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Camille Xerez-Burgos November 16, 2012 Period 7 Xerez-Burgos 1 The Reality and Truth of an Artist Oscar Wilde's definition of an artist is the creator of beautiful things to reveal art and to conceal the artist. In the novel, The Picture of Dorian Gray, it is controversial whether or not Lord Henry and Dorian Gray are true artists or not. Both are creators of beautiful things and revealers of art, yet blunder out from the artistic world and come to the real world. Overall, Lord Henry and Dorian Gray do fit the definitions as artists in Oscar Wilde's perspective by having no desires to prove anything, by having to express everything, and by having no ethical sympathies. Lord Henry and Dorian Gray are artists, according to Oscar Wilde, because no desires are arousing to prove anything. " Resist it, and your soul grows sick with longing for the things it has forbidden itself, with desire for what its monstrous laws have made monstrous and unlawful" (Wilde 34). Lord Henry tells this to Dorian, and Dorian takes it to heart. He repeatedly hears how he should not desire anything since the truth can be proven, and it is sometimes something that is not necessary to see. Both of these characters have no true desires because it has no significant importance and it is an unnecessary detail in life. All focus needs to be directed on them and revealing art and being creators. Xerez-Burgos 2 Correspondingly, Lord Henry and Dorian fulfill Wilde's definition of being an artist by having to express everything. Being the arrogant and obnoxious character Lord Henry is, he always states what is on his mind. He influences Dorian Gray, which shows through the choices and actions of Dorian. Dorian also expresses everything, especially to Sibyl Vane. The night of Sibyl's show where she acted terribly, Dorian bluntly told her how she " killed [his] love [and how she is] shallow and stupid" (Wilde 63). Dorian did not care how his

words affect Sibyl, and is only concerned on how she looks to his peers. These two characters just express and say what is on their mind not realizing how their words affect the people around them, but it fits the definition of an artist in the perspective of Wilde. Generally, Lord Henry and Dorian express the definition of an artist in Wilde's perspective ultimately by having no ethical sympathies. Lord Henry says " I like persons better than principles, and I like persons with no principles better than anything else in the world" (Wilde 19). Lord Henry does not care what he says and how he says it, as long as he hears himself talk and says something spontaneous and meaning to him, he can move on with life. The artist, Lord Henry, influences the people around him with no ethical sympathy making him the artist in Wilde's eyes. Dorian follows Lord Henry's footsteps to a certain extent and expresses his opinions with no standards either. For example, when Sibyl commits suicide, Lord Henry converses with Dorian and puts him at a better mental state. Dorian concludes that he was overreacting and it is not his fault and he did nothing wrong, it was all her since she did not act properly on stage. Both show no sympathy at all, and mask their feelings from everyone. Xerez-Burgos 3 In other words, Dorian Gray and Lord Henry are the perfect examples of what a true artist is in Oscar Wilde's eyes by not having any desires to prove anything, by having to express everything, and by having no ethical sympathies. Personally, an artist is someone who can emotionally connect with the audience and make them change their outlook just by the piece created. It can be by writing a song to creating a dance to express the feelings kept inside that one person. Dorian and Lord Henry do not fit my definition of an artist at all. All they care about is themselves rather than

affecting their audience, and hoping to change them for the better. Camille

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