

The tell-tale heart analysis

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One of Edgar Allan Poe's most famous short stories, "The Tell-Tale Heart," was first published in the January, 1843 edition of James Russell Lowell's *The Pioneer* and was reprinted in the August 23, 1845 issue of *The Broadway Journal*. The story is a psychological portrait of a mad narrator who kills a man and afterward hears his victim's relentless heartbeat. While "The Tell-Tale Heart" and his other short stories were not critically acclaimed during his lifetime, Poe earned respect among his peers as a competent writer, insightful literary critic, and gifted poet, particularly after the publication of his famous poem, "The Raven," in 1845. After Poe's death in 1849, some critics faulted his obsession with dark and depraved themes. Other critics, like George Woodberry in his 1885 study of Poe, considered "The Tell-Tale Heart" merely a "tale of conscience." But this simplistic view has changed over the years as more complex views of Poe and his works have emerged. Poe is now considered a forefather of two literary genres, detective stories and science fiction, and is regarded as an important writer of psychological thrillers and horror. "The Tell-Tale Heart" is simultaneously a horror story and psychological thriller told from a first-person perspective. It is admired as an excellent example of how a short story can produce an effect on the reader. Poe believed that all good literature must create a unity of effect on the reader and this effect must reveal truth or evoke emotions. "The Tell-Tale Heart" exemplifies Poe's ability to expose the dark side of humankind and is a harbinger of novels and films dealing with psychological realism. Poe's work has influenced genres as diverse as French symbolist poetry and Hollywood horror films, and writers as diverse as Ambrose Bierce and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. "The Tell-Tale Heart: Introduction." *Short Stories for*

Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. eNotes. com. January 2006. 30 October 2006. .