

Edgar allan poe

Literature



**ASSIGN
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I. Introduction

Edgar Allan Poe is a United States short-story writer, poet, critic, and editor. There has always been disagreement as to the quality of his work and some of the events of his life. However, even those critics who do not consider him a great writer acknowledge his importance in the development of modern literature.

Poe's most popular stories are those of horror, such as "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "The Black Cat," and of detection, such as "The Gold Bug" and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." Among his well-known lyrical poems are the haunting "Ulalume," "The Raven," and "Annabel Lee," and the classically restrained "To Helen."

Poe was one of the most brilliant and independent of 19th-century literary critics. His emphasis on artistic rather than moral values in literature greatly influenced modern literary theory and practice (Shorto, 11-14). His stressing of poetry's musical elements, and his use of evocative and symbolic language and imagery, contributed to the rise of the French Symbolist movement in poetry and, through it, to various 20th-century trends in poetry.

Poe was the first to formulate rules for the short story, and the principles of brevity and unity that he advocated have influenced short-story writing to the present time. He is credited with inventing the modern detective story, and with bringing the Gothic horror tale to a high level of development. He enriched both types of stories with psychological insight.

Poe's preoccupation with madness, death, and the supernatural, and his denial of the importance of moral values in literature, were bitterly criticized during his lifetime and for some years afterward. More valid from a literary standpoint was the objection—still made by many critics—that some of his works are too contrived (Wagenknecht, 67-71).

Thesis Statement: This paper scrutinizes the life of mystery and darkness of Edgar Allan Poe.

II. Discussion

A. Early Life

Edgar Poe was born in Boston, second of the three children of David and Elizabeth Poe, traveling actors. When Edgar was two years old his mother died in Richmond, Virginia; his father had previously deserted the family. Edgar was taken into the home of John Allan, a merchant, from whom the boy took his middle name. The Allans lived in England from 1815 to 1829, where Edgar attended private schools. He later attended a Richmond academy.

Poe entered the University of Virginia in 1826, but at the end of the year Allan withdrew him because Poe had run up large gambling debts. After a quarrel with his foster father Poe went to Boston in 1827. There he published anonymously his first volume of poetry, *Tamerlane and Other Poems*. He enlisted in the army and served two years. In 1829 he published his second book of poems (Bloom, 23-31). That same year his foster mother died and Poe became briefly reconciled with his foster father, who got him an appointment to the U. S. Military Academy in 1830. Poe cut classes and drills

and was expelled from the Academy early in 1831. His break with Allan was final.

B. Later Years

In 1831, Poe lived in New York City for a short while and published Poems. It contained many of his best poems, including “ To Helen,” “ The City in the Sea,” and “ Israfel.” Poe then went to live with his aunt Mrs. Maria Clemm in Baltimore. He turned to the writing of fiction and did not publish another book of poetry for 14 years. In 1843, he won a prize for the story “ Manuscript Found in a Bottle.”

Poe went back to Richmond in 1835 and joined the staff of the Southern Literary Messenger, soon becoming its editor. He brought Mrs. Clemm and her daughter, Virginia, to live with him, and the following year married the 13-year-old Virginia (Bloom, 23-31). Poe won wide attention for his critical reviews in the Messenger.

In 1837 Poe moved to New York, but unable to find work there, moved to Philadelphia, where he became editor of Burton’s Gentleman’s Magazine (1839-40). Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque was published in 1840 and favorably reviewed. Poe was literary editor of Graham’s Magazine for a few months in 1841 and in it began to publish his detective stories.

Poe won another prize with “ The Gold Bug” (1843), which became his most popular story during his lifetime. He returned to New York and became assistant editor of the Mirror. Publication of The Raven and Other Poems in 1845 brought him increased fame (Wagenknecht, 67-71). For a few months he was owner of the Broadway Journal, but the periodical failed.

Poe's wife died of tuberculosis in 1847, and he became depressed and ill. He became emotionally involved with two women and attempted suicide. During his last years, however, he wrote some of his best poems and critical essays. He also published Eureka (1848), a philosophical work.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, Poe became engaged to childhood sweetheart in Richmond in 1849. He then went to Baltimore to bring his aunt back for the wedding. A few days later he was found fatally ill in a tavern in Baltimore.

Although Poe was an alcoholic, the legend that he was an opium addict and degenerate wastrel is contradicted by the facts of his predominantly quiet and hard-working life. In 1910, Poe was elected to the Hall of Fame for Great Americans.