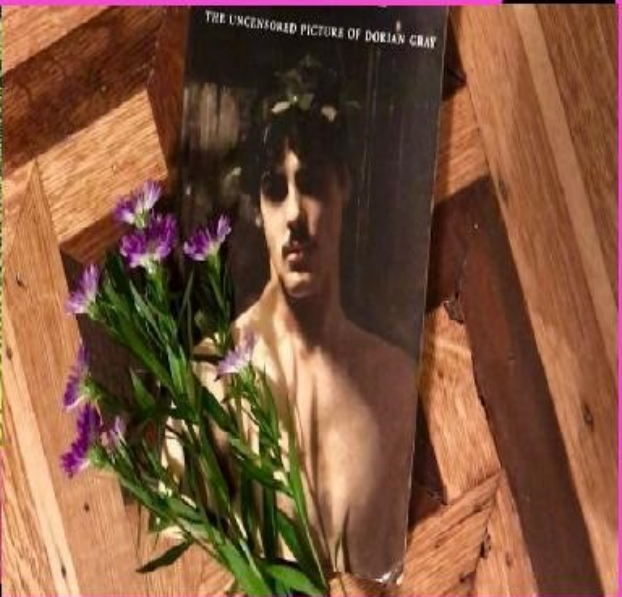
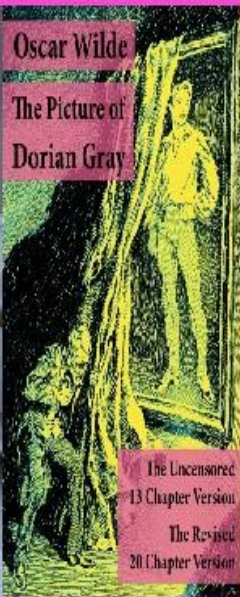
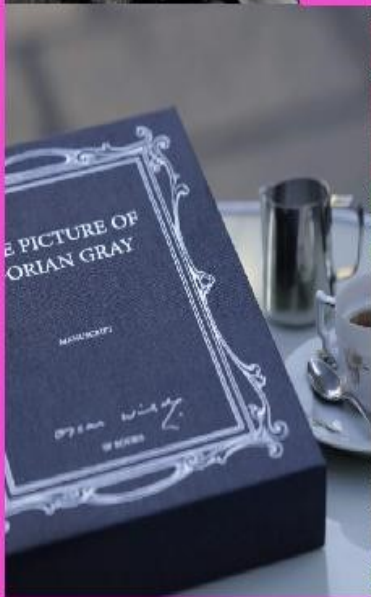


**OSCAR WILDE
THE PICTURE OF
DORIAN GRAY**

JOSEY er 16
ICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY

**NIEUWENHUIS
FUNUDA FILMS**

The MAY 30, 2019



OSCAR WILDE – THE UNCENSORED PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY – 2012

The main character is not so much Dorian Gray as Lord Henry Wotton. He is the one who manipulated the seventeen-year-old Dorian Gray as if he were a puppet-master playing with his puppet on its strings and rod, unseen and yet the one who provided society, meaning here the top elite of this society, with the daily gossip that can only entertain their idleness. Both Dorian Gray and Lord Henry Wotton were part of this idle society and Lord Wotton occupied his time with making Dorian Gray do what he, Lord Wotton, would like to do but couldn't since it was a lot funnier to have someone else do it.



We all know the trick of the painting that ages in the place and stead of Dorian Gray and takes on itself all the perverted crimes of this Dorian Gray it is supposed to represent. What is important here is the fact that Dorian Gray is going to remain innocent-looking and as if he were forever 16 or 17 years old in his body, while his soul – if he has a soul, or if the concept of soul was relevant here – is getting more and more wicked and lost. I will not use the words “sin” or “sinful” here because that’s an easy Christian way of looking at the problem. What this picture means is that for everyone what looks good has to be good, even when you know it is bad, at least according to the social gossip and the moral rumor.

In spite of all the rumors against or about Dorian Gray, and the long list of ruined members of the elite who got connected – too closely – with Dorian Gray, he will always be welcome in his all-male club, and in all social events, even those involving his victims. What you see is what you get, isn't it? That has never changed, and if what you see is worth getting, you just have to get it, and you get it, poison and all, no matter how dangerous it could be. And you will run away to the other end of the world in shame afterward, and you will commit suicide with no explanation, and you will lock yourself into absolute reclusion. This visual dimension of the human experience is brilliantly shown here, though it is slightly over-developed when dealing with the intellectual interests of Dorian Gray in transmuted objects, in transgressive experiences.

He starts with perfumes, transmuted scents transfixed into a trap for other people who fall to that attraction. You should not follow your nose. Then he gets into jewels that are flashing color and beauty all around and attract all the social magpies in this world. Then he goes into embroideries which are beautiful needlework that in reality hides what can be ugly, what is ugly underneath. Dorian Gray collects and cultivates illusions, in fact, surrogate simulacra that look like beauty but are not the real beauty of the person who carries or wears them.



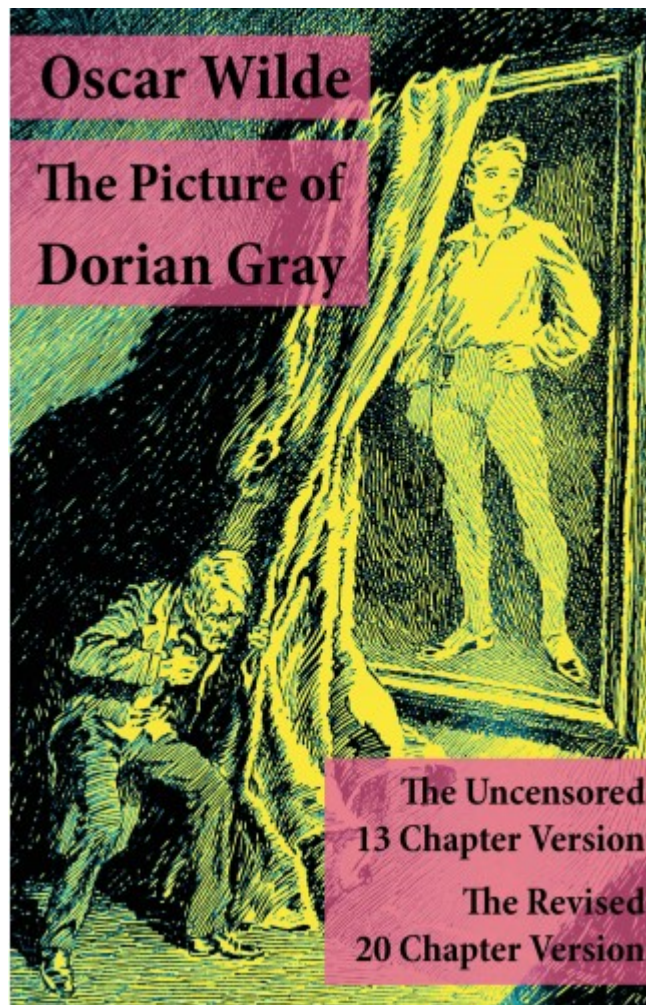
Dorian Gray then becomes the only subject – or rather the only object – of Lord Henry Wotton's study about the possibility to make some idle and vain young person explore all the possible fields of corruption and ugliness in society, while keeping their fair appearances, their obsessive attractions to other people, though it runs against the reputation of this young man. He is, in fact, full time mental and sensuous temptation for everyone who is bored with their idleness. When the pie is too sweet, why not drink some hemlock tea?

Oscar Wilde is, of course, thinking of his own case and experience: to be seduced by a young and vain person, but it means no love or at least it does not mean love. What the book, even in this uncensored edition, is not at all clear about is one "perversion" this English aristocratic society cannot accept morally though it practices it vastly and nobody frowns on it as long as no class difference has been trespassed. This is homosexuality. Yet it is hinted at the fact that the artist, as for one, had some desire along this line but it is clearly hinted that Dorian Gray refused it. We can even wonder if the painting's black magic is not the result of this repressed love, or rather attraction, for an aristocrat on the side of the artist, or for a non-aristocrat on Dorian Gray's side. Then the killing of the artist is nothing but the final castration of Dorian Gray's desire, its total repression by the elimination of the object of this anti-social attraction for someone under his own station, and that elimination has to be done with a knife, a phallic symbol of some sort.

That would explain why then he decided not to take advantage of the young village girl he had seduced in the worst feudal way since his homosexual desire was finally repressed and kept under control. Without an object his desire became pointless and he could, in fact, turn it against himself. If the subject has no object, then the subject becomes his own object. He did not have to compensate for his desire and

escape from it by raping a girl far under his own aristocratic station. He had to turn his own desire onto himself and narcissistically caused his own destruction.

So, this new edition does not break any new barrier, but the traditional slightly censored edition was just as clear. A couple of sketchy allusion to this type of desire is just adding some fresh cream to the pie.



And no one will be surprised by the end that is exposed – and that’s the proper word – in ninety-one words and six lines. A prime number split along the wisdom of Solomon. Well, well, well! Note the book has a strong and strange anti-Jewish side which was quite “normal” in those days, but which is slightly irritating today. The victim of any segregation always finds compensation. Dorian Gray is quite within the limits of normalcy after all. Do not expect any epiphany from him and his story.

Dr. Jacques COULARDEAU

JOSEY NIEUWENHUIS, "DORIAN GRAY,"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2cn1iejufk>, FUNUDA
FILMS, 2016

This film is a mystery in many ways, but its director has a LinkedIn page and profile. Josey Nieuwenhuis is connected to Grandville High School, Grandville, Michigan, as a graduate. But he defines himself as a Funuda Films director where he has been active from 2000, and he is still active there, which means he has been a director there for more than 19 years. And yet he is not listed at IMDb and the film is not listed either and this is surprising for someone who has been a director for 19 years. And on LinkedIn, he defines himself as follows: “I have extensive talent and experience with editing in both Photography and Film.” I have just sent a message to him on LinkedIn and I hope I will get an answer soon.

The film referred to here is both a fair adaptation and at the same time slightly too short, too superficial on the central question of how a young man can be manipulated by another, older indeed, into doing what the older man would like to do but does not have the guts to. Lord Henry Wotton is a devilish manipulator of human puppets and Dorian Gray is a perfect case. But we do not enter Dorian Gray's real dark side because Oscar Wilde is clear on one element: you cannot manipulate someone who is not "manipulatable." Dorian Gray is the easiest manipulatable person you can imagine. And yet Oscar Wilde shows how he is able to resist the major manipulation, the sexual manipulation from the painter himself, and how he will bring this painter to confessing this attraction, appeal and desire and that will cause his doomed destruction in the hands of Dorian Gray himself with a – mind you – phallic knife of course.



The adaptation is fair in a way because it systematically uses the dialog in the novel. Oscar Wilde is a playwright more than anything else and this novel is full of long dialogs that are very dramatic and perfectly written for the stage. Josey Nieuwenhuis uses these dialogs without any rewriting, or little rewriting, in his scenario. But he is apparently unable to use the long prose passages that describe the slow and tortured, twisted, distorted evolution of Dorian Gray starting with the desire to experiment with life and yet the will not let himself fall, glide or slip into anything gay, as we would say today. He is, in fact, a typical repressed homosexual who is attracted by men and yet censors his attraction and compensates for it by punishing himself with relationships with women whom he destroys in the end. All the men who approach him get ruined or destroyed in a way or another, even the master manipulator who is led to a divorce from his wife. So, he is surrounded with suicides, shameful escapes, total reclusion away from this unethical world for some, and eventually these men being killed by the devilish man himself. This is underrepresented in this film.



The black magic of the painting imposed onto it by Dorian Gray himself who is thus the main black magician, sorcerer, witchdoctor or dark wizard. He imposes corruption, distortion, and destruction onto

anyone who approaches him (men) and women are just collateral victims to deal with the desire he does not want to acknowledge and accept in himself. He is not clearly sexually approached by other people. At least it is not said as bluntly as that in the novel. He is only sexually responding to a more or less understood evolution towards this sexual dimension in the most destructive way, a response to his own attraction to these other men around him that he cannot cope with or simply tolerate. And the only one who confesses his attraction to Dorian Gray, the painter, will be instantly killed by this Dorian Gray because for him this confession is the accusation that he, Dorian Gray, is the real perpetrator of this attraction: he creates this attraction in the painter, and this accusation is beyond Dorian Gray's capability to accept anything of the sort. He is so repressed in his gayness that he destroys anyone who would make him think, no matter how little, that he is an active subject in this appeal, that he is the appealer, the source of the appeal.

This film then is slightly too short and the abstinence and reclusion of the end of the novel are not really brought up. When he finally decides to stop ruining women to satisfy his unaccepted and repressed gay desire, he has to commit his own destruction, which he does, strangely enough, by trying to destroy the painting, hence the ugly picture of himself, what Oscar Wilde calls his soul.

Dr. Jacques COULARDEAU

