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pantheism

the belief that all being is a part of the Divine, or emanates from the Divine, or contains a spark of the Divine. The term is more precisely used for the first or second of those definitions than the third. Philosophers also differentiate pantheism (God is all-encompassing and all being participates in God) from panentheism (God is external to the Universe but also contains the Universe). William Blake's statement that "...everything that lives is holy" (from "A Song of Liberty") is pantheistic; the Transcendentalist notion offered by Ralph Waldo Emerson, partly from Plotinus and Swedenborg, that life emanates from a divine center and desires reunion with that center (perfection) contains pantheistic elements; Walt Whitman's notions of the interconnectedness of everyone and everything ("Crossing Brooklyn Ferry") reflect his pantheistic sentiments.

paradigm (from philosopher Thomas Kuhn)

the dominant idea or set of preconceptions in a particular field at a particular time period. The concept derives from G.F.W. Hegel's idea of the *Zeitgeist* (Spirit of the Age) and sets out to demonstrate how ideas gain ascendancy in various scientific fields.

The concept is not regularly applied to the arts, but one could easily imagine an explanation of the supplanting of the Neo-Classical paradigm by the Romantic paradigm in English literature. Benedetto Croce's *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century* appears to suggest that the decadent artistic period late in the century reflected an exhaustion of the Romantic / Victorian *Zeitgeist*, a historical and artistic example that parallels Kuhn's ideas regarding science.

parody

a work written as a deliberate imitation of another work, usually for satiric or humorous purposes. Sometimes the parody is directed at the original work or its author, as A.C. Swinburne's "Higher Pantheism in a Nutshell" is directed, quite viciously, at Alfred Lord Tennyson and his defense of Christianity, "The Higher Pantheism." The intent was to ridicule the ideas of the Tennyson poem. Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* parodies the very popular gothic romances with which she was familiar.

A work may poke fun less seriously, with the parody meant to be funny, rather than to carry any serious commentary on the original. "Weird Al's" parody of Madonna's "Like a Virgin," entitled "Like a Surgeon," has no more substance than one piece of pop culture gathering humor by association with a more original piece. The Firesign Theater's "Back to the Shadows Again," using the music of Gene Autry's "Back in the Saddle Again," exists as part of a genuinely topical satire, but is neither directed at nor reliant on Autry's original.

The parody may also intimately incorporate elements of an original in producing a satire which is directed to other targets. Nathaniel Hawthorne's close modeling of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* into his tale, "The Celestial Railroad," reflects this design. Hawthorne's satire is directed at the modern world: the religion of his contemporaries and the industrial and consumer values of the 'modern' early

nineteenth century. Bunyan's allegory is reapplied to the standards of Hawthorne's time, giving a 'modern' (and considerably more humorous) structure to the 'divinely inspired' dream.

pastoral

taking place "out in the pasture," that is, in a rural setting.

Pastoral settings were traditional for love poems based on Classical Greek imagery, such as Christopher Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to the Nymph." Elegies also traditionally include a pastoral element, as John Milton alludes to sheep and shepherds in "Lycidas" and Robert Lowell ventures from the cold ocean long enough to visit Our Lady of Walsingham in "The Quaker Graveyard at Nantucket."

It is of significant interest that the notions of the 'pure' countryside, often peopled by Classical nymphs and deities, significantly predate the spread of **Romantic** notions of **Nature**. There is no pretense of reality in Marlowe's shepherd poem, which takes place in an imaginary Arcadia, untouched by the autumn chill of Sir Walter Raleigh's poetic response. Milton makes a different use of the pastoral in his elegy, his shepherd and sheep providing a pretext for a lecture against wayward clergy ('shepherds').

pathetic fallacy (fallacy of 'pathos,' or emotion)

attributed to John Ruskin

not a fallacy but a very standard (as in over-used) literary device in which one ascribes emotions to inanimate objects or elements of the setting. The haiku

"Sullen summer clouds
set critic Ruskin sulking
in arthritic pain."

attributes a mood (pathos) to inanimate nature (sullen clouds), as well as **personifying** the clouds, as they evidently choose to torment the long-deceased critic.

pathos/pathetic

1) that which arouses strong emotion, usually sadness, sorrow, sympathy, or even empathy.

The death of little Nell in Charles Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop* is designed to arouse pathos; I believe Oscar Wilde was correct when he suggested it was an example of outrageous sentimentality. However, the depiction of Pip squirming through Christmas dinner with Pumblechook and his entourage in *Great Expectations* arouses genuine pathos, and genuine sympathy for Pip.

Arthur Miller is quite concerned that viewers find Willie Loman (*The Death of a Salesman*) a tragic figure rather than just a pathetic one. The viewer is expected to understand Willy Loman's desperate need for his dreams, and for dignity, rather than just feel sorrow for his wasted life.

2) 'pathos' is used in rhetorical instruction to refer to devices employed in an argument to arouse emotional response and the resultant tone of the piece. A host of devices can be used, legitimately or illegitimately, to inspire sympathy, empathy, enthusiasm, hatred, or any other emotion in a reader. Such devices include vivid examples, such as the depictions of London poverty Charles Dickens includes in his didactic Christmas story, *A Christmas Carol*. Chris

Hedges uses examples from ‘reality TV’ to depict our cultural fascination with shallow melodrama in his *Empire of Illusion*. Less legitimately, a writer may use name-calling, guilt-by-association, and such rhetorical techniques to stir the emotions of an audience. Talk-radio commentators are notorious for replacing reason with unsubstantiated anger.

persona

the voice in which an author writes: a voice which may be like him to a greater or lesser extent; which may or may not share his ‘real’ views; and which may appear as a conscious creation or which may be nearly impossible for the reader to distinguish from the author.

Mark Twain is a persona, the pen name and creation of Samuel Langhorne Clemens. Clemens made such a sustained use of ‘Mark Twain’ as a public persona as well as a print ‘voice,’ that he is often confused with his creation. First person fiction requires the creation of a narrative persona, be it Twain’s Huck Finn (yes, a persona creating a persona!) or Charles Dickens’s Pip (*Great Expectations*). This persona may be unlike the writer as is the mad murderer of Robert Browning’s “Porphyria’s Lover.” The persona may be a deeply disguised model of the writer, like the “Jack the Bear” of Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*. The persona may even resemble the writer as much as David Copperfield appears to resemble Dickens.

The persona is not just the vehicle of first person fiction. I suggest that all effective writers, consciously or unconsciously, always write through a persona. Good writing involves the creation of a unified voice and the voice of an actual human mind is neither so unified nor so simple as that found in even the most complex narrative. The voice that creates the fog of Chancery at the beginning of *Bleak House* is a persona of Charles Dickens, as much an invention as the voice appearing later in the book, that of first person narrator Esther Summerson. More overtly, the ‘dear reader’ comments found in George Eliot’s fiction reflect narrative choices and calculation just as clearly as do the unfolding elements of the plot or attributes of the characters.

personification

attributing human characteristics to an inanimate object.

An “angry” storm cloud is a storm cloud personified. “The Evil Gun” (actual title of a truly awful western movie) appears to attribute morality and motive to a piece of metal. (Susanna Clarke in *Jonathan Strange and Mr. Norrell* tells her readers that the faerie folk regularly attribute motive and intent to objects we would consider inanimate. Perhaps, if we take a clue from that realm, the rock that bruised your foot really did ‘have it in’ for you.)

In “Chicago,” Carl Sandburg personifies the city, giving it the muscles and sweat-stains of its inhabitants.

perspective

1) point of view; the viewpoint from which an event or object is observed; the narrative voice or the *chosen* focus of a third person narration would serve to establish perspective;

2) the viewpoint from which one writes; the viewpoint from which one views the cosmos or some elements of it. As a philosophical/historical concept, perspective

can be defined as the actual viewpoint of the writer, in so far as it can be determined by available evidence. According to philosopher Ortega y Gasset, each of us possesses his/her unique perspective, which shares elements with the perspectives of others but also contains wholly individual elements.

Thus the perspective found in all of Charles Dickens's writing, regardless of the persona he establishes, is that of a male, middle class, member of English society in the nineteenth century. He cannot, regardless of his efforts, fully step outside of that perspective. He may, in some segments of *Bleak House*, write as Esther Summerson, but only within the bounds of the Esther Summerson he has the background and imagination to create. Jules Verne may write of submarines and flying machines and all such things as his imagination creates, but his flying machines and submarines will no more be identical to the working models than his humans are identical to those figures created by Ernest Hemingway in the world after the Great War. He cannot, in that sense, create what he has not lived, though he and other writers can – and do -- create imaginary worlds from the fabric of possibilities available to their minds.

While necessary perspective does limit possibilities, perspective need not limit either talent or imagination. Some critics, quite egocentrically, claim constraints on other writers' abilities based on stereotyped notions of human capacity. V.S. Naipal claims that all female writers are 'inferior' (at least to him) as they are limited by the feminine perspective, and are identifiable as female in every piece they write. I would refute this claim with two simple examples: many critics did not identify George Eliot as female following the publication of *Adam Bede* and preceding her release of her own identity; second, Jane Austen's *Emma*, a simple social comedy, is a far, far better piece of writing, demonstrating greater understanding of the human psyche, than V.S. Naipal's pretentious *A Bend in the River*, demonstrating that he is a rather mediocre talent in comparison.

Each writer's perspective is unique: writers share certain elements of perspective with all their readers, beginning with the written language itself; they share more elements with their contemporaries as they live in same world and experience similar events; yet each brings something to his/her work that is outside the perspective of all other humans. Dickens's childhood traumas offer him the perspective to create the Pip of *Great Expectations* as well as the *David Copperfield* who found himself working in a boot blacking factory. Edgar Rice Burroughs's hours spent alone with his imagination during childhood illnesses gave him the perspective to create the fantasy world of *Tarzan*.

As all people see the world from a mix of shared and individual elements, language offers the opportunity to share individual elements. Much literature, I suggest, involves the effort to communicate and share that unique, individual perspective which the writer possesses.

Philistine (from Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*)

a person of privilege, position, or education whose values lack depth. Arnold's reference was to British nobility and gentry who would devote their lives to hunting rather than intellectual understanding and whose standards were intimately tied, not to the needs of humanity, but their own comfort. Modern versions would be at home in college football stadiums, having donated coin to

the slush fund which pays their alma mater's quarterback rather than to their alma mater's library.

phonetics

rules and patterns of pronunciation.

picaresque

usually referring to a novel: containing and centering on a series of bold adventures, with the hero's adventures generally taking place as a series of episodes rather than as part of a tightly woven plot.

Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* is the first picaresque novel as well as the acknowledged first novel; Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* is likewise picaresque in structure, as is Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and most other early novels. Tobias Smollett's novels, such as *Roderick Random*, epitomize the genre. I would consider Sir Walter Scott's adventure novels, such as *Ivanhoe*, as too tightly plotted to fit the definition though the plot is still centered on the title character.

plagiarism

the use of the words, ideas, or literary structure of another without proper acknowledgement. It is the legal, ethical, and scholarly obligation of any researcher or writer to fully acknowledge use of the words of another (all quotes and all paraphrase of another should be cited in the appropriate fashion); the ideas of another (both summary of another's writings or scholarly work and incorporation of individual ideas should be properly acknowledged); and even the structure of a written piece (borrowing form as well as individual elements from a structured list, for example, should be acknowledged; music copyrights apply to formal attributes of compositions).

Failure to fully acknowledge sources is a form of academic dishonesty. Penalties within the academic environment range from grade penalties imposed on students to dismissal from academic positions for professors. In the world of commercial publishing, plagiarism can result in legal consequences ranging from civil suits to criminal penalties, the latter for certain types of copyright violation.

plantation novel

a novel genre from the Antebellum period, it glorified the aristocratic Southern 'way of life'; such novels featured the all-wise bourbon-sipping patriarch, supposedly happy slaves at work in the fields, and the like.

John Pendleton Kennedy was one of the creators of the genre (*Swallow Barn*).

The genre is lampooned viciously, with deadly accuracy, in the Grangerford chapters of Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

plot

the 'story' of a narrative piece; the sequence of action that the piece describes. A novel with a unified plot centers on a single event whose significance is established early in the work and whose resolution completes the action. Complex novels may include secondary plots without compromising uniformity. Not all novels have a uniform plot (see **picaresque**).

The plot of *The Lord of the Rings* involves the efforts of the Fellowship of the Ring (and not just ringbearer Frodo) to thwart Sauron's attempt to destroy all that is worthwhile in Middle Earth. The ascent of the King (Aragorn) takes its own place as a secondary plot.

The plot of *The Old Man and the Sea* is straight-forwardly the story of a fisherman attempting to catch and keep a big fish.

The plot of *Moby Dick* centers on Ishmael's attempt to find his place in the scheme of the world, with the great tragedy, Ahab's war with nature and the natural order, the secondary plot – or is it? Is the plot Ahab's tragedy and is Ishmael a narrative vehicle?

poem

a literary work in which structure, rhythm, and employment of various linguistic devices tend to have significant importance, often as much as or more importance than content, though sometimes as an augmentation to content. Structure can refer to precise schemes of stanza, meter, or rhyme, or can refer to free verse or experimental structure. Rhythm is important, either by its presence (patterns of meter) or absence (deliberate free verse or experimental structure). Employment of such literary devices as metaphor is generally expected. Traditional poetry employs set patterns of meter and verse (quatrains of iambic tetrameter; iambic pentameter; etc.) and often employs end rhyme (though blank verse, the 'highest' of verse forms, does not employ end rhyme). Variations, however, are not necessarily recent: George Herbert's visual poetry (seventeenth century) employed eccentric form; Gerrard Manley Hopkins' 'sprung rhythm' was a late nineteenth century innovation.

John Milton's *Paradise Lost* is an epic poem; a **haiku** is a poem; e.e. cummings' "[A leaf falls, loneliness]" is a poem, and derives some of its aesthetic importance from its highly original form. Pieces like John Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," William Shakespeare's sonnets, Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," and Robert Burns's "Tam O'Shanter" are obviously poems. Carolyn Forché's "The General," written in paragraph form, is termed by its author and accepted by critics as a poem (prose poem).

poetic foot

a single pattern (usually 2 or 3 syllables) of stresses which may be repeated or combined with other such patterns to form a line of poetry.

point of view

the perspective from which a story is told:

1st. person - narrative voice is "I."

- Emily Dickinson's "I could not stop for Death" is an obvious example with the first person pronoun in the opening line. Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*, Percy Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind," and Robert Browning's "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came" all employ first person narrators.
- The writer may also create a first-person character or persona who stays at the periphery of the action but provides a perspective for an essentially third-person tale. Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Body Snatchers" is narrated by an "I" whose only part in the action lies in membership in the informal drinking club of the George at Debenham.

2nd. person - the writer addresses the reader as "you," giving the reader the imaginary central position in the action:

Tom Robbins wrote a novel, *Half-Asleep in Frog Pajamas*, employing second person narration throughout. I am certain I am not the only person who judged the piece completely unreadable. Larry Brown's descriptive essay "Fire" reflects a more reasonable employment of second person as he wishes his readers to imagine themselves in the position of the firefighter.

3rd. person omniscient - all characters are "he" or "she"; the narrator is outside the action and knows everything.

In the novel *War and Peace*, Leo Tolstoy knows everything, even why armies behave as they do (well, actually he theorizes on that topic), and reveals as much or as little as the circumstances seem to require. Tolstoy takes us inside the heads of multiple characters, Pierre, Natasha, Andrew, and others. In the similarly vast *Les Miserables*, Victor Hugo includes detail of a Napoleonic War battle and explains the evolution of the Paris sewer system, but is more inclined to use the action to demonstrate characters' motivation than to prowl unceasingly in their thoughts.

3rd. person limited -- narrator is outside the action, but appears to know only a consistently determined portion of the workings of his universe.

- The narrator may offer external action only, particularly if the author believes that behavior, not internal dialogue, matters (**naturalistic** fiction). Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* is a naturalistic example; Ernest Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants" also offers only the external picture, but Hemingway uses the external action for opposite ends, to create reader awareness of internal conflicts and motivation.
- The narrator may offer the perspective of a single character, in effect much like a first person piece but employing 'she' or 'he' rather than 'I.' F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams" and "Babylon Revisited" both employ the third person limited technique, as we follow, respectively, Dexter and Charlie through their collisions with reality.
- The narrator may choose to limit his focus to a single character, but not to confine himself to that character's perspective. Nathaniel Hawthorne offers most of "Young Goodman Brown" from Brown's perspective, but follows him to the grave from an outside, universal, perspective.
- **Free indirect discourse** may be employed, in which the author combines or mixes focus from a single character with external, often omniscient, focus.

polytheism

any of those religions which recognizes or worships a number of deities. The obvious examples include the Classical Greek, with gods and goddesses Zeus, Hera, Aphrodite, Athena, and the like. Polytheist religions often include a mix of major deities, minor (or household) deities, and sometimes **animist** figures. Pan, a deity of fields and flocks, has animist elements though he has his place in the Greek pantheon. Polytheist religions may also recognize or accept the validity of deities of other religions though their adherents do not worship those particular deities.

Post-modernism

a direction in the humanities derived from Michael Foucault and his fellow-travelers, post-modernism is rooted on two philosophical claims: since it is impossible to know everything, it is impossible to possess any genuine ‘truth’; and since all knowledge is dependent on one’s individual perspective, it is impossible to judge whether one perspective is or is not superior to another. Post-modernist conceptions can be found in the literature of Jorge Luis Borges, the delightful magical-realism of Gabriel Garcia Marquez (“A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”), and Thomas Pynchon’s excursions into the paranoia of the age (*V.; Gravity’s Rainbow*). While post-modernist conceptions have contributed to excellent literature, their contributions to philosophy are more questionable (scientific philosophers’ reactions include *The Sokal Hoax*). Their language-twisting arguments appear much the sort offered by the Classical Sophists and have had the effect of denigrating attempts to find historical truth throughout the humanities.

pragmatic

that which works; that whose functionality in the “real world” can be demonstrated.

There are tremendous pragmatic advantages in driving on the right-hand side of two lane roads in the United States, regardless of whether or not one believes the government has the right to impose laws, including traffic laws, on individuals. Persons attempting to ignore this pragmatic guideline rapidly separate themselves from the driving public. In almost all countries, convention predates traffic laws in this regard: it is pragmatically advantageous for people to come to some consensus as to basic highway customs. In Burma, where a consensus was slow to emerge, taxi drivers killed each other and their customers at an alarming rate. Some philosophers (John Stuart Mill and the Utilitarians as well as the philosophical school of William James, known as Pragmatists) believe the roots of ethics lie in pragmatic responses to the world; others, such as Immanuel Kant, insist on the search for absolute standards of ethical behavior.

predestination

the belief that the course of one's life (including one's eternal reward) is mapped and unalterable from beginning to end; Calvinist doctrine includes the idea of predestination.

Of those “Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God” in the Jonathon Edwards sermon, the elect will inevitably follow a course of belief and behavior that will lead them to redemption and heaven while the fallen will equally inevitably make their way to hell. That Edwards could simultaneously hold that belief and a belief in free will, and believe it his duty to offer sermons designed to strike mortal fear into the hearts of mankind, reflects the ability to construct and logically overcome a paradox.

The Calvinist doctrine of predestination figures heavily in the literary works of early New England, and is reflected in Samuel Sewall’s diary, Mary Rowlandson’s captivity narrative, and the poetry of the period, both the overtly religious poetry and the more secular portions of Anne Bradstreet’s “homespun verse.”

Christopher Marlowe's "Tragical History of Doctor Faustus" seems to include a commentary on Calvinism – one that expands on the crude interpretation that some may know themselves as hell-bound and therefore turn their back on all opportunities, real or imagined, for redemption. His Faustus appears to believe "the wages of sin is death" and that is the end of it. Later theologians (such as Edwards) would respond to such a notion with the suggestion that "God knows where you are going, but you do not; you must choose though He knows the choice you will make."

Pre-Raphaelites

a school of British painters and poets from the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Their painting style included a passion for fealty to detail and a rejection of impressionism and of trends that they claimed could be traced to Raphael. Critic John Ruskin was a patron of the movement. Its major literary figures included Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Christina Rossetti, and Algernon Charles Swinburne. D.G. Rossetti's 'fleshly' poems "The Blessed Damosel" and "Jenny," as well as his painting, emphasized the sensual elements of the movement. His illustrations for Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" add more than a dollop of flesh to her morality tale. The poems, like Pre-Raphaelite painting, tend to be rich in precise detail and visual elements. D.G. Rossetti's short poem, "The Woodspurge" hinges on a precise wisp of physical observation. Longer poems, like Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" and D.G. Rossetti's "Jenny," tend to include opulent descriptive passages and/or very precise details.

prescriptive

that which tells how a thing *should* be; that which offers rules; regarding a dictionary or language usage guide, one which sets forth rules as to what is allowed in the language or how the language is to be employed.

An official French dictionary would include those terms and only those terms considered a legitimate part of the language by the French Academy, a body of France's most esteemed language scholars. They prescribe usage within the French language (and may and did declare that 'email' is not a French word). Stylesheets and formatting guides are prescriptive. They do not purport to state what is correct regarding the entire language, but do establish rules for language, citations, and form for specific fields and areas of study. Thus, psychology papers are expected to adhere to the rules found in the APA Stylesheet; students in English are expected to follow the MLA's rules; students in other areas of study follow whatever stylesheets are designated by their academic departments or apply to their fields.

prodigal son

from the biblical parable of the Prodigal Son, a literary motif in which the protagonist leaves his community (that is home, family, or friends), makes bad choices or falls into bad company, learns the error of his ways, returns home seeking forgiveness, and reforms. Prince Hal (Shakespeare's Henry IV & V plays) may be seen as the prodigal son, passing his time with Falstaff's rogues before returning to his world and his responsibilities. Pip, in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*, comes to his senses in the fashion of the prodigal son, but it is too late for him to return home. Roguish heroes throughout fiction carry

elements of the prodigal, as they ‘return to’ or are found to possess essential ties to ‘the good,’ Hans Solo of the original “Star Wars” movie being an obvious example. Just as the returning prodigal is a staple of contemporary bad TV, the would-be prodigal’s soul-crushing return has long been a staple of sentimental literature. George Douglas Brown’s “How Janet Goudie Came Home” is one such story, as the wayward protagonist returns to discover her father lying in his coffin.

prosody

metrics; versification; mechanics of verse; the music of poetry.

protagonist

the central figure of a piece of writing; the one with whom the reader is encouraged to empathize.

Frodo is the chief protagonist of J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* and the reader desires his success; Ahab may be the protagonist of Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*, but the reader is led to wish that he could turn away from his flawed quest. (Both of the above pieces contain other figures who could be described as protagonists: Aragorn, Gandolf and maybe others in the former; both the narrator Ishmael and Starbuck in his confrontations with Ahab in the latter.)

As a tragic hero, Hamlet is the protagonist of the William Shakespeare’s play, but the viewer is not encouraged to emulate him. The viewer is actively encouraged to reject the philosophy of Willy Loman, the protagonist of Arthur Miller’s modern tragedy, *Death of a Salesman*.

Puritanism

for the purposes of English students, the religion of the faction responsible for the beheading of Charles I of England (1649) and the rule of Oliver Cromwell (under the Protectorate 1653-59; prior to that under Parliament or his own authority), as well as the dominant religion of the settlers of the New England colonies. The Puritans were Calvinists, fundamentalist reformers of the Presbyterian Church. (The original Plymouth colonists were Separatists, but shared most of the religious values of those more accurately and precisely termed Puritans.)

The Puritans closed the theatres in England, but also gave British literature John Milton (*Paradise Lost*) and John Bunyan (*Pilgrim’s Progress*, written from prison following the Restoration). In American literature, the delightful poetry of Anne Bradstreet (“The Author to Her Book”) joins personal accounts (William Bradford’s *Of Plymouth Plantations*; Samuel Sewall’s *Diary*; Mary Rowlandson’s *Captivity Narrative*) and religious poetry (Michael Wigglesworth, Edward Taylor) in the canon.

pyrrhic

a poetic foot consisting of two light stresses.

Q

quatrain

a four-line stanza

R

rake

a male of property and social station (nobility or gentry), usually young, who is given to hedonistic pursuits; a ‘hellraiser.’ His behavior would include chasing women, up to and including forcing himself on women of lower station, generally would include drinking to excess (either habitual drunkenness or alcoholism), and would often include a strong taste for cards and gambling. Other vices of any type reflecting ‘high spirits’ (include fighting, dueling, and riding a horse in an unsafe manner) might be among his attributes.

The rake who attempts to seduce Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, then reforms and marries her is one literary example. Steerforth of Dickens's *David Copperfield* is a nineteenth century version. ‘Nemo,’ Lady Dedlock’s fallen initial lover from Dickens’s *Bleak House*, likely lost his way through rakish behavior, but Dickens deliberately minimizes our knowledge of this man who chose to be ‘no one.’ Lord Byron provides an excellent real-life example of the rake to augment the suggested behavior of his heroic creations (“Don Juan,” “Childe Harold”).

Washington Irving’s Brom Bones in “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” is not rich enough to qualify as a ‘rake,’ but merely is a young man ‘sowing wild oats.’

Realism

a school of writing which emphasizes adherence to a flow of events such as would be possible in the “real world” (the world in which we live; the world we might find described in the newspaper); ordinary people are appropriate subjects for realistic writing; events take place and plots are resolved in a manner consistent with the workings of the real world.

American adherents of Realism and Naturalism include Stephen Crane (*The Red Badge of Courage*) and Theodore Dreiser (*Sister Carrie*). Ambrose Bierce's Civil War stories, which are as rich in realistic detail as anything written by any Realist writer, are outside the genre as Bierce curls unlikely and supernatural coincidence into his stories to amplify their symbolic significance.

British novelist George Eliot (*The Mill on the Floss; Middlemarch; Adam Bede*) models nineteenth century Realism, as she offers cross-sections of society rather than symbolically created microcosms such as found in Charles Dickens’s fiction. Critics may quibble about whether George Gissing (*New Grub Street*) fits into the Realist or Naturalist category, with his best moments reflecting a Dickensian influence and his lesser ones an attention to detail that becomes flat and boring.

reductionism

explaining a complex event by use of a single, simple causal model.

Richard Dawkins’ *The Selfish Gene* attempts to reduce the factors of evolution to the single causal model of genes perpetuating themselves. Some (such as Dawkins) attempt to redefine the term ‘reductionism’ and equate it with scientific method; the term’s initial connotations are those of philosophical disdain: the term suggests over-simplification. Mark Twain’s desultory explanation of how the entirety of the evolution of the universe was designed with the sole purpose of creating humanity provides a wonderful, satiric, example of reductionism. As

anything from Dawkins's 'selfish gene' to 'the selfish appendix' can be equally plugged into such a formula, it provides apt warning against such oversimplification.

reification (from Søren Kierkegaard)

a philosophical term for the mistaking of a definition or a description of a thing for the thing itself.

Fairly recently our knowledge of aerodynamics was such that we could not understand how a bumble bee could fly; someone who thought our knowledge was more real than nature might react to this by saying, "the bumblebee is defying the laws of nature"; that statement would be an example of reification; we know (or should know) the bumblebee was not defying anything; its ability to fly indicated that our knowledge was incomplete.

religion

an organized body of beliefs regarding the deities and the supernatural, such as would constitute the belief system of a like-minded group of adherents. The term may be employed on a number of levels: Christian / Episcopalian / High church Anglican; the first potentially encompassing all those who believe Jesus Christ's status as a particular representative of the monotheistic deity referred to in one or another version of the Christian bible; the second encompassing only those members of a particular Protestant denomination; the third encompassing a particular subset of a particular denomination of Protestant Christians. While normal reference is to a group in context (Protestant / Catholic in the religious conflicts of Shakespeare's time; New England Puritan in the context of Anne Bradstreet; Enlightenment Deist as represented by Thomas Jefferson; Anglican/Dissenter as found in eighteenth and nineteenth century English religious disputes), the term can also be used to refer to an individual's particular patterns of belief, as in Thomas Paine's claim that his religion is his own in *Age of Reason*.

resolution

1) the notion, in a literary work, that a character's, or the characters', fates should be worked out in the culmination of the piece.

Oliver Twist's life reaches a resolution in the Dickens novel, as he is reunited with his adopted family and presumably enters a stable world; Pip of *Great Expectations*, however, has only part of his destiny resolved. His 'gentlemanly' ambitions reach their resolution, as he accepts the place of a clerk that is open to him and puts Magwitch's foolishness behind him; romantic issues remain unresolved, as the reader is left to imagine what future may or may not await Pip and the emotionally scarred Stella.

Bleak House offers complete resolutions and psychological peace – though not affirmative endings -- for all of the characters (villains excepted). Esther Summerson finds happiness; Sir Leicester Dedlock and Ada Jarndyce each are left with the peace available to those who mourn; George Rouncewell comes home; even such uncertain characters as William Guppy and Tony Jobling find their places in Guppy's law modest law firm.

Modern pieces may not offer resolution or offer only limited resolution. The evident resolution of Albert Camus's *The Plague* is rendered tentative by his insistence that plague will come again. The battle never ends. The only resolution

available in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is death, because Godot is not coming (not unless Godot is Death).

2) the structural place in a work where the plot line is worked out; it occurs at the end.

Restoration drama

English drama written or performed following Charles II's return to the English throne (1659) and the reopening of the playhouses. Restoration drama featured, for the first time on the English stage, women playing female roles, with Charles II's mistress, Nell Gwin, a prominent actress.

The dominant form was the comedy, filled with sexual references and double entendres. William Wycherley's *The Country Wife* and William Congreve's *The Way of the World* were among the most important comedies. Wycherley's *The Country Wife* features a character named Horner who manages to 'give the horns' to a number of husbands in the course of the action; *The Way of the World* features a pair of protagonists whose one 'virtue' appears to be a particular level of verbal agility. Females appeared behind the performances as well as on the stage, as one of the period's major playwrights, Aphra Behn, was a woman. Her works included racy comedy as well as melodrama and she also penned a melodramatic novel. Theatre of the period included Shakespeare revivals, a few good tragedies (Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserved*; John Dryden's *All for Love*) and a sizable measure of bad melodrama as well as the risqué comedies.

Resurrection man

a grave robber; the ironic name indicates one who pulls the body from the earth prior to Judgment Day, in a sense 'resurrecting' the cadaver. Human bodies were regularly exhumed and sold to medical students and schools in the time (nineteenth century England) when the only legal source of cadavers was hanged criminals. Pulling people's corpses from graveyards was, of course, illegal. Thus Resurrection men practiced their trade in secret, in the dead of night.

Charles Dickens includes a curiously sympathetic grave robber, Jerry Cruncher, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, using him as an element in the metaphor of a character being 'recalled from the grave' of a French prison. Cruncher 'digs up' more than one corrupt secret over the course of the narrative.

The most blood-curdling Resurrection men in fiction may be those found in Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Body Snatcher," a short story based on the Burke-Hare murders, a scandalous affair in which Burke and Hare murdered a number of people in order to sell their bodies for dissection. The Stevenson story focuses on the interaction of the two medical students who purchased murdered bodies: Fettes, now an old drunkard, and the now-successful physician who was his mentor in crime, Wolf Macfarlane.

rhyme

utilizing words (normally at the end of specific lines -- end rhyme) in which the final syllables offer the same sound.

Paul Simon rhymes 'harmony' with 'mediocrity' in his song "Homeward Bound"; T.S. Eliot manages to find a number of rhymes for 'Macavity' in his poem about the mystery cat.

rhyme scheme

a poem's pattern of rhyming sounds.

The rhyme scheme may be indicated as abab ; aba ; abcb ; etc., the repeated letters indicating the presence of rhyming words.

romance

a type of narrative featuring love, adventure, and -- standardly -- a happy ending.

A romance is a "higher" form than a comedy.

Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Knight's Tale" features courtly conventions and a happy ending, standing in sharp contrast to the *fablieu* where, whatever the ending, the action is most uncourtly.

The term 'romance' is also applied to William Shakespeare's late dramatic productions including *The Tempest* and *A Winter's Tale*, with their dramatic action leading to a happy resolution. Such earlier plays as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, whose action and happy ending are orchestrated by humor-driven fairies, are comedies.

Romantic period

in British literature, the period running from about the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria. Its major representatives included William Blake, Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and John Keats.

Romantic / Romanticism ('R' often capitalized)

Romanticism is a very broad term, one more indicative of a direction of thought than of anything that could be termed a school or belief system. The Romantic Movement begins in the eighteenth century in Germany, in the eighteenth century with Rousseau in France, and in the late eighteenth century in England. Historian Jacques Barzun characterizes Romanticism as a reaction, not against Reason (that near-God of the Enlightenment) but against the "cold intellect" (intellect divorced from emotion). Many of the major figures were scholars (Goethe, Coleridge, even Shelley) and quite fond of Reason, but also insistent on the reality of emotions. Politically, the English Romantics defended the ideals, and sometimes the actions, of the French Revolution.

In English literature the term is standardly associated with Wordsworth and Coleridge ("the first generation") and with Byron, Shelley, and Keats ("the second generation"). Such an association leaves out the earlier William Blake and Robert Burns, both clearly Romantics. Likewise, such a limitation ignores the fact that Victorian Robert Browning would, not quite accurately, have considered himself a Romantic poet, and that such contemporaries of his as D.G. Rossetti, William Morris, and A.C. Swinburne should definitely be labeled Romantic.

The definition is further compromised by the continued, and continuing, existence of Romanticism. Critic Harold Bloom considers himself a Romantic (I wonder at his definition). I am a Romantic, a sort of heir to the intellectual tradition of philosopher Henri Bergson and, particularly, of critic/philosopher/historian Benedetto Croce. I have experienced a professor who considered himself an avid "anti-Romantic," a disciple of Ivor Winter. He insisted that Beat Generation writer Jack Kerouac was a Romantic and Romanticism was characterized by Beat Generation excesses. I believe he was deeply in error on both counts. Croce

would have termed Kerouac a ‘decadent,’ just as he termed the aesthete movement of the late nineteenth century ‘decadent’ rather than Romantic. Jacques Barzun traces the terms “Romantic” and “Romanticism” to the eighteenth century, and notes their initial application to writings concerned with the emotions.

One can also look at Romanticism, at least in English literature, in terms of a reaction against Neo-Classical principles, again, those principles of “cold intellect.” In English poetry Romanticism may be first associated with one poem by Thomas Gray, “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.” The poem extols the virtues of those who lived humble lives, minded their own business, and quietly passed to their ultimate reward.

I would list the following as major elements of Romanticism, again noting that Romanticism should be looked at more as a pattern or direction of thought than of any rigorous set of beliefs:

- emotions matter; human emotional reactions are real and are an integral part of our lives;
- qualities of ‘reality,’ the divine, or divinities may be reflected in nature; we can sense God or the gods through our sensing of nature;
- common people matter and individuals matter; the philosophy of the eighteenth century (Locke) finally comes to art as the Romantics recognize that the world is made up of all its individuals, not just “the great”;
- the common people may be better than the great in that they know their place in the Cosmos; humility and self-sacrifice are rewarded; hubris (such as earns the wrath of the gods) is present in all who believe they are superior to others; the Rebel (Prometheus) is the hero; the king (Zeus) the immoral oppressor.
- beauty is linked to originality, the new, and new ways of thinking and seeing;
- the **sublime** attracts; the sublime is defined as that which is awesome; that which overpowers the senses and the emotions; that which one simultaneously is scared to death of and deeply attracted to.

One will find many (seldom all) of those elements in much of the art and much of the thought termed Romantic. In most cases, this list provides a delineation between Romantic literature and the Neo-Classical literature which preceded it.

English writers who would be considered Romantics include Thomas Gray, Robert Burns and William Blake, all the names associated with the Romantic period, and such later writers as the Pre-Raphaelites and William Morris. Robert Browning and Charles Dickens would have considered themselves Romantics, though contemporary critics would not categorize either as such.

American writers who would be considered Romantics include Phillip Freneau, William Cullen Bryant, James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne and most others who wrote from early in the nineteenth century through the Civil War period.

Romanticism is also linked to a tempered but unbounded notion of human optimism: M. H. Abrams writes about art and the history of ideas. Here's an

exemplary sentence from his 1963 essay "English Romanticism: The Spirit of the Age": "In short, Wordsworth evokes from the unbounded and hence impossible hopes in the French Revolution a central Romantic doctrine, one which reverses the cardinal neoclassic ideal of setting only accessible goals, by converting what had been man's tragic error--the inordinacy of his 'pride' that persists in setting infinite aims for finite man--into his specific glory and his triumph.