

American literature critical essay

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



A . Some of the best names that come into mind when one speaks of modern English literature and fantasies are Editha, and Kate Chopin. Their works stand tall in the golden pages of modern literature, influencing most people of this generation and many more to follow. They have painted and breathed life into each character of the novel, *The Awakening*, with great magical artistic skills. Such is the greatness and purity of the artists that they are believed to have given birth to a completely new form of writing that the modern Literature is so proud of.

Hence they are considered premodern. There are some more writers such as Tolkien who have contributed immensely towards this. “ I believe, Mr. Tolkien has succeeded more completely than any previous writer in this genre in using the traditional properties of the Quest, the heroic journey, the Numinous Object, the conflict between Good and Evil while at the same time satisfying our sense of historical and social reality” (W. H. Auden, 1956). The greater the power, the more dangerous is the abuse. The truth in the statement is well proved in Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*.

The author makes his political report in this twentieth-century fable that could be relished as an elating and exhilarating story. He, very well comments upon the abuse of political power and how the poor and down trodden fall prey to the diplomacy of sly rulers. In the midst of haziness between an imagination and reality this twentieth-century fable portrays the evil in Middle-Earth as totalitarian evil and that war is an immense ingredient of this malevolence. Many premodern authors have flourished on the fantasy genre. Age cannot wither their novels nor custom stale their infinite variety.

The best, modern novels seem inexhaustible. They are a permanent source of inspiration for humanity. Fantasy literature generally encompasses unreal, nonhuman creatures, unusual powers, created mythologies and imaginary settings. Frost, who can also be termed as a premodern poet remains faithful to the spoken language of his time. His language, in the poem, is a mixture of playfulness and seriousness. He portrays regionalism with its rich stock of images, situation and anecdotes. This in turn provides an abundant source for metaphors and symbols.

The conversational tone and the dramatic situation in the poem strike the readers. The picture at the core of " Mending Wall" is striking. Two men convene on terms of good manners and sociability to put up a barricade between them. The wall is erected out of convention, out of tradition. Nevertheless the very ground works against them as well as makes their task thorny. The two neighbors thrust stones, back on top of the wall; however as a result of hunters or elves, or the chill of nature's imperceptible hand, the boulders topple downward yet again.

The informal fashion and lack of rhyme masquerade the ploy in Petit the Poet. Some of his most praised and entertaining works involve Petit the Poet and Seth Compton, marvelous creations of Edgar Lee, best reveal his blending of wit with humor. His personal and conversational style makes the reader involved in his tone and mood. He takes the reader into confidence through his easy and delightful pace. Furthermore it appears quite realistic with some witty descriptions.

The tone is very somber and the reader cannot help but a distinct hopelessness, of the plight of human beings not being able to choose what

they remember, and also that the memories cherished today, will be much different than the memories cherished tomorrow. C. Mending Wall Robert Frost was born in San Francisco, U. S. A, in 1874. Disenchanted with the lofty subjects of many American poets, Frost opted to write about country life with which he was most familiar. In the poem, " Mending Wall" shows sound posturing, a form of writing based on the tones of everyday speech.

In his collection, North of Boston (1914), Frost began to experiment with poems of monologue and dialogue, which critics have called his dramatic poems. The present poem, " Mending Wall" too reflects his interest in dramatic and natural speech. The stanzas of the poem " Mending Wall" are straightforward also sound more akin to an extraordinary human frame of mind than a fuming portrayal of the poet's neighbor. A breakdown of the rhyme scheme sends the reader into a mesmerizing situation and the words is comparatively free from portentous and dark imagery. Robert Frost's poetry is well known for its intensely personal and touching theme.

A great deal of Frost's verse is confessional and reveals his life experiences through metaphor or explicitly. " Mending Wall" asserts his abhorrence for a wall or a barrier between human beings. This Frost does through the exercise of powerful imagery articulated through language, structure, and tone. A wall divides the poet's land from his neighbor's. They get together to saunter to the wall and mutually mend it, when it is spring time. " Something there is that doesn't love a wall, That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it, And spills the upper boulders in the sun,

And makes gaps even two can pass abreast". (Lines 1-4) The speaker sees no reason for the wall to be kept--there are no cows to be contained, just

apple and pine trees. He does not believe in walls for the sake of walls. The neighbor chooses to stick to his father's words: " Good fences make good neighbors. " The poet remains skeptical and impishly forces the neighbor down to come across the outdated interpretation. However his neighbor will not be persuaded. The poet visualizes his neighbor as a leftover from a reasonably obsolete time. He is an existing paradigm of an old orthodox.

Nevertheless the neighbor merely goes back over the saying. Frost retains five stressed syllables designed for each line; however he shows a discrepancy in the feet widely to maintain the usual dialogue in the rhyme. The dearth of radiance, gloom and unhappiness, have been brought into play. Perceptibly the wall is thought of as a vengeance for transparency, light and security. The turnaround of proceedings in the poem reiterates the dismay of hostilities and the futile misfortunes that could have been evaded if those drawn in would have scrutinized the dealings they were caught up with.

Even though the reader of the poem gets the notion of the neighbor portrayed in the poem by Frost, he does not subsist outside of descriptions of men from the past or historical pictures. The poet's neighbor is, in many senses, of a weak temperament rather undeserving of examination because there is nothing that detaches him an ordinary human being. There is realization that hostilities are but a ploy to gain power and supremacy over the feelings of people. A sense of guilt revolves around the entire novel and expresses that wars are unfortunate and only a gamble where the leaders resort to exploit the poor, down trodden masses.

" Mending Wall" is a lingering recollection of life events and dreams that have spiraled out of control due to hostilities. The hopes and dreams that once seemed so right and so justifiable become shattered because of the wall that inflicts the very core of the poet's soul. Frost remains faithful to the spoken language of his time. His language, in the poem, is a mixture of playfulness and seriousness. He portrays regionalism with its rich stock of images, situation and anecdotes. This in turn provides an abundant source for metaphors and symbols. The conversational tone and the dramatic situation in the poem strike the readers.

The picture at the core of " Mending Wall" is striking. Two men convene on terms of good manners and sociability to put up a barricade between them. The wall is erected out of convention, out of tradition. Nevertheless the very ground works against them as well as makes their task thorny. The two neighbors thrust stones, back on top of the wall; however as a result of hunters or elves, or the chill of nature's imperceptible hand, the boulders topple downward yet again. " The work of hunters is another thing: I have come after them and made repair Where they have left not one stone on a stone,

But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,"(lines 5-8) Even then, the neighbors carry on with their work of mending the wall. The poem, consequently, looks as if it contemplates typically on themes like, human construction of blockades, separation, and hostility. What sets in motion in unsophisticated candor ends in intricate symbolism. This wall-building work appears primeval, as it is portrayed in formal, conventional terms. It engrosses " spells" to work against the " elves," and the neighbor comes into

view as a Stone-Age savage at the same time as he lifts and carries a boulder. " We have to use a spell to make them balance:

'Stay where you are until our backs are turned! ' We wear our fingers rough with handling them. Oh, just another kind of out-door game,"(lines 18-21)

Frost's treatment of objects of nature shows that he does not idealize or glorify them. His attitude towards the stone wall is not actually that of a realist, nor so much of a romantist. Frost's poems on natural objects are not dealt with as the starting point for the mystical meditation. Like other poems, " Mending Wall" carries a moral but the moral is indirectly presented either as a dramatic situation. Frost's poems are profoundly philosophical in spite of their homely diction.

In " Mending Wall", he uses symbolism to communicate a deep rooted principle. The symbolism in the poem comes out as an indirect method of communication. The poem has a surface meaning but it also shows a deeper significance, which is understood only through a closer scrutiny of the poem. D. Edgar Lee Masters is acclaimed as one of the leading humorous poets of the world. He has produced some of the best works of his time. His readers have long appreciated him for his classical interpretation of human nature and several critical thematic concerns of society but yet in a most humorous, easy and light hearted representation.

One of the simplest and easy flowing poems of Edgar Lee is Petit the Poet. The informal fashion and lack of rhyme masquerade the ploy in Petit the Poet. Some of his most praised and entertaining works involve Petit the Poet and Seth Compton, marvelous creations of Edgar Lee, best reveal his blending of wit with humor. His personal and conversational style makes the

reader involved in his tone and mood. He takes the reader into confidence through his easy and delightful pace. Furthermore it appears quite realistic with some witty descriptions.

The tone is very somber and the reader cannot help but a distinct hopelessness, of the plight of human beings not being able to choose what they remember, and also that the memories cherished today, will be much different than the memories cherished tomorrow. The poem is composed to 18 lines. The concluding verse shows an analogous allusion. " Seeds in a dry pod, tick, tick, tick, Tick, tick, tick, what little iambics, While Homer and Whitman roared in the pines? " The concluding part of the poem brings us backwards in time, which allows the reader to view true accounts and suffering that people have to endure in a village.

Thus Petit the poet, no doubt is thought to appall us yet again but with a twist. Thus the irony in, Petit the poet, comes through as we read it. The analytical issue of Seth Compton is beautifully depicted with a humorous disposition. The poet describes human behavior through the process of loving and forgetting. The poet tactfully and with an aroma of humor, describes the social and moral matters of the modern times from the perspective of a clean hearted human being. He craftily incorporates humor to the arena and at the same time, trying to bring into light the disgrace of corruption.

For this kind of his writing, he has been also long criticized for his more moderate representation of the extents of social illness of the time. The Poet is distressed to see the state of the people after death. The circulating library that he constructed was soon disposed off. " When I died, the circulating
<https://assignbuster.com/american-literature-critical-essay/>

library Which I built up for Spoon River, And managed for the good of inquiring minds, Was sold at auction on the public square” The poem gives a feeling that Seth Compton has been keeping a note of all the happenings after his death.

During the period when the poem was written, although seemingly flowing in a positive direction, human relations were beginning to withstand new strains, trapped now in a cleverer and more civilized society. These relations were more official and formal than social and personal. This new form of the society was less institutionalized but at the same time was more difficult to resolve or combat. This new tactic, intoxicated with the velvety diplomacies of pity, care and tolerance, made things even worse. Very ironically and rightly, the Poet criticizes the aspects of morality in terms of critical social concerns.