Wilde's intent to "denaturalize" heterosexuality and masculinity. *Dorian Gray* is Wilde's means to legitimate homosexuality, wrongly considered synonymous with sodomy, when it was, in his view, a sign of "human progress" and evolution. Both Dorian's morbid narcissism and his lustful relationship with the other male characters incarnate Wilde's criticism of the hypocritical Victorian male community.

Manganiello, Dominic. "Ethics and Aesthetics in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 9 (1983): 25-33.

Foregrounds the controversy between morality and art (ethics and aesthetics) that led the press to attack Wilde's novel as corrupt and immoral. In fact, Wilde faulted his critics, insisting that *Dorian Gray* be read from an artistic not a moral perspective. *Dorian Gray* is the story of a beautiful young man and not a spotless soul. The crucial distinction between a novel without a moral and an immoral novel should not be overlooked.

McCollister, Deborah. "Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *Explicator* 54 (1995): 17-20.

McCollister concentrates on a fundamental theme of the novel: human power. The relationship between the three main characters is based on the varying degrees of power that the three characters exercise: ". . . Wilde strongly suggests that most of the characters possess at least some power to charm, as well as some vulnerability to mesmeric spells. Ultimately, however, no one has complete control; all humans are subject to even higher powers than their own" (20). Basil's murder, Lord Henry's passive existence, and Dorian's death prove that there are neither winners nor losers in this power game.

Molino, Michael R. "Narrator/Voice in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: A Question of Consistency, Control, and Perspective." *Journal of Irish Literature* 20 (1991): 6-18.

Analyzes Wilde's voice in the novel. The narrator's perspective, along with the reader's, changes as the plot develops. First-person and third-person narrations constantly alternate to enable the reader to look at the events from multiple points of view.

Murlanch, Isabel. "Taking Risks: A Reading of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *Miscellanea: A Journal of English and American Studies* 15 (1994): 219-34.

Dorian Gray represents each individual's innermost desire for lasting beauty, youth, and the capacity to live life intensely. The novel prompts readers to question themselves and to admit their sympathy for Dorian. Wilde assumed that Dorian incarnated uninhibited human nature. As the author stated in the "Preface": "It is the spectator, and not life, that art really mirrors."

Murray, Isobel. "Oscar Wilde in His Literary Element: Yet Another Source for *Dorian Gray*." Sandulescu 283-96.

Identifies Louisa May Alcott's *A Modern Mephistopheles* (1877) as a possible source for Wilde's novel. Wilde was acquainted with Alcott, whom he met five years after she published *A Modern Mephistopheles* anonymously. Although it is not known that Wilde read Alcott's novel, the resemblance between Lord Henry Wotton and Jasper Helwyze, and between Dorian Gray and Felix Canaris, along with the writer's shared Faustian theme, is quite evident.

Nassaar, Christopher S. "*The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Lady Windermere's Fan*." *Explicator* 54 (1995): 20-24.

Through the tragedy of *Dorian Gray* and the comedy of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, Wilde reveals the morality and decadence of his time: ". . . Dorian's development mirrors the drift of Victorian life and art towards corruption. In *Lady Windermere's Fan*, this same drift . . . is simultaneously obscured by being cast in the mold of social comedy" (21). The characters in both works embody the degeneration of the human being, who develops from "childlike innocence to a state of serious depravity" (20).

_____. "Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and *Salomé*." *Explicator* 53 (1995): 217-20.

Compares Jack the Ripper, Dorian Gray, and Salomé to hypothesize that Wilde must have read about the killer of prostitutes because of the gruesome violence in his own novel and play. In *Dorian Gray* the meticulous description of Basil's homicide and the chemical dis-

solution of his body suggest Wilde's knowledge of Jack the ripper's serial murders.

Oates, Joyce Carol. "*The Picture of Dorian Gray*: Wilde's Parable of the Fall." *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1980): 419-28.
"The novel's power lies in the interstices of its parable . . ." (419). Although Wilde's preface states that *Dorian Gray* contains no moral, Oates assumes that the novel foregrounds the struggle between Good and Evil. In the opening scenes in Dorian's garden, Basil incarnates the creator, Dorian the creature, and Lord Henry the devil. Oates urges readers to read *Dorian Gray* "as a serious meditation upon the moral role of the artist," an issue that deeply concerned Wilde.

Ostermann, Sylvia. "Eros and Thanatos in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." Sandulescu 297-304.
Examines the Hellenic concepts of love and death, particularly death as a unique and drastic escape for prohibited love. In Wilde's novel, Basil dies by the hand of his beloved Dorian, and Dorian dies by his own hand, i.e. the one he loves most. Death is both the ultimate solution to hopeless love and an inevitable punishment for "the excessive love or admiration for oneself" (299).

Powell, Kerry. "Tom, Dick, and Dorian Gray: Magic-Picture Mania in Late Victorian Fiction." *Philological Quarterly* 62 (1983): 147-70.
In Dorian Gray's story we recognize familiar issues in late-nineteenth-century literature such as the "relation between art and life, the Faustian impulse, and the decision of good and evil in human personality" (151). However, the novel excels for its originality because Wilde shaped traditional elements without being ordinary. Powell emphasizes Wilde's genius in creating a novel that, although based on a literary staple of the day, the magic-portrait story, nonetheless became a masterpiece: "By the 1880s the number of magic-portrait stories swelled to the proportions of a deluge" (151). Wilde's aim was "to show his tedious contemporaries where they had erred and how such a tale *ought* to be written" (153). Accordingly, he "shaped to his own purposes the elements of the tradition he inherited. His predecessors had generally employed the motif of the altered picture or that of the changed model, but not both" (159).

Rashkin, Esther. "Art and Symptom: A Portrait of Child Abuse in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. *Modern Philology* 95 (1997): 68-80.
Approaches the text psychoanalytically, with specific reference to Sandor Ferenczi's *Confusion of Tongues between Adults and Child* (1933), which studies "pathological behaviors in certain children who have been psychologically aggressed" (72). Rashkin proposes that Dorian Gray's tragedy exemplifies the harmful effects of adult psychological abuse on young minds. With varying intensity and awareness, Basil, Lord Henry, and Dorian's grandfather play devastating roles in Dorian's life because of their destructive psychological influence on him.

Sandulescu, C. George, ed. *Rediscovering Oscar Wilde*. Gerrards Cross Publisher, 1994.
A collection of essays on Wilde's canon based on papers presented at the 1993 Fifth International Conference of the Princess Grace Irish Library in Monaco. See specific entries.

Seagrott, Heather. "Hard Science, Soft Psychology, and Amorphous Art in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *SEL* 38 (1998): 741-59.
Science and human psychology were the subjects of crucial debates during the Victorian age. Wilde was particularly interested in the relationship between art and science, and in *Dorian Gray* he suggested that they cannot be reconciled: "Wilde's novel is a most unscientific text: despite Dorian's extended survey of stimulation and response, he fails to produce clear-cut findings" (758), which is what science expects.

Smith, Elaine. "Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: A Decadent Portrait of Life in Art—or Art in Life." *Publications of the Arkansas Philological Association* 19 (1993): 23-31.
Underlines how Wilde's own history reflects the precarious boundary between art an life. Wilde's novel was used as evidence against him during the trials, after which he was condemned to hard labor. Smith finds a compelling resemblance between creator and creature. In fact, Dorian's ruin depends on "a portrait [that] exercises a demoniac control over the life of the one who sat for it" (23).

Witt, Amanda. "Blushings and Palings: The Body as Text in Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*." *Publications of the Arkansas Philological Association* 19 (1993): 85-96.
Witt proposes that readers should analyze Dorian Gray not as an artificial, surreal creature but as a human being who "walks and breathes and talks," and who has living characteristics . . . such as blushes, flushes, and palings" (84). The detailed analysis of Dorian's physical metamorphosis mirrors the progressive shifts of his spiritual nature: "The spreading colors in the picture and in the world surrounding Dorian demonstrate the contagion of his evil; for these colors echo the colors of Dorian's body, which in turn reveals his true moral state. Far from being static art, Dorian Gray's body dynamically lives art" (95). "White," "pallid," and pale" symbolize shades of his innocence; "scarlet," "red," "blood-stained," and "black" those of his wicked heart.

Works Cited

Beckson, Karl, ed. *Oscar Wilde: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge, 1970.

Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. New York: Modern Library, 1998.

San Diego State University