

# Nathaniel Hawthorne: dark romantic



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Danie Farnam Eng III-Robben 5th block 2-16-10 Nathaniel Hawthorne the Dark Romantic The Dark Romantics explored conflicts between good and evil and the effects of guilt and sin. Nathaniel Hawthorne was a writer in the 1800s whose stories exemplified characteristics of those of the Dark Romantic writers. In all of Hawthorne's stories there are topics of good and evil, guilt and sin. Hawthorne was a great writer that earned recognition and admiration by all, but seemed to be weighed down by his insight to the human heart. Hawthorne was highly aware of the human conscious and acutely aware of his surroundings and people. Hawthorne's dark and insightful nature only added to his literature. Hawthorne used literary devices and wrote allegorical and parable stories that the reader could identify with and understand there was more that met the eye. " Dr. Heidegger's Experiment, " " The Minister's Black Veil, " and " Rappaccini's Daughter, " are all stories by Nathaniel Hawthorne that possess the qualities of Dark Romanticism that dug deeper into the human heart and mind to see the negative side that all people have. Hawthorne's " Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" is an allegorical story. An allegorical story is a story with characters and objects that stand for abstract ideas and moral qualities. In the story Dr. Heidegger has an oaken closet that contains a skeleton that symbolizes his secrets from his past that he keeps hidden. Hawthorne knew that everyone, even a respected doctor, could have secrets they are not proud of. All of the characters in the story stand for something and represent immoral ideas. Mr. Medbourne, an old merchant that made bad investments, represents greed. Colonel Killigrew wasted his best years on women and alcohol, representing wastefulness. Mr. Gascoigne was a ruined politician that was power hungry, representing misused power. The women that all

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three men fought over, Widow Wycherly, represents vanity. When all four characters are given a second chance to drink the water from the Fountain of Youth (represents second chance), they waste it and go back to their old ways. These characters did not learn from their follies of their youth or gain wisdom with age. Hawthorne knew that people lack the ability to achieve perfection and therefore, since they are only human, are destined to make the same mistake twice. "The Minister's Black Veil" is a parable in which Mr. Hooper, an easygoing and kind minister, tries to teach his clergy a moral lesson. This story is a parable mainly because the moral themes form the center point of the story. The lesson Mr. Hooper tries to teach his clergy is that everyone wears a mask, a false visage of who they really are. While trying to teach this lesson, the clergy does not understand. They are gossiping and speculating as to why Mr. Hooper is wearing this veil. Mr. Hooper's fiancée even leaves him because she cannot handle the rumors that are spreading about him. Mr. Hooper wears his veil to the grave, not succeeding in his mission. The clergy should have cared more about one another and should have communicated with Mr. Hooper, but instead speculated and outcasted the minister. Mr. Hooper sacrificed personal relationships and love for the sake of teaching his clergy a lesson. Mr. Hooper was selfless while his clergy was being selfish. In the film "Rappaccini's Daughter," based on a story by Nathaniel Hawthorne the theme, like Hawthorne's other stories, is evil. Rappaccini's Daughter is full of symbols. The garden in which the story takes place symbolizes The Garden of Eden. Beatrice represents Eve while Giovanni represents Adam. The poison in the story represents the inner turmoil of good versus evil. Rappaccini, Beatrice's father, cares more for science than for mankind. He is

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only interested in his patients for pure scientific purposes. It is impossible to view Rappuccini as a normal and loving human because his garden is evil and unnatural. Rappuccini is a tragic hero with intentions of defending God's creations and protecting his daughter, but in the end fails. He is a man whose desire for power drives him to replace God's creation. Giovanni had more poison in him than Beatrice. She even asks Giovanni before dying, "Giovanni was there not from the beginning more poison in you than in me?" Giovanni had poison in him all along. He was selfish and only cared about himself. In the story there is a question of true love and sacrifice. Beatrice made the ultimate sacrifice, in the end, though, drinking the antidote for love. "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," "The Minister's Black Veil," and "Rappuccini's Daughter," are all stories by Nathaniel Hawthorne that possess the qualities of Dark Romanticism that dug deeper into the human heart and mind to see the negative side that all people have. In "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" 4 people are given an opportunity, a second chance and just revert back to their old ways. This shows that humanity is not perfect, and will make the same mistake twice because of immoral inner desires. In "The Minister's Black Veil" a kind mild Mr. Hooper tries to show the dark sides that people have, but ends up being out casted. All of the stories have Dark Romanticism characteristics. Hawthorne writes of the conflict between good and evil and the effects of guilt and sin on human behaviors. All in all, Hawthorne's troubled life that lead to him being weighed down by his insight into the dark side of the human mind and heart only bettered his literature as a Dark Romantic.