

By the 1890s, another term had become associated with this focus on 'art for art's sake'. These included the notion of intense refinement; the valuing of artificiality over nature; a position of ennui or boredom rather than of moral earnestness or the valuing of hard work; an interest in perversity and paradox, and in transgressive modes of sexuality. One of the most important explicators of decadence was the poet Arthur Symonds, whose essay 'The Decadent Movement in Literature' (1893), described decadence as 'a new and beautiful and interesting disease'.