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Aesthetics and ethics

This major collection of new essays stands at the border of aesthetics and ethics and deals with charged issues of practical import: art and morality, the ethics of taste, censorship, and the objectivity of aesthetic judgments. As such its potential interest is by no means confined to professional philosophers; it should also appeal to art historians and critics, literary theorists, and students of film and the media.

Prominent philosophers in both aesthetics and ethics tackle a wide array of issues. Some of the questions explored include: Can art be morally enlightening and, if so, how? If a work of art is morally better, does that make it better as art? Is morally deficient art to be shunned or even censored? Do subjects of artworks have rights as to how they are represented? Do artists have duties as artists as well as duties as human beings and, if so, to whom? How much tension is there between the demands of art and the demands of life? Is there such a thing as a personal aesthetic and, if so, what justification does it stand in need of? How much agreement can we expect to achieve in ethical and aesthetic matters as compared with scientific ones?

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Aesthetics and ethics

Essays at the intersection

Edited by
JERROLD LEVINSON
University of Maryland, College Park



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Editor's acknowledgments

The core of this collection, historically speaking, is a group of six papers that were delivered at a conference, "Aesthetics and Ethics," organized at College Park in April 1994. They are the essays by Noël Carroll, Ted Cohen, Gregory Currie, Karen Hanson, Richard Miller, and Lynne Tirrell. The essays by Arthur Danto, Mary Devereaux, Berys Gaut, and Peter Railton were solicited after the conference, with an eye to complementing what was already in place.

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