

The narrative structure of heart of darkness



The Narrative Structure of Heart of Darkness Peter Brooks's "An Unreadable Report: Conrad's Heart of Darkness" discusses the narrative style of the book. And may I take the time here to say, Wow! , I have never thought about this before and it is warping my mind. HOD not only tells a story; it explores why the story should be told in this manner as well as the limitations of telling the story in this manner. Conrad uses the "organizing features of traditional narrative" (Which are?

The detective story and frame story) to tell his story, but by using them, he points out their weaknesses. HOD is a detective story with an inconclusive ending. HOD is a frame story; but the observance of the action from different perspectives does not, as is traditionally meant to, bestow upon the reader a complete understanding of whatever took place; the different perspectives, because they are not definitive, give only an indication of what happened. Relation to the detective story Marlow's experience is secondary to Kurtz's. his Journey is a repetition, which gains its meaning from its attachment to the prior Journey" As is typical of the detective story he will retrace the footsteps of his predecessor. The classic detective story is constructed by events running at two tracks of time; one the crime occurred and the time in the present when the crime it analyzed. In Heart of Darkness all we know about the first track of time is what the people in the second track find out. And yet the purpose of this second track is only to do just that: to give us a vague representation of the first. In this manner the detective story may lie at the heart of any narrative structure; it retraces "events that have already occurred" The narrative style - the way in which the story is told - is based

upon the detective, Marlow, trying to uncover what happened with Kurtz and why. Marlow's goal and his quest for summation.