

# Edgar allen poes the raven english literature essay

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Name Course Tutor February 1st 2013 Outline Abstract Life, without a doubt, is filled with adversaries that can cause lots of sorrow and grief. As individuals, we do not always know how to deal with these adversaries, so we tend to seek other forms of comforts, which we think that can eliminate our burdens. But, these outside comforts are not always instrumental influences and even though they can provide us a false sense of comfort, they frequently end with more torment. In 'The Raven' by Edgar Allen Poe, the narrator is distressed by the loss of his great love, Lenora and in order to deal with his loss, he consumes alcohol as a coping tactic which the reader sees as the raven, however, after the initial respite of security wanes away, he is left with the extra burden of alcoholism. In attempts to find relief for his lost love, he tries to lose himself in elapsed lore but is unsuccessful as the shadows on the floor and rustling of curtains fill him with overwhelming terrors that he has never experienced before. This paper will explore more on Edgar Allen Poe's 'The Raven'. Discussion One striking element about this narrative is the way Poe uses the raven and alcohol to characterize several issues. In this narrative, alcohol is the narrator's nepenthe, a healing potion that makes his head at ease and rids him of his distress. Reveling in the relief that alcohol has brought in his life, the narrator draws himself closer to the alcohol, however in doing so, he is reminded of the reasons as to why he is taking comfort in it; alcohol it is comfort for his grief for his loss. He attempts to find a deeper consolation in the alcohol that the exterior relief it has provided so far, nevertheless, he comes to the realization that the reaction from it is simply singular. In spite of any approach he takes with the alcohol, it only gives him the same reaction. And it is for the reason of this, that as time

goes on, the initial comfort alcohol gave him becomes less and the dissatisfaction increases. In addition to this, the relief that alcohol initially gave him is not everlasting and his memories of his distress that were provisionally suppressed flood back to him and he starts to recognize the negative effect of alcohol, nor connecting it to a "...thing of evil..." ( ). The narrator comes to the realization that alcohol is a product of an, "...sorrowful master whom unmerciful adversity will follow fast till his songs one burden bore..." ( ). Fully knowing that alcohol cannot purge his pain about his loss, he regrets that he had partaken in it and wishes that he has simply remained with his loneliness unbroken ( ). Coming to the realization that the alcohol is no use to him, he attempts to rid himself of it, however, his efforts are fruitless. In the end, the narrator finds his soul ensnared under the detrimental power of alcohol with the sense that its domination "...shall be elevated nevermore..." ( ). Poe's reaction to alcohol and the raven never changes, however, its meaning alters with what the reader assume or asks of it. Starting his starting of consuming alcohol, the narrator initially feels that consuming alcohol seems to be comforting, but as the narrator continues to deeply desire it, it becomes trickier and it almost becomes a need, and the real comfort he gets from the alcohol becomes the reason he consumes it. According to ( ), what is required to be drawn from it, so as to maintain that comfort becomes misrepresented and even though the narrator starts to realize this, he still continues to look at it and becomes dependant on it to counter his sorrow or grief. When the narrator recognizes the fact that there is no real comfort from alcohol, and comprehends that the solution he finds in it are deceptions or lies, he has already relied on the alcohol to a great

extent that it has taken over and weakened him and his determination to rid himself of the alcohol becomes very challenging. On the other hand, the raven serves as the representation of the unreal due to the fact that it is nothing more than an anthropomorphized account of the subconscious despair of the narrator. This narrative, in this way consists of a pseudo dialogue between the psychological echo of the narrator and the narrator himself ( ). Each time the narrator addresses the empty night, the raven responds by reminding him of his distress using a word that is the quintessence of the anguish and despair of the narrator, consequently, deciding the mystery between fantasy and reality.( ) affirms that in order to understand the nature of the association between the raven and the narrator, it is useful to examine Todorov's concept of the fantastic. First, for a literary work to be seen fantastic, there has to be a hesitation on the reader's part in differentiating reality from unreality. Also, a character in a work has to share uncertainty. Most people agree that a raven that talks accomplishes this on both ends. Ultimately, a decision has to be made between the raven and the narrator, while still accepting the incongruity as literal instead of it being allegorical or metaphorical. When the choice happens, the idea of the fantastic breaks down into one or even two subcategories ( ). And if the events in a piece of work are considered weird, but explicable in the world, the fantastic becomes the strange. Also, by replacing the reality and unreality with marvelous and uncanny in that order, it is easier for the audience or readers to distinguish between the two and attain a more thorough understanding of the raven.( ) argues that when the raven enters, the marvelous and uncanny reach maximum conflict

competence. In order to determine how the fantastic will break down and therefore decide the conflict between unreality and reality, the raven has to be assigned a particular role. The raven is either a psychotic manifestation of the subconscious desire of the narrator to be reunited with his love in a weird literary world or a mystical talking bird in an amazing literary world ( ). But, based on the vague grip on reality of the narrator, the former seems to more likely. In the thirteenth stanza, the crucial moment of decision occurs after the raven has answered every assertion or question posed by the narrator with nevermore. As the narrator is considering why the bird continues to give such vague replies, he answers his question in the same manner the raven does and he creates a mirror between the two ( ). And since every nevermore draws an apprehensive reaction from the narrator, it is easy to observe that the word has been consistently placed in the readers' head so as to draw attention to the suffering the narrator experiences. Such repetition suggests the obsession of the narrator with the raven and mirrors his repressed distress over the loss of his love, Lenore. Lastly, the habitual connection of the word ' nevermore' with despondency and anguish creates a noticeable association between the narrator and the raven, illuminating each character as a fissured part of a single mind. ConclusionThe tone in Poe's narrative ' The Raven' signifies a man's painful state of mind, one that is susceptible to madness that is as a result of the loss of his one true love. Throughout this poem, the raven patronizes and ridicules the narrator, thus creating a sense of anguish and suffering within the character. The narrator turns to alcohol as a source of comfort, but he later deeply regrets this decision when he finds it challenging to part ways with alcohol. Poe uses the

word ' nevermore ' to repeatedly convey the narrator's obsession with the raven to show how just a single word with despondency and anguish creates a conspicuous association between the narrator and the raven.