

INTRODUCTION

Dorota Glowacka and Stephen Boos

The quarrel between philosophy and art, beauty and morality, art and politics, and aesthetics and ethics in Western culture is symbolized in Plato's *Republic* by the denigration and expulsion of poets from the polis. Poetry, Plato's Socrates says, misrepresents gods, heroes, and the truth. The symbolic return of the exiled poets is found in Aristotle's rehabilitation of mimesis and his defense of the moral and epistemological value of art. According to Aristotle, tragedy is not only concerned with universal truth, but its cathartic effect makes better citizens. Since antiquity, the dispute between art and ethics has assumed at least two principal forms: art is either regarded as subservient to ethical, religious, and philosophical spheres or, as in Nietzsche and Heidegger, it constitutes an autonomous, self-sufficient aesthetic realm lying beyond good and evil, a sphere beyond political, social, and ethical concerns.

If, in classical antiquity, the forms of art and religion are indistinguishable, in the High Middle Ages, art becomes the handmaiden of religion. The medieval poet is still religious but acknowledges the limitations of his craft, as does Dante in the *Divine Comedy*, by pointing to a religious sphere lying beyond his imaginative and poetic grasp. In the Renaissance period, alongside a developing secularism and worldliness, art initiates the process of liberating itself from religion. Art is no longer merely subservient to either philosophy or religion but comes to possess an irreducible and unique status. The emergence of an autonomous, self-sufficient realm of the aesthetic is quickly followed, particularly in the eighteenth century, by the establishment of the modern science of aesthetics. Although A.G. Baumgarten, in his *Aesthetica*, is perhaps the first to characterize the aesthetic as a perceptual knowledge mediate between theoretical and practical knowledge, it is Kant who, in his *Critique of Judgment*, best articulates the problematic nature of the relationship between beauty and the realm of truth and moral goodness. According to Kant, aesthetic judgment is not only distinct from understanding and reason but also forms a bridge

between the concepts of nature and freedom. Kant elevates aesthetic judgment above the realm of the merely empirical and emphasizes its reliance on the free play of the faculties of imagination and understanding, unbounded by the determinate concepts of either theoretical or practical reason. At the same time, the aesthetic experience of the sublime is thought by Kant to awaken in us a feeling of our supersensible destination (i.e., the idea of the morally good). This link between the sublime and a higher good, between aesthetics and morality, remains incomplete in Kant, since the concurrence between beauty and morality, as Kant says, works only by analogy, in the manner of “as if.”

The primacy of aesthetics over theoretical and ethical life is explicit in the aesthetic theories of many nineteenth-century philosophers and artists. Friedrich Schiller, writing shortly after the French Revolution, argues that aesthetic education alone enables humanity to make the transition from nature to moral and political freedom. Friedrich Schlegel, on the other hand, writes about the need for a new mythology, the most artful of all works of art, which will be forged out of the depths of the modern spirit of idealism. Arthur Schopenhauer regards visual works of art as representations of the Ideas and music as the direct expression of a metaphysical Will.

The metaphysically privileged role assigned to art and aesthetics over morality and ethics is perhaps most pronounced in the philosophical theory of Friedrich Nietzsche. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche writes that art and not morality is the truly metaphysical activity of mankind, and that the existence of the world can be legitimated only on aesthetic grounds. Martin Heidegger and Theodor Adorno, on the other hand, regard art as a way of overcoming the inherent limitations of modern technological society. Heidegger conceives the fine arts as a form of *aletheia*, a way of “revealing,” which can “save” us from the twofold danger of modern technology, whereas Adorno, for whom genuine works of art are unintelligible wholes, turns to the avant-garde for the critique of advanced capitalist society.

According to traditional views, therefore, ethics and aesthetics are either autonomous and separate from each other or one is subservient to the other. The chapters in *Between Ethics and Aesthetics: Crossing the Boundaries* question the legitimacy of these well established formulations and insist on the need to rethink the existing definitions of aesthetics and ethics and the relations between them. Contemporary ethical philosophers have increasingly recognized the heterogeneity inherent in ethics, which is irreducible to the totalizing claims of any given system of thought.

Perhaps one of the strongest indicators of these changing trends in contemporary thought is the growing interest, among scholars from various disciplines, in the work of Emmanuel Levinas. Against traditional formulations of ethics as a normative project grounded in the primacy of the I, Levinas defines the ethical as a moral responsibility for the well-being of the Other. According

to Levinas, the very notions of subjectivity, consciousness, and freedom already presuppose an infinite, nondischargeable debt to the Other. For Levinas, Western representational paradigms are the project of an egological, imperial subject, while aesthetics, traditionally understood as producing a likeness of the Other, colludes in the appropriation of Otherness by the same. Levinas himself has never attempted to redefine aesthetics within the parameters of the Other, yet his critique has precipitated various searches for a possibility of an “other” aesthetics, capable of accommodating radical alterity without reducing it to the measure of the same. Poststructuralist thinkers such as Jean-François Lyotard, Jean-Luc Nancy, Maurice Blanchot, and Jacques Derrida, often directly influenced by Levinas’ “ethics of ethics,” have searched for ways to articulate the exteriority that transcends thought itself and therefore remains nonrepresentable. Also, as shown by several authors in this book, some of the most powerful explorations of the possibilities to accord visibility and voice to Otherness that eludes Western representational practices have recently taken place within feminist theory, in the works of authors such as Luce Irigaray, Gayatri Spivak, Drucilla Cornell and bell hooks.

The concern for the connection—and divide—between ethics and aesthetics is one of the most important issues in contemporary theoretical debates. This book has been conceived as a forum for the presentation of current discussion on ethics and aesthetics but also as a site where traditional formulations of these notions are being contested. In the editors’ view, the questions arising from modernity’s crisis of representation necessitate an ongoing, interdisciplinary discussion about the intersections of ethics and aesthetics. To this end, *Between Ethics and Aesthetics* promotes a plurality of approaches from disciplines such as philosophy, literary theory, social and political thought, postcolonial theory, women’s studies, cultural studies, theology, art history, and Holocaust studies. These polyvalent voices converse and converge but just as often resist one another. Such a structure is designed to set in motion interpretive practices that challenge the very notion of disciplinarity and discrete disciplinary boundaries. As a result, the discursive register of the essays is broad, including specialized theoretical discussions, close readings of literary texts and analyses of artworks, and personal statements and narratives by artists and other people involved in the processes of artistic production and promotion of the arts. It is our hope that this infringement on the principle of congruity, consistency, and decorum will spur further discussions about the applicability of current philosophical debates on ethics and aesthetics to concrete artistic and literary practices.

The book is divided into four thematic sections, each of which explores the boundaries between ethics and aesthetics from a particular angle, asking questions about the relations between philosophical reflection and art, aesthetics and the thought of the Other, aesthetics and politics, and ethics and artistic practice, respectively.

The chapters in Part 1, “Rethinking Ethics and Aesthetics: Between Philosophy and Art,” return to the works of Kant, Schiller, and Hegel and reconsider central issues of aesthetics such as the conjunction between beauty and morality versus the disinterestedness of aesthetic judgment, the relation between philosophy and art and thus the very possibility of aesthetics, and, importantly, the immanently gendered nature of philosophical reflection on ethics and aesthetics. In the first chapter, “Rethinking the Aesthetic: Kant, Schiller, and Hegel,” Stephen Boos examines the history of modern aesthetics and argues that the modern aesthetic sensibility should be viewed as the reconciling synthesis of practical and theoretical life, duty and inclination, and reason and feeling. Kant, Boos claims, acknowledges the mediating role of the aesthetic in the system of reason but tends to emphasize the separation of aesthetics from ethics. It is Schiller, rather, who establishes the primacy of aesthetics in intellectual and practical life. Following Schiller, Hegel elevates the aesthetic into the realm of religion and philosophy. Art and philosophy, Hegel asserts, both engage in acts of reconciling the highest oppositions and contradictions in human existence, although philosophy is “higher” than art in this endeavor. In a deconstructive gesture, Boos locates in Hegel’s reflection on aesthetics, specifically in the famous discussion of *Antigone*, a moment when the task of art is not reconciliation and synthesis of opposites but exposition of contradiction and paradox.

While Boos claims that the task of *Antigone* may be to expose contradiction and paradox at the core of the polis, Tina Chanter, in Chapter 2, “Looking at Hegel’s *Antigone* through Irigaray’s *Speculum*,” argues that Luce Irigaray’s reading of Hegel enables us to see in the mythical character of Antigone a new ethics of sexual difference that would no longer regard her as a political outlaw but instead acknowledge the ethical legitimacy of her actions. Hegel’s identification of women with nature prejudices his view that Antigone lacks an ethical spirit, despite the action she takes on behalf of her brother. Chanter, following Irigaray, uproots Hegel’s assumptions about women and shows that they depend on the view of female biology, which is in itself embedded in cultural stereotypes about women’s passivity and lack of political efficacy. The feminist dismantling of the Hegelian topos of Woman prepares the way for a revised conception of civil rights that takes account of sexual difference.

A challenge to the dominant view of the separation between ethics and aesthetics in Kant’s philosophy, as discussed in Boos’ chapter, is offered in Rodolphe Gasché’s reflection on a link between the judgments of the beautiful and the sublime, and the morally good—in Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*. In Chapter 3, “Linking Onto Disinterestedness, or the Moral Law in Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*,” Gasché argues that the act of negating the sensible in judgments of the beautiful and the sublime opens a space within the aesthetic for a possible relation with moral feeling, a relation that is more explicit in the sub-

lime. The disengagement from the sensible, Gasché points out, causes reason to take an intellectual interest in the sublime, although such interest does not affect the purity of aesthetic judgment. In other words, Kant preserves the separation between ethics and aesthetics but also allows the transition from aesthetics to ethics.

Although in Chapter 4, “Gesture and Commentary,” Jean-François Lyotard also returns to Kant, his elaboration of the sublime in particular, he wonders about the very possibility of aesthetics in the wake of philosophy’s recent awareness of its own limitations in relation to art. Lyotard argues for an aesthetics of feeling, which breaks with Hegel’s subordination of art to philosophy. Lyotard confirms that color, volume, tone, and line, which comprise the work of art as its gestures in time/space/matter, demand philosophical commentary, yet the perceptible singularity of a work of art renders it impenetrable to thought. Lyotard proposes that not only should philosophy relinquish its claim to dominance over art but also that, in order to comment competently on the gestures of art, it should first acknowledge and confront its own “gesticulation.”

Part 2, “Aesthetics and the Question of the Other,” takes up the issue of thematizing alterity in discourse and explores the possibilities of imagining the Other in ways that do not reduce heterogeneity to the measure of the same. This engagement with the problematic of radical alterity has been inspired by the ethical philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and his critique of traditional aesthetics as injurious to the Other. The chapters in this section look toward ethics as a way of addressing the crisis of representation, although they do so in different contexts of philosophy, literary theory, theology, and feminist theory.

Richard Kearney, in “Levinas and the Ethics of Imagining,” Chapter 5, investigates Levinas’ claim that a solution to the modern crisis of representation, precipitated by the resurgence of the Other, can be found in ethics. Levinas’ argument for the hegemony of the ethical imposes a view of poetics subordinated to ethics, in which the role of imagination in acts of representation appears to be suppressed. However, by examining Levinas’ own readings of Proust, Célan, Blanchot, and Agnon, Kearney proposes that Levinas’ distrust of images is not directed against imagination as such; on the contrary, it necessitates an “other” poetics or a poetics that is answerable to the Other.

Dorota Glowacka, in Chapter 6, “Disappearing Traces: Emmanuel Levinas, Ida Fink’s Literary Testimony, and Holocaust Art,” situates Kearney’s diagnosis that Levinas’ writings open up a possibility of new aesthetic practices in the context of Holocaust literature and art. Glowacka argues that reconceptualizing aesthetics in terms of bearing witness to the Other is particularly relevant to aesthetic practices that have been inspired by the Holocaust. Drawing on Levinas’ articulation of the experience of absolute alterity as a trace—a nonphenomenal event that underlies all thematization of Otherness in language or image—she refers to these works as “the art of disappearing traces.” Glowacka illustrates her

argument with examples from literary testimony by Ida Fink, an Israeli writer of Polish origin, and from contemporary Holocaust art.

Unlike Kearney's and Glowacka's theoretical analyses, Martin Rumscheidt, in "Poetry, Theology, and Ethics: A Study in Paul C elan," Chapter 7, offers a personal reflection from a German-Canadian theological perspective. He proposes a provocative thesis that perhaps theology's either distancing itself from aesthetics or subjugating aesthetic concerns to the task of the Church's tutelage has been detrimental for its capacity to provide an ethics for human subjects. Rumscheidt resumes Glowacka's inquiry into the possibility of ethics and aesthetics in the wake of the Holocaust and relates it to the question about the possibility of post-Auschwitz theology. He contends that Auschwitz exposed the dangers of separation between the domains of aesthetics, politics, and religion, and he argues for a need to integrate aesthetics ("poetry") into theology if it is to be reborn "after Auschwitz." Yet for Rumscheidt, who calls himself "a child of Nazi Germany," the success of such an undertaking hinges on the need to reexamine Christianity's representations of its "other"—the Jew. Rumscheidt wrestles with the aporetic task of nonappropriative refiguring of the Jew in the Christian context through a reading of Paul C elan's poem *Death Fugue*.

Finally, Marjorie Stone, in "Between Ethics and Anguish: Feminist Ethics, Feminist Aesthetics, and Representations of Infanticide in 'The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim's Point' and *Beloved*," Chapter 8, brings the discussion on the relations between ethics and aesthetics to bear upon the issue of articulating black female experience, specifically in relation to representations of infanticide by white anti-slavery and black writers from the nineteenth century to the present. The author is concerned with aesthetic practices that allow for the "othering" of anguish in ways that may divorce it from the context of ethics altogether, yet she also takes issue with the assumption that art is incapable of expressing the "limit experience" of human anguish. Stone proposes, therefore, a strategic substitution of "anguish" for aesthetics in the phrase "between ethics and aesthetics" and argues that in order to adequately address the above concerns, it is imperative for literary criticism to search for new ways of integrating feminist ethics (with its contentious insistence on "the real") and feminist aesthetics (supposedly confined to "the representational").

Emmanuel Levinas points out, in *Totality and Infinity*, that the ethical relation between the I and the Other does not obtain in the void: the intersubjective space in which the advent of the Other is announced is also the space of others; it constitutes a community.¹ Part 3 of this book explores this dimension by looking at the conjunction of aesthetics and politics.

In Chapter 9, "Feminine Writing, Metaphor, and Myth," Drucilla Cornell defends the role of myth in feminist theory and argues that the process of figuration and remythologization *allows*, rather than *prohibits*, the feminist project to be both ethical and politically efficacious. Deconstructing the divide be-

tween imagination, in its mythical and utopian dimension, and the social and political reality of women's lives, Cornell demonstrates that myths have always been a touchstone of feminine identification. Whether in Kristeva's "mythology" of the mother, Cicoux's engagement of mythical figures, or Irigaray's writing of the feminine through mimesis, the myth has been an irreducible presence in feminist theory. Such reinterpretations of mythical figures are expressions of the utopia beyond patriarchy and gender hierarchy, although this does not have to involve an appeal to essentialism (and here Cornell distinguishes her project from Gayatri Spivak's "strategic essentializing"). A necessarily aesthetic dimension of remythologizing the feminine, therefore, does not result in replacing the political with the aesthetic. On the other hand, the supposed dangers of reinstating the myths of the feminine stem from an essentialist desire for a universal human subject (such as de Beauvoir's repudiation of the myth of femininity as the male fantasy of Woman as Other). Cornell also responds to the charge that the recourse to myth obscures feminine specificity and the diversity of lives of actual women through the discussion of Toni Morrison's reliance on the myth of Medea (*Beloved*) to articulate the very difference of the Afro-American mother's situation.

In Chapter 10, "Aesthetics and Politics," renowned Marxist critic Terry Eagleton explores the meaning and possibility of "political aesthetics"—the term often thought to be contradictory, since aesthetics has its genesis precisely in its opposition to the political realm. Every society, Eagleton asserts, creates a quasi-sacred place for itself, over and above the political, in which it becomes aware of its fundamental values; in modern times, this place has been called aesthetics or literature. The politicization of the aesthetic is hotly contested in contemporary philosophical circles, because it was first constructed as a refuge from the ravages of capitalism (although, as Eagleton notes, it was also the birthplace of a post-bourgeois political ideal of humanity). Eagleton considers two different senses of the aestheticization of politics: postmodernism and socialism. The postmodern solution to the structural contradiction in which advanced capitalism finds itself is, in his view, unacceptable, because it seeks to deconstruct the existing superstructure while retaining the material basis of capitalism. Socialism, on the other hand, believes that the material conditions for the aestheticization of politics have yet to be constructed. In the latter context, Eagleton proposes that literature, in conjunction with theory, may harbor a potential for political aesthetics, although it has not constituted one yet.

In distinction to Eagleton, Victor Li, in Chapter 11, "An Ethics of the Name: Rethinking Globalization," draws on the deconstructive and postmodern theories of Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, Kenneth Burke, Pierre Bourdieu, and Slavoj Žižek in order to draw a connection between political economy and aesthetic culture and to argue for an "ethics of the name" that can be linked to practical and political issues in the world. He explores a

possibility of such ethics through a critical analysis of the term *globalization*, which itself has a kind of aesthetic or shaping quality that, in a sublime fashion, seeks to be self-determining and equal only to itself and is thus unable to account for radical difference that always exceeds “the name.” It is also symptomatic of the economic and instrumental rationality that forecloses diverse, open-ended forms of inquiry. The aesthetic of globalization, therefore, must face up to an ethical demand, in a Levinasian sense, issuing from alterity that cannot be reduced to the same. Li’s deconstructive reading is strategic: it opens globalization’s hegemony to dispute and rearticulation and posits a task of searching for “names” that would resist the vision of a globe completely saturated by capital.

Krzysztof Ziarek, in Chapter 12, “The Social Figure of Art: Heidegger and Adorno on the Paradoxical Autonomy of Artworks,” provides a philosophical framework for discussions about the social and political role of art. In the author’s view, explanations of the social significance of art in terms of cultural production, social effects, or aesthetic ideology are no longer sufficient. In an attempt to address art “after aesthetics,” Ziarek turns to the aesthetic theories of Adorno and Heidegger. While Adorno insists on the radical social significance of the formal figuration in modern art, defending it against the naive misconceptions of social aesthetic, Heidegger takes the discussion of art beyond the notion of form and representation and examines it as an active event. Through these readings, Ziarek proposes that art’s relevance and critical potential reside in what he calls “the social figure of art.” By opening up a certain mode of knowing, the figure of art understood as occurrence acquires historical and social significance, challenging the very parameters of the rationality that organizes social-cultural discourse. The figure of art does not in itself produce revolutionary counter-forces, but it inflects the dynamic between the forces already in existence: it is this inflection that has significant political and ethical implications. Looking at the work of Samuel Beckett, Marcel Duchamp, and dadaists, Ziarek argues that the avant-garde in particular emphasizes the “figural” force of art that allows for contestation and poetic transformation of reality.

Importantly, David MacFadyen, in Chapter 13, “Politics, Aesthetics, and Ethics in Joseph Brodsky’s Poem *On the Death of Zhukov*,” provides a specific example of politicizing aesthetics through a reading of Nobel Prize laureate Joseph Brodsky’s eulogy on the death of Marshall Zhukov. The poem, lauding the hero of the Soviet Union and stylized in the tradition of the Soviet pathos, marks a strange hiatus in the career of the dissident poet, twice exiled from his country. MacFadyen seeks the answer to the enigma of Brodsky’s apparent embracing of the Soviet ethos by scrutinizing the poet’s complex relationship to the entire Soviet aesthetics and to the ideology that underwrites it. Zhukov, in Brodsky’s poetic embodiment, becomes a potent challenge to the rhetoric of

Soviet propaganda. Brodsky's use of the Soviet aesthetics becomes subversive when the tropes that serve to cement ideology are deconstructed and employed as the means of resisting the totalitarian discourse. MacFadyen's chapter is thus an implicit critique of Eagleton's foregrounding of the socialist context as the privileged site of the radical transformation of art.

While continuing to ask questions about the political relevance and transformative potential of art, Part 4, "Toward an Ethical Art Practice?" offers the reader an opportunity to hear the voices of contemporary artists and art critics. In Chapter 14, "Beauty and the Beast," Alex Colville, a well-known Canadian painter and a recipient of the Order of Canada, reflects on the interrelations of ethics and aesthetics. Quoting a number of prominent Western artists and thinkers, Colville insists on the need to reconsider the modernist notion of art's autonomy and to conceive of beauty and truth, of culture and politics, as inseparably intertwined in the work of art.

Elizabeth Edwards, in Chapter 15, "The Banal Profound and the Profoundly Banal: Andy Warhol," offers a provocative intervention into the statements that insist on the integration of ethics and aesthetics. Given the recent "return to ethics" in contemporary theory, Edwards questions whether "the autonomy of art" was ever really possible, or whether such a possibility is merely an anxious prelude to a massive recuperation of art by ethics. Confronting certain current ethicizing theories of art, Lyotard's theory of the sublime in particular, the author argues that the notion of banality, as developed in the specific historical moment of the early 1960s, resists assimilation into either ethics or aesthetics. Particularly in Andy Warhol's art, banality is not removed from the subject matter; rather, it is rendered available for aesthetic pleasure. Edwards calls for a restitution of "mere enjoyment" in the experience of art, the term debased by aesthetics since Kant, as a counterweight to the ethical claim of contemporary art theories that often efface a historically specific gesture of pop art.

Unlike Edwards' theory-oriented art criticism, Chapter 16, "Short Circuit: The Story of An Exhibition That Provoked Unforeseen Consequences," is a personal narrative by Susan Gibson Garvey, the curator of Dalhousie University Art Gallery in Halifax and a practicing artist herself. It describes her experiences during an exhibition of contemporary activist art entitled *No Laughing Matter*, which was put together by New York's Independent Curators Incorporated. The exhibits in the show commented, often ironically, upon a number of controversial social issues. Unexpectedly for the organizers, one of the exhibits, the work by Carrie May Weems, which makes provocative statements about racial stereotyping, spurred powerful adverse reactions from the local black community. The incident became a divisive issue at the university and in the community at large and almost resulted in the closing of the art gallery. Although painful for the parties involved, the debacle raised important questions

about the role and perception of activist art, as well as the place of a university art gallery in the community. Gibson Garvey herself ponders the social implications of works of art, which challenge the autonomy of the gallery as the space for the unencumbered contemplation of art.

The last chapter in this book, "Other Tongues: Language and Hybridity in Recent Canadian Video Art," raises a similar question about the role and efficacy of socially engaged art practice in the context of video art. The author, Marusya Bociurkiw, a new-generation video artist and art curator, reflects on the work of six Canadian video filmmakers (Cathy Sisler, Shani Mootoo, Nelson Henricks, Philip Napier, Ruth Cuthand, and Elizabeth MacKenzie), whose works are actively engaged in contesting hegemonic cultural politics. For all of them, the search for a cinematic language of difference in video art mirrors the quest for a new subaltern language and an alternative cultural identity. Some of the fragile homes for difference the artists have located are the immigrant, postcolonial voices, gay and lesbian languages of the body, and the suppressed languages of the First Nations. Bociurkiw also examines the critical apparatus that has been, at times, marked by dualistic categories and thus has given insufficient voice to cultural difference. Combining the elements of queer and postcolonial theory, she questions the notion of a separate category for the Other as itself entrenched in the exploitative logic of the West and calls for experimentation in video art that would allow it to voice marginalized identities.

The work we are presenting here taps into present intellectual currents; its predecessors include *Ethics/Aesthetics: Postmodern Positions*,² which elaborates on the dilemmas of postmodernism in the context of literature, popular culture, and theory such as Lacanian psychoanalysis or Foucault's theories of power; a special 1995 issue of *L'Esprit créateur*, "Beyond Aesthetics?" which focuses on the challenge that the need to redefine aesthetics poses for philosophy, Hegelianism in particular; a 1996 collection of mostly literary criticism, *Ethics and Aesthetics: The Moral Turn of Postmodernism*,³ published in Heidelberg, Germany, with limited circulation in North America; and a special 1999 issue of *PMLA*, devoted to ethics and literary study.⁴ Also of relevance are the volumes published by Stanford University Press in the series *Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics*, although their context is specifically philosophical and theoretical.

Although in recent years several individual studies investigating the relation between ethics and aesthetics have also appeared, considering the vast body of works that focuses on *either* ethics and aesthetics, almost exclusively within the confines of particular disciplines,⁵ there is a further need to explore the interrelations between the two in contemporary contexts. This book has been conceived in the belief that an interdisciplinary approach is the most promising framework for such an investigation.

NOTES

1. Emmanuel Levinas, "The Other and the Others," *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 212–14.
2. Robert Merrill, ed., *Ethics/Aesthetics: Postmodern Positions* (Washington, D.C.: Maisonneuve Press, 1988).
3. Gerhard Hoffmann and Alfred Hornung, eds. *Ethics and Aesthetics: The Moral Turn of Postmodernism* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1996).
4. See *PMLA* Vol. 114, No. 1 (January 1999). Derek Attridge's excellent essay, "Truth, Literature, Ethics: Relating to the Other" (*PMLA*, 20–31) is of particular relevance to this volume.
5. See, for example, Wayne Booth, *The Company We Keep: An Ethics of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), J. Hillis Miller, *The Ethics of Reading: Kant, de Man, Eliot, Trollope, James, and Benjamin* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), Christopher Norris, *Truth and the Ethics of Criticism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), Tobin Siebers, *The Ethics of Criticism* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988), Adam Zachary Newton, *Narrative Ethics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), and Jill Robbins, *Altered Readings: Levinas and Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).