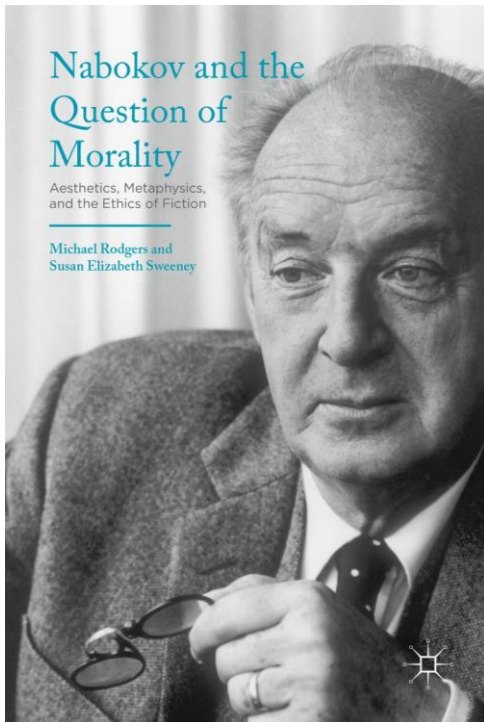


Nabokov and the Question of Morality

Aesthetics, Metaphysics,
and the Ethics of Fiction

Michael Rodgers and
Susan Elizabeth Sweeney



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Nabokov and the Question of Morality Aesthetics, Metaphysics, and the Ethics of Fiction

Edited by Michael Rodgers and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney

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Michael Rodgers is a Teaching Assistant at the University of Strathclyde, UK, where he completed his PhD dissertation on the relationship between Vladimir Nabokov's fiction and Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy. He is currently researching the idea of uncomfortable humor in twentieth-century literature.

Susan Elizabeth Sweeney is Professor of English at the College of the Holy Cross, USA. The author of over thirty essays on Nabokov, she was twice elected president of the International Vladimir Nabokov Society and spent ten years as co-editor of NABOKV-L, the Vladimir Nabokov Electronic Forum. She also publishes widely on American literature, detective fiction, and narrative theory.

"A tremendous achievement. This book brings together the voices of young scholars and veteran Nabokovians to weigh in on the most perplexing questions that animate Nabokov's art. Fyodor, the protagonist of Nabokov's Russian magnum opus *The Gift*, notes that reading Pushkin is like having the capacity of one's lungs expanded; reading these essays offers a similarly bracing experience."

—Dana Dragunoiu, Professor of English, Carleton University, Canada, and author of *Vladimir Nabokov and the Poetics of Liberalism*

"It is the great achievement of these provokingly forthright articles by leading Nabokov scholars, as well as younger emerging critics, that they treat Nabokov's eerie and insistent moral simplicity as a question and a puzzle, extending his ethical intricacy well into such spheres as reading, heroism, experiment, love, divinity, sexual frankness, and modernity."

—Thomas Karshan, Lecturer of English, University of East Anglia, UK, and author of *Nabokov and the Art of Play*

About the book

The first collection to address the vexing issue of Nabokov's moral stances, this book argues that he designed his novels and stories as open-ended ethical problems for readers to confront. In a dozen new essays, international Nabokov scholars tackle those problems directly while addressing such questions as whether Nabokov was a bad reader, how he defined evil, if he believed in God, and how he constructed fictional works that led readers to become aware of their own moral positions. In order to elucidate his engagement with aesthetics, metaphysics, and ethics, *Nabokov and the Question of Morality* explores specific concepts in the volume's four sections: "Responsible Reading," "Good and Evil," "Agency and Altruism," and "The Ethics of Representation." By bringing together fresh insights from leading Nabokovians and emerging scholars, this book establishes new interdisciplinary contexts for Nabokov studies and generates lively readings of works from his entire career.

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