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**Abstract**

In this paper, I attempt to correlate the recent rise of the moral novel with the attacks of 9/11. In exploring the definition of moral fiction and briefly tracing its roots in recent history, I attempt to answer the question of what early 21<sup>st</sup> century readers ask from their fiction, and what purpose the novel strives to serve.

In examining the novels *Saturday* by Ian McEwan, *The Emperor's Children* by Claire Messud, and *Everyman* by Philip Roth, I hope to locate and explore the trend in contemporary novel writing that is to reinforce scripted notions of right and wrong that recall both Judeo-Christian mythology and the nineteenth century literature that perpetuated those values.