

# Color and Meaning in Film: An Argument from Irony

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**Abstract:** Allusions to color in film studies and philosophy of film rarely mention its major contributions. At best, color is seen as accessory, at worst, as sensory distraction from aesthetic and narrative content. Drawing from instances where color symbolism is deployed ironically, we argue that color is an essential component of meaning and authorial intention. By reversing the conventional symbolism of color, ironic filmmakers make of it more than arguments from aesthetic and stylistic purity are able to account for, and require specific analysis from a more inclusive perspective on the elements that make up the meaning and value of their works.

*Keywords:* Film, color, meaning, irony

Dismissive attitudes towards the use of color in film are prevalent in the study of visual arts, and find potential counterparts across philosophy and literature in the form of aversion to stylistic excess. In this paper, we identify two historical antecedents of this attitude, and point to irony as a major layer of aesthetic value and signification. We examine two clear instances where the meaning of color subverts its conventional usage, and compare them to the use of irony in literature. Without room for color, we suggest, ironic works can be, and have been, blatantly misinterpreted. Color is able to capture characters' opposing perspectives and the contradictory features of real and imaginary worlds, in a way that positively contributes to artworks' meaning and aesthetic value.

## 1. Color as Charm: The History of Aesthetic Purity

Let us begin by searching for the origins of the suspicion towards color, which stretch back to long before film was invented. Kant makes one of the most illustrative distinctions between color and the proper objects of aesthetic value in the *Critique of Judgment*, when he argues that

it is not what gratifies in sensation but merely what pleases by its form, that is the fundamental prerequisite for taste. The colours which give brilliancy to the sketch are part of the charm. They may no doubt, in their own way, enliven the object for sensation, but make it really worth looking at and beautiful they cannot. The *charm* of colours, or of the agreeable tones of instruments, may be added: but the *design* in the former and the *composition* in the latter constitute the proper object of the pure judgement of taste. (CJ, §14, 226)

Here Kant delineates, but also presupposes, a significant difference between form – which he describes as the proper object of aesthetic taste – and charm, which merely serves to stimulate the senses. On this approach, charm compromises our appreciation of form: it might be subjectively pleasing, like the taste of an apple, but has no place in judgements of taste.

Tarkovsky, whose Kantian influence is patent, draws on a similar idea when he establishes an analogy between film and the sculpting of a marble block:

Just as a sculptor takes a lump of marble, and, inwardly conscious of the features of his finished piece, removes everything that is not part of it – so the film-maker, from a 'lump of time' made up of an enormous, solid cluster of living facts, cuts off and discards whatever he does not need, leaving only what is to be an element of the finished film, what will prove to be integral to the cinematic image. (Tarkovsky 63-64)

For Tarkovsky, the director is like a sculptor, lending shape to what he considers to be the essence of film: the internal notion of time. This image is also implicit in the title “Sculpting in Time”, in some languages translated as “Sculpting Time”. Though it is not easy to find a uniform definition of what ‘form’ amounts to across different spheres of art, the metaphor is useful for our purposes: if film is a sculpture *in* time (or, as some translations of the title suggest, a sculpture *of* time) what are the *formal* aspects of film, and how do we distinguish that which serves no purpose – the non-essential? Tarkovsky gives a partial answer, mentioning montage, editing, and rhythm as essential features of film, insofar as they give form to the representation of internal time. Meanwhile, the *atmosphere* created in the film is relegated to a secondary status. Discussing *Stalker*, Tarkovsky writes:

An atmosphere will come into being as a result of this concentration on what is most important. (The idea of creating atmosphere for its own sake seems to me strange). (Tarkovsky 194)

Now it is clear that atmosphere is at least in part given by color: the dull browns and lacklustre greens of Siberia, for instance, give the Zone its otherworldly aura. So again we are faced with the idea of color as something *additional* to what is being expressed – a certain subjective condition of time – and that artists should avoid giving too much attention to anything beyond what is strictly necessary to express it. Like Kant, Tarkovsky regards color as inessential, a feature aimed at “gratifying” the senses or even, as Stanley Cavell puts it “a new form of packaging, one which my occasional market research on the subject has convinced me is profitable” (Cavell 1979, 80), rather than an object of aesthetic appreciation. The affinities between Kant and Tarkovsky show that what might at first appear to be an Adornian attack on the commercial, marketable aspect of a new technological advance, in truth goes further back in history. We may refer to this approach to color as the “attack from aesthetic purity”: the idea that color is something external to, and independent of, the formal properties of aesthetic objects, and not a proper object of aesthetic appreciation.

## 2. Meaning and Stylistic Purity

As we mentioned in passing, criticisms of color in the visual arts run parallel to those targeting certain stylistic qualities in written and spoken word. For instance, Antonioni reproduces Tarkovsky’s point almost identically in a way that applies beyond the medium common to both:

When one detaches a story from the words that express it, that make it an artistically complete narrative, what remains? There remains a story that is equivalent to a news story read in the newspaper, to a friend’s story, to an event we had the opportunity to witness, to a birth of our fantasy. This is the new starting point. It is then a question of developing, shaping, articulating the raw material in another language, with all the consequences that the fact entails. Indeed at this point the original text can even get in the way. (Antonioni 72)

Replacing internal time in Tarkovsky’s sculpture metaphor, here the content of the narrative is what remains after what is subjective and superfluous is stripped off. Even linguistic idiosyncrasies affect the essential meaning of the narrative, which is the “raw material” of the story. Tarkovsky would say that, in film, the story is given its shape by editing, montage, and rhythm. Atmosphere, we might add, would be an unnecessary addition on the part of the translator.

This takes us to a parallel aversion to style that can be found in other disciplines. Let us draw an example from contemporary philosophy of language: the distinction between the Fregean concepts of *Sinn* (sense), *Bedeutung* (reference) and *Färbung* (coloring), of which only the first two serve to determine meaning of sentences. This analysis suggests that coloring (also called *tonality*, or *tone*) of a sentence is merely ornamental, and not central to its meaning. Truth and falsity are not affected by the tone of sentences. As Frege writes: “Somebody using the

sentence ‘Alfred has still not come’ actually says ‘Alfred has not come’, and at the same time hints at—but only hints at—the fact that Alfred’s arrival is expected” (Frege 295). In Frege’s example, tone hints at (and *only* hints at) a further meaning contained in the sentence ‘Alfred has still not come’. However, it does not have the power to *change the meaning* of the sentence. As Maria Baghramian remarks in her paper “The Depths and Shallows of Philosophical Style” (Baghramian 312–313), this Fregean idea was also stressed by Michael Dummett, for instance, when he wrote: “The English sentences ‘He has died’, ‘He is deceased’, and ‘He has passed away’ do not differ in sense but only in tone. Likewise, where A and B are sentences, the complex sentences ‘A and B’ and ‘Not only A but B’ do not differ in sense, but in tone: if either one of them is true, so is the other, even if it conveys an inappropriate suggestion” (Dummett 13). As Dummett explicitly writes, tone is “an *inappropriate* suggestion”. Investigating the meaning of sentences requires that we avoid being distracted by their *coloring*. Once again, in this line of the analytic tradition, as in some currents of contemporary cinema, style and color are thought of as fancy ornaments at best, and as distracting, “inappropriate” ornaments at worst. And in both philosophy and film, this dismissiveness towards color and style seems to be guided by an ideal of purity: *the purer, the better*. We henceforth refer to this as the argument from stylistic purity.

To extend this analysis to film, we need analogous candidates for the tone/content dichotomy. Certainly, our claim that color is akin to tone or to style – and therefore irrelevant to content – is neither surprising nor incompatible with the general attack on stylistic purity. The more urgent question is whether film can be said to carry meaning in a way that bears the relevant resemblances to literary texts, and whether this destabilizes in some measure the position of the aesthetic purist. Color symbolism is familiar to both film critics and art historians of all stripes. For instance, in his analysis of *Cries and Whispers*, P. Adams Stiney draws an analogy between Bruno Bettelheim’s interpretation of red/white symbolism in art and its role in Bergman’s film:

What meaning? Let us begin at the end and work our way backwards. The autumnal colors invoke the consummation of the seasons, a gorgeous dying of nature. It is fall (or Swedish summer); the penultimate flaring of color tonality, just before the vegetal death, corresponds to the recovery immanent in Anna’s reading of Agnes’s words. It is not a rebirth, a spring; rather, it is a repetition in a different register of the temporality of the whole film. But now we know Agnes from the perspective of her death, so the flashback describes a liminal zone, where memory is under the sign of death even if it is gorgeous in its prolongation of the end. (Adams Stiney 40)

To go back to the metaphor deployed by Antonioni: the criticism from stylistic purity presupposes that color and atmosphere are added *after* the new language has been shaped – in Tarkovsky’s technologies of time, and in the case of literature, in terms of conventional meaning – rather than in the process of sculpting the story. A helpful image suggested by painting is that of adding color after providing the outline, to make the painting realistic, visually attractive or, as Cavell suggests, commercially successful. Of course, color might not be all filmmakers’ preferred stylistic device, in the same way that visual imagery, or detailed description, may not be an authors’ style of choice. Some, like Frege, believe that style is ornament, and that one should restrict oneself to the bare minimum. But what if tone could affect the *content* of what we say – or, *contra* Tarkovsky, of what we film? In that case, the strict separation between meaning and style would be a misguided enterprise, as would Tarkovsky’s insistence that the atmosphere is a “collateral” addition.

Now in art history, formal aspects are also separated from content in terms of meaning, where the latter is given either by conventional symbolism or by new symbols included in the authors’ imagery through repetition. Meaning, depending on how far we are willing to push the linguistic analogy, is *what* the author says, or at any rate what the work says as a whole. Style, on the other hand, is ornament, and part of *how* the message is conveyed. The following section strives to show that this distinction restricts the kind of points that authors – and filmmakers

– are able to make. We suggest studying irony as an illustration of the way in which color, in film as well as in literature, becomes essential to the interpretation of meaning, both in local examples of meaning and the more complex messages that authors can effectively convey.

### 3. Color Irony in Film and Literature

Vladimir Nabokov, one of the major stylists of the twentieth century, infused his most renowned novel with excellent examples of stylistic irony. Despite its commercial success, *Lolita* was profusely criticised and often dubbed ‘pornographic’. In an infamous review, Oliver Prescott gives two reasons why it does not merit any reader’s attention:

The first is that it is dull, dull, dull in a pretentious, florid and archly fatuous fashion. The second is that it is repulsive. (Prescott)

We want to focus, firstly, on the second of Prescott’s criticisms, the harrowing attack on style. Consider the following passage, in which Humbert describes the fantasy of having a grandchild with Lolita:

[...] The thought that with patience and luck I might have her [Lolita] produce eventually a nymphet with my blood in her exquisite veins, a Lolita the Second, who would be eight or nine around 1960, when I would still be *dans la force l’âge* indeed the telescope of my mind, or un-mind, was strong enough to distinguish in the remoteness of time a *vieillard encore vert* (old still green) – or was it green rot? – bizarre, tender, salivating Dr Humbert, practicing on a supremely lovely Lolita the Third, the art of being a granddad. (Nabokov 176)

Now it is clear that in a way Prescott’s description of Nabokov’s style is not exactly wrong. It is also one of the many passages that bring out Humbert’s revolting immorality. Moreover, Humbert appears to revel in this: he doesn’t seem bothered by an image that, to the average reader, is contemptible to say the least. But what of his self-description in this passage? He imagines his future, middle-aged self as a “*vieillard encore vert*” – a pun that only works in French, but quite effectively. On one hand, a *vieillard vert* is an old man who is inappropriately sexual, especially towards young girls. On the other hand, a man who is *encore* (still) green is immature. So Humbert plays on the double aspect of being gleefully youthful, on the one hand, and contemptibly old, on the other. There is not simply playfulness, but also irony, in the narrator’s voice. The image of “salivating Dr Humbert” also points us in this direction: Humbert’s third-person self-characterizations are loaded with the very words and qualifications that Nabokov expects the reader to attribute to him, as Prescott does. But Humbert’s self-complacency is patent in his playfulness: his sheer grandiloquence, what Prescott calls “a vocabulary that would astound the editors of the Oxford Dictionary” (Prescott), and an overall style described as “self-consciously ornate”. Lastly, Prescott condemns those stylistic choices that he attributes to Nabokov directly: the choice, for instance, of calling a girls’ school “St. Algebra”, supposedly revealing a lack of self-consciousness in the author himself (ibid).

*Contra* Prescott – who arguably misinterprets irony – Nabokov’s choice of style drastically conditions what we should take not only Humbert, but also his creator, to say: while Humbert’s suggestions are admittedly repulsive, a deeper layer of irony is found at the level of the novel as a whole. Consider Nabokov’s reply to a question concerning the alleged ‘immorality’ of *Lolita*, in a 1961 interview gathered in the collection *Think, Speak, Write*:

On the contrary. It has a very moral moral: don’t harm children. Now, Humbert does. We might defend his feelings for Lolita, but not his perversity. (Nabokov 300)

We want to highlight two things about this declaration. First, that whatever moral is alluded to in his brief assertion, should be interpreted as part of the *author’s meaning* in the book as a whole.

In philosophy of language this might be interpreted as the speaker's meaning, as opposed to sentence meaning, or the conventional meaning of individual words and passages within the text. It is not Humbert's moral, nor is it anywhere included in his declarations. That authors can convey a message over and above their characters' assertions is no mystery. As Noël Carroll accurately words it,

Authors, in fact, often make political (Gorky's *Mother*), philosophical (Sartre's *Nausea*), and moral (James's *The Ambassadors*) points through their literary writings. This is a commonly known, openly recognized, and frequently discussed practice in our literary culture... there is no reason to believe that in every case the implicit points found in literary works are merely the notions of a fictional speaker or an implied author rather than the actual author. (Carroll 166)

We may contrast this with the meaning of more local words, aspects, and particles of the book which arguably gave rise to Prescott's interpretation: because Nabokov makes Humbert the explicit narrator of the story, he overlooks Nabokov's satirical overtones. Were the book *amoral*, it would either have *no* meaning as a whole, or no meaning concerning morality. Second, readers have often misread the meaning or intention behind *Lolita*. This is presumably the case of the interviewer, and of all those who accused Nabokov of *immorality*, as though the book were an apology of Humbert's misbehavior. These critics can be seen as having misinterpreted the ironic resources, stylistic and otherwise, with which the book is fraught. It is as though, upon someone ironically saying something immoral, an audience misconstrued their meaning upon failing to notice their ironic tone; their overtly exaggerated vocabulary; their deliberate violation of a Gricean maxim.<sup>3</sup> This shows that Prescott – as well as those who accused not the book, but the author himself, of being immoral – may have been reading a level too shallow, missing out on the not-so-superficial problem of style.

Our hunch that these are both good instances of irony has not yet been substantiated. But for a parallel with familiar examples of irony in conversation, consider the following example of local irony from Kieślowski's *A Short Film About Killing*:

“What, in your view, deters crime?” — “In general terms, it is the impact of punishment not on the criminal, but on the others to discourage them. Shall I put it precisely?” — [Yes] — “It is a deterrent though the convict... or, even, the convict is the deterrent. It intimidates others. Article 50 of the Penal Code”. — “I dislike your ironic tone...” (Kieślowski 1988)

This is a part of the colloquium between Piotr, a somewhat idealist figure hoping to change the Polish legal system, and one of the examiners during the oral assessment that should qualify him as a lawyer. As noted by his interlocutor, Piotr is being ironic: he doesn't really think that punishment deters crime. And as we anticipated, only Piotr's ironic tone lets his intended meaning shine through. But the elephant in the room in this conversation, and in the film as a whole, is Kieślowski's condemnation of the brutality of the capital punishment. The placement of this very scene in the context of the film is also ironic. Piotr's passionate words against capital punishment come right after the scene where Jacek, the young murderer-to-be, throws stones from a bridge over the road, causing a major accident whose (probably lethal) effects we never see. Would the new lawyer be so sure of his defence, had he witnessed Jacek's a seamlessly cruel and light-hearted act? Presumably, he would have given the same answer given at the beginning of the film, when asked about his legal vocation: “I don't know anymore”. His world, like Jacek's world (which is more complex than the scene in which the stone is thrown might lead one to believe) is ambivalent.

Throughout the film, shot through green filters, we see a blended world, through which Kieślowski intended to communicate a meaning opposite to the one attached to green conventionally: cruelty and dullness, rather than hope. The world of (conventional) color is overturned, impregnating the film with Kieślowski's rather cynical irony. In Shakespearean



comedies, the Green World was the place reserved for magical occurrences which twisted the plot of the comedy (a prime example is the green forest of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*).<sup>4</sup> Kieślowski's film *ends* with green: Piotr desperately crying in a green meadow before the forest (allegedly the meadow where Jacek's sister died, as Jacek revealed to Piotr before the execution). The effect is unsettling. What is conventionally thought of as a peaceful and lively, sometimes magical space works as a backdrop for Piotr's death and sorrow. Analogously, what is thought of as the best way of preventing murder (capital punishment) is in fact revealed to be the most dreadful crime. The equivalent of Nabokov's moral, in the case of Kieślowski, is found in the very title of the work, which alludes to one of the ten commandments: *Thou Shalt Not Kill*.<sup>5</sup> The overarching irony here is that, whereas Polish law is supposedly inflicting punishment for the violation of the sixth commandment, in the retributive "eye for an eye" fashion of the Old Testament, it is precisely Polish society that Kieślowski is condemning. All of the hope, goodness



and restoration of evil we would expect from green as a symbol of hope is replaced with the dull, hopeless cruelty of Kieślowski's filters. Without such ironic undertones, *A Short Film About Killing* would not be able to reach such depth and profundity. A profundity that lies in placing the spectators between two worlds and making them *zig zag* between them – as in the marvellous scene where Piotr is *zig zagging* on his scooter between the light and the dark sections of the screen. He is happy that he just became a lawyer and wanders exultantly in the city. Even in that joyful moment – as the presence of the opposite tones signal – the spectator is reminded of the double nature of our world, which is at once hopeful and cruel.

#### 4. Irony and Authorial Intent

The foregoing analyses of *Lolita* and *A Short Film About Killing* encompass two levels of ironic meaning: firstly, the level at which characters utter individual statements, and second, the level at which authors convey their point over and above explicit texts and images, and even symbols charged with conventional meaning. As Carroll suggests,

These points are very often secured through oblique techniques – implication, allegory, presupposition, illustration (unaccompanied with explicative commentary), and so on. That is, such points need not be and often are not directly stated. (Carroll 166)

The moral drawn from the previous section was that style and color should be regarded as two of the 'oblique techniques' through which the authors' meaning is conveyed. This is clearly shown in the moral of *Lolita*, which Nabokov confirms in his interview, and in the alternative title of *A Short Film About Killing*: thou shall not kill, but even murder, Kieślowski implies, should be forgiven. These 'points' are made over and above the characters, who may have other things to say about the issues at stake. More importantly, they are made in a way that would not have been possible without their authors' oblique use of irony.

We turn, finally, to a more lighthearted use of color irony in film, one with a message that is neither political nor moral, but which still requires reading an ironic tone in its uses of color. We are speaking of Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom*, a coming-of-age period piece entirely shot in blue and yellow. The vibrant hues of yellow are the colors of happiness and joy, and

are conventionally associated with young age. In this film, the protagonists are children who escape from their oppressive families, but they are ambiguously portrayed as though they were already adults. Their characters are made to contrast with a nasty figure, interpreted by Tilda Swinton, and given the name “Social Service”. The irony implicit in the name is patent; what is more, Social Service consistently dresses herself in blue, a color conventionally associated with calm and peace.<sup>6</sup> Anderson's unconventional use of blue in *Moonrise Kingdom* is prevalent. In fact, the scene condensing most of the tension and danger in the film (the one where two children, trapped on the top of a tower, threaten with suicide) is entirely shot in a way that reveals Anderson's irony towards the world that he conveys. They are in danger, but the whole moment is immersed in a metallic blue, which gives an air of security and calm. Soon we will discover that what threatens them – the adult world embodied in the figure of Social Service – is not really as terrible as they think. In fact, Social Service herself offers them a way out of their troubles. The juxtaposition of contrasting colors could have denoted an opposition between good and evil (yellow and blue), but in this context it works as a means to exploring the complexity of the characters, and of the world that we inhabit: we are reminded of the subjective sense of danger present in childhood, and of the objective security that we perceive in it as adults. Anderson thus avoids every hint of Manicheism, and reveals that what is truly frightful about childhood is not what children believe – it is the evanescence of it. And what is frightful about adulthood is the nostalgia into which our memories of childhood plunge us.



Now on one account of the aesthetic use of irony, one could suggest that color – as well as style – is simply a means of securing the message at the higher level of authorial intention, in the same way one might change one's tone, like Piotr in his remarks about punishment, to indicate that one means the opposite to what is said. But even when irony is a representation of an illocutionary act performed by a fictional character<sup>8</sup>, we suggest the following examples of irony at a higher level of authorial meaning and intent:

Color	Conventional meaning	Local meaning	Global authorial intention
bizarre, tender, salivating Dr Humbert	self-contempt	self-complacency	moral condemnation of Humbert Humbert
green	hope, change, re-birth	Jacek will not be spared	condemnation of death penalty
blue	security and calm	danger	subjective danger, objective security

In the cases at hand, the last column of our table suggests something *more than* either of the columns on the left hand side. What the author bestows upon the text – or film – are new ways of looking at all of the features to the left, and at the world we are shown through the screen. Nabokov, as we saw in our extract from the interview, provides a new way of looking at Humbert's *feelings*, which is both understanding and unforgiving. Humbert is not torn between

good and evil, between lust and moral condemnation, but Nabokov, together with the charitable reader, is. His consistent use of style – the pedantry, the lewd imagery, the inappropriate details of which Humbert is not entirely self-conscious – makes the novel a kind of caricature, but it does so while bringing Nabokov’s uncomfortable compassion into the picture.

Through color, just as Piotr does by changing the tone in his voice, authors display irony insofar as they say something opposite to what is meant (Brown and Levinson 80). But our central contribution is the suggestion that these instances of irony are meant to shed light on the contradictions inherent in real life. The common ground of our examples is that their authors take up a double perspective on the world, with the film-specific upshot that this can be done immediately: in one shot one may superimpose color – say, green, as in the shot from *A Short Film About Killing* – and a strikingly contrasting image – such as the smiling lawyer on the motorcycle. Visually, this is as aesthetically important as any other element involved. Going back to Kant, for instance, we may argue that the table, with its three layers of codependent meaning, captures aspects of film that are as ‘formal’ as any combination of shapes, harmonies, or narrative structures. Or, if we take on a value-maximising approach to interpretation<sup>7</sup> – on which the aim is to obtain as much aesthetic satisfaction from its objects, we might say that the ability of color to contrast several perspectives, or several meanings of the same sign, is conducive to what Nabokov called “aesthetic bliss”, with “curiosity, tenderness, kindness and ecstasy” – the value he attributed to writing and reading *Lolita*. Our purpose in this paper is not to determine the value of irony, nor to study its necessary and sufficient conditions. Our point is that *if* our examples of irony can pump our intuitions as we suggest they do, then color is as valuable a resource, aesthetically and visually, as any other component of aesthetic value and signification. It doesn’t simply mean something other than what the character says explicitly: it is also a way of showing how the world surrounding them may contradict itself. That film is able to capture these aspects visually, narratively, and with all the sensitivity of examined experience, is as strong an argument for the aesthetic value of color as that of any other element could be.

## 5. Conclusion

In the first two sections of this paper, we identified several sources of aversion to color in film, charm in the visual arts and style in literature and philosophy. We then gave two examples where color is essential to the interpretation of authorial intention, therefore contributing to determining meaning. Both Kieślowski and Anderson provide filters through which to contemplate the naturally colored world: Poland is as cruel and unforgiving as it is (through Piotr’s efforts) tentative at justice, and Jacek is as ruthless as he is tender and loved. Likewise, the boy scout children of *Moonrise Kingdom* are less and yet more complicated than young adults; less and yet more capable of getting themselves in danger and of achieving ordinary salvation. Without color as a vehicle for communicating irony, not just the author’s intended meaning, but also the insight it provides, would be irretrievably lost.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Grice is a clear counterexample to Frege within the analytic tradition. Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, for instance, interpret irony as a violation of the Maxim of Quality, using other potential clues to convey the intended meaning. This reading supports our analogy, pointing to various conversational phenomena with which we draw parallels in the sections that follow.
- <sup>2</sup> A discussion on the Green World and on its role in the genre of the Hollywood Comedy of Remarriage is to be found in Cavell 1981 and Cavell 2004. For the origin of the term Green World see Frye 1957.
- <sup>3</sup> This title is preserved in the shorter version included under the *Decalogue* Kieslowski's series on the Ten Commandments, and in various translations.
- <sup>4</sup> The conventional meaning of blue is discussed by Pastoureau: "Comme il est docile, comme il est discipliné! Le bleu est une couleur si sage, qui se fonde dans le paysage, et ne se fait pas remarquer" (Pastoureau 13).
- <sup>5</sup> That artworks are representations of illocutionary acts by fictional characters and implied speakers is held by Beardsley (Carroll 167). Carroll suggests artworks can also be performances of illocutionary acts themselves (Carroll 165). This would respond to the authorial intention referenced in the right hand column of our table.
- <sup>6</sup> Note that value-maximising views are sometimes taken to contrast actual intentionalism, on which we based some of our claims about the relevance of authorial intention to interpretation. For this reason we take the relevance of irony in a value-maximising theory of interpretation to support our point regardless of our position in the debate about intention and interpretation.

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