

Dr. Alan Haffa

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49)

- Born in Boston; parents were actors
- Raised by John Allan; tobacco merchant in Richmond
- Education and troubled life with John Allan
- Army service, and West Point; Poetry
- Editor for literary magazine; marriage to cousin, Virginia (age 14)
- 1840, *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*
- 1845, "The Raven"
- 1847, Virginia died; "Annabel Lee"
- 1849, died in hospital in Baltimore

Poetic Style

- Free Rhyming; Internal Rhyme
- Use of alliteration and assonance
- Strong rhythmic cadence
- Tragic and romantic: themes of love-lost and death predominate

The Raven, 1845

<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/178713>

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore –
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door. "
'T is some visitor, " I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door–
Only this and nothing more."

Analysis of The Raven

- Trochaic Octameter: Stress/Un-stress; 8 feet
 - Borrowed meter and rhyme from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Lady Geraldine's Courtship"; Dedicated The Raven to her.
- Growing suspense and mood of melancholy
 - Setting establishes a Gothic mood

- Assonance of “O” sounds
- Repetition of raven’s refrain
- Surprise to fear to terror as narrator realizes what the raven means
- Power of the Imagination: nothing really happens other than a raven tapping on his window and refusing to go;

Raven Symbolism

- War goddess took form of Raven
- Ravens and the battlefield
- Native American Norse Myth
- Irish Myth: Morrigan on dying Cuchulainn, tied to a rock
- Raven is thus imbued with a symbolic meaning as a harbinger of death and the impossible gap between the living and the dead
- Pathetic Fallacy

Charles Baudelaire (1821-67)

- Father and Step-Father
- Debt and Health Problems
- Jeanne Duval—Black Venus; Lived off mother; a dandy
- Political Activity
- Art and Literature Critic
- Translated Edgar Allan Poe
- Major work: *Les Fleurs du Mal*, 1857; Indecency prosecution
- Died in his mother’s arms

Baudelaire’s Aesthetic

- Fear as a poetic theme
- Ugliness as a theme of poetic interest
- Beauty reconceived as bizarre
- From the “Philosophic Art,”: “What is the modern conception of art? It is to create a suggestive magic containing both the object and the subject, the world outside the artist and the artist himself.”
- This theory of art would influence the Symbolist Poets of the 1870s-1890s.

Edouard Manet

- Friendship and advocacy
- After 1845 Salon: "He shall be the true painter who can pull out of everyday life its epic side and make us understand just how great and poetic we are in our neckties and polished boots."
- "La Maitresse de Baudelaire" 1862

Alexandrine Verse

- 12 syllable lines, rhyming
- Number of lines may vary; Alexandrine Sonnet
- 6 Iams with caesura followed by another 6 iams
- First used in Neo-Classical France: Corneille and Racine
- Baudelaire changes position of Caesura

"A Martyr"

- Sensuous imagery
- Shocking juxtaposition to "from a headless corpse runs a thin flood over the sated pillow, and the linen drinks the red and living blood with the greediness of a meadow."
- She is not a Martyr for religion but for love
- Itemized description of body parallels the Petrarch love sonnet, which catalogued a woman's beauty, body part by body part
- Parodying the traditional love poem

Robert Browning (1812-1889)

- Father, Bank Clerk; library of 6,000 books
- Highly allusive poetry
- Courtship of Elizabeth Barrett Browning
- 1846: marriage and move to Florence
- Famous for "dramatic monologue" technique

Browning's Poetry

- Shakespeare as model: **personality as staged** and **variable**
- Narrative voice in lyric to create **objectivity**
- *Dramatic Lyrics*, 1842, "lyric in expression," but they are "the utterances of so many

imaginary persons, not mine.”

- Dramatic monologue: Marvel and Tennyson had used it, but **B. perfected it**
- **Focus on an emotional moment**
- Unappealing yet Sympathetic Characters

Porphyria's Lover: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/175584>

- Does the narrator love Porphyria?
- Why does the narrator kill Porphyria?
- Porphyria's disease: pale, weak, sensitive to light
- Interpretation 1: He kills in fulfillment of her wish to die: God can't complain because morally what he has done is right.
- Interpretation 2: He kills her out of jealousy to possess her completely: men destroy that which we love and find ways to justify it

Summary

- 19th century poetry evolved from Romanticism to Realism
- Influence of Gothic
- Poetry that raises Moral issues
- Greater freedom in the poetic forms
- Do we detect a response to the greater complexity and pressure of Industrial Age?
- Poets seem to be exploring what it means to be human in a new way
- In the past, it was taken for granted what was moral and what made us human; now, poets are delving deeper and darker