

M. H. Abrams

Geoffrey Galt Harpham

A Glossary
of
Literary
Terms

Tenth Edition



A Glossary of Literary Terms

TENTH EDITION

M. H. ABRAMS

Cornell University

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National Humanities Center



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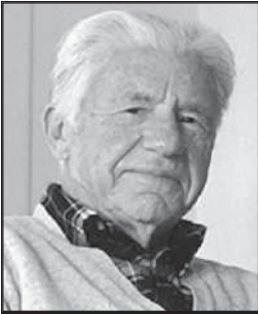
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About the Authors



M. H. Abrams, Class of 1916 Professor of English at Cornell University, Emeritus, is a distinguished scholar who has written prize-winning books on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature, literary theory and criticism, European Romanticism, and Western intellectual history. He inaugurated *A Glossary of Literary Terms* in 1957 as a series of succinct essays on the chief terms and concepts used in discussing literature, literary history and movements, and literary criticism. Since its initial publication, the *Glossary* has become an indispensable handbook for all students of English and other literatures.



Geoffrey Galt Harpham has been a co-author of the *Glossary* since the eighth edition in 2005. He is president and director of the National Humanities Center in North Carolina and has written extensively in the fields of critical theory and intellectual history. Among his books are *The Character of Criticism*, *Shadows of Ethics: Criticism and the Just Society*, *Language Alone: The Critical Fetish of Modernity*, and *The Humanities and the Dream of America*.



Contents

PREFACE	vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ix
HOW TO USE THIS GLOSSARY	x
LITERARY TERMS	1
INDEX OF AUTHORS	423



Preface

Literary studies are always on the move. The purpose of this tenth edition of *A Glossary of Literary Terms* is to keep the entries current with innovations in critical views and methods, to take into account important new publications in literature, criticism, and scholarship, and also to take advantage of suggestions for improvements and additions, some solicited by the publisher and others volunteered by users of the *Glossary*.

All the entries have been reviewed, and most of them have been revised in order to improve the clarity, precision, and verve of the exposition, but above all, to bring the entries up to date in their substance and their lists of suggested readings. This edition adds 30 terms to the *Glossary*, including substantial new essays on *cognitive literary studies*, *detective story*, *graphic novels*, the *grotesque*, *Idealism*, and *romance novel*. The book now encompasses discussions of more than 1,175 literary terms. Books originally published in languages other than English are listed in their English translation. We avoid references to websites, since these are often unstable, and variable in their content.

A Glossary of Literary Terms defines and discusses the terms, as well as the critical theories and viewpoints, that are used to classify, analyze, interpret, and narrate the history of works of literature. The component entries, together with the guides to further reading included in most of them, are oriented especially toward undergraduate students of English, American, and other literatures. Over the decades, however, the book has proved sufficiently full and detailed to serve as a useful and popular work of reference for advanced students, as well as for the general reader with literary interests.

The *Glossary* is organized as a series of succinct essays, listed in the alphabetic order of the title word or phrase. Terms that are related but subsidiary, or that designate subclasses, are identified and discussed under the title heading of the primary or generic term; in addition, words that are often used in conjunction, or as mutually defining contraries, are discussed in the same essay. The essay form makes it feasible to supplement the definition of a literary term with indications

PREFACE

boldface identifies terms for which the essay provides the
italics indicate terms that are discussed more fully else-
Glossary. It should be noted that all the literary terms discussed in
, whether they serve as the title of an essay or are defined within an

Glossary remains the one announced by



Acknowledgments

This edition, like preceding ones, has profited greatly from the suggestions of both teachers and students who proposed changes and additions that would enhance the usefulness of the *Glossary* to the broad range of courses in American, English, and other literatures. The following teachers, at the request of the publisher, made many useful proposals for improvements:

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How to Use This Glossary

Glossary appear in a single alphabetic sequence.

, by the number of the page in which it is defined and discussed. This *italics*, of the occurrences of the term in

criti-
style, the entries that define and
genres, and the many entries that deal with the
drama, lyric,

ā	fate	ĩ	pin
ă	pat	ō	Pope
ä	father	ö	pot
ē	meet	oo	food
ë	get	ü	cut
ī	pine		

Glossary are
Index of Authors at the end of the volume. To make it easy to locate,
Index are colored gray.



A Glossary of Literary Terms



Literary Terms

A

abstract (language): 60; 169.

absurd, literature of the: The term is applied to a number of works in drama and prose fiction which have in common the view that the human condition is essentially absurd, and that this condition can be adequately represented only in works of literature that are themselves absurd. Both the mood and dramaturgy of absurdity were anticipated as early as 1896 in Alfred Jarry's French play *Ubu roi* (*Ubu the King*). The literature has its roots also in the movements of *expressionism* and *surrealism*, as well as in the fiction, written in the 1920s, of Franz Kafka (*The Trial*, *Metamorphosis*). The current movement, however, emerged in France after the horrors of World War II (1939–45) as a rebellion against basic beliefs and values in traditional culture and literature. This tradition had included the assumptions that human beings are fairly rational creatures who live in an at least partially intelligible universe, that they are part of an ordered social structure, and that they may be capable of heroism and dignity even in defeat. After the 1940s, however, there was a widespread tendency, especially prominent in the *existential philosophy* of men of letters such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, to view a human being as an isolated existent who is cast into an alien universe; to conceive the human world as possessing no inherent truth, value, or meaning; and to represent human life—in its fruitless search for purpose and significance, as it moves from the nothingness whence it came toward the nothingness where it must end—as an existence which is both anguished and absurd. As Camus said in *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942),

In a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels a stranger. His is an irremediable exile.... This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of Absurdity.

ABSURD, LITERATURE OF THE

The Bald Soprano (1949), *The Lesson*
theater of the absurd, has put it: “Cut off

” Ionesco also said, in commenting
“People drowning

”

Samuel Beckett (1906–89), the most eminent and influential writer in this

Waiting for Godot (1954) and *Endgame* (1958), project the irrationalism,

Waiting for Godot presents two

“Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it’s awful.”

’s

Malone Dies (1958) and *The Unnamable* (1960), presents
antihero who plays out the absurd moves of the end game of civilization in

’s characters carry on, even if in a life without

Another French playwright of the absurd was Jean Genet (who combined

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern
(1966) and *Travesties* (1974), exploit the devices of absurdist theater

black comedy or
: baleful, naive, or inept characters in a fantastic or nightmarish
“tragic farce,” in

’s *Catch22* (1961), Thomas Pynchon’s *V* (1963), John
’s *The World According to Garp* (1978), and some of the novels by the

’s *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) is an example of black comedy in the

Largo Desolato

(1987) by the Czech Vaclav Havel and *The Island* (1973), a collaboration by the South African writers Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona.

See also *wit, humor, and the comic*, and refer to: Martin Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd* (rev. 1968); David Grossvogel, *The Blasphemers: The Theatre of Brecht, Ionesco, Beckett, Genet* (1965); Arnold P. Hinchliffe, *The Absurd* (1969); Max F. Schultz, *Black Humor Fiction of the Sixties* (1980); Enoch Brater and Ruby Cohn, eds., *Around the Absurd: Essays on Modern and Postmodern Drama* (1990); and Neil Cornwell, *The Absurd in Literature* (2006).

For references to the *literature of the absurd* in other entries, see pages 47, 185, 227.

absurd, theater of the: 2.

accent (in meter): 217.

accentual meter: 217.

accentual-syllabic meter: 217.

accentual verse: 221.

accidie (ak' sidē): 364.

act and scene: An **act** is a major division in the action of a *play*. In England this division was introduced by Elizabethan dramatists, who imitated ancient Roman plays by structuring the action into five acts. Late in the nineteenth century a number of writers followed the example of Chekhov and Ibsen by constructing plays in four acts. In the twentieth century the most common form for traditional nonmusical dramas has been three acts.

Acts are often subdivided into **scenes**, which in modern plays usually consist of units of action in which there is no change of place or break in the continuity of time. (Some recent plays dispense with the division into acts and are structured as a sequence of scenes, or episodes.) In the conventional theater with a **proscenium arch** that frames the front of the stage, the end of a scene is usually indicated by a dropped curtain or a dimming of the lights, and the end of an act by a dropped curtain and an intermission.

action: 46.

adversarius (adversär' ūs): 354.

aesthetic distance: 92; 235. See also *empathy and sympathy*.

Aesthetic ideology: Aesthetic ideology was a term applied by the *deconstructive* theorist Paul de Man, in his later writings, to describe the “seductive” appeal of *aesthetic* experience, in which, he claimed, form and meaning, perception

's view,
organicism approaches not only

Aesthetic Ideology (1996); and Marc Redfield, *Phantom Formations:*
(1996).

In *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990), the Marxist theorist Terry Eagleton
critique of "the aesthetic," noting the many "ideologi-
" perversions and distortions of the concept. Originally articulated in terms
"emancipatory" potential

ideology under Marxist
, and for essays on this subject, refer to George Levine, ed., *Aesthetics*
, 1994.)

: In his Latin treatise entitled *Aesthetica* (1750), the German philos-
"aesthetica" to the arts, of
"the aesthetic end is the perfection of sensuous cognition, as such;
" In present usage, **aesthetics** (from the Greek, "pertaining to
") designates the systematic study of all the *fine arts*, as well as

Aestheticism, or alternatively the **aesthetic movement**, was a Euro-

"l'art pour
"—**art for art's sake**.

The historical roots of Aestheticism are in the views proposed by the
Critique of Judgment (1790), that
"pure" aesthetic experience consists of a "disinterested" contemplation of
"pleases for its own sake," without reference to reality or to the
" ends of utility or morality. As a self-conscious movement, how-
's witty
Mademoiselle de Maupin,

1835). Aestheticism was developed by Baudelaire, who was greatly influenced by Edgar Allan Poe's claim (in "The Poetic Principle," 1850) that the supreme work is a "poem *per se*," a "poem written solely for the poem's sake"; it was later taken up by Flaubert, Mallarmé, and many other writers. In its extreme form, the aesthetic doctrine of art for art's sake veered into the moral and quasi-religious doctrine of life for art's sake, or of life conducted as a work of art, with the artist represented as a priest who renounces the practical concerns of worldly existence in the service of what Flaubert and others called "the religion of beauty."

The views of French Aestheticism were introduced into Victorian England by Walter Pater, with his emphasis on the value in art of high artifice and stylistic subtlety, his recommendation to crowd one's life with exquisite sensations, and his advocacy of the supreme value of beauty and of "the love of art for its own sake." (See his Conclusion to *The Renaissance*, 1873.) The artistic and moral views of Aestheticism were also expressed by Algernon Charles Swinburne and by English writers of the 1890s such as Oscar Wilde, Arthur Symonds, and Lionel Johnson, as well as by the artists J. M. Whistler and Aubrey Beardsley. The influence of ideas stressed in Aestheticism—especially the view of the "autonomy" (self-sufficiency) of a work of art, the emphasis on the importance of craft and artistry, and the concept of a poem or novel as an end in itself, or as invested with "intrinsic" values—has been important in the writings of prominent twentieth-century authors such as W. B. Yeats, T. E. Hulme, and T. S. Eliot, as well as in the literary theory of the *New Critics*.

For related developments, see *aesthetic ideology*, *decadence*, *fine arts*, and *ivory tower*. Refer to: William Gaunt, *The Aesthetic Adventure* (1945, reprinted 1975); Frank Kermode, *Romantic Image* (1957); Enid Starkie, *From Gautier to Eliot* (1960); R. V. Johnson, *Aestheticism* (1969). For the intellectual and social conditions during the eighteenth century that fostered the theory, derived from theology, that a work of art is an end in itself, see M. H. Abrams, "Art-as-Such: The Sociology of Modern Aesthetics," in *Doing Things with Texts: Essays in Criticism and Critical Theory* (1989). Useful collections of writings in the Aesthetic Movement are Eric Warner and Graham Hough, eds., *Strangeness and Beauty: An Anthology of Aesthetic Criticism 1848–1910* (2 vols., 1983); Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst, eds., *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History, c. 1880–1900* (2000). A useful descriptive guide to books on the subject is Linda C. Dowling, *Aestheticism and Decadence: A Selective Annotated Bibliography* (1977). In recent years, the concepts of the aesthetic and of beauty have been revisited, often in a spirit of renewed appreciation, by philosophers and literary critics alike. See George Levine, ed., *Aesthetics and Ideology* (1994); Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (1999); Arthur C. Danto, *The Abuse of Beauty: Aesthetics and the Concept of Art* (2003); Jonathan Loesberg, *A Return to Aesthetics: Autonomy, Indifference, and Postmodernism* (2005); Denis Donoghue, *Speaking of Beauty* (2003); John Armstrong, *The Secret Power of Beauty* (2004); and Susan Stewart, *The Open Studio: Essays on Art and Aesthetics* (2005). Berys Gaut and Dominic McIver Lopes, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics* (2d ed., 2005), is a useful collection of historical and descriptive

, 4 vols. (1998).

For references to *Aestheticism* in other entries, see page 168.

; 3.

: In an essay published in 1946, W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C.

—especially its emotional effects—upon the reader. As a result of this
 “the poem itself, as an object of specifically critical judgment, tends to
 ” so that criticism “ends in impressionism and relativism.” The two

(1923), that the value of a poem can be measured

“it does not appear that critical evalua-

” So altered, the doctrine becomes a
objective criticism, in which the critic, instead of describing the effects

reader-

Refer to: Wimsatt and Beardsley, “The Affective Fallacy,” reprinted in
The Verbal Icon (1954); and Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*:
 (1958), p. 491 and chapter 11. See also
 ’s related concept of the *intentional fallacy*.

; 249. See *Black Arts Movement*; *Harlem Renais-*
; performance poetry; slave narratives; spirituals.

(ăgroi' kôs): **378**.

(ăl' ăzôn): **378**; 184.

(alexan' drîn): **219**; 94.

alienation effect: In his *epic theater* of the 1920s and later, the German dramatist Bertolt Brecht adapted the *Russian formalist* concept of “defamiliarization” into what he called the “alienation effect” (*Verfremdungseffekt*). The German term is also translated as **estrangement effect** or **distancing effect**; the last is closest to Brecht’s notion, in that it avoids the negative connotations of jadedness, incapacity to feel, and social apathy that the word “alienation” has acquired in English. This effect, Brecht said, is used by the dramatist to make familiar aspects of the present social reality seem strange, so as to prevent the emotional identification or involvement of the audience with the characters and their actions in a play. His own aim in drama was instead to evoke a critical distance and attitude in the spectators, in order to arouse them to take action against, rather than simply to accept, the state of society and behavior represented on the stage.

On Brecht, refer to *Marxist criticism*; for a related aesthetic concept, see *distance and involvement*.

allegorical imagery: 8.

allegorical interpretation (of the Bible): 181.

allegory: An allegory is a narrative, whether in prose or verse, in which the agents and actions, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived by the author to make coherent sense on the “literal,” or primary, level of signification, and at the same time to communicate a second, correlated order of signification.

We can distinguish two main types: (1) Historical and political allegory, in which the characters and actions that are signified literally in their turn represent, or “allegorize,” historical personages and events. So in John Dryden’s *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681), the biblical King David represents Charles II of England, Absalom represents his natural son the Duke of Monmouth, and the biblical story of Absalom’s rebellion against his father (2 Samuel 13–18) allegorizes the rebellion of Monmouth against King Charles. (2) The allegory of ideas, in which the literal characters represent concepts and the plot allegorizes an abstract doctrine or thesis. Both types of allegory may either be sustained throughout a work, as in *Absalom and Achitophel* and John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress* (1678), or else serve merely as an episode in a nonallegorical work. A famed example of episodic allegory is the encounter of Satan with his daughter Sin, as well as with Death—who is represented allegorically as the son born of their incestuous relationship—in John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Book II (1667).

In the second type, the sustained allegory of ideas, the central device is the *personification* of abstract entities such as virtues, vices, states of mind, modes of life, and types of character. In explicit allegories, such reference is specified by the names given to characters and places. Thus Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress* allegorizes the Christian doctrine of salvation by telling how the character named Christian, warned by Evangelist, flees the City of Destruction and makes his way laboriously to the Celestial City; en route he encounters characters with names like Faithful, Hopeful, and the Giant Despair, and passes through places

ALLEGORY

Now as Christian was walking solitary by himself, he espied one afar off come crossing over the field to meet him; and their hap was to meet just as they were crossing the way of each other. The Gentleman's name was Mr. Worldly-Wiseman; he dwelt in the Town of Carnal-Policy, a very great Town, and also hard by from whence Christian came.

Works which are primarily nonallegorical may introduce **allegorical** (the personification of abstract entities who perform a brief allegori-

's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* (1645). This device was exploited especially poetic diction of authors in the mid-eighteenth century. An example—so

—is the passage
's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751):

Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Allegory is a narrative strategy which may be employed in any literary

Everyman is an allegory in the
morality play. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a moral and religious allegory

's *The Faerie Queene* (1590–96) fuses
romance; the third

's *Gulliver's Travels*, the voyage to Laputa and Lagado
satire directed mainly against philosophical and scien-

' "Ode on the Poetical Character" (1747) is
poem which allegorizes a topic in literary criticism—the nature, sources,

's creative imagination. John Keats makes a subtle use of
"To Autumn" (1820), most explicitly in the sec-

Sustained allegory was a favorite form in the Middle Ages, when it pro-
dream vision,

's *Divine Comedy*, the French
, Chaucer's *House of Fame*, and William Langland's *Piers Plow-*
. But sustained allegory has been written in all literary periods, and is the
's *Faust*,
; Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*; and Thomas Hardy's *The Dynasts*. In

Allegory was on the whole devalued during the twentieth century, but

its historical subtext, its “political unconscious.” (See Jameson, under *Marxist criticism*.) And Paul de Man elevates allegory, because it candidly manifests its artifice, over what he calls the more “mystified” concept of the *symbol*, which he claims seems to promise, falsely, a unity of form and content, thought and expression. (See de Man, under *deconstruction*.)

A variety of literary *genres* may be classified as species of allegory in that they all narrate one coherent set of circumstances which are intended to signify a second order of correlated meanings:

A **fable** (also called an **apologue**) is a short narrative, in prose or verse, that exemplifies an abstract moral thesis or principle of human behavior; usually, at its conclusion, either the narrator or one of the characters states the moral in the form of an *epigram*. Most common is the **beast fable**, in which animals talk and act like the human types they represent. In the familiar fable of the fox and the grapes, the fox—after exerting all his wiles to get the grapes hanging beyond his reach, but in vain—concludes that they are probably sour anyway: the express moral is that human beings belittle what they cannot get. (The modern expression “sour grapes” derives from this fable.) The beast fable is a very ancient form that existed in Egypt, India, and Greece. The fables in Western cultures derive mainly from the stories that were, probably mistakenly, attributed to Aesop, a Greek slave of the sixth century BC. In the seventeenth century a Frenchman, Jean de la Fontaine, wrote a set of witty fables in verse which are the classics of this literary kind. Chaucer’s “The Nun’s Priest’s Tale,” the story of the cock and the fox, is a beast fable. The American Joel Chandler Harris wrote many Uncle Remus stories that are beast fables, told in southern African-American dialect, whose origins have been traced to *folktales* in the oral literature of West Africa that feature a trickster similar to Uncle Remus’ Brer Rabbit. (A **trickster** is a character in a story who persistently uses his wiliness, and gift of gab, to achieve his ends by outmaneuvering or outwitting other characters.) A counterpart in many Native American cultures are the beast fables that feature Coyote as the central trickster. James Thurber’s *Fables for Our Time* (1940) is a recent set of short fables; and in *Animal Farm* (1945) George Orwell expanded the beast fable into a sustained satire on Russian totalitarianism under Stalin in the mid-twentieth century.

A **parable** is a very short narrative about human beings presented so as to stress the tacit analogy, or parallel, with a general thesis or lesson that the narrator is trying to bring home to his audience. The parable was one of Jesus’ favorite devices as a teacher; examples are his parables of the good Samaritan and of the prodigal son. Here is his terse parable of the fig tree, Luke 13:6–9:

He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, “Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?” And he answering said unto him, “Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it. And if it bears fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.”

“parable” to signify any
” or onto many others, whether the

didactic device, but “a basic cognitive principle”
“every level of our experience” and that

’s *A la recherche du temps perdu*.” (Mark Turner, *The*
, New York, 1996.)

An **exemplum** is a story told as a particular instance of the general theme

’s “The Pardoner’s Tale,” the Par-
“Greed is the root of all evil,” incorporates as

“exemplum” is also applied to tales used in a formal,
’s Chanticleer, in “The
’s Priest’s Tale,” borrows the preacher’s technique in the ten exempla

Literature and the
(2d ed., 1961, chapter 4).

Proverbs are short, pithy statements of widely accepted truths about
rical, in that the explicit statement

”; “people in glass houses should not throw
” Refer to *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, ed. W. G. Smith

See *didactic*, *symbol* (for the distinction between allegory and symbol),
interpretation: typo-
. On allegory in general, consult C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory*
(1936), chapter 2; Edwin Honig, *Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory*
Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (1964); Rose-
Allegorical Imagery (1966); Michael Murrin, *The Veil of Allegory*
The Language of Allegory (1979); Jon Whitman,
(1987).

For references to *allegory* in other entries, see page 88.

: Alliteration is the repetition of a speech sound in a sequence of

alliterative meter, alliteration

caesura; and at least one, and usually both, of the two stressed sylla-

half-line. (In this type of versification a vowel was considered to alliterate with any other vowel.) A number of Middle English poems, such as William Langland's *Piers Plowman* and the romance *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, both written in the fourteenth century, continued to use and play variations upon the old alliterative meter. (See *strong-stress meters*.) In the opening line of *Piers Plowman*, for example, all four of the stressed syllables alliterate:

In a sómer sésón, when sóft was the sónne....

In later English versification, however, alliteration is used only for special stylistic effects, such as to reinforce the meaning, to link related words, or to provide tone color and enhance the palpability of enunciating the words. An example is the repetition of the *s*, *th*, and *w* consonants in Shakespeare's Sonnet 30:

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste....

Various other repetitions of speech sounds are identified by special terms:

Consonance is the repetition of a sequence of two or more consonants, but with a change in the intervening vowel: live-love, lean-alone, pitter-patter. W. H. Auden's poem of the 1930s, "O where are you going?" said reader to rider," makes prominent use of this device; the last stanza reads:

Text not available due to copyright restrictions

Assonance is the repetition of identical or similar vowels—especially in stressed syllables—in a sequence of nearby words. Note the recurrent long *i* in the opening lines of Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1820):

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster child of silence and slow time....

The richly assonantal effect at the beginning of William Collins' "Ode to Evening" (1747) is achieved by a patterned sequence of changing vowels:

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy pensive ear....

For a special case of the repetition of vowels and consonants in combination, see *rhyme*. For references to *alliteration* in other entries, see page 140.

¹ Lines from "O where are you going?" from *W. H. Auden: Collected Poems 1927–1957* by W. H. Auden, ed. by Edward Mendelson. Copyright © 1934 and renewed 1962 by W. H. Auden. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc., and Faber & Faber Ltd.

: Allusion is a passing reference, without explicit identification, to a

's "Litany in Time of Plague,"

Brightness falls from the air,
Queens have died young and fair,
Dust hath closed Helen's eye,

"Helen" in the last line alludes to Helen of Troy. Most allu-

's *The Waste Land* (1922) describ-

Text not available due to copyright restrictions

ironic allusion, achieved by echoing Shakespeare's phrasing, is to the descrip-
's magnificent barge in *Antony and Cleopatra* (II. ii. 196ff):

The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water.

For discussion of a poet who makes persistent and complex use of this

Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion (1959);

The Figure of Echo: A Mode of Allusion in Milton and

(1981); Edwin Stein, *Wordsworth's Art of Allusion* (1988); Christopher

Allusion to the Poets (2002), and *True Friendship: Geoffrey Hill, Anthony*

(2010).

Since allusions are not explicitly identified, they imply a fund of knowl-

's time, but some are aimed at a special coterie.

Astrophel and Stella, the Elizabethan *sonnet sequence*, Sir Philip

's punning allusions to Lord Robert Rich, who had married the Stella

's private reading and experience, in the awareness that few if any read-

intertextuality includes literary echoes and allusions as one

The Full-Knowing Reader: Allusion and the Power of the Reader in

"The Waste Land" from *Collected Poems 1909-1962* by T. S. Eliot. Copyright © 1964, 1963 by T. S. Eliot.

Western Literary Tradition (1998); and Gregory Machacek, "Allusion," *PMLA*, Vol. 122 (2007).

ambiance: (ăm' bēāns), 19.

ambiguity: In ordinary usage "ambiguity" is applied to a fault in style; that is, the use of a vague or equivocal term or expression when what is wanted is precision and particularity of reference. Since William Empson published *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930), however, the term has been widely used in criticism to identify a deliberate poetic device: the use of a single word or expression to signify two or more distinct references, or to express two or more diverse attitudes or feelings. **Multiple meaning** and **plurisignation** are alternative terms for this use of language; they have the advantage of avoiding the pejorative association with the word "ambiguity."

When Shakespeare's Cleopatra, exciting the asp to a frenzy, says (*Antony and Cleopatra*, V. ii. 306ff.),

Come, thou mortal wretch,
With thy sharp teeth this knot intricate
Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool,
Be angry, and dispatch,

her speech is richly multiple in significance. For example, "mortal" means "fatal" or "death-dealing," and at the same time may signify that the asp is itself mortal, or subject to death. "Wretch" in this context serves to express both contempt and pity (Cleopatra goes on to refer to the asp as "my baby at my breast, / That sucks the nurse asleep"). And the two meanings of "dispatch"—"make haste" and "kill"—are equally relevant.

A special type of multiple meaning is conveyed by the **portmanteau word**. "Portmanteau" designates a large suitcase that opens into two equal compartments, and was introduced into literary criticism by Humpty Dumpty, the expert on semantics in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (1871). He is explicating to Alice the meaning of the opening lines of "Jabberwocky":

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe.

"Slithy," Humpty Dumpty explained, "means 'lithe and slimy'.... You see it's like a portmanteau—there are two meanings packed up into one word." James Joyce exploited this device—the fusion of two or more existing words—in order to sustain the multiple levels of meaning throughout his long dream narrative *Finnegans Wake* (1939). An example is his comment on girls who are "yung and easily freudened"; "freudened" combines "frightened" and "Freud," while "yung" combines "young" and Sigmund Freud's rival in depth psychology, Carl Jung. (Compare *pun*.) "Différance," a key analytic term of the philosopher of language Jacques Derrida, is a portmanteau noun which he describes as combining two diverse meanings of the French verb "différer": "to differ" and "to defer." (See *deconstruction*.)

By his analysis of ambiguity, William Empson helped make current a mode of *explication* developed especially by exponents of the *New Criticism*, which

over-reading: excess-

For related terms see *connotation and denotation* and *pun*. For a critique of his theory and practice, refer to Elder Olson, "William Empson," in *Critics and Criticism*, ed.

(anāk' rōnism): **300**.

(anagnō' rīsīs): **297**; 409.

(anapēs' tik): **218**.

(anā' fora): **345**.

(in satire): **354**.

(in a plot): **294**.

: The chief person in a modern novel or play whose character is widely *hero*, of a serious literary

antihero is petty, ignominious, passive, clownish, or dishonest. The use of nonheroic protagonists occurs as early as the *picaresque* novel of the sixteenth century, and the heroine of Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) is a thief and a prostitute. The term "antihero," however, is usually applied to writings in the period of disillusion after the Second World War, beginning with such lowly protagonists as we find in John Wain's *Hurry on Down* (1953) and Kingsley Amis' *Lucky Jim* (1954). Notable later instances in the novel are Yossarian in Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (1961), Humbert Humbert in Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955), and Tyrone Slothrop in Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973). The use of an antihero is especially conspicuous in dramatic tragedy, in which the traditional protagonist had usually been of high estate, possessing dignity and courage (see *tragedy*). Extreme instances are the characters who people a world stripped of certainties, values, or even meaning in Samuel Beckett's dramas—the tramps Vladimir and Estragon in *Waiting for Godot* (1952) or the blind and paralyzed old man, Hamm, who is the protagonist in *Endgame* (1958).

See literature of the *absurd* and *black comedy*, and refer to Ihab Hassan, "The Antihero in Modern British and American Fiction," in *Rumors of Change* (1995). For references to *antihero* in other entries, see page 2.

antimasque: 210.

antinovel: 258.

antipathy (antĭp' athy): 105.

antistrophe (antĭs' trōfē): 262.

antithesis (antĭ' thesis) is a contrast or opposition in the meanings of contiguous phrases or clauses that manifest **parallelism**—that is, a similar word order and structure—in their *syntax*. An example is Alexander Pope's description of Atticus in his *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735), "Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike." In the antithesis in the second line of Pope's description of the Baron's designs against Belinda, in *The Rape of the Lock* (1714), the parallelism in the syntax is made prominent by *alliteration* in the antithetic nouns:

Resolved to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray.

In a sentence from Samuel Johnson's prose fiction *Rasselas* (1759), chapter 26, the antithesis is similarly heightened by alliteration in the contrasted nouns: "Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

antithetical criticism: 174.

antitype: 181.

anxiety of influence: 173; 323.

APHORISM

(ǎf' ōrism): **111**.

(ǎpǒk' rīfa): **41**.

.

(ǎpǒ' rēa): **80**.

(apōs' trōf ē): **345**.

(ǎp' othēm): **111**.

.

(in reading): **247**.

(arkā' dia): **268**.

: The literary use of words and expressions that have become obsolete
The Faerie Queene (1590–96) de-
's medie-

chivalric romance. The translators of the King James Version of the

brede / Of marble men and maidens *overwrought*," he used archaic words
"braid" and "worked [that is, ornamented] all over." Abraham Lincoln
"Gettysburg Address,"

"Fourscore and seven years ago."

Archaism has been a standard resort for *poetic diction*. Through the nine-
"I ween,"

"steed," "taper" (for candle), and "morn," but only in their

: In literary criticism the term **archetype** denotes narrative

elemental patterns of myth and ritual that, he claimed, recur in the legends and ceremonials of diverse and far-flung cultures and religions. An even more important antecedent was the depth psychology of Carl G. Jung (1875–1961), who applied the term “archetype” to what he called “primordial images,” the “psychic residue” of repeated patterns of experience in our very ancient ancestors which, he maintained, survive in the *collective unconscious* of the human race and are expressed in myths, religion, dreams, and private fantasies, as well as in works of literature. See *Jungian criticism*, under *psychoanalytic criticism*.

Archetypal literary criticism was given impetus by Maud Bodkin’s *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (1934) and flourished especially during the 1950s and 1960s. Some archetypal critics dropped Jung’s theory of the collective unconscious as the deep source of these patterns; in the words of Northrop Frye, this theory is “an unnecessary hypothesis,” and the recurrent archetypes are simply there, “however they got there.”

Among the prominent practitioners of various modes of **archetypal criticism**, in addition to Maud Bodkin, were G. Wilson Knight, Robert Graves, Philip Wheelwright, Richard Chase, Leslie Fiedler, and Joseph Campbell. These critics tended to emphasize the persistence of mythical patterns in literature, on the assumption that myths are closer to the elemental archetype than the artful manipulations of sophisticated writers (see *myth critics*). The death/rebirth theme was often said to be the archetype of archetypes, and was held to be grounded in the cycle of the seasons and the organic cycle of human life; this archetype, it was claimed, occurs in primitive rituals of the king who is annually sacrificed, in widespread myths of gods who die to be reborn, and in a multitude of diverse texts, including the Bible, Dante’s *Divine Comedy* in the early fourteenth century, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “Rime of the Ancient Mariner” in 1798. Among the other archetypal themes, images, and characters frequently traced in literature were the journey underground, the heavenly ascent, the search for the father, the Paradise/Hades dichotomy, the Promethean rebel-hero, the scapegoat, the earth goddess, and the fatal woman.

In his influential book *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Northrop Frye developed the archetypal approach—which he combined with the *typological interpretation* of the Bible and the conception of the imagination in the writings of the poet and painter William Blake (1757–1827)—into a radical and comprehensive revision of the foundational concepts of both the theory of literature and the practice of literary criticism. Frye proposed that the totality of literary works constitute a “self-contained literary universe” which has been created over the ages by the human imagination so as to assimilate the alien and indifferent world of nature into archetypal forms that satisfy enduring human desires and needs. In this literary universe, four radical **mythoi** (that is, plot forms, or organizing structural principles), correspondent to the four seasons in the cycle of the natural world, are incorporated in the four major *genres* of comedy (spring), romance (summer), tragedy (autumn), and satire (winter). Within the archetypal mythos of each of these genres, individual works of literature also play variations upon a number of more limited archetypes—that is, conventional patterns and types that literature shares with social rituals as well as with theology, history,

“discursive verbal structures.” Viewed archetypally, Frye

(1990).

In addition to the works mentioned above, consult: C. G. Jung, “On the
 ” (1922), in *Contributions to*
 (1928), and “Psychology and Literature,” in *Modern Man*
 (1933); G. Wilson Knight, *The Starlit Dome* (1941); Robert
The White Goddess (rev. 1961); Richard Chase, *The Quest for Myth*
The Idea of a Theater (1949); Philip Wheelwright,
 (rev. 1968); Northrop Frye, “The Archetypes of Litera-
 ” in *Fables of Identity* (1963); Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand*
 (2d ed., 1968). In the 1980s, *feminist critics* developed forms of archetypal

Archetypal Patterns in Woman’s Fiction (1981), and
Feminist Archetypal Theory: Inter-
 (1985).

For discussions and critiques of archetypal theory and practice, see Murray
Northrop Frye in Modern Criticism (1966); Robert Denham, *North-*
 (1978); Frank Lentricchia, *After the New Criticism*
archetypal criticism in other entries, see
 149, 297, 323.

(ar’ kětīp): **16**.

(in narrative forms): **108**.

’s sake: 4.

.

; 63, 64.

(ǎ’ sōnāns): **11**.

: Atmosphere is the emotional tone pervading a section or the

by the terse and nervous dialogue of the sentinels as they anticipate a

reappearance of the ghost; Coleridge engenders a compound of religious and superstitious terror by his description of the initial scene in the narrative poem *Christabel* (1816); and Hardy in his novel *The Return of the Native* (1878) makes Egdon Heath a brooding presence that reduces to pettiness and futility the human struggle for happiness for which it is the setting. Alternative terms frequently used for atmosphere are **mood** and the French word **ambiance**.

For references to *atmosphere* in other entries, see page 152.

aubade (ō bād'): 229.

Augustan Age (awgŭs' tan): 282.

author and authorship: The conception of an author in ordinary literary discourse can be summarized as follows: **Authors** are individuals who, by their intellectual and imaginative powers, purposefully create from their experience and reading a literary work which is distinctively their own. The work itself, as distinguished from the written or printed texts that instantiate the work, remains a product accredited to the author as its originator, even if he or she turns over the rights to publish and profit from the texts to someone else. And insofar as the literary work turns out to be great and original, the author who has composed that work is deservedly accorded high cultural status and achieves lasting fame.

Since the 1960s this way of conceiving an author has been put to radical question by a number of structural and poststructural theorists, who posit the human *subject* not as an originator and shaper of a work, but as a "space" in which conventions, codes, and circulating locutions precipitate into a particular text, or else as a "site" wherein there converge, and are recorded, the cultural constructs, discursive formations, and configurations of power prevalent in a given cultural era. The author is said to be the product rather than the producer of a text, or is redescribed as an "effect" or "function" engendered by the internal play of textual language. Famously, in 1968 Roland Barthes proclaimed and celebrated "The Death of the Author," whom he described as a figure invented by critical discourse in order to set limits to the inherent free play of the meanings in reading a literary text. See under *structuralist criticism* and *poststructuralism*.

In an influential essay "What Is an Author?" written in 1969, Michel Foucault raised the question of the historical "coming into being of the notion of 'author'"—that is, of the emergence and evolution of the "author function" within the discourse of our culture. The investigation would include such inquiries as "how the author became individualized," "what status he has been given," what "system of valorization" involves the author, and how the fundamental category of "'the-man-and-his-work criticism' began." Foucault's essay and example gave impetus to a number of studies which reject the notion that the prevailing concept of **authorship** (the set of attributes possessed by an author) is either natural or necessitated by the way things are. Instead, historicists conceive authorship to be a *cultural construct* that emerged and changed drastically, in accordance with changing economic conditions, social circumstances, and institutional arrangements for the writing

Cultural historians have emphasized the important role, in constructing and

an author presumably was not inquired after, since the individual bard or minstrel improvised by reference to inherited subject matter, forms, and literary formulae. (See *oral poetry*.) In a culture where at least a substantial segment of the population can read, the production of enduring texts in the form of written scrolls and manuscripts generated increasing interest in the individual responsible for producing the work that was thus recorded. Many works in manuscript, however, circulated freely, and were often altered in transcriptions, with little regard to the intentions or formulations of the originator of the work.

primarily manuscript culture to a primarily print culture. (See *book*.) The invention of printing greatly expedited the manufacture and dissemination of printed texts, and so multiplied the number of producers of literary works, and made financially important the specification of the identity and ability of an individual writer, in order to invite support for that individual by the contemporary system of aristocratic and noble patronage. Foucault, in addition, proposed the importance of a punitive function in fostering the concept of an author's responsibility in originating a work, which served the interests of the state in affixing on a particular individual the blame for transgressive or subversive ideas.

ous periods, just who was the originator of what parts of an existing literary text, which was often, in effect, the product of multiple collaborators, censors, editors, printers, and publishers, as well as of successive revisions by the reputed author. See *multiple authorship* under *textual criticism*.

teenth centuries, and the attendant explosion in the number of literary titles printed, and in the number of writers required to supply this market. Both Foucault and Barthes, in the essays cited above, emphasized that the modern concept of an author as an individual who is the intellectual owner of his or her literary product was the result of the *ideology* engendered by the emerging capitalist economy in this era. Other scholars have stressed the importance of the shift during the eighteenth century, first in England and then in other European countries, from a reliance by writers on literary patrons to that of support by payments from publishers and booksellers. A result of the booming literary market was the increasingly successful appeal by writers for copyright laws that would invest them, instead of the publisher, with the ownership of the works that they composed for public sale. These conditions of the literary marketplace fostered the claims by writers that they possessed originality, creativity, and genius, and so were able to produce literary works that were entirely

new. They made such claims in order to establish their legal rights, as authors, to ownership of such productions as their “intellectual property,” in addition to their rights (which they could sell to others) to the printed texts of their works as “material property.” Historians of authorship pointed out that the most emphatic claims about the genius, creativity, and originality of authors, which occurred in the *Romantic Period*, coincided with, and was interactive with, the success of authors in achieving some form of copyright protection of an author’s proprietary rights to the literary work as the unique product of his or her native powers. See Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright*, 1993; Martha Woodmansee, *The Author, Art, and the Market: Rereading the History of Aesthetics*, 1994; and the essays by various scholars in *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature*, ed. Martha Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi, 1994. Paulina Kewes’ *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660–1710* (1998) is a study of the cultural and economic factors that determined the status of an author in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Historicist scholars of authorship have succeeded in demonstrating that there has been a sustained interplay between the economic circumstances and institutional arrangements for producing and marketing literary texts and some aspects of the conception of authorship, or of ideas associated with authorship. The radical further claim, however, that the modern figure and functions assigned to an author are in their essentials a recent formation, resulting from the distinctive conditions of the literary marketplace after the seventeenth century, does not jibe with historical evidence. Some two thousand years ago, for example, the Roman poet Horace wrote his verse-epistle, the *Ars Poetica*, at a time when books consisted of texts copied by hand in rolls of papyrus. (See the entry *book*.) Horace adverts to a number of individuals from Homer to his friend Virgil who, he makes clear, are individuals who conceived and brought their works into being, and thus are responsible for having achieved their specific content, form, and quality. A competent literary author—Horace refers to him variously as *scriptor* (writer), *poeta* (maker), and *carminis auctor* (originator of a poem)—must possess a natural talent or genius (*ingenium*) as well as an acquired art; this author purposefully designs and orders his *poema* in such a way as to evoke the emotions of his audience. The bookseller, Horace indicates, advertises his commodities locally and also ships them abroad. And if a published work succeeds in instructing and giving pleasure to a great many readers, it is a book that not only “makes money for the bookseller,” but also “crosses the sea and spreads to a distant age the fame of its author.” Clearly, Horace distinguishes between material and authorial, or intellectual, ownership, in that the author, even if he retains no proprietary interest in a published book, retains the sole responsibility and credit for having accomplished the work that the text incorporates. (See M. H. Abrams, “What Is a Humanistic Criticism?” in *The Emperor Redressed: Critiquing Critical Theory*, ed. Dwight Eddins, 1995.)

Another revealing instance is provided by the publication of the First Folio of Shakespeare’s plays in 1623. As writings intended for the commercial

's plays were a collaborative enterprise in which textual
 's property, but that of his
The Norton Shakespeare (1997), there is no evidence that Shake-
 " or that he had any legal
 's death his friends and fellow actors
 collection of his plays by virtue of the fact, as they claimed in a preface,
 "as he conceived them" and represented
 "thought" and "uttered." The identity of the conceiver

's friend and dramatic rival, "To the Memory of My
 " In it Jonson appraised
 "The applause! delight! the wonder of
 " but also as an individual who, by the products of his innate abilities
 ") even more than his "art," was "not of an age, but for all time!";
 "well-turned" lines reflect the "mind, and manners" of

's "auctor" and of Jonson's "author" were
 See the entry *sociology of literature*. In addition to the items listed above,
Books and Readers in Ancient Rome (1951);
Medieval Theory of Authorship (1984); Wendy Wall, *The Imprint*
 (1993). Roger
 "Figures of the Author," *The Order of Books* (1994), describes

(narration): **302**.

(ǎ' vön-gard''): **227**.



B

ballad: A short definition of the **popular ballad** (also called the **folk ballad** or **traditional ballad**) is that it is a song, transmitted orally, which tells a story. Ballads are thus the narrative species of *folk songs*, which originate, and are communicated orally, among illiterate or only partly literate people. In all probability the initial version of a ballad was composed by a single author, but he or she is unknown; and since each singer who learns and repeats an oral ballad is apt to introduce changes in both the text and the tune, it exists in many variant forms. Typically, the popular ballad is dramatic, condensed, and impersonal: the narrator begins with the climactic episode, tells the story tersely in action and dialogue (sometimes by means of dialogue alone), and tells it without self-reference or the expression of personal attitudes or feelings.

The most common stanza form—called the **ballad stanza**—is a *quatrain* in alternate four- and three-stress lines; usually only the second and fourth lines rhyme. This is the form of “Sir Patrick Spens”; the first stanza also exemplifies the abrupt opening of the typical ballad, and the manner of proceeding by third-person narration, curtly sketched setting and action, sharp transition, and spare dialogue:

The king sits in Dumferling towne,
Drinking the blude-red wine:
“O whar will I get a guid sailor,
To sail this schip of mine?”

Many ballads employ set formulas (which helped the singer remember the course of the song) including (1) stock descriptive phrases like “blood-red wine” and “milk-white steed,” (2) a *refrain* in each stanza (“Edward,” “Lord Randall”), and (3) **incremental repetition**, in which a line or stanza is repeated, but with an addition that advances the story (“Lord Randall,” “Child Waters”). See *oral poetry*.

Although many traditional ballads probably originated in the later Middle Ages, they were not collected and printed until the eighteenth century, first in England, then in Germany. In 1765 Thomas Percy published his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* which, although most of the contents had been revised in the style of Percy’s era, did much to inaugurate widespread interest in folk literature. The basic modern collection is Francis J. Child’s *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1882–98), which includes 305 ballads, many of them in variant versions. Bertrand H. Bronson has edited *The Traditional Tunes of the Child Ballads* (4 vols., 1959–72). Popular ballads are still being sung—and collected, now with the help of an electronic recorder—in the British Isles and remote rural areas of America. To the songs that early settlers brought with them from Great Britain, America has added native forms of the ballad, such as those sung by lumberjacks, cowboys, laborers, and social protesters. A number of recent folk singers, including Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, and Joan Baez, themselves compose ballads; most of these, however, such as “The Ballad of

” (about a notorious gangster and his moll), are closer to the “broadside ballad” than to the archaic and heroic mode of the

A **broadside ballad** is a ballad that was printed on one side of a single “broadside”), dealt with a current event or person or issue, and

The traditional ballad has greatly influenced the form and style of lyric **literary ballad**, which is a narra-

’s very popular
 ” (1774)—which soon became widely read and influential in an
 —and Goethe’s “Erlkönig” (1782). In England, some of the
Romantic Period: Coleridge’s “Rime of
 ” (which, however, is much longer and has a much more
 ’s “Proud Maisie,” and Keats’
 ” In his *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798, Wordsworth begins
 ” by introducing a narrator as an agent and first-person teller of
 —“I met a little cottage girl”—which is probably one reason he called
 “*lyrical* ballads.” Coleridge’s “Ancient Mariner,” on the other
Lyrical Ballads, opens with the

It is an ancient Mariner
 And he stoppeth one of three....

See W. J. Entwistle, *European Balladry* (rev. ed., 1951); M. J. C. Hodgart, (2d ed., 1962); John A. and Alan Lomax, *American Ballads and Folk* (1934); D. C. Fowler, *A Literary History of the Popular Ballad* (1968). For *The Common Muse*, ed. V. de Sola Pinto and Allan E.

; 376.

(ba rōk’) is a term applied by art historians (at first derogatorily, but

Renaissance, but breaks them up and intermingles them to

’s cathedral in Rome.

The term has been adopted with reference to literature, with a variety

—for example, some verse passages in Milton’s *Paradise* (1667) and Thomas De Quincey’s prose descriptions of his dreams in

Confessions of an English Opium Eater (1822) have both been called baroque. Occasionally—though oftener on the Continent than in England—it serves as a period term for post-Renaissance literature in the seventeenth century. More frequently it is applied specifically to the elaborate verses and extravagant conceits of the late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century poets Giambattista Marino in Italy and Luis de Góngora in Spain. In English literature the metaphysical poems of John Donne are sometimes described as baroque; but the term is more often, and more appropriately, applied to the elaborate style, fantastic conceits, and extreme religious emotionalism of the poet Richard Crashaw, 1612–49; see under *metaphysical conceit*. Refer to René Wellek, “The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship,” in *Concepts of Criticism* (1963).

The term “baroque” is derived from the Spanish and Portuguese name for a pearl that is rough and irregular in shape.

bathos and anticlimax: **Bathos** is Greek for “depth,” and it has been an indispensable term to critics since Alexander Pope, *parodying* the Greek Longinus’ famous essay *On the Sublime* (that is, “loftiness”), wrote in 1727 an essay *On Bathos: Of the Art of Sinking in Poetry*. With mock solemnity Pope assures his readers that he undertakes “to lead them as it were by the hand.... the gentle downhill way to Bathos; the bottom, the end, the central point, the *non plus ultra*, of true Modern Poesy!” The word ever since has been used for an unintentional descent in literature when, straining to be pathetic or passionate or elevated, the writer overshoots the mark and drops into the trivial or the ridiculous. Among his examples Pope cites “the modest request of two absent lovers” in a contemporary poem:

Ye Gods! annihilate but Space and Time,
And make two lovers happy.

The slogan “For God, for Country, and for Yale!” is bathetic because it moves to intended **climax** (that is, an ascending sequence of importance) in its rhetorical order, but to unintended descent in its reference—at least for someone who is not a Yale graduate. Even major poets sometimes fall unwittingly into the same rhetorical figure. In the early version of *The Prelude* (1805; Book IX), William Wordsworth, after recounting at length the tale of the star-crossed lovers Vaudracour and Julia, tells how Julia died, leaving Vaudracour to raise their infant son:

It consoled him here
To attend upon the Orphan and perform
The office of a Nurse to his young Child
Which after a short time by some mistake
Or indiscretion of the Father, died.

The Stuffed Owl: An Anthology of Bad Verse, ed. D. B. Wyndham Lewis and Charles Lee (rev. 1948), is a rich mine of unintended bathos.

Anticlimax is sometimes employed as an equivalent of bathos; but in a more useful application, “anticlimax” is nonderogatory, and denotes a writer’s deliberate drop from the serious and elevated to the trivial and lowly in order

mock-heroic “Ode
 ” (1748)—the cat had drowned when she tried
 —gravely inserts this moral observation:

What female heart can gold despise?
 What cat’s averse to fish?

Don Juan (1819–24; I. ix.) Byron uses anticlimax to deflate the would-
 ’s father:

A better cavalier ne’er mounted horse,
 Or, being mounted, e’er got down again.

: Beat writers identifies a loose-knit group of poets and novelists,
 —antiestablishment, antipolitical, anti-intellectual, opposed to the pre-

per-
 .) “Beat” was used to signify both “beaten down” (that is, by the
 “beatific” (many of the Beat writers culti-

’s *Howl* (1956)

decadence in the late nineteenth century.) A representa-
 ’s *On the Road* (1958).

counterculture, under *Periods of*

Refer to Lawrence Lipton, *The Holy Barbarians* (1959); Seymour Krim, ed.,
 (1960); Ann Charters, ed., *The Portable Beat Reader* (1992); Brenda
Women of the Beat Generation: The Writers, Artists and Muses at the
 (1996); Jonah Raskin, *American Scream: Allen Ginsberg’s*
 ” and *the Making of the Beat Generation* (2004). Holly George-Warren has
Rolling Stone
 (1999).

For references to *Beat Writers* in other entries, see pages 29, 76, 277.

(of a plot): **296**.

beliefs (in reading literature): 129.

bibliography: 32; 35.

Bildungsroman (bild' ungsrōmān'): 255.

binary opposition: 79; 328.

biography: Late in the seventeenth century, John Dryden defined biography neatly as "the history of particular men's lives." The name now connotes a relatively full account of a particular person's life, involving the attempt to set forth character, temperament, and milieu, as well as the subject's activities and experiences.

Both the ancient Greeks and Romans produced short, formal lives of individuals. The most famed surviving example is the *Parallel Lives* of Greek and Roman notables by the Greek writer Plutarch, c. AD 46–120; in the translation by Sir Thomas North in 1579, it was the source of Shakespeare's plays on Roman subjects. Medieval authors wrote generalized chronicles of the deeds of a king, as well as **hagiographies**: the stylized lives of Christian saints, often based more on pious legends than on fact. In England, the fairly detailed secular biography appeared in the seventeenth century; the most distinguished instance is Izaak Walton's *Lives* (including short biographies of the poets John Donne and George Herbert), written between 1640 and 1678.

The eighteenth century in England is the age of the emergence of the full-scale biography, and also of the theory of biography as a special literary genre. It was the century of Samuel Johnson's *Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81) and of the best known of all English biographies, James Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791). In our own time, biographies of notable women and men have become one of the most popular of literary forms, and usually there is at least one biographical title high on the best seller list.

Autobiography is a biography written by the subject about himself or herself. It is to be distinguished from the **memoir**, in which the emphasis is not on the author's developing self but on the people and events that the author has known or witnessed, and also from the private **diary** or **journal**, which is a day-to-day record of the events in one's life, written for personal use and satisfaction, with little or no thought of publication. Examples of the latter type are the seventeenth-century diaries of Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn, the eighteenth-century journals of James Boswell and Fanny Burney, and Dorothy Wordsworth's remarkable *Journals*, written 1798–1828, but not published until long after her death. The first fully developed autobiography is also the most influential: the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, written in the fourth century. The design of this profound and subtle **spiritual autobiography** centers on what became the crucial experience in Christian autobiography: the author's anguished mental crisis, and a recovery and **conversion** in which he discovers his Christian identity and religious vocation.

Michel de Montaigne's *Essays*, published in 1580 and in later expansions, constitute in their sum the first great instance of autobiographical self-revelation

's *Confessions* (written 1764–70), Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* "written 1810–31), the autobiographies of Benjamin Franklin (1790), William James (1892), Gertrude Stein (published 1934), Lillian Hellman, and Gertrude Stein (published 1964). Many spiritual histories of the self, however, such as John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666), followed the example of religious self-revelation centering on a crisis and conver-

s discovery of his identity

's autobiography in verse, *The Prelude* (completed 1805, published in re-

's *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913–27), James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist* (1915), and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1965). In recent

's *The Woman Warrior*, 1975) mingle fiction and personal experience to tell the author's essential life story (see the entry *novel*).

On biography: Donald A. Stauffer, *English Biography before 1700* (1930) and *English Biography since 1700* (1941); Leon Edel, *Literary Biography* (1957); Richard D. Altick, *Lives and Letters: A History of Literary Biography* (1965); David Novarr, *The Lines of Life: Theories of Biography* (1965); Linda Wagner-Martin, *Telling Women's Lives: Theories of Biography* (1994); David Ellis, *Literary Lives: Biography and the Search for the Self* (2000). Catherine N. Parke, *Biography: Writing Lives* (1996), in "Minority Biography." On autobiography: Roy Pascal, *The Autobiography* (1960); Estelle C. Jelinek, ed., *Women's Autobiography* (1980), and *The Tradition of Women's Autobiography* (1986). The importance of autobiography in the Victorian period: *Figures of Autobiography* (1986). For an extended discussion of the Victorian period: *Memory and the Victorian Novel* (2001). John N. Morris, in *Versions of the Self* (1966),

(1971), describes the wide ramifications of spiritual autobi-

"The Autobiographical Pact" (1974), Philippe Lejeune argues for

On *Autobiography* (1989). Paul John Eakin's *How Our Lives Become Stories* (1999) is an account of autobiography that draws on cognitive theory. See also *The Autobiographical Pact* (2008).

Black Aesthetic: 29.

Black Arts Movement: The Black Arts Movement designates a number of *African-American* writers whose work was shaped by the social and political turbulence of the 1960s—the decade of massive protests against the Vietnam War, demands for the rights of African-Americans that led to repeated and sometimes violent confrontations, and the riots and burnings in Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, Newark, and other major cities. The literary movement was associated with the Black Power movement in politics, whose spokesmen, including Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X, opposed the proponents of integration, and instead advocated black separatism, black pride, and black solidarity. Representatives of the Black Arts put their literary writings at the service of these social and political aims. As Larry Neal put it in his essay “The Black Arts Movement” (1968): “Black Art is the aesthetic and spiritual sister of the Black Power Concept. As such it envisions an art that speaks directly to the needs and aspirations of Black America” and “to the Afro-American desire for self-determination and nationhood.”

The **Black Aesthetic** that was voiced or supported by writers in the movement rejected, as aspects of domination by white culture, the “high art” and modernist forms advocated by Ralph Ellison and other African-American writers in the 1950s. Instead, the black aesthetic called for the exploitation of the energy and freshness of the black vernacular, in rhythms and moods emulating jazz and the blues, dealing especially with the lives and concerns of lower-class blacks, and addressed to a black mass audience. The most notable and influential practitioner of the Black Arts was Imamu Amiri Baraka (born LeRoi Jones) who, after an early period in Greenwich Village as an associate of Allen Ginsberg and other *Beat* writers, moved to Harlem, where he founded the Black Arts Repertory Theater/School in 1965. Baraka was distinguished as a poet, a dramatist (his play *Dutchman* is often considered an exemplary product of the Black Arts achievement), a political essayist, and a critic both of literature and of jazz music. Among other writers of the movement were the poets Etheredge Knight, Sonia Sanchez, Haki Madhubuti, and Nikki Giovanni; the authors of prose fiction John Alfred Williams, Eldridge Cleaver, and James Alan McPherson; and the playwrights Paul Carter Harrison and Ed Bullins.

The revolutionary impetus of the Black Arts Movement had diminished by the 1970s, and some of its pronouncements and achievements now seem undisciplined and crudely propagandistic. But its best writings survive, and their critical rationale and subject matter have served as models not only to later African-American writers, but also to Native American, Latino, Asian, and other *ethnic* writers in America. For a later emergence, on the popular level, of antiestablishment poetry by African-Americans, see *rap* under *performance poetry*.

The *Black Aesthetic*, ed. Addison Gayle (1971), includes essays that were important in establishing this mode of criticism by Ron Karenga, Don L. Lee, and Larry Neal, as well as by Gayle himself. See also Imamu Amiri Baraka, *Home: Social Essays* (1966), and editor with Larry Neal of *Black Fire: An*

(1968); Stephen Henderson, *Understanding* (1973); and the text, biographies, and bibliographies for –1970” in *The Norton Anthology of African*, ed. H. L. Gates, Nellie Y. McKay, and others, 1997.

. See also *African-American writers*.

: Blank verse consists of lines of *iambic pentameter* (five-stress iambic —hence the term “blank.” Of all English metrical

’s
(about 1540), it became the standard meter for Elizabethan and later

Paradise Lost (1667), James Thomson
Seasons (1726–30), William Wordsworth for
Prelude (1805), Alfred, Lord Tennyson for the narrative
(1891), Robert Browning for *The Ring and the Book* (1868–69)
The Waste Land
Romantic Period to the pres-
’s “Frost at Mid-
” Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey,” Tennyson’s “Tears, Idle Tears” (in
,”

Divisions in blank verse poems, used to set off a sustained passage, are
verse paragraphs. See, for example, the great verse paragraph of
’s *Paradise Lost*, beginning with “Of
’s first disobedience” and ending with “And justify the ways of God to
”; also, the opening verse paragraph of twenty-two lines in Wordsworth’s
” (1798), which begins:

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur.

See *meter*, and refer to Moody Prior’s critical study of blank verse in *The*
(1964). For references to *blank verse* in other entries, see
64, 93, 142.

Bloomsbury Group: Bloomsbury Group is the name applied to an informal association of writers, artists, and intellectuals, many of whom lived in Bloomsbury, a residential district in central London. This group of friends began to meet around 1905 for conversations about the arts and issues in philosophy. Its members, who opposed the narrow post-Victorian restrictions in both the arts and morality, included the novelists Virginia Woolf and E. M. Forster, the painters Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell (Virginia Woolf's sister), the influential art critics Clive Bell and Roger Frye, the iconoclastic biographer of Victorian personages Lytton Strachey, and the famed economist John Maynard Keynes. Some members were linked not only by common interests and viewpoints but also by complicated erotic liaisons, both heterosexual and homosexual. The Bloomsbury Group had an important influence on innovative literary, artistic, and intellectual developments in the two decades after the First World War, which ended in 1918. A memoir by the son of Clive Bell and Vanessa Stephen is Quentin Bell, *Bloomsbury Recalled* (1997). See Leon Edel, *Bloomsbury: A House of Lions* (1979); S. P. Rosenbaum, ed., *The Bloomsbury Group: A Collection of Memoirs and Commentary* (1995); and Rosenbaum, ed., *A Bloomsbury Group Reader* (1993).

Bombast: Bombast denotes a wordy and inflated diction that is patently disproportionate to the matter that it signifies. The magniloquence of even so fine a poet as Christopher Marlowe is at times inappropriate to its sense, as when Faustus declares (*Dr. Faustus*, 1604; III. i. 47ff.):

Now by the kingdoms of infernal rule,
Of Styx, Acheron, and the fiery lake
Of ever-burning Phlegethon I swear
That I do long to see the monuments
And situation of bright-splendent Rome;

which is to say: “By Hades, I’d like to see Rome!” Bombast is a frequent component in the heroic *drama* of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The pompous language of that drama is parodied in Henry Fielding’s *Tom Thumb the Great* (1731), as in the noted opening of Act II. v., in which the diminutive male lover cries:

Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!
Thy pouting breasts, like kettle-drums of brass,
Beat everlasting loud alarms of joy;
As bright as brass they are, and oh! as hard;
Oh! Huncamunca, Huncamunca, oh!

Fielding points out in a note that this passage was specifically a *parody* of James Thomson’s bombastic lines in *The Tragedy of Sophonisba* (1730):

Oh! Sophonisba, Sophonisba, oh!
Oh! Narva, Narva, oh!

“Bombast” originally meant “cotton stuffing,” and in Elizabethan times came to be used as a metaphor for an over-elaborate style.

(bōmōl' ōkōs): **378**.

: In its inclusive sense, the term designates any written or printed document

, and physical properties of books are called **bibliography**.

In ancient Greece and Rome the standard form of the book was the dou-
Papyrus, which had been developed in Egypt, was made

manuscripts (that is, written by hand), and were inscribed in columns;

In a very important change in the form of the book during the fifth cen-

Parchment was made from the skins of sheep, goats, or calves

is sometimes used interchangeably with “parchment,” but is more use-

codex (the plural is “codices”), the

—a single volume could contain all four

In the course of the Middle Ages, many monasteries had **scriptoria**—

—at first for religious, and later for

—the manuscripts were **illumi-**

; that is, they were adorned by artists with bright-colored miniature

palimpsests (Greek for “scraped clean”); often, the

Paper, invented by the Chinese as early as the first century AD, was in-

—50, Johannes Gutenberg introduced in Germany a

of a press that was tightened by turning a levered screw. Within the next half century this cheap method of making many uniform copies of a book had spread throughout Europe, with enormous consequences for the growth of literacy and learning, and for the widespread development of the experimental sciences. See Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe*, 2 vols., 1979.

The term **incunabula** (in' kyoonăb" yoolă; the singular is incunabulum) designates books that were produced in the infancy of printing, during the half century before 1500. "Incunabula" is Latin for "swaddling clothes" or "cradle."

From the mid-seventeenth century on, there was a great increase in literacy and in the demand by the general public for literary and all other types of books. The accessibility and affordability of books was greatly expedited, beginning in the nineteenth century, by the invention of machines—powered first by steam, then by electricity—for producing paper and type, printing and binding books, and reproducing illustrations. In the twentieth century, and even more in the present era, the primacy of the printed book for recording and disseminating all forms of information has been challenged by the invention and rapid proliferation of electronic media for processing texts and images.

Refer to the entries on *book editions*, *book format*, *book history studies*, and *textual studies*. For the history of the book trade from classical Greece through the twentieth century, see F. A. Mumby, *Publishing and Bookselling: From the Earliest Times to 1870* (5th ed., 1974), and Ian Norrie, *Mumby's Publishing and Bookselling in the Twentieth Century* (1982). On the making, format, and history of printed books, see Ronald B. McKerrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* (rev. 1994).

book editions: In present usage, **edition** designates the total copies of a book that are printed from a single setting of type or other mode of reproduction. The various "printings" or "reprints" of an edition—sometimes with some minor changes in the text—may be spaced over a period of years. We now identify as a "new edition" a printing in which substantial changes have been made in the text. A text may be revised and reprinted in this way many times, hence the terms "second edition," "third edition," etc.

A **variorum edition** designates either (1) an edition of a work that lists the textual variants in an author's manuscripts and in revisions of the printed text; an example is *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats*, ed. Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach (1957); or else (2) an edition of a text that includes a selection of annotations and commentaries on the text by previous editors and critics. (The term "variorum" is a short form of the Latin *cum notis variorum*: "with the annotations of various persons.") *The New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare* is a variorum edition in both senses of the word.

See *book*, and refer to Ronald B. McKerrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography* (rev. 1965); Fredson Bowers, *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (1949); Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (1972).

: **Format** signifies the page size, shape, and other physical features “sheet”; if the sheet is folded once “leaves” of four pages, the book is a **folio** (the Latin word for “). When we refer to “the first Shakespeare folio,” for example, we mean *edition* of Shakespeare’s collected plays, the ’s sheets. A sheet **quarto**; a sheet folded a third time into **octavo**. In a **duodecimo** volume, a sheet is folded so as

As this book is open in front of you, the page on the right is called a (Latin for “on the right”), and the page on the left is called a **verso** “turned”).

The **colophon** in older books was a note at the end stating such facts as

” has come to mean, usually, the publisher’s emblem, such as a

: Investigations of all the factors involved in the produc—especially with reference to literary texts—had for many centuries

Traditionally, the production and dissemination of recorded texts had

’s originating conception. From this age-old

of literary texts had been normative and evaluative. That is, literary authors were judged to be good or bad, major or minor; bibliographers set out to establish a single valid text, free from what were called “corruptions” by agents other than the originating author (see *textual criticism*); and interpretations of the text by readers were judged to be right or wrong, good or bad, sensitive or insensitive. In contrast, current exponents of book history tend to be objective and nonjudgmental. All contributions to a recorded text, whether by the author or other agents, and whether intentional or accidental, are taken into account; literary books,

together with all other texts, are regarded as “commodities” that are marketed to readers, their “consumers,” in order to make a profit; and the diverse responses to the text by different classes and groups, whether elite readers or mass audiences, are paid equal and neutral attention.

2. The book historian does not view the making and distribution of a book as a one-way process from author through publisher and printer to reader. Instead, Robert Darnton—an important early formulator of the point of view and procedures of book history—proposed in 1982 that historians view the “life cycle” of a book as a “communications circuit” that runs from the author through the publisher, printer, and distributors to the reader, and back to the author, in a process within which the reader “influences the author both before and after the act of composition.” (“What Is the History of Books?,” in *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections on Cultural History*, 1990.) In accordance with this perspective, book historians conceive all stages of the life cycle of a book to be interactive. The author, for example, is subject to the demands of the publisher, who estimates the market demands of readers; while the readers also directly influence the author who, in composing a work, anticipates the preferences of a potential audience.
3. In defining the overall “communications circuit,” Robert Darnton emphasized also that book history deals with “each phase of this process ... in all its relations with other systems, economic, social, political, and cultural, in the surrounding environment.” D. F. McKenzie, who, like Darnton, was influential in describing and exemplifying the emerging practice of book history, described the new development in *bibliography* as “a sociology of texts” that considers “the human motives and interactions” at each point in “the production, transmission, and consumption of texts.” (“The Book as an Expressive Form,” in *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*, 1986; rev. 1999.) Book history, that is, deals with the formation and dissemination of a text, not as a self-contained process, but as one that at every stage is affected by, and in turn may influence, the economic, social, and cultural circumstances of its time and place.

Applied to the long-term development of ways of recording and communicating information, book history deals with the sequence of revolutionary changes that occurred when an oral culture was succeeded by a *manuscript* culture; when the era of written texts in turn gave way, in the mid-fifteenth century, to a primarily print culture; and when, as the result of new technologies that began in the twentieth century, printed books and materials were increasingly supplemented—and to some extent displaced—by film, television, the computer, and the World Wide Web. (See *oral poetry* and *book*.) An influential work that deals with the impact on Western civilization, science, and the arts by the change from script to print is Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (2 vols., 1979).

The major focus by book historians has been on the era of print, and especially on the diverse circumstances that affect each stage of the

D. F. McKenzie has emphasized the contributions to the book, not only
’s literary advisers, and copyeditors but also by the
—often with little or no consultation with
—determine the typography, spatial layout, illustrations, paper, and

“expressive
” and contribute to the meaning of the verbal text. (See D. F.
Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts, 1986; also, for similar views

The Textual Condition, 1991.)

A prolific and influential contributor to book history is the French scholar

“fostered a solitary and private relation between the
” “radically transformed intellectual work,” and greatly
’s “inner life.” Chartier also analyzed the degree to which
“social and cultural practices”

The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Eur-
, 1989; and *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Co-*
, 1995.) Other scholars have chronicled the emergence of mass

The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading
—1900, 1957, rev. 1998; Jonathan Rose, “Rereading the English
” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 53, 1992.) There are

Sen-
—1860, 1985.) And
A Feeling for Books, 1997, Janice Radway shows that the panelists in the
—founded in the 1920s, and still flourishing—have

For studies of individual stages in the production and reception of literary

author and authorship, reader-response criticism,
, *sociology of literature, and textual criticism.* All the researchers

mentioned in this entry on book history studies are represented in the anthology, *The Book History Reader*, edited by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (2002). Influential works, in addition to those already referred to, are: Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962); Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie, 1775–1800* (1979); Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982); D. F. McKenzie, “The Sociology of a Text: Orality, Literacy and Print in Early New Zealand,” *The Library*, 1984, pp. 333–65; John Sutherland, *Victorian Fiction: Writers, Publishers, Readers* (1995); Geoffrey Nunberg, ed., *The Future of the Book* (1996); Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (1998).

bourgeois epic (boor' zwä): 109.

bourgeois tragedy: 410.

bowdlerize: To delete from an edition of a literary work passages considered by the editor to be indecent or indelicate. The word derives from the Reverend Thomas Bowdler, who tidied up his *Family Shakespeare* in 1818 by omitting, as he put it, “whatever is unfit to be read by a gentleman in a company of ladies.” Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) and *The Arabian Nights*, as well as Shakespeare’s plays, are often bowdlerized in editions intended for the young; and until the 1920s, at which time the standards of literary propriety were drastically liberalized, some compilers of anthologies for college students availed themselves of Bowdler’s prerogative in editing Chaucer.

Breton lay: 191.

broadside ballad: 24.

bucolic poetry (byooköl' ik): 268.

burlesque: Burlesque has been succinctly defined as “an incongruous imitation”; that is, it imitates the manner (the form and style) or else the subject matter of a serious literary work or a literary *genre*, but makes the imitation amusing by a ridiculous disparity between the manner and the matter. The burlesque may be written for the sheer fun of it; usually, however, it is a form of *satire*. The butt of the satiric ridicule may be the particular work or the genre that is being imitated, or else the subject matter to which the imitation is incongruously applied, or (often) both of these together.

“Burlesque,” “parody,” and “travesty” are sometimes applied interchangeably; simply to equate these terms, however, is to surrender useful critical distinctions. It is better to follow the critics who use “burlesque” as the generic name and use the other terms to discriminate species of burlesque; we must keep in mind, however, that a single instance of burlesque may exploit a variety of techniques. The application of these terms will be clearer if we make two preliminary

style.) If the form and style are high and
 “high burlesque”; if the sub-

“low burlesque.” (2) A burlesque may also be distin-

Varieties of high burlesque:

- A. A **parody** imitates the serious manner and characteristic features of a particular literary work, or the distinctive style of a particular author, or the typical stylistic and other features of a serious literary genre, and deflates the original by applying the imitation to a lowly or comically inappropriate subject. John Phillips’ “The Splendid Shilling” (1705) parodied the epic style of John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667) by exaggerating its high formality and applying it to the description of a tattered poet composing in a drafty attic. Henry Fielding in *Joseph Andrews* (1742) parodied Samuel Richardson’s novel *Pamela* (1740–41) by putting a hearty male hero in place of Richardson’s sexually beleaguered heroine, and later on Jane Austen poked good-natured fun at the genre of the *gothic novel* in *Northanger Abbey* (1818). Here is Hartley Coleridge’s parody of the first stanza of William Wordsworth’s “She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways,” which he applies to Wordsworth himself:

He lived amidst th’ untrodden ways
 To Rydal Lake that lead,
 A bard whom there were none to praise,
 And very few to read.

From the early nineteenth century to the present, parody has been the favorite form of burlesque. Among the gifted parodists of the past century in England were Max Beerbohm (see *A Christmas Garland*, 1912) and Stella Gibbons (*Cold Comfort Farm*, 1936), and in America, James Thurber, Phyllis McGinley, and E. B. White. The novel *Possession* (1990), by the English writer A. S. Byatt, exemplifies a serious literary form which includes straight-faced parodies of Victorian poetry and prose, as well as of academic scholarly writings.

- B. A **mock epic** or **mock-heroic** poem is that type of parody which imitates, in a sustained way, both the elaborate form and the ceremonious style of the *epic* genre, but applies it to narrate a commonplace or trivial subject matter. In a masterpiece of this type, *The Rape of the Lock* (1714), Alexander Pope views through the grandiose epic perspective a quarrel between the belles and elegants of his day over the theft of a lady’s curl. The story includes such elements of traditional epic protocol as supernatural

machinery, a voyage on board ship, a visit to the underworld, and a heroically scaled battle between the sexes—although with metaphors, hatpins, and snuff for weapons. The term *mock-heroic* is often applied to other dignified poetic forms which are purposely mismatched to a lowly subject; for example, to Thomas Gray's comic "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat" (1748); see under *bathos* and *anticlimax*.

II. Varieties of low burlesque:

- A. The **Hudibrastic poem** takes its name from Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663), which satirized rigid Puritanism by describing the adventures of a Puritan knight, Sir Hudibras. Instead of the doughty deeds and dignified style of the traditional genre of the *chivalric romance*, however, we find the knightly hero experiencing mundane and humiliating misadventures which are described in *doggerel* verses and a ludicrously colloquial idiom.
- B. The **travesty** mocks a particular work by treating its lofty subject in a grotesquely undignified manner and style. As Boileau put it, describing a travesty of Virgil's *Aeneid*, "Dido and Aeneas are made to speak like fishwives and ruffians." *The New Yorker* once published a travesty of Ernest Hemingway's novel *Across the River and Into the Trees* (1950) with the title *Across the Street and Into the Bar*, and the film *Young Frankenstein* is a travesty of Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*.

Another form of burlesque is the **lampoon**: a short satirical work, or a passage in a longer work, which describes the appearance and character of a particular person in a way that makes that person ridiculous. It typically employs **caricature**, which in a verbal description (as in graphic art) exaggerates or distorts, for comic effect, a person's distinctive physical features or personality traits. John Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* (1681) includes a famed twenty-five-line lampoon of Zimri (Dryden's contemporary, the Duke of Buckingham), which begins:

In the first rank of these did Zimri stand;
A man so various, that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
Was everything by starts, and nothing long....

The modern sense of "burlesque" as a theater form derives, historically, from plays which mocked serious types of drama by an incongruous imitation. John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728)—which in turn became the model for the German *Threepenny Opera* by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill (1928)—was a high burlesque of Italian opera, applying its dignified formulas to a company of beggars and thieves. A number of the comic musical plays by Gilbert and Sullivan in the Victorian era also include elements of high burlesque of grand opera.

BURLESQUE

See George Kitchin, *A Survey of Burlesque and Parody in English* (1931);
English Burlesque Poetry, 1700–1750 (1932); Margaret A.
Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern (1993). Anthologies: Walter
A Century of Parody and Imitation (1913);
The Antic Muse: American Writers in Parody (1955); Dwight
Parodies: An Anthology (1960); John Gross, ed., *The Oxford*
(2010).





cacophony (kăkōf' ōnē): 115.

caesura (sězyoor' ä): 221; 10, 158.

canon of literature: The Greek word “kanon,” signifying a measuring rod or a rule, was extended to denote a list or catalogue, then came to be applied to the list of books in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament which were designated by church authorities to be the genuine Holy Scriptures. A number of writings related to those in the Scriptures, but not admitted into the authoritative canon, are called **apocrypha**; eleven books which have been included in the Roman Catholic biblical canon are considered apocryphal by Protestants.

The term “canon” was later used to signify the list of secular works accepted by experts as genuinely written by a particular author. We speak thus of “the Chaucer canon” and “the Shakespeare canon,” and refer to other works that have sometimes been attributed to an author, but on evidence that many editors judge to be inadequate or invalid, as “apocryphal.” In recent decades the phrase **literary canon** has come to designate—in world literature, or in European literature, but most frequently in a national literature—those authors who, by a cumulative consensus of critics, scholars, and teachers, have come to be widely recognized as “major,” and to have written works often hailed as literary *classics*. The literary works by canonical authors are the ones which, at a given time, are most kept in print, most frequently and fully discussed by literary critics and historians, and—in the present era—most likely to be included in anthologies and in the syllabi of college courses with titles such as “World Masterpieces,” “Major English Authors,” or “Great American Writers.”

The use of the term “canon” with reference both to the books of the Bible and to secular literature obscures important differences in the two applications. The biblical canon has been established by church authorities vested with the power to make such a decision; is enforced by authorities with the power to impose religious sanctions; is explicit in the books that it lists; and is closed, permitting neither deletions nor additions. (See the entry “Canon” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 1993.) The canon of literature, on the other hand, is the product of a wavering and unofficial consensus; it is tacit rather than explicit, loose in its boundaries, and always subject to changes in the works that it includes.

The social process by which an author or a literary work comes to be widely although tacitly recognized as canonical has come to be called “canon formation.” The factors in this formative process are complex and disputed. It seems clear, however, that the process involves, among other conditions, a broad concurrence of critics, scholars, and authors with diverse viewpoints

” (1765) Samuel Johnson said that a century is “the
” Some authors of the past
—

—have achieved the prestige, influence, assignment in college

in their national canons, at least.
At any time, the boundaries of a literary canon remain indefinite and dis-

New Critics in the 1930s and later, made Donne’s
metaphysical poets.) Since then, Donne’s reputation has diminished, but he
’s altering reputation, see Ben
Desiring Donne: Poetry, Sexuality, Interpretation, 2006.) Once firmly

’s place in
Since the 1970s, the nature of canon formation, and opposition to estab-

poststructuralism). The debate often focuses on
“core courses” in the humanities and in Western civilization. A
humanistic study, has been determined less by artistic
ideology, political interests, and values of a
patriarchy, and imperialism, and understate or exclude interests and

accomplishments of blacks, Hispanics, and other ethnic minorities, and also the achievements of women, the working class, popular culture, homosexuals, and non-European civilizations. The demand is “to open the canon” so as to make it **multicultural** instead of “Eurocentric.” (As applied to literary scholarship, “multicultural” designates the movement to redress what are asserted to be the errors and injustices of a history dominated by Europe-centered historians, so as to make it represent adequately the cultural contributions of races and groups that have been hitherto marginalized or ignored.) Another demand frequently voiced is that the standard canon be stripped of its elitism and its “hierarchism”—that is, its built-in discriminations between high art and lower art—in order to include such cultural products as Hollywood films, television serials, popular songs, and fiction written for a mass audience. A radical wing of revisionist theorists, to further their political aim to transform the existing power structures, demand not merely the opening, but the abolition of the standard canon and its replacement by currently marginal and excluded groups and texts. In another extreme form of multicultural thinking, adherents claim that culture constructs its own social reality, so that any assertions of knowledge, truth, or value are relative—that is, the claims are valid only within that particular culture. (Refer to *cultural constructs* in the entry on *new historicism*, and *relativism* in the entry on *poststructuralism*.) See Satya Mohanty, *Literary Theory and the Claims of History: Postmodernism, Objectivity, Multicultural Politics* (1997); and James Trotman, ed., *Multiculturalism: Roots and Realities* (2002).

The views of defenders of the standard canon, like those of its opponents, range from moderate to extreme. The position of many moderate defenders might be summarized as follows: Whatever has been the influence of class, gender, race, and other special interests and prejudices in forming the existing canon, this is far from the whole story. The canon is the result of the concurrence of a great many (often unexpressed) norms and standards, and among these, one crucial factor has been the high intellectual and artistic quality of the canonical works themselves, and their attested power to enlighten and give delight, and to appeal to widely shared human concerns and values. (See *humanism*.) Moderate defenders agree to the desirability of enlarging the canon of texts that are assigned frequently in academic courses, in order to make the canon more broadly representative of diverse cultures, ethnic groups, classes, and interests; they point out, however, that such changes would not be a drastic innovation, since the educational canon has always been subject to deletions and additions. They emphasize also that the existing Western, English, and American canons include notable examples of skepticism, of political radicalism, and of the toleration of dissent—features of the accepted canon of which the present proponents of radical change are, clearly, the inheritors and beneficiaries. And however a canon is enlarged to represent other cultures and classes, moderate defenders insist on the need to maintain a continuing study of and dialogue with the diverse and long-lasting works of intellect and imagination that have shaped Western civilization and constitute much of Western culture. They point to the enduring primacy, over many

—not only Shakespeare, but also Spenser, Milton,
 —and so recognize and confirm in practice the literary canon that they

For discussions of the nature and formation of the literary canon, see
Canons (1984); John
Cultural Capital: The Problem of Literary Canon Formation (1993); and
 “Canonicity,” *PMLA*, Vol. 106 (1991), pp. 110–21.

English Literature: Opening Up the Canon (1981);
*Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction,
 –1860* (1985); Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Contingencies of Value: Alterna-*
(1988); Jonathan Culler, *Framing the Sign:*
(1988), chapter 2, “The Humanities Tomorrow”;
The Politics of Liberal Education
 “Prologue” to *An*
(1989); the essays in *The Changing Culture of the University*, a
Partisan Review (Spring 1991); Harold Bloom, *The Western*
(1994).

For references to *canon of literature* in other entries, see page 307.

(car' pĕ dĕ' ěm), meaning “seize the day,” is a Latin phrase from
 's *Odes* (I. xi.) which has become the name for a very com-
motif, especially in lyric poetry. The speaker in a *carpe diem*

—who is often represented as a virgin reluctant to change her condition—

's
 , 1590–96 (II. xii. 74–75; “Gather therefore the Rose, whilst
 ”), and, in the seventeenth century, Robert Herrick's “To the Vir-
 ” (“Gather ye rosebuds, while ye may”), and Ed-
 's “Go, Lovely Rose.” The more complex poems of this type
 —or else desperation—of the pursuit of plea-
 's
 ” (1681) and the sustained set of variations on the *carpe*

diem motif in *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, translated by the Victorian poet Edward FitzGerald. In 1747 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote “The Lover: A Ballad,” a brilliant counter to the *carpe diem* poems written by male poets; in it, the woman explains to her importunate suitor why she finds him utterly resistible.

catalectic (kāṭālek' tīk): 218.

catastrophe (in a plot) (kāṭās' trōfē): 296; 409, 412.

catharsis (kāthār' sīs): 408.

Cavalier poets: 281.

Celtic Revival: The Celtic Revival, also known as the **Irish Literary Renaissance**, identifies the remarkably creative period in Irish literature from about 1880 to the death of William Butler Yeats in 1939. The aim of Yeats and other early leaders of the movement was to create a distinctive national literature by going back to Irish history, legend, and folklore, as well as to native literary models. The major writers, however, wrote not in the native Irish (one of the Celtic languages) but in English, and under the influence of various non-Irish literary forms. A number of them also turned increasingly for their subject matter to modern Irish life rather than to the ancient past.

Notable poets in addition to Yeats were AE (George Russell) and Oliver St. John Gogarty. The dramatists included Yeats himself, as well as Lady Gregory (who was also an important patron and publicist for the movement), John Millington Synge, and later Sean O'Casey. Among the novelists were George Moore and James Stephens, as well as James Joyce, who, although he abandoned Ireland for Europe and ridiculed the excesses of the nationalist writers, adverted to Irish subject matter and characters in all his writings. As these names indicate, the Celtic Revival produced some of the greatest poetry, drama, and prose fiction written in English during the first four decades of the twentieth century.

See Herbert Howarth, *The Irish Writers* (1958); Phillip L. Marcus, *Yeats and the Beginning of the Irish Renaissance* (1970), and “The Celtic Revival: Literature and the Theater,” in *The Irish World: The History and Cultural Achievements of the Irish People* (1977). Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland* (1996), deals with the Irish writers as exemplary modernists. For the influence of anthropology on Irish revivalists, see Gregory Castle, *Modernism and the Celtic Revival* (2001).

character and characterization:

1. The **character** is the name of a literary *genre*; it is a short, and usually witty, sketch in prose of a distinctive type of person. The genre was inaugurated by Theophrastus, a Greek author of the second century BC,

who wrote a lively book entitled *Characters*. This literary form had a great vogue in the early seventeenth century; the books of characters then written by Joseph Hall, Sir Thomas Overbury, and John Earle influenced later writers of essays, history, and fiction. The titles of some of Overbury's sketches will indicate the nature of the form: "A Courtier," "A Wise Man," "A Fair and Happy Milkmaid." See Richard Aldington's anthology *A Book of "Characters"* (1924).

Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the **dialogue**—and from what they do—the **action**. The grounds in the characters' temperament, desires, and moral nature for their speech and actions are called their **motivation**. A character may remain essentially "stable," or unchanged in outlook and disposition, from beginning to end of a work (Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Micawber in Charles Dickens' *David Copperfield*, 1849–50), or may undergo a radical change, either through a gradual process of development (the title character in Jane Austen's *Emma*, 1816) or as the result of a crisis (Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Pip in Dickens' *Great Expectations*). Whether a character remains stable or changes, the reader of a traditional and realistic work expects "consistency"—the character should not suddenly break off and act in a way not plausibly grounded in his or her temperament as we have already come to know it.

E. M. Forster, in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927), introduced new terms for an **flat**

(also called a **type**, or "two-dimensional"), Forster says, is built "a single idea or quality" and is presented without much individualiz-

round character is complex in temperament and motivation and is

humours character, such as Ben Jonson's "Sir Epicure" is a flat character who has a name which says it all, in contrast to 's multifaceted Falstaff. Almost all

's *Henry IV*, , for Mistress Quickly to be as globular as Falstaff. The degree to which,

detective story or adventure novel or *farce* comedy, even the protag-

Anatomy of Criticism (1957), Northrop

such as the self-deprecating “eiron,” the boastful “alazon,” and the “senex iratus,” or choleric old father in classical comedy. See *stock characters*.

A broad distinction is frequently made between alternative methods for **characterizing** (that is, establishing the distinctive characters of) the persons in a narrative: showing and telling. In **showing** (also called “the dramatic method”), the author simply presents the characters talking and acting, and leaves it entirely up to the reader to infer the motives and dispositions that lie behind what they say and do. The author may show not only external speech and actions, but also a character’s inner thoughts, feelings, and responsiveness to events; for a highly developed mode of such inner showing, see *stream of consciousness*. In **telling**, the author intervenes authoritatively in order to describe, and often to evaluate, the motives and dispositional qualities of the characters. For example, in the terse opening chapter of *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), Jane Austen first shows us Mr. and Mrs. Bennet as they talk to one another about the young man who has just rented Netherfield Park, then (in the quotation below) tells us about them, and so confirms and expands the inferences that we have begun to make from what has been shown.

Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice, that the experience of three-and-twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character. *Her* mind was less difficult to develop. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper.

Especially since the novelistic theory and practice of Flaubert and Henry James, a critical tendency has been to consider “telling” a violation of artistry and to recommend only the technique of “showing” characters; authors, it is said, should totally efface themselves in order to write “objectively,” “impersonally,” or “dramatically.” Such judgments, however, privilege a modern artistic limitation suited to particular novelistic effects, and decry an alternative method of characterization which a number of novelists have employed to produce masterpieces. See *point of view*.

Innovative writers in the twentieth century—including novelists from James Joyce to French writers of the *new novel*, and authors of the dramas and novels of the *absurd* and various experimental forms—often presented the persons in their works in ways which ran counter to the earlier mode of representing lifelike characters who manifest a consistent substructure of individuality. Structuralist critics undertook to dissolve even the lifelike characters of traditional novels into a system of literary conventions and codes which are *naturalized* by the readers; that is, readers are said to project lifelikeness upon codified literary representations by assimilating them into their own prior stereotypes of individuals in real life. See *structuralist criticism* and *text and writing* (*écriture*), and refer to Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics* (1975), chapter 9, “Poetics of the Novel.”

See *plot* and *narrative and narratology*. For the traditional problems and methods of characterization, including discussions of showing and telling, see in addition to E. M. Forster (above), Percy Lubbock, *The Craft of Fiction*

The Rhetoric of Fiction (1961), especially chapters 1–
Character and the Novel (1965). On problems in deter-
The Pleasure of the Play (1994);
postmodern drama,
The Death of Character (1996). On the formal distinction be-
protagonists) and minor characters, see Alex Woloch,
(2003). In *The Economy of Character* (1998), Deidre S. Lynch describes

(a literary form): **45**.

. See also *distance and involvement; empathy and sympathy*.

(kīāz' mūs): **346**.

(of criticism): **138; 172**.

Chivalric romance (or **medieval romance**) is a type of

epic and heroic forms.
” originally signified a work written in the French language,

romance is dis-

quest undertaken by a single knight
's favor; frequently its central interest is *courtly love*, to-
's sake; it stresses the chivalric ideals of courage, loyalty, honor, mercifulness

The recurrent materials of medieval chivalric romances have been divided
“The Matter of Britain” (Celtic sub-
“The
” (the history and legends of classical antiquity, including the
's *Troilus and Criseyde* belongs to this class. (3) “The Matter of France”
“The Matter of England” (heroes such

de Troyes, the great twelfth-century French poet, wrote Arthurian romances; German examples are Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* and Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan und Isolde*, both written early in the thirteenth century. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, composed in fourteenth-century England, is a **metrical romance** (that is, a romance written in verse) about an Arthurian knight; and Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (fifteenth century) is an English version in prose of the cycle of earlier metrical romances about Arthur and various of his Knights of the Round Table.

See *prose romance*, *Gothic romance*, *romantic comedy*, and *romance novel*. Refer to L. A. Hibbard, *Medieval Romance in England* (rev. 1961); R. S. Loomis, *The Development of Arthurian Romance* (1963) and *The Grail* (1963); the anthology *Medieval Romances*, ed. R. S. and L. H. Loomis (1957); and *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance*, ed. Roberta L. Krueger (2000). For the history of the term "romance" and modern extensions of the genre of romance, see Gillian Beer, *The Romance* (1970); and for Northrop Frye's theory of the mythical basis of the romance genre, see the entry in this *Glossary* on *myth*. For references to *chivalric romance* in other entries, see pages 16, 39, 66.

choral character: 50.

chorus: Among the ancient Greeks the chorus was a group of people, wearing masks, who sang or chanted verses while performing dancelike movements at religious festivals. A similar chorus played a part in Greek tragedies, where (in the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles) they served mainly as commentators on the dramatic actions and events who expressed traditional moral, religious, and social attitudes; beginning with Euripides, however, the chorus assumed primarily a lyrical function. The Greek ode, as developed by Pindar, was also chanted by a chorus; see *ode*. In *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) the German classicist and philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche speculated that, at the origin of Greek tragedy, the chorus—consisting of goat-like satyrs—were the only figures on the stage. They were presented as attendants and witnesses of the suffering, death, and self-transformation of their master, the god Dionysus. Later, in Nietzsche's view, actors were introduced to enact the event that had originally been represented only symbolically, and the chorus was reduced to the role of commentator.

Roman playwrights such as Seneca took over the chorus from the Greeks, and in the mid-sixteenth century some English dramatists (for example, Norton and Sackville in *Gorboduc*) imitated the Senecan chorus. The classical type of chorus was never widely adopted by English dramatic writers. John Milton, however, included a chorus in *Samson Agonistes* (1671), as did Shelley in *Prometheus Unbound* (1820) and Thomas Hardy in *The Dynasts* (1904–8); more recently, T. S. Eliot made effective use of the classical chorus in his religious tragedy *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935). The use in drama of a chorus of singers and dancers survives also in operas and in musical comedies.

During the Elizabethan Age the term "chorus" was applied also to a single person who, in some plays, spoke the prologue and epilogue, and sometimes

's vehicle

's *Dr. Faustus* and Shakespeare's *Henry V*. In
's *Winter's Tale*, the fifth act begins with "Time, the Chorus,"
"impute it not a crime / To me or my
'er sixteen years" since the preceding events,

's *Our Town* (1938).

Modern scholars use the term **choral character** to refer to a person

ironic per-

King Lear, Enobarbus in *Antony and Cleopatra*,
Troilus and Cressida; a modern instance is Seth Beckwith in
'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931). "Choral character" is sometimes ap-
novel who represent the point of view

's

's novels.

For the alternative use of the term "chorus" to signify a recurrent stanza in
refrain. Refer to A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb, Tragedy and*
(1927) and *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (1953); T. B. L. Webster,
(1956).

(in a song): **337**.

Chronicle plays were dramatic works based on the historical
Chronicles by Raphael Holinshed and others; see

. They achieved high popularity late in the sixteenth century,

ing with English history. The early

Edward II

's *Chronicles* to com-
's series of chronicle plays,

Richard II, *1 Henry IV*,

, and *Henry V*.

The Elizabethan chronicle plays are sometimes called **history plays**. This

mainly on historical materials, such as Shakespeare's Roman plays *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, and including such recent examples as Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953), which treats the Salem witch trials of 1692, and Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* (1962), about the sixteenth-century judge, author, and martyr Sir Thomas More. G. B. Shaw titled one of his plays, which dealt with historical matters, *St. Joan: A Chronicle Play in Six Scenes* (1923).

E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (1946); Lily B. Campbell, *Shakespeare's "Histories"* (1947); Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (rev. 1965); Max M. Reese, *The Cease of Majesty: A Study of Shakespeare's History Plays* (1962). For a *new-historicist* treatment of Shakespeare's history plays *Henry IV, 1 and 2*, and *Henry V*, see Stephen Greenblatt, "Invisible Bullets," in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (1985).

chronicles: Chronicles, the predecessors of modern histories, were written accounts, in prose or verse, of national or worldwide events over a considerable period of time. If the chronicles deal with events year by year, they are often called **annals**. Unlike the modern historian, most chroniclers tended to take their information as they found it, making little attempt to separate fact from legend. The most important English examples are the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, started by King Alfred in the ninth century and continued until the twelfth century, and the *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1577–87) by Raphael Holinshed and other writers. The latter documents were important sources of materials for the *chronicle plays* of Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists.

chronological primitivism: 316; 151.

classic, a: 236; 41.

classical: 236.

cliché: Cliché is French for "stereotype"—that is, a metal plate with a raised surface of type, used for printing. In its literary application, "cliché" signifies an expression that deviates enough from ordinary usage to call attention to itself and has been used so often that it is felt to be hackneyed or cloying. "I beg your pardon" or "sincerely yours" are standard usages that do not call attention to themselves; but "point with pride," "the eternal verities," "a whole new ballgame," and "lock, stock, and barrel" are accounted as clichés; so are indiscriminate uses in ordinary talk of terms taken from specialized vocabularies such as "alienation," "identity crisis," "interface," and "paradigm." Some clichés are foreign phrases that are used as an arch or elegant equivalent for a common English term ("aqua pura," "au courant," "terra firma"); others are over-used literary echoes. "The cup that cheers" is an inaccurate quotation from William Cowper's *The Task* (1785), referring to tea—"the cups / That cheer but not inebriate." In his *Essay on Criticism* (II. 11. 350ff.), Alexander

(untalented pretenders to the poetic art) used in order to eke out

Where'er you find "the cooling western breeze,"
 In the next line, it "whispers through the trees";
 If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
 The reader's threatened (not in vain) with "sleep."

A Dictionary of Clichés (4th ed., 1950), and Christine
Have a Nice Day—No Problem! A Dictionary of Clichés (1992).

(in a plot): **296**.

(rhetorical): **25**.

; 80.

.

.

.

; 311.

Cognitive literary studies, also known as **cognitive**
 , is an approach to literature from the viewpoint of cognitive science,

formalism and the *New Criticism*, which treat the literary
 's thoughts or intentions, and critical
new historicism and *cultural studies*, which assume that litera-

A rough distinction can be made between cognitive studies that use liter-

features, such as metaphor and analogy, that involve complex mental processes. Literary language is treated as a rich body of evidence for human cognitive capacities such as the ability to register impressions, form

concepts, process information, communicate intentional states, use symbols, and produce narratives. The idea of **conceptual metaphor**, initially developed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, has been particularly influential. The fact that a number of metaphors occur in numerous languages (e.g., “the river of time,” or “life is a journey”) supports, they claim, the hypothesis that the mapping, in these cases, between conceptual domains corresponds to neural mappings in the brain. (See the cognitive view in the entry *metaphor, theories of*; also refer to George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, updated ed. 2003, and Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, 1989.) Some work in this area uses imaging technology to observe the brain’s responses to literary stimuli, including *rhythm* and *rhetorical figures*, especially metaphor.

2. In the second type, cognitive studies undertakes to illuminate literature by reference to properties of the brain. One way to do so is to refer to studies that demonstrate the human capacity to construct imagined worlds, to track multiple sources of information, or to apply a “theory of mind”—that is, the ability to understand the mental states of other people—and then to use these studies to explain the cognitive motivation of such features of literature as *free indirect discourse* (in which the thoughts of fictional characters are represented in the voice of the narrator), or the ways in which literature enlists the emotional responses of the reader, such as concern or sympathy for fictional characters.

Cognitive literary study often allies itself with *Darwinian literary studies*, by arguing that the literary processes of the brain reveal adaptive qualities of human existence that have served the evolutionary interests of the human species.

For cognitive poetics, see Elena Semino and Jonathan Culpeper, eds., *Cognitive Stylistics: Language and Cognition in Text Analysis* (2002); and Joanna Gavins and Gerard Steen, eds., *Cognitive Poetics in Practice* (2003). Peter Stockwell’s *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction* (2002) attempts to construct a bridge between linguistic analysis and accounts of the reading experience. In *Literature and the Brain* (2009), Norman Holland surveys recent empirical work that illuminates the brain’s response to the various kinds of cognition. In *Reading Minds: The Study of English in the Age of Cognitive Science* (1991), Mark Turner argues that the human mind is inherently linguistic and literary, with a unique capacity for “conceptual blending.” For an example of the use of imaging technology in studying the response to literary language, see Philip Davis, “Syntax and Pathways,” *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 2008 (33.4), 265–77. For instances of the “theory of mind” approach, see Lisa Zunshine, *Why We Read Fiction: Theory of Mind and the Novel* (2006); and Blakey Vermeule, *Why Do We Care about Literary Characters?* (2010). Bruce McConachie and F. Elizabeth Hart, eds., *Performance and Cognition: Theatre Studies and the Cognitive Turn* (2006) gathers a number of essays that apply the cognitive approach to drama.

; 311.

(kōl' ōfōn): 34.

In the most common literary application, a comedy is a fictional work

“comedy” is customarily applied only to plays

plot, as just defined, also occurs in prose fic-

Within the very broad spectrum of dramatic comedy, the following types

Romantic comedy was developed by Elizabethan dramatists on the model of contemporary *prose romances* such as Thomas Lodge’s *Rosalynde* (1590), the source of Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* (1599). Such comedy represents a love affair that involves a beautiful and engaging heroine (sometimes disguised as a man); the course of this love does not run smooth, yet overcomes all difficulties to end in a happy union. Many of the boy-meets-girl plots of later writers are instances of romantic comedy, as are *romance novels* and many motion pictures, from *The Philadelphia Story* to *Sleepless in Seattle*. In *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Northrop Frye points out that some of Shakespeare’s romantic comedies manifest a movement from the normal world of conflict and trouble into “the green world”—the Forest of Arden in *As You Like It*, or the fairy-haunted wood of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*—in which the problems and injustices of the ordinary world are dissolved, enemies reconciled, and true lovers united. Frye regards that phenomenon (together with other aspects of these comedies, such as their frequent conclusion in the social ritual of a wedding, a feast, or a dance) as evidence that comic plots derive from primitive myths and rituals that celebrated the victory of spring over winter. (See *archetypal criticism*.) Linda Bamber’s *Comic Women, Tragic Men: A Study of Gender and Genre in Shakespeare* (1982) undertakes to account for the fact that in Shakespeare’s romantic comedies, the women are often superior to the men, while in his tragedies he “creates such nightmare female figures as Goneril, Regan, Lady Macbeth, and Volumnia.” See also *gender criticism*.

2. **Satiric comedy** ridicules political policies or philosophical doctrines, or else attacks deviations from the accepted social order by making ridiculous the violators of its standards of morals or manners. (See *satire*.) The early master of satiric comedy was the Greek Aristophanes, c. 450–c. 385 BC, whose plays mocked political, philosophical, and literary matters of his age. Shakespeare's contemporary, Ben Jonson, wrote satiric or (as it is sometimes called) "corrective comedy." In his *Volpone* and *The Alchemist*, for example, the greed and ingenuity of one or more intelligent but rascally swindlers, and the equal greed but stupid gullibility of their victims, are made grotesquely or repulsively ludicrous rather than lightly amusing.
3. The **comedy of manners** originated in the **New Comedy** of the Greek Menander, c. 342–292 BC (as distinguished from the **Old Comedy** represented by Aristophanes, c. 450–c. 385 BC) and was developed by the Roman dramatists Plautus and Terence in the third and second centuries BC. Their plays dealt with the vicissitudes of young lovers and included what became the *stock characters* of much later comedy, such as the clever servant, old and stodgy parents, and the wealthy rival. The English comedy of manners was early exemplified by Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, and was given a high polish in **Restoration comedy** (1660–1700). The Restoration form owes much to the brilliant dramas of the French writer Molière, 1622–73. It deals with the relations and intrigues of men and women living in a sophisticated upper-class society, and relies for comic effect in large part on the wit and sparkle of the dialogue—often in the form of *repartee*, a witty conversational give-and-take which constitutes a kind of verbal fencing match—as well as on the violations of social standards and decorum by would-be wits, jealous husbands, conniving rivals, and foppish dandies. Excellent examples are William Congreve's *The Way of the World* and William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*. (See *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*, ed. Deborah Payne Fisk, 2000.) A middle-class reaction against what had come to be considered the immorality of situation and indecency of dialogue in the courtly Restoration comedy resulted in the *sentimental comedy* of the eighteenth century. In the latter part of that century, however, Oliver Goldsmith (*She Stoops to Conquer*) and his contemporary Richard Brinsley Sheridan (*The Rivals* and *A School for Scandal*) revived the wit and gaiety, while deleting the indecency, of Restoration comedy. The comedy of manners lapsed in the early nineteenth century, but was revived by many skillful dramatists, from A. W. Pinero and Oscar Wilde (*The Importance of Being Earnest*, 1895), through George Bernard Shaw and Noel Coward, to Neil Simon, Alan Ayckbourn, Wendy Wasserstein, and other recent and contemporary writers. Many of these comedies have also been adapted for the cinema. See David L. Hirst, *Comedy of Manners* (1979).
4. **Farce** is a type of comedy designed to provoke the audience to simple, hearty laughter—"belly laughs," in the parlance of the theater. To do so

it commonly employs highly exaggerated or caricatured types of characters, puts them into improbable and ludicrous situations, and often makes free use of sexual mix-ups, broad verbal humor, and physical bustle and horseplay. Farce was a component in the comic episodes in medieval *miracle plays*, such as the Wakefield plays *Noah* and the *Second Shepherd's Play*, and constituted the matter of the Italian *commedia dell'arte* in the Renaissance. In the English drama that has best stood the test of time, farce is usually an episode in a more complex form of comedy—examples are the knockabout scenes in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The plays of the French playwright Georges Feydeau (1862–1921), relying in great part on sexual humor and innuendo, are true farce throughout, as is Brandon Thomas' *Charley's Aunt*, an American play of 1892 which has often been revived, and also some of the current plays of Tom Stoppard. Many of the movies by such comedians as Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, W. C. Fields, the Marx brothers, and Woody Allen are excellent farce, as are the Monty Python films and television episodes. Farce is often employed in single scenes of musical revues, and is the standard fare of television "situation comedies." It should be noted that the term "farce," or sometimes "farce comedy," is applied also to plays—a supreme example is Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)—in which exaggerated character types find themselves in ludicrous situations in the course of an improbable plot, but which achieve their comic effects not by broad humor and bustling action, but by the sustained brilliance and wit of the dialogue. Farce is also a frequent comic tactic in the theater of the *absurd*. Refer to Robert Metcalf Smith and H. G. Rhoads, eds., *Types of Farce Comedy* (1928); Leo Hughes, *A Century of English Farce* (1956); and for the history of farce and low comedy from the Greeks to the present, Anthony Caputi, *Buffo: The Genius of Vulgar Comedy* (1978), and Albert Bermel, *Farce: A History from Aristophanes to Woody Allen* (1990).

A distinction is often made between high and low comedy. **High comedy**, as described by George Meredith in a classic essay *The Idea of Comedy* “intellectual laughter”—thoughtful laughter from spectators —at the spectacle of folly,

“love duels”) between such intelligent, highly verbal, ¹⁰’s *Much* (1598–99) and Mirabell and Millamant in Congreve’s *The* (1700). **Low comedy**, at the other extreme, has little or no “gags,” and

See also *comedy of humours*, *tragicomedy*, and *wit, humor, and the comic*. On
The Nature of Roman Comedy
The Theory of Comedy (1968); Andrew Stott, *Comedy*

(2005). On the relation of comedy to myth and ritual: Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), pp. 163–86; C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy* (1959). On comedy in cinema and television: Horace Newcomb, *Television: The Most Popular Art* (1974), chapter 2; Steve Neale and Frank Krutnik, *Popular Film and Television Comedy* (1990).

comedy of humours: A type of comedy developed by Ben Jonson, the Elizabethan playwright, based on the ancient physiological theory of the “four humours” that was still current in Jonson’s time. The **humours** were held to be the four primary fluids—blood, phlegm, choler (or yellow bile), and melancholy (or black bile)—whose “temperament” (mixture) was held to determine a person’s both physical condition and type of character. An imbalance of one or another humour in a temperament was said to produce four kinds of disposition, whose names have survived the underlying theory: sanguine (from the Latin “sanguis,” blood), phlegmatic, choleric, and melancholic. In Jonson’s comedy of humours each of the major characters has a preponderant humour that gives him a characteristic distortion or eccentricity of disposition. Jonson expounds his theory in the “Induction” to his play *Every Man in His Humour* (1598) and exemplifies the mode in his later comedies; often he identifies the ruling disposition of a **humours character** by his or her name: “Zeal-of-the-land Busy,” “Dame Purecraft,” “Wellbred.” The Jonsonian type of humours character appears in plays by other Elizabethans, and remained influential in the *comedies of manners* by William Wycherley, Sir George Etherege, William Congreve, and other dramatists of the English Restoration, 1660–1700.

comedy of manners: 55; 57.

comedy, sentimental: 361.

comic, the: 420; 353.

comic relief: Comic relief is the introduction of comic characters, speeches, or scenes in a serious or tragic work, especially a drama. Such elements were almost universal in *Elizabethan tragedy*. Sometimes they occur merely as episodes of dialogue or horseplay for purposes of alleviating tension and adding variety. In more carefully wrought plays, however, they are integrated with the plot, in a way that counterpoints and enhances the serious or tragic significance. Examples of such complex uses of comic elements are the gravediggers in *Hamlet* (V. i.), the scene of the drunken porter after the murder of the king in *Macbeth* (II. iii.), the Falstaff scenes in *1 Henry IV*, and the roles of Mercutio and the old nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*.

See Thomas De Quincey’s famed essay “On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*” (1823).

commedia dell’arte: Commedia dell’arte was a form of comic drama developed about the mid-sixteenth century by guilds of professional Italian actors.

stock characters, the actors largely improvised the dialogue around a **scenario**—a term that still denotes a brief outline of a drama, indicating

”), aided by a clever and intriguing servant (“Harlequin”), in a
“Punch” and other clowns. Wandering

’s *The Taming of the Shrew*, Rostand’s *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and Molière’s
drew on conventions of the commedia. The modern puppet

farce and buffoonery.

See Kathleen M. Lea, *Italian Popular Comedy, 1560–1620* (2 vols.,
The Triumph of Pierrot (rev. 1993),

The Science of Buffoonery: Theory and History of the
’Arte (1989). See also two books by Robert F. Storey: *Pierrot*:
(1978) and *Pierrots on the Stage of Desire* (1985),

(in meter): **376**.

(linguistic): **195**.

(in a plot): **296**.

Originally meaning a concept or image, “conceit” came to be the term

figurative lan-
) English poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries adapted the
“conchetto.” Two types of conceit are often distin-

Petrarchan conceit is a type of figure used in love poems that had
been novel and effective in the Italian poetry of Petrarch, but became
hackneyed in some of his imitators among the Elizabethan sonneteers.
(See the entry *sonnet*.) The figure consists of detailed, ingenious, and often
exaggerated comparisons applied to the disdainful mistress, as cold and
cruel as she is beautiful, and to the distresses and despair of her worshipful
lover. (See *courtly love*.) Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–42), for example, in the
sonnet “My Galley Chargèd with Forgetfulness” that he translated from
Petrarch, compares the lover’s state in detail to a ship laboring in a storm.
Another sonnet of Petrarch’s translated by Wyatt begins with an *oxymoron*

describing the opposing passions experienced by a courtly sufferer from the disease of love:

I find no peace; and all my war is done;
I fear and hope; I burn and freeze in ice.

Shakespeare (who at times employed this type of conceit himself) *parodied* some standard comparisons by Petrarchan sonneteers in his Sonnet 130, beginning

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.

2. The **metaphysical conceit** is a characteristic figure in the work of John Donne (1572–1631) and other *metaphysical poets* of the seventeenth century. It was described by Samuel Johnson (1709–84), in a famed passage in his “Life of Cowley,” as “wit” which

is a kind of *discordia concors*; a combination of dissimilar images, or discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike....
The most heterogeneous ideas are yoked by violence together.

The metaphysical poets exploited all knowledge—commonplace or esoteric, practical, theological, or philosophical, true or fabulous—for the vehicles of these figures; and their comparisons, whether succinct or expanded, were often novel and witty, and at their best startlingly effective. In sharp contrast to both the concepts and figures of conventional Petrarchism is John Donne’s “The Flea,” a poem that uses a flea who has bitten both lovers as the basic reference for the lyric speaker’s argument against a lady’s resistance to his advances. In Donne’s “The Canonization,” as the poetic argument develops, the comparisons for the relationship between lovers move from the area of commerce and business, through actual and mythical birds and diverse forms of historical memorials, to a climax which equates the sexual acts and the moral status of worldly lovers with the ascetic life and heavenly destination of unworldly saints. The best known sustained conceit is Donne’s parallel (in “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”) between the continuing relationship of his and his lady’s soul during their physical parting, and the coordinated movements of the two feet of a draftsman’s compass. An oft-cited instance of the chilly ingenuity of the metaphysical conceit when it is overdriven is Richard Crashaw’s description, in his mid-seventeenth-century poem “Saint Mary Magdalene,” of the tearful eyes of the repentant Magdalene as

two faithful fountains
Two walking baths, two weeping motions,
Portable and compendious oceans.

CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR

The metaphysical conceit fell out of favor in the eighteenth century,

's comparison of the evening to "a patient etherized
" at the beginning of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," and
' "In Memory of
" The vogue for such conceits extended even to popular love

You're the top!
You're the Coliseum
You're the top!
You're the Louvre Museum.
You're a melody from a symphony by Strauss
You're a Bendel bonnet,
A Shakespeare sonnet,
You're Mickey Mouse.

Refer to Rosemond Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (1947), and
The Conceit (1969).

In standard philosophical usage a "concrete term" is a
"abstract
" denotes either a class of things or else (as in "brightness," "beauty,"
" "despair") qualities that exist only as attributes of particular persons or

's "Grishkin is nice ..."), and abstract if it
's "Hope springs
"). Critics of literature, however, often use these

"Ode to Psyche" (1820)

'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed,
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian

"Ode to a Nightingale," Keats communicates concretely, by

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains....

It is frequently asserted that “poetry is concrete,” or, as John Crowe Ransom put it in *The World's Body* (1938), that its proper subject is “the rich, contingent materiality of things.” Most poetry is certainly more concrete than other modes of language, especially in its use of *imagery*. It should be kept in mind, however, that poets do not hesitate to use abstract language when the area of reference or artistic purpose calls for it. Keats, though he was one of the most concrete of poets, began *Endymion* with a sentence composed of abstract terms:

A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
 Its loveliness increases; it will never
 Pass into nothingness; ...

And some of the most moving and memorable passages in poetry are not concrete; for example, the statement about God in Dante's *Paradiso*, “In His will is our peace,” or the bleak comment by Edgar in the last act of *King Lear*,

Men must endure
 Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
 Ripeness is all.

See John Crowe Ransom, *The World's Body* (1938); Richard H. Fogle, *Imagery of Keats and Shelley* (1949), chapter 5.

concrete poetry: Concrete poetry is a recent term for an ancient poetic type, called **pattern poems** or **shaped verse**, that experiments with the visual shape in which a text is presented on the page. Some Greek poets, beginning in the third century BC, shaped a text in the form of the object that the poem describes or suggests. In the Renaissance and seventeenth century, a number of poets composed such patterned forms, in which the lines vary in length in such a way that their printed shape outlines the subject of the poem; familiar examples in English are George Herbert's “Easter Wings” and “The Altar.” Prominent later experiments with pictorial or suggestive typography include Stéphane Mallarmé's *Un Coup de dés* (“A Throw of Dice,” 1897) and Guillaume Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* (1918); in the latter publication, for example, Apollinaire printed the poem “Il pleut” (“It rains”) so that the component letters trickle down the page.

The vogue of **concrete poetry** is a worldwide movement that was largely inaugurated in 1953 by the Swiss poet Eugen Gomringer. The practice of such poetry varies widely, but the common feature is the use of a radically reduced language, typed or printed in such a way as to force the visible text on the reader's attention as a physical object and not simply as a transparent carrier of its meanings. Many concrete poems, in fact, cannot be read at all in the conventional way, since they consist of a single word or phrase which is

“kinetic,” evolve as we turn the
 America had its own tradition of pattern poetry in the typographical ex-
 ’ “r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r” in which, to represent the way we at first
 “grasshopper.” Prominent prac-

Iconographs, 1970) and John Hollander
 , 1991). Other Americans who have been influenced by the

Collections of concrete poems in a variety of languages are Emmett Wil-
An Anthology of Concrete Poetry (1967); Mary Ellen Solt, ed. (with a
Concrete Poetry: A World View (1968); see also
Pattern Poetry: Guide to an Unknown Literature (1987). For a
 ’s com-
 “false wit” in the *Spectator*, Nos. 58 and 63.

(in reading): **289**.

Confessional poetry designates a type of narrative and
 ’s *Life Studies*

’s own life. Much confessional poetry was written in rebel-
New Critics.
spiritual autobiography in
 ’s *Confessions* (c. AD 400). It differs also from poems
Romantic Period representing the poet’s own circumstances, experiences,
 ’s “Tintern Abbey” and Samuel
 ’s “Dejection: An Ode,” in the candor and sometimes star-

Anne Sexton: A Biography
 “What Was Confessional Poetry?” in *The Columbia History of American*
 , ed. Jay Parini (1993); Adam Kirsch, *The Wounded Surgeon* (2005).

A confidant (the feminine form is “confidante”) is a character in a

protagonist as a trusted friend to whom he or she confesses intimate thoughts, problems, and feelings. In drama the confidant provides the playwright with a plausible device for communicating to the audience the knowledge, state of mind, and intentions of a principal character without the use of stage devices such as the *soliloquy* or the *aside*; examples are Hamlet's friend Horatio in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and Cleopatra's maid Charmian in his *Antony and Cleopatra*.

In prose fiction a famed confidant is Dr. Watson in Arthur Conan Doyle's stories about Sherlock Holmes (1887 and following). The device is particularly useful to those modern writers who, like Henry James, have largely renounced the novelist's earlier privileges of having access to a character's state of mind and of intruding into the narrative in order to communicate such information to the reader. (See *point of view*.) James applied to the confidant the term **ficelle**, French for the string by which the puppeteer manages his puppets. Discussing Maria Gostrey, Strether's confidante in *The Ambassadors*, James remarks that she is a "ficelle" who is not, "in essence, Strether's friend. She is the reader's friend much rather" (James, *The Art of the Novel*, ed. R. P. Blackmur, 1934, pp. 321–22).

See W. J. Harvey, *Character and the Novel* (1965).

conflict (in a plot): 294.

connotation and denotation: In a widespread literary usage, the **denotation** of a word is its primary signification or reference; its **connotation** is the range of secondary or associated significations and feelings which it commonly suggests or implies. Thus "home" denotes the house where one lives, but connotes privacy, intimacy, and coziness; that is the reason real estate agents like to use "home" instead of "house" in their advertisements. "Horse" and "steed" denote the same quadruped, but "steed" has a different connotation that derives from the chivalric or romantic narratives in which this word was often used.

The connotation of a word is only a potential range of secondary significations; which part of these connotations are evoked depends on the way the word is used in a particular context. Poems typically establish contexts that bring into play some part of the connotative as well as the denotative meaning of words. In his poem "Virtue" George Herbert wrote,

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky....

The denotation of "bridal"—a union between human beings—serves as part of the *ground* for applying the word as a *metaphor* to the union of earth and sky; but the specific context in which the word occurs also evokes such connotations of "bridal" as sacred, joyous, and ceremonial. (Note that "marriage" although metrically and denotatively equivalent to "bridal," would have been less richly significant in this context, because more commonplace in its connotation.) Even the way a word is spelled may alter its connotation.

“Ode to a Nightingale” (1819), altered his
 “fairy” to the old form “faery” in order to evoke the con-
 ’s *The Faerie*

Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in *faery* lands forlorn,

(social and discursive): See *social constructs*.

. See also *Modern Period*, in *Periods of English*

“coming together”) are necessary, or at least convenient, devices, accepted by tacit agreement between author and audience, for solving the problems in representing reality that are posed by a particular artistic medium. In watching a modern production of a Shakespearean play, for example, the audience accepts without question the convention by which a *proscenium* stage with three walls (or if it is a **theater in the round**, with no walls) represents a room with four walls. It also accepts the convention of characters speaking in *blank verse* instead of prose, and uttering their private thoughts in *soliloquies* and *asides*, as well as the convention by which actions presented on a single stage in less than three hours may represent events which take place in a great variety of places, and over a span of many years.

subject matter, form, or technique that occur repeatedly in works of literature. Conventions in this sense may be recurrent types of character, turns of plot, forms of versification, or kinds of diction and style. *Stock characters* such as the Elizabethan braggart soldier, or the languishing and fainting heroine of Victorian fiction, or the sad young men of the lost-generation novels of the 1920s, were among the conventions of their literary eras. The abrupt reform of the villain at the end of the last act was a common convention of *melodrama*. *Euphuism* in prose, and the *Petrarchan* and *metaphysical conceits* in verse, were conventional devices of style. It is now just as much a literary convention to be outspoken on sexual matters as it was to be reticent in the age of Charles Dickens and George Eliot.

3. In the most inclusive sense, common in structuralist criticism, all literary works, no matter how seemingly realistic, are held to be entirely constituted by literary conventions, or “codes”—of genre, plot, character, language, and so on—which a reader *naturalizes*, by assimilating these conventions into the world of discourse and experience that, in the reader’s time and place, are regarded as real, or “natural.” (See *structuralist criticism* and *character and characterization*.)

Invention was originally a term used in theories of *rhetoric*, and later in literary criticism, to signify the “finding” of the subject matter by an orator or a poet; it then came to signify innovative elements in a work, in contrast to the deliberate “imitation” of the forms and subjects of prior literary models. (See *imitation*.) At the present time, “invention” is often opposed to “convention” (in sense 2, above) to signify the inauguration by a writer of an unprecedented subject or theme or form or style, and the resulting work is said to possess **originality**. Repeatedly in the history of literature, innovative writers such as John Donne, Walt Whitman, James Joyce, or Virginia Woolf rebel against reigning conventions of their time to produce highly original works, only to have their inventions imitated by other writers, who thereby convert literary innovations into an additional set of literary conventions. (For a discussion of the history and uses of the concept of originality, see Thomas McFarland, *Originality and Imagination*, 1985.)

There is nothing either good or bad in the extent or obviousness of conformity to pre-existing conventions; all depends on the effectiveness of the use an individual writer makes of them. The *pastoral elegy*, for example, is one of the most conspicuously convention-bound of literary forms, yet in “Lycidas” (1638) John Milton achieved what, by wide critical agreement, ranks as one of the greatest lyrics in the language. He did this by employing the ancient pastoral rituals with freshness and power, so as to absorb an individual’s death into the universal human experience of mortality, and to add to his voice the resonance of earlier pastoral laments for a poet who died young.

See M. C. Bradbrook, *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (1935); Harry Levin, “Notes on Convention,” in *Perspectives of Criticism* (1950); Graham Hough, *Reflections on a Literary Revolution* (1960); and the issues *On Convention* in *New Literary History*, Vols. 13–14 (1981 and 1983). For references to *conventions* in other entries, see pages 66, 300.

conversion: 27.

Copernican theory (kōpūr’ nīkan): 340.

copy-text: 402.

correspondences: 397.

cosmic irony: 186.

; 76.

A doctrine of love, together with an elaborate code governing the *chivalric romances* of western Europe during the Middle Ages. The *conventions* of courtly love is usually attributed to the (poets of Provence, in southern France) in the period from

, translated into English as *The Art of Courtly Love*. In the

's wife, as in the stories of Tristan and Isolde or of Lancelot and Guine-

The origins of courtly love have been traced to a number of sources: a 's mock-serious book *The Remedies of* ; an imitation in lovers' relations of the politics of feudalism (the lover is a

's heaven through his lady's "gift of grace."
From southern France the doctrines of courtly love spread to Chrétien de -90) and other poets and romance writers in *La Vita Nuova*, 1290-94), Petrarch, and other wri-

Sir Gawain and the
, in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, and later in the Petrarchan sub-
Petrarchan conceits of the Elizabethan sonneteers.
"Courtly love" is a modern term that does not occur in medieval texts,

literature and to elegant conversation at courts, or whether to some degree it reflected the actual sentiments and conduct in aristocratic life of the time. What is clear is that its views about the intensity and the ennobling power of love as “the grand passion,” of the special sensibility and high spiritual status of women, and of the complex decorum governing relations between the sexes have profoundly affected not only the literature of love but also the actual experience of “being in love” in the Western world, through the nineteenth century and (to a diminished extent) even into our own day of sexual candor, freedom, and the feminist movement for equivalence in the relations between the sexes. Some feminists attack the medieval doctrine of courtly love, as well as later tendencies to spiritualize and idealize women, as in fact demeaning to them, and a covert device to ensure their social, political, and economic subordination to men. See *feminist criticism*.

Refer to C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (1936); A. J. Denomy, *The Heresy of Courtly Love* (1947); F. X. Newman, ed., *The Meaning of Courtly Love* (1968); Denis de Rougemont, *Love in the Western World* (rev. 1974); Roger Boase, *The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love: A Critical Study of European Scholarship* (1977); David Burnley, *Courtliness and Literature in Medieval England* (1998). For skeptical views of some commonly held opinions, see D. W. Robertson, “Some Medieval Doctrines of Love,” in *A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval Perspectives* (1962); Peter Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric* (1965–66); E. Talbot Donaldson, “The Myth of Courtly Love,” in *Speaking of Chaucer* (1970). For reappraisals of the role of women in the tradition, see Andrée Kahn Blumstein, *Misogyny and Idealization in the Courtly Romance* (1977); R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (1991); Slavoj Žižek, “Courtly Love, or Woman as Thing,” in *Metastases of Enjoyment* (1994).

For references to *courtly love* in other entries, see page 48.

crisis (in a plot): 296.

criteria (in criticism): 67.

criticism: Criticism, or more specifically **literary criticism**, is the overall term for studies concerned with defining, classifying, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating works of literature. **Theoretical criticism** proposes an explicit **theory** of literature, in the sense of general principles, together with a set of terms, distinctions, and categories, to be applied to identifying and analyzing works of literature, as well as the **criteria** (the standards, or norms) by which these works and their writers are to be evaluated. The earliest, and enduringly important, treatise of theoretical criticism was Aristotle’s *Poetics* (fourth century BC). Among the most influential theoretical critics in the following centuries were Longinus in Greece; Horace in Rome; Boileau and Sainte-Beuve in France; Baumgarten and Goethe in Germany; Samuel Johnson, Coleridge, and Matthew Arnold in England; and Poe and Emerson in America. Landmarks of theoretical criticism in the first half of the twentieth century are

Principles of Literary Criticism (1924); Kenneth Burke, *The* (1941, rev. 1957); R. S. Crane, ed., *Critics and Crit-* (1952); Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in* (trans. 1953, reissued 2003); and Northrop Frye, *Anatomy* (1957).

Since the 1970s there have been a large number of publications—Conti—proposing diverse radical forms of critical the-
theories and movements in criticism,
 ; each theory in that list is also given a separate entry in this *Glossary*. For
 “theory” in these critical move-
poststructuralism.

Practical criticism, or **applied criticism**, concerns itself with particu-
 nd evaluation are often left implicit, or

Restoration; Dr. Johnson’s *Lives of the English Poets* (1779–81); Coler-
 ’s chapters on the poetry of Wordsworth in *Biographia Literaria* (1817)
 ’s lectures on Shakespeare

’s *Essays in Criticism* (1865 and following); I. A.
 ’ *Practical Criticism* (1930); T. S. Eliot’s *Selected Essays* (1932); and

’ *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947) exemplifies the “close read-
 ” of single texts which was the typical mode of practical criticism in the
New Criticism. For an example of practical criticism applied to a
Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise
 (2d ed., 1998).

In practical criticism, a frequent distinction is made between impression-

Impressionistic criticism attempts to represent in words the felt quali-
 “impres-
 ”) that the work directly evokes from the critic. As William Hazlitt put
 “On Genius and Common Sense” (1824): “You decide from

... though you may not be able to analyze or account
 ” And Walter Pater later said that in criticism
 ’s object as it really is, is to know one’s own
 ” and posed
 “What is this song or picture ... to *me*?” (preface to
 , 1873). At its extreme this mode of
 ’s phrase, “the adventures of a sensitive
 ”

Judicial criticism, on the other hand, attempts not merely to commu-

subject, organization, techniques, and style, and to base the critic's individual judgments on specified criteria of literary excellence.

Rarely are these two modes of criticism sharply distinct in practice, but good examples of primarily impressionistic commentary can be found in the Greek Longinus (see the characterization of the *Odyssey* in his treatise *On the Sublime*), Hazlitt, Walter Pater (the locus classicus of impressionism is his description of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* in *The Renaissance*, 1873), and some of the twentieth-century critical essays of E. M. Forster and Virginia Woolf.

Types of traditional critical theories and of applied criticism can be usefully distinguished by their orientation—that is, according to whether, in defining, explaining, and judging a work of literature, they refer the work primarily to the outer world, or to the reader, or to the author, or else treat the work as an independent entity:

1. **Mimetic criticism** views the literary work as an imitation, or reflection, or representation of the world and human life, and the primary criterion applied to a work is the “truth” and “adequacy” of its representation to the matter that it represents, or should represent. This mode of criticism, which first appeared in Plato and (in a qualified way) in Aristotle, remains characteristic of modern theories of literary realism. See *imitation*.
2. **Pragmatic criticism** views the work as something which is constructed in order to achieve certain effects on the audience (effects such as aesthetic pleasure, instruction, or kinds of emotion), and it tends to judge the value of the work according to its success in achieving that aim. This approach, which largely dominated literary discussion from the versified *Art of Poetry* by the Roman Horace (first century BC) through the eighteenth century, has been revived in *rhetorical criticism*, which emphasizes the artistic strategies by which an author engages and influences the responses of readers to the matters represented in a literary work. The pragmatic approach has also been adopted by some *structuralists* who analyze a literary text as a systematic play of codes that produce the interpretative responses of a reader.
3. **Expressive criticism** treats a literary work primarily in relation to its author. It defines poetry as an expression, or overflow, or utterance of feelings, or as the product of the poet's imagination operating on his or her perceptions, thoughts, and feelings; it tends to judge the work by its sincerity, or its adequacy to the poet's individual vision or state of mind; and it often seeks in the work evidences of the particular temperament and experiences of the author who, deliberately or unconsciously, has revealed himself or herself in it. Such views were developed mainly by romantic critics in the early nineteenth century and remain current in our own time, especially in the writings of *psychological* and *psychoanalytic critics* and in *critics of consciousness* such as Georges Poulet and the Geneva School. For a reading of literary criticism itself as involving self-expression, see Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *The Character of Criticism*, 2006.

Objective criticism deals with a work of literature as something which stands free from what is often called an “extrinsic” relationship to the poet, or to the audience, or to the environing world. Instead it describes the literary product as a self-sufficient and autonomous object, or else as a world-in-itself, which is to be contemplated as its own end, and to be analyzed and judged solely by “intrinsic” criteria such as its complexity, coherence, equilibrium, integrity, and the interrelations of its component elements. The conception of the self-sufficiency of an aesthetic object was proposed in Kant’s *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (1790)—see *distance and involvement*—was taken up by proponents of *art for art’s sake* in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and has been elaborated in detailed modes of applied criticism by a number of important critics since the 1920s, including the *New Critics*, the *Chicago School*, and proponents of European *formalism*.

An essential critical enterprise that the ordinary reader takes for granted
textual criticism.

“historical criticism,” “biographical
 ” “sociological criticism” (see *sociology of literature* and *Marxist criticism*), *psychological criticism* (a subspecies is *psychoanalytic criticism*), and *arche- or myth criticism* (which undertakes to explain the formation of types

For a detailed discussion of the classification of traditional theories that is

The Mirror and the Lamp (1953),

“Types and Orientations of Critical Theories” in *Doing Things*
 (1989). On types of critical

Theory of Literature

Classical Criticism, ed. George A. Kennedy

A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renais-

(2 vols., 1963); René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism, 1750–1950*

The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism (multiple vols.,

–). On criticism in the earlier nineteenth century see Abrams, *The Mirror*

; on twentieth-century criticism, refer to: S. E. Hyman, *The*

(1948); Murray Krieger, *The New Apologists for Poetry* (1956);

Structuralist Poetics (1975) and *Literary Theory: A Very Short*

(1997); Grant Webster, *The Republic of Letters: A History of Postwar*

(1979); Frank Lentricchia, *After the New Criticism*

Criticism and Literary Theory, 1890 to the Present (1996).

Convenient anthologies of literary criticism are A. H. Gilbert, ed., *Literary*

(1962); Lionel Trilling, ed., *Literary Criticism: An*

(1970); Hazard Adams, ed., *Critical Theory since Plato* (2d

and Leroy Searle, eds., *Critical Theory since 1965* (1986); Vassilis Lambropoulos and David Neal Miller, eds., *Twentieth-Century Literary Theory: An Introductory Anthology* (1987); David Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory* (1988); Robert Con Davis and Ronald Schleifer, *Contemporary Literary Criticism* (rev. 1989); and the most inclusive, Vincent Leitch and others, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (2001). Suggested readings in current types of critical theory are included in the entry of this *Glossary* for each type.

For collections of essays on topics in late twentieth-century theory and criticism, see Michael Groden and Martin Kreiswirth, eds., *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism* (1994); Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, eds., *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (2d ed., 1995).

For the many types of critical theory and practice, see *anxiety of influence*; *archetypal criticism*; *art for art's sake*; *Chicago School*; *contextual criticism*; *theories and movements in recent criticism*; *critics of consciousness*; *Darwinian literary studies*; *deconstruction*; *dialogic criticism*; *ecocriticism*; *feminist criticism*; *gender criticism*; *linguistics in modern criticism*; *Marxist criticism*; *New Criticism*; *new historicism*; *phenomenology and criticism*; *postcolonial studies*; *psychological and psychoanalytic criticism*; *queer theory*; *reader-response criticism*; *reception theory*; *rhetorical criticism*; *Russian formalism*; *semiotics*; *sociological criticism*; *speech-act theory*; *structuralist criticism*; *stylistics*.

criticism, theories and movements in recent: 405.

critics of consciousness: 290.

critique: Critique is often used to designate an especially robust and searching kind of criticism; it suggests a rational analysis of an intellectual position, or of a work incorporating that position, with a sharp eye especially for errors, confusions, or harmful implications. The term glances back to the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, who wrote three *Critiques* (of Pure Reason, Practical Reason, and Judgment), published 1781–90. The fact that Kant's use of "critique" suggests a rigorous reliance on reason, implies confidence in human autonomy, and is associated with Kant's looking forward to human emancipation (see *Enlightenment*) has made the term especially congenial to Marxist thinkers. The use of "critique" is associated particularly with the writings on "critical social theory" of the Frankfurt School, a group of neo-Marxists that included Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Jürgen Habermas (see under *Marxist criticism*). For brief and influential position statements, see Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," in *Critical Theory* (1992); and Adorno, "Resignation," in *The Culture Industry* (2001).

cultural constructs: 245; 328. See also *social constructs*.

cultural materialism: 250.

cultural poetics: 249.

Cultural studies designates a cross-disciplinary enterprise for

“signifying
” A chief concern is to specify the functioning of the social, eco-

” their acceptance as “truth,” the modes of discourse in which

One precursor of modern cultural studies was Roland Barthes, who in
(1957, trans. 1972) analyzed the social conventions and “codes”
’s fashions and
semiotics and *structuralism*.) Another
—especially
—as an integral part of the general
’ *Culture and*
(1958) and by Richard Hoggart’s *The Uses of Literacy* (1958, reprinted

“the new historicism,” with its ante-

new historicism.)
A prominent endeavor in cultural studies is to subvert the distinctions in
“high literature” and “high art” and what were

than to popular fiction, best-selling romances (that is, love stories), journal-

“soap operas,” and rock and *rap* music. And within

aesthetic ideology of white European and Ameri-

postcolonial writers. Radical exponents of cultural studies subordinate
l activism; they orient their writings and

—a leader in British cultural studies—

Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies (1996).

Many cultural studies are devoted to the analysis and interpretation of

these phenomena are viewed as endowed with meanings that are the product of social forces and conventions, and that may either express or oppose the dominant structures of power in a culture. In theory, there is no limit to the kinds of things and patterns of behavior to which such an analysis of cultural “texts” may be applied; current studies deal with a spectrum ranging from the vogue of bodybuilding through urban street fashions, and from cross-dressing to the social gesture of smoking a cigarette.

See the journal *Cultural Studies*, 1987–; also Catherine Belsey, *Critical Practice* (1980); Andrew Ross, *No Respect: Intellectual and Popular Culture* (1989); Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler, eds., *Cultural Studies* (1992); Anthony Easthope, *Literary into Cultural Studies* (1991); Richard Klein, *Cigarettes Are Sublime* (1993); Valda Blundell, John Shepherd, and Ian Taylor, eds., *Relocating Cultural Studies: Developments in Theory and Research* (1993); Terry Lovell, ed., *Feminist Cultural Studies* (2 vols., 1995); Houston A. Baker, Jr., Manthia Diawara, and Ruth H. Lindeborg, eds., *Black British Cultural Studies: A Reader* (1996); Mark Seltzer, *Serial Killers I, II, III* (1997); Mieke Bal, *The Practice of Cultural Analysis* (1997); Simon During, ed., *The Cultural Studies Reader* (2d ed., 1999); Simon During, *Cultural Studies: A Critical Introduction* (2005); Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick, eds., *Cultural Theory: The Key Thinkers* (2d ed., 2007). M. Jessica Munns and Gita Rajan, eds., *A Cultural Studies Reader: History, Theory, Practice* (1995), traces cultural studies as far back as Matthew Arnold in the Victorian era, then through the structural anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss to many current practitioners. For references to *cultural studies* in other entries, see page 52.

cyberfiction: 167.

cyberpunk: 357.





(däktıl' ık): 219.

The application to literature of Charles Darwin's

's *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (1975), which proposed that evolu-

The first major publication in Darwinian literary studies was Joseph
's *Evolution and Literary Theory* (1995), written in express opposition to
poststructuralist criticism, with their exclusive focus on

Many Darwinian studies focus on the analysis of themes in literature, es-

—
—com-

Such thematic analyses have been criticized as drastically reductive, even

human life. A key work was Robert F. Storey's *Mimesis and the Human Animal* (1996), which proposed a "biogrammar" of the human species that stressed such aspects of literature as its representation of human sociality and of elemental human motives and mental functions. Storey then applied his biogrammar to an analysis of the major *genres* of narrative, tragedy, and comedy, which he treated as highly developed forms of evolved and adaptive—or, in tragedy, of maladaptive—responses to evolutionary pressures; each genre, he claimed, had its distinctive kind of "phylogenetic" history of adaptive evolution.

Another type of Darwinian approach to literature is the study of how the basic activities of writing and reading literary works contribute to the adaptive fitness for survival of the human organism, by developing useful patterns of response, mapping out social relations, depicting intimate kin relationships, clarifying our understanding of our fundamental nature, and in general, helping us to make sense of the enviroing world. Some studies in this area of literary investigation use methods, such as statistical analyses, which ally them with the social sciences rather than the *humanities*.

For an overview of Darwinian literary studies, and of their relation to other fields such as evolutionary philosophy and *ecocriticism*, see Joseph Carroll, *Literary Darwinism: Evolution, Human Nature, and Literature* (2004). The initial anthology of Darwinian approaches to literature was Jonathan Gottschall and David Sloan Wilson, eds., *The Literary Animal: Evolution and the Nature of Narrative* (2005). For a wide-ranging, undogmatic application of the Darwinian perspective to a diversity of literary texts, see David P. Barash and Nanelle R. Barash, *Madame Bovary's Ovaries: A Darwinian Look at Literature* (2005). Among other relevant studies are Brian Boyd, *On the Origin of Stories: Evolution, Cognition, and Fiction* (2009); Marcus Nordlund, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Love: Literature, Culture, Evolution* (2007); and Jonathan Gottschall, *The Rape of Troy: Evolution, Violence, and the World of Homer* (2008).

dead metaphor: 131.

death of the author: 311.

Decadence, the: In the latter part of the nineteenth century, some French proponents of the doctrines of *Aestheticism*, especially Charles Baudelaire, also espoused views and values that developed into a movement called "the Decadence." The term (not regarded by its exponents as derogatory) was based on qualities attributed to the literature of Hellenistic Greece in the last three centuries BC, and to Roman literature after the death of the Emperor Augustus in AD 14. These literatures were said to possess the high refinement and subtle beauties of a culture and art that had passed their vigorous prime, but manifested a special savor of incipient decay. Such was also held to be the state of European civilization, especially in France, as it approached the end of the nineteenth century.

Many of the precepts of the Decadence were voiced by Théophile Gautier's "Notice," describing Baudelaire's poetry, that he prefixed to an edition of his *Les Fleurs du mal* ("Flowers of Evil") in 1868. Central to the movement was the concept of "naturalness" in the sense both of biological nature and of the standard, or "natural" norms of morality and sexual behavior. The thoroughgoing Decadent

"natural" in human experience by resorting to drugs,

"the systematic derangement of all the senses." The movement

À rebours ("Against the Grain"), written by J. K.

fin de siècle (end of the century); the phrase

In England the ideas, moods, and behavior of the Decadence were man-

ifested in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), his play *Salomé* (1893), and many of

The emphases of the Decadence on drugged perception, sexual experi-

Beat poets and the *counterculture* of the decades that

See Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony* (1933); A. E. Carter, *The Idea of Decadence, 1870-1900* (1958); Karl Beckson, ed., *Aesthetes and Decadents* (1966); Richard Gilman, *Decadence: The Strange Life of an Idea* (1979); Ian Fletcher, ed., *Decadence and the 1890s* (1979); G. H. Pittock, *Spectrum of Decadence: The Literature of the 1890s* (1993); and Jane Des-
A Cultural History of Decadence (2008). A useful descriptive guide to the movement is
Aestheticism and Decadence: A Selection of Writings (1977). For references to *decadence* in other entries,

deconstruction: Deconstruction, as applied in the criticism of literature, designates a theory and practice of reading that questions and claims to “subvert” or “undermine” the assumption that the system of language is based on grounds that are adequate to establish the boundaries, the coherence or unity, and the determinate meanings of a literary text. Typically, a deconstructive reading sets out to show that conflicting forces within the text itself serve to dissipate the seeming definiteness of its structure and meanings into an indefinite array of incompatible and undecidable possibilities.

The originator and namer of deconstruction is the French thinker Jacques Derrida, among whose precursors were Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and Martin Heidegger (1889–1976)—German philosophers who put to radical question fundamental philosophical concepts such as “knowledge,” “truth,” and “identity”—as well as Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), whose *psychoanalysis* violated traditional concepts of a coherent individual consciousness and a unitary self. Derrida presented his basic views in three books, all published in 1967, entitled *Of Grammatology*, *Writing and Difference*, and *Speech and Phenomena*; after that date he reiterated, expanded, and applied those views in a rapid sequence of publications.

Derrida’s writings are complex and elusive, and the summary here can only indicate some of their main tendencies. His vantage point is what he calls, in *Of Grammatology*, “the axial proposition that there is no outside-the-text” (“il n’y a rien hors du texte,” or alternatively “il n’y a pas de hors-texte”). Like all Derrida’s key terms and statements, this has multiple significations, but a primary one is that a reader cannot get beyond verbal signs to any things-in-themselves which, because they exist independently of the system of language, might serve to anchor a determinable meaning.

Derrida’s reiterated claim is that not only all Western philosophies and theories of language, but all Western uses of language, hence all Western culture, are **logocentric**; that is, they are centered or grounded on a “logos” (which in Greek signified both “word” and “rationality”) or, in a phrase he adopts from Heidegger, they rely on “the metaphysics of presence.” They are logocentric, according to Derrida, in part because they are **phonocentric**; that is, they grant, implicitly or explicitly, logical “priority,” or “privilege,” to speech over writing as the model for analyzing all discourse. By logos, or **presence**, Derrida signifies what he also calls an “ultimate referent”—a self-certifying and self-sufficient ground, or foundation, available to us totally outside the play of language itself, that is directly present to our awareness and serves to “center” (that is, to anchor, organize, and guarantee) the structure of the linguistic system, and as a result suffices to fix the bounds, coherence, and determinate meanings of any spoken or written utterance within that system. (On Derrida’s “decentering” of structuralism, see *poststructuralism*.) Historical instances of such claimed foundations for language are God as the guarantor of its validity, or a Platonic form of the true reference of a general term, or a Hegelian “telos” or goal toward which all process strives, or an intention to signify something determinate that is directly present to the awareness of the person who initiates an utterance. Derrida undertakes to

—which he regards as central in Western
—that at the instant of speaking, the “intention” of a

’s consciousness, and is also communicable to an
intention, under *interpretation and hermeneutics*.) In Derrida’s view,

Derrida expresses his alternative conception, that the play of linguistic
“undecidable,” in terms derived from Saussure’s view that in a
signifiers (the material elements of a language, whether
signifieds (their conceptual meanings) owe their
“positive” or inherent features, but to
“differences” from other speech sounds, written marks, or conceptual
linguistics in modern criticism and in semiotics.)

“present” to us in their own positive identity, since both these fea-

”; instead, in any spoken or written utterance, the apparent meaning is
“self-effacing” **trace**—self-effacing in that one is not
—which consists of all the nonpresent differences from other ele-
“effect” of
’s view, is

) of language may produce the “effects” of decidable meanings in an ut-

In a characteristic move, Derrida coins the *portmanteau* term **différance**,
“-ance” instead of “-ence” to indicate a
“différer”: to be different, and to de-

“effect” of having a significance that is the product of its dif-

“presence”—or in a language-independent reality
transcendental signified—its determinate specification is de-
“play,”
en abîme—that is, in an endless regress. To Derrida’s view,

disseminated—a term

having an effect of meaning (a “semantic” effect), of dispersing meanings among innumerable alternatives, and of negating any specific meaning. There is thus no ground, in the incessant play of difference that constitutes any language, for attributing a decidable meaning, or even a finite set of determinately multiple meanings (which he calls “polysemy”), to any utterance that we speak or write. (What Derrida calls “polysemy” is what William Empson called “ambiguity”; see *ambiguity*.) As Derrida puts it in *Writing and Difference*: “The absence of a transcendental signified extends the domain and the play of signification infinitely” (p. 280).

Several of Derrida’s diverse skeptical procedures have been especially influential in deconstructive literary criticism. A cardinal procedure is to subvert the innumerable **binary oppositions**—such as speech/writing, nature/culture, truth/error, male/female—which are essential structural elements in logocentric language. Derrida shows that such oppositions constitute a tacit hierarchy, in which the first term functions as privileged and superior and the second term as derivative and inferior. Derrida’s procedure is to invert the hierarchy, by showing that the primary term can be made out to be derivative from, or a special case of, the secondary term; but instead of stopping at this reversal, he goes on to destabilize both hierarchies, leaving them in a condition of undecidability. (Among deconstructive literary critics, one such demonstration is to take the standard hierarchical opposition of literature/criticism, to invert it so as to make criticism primary and literature secondary, and then to represent, as an undecidable set of oppositions, the assertions that criticism is a species of literature and that literature is a species of criticism.) A second operation influential in literary criticism is Derrida’s deconstruction of any attempt to establish a securely determinate bound, or limit, or margin, to a textual work so as to differentiate what is “inside” from what is “outside” the work. A third operation is his analysis of the inherent nonlogicality, or “rhetoricity”—that is, the inescapable reliance on *rhetorical figures* and *figurative language*—in all uses of language, including in what philosophers have traditionally claimed to be the strictly literal and logical arguments of philosophy. Derrida, for example, emphasizes the indispensable reliance in all modes of discourse on metaphors that are assumed to be merely convenient substitutes for *literal*, or “proper” meanings; then he undertakes to show, on the one hand, that metaphors cannot be reduced to literal meanings but, on the other hand, that supposedly literal terms are themselves metaphors whose metaphoric nature has been forgotten.

Derrida’s characteristic way of proceeding is not to lay out his deconstructive concepts and operations in a systematic exposition, but to allow them to emerge in a sequence of exemplary close readings of passages from writings that range from Plato through Jean-Jacques Rousseau to the present era—writings that, by standard classification, are mainly philosophical, although occasionally literary. He describes his procedure as a “double reading.” Initially, that is, he interprets a text as, in the standard fashion, “lisible” (readable or intelligible), since it engenders “effects” of having determinate meanings. But this reading, Derrida says, is only “provisional,” as a stage toward a second, or

DECONSTRUCTION

“critical reading,” which disseminates the provisional meaning

aporia—an insuperable deadlock, or “double” of incompatible or contradictory meanings which are “undecidable,”

’s rendering, is that each text deconstructs itself, by undermining its

“happens” in a critical reading.

“deconstruction has nothing to do with destruction,” and that the stan-

“situate” or “reinscribe” any text in a system of difference which

Derrida did not propose deconstruction as a mode of literary criticism,

’s “critical reading” to the kind of *close reading* of partic-
New

; they do so, however, Paul de Man has said, in a way which reveals
“were not nearly close enough.” The end re-

“totalized” boundary that makes it an entity, much

“rhetoricity,” or use of figurative
—features that make any “right reading” or “correct reading” of a

Paul de Man was the most innovative and influential of the critics who
’s later writ-

“grammar” (the code or rules of language) as opposed to “rhetoric”

“constative” versus “performative” linguistic functions that

had been distinguished by John Austin (see *speech-act theory*). In its grammatical aspect, language persistently aspires to determinate, referential, and logically ordered assertions, which are persistently dispersed by its rhetorical aspect into an open set of nonreferential and illogical possibilities. A literary text, then, of inner necessity says one thing and performs another, or as de Man alternatively puts the matter, a text “simultaneously asserts and denies the authority of its own rhetorical mode” (*Allegories of Reading*, 1979, p. 17). The inevitable result, for a critical reading, is an aporia of “vertiginous possibilities.”

Barbara Johnson, once a student of de Man’s, has applied deconstructive readings not only to literary texts, but to the writings of other critics, including Derrida himself. Her succinct statement of the aim and methods of a deconstructive reading is often cited:

Deconstruction is not synonymous with *destruction*.... The deconstruction of a text does not proceed by random doubt or arbitrary subversion, but by the careful teasing out of warring forces of signification within the text itself. If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading, it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another. (*The Critical Difference*, 1980, p. 5)

J. Hillis Miller, formerly the leading American representative of the *Geneva School* of consciousness-criticism, later became one of the most prominent of deconstructors, known especially for his application of this type of critical reading to prose fiction. Miller’s statement of his critical practice indicates how drastic the result may be of applying to works of literature the concepts and procedures that Derrida had developed for deconstructing the foundations of Western metaphysics:

Deconstruction as a mode of interpretation works by a careful and circumspect entering of each textual labyrinth.... The deconstructive critic seeks to find, by this process of retracing, the element in the system studied which is alogical, the thread in the text in question which will unravel it all, or the loose stone which will pull down the whole building. The deconstruction, rather, annihilates the ground on which the building stands by showing that the text has already annihilated the ground, knowingly or unknowingly. Deconstruction is not a dismantling of the structure of a text but a demonstration that it has already dismantled itself.

Miller’s conclusion is that any literary text, as a ceaseless play of “irreconcilable” and “contradictory” meanings, is “indeterminable” and “undecidable”; hence, that “all reading is necessarily misreading.” (“Stevens’ *Rock and Criticism as Cure*, II,” in Miller’s *Theory Then and Now*, 1991, p. 126, and “Walter Pater: A Partial Portrait,” *Daedalus*, Vol. 105, 1976.)

For other aspects of Derrida’s views see *poststructuralism* and refer to Geoffrey Bennington, *Jacques Derrida* (1993). Some of the central books by Jacques

Of
 , translated and introduced by Gayatri C. Spivak (1976); *Writing*
 (1978); and *Dissemination* (1981). A useful anthology of selec-
A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds, ed. Peggy Kamuf
Acts of Literature, ed. Derek Attridge (1992), is a selection of Derrida's
 's views is the
 's noted dispute with John R. Searle about
Limited Inc. (1988); on this dis-
 "Meaning and Iterability," in *On Deconstruction*
 "Derrida and the Ethics of Criticism," in
 (1999). Books exemplifying types
Blindness and Insight (1971),
Allegories of Reading (1979); Barbara Johnson, *The Critical Difference: Essays*
 (1980), and *A World of Difference* (1987);
Fiction and Repetition: Seven English Novels (1982), *The Linguistic*
 (1985), and *Theory Then and Now* (1991);
Decomposing Figures: Rhetorical Readings in the Romantic Tradi-
 (1986). Expositions of Derrida's deconstruction and of its applications to
Saving the Text (1981); Jonathan Culler,
 (1982); Richard Rorty, "Philosophy as a Kind of Writing,"
Consequences of Pragmatism (1982); Michael Ryan, *Marxism and Deconstruction*
Deconstruction in Context (1986); Christopher
Paul de Man (1988). For the range of deconstructive literary criticism,
Deconstruction: A Reader (2001); for a positive
Deconstruction: Theory and
 (3d ed., 2002).
 Among the many critiques of Derrida and of various practitioners of de-
The Function of Criticism
 "The Deconstructive Angel," "How to Do Things
 " and "Construing and Deconstructing," in *Doing Things with*
 (1989); John M. Ellis, *Against Deconstruction* (1989); Wendell V. Harris,
Beyond Poststructuralism (1996). Essays that oppose the theory and practice
The Emperor Redressed: Critiquing Critical
 , ed. Dwight Eddins, 1995, and *Theory's Empire: An Anthology of Dis-*
 , ed. Daphne Patai and Will H. Corral, 2005.
 For references to *deconstruction* in other entries, see pages 3, 163, 196, 245,
 , 401.

(dā kōr): **364.**

Decorum, as a term in literary criticism, designates the view that
genre, its subject

Art of Poetry by the Roman Horace in the first

of literature in the Renaissance and the *Neoclassic* age, when (as John Milton put it in his essay *Of Education*, 1644) decorum became “the grand masterpiece to observe.” In its most rigid application, literary forms, characters, and style were each ordered in hierarchies, or “levels,” from high through middle to low, and all these elements had to be matched to one another. Thus comedy must not be mixed with tragedy, and the highest and most serious genres (epic and tragedy) must represent characters of the highest social classes (kings and nobility) acting in a way appropriate to their status and speaking in the *high style*. A number of critics in this period, however, especially in England, maintained the theory of decorum in only limited ways. Thomas Rymer (1641–1713) was an English proponent, and Samuel Johnson (1709–84) was a notable opponent of the strict form of literary decorum.

See *neoclassic* and *romantic*, *poetic diction*, and *style*, and refer to Vernon Hall, *Renaissance Literary Criticism: A Study of Its Social Content* (1945). Erich Auerbach’s *Mimesis* (trans. 1953, reprinted 2003) describes the sustained conflict in postclassical Europe between the reigning doctrines of literary decorum and the example of the Bible, in which the highest matters, including the sublime tragedy of the life and passion of Christ, are intermingled with base characters and humble narrative detail, and are treated with what seemed to a classical taste a blatant indecorum of style. For Wordsworth’s deliberate inversion of traditional decorum at the beginning of the nineteenth century, by investing the common, the lowly, and the trivial with high dignity and sublimity, see M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism* (1971), pp. 390–408. For references to *decorum* in other entries, see pages 237, 298.

deep structure (linguistic): 198.

defamiliarize: 139.

deictic (dīk’ tīk): 233.

deism: A widespread mode of religious thought that manifested the faith in the supremacy of human reason during the European *Enlightenment* in the latter part of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. Deism has been succinctly described as “religion without revelation.” The thoroughgoing deist renounced, as violating reason, all “revealed religion”—that is, all religions, including Christianity, which are based on faith in the truths revealed in special scriptures at a certain time and place, and therefore available to only particular individuals or groups. The deist instead relied on those truths which, it was claimed, prove their accord with universal human reason by the fact that they are to be found in all religions, everywhere, at all times. Accordingly the basic tenets of deism—for example, that there is a deity, discoverable by reasoning from the creation to the creator, who deserves our worship and sanctions all moral values—were, in theory, the elements shared by all particular, or “positive,” religions. Many thinkers assimilated aspects of deism while remaining professing Christians. Alexander Pope, without renouncing his

“The

” (1738), which begins

Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

(dēmōt' ik): **385**.

(dā noo mǎn'): **297**.

A narrative that centers on the sustained, analytic investigation

plot was given its standard form by
“Murders in the Rue Morgue,” 1841,
“The Purloined Letter,” 1845), and later by the most widely known of all

The 1920s and 1930s was the period of many major detective stories by four

Through the first two decades of the last century, the typical detective

, set in mean urban environments, and featuring

” notably Raymond Chandler’s Philip Marlowe and Dashiell
’s Sam Spade. Detective stories have been favored recreational read-

Mystery novels (or more shortly **mysteries**) are a large class that in-

’s Gothic romance, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

(1794), and the Victorian novel by Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone* (1868), about the mystifying disappearance of a very valuable diamond.

The **thriller** designates any novel which features a rapid sequence of sensational events; often, such novels represent hairbreadth escapes of a protagonist from relentless and terrifying pursuit by sinister enemies. This type of fiction was inaugurated by William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794), in which the hero flees malignant persecution by an employer whose guilty secret he has discovered. The term "thriller" was first applied to fiction in pulp magazines, and is now most frequently used for such popular writings, with formulaic plots and thin characterization, as the spy stories by Ian Fleming about James Bond. The term "thriller," however, is sometimes extended to apply to the much more complex and sophisticated spy fiction by authors such as John le Carré and Anthony Price, as well as to Alfred Hitchcock's cinematic masterpieces of suspense and terror, including *Rear Window* and *Vertigo*. Detective stories, mysteries, and thrillers constitute a major proportion of motion pictures and of television dramas.

See the ground-breaking "Introduction" by Dorothy Sayers to her anthology, *The Omnibus of Crime* (2d ed., 1931); and Julian Symons, *Bloody Murder* (3d ed., 1993); Jacques Barzun and Wendell Hertig Taylor, *A Catalogue of Crime* (rev. and enl. ed., 1989); P. D. James, *Talking about Detective Fiction* (2009); *The Oxford Companion to Crime and Mystery Writing* (1999).

deus ex machina (dā' ūs ex mak' īna) is Latin for "a god from a machine." It designates the practice of some Greek playwrights (especially Euripides) to end a drama with a god, lowered to the stage by a mechanical apparatus, who by his judgment and commands resolved the dilemmas of the human characters. The phrase is now used for any forced and improbable device—a telltale birthmark, an unexpected inheritance, the discovery of a lost will or letter—by which a hard-pressed author resolves a plot. Conspicuous examples occur even in major novels like Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (1837–38) and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891). The German playwright Bertolt Brecht *parodied* such devices in the madcap conclusion of his *Three-penny Opera* (1928). See *plot*.

diachronic (dīākron' ik): **193**.

dialects: **196**.

dialogic criticism: Dialogic criticism is modeled on the theory and critical procedures of the Soviet critic Mikhail Bakhtin who, although he published his major works in the 1920s and 1930s, remained virtually unknown to the West until the 1980s, when translations of his writings gave him a wide and rapidly increasing influence. To Bakhtin a literary work is not (as in various *poststructural* theories) a text whose meanings are produced by the play of impersonal linguistic or economic or cultural forces, but a site for the dialogic interaction of multiple voices, or modes of discourse, each of which is not merely a verbal but a social phenomenon, and as such is the product of

's speech does not express a pre-existent and autono-

—

Bakhtin's prime interest was in the novel, and especially in the ways that

's single voice. In *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929, trans. by
monologic novels of writers such as
 —which undertake to subordinate the voices of all the characters
 —to the
 (or “polyphonic form”) of Fyodor Dostoevsky's novels, in
 “a plurality of independent and

” In Bakhtin's view, however, a novel can never be totally monologic,
 's reports of the utterances of another character are inescap-
 “double-voiced” (in that we can distinguish therein the author's own
 's discourse contin-

In *Rabelais and His World* (trans. 1984), Bakhtin proposed his widely cited
carnavalesque in certain works of literature. This literary

—novels that are both dialogic and

In an essay on “Discourse in the Novel” (1934–35), Bakhtin develops his

's *Poetics*, which proposed

plot). Instead, Bakhtin elevates *discourse* (equivalent to Aristotle's subordi-
diction) into the primary component of a narrative work; and

regime in Russia, Bakhtin's libertarian and open concept of the literary narrative is obviously, although tacitly, opposed to the Soviet version of Marxist criticism, which stresses the way a novel either reflects or distorts the true social reality, or expresses only a single dominant ideology, or should exemplify a "social realism" that accords with an authoritarian party line. See *Marxist criticism* and, for a discussion of the complex issue of Bakhtin's relation to Marxism and Soviet literary criticism, see Simon Dentith, *Bakhtinian Thought: An Introductory Reader* (1995), pp. 8–21.

Bakhtin's views have been, in some part and in diverse ways, incorporated by representatives of various types of critical theory and practice, whether traditional or *poststructural*. Among current students of literature, those who are identified specifically as "dialogic critics" follow Bakhtin's example by proposing that the primary component in the constitution of narrative works, or of literature generally—and of general culture as well—is a plurality of contending and mutually qualifying social voices, with no possibility of a decisive resolution into a monologic truth. Self-reflexively, a thoroughgoing dialogic critic, in accordance with Bakhtin's views, considers his or her own critical writings to be simply one voice among many in the contention of critical theories and practices, which coexist in a sustained tension of opposition and mutual definition. As Don Bialostosky, a chief spokesman for dialogic criticism, voiced its rationale and ideal:

As a self-conscious practice, dialogic criticism turns its inescapable involvement with some other voices into a program of articulating itself with all the other voices of the discipline, the culture, or the world of cultures to which it makes itself responsible.... Neither a live-and-let-live relativism nor a settle-it-once-and-for-all authoritarianism but a strenuous and open-ended dialogism would keep them talking to themselves and to one another, discovering their affinities without resting in them and clarifying their differences without resolving them. ("Dialogic Criticism," in G. Douglas Atkins and Laura Morrow, eds., *Contemporary Literary Theory*, 1989, pp. 223–24)

See the related critical enterprise called *discourse analysis*; and in addition to the writings mentioned above, refer to Mikhail Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. Michael Holquist (1981), and *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (1986). For Bakhtin's life and intellectual views, with attention to the problem of identifying writings that Bakhtin published under the names of various of his colleagues, see Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin* (1984), and Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Poetics* (1990). An influential early exposition that publicized Bakhtin's ideas in the West was Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle* (1984). A later book describing the wide dissemination of these ideas is David Lodge's *After Bakhtin* (1990). For an application of dialogic criticism, see Don H. Bialostosky, *Wordsworth, Dialogics, and the Practice of Criticism* (1992). For a critical view of Bakhtin's claims, see René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism, 1750–1950*, Vol. 7 (1991), pp. 354–71.

; 90.

; 86.

The adjective “didactic,” which means “intended to give” is applied to works of literature that are designed to expound a

theme. (See the entry *literature*.)

“mimetic” or “representational”) in which the materials

entury BC the Roman Lucretius wrote
De Rerum Natura (“On the Nature of Things”) to ex-

Georgics, in which the poetic
aesthetic appeal to a laudation of rural life and information

georgics (on the model of Virgil), describing in
rding, running a sugar plantation, and
's *Essay on Criticism* and his *Essay on Man* are

Such works for the most part directly describe the principles and proce-

's human

allegory, for example,
's *The Faerie Queene* and John Bunyan's *The Pil-*
's *Progress*, the purpose of enhancing and adding force to the incorpo-

satire are didactic in that they are de-
's attitudes toward

's *Letter to Can Grande* tells us that he planned his fourteenth-century
to represent, in the mode of a visionary narrative, the major

Christian truths and the way to avoid damnation and achieve salvation. And John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) can also be called didactic to the extent that the narrative is in fact organized, as Milton claimed in his opening invocation, around his "great argument" to "assert Eternal Providence, / And justify the ways of God to men."

It will be seen from these examples that "didactic literature," as here defined, is an analytical distinction and not a derogatory term; also that the distinction is not absolute but a matter of relative emphasis on instructing and persuading an audience, as against rendering a subject in such a way as to maximize its power to move and give artistic delight in its own right. The plays of Bernard Shaw and Bertolt Brecht manifest a fine balance of didactic intention, imaginative invention, and artistic enhancement. And some literary masterpieces are primarily didactic, while others (Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Jane Austen's *Emma*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*)—even though their plots involve moral concerns and imply criteria for moral judgments—are primarily, to adopt a phrase by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, works "of pure imagination."

The term **propagandist literature** is sometimes used as the equivalent of didactic literature, but it is more useful to reserve the term for that type of didactic work which is obviously organized and rendered to induce the reader to assume a specific attitude toward, or to take direct action on, a pressing social, political, or religious issue of the time at which the work is written. Prominent and effective examples of such works are Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852, attacking slavery in the South), Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906, on the horrors of the unregulated slaughtering and meatpacking industry in Chicago), and Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty* (1935, a play directed against the strong-arm tactics used to suppress a taxicab drivers' union). The *socialist realism* that was the official critical doctrine of the former Soviet Union espoused what was essentially a propagandist mode of literature.

See *fiction*, and refer to John Chalker, *The English Georgic: A Study in the Development of a Form* (1969). On a useful way to distinguish between primarily didactic and primarily imaginative, or "mimetic," literature, see R. S. Crane, ed., *Critics and Criticism* (1952), especially pp. 63–68 and 589–94.

différance (dīf' ārāns''): 78.

difference (in linguistics): 196; 358.

dimeter (dīm' ěter): 219.

dirge: 102.

discourse: 312; 86, 245, 306.

discourse analysis: Traditional linguists and philosophers of language, as well as literary students of *style* and *stylistics*, have typically focused their analyses on isolated units of language—the sentence, or even single words, phrases, and

—in abstraction from the specific circumstances of an utterance. Dis-

Emphasis on the meaning of a discourse as dependent on specific cultural

herme-
, the concern of Michel Foucault with the institutional conditions and

interpreta-
and *new historicism*.) The current use of discourse analysis

implicature to account for indi-

speech-act theory.) Thus, how can we explain the fact
“Can you pass the salt?” although it is in the syntactical

“Logic
” 1975, reprinted in his *Studies in the Way of Words*, 1989.)

“communicative presumption”—for example, that an ut-

’s analysis of the underlying

Some proponents of stylistics include discourse analysis within their area
stylistics.) And since the late 1970s, a number of critics
dialogue in novels

literary work, and also the readers of that work, are constantly able to infer correctly meanings that are not asserted or specified in a conversational interchange. The claim is that such inferences are “rule-governed,” in that they depend on tacit sets of assumptions, shared by users and interpreters of discourse, that come into play to establish meanings and, furthermore, that these meanings vary systematically, in accordance with whether the rule-guided expectations are fulfilled or intentionally violated. Such explorations of conversational discourse in literature often extend to the reanalysis of *point of view* and other traditional topics in the criticism of literary narratives. (Compare the entry on *dialogic criticism*.)

See Malcolm Coulthard, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis* (1977); Gillian Brown and George Yule, *Discourse Analysis* (1983); Teun A. van Dijk and Walter Kintsch, *Strategies of Discourse Comprehension* (1983); Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (1986); Wendell V. Harris, *Interpretive Acts* (1988), chapter 2; Sara Mills, *Discourse* (2d ed., 2009). A relevant collection of writings is Adam Jaworski and Nicholas Coupland, eds., *The Discourse Reader* (1999).

discovery (in a plot): 297.

discussion play: 318.

disposition (in rhetoric): 343.

disseminate (in deconstruction): 78.

dissociation of sensibility: “Dissociation of sensibility” was a phrase introduced by T. S. Eliot in his essay “The Metaphysical Poets” (1921). Eliot’s claim was that John Donne and the other *metaphysical poets* of the earlier seventeenth century, like the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists, “possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience.” They manifested “a direct sensuous apprehension of thought,” and felt “their thought as immediately as the odour of a rose.” But “in the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered.” This dissociation of intellection from emotion and sensuous perception, according to Eliot, was greatly aggravated by the influence of John Milton and John Dryden; and most of the later poets writing in English either thought or felt, but did not think and feel, as an act of unified sensibility.

Eliot’s vaguely defined distinction had a great vogue, especially among American *New Critics*. The dissociation of sensibility was said to be the feature that weakened most poetry between Milton and the later writings of W. B. Yeats, and was attributed particularly to the development, in the seventeenth century, of the scientific conception of reality as a material universe stripped of human values and feeling. (See, for example, Basil Willey, *The Seventeenth Century Background*, 1934.) Especially after 1950, however, Eliot’s conception

's disapproval (as a political and social conservative) of the course

's particular poetic preferences.

See T. S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," in *Selected Essays* (2d ed., "Milton II," in *On Poetry and Poets* (1957). Attacks on the validity *Donne's Poetry and Modern Criticism* (1950), *Romantic Image* (1957), chapter 8. For references to *disso-*, see page 360.

(dis' ōnans): 115.

In his *Critique of Judgment* (1790), Immanuel Kant

"contemplation"

"disinterested" (that is, independent of one's personal interests and 's reality, moral effect, or utility.

aesthetics and *aestheticism*.) Various philosophers of art developed this con- "aesthetic experience" from all other kinds

"distance" into this type of theory.

—with its strains, anxiety, and fear of invisible dangers and an aesthetic experience, in which we attend with delight to the "ob-
" features and sensuous qualities of the fog itself. This aesthetic mode
"psychical dis-
" which "is obtained by separating the object and its appeal from
's own self, by putting it out of gear with practical needs and ends."

"indivi-

's capacity for maintaining a greater or lesser degree" of such distance. In recent literary criticism the term **aesthetic distance**, or simply **distance**,

's distance, or "detachment"—which is in inverse relationship to 's **involvement**, or "concern"—with the actions and for-

's detailed analysis of the control of distance in

's *Emma*, in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (rev. 1983), chapter 9.

Edward Bullough's innovative essay on "Psychical Distance as a Factor in Art
" *British Journal of Psychology* 5 (1912), is reprinted in
A Modern Book of Aesthetics (rev. 1952). A useful review of the-
Aesthetics

(1960), chapter 2. For the view that such theories are
Art and the Aesthetic (1974), chapters 4 and 5.

See empathy and sympathy.

distancing effect: 7.

documentary drama: 257.

documentary fiction: 257.

doggerel: A term applied to rough, heavy-footed, and jerky *versification*, and also to verses that are monotonously regular in meter and tritely conventional in sentiment. Doggerel is usually the product of ineptitude on the part of the versifier, but is sometimes deliberately employed by poets for satiric, comic, or rollicking effect. John Skelton (1460?–1529) wrote short lines of two or three stresses, intentionally rough and variable in meter, which have come to be called **Skeltonics**; as he both described and exemplified his versification in *Colin Clout*:

For though my rhyme be ragged,
Tattered and jagged,
Rudely rain-beaten,
Rusty and moth-eaten,
If ye take well therewith,
It hath in it some pith.

The tumbling, broken, and comically grotesque *octosyllabic couplet*—often using double, triple, and imperfect rhymes—developed by Samuel Butler for his satiric poem *Hudibras* (1663–78) is a form of deliberate doggerel that has come to be called **Hudibrastic verse**:

Besides, he was a shrewd philosopher,
And had read every text and gloss over;
Whate'er the crabbed'st author hath,
He understood b'implicit faith.

See meter. For references to *doggerel* in other entries, see page 39.

domestic tragedy: 410.

double plot: 295.

double rhyme: 349.

drama: The form of composition designed for performance in the theater, in which actors take the roles of the characters, perform the indicated actions, and utter the written dialogue. (The common alternative name for a dramatic composition is a **play**.) In **poetic drama** the dialogue is written in verse, which in English is usually *blank verse* and in French is the twelve-syllable

alexandrine. Almost all the *heroic dramas* of the English Restora-
heroic couplets (iambic pentameter lines
closet drama is written in dramatic form, with dialogue,

's *Samson Agonistes*
's *Manfred* (1817), Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), and
's *The Dynasts* (1904–08).

For types of drama, see *absurd*, *literature of the*; *chronicle plays*; *comedy*; *comedy of*
; *commedia dell'arte*; *drama of sensibility*; *epic theater*; *expressionism*; *folk drama*;
; *masque*; *melodrama*; *miracle plays*, *morality plays*, and *interludes*; *mummer's*
; *pantomime and dumb show*; *pastoral*; *problem play*; *satire*; *sentimental comedy*; *trag-*
; *tragicomedy*. For features of drama, see *act*; *atmosphere*; *character and characteriza-*
; *deus ex machina*; *plot*; *proscenium arch*; *setting*; *theater in the round*; *three unities*.

; 295.

A **monologue** is a lengthy speech by a single person.

soliloquy. **Dramatic monologue**, however, does
lyric poem that was per-
's

" "The Bishop Orders His Tomb," "Andrea del Sarto,"

not the poet, utters the speech that makes

's lies. (2) This person

' presence, and what they say and do, only from clues in the discourse
's choice and

's temperament and character.

In monologues such as "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" and "Caliban"
" Browning omits the second feature, the presence of a silent

—the focus on self-revelation—serves to distinguish a
dramatic lyric, which is also

's "The Canonization" and "The Flea" (1613), for example, are dra-

's elaborately ingenious argument, rather

's "Tintern Abbey" (1798) is spoken by one person to a

silent auditor (his sister) in a specific situation at a significant moment in his life, it is not a dramatic monologue proper, both because we are invited to identify the speaker with the poet himself, and because the organizing principle and focus of interest is not the revelation of the speaker's distinctive temperament, but the evolution of his observations, memories, and thoughts toward the resolution of an emotional problem.

Tennyson wrote "Ulysses" (1842) and other dramatic monologues, and the form has been used by H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), Amy Lowell, Robert Frost, E. A. Robinson, Ezra Pound, Robert Lowell, and other poets of the twentieth century. The best-known modern instance is T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1915).

See Robert Langbaum, *The Poetry of Experience: The Dramatic Monologue in Modern Literary Tradition* (1957); Adena Rosmarin, *The Power of Genre* (1985), chapter 2, "The Dramatic Monologue"; Elisabeth A. Howe, *The Dramatic Monologue* (1996).

dramatis personae (drām' ātis pĕrsō' nē): 286.

dream allegory: 95.

dream vision: Dream vision (also called **dream allegory**) is a mode of narrative widely employed by medieval poets: the narrator falls asleep, usually in a spring landscape, and dreams the events he goes on to relate; often he is led by a guide, human or animal, and the events which he dreams are at least in part an *allegory*. A very influential example is the thirteenth-century French poem *Roman de la Rose*; the greatest of medieval poems, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, is also a dream vision. In fourteenth-century England, it is the narrative mode of the fine elegy *Pearl*, of Langland's *Piers Plowman*, and of Chaucer's *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame*. After the Middle Ages the vogue of the dream allegory diminished, but it never died out, as Bunyan's prose narrative *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) and Keats' verse narrative *The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream* (1819) bear witness. Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) is in the form of a dream vision, and James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939) consists of an immense cosmic dream on the part of an archetypal dreamer.

See C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (1938); and Howard Rollin Patch, *The Other World according to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (1950, reprinted 1970).

dumb show: 266.

duodecimo (doo' ōdēs'' ĭmō): 34.

dystopia (dĭstō' pĕā): 417.



E

(period): **338**.

(in American literature): **274**.

(ěk' lög): **268**.

Ecocriticism was a term coined in the late 1970s by combining
” with a shortened form of “ecology”—the science that investigates

“Ecocriticism” (or by alternative names, **environ-**
and **green studies**) designates the critical writings which

Representations of the natural environment are as old as recorded litera-

pastoral form inaugurated by the Greek Theo-
—an

’s long poem in blank verse *The*
(1726–30), and in the widely practiced *genre* called **nature writing**: the

’s enormously popular
(1789)—his close and affectionate ob-

’s *Travels*

of this genre, Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden* (1854). By the mid-

” to preserve what remained of the American

wilderness; the most noted advocates were the American writers John Burroughs (1837–1921) and John Muir (1838–1914).

In the twentieth century the warnings by scientists and conservationists increased; two especially influential books were Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* (1949), drawing attention to the ominous degradation of the environment, and Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), concerning the devastation inflicted by newly developed chemical pesticides on wildlife, both on land and in water. By the latter part of the century there was widespread concern that the earth was in an environmental crisis, brought on by the industrial and chemical pollution of the "biosphere" (the thin layer of earth, water, and air essential to life), the depletion of forests and of natural resources, the relentless extinction of plant and animal species, and the explosion of the human population that threatened to exceed the capacity of the earth to sustain it.

It was in this climate of crisis that ecocriticism was inaugurated. By the 1990s it had become a recognized and rapidly growing field of literary study, with its own organization (ASLE: Association for the Study of Literature and Environment), its own journal (*ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*), numerous articles in literary and critical periodicals, a proliferation of college courses, and a series of conferences whose concern with the literature of the environment encompassed all continents. As in earlier insurgent modes such as *feminist criticism* and *queer theory*, many ecocritical writings continue to be oriented toward heightening their readers' awareness, and even toward inciting them to social and political action; but while the other movements in criticism are directed toward achieving social and political justice, a number of ecocritics are impelled by the conviction that what is at stake in their enterprise is not only the well-being but, ultimately, the survival of human life.

Ecocritics do not share a single theoretical perspective or procedure; instead, their engagements with environmental literature manifest a wide range of traditional, *poststructural*, and *postcolonial* points of view and modes of analysis. Within this diversity, however, certain issues and concerns are recurrent:

1. It is claimed that the reigning religions and philosophies of Western civilization are deeply **anthropocentric**; that is, they are oriented to the interests of human beings, who are viewed as opposed to and superior to nature, and as free to exploit natural resources and animal species for their own purposes. This viewpoint is grounded in the biblical account of the creation, in which God gave man "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth" (*Genesis* 1.26). A similar conception is manifested elsewhere in the Bible, dominated Greek and Roman philosophy, was the prevailing view in Christianity, and underlay the emergence of modern science in the Renaissance, the *humanism* of the eighteenth-century *Enlightenment*, and the triumphs of what has been called "the scientific-technological-industrial complex" in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A present-day countermovement, sometimes named "deep ecology," maintains that attempts to reform particular

instances of the spoliation of the natural world deal with symptoms rather than the root cause, and that the only real hope is to replace anthropocentrism by **ecocentrism**: the view that all living things and their earthly environment, no less than the human species, possess importance, value, and even moral and political rights.

binaries such as man/nature or culture/nature, viewed as mutually exclusive oppositions. It is pointed out, instead, that these entities are interconnected, and also mutually constitutive. As Wendell Berry wrote in *The Unsettling of America* (1977), “[W]e and our country create one another, depend upon one another, are literally part of one another.... Our culture and our place are images of each other, and inseparable from each other.” Our identities, or sense of self, for example, are informed by the particular place in which we live and in which we feel that we belong and are at home. On the other side, human experience of the natural environment is not a replication of the thing itself, but always mediated by the culture of a particular time and place; and its representation in a work of literature is inescapably shaped by human feelings and the human imagination. A striking example is the radical shift in the conception of the wilderness in America, from the Puritan view of it as a dark and ominous thing, possibly the abode of demons, which needs to be overcome, appropriated, and cultivated by human beings, to the view expressed by Thoreau two centuries later that “[i]n wildness is the preservation of the world” (“Walking,” in *Excursions*, 1863). Or as the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote in England some twenty years later, in “Inversnaid”:

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

“green reading” (that is, analysis of the implications of a text for environmental concerns and toward political action) to all literary *genres*, including prose fiction and poetry, and also to writings in the natural and social sciences. Within the literary domain, the endeavor is to elevate the status, or to include within the major *canon of literature* the hitherto undervalued forms of nature writing and of *local color* or regional fiction by authors such as Thomas Hardy, Mark Twain, and Sarah Orne Jewett.

attitudes toward the environment that are attributable to a writer’s race, ethnicity, social class, and gender. The writings of Annette Kolodny gave impetus to what has come to be called **ecofeminism**—the analysis of the role attributed to women in fantasies of the natural environment by male authors, as well as the study of specifically feminine conceptions of the environment in the neglected nature writings by female authors. In *The*

Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters (1975), Kolodny stresses, in male-authored literature, the predominant gendering of the land as female, and the accordant tendency to resort to nature for pastoral repose, recuperation, and gratification. She also proposes a parallel between the domination and subjugation of women and the exploitation and spoliation of the land. (For an instance in which the devastation of a natural scene is figured in detail as the rape of a virgin, refer to Wordsworth's autobiographical poem "Nutting," 1800.) In a later book, *The Land before Her: Fantasy and Experiences of the American Frontiers, 1680–1860* (1984), Kolodny details the difference between the traditional representations of the frontier by male authors, and the counterview—domestic, and oriented to gardening and family concerns—in neglected narratives about the frontier by women. Other critics have pointed out that the prominent American form called the **wilderness romance**—represented by such major works as James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking* novels, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, and Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*—project distinctively male imaginings of escape to an unspoiled natural environment, free of women and of an effete, woman-dominated civilization, in which the protagonist undergoes a test of his character and virility. See for example Nina Baym, "Melodramas of Beset Manhood: How Theories of American Fiction Exclude Women Writers" (1981), in *Feminism and American Literary History* (1992); also Vera Norwood, *Made from This Earth: American Women and Nature* (1993).

5. There is a growing interest in the animistic religions of so-called "primitive" cultures, as well as in Hindu, Buddhist, and other religions and civilizations that lack the Western opposition between humanity and nature, and do not assign to human beings dominion over the nonhuman world. Ecocritics in the United States concern themselves especially with the oral traditions of Native Americans and with the exposition of these cultures by contemporary Native American writers such as N. Scott Momaday and Leslie Marmon Silko. The common view in such traditions, it is pointed out, envisions the natural world as a living, sacred thing, in which each individual feels intimately bonded to a particular physical "place," and where human beings live in interdependence and reciprocity with other living things. See Joni Adamson, *American Indian Literature, Environmental Justice, and Ecocriticism: The Middle Place* (2001), and Donelle N. Dreese, *Ecocriticism: Creating Self and Place in Environmental and American Indian Literatures* (2002). Refer to *primitivism*.

Some radical environmental critics maintain that the ecological crisis can be resolved only by the rejection, in the West, of the Judeo-Christian religion and culture, with its anthropocentric view that human beings, because they possess souls, transcend nature and are inherently masters of the nonhuman world, and by adopting instead an ecocentric religion which promulgates the sacredness of nature and a reverence for all forms of life as intrinsically equivalent. (See for example the influential essay by the intellectual historian

“The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” in *The Eco-*
, listed below.) Other environmentalists insist, on the contrary,

Man’s Responsibility for Nature: Ecological Problems and
, 1974. This work includes a useful survey not only of the

There are numerous anthologies of nature writing; representative recent
The Norton Book of Nature Writing, ed. Robert Finch and John Elder
American Nature Writers, ed. John Elder (2 vols., 1996); *Literature of*
(1998). The *Romantic Period* of the early

“alienation,” from

Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature,
–5, 8; also his essay “Coleridge and the Romantic Vision of
” 1974, included in *The Correspondent Breeze: Essays on English Ro-*
, 1984.) Jonathan Bate, in *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Envi-*
(1991), details the emergence, in Wordsworth and his

The Excursion
“the outrage done to nature” by newly established factories
Ecological
(1994); and James C.

Green Writing: Romanticism and Ecology (2000).

Books that were important in the founding and development of ecocriticism,
The Machine in the
(1964); Roderick Frazier Nash,

Wilderness and the American Mind (1967; 3d ed., 1982); Donald Worster, *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas* (1977); John Elder, *Imagining the Earth: Poetry and the Vision of Nature* (1985); Robert Pogue Harrison, *Forests: The Shadow of Civilization* (1992); Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (1995); Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (1995).

The anthology *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, ed. Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm (1996), did much, by its Introduction and selections, to give definition and impetus to the ecocritical movement. The following collections of essays indicate the scope and diversity of ecocritical writings: *Sisters of the Earth: Women's Prose and Poetry about Nature*, ed. Lorraine Anderson (1991); *Being in the World: An Environmental Reader for Writers*, ed. Scott H. Slovic and Terrell F. Dixon (1993); Lawrence Coupe, ed., *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism* (2000); *The Greening of Literary Scholarship: Literature, Theory, and the Environment*, ed. Steven Rosendale (2002); and Bill McKibben, ed., *American Earth: Environmental Writing since Thoreau* (2008). Greg Garrard outlines the theory and practice of the movement in *Ecocriticism* (2004).

ecofeminism: 98.

écriture (ä' krityoor''): 400; 311.

edition: 33; 32, 34.

Edwardian Period: 284.

ego: 322.

eiron (ī' rōn): 378; 184.

elegiac meter (ēlējī' āk): 101.

elegy: In Greek and Roman times, "elegy" denoted any poem written in **elegiac meter** (alternating *hexameter* and *pentameter* lines). The term was also used, however, to refer to the subject matter of change and loss frequently expressed in the elegiac verse form, especially in complaints about love. In accordance with this latter usage, "The Wanderer," "The Seafarer," and other poems in Old English on the transience of all worldly things are even now called elegies. In Europe and England the word continued to have a variable application through the Renaissance. John Donne's elegies, written in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, are love poems, although they relate to the sense of elegy as lament, in that many of them emphasize mutability and loss. In the seventeenth century the term **elegy** began to be limited to its most common present usage: a formal and sustained lament in verse for the death of a particular person, usually ending in a consolation. Examples are

ELEGY

Pearl and Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* (elegies in the dream allegory); Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *In Memoriam* (1850), on the
's "In Memory of W. B. Yeats"

's "Elegy Written in a
" (1757), and the *Duino Elegies* (1912–22) of the German

The **dirge** is also a versified expression of grief on the occasion of a particu-
's death, but differs from the elegy in that it is short, is less formal, and
's "Full
" and William Collins' "A Song from Shakespeare's
" (1749). **Threnody** is now used mainly as an equivalent for "dirge,"
monody for an elegy or dirge which is presented as the utterance of a single
"Lycidas" (1638) in the subtitle as a "monody"
"the Author bewails a learned Friend," and Matthew Arnold called his
"Thyrsis: A Monody" (1866).

An important subtype is the **pastoral elegy**, which represents both the
—who is usually also a poet—as shepherds (the
"pastor"). This poetic form was originated by

's "Astrophel," on the death of Sir Philip
's "Lycidas" (1638); Shelley's "Adonais" (1821); and
's "Thyrsis." The pastoral elegists, from the Greeks
conventions, which are
"Lycidas." In addition to the fictional represen-

–36 and elsewhere), we often find the following conventional features:

frequent reference to other figures from classical mythology (lines 15–
22, and later).

's death (lines 37–49). (Recent
critics who stress the mythic and ritual origins of poetic genres claim that
this feature is a survival from primitive laments for the death of Tham-
muz, Adonis, or other vegetational deities who died in the autumn to
be reborn in the spring. See *myth critics*.)

the dead shepherd (lines 50–63).

–111).

and adverts to the corrupt conditions of his own times (lines 64–84,

113–31). Such passages, though sometimes called “digressions,” are integral to the evolution of the mourner’s thought in “Lycidas.”

6. Post-Renaissance elegies often include an elaborate passage in which appropriate flowers are brought to deck the hearse (lines 133–51).
7. There is a closing consolation. In Christian elegies, the lyric reversal from grief and despair to joy and assurance typically occurs when the elegist comes to realize that death in this world is the entry to a higher life (lines 165–85).

In his *Life of Milton* (1779) Samuel Johnson, who disapproved both of pastoralism and mythology in modern poetry, decried “Lycidas” for “its inherent improbability,” but in the elegies by Milton and other major poets the ancient rituals provide a structural frame on which they play variations with originality and power. Some of the pastoral conventions, although adapted to an industrial age and a non-Christian worldview, survive still in Walt Whitman’s elegy on Lincoln, “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d” (1866).

In the last two decades of the twentieth century there was a strong revival of the elegy, especially in America, to mourn the devastation and death wrought by AIDS among talented young intellectuals, poets, and artists; see Michael Klein, ed., *Poets for Life: Seventy-six Poets Respond to AIDS* (1989).

See *conventions* and *pastoral*. On the elegy, refer to T. P. Harrison, Jr., and H. J. Leon, eds., *The Pastoral Elegy: An Anthology* (1939); Peter Sacks, *The English Elegy: Studies in the Genre from Spenser to Yeats* (1985). On “Lycidas”: C. A. Patrides, ed., *Milton’s “Lycidas”: The Tradition and the Poem* (rev. 1983), which includes a number of recent critical essays; and Scott Elledge, ed., *Milton’s “Lycidas”* (1966), which reprints classical and Renaissance pastoral elegies and other texts as background to Milton’s poem. For both traditional and modern forms of elegy, see the introductory materials and the poems reprinted in Sandra M. Gilbert, ed., *Inventions of Farewell: A Book of Elegies* (2001); and for a wide range of analyses and critical discussion, refer to *The Oxford Companion to the Elegy* (2010).

Elizabethan Age: 280.

emblem: 394.

emotive language: 128.

empathy and sympathy: German theorists in the nineteenth century developed the concept of “Einfühlung” (“feeling into”), which has been translated as **empathy**. It signifies an identification of oneself with an observed person or object which is so close that one seems to participate in the posture, motion, and sensations that one observes. Empathy is often described as “an

” and is commonly
“inner mimicry”; that is, the observation of an
’s own sensations, but as though they were attributes of the outer object.

“a part of all I see,” and that “if a sparrow comes before
” he was

In literature we call “empathic” a passage which conspicuously evokes

’s description, in his narrative poem *Venus and Adonis* (1593), of
the snail, whose tender horns being hit,
Shrinks backward in his shelly cave with pain.
’ *Endymion*

when heav’d anew
Old ocean rolls a lengthen’d wave to the shore,
Down whose green back the short-liv’d foam, all hoar,
Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence.
—experienced from the point of view
—by
“At Ithaca”:³

Over and back,
the long waves crawl
and track the sand with foam;
night darkens and the sea
takes on that desperate tone
of dark that wives put on
when all their love is done.

Sympathy, as distinguished from empathy, denotes fellow-feeling; that

personification.) We

³ by HD (Hilda Doolittle), from *Collected Poems, 1912-1944*, copyright © 1982 by the estate of Hilda

“sympathize,” for example, with the emotional experience of a child in his first attempt to recite a piece in public; we may also “empathize” as he falters in his speaking or makes an awkward gesture. Robert Burns’ “To a Mouse” (1786) is an engaging expression of his quick sympathy with the terror of the “wee, sleekit, cow’rin, tim’rous beastie” whose nest he has turned up with his plow.

The engagement and control of a reader’s sympathy with certain characters, and the establishment of **antipathy** toward others, is essential to the traditional literary artist. In *King Lear*, Shakespeare undertakes to make us sympathize with Cordelia, for example, and progressively with King Lear, but to make us feel horror and antipathy toward his “pelican daughters,” Goneril and Regan. Our attitude in the same play toward the villainous Edmund, the bastard son of Gloucester, as managed by Shakespeare, is complex—antipathetic, yet with some element of sympathetic understanding of his distorted personality. (See *distance and involvement*.) Bertolt Brecht’s *alienation effect* was designed to inhibit the sympathy of an audience with the protagonists of his plays, in order to encourage a critical attitude to the actions and social and economic realities that the plays represent.

A number of recent critical theorists stress the need to read against one’s acquiescence to the sympathetic identification intended by an author. Such feminist critics as Judith Fetterley, for example, in *The Resisting Reader* (1978), propose that women should learn to read in opposition to the sympathy with male protagonists, and the derogation of women characters, that is written into the work of many male authors. (See under *feminist criticism*.) And a tendency in the *new historicism*, as well as in *postcolonial criticism*, is to recommend that the reader, even if against an author’s intention, shift his or her sympathy from the dominant to the subversive characters in a literary work—from the magus Prospero, for example, in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, to his brutish and rebellious slave Caliban, who is taken to represent the natives of the New World who were oppressed and enslaved by English and European invaders. (Some current critics claim that, whatever Shakespeare’s intentions, Caliban, as he is represented, is sympathetic, and that Prospero, as he is represented, is not; also that the sympathetic admiration for Prospero in the nineteenth century depended on a willful evasion of certain aspects of the play.)

Refer to H. S. Langfeld, *The Aesthetic Attitude* (1920)—the section on empathy is reprinted in *Problems of Aesthetics* (1963), ed. Eliseo Vivas and Murray Krieger. For detailed analyses of empathic passages in literature, see Richard H. Fogle, *The Imagery of Keats and Shelley* (1949), chapter 4. See also the entry *sensibility, literature of*.

encomiastic (ĕnkōmīās’ tik): 263.

end (of a plot): 296.

end rhymes: 348.

(ěnjămb' měnt): 221.

The name applied to an intellectual movement and cultural

progress.) For some thinkers the model for “reason” was the induc-

“reason” was primarily geometrical—the deduction

“the light of reason.” Many thinkers relied on reason

In England the thought and the world outlook of the Enlightenment are

–1626) through John Locke

–1704) to late-eighteenth-century thinkers such as William Godwin

–1836); in France, from Descartes (1596–1650) through Voltaire

–1778) to Diderot and other editors of the great twenty-volume *Ency-*

(1751–72); in Germany, from Leibniz (1646–1716) to what is often

“critical philosophy”

–1804). Kant’s famous essay “What Is Enlighten-

” written in 1784, defines it as “the liberation of mankind from his

” and the achievement of a state of maturity

“determination and courage to use [his under-

” On the British enlightenment

The Enlightenment (2001).

In America, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson represented the

In recent years, the Enlightenment has been the subject of vigorous reas-

Race and the Enlight-

(1997), for an anthology of Enlightenment texts, many of

’s contribution to modern

political and scientific attitudes, see Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (2001).

The Enlightenment category of the universal, which was central to eighteenth-century thinkers who sought to transcend national, linguistic, or other divisions, has been both praised as an indispensable tool of a radical social critique and derogated as the conceptual means by which local differences such as race, sex, ethnicity, and class are elided in the name of a dubious universality. A crucial text in the latter reassessment was Michel Foucault, “What Is Enlightenment?” in Paul Rabinow, ed., *The Foucault Reader* (1984), pp. 32–50. See also James Schmidt, ed., *What Is Enlightenment?* (1996); Geoffrey Galt Harpham, “So...What Is Enlightenment?” in *Shadows of Ethics* (1999), pp. 67–98. For an anthology of Enlightenment writings, see Peter Gay, ed., *The Enlightenment: A Comprehensive Anthology* (1973). Gay has also written *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation* (2 vols., 1995, 1996); see also Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (1968). Refer to the entry *neoclassic and romantic*. For references to *Enlightenment* in other entries, see pages 283, 341.

environmental criticism: 96.

envoy (in a poem): 378.

epic: In its strict sense the term **epic** or **heroic poem** is applied to a work that meets at least the following criteria: it is a long verse narrative on a serious subject, told in a formal and elevated style, and centered on a heroic or quasi-divine figure on whose actions depends the fate of a tribe, a nation, or (in the instance of John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*) the human race.

There is a standard distinction between traditional and literary epics. “Traditional epics” (also called “folk epics” or “primary epics”) were written versions of what had originally been oral poems about a tribal or national hero during a warlike age. (See *oral poetry*.) Among these are the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that the Greeks ascribed to Homer; the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf*; the French *Chanson de Roland* and the Spanish *Poema del Cid* in the twelfth century; and the thirteenth-century German epic *Nibelungenlied*. “Literary epics” were composed by individual poetic craftsmen in deliberate imitation of the traditional form. Of this kind is Virgil’s Latin poem the *Aeneid*, which later served as the chief model for Milton’s literary epic *Paradise Lost* (1667). *Paradise Lost* in turn became, in the *Romantic Period*, a model for John Keats’ fragmentary epic *Hyperion*, as well as for William Blake’s several epics, or “prophetic books” (*The Four Zoas*, *Milton*, *Jerusalem*), which translated into Blake’s own mythic terms the biblical narrative that had been Milton’s subject.

The epic was ranked by Aristotle as second only to tragedy, and by many Renaissance critics as the highest of all *genres*. The literary epic is certainly the most ambitious of poetic enterprises, making immense demands on a poet’s knowledge, invention, and skill to sustain the scope, grandeur, and authority of a poem that tends to encompass the world of its day and a large portion of its learning. Despite numerous attempts in many languages over nearly three

Aeneid from the

Iliad he is the Greek warrior Achilles, who is the son of the sea nymph Thetis; and Virgil's Aeneas is the son of the goddess Aphrodite. In *Paradise Lost*, Adam and Eve are the progenitors of the entire human race, or if we regard Christ as the protagonist, He is both God and man. Blake's primal figure is "the Universal Man" Albion, who incorporates, before his fall, humanity and God and the cosmos as well.

larger. Odysseus wanders over the Mediterranean basin (the whole of the world known at the time), and in Book XI he descends into the underworld (as does Virgil's Aeneas). The scope of *Paradise Lost* is the entire universe, for it takes place in heaven, on earth, in hell, and in the cosmic space between. (See *Ptolemaic universe*.)

' feats in the Trojan War, or a long, arduous, and dangerous journey intrepidly accomplished, such as the wanderings of Odysseus on his way back to his homeland, in the face of opposition by some of the gods. *Paradise Lost* includes the revolt in heaven by the rebel angels against God, the journey of Satan through chaos to discover the newly created world, and his desperately audacious attempt to outwit God by corrupting mankind, in which his success is ultimately frustrated by the sacrificial action of Christ.

interest or an active part—the Olympian gods in Homer, and Jehovah, Christ, and the angels in *Paradise Lost*. These supernatural agents were in the *Neoclassic Age* called the **machinery**, in the sense that they were part of the literary contrivances of the epic.

nial style which is deliberately distanced from ordinary speech and proportioned to the grandeur and formality of the heroic subject and architecture. Hence Milton's **grand style**—his formal diction and elaborate and stylized syntax, which are in large part modeled on Latin poetry, his sonorous lists of names and wide-ranging *allusions*, and his imitation of Homer's *epic similes* and *epithets*.

There are also widely used epic *conventions*, or formulas, in the choice and

Paradise Lost:

argument, or epic theme, invokes a muse or guiding spirit to inspire him in his great undertaking, then addresses to the muse the **epic question**, the answer to which inaugurates the narrative proper (*Paradise Lost*, I. 1–49).

2. The narrative starts **in medias res** (“in the middle of things”), at a critical point in the action. *Paradise Lost* opens with the fallen angels in hell, gathering their scattered forces and determining on revenge. Not until Books V–VII does the angel Raphael narrate to Adam the events in heaven which led to this situation; while in Books XI–XII, after the fall, Michael foretells to Adam future events up to Christ’s second coming. Thus Milton’s epic, although its action focuses on the temptation and fall of man, encompasses all time from the creation to the end of the world.
3. There are catalogues of some of the principal characters, introduced in formal detail, as in Milton’s description of the procession of fallen angels in Book I of *Paradise Lost*. These characters are often given set speeches that reveal their diverse temperaments and moral attitudes; an example is the debate in Pandemonium, Book II.

The term “epic” is often applied, by extension, to narratives which differ in many respects from this model but manifest the epic spirit and grandeur in the scale, the scope, and the profound human importance of their subjects. In this broad sense Dante’s fourteenth-century *Divine Comedy* and Edmund Spenser’s late-sixteenth-century *The Faerie Queene* (1590–96) are often called epics, as are conspicuously large-scale and wide-ranging works of prose fiction such as Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick* (1851), Leo Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* (1869), and James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922); this last work achieves epic scope in representing the events of an ordinary day in Dublin (16 June 1904) by modeling them on the episodes of Homer’s *Odyssey*. In a still more extended application, the Marxist critic Georg Lukács used the term **bourgeois epic** for all novels which, in his view, reflect the social reality of their capitalist age on a broad scale. In a famed sentence, Lukács said that “the novel is the epic of a world that has been abandoned by God” (*Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock, 1971). See Lukács under *Marxist criticism*.

See *mock epic*, and refer to W. W. Lawrence, *Beowulf and Epic Tradition* (1928); C. M. Bowra, *From Vergil to Milton* (1945), and *Heroic Poetry* (1952); C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to “Paradise Lost”* (1942); Brian Wilkie, *Romantic Poets and Epic Tradition* (1965); Paul Merchant, *The Epic* (1971); Michael Murren, *The Allegorical Epic* (1980); David Quint, *Epic and Empire* (1993). In *Epic: Britain’s Heroic Muse, 1790–1910* (2008), Herbert F. Tucker reveals how very widely the epic form continued to be composed, long after it was held to have been displaced by the prose novel. For an *archetypal* conception of the epic, see Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), pp. 315–26. For references to *epic* in other entries, see page 159. See also *heroic drama*.

epic question: 108.

epic similes: Epic similes, also called **Homeric similes**, are formal, sustained similes in which the secondary subject, or *vehicle*, is elaborated far beyond its points of close parallel to the primary subject, or *tenor* (see under *figurative*

). This figure was imitated from Homer by Virgil, Milton, and other *epics*, who employed it to enhance the ceremonial quality *Paradise* (l. 768ff.), Milton describes his primary subject, the fallen angels throng-

As Bees
In spring time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the Hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd Plank,
The suburb of their Straw-built Citadel,
New rubb'd with Balm, expatiate and confer
Their State affairs. So thick the aery crowd
Swarm'd and were strait'n'd; . . .

Epic theater is a term that the German playwright Bertolt Brecht, “epic,” Brecht signified *epic*. By employing a detached narrator and other devices to achieve , Brecht aimed to subvert the sympathy of the audience with

’s dramatic works continue

See Bertolt Brecht under *Marxist criticism*, and refer to John Willett, ed., (1964); and Janelle Reinelt, (1994).

(ēpidīk' tik): **343**.

The term is now used for a statement, whether in verse or prose,

The verse epigram was much cultivated in England in the late sixteenth and

“of wit, of polish, and of Pope.”

epigrams. In the same century, when the exiled Stuarts were still pretenders to the English throne, John Byrom proposed this epigrammatic toast:

God bless the King—I mean the Faith’s defender!
 God bless (no harm in blessing) the Pretender!
 But who pretender is or who is king—
 God bless us all! that’s quite another thing.

And here is one of Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s epigrams, to show that Roman-ticism did not preclude wit:

On a Volunteer Singer
 Swans sing before they die—’twere no bad thing
 Should certain people die before they sing!

Many of the short poems of Walter Savage Landor (1775–1864) were fine examples of the nonsatirical epigram. Boileau and Voltaire excelled in the epigram in France, as did Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller in Germany; and in America, a number of the short poems by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Emily Dickinson may be accounted epigrams. The form continued to be cultivated by Robert Frost, Ezra Pound, Ogden Nash, Phyllis McGinley, Dorothy Parker, A. R. Ammons, Richard Wilbur, Anthony Hecht, and other poets in the twentieth century.

“Epigram” came to be applied, after the eighteenth century, to neat and witty statements in prose as well as verse; an alternative name for the prose epigram is the **apothegm**. (For examples, see *wit, humor, and the comic*.) Such terse and witty prose statements are to be distinguished from the **aphorism**: a pithy and pointed statement of a serious maxim, opinion, or general truth. One of the best known aphorisms is also one of the shortest: *ars longa, vita brevis est*—“art is long, life is short.” It occurs first in a work attributed to the Greek physician Hippocrates entitled *Aphorisms*, which consisted of tersely worded precepts on the practice of medicine. (See John Gross, ed., *The Oxford Book of Aphorisms*, 1983.) A related prose form is the *proverb*; see under *allegory*.

Refer to E. B. Osborn, ed., *The Hundred Best Epigrams* (1928); Kingsley Amis, ed., *The New Oxford Book of Light Verse* (1978); Russell Baker, ed., *The Norton Book of Light Verse* (1986). For references to *epigram* in other entries, see page 9.

epiphany: Epiphany means “a manifestation,” or “showing forth,” and by Christian thinkers was used to signify a manifestation of God’s presence within the created world. In the early draft of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* entitled *Stephen Hero* (published posthumously in 1944), James Joyce adapted the term to secular experience, to signify the sense of a sudden radiance and revelation that occurs during the perception of a commonplace object. “By an epiphany [Stephen] meant a sudden spiritual manifestation.” “Its soul, its whatness, leaps to us from the vestment of its appearance. The soul of the commonest

” Joyce’s short

A Portrait of the Artist, chapter 4. “Epiphany” has become the stan-

. Thus Shelley, in his *Defense of Poetry* (1821), described the “best”

” which poetry “redeems from decay.” William
“moments,” or in
“spots of time.” For examples of short poems

’s “The Two April”
” and “The Solitary Reaper.” Wordsworth’s *Prelude*, like some of
’s narratives, is constructed as a sequence of such visionary encounters.
–54 (1850 ed.), Wordsworth describes the

” when he for the first time passed in a stagecoach over the
” of London and the “trivial forms / Of houses, pavement,
” suddenly assumed a profound power and significance:

’twas a moment’s pause,—
All that took place within me came and went
As in a moment; yet with Time it dwells,
And grateful memory, as a thing divine.

See Irene H. Chayes, “Joyce’s Epiphanies,” reprinted in *Joyce’s “Por-
”: Criticisms and Critiques*, ed. T. E. Connolly (1962); Morris Beja, *Epiph-*
(1971); Ashton Nichols, *The Poetics of Epiphany:*
(1987). On the
“moment” in sacred writings, beginning with

Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic
(1971), chapters 7–8.

(plot): 253; 295.

(ěpīs” tōlēř’ ē): 254.

Epithalamion, or in the Latin form “epithalamium,” is a poem

“at the bridal chamber,” since the verses were originally

“Epithalamion,” a celebration

of his own marriage that he composed as a wedding gift to his bride. Spenser's poem follows, in elaborately contrived numbers of stanzas and lines, the sequence of the hours during his wedding day and night and combines, with unflinching ease and dignity, Christian ritual and beliefs, pagan topics and mythology, and the local Irish setting. John Donne, Ben Jonson, Robert Herrick, and many other Renaissance poets composed wedding poems that were solemn or ribald, according to the intended audience and the poet's own temperament.

Sir John Suckling's "A Ballad upon a Wedding" is a good-humored *parody* of this upper-class poetic form, which he applies to a lower-class wedding. The tradition persists. Shelley composed an "Epithalamium"; Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, although it opens with a funeral, closes with an epithalamion; A. E. Housman spoke in the antique idiom of the bridal song in "He Is Here, Urania's Son." Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote an "Epithalamion" in 1888 (published in 1918), as did e. e. cummings in 1923, and W. H. Auden in 1939.

See Robert H. Case, *English Epithalamies* (1896); Virginia J. Tufte, *The Poetry of Marriage* (1970); and (on the elaborate construction of the stanzas and lines in Spenser's "Epithalamion" to correspond with the passage of time on his wedding day) A. Kent Hieatt, *Short Time's Endless Monument* (1960).

epithet: As a term in criticism, **epithet** denotes an adjective or adjectival phrase used to describe a distinctive quality of a person or thing; an example is "*silver snarling trumpets*" in John Keats' *The Eve of St. Agnes*. The term is also applied to an identifying phrase that stands in place of a noun; thus Alexander Pope's "*the glittering forfex*" is an ironically inflated epithet for the scissors with which the Baron performs his heinous act in *The Rape of the Lock* (1714). The frequent use of derogatory adjectives and phrases in *invective* has led to the mistaken notion that an "epithet" is always uncomplimentary.

Homeric epithets are adjectival terms—usually a compound of two words—like those which Homer in his *epic* poems used as recurrent formulas in referring to a distinctive feature of someone or something: "*fleet-footed Achilles*," "*bolthurling Zeus*," "*the wine-dark sea*." Buck Mulligan in James Joyce's *Ulysses* *parodied* the formula in his reference to "*the snot-green sea*." We often use "conventional epithets" in identifying historical or legendary figures, as in Charles *the Great*, Lorenzo *the Magnificent*, Patient Griselda.

epoché (ěp' ōkē): 289.

epode (ě' pōd): 262.

equivoque (ěk' wivōk): 326.

(črtse'' ungsrōmān''): 255.

eschatology (ěs' kătōl' ōjē): 182.

ESSAY

Any short composition in prose that undertakes to discuss a matter, express
“treatise” or “dissertation” in its lack of pretension

A useful distinction is that between the formal and informal essay. The
, or **article**, is relatively impersonal: the author writes as an

—Harper’s, *Commentary*, *Scientific American*,
informal essay (or “familiar” or “personal essay”), the

The New Yorker.

The Greeks Theophrastus and Plutarch and the Romans Cicero and Sen-

’s French *Essais* in 1580. The title signifies “attempts”

’s commentary on topics such as “Of Illness” and “Of Sleeping,” in

Essays; most of them are short discussions such as “Of Truth,” “Of
” “Of Marriage and the Single Life.” Alexander Pope adopted the

Essay on Criticism (1711) and
Essay on Man (1733), but the verse essay has had few important exponents

’s *Tatler* and *Spectator*, with their many successors, gave

In the early nineteenth century the founding of new types of magazines,

—and especially the per-
—to a level that has not been surpassed. Major American essayists

See Robert Scholes and Carl H. Klaus, *Elements of the Essay* (1969); John Gross, ed., *The Oxford Book of Essays* (1991); Wendy Martin, ed., *Essays by Contemporary American Women* (1996). For a suggestive view of the tacit philosophical assumptions underlying the essay form, see Georg Lukács, "On the Nature and Form of the Essay," in *Soul and Form* (1980).

essentialism: 163.

estrangle: 139.

estrangement effect: 7.

ethnic writers: 278; 249.

ethos (ē' thōs): 270.

euphemism: An inoffensive expression used in place of a blunt one that is felt to be disagreeable or embarrassing. Euphemisms occur frequently with reference to such subjects as religion ("Gosh darn!" for "God damn!"), death ("pass away" instead of "die"), bodily functions ("comfort station" instead of "toilet"), and sex ("to sleep with" instead of "to have sexual intercourse with").

On the extraordinary number and variety of sexual euphemisms in Shakespeare's plays, see Eric Partridge, *Shakespeare's Bawdy* (1960).

euphony and cacophony: **Euphony** is a term applied to language which strikes the ear as smooth, pleasant, and musical, as in these lines from John Keats, *The Eve of St. Agnes* (1820),

And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

Analysis of the passage, however, will show that what seems to be a purely auditory agreeableness is due more to the significance of the words, conjoined with the ease and pleasure of the physical act of enunciating the sequence of the speech sounds, than to the inherent melodiousness of the speech sounds themselves. The American critic John Crowe Ransom illustrated the importance of significance to euphony by altering Tennyson's "The murmur of innumerable bees" to "The murder of innumerable beeves"; the euphony is destroyed, not by changing one speech sound and inserting others, but by the change in reference.

Similarly, in **cacophony**, or **dissonance**—language which is perceived as harsh, rough, and unmusical—the discordancy is the effect not only of the sound of the words, but also of their significance, conjoined with the difficulty of enunciating the sequence of the speech sounds. Cacophony may be inadvertent, through a lapse in the writer's attention or skill, as in the unfortunate line of Matthew Arnold's fine poem "Dover Beach" (1867), "Lay

” But cacophony may also be deliberate
’s “Pied Piper” (1842),

Rats!
They fought the dogs and killed the cats . . .
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men’s Sunday hats;

’s attempt, in his poem “In
” to mimic, as well as describe, dogged endurance by the difficulty

I shall not lose old strength
In the lone frost’s black length.
Strength long since fled!

alliteration and *onomatopoeia*. Refer to G. R. Stewart,
(1930), and Northrop Frye, ed., *Sound and Poetry*

A conspicuously formal and elaborate prose style which had a vogue in

, which John Lyly wrote in 1578. In the dialogues
Euphues and His England (1580), as well as in his stage come-

sententious (that is, full of moral maxims),
antithesis, reinforces the structural parallels by
alliteration and *assonance*, exploits the *rhetorical ques-*
, and is addicted to long similes and learned allusions which are often drawn

Euphues; the character Philautus is speaking:

I see now that as the fish *Scholopidus* in the flood Araris at the waxing of
the Moon is as white as the driven snow, and at the waning as black as
the burnt coal, so Euphues, which at the first encreasing of our famil-
iarity, was very zealous, is now at the last cast become most faithless.

parodied this self-consciously elegant style in
’s *Labour’s Lost* and other plays; nonetheless he, like other authors of the
’s explorations of the formal and rhetorical possibili-

See *style*; also Jonas A. Barish, “The Prose Style of John Lyly,” *English*
23 (1956), and G. K. Hunter, *John Lyly* (1962).

(ěxějě’ sis): **176**.

(ěxěm’ plům): **10**.

existential philosophy: 178; 1.

explication: 242; 14.

explication de texte: 243

exposition (in a plot): 296.

expressionism: A German movement in literature and the other arts (especially the visual arts) which was at its height between 1910 and 1925—that is, in the period just before, during, and after World War I. Its chief precursors were artists and writers who had in various ways departed from realistic depictions of life and the world, by incorporating in their art visionary or powerfully emotional states of mind that are expressed and transmitted by means of distorted representations of the outer world. Among these precursors in painting were Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, and the Norwegian Edvard Munch—Munch's lithograph *The Cry* (1894) depicting, against a bleak and stylized background, a tense figure with a contorted face uttering a scream of pure horror, is often taken to epitomize what became the expressionist mode. Prominent among the literary precursors of the movement in the nineteenth century were the French poets Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud, the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky, the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, and above all the Swedish dramatist August Strindberg.

Expressionism itself was not a concerted or well-defined movement. It can be said, however, that its central feature is a revolt against the artistic and literary tradition of *realism*, both in subject matter and in style. The expressionist artist or writer undertakes to express a personal vision—usually a troubled or tensely emotional vision—of human life and human society. This is done by exaggerating and distorting what, according to the norms of artistic realism, are objective features of the world, and by embodying violent extremes of mood and feeling. Often the work implies that what is depicted or described represents the experience of an individual standing alone and afraid in an industrial, technological, and urban society which is disintegrating into chaos. Those expressionists who were radical in their politics also projected utopian views of a future community in a regenerate world.

Expressionist painters tended to use jagged lines to depict contorted objects and forms, as well as to substitute arbitrary, often lurid colors, for natural hues; among these painters were Emil Nolde, Franz Marc, Oskar Kokoschka, and, for a time, Wassily Kandinsky. Expressionist poets (including the Germans Gottfried Benn and Georg Trakl) departed from standard meter, syntax, and poetic structure to organize their works around symbolic images. Expressionist writers of prose narratives (most eminently Franz Kafka) abandoned standard modes of characterization and plot for symbolic figures involved in an obsessive world of nightmarish events.

Drama was a prominent and widely influential form of expressionist writing. Among the better-known German playwrights were Georg Kaiser (*Gas*,

), Ernst Toller (*Mass Man*), and, in his earlier produc-

'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* (1920) pro-

's *The Adding*
(1923) used nonrealistic means to represent a mechanical, sterile, and

's early expressionist film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920)—

—as well as Friedrich Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922) and
's *Metropolis* (1926) are often shown in current revivals of films.
Expressionism had begun to flag by 1925 and was finally suppressed in

's *The Skin of Our Teeth* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a*
, as well as on the *theater of the absurd*; on the poetry of Allen Ginsberg
Beat writers; on the prose fiction of Samuel Beckett, Kurt Vonne-

See Richard Samuel and R. H. Thomas, *Expressionism in German Life, Lit-
-1924* (1939); Walter H. Sokel, *The Writer in Ex-
(1959)*; John Willett,
(1970); Donald E. Gordon, *Expressionism: Art and Idea* (1987);
*A Companion to the Literature of German Expressionism
From Caligari to Hitler:*
(1947); Lotte Eisner, *The Haunted*

expressionism in other entries, see pages 1, 258.

; 290, 344, 382.



F

fable: 9.

fabliau (fab' lēō): The medieval fabliau was a short comic or satiric tale in verse dealing realistically with middle-class or lower-class characters and delighting in the ribald; one of its favorite themes was the cuckolding of a stupid husband. (Professor Douglas Bush neatly described the type as “a short story broader than it is long.”) The fabliau flourished in France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and became popular in England during the fourteenth century. Chaucer, who wrote one of the greatest serious short stories in verse, the account of Death and the rioters in “The Pardoner’s Tale,” also wrote one of the best fabliaux, the hilarious “Miller’s Tale.”

See Joseph Bédier, *Les Fabliaux* (5th ed., 1928); *Fabliaux: Ribald Tales from the Old French*, trans. Robert Hellman and Richard O’Gorman (1976); Howard Bloch, *The Scandal of the Fabliaux* (1986); John Hines, *The Fabliau in English* (1993).

fabula: 234.

fabulation: 258.

fallible narrator: 305; 185.

falling action: 296.

false wit: 420.

family resemblances: 150.

fancy and imagination: The distinction between fancy and imagination was a key element in Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s theory of poetry, as well as in his general theory of the mental processes. In earlier discussions, “fancy” and “imagination” had for the most part been used synonymously to denote a faculty of the mind which is distinguished from “reason,” “judgment,” and “memory,” in that it receives “images” from the senses and reorders them into new combinations. In the thirteenth chapter of *Biographia Literaria* (1817), Coleridge attributes this reordering function of the sensory images to the lower faculty he calls **fancy**: “Fancy . . . has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space.” To Coleridge, that is, the fancy is a mechanical process which receives the elementary images—the “fixities and definites” which come to it ready-made from the senses—and, without altering the parts, reassembles them into a different spatial and temporal order from that in which they were originally

dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and unify. It is essentially *vital*, even as all objects (*as* objects) are essentially fixed and dead.

Coleridge's **imagination**, that is, is able to “create” rather than merely
—the mental pictures, or
—and unifying them into a new whole.
“vital”; that is,

” while its rules are “the very powers of
” And in the fourteenth chapter of the *Biographia*,
“synthetic” power which is the

—that is, a newly generated unity, constituted by an interdependence

.)
Most critics after Coleridge who distinguished fancy from imagination

“imagination” itself is as various as the modes of psychology that critics
Freudian, Jungian), while its processes

“myth,” as “pure poetry” or as a work designed to produce effects on

See I. A. Richards, *Coleridge on Imagination* (1934); M. H. Abrams, *The*
(1953), chapter 7; Richard H. Fogle, *The Idea of Coleridge's*
(1962).

feminist criticism: As a distinctive and concerted approach to literature, feminist criticism was not inaugurated until late in the 1960s. Behind it, however, lie two centuries of struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements, and for women's social and political rights, marked by such books as Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), and the American Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845). Much of feminist literary criticism continues in our time to be interrelated with the movement by political **feminists** for social, legal, and cultural freedom and equality.

An important precursor in feminist criticism was Virginia Woolf, who, in addition to her fiction, wrote *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and numerous other essays on women authors and on the cultural, economic, and educational disabilities within what she called a "patriarchal" society, dominated by men, that have hindered or prevented women from realizing their productive and creative possibilities. (See the collection of her essays, *Women and Writing*, ed. M. Barrett, 1979.) A much more radical critical mode, sometimes called "second-wave feminism," was launched in France by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), a wide-ranging critique of the cultural identification of women as merely the negative object, or "Other," to man as the dominating "Subject" who is assumed to represent humanity in general; the book dealt also with "the great collective myths" of women in the works of many male writers.

In America, modern feminist criticism was inaugurated by Mary Ellmann's deft and witty discussion, in *Thinking about Women* (1968), about the derogatory stereotypes of women in literature written by men, and also about alternative and subversive representations that occur in some writings by women. Even more influential was Kate Millett's hard-hitting *Sexual Politics*, published the following year. By "politics" Millett signifies the mechanisms that express and enforce the relationships of power in society; she analyzes many Western social arrangements and institutions as covert ways of manipulating power so as to establish and perpetuate the dominance of men and the subordination of women. In her book she attacks the male bias in Freud's *psychoanalytic* theory and also analyzes selected passages by D. H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, and Jean Genet as revealing the ways in which the authors, in their fictional fantasies, aggrandize their aggressive phallic selves and degrade women as submissive sexual objects.

In the years after 1969 there was an explosion of feminist writings without parallel in previous critical innovations, in a movement that in its earlier stages, as Elaine Showalter remarked, displayed the urgency and excitement of a religious awakening. Current feminist criticism in America, England, France, and other countries is not a unitary theory or procedure. It manifests, among those who practice it, a great variety of critical vantage points and procedures, including adaptations of *psychoanalytic*, *Marxist*, and diverse *poststructuralist* theories, and its vitality is signalized by the vigor (sometimes even rancor) of the debates within the ranks of professed feminists themselves. The various feminisms, however, share certain assumptions and concepts that underlie the

patriarchal

(ruled by the father)—that is, it is male-centered and -controlled, and is organized and conducted in such a way as to subordinate women to men in all cultural domains: familial, religious, political, economic, social, legal, and artistic. From the Hebrew Bible and Greek philosophic writings to the present, the female tends to be defined by negative reference to the male as the human norm, hence as an Other, or non-man, by her lack of the identifying male organ, of male capabilities, and of the male character traits that are presumed, in the patriarchal view, to have achieved the most important scientific and technical inventions and the major works of civilization and culture. Women themselves are taught, in the process of being socialized, to internalize the reigning patriarchal *ideology* (that is, the conscious and unconscious presuppositions about male superiority), and so are conditioned to derogate their own sex and to cooperate in their own subordination.

's sex as a man or woman is determined by anatomy, the prevailing concepts of **gender**—of the traits that are conceived to constitute what is masculine and what is feminine in temperament and behavior—are largely, if not entirely, *social constructs* that were generated by the pervasive patriarchal biases of our civilization. As Simone de Beauvoir put it, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. . . . It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature . . . which is described as feminine.” By this cultural process, the masculine in our culture has come to be widely identified as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, creative; the feminine, by systematic opposition to such traits, has come to be identified as passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional, and conventional. (See *gender criticism*.)

“masculinist,” or “androcen-
tric”) ideology pervades those writings which have been traditionally considered great literature, and which until recently have been written mainly by men for men. Typically, the most highly regarded literary works focus on male protagonists—Oedipus, Ulysses, Hamlet, Tom Jones, Faust, the Three Musketeers, Captain Ahab, Huck Finn, Leopold Bloom—who embody masculine traits and ways of feeling and pursue masculine interests in masculine fields of action. To these males, the female characters, when they play a role, are marginal and subordinate, and are represented either as complementary and subservient to, or in opposition to, masculine desires and enterprises. Such works, lacking autonomous female role models, and implicitly addressed to male readers, either leave the woman reader an alien outsider or else solicit her to “identify against herself” by taking up the position of the male subject and so assuming male values and ways of perceiving, feeling, and acting.

It is often held, in addition, that the traditional categories and criteria for analyzing and appraising literary works, although represented in standard critical theory as objective, disinterested, and universal, are in fact infused with masculine assumptions, interests, and ways of reasoning, so that the standard selection and rankings, the prevailing *canon*, and the critical treatments of literary works have in fact been tacitly but thoroughly gender-biased.

A major interest of feminist critics in English-speaking countries has been to reconstitute the ways we deal with literature in order to do justice to female points of view, concerns, and values. One emphasis has been to alter the way a woman reads the literature of the past so as to make her not an acquiescent, but (in the title of Judith Fetterley's book published in 1978) *The Resisting Reader*; that is, one who resists the author's intentions and design in order, by a "revisionary rereading," to bring to light and to counter the covert sexual biases written into a literary work. Another prominent procedure has been to identify recurrent and distorting "images of women," especially in novels and poems written by men. These images are often represented as tending to fall into two antithetic patterns. On the one side we find idealized projections of men's desires (the Madonna, the Muses of the arts, Dante's Beatrice, the pure and innocent virgin, the "Angel in the House" that was represented in the writings of the Victorian poet Coventry Patmore). On the other side are demonic projections of men's sexual resentments and terrors (Eve and Pandora as the sources of all evil, destructive sensual temptresses such as Delilah and Circe, the malign witch, the castrating mother). While many feminist critics have decried the literature written by men for its depiction of women as marginal, docile, and subservient to men's interests and emotional needs and fears, some of them have also identified male writers who, in their view, have managed to rise above the sexual prejudices of their time sufficiently to understand and represent the cultural pressures that have shaped the characters of women and forced upon them their negative or subsidiary social roles. The latter class is said to include, in selected works, such authors as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Samuel Richardson, Henrik Ibsen, and George Bernard Shaw.

A number of feminists have concentrated, not on the woman as reader, but on what Elaine Showalter named **gynocriticism**—that is, a criticism which concerns itself with developing a specifically female framework for dealing with works written by women, in all aspects of their production, motivation, analysis, and interpretation, and in all literary forms, including journals and letters. Notable books in this mode include Patricia Meyer Spacks' *The Female Imagination* (1975), on English and American novels of the past three centuries; Ellen Moers' *Literary Women* (1976), on major women novelists and poets in England, America, and France; Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing* (1977); and Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979; rev. 2000). This last book stresses especially the psychodynamics of

“anxi-
” resulting from the stereotype that literary creativity is an

’s *Jane*
; such a figure is “usually in some sense the *author’s* double, an image of
” (Refer to *influence and the anxiety of influence*.)
One concern of gynocritics is to identify distinctively feminine subject
—the world of domesticity, for exam-
—in which personal and affec-

“subjectiv-
” in thinking, feeling, valuing, and perceiving oneself and the outer world.

“woman’s language,” or distinctively feminine
of speech and writing, in sentence structure, types of relations between

’s domestic and “sentimental” novels, which are noted perfunctorily

’s *A Literature of Their Own* (1977) on British writers, and on Amer-
’s *Woman’s Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about*
—1870 (1978); and Elaine Showalter, *A Jury of Her*
(2009).
’s

No Man’s Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth
(2 vols., 1988–89).
The often-asserted goal of feminist critics has been to enlarge and reorder,
—that is, the set

” and to serve as the chief subjects of literary history, criticism, scholar-
canon of literature). Feminist studies have succeeded in

number of African-American writers such as Zora Neale Hurston). Some feminists have devoted their critical attention especially to the literature written by lesbian writers, or that deals with lesbian relationships in a heterosexual culture. (See *queer theory*.)

American and English critics have for the most part engaged in empirical and thematic studies of writings by and about women. The most prominent feminist critics in France, however, have occupied themselves with the "theory" of the role of gender in writing, conceptualized within various *poststructural* frames of reference, and above all Jacques Lacan's reworkings of Freudian *psychoanalysis* in terms of Saussure's linguistic theory. English-speaking feminists, for example, have drawn attention to demonstrable evidences that a male bias is encoded in our linguistic conventions; instances include the use of "man" or "mankind" for human beings in general, of "chairman" and "spokesman" for people of either sex, and of the pronouns "he" and "his" to refer back to ostensibly gender-neutral nouns such as "God," "human being," "child," "inventor," "author," and "poet." (See Sally McConnell-Ginet, Ruth Borker, and Nelly Furman, eds., *Women and Language in Literature and Society*, 1980; Deborah Cameron, *Feminism and Linguistic Theory* (2d ed., 1992); and Robin Tolmach Lakoff et al., *Language and Woman's Place: Text and Commentaries*, 2004; see also the entry *linguistics in literary criticism*.) The radical claim of some French theorists, on the other hand, is that all Western languages, in all their features, are utterly and irredeemably male-engendered, male-constituted, and male-dominated. Discourse, it is asserted, in a term proposed by Lacan, is **phallogocentric**; that is, it is centered and organized throughout by implicit recourse to the phallus (used in a symbolic sense) both as its supposed "logos," or ground, and as its prime signifier and power source. Phallogocentrism, it is claimed, manifests itself in Western discourse not only in its vocabulary and syntax, but also in its rigorous rules of logic, its proclivity for fixed classifications and oppositions, and its criteria for what is traditionally considered to be valid evidence and objective knowledge. A basic problem for such theorists is to establish the very possibility of a woman's language that will not, when a woman writes, automatically be appropriated into this phallogocentric language, since such appropriation is said to force her into complicity with linguistic features that impose on females a condition of marginality and subservience, or even of linguistic nonentity.

To evade this dilemma, Hélène Cixous posits the existence of an incipient "feminine writing" (*écriture féminine*) which has its source in the mother, in the stage of the mother-child relation before the child acquires the male-centered verbal language. Thereafter, in her view, this prelinguistic and unconscious potentiality manifests itself in those written texts which, abolishing all repressions, undermine and subvert the fixed signification, the logic, and the "closure" of our phallogocentric language, and open out into a joyous freeplay of meanings. Alternatively, Luce Irigaray posits a "woman's writing" which evades the male monopoly and the risk of appropriation into the existing system by establishing as its generative principle, in place of the monolithic phallus, the diversity, fluidity, and multiple possibilities inherent in the

“chora,” or prelinguistic, pre-Oedipal, and unsystematized signifying
“semiotic.” This process is

“symbolic.” The semiotic process, however, can break
—her prime example is avant-garde poetry,
—as a “heterogeneous destructive cau-
” that disrupts and disperses the authoritarian “subject” and strikes free of

“law of the Father,” consigns women to a negative and mar-

Since the 1980s a number of feminist critics have used *poststructuralist*
“woman” and other

“woman” or “the feminine,” as well as the diversities

A World of Difference (1987); Rita Felski, *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics:*
(1989); and the essays in *Feminism/*
, ed. Linda J. Nicholson (1990). Judith Butler, in two influential

“performative”—that to be masculine or feminine or homosexual is

“the performative,” refer to

.) See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion*
(1990) and *Bodies that Matter* (1993).

Feminist theoretical and critical writings, although recent in origin,

women’s studies—the investigation of the status and roles

—and courses in

’s literature and feminist criticism; and ever-increasing place is given to

ecofeminism and

In addition to the books mentioned above, the following works are especially useful. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, eds., *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* (3d ed., 2007)—the editorial materials provide a concise history, as well as biographies and bibliographies, of female authors since the Middle Ages. See also Jane Gallop, *The Daughter's Seduction: Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (1982), and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (1987). Histories and critiques of feminist criticism: K. K. Ruthven, *Feminist Literary Studies: An Introduction* (1984); Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (1985)—much of this book is devoted to feminist theorists in France; Mary Evans, *Introducing Contemporary Feminist Thought* (1997); Ruth Robbins, *Literary Feminisms* (2000); Shari Benstock, Suzanne Ferriss, and Susanne Woods, eds., *A Handbook of Literary Feminisms* (2002); Margaret Walters, *Feminism: A Very Short Introduction* (2005); Ellen Rooney, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Feminist Literary Theory* (2006). Collections of essays in feminist criticism: Elaine Showalter, ed., *The New Feminist Criticism* (1985); Patrocinio P. Schweickart and Elizabeth A. Flynn, eds., *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts* (1986); Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl, eds., *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism* (2d ed., 1997); Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker, eds., *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period* (1994). For critiques of some feminist positions and views by women, see Nina Baym, "The Madwoman and Her Languages: Why I Don't Do Feminist Literary Theory," in *Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship*, ed. Shari Benstock (1987); Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Feminism without Illusions: A Critique of Individualism* (1991); Camille Paglia, *Vamps & Tramps* (1994); Susan Gubar, *Critical Condition: Feminism at the Turn of the Century* (2000). Among the books by French feminist theorists available in English are Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clement, *The Newly Born Woman* (1986); Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1985) and *This Sex Which Is Not One* (1985); Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980); *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Toril Moi (1986); and Toril Moi, *What Is a Woman? And Other Essays* (2001). On feminist treatments of African-American women: Barbara Christian, *Black Feminist Criticism* (1985); Hazel V. Carby, *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist* (1987); Henry L. Gates, Jr., *Reading Black, Reading Feminist: A Critical Anthology* (1990); Joy James and T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, eds., *The Black Feminist Reader* (2000). Feminist treatments of lesbian and gay literature: Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1985) and *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990). Feminist theater and film studies: Teresa de Lauretis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (1984); Sue-Ellen Case, *Feminism and Theatre* (1987); Constance Penley, *The Future of an Illusion: Film, Feminism, and Psychoanalysis* (1989); Peggy Phelan and Lynda Hart, eds., *Acting Out: Feminist Performances* (1993).

For references to *feminist criticism* in other entries, see pages 97, 146, 248, 287, 323, 419.

In an inclusive sense, **fiction** is any literary *narrative*, whether

novel and *short story*), and sometimes is used

“fictional

” the *historical novel*, and the *nonfiction novel*.

Both philosophers and literary critics have concerned themselves with the

truth, or what is sometimes called their

”—that is, whether, or in just what way, they are subject to the

“fictional sen-

” should be regarded as referring to a special world, “created” by the

The Mirror and the

, 1953, pp. 272–85, “The Poem as Heterocosm”; James Phelan, *Worlds*

, 1981.) Others, most notably I. A.

emotive language composed of

; and that whereas a statement in “referential language” is

” a pseudostatement “is justified entirely by its effect in releasing

” (I. A. Richards, *Science and Poetry*, 1926). Most

Apology for Poetry (published 1595),

“nothing affirms, therefore never lyeth. For, as I take it, to

” Current versions of this view

“The Language of Fiction” (1954), reprinted in W. E. Kennick,

Art and Philosophy (rev. 1979).

In *speech-act theory*, a related view takes the form that a writer of fiction

“pretends” to make assertions, or “imitates” the making of assertions, and

“normal illocutionary commitment” of the writer of such

“The

” in *Expression and Meaning: Studies in the*

(1979, reprinted 1986). We find in a number of other

“fictive utterances” to include

—poems, narratives, and dramas, as well as novels;

“natural” discourse. A novel, for example, not only is made up

“represents the

referring.” See Barbara Herrnstein Smith, “Poetry as Fiction,” in *Margins of Discourse* (1978), and Richard Ohmann, “Speech Acts and the Definition of Literature,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 4 (1971).

Most modern critics of prose fiction, whatever their persuasion, make an important distinction between the fictional scenes, persons, events, and dialogue that a narrator reports or describes and the narrator’s own assertions about the world, about human life, or about the human situation; the central, or controlling, generalizations of the latter sort are said to be the *theme* or **thesis** of a work. These assertions by the narrator may be explicit (for example, Thomas Hardy’s statement at the end of *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, “The President of the immortals had had his sport with Tess”; or Tolstoy’s philosophy of history at the end of *War and Peace*). Many such claims, however, are said to be merely “implied,” “suggested,” or “inferred” from the narrator’s choice and control of the fictional characters and plot of the narrative itself. It is often claimed that such generalizations by the narrator within a fictional work, whether expressed or implied, function as assertions that claim to be true about the world, and that they thereby relate the fictional narrative to the factual and moral world of actual experience. See John Hospers, “Implied Truths in Literature” (1960), reprinted in W. E. Kennick, ed., *Art and Philosophy* (rev. 1979).

A much-discussed topic, related to the question of an author’s assertions and truth-claims in narrative fiction, concerns the part played by the **beliefs** of the reader. The problem raised is the extent to which a reader’s own moral, religious, and social convictions, as they coincide with or diverge from those asserted or implied in a work, determine the interpretation, acceptability, and evaluation of that work by the reader. For the history and discussions of this problem in literary criticism, see William Joseph Rooney, *The Problem of “Poetry and Belief” in Contemporary Criticism* (1949); M. H. Abrams, editor and contributor, *Literature and Belief* (1957); Walter Benn Michaels, “Saving the Text: Reference and Belief,” *Modern Language Notes* 93 (1978). Many discussions of the role of belief in fiction cite S. T. Coleridge’s description of the reader’s attitude as a “willing suspension of disbelief.”

A review of theories concerning the relevance of the criterion of truth to fiction is Monroe C. Beardsley’s *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (1958), pp. 409–19. For an analysis and critique of theories of emotive language see Max Black, “Questions about Emotive Meaning,” in *Language and Philosophy* (1949), chapter 9. Gerald Graff defends the claim for propositional truth in poetry in *Poetic Statement and Critical Dogma* (1970), chapter 6. In the writings of Jacques Derrida and his followers in literary criticism, the *binary* opposition truth/falsity is one of the metaphysical presuppositions of Western thought that they put to question; see *deconstruction*. For a detailed treatment of the relationships of fictions to the real world, including a survey of the diverse views about this problem, see Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen, *Truth, Fiction and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective* (1994).

Figurative language is a conspicuous departure from what

Most modern classifications and analyses are based on the treatment of figu-

's *Institutes of Oratory* (first cen-

Figures of thought, or **tropes** (meaning “turns,”
”), in which words or phrases are used in a way that effects a con-

literal

. (2) **Figures of speech**, or “rhetorical figures,” or **schemes** (from
“form”), in which the departure from standard usage is not

rhetorical figures. For recent opposition to the
metaphor, theories of.

In a **simile**, a comparison between two distinctly different things is
“like” or “as.” A simple example is Robert
“O my love’s like a red, red rose.” The following simile from Samuel
’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” also specifies the fea-
“green”) in which icebergs are similar to emerald:

And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

conceit and epic simile.

In a **metaphor**, a word or expression that in literal usage denotes one

“O my love is a red, red rose”

Eye, gazelle, delicate wanderer,
Drinker of horizon’s fluid line.⁴

symbol.

It should be noted that in these examples we can distinguish two ele-

“Not palaces, an era’s crown,” from *Collected Poems, 1928–1953*, by Stephen Spender. Copyright © 1934

widely adopted usage, I. A. Richards introduced the name **tenor** for the subject ("my love" in the altered line from Burns, and "eye" in Spender's lines), and the name **vehicle** for the metaphorical term itself ("rose" in Burns, and the three words "gazelle," "wanderer," and "drinker" in Spender). In an **implicit metaphor**, the tenor is not itself specified, but only implied. If one were to say, while discussing someone's death, "That reed was too frail to survive the storm of its sorrows," the situational and verbal context of the term "reed" indicates that it is the vehicle for an implicit tenor, a human being, while "storm" is the vehicle for an aspect of a specified tenor, "sorrows." Those aspects, properties, or common associations of a vehicle which, in a given context, apply to a tenor are called by Richards the **grounds** of a metaphor. (See I. A. Richards, *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 1936, chapters 5–6.)

All the metaphoric terms, or vehicles, cited so far have been nouns, but other parts of speech may also be used metaphorically. The metaphoric use of a verb occurs in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, V. i. 54, "How sweet the moonlight *sleeps* upon this bank"; and the metaphoric use of an adjective occurs in Andrew Marvell's "The Garden" (1681):

Annihilating all that's made
To a *green* thought in a green shade.

A **mixed metaphor** conjoins two or more obviously diverse metaphoric vehicles. When used inadvertently, without sensitivity to the possible incongruity of the vehicles, the effect can be ludicrous: "Girding up his loins, the chairman plowed through the mountainous agenda." Densely figurative poets such as Shakespeare, however, often mix metaphors in a functional way. One example is Hamlet's expression of his troubled state of mind in his *soliloquy* (III. i. 59–60), "to take arms against a sea of troubles, / And by opposing end them"; another is the complex involvement of vehicle within vehicle, applied to the process of aging, in Shakespeare's Sonnet 65:

O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wrackful siege of battering days?

A **dead metaphor** is one which, like "the leg of a table" or "the heart of the matter," has been used so long and become so common that we have ceased to be aware of the discrepancy between vehicle and tenor. Many dead metaphors, however, are only moribund and can be brought back to life. Someone asked Groucho Marx, "Are you a man or a mouse?" He answered, "Throw me a piece of cheese and you'll find out." The recorded history of language indicates that a great many words that we now take to be literal were, in the distant past, metaphors.

Metaphors are essential to the functioning of language and have been the subject of copious analyses, and sharp disagreements, by rhetoricians, linguists, literary critics, and philosophers of language. For a discussion of diverse views, see the entry *metaphor, theories of*.

Some tropes, sometimes classified as species of metaphor, are more fre-

In **metonymy** (Greek for “a change of name”) the literal term for one

“the crown” or
 ” can be used to stand for a king and “Hollywood” for the film
 “Milton” can signify the writings of Milton (“I have read all of Mil-
 ”); and typical attire can signify the male and female sexes: “doublet and
 ” (Shakespeare, *As You Like*

“vertical,” and the metonymic, or “horizontal,”

linguistics in literary criticism.)

In **synecdoche** (Greek for “taking together”), a part of something is used

“ten *hands*” for ten workers, or “a hundred *sails*” for ships and, in
 “wheels” to stand for an automobile. By a bold use of the fig-
 “Lycidas” as “blind

.”

Another figure related to metaphor is **personification**, or in the Greek
prosopopeia, in which either an inanimate object or an abstract con-

pathetic fallacy). Milton wrote in *Paradise Lost* (IX.
 -3), as Adam bit into the fatal apple,

Sky lowered, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin.

’ “To Autumn” finely personifies the season, au-

, I. 251–52, Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote:

Then, land!—then, England! oh, the frosty cliffs
 Looked cold upon me.

stract terms was standard in eighteenth-century
 , where it sometimes became a thoughtless formula. Coleridge
 rating the invention of inoculation
apostrophe to the personified subject

Inoculation! heavenly Maid, descend!

Personification and the Sublime (1985).

The term **kenning** denotes the recurrent use, in the Anglo-Saxon *Beo-*
 and poems written in other Old Germanic languages, of a descriptive
periphrasis,

oral poetry). Some kennings are instances

of *metonymy* (“the whale road” for the sea, and “the ring-giver” for a king); others of *synecdoche* (“the ringed prow” for a ship); still others describe salient or picturesque features of the object referred to (“foamy-necked floater” for a ship under sail, “storm of swords” for a battle).

Other departures from the standard use of words, often classified as tropes, are treated elsewhere in this *Glossary*: *aporia*, *conceit*, *epic simile*, *hyperbole*, *irony*, *litotes*, *paradox*, *periphrasis*, *pun*, *understatement*. Since the mid-twentieth century, especially in the *New Criticism*, *Russian formalism*, and Harold Bloom’s theory of the *anxiety of influence*, there has been a great interest in the analysis and functioning of figurative language, which was once thought to be largely the province of pedantic rhetoricians. In deconstructive criticism, especially in the writings by Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man, the analysis of figurative language is one of the primary ways of establishing what they assert to be the uncertainty and undecidability of meaning; see *deconstruction*.

Summaries of the classification of figures that was inherited from the classical past are Edward P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (3d ed., 1990); and Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (2d ed., 1991). Arthur Quinn’s lucid and amusing booklet, *Figures of Speech: 60 Ways to Turn a Phrase* (1993), treats mainly what this *Glossary* classifies as *rhetorical figures*. René Wellek and Austin Warren, in *Theory of Literature* (rev. 1970), summarize, with bibliography, diverse treatments of figurative language; and Jonathan Culler, in *The Pursuit of Signs* (1981), discusses the concern with this topic in deconstructive theory.

For references to *figurative language* in other entries, see pages 79, 170, 343. See also *rhetorical figures*; *style*. Refer also to the following figures: *allusion*; *ambiguity*; *anaphora*; *antithesis*; *aporia*; *conceit*; *epic simile*; *epithet*; *hyperbole and understatement*; *irony*; *kenning*; *litotes*; *paradox*; *pathetic fallacy*; *periphrasis*; *pun*; *symbol*; *synesthesia*. For figures of sound, see *alliteration*; *onomatopoeia*; *rhyme*.

figures of speech: 130.

figures of thought: 130.

fin de siècle (fǎn’ dě syĕk’ l): 76.

fine arts: Fine arts in modern usage designates primarily the five arts of *literature*, painting, sculpture, music, and architecture. Individual works of art in all these modes are held to share a defining feature; that is, they are objects that are to be regarded with a close, exclusive, and pleasurable attention.

This grouping of the arts did not appear, in the writings of philosophers and critics, until the latter part of the eighteenth century. During some two thousand years before that time, each of these arts had been treated separately, or else classified with such practical pursuits as agriculture and carpentry. When one of the arts was compared to another, it was only in a limited way; poetry, for example, was sometimes compared to painting,

“the fine” was the result, in the course of the eighteenth century, of a drastic

sts and critics had assumed a maker’s perspective and analyzed its attributes in terms of

ars—

—words, or paint,
—into a product that its

—the most highly developed
—this assumption of the maker’s perspective toward a

In the course of the eighteenth century, there occurred a radical shift in
—a shift from a maker’s perspective and a construction’s perspective and a contemplation model. Under-

he five diverse arts available—usually
—to a large and rapidly expanding public. In literature, the change

r no purpose other than the interest

gured, where large audiences gathered,

. The eighteenth century was also the

Within a single century, then, the standard way of experiencing the hith-

’s perspective and a

contemplation model. Immanuel Kant, for example, in his immensely influential *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (1790), defined the normative judgment of all works of art as “purely contemplative,” and as “a pure disinterested delight” in an object that “pleases for its own sake.” The result of this paradigm shift was to group together all five arts—patently different in their materials, their required skills, and their social functions—into the single class of “the fine arts,” consisting of objects whose reason for being was simply to be read, or looked at, or listened to, for their own sake, simply for the pleasure of doing so.

Refer to the entry *aestheticism*. For the gradual emergence during the eighteenth century of the conception of “the fine arts” as a single class, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, “The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics,” *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 12 (1951), pp. 496–527, and Vol. 13 (1952), pp. 17–46. On the social and institutional developments, and the correlative conceptual changes, that led to this classification, see M. H. Abrams, “Art-as-Such: The Sociology of Modern Aesthetics,” in *Doing Things with Texts: Essays in Criticism and Critical Theory* (1989).

first-person narrative: 301.

first-person points of view: 303.

flashback (in a plot): 296.

flat character: 46; 211.

focus of character: 302.

focus of narration: 302.

foil: 294.

folio: 34; 22.

folk ballad: 23.

folk drama: 136.

folk songs: 136; 23.

folklore: Folklore, since the mid-nineteenth century, has been the collective name applied to sayings, verbal compositions, and social rituals that have been handed down solely, or at least primarily, by word of mouth and example rather than in written form. Folklore developed, and continues even now, in communities where few if any people can read or write. It also continues to flourish among literate populations, in the form of oral jokes, stories, and

“urban folklore” by
When You’re up to Your Ass in Alligators:
 (1987). Folklore includes

’s *Merchant of Venice* (II. ix.) and
 ’s dream which is central to Keats’ *Eve of St.*
 (1820) are both derived from folklore. Refer to A. H. Krappe, *Science of*
 (1930, reprinted 1974); Richard M. Dorson, ed. *Folklore and Folklife: An*
 (1972).

The following forms of folklore have been of special importance for later

Folk drama originated in primitive rites of song and dance, especially in

tragedy devel-

munners’ play (a mummer is a masked actor).
 ’s *The Return of the Native* (Book II, chapter 5) describes the
 ’ play, and a form of this drama is still performed
The English
 (1933).

Folk songs include love songs, Christmas carols, work songs, sea chan-
 ’s game songs, and many other
ballad. (See *oral*
 .) All forms of folk song have been assiduously collected since the

“A Red, Red
 ” and “Auld Lang Syne,” for example, both derive from one or
 “Green Grow the Rashes, O” is a tidied-up ver-
The Songs of Robert Burns (1903);
Folk Songs of England (5 vols., 1908–12); and Alan Lomax,
 (1960).

The **folktale**, strictly defined, is a short narrative in prose of unknown

—such as “The Three Bears” by Robert Southey
 –1843) and Parson Mason L. Weems’ story of George Washington and
 —which have been picked up and repeatedly narrated by word

myths, fables, tales of heroes (whether

historical like Johnny Appleseed or legendary like Paul Bunyan), and fairy tales. Many so-called “fairy tales” (the German word **Märchen** is frequently used for this type of folktale) are not stories of fairies but of various kinds of marvels; examples are “Snow White” and “Jack and the Beanstalk.” Another type of folk tale, the set “joke”—that is, the comic (often bawdy) *anecdote*—is the most abundant and persistent of all; new jokes, or new versions of old jokes, continue to be a staple of social exchange, wherever people congregate in a relaxed mood.

The same, or closely similar, oral stories have turned up in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and have been embodied in the narratives of many writers. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* includes a number of folktales; “The Pardoner’s Tale” of Death and the three rioters, for example, was of Eastern origin. See Benjamin A. Botkin, *A Treasury of American Folklore* (1944); Stith Thompson, *The Folktale* (1974); and Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale* (1970). The standard catalogue of recurrent *motifs* in folktales throughout the world is Stith Thompson’s *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (1932–37).

folktale: 136; 230.

foot (in meter): 218.

forced rhyme: 349; 377.

foregrounding: 139.

forensic oratory (fōrēn’ sīc): 343.

form and structure: “Form” is one of the most frequent terms in literary criticism, but also one of the most diverse in its meanings. It is often used merely to designate a *genre* or literary type (“the lyric form,” “the short story form”), or for patterns of meter, lines, and rhymes (“the verse form,” “the stanza form”). It is also, however—in a sense descended from the Latin “forma,” which was equivalent to the Greek “idea”—the term for a central critical concept. In this application, the **form** of a work is the principle that determines how a work is ordered and organized; critics, however, differ greatly in their analyses of this principle. All agree that “form” is not simply a fixed container, like a bottle, into which the “content” or “subject matter” of a work is poured; but beyond this, the concept of form varies according to a critic’s particular assumptions and theoretical orientation (see *criticism*).

Many *neoclassic* critics, for example, thought of the form of a work as a combination of parts, matched to each other according to the principle of *decorum*, or mutual fittingness. In the early nineteenth century Samuel Taylor Coleridge, following the lead of the German critic A. W. Schlegel, distinguished between **mechanic form**, which is a fixed, pre-existent shape such as we impose on wet clay by a mold, and **organic form**, which, Coleridge

“is innate; it shapes as it develops itself from within, and the fullness of

” To Coleridge, in other words, as to other **organicists** in literary crit-

The Mirror

, 1953, chapters 7–8; and George Rousseau, *Organic Form*,

New Critics use the word **structure** interchangeably with

” and regard it as primarily an equilibrium, or interaction, or ironic

“meanings.” Various exponents of *archetypal* theory regard the form of a

structuralist

In an influential critical enterprise, R. S. Crane, a leader of the **Chicago**

of criticism, revived and developed the concept of form in Aristotle’s

, and made a distinction between “form” and “structure.” The form of

“dynamis,” the particular “working”

“emotional power” that the composition is designed to effect, which func-

“shaping principle.” This formal principle controls and synthesizes

“structure” of a work—that is, the order, emphasis, and rendering of all its

—into “a beautiful and effective whole of

” See R. S. Crane, *The Languages of Criticism and the Struc-*

(1953), chapters 1 and 4; also Wayne C. Booth, “Between Two

” in *Profession*, Vol. 82

See *formalism* and refer to René Wellek, “Concepts of Form and Structure

” in *Concepts of Criticism* (1963); Kenneth

The Philosophy of Literary Form (3d ed., 1973); and Eugène Vinaver,

(1966). See also *plot*.

A type of literary theory and analysis which originated in Moscow

Russian Formalism applied the term

” derogatorily, because of its focus on the patterns and technical

Roman Jakobson. When this critical mode was suppressed by the Soviets in the early 1930s, the center of the formalist study of literature moved to Czechoslovakia, where it was continued especially by members of the **Prague Linguistic Circle**, which included Roman Jakobson (who had emigrated from Russia), Jan Mukarovsky, and René Wellek. Beginning in the 1940s both Jakobson and Wellek continued their influential work as professors at American universities.

Formalism views *literature* primarily as a specialized use of language, and proposes a fundamental opposition between the literary (or poetical) use of language and the ordinary, “practical” use of language. It proposes that the central function of ordinary language is to communicate to auditors a message, or information, by references to the world existing outside of language. In contrast, it conceives literary language to be self-focused, in that its function is not to convey information by making extrinsic references, but to offer the reader a special mode of experience by drawing attention to its own “formal” features—that is, to the qualities and internal relations of the linguistic signs themselves. The linguistics of literature differs from the linguistics of practical discourse, because its laws are oriented toward producing the distinctive features that formalists call **literariness**. As Roman Jakobson wrote in 1921: “The object of study in literary science is not literature but ‘literariness,’ that is, what makes a given work a literary work.” (See *linguistics in modern criticism*.)

The literariness of a work, as Jan Mukarovsky, a member of the Prague Circle, described it in the 1920s, consists “in the maximum of **foregrounding** of the utterance,” that is, the foregrounding of “the act of expression, the act of speech itself.” (To “foreground” is to bring something into prominence, to make it dominant in perception.) By “backgrounding” the referential aspect and the logical connections in language, poetry makes the words themselves “palpable” as phonic signs. The primary aim of literature in thus foregrounding its linguistic medium, as Victor Shklovsky put it in an influential formulation, is to **estrangle** or **defamiliarize**; that is, by disrupting the modes of ordinary linguistic discourse, literature “makes strange” the world of everyday perception and renews the reader’s lost capacity for fresh sensation. (In the *Biographia Literaria*, 1817, Samuel Taylor Coleridge had long before described the “prime merit” of a literary genius to be the representation of “familiar objects” so as to evoke “freshness of sensation”; but whereas the Romantic critic had stressed the author’s ability to express a fresh mode of experiencing the world, the formalist stresses the function of purely literary devices to produce the effect of freshness in the reader’s experience of a literary work.) The foregrounded properties, or “artistic devices,” which estrange poetic language are often described as “deviations” from ordinary language. Such deviations, which are analyzed most fully in the writings of Roman Jakobson, consist primarily in setting up, and afterward violating, patterns in the sound and syntax of poetic language—including patterns in speech sounds, grammatical constructions, rhythm,

—and also in setting up prominent recurrences of
Some of the most fruitful work of Jakobson and others, valid outside the
meter and of the repetitions of
alliteration and *rhyme*. These features of poetry they regard not as

“story” (the simple enumeration of a chronological sequence of events)
plot by the use of a variety of devices that violate sequence and that

.)

The standard treatment of the Russian movement is by Victor Erlich,
(rev. 1981). See also R. L. Jackson and
Russian Formalism: A Retrospective Glance (1985). René Wellek
e Literary Theory and Aesthetics of the Prague School (1969).

Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays (1965); Ladislav Matejka
Readings in Russian Poetics: Formalist and Structur-
(1971); P. L. Garvin, ed., *A Prague School Reader on Esthetics, Literary*
(1964); and Peter Steiner, ed., *The Prague School: Selected*
–1946 (1982). A comprehensive and influential formalist essay
“Linguistics and Poetics,” is included in his *Language in*
(1987). Samuel Levin’s *Linguistic Structures in Poetry* (1962) represents

Russian Formalism and Anglo-American New Criticism: A Comparative
(1971).

American *New Criticism*, although it developed independently, is some-
“formalist” because, like European formalism, it stresses the anal-

“external” world. It also, like European

“theme.” The main influ-

stylistics and of *narratology*. Roman Jakobson and Tzvetan

Todorov have also been influential in introducing formalist concepts and methods into French *structuralism*.

Strong opposition to formalism, in both its European and American varieties, has been voiced by some *Marxist critics* (who view it as the product of a reactionary ideology), and more recently by proponents of *reader-response criticism*, *speech-act theory*, and *new historicism*; these last three types of criticism all reject the view that there is a sharp and definable division between ordinary language and literary language. In the 1990s a number of critics called for a return to a formalist mode of treating a work of literature primarily as literature, instead of with persistent reference to its stand, whether explicit or covert, on political, racial, or sexual issues. A notable instance is Frank Lentricchia's "Last Will and Testament of an Ex-literary Critic" (*Lingua Franca*, Sept./Oct. 1996), renouncing his earlier writings and teachings "about literature as a political instrument," in favor of the view "that literature is pleasurable and important, as literature, and not as an illustration of something else." (Refer to *objective criticism*, under the entry in this *Glossary on criticism*.) See also Harold Bloom's advocacy of reading literature not to apply or confirm a political or social theory but for the love of literature, in *The Western Canon* (1994); and the essays in *Aesthetics and Ideology*, ed. George Levine (1994).

Toward the end of the last century, the formalist approach found a number of theoretical advocates. This return to formalism, building on a renewed interest in metrics (see *meter*) and in *aesthetics*, at first was proposed primarily as a reaction against the *new historicism*; but within a few years, what became known as the **new formalism** proposed a positive program, undertaking to connect the formal aspects of literature to the historical, political, and worldly concerns, in opposition to which the formalist movement had earlier defined itself. A number of new formalists argue that the formal integrity of a work of art is what protects it against *ideology*, idealization, and the routinizing effects of everyday experience; others emphasize that the perception of aesthetic or literary form is a necessary condition of critical thought. (The "new formalism" in criticism is to be distinguished from the "new formalism" in the writing of poetry; see the entry *free verse*.)

The first major advocate of new formalism was Susan J. Wolfson in *Formal Charges: The Shaping of Poetry in British Romanticism* (1997). Wolfson and Marshall Brown edited a collection of new-formalist essays, *Reading for Form* (2006). See also W. J. T. Mitchell, "The Commitment to Form," *PMLA*, Vol. 118 (March 2003); and for an appreciative overview of the new-formalist movement, Marjorie Levinson, "What Is New Formalism?" *PMLA*, Vol. 122 (March 2007). The journal *Representations* devoted a special issue to the question of form in 2008. For references to formalism (in literary criticism) in other entries, see pages 52, 168, 290.

format of a book: 34.

; 53.

Free verse is sometimes referred to as “open form” verse, or by the **vers libre**. Like traditional verse, it is printed in short lines

—that is, into feet, or recurrent units of weak- and strong-stressed syllable.) Most free verse also has irregular line lengths, and either lacks
Blank verse differs from unrhymed free

Within these broad boundaries, there is a great diversity in the measures

Leaves of Grass by using verse lines of varying length which depended for

Symbolist poets in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and

Among the many modes of open versification in English, we can make a

—the variable positioning, spacing, and length of words,
—to control pace, pause, and emphasis in the reading, and also

to achieve an alternation of suspension and relief, in accordance as the line endings work against or coincide with the pull toward closure of the units of syntax.

*Chanson Innocente*⁵

in Just-
 spring when the world is mud-
 luscious the little
 lame balloonman

 whistles far and wee

 and eddieandbill come
 running from marbles and
 piracies and it's
 spring

 when the world is puddle-wonderful

 the queer
 old balloonman whistles
 far and wee
 and bettyandisbel come dancing
 from hop-scotch and jump-rope and

 it's
 spring
 and
 the
 goat-footed
 balloonMan whistles
 far
 and
 wee

In the following passage from Langston Hughes' free-verse poem "Mother to Son," the second and sixth lines are metrically parallel (in that both fall into fairly regular *iambic pentameter*) in order to enhance their opposition in reference; while the single word "bare," constituting a total verse line, is rhymed with "stair" in the long line to which "bare" contrasts starkly, in meaning as in line-length:

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⁵ Copyright © 1923, 1951, 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust. Copyright © 1976 by George James Firmage, from *Complete Poems: 1904-1962* by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.

⁶ "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes from *Collected Poems*. Reprinted by permission of Harold Ober Associates, Inc.

FREE VERSE

Text not available due to copyright restrictions

A very short poem by A. R. Ammons exemplifies the unobtrusive way in

*Small Song*⁷

The reeds give
way to the

wind and give
the wind away

The visual pattern of the printed poem signals that we are to read it as

couplets. The first line of each stanza ends with the same word,
” not only to achieve tension and release in the suspended syntax of

“give way” (surrender) to
. . . away” (reveal, with a suggestion also of yield up). The poet

iambic foot, yet is free to mimic in-

nd give / the wind a way).

A number of contemporary poets and critics have called—in a movement
new formalism—for a return from free verse to the

“The New Formalism,” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 14
“Notes on the New Formalism,” in *Conversant*
, ed. James McCorkle (1990). For “new formalism” as applied to a
formalism.

See Percy Mansell Jones, *The Background of Modern French Poetry* (1951);
“The Prosodies of Free Verse,” in *Twentieth-Century Litera-*
, ed. Reuben A. Brower (1971); Walter Sutton, *American Free*
(1973); Paul Fussell, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (rev. 1979); Charles
Free Verse: An Essay on Prosody (1980); H. T. Kirby-Smith, *The*
(1996). Timothy Steele’s *Missing Measures: Modern Poetry*

⁷ is reprinted from *The Really Short Poems of A. R. Ammons*, by permission of W. W. Norton &

and the Revolt against Meter (1990) is a history of free verse by a writer who argues for a return to metrical versification. For references to *free verse* in other entries, see pages 223, 319.

freestyling: 271.

Freudian criticism: See *psychological and psychoanalytic criticism*.

Freytag's Pyramid: 296.





: 272.

; 146.

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: Gender criticism, like the **gender studies** of which it is a part,
's identification as male or

social

that is diverse, variable, and dependent on historical circumstances.

Gender studies have an obvious (and sometimes contentious) overlap
feminist criticism, gay studies, and lesbian studies; the distinguishing attribute

men's studies was estab-
women's stud-

. Proponents of men's studies did not contest the overall fact of *patriarchy*—

—but undertook to complicate and subtilize the opposition of
“masculi-

” the internal stresses within each concept of masculinity, and the degree

's studies

's studies have broadened their scope so as to

The Making of Masculi-

's *Studies*, 1987; Alice Jardine and Paul Smith, eds., *Men*

, 1987; Judith Kegan Gardiner, ed., *Masculinity Studies and Feminist*
, 2002.)

Gender studies are indebted to the social historian Michel Foucault, who

's studies

Between Men: English Literature and Male

Homosocial Desire, which proposed that there is a large “homosocial spectrum” of male-to-male bondings, ranging from fierce rivalry through a variety of relationships within families, friendships, and all-male societies and organizations, to patently erotic desires and intimacies; she also held that these relationships were crossed, concealed, or distorted by a pervasive homophobia—the fear that one’s bondings to other men, whatever its type, should appear to be homosexual, to oneself as well as to other people. In 1990 Judith Butler published *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. In it she argued that gender is not an innate or essential identity, but a contingent and variable construct that mandates a “performance”—that is, a particular set of practices which an individual acquires from the discourse of his or her social era and strives to enact. (Refer to the comments on Foucault, Sedgwick, and Butler in the entries *feminist criticism* and *queer theory*.)

The predominant emphasis on same-sex desires and on intersexual and intrasexual rivalries in forming masculine and other gender categories has been countered by a number of scholars who insist on the importance of such nonsexual factors as race, ethnicity, economic arrangements, and social class in establishing different types and ideals of manhood. David Leverenz, for example, in *Manhood and the American Renaissance* (1989), attributes the chief influence in fashioning American “ideologies of manhood” to altering economic conditions and class structures. Leverenz stresses the primacy, from the mid-nineteenth century into the present, of the economic era of competitive individualism in establishing middle-class norms of manhood that are based on male rivalry in the working arena, and points out the pervasive effect of the struggle for dominance and status, not of men against women, but of men against other men. James Eli Adams’ *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Masculinity* (1995) analyzes the multiplicity, the multiple determinants, the surprising interrelationships, and the internal strains and instabilities of diverse Victorian masculinities and ideals of “manliness.” He identifies shared interests that were dependent on social class, occupation, political allegiance, and religious beliefs, as well as same-sex desires and object-choices, which bonded Victorian men into a diversity of tight-knit groups and sometimes secret communities, and describes the mixed feelings of suspicion, fear, and allure exerted on outsiders by such closed male fellowships, including those that did not have a homosexual component.

Scholars of gender, and particularly of masculinities, focus on eras when rapid changes in social conditions have produced conspicuous strains and alterations in gender-norms. The Victorian period has been a favorite one for these investigations. Another is the present era, in which the vogue of gender studies has itself served to make even more uncertain, precarious, and mutable the gender roles that such studies subject to analytic scrutiny.

Gender studies are interdisciplinary, and are conducted by sociologists, cultural anthropologists, and social historians, as well as by scholars of literature and cinema. The following books indicate the range of these studies: Joseph H. Pleck, *The Myth of Masculinity* (1981); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America* (1985); Peter G.

Him/Her/Self: Sex Roles in Modern America (rev. 1986); Teresa de
Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction (1987);
Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-
 (1988); Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (1995). Consult
Engendering
 (1990); Michael Roper and James
Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800 (1991); David Glover
Gender (2000); Rachel Adams and David Savran, eds., *The*
 (2002). See also Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Gender Criti-
 't Gender," in Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn, eds., *Redrawing*
 (1992).

: 146.

(of criticism): 290.

: A term, French in origin, that denotes types or classes of *literature*. The

lyric (uttered throughout
epic or *narrative* (in which the narrator speaks in the first
drama (in which

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916),

Within this overarching division, Aristotle and other classical critics iden-
 , *tragedy*, *comedy*, and *satire*, have remained current to the present day; to
biography, *essay*, and *novel*. A glance at the genres in prose and verse listed at

Through the Renaissance and much of the eighteenth century, the recog-
 —or poetic **kinds** as they were then called—were widely thought

neoclassic critics insisted that each kind must remain "pure" (there
 "mixing" of tragedy and comedy), and also proposed
 which specified the subject matter, structure, style, and emotional effect

down to peasants—see *decorum*), ranging from epic and tragedy at the top to the pastoral, short lyric, epigram, and other types—then considered to be minor genres—at the bottom. Shakespeare satirized the pedantic classifiers of his era in Polonius' catalogue (*Hamlet*, II. ii.) of types of drama: "tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral...."

In the course of the eighteenth century the emergence of new types of literary productions—such as the novel, and the poem combining nature description, philosophy, and narrative (James Thomson's *Seasons*, 1726–30)—helped weaken confidence in the fixity and stability of literary genres. And in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the extraordinary rise in the prominence and prestige of the short lyric poem, and the concurrent shift in the basis of critical theory to an *expressive* orientation (see the entry *criticism*), effected a drastic alteration in both the conception and ranking of literary genres, with the lyric displacing epic and tragedy as the quintessentially poetic type. From the *Romantic Period* on, a decreasing emphasis on the generic conception of literature was indicated by the widespread use of criteria for evaluating literature which—unlike the criteria in *neoclassic* criticism, which tended to be specific to a particular genre—were broadly applicable to all literary works: criteria such as "sincerity," "intensity," "organic unity," and "high seriousness." In the *New Criticism* of the mid-twentieth century, with its ruling concept of the uniqueness of each literary work, genre ceased to play more than a subordinate role in critical analysis and evaluation. For the changes in the nineteenth century in the classification and ranking of the genres, see M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), especially chapters 1, 4, and 6; on the continuance, as well as changes, of writings in the traditional genres during the Romantic Period, see Stuart Curran, *Poetic Form and British Romanticism* (1986).

After 1950 or so, an emphasis on generic types was revived by some critical theorists, although on varied principles of classification. R. S. Crane and other Chicago critics have defended the utility for practical criticism of a redefined distinction among genres, based on Aristotle's *Poetics*, in which works are classified in accordance with the similarity in the principles by which they are organized in order to achieve a particular kind of emotional effect; see R. S. Crane, ed., *Critics and Criticism* (1952), pp. 12–24, 546–63, and refer to the *Chicago school* in this *Glossary*. Northrop Frye has proposed an *archetypal* theory in which the four major genres (comedy, romance, tragedy, and satire) are held to manifest the enduring forms bodied forth by the human imagination, as represented in the archetypal myths correlated with the four seasons (*Anatomy of Criticism*, 1957, pp. 158–239). Other current theorists conceive genres as social formations on the model of social institutions, such as the state or church, rather than on the model of biological species. By *structuralist critics* a genre is conceived as a set of constitutive conventions and codes, altering from age to age, but shared by a kind of implicit contract between writer and reader. These codes make possible the writing of a particular literary text, although the writer may play against, as well as

—that is, to *natural-*
 it, by relating it to the world as defined and ordered by codes in the
 Many current critics regard genres as more or less arbitrary modes of clas-
 's concept of **family resemblances**. That is, they propose that, in the

's view, see
 "Family Resemblances and Generalization Concern-
 " *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 2 [1965], pp. 219–28,
 "Family Resemblances and Family Trees: Two Cogni-
 " *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 30 [2004], pp. 537–56.) There has also

Reviews of traditional theories of genre are René Wellek and Austin
Theory of Literature (3d ed., 1973), chapter 17, and the readable short
Genre (1982). For more recent developments see
Beyond Genre: New Directions in Literary Classification (1972);
Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and
 (1982); Adena Rosmarin, *The Power of Genre* (1985); and David Duff,
Modern Genre Theory (2000). For a Marxist approach, see Fredric Jameson,
 " chapter 2 of
 (1981); for a de-
 "The Law of Genre," *Critical In-*
 (Autumn 1980; reprinted in W. J. T. Mitchell, ed., *On Narrative*, 1981);
Genre
PMLA, Vol. 122:5 (October 2007) on
 ,

For references to *genre* in other entries, see pages 17, 27, 37, 45, 96. For
autobiography; *biography*; *the character*; *drama*; *essay*; *exemplum*;
 ; *fantastic literature*; *nature writing*; *novel*; *parable*; *satire*; *short story*. For verse
ballad; *chivalric romance*; *drama*; *emblem poem*; *epic*; *epigram*; *fable*;
 ; *georgic*; *lai*; *light verse*; *lyric*; *occasional poem*; *pastoral*; *rap*; *satire*.

Georgian period: 284.

Georgian poets: 284.

georgic (jōr' jik): 88.

golden age: The term derives from the *chronological primitivism* that was propounded in the Greek poet Hesiod's *Works and Days* (eighth century BC), as well as by many later Greek and Roman writers. The earliest period of human history, regarded as a state of perfect felicity, was called "the golden age," and the continuous decline of human well-being through time was expressed by the sequence "the silver age" and "the bronze age," ending with the present sad condition of humanity, "the iron age." See *primitivism and progress* and, for renderings of the golden age in the guise of a carefree rural existence, *pastoral*. Refer to Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (1969).

Gothic novel: The word **Gothic** originally referred to the Goths, an early Germanic tribe, then came to signify "germanic," then "medieval." "Gothic architecture" now denotes the medieval form of architecture, characterized by the use of the high pointed arch and vault, flying buttresses, and intricate recesses, which spread through western Europe between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries.

The Gothic novel, or in an alternative term, **Gothic romance**, is a type of prose fiction which was inaugurated by Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story* (1764)—the subtitle denotes its setting in the Middle Ages—and flourished through the early nineteenth century. Some writers followed Walpole's example by setting their stories in the medieval period; others set them in a Catholic country, especially Italy or Spain. The locale was often a gloomy castle furnished with dungeons, subterranean passages, and sliding panels; the typical story focused on the sufferings imposed on an innocent heroine by a cruel and lustful villain, and made bountiful use of ghosts, mysterious disappearances, and other sensational and supernatural occurrences (which in a number of novels turned out to have natural explanations). The principal aim of such novels was to evoke chilling terror by exploiting mystery and a variety of horrors. Many of them are now read mainly as period pieces, but the best opened up to fiction the realm of the irrational and of the perverse impulses and nightmarish terrors that lie beneath the orderly surface of the civilized mind. Examples of Gothic novels are William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786)—the setting of which is both medieval and Oriental and the subject both erotic and sadistic—Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and other highly successful romances, and Matthew Gregory Lewis' *The Monk* (1796), which exploited, with considerable literary skill, the shock effects of a narrative involving rape, incest, murder, and diabolism. Jane Austen made good-humored fun of the more decorous instances of the Gothic vogue in *Northanger Abbey* (written 1798, published 1818).

The term “Gothic” has also been extended to a type of fiction which
 of gloom and terror, represents events that are uncanny or macabre or

“Gothic” has been applied to William Godwin’s
 (1794), Mary Shelley’s remarkable and influential *Frankenstein*

“Gothic” has been used to describe elements of the maca-
 , Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, Charles Dickens’ *Bleak House*
Great Expectations (the Miss

and refer to Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic*
The Female Gothic (1983).

America, especially the American South, has been fertile in Gothic fiction

’s *Sanctuary*
Absalom, Absalom! and some of the fiction of Truman Capote. The night-

’s pop-
Rebecca (1938) and Iris Murdoch’s *The Unicorn*; it is also exploited by

See G. R. Thompson, ed., *The Gothic Imagination: Essays in Dark Roman-*
 (1974); William Patrick Day, *In the Circles of Fear and Desire* (1985);
The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fiction from 1765 to
 (1979; 2d ed., 1996); Eugenia DeLamotte, *Perils of the Night* (1990);
Art of Darkness (1995); Victor Sage and Allan Lloyd Smith,
Modern Gothic: A Reader (1996); Fred Botting, *Gothic* (1996); E. J. Clery
Gothic Documents: A Sourcebook, 1700–1820 (2000);
Gothic (1996). On “American Gothic”—and especially the
 —see Chester E. Eisinger, “The Gothic Spirit in the
 ” *Fiction in the Forties* (1963). For references to *Gothic novel* in other en-
 390, and refer to the *thriller*, in the entry *detective story*.

: 195; 382.

Graphic narrative, **graphic novel**, and **sequential art** are

nonfiction, in which extended narratives are told through a series of illustrations. The combined use of images with words is, however, much older. Medieval tapestries or woodcut series often told stories, and *illuminated* manuscripts often used pictures to imply, complement, or elaborate on narrative sequences. Both William Hogarth (1697–1764) and William Blake (1757–1826) produced forms of graphic narrative, and Blake’s *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* is often cited as a precursor by contemporary graphic narrative artists. The more direct graphic antecedent was, however, the comic book form as it emerged at the end of the nineteenth century in the United States. In 1930, the American Milt Gross published *He Done Her Wrong*, a three-hundred-page narrative composed entirely of images in comic-book style. Other “wordless novels” followed, and in the 1940s, *Classics Illustrated*, a series that adapted well-known novels to the graphic style of the comic book, began to appear. In 1976, Harvey Pekar began his long-running autobiographical series *American Splendor*, illustrated with framed images by artists such as R. Crumb, whose pictorial style and countercultural sensibility was imitated by many artists who produced graphic narratives.

One of the first works to which the term “graphic novel” was applied was Will Eisner’s *A Contract with God, and Other Tenement Stories* (1978), a collection of linked graphic narratives. The most significant graphic narrative of the twentieth century was Art Spiegelman’s two-volume *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale* (1986, 1991), which recounted in the form of a *fable* the struggle of Spiegelman’s father, a Polish Jew, to survive the Holocaust. Other graphic narratives have also focused on traumatic events or episodes in the public realm; see Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons, *Watchmen* (1986), Joe Sacco, *Palestine* (1996); and Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* (2003).

The graphic narratives that began to appear in the 1990s often sought to exploit the appeal of classic novels and popular literary forms by working in the genres of spy fiction, *mysteries*, and autobiography; at the same time, the formal experimentation of many graphic narratives align them with the practices of the artistic *avant-garde*.

One of the first books to develop a theory of graphic narrative was Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics* (1993). In *Adult Comics: An Introduction* (1993, new ed. 2003), Roger Sabin discusses the history of comics, stressing the British Victorian period, and Japanese and European traditions of graphic narrative; see also Sabin’s *Comics, Comix & Graphic Novels* (1996). Stephen Weiner’s *Faster than a Speeding Bullet: The Rise of the Graphic Novel* (2003) focuses on comic art in the United States. One of the leading practitioners of graphic narrative, Will Eisner, has written about his craft in *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative* (2008). See also Stephen E. Tabachnick, ed., *Teaching the Graphic Novel* (2009); Hillary Chute, “Comics as Literature? Reading Graphic Narrative,” *PMLA* 123.2 (2008); and *Modern Fiction Studies* 2006 (52.4), a special issue devoted to “autographics.”

Graveyard Poets: A term applied to eighteenth-century poets who wrote meditative poems, usually set in a graveyard, on the theme of human mortality, in

's "Night-Piece on Death" (1721), Edward Young's long
(1742), and Robert Blair's "The Grave" (1743). The vogue
's "Elegy
" (1751). The writing of graveyard poems
's "Thanatopsis"

See Amy Louise Reed, *The Background of Gray's Elegy* (1924). Edith M.
The Gloomy Egoist (1932), follows the evolution of graveyard and

Le Pré-romantisme (3 vols., 1924–47).

: The conception of the Great Chain of Being is

Enlight-
. In its comprehensive eighteenth-century form, the Great Chain of
"excellence" of God con-
—that is, in an unstinting, unjealous overflow of

ety of life; no conceivable species of being remains unrealized.

degree, and so merges all but imperceptibly into the species most nearly
related to it.

pose a great chain, or ladder, of being, extending from the lowliest con-
dition of the merest existence up to God Himself. In this chain human
beings occupy the middle position between the animal kinds and the
angels, who are purely spiritual beings.

On these concepts Leibniz and other thinkers also grounded what is
philosophical optimism—the view that this is "the best of all possi-
" but only in the special sense that this is the best world whose

's bountifulness consists in His creation of the greatest possible vari-

's excellence logically entails that there must be a progressive set

of limitations, hence increasing “evils,” as we move downward along the chain of being. As Voltaire ironically summarized this mode of optimism in his era, “This is the best of all possible worlds, and everything in it is a necessary evil.”

With remarkable precision and economy, Alexander Pope compressed the basic concepts that make up the Great Chain of Being into a half-dozen or so *heroic couplets*, in Epistle I of his *Essay on Man* (1732–34):

Of systems possible, if 'tis confessed
That Wisdom Infinite must form the best,
Where all must full or not coherent be,
And all that rises rise in due degree;
Then in the scale of reasoning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as man....
See, through this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth....
Vast Chain of Being! which from God began,
Natures ethereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach! from Infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing. ...

Philosophical optimism is one type of what is known as a **theodicy**. This term, compounded of the Greek words for “God” and “right,” designates any system of thought which sets out to reconcile the assumption that God is perfectly good with the fact that evil exists. Milton’s “great argument” in *Paradise Lost*, by which he undertakes to “assert Eternal Providence / And justify the ways of God to men” (l. 24–26) is an example of a traditional Christian theodicy, explaining evil as the result of “man’s first disobedience” in Eden to a perfectly just God, which “Brought death into the world, and all our woe.”

See A. O. Lovejoy’s classic work in the history of ideas, *The Great Chain of Being* (1936); also E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (1943), chapters 4–5, which deals with the prevalence of the conception in Shakespeare’s lifetime.

green studies: 96.

grotesque: A term originally applied to a style of mosaic and fresco wall paintings first used in ancient Rome and rediscovered in the late fifteenth century during an excavation of the emperor Nero’s Golden House, or Domus Aurea. The style combined arabesques with floral, animal, and human elements in a whimsically ornamental mode. Because the rooms of the Golden House were, at the time of excavation, underground and resembled grottoes, the artwork was labeled “grottesca” (Italian for “of a grotto”). The style was adopted and extended by Raphael and other painters of the Italian Renaissance, who used it to fill marginal spaces such as borders of paintings, or to cover ceilings or pilasters.

Facilitated by the rise of printing and the medium of engraving, the dissemination of “grottesca” designs continued throughout Europe from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The term itself was increasingly used to

“temptations” of St. Anthony, the gargoyles

“grot-” was intended to be none of these, but simply delightful and diverting. The grotesque has been identified as a sign of *decadence*—as in the extrav-
baroque or rococo art—or else as the

“Grotesque Renaissance” in *The Stones of Venice* (1981, 2d ed.
“noble” or “terrible gro-” which expressed “the *repose* or play of a *serious* mind” and the “bar-” or “ignoble” grotesque, which represented “the *full exertion* of a one,” with Dante representing the purest form of the first category “Hindoos” and “savages” the second. The term “grotesque” is now widely applied to painters such as Hieron-

Great Expectations), and Franz Kafka
”). The term is also used to describe macabre episodes in the
Psycho and *Vertigo*).
The first influential academic study of the grotesque was Wolfgang
The Grotesque in Art and Literature (1957, trans. 1981), which stressed
’s darker or demonic attributes of estrangement and alienation. In
’s *Rabelais and His World* appeared,

(2d ed., 2006),

—an interval

The Grotesque (2009).

(of a metaphor): **131**, 63.

(in drama): **378**.





hagiography (hāg' ēōg'' răf ē): 27.

haiku (sometimes spelled **hokku**): Haiku is a Japanese poetic form that represents—in seventeen syllables that are ordered into three lines of five, seven, and five syllables—the poet's emotional or spiritual response to a natural object, scene, or season of the year. The strict form, which relies on the short, uniform, and unstressed syllabic structure of the Japanese language, is extremely difficult in English; most poets who attempt the haiku loosen the rule for the number and pattern of the syllables. The haiku greatly influenced Ezra Pound and other Imagists, who set out to reproduce both the brevity and the precision of the image in the Japanese original. Ezra Pound's "In a Station of the Metro" is a well-known instance of the haiku in the loosened English form; see this poem under *imagism*.

Earl R. Miner, *The Japanese Tradition in British and American Literature* (1958); R. H. Blyth, *A History of Haiku* (2 vols., 1963–64); Bruce Ross, ed., *Haiku Moment: An Anthology of Contemporary North American Haiku* (1993).

hamartia (hāmārtē' a): 408.

hard-boiled detective story: 84.

Harlem Renaissance: A period of remarkable creativity in literature, music, dance, painting, and sculpture by African-Americans, from the end of the First World War in 1917 through the 1920s. In the course of the mass migrations to the urban North in order to escape the legal segregation of the American South—and also in order to take advantage of the jobs opened to African-Americans at the beginning of the war—the population of the region of Manhattan known as Harlem became almost exclusively black, and developed into the vital center of African-American culture in America. Distinguished writers who were part of the movement included the poets Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes (who also wrote novels and plays), Claude McKay, and Sterling Brown; the novelists Jean Toomer (whose inventive *Cane*, 1923, included verse and drama as well as prose fiction), Jessie Fauset, and Wallace Thurman; and many essayists, memoirists, and writers in diverse modes such as James Weldon Johnson, Marcus Garvey, and Arna Bontemps.

The Great Depression of 1929 and the early 1930s brought the period of buoyant Harlem culture—which had been fostered by prosperity in the publishing industry and the art world—effectively to an end. Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), and her other works, however, are widely accounted as late products of the Harlem Renaissance.

See *The New Negro: An Interpretation* (1925), an anthology edited by Alain Locke that did much to define the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance; Arna Bontemps, ed., *The Harlem Renaissance Remembered* (1972); David Levering Lewis, ed., *The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader* (1994); David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (1997); Steven Watson, *The Harlem*

–1930 (1995); Cheryl Wall, (1995); George Hutchinson, *The Harlem* (1995); William L. Andrews, Frances Smith *The Concise Oxford Companion to African* (2001).

(hějěm' ōnē): **207**, 307.

(hěptām' ěter): **220**.

(hěr' měnoo" tik): **176**.

; 180.

(in a narrative): **294**; 14.

Lines of iambic pentameter (see *meter*) which rhyme in pairs: *aa*, *, cc*, and so on. The adjective “heroic” was applied in the later seventeenth *epic* heroic dramas. This verse form was introduced into English *The Legend of Good Women* and most of *The*), and has been in constant use ever since. From the age of

Neoclassic Period, the poets wrote **closed couplets**, in which

caesura, or medial pause in the syntax.

The following passage from John Denham’s *Cooper’s Hill* (which he

Cooper’s Hill under to-

.) Note how Denham achieves diversity within the straitness

antithesis between the single lines and between the two halves

the iambic foot that begins the first line and the last line, and by manipulating similar and contrasting vowels and consonants. The poet is addressing the River Thames:

O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

And here is a passage from Alexander Pope, the greatest master of the metrical, syntactical, and rhetorical possibilities of the closed heroic couplet ("Of the Characters of Women," 1735, lines 243–48):

See how the world its veterans rewards!
A youth of frolics, an old age of cards;
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
Young without lovers, old without a friend;
A fop their passion, but their prize a sot;
Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot!

These closed neoclassic couplets contrast with the "open" pentameter couplets quoted from Keats' *Endymion* (1818) in the entry on *meter*. In the latter, the pattern of stresses varies often from the iambic norm, the syntax is unsymmetrical, and the couplets run on freely, with the rhyme serving to color rather than to stop the verse.

See George Williamson, "The Rhetorical Pattern of Neoclassical Wit," *Modern Philology*, Vol. 33 (1935); W. K. Wimsatt, "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason (Alexander Pope)," in *The Verbal Icon* (1954); William Bowman Piper, *The Heroic Couplet* (1969). For references to *heroic couplet* in other entries, see page 94.

heroic drama: Heroic drama was a form mainly specific to the *Restoration Period*, though instances continued to be written in the early eighteenth century. As John Dryden defined it: "An heroic play ought to be an imitation, in little, of an heroic poem; and consequently... love and valour ought to be the subject of it" (Preface to *The Conquest of Granada*, 1672). By "heroic poem" he meant *epic*, and the plays attempted to emulate the epic by employing as protagonist a large-scale warrior whose actions involve the fate of an empire, and by having all the characters speak in an elevated style, usually cast in the epigrammatic form of the closed *heroic couplet*. A noble hero and heroine are typically represented in a situation in which their passionate love conflicts with the demands of honor and with the hero's patriotic duty to his country; if the conflict ends in disaster, the play is called an **heroic tragedy**. Often the central dilemma is patently contrived and the characters seem to modern readers to be statuesque and unconvincing, while the attempt to sustain a high epic style swells sometimes into *bombast*, as in this utterance from Dryden's *Love Triumphant* (1693): "What woods are these? I feel my vital heat / Forsake my limbs, my curdled blood retreat."

Dryden is the major writer of this dramatic form; *The Conquest of Granada* 's most successful achieve-
All for Love (1678), which is an adaptation to the heroic formula of
's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Other heroic dramatists were Nathaniel
The Rival Queens) and Thomas Otway, whose *Venice Preserved* is a fine

parodies of the type: the Duke of Bucking-
's *The Rehearsal* (1672) and Henry Fielding's *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or*
(1731).

See Bonamy Dobrée, *Restoration Tragedy* (1929); Allardyce Nicoll, *Resto-*
(1955); Arthur C. Kirsch, *Dryden's Heroic Drama* (1965); Derek
–1700 (1996). For references to *heroic drama* in
282.

: 107.

; 410.

(in a narrative): 294.

(hěxām' ěter): 219.

(hī' ěrăt'' ĭk): 385.

homonyms: 325.

homostrophic (hō' mō strō'' fĭk): 263.

Horatian ode: 263.

Horatian satire: 354.

hubris (hyoo' brīs): 408.

Hudibrastic poem (hyoo' dībrās'' tik): 39.

Hudibrastic verse: 93.

humanism: In the sixteenth century the word **humanist** was coined to signify one who taught or wrote in the “*studia humanitatis*,” or “humanities”—that is, grammar, rhetoric, history, poetry, and moral philosophy, as distinguished from fields less concerned with the moral and imaginative aspects and activities of man, such as mathematics, natural philosophy, and theology. At that time, these studies focused on classical, especially Roman, culture; and they put great emphasis on learning to speak and write good Latin. Scholarly humanists recovered, edited, and expounded many ancient texts in Greek and Latin, and so contributed greatly to the store of materials and ideas in the European *Renaissance*. These humanists also wrote many works concerned with educational, moral, and political themes, based largely on classical writers such as Aristotle, Plato, and above all, Cicero. In the nineteenth century a new word, **humanism**, came to be applied to the view of human nature, the general values, and the educational ideas common to many Renaissance humanists, as well as to a number of later writers in the same tradition.

Typically, Renaissance humanism assumed the dignity and central position of human beings in the universe; emphasized the importance in education of studying classical imaginative and philosophical literature, although with emphasis on its moral and practical rather than its aesthetic values; and insisted on the primacy, in ordering human life, of reason (considered the universal and defining human faculty) as opposed to the instinctual appetites and the “animal” passions. Many humanists also stressed the need, in education, for a rounded development of an individual’s diverse powers—physical, mental, artistic, and moral—as opposed to a merely technical or specialized kind of training.

In our time the term “humanist” often connotes those thinkers who base truth on human experience and reason and who base values on human nature and culture, as distinguished from those who regard religious revelation as the warrant for basic truth and values. With few exceptions, however, Renaissance humanists were pious Christians who incorporated the concepts and ideals inherited from pagan antiquity into the frame of the Christian creed.

Christian humanism.

The rapid advance in the achievements and prestige of the natural

Life of Milton (1779):

The truth is, that the knowledge of external nature, and the sciences which that knowledge requires or includes, are not the great or the frequent business of the human mind.... We are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance.... Socrates was rather of opinion that what we had to learn was, how to do good, and avoid evil.

Victorian Period,
and studies in general education.
’s leading ideas are adaptations of the tenets of the older
—his view, for example, that culture is a perfection “of our
” and consists of “a
all the powers which make the beauty and worth
”; his emphasis on knowing “the best that is known and
” with the assumption that much of what is best is in
”

In the 1890s the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey developed a highly

“explanation” of the world, and the “human sciences” (the hu-
“understanding” of the full, concrete world
—the lived human world, for example, that is represented
interpretation and hermeneutics.)

In the last century the American movement of 1910–33 known as the
, under the leadership of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer

Literature and the American
, 1908; Norman Foerster, ed., *Humanism and America*, 1930; and Claes
Will, Imagination, and Reason: Babbitt, Croce, and the Problem of Reality,

humanistic view of the aims of a liberal education survives mainly in the requirement that all students in the liberal arts must take at least one course in the group called **the humanities**, which comprises literature, philosophy, music, languages, and sometimes history.

It is notable that a number of structuralist and poststructuralist philosophical and critical theories were expressly antihumanistic, not only in the sense that they undertook to subvert many of the values proposed by traditional humanism, but in the more radical sense that they undertook to “decenter,” or to eliminate entirely, the focus on the human being, or “subject,” as the major object of study and the major agency in effecting scientific, cultural, and literary achievements. “Man,” as Michel Foucault put it in a widely quoted affirmation, “is a simple fold in our language” who is destined to “disappear as soon as that knowledge has found a new form.” In the realm of literary and critical theory, some *structuralists* conceived of a human author as simply a “space” in which linguistic and cultural codes come together to effect a text; *deconstructionists* tended to reduce the human subject to one of the “effects” engendered by the differential play of language; and a number of *Marxist* and *new-historicist critics* analyzed the subject as a construction that is produced by the ideological “discursive formations,” particular to a time and culture, which the author-as-subject acquires and transmits in his or her literary productions. (See subject, under *poststructuralism*.)

Diverse poststructural and other opponents of humanism assert that human-centered systems of norms and values are based on the fallacy of **essentialism**—that is, the view (which antihumanists assume to be mistaken) that there is an essential human nature, or set of defining human features, which is innate, universal, and independent of historical and cultural differences. In response, the philosopher Martha Nussbaum has mounted a defense of essentialism, insisting that we are able to formulate, from within our own historical and cultural situation, a set of basic features, functions, and needs that constitute the specifically human form of life and are shared by human beings across all divisions of time, place, and culture. These common features include the knowledge that we are mortal, and have an instinctual aversion to death; the fact that we live an embodied life, hence have nutritional, sexual, and other needs and desires and a sensibility to pleasure and pain; the cognitive ability to perceive, think, and imagine, together with the practical ability to plan the means to achieve our aims; the capacity to experience emotions such as grief, anger, fear, and love; and a sense of relatedness and affiliation to other human beings. Possessing such capacities, we are able to recognize ourselves in others and to acknowledge our common humanity, whatever our individual and cultural differences. Conversely, if an individual does not have one or more of these features, we consider him to be, to that extent, lacking in humanity. Nussbaum holds that such essentialism provides adequate grounds for establishing basic human norms and values, and also that it is in fact indispensable as a ground for justifying claims for social and political justice on behalf of any oppressed, excluded, or marginalized minority. See Martha Nussbaum, “Social Justice and Universalism: In Defense of an Aristotelian

” *Modern Philology*, Vol. 90, supplement,
Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach

“In Defense

”

The linguist and social philosopher Noam Chomsky also supports human

“universal grammar,” fixed in
“rule-bound creativity” of the produc-
linguistics in literary

.) This universal genetic inheritance, in Chomsky’s view, constitutes

—that all human attitudes, beliefs, and norms are so-
—abets efforts by dominant social

Reflections on Language, 1975, and for evi-
’s genetic view of an
The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial

, 2002.)

A number of feminists, gay and lesbian critics, and proponents of ethnic
are adherents of “identity politics,” and stake out a position

subject. Like traditional humanists, **identity**
reject the extreme poststructural claims that the human subject is no
—as
—at the center of the

identity politics is often used pejora-

“identity” among advocates of political activism see
Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction, 1997, chapter 8;
Glossary on feminist criticism, postcolonial studies,

queer theory.)

On the concept and history of humanism: Douglas Bush, *The Renaissance*
(1939); P. O. Kristeller, *The Classics and Renaissance*
(1955); H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (1956);
The Idea of the Humanities (2 vols., 1967); Tony Davies, *Human-*
(2d ed., 2008); Tzvetan Todorov, *Imperfect Garden: The Legacy of Human-*
(2002). For antihumanist critiques or deconstruction of the human subject,
poststructuralism, deconstruction, and new historicism. For

opposition to such views and defenses of the humanist position in authorship, interpretation, and criticism, see Commission on the Humanities, *The Humanities in American Life: Report of the Commission on the Humanities* (1980); Richard Levin, "Bashing the Bourgeois Subject," in *Textual Practice*, Vol. 3 (1989); Clara Claiborne Park, *Rejoining the Common Reader* (1991); M. H. Abrams, "What Is a Humanistic Criticism?" in *The Emperor Redressed: Critiquing Critical Theory*, ed. Dwight Eddins (1995); Richard A. Etlin, *In Defense of Humanism: Value in Arts and Letters* (1996); Alvin Kernan, ed., *What's Happened to the Humanities?* (1997); David A. Hollinger, ed., *The Humanities and the Dynamics of Inclusion since World War II* (2006); Tony Davies, *Humanism* (2d ed., 2008). In *The Humanities and the Dream of America* (2011), Geoffrey Galt Harpham explores recurrent claims of a "crisis in the humanities," and argues that the modern concept of the humanities is a product of the post-World War II system of higher education in America.

For references to *humanism* in other entries, see page 42.

humanist: 161; 339.

humanities, the: 163.

humor: 421.

humours character: 57; 46, 421.

hybridization (in literary cultures): 307.

hymn: In current usage "hymn" denotes a song that celebrates God or expresses religious feelings and is intended primarily to be sung as part of a religious service. (See *lyric*.) The term derives from the Greek *hymnos*, which originally signified songs of praise that were for the most part addressed to the gods, but in some instances to human heroes or to abstract concepts. The early Christian churches, following classical examples, introduced the singing of hymns as part of the liturgy; some of these consisted of the texts or paraphrases of Old Testament psalms, but others were composed as songs of worship by churchly authors of the time. The writing of religious lyric poems set to music continued through the Middle Ages and into the Protestant Reformation; Martin Luther (1483–1546) himself composed both the German words and the music of hymns, including "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," which is now sung by most Christian denominations.

The writing of religious hymns, some of them metrical versions of the psalms and others original, continued through the Renaissance and was supplemented by a revival of "literary hymns" on secular or even pagan subjects—a classical type which had been kept alive through the Middle Ages by a number of neo-Latin poets, and was now composed to be read rather than sung.

's *Four Hymns* (1596) are distinguished examples of such

's "A Hymn on the Seasons"
' "Hymn to Apollo," and Shelley's "Hymn of Apollo" and
"; the last three of these hymns, it should be noted, like

The secular hymns were often long and elaborate compositions that
ode. These hymns,
"Hymn" that constitutes
's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativ-
" (1629), were formal compositions that were intended only to be read. The
—the short religious lyric written for public singing—was

"Lead, Kindly Light." In America the poets

African-American type that we call **spirituals**,
"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and "Go Down, Moses." (James
Book of American Negro Spirituals,
-26.)

See the anthology, *New Oxford Book of Christian Verse*, ed. Donald Davie
Hymnody Past and Present (1937); Louis F.
The English Hymn (1962); P. S. Diehl, *The Medieval European Religious*
(1985); and the article "Hymn" in *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Po-*
(1993).

: The figure of speech, or *trope*, called **hyper-**
(*hīpur'bolē*): Greek for "overshooting") is bold overstatement, or the

Not poppy nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday.

's gallantly hy-
"Drink to me only with thine eyes," and
"To His Coy Mistress," by which Andrew Marvell
"vegetable love should grow"—if he had "but
" The "tall talk" or **tall tale** of the American West is a

form of mainly comic hyperbole. There is the story of a cowboy in an eastern restaurant who ordered a steak well done. “Do you call this well done?” he roared at the server. “I’ve seen critters hurt worse than that get well!”

The contrary figure is **understatement** (the Greek term is **meiosis**, “lessening”), which deliberately represents something as very much less in magnitude or importance than it really is, or is ordinarily considered to be. The effect is usually ironic. It is savagely (and complexly) ironic in Jonathan Swift’s *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), in which the narrator asserts the “superiority” of “that Wisdom, which converses about the surface” to “that pretended Philosophy which enters into the Depth of Things,” giving as example that “last week I saw a Woman *flay’d*, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her Person for the worse.” The understatement is comically ironic in Mark Twain’s comment, “The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated.” Some critics extend “meiosis” to the use in literature of a simple, unemphatic statement to enhance the effect of a deeply pathetic or tragic event; an example is the line at the close of the narrative in William Wordsworth’s “Michael” (1800): “And never lifted up a single stone.”

A special form of understatement is **litotes** (Greek for “plain” or “simple”), the assertion of an affirmative by negating its contrary: “He’s not the brightest man in the world” meaning “He is stupid.” The figure is frequent in Anglo-Saxon poetry, where the effect is usually one of grim irony. In *Beowulf*, after Hrothgar has described the ghastly mere where the monster Grendel dwells, he comments, “That is not a pleasant place.”

hypermedia: 167.

hypertext: Hypertext designates a nonsequential kind of text, achieved by embedding within it a number of links and references to other texts; the result is to make the experience of reading the hypertext nonlinear, open, and variable. That is, the reader of the hypertext, instead of reading along a single verbal line, branches off into other texts at will. (This *Glossary* can be accounted a form of hypertext, in that the italicized terms invite readers to suspend forward progress while they look ahead or back in order to consult other relevant entries.) The term was coined in the 1960s, and was applied specifically to texts on a computer, in which browsers and hyperlinks enable the reader to move instantly from one document to another. Narratives that use embedded hyperlinks to enable the reader to navigate freely, deviating from the main narrative to explore details of plot, character, or setting, are called **hypertext fiction** or **cyberfiction**. Often, hypertext fiction—like other instances of what are called **hypermedia**—incorporates sound, graphics, and video.

See George P. Landow, ed., *Hyper/Text/Theory* (1994), and *Hypertext 3.0* (2006).

hypotactic style (hī’ pōtāk’ tik): 386.



I

(ĩām' bik): **218**; 30.

(in semiotics) (ĩ kōn): **358**.

(ĩkōnō' grāfē): **182**.

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Idealism is the name for a philosophical doctrine, arising at the end of

's treatise on *Naive and Sentimental Poetry*, Idealism was articulated as a program, at the center of which is the image of a harmonious human
According to the tenets of Idealism, it was the task of art, and poetry in

's *Madame Bovary* for blasphemy and Baudelaire's *Les*
for obscenity demonstrated the consequences for works of art
modernism began,

aestheticism,
formalism all had, she argues, a common enemy in Idealism,

Henrik Ibsen and the Birth of Modernism: Art, Theater, Philosophy (2006).

Reading in Detail: Aesthetics and the Feminine

.

(ĩdēōl' ōjē): **203**; 20, 42, 333, 401.

.

(ĩl' ōkyoo'' shūnāry): **372**.

illuminated (books): 32, 153.

image clusters: 170.

Imagery: This term is one of the most common in criticism, and one of the most variable in meaning. Its applications range all the way from the “mental pictures” which, it is sometimes claimed, are experienced by the reader of a poem, to the totality of the components which make up a poem. Examples of this range of usage are the statements by the poet C. Day Lewis, in his *Poetic Image* (1948, pp. 17–18), that an image “is a picture made out of words,” and that “a poem may itself be an image composed from a multiplicity of images.” Three discriminable uses of the word, however, are especially frequent; in all these senses imagery is said to make poetry *concrete*, as opposed to *abstract*:

1. “Imagery” (that is, “images” taken collectively) is used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem or other work of literature, whether by literal description, by *allusion*, or in the *vehicles* (the secondary references) of its similes and metaphors. In William Wordsworth’s “She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways” (1800), the imagery in this broad sense includes the literal objects the poem refers to (for example, “untrodden ways,” “springs,” “grave”), as well as the “violet” of the metaphor and the “star” of the simile in the second stanza. The term “image” should not be taken to imply a visual reproduction of the object denoted; some readers of the passage experience visual images and some do not; and among those who do, the explicitness and details of the pictures vary greatly. Also, “imagery” in this usage includes not only visual sense qualities, but also qualities that are auditory, tactile (touch), thermal (heat and cold), olfactory (smell), gustatory (taste), and kinesthetic (sensations of movement). In his *In Memoriam* (1850), No. 101, for example, Tennyson’s imagery encompasses not only things that are visible, but also qualities that are smelled, tasted, or heard, together with a suggestion, in the adjective “summer,” of warmth:

Unloved, that beech will gather brown, ...
And many a rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air...

2. Imagery is used, more narrowly, to signify only specific descriptions of visible objects and scenes, especially if the description is vivid and particularized, as in this passage from Marianne Moore’s “The Steeple-Jack”:

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⁸ Lines from “The Steeplejack” by Marianne Moore, from *The Complete Poems of Marianne Moore*. Copyright © 1951. Reprinted with permission from Faber & Faber Ltd.

figurative language, especially the *vehicles* of metaphors and similes. Critics after the 1930s, and notably the *New Critics*, went far beyond earlier commentators in stressing imagery, in this sense, as the essential component in poetry, and as a major factor in poetic meaning, structure, and effect.

Using the term in this third sense, Caroline Spurgeon, in *Shakespeare's* (1935), made statistical counts of the referents of

's personal experiences, interests, and temperament. Following the lead

's plays of **image clusters** (recurrent groupings of seemingly unre-

motifs (for example, animal imagery in , and the figures of disease, corruption, and death in *Hamlet*); her view *atmosphere* of a play.

"thematic imagery" in works of literature. Some *New Critics* —in distinction from explicit

—
theme, worked itself out

Macbeth in *The Well Wrought Urn*
This Great Stage: Image and Structure

"*King Lear*" (1948).

See also H. W. Wells, *Poetic Imagery* (1924); Richard H. Fogle, *The Imagery* (1949); Norman Friedman, "Imagery: From Sensation to " *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 12 (1953); Frank Kermode, *Ro-* (1957). For references to *imagery* in other entries, see page 61.

(in Lacanian criticism): **324**.

Imagism was a poetic vogue that flourished in England, and even

"rather blurry, messy sentimentalistic mannerish" poetry at the turn of the century. Pound, the

"Amygism."

Some Imagist Poets (1915–17), were for

a poetry which, abandoning conventional limits on poetic materials and versification, is free to choose any subject and to create its own rhythms, uses common speech, and presents an “image” (vivid sensory description) that is hard, clear, and concentrated. (See *imagery*.)

The typical Imagist poem is written in *free verse* and undertakes to render as precisely, vividly, and tersely as possible, and without comment or generalization, the writer’s impression of a visual object or scene; often the impression is rendered by means of metaphor, or by juxtaposing, without indicating a relationship, the description of one object with that of a second and diverse object. This famed example by Ezra Pound exceeds other Imagist poems in the degree of its concentration:

In a Station of the Metro
The apparition of these faces in the crowd,
Petals on a wet, black bough.⁹

In this poem Pound, like a number of other Imagists, was influenced by the Japanese *haiku*.

Imagism was too restrictive to endure long as a concerted movement, but it served to inaugurate a distinctive feature of *modernist* poetry. Almost every major poet from the 1920s through the middle of the twentieth century, including W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, and Wallace Stevens, manifests some influence by the Imagist experiments with the presentation of precise, clear images that are juxtaposed without specifying their interrelationships.

See T. E. Hulme, *Speculations*, ed. Herbert Read (1924); *The Imagist Poem*, ed. William Pratt (1963); Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (1971); Glenn Hughes, *Imagism and the Imagists: A Study in Modern Poetry* (1973); J. B. Harner, *Victory in Limbo: Imagism, 1908–1917* (1975); Andrew Thacker, *The Imagist Poets* (2008).

imitation: In literary criticism the word **imitation** has two frequent but diverse applications: (1) to define the nature of literature and the other arts, and (2) to indicate the relationship of one literary work to another literary work which served as its model.

1. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle defines poetry as an imitation (in Greek, **mimesis**) of human actions. (See *criticism*.) By “imitation” he means something like “representation,” in its root sense: the poem imitates by taking an instance of human action and re-presenting it in a new “medium”—that of words. By distinguishing differences in the artistic media, in the kind of actions imitated, and in the manner of imitation (for example, dramatic or narrative), Aristotle first distinguishes poetry from other arts, and then makes distinctions between the various poetic kinds, such as drama and epic, tragedy and comedy. From the sixteenth through the eighteenth

⁹ Lines from “In a Station of the Metro” from *Personae* by Ezra Pound. Copyright © 1926 by Ezra Pound. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation and Faber & Faber Ltd.

century the term “imitation” was a central term in discussing the nature of poetry. Critics differed radically, however, in their concept of the nature of the mimetic relationship, and of the kinds of things in the external world that works of literature imitate, or ought to imitate, so that theories of imitation varied in the kind of art they recommended, from a strict realism to a remote idealism. With the emergence in the early nineteenth century of an *expressive criticism* (the view that poetry is essentially an expression of the poet’s feelings or imaginative process), imitation tended to be displaced from its central position in literary theory (see *criticism*). In the last half century, however, the use of the term has been revived, especially by R. S. Crane and other *Chicago critics*, who ground their theory on the analytic method and basic distinctions of Aristotle’s *Poetics*. Many *Marxist critics* also propose a view of literature as an imitation, or, in their preferred term, “reflection,” of social reality.

poet should “imitate” the established models in a particular literary *genre*. The notion that the proper procedure for poets, with the rare exception of an “original genius,” was to imitate the normative forms and styles of the Greek and Roman masters continued to be influential through the eighteenth century. All the major critics, however, also insisted that mere copying was not enough—that a good literary work must imitate the form and spirit rather than the detail of the classic models, and that success can be achieved only by a poet who possesses an innate poetic talent. (See *neoclassic*.)

In a specialized use of the term in this second sense, “imitation” was also

’s own age, usually in a satirical
Imitations of Horace (1733

’s recognition of the resourcefulness and wit with which Pope

’s Roman satires.

On “imitation” as a term used to define literature see R. S. Crane, ed., (1952); M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), –2; and Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis* (trans. 1953, reprinted 2003). On ’s “imitations” of Horace and other ancient masters see R. A. Brower, (1959). For denials, on various grounds,

Russian formal-
, *structuralist criticism*, *deconstruction*, *new historicism*, and *text and writing*
. Among modern defenses of the view that literature is mimetic, in

Literature against Itself (1979); A. D. Nuttall, *A*
(1983); and Robert

“Mimesis and the Motives for Fiction,” in his *Motives for Fiction* (1984). For references to *imitation* in other entries, see pages 237, 342.

imperfect rhyme: 349.

impersonal (narrator): 302.

implicature: 90.

implicit metaphor: 131.

implied auditor: 287.

implied author: 288.

implied reader: 330.

impressionistic criticism: 68.

in medias res (in mā' dēās rās'): 109; 296.

incidents (in a plot): 295.

incremental repetition: 23.

incunabula (în kyoönăb'' yoolă): 33.

index (in semiotics): 358.

indexicals: 233.

indirect satire: 354.

influence and the anxiety of influence: Critics and historians of literature have for many centuries discussed what was called the **influence** of an author, or of a literary tradition, upon a later author, who was said to adopt, and at the same time to alter, aspects of the subject matter, form, or style of the earlier writer or writers. Among traditional topics for discussion, for example, have been the influence of Homer on Virgil, of Virgil on Milton, of Milton on Wordsworth, or of Wordsworth on Wallace Stevens. The **anxiety of influence** is a phrase used by the influential contemporary critic Harold Bloom to identify his radical revision of this standard theory that influence consists in a direct "borrowing," or assimilation, of the materials and features found in earlier writers. Bloom's own view is that in the composition of any poem, influence is inescapable, but that it evokes in the author an anxiety that compels a drastic distortion of the work of a predecessor. He applies this concept of anxiety to the reading as well as the writing of poetry.

In Bloom's theory a poet (especially since the time of Milton) is motivated to compose when his imagination is seized upon by a poem or poems

“precursor.” The “belated” poet’s attitudes to his precursor, like those in
’s analysis of the Oedipal relationship of son to father, are ambivalent;

’s preemption of the descendant’s imaginative space.

“defensively,” in such a way as to distort it beyond

“strong” that it effects an illusion of “priority”—that is,
’s precedence in time,

Since Bloom conceives that “every poem is a misinterpretation of a par-
” he recommends that literary critics boldly practice what he calls
—that is, that they learn “to read any poem as its
’s deliberate misinterpretation, *as a poet*, of a precursor poem or of poetry
” The results of such “strong readings” will be antithetical both to

“interesting,” misreadings, and so will take

—al-

As Bloom points out, a precursor of his views was Walter Jackson Bate’s
(1970), which described the struggles

(1973), then elaborated the theory, and demonstrated
A Map
(1975), *Kabbalah and Criticism* (1975), and *Poetry and Repression*

’s writings, *Poetics of Influence*, ed. John

After the New Criticism (1980), chapter 9; David Fite, *Harold*
(1985); M. H. Abrams, “How to Do
” in *Doing Things with Texts* (1989). Bloom proposed his

of the concept of anxiety of influence to women writers, see Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (rev. 2000), discussed in the entry *feminist criticism*.

informal essay: 114.

intention (in interpretation): 177; 185.

intention (in phenomenology): 289.

intentional fallacy: Intentional fallacy signifies what is claimed to be the error of interpreting and evaluating a literary work by reference to evidence, outside the text itself, for the intention—the design and purposes—of its author. The term was proposed by W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley in “The Intentional Fallacy” (1946), reprinted in Wimsatt’s *The Verbal Icon* (1954). They asserted that an author’s intended aims and meanings in writing a literary work—whether these are asserted by the author or merely inferred from our knowledge of the author’s life and opinions—are irrelevant to the literary critic, because the meaning, structure, and value of a text are inherent within the finished, freestanding, and public work of literature itself. Reference to the author’s supposed purposes, or else to the author’s personal situation and state of mind in writing a text, is held to be a harmful mistake, because it diverts our attention to such “external” matters as the author’s biography, or psychological condition, or creative process, which we substitute for the proper critical concern with the “internal” constitution and inherent value of the literary product. (See *objective criticism*, under *criticism*.)

This claim, which was central in the *New Criticism*, has been strenuously debated, and was reformulated by both of its original proponents. (See Wimsatt, “Genesis: An Argument Resumed,” in *Day of the Leopards*, 1976; and Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 1958, pp. 457–61, and *The Possibility of Criticism*, 1970, pp. 16–37.) A view acceptable to many traditional critics (but not to *structuralist* and *poststructuralist* theorists) is that in the exceptional instances—for example, in Henry James’ prefaces to his novels—where we possess an author’s express statement about his artistic intentions in a literary work, that statement should constitute evidence for an interpretive hypothesis, but should not in itself be determinative. If the author’s stated intentions do not accord with the text, they should be qualified or rejected in favor of an alternative interpretation that conforms more closely to the shared, or “public,” linguistic and literary conventions that the text itself incorporates.

Compare *affective fallacy*. For diverse views of the role of authorial intentions in establishing a text and in interpreting the meanings of a text, see *interpretation and hermeneutics* and *textual criticism*. A detailed objection to Wimsatt and Beardsley’s original essay is E. D. Hirsch’s “Objective Interpretation” (1960), reprinted as an appendix to his *Validity in Interpretation* (1967). An anthology of discussions of this topic in literary criticism is David Newton-De Molina, *On Literary Intention* (1976). Ronald Dworkin discusses parallels

“Law as Interpretation,” *The Politics of Interpretation*, ed. W. J. T.
intentional fallacy in other entries, see
 179.

: 380.

(in drama): 225.

: In the narrow sense, to interpret a work of

interpretation focuses on especially obscure, am-

's *genre*, component elements, form and
criticism).

The term **hermeneutics** originally designated the formulation of princi-

, or commentary on the application of the meanings expressed in
 “hermeneutics” has come
 —that is, a formulation of

The German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher, in a series of lectures
 “general hermeneutics” as “the art
 ” texts of every kind. Schleiermacher’s views were developed
 –1911),

“human sciences”: that is, in the *humani-*
 and the social sciences, as distinguished from the natural sciences. Dilthey

” of human beings. He proposed that whereas the aim of
 “explanation” by means of static, reductive

” The understanding of a verbal text consists in “the interpre-
works, works in which the texture of inner life comes fully to
 ” And in literature above all, “the inner life of man finds its com-
 ” (See *humanism*.)

In formulating the way in which we come to understand the meaning of
hermeneutic circle to a procedure

Schleiermacher had earlier described. That is, in order to understand the determinate meanings of the verbal parts of any linguistic whole, we must approach the parts with a prior sense of the meaning of the whole; yet we can know the meaning of the whole only by knowing the meanings of its constituent parts. This circularity of the interpretive process applies to the interrelations between the single words within any sentence and the sentence as a whole, as well as to interrelations between all the sentences and the work as a whole. Dilthey maintained that the hermeneutic circle is not a vicious circle, in that we can achieve a valid interpretation by a mutually qualifying interplay between our evolving sense of the whole and our retrospective understanding of its component parts.

Interest in the theory of interpretation revived strongly in the 1950s and 1960s, concurrently with the turn of Western philosophy to focus on the uses and meanings of language, and the turn of literary criticism—exemplified by the *New Criticism* in America—to the conception of a literary work as a linguistic object and to the view that the primary task of criticism is to interpret its verbal meanings and their interrelations. There have been two main lines of development in recent hermeneutics:

1. One development, represented notably by the Italian theorist Emilio Betti and the American E. D. Hirsch, takes off from Dilthey's claim that a reader is able to achieve an objective interpretation of an author's expressed meaning. In his *Validity in Interpretation* (1967), followed by *The Aims of Interpretation* (1976), Hirsch asserts that "a text means what its author meant," specifies that this meaning is "the verbal meaning which an author intends," and undertakes to show that such verbal meaning is in principle determinate (even if in some instances determinately ambiguous, or multiply significant), that it remains stable through the passage of time, and that it is in principle reproducible by each competent reader. The author's verbal **intention** is not the author's overall state of consciousness at the time of writing, but only the intention-to-mean something which, by recourse to preexisting linguistic conventions and norms, gets actualized in words, and so may be shared by readers who are competent in the same conventions and norms and know how to apply them in their interpretive practice. If a text is read independently of reference to the author's intentions, Hirsch asserts, it remains indeterminate—that is, capable of an indefinite diversity of meanings. A reader arrives at a determinate interpretation by using an implicit logic of validation (capable of being made explicit by the hermeneutic theorist), which serves to specify the author's intention, by reference not only to the general conventions and norms of a language, but also to all evidence, whether internal or external to the text, concerning "relevant aspects in the author's outlook" or "horizon." Relevant external references include the author's cultural milieu and personal prepossessions, as well as the literary and generic conventions that were available to the author at the time when the work was composed.

Hirsch reformulates Dilthey's concept of the hermeneutic circle as follows: a competent reader forms an "hypothesis" as to the meaning of a part or whole of a text which is "corrigible"—that is, the hypothesis can be either confirmed or disconfirmed by continuing reference to the text; if disconfirmed, it is replaced by an alternative hypothesis which conforms more closely to all the components of the text. Since the interpreted meanings of the components of a text are to some degree constituted by the hypotheses one brings to their interpretation, such a procedure can never achieve absolute certainty as to a text's correct meaning. The most a reader can do is to arrive at the most probable meaning of a text; but this logic of highest probability, Hirsch insists, is adequate to yield objective knowledge, confirmable by other competent readers, concerning the determinate and stable meanings both of the component passages and of the artistic whole in a work of literature.

Hirsch follows traditional hermeneutics in making an essential distinction between verbal meaning and significance. The **significance** of a text to a reader is the relation of its verbal meaning to other matters, such as the personal situation, beliefs, and responses of the individual reader, or the prevailing cultural milieu of the reader's own era, or a particular set of concepts or values, and so on. The **verbal meaning** of a text, Hirsch asserts—the meaning intended by the writer—is determinate and stable; its significance, however—what makes the text alive and resonant for diverse readers in diverse times—is indeterminate and ever-changing. Verbal meaning is the particular concern of hermeneutics; textual significance, in its many aspects, is one of the concerns of literary criticism.

Dilthey's view that the genuine understanding of literary and other humanistic texts consists in the reader's re-experience of the "inner life" that the texts express. A primary thinker in this development is Martin Heidegger, whose *Being and Time* (1927, trans. 1962) incorporated the act of interpretation into an **existential philosophy**—that is, a philosophy centered on "Dasein," or what it is to-be-in-the-world. Heidegger's student Hans Georg Gadamer adapted Heidegger's philosophy into an influential theory of textual interpretation, *Truth and Method* (1960, trans. 1975). The philosophical premise is that temporality and historicity—a situation in one's present that looks back to the past and anticipates the future—is inseparably a part of each individual's being; that the process of understanding something, involving an act of interpretation, goes on not only in reading verbal texts but in all aspects of human experience; and that language, like temporality, pervades all aspects of that experience. In applying these philosophical assumptions to the understanding of a literary text, Gadamer translates the traditional hermeneutic circle into the metaphors of dialogue and fusion. Readers bring to a text a "pre-understanding," which is constituted by their own temporal and personal "horizons." They should not, as "subjects," attempt to analyze and dissect the text as an autonomous "object." Instead the reader, as an "I," situated

in his or her present time, addresses questions to the text as a "Thou," but with a receptive openness that simply allows the matter of the text—by means of their shared heritage of language—to speak in responsive dialogue, and to readdress its own questions to the reader. The understood meaning of the text is an event which is always the product of a "fusion of the horizons" that a reader brings to the text and that the text brings to the reader.

Gadamer insists that (unlike most theories of interpretation) this hermeneutics is not an attempt to establish norms or rules for a correct interpretation, but an attempt simply to describe how we in fact succeed in understanding texts. Nonetheless his theory has the consequence that the search for a determinate meaning of a text which remains stable through the passage of time becomes a will-o'-the-wisp. Since the meaning of a text "is always codetermined" by the particular temporal and personal horizon of the individual reader, there cannot be one stable "right interpretation"; the meaning of a text is always to an important extent its meaning that it has here, now, for me. To Gadamer's view that the historical and personal relativity of meaning is inescapable, Hirsch replies that a reader in the present, by reconstructing the linguistic, literary, and cultural conditions of its author, is often able adequately to determine the original and unchanging verbal meaning intended by the writer of a text in the past; and that insofar as Gadamer is right about the unbridgeable gap between the meaning of a text then and its meaning now, he is referring to the ever-alterable "significance" contributed by each reader, in his or her time and personal and social circumstances, to the text's stable verbal meaning.

Traditional literary critics had tacitly assumed that to interpret a text correctly is to approximate the meaning intended by its author, long before theorists such as Hirsch undertook to define and justify this view. Even the *New Critics* took for granted that the meaning of a text is the meaning that the author intended; what some of these critics called the *intentional fallacy* merely designates the supposed error, in interpreting a text, of employing clues concerning an author's intention which are "external" to the "internal" actualization of that intention in the language of the text itself. Most traditional philosophers, including recent "ordinary language philosophers," have also held that to understand an utterance involves reference to the writer's intention, which we infer from our awareness of the writer's linguistic assumptions. H. P. Grice, for example, proposed in the 1950s an influential account of verbal meaning as a speaker's intention in an utterance to produce a specific effect in a hearer, by means of the hearer's recognition of the speaker's intention in making that utterance. (See under *discourse analysis*.) In *Speech Acts* (1970), John Searle accepted this description, with the qualification that the speaker can express, and so enable the hearer to recognize, his or her intention only insofar as the expression conforms to the conventions or rules of their common language. In a later refinement of this view, Searle makes a

's intention which determines the kind and *speech act*, and the speaker's intention to communicate that *Intentionality* (1983), chapter 6. On this issue in "Intention and Con-
" in Jay F. Rosenberg and Charles Travis, eds., *Readings* (1971).

A radical departure from the traditional author-oriented views of a deter-
structural and *poststructural* the-
author and authorship.) Some theorists, rejecting any control of
subject, and his or her intention,
"undecidable" by the self-

deconstruction and *reader-response criticism*.) Other cur-

psycho-
, *Marxist criticism*, *new historicism*.) Paul Ricoeur has labeled such
hermeneu-
, in that they approach a text as a veiled or mystified set of re-
subtext, needs to be deciphered by the

In addition to the titles listed above, refer to Richard E. Palmer, *Herme-*

's theory. See also
, ed. Phillip Damon (1967); *The*
(1974) by the French philoso-
Hermeneutics: Questions and
, ed. Gary Shapiro and Alan Sica (1984); Wendell V. Harris, *Interpre-*
(1988); Francis-Noël Thomas, *The Writer Writing*
"Intentions' and 'Purposes.'" In *Multiple Authorship and the*
(1991), Jack Stillinger points out that reference to

textual criticism. John R. Searle distinguishes three
"intention" in diverse discussions of the interpretation
"Literary Theory and Its Discontents," *The Emperor*
, ed. Dwight Eddins (1995).

: The **typological** (or **figural**)

and laws of the Hebrew Scriptures with the narratives and teachings of the Christian Scriptures. As St. Augustine expressed its principle: "In the Old Testament the New Testament is concealed; in the New Testament the Old Testament is revealed." In typological theory, that is, the key persons, actions, and events in the Old Testament are viewed as "*figurae*" (Latin for "figures") which were historical realities, but also "prefigure" those persons, actions, and events in the New Testament that are similar to them in some aspect, function, or relationship. Often the Old Testament figures are called **types** and their later correlatives in the New Testament are called **antitypes**. The Old Testament figure or type is held to be a prophecy or promise of the higher truth that is "fulfilled" in the New Testament, according to a plan which is eternally present in the mind of God but manifests itself to human beings only in the two scriptural revelations separated by a span of time.

To cite a few of the very many instances of typological interpretation: Adam was said to be a figure (or in alternative terms, a "type," "image," or "shadow") of Christ. One of the analogies cited between prefiguration and fulfillment was that between the creation of Eve from Adam's rib and the flow of blood from the side of the crucified Christ; another was the analogy between the tree that bore the fruit occasioning Adam's original sin and the cross which bore as its fruit Christ, the Redeemer of that sin. In a similar fashion the manna provided the children of Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 16) was held to prefigure the Eucharist, and the relationship between the Egyptian servant girl Hagar and Sarah (Genesis 16) was held to prefigure the relationship between the earthly Jerusalem of the Old Testament and the heavenly Jerusalem of the New Testament. By some interpreters, elements of New Testament history were represented as in their turn prefiguring the events that will come to be fulfilled in "the last days" of Christ's Second Coming and Last Judgment.

The **allegorical interpretation** of the Bible had its roots in Greek and Roman thinkers who treated classical myths as allegorical representations of abstract cosmological, philosophical, or moral truths. The method was applied to narratives in the Hebrew Scriptures by the Jewish philosopher Philo (died AD 50) and was adapted to Christian interpretation by Origen in the third century. The fundamental distinction in the allegorical interpretation of the Bible is between the "literal" (or "historical," or "carnal") meaning of the text—the historical truth that it specifically signifies—and the additional "spiritual" or "mystical" or "allegoric" meaning that it signifies by analogy. (Refer to the entry *allegory*.)

The spiritual aspect of a text's literal meaning was often in turn subdivided into two or more levels; some interpreters specified as many as seven, or even twelve levels. By the twelfth century, however, biblical interpreters widely agreed in finding a **fourfold meaning** in many biblical passages. A typical set of distinctions, as proposed by St. Thomas Aquinas and others, specifies (1) the literal or historical meaning, which is a narrative of what in fact happened; (2) the allegorical meaning proper, which is the New Testament truth, or else the prophetic reference to the Christian Church, that is signified by a passage in

eschatology, that is, the events that are
“the last days” of Christ’s judgment and the life after death of indi-

We can distinguish between the typological and allegorical mode of inter-

iconography—that is, representations

—in painting and sculpture. Medieval and later poets
—originally
—in composing their own writings on

Divine
to signify a double subject, literal and allegorical, and that the allegor-

The American scholar D. W. Robertson and others have proposed that

—including the *Roman de la Rose*, the works of Chaucer
—were expressly written to

The Genesis
(1979), the British critic Frank

On the various modes of biblical interpretation, see F. W. Farrar, *History*
(1886), Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*
Exégèse Médiévale: les
’écriture (4 vols., 1959–74; rev. 1993). A classic discussion of ty-
’s “Figura” in his *Scenes*
(1959). Philip Rollinson, in *Classical The-*
(1981), relates early medieval interpreta-

is Jonathan Edwards' *Images or Shadows of Divine Things*, ed. Perry Miller (1948). For uses of typological and allegoric materials by various literary authors, see Rosemund Tuve, *A Reading of George Herbert* (1952) and *Allegorical Imagery* (1966); J. H. Hagstrum, *William Blake: Poet and Painter* (1964); P. J. Alpers, *The Poetry of "The Faerie Queene"* (1967); and the essays on a number of authors in Paul Miner, ed., *Literary Uses of Typology* (1977). For the extension of typological and allegoric methods to the analysis of secular medieval poems, see D. W. Robertson, Jr., "Historical Criticism," in *English Institute Essays, 1950*, ed. A. S. Downer (1951), and *A Preface to Chaucer: Studies in Medieval Perspectives* (1962). The validity of such an extension is attacked by several scholars in *Critical Approaches to Medieval Literature*, ed. Dorothy Bethurum (1960), and by R. S. Crane, "On Hypotheses in 'Historical Criticism,'" in *The Idea of the Humanities* (1967, Vol. 2, pp. 236–60). On the application of biblical allegorization to later literary forms see, in addition to Kermode (above), Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (1982); and Stephen Prickett, ed., *Reading the Text: Biblical Criticism and Literary Theory* (1991).

interpretive communities: 332.

intertextuality: 401; 12.

intonation: 197.

intrigue: 294.

introspection: 380.

intrusive (narrator): 302.

invective: The denunciation of a person by the use of derogatory *epithets*. Thus Prince Hal, in Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV*, calls the corpulent Falstaff "this sanguine coward, this bedpresser, this horseback-breaker, this huge hill of flesh." (In context, there is in this instance of invective an affectionate undertone, as often when friends, secure in an intimacy that ensures they will not be taken literally, resort to derogatory name-calling in the exuberance of their affection.)

In his *Discourse Concerning Satire* (1693), John Dryden described the difference in efficacy, as a put-down, between the directness of invective and the indirectness of *irony*, in which a speaker maintains the advantage of cool detachment by leaving it to the circumstances to convert bland compliments into insults:

How easy is it to call rogue and villain, and that wittily! But how hard to make a man appear a fool, a blockhead, or a knave, without using any of those opprobrious terms.... There is ... a vast difference

INVENTION

between the slovenly butchering of a man, and the fineness of a stroke that separates the head from the body, and leaves it standing in its place.

(in rhetoric): **65**; 343.

; 298.

; 187, 305.

(of a reader): **92**.

: In Greek comedy the character called the *eirōn* was a dissembler, who

alazon—the self-deceiving and stupid
(*Anatomy of Criticism*, 1957.) In most modern
“irony,” there remains the root sense of dissembling,

Verbal irony (which was traditionally classified as one of the *tropes*) is a

’s *The*
(1714), after Sir Plume, egged on by the ladies, has stammered

“It grieves me much,” replied the Peer again,
“Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain.”

Pride and Prejudice (1813): “It is a truth universally acknowl-
”; part of the ironic implication (based on assumptions that Austen

—or even to the fact that the author intends the statement to be

understood ironically—may be oblique and unobtrusive. That is why recourse to irony by an author tends to convey an implicit compliment to the intelligence of readers, who are invited to associate themselves with the author and the knowing minority who are not taken in by the ostensible meaning. That is also why many literary ironists are misinterpreted and sometimes (like Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift in the eighteenth century) get into serious trouble with the obtuse authorities. Following the intricate and shifting maneuvers of great ironists like Plato, Swift, Voltaire, Austen, or Henry James is a test of skill in reading between the lines.

Some literary works exhibit **structural irony**; that is, the author, instead of using an occasional verbal irony, introduces a structural feature that serves to sustain a duplex meaning and evaluation throughout the work. One common literary device of this sort is the invention of a **naïve hero**, or else a naïve narrator or spokesman, whose invincible simplicity or obtuseness leads him to persist in putting an interpretation on affairs which the knowing reader—who penetrates to, and shares, the implied point of view of the authorial presence behind the naïve *persona*—just as persistently is called on to alter and correct. (Note that verbal irony depends on knowledge of the ironic *intention* of the fictional speaker, which is shared by both the speaker and the reader; structural irony depends on a knowledge of the ironic intention of the author, which is shared by the reader but is not the intention of the fictional speaker.) One example of the naïve spokesman is Swift's well-meaning but insanely rational and morally obtuse economist who writes the "Modest Proposal" (1729) to convert the excess children of the oppressed and poverty-stricken Irish into a financial and gastronomical asset. Other examples are Swift's stubbornly credulous Gulliver, the self-deceiving and paranoid monologist in Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" (1842), and the insane editor, Kinbote, in Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962). A related structural device for sustaining ironic qualification is the use of the *fallible narrator*, in which the teller of the story is a participant in it. Although such a narrator may be neither stupid, credulous, nor demented, he nevertheless manifests a failure of insight, by viewing and appraising his own motives, and the motives and actions of other characters, through what the reader is intended to recognize as the distorting perspective of the narrator's own prejudices and interests. (See *point of view*.)

In *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1974) Wayne Booth identifies as **stable irony** that in which the speaker or author makes available to the reader an assertion or position which, whether explicit or implied, serves as a firm ground for ironically qualifying or subverting the surface meaning. **Unstable irony**, on the other hand, offers no fixed standpoint which is not itself undercut by further ironies. The literature of the *absurd* typically presents such a regression of ironies. At an extreme, as in Samuel Beckett's drama *Waiting for Godot* (1955) or his novel *The Unnamable* (1960), there is an endless regress of ironic undercuttings. Such works suggest a denial that there is any secure evaluative standpoint, or even any determinable rationale, in the human situation.

IRONY

Sarcasm in common parlance is sometimes used as an equivalent for

“Oh, you’re God’s great gift to women,
” The difference in application of the two terms is indicated by the
“irony” derives from “eiron,” a “dis-
” “sarcasm” derives from the Greek verb “sarkazein,” “to tear flesh.”
’s voice.

The term “irony,” qualified by an adjective, is used to identify various

Socratic irony takes its name from the fact that, as he is represented in
’s dialogues (fourth century BC), the philosopher Socrates usually dis-

Dramatic irony involves a situation in a play or a narrative in which the

’ *Oedipus the King*, for
tragic irony, for the king (“I,
”) engages in a hunt for the incestuous

’s *Twelfth Night* (II. v.) in which Malvolio struts and

’s

Cosmic irony (or “the irony of fate”) is attributed to literary works in

*Tess of the
’Urbervilles* (1891) the heroine, having lost her virtue because of her inno-

“The

”

Romantic irony is a term introduced by Friedrich Schlegel and other

designate a mode of dramatic or narrative writing in which the author builds up the illusion of representing reality, only to shatter the illusion by revealing that the author, as artist, is the creator and arbitrary manipulator of the characters and their actions. The concept owes much to Laurence Sterne's presentation of a self-conscious and willful narrator in his *Tristram Shandy* (1759–67). Byron's great narrative poem *Don Juan* (1819–24) persistently uses this device for ironic and comic effect, letting the reader into the narrator's confidence, and so revealing the latter to be nothing more than a fabricator of fiction who is often at a loss for matter to sustain his story and undecided about how to continue it. (See Anne Mellor, *English Romantic Irony*, 1980.) This type of irony, involving a self-conscious narrator, has become a recurrent mode in the modern form of *involute fiction*.

A number of writers associated with the *New Criticism* used "irony," although in a greatly extended sense, as a general criterion of literary value. This use is based largely on two literary theorists. T. S. Eliot praised a kind of "wit" (characteristic, in his view, of seventeenth-century *metaphysical poets* but absent in the Romantic poets) which is an "internal equilibrium" that implies the "recognition," in dealing with any one kind of experience, "of other kinds of experience which are possible." ("Andrew Marvell," 1921, in *Selected Essays*, 1960.) And I. A. Richards defined irony in poetry as an equilibrium of opposing attitudes and evaluations (*Principles of Literary Criticism*, 1924, chapter 32):

Irony in this sense consists in the bringing in of the opposite, the complementary impulses; that is why poetry which is exposed to it is not of the highest order, and why irony itself is so constantly a characteristic of poetry which is.

Such observations were developed by Robert Penn Warren, Cleanth Brooks, and other New Critics into the claim that poems in which the writer commits himself or herself unreservedly to a single attitude or outlook, such as love or admiration or idealism, are of an inferior order because they are vulnerable to the reader's ironic skepticism; the greatest poems, on the other hand, are invulnerable to external irony because they already incorporate the poet's own "ironic" awareness of opposite and complementary attitudes. See Robert Penn Warren, "Pure and Impure Poetry" (1943), in *Critiques and Essays in Criticism*, ed. Robert W. Stallman (1949); Cleanth Brooks, "Irony as a Principle of Structure" (1949), in *Literary Opinion in America*, ed. M. D. Zabel (3d ed., 1962).

See D. C. Muecke, *Irony* (1970); A. E. Dyson, *The Crazy Fabric, Essays in Irony* (1965); Wayne C. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1974); Linda Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* (1995); Claire Colebrook, *Irony* (2003). A suggestive and wide-ranging earlier exploration of the mode is Søren Kierkegaard's *The Concept of Irony* (1841; trans. Lee M. Capel, 1965). For references to *irony* in other entries, see pages 12, 183.

irregular ode: 263.

Italian sonnet: 370.

IVORY TOWER

: A phrase taken from the biblical Song of Songs 7:4, in which the
“Thy neck is as a tower of ivory.” In the
“tour d’ivoire” to

“ivory
” is often used (usually in a derogatory way) to signify an attitude or a

aestheticism.)



J

A term derived from the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah, who in the seventh century BC attributed the calamities of Israel to its violation of the covenant with Jehovah and return to pagan idolatry, denounced with gloomy eloquence its religious and moral iniquities, and called on the people to repent and reform in order that Jehovah might restore them to His favor and renew the ancient covenant. As a literary term, **jeremiad** is applied to any work which, with a magniloquence like that of the Old Testament prophet (although it may be in secular rather than religious terms), accounts for the misfortunes of an era as a just penalty for its social and moral wrongdoings, but usually holds open the possibility for reforms that will bring a happier future.

In the *Romantic Period*, powerful passages in William Blake's "prophetic poems" constitute short jeremiads, and the term is often applied to those of Thomas Carlyle's writings in which he uses a resonant biblical idiom to denounce the social and economic misdeeds of the *Victorian Period* and to call for drastic reforms. The jeremiad, in its original religious mode, was a familiar genre in the sermons and writings of the *Colonial Period* in America, at a time when it was a commonplace that the colonies in New England were the "New Israel" with which God had covenanted a glorious future. The misfortunes of the colonists, accordingly, were attributed to deviations from the divine commands and described as punishments inflicted by God on His chosen people for their own ultimate benefit. In the words of Increase Mather, "God does not punish ... other Nations until they have filled up the Measure of their sins, and then he utterly destroyeth them; but if our Nation forsake the God of their Fathers never so little," He punishes us in order "that so he may prevent our destruction" (*The Day of Trouble Is Near*, 1674). Since that era the prophetic stance and denunciatory rhetoric of the jeremiad has been manifested by many orators and writers, religious and secular, into the present time. See Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (1978), and George P. Landow, *Elegant Jeremiahs: The Sage from Carlyle to Mailer* (1986).

(in linguistics): 197.

: 354.





: 132.

(of literature): 148.

(kunst' lërōmān''): 255.



L

Lacanian literary criticism: 324.

lai: A name originally applied to a variety of poems by medieval French writers in the latter part of the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries. Some lais were lyric, but most were short narratives written in *octosyllabic couplets*. Marie de France, who wrote in the French language although probably in England at the court of King Henry II, composed a number of notable poems of this sort; they are called “Breton lais” because most of their narratives are drawn from Arthurian and other Celtic legends. (“Breton” refers to Brittany, which was a Celtic part of France; see *chivalric romance*.) The Anglicized term **Breton lay** was applied in the fourteenth century to English poems written on the model of the narratives of Marie de France; they included *Sir Orfeo*, the *Lay of Launfal*, and Chaucer’s “The Franklin’s Tale.” Later still, **lay** was used by English poets simply as a synonym for song, or as an archaic word for a fairly short narrative poem—for example by Sir Walter Scott in his *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, 1805.

See Roger S. Loomis, ed., *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages* (1959); and the Introduction by Charles W. Dunn to *Lays of Courtly Love*, trans. Patricia Terry (1963).

lampoon: 39.

langue (in linguistics) (läng): **194; 310, 358, 382.**

latent content: 321.

lay (song): **191.**

Lebenswelt: 289.

legend: 230.

leitmotif (līt' mōtēf'): **229.**

lesbian studies: 327; 146.

light verse: Light verse is a term applied to a great variety of poems that use an ordinary speaking voice and a relaxed manner to treat their subjects gaily, or playfully, or wittily, or with good-natured *satire*. The subject matter of light verse need not be in itself petty or inconsequential; the defining quality is the *tone* of voice used, and the attitude of the lyric or narrative speaker toward the subject. Thomas Love Peacock’s “The War Song of Dinas Vawr” (1829) begins

LIGHT VERSE

The mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deemed it meter
To carry off the latter.

And it ends

We brought away from battle,
And much their land bemoaned them,
Two thousand head of cattle,
And the head of him who owned them:
Ednyfed, king of Dyfed,
His head was borne before us;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
And his overthrow, our chorus.

Vers de société (society verse) is the very large subclass of light verse

villanelle, are in this form. Many of

Birds do it, bees do it
Even educated fleas do it
Let's do it, let's fall in love.

A Vers de Société Anthology, reprinted 1976.

Nursery rhymes and other children's verses are another type of light

“The Jumbles,” “The Owl and the Pussy Cat”) and
“Jabberwocky,” *The Hunting of the Snark*) made children's **non-**
into a Victorian specialty. Lear is also notable for popularizing
limerick, which is a largely oral form of light verse that everyone knows
oral poetry.) The name is probably derived

“Will you come up to Limerick?”

ana-
meter, rhyming *aabba*, with the third and fourth lines shortened from

's propensity

Text not available due to copyright restrictions

An accessible collection is *The Penguin Book of Limericks*, ed. E. O. Parrott (1983). For scholarly editions of the ribald variety of the form, largely from oral sources, refer to G. Legman's two volumes, *The Limerick: 1700 Examples, with Notes, Variants, and Index* (1969); and *The New Limerick: 2750 Unpublished Examples, American and British* (1977).

Fine artificers of light and society verse are John Skelton (c. 1460–1529), the *Cavalier poets* of the early seventeenth century, and John Dryden, Matthew Prior, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Alexander Pope, W. S. Gilbert, and Austin Dobson. Modern practitioners include Ezra Pound, W. H. Auden, e. e. cummings, Ogden Nash, Marianne Moore, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Dorothy Parker, Phyllis McGinley, Morris Bishop, John Betjeman, A. R. Ammons, Anthony Hecht, John Updike, and Ishmael Reed.

See *epigram*. Refer to *Worldly Muse: An Anthology of Serious Light Verse*, ed. A. J. M. Smith (1951); *The Fireside Book of Humorous Poetry*, ed. W. Cole (1959); *The New Oxford Book of Light Verse*, ed. Kingsley Amis (1978); *The Norton Book of Light Verse*, ed. Russell Baker (1986).

limerick: 192.

limited point of view: 303.

line (of verse): 217.

linguistics in literary criticism: Linguistics is the systematic study of the elements of language and the principles governing their combination and organization. An older term for the scientific study of the constitution and history of language was **philology**—a term that is still sometimes used as synonymous with linguistics. Through the nineteenth century, philology was mainly “comparative” (the analysis of similarities and differences within a family of related languages) and “historical” (the analysis of the evolution of a family of languages, or of changes within a particular language, over a long course of time). This latter study of the changes in language over a span of time has come to be called **diachronic**; the important developments in twentieth-century linguistics came with the shift to the **synchronic** study of the systematic interrelations of the components of a single language at a particular time. A major contributor to modern synchronic linguistics was Ferdinand de Saussure, a French-speaking Swiss whose lectures on language as a self-sufficient

¹⁰ From *A Bowl of Bishop* by Morris Bishop. Copyright © 1954 by Morris Bishop. Used by permission of Doubleday, a division of Random House.

–11, were published from students’ notes in 1916, his death; these lectures have been translated as *Course* (1916). (See Saussure under *semiotics*.) Important contributions of “descriptive” or “structural” linguists,

” various Native American languages. Both Continental and American

Russian formalism and stylistics), and Saussure’s concepts and pro-

structuralist criticism).

As an empirical, fact-based study of language, philology has often ap-

subjective responses and judg-

“Return to Philology,” argued

new philology have

“new philology” designates a movement to reorient philologi-

book history studies.

On calls for a return to philology, see Paul de Man, “The Return to Philology,” in *The Resistance to Theory* (1986); Edward Said, “The Return to Philology,” in *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (2004); Jan Ziolkowski, “The Return to Philology,” (1990); Lee Patterson, “The Return to Philology,” in John van Dijk, ed., *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies* (1994); and Seth Lerer, ed.,

“Roots, Races, and the Return to Philology,” in *The Humanities* (2011), Geoffrey Galt Harpham traces the connec-

“The New Philology,” a spe-

Speculum, Vol. 65 (1990).

The following linguistic terms and concepts are often employed by

Saussure introduced an important distinction between *langue* and *parole*. **parole** is any single meaningful utterance, spoken or written. The **langue**

’s primary concern, in Saussure’s view, is to establish the nature

’s *langue* and *parole* the distinction

between **competence** (the tacit knowledge possessed by native speakers who have mastered, or “internalized,” the implicit conventions and rules of a language system that make possible the production and understanding of well-formed and meaningful sentences) and **performance** (the actual utterance of particular sentences). Competent speakers know how to produce such sentences, without being able to specify the conventions and rules that enable them to do so; the function of the linguist is to identify and make explicit the system of linguistic conventions and rules that the speaker unknowingly puts into practice.

Modern linguists commonly distinguish three aspects that together constitute the **grammar**—the components, and the principles of ordering the components—in any “natural language” (English, French, Japanese, and so on): (1) **phonology**, the study of the elementary speech sounds; (2) **morphology**, the study of the ordering of speech sounds into the smallest meaningful groups (*morphemes* and words); and (3) **syntax**, the study of the way that sequences of words are ordered into phrases, clauses, and sentences. Structural linguists usually represent these three aspects as manifesting parallel principles of distinctions and ordering, although on successively higher and more complex levels of organization. A fourth aspect of language sometimes included within the area of linguistics is **semantics**, the study of the meaning of words and of the combination of words in phrases, sentences, and larger linguistic units. In the area of semantics, Saussure introduced the terminology of the *sign* (a single word) as constituted by an inseparable union of **signifier** (the speech sounds or written marks composing the sign) and **signified** (the conceptual meaning of the sign).

1. One branch of phonology is **phonetics**, the physical description of the elementary speech sounds in all known languages and the way they are produced by the vocal apparatus. The “phonetic alphabet” is a standardized set of symbols for representing in written form all these speech sounds. Another branch is “phonemics,” which deals with **phonemes**: the smallest units of speech sound which, within any one natural language, are functional—that is, which cannot vary without changing the word of which they are a part into a different word. Thus in the English word represented by the spelling “pin,” if we change only the initial speech sound, we get three different words, pin-tin-din; if we change only the medial sound, we get pin-pen-pun; if we change only the final sound, we get pin-pit-pill. From the matrix of such changes, we determine that each of the individual units represented by the spelling p, t, d; i, e, u; and n, t, l function as differentiating phonemes within the English language. Each language has its own system of phonemes which both overlaps with and diverges from the phonemic system of any other language. The imperfect success that a native speaker of one language, such as German or French, manifests in adapting his habitual pronunciations to the phonemic system of a different language, such as English, is a major feature of what we identify as a “foreign accent.”

Even within a single language, however, a native speaker will vary the pronunciation of a single phonemic unit within different combinations of speech sounds, and will also vary the pronunciation from one utterance to another. Even greater phonetic differences are apparent between two native speakers, especially if they speak the **dialects** of diverse regions, or of diverse social groups. Saussure proposed the principle that what we identify as “the same phoneme” within a language is not determined by the physical features of the speech sound itself, but by its **difference** from all other phonemes in that language—that is, by the differentiability, within a given language, between a particular speech unit and all other functional speech units. Saussure’s important claim is that the principle of difference, rather than any “positive” property, functions to establish identity not only for phonemes, but for units on all levels of linguistic organization, including both signs and the concepts that the signs signify. All these types of items, then, are systemic facts that achieve an identity only within a particular language, and vary between one language and another. (This claim, that seeming identities are in fact constituted by networks of differences, has been adopted and generalized as a central feature in *structuralism*, *semiotics*, and *deconstruction*.)

—the combination of phonemes into morphemes and into words. A **morpheme** is the smallest meaningful unit of speech sounds within any one language; that is, a morphemic unit, composed of one or more phonemes, is a unit that recurs in a language with the same, or at least similar, meaning. Some morphemes, such as “man,” “open,” and “run” in English, constitute complete words; others, however, occur only as parts of words. For example the noun “grace” is a word that is a single morpheme. If we prefix to the root element, “grace,” the morpheme “dis-,” it becomes a different word with a sharply different meaning: “disgrace”; if we add to the root the morphemic suffix “-ful,” the noun functions as an adjective, “graceful”; if we add to these two morphemes the further suffix, “-ly,” the resulting word functions as an adverb, “gracefully”; if we prefix to this form either the morphemic “dis-” or “un-,” we get the adverbial words, each composed of four morphemes, “disgracefully” and “ungracefully.”

We find also an interesting set of phoneme combinations which do not constitute specific morphemes, yet are experienced by speakers of English as having a common, though very loose-boundaried, area of meaning. Examples are the initial sounds represented by “fl-” in the set of words “flash, flare, flame, flicker, flimmer,” all of which signify a kind of moving light; while in the set “fly, flip, flap, flop, flit, flutter,” the same initial sounds all signify a kind of movement in air. The terminal sounds represented by “-ash,” as they occur in the set “bash, crash, clash, dash, flash, gash, mash, slash,” have an overlapping significance of sudden or violent movement. Such combinations of phonemes are sometimes called **phonetic intensives**, or else instances of **sound-symbolism**; they are important components in the type of words, exploited especially by

poets, in which the sounds of the words seem peculiarly appropriate to their significance. See *onomatopoeia*, and refer to Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (1933), pp. 244–46; I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936), pp. 57–65; Leanne Hinton, Johanna Nichols, and John J. Ohala, eds., *Sound Symbolism* (1995).

Phonemes, morphemes, and words are all said to be “segments” of the stream of speech sounds which constitute an utterance. Linguists also distinguish **suprasegmental** features of language, consisting of stress, juncture, and intonation, all of which function morphemically, in that they alter the identity and significance of the segments in an utterance. A shift in **stress**—that is, of relative forcefulness, or loudness, of a component element in an utterance—from the first to the second syllable converts the noun “invalid” into the adjective “inválid,” and the noun “cónvict” into the verb “convíct.” **Juncture** denotes the transition in an utterance between adjacent speech sounds, whether within a word, between words, or between groups of words. Linguists distinguish various functional classes of junctures in English utterances. **Intonation** is the variation of **pitch**, the rise or fall of voice melody, in the course of an utterance. We utter the assertion “He is going home” with a different intonation from that of the question “Is he going home?”; and the use of the question intonation (the rise in pitch), even with the assertive sequence of words “He is going home?” will make the sentence function to an auditor not as an assertion, but as a question. Uttering the following three words so as to alter the relative stress in the ways indicated, and at the same time using a variety of intonational patterns and pauses, will reveal the extent to which suprasegmental features can affect the significance of a sentence constituted by the same words: “Í like you.” “Í líke you.” “Í like yóu.”

3. The third level of analysis (after the level of phonemes and the level of the combination of phonemes into morphemes and words) is syntax: the combination of words into phrases, clauses, and sentences. Analysis of speech performances (paroles) in any language reveals regularities in such constructions, which are explained by postulating syntactic **rules** that are operative within the linguistic system, or langue, which has been mastered by competent speakers and auditors. (These purely “descriptive” rules, or general regularities of syntax in common speech, are to be distinguished from the “prescriptive” rules of grammar which are presented in school handbooks designed to teach the “correct usage” of upper-class standard English.) A widely used distinction, developed by Roman Jakobson, is that between the rules governing **paradigmatic** relations (the “vertical” relations between any single word in a sentence and other words that are phonologically, syntactically, or semantically similar, and which can be substituted for it), and **syntagmatic** relations (the “horizontal” relations which determine the possibilities of putting words in a sequence so as to make a well-formed syntactic unit). On the phonemic and morphemic levels, a similar distinction is made between

paradigmatic relations among single elements and syntagmatic relations of sequences of elements. This paradigmatic-syntagmatic distinction parallels the distinction made by Jakobson between metaphoric (vertical) and metonymic (horizontal) relations in analyzing *figurative language*.

Noam Chomsky in *Syntactic Structures* (1957) initiated what is known as *transformational grammar*. Chomsky's persistent emphasis is "creativity" in language—the fact that a com-

poser's earlier linguistic experience, as well as the fact that

the speaker has "rule-bound creativity" of a language, and listeners' competence consists in

the system's **generative** in that it undertakes to establish a finite system "generate"—in the sense that it will adequately—the totality of syntactically "well-formed" sentences that are **transformational** in that it postulates, in **deep structure** of a language system, a set of "kernel sentences" (such as "John is building a house") which, in accordance with diverse rules of **surface** of a language system (for example, the passive form "The house is built" and the question form "Is John building a house?" as

Chomsky's views are included in Louise Rosenblatt, *Chomsky and His Critics* (2003).

For diverse applications of the concepts and methods of modern linguistics—*deconstruction*, *Russian formalism*, *semiotics*, *stylistics*, and *stylistics*. For Saussure's theories refer to Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin (1966), and the concise *Ferdinand de Saussure* (rev. 1986). For American linguistics see *An Outline of English* (1957); Zellig S. Harris, *Structural Linguistics* (2d ed., 1960); Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (1933); On transformational-generative grammar: Noam Chomsky, *Selected Readings*, ed. J. P. B. Allen and Paul Van Buren (1971); *The Structure of Language*, ed. Jerry A. Fodor and Jerrold J. Katz (1964); John R. Hayes, *Noam Chomsky* (1970). Useful reviews of Continental and American

Linguistics and Literary Theory (1969); William H. Younggren, *Semantics* (1972); Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs* (1975); *The Linguistics of Writing: Arguments before and after* (1987); Jan Ziolkowski, ed., *On Philology* (1987); *Linguistic Criticism* (2d ed., 1996). A comprehensive ac-

Language Alone: The Critical Fetish of Modernity (2002). See also Chomsky's influential essay "Linguistics and Poetics," in his *Language*

in *Literature* (1987), and the expansion of Jakobson's basic distinction between the horizontal and vertical dimensions of language in David Lodge, *The Modes of Modern Writing: Metaphor, Metonymy, and the Typology of Modern Literature* (1977).

Issues of gender and language are addressed in Barrie Thorne, Cheris Kramerae, and Nancy Henley, eds., *Language, Gender, and Society* (1983); Dale Spender, *Man Made Language* (2d ed., 1985); Joyce Penfield, ed., *Women and Language in Transition* (1987); Deborah Cameron, *Feminism and Linguistic Theory* (2d ed., 1992); Sally Johnson and Ulrike Hanna Meinhof, eds., *Language and Masculinity* (1997). (Refer to *feminist criticism* and *gender criticism*.) For references to *linguistics* in other entries, see page 358.

literal meaning: 130; 79, 212.

literariness: 139.

literary ballad: 24.

literary canon: 41.

literary criticism: 67.

literature (from the Latin *litteraturae*, "writings"): Literature has been commonly used since the eighteenth century, equivalently with the French *belles lettres* ("fine letters"), to designate fictional and imaginative writings—poetry, prose fiction, and drama. (See *genres*.) In an expanded use, it designates also any other writings (including philosophy, history, and even scientific works addressed to a general audience) that are especially distinguished in form, expression, and emotional power. It is in this larger sense of the term that we call "literary" the philosophical writings of Plato and William James, the historical writings of Edward Gibbon, the scientific essays of Thomas Henry Huxley, and the psychoanalytic lectures of Sigmund Freud, and include them in the reading lists of some courses in literature. Confusingly, however, "literature" is sometimes applied also, in a sense close to the Latin original, to all written works, whatever their kind or quality. This all-inclusive use is especially frequent with reference to the sum of works that deal with a particular subject matter. At a major American university that includes a College of Agriculture, the Chairman of the Division of Literature once received this letter: "Dear Sir, Kindly send me all your literature concerning the use of cow manure as a fertilizer."

In its application to imaginative writing, "literature" has an evaluative as well as descriptive function, so that its proper use has become a matter of contention. Modern critical movements, aiming to correct what are seen as historical injustices, stress the strong but covert role played by gender, race, and class in establishing what has, in various eras, been accounted as literature, or in forming the ostensibly timeless criteria of great and *canonical* literature, or

“high literature” and the literature addressed to a
cultural studies, feminist criticism,
, Marxist criticism, and new historicism; refer also to Jonathan
The Literary in Theory (2007). For the historical development of
fine art that is autonomous, and to be
 “Art-as-Such: The Sociology of
 ” in *Doing Things with Texts* (1984); and Pierre Bourdieu,
 (1995). For references
literature in other entries, see page 204.

(lī' tōtēz): **167.**

The detailed representation in prose fiction of the setting, dialect, cus-

's “Wessex” or Rudyard Kipling’s India. After the

“local color fiction” is often applied to works which,
 ’s or Damon Runyon’s stories set in New York City, rely for their

“regional fiction” is then used to distinguish those
regional novel.

(lōgō sēn' trik): **77.**

lyric: In the most common use of the term, a **lyric** is any fairly short poem, uttered by a single speaker, who expresses a state of mind or a process of perception, thought, and feeling. Many lyric speakers are represented as musing in solitude. In *dramatic lyrics*, however, the lyric speaker is represented as addressing another person in a specific situation; instances are John Donne's "Canonization" and William Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey."

Although the lyric is uttered in the first person, the "I" in the poem need not be the poet who wrote it. In some lyrics, such as John Milton's sonnet "When I consider how my light is spent" and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Frost at Midnight," the references to the known circumstances of the author's life make it clear that we are to read the poem as a personal expression. Even in such **personal lyrics**, however, both the character and utterance of the speaker may be formalized and altered by the author in a way that is conducive to the desired artistic effect. In a number of lyrics, the speaker is a conventional period-figure, such as the long-suffering suitor in the Petrarchan sonnet (see *Petrarchan conceit*), or the courtly, witty lover of the *Cavalier* poems. And in some types of lyrics, the speaker is obviously an invented figure remote from the poet in character and circumstance. (See *persona*, *confessional poetry*, and *dramatic monologue* for distinctions between personal and invented lyric speakers.)

The lyric genre comprehends a great variety of utterances. Some, like Ben Jonson's "To the Memory of ... William Shakespeare" and Walt Whitman's ode on the death of Abraham Lincoln, "O Captain, My Captain," are ceremonial poems uttered in a public voice on a public occasion. Among the lyrics in a more private mode, some are simply a brief, intense expression of a mood or state of feeling; for example, Shelley's "To Night," or Emily Dickinson's "Wild Nights, Wild Nights," or this fine medieval elegiac song:

Fowles in the frith,
The fisshes in the flood,
And I mon waxe wood:
Much sorwe I walke with
For best of bone and blood.

But the genre also includes extended expressions of a complex evolution of feelingful thought, as in the long elegy and the meditative ode. And within a lyric, the process of observation, thought, memory, and feeling is organized in a variety of ways. For example, in "love lyrics" the speaker may simply express an enamored state of mind in an ordered form, as in Robert Burns' "O my love's like a red, red rose," and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways"; or may gallantly elaborate a compliment (Ben Jonson's "Drink to me only with thine eyes"); or may deploy an argument to take advantage of fleeting youth and opportunity (Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress," or Shakespeare's first seventeen sonnets addressed to a male youth); or may express a cool response to an importunate lover (Christina Rossetti's "No, thank you, John"). In other kinds of lyrics the speaker manifests and celebrates a particular disposition and set of values (John Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso"); or

's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality,"
 's "Dover Beach"); or is exhibited as making and justifying the choice of a
 ' "Sailing to Byzantium").
 In the original Greek, "lyric" signified a song rendered to the accompaniment

hymn, for example, is a lyric on a religious subject that is intended
 "lyrical" is sometimes applied to an expressive,
 's declaration of love to Adam,
 " in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, IV, 639–56.
 See *genre* for the broad distinction between the three major poetic classes

aubade, *dramatic monologue*, *elegy*, *epithala-*
, hymn, *ode*, *sonnet*. Refer to Norman Maclean, "From Action to Image:
 " in *Critics and Criticism*, ed. R. S.
Mediaeval Love-Song (1961); Chaviva Hošek
Lyric Poetry: Beyond New Criticism (1985); David
Lyric (1985); Helen Vendler, *The Music of What Happens* (1988), and
 (2007).

For references to *lyric* in other entries, see pages 8, 94. For types of lyric,
aubade; *dramatic monologue*; *elegy*; *epithalamion*; *folk song*; *haiku*; *ode*; *sonnet*.





machinery (in an epic): 108.

magazines: 367.

magic realism: 258.

malapropism: Malapropism is that type of **solecism** (the conspicuous and unintended violation of standard diction or grammar) which mistakenly uses a word in place of another that it resembles; the effect is usually comic. The term derives from Mrs. Malaprop in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's comedy *The Rivals* (1775), who in the attempt to display a copious vocabulary said things such as "a progeny of learning," "as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile," and "he is the very pineapple of politeness." In an early radio comedy "The Easy Aces," Jane Ace, an inveterate malapropist, remarked: "He got so excited, he ran around like a chicken with its hat off."

manifest content: 321.

manifesto: 238.

manuscripts: 32; 35.

Märchen (mër' shën): 137.

Marxist criticism: Marxist criticism, in its diverse forms, grounds its theory and practice on the economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx (1818–83) and his fellow-thinker Friedrich Engels (1820–95), and especially on the following claims:

1. In the last analysis, the evolving history of humankind, of its social groupings and interrelations, of its institutions, and of its ways of thinking are largely determined by the changing mode of its "material production"—that is, of its overall economic organization for producing and distributing material goods.
2. Changes in the fundamental mode of material production effect changes in the class structure of a society, establishing in each era dominant and subordinate classes that engage in a struggle for economic, political, and social advantage.
3. Human consciousness is constituted by an **ideology**—that is, the beliefs, values, and ways of thinking and feeling through which human beings perceive, and by recourse to which they explain, what they take to be reality. An ideology is, in complex ways, the product of the position and interests of a particular class. In any historical era, the dominant

MARXIST CRITICISM

ideology embodies, and serves to legitimize and perpetuate, the interests of the dominant economic and social class.

Ideology was not much discussed by Marx and Engels after *The German*, which they wrote jointly in 1845–46, but it has become a key con-

“ideology” is used in a variety of

’s race, sex,

“superstruc-” of which the concurrent socioeconomic system is the “base.” Friedrich “a false consciousness,” and many later Marxists

“scientific” (that is, Marxist) knowledge of the eco-

” who own the means of production and distribution, as “proletariat,” or wage-earning working class. This ideology,

—including religion, morality, philosophy, politics,

In accordance with some version of the views just outlined, a Marxist *literature* in any historical era, not as “products” of

“vulgar Marxism” analyzed a “bourgeois”

“social realism” that

transcend the prevailing bourgeois ideology sufficiently to represent (or in the frequent Marxist equivalent, to **reflect**) aspects of the “objective” reality of their time. (See *imitation*.)

The Hungarian thinker Georg Lukács, one of the most widely influential of Marxist critics, represents such a flexible view of the role of ideology. He proposed that each great work of literature creates “its own world,” which is unique and seemingly distinct from “everyday reality.” But masters of realism in the novel such as Balzac or Tolstoy, by “bringing to life the greatest possible richness of the objective conditions of life,” and by creating “typical” characters who manifest the essential tendencies and determinants of their epoch, succeed—often “in opposition to [the author’s] own conscious ideology”—in producing a fictional world which is a “reflection of life in the greatest concreteness and clarity and with all its motivating contradictions.” That is, the fictional world of such great writers accords with the Marxist conception of the real world as constituted by class conflict, economic and social “contradictions,” and the alienation of the individual under capitalism. (See *bourgeois epic*, under *epic*, and refer to Georg Lukács, *Writer and Critic and Other Essays*, trans. 1970; the volume also includes Lukács’ useful review of the foundational tenets of Marxist criticism, in “Marx and Engels on Aesthetics.”)

While lauding nineteenth-century literary realism, Lukács attacked modernist experimental writers as “decadent” instances of concern with the subjectivity of the alienated individual in the fragmented world of our late stage of capitalism. (See *modernism*.) He thereby inaugurated a vigorous debate among Marxist critics about the political standing of formal innovators in twentieth-century literature. In opposition to Lukács, the **Frankfurt School** of German Marxists, especially Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, lauded modernist writers such as James Joyce, Marcel Proust, and Samuel Beckett, proposing that their formal experiments, by the very fact that they fragment and disrupt the life they “reflect,” establish a distance and detachment that serve as an implicit critique—or yield a “negative knowledge”—of the dehumanizing institutions and processes of society under capitalism. Adorno and Horkheimer attempted, after World War II, to explain “why humanity, instead of entering into a truly human condition” (as Marxists had predicted) “is sinking into a new kind of barbarism.” See the entry *critique*, and refer to *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, ed. Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (1982), and for an authoritative history of the Frankfurt School, Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (1996).

Two rather maverick German Marxists, Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin, who supported modernist and nonrealistic art, have had considerable influence on non-Marxist as well as Marxist criticism. In his critical theory, and in his own dramatic writings (see *epic theater*), Bertolt Brecht rejected what he called the “Aristotelian” concept that a tragic play is an imitation of reality, with a unified plot and a universal theme that establishes an identification of the audience with the hero and produces a catharsis of the spectator’s emotions. (See Aristotle, under *tragedy* and *plot*.) Brecht proposes instead that the illusion of reality should be deliberately shattered by an episodic plot, by

's sympathy, by a striking theatrical "alienation effect" (see under *distance and involvement*). The

Another notable critic, Walter Benjamin, was both an admirer of Brecht

's attention to the effects of changing material conditions in the pro-

"a revolutionary criticism of traditional concepts of
" In his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,"

"aura" of uniqueness,
—an aura

aestheticism and fine arts.) The new media not only make

"the formulation of revolutionary demands in the politics of art."
's writings are available in Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, 4 vols.,
-4. Useful collections of essays by the Marxist critics Lukács, Brecht,
Aesthetics and Politics, 1977; and
An Anthology of Western Marxism: From Lukács and
, 1989.)

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a resurgence of

In the 1960s the influential French Marxist Louis Althusser assimilated the
then current into his view that the structure of society is not a
"nonsynchronous" so-
"ideological state apparatuses," including religious, legal,
"relative auton-
"; only "in the last instance" is the ideology of a particular institution

In an influential reconsideration of the general nature of ideology, Althusser opposes its definition as simply “false consciousness.” He declares instead that the ideology of each mode of state apparatus is different, and operates by means of a discourse which **interpellates** (calls upon) the individual to take up a pre-established “subject position”—that is, a position as a person with certain views and values, which, however, in every instance serve the ultimate interests of the ruling class. (See *discourse*, and *subject* under *poststructuralism*.) Althusser affirms, furthermore, that a great work of literature is not a mere product of ideology, because its fiction establishes for the reader a distance from which to recognize, hence expose, “the ideology from which it is born ... from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it alludes.” Pierre Macherey, in *A Theory of Literary Production* (1966, trans. 1978), stressed the supplementary claim that a literary text not only distances itself from its ideology by its fiction and form, but also exposes the “contradictions” that are inherent in that ideology by its “silences” or “gaps”—that is, by what the text fails to say because its inherent ideology makes it impossible to say it. Combining Marxism and *Freudianism*, Macherey asserts that such textual “absences” are symptoms of ideological repressions of the contents in the text’s own “unconscious.” The aim of Marxist criticism, Macherey asserts, is to make these silences “speak” and so to reveal, behind what an author consciously intended to say, the text’s unconscious content—that is, its repressed awareness of the flaws, stresses, and incoherence in the very ideology that it incorporates. (See *hermeneutics of suspicion*.)

Between 1929 and 1935 the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci, while imprisoned by the fascist government, wrote approximately thirty documents on political, social, and cultural subjects, known as the “prison notebooks.” Gramsci maintains the original Marxist distinction between the economic base and the cultural superstructure, but replaces the claim that culture is a disguised “reflection” of the material base with the concept that the relationship between the two is one of “reciprocity,” or interactive influence. Gramsci places special emphasis on the popular, as opposed to the elite elements of culture, ranging from *folklore* and popular music to the cinema. Gramsci’s most widely echoed concept is that of **hegemony**: that a social class achieves a predominant influence and power, not by direct and overt means, but by succeeding in making its ideological views so pervasive that the subordinate classes unwittingly accept and participate in their own oppression. The concept of hegemony, unlike the classical Marxist conception of ideology, implies an openness to negotiation and exchange, as well as conflict, between classes, and so refashions Marxist categories to fit a modern, post-industrial society in which diverse concepts and ideas, apart from “modes of production,” play a leading role. Another appealing feature of Gramsci’s thought to recent theorists is his emphasis on the role of intellectuals and opinion makers in helping people understand how they can effect their own transformation. Especially since Gramsci’s prison writings began to be translated into English in 1971, they have had a strong influence on literary and social critics such as Terry Eagleton in England and Fredric Jameson and Edward Said in America,

, trans. William Boelhower, 1985; David
The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916–1935, 2000;
Gramsci and Marxist Theory, 1979.)

Gramsci's writings also inspired a number of **post-Marxist** thinkers, who
poststructural discourse. Among these was a leader
cultural studies, also
under the entry *new historicism*.) Hall insisted that ideology
“false consciousness” or kind of concealment, but

“meaning,” Hall said, “is always
made to mean.” (See Hall,
“Ideology,”” in Michael Gurevitch and others, eds., *Cul-*
1982.)

Also strongly influenced by Gramsci were Ernesto Laclau and Chantal
Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (1985) argued for an under-

“unfixity” was “the
” so that the place of power in a society can

's lin-
linguistics in literary criticism and semiotics. For post-
Language Alone:
, 2002, pp. 70–141.)

In England the many social and critical writings of Raymond Williams

's “lived experience.” A leading theorist

—described as
—is reworked into a

deconstruction and from Lacan's version of Freudian *psy-*
. Eagleton views such poststructuralist analyses as useful to Marxist

The most prominent American theorist, Fredric Jameson, is also the most
The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially

Symbolic Act (1981), Jameson expressly adapts to his critical enterprise such seemingly incompatible viewpoints as the medieval theory of fourfold levels of meaning in the *allegorical interpretation* of the Bible, the *archetypal criticism* of Northrop Frye, *structuralist criticism*, Lacan's reinterpretations of Freud, *semiotics*, and *deconstruction*. These modes of criticism, Jameson asserts, are applicable at various stages of the critical interpretation of a literary work; but Marxist criticism, he contends, "subsumes" all the other "interpretive modes," by retaining their positive findings within a "political interpretation of literary texts" which stands as the "final" or "absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation." This last-analysis "political interpretation" of a literary text involves an exposure of the hidden role of the "political unconscious"—a concept which Jameson describes as his "collective," or "political," adaptation of the Freudian concept that each individual's unconscious is a repository of repressed desires. (See *psychological and psychoanalytic criticism*.) In a mode similar to Macherey, Jameson affirms that in any literary product of our late capitalist era, the "rifts and discontinuities" in the text, and especially those elements which, in the French phrase, are its "non-dit" (its not-said), are symptoms of the repression by a predominant ideology of the contradictions of "History" into the depths of the political unconscious; and the content of this repressed History, Jameson asserts, is the revolutionary process of "the collective struggle to wrest a realm of Freedom from a realm of Necessity." In the final stage, or last analysis, of an interpretation, Jameson holds, the Marxist critic "re-writes," in the mode of "allegory," the literary text "in such a way that the [text] may be seen as the ... reconstruction of a prior historical or ideological *subtext*"—that is, of the text's unspoken, because repressed and unconscious, awareness of the ways it is determined not only by current ideology, but also by the long-term process of true "History." (See *allegory*.)

Refer to *sociology of literature*, and for the Marxist wing of the new historicism, see *cultural materialism* under the entry *new historicism*. Useful introductions to Marxist criticism in general are the essays in Maynard Solomon, ed., *Marxism and Art: Essays Classic and Contemporary* (1979); Terry Eagleton and Drew Milne, eds., *Marxist Literary Theory: A Reader* (1996). In addition to the writings listed above, refer to Georg Lukács, *Studies in European Realism* (1950); Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780–1950* (1960) and *Marxism and Literature* (1977); Peter Demetz, *Marx, Engels and the Poets: Origins of Marxist Literary Criticism* (1967); Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (trans. 1968); Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays* (1969, trans. 1971), and *For Marx* (1996); Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form* (1971), and *Late Marxism: Adorno, or the Persistence of the Dialectic* (1996); Lee Baxandall and Stefan Morawski, eds., *Marx and Engels on Literature and Art* (1973); Terry Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology* (1976) and *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (1976); Chris Bullock and David Peck, eds., *Guide to Marxist Literary Criticism* (1980); Michael Ryan, *Marxism and Deconstruction* (1982); J. J. McGann, *The Romantic Ideology* (1983); J. G. Merquior, *Western Marxism* (1986). Various essays by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak assimilate Marxist concepts both to *deconstruction* and to the viewpoint of *feminist criticism*; see, for example, her

” in *Displacement: Derrida and*
, ed. Mark Krupnick (1983). For Derrida’s “reading” of Marx, see his *Spec-*

“Dialectical Immaterialism,” in *Skeptical Engagements* (1986); also
“The New Interdisciplinarity in Literary Criticism,” in Nancy
After Poststructuralism: Interdisciplinarity and
, 1993. Marxist concerns also serve to form the *new formalism* in
“Red Kant, or The Persistence of the
” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 26 (2000).

For references to *Marxist criticism* in other entries, see pages 163, 172,
, 311.

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The masque (a variant spelling of “mask”) was inaugurated in Renaissance

—often slight, and mainly mythological and allegorical—served
ed by amateurs who belonged to courtly

In the early seventeenth century in England the masque drew upon the

The Masque of Blacknesse and *The Masque of Queens*) and Inigo

’s *The Tempest*, and Mil-
’s sage and serious revival of the form, *Comus*, with songs by the composer

Prometheus Unbound

A Masque of Reason (1945) and *A Masque of Mercy*
’s lurid tale, “The Masque of the Red Death,” depicts

The **antimasque** was a form developed by Ben Jonson. In it the charac-
grotesque and unruly, the action ludicrous, and the humor broad; it

served as a foil and countertype to the elegance, order, and ceremony of the masque proper, which preceded it in a performance.

See Allardyce Nicoll, *Stuart Masques and the Renaissance Stage* (1937); Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power* (1975). Stephen Orgel and Roy Strong, in *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court* (2 vols., 1973), discuss Jones' contributions to the masque, with copious illustrations.

mechanic form: 137.

medieval romance: 48.

medieval tragedy: 409.

meiosis (mīō' sis): 167.

melodrama: "Melos" is Greek for song, and the term "melodrama" was originally applied to all musical plays, including opera. In early-nineteenth-century London, many plays were produced with a musical accompaniment that (as in modern motion pictures) served simply to fortify the emotional tone of the various scenes; the procedure was developed in part to circumvent the Licensing Act (1737), which allowed "legitimate" plays only as a monopoly of the Drury Lane and Covent Garden theaters, but permitted musical entertainments elsewhere. The term "melodrama" is now often applied to some of the typical plays, especially during the *Victorian Period*, that were written to be produced to musical accompaniment.

The Victorian melodrama can be said to bear the relation to tragedy that *farce* does to comedy. Typically, the protagonists are *flat* types: the hero is greathearted, the heroine pure, and the villain a monster of malignity. (The sharply contrasted good guys and bad guys of the movie western and some television dramas are modern derivatives from standard types in the old melodramas.) The plot revolves around malevolent intrigue and violent action, while the credibility of both character and plot is often sacrificed for violent effect and emotional opportunism. Nineteenth-century melodramas such as *Under the Gaslight* (1867) and the temperance play *Ten Nights in a Barroom* (1858) are still sometimes produced—less for thrills, however, than for laughs. Recently, the composer Stephen Sondheim converted George Dibdin Pitt's Victorian thriller *Sweeney Todd, The Barber of Fleet Street* (1842) into a highly effective musical drama.

The terms "melodrama" and "melodramatic" are also, in an extended sense, applied to any literary work or episode, whether in drama or prose fiction, that relies on implausible events and sensational action. Melodrama, in this sense, was standard fare in cowboy-and-Indian and cops-and-robber types of silent films, and remains alive and flourishing in current cinematic and television productions.

See M. W. Disher, *Blood and Thunder: Mid-Victorian Melodrama and Its Origins* (1949) and *Plots That Thrilled* (1954); Frank Rahill, *The World of*

(1967); R. B. Heilman, *Tragedy and Melodrama* (1968); David
 “Television Melodrama,” *Television as a Cultural Force*, ed. Douglass
Melodramatic Formations: American Theatre
 –1870 (1992).

(mĕnip' ĕān): 354.

's studies: 146.

; 63.

When someone says, discussing John's eating habits,
 "and when Coleridge writes in "The Ancient Mariner"

The moonlight steeped in silentness
 The steady weathercock,

"pig" and the verb "steeped" are metaphors,
metaphor under figurative lan-

.) But after twenty-five centuries of discussions of metaphor by rhetor-
 —in which during the second half of
 —there is no

from the time that Aristotle introduced it in the fourth century BC until
 the recent past. It holds that a metaphor is a departure from the *literal*
 (that is, what a competent speaker experiences as the standard) use of lan-
 guage which serves as a condensed or elliptical *simile*, in that it involves an
 implicit comparison between two disparate things. (The two things in the
 examples cited above are John's eating habits and those of a pig, and the
 event of something being steeped—soaked in a liquid—and the appear-
 ance of the moonlit landscape.) This view usually assumes that the fea-
 tures being compared pre-existed the use of the metaphor; that the
 metaphor can be translated into a statement of literal similarity without
 loss of cognitive content (that is, of the information it conveys); and also
 that a metaphor serves mainly to enhance the rhetorical force and stylistic
 vividness and pleasantness of a discourse.

The Philosophy of Rhetoric (1936) I. A. Richards
 introduced the terms *vehicle* for the metaphorical word (in the two

examples, “pig” and “steeped”) and *tenor* for the subject to which the metaphorical word is applied (John’s eating habits and the moonlit landscape). In place of the similarity view, he proposed that a metaphor works by bringing together the disparate “thoughts” of the vehicle and tenor so as to effect a meaning that “is a resultant of their interaction” and that cannot be duplicated by literal assertions of a similarity between the two elements. He also asserted that metaphor cannot be viewed simply as a rhetorical or poetic departure from ordinary usage, in that it permeates all language and affects the ways we perceive and conceive the world. Almost twenty years later, in an influential essay entitled “Metaphor” (1954–55), the philosopher Max Black refined and greatly expanded Richards’ treatment. Black proposed that each of the two elements in a metaphor has a “system of associated commonplaces,” consisting of the properties and relations that we commonly attach to the object, person, or event. When we understand a metaphor, the system of commonplaces associated with the “subsidiary subject” (equivalent to I. A. Richards’ “vehicle”) interacts with the system associated with the “principal subject” (Richards’ “tenor”) so as to “filter” or “screen” that system, and thus effects a new way of perceiving and conceiving the principal subject. This process, by which one complex set of associations serves to select and reorganize a second set, Black claims, is a “distinctive *intellectual* operation.” He also claims that, in place of saying that metaphors simply formulate a pre-existing similarity between the two subjects, “it would be more illuminating in some of these cases to say that the metaphor *creates* the similarity.”

Before Max Black’s essay, philosophers had paid only passing attention to metaphor. The reigning assumption had been that the main function of language is to communicate truths, and that truths can be clearly communicated only in literal language. For the most part, accordingly, philosophers had adverted to metaphor only to warn against its intrusion into rational discourse, as opposed to poetry and oratory, on the ground that figurative language, as John Locke had said in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), serves only “to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgment.” Black’s essay, however, helped inaugurate a philosophical concern with metaphor which, since the 1960s, has resulted in a flood of publications. Many of these writings restate, with various qualifications, refinements, and expansions, either the similarity or interaction views of metaphor. Within these contributions, however, one can identify two additional views, both of which have been influential in literary theory as well as in philosophy:

3. The pragmatic view. In an essay entitled “What Metaphors Mean” (1978), Donald Davidson mounted a challenge to the standard assumption that there is a metaphorical meaning as distinct from a literal meaning. “Metaphors,” he claims, “mean what the words, in their most literal interpretation, mean, and nothing more.” The question of metaphor is

pragmatic, not semantic; that is, it is the use of a literal statement in such a way as to “suggest,” or “intimate,” or “lead us to notice” what we might otherwise overlook. In a chapter on “Metaphor” in *Expression and Meaning* (1979), John Searle also rejected the similarity and interaction views, on the grounds that at best they serve to explain, and that only in part and in a misleading way, how some metaphors come to be used and understood. In consonance with his overall *speech-act theory*, Searle proposed that to explain metaphor we must distinguish between “word, or sentence meaning” (what the word or sentence means literally) and a particular speaker’s “utterance meaning” (the metaphorical meaning that a speaker uses the literal word or sentence meaning to express). Searle goes on to propose a set of implicit principles, shared by the speaker and interpreter, to explain how a speaker can use a sentence with a literal meaning to say something with a very different metaphorical meaning, as well as to clarify how a hearer recognizes and proceeds to interpret a literal sentence that is used metaphorically.

nent since about 1980, begins by rejecting the assumption in many earlier theories that the ordinary, normal use of language is literal, from which metaphor is a deviation for special rhetorical and poetic purposes. Instead it claims that the ordinary use of language is pervasively and indispensably metaphorical, and that metaphor persistently and profoundly structures the ways human beings perceive, what they know, and how they think.

George Lakoff and Mark Turner in *More than Cool Reason* (1979) provide a short and accessible introduction to this cognitive view, with special attention to its relevance for the analysis of metaphors in poetry. They conceive metaphor to be a projection and mapping across what they call “conceptual domains”; that is, its use is basically a cognitive mental process, of which the metaphorical word, phrase, or sentence is only the linguistic aspect and expression. To identify the two elements that compose a metaphor, the authors replace “vehicle” and “tenor,” or “primary” and “secondary,” with the terms “source domain” and “target domain.” In using and understanding a metaphor, part of the conceptual structure of the source domain is “mapped” onto the conceptual structure of the target domain, in a one-way “transaction” (as distinct from an “interaction”) which may alter and reorganize the way we perceive or think about the latter element.

A distinctive procedure in this view is to identify a number of “basic conceptual metaphors” that pervade discourse in our Western culture, but are so common and operate so automatically that for the most part we use them without noticing them. Some of the most common basic metaphors are Purposes Are Destinations; Time Moves; Time Is A Reaper; Life Is A Journey; Life Is A Play; People Are Plants. Such metaphors establish cross-conceptual mappings that manifest themselves in our ordinary speech as well as in the greatest poetry. People Are Plants, for example, is a type of cognitive mapping that underlies such everyday expressions as

“She’s in the flower of youth,” “She’s a late bloomer,” and “He’s withering fast,” no less than it does King Lear’s “Ripeness is all.” The difference between trivially conventional and innovatively poetic uses of a basic metaphor, by this analysis, is a difference not in cognitive kind, but in the range and diversity of application, and in the skill manifested in its verbal expression. And in all uses (including in the language of the sciences) cross-domain metaphors play an ineradicable part in determining what we know, how we reason, what values we assign, and the ways we conduct our lives.

Vigorous debates about metaphor continue apace. A plausible conclusion is that the diverse accounts of metaphor listed above need not be mutually exclusive, in that each is directed especially to a particular one of many kinds of metaphor or functions of metaphor, or focuses on a different moment in the process of recognizing and understanding a metaphor, or is adapted to the perspective of a preferred mode of philosophy.

Mark Johnson, ed., *Philosophical Perspectives on Metaphor* (1981), includes, among others, the writings on metaphor (mentioned above) by Richards, Black, Davidson, and Searle; Sheldon Sacks, ed., *On Metaphor* (1987), contains essays by both philosophers and literary critics; and Andrew Ortony, ed., *Metaphor and Thought* (2d ed., 1993), includes an essay by George Lakoff that summarizes the cognitive treatments of metaphor. On the cognitive view, see also George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980); and Mark Turner, *Death Is the Mother of Beauty* (1987). For earlier treatments of the pervasive cognitive function of metaphors, see Stephen C. Pepper, *World Hypotheses* (1942), on the “root metaphors” that generate the major philosophical worldviews; and M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), on the diverse “constitutive metaphors” that provide the structure and categories of divergent theories of literature and the other arts. See also Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor* (1977), and for an influential essay on metaphor by a deconstructive theorist, Jacques Derrida, “White Mythology,” in *Margins of Discourse* (1982).

metaphysical conceit: 59; 64.

metaphysical poets: John Dryden said in his *Discourse Concerning Satire* (1693) that John Donne in his poetry “affects the metaphysics,” meaning that Donne employs the terminology and abstruse arguments of the medieval Scholastic philosophers. In 1779 Samuel Johnson extended the term “metaphysical” from Donne to a school of poets, in the acute and balanced critique which he incorporated in his “Life of Cowley.” The name is now applied to a group of seventeenth-century poets who, whether or not directly influenced by Donne, employ similar poetic procedures and imagery, both in secular poetry (Cleveland, Marvell, and Cowley) and in religious poetry (Herbert, Vaughan, Crashaw, and Traherne).

METAPHYSICAL POETS

Attempts have been made to demonstrate that these poets had in common
“metaphysical,” however, fits these

Petrarchan

; Donne’s poems are opposed also to the fluid, regular versification of
’s contemporaries, the *Cavalier poets*. Instead, Donne wrote in a diction

—with a reluctant mis-

“witty,” making ingenious use of *paradox*, *pun*, and startling *par-*
metaphysical conceit and *wit*). The beginnings
’s poems will illustrate the shock tactic, the dramatic form of

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root ...

For God’s sake hold your tongue, and let me love.

Busy old fool, unruly sun ...

Batter my heart, three-personed God....

’s poetic procedures have parallels in each of his

These poets have had admirers in every age, but beginning with the
of the later seventeenth century, they were by most critics and
false wit, until a drastic revaluation after World War I elevated Donne, and to

). This reversal owed much to H. J. C. Grierson’s Introduction
Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century (1912), was given
’s essays “The Metaphysical Poets” and “Andrew
” (1921), and was continued by a great number of commentators,
New Critics,

“unified sensibility.” (See *dissociation of sensibility*.)

More recently, Donne has lost this exemplary status, but continues to occupy a firm position as a prominent poet in the English canon.

See F. R. Leavis, *Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry* (1936); Cleanth Brooks, *Modern Poetry and the Tradition* (1939); Rosemund Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (1947); J. E. Duncan, *The Revival of Metaphysical Poetry* (1959); Helen Gardner, ed., *John Donne: A Collection of Critical Essays* (1962). F. J. Warnke, *European Metaphysical Poetry* (1961), treats the Continental vogue of this style. For references to *metaphysical poets* in other entries, see page 420.

meter: Meter is the recurrence, in regular units, of a prominent feature in the sequence of speech sounds of a language. There are four main types of meter in European languages: (1) In classical Greek and Latin, the meter was **quantitative**; that is, it was established by the relative duration of the utterance of a syllable, and consisted of recurrent patterns of long and short syllables. (2) In French and many other Romance languages, the meter is **syllabic**, depending on the number of syllables within a line of verse, without regard to the fall of the stresses. (3) In the older Germanic languages, including Old English, the meter is **accentual**, depending on the number of stressed syllables within a line, without regard to the number of intervening unstressed syllables. (4) The fourth type of meter, combining the features of the two preceding types, is **accentual-syllabic**, in which the metric units consist of a recurrent pattern of stresses on a recurrent number of syllables. The stress-and-syllable type has been the predominant meter of English poetry since the fourteenth century.

The study of the theory and practice of meter is called **metrics**. There is considerable dispute about the most valid or useful way to analyze and classify English meters. This entry will begin by presenting a traditional accentual-syllabic analysis which has the virtues of being simple, widely used, and applicable to by far the greater part of English poetry from Chaucer to the present. Major departures from this stress-and-syllable meter will be described in the latter part of the entry.

In all sustained spoken English we sense a **rhythm**; that is, a recognizable although varying pattern in the beat of the **stresses**, or **accents** (the more forcefully uttered, hence louder syllables) in the stream of speech sounds. In meter, this rhythm is structured into a recurrence of regular—that is, approximately equivalent—units of stress pattern. Compositions written in meter are also known as **verse**.

We attend, in reading verse, to the individual **line**, which is a sequence of words printed as a separate entity on the page. The meter is determined by the pattern of stronger and weaker stresses on the syllables composing the words in the verse line; the stronger is called the “stressed” syllable and all the weaker ones the “unstressed” syllables. (What the ear perceives as a strong stress is not an absolute quantity, but is relative to the degree of stress in the adjacent syllables.) Three major factors determine where the stresses (in the sense of the relatively stronger stresses or accents) will fall in a line of verse: (1) Most important is the “word accent” in words of more than one syllable;

METER

“accent” itself, for example, the stress falls on the first syllable.

—in a sentence or a phrase—the stress will fall depends on the gram-

“rhetorical accent,” or the emphasis we give a word because we want

“metrical accent,” which is the beat that

If the prevailing stress pattern enforces a drastic alteration of the normal
wrenched accent. Wrenching may be the result of a

folk ballad (for
“fair ladie,” “far countrée”), and is sometimes deliberately used for
’s *Don Juan* (1819–24) and in the verses of

It is possible to distinguish a number of degrees of syllabic stress in English

“binary.” That is, we distinguish only
—strong stress and weak stress—and group the syllables into
foot is the

“stressed”; the relatively weaker-stressed syllables
“light,” or most commonly, “unstressed.”

The four standard feet distinguished in English are:

Iambic (the noun is “iamb”): an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.

Thě cúr | fěw tólls | thě knéll | ǒf pár | tǐng dáy. |

(Thomas Gray, “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”)

Anapestic (the noun is “anapest”): two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable.

Thě Ās sýr | iǎn cǎme dówn | líke ǎ wólf | ǒn thě fórd. |

(Lord Byron, “The Destruction of Sennacherib”)

Trochaic (the noun is “trochee”): a stressed followed by an unstressed syllable.

Thére theý | áre, mý | fíf tý | mén ǎnd | wó mĕn. |

(Robert Browning, “One Word More”)

Most trochaic lines lack the final unstressed syllable—in the technical term, such lines, or any verse lines that lack the final syllable, are **catalectic**. So in Blake’s “The Tiger”:

Tí gě! | tí gě! | búrn ĭng | bríght |
 Ín thě | fó rěst | óf thě | níght. |

4. **Dactylic** (the noun is “dactyl”): a stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables.

Éve, with hě | bás kět, wás |
 Déep ĩn thě | bélls ānd grāss. |

(Ralph Hodgson, “Eve”)

Iambs and anapests, since the strong stress is at the end, are called “rising meter”; trochees and dactyls, with the strong stress at the beginning, are called “falling meter.” Iambs and trochees, having two syllables, are called “duple meter”; anapests and dactyls, having three syllables, are called “triple meter.” It should be noted that the iamb is by far the commonest English foot; some metric theorists treat other types of stress patterns as variants of the iamb. (For the development of the iambic line in English, see John Thompson, *The Founding of English Metre*, 1961.)

Two other feet are often distinguished by special names, although they occur in English meter only as occasional variants from standard feet:

Spondaic (the noun is “spondee”): two successive syllables with approximately equal strong stresses, as in each of the first two feet of this line:

Góod stróng | thĭck stú | pě fy | ĭng ín | cěnse smóke. |

(Browning, “The Bishop Orders His Tomb”)

Pyrrhic (the noun is also “pyrrhic”): a foot composed of two successive syllables with approximately equal light stresses, as in the second and fourth feet in this line:

Mý wăy | ĩs tǒ | bě gín | wĭth thě | bě gín nĭng |

(Byron, *Don Juan*)

This latter term is used only infrequently. Some traditional metrists deny the existence of a true pyrrhic, on the grounds that the prevailing metrical accent—in the above instance, iambic—always imposes a slightly stronger stress on one of the two syllables.

A metric line is named according to the number of feet composing it:

monometer:	one foot
dimeter:	two feet
trimeter:	three feet
tetrameter:	four feet
pentameter:	five feet
hexameter:	six feet (an Alexandrine is a line of six iambic feet)

METER

heptameter: seven feet (a **fourteener** is another term for a line of seven iambic feet—hence, of fourteen syllables; it tends to break into a unit of four feet followed by a unit of three feet)

octameter: eight feet

To describe the meter of a line we name (1) the predominant foot and

's "Elegy" is "iambic pentameter," and the line from Byron's
" is "anapestic tetrameter."

To **scan** a passage of verse is to go through it line by line, analyzing the

scansion, signified by conventional symbols, of
' *Endymion* (1818). The passage was chosen

Ǻ th́ng | ǫf béau | tǿ ís | Ǻ jóy | fǿr é vǿr: |
Ǻts lóve | lǿ nǿss | ǿn créas | ǿs; // ít | wǿll név ǿr |
 ǿn | tǿ nóth | ǿng nǿss, | // bútt stǿll | wǿll kéep |
Ǻ bów | ǿr quí | ǿt fǿr | ǿs, // ánd | Ǻ sléep |
 ǿf | swǿet dréams, | Ǻnd héalth, | Ǻnd quí | ǿt bréath ǿng. |

The prevailing meter is iambic pentameter. As in all fluent verse, how-

"substitutions." Thus:

and are said to have a **feminine ending**. In lines 3 and 4, the closing feet, because they are standard iambs, end with a stressed syllable and are said to have **masculine endings**.

"inverted" to form trochees. (This initial position is the most common place for inversions in iambic verse.)

line 4, as pyrrhics (two unstressed syllables); these help to give Keats' verses their rapid movement. This is a procedure in scansion about which metric analysts disagree: some will feel enough of a metric beat to mark all these feet as iambs; others will mark still other feet (for example, the third foot of line 1) as pyrrhics also. And some metrists prefer to use symbols measuring two degrees of strong stress, and will indicate a difference in the feet, as follows:

Ǻts lóve | lǿ nǿss | ǿn créás | ǿs.

Notice, however, that these are differences only in nuance; analysts agree that the prevailing pulse of Keats' versification is iambic throughout, and

that despite many variations, the felt norm is of five stresses in the verse line.

Two other elements are important in the metric movement of Keats' passage: (1) In lines 1 and 5, the pause in the reading—which occurs naturally at the end of a sentence, clause, or other syntactic unit—coincides with the end of the line; such lines are called **end-stopped**. Lines 2 through 4, on the other hand, are called **run-on lines** (or in a term derived from the French, they exhibit **enjambment**—"a striding-over"), because the pressure of the incompleting syntactic unit toward closure carries on over the end of the verse line. (2) When a strong phrasal pause falls within a line, as in lines 2, 3, and 4, it is called a **caesura**—indicated in the quoted passage by the conventional symbol //. The management of these internal pauses is important for giving variety and for providing expressive emphases in the long pentameter line.

To understand the use and limitations of an analysis such as this, we must realize that a prevailing metric pattern (iambic pentameter, in the passage from Keats) establishes itself as a perceived norm which controls the reader's expectations, even though the number of lines that deviate from the norm may exceed the number that fit the norm exactly. In addition, scansion is an abstract scheme which deliberately omits notation of many aspects of the actual reading of a poem that contribute importantly to its pace, rhythm, and total impression. It does not specify, for example, whether the component words in a metric line are short words or long words, or whether the strong stresses fall on short vowels or long vowels; it does not give any indication of the *intonation*—the overall rise and fall in the pitch and loudness of the voice, and the rhetorical emphases—which we use to bring out the meaning and effect of these poetic lines. It also does not indicate the interplay of the metric stresses with the **phrasal rhythms**—the anticipation, suspension, and closure of the syntactic and semantic phrases—within a sustained verse passage. Such details are omitted in order to lay bare the essential metric skeleton; that is, the pattern of the stronger and weaker stresses in the syllabic sequence of a verse line. Moreover, an actual reading of a poem, if it is a skillful reading, will not accord mechanically with the scansion. There is a marked difference between the scansion, as an abstract metrical norm, and a skilled and expressive oral reading, or **performance**, of a poem; and no two competent readers will perform the same lines in precisely the same way. But in a performance, the metric norm indicated by the scansion is sensed as an implicit understructure of pulses; in fact, the interplay of an expressive performance, with its intonational and phrasal patterns operating sometimes with and sometimes against this underlying metric pulse, gives tension and vitality to our experience of verse.

We need to note, finally, that some kinds of versification which occur in English poetry differ from the syllable-and-stress type already described:

1. **Strong-stress meters** or **accentual verse**. In this meter, native to English and other Germanic languages, only the beat of the strong stresses counts in the scanning, while the number of intervening light syllables is

highly variable. Usually there are four strong-stressed syllables in a line, whose beat is emphasized by *alliteration*. This was the meter of Old English poetry and continued to be the meter of many Middle English poems, until Chaucer and others popularized the syllable-and-stress meter. In the opening passage, for example, of *Piers Plouman* (later fourteenth century) the four strong stresses (always divided by a medial caesura) are for the most part reinforced by alliteration (see *alliterative meter*); the light syllables, which vary in number, are recessive and do not assert their individual presence:

In a sómer sésón, // whan sóft was the sónne,
I shópe me in shróudes, // as Í a shépe were,
In hábits like an héremite, // unhóly of wórkes,
Went wýde in this wórld, // wónders to hére.

Strong-stress meter survives in some *folk* poetry and in traditional children's rhymes such as "Hickory, dickory, dock." It was revived as an artificial literary meter by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in *Christabel* (1816), in which each line has four strong stresses but the number of syllables within a line varies from four to twelve. Strong-stress meter, with four stresses to a line, is also the basic metric structure in the modern types of performance poetry called *rap*.

What G. M. Hopkins in the later nineteenth century called his **sprung rhythm** is a variant of strong-stress meter: each foot, as he describes it, begins with a stressed syllable, which may either stand alone or be associated with from one to three (occasionally even more) light syllables. Two six-stress lines from Hopkins' "The Wreck of the *Deutschland*" indicate the variety of the rhythms in this meter, and also exemplify its most striking feature: the great weight of the strong stresses, and the frequent juxtaposition of strong stresses (*spondees*) at any point in the line. The stresses in the second line were marked in a manuscript by Hopkins himself; they indicate that in complex instances, his metric decisions may seem arbitrary:

The | sóur | scythe | crínge, and the | bléar | sháre |
cóme. |
Our | héarts' chárity's | héarth's | fire, our | thóughts'
chivalry's | thróng's | Lórd. |

(See Marcella M. Holloway, *The Prosodic Theory of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 1947.) A number of modern metrists, including T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, skillfully interweave both strong-stress and syllable-and-stress meters in some of their versification.

Quantitative meters in English are written in imitation of classical Greek and Latin versification, in which the metrical pattern is not determined by the stress but by the "quantity" (duration of pronunciation) of a syllable, and the foot consists of a combination of "long" and "short" syllables. Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Thomas Campion, and

other Elizabethan poets experimented with this meter in English, as did Coleridge, Tennyson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Robert Bridges later on. The strong accentual character of English, however, as well as the indeterminateness of the duration of a syllable in the English language, makes it impossible to sustain a quantitative meter for any length. See Derek Attridge, *Well-Weighted Syllables: Elizabethan Verse in Classical Meters* (1974).

3. In *free verse* (discussed in a separate entry), the component lines have no (or only occasional) metric feet, or uniform stress patterns.

George Saintsbury, *Historical Manual of English Prosody* (1910), is a well-illustrated treatment of traditional syllable-and-stress metrics. For later discussions of this and alternative metric theories see Seymour Chatman, *A Theory of Meter* (1965); and W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Concept of Meter" (1959). This last essay is reprinted in W. K. Wimsatt, *Hateful Contraries* (1965), and in Harvey Gross, ed., *The Structure of Verse* (1966)—an anthology that reprints other useful essays, including Northrop Frye, "The Rhythm of Recurrence," and Yvor Winters, "The Audible Reading of Poetry." See also W. K. Wimsatt, ed., *Versification: Major Language Types* (1972); Paul Fussell, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (rev. 1979); John Hollander, *Rhyme's Reason: A Guide to English Verse* (1981); T. V. F. Brogan, *English Versification, 1570–1980* (1981); Robert Pinsky, *The Sounds of Poetry: A Brief Guide* (1998); Amittai Aviram, *Telling Rhythm: Body and Meaning in Poetry* (1994); Derek Attridge, *Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction* (1995); Thomas Carper and Derek Attridge, *Meter and Meaning: An Introduction to Rhythm in Poetry* (2003). For responses by contemporary poets to David Baker's contention that there are only iambic feet in English, see David Baker, ed., *Meter in English: A Critical Engagement* (1996). For references to *meter* in other entries, see page 140. See also *alliterative meter*; *blank verse*; *doggerel*; *free verse*.

metonymy (mĕtōn' ĭmē): 132.

metrical romance: 49.

middle (of a plot): 296.

Middle English: 280.

Middle English period: 280.

middle style: 384.

miles gloriosus (mĕ' lās glōrĕō' sūs): 379.

mime (mīm): 266.

(mīmē' sis): 171.

(mīmět' ik): 69; 382.

These are all types of late-

The **miracle play** had as its subject either a story from the Bible, or else

” denotes only dramas based on saints’ lives, and the term **mys-**
is applied to dramas based on the Bible. “Mystery” is used in the
ministerium, “work,” “occupa-
”) of the “trade” conducted by each of the medieval guilds which spon-

The plays representing biblical narratives originated within the church in

tropes, especially the “Quem quaeritis” (“Whom are you seek-
”) trope portraying the visit of the three Marys to the tomb of Christ.

“cycles” of such plays, represent-

“pageant wagon” which was drawn, in sequence, to one after an-

“Noah” and “Second Shepherd’s Play,” and the Brome “Abraham
,”

Morality plays were dramatized *allegories* of a representative Christian life

often played the role of the tempter in a fashion both sinister and comic;

’s Falstaff. The best-known morality play is the fifteenth-century
, which is still given an occasional performance; other notable exam-
The Castle of Perseverance and *Mankind*.

Interlude (Latin, “between the play”) is a term applied to a variety of short stage entertainments, such as secular *farces* and witty dialogues with a religious or political point. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, these little dramas were performed by bands of professional actors; it is believed that they were often put on between the courses of a feast or between the acts of a longer play. Among the better-known interludes are John Heywood’s farces of the first half of the sixteenth century, especially *The Four PP* (that is, the Palmer, the Pardoner, the ‘Pothecary, and the Peddler, who engage in a lying contest), and *Johan Johan the Husband*, *Tyb His Wife*, and *Sir John the Priest*.

Until the middle of the twentieth century, concern with medieval drama was scholarly rather than critical. Since that time a number of studies have dealt with the relationships of the texts to the religious and secular culture of medieval Europe, and have stressed the artistic excellence and power of the plays themselves. See Karl Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church* (2 vols., 1933); Arnold Williams, *The Drama of Medieval England* (1961); T. W. Craik, *The Tudor Interlude* (1962); David M. Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe* (1962); V. A. Kolve, *The Play Called Corpus Christi* (1966); Rosemary Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* (1972); Jerome Taylor and Alar Nelson, eds., *Medieval English Drama: Essays Critical and Contextual* (1972); Robert Potter, *The English Morality Play* (1975). For references to *miracle play* in other entries, see pages 409, 411.

mirror stage: 324.

mise en scène (mē’ zăn sĕn’): 364.

mixed metaphor: 131.

mock epic: 38.

mock heroic: 38; 26, 39.

Modern Period: 285.

modernism and postmodernism: The term **modernism** is widely used to identify new and distinctive features in the subjects, forms, concepts, and styles of literature and the other arts in the early decades of the twentieth century, but especially after World War I (1914–18). The specific features signified by “modernism” (or by the adjective **modernist**) vary with the user, but many critics agree that it involves a deliberate and radical break with some of the traditional bases not only of Western art, but of Western culture in general. Important intellectual precursors of modernism, in this sense, are thinkers who had questioned the certainties that had supported traditional modes of social organization, religion, and morality, and also traditional ways of conceiving the human self—thinkers such as Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), Karl

The
(1890–1915) stressed the correspondence between central
Some literary historians locate the beginning of the modernist revolt as far
high modernism,

's *Ulysses*, T. S. Eliot's
, and Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room*, as well as many other ex-

T. S. Eliot wrote in a review of Joyce's *Ulysses* in 1923 that the inherited
"the immense panorama of futility
" Like Joyce and like Ezra Pound
Cantos, Eliot experimented with new forms and a new style that would

The Waste Land (1922), for example, Eliot replaced the standard

's *Ulysses* and his even more radical *Finnegans Wake* (1939),

stream of consciousness and other innovative modes of narration. Gertrude
—often linked with Joyce, Pound, Eliot, and Woolf as a trail-blazing
—experimented with **automatic writing** (writing that has been

'Neill, and

expressionism and *surrealism*, in the modernist paintings and

A prominent feature of modernism is the phenomenon called the **avant-garde** (a French military metaphor: “advance-guard”); that is, a small, self-conscious group of artists and authors who deliberately undertake, in Ezra Pound’s phrase, to “make it new.” By violating the accepted conventions and proprieties, not only of art but of social discourse, they set out to create ever-new artistic forms and styles and to introduce hitherto neglected, and sometimes forbidden, subject matter. Frequently, avant-garde artists represent themselves as “alienated” from the established order, against which they assert their own autonomy; a prominent aim is to shock the sensibilities of the conventional reader and to challenge the norms and pieties of the dominant bourgeois culture. See Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1968). Peter Bürger’s *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1984) is a neo-Marxist analysis both of modernism and of its distinctive cultural formation, the avant-garde.

The term **postmodernism** is often applied to the literature and art after World War II (1939–45), when the effects on Western morale of the First World War were greatly exacerbated by the experience of Nazi totalitarianism and mass extermination, the threat of total destruction by the atomic bomb, the progressive devastation of the natural environment, and the ominous fact of overpopulation. Postmodernism involves not only a continuation, sometimes carried to an extreme, of the countertraditional experiments of modernism, but also diverse attempts to break away from modernist forms which had, inevitably, become in their turn conventional, as well as to overthrow the elitism of modernist “high art” by recourse for models to the “mass culture” in film, television, newspaper cartoons, and popular music. Many of the works of postmodern literature—by Jorge Luis Borges, Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov, Thomas Pynchon, Roland Barthes, and many others—so blend literary genres, cultural and stylistic levels, the serious and the playful, that they resist classification according to traditional literary rubrics. And these literary anomalies are paralleled in other arts by phenomena like pop art, op art, the musical compositions of John Cage, and the films of Jean-Luc Godard and other directors.

An undertaking in some postmodernist writings—prominently in Samuel Beckett and other authors of the literature of the *absurd*—is to subvert the foundations of our accepted modes of thought and experience so as to reveal the meaninglessness of existence and the underlying “abyss,” or “void,” or “nothingness” on which any supposed security is conceived to be precariously suspended. Postmodernism in literature and the arts has parallels with the movement known as poststructuralism in linguistic and literary theory; poststructuralists undertake to subvert the foundations of language in order to demonstrate that its seeming meaningfulness dissipates, for a rigorous inquirer, into a play of conflicting indeterminacies, or else undertake to show that all forms of cultural discourse are manifestations of the reigning ideology, or of the relations and constructions of power, in contemporary society. See *poststructuralism*.

For some postmodernist developments in literature, see literature of the *absurd*, *antihero*, *antinovel*, *Beat writers*, *concrete poetry*, *metafiction*, *new novel*, *performance poetry*. On modernism, refer to Richard Ellmann and Charles Feidelson, eds., *The Modern Tradition: Backgrounds of Modern Literature* (1965); Irving

- The Idea of the Modern in Literature and the Arts* (1967); Lionel *Beyond Culture* (1968); Paul de Man, "Literary History and Literary" in *Blindness and Insight* (1971); Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era A History of Modern Poetry: From the 1890s to the High* (1976); Peter Nicholls, *Modernisms: A Literary Guide* (1995); *Early Modernism: Literature, Music, and Painting in Europe, –1916* (1994); Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, eds., *Modernism: –1930/A Guide to European Literature* (1991); Michael North, *The Dialect* (1998); Michael *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism* (1999). See also the *Modernism/Modernity*.
- On postmodernism, see Clement Greenberg, *The Notion of Post-Modern The Postmodern Condition* (trans. 1984); Andreas Huyssen, (1986); David *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural* (1989); John McGowan, *Postmodernism and Its Critics* (1991); Fredric *Postmodernism* (1991); Ingeborg Hoesterey, ed., *Zeitgeist in Babel:* (1991); Stuart Sim, ed., *The Routledge Companion* (2001); Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist, eds., *Ency-* (2003).
- On the massive impact on culture and literature of the two World Wars, *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War The Great War and Modern Memory* (2000).
- On modern and postmodern drama: Austin Quigley, *The Modern Stage* (1985); William B. Worthen, *Modern Drama and the Rhetoric* (1992); Debora Geis, *Postmodern Theatric(k)s* (1993). For references to in other entries, see page 168.

; 171.

(mōnōm' ě ter): **219**.

; 8, 379, 409, 411.

morphology: 195.

motif and theme: A **motif** is a conspicuous element, such as a type of event, device, reference, or formula, which occurs frequently in works of literature. The “loathly lady” who turns out to be a beautiful princess is a common motif in *folklore*, and the man fatally bewitched by a fairy lady is a motif adopted from folklore in Keats’ “La Belle Dame sans Merci” (1820). Common in lyric poems is the **ubi sunt motif**, the “where-are” formula for lamenting the vanished past (“Where are the snows of yesteryear?”), and also the *carpe diem* motif, whose nature is sufficiently indicated by Robert Herrick’s title “To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time.” An **aubade**—from the Old French “alba,” meaning dawn—is an early-morning song whose usual motif is an urgent request to a beloved to wake up. A familiar example is Shakespeare’s “Hark, hark, the lark at heaven’s gate sings.” An older term for recurrent poetic concepts or formulas is the **topos** (Greek for “a commonplace”); Ernst R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (trans. 1953), treats many of the ancient literary topoi. The term “motif,” or else the German **leitmotif** (a guiding motif), is also applied to the frequent repetition, within a single work, of a significant verbal or musical phrase, or set description, or complex of images, as in the operas of Richard Wagner or in novels by Thomas Mann, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and William Faulkner. See *imagery*; and for a *deconstructive* treatment of recurrent elements or motifs in prose fiction, see J. Hillis Miller, *Fiction and Repetition* (1982).

Theme is sometimes used interchangeably with “motif,” but the term is more usefully applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to involve and make persuasive to the reader. John Milton states as the explicit theme of *Paradise Lost* to “assert Eternal Providence, / And justify the ways of God to men”; see *didactic literature* and *fiction and truth*. Some critics have claimed that all nontrivial works of literature, including lyric poems, involve an implicit theme which is embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery; see, for example, Cleanth Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947). And *archetypal critics* trace such recurrent themes as that of the scapegoat, or the journey underground, through myths and social rituals, as well as literature. For a discussion of the overlapping applications of the critical terms “subject,” “theme,” and “thesis” see Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics* (1958, pp. 401–11).

motivation: 46.

movements in recent criticism: 405.

multiculturalism: 43.

multiple authorship: 404.

multiple meaning: 13.

' play: 136.

: In classical Greek, "mythos" signified any story or plot, whether true or
—a system of hereditary stories of ancient origin which were

—set forms and procedures in sacred ceremonies—but anthropologists

legend. If the hereditary story

folktale.

The French structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss departed from the traditional

"The Structural Study of
" in *Structural Anthropology* (1968), and refer to *structuralist criticism* and
. Another influential contribution to the theory of myths is the
's *Work on Myth* (1979, trans.

—a need that is not outmoded by scientific advances and rationality;
"Darwinism of words," in which those

"a work"—an ongoing and ever-changing process that

It can be said that a mythology is a religion which we do not believe.

"Still doth the old in-
" The term "myth" has also been extended to

possible; see, for example, his "Myth of Er" in Book X of *The Republic*. The German *Romantic* authors F. W. J. Schelling and Friedrich Schlegel proposed that to write great literature, modern poets must develop a new unifying mythology which will synthesize the insights of the myths of the Western past with the new discoveries of philosophy and the physical sciences. In the same period in England William Blake, who felt "I must create a system or be enslaved by another man's," incorporated in his poems a system of mythology he had himself created by fusing hereditary myths, biblical history and prophecy, and his own intuitions, visions, and intellection. A number of modern writers have also asserted that an integrative mythology, whether inherited or invented, is essential to literature. James Joyce in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, T. S. Eliot in *The Waste Land*, Eugene O'Neill in *Mourning Becomes Electra*, and many other writers have deliberately woven their modern materials on the pattern of ancient myths, while W. B. Yeats, like his admired predecessor Blake, undertook to construct his own systematic mythology, which he expounded in *A Vision* (1926) and embodied in a number of remarkable lyric poems such as "The Second Coming" and "Byzantium."

Around the middle of the twentieth century, "myth" became a prominent term in literary analysis. A large group of writers, the **myth critics**—including Robert Graves, Francis Fergusson, Maud Bodkin, Richard Chase, and (the most influential) Northrop Frye—viewed the genres and individual plot patterns of many works of literature, including what on the surface are highly sophisticated and realistic works, as recurrences of basic mythic formulas. As Northrop Frye put it, "[T]he typical forms of myth become the conventions and genres of literature." According to Frye's theory, there are four main narrative genres—comedy, romance, tragedy, and irony (satire)—and these are "displaced" modes of the four elemental forms of myth that are associated with the seasonal cycle of spring, summer, autumn, and winter. (See *archetypal criticism* and *genre*.)

A reader needs to be alert to the bewildering variety of applications of the term "myth" in contemporary criticism. In addition to those already described, its uses range all the way from signifying any widely held fallacy ("the myth of progress," "the American success myth") to denoting the solidly and detailedly imagined realm within which a fictional narrative is enacted ("Faulkner's myth of Yoknapatawpha County," "the mythical world of *Moby-Dick*").

For classical mythology see H. J. Rose, *A Handbook of Greek Mythology* (1939), and on the use of classical myths in English literature, Douglas Bush, *Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry* (rev. 1963) and *Mythology and the Romantic Tradition in English Poetry* (rev. 1969). Among studies of myths especially influential for modern literature and criticism are James G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (rev. 1911); Jessie L. Weston, *From Ritual to Romance* (1920); Jane E. Harrison, *Themis* (2d ed., 1927). On "myth critics" see William Righter, *Myth and Literature* (1975); and for instances of the theory and practice of myth criticism, Richard Chase, *Quest for Myth* (1949); Leslie Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960); John B. Vickery, ed., *Myth and Literature* (1966); Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) and "Literature and Myth"

MYTH CRITICS

Relations of Literary Study, ed. James Thorpe (1967). This last essay has a useful

archetypal criticism; folklore.

; 323.

(mith' oy): 17.

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naive hero: 185.

narratee: 234.

narration, grammar of: The **grammar of narration** is the analysis of special and distinctive grammatical usages that occur in fictional *narratives*. Its systematic study was begun by Käte Hamburger in *The Logic of Literature* (1957, trans. 1973). One focus of such analysis is the special play of **deictics**, also known as **indexicals** or **shifters**—that is, words and phrases such as “now,” “then,” “here,” “there,” “today,” “last week,” as well as personal pronouns (“I,” “you”) and some tenses of verbs—whose reference depends on the particular speaker and his or her position in place and time. In many narratives, usually in a way not explicitly noticed by the reader, the references of such terms constantly shift or merge, as the narration moves from the narrator, by whom the events are told in the past tense (for example, then and there), to a character in the narration, for whom the action is present (for example, here and now). Another notable grammatical usage in narration has been called **free indirect discourse** (equivalent to the French “style indirect libre”), or “represented speech and thought.” These terms refer to the way, in many narratives, that the reports of what a character says and thinks shift in pronouns, adverbs, tense, and grammatical mode, as we move—or sometimes hover—between the direct narrated representation of these events as they occur to the character and the indirect representation of such events by the narrator of the story. Thus, a direct representation, “He thought, ‘I will see her home now, and may then stop at my mother’s,’” might shift, in an “indirect representation,” to “He thought that he would see her home and then maybe stop at his mother’s.” In a further shift to “free indirect representation” the sentence might change to “He would see her home, and might afterward stop at his mother’s.” Refer to *narrative and narratology*, and see Roy Pascal, *The Dual Voice: Free Indirect Speech and Its Functioning in the Nineteenth-Century European Novel* (1977); Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (1978); Ann Banfield, *Unspeakeable Sentences: Narration and Representation in the Language of Fiction* (1982).

narrative and narratology: A **narrative** is a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do. Some literary forms such as the novel and short story in prose, and the epic and romance in verse, are explicit narratives that are told by a *narrator*. In drama, the narrative is not told, but evolves by means of the direct presentation on stage of the actions and speeches of the characters. (Refer to *genres*.) It should be noted that there is an implicit narrative element even in many *lyric* poems. In William Wordsworth’s “The Solitary Reaper,” for example, we infer from

Narratology denotes a concern, which became prominent in the mid-

discourse by which a
narratee—that is, the explicit or im-

's *Poetics*, in the fourth century
's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (rev. 1983); this modern theory,

Russian formalism and especially in French
. Narratologists, accordingly, do not treat a narrative in the tradi-

story—a mere
—into the organized and meaningful structure of a
plot. (The Russian formalists had made a parallel distinction between
fabula—the elemental materials of a story—and the **syuzhet**, the con-

“grammar” of narrative in

Narrative Discourse (1980),
Figures of Literary Discourse (1982), the French structuralist critic

point of view in narrative fiction.

In the 1970s the historian Hayden White set out to demonstrate that the

archetypal, and other structural

Metahistory

The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representa-
(1987). The philosopher W. B. Gallie wrote an influential book on the

Philosophy and the Historical Understanding (1964);
Narration and Knowledge (1985).

A book which did much to inaugurate modern narratology was *The*
by the Russian formalist Vladimir Propp (trans.

(above), Tzvetan Todorov, *The Poetics of Prose* (trans. 1977); Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (1978); Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (1981); Wallace Martin, *Recent Theories of Narrative* (1986); Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narratology* (1987); Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative* (3 vols., 1984–88); Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (1992); Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (rev. 1997); Seymour Chatman, *Coming to Terms: The Rhetoric of Narration in Fiction and Film* (1990); David Herman, ed., *Narratologies: New Perspectives on Narrative Analysis* (1999). Some cognitive psychologists and literary theorists have proposed that narrative, or the telling of diverse “stories” about how one thing leads to another, is the basic means by which we make sense of the world, provide meaning to our experiences, and organize our lives. See Jerome Bruner, *Acts of Meaning* (1990), and *Actual Worlds, Possible Minds* (1986); and Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind* (1996). For some narratological contributions to older analyses of how a story gets told, see *point of view*.

narratology: 234.

narrator: 301.

natural geniuses: 237.

naturalism: 335.

Naturalistic Period: 275.

naturalize (in reading): 401; 247, 258, 296.

nature writing: 96.

negative capability: The poet John Keats introduced this term in a letter written in December 1817 to define a literary quality “which Shakespeare possessed so enormously—I mean *Negative Capability*, that is, when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.” Keats contrasted to this quality the writings of Coleridge, who “would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude ... from being incapable of remaining content with half knowledge,” and went on to express the general principle “that with a great poet the sense of beauty overcomes every other consideration, or rather obliterates all consideration.” The elusive term has entered critical circulation and has accumulated a large body of commentary. When conjoined with observations in other letters by Keats, “negative capability” can be taken (1) to characterize an impersonal, or objective, author who maintains *aesthetic distance*, as opposed to a subjective author who is personally involved with the characters and actions represented in a work of literature, and as opposed also to an author who uses a literary

distance and involvement and objective and subjective. On the diverse interpretations of Keats' "negative capability," see W. J. *John Keats* (1963).

The simplest use of these extremely variable terms is "Neo-
" in England spans the 140 years or so after the Restoration
"Romantic Period" is usually taken to extend approximately
—or alternatively, from
Lyrical Ballads in 1798—through the first three decades of
" is rarely applied to eighteenth-century writers; on the other
—65, the era of Emerson, Thoreau, Poe, Melville, and Hawthorne,
"the American Romantic Period." (See *periods of English*
and *periods of American literature*.) "Neoclassic" and "romantic" are

Historians have often tried to "define" neoclassicism or romanticism, as

neoclassic literature:

to a distrust of radical innovation and was evidenced above all in their great respect for **classical** writers—that is, the writers of ancient Greece and Rome—who were thought to have achieved excellence, and established the enduring models, in all the major literary *genres*. Hence the term "neoclassic." (It is from this high estimate of the literary achievements of classical antiquity that the term "**a classic**" has come to be applied to any later literary work that is widely agreed to have achieved excellence and to have set a standard in its kind. Refer to the entry *canon*

of literature, and see T. S. Eliot, *What Is a Classic?* (1945), and Frank Kermode, *The Classic* 1975.)

2. Literature was conceived to be primarily an “art”; that is, a set of skills which, although it requires innate talents, must be perfected by long study and practice and consists mainly in the deliberate adaptation of known and tested means to the achievement of foreseen ends upon the audience of readers. (See *pragmatic criticism*, under *criticism*.) The neoclassic ideal, founded especially on Horace’s Roman *Ars Poetica* (first century BC), is the craftsman’s ideal, demanding finish, correction, and attention to detail. Special allowances were often made for the unerring and innovative freedom of what were called **natural geniuses**, and also for felicitous strokes, available even to some less gifted poets, which occur without premeditation and achieve, as Alexander Pope said (in his deft and comprehensive summary of neoclassic principles *An Essay on Criticism*, 1711), “a grace beyond the reach of art.” But the prevailing view was that a natural genius such as Homer or Shakespeare is extremely rare, and probably a thing of the past, and that to even the best of artful poets, literary “graces” come only occasionally. The representative neoclassic writer commonly strove, therefore, for “correctness,” was careful to observe the complex demands of stylistic *decorum*, and for the most part respected the established “rules” of his art. The neoclassic **rules of poetry** were, in theory, the essential properties of the various *genres* (such as epic, tragedy, comedy, pastoral) that have been abstracted from classical works whose long survival has proved their excellence. Such properties, many critics believed, must be embodied in modern works if these too are to be excellent and to survive through the ages. In England, however, many critics were dubious about some of the rules accepted by Italian and French critics, and opposed the strict application of rules such as the *three unities* in drama.
3. Human beings, and especially human beings as an integral part of a social organization, were regarded as the primary subject matter of the major forms of *literature*. Poetry was held to be an *imitation* of human life—in a common phrase, “a mirror held up to nature.” And by the human actions it imitates, and the artistic form it gives to the imitation, poetry is designed to yield both instruction and pleasure to the people who read it. Not art for art’s sake, but art for humanity’s sake, was a central ideal of neoclassic *humanism*.
4. In both the subject matter and the appeal of art, emphasis was placed on what human beings possess in common—representative characteristics and widely shared experiences, thoughts, feelings, and tastes. “True wit,” Pope said in a much-quoted passage of his *Essay on Criticism*, is “what oft was thought but ne’er so well expressed.” That is, a primary aim of poetry is to give new and consummate expression to the great commonplaces of human wisdom, whose universal acceptance and durability are the best warrant of their importance and truth. Some critics also insisted, it should be noted, on the need to balance or enhance the

general, typical, and familiar with the opposing qualities of novelty, particularity, and invention. Samuel Johnson substituted for Pope's definition of true wit the statement that wit "is at once natural and new" and praised Shakespeare because, while his characters are species, they are all "discriminated" and "distinct." But there was wide agreement that the general nature and the shared values of humanity are the basic source and test of art, and also that the fact of universal human agreement, everywhere and always, is the best test of moral and religious truths, as well as of artistic values. (Compare *deism*.)

man beings as limited agents who ought to set themselves only accessible goals. Many of the great works of the period, satiric and didactic, attack human "pride"—interpreted as presumption beyond the natural limits of the species—and enforce the lesson of the golden mean (the avoidance of extremes) and of humanity's need to submit to its restricted position in the cosmic order—an order sometimes envisioned as a natural hierarchy, or *Great Chain of Being*. In art, as in life, what was for the most part praised was the law of measure and the acceptance of limits upon one's freedom. The poets admired extremely the great genres of epic and tragedy, but wrote their own masterpieces in admittedly lesser and less demanding forms such as the essay in verse and prose, the comedy of manners, and especially satire, in which they felt they had more chance to equal or surpass their classical and English predecessors. They submitted to at least some "rules" and other limiting conventions in literary subjects, structure, and diction. Typical was their choice, in many poems, to write within the extremely tight limits of the *closed couplet*. But a distinctive quality of the urbane poetry of the Neoclassic Period was, in the phrase often quoted from Horace, "the art that hides art"; that is, the seeming freedom and ease with which, at its best, it meets the challenge set by traditional and highly restrictive patterns.

Here are some aspects in which **romantic** aims and achievements, as

materials, forms, and style of literature. Wordsworth's preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1800 was written as a poetic **manifesto**, or statement of revolutionary aims, in which he denounced the upper-class subjects and the *poetic diction* of the preceding century and proposed to deal with materials from "common life" in "a selection of language really used by men." Wordsworth's serious or tragic treatment of lowly subjects in common language violated the neoclassic rule of *decorum*, which asserted that the serious genres should deal only with the momentous actions of royal or aristocratic characters in an appropriately elevated style. Other innovations in the period were the exploitation by Samuel

Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, and others of the realm of the supernatural and of “the far away and the long ago”; the assumption by William Blake, William Wordsworth, and Percy Bysshe Shelley of the persona of a poet-prophet who writes a visionary mode of poetry; and the use of poetic *symbolism* (especially by Blake and Shelley) deriving from a world-view in which objects are charged with a significance beyond their physical qualities. “I always seek in what I see,” as Shelley said, “the likeness of something beyond the present and tangible object.”

2. In his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth repeatedly declared that good poetry is “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” According to this view, poetry is not primarily a mirror of men in action; on the contrary, its essential component is the poet’s own feelings, while the process of composition, since it is “spontaneous,” is the opposite of the artful manipulation of means to foreseen ends stressed by the neoclassic critics. (See *expressive criticism*.) Wordsworth carefully qualified this radical doctrine by describing his poetry as “emotion recollected in tranquility,” by specifying that a poet’s spontaneity is the result of a prior process of deep reflection, and by granting that it may be followed by second thoughts and revisions. But the immediate act of composition, if a poem is to be genuine, must be spontaneous—that is, unforced, and free of what Wordsworth decried as the “artificial” rules and conventions of his neoclassic predecessors. “If poetry comes not as naturally as the leaves to a tree,” Keats wrote, “it had better not come at all.” The philosophical-minded Coleridge substituted for neoclassic “rules,” which he describes as imposed on the poem from without, the concept of inherent organic “laws”; that is, he conceives that each poetic work, like a growing plant, evolves according to its own internal principles into its final *organic form*.
3. To a remarkable degree external nature—the landscape, together with its flora and fauna—became a persistent subject of poetry, and was described with an accuracy and sensuous nuance unprecedented in earlier writers. It is a mistake, however, to describe the romantic poets as simply “nature poets.” (See *nature writing*, under *ecocriticism*.) While many major poems by Wordsworth and Coleridge—and to a great extent by Shelley and Keats—set out from and return to an aspect or change of aspect in the landscape, the outer scene is not presented for its own sake but as a stimulus for the poet to engage in the most characteristic human activity, that of thinking. Representative Romantic works are in fact poems of feelingful meditation which, although often stimulated by a natural phenomenon, are concerned with central human experiences and problems. Wordsworth asserted, in what he called a “Prospectus” to his major poems, that it is “the Mind of Man” which is “my haunt, and the main region of my song.”
4. Neoclassic poetry was about other people, but many Romantic poems, long and short, invited the reader to identify the protagonists with the poets themselves, either directly, as in Wordsworth’s *Prelude* (1805, rev.

1850) and a number of lyric poems (see *lyric*), or in altered but recognizable form, as in Lord Byron's *Childe Harold* (1812–18). In prose we find a parallel vogue in the revealingly personal essays of Charles Lamb and William Hazlitt and in a number of spiritual and intellectual autobiographies: Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1822), Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (1817), and Thomas Carlyle's fictionalized self-representation in *Sartor Resartus* (1833–34). And whether Romantic subjects were the poets themselves or other people, they were no longer represented as part of an organized society but, typically, as solitary figures engaged in a long, and sometimes infinitely elusive, quest; often they were also social nonconformists or outcasts. Many important Romantic works had as protagonist the isolated rebel, whether for good or ill: Prometheus, Cain, the Wandering Jew, the Satanic hero-villain, or the great outlaw.

of the French Revolution in the early 1790s fostered the sense in Romantic writers that theirs was a great age of new beginnings and high possibilities. Many writers viewed a human being as endowed with limitless aspiration toward an infinite good envisioned by the faculty of imagination. "Our destiny," Wordsworth says in a visionary moment in *The Prelude*, "our being's heart and home, / Is with infinitude, and only there," and our desire is for "something evermore about to be." "Less than everything," Blake announced, "cannot satisfy man." Humanity's undaunted aspirations beyond its assigned limits, which to the neoclassic moralist had been its tragic error of generic "pride," now became humanity's glory and a mode of triumph, even in failure, over the pettiness of circumstance. In a parallel way, the typical neoclassic judgment that the highest art is the perfect achievement of limited aims gave way to dissatisfaction with rules and inherited restrictions. According to a number of Romantic writers, the highest art consists in an endeavor beyond finite human possibility; as a result, neoclassical satisfaction in the perfectly accomplished, because limited, enterprise was replaced in writers such as Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, by a preference for the glory of the imperfect, in which the artist's very failure attests the grandeur of his aim. Also, Romantic writers once more entered into competition with their greatest predecessors in audacious long poems in the most exacting genres: Wordsworth's *Prelude* (a rereading, at epic length and in the form of a spiritual autobiography, of central themes of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*); Blake's visionary and prophetic epics; Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* (emulating Greek drama); Keats' Miltonic epic *Hyperion*; and Byron's ironic conspectus of contemporary European civilization, *Don Juan*.

See *Enlightenment*, and refer to R. S. Crane, "Neoclassical Criticism," in , ed. Joseph T. Shipley (rev. 1970); A. O. Lovejoy, (1948); James Sutherland, *A Preface to Eighteenth*

Century Poetry (1948); W. J. Bate, *From Classic to Romantic* (1948); Harold Bloom, *The Visionary Company: A Reading of English Romantic Poetry* (1961); René Wellek, "The Concept of Romanticism in Literary History" and "Romanticism Re-examined," in *Concepts of Criticism* (1963); Northrop Frye, ed., *Romanticism Reconsidered* (1963), and *A Study of English Romanticism* (1968); M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (1953), and *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (1971); Thomas McFarland, *Romanticism and the Forms of Ruin* (1981); Marilyn Butler, *Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and Its Background 1760–1830* (1982); Jerome McGann, *The Romantic Ideology* (1983); Marilyn Gaull, *English Romanticism: The Human Context* (1988); Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism* (trans. 1988); Isaiah Berlin, *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas* (1990); Stuart Curran, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to British Romanticism* (1993). Hugh Honour, in his books on *Neo-classicism* (1969) and on *Romanticism* (1979), stresses the visual arts. A collection of essays that define or discuss Romanticism is Robert F. Gleckner and Gerald E. Enscow, eds., *Romanticism: Points of View* (rev. 1975); see also *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776–1832* (2001). In *Poetic Form and British Romanticism* (1986), Stuart Curran stresses the relationship of innovative Romantic forms to the traditional poetic genres.

See also *closed couplet*; *decorum*; *deism*; *Enlightenment*; *Great Chain of Being*; *humanism*; *primitivism*; *satire*.

Neoclassic Period: 282.

neoclassic poetic diction: 298.

Neoplatonism (nēōplāt' ōnism): 292.

New Comedy: 55.

New Criticism: This term, made current by the publication of John Crowe Ransom's *The New Criticism* in 1941, came to be applied to a theory and practice that remained prominent in American literary criticism until late in the 1960s. The movement derived in considerable part from elements in I. A. Richards' *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929) and from the critical essays of T. S. Eliot. It opposed a prevailing interest of scholars, critics, and teachers of that era in the biographies of authors, in the social context of literature, and in literary history by insisting that the proper concern of literary criticism is not with the external circumstances or effects or historical position of a work, but with a detailed consideration of the work itself as an independent entity. Notable critics in this mode were the southerners Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, whose textbooks

(1938) and *Understanding Fiction* (1943) did much to make

—in addition to Ransom, Brooks, and
—who are often identified as New Critics are Allen Tate, R. P.

An influential English critic, F. R. Leavis, in turning his attention from back-
“literary texts them-
” shared some of the concepts of the New Critics and their analytic focus
“the words on the page.” He differed from his American coun-
eat literary works are a concrete and life-

“the Great Tradition” of English literature in advanc-
“civilization” against the antagonistic forces in modern
Revaluation: Tradition and Development in English Poetry (1936);
(1943, 2d ed. 1948); *The Great Tradition: George Eliot*,
(1948); also Anne Sampson, *F. R. Leavis* (1992).

The New Critics differed from one another in many ways, but the

—in Eliot’s words, “primarily
as poetry and not another thing”—and should therefore be regarded as an
independent and self-sufficient verbal object. The first law of criticism,
John Crowe Ransom said, “is that it shall be objective, shall cite the
nature of the object” and shall recognize “the autonomy of the work it-
self as existing for its own sake.” (See *objective criticism*.) New Critics warn
the reader against critical practices which divert attention from the poem
itself (see *intentional fallacy* and *affective fallacy*). In analyzing and evaluating
a particular work, they eschew reference to the biography and tempera-
ment and personal experiences of the author, to the social conditions at
the time of its production, or to its psychological and moral effects on the
reader; they also tend to minimize recourse to the place of the work
in the history of literary forms and subject matter. Because of its focus
on the literary work in isolation from its attendant circumstances and ef-
fects, the New Criticism is often classified as a type of critical *formalism*.

is conceived to be a special kind of language whose attributes are defined
by systematic opposition to the language of science and of practical and
logical discourse, and the explicative procedure is to analyze the meanings
and interactions of words, *figures of speech*, and *symbols*. The emphasis is on
the “organic unity,” in a successful literary work, of its overall structure
with its verbal meanings, and we are warned against separating the two by
what Cleanth Brooks called “the heresy of paraphrase.”

explication, or **close reading**: the detailed analysis of the complex interrelationships and
ambiguities (multiple meanings) of the verbal and figurative components

within a work. **Explication de texte** (stressing all kinds of information, whether internal or external, relevant to the full understanding of a word or passage) had long been a formal procedure for teaching literature in French schools, but the explicative analysis of internal verbal interactions characteristic of the New Criticism derives from such books as I. A. Richards' *Practical Criticism* (1929) and William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930).

4. The distinction between literary *genres*, although acknowledged, does not play an essential role in the New Criticism. The essential components of any work of literature, whether lyric, narrative, or dramatic, are conceived to be words, images, and symbols rather than character, thought, and plot. These linguistic elements, whatever the genre, are often said to be organized around a central and humanly significant *theme*, and to manifest high literary value to the degree that they manifest "*tension*," "*irony*," and "*paradox*" in achieving a "reconciliation of diverse impulses" or an "equilibrium of opposed forces." The form of a work, whether or not it has characters and plot, is said to be primarily a "structure of meanings," which evolve into an integral and freestanding unity mainly through a play and counterplay of "thematic imagery" and "symbolic action."

The basic orientation and modes of analysis in the New Criticism were adapted to the **contextual criticism** of Eliseo Vivas and Murray Krieger. Krieger defined contextualism as "the claim that the poem is a tight, compelling, finally closed context," which prevents "our escape to the world of reference and action beyond," and requires that we "judge the work's efficacy as an aesthetic object." (See Murray Krieger, *The New Apologists for Poetry*, 1956, and *Theory of Criticism*, 1976.) The revolutionary thrust of the mode had lost much of its force by the 1960s, when it gave way to various newer theories of criticism, but it has left a deep and enduring mark on the criticism and teaching of literature, in its primary emphasis on the individual work and in the variety and subtlety of the devices that it made available for analyzing its internal relations. *Lyric Poetry: Beyond New Criticism*, eds. Chaviva Hošek and Patricia Parker (1985), is a collection of *structuralist*, *poststructuralist*, and other essays which—often in express opposition to the New Criticism—exemplify the diverse newer modes of "close reading"; some of these essays claim that competing forces within the language of a lyric poem preclude the possibility of the unified meaning that was a central tenet of the New Critics.

Central instances of the theory and practice of New Criticism are Cleanth Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947), and W. K. Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon* (1954). The enterprises of New Criticism are privileged over alternative approaches to literature in René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (3d ed., 1964), which became a standard reference book in the graduate study of literature. Robert W. Stallman's *Critiques and Essays in Criticism, 1920–1948* (1949) is a convenient collection of essays in this critical mode; the literary journal *The Explicator* (1942ff.), devoted to the close reading of single poems, was a characteristic product of its approach to literary texts, as are

Poetry Explication: A Checklist of Interpretation since 1924 of
 , ed. Joseph M. Kuntz (3d ed.,
Explication as Criticism (1963); the review
A History of Modern Criticism, Vol. 6

“In Search of the New Criticism” (1983), rep-
Community, Religion, and Literature (1995). For critiques of
Critics
 (1952), and *The Languages of Criticism and*
 (1953); Gerald Graff, *Poetic Statement and Critical Dogma*
Literary Theory: An Introduction (1993); Susan Wolfson,
 (1997). For references to *New Criticism* in other entries, see
 42, 52, 140, 170, 262, 267. See also *affective fallacy*; *ambiguity*; *form and*
intentional fallacy; *tension*.

(in literary criticism): **141**.

(in writing poetry): **144**.

New historicism, since the early 1980s, has been the accepted
formalism
New Criticism and to the critical *deconstruction* that

“background” against which to set a work of literature as an inde-
 “reflection” of the worldview
 “situated” within the totality of the institutions, social practices, and dis-

What is most distinctive in this mode of historical study is mainly the
poststruc-
). Especially prominent are: (1) The views of the revisionist Marxist

“subjects” in a discourse, in a way that in fact “subjects”
 —that is, subordinates them—to the interests of the ruling classes; see
 under *Marxist criticism*, and *subject* under *poststructuralism*. (2) Michel

Foucault's view that the *discourse* of an era, instead of reflecting pre-existing entities and orders, brings into being the concepts, oppositions, and hierarchies of which it speaks; that these elements are both products and propagators of "power," or social forces; and that as a result, the particular discursive formations of an era determine what is at the time accounted to be "knowledge" and "truth," as well as what is considered to be humanly normal as against what is considered to be criminal, or insane, or sexually deviant; see Foucault under *poststructuralism*. (3) The central concept in *deconstructive* criticism that all texts involve modes of signification that war against each other, merged with Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the dialogic nature of many literary texts, in the sense that they incorporate a number of conflicting voices that represent diverse social classes and interests; see *dialogic criticism*. (4) Developments in cultural anthropology, especially Clifford Geertz's view that a culture is constituted by distinctive sets of signifying systems, and his use of what he calls **thick descriptions**—the close analysis, or "reading," of a particular social production or event so as to recover the meanings it has for the people involved in it, as well as to discover, within the overall cultural system, the network of conventions, codes, and modes of thinking with which the particular item is implicated, and which invest the item with those meanings.

In an oft-quoted phrase, Louis Montrose described the new historicism as "a reciprocal concern with the historicity of texts and the textuality of history." That is, history is conceived to be not a set of fixed, objective facts but, like the literature with which it interacts, a text that itself needs to be interpreted. Any text, on the other hand, is conceived as a discourse which, although it may seem to present, or reflect, an external reality, in fact consists of what are called **representations**—that is, verbal formations which are the "ideological products" or **cultural constructs** of the historical conditions specific to an era. A number of historicists claim also that these cultural and ideological representations in texts serve mainly to reproduce, confirm, and propagate the complex power structures of domination and subordination which characterize a given society.

Despite their common perspective on literary writings as mutually implicative with all other components of a culture, we find considerable diversity and disagreements among individual exponents of the new historicism. The following proposals, however, occur frequently in their writings, sometimes in an extreme and sometimes in a qualified form. All of them are formulated in opposition to views that, according to new historicists, were central ideological constructs in traditional literary criticism. Many historicists assign the formative period of some basic constructs to the early era of capitalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

1. Literature does not occupy a "trans-historical" *aesthetic* realm which is independent of the economic, social, and political conditions specific to an era, nor is literature subject to timeless criteria of artistic value. Instead, a literary text is simply one of many kinds of texts—religious, philosophical, legal, scientific, and so on—all of which are formed and structured by the

particular conditions of a time and place, and among which the literary text has neither unique status nor special privilege. A related fallacy of mainstream criticism, according to new historicists, was to view a literary text as an autonomous body of fixed meanings that cohere to form an organic whole in which all conflicts are artistically resolved. (See, for example, *New Criticism*.) On the contrary, it is claimed, many literary texts consist of a diversity of dissonant voices, and these voices express not only the orthodox, but also the subordinated and subversive forces of the era in which the text was produced. Furthermore, what may seem to be the artistic resolution of a literary plot, yielding pleasure to the reader, is in fact deceptive, for it is an effect that serves to cover over the unresolved conflicts of power, class, gender, and diverse social groups that make up the tensions that underlie the surface meanings of a literary text.

Some new historicists nonetheless maintain the distinction between literary and nonliterary works, as well as between major and lesser works of literary artistry. As Stephen Greenblatt has said, "Major works of art remain centrally important, but they are jostled now by an array of other texts and images." The confrontation of such works with minor or nonliterary works, he claims, in fact serves to explain what it means to be major, and indicate why it is that works that are major have outlasted the others.

serve as the "background" to the literature of an era, or which literature can be said simply to reflect, or which can be adverted to (as in early *Marxist criticism*) as the "material" conditions that, in a unilateral way, determine the particularities of a literary text. In contrast to such views, a literary text is said by new historicists to be thoroughly "embedded" in its context, and in a constant interaction and interchange with other components inside the network of institutions, beliefs, and cultural power relationships, practices, and products that, in their ensemble, constitute what we call history. New historicists commonly regard even the conceptual "boundaries" by which we currently discriminate between *literature* and nonliterary texts to be a construct of post-Renaissance ideological formations. They continue to make use of such discriminations, but only for tactical convenience in conducting critical discussion, and stress that one must view all boundaries between types of discourse as entirely permeable to interchanges of diverse elements and forces. Favored terms for such interchanges—whether among the modes of discourse within a single literary text, or among diverse kinds of texts, or between a text and its institutional and cultural context—are "negotiation," "commerce," "exchange," "transaction," and "circulation." Such metaphors are intended not only to denote the two-way, oscillatory relationships among literary and other components of a culture, but also to indicate, by their obvious origin in the monetary discourse of the marketplace, the degree to which the operations and values of modern consumer capitalism saturate the literary and aesthetic, as well as all other institutions and relations. As Stephen Greenblatt expressed such a view, the "negotiation" that

results in the production and circulation of a work of art involves a “mutually profitable exchange”—including “a return normally measured in pleasure and interest”—in which “the society’s dominant currencies, money and prestige, are invariably involved.” (“Toward a Poetics of Culture,” in *The New Historicism*, ed. H. Aram Veeseer, 1989.)

3. The humanistic concept of an essential human nature that is shared by the author of a literary work, the characters within the work, and the audience the author writes for, is another of the widely held ideological illusions that, according to many new historicists, were generated primarily by a capitalist culture. They also attribute to this “bourgeois” and “essentialist humanism” the view that a literary work is the imaginative creation of a free, or “autonomous,” author who possesses a unified, unique, and enduring personal identity. (See *essentialism* in the entry *humanism*, also *author and authorship*.) In the epilogue to *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980) Stephen Greenblatt says that, in the course of writing the book, he lost his initial confidence in “the role of human autonomy,” for “the human subject itself began to seem remarkably unfree, the ideological product of the relations of power in a particular society.” An area of contest among new historicists is the extent to which an author, despite being a *subject* who is constructed and positioned by the play of power and ideology within the discourse of a particular era, may retain some scope for individual initiative and “agency.” A number of historicists who ascribe a degree of freedom and initiative to an individual author do so, however, not as in traditional criticism, in order to account for an author’s literary invention and distinctive artistry, but in order to keep open the theoretical possibility that an individual author can intervene so as to inaugurate radical changes in the social power structure of which that individual’s own “subjectivity” and function are themselves a product.
4. Like the authors who produce literary texts, their readers are *subjects* who are constructed and positioned by the conditions and ideological formations of their own era. All claims, therefore, for the possibility of a disinterested and objective interpretation and evaluation of a literary text—such as Matthew Arnold’s behest that we see a work “as in itself it really is”—are among the illusions of a humanistic idealism. Insofar as the ideology of readers conforms to the ideology of the writer of a literary text, the readers will tend to *naturalize* the text—that is, interpret its culture-specific and time-bound representations as though they were the features of universal and permanent human nature and experience. On the other hand, insofar as the readers’ ideology differs from that of the writer, they will tend to **appropriate** the text—that is, interpret it so as to make it conform to their own cultural prepossessions.

New historicists acknowledge that they themselves, like all authors, are “subjectivities” that have been shaped and informed by the circumstances and discourses specific to their era, hence that their own critical writings in great part construct, rather than discover ready-made, the textual meanings they describe and the literary and cultural histories

they narrate. To mitigate the risk that they will unquestioningly appropriate texts that were written in the past, they stress that the course of history between the past and present is not coherent, but exhibits discontinuities, breaks, and ruptures; by doing so, they hope to “distance” and “estrangle” an earlier text and so sharpen their ability to detect its differences from their present ideological assumptions. Some historicists present their readings of texts written in the past as (in their favored metaphor) “negotiations” between past and present. In this two-way relationship, the features of a cultural product, which are identifiable only relative to their differences from the historicist’s subject-position, in return make possible some degree of insight into the forces and configurations of power—especially with respect to class, gender, race, and ethnicity—that prevail in the historicist’s present culture and serve to shape the historicist’s own ideology and interpretations.

The concepts, themes, and procedures of new historicist criticism took

“sites” which enacted and reproduced the interests and

“representations” in literary texts are not reflectors of reality but
 ” forms of ideology. Historicists of Romantic literature, however,

political readings of a literary text—readings in which they stress
 “suppression,” “displacement,” and “sub-
 ” by which, they assert, a writer’s political ideology (in a process of

“absence,” the circumstances and contradic-

subtext of historical and political conflicts and oppressions which
 ’s true, although covert or unmentioned, subject matter. (On
 “silences,” see Pierre Macherey and Fredric Jameson, under
 .)

In the course of the 1980s, the characteristic viewpoints and practices of

feminist critics, who stressed the role of male power struc-

procedures also have parallels in the critics of *African-American* and other *ethnic* literatures, who stress the role of culture formations dominated by white Europeans in suppressing, marginalizing, or distorting the achievements of non-white and non-European peoples. In the 1990s, various forms of new historicism, and related types of criticism that stress the embeddedness of literature in historical circumstances, replaced deconstruction as the reigning mode of *avant-garde* critical theory and practice.

Stephen Greenblatt inaugurated the currency of the label “new historicism” in his Introduction to a special issue of *Genre*, Vol. 15 (1982). He prefers, however, to call his own critical enterprise **cultural poetics**, in order to highlight his concern with literature and the arts as integral with other social practices that, in their complex interactions, make up the general culture of an era. Greenblatt’s essay entitled “Invisible Bullets” in *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988) serves to exemplify the interpretive procedures of the leading exponent of this mode of criticism, who often inaugurates a commentary on a work of literature with an unexpected historical anecdote, or with a “luminous” interpretive detail in a marginal literary text, or in a nonliterary text. In this essay, Greenblatt begins by reading a selection from Thomas Harriot’s *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, written in 1588, as a representative discourse of the English colonizers of America which, without its author’s awareness, serves to confirm “the Machiavellian hypothesis of the origin of princely power in force and fraud,” but nonetheless draws its “audience irresistibly toward the celebration of that power.” Greenblatt also asserts that Harriot tests the English power structure that he attests by recording in his *Report* the countervoices of the Native Americans who are being appropriated and oppressed by that power. Greenblatt then identifies parallel modes of power discourse and counterdiscourse in the dialogues in Shakespeare’s *Tempest* between Prospero the imperialist appropriator and Caliban the expropriated native of his island, and goes on to find similar discursive configurations in the texts of Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, 1 and 2*, and *Henry V*. In Greenblatt’s reading, the dialogue and events of the Henry plays reveal the degree to which princely power is based on predation, calculation, deceit, and hypocrisy; at the same time, the plays do not scruple to record the dissonant and subversive voices of Falstaff and various other representatives of Elizabethan subcultures. These counterestablishment discourses in Shakespeare’s plays, however, in fact are so managed as to maneuver their audience to accept and even glorify the power structure to which that audience is itself subordinated. Greenblatt applies to these plays a conceptual pattern, the **subversion-containment dialectic**, which has been a central concern of new historicist critics of Renaissance literature. The thesis is that, in order to sustain its power, any durable political and cultural order not only to some degree allows, but also actively fosters “subversive” elements and forces, yet in such a way as more effectively to “contain” such challenges to the existing order. (Foucault had established such a conception by his claim that, under a dominating “regimen of truth,” all attempts at opposition to power cannot help but be “complicitous” with it.) This view of the general triumph of

“pessimistic”
“quietist” by the group of new historicists known as “cultural material-
” who insist on the capacity of subversive ideas and practices—such as
—to effect drastic social

Cultural materialism is a term, employed by the British neo-Marxist

—Marxist
’s view of cultural phenomena as a
” which, in the last analysis, is determined by the “material”
“base.” (See *Marxist criticism*.) They insist that, whatever
“textuality” of history, a culture and its literary products are always to an

“intervention” in their own era, in an express
” as Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield have put it, “to the

” (Foreword to *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural*
, 1985. See also the comment on Stuart Hall, in the entry *Marxist*
) Similar views are expressed by those American exponents of the new

“complicity” with the for-
literary criticism that they set out to displace. For the connections be-

New Historicism and Cultural Materialism: A Reader
New Historicism and Cultural Materialism (1998).
See *cultural studies*, which are closely related to the new historicism. For

Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays (1969,
Foucault: A Critical Introduction (1994); and Clifford
“Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in
(1973). *The New Historicism*, ed. H. Aram Veesser

’s *The New Historicism Reader* (1994); the essays in Jeffrey N. Cox and
New Historical Literary Study (1993); Stephen Green-
Representing the English Renaissance (1988), and his *Learning to Curse:*
(1990); the survey in Paul Hamilton, *Historicism:*
(1996); and Peter C. Herman, ed., *Historicizing Theory*
Practicing New

Historicism (2000). For a feminist application of new historicism, refer to Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers, eds., *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (1986). Treatments of Romantic literature that exemplify a new historicist orientation include Jerome J. McGann, *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation* (1983); Marjorie Levinson, *Wordsworth's Great Period Poems* (1986); Clifford Siskin, *The Historicity of Romantic Discourse* (1988); Alan Liu, *Wordsworth: The Sense of History* (1989); and Marjorie Levinson and others, *Rethinking Historicism: Critical Readings in Romantic History* (1989). For new historicist criticism focused on literature after the Romantic period, see Catherine Gallagher, *The Industrial Reformation of English Fiction: Social Discourse and Narrative Form, 1832–1867* (1985), and Walter Benn Michaels, *The Gold Standard and the Logic of Naturalism: American Literature at the Turn of the Century* (1987). Refer also to the journal *Representations*. In “What Is New Formalism?” (*PMLA*, Vol. 122, 2007), Marjorie Levinson stresses the connection between new historicism and the revival of critical interest in questions of literary form; see *new formalism*.

Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield present writings by British cultural materialists in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* (1985), as does John Drakakis in *Alternative Shakespeares* (1985); see also Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (1977), and Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (1976). Walter Cohen, “Political Criticism of Shakespeare,” in Jean E. Howard and Marion F. O'Connor, eds., *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology* (1987), interrogates new historicism from a Marxist point of view; while J. Hillis Miller, in his presidential address to the Modern Language Association on “The Triumph of Theory” (*PMLA*, Vol. 102, 1987, pp. 281–91), does so from the point of view of deconstructive criticism. Feminist critiques of new historicism are Lynda Boose, “The Family in Shakespeare Studies,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 40 (1987); and Carol Thomas Neely, “Constructing the Subject: Feminist Practice and the New Renaissance Discourse” (*English Literary Renaissance*, Vol. 18, 1988). Critiques of some forms of new historicism from more traditional critical positions are Edward Pechter, “The New Historicism and Its Discontents,” *PMLA*, Vol. 102 (1987); M. H. Abrams, “On Political Readings of *Lyrical Ballads*,” in *Doing Things with Texts: Essays in Criticism and Critical Theory* (1989); Richard Levin, “Unthinkable Thoughts in the New Historicizing of English Renaissance Drama,” *New Literary History*, Vol. 21 (1989–90), pp. 433–47; and Brook Thomas, *The New Historicism and Other Old-Fashioned Topics* (1991). For tendencies in the writing of general history closely parallel to the new historicism in literary studies, see Dominick La Capra, *History and Criticism* (1985); and Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (1989). For references to *new historicism* in other entries, see pages 52, 163, 311.

New Humanism: 162.

new novel: 258; 47.

(noovō' rōmān'): 258.

The term “novel” is applied to a great variety of writings that have in
fiction written in
short story
novelette; its magnitude permits

’s
 and Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*; Jane Austen’s *Emma* and
 ’s *Orlando*; Charles Dickens’ *Pickwick Papers* and Henry James’
 ; Leo Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* and Franz Kafka’s *The*
 ; Ernest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* and James Joyce’s *Finnegans*
 ; Doris Lessing’s *The Golden Notebook* and Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita*.
 The term for the novel in most European languages is **roman**, which is
romance. The English name for the form,
novella (literally, “a little new
 ”), which was a short tale in prose. In fourteenth-century Italy there was

’s *Decameron*, which is still avail-

” (or in the German form, *Novelle*) is often used as an equivalent for

novelette: a prose fiction of middle length, such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* or Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*. (See under *short story*.)

Long narrative romances in prose were written by Greek writers as early as the second and third centuries AD. Typically they dealt with separated lovers who, after perilous adventures and hairbreadth escapes, are happily reunited at the end. The best known of these Greek romances, influential in later European literature, were the *Aethiopica* by Heliodorus and the charming pastoral narrative *Daphnis and Chloe* by Longus. Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* (the model for Shakespeare's *As You Like It*) and Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* were Elizabethan continuations of the pastoral romance of the ancient Greeks. See *romance* and *pastoral*.

Another important predecessor of the novel was the **picaresque narrative**, which emerged in sixteenth-century Spain; see Michael Alpert, trans., *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *The Swindler* (2003), and Giancarlo Maiorino, *At the Margins of the Renaissance: Lazarillo de Tormes and the Picaresque Art of Survival* (2003). The most popular instance, however, *Gil Blas* (1715), was written by the Frenchman Le Sage. "Picaro" is Spanish for "rogue," and a typical story concerns the escapades of an insouciant rascal who lives by his wits and shows little if any alteration of character through a long succession of adventures. Picaresque fiction is realistic in manner, **episodic** in structure (that is, composed of a sequence of events held together largely because they happened to one person), and often satiric in aim. The first, and very lively, English example was Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594). We recognize the survival of the picaresque type in many later novels such as Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), Thomas Mann's *The Confessions of Felix Krull* (1954), and Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953). The development of the novel owes much to prose works which, like the picaresque story, were written to deflate romantic or idealized fictional forms. Cervantes' great quasi-picaresque narrative *Don Quixote* (1605) was the single most important progenitor of the modern novel; in it, an engaging madman who tries to live by the ideals of chivalric romance in the everyday world is used to explore the relationships of illusion and reality in human life.

After these precedents and many others—including the seventeenth-century *character* (a brief sketch of a typical personality or way of life) and Madame de La Fayette's psychologically complex study of character, *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678)—what is recognizably the novel as we now think of it appeared in England in the early eighteenth century. In 1719 Daniel Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe* and in 1722, *Moll Flanders*. Both of these are still picaresque in type, in the sense that their structure is episodic rather than in the organized form of a *plot*; while Moll is herself a colorful female version of the old picaro—"twelve Year a Whore, five times a Wife (whereof once to her own Brother), Twelve Year a Thief, Eight Year a Transported Felon in Virginia," as the title page resoundingly informs us. But *Robinson Crusoe* is given an enforced unity of action by its focus on the problem of surviving on an uninhabited island, and both stories present so convincing a central

novel of incident.

The credit for having written the first English **novel of character**, or " is almost unanimously given to Samuel Richardson *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740). *Pamela* is the story of a sentimental

protagonist will do next and on how the
's motives

(rev. 1965). For an account, in the mode of
, of the genesis of the conception of character in the novel, see
The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the
(1998).

Pamela, like its greater and tragic successor, Richardson's *Clarissa* (1747–48),
epistolary novel; that is, the narrative is conveyed entirely by an ex-

point of view to one or another single character, but the epistolary
—for example, in Mark Harris' hilarious
Wake Up, Stupid (1959) and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982). See
Special Delivery: Epistolary Modes in Modern Fiction (1992).

Novels may have any kind of plot form—tragic, comic, satiric, or roman-
—which was described by Hawthorne, in his pref-
The House of the Seven Gables (1851) and elsewhere, and has been
—is that between two

realistic novel can be described as the fictional

novel of manners. The **prose romance**, on the
chivalric romance of the Middle Ages and
Gothic novel of the later eighteenth century. It usually deploys characters

to be set in the historical past, and the *atmosphere* is such as to suspend the reader's expectations that are based on everyday experience. The plot of the prose romance emphasizes adventure, and is frequently cast in the form of the *quest* for an ideal, or the pursuit of an enemy; and the nonrealistic and occasionally melodramatic events are claimed by some critics to project in symbolic form the primal desires, hopes, and terrors in the depths of the human mind, and to be therefore analogous to the materials of dream, myth, ritual, and folklore. Examples of romance novels are Walter Scott's *Rob Roy* (1817), Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* (1844–45), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), and an important line of American narratives which extends from Edgar Allan Poe, James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville to recent writings of William Faulkner and Saul Bellow. Martin Green, in *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (1979), distinguishes a special type of romance, "the adventure novel," which deals with masculine adventures in the newly colonized non-European world. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is an early prototype; some later instances are H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1886), Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883), and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1901).

Refer to Laurie Langbauer, *Women and Romance: The Consolations of Gender in the English Novel* (1990); Deborah Ross, *The Excellence of Falsehood: Romance, Realism, and Women's Contribution to the Novel* (1991). On the realistic novel in the nineteenth century see Harry Levin, *The Gates of Horn: A Study of Five French Realists* (1963); Ioan Williams, *The Realist Novel in England* (1975); G. J. Becker, *Master European Realists* (1982). On the prose romance in America, see Richard Chase, *The American Novel and Its Tradition* (1957); Northrop Frye, "The Mythos of Summer: Romance," in *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957); Joel Porte, *The Romance in America* (1969); Michael D. Bell, *The Development of American Romance* (1980); and for a skeptical view of the usual division between novel and romance, Nina Baym, *Novels, Readers, and Reviewers: Responses to Fiction in Antebellum America* (1984).

Other often identified subclasses of the novel are based on differences in subject matter, emphasis, and artistic purpose:

Bildungsroman and **Erziehungsroman** are German terms signifying "novel of formation" or "novel of education." The subject of these novels is the development of the protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences—and often through a spiritual crisis—into maturity; this process usually involves recognition of one's identity and role in the world. The mode began in Germany with K. P. Moritz's *Anton Reiser* (1785–90) and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795–96); it includes Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1861), Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* (1915), and Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924). An important subtype of the Bildungsroman is the **Künstlerroman** ("artist-novel"), which represents the development of a novelist or other artist from childhood into the stage of maturity that signals the recognition of the protagonist's artistic destiny and mastery of an artistic craft. Dickens' *David*

NOVEL

(1849–50) can be considered an early instance of this type; later

's *Remembrance of Things Past* (1913–27), James Joyce's (1914–15), Thomas Mann's *Tonio Kröger* (1914), André Gide's *The Counterfeiters* (1926). See "The Princess Casamassima," in *The Liberal Imagination* (1950); *Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts: The Artist as Hero in Fiction* (1974); Martin Swales, *The German Bildungsroman from Wieland to* (1978); Thomas L. Jeffers, *Apprenticeships: The Bildungsroman from Goethe* (2005). In *Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel* (1993), Susan Fraiman analyzes novels about "growing up"; she proposes that they put to question the "enabling fiction" that the is a "progressive development" toward "masterful selfhood." The **social novel** emphasizes the influence of the social and economic

sociological novel. Examples of social novels are 's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852); Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* 's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939); Nadine Gordimer's 's *Daughter* (1979). A Marxist version of the social novel, representing

proletarian novel (*Marxist criticism*). Proletarian fiction flourished especially during the great

's *Love on the Dole* (1933); American examples are Grace Lumpkin's *To* (1932), about a mill strike in North Carolina, and Robert 's *Laugh and Lie Down* (1931), about the harshness of life in a lumber

Some realistic novels, including George Eliot's *Middlemarch* and Tolstoy's , make use of events and personages from the historical past to

historical novel

's *Ivanhoe* (1819), set 's *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), set in Paris and London during the 's *Romola* (1863), in Florence during the 's *Gone with the Wind* (1936), in Georgia

The Historical Novel

(1937, trans. 1962); a comprehensive later commentary is by Harry E. Shaw, *The Forms of Historical Fiction: Sir Walter Scott and His Successors* (1983).

One twentieth-century variant of the historical novel is known as **documentary fiction**, which not only incorporates historical characters and events, but also reports of everyday happenings in contemporary newspapers: John Dos Passos, *USA* (1938); E. L. Doctorow, *Ragtime* (1975) and *Billy Bathgate* (1989). Another recent offshoot is the form that one of its innovators, Truman Capote, named the **nonfiction novel**. This uses a variety of novelistic techniques, such as deviations from the temporal sequence of events and descriptions of a participant's state of mind, to give a graphic rendering of recent people and happenings, and is based not only on historical records but often on personal interviews with the chief agents. Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood* (1965) and Norman Mailer's *The Executioner's Song* (1979) are instances of this mode; both offer a detailed rendering of the life, personality, and actions of murderers, based on a sustained series of prison interviews with the protagonists themselves. Other examples of this form are the writings of John McPhee, which the author calls **literature of fact**; see his *Levels of the Game* (1969) and *The Deltoid Pumpkin Seed* (1973). A third variant is the *fabulative* historical novel that interweaves history with fantasized, even fantastic events: John Barth, *The Sot-Weed Factor* (1960, rev. 1967); Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973). See John Hollowell, *Fact and Fiction: The New Journalism and the Nonfiction Novel* (1977); Barbara Foley, *Telling the Truth: The Theory and Practice of Documentary Fiction* (1986); and Barbara Lounsberry, *The Art of Fact: Contemporary Artistic Nonfiction* (1990). Cushing Strout, in *The Veracious Imagination* (1981), studies such developments in recent novels, as well as the related form called **documentary drama** in theater, film, and television, which combines fiction with history, journalistic reports, and biography.

The **regional novel** emphasizes the setting, speech, and social structure and customs of a particular locality, not merely as *local color*, but as important conditions affecting the temperament of the characters and their ways of thinking, feeling, and interacting. Instances of such localities are "Wessex" in Thomas Hardy's novels, and "Yoknapatawpha County," Mississippi, in Faulkner's. Stella Gibbons wrote a witty *parody* of the regional novel in *Cold Comfort Farm* (1936). For a discussion of regionalism centered on the Maine author Sarah Orne Jewett, see chapter 4 in Bill Brown, *A Sense of Things* (2003).

Beginning with the second half of the nineteenth century, the novel displaced all other literary forms in popularity. The theory as well as the practice of the novelistic art has received the devoted attention of some of the greatest masters of modern literature—Flaubert, Henry James, Proust, Mann, Joyce, and Virginia Woolf. (Henry James' prefaces, gathered into one volume as *The Art of the Novel*, ed. R. P. Blackmur, 1934, exemplify the care and subtlety that have been lavished on this craft.) There has been constant experimentation with new fictional methods, such as management of the *point of view* to minimize or eliminate the apparent role of the author-narrator or, at

NOVEL

symbolist and *expressionist* techniques

stream of consciousness narration in a way that converts the

Such experimentation reached a radical extreme in the second half of the
postmodernism). Vladimir Nabokov was a supreme tech-
involuted novels (a work whose subject incorporates an
—for example, his *Pale Fire*);

antinovel—that is, a work

nouveau roman (the **new novel**) in France,
Jealousy (1957), in which he left out such standard elements as plot,

naturalize (that is, make intelligible in the mode of standard narrative

Writing Degree
(trans. 1967), and Stephen Heath, *The Nouveau Roman: A Study in the*
(1972).

The term **magic realism**, originally applied in the 1920s to a school of

realism in

's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967).
metafiction (an alternative is **surfiction**) as an

fabulation for

—and sometimes

highly effective—experiments with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, and fusions of the everyday, the fantastic, the mythical, and the nightmarish, in renderings that blur traditional distinctions between what is serious or trivial, horrible or ludicrous, tragic or comic. Recent fabulators include Thomas Pynchon, John Barth, Donald Barthelme, William Gass, Robert Coover, and Ishmael Reed. See Raymond Federman, *Surfiction* (1975); Robert Scholes, *Fabulation and Metafiction* (1979)—an expansion of his *The Fabulators* (1967); James M. Mellard, *The Exploded Form: The Modernist Novel in America* (1980); and Patricia Waugh, *Metafiction* (1984). For an account of metafiction from a feminist viewpoint, see Joan Douglas Peters, *Feminist Metafiction and the Evolution of the British Novel* (2002). Refer also to the entries in this Glossary on the literature of the *absurd* and *black humor*.

See *fiction and narrative and narratology*. Histories of the novel: E. A. Baker, *History of the English Novel* (12 vols., 1924ff.); Arnold Kettle's Marxist survey, *An Introduction to the English Novel* (2 vols., 1951); Dorothy Van Ghent, *The English Novel: Form and Function* (1953); Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (1957); Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600–1740* (1987; 2d ed., 2002); J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (1990); Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (1990); *The Columbia History of the British Novel*, ed. John Richetti (1994); and *The Columbia History of the American Novel*, ed. Emory Elliott (1991). *The Novel*, ed. Franco Moretti (2 vols., 2006), consists of essays by many critics on the history, forms, and themes of the novel as an international literary type. Michael McKeon, ed., *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach* (2000), gathers essays in literary criticism of the novel, from its beginnings to the present. On the art of the novel: Percy Lubbock, *The Craft of Fiction* (1921); E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927); and three later influential books—Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (rev. 1983); Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending* (1968); and David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction* (1992). Philip Stevick, ed., *The Theory of the Novel* (1967) is a collection of influential essays by various critics; J. Hillis Miller applies a deconstructive mode of criticism in *Fiction and Repetition* (1982); and Daniel Schwarz, *The Humanistic Heritage* (1986), reviews theories of prose fiction from 1900 to the present. The Czech émigré writer Milan Kundera has written three notable meditations on the novel in Europe: *The Art of the Novel* (2003), *Testaments Betrayed: An Essay in Nine Parts* (1995), and *The Curtain: An Essay in Seven Parts* (2006).

For additional types of the novel, see *absurd*, *literature of the*; *detective story*; *fantastic literature*; *Gothic novel*; *magic realism*; *novel of sensibility*; *novelette*; *realism and naturalism*; *romance novel*; *science fiction*; *utopias and dystopias*. For features of the novel, see *atmosphere*; *character and characterization*; *confidant*; *distance and involvement*; *frame story*; *local color*; *narration, grammar of*; *persona, tone, and voice*; *plot*; *point of view*; *realism and naturalism*; *setting*; *stock character*; *stock situations*; *stream of consciousness*.

novel of character: 254.

novel of incident: 254.

.

.

; 253.

(nōvēl' ā): **252.**

(nōvēl' ě): **366.**





objective and subjective: John Ruskin complained in 1856 that “German dullness and English affectation have of late much multiplied among us the use of two of the most objectionable words that were ever coined by the troublesomeness of metaphysicians—namely, ‘objective’ and ‘subjective.’” Ruskin was at least in part right: the words were imported into English criticism from the post-Kantian German critics of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and they have certainly been troublesome. Amid the great variety of ways in which the opposition has been applied to literature, one is sufficiently widespread to be worth specifying. A **subjective** work is one in which the author incorporates personal experiences, or projects into the narrative his or her personal disposition, judgments, values, and feelings. An **objective** work is one in which the author presents the invented situation or the fictional characters and their thoughts, feelings, and actions and undertakes to remain detached and noncommittal. Thus a subjective *lyric* is one in which we are invited to associate the “I,” or lyric speaker, with the poet (Coleridge’s “Frost at Midnight,” Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey,” Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind,” Sylvia Plath’s “Daddy”); in an objective lyric the speaker is obviously an invented character, or else is simply a lyric voice without specific characteristics (Robert Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” T. S. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” Wallace Stevens’ “Sunday Morning”). A subjective novel is one in which the author (or at any rate the narrator) intervenes to comment and deliver judgments about the characters and actions represented; an objective novel is one in which the author is self-effacing and tries to create the effect that the story tells itself. Critics agree, however, that the difference between a subjective and objective literary work is not absolute, but a matter of degree. See *confessional poetry*, *distance and involvement*, *negative capability*, *persona*, and *point of view*.

On the introduction of the terms “objective” and “subjective” into English criticism and the variousness of their application, see M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953), pp. 235–44. For their uses in modern criticism of the novel, see Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (rev. 1983), chapter 3.

objective correlative: This term, which had been coined by the American painter and poet Washington Allston (1779–1843), was introduced by T. S. Eliot, rather casually, into his essay “Hamlet and His Problems” (1919); its subsequent vogue in literary criticism, Eliot said, astonished him. “The only way of expressing emotion,” Eliot wrote, “is by finding an ‘objective correlative’; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion,” and which will evoke the same emotion from the reader. Eliot’s formulation has been often criticized for falsifying the way a poet actually composes, on the ground that no object or situation is in itself a “formula” for an emotion, but depends for its emotional significance and effect on the way it is rendered and used by a particular poet.

's concept of an outer correlative for inner feelings was due
New Criticism against vagueness
 —an oft-cited
 's "Indian Serenade": "I die, I faint, I fail"—and in favor

" reprinted in *Critiques and Essays in*
 , ed. Robert W. Stallman (1949).

; 6.

(narrator): **302**.

Occasional poems are written to celebrate or memorialize a

's "Epithalamion," on the occasion of
 's "Lycidas," on the death of the young poet
 's "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return
 "; and Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light
 " are all poems that have long survived their original occasions, and
 ' "Easter, 1916" and W. H. Auden's "September 1, 1939" are
 's poet laureate is often called on to meet the

(öktäm' ěter): **220**.

(ök' tāv): **370**.

(öktāv' ō): **34**.

(ök' tō sīlāb' ik): **375**; 191.

In its traditional application, "ode" denotes a long lyric poem that is serious

lyric which is "massive,
 " ("From Ac-
 " in *Critics and Criticism*, ed. R. S. Crane, 1952). The prototype

chorus in Greek drama. His complex stanzas were patterned in

; moving to the right, the **antistrophe**; then, standing still, the **epode**.
 The **regular** or **Pindaric ode** in English is a close imitation of Pindar's
 stanza pattern, and

's ode "To the Immortal Memory and Friendship of That Noble Pair,

Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison" (1629); the typical construction can be conveniently studied in this poem or in Thomas Gray's "The Progress of Poesy" (1757). The **irregular ode**, also called the **Cowleyan Ode**, was introduced in 1656 by Abraham Cowley, who imitated the Pindaric style and matter but disregarded the recurrent stanzaic pattern in each strophic triad; instead, he allowed each stanza to establish its own pattern of varying line lengths, number of lines, and rhyme scheme. This type of irregular stanzaic structure, which is free to alter in accordance with shifts in subject and mood, has been the most common for the English ode ever since; Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (1807) is representative.

Pindar's odes were **encomiastic**; that is, they were written to praise and glorify someone—in the instance of Pindar, the ode celebrated a victorious athlete in the Olympic games. (See *epideictic*, under *rhetoric*.) The earlier English odes, and many later ones, were also written to eulogize something, such as a person (John Dryden's "Anne Killigrew"), or the arts of music or poetry (Dryden's "Alexander's Feast"), or a time of day (Collins' "Ode to Evening"), or abstract concepts (Gray's "Hymn to Adversity" and Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty"). Romantic poets perfected the personal ode of description and passionate meditation, which is stimulated by (and sometimes at its close reverts to) an aspect of the outer scene and turns on the attempt to solve either a personal emotional problem or a generally human one (Wordsworth's "Intimations" ode, Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode," Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind"). Recent examples of this latter type are Allen Tate's "Ode to the Confederate Dead" and Wallace Stevens' "The Idea of Order at Key West." (See *descriptive-meditative lyric*, in the entry *topographical poetry*.)

The **Horatian ode** was originally modeled on the matter, tone, and form of the odes of the Roman Horace. In contrast to the passion, visionary boldness, and formal language of Pindar's odes, many Horatian odes are calm, meditative, and colloquial; they are also usually **homostrophic** (that is, written in a single repeated stanza form), and shorter than the Pindaric ode. Examples are Marvell's "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland" (1650) and Keats' ode "To Autumn" (1820).

See Robert Shafer, *The English Ode to 1660* (1918); G. N. Shuster, *The English Ode from Milton to Keats* (1940, reprinted 1964); Carol Maddison, *Apollo and the Nine: A History of the Ode* (1960)—this book includes a discussion of the odes of Pindar and Horace (chapter 2); John Heath-Stubbs, *The Ode* (1969); Paul H. Fry, *The Poet's Calling in the English Ode* (1980).

Oedipus complex: 322.

Old Comedy: 55.

Old English Period: 279.

omniscient point of view: 301.

Onomatopoeia, sometimes called **echoism**, is used both in a

or a combination of words, whose sound seems to duplicate the sound it denotes: “hiss,” “buzz,” “rattle,” “bang.” There is no exact duplication, however, of nonverbal by verbal sounds; the perceived similarity is due as much to the meaning, and to the sensation of articulating the words, as to their sounds. Two lines of Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s “Come Down, O Maid” (1847) are often cited as a skillful instance of onomatopoeia:

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

The American critic John Crowe Ransom remarked that by making only two changes in the speech sounds of the last line, we lose the echoic effect because we change the meaning drastically: “And murdering of innumerable beeves.”

The sounds seemingly mimicked by onomatopoeic words need not be pleasant ones. Robert Browning liked to represent squishy and scratchy sounds, as in “Meeting at Night” (1845):

As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i’ the slushy sand.
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match....

Compare *euphony* and *cacophony*.

“onomatopoeia” is applied to words or passages which seem to correspond to, or to strongly suggest, what they denote in any way whatever—in size, movement, tactile feel, duration, or force, as well as sound (see *sound symbolism*). Alexander Pope recommends such extended verbal mimicry in his *Essay on Criticism* (1711) when he says that “the sound should seem an echo of the sense,” and goes on to illustrate his maxim by mimicking two different kinds of action or motion by the metrical movement and by the difficulty or ease of utterance, in conjunction with the signification, of the poetic lines that describe them:

When Ajax strives some rock’s vast weight to throw,
The line too labors, and the words move slow;
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o’er th’ unbending corn, and skims along the main.

(öp’ sis): **364.**

Oral poetry, or “oral formulaic poetry,” is composed and transmit-

are prehistoric, yet it continues to flourish even now among populations which for the most part cannot read or write. Oral poetry includes both narrative forms (see *epic* and *ballad*) and lyric forms (see *folk songs*). There is no fixed version of an oral composition, since each performer tends to render it differently, and sometimes introduces differences between one performance and the next. Such poems, however, typically incorporate verbal formulas—set words, word patterns, refrains, and set-pieces of description—which help a performer to improvise a narrative or song on a given theme, and also to recall and repeat, although often with variations, a poem that has been learned from someone else. (For examples of such formulas, see *ballad*, *epic*, and *refrain*.)

Oral ballads and songs have been collected and published ever since the eighteenth century. The systematic analysis of oral formulaic poetry in its origins and early renderings, however, was begun in the 1930s by the American scholar Milman Parry on field trips to Yugoslavia, the last place in Europe where the custom of composing and transmitting oral poetry, especially heroic narratives of warfare, still survived. Albert B. Lord and other successors continued Parry's work, and also applied the principles of this contemporary oral poetry retrospectively to an analysis of the constitution of the Homeric epics, the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf*, the Old French *Chanson de Roland*, and other epic poems which, although they survive only in a written form, had originated and evolved as oral formulaic poetry. Research into oral literary performances is also being carried on in Africa, Asia, and other parts of the world where the ancient tradition maintains its vitality. Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982), analyzes the effects on literary compositions of the shift from an oral to a print culture. For current modes of primarily oral poetry within a print culture, see *limerick* (under *light verse*) and *rap poetry* (under *performance poetry*).

A description of Milman Parry's work is in *Serbocroatian Heroic Songs*, ed. Albert B. Lord, Vol. 1; see also Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (1960, 2d ed., 2000); Adam Parry, ed., *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry* (1971); Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context* (1977); and J. M. Foley, *Oral Traditional Literature* (1981). For references to *oral poetry* in other entries, see pages 19, 22, 97, 121, 243.

organic form: 137.

organicist: 138; 4.

orientalism: 306.

originality: 65.

ottava rima (ötäv' ä rē' mǎ): 377.

over-reading: 14.

oxymoron (öximō' rōn): 267.



P

: 32.

Palinode, from the Greek for “song again,” is a poem or poetic

in which Geoffrey Chaucer, contrite after being
Troilus
 and in his translation of the *Romance of the Rose*, does penance by

courtly love.) Palinodes are especially common in love poetry.
 “Leave me, O love which
 ” is a palinode renouncing the poetry of sexual love for

is acting on the stage without

mime (“mimic”) a character’s actions and to express a charac-
 ’s feelings. Elaborate pantomimes, halfway between drama and dance, were

’s nursery rhymes, or familiar children’s stories such as “Puss in
 ” in a blend of miming, music, and dialogue. In America and many

A **dumb show** is an episode of pantomime introduced into a spoken

Hamlet (III. ii.), and the miming of the banishment of the
 ’s *The Duchess of Malfi* (III. iv.).
 See R. J. Broadbent, *A History of Pantomime* (1901).

paradigmatic (in linguistics): 197.

paradox: A paradox is a statement which seems on its face to be logically contradictory or absurd, yet turns out to be interpretable in a way that makes sense. An instance is the conclusion to John Donne's sonnet "Death, Be Not Proud":

One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; *Death, thou shalt die.*

The paradox is used occasionally by almost all poets, but was a persistent and central device in seventeenth-century *metaphysical poetry*, in both its religious and secular forms. Donne, who wrote a prose collection titled *Problems and Paradoxes*, exploited the figure constantly in his poetry. "The Canonization," for example, is organized as an extended proof, full of local paradoxes, of the paradoxical thesis that sexual lovers are saints. Paradox is also a frequent component in verbal *wit*.

If the paradoxical utterance conjoins two terms that in ordinary usage are contraries, it is called an **oxymoron**; an example is Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "O *Death in life*, the days that are no more." The oxymoron was a familiar type of *Petrarchan conceit* in Elizabethan love poetry, in phrases like "pleasing pains," "I burn and freeze," "loving hate." It is also a frequent figure in devotional prose and religious poetry as a way of expressing the Christian mysteries, which transcend human sense and logic. So John Milton describes the appearance of God, in *Paradise Lost* (III, 380):

Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear.

Paradox was a prominent concern of many *New Critics*, who extended the term from its limited application to a type of *figurative language* so as to encompass all surprising deviations from, or qualifications of, common perceptions or commonplace opinions. It is in this expanded sense that Cleanth Brooks is able to claim, with some plausibility, that "the language of poetry is the language of paradox," in *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947). See also *deconstruction* for the claim that all uses of language disseminate themselves into the unresolvable paradox called an *aporia*.

paralipsis (păřălîp' sîs): 347.

parallelism: 15.

paranomasia (păřănōmă' zya): 325.

pararhyme: 349.

paratactic style: 385.

: 32.

; 25, 59.

(in linguistics): 194; 310, 358.

The originator of the pastoral was the Greek poet Theocritus, who in

” is Latin for “shepherd.”) Virgil later imitated Theocritus in his Latin
, and in doing so established the enduring model for the traditional
(păș’ tōră): a deliberately conventional poem expressing an urban
’s nostalgic image of the supposed peace and simplicity of the life of shep-
conventions that
’s imitations of Theocritus include a

’er grow old, or engaging in a friendly

pastoral
, which persisted long after the other traditional types had lost their popu-
idyll, from the
’ pastorals; **eclogue** (literally, “a selection”), from the title of
’s pastorals; and **bucolic poetry**, from the Greek word for “herdsman.”
Classical poets often described the pastoral life as possessing features of the
golden age. Christian pastoralists conjoined the golden age of pagan

“shepherd” (applied to the ecclesiastical or parish “pastor,” and

’s *Shep-*
’s *Calendar* (1579), which popularized the mode in English poetry, in-

Such was the attraction of the pastoral dream that Renaissance writers incor-
’s *Arcadia* (1581–84)
romance written in an elaborately artful prose. (**Arcadia** was a
’ Sicily

’s “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love”), and the pastoral drama.
’s *The Faithful Shepherdess* is an example of this last type, and
’s *As You Like It*, based on the contemporary pastoral romance
by Thomas Lodge, is set in the forest of Arden, a green refuge from

The last important series of traditional pastorals, and an extreme instance
’s

Pastorals (1709). Five years later John Gay, in his *Shepherd's Week*, wrote a parody of the type by applying its elegant formulas to the crudity of actual rustic manners and language; by doing so, he inadvertently showed later poets the way to the seriously realistic treatment of rural life. In 1783 George Crabbe published *The Village* specifically in order to

paint the cot
As Truth will paint it and as bards will not.

How far the term then lost its traditional application to a poetry of aristocratic artifice is indicated by Wordsworth's title for his realistic rendering of a rural tragedy in 1800: "Michael, A Pastoral Poem."

In recent decades the term "pastoral" has been expanded in various ways. William Empson, in *Some Versions of Pastoral* (1935), identified as pastoral any work which opposes simple to complicated life, to the advantage of the former: the simple life may be that of the shepherd, the child, or the working man. In Empson's view this literary mode serves as an oblique way to criticize the values and hierarchical class structure of the society of its time. Empson accordingly applies the term to works ranging from Andrew Marvell's seventeenth-century poem "The Garden" to Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and the modern *proletarian novel*. Other critics apply the term "pastoral" to any work which represents a withdrawal to a place apart that is close to the elemental rhythms of nature, where the protagonist gains a new perspective on the complexities, frustrations, and conflicts of the social world. On the continuation of the pastoral strain in "nature writers," see *ecocriticism*.

W. W. Greg, *Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama: A Literary Inquiry, with Special Reference to the Pre-Restoration Stage in England* (1906); the Introduction to *English Pastoral Poetry from the Beginnings to Marvell*, ed. Frank Kermode (1952); Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, *The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric* (1969); Andrew V. Ettin, *Literature and the Pastoral* (1985); Annabel Patterson, *Pastoral and Ideology, Virgil to Valéry* (1987); Paul Alpers, *What Is Pastoral?* (1996); Terry Gifford, *Pastoral* (2008).

pastoral elegy: 102; 65, 268.

pathetic fallacy: A phrase invented by John Ruskin in 1856 to signify any representation of inanimate natural objects that ascribes to them human capabilities, sensations, and emotions (*Modern Painters*, Vol. 3, chapter 12); see *pathos*. As used by Ruskin—for whom "truth" was a primary criterion of art—the term was derogatory; for, he claimed, such descriptions do not represent the "true appearances of things to us" but "the extraordinary, or false appearances, when we are under the influence of emotion, or contemplative fancy." Two of Ruskin's examples are the lines

The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mould
Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold,

and Coleridge's description in "Christabel" of

The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can.

“morbid.” Only

’s contention would make just
“morbid.” “Pathetic fallacy” is now

personification.

See Josephine Miles, *Pathetic Fallacy in the Nineteenth Century* (1942);
The Literary Criticism of John Ruskin (1965), Introduction
–78.

: Pathos in Greek meant the passions, or suffering, or deep feeling gener-
ethos, a person’s overall disposition or character. In

Victorian era some prominent

and of the death of Little Eva in Harriet Beecher
’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. (See *sentimentalism*.) To many modern readers, the

Pray, do not mock me.
I am a very foolish fond old man,

’s terse and indirect revelation of the grief of the old
Michael (1800), ll. 465–66:

Many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone.

; 42, 146.

(pěntām’ ěter): **219**.

: **349**.

(in linguistics): **195**.

performance (of a poem): 221.

performance poetry: Since the seventeenth century, poetry—like other forms of literature—has been composed primarily for printing. In recent years, however, the ancient tradition of composing poetry specifically for oral performance before an audience has been revived in a number of modes, some of which involve extemporizing the poem during the performance itself. Taken together, these compositions can be accounted the first widespread and sustained revival of oral poetry since the beginning of the print culture in the fifteenth century. (See *oral poetry*; also *printing*, under *Renaissance*.) During the rebellious 1960s, for example, **poetry happenings** (public recitations, often to musical accompaniment) were an integral part of the countercultural scene. Later, other marginalized groups produced similar performances, usually in urban settings and before audiences who regarded poetry in print as academic and elitist. The **poetry slam** emerged in the 1980s as competitions in which rival poets were set a time limit, then scored for their oral productions by members of the audience; the poetry at such events was marked by emphatic rhythms, succinctness, clarity, and hipness. For essays by various inquirers about the public performance of printed poems, as well as about contemporary poems composed for public performance, see Charles Bernstein, ed., *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word* (1998). The anthology *Poetry Nation*, ed. Regie Cabico, Todd Swift, and Bob Holman (1998), traces the genealogy of various modes of “alternative” poetry that fuse oral and printed traditions to the performances of the Beat Generation, especially Allen Ginsberg. (See under *Beat Writers*.)

The most widely known and practiced performance poetry is **rap**, an element in **hip-hop**; the latter term since the 1980s has come to designate a cultural movement among urban African-American youths that originated in New York and was marked by distinctive clothing, graffiti, break dancing, and music, especially rap. Both the music and verse form of rap had complex origins in African, *African-American*, and West Indian musical traditions. The verbal component, technically speaking, consists of a hard-driving four-stress line, with a variable number of intervening syllables and a varying number of mainly sequential rhymes, in which there is a frequent use of *partial* and *forced rhymes* (see *meter* and *rhyme*). “To rap” is slang for “to talk,” and rap verse is spoken, in a heavily stressed beat, over an accompaniment of bass, percussion, and sometimes other musical instruments. (There is an interesting parallel between rap and the strong-stress meter and the performance of Old English poetry; see under *meter*.) Often in rap the accompaniment is punctuated by “scratching” (the sounds made by rotating a phonograph record to and fro on a turntable so that the needle moves back and forth in the groove) and by “sampling” (the insertion of fragments of recorded music). In the mode known as **freestyling**, or **battle-rapping**, rap verses are improvised during performance, often in competitions between rival rappers. A rapper’s distinctive style, in versification, pace, and voice quality, is called his or her “flow.”

In its early years rap usually conveyed a self-aggrandizing, contentious, and anti-establishment message, and in the 1980s the genre came to be

gangsta rap (“gangster rap”), which flaunted (sometimes in a self-

“Poetry,” by the rapper KRS-One, recorded in 1987.

Difficult, isn’t it
My point? You’re missing it
Your head is in front of my hand
So I’m dissing it!¹¹

“The Evil That Men

”; this is an excerpt:

Tell me, don’t you think it’s a shame
When someone can put a quarter in a video game
But when a homeless person approaches you on the street
You can’t treat him the same
It’s time to teach the deaf, the dumb, the blind
That black on black crime only shackles and binds
You to a doom, a fate worse than death
But there’s still time left
To stop puttin’ your conscience on cease,
And bring about some type of peace....¹²

Rap has achieved a remarkable and wide-ranging popularity. The lyrics are
—in

—in most countries of the world.

See Gregory Nagy, *Poetry as Performance: Homer and Beyond* (1996);
Hip Hop America (2d ed., 1999); Michael Eric Dyson, *Know*
(2007); Lesley Wheeler, *Voicing Ameri-*
(2008). For a

Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary
(1994). The online encyclopedia Wikipedia has informative articles

“Poetry” as performed by KRS-One. Lyrics written by Lawrence Parker/Scott Sterling. Copyright ©

“Evil That Men Do” by Dana Owens, as performed by Queen Latifah. Copyright © 1987 WB Music

on performance poetry, hip-hop, rap, and related topics. For references to *performance poetry* in other entries, see page 26.

performative (in speech-act theory): 373; 328.

performative (in constructionist/deconstructionist theory): 373; 328.

periodic sentence: 385.

periods of American literature: The division of American literature into convenient historical segments, or “periods,” lacks the consensus among literary scholars that we find with reference to English literature; see *Periods of English Literature*. The many syllabi of college surveys reprinted in *Reconstructing American Literature*, ed. Paul Lauter (1983), and the essays in *Redefining American Literary History*, ed. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff and Jerry W. Ward (1990), demonstrate how variable are the temporal divisions and their names, especially since the beginning of efforts to do justice to literature written by women and by ethnic minorities. Some recent historians, anthologists, and teachers of American literature simply divide their survey into dated sections, without affixing period names. A prominent tendency, however, is to recognize the importance of major wars in marking significant changes in literature. This tendency, as the scholar Cushing Strout has remarked, “suggests that there is an order in American political history more visible and compelling than that indicated by specifically literary or intellectual categories.”

The following divisions of American literary history recognize the importance assigned by many literary historians to the Revolutionary War (1775–81), the Civil War (1861–65), World War I (1914–18), and World War II (1939–45). Under these broad divisions are listed some of the more widely used terms to distinguish periods and subperiods of American literature. These terms, it will be noted, are diverse in kind; they may signify a span of time, or a type of political organization, or a prominent intellectual or imaginative mode, or a predominant literary form.

1607–1775. This era, from the founding of the first settlement at Jamestown to the outbreak of the American Revolution, is often called the **Colonial Period**. Writings were for the most part religious, practical, or historical. Notable among the seventeenth-century writers of journals and narratives about the founding and early history of some of the colonies were William Bradford, John Winthrop, and the theologian Cotton Mather. In the following century Jonathan Edwards was a major philosopher as well as theologian, and Benjamin Franklin an early American master of lucid and cogent prose. Not until 1937, when Edward Taylor’s writings were first published from manuscript, was Taylor discovered to have been an able religious poet in the *metaphysical* style of the English devotional poets Herbert and Crashaw. Anne Bradstreet was the chief Colonial poet of secular and domestic as well as religious subjects.

The publication in 1773 of *Poems on Various Subjects* by Phillis Wheatley,

black writers
African-American

) in America. The complexity and diversity of the African-American
—both Western and African, oral and written, slave and free,

—have effected tensions and fusions that, over the course of time,

's most important contri-

To Make a

(1939; reissued 1986); Houston A. Baker, Jr., *Black Literature in*
(1971); Bernard W. Bell, *The Afro-American Novel and Its Tradition*

Figures in Black (1987), and ed., *Black Literature*

(1984); also Henry L. Gates, Jr., Nellie Y. McKay, and

The Norton Anthology of African-American Literature (1997).

The period between the Stamp Act of 1765 and 1790 is sometimes dis-

Revolutionary Age. It was the time of Thomas Paine's

's "Statute of Virginia for

"Declaration of Independence," and many other writ-

The Federalist Papers in support of the Constitution, most notably those

1775–1865. The years 1775–1828, the **Early National Period** ending

's *The Contrast*, 1787), the earliest American novel (William Hill

's *The Power of Sympathy*, 1789), and the establishment in 1815 of the

The North American Review. Washington

Gothic novel of mys-

slave narratives

African-American slaves who had escaped or

' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845) and Harriet

' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861).

The span 1828–65 from the Jacksonian era to the Civil War, often iden-

Romantic Period in America (see *neoclassic and romantic*), marks

American Renaissance, the title of F. O.

's influential book (1941) about its outstanding writers, Ralph

symbolism); it is also sometimes called the

Age of Transcendentalism, after the philosophical and literary movement, centered on Emerson, that was dominant in New England (see *Transcendentalism*). In all the major genres except drama, writers produced works of an originality and excellence not exceeded in later American literature. Emerson, Thoreau, and the early feminist Margaret Fuller shaped the ideas, ideals, and literary aims of many contemporary and later American writers. It was the age not only of continuing writings by William Cullen Bryant, Washington Irving, and James Fenimore Cooper, but also of the novels and short stories of Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the southern novelist William Gilmore Simms; of the poetry of Poe, John Greenleaf Whittier, Emerson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and the most innovative and influential of all American poets, Walt Whitman; and of the beginning of distinguished American criticism in the essays of Poe, Simms, and James Russell Lowell. The tradition of *African-American* poetry by women was continued by Francis Ellen Watkins Harper, and the *African-American* novel was inaugurated by William Wells Brown's *Clotel* (1853) and by Harriet E. Wilson's *Our Nig* (1859).

1865–1914. The cataclysm of the bloody Civil War and Reconstruction, followed by a burgeoning industrialism and urbanization in the North, profoundly altered American self-awareness, and also American literary modes. The years 1865–1900 are often known as the **Realistic Period**, by reference to the novels by Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, and Henry James, as well as by John W. DeForest, Harold Frederic, and the *African-American* novelist Charles W. Chesnutt. These works, though diverse, are often labeled “realistic” in contrast to the “romances” of their predecessors in prose fiction: Poe, Hawthorne, and Melville (see *prose romance* and *realism*). Some realistic authors grounded their fiction in a regional milieu; these include (in addition to Mark Twain's novels on the Mississippi River region) Bret Harte in California, Sarah Orne Jewett in Maine, Mary Wilkins Freeman in Massachusetts, and George W. Cable and Kate Chopin in Louisiana. (See *regional novel*.) Chopin has become prominent as an early and major *feminist* novelist. Whitman continued writing poetry up to the last decade of the century, and (unknown to him and almost everyone else) was joined by Emily Dickinson; although only seven of Dickinson's more than a thousand short poems were published in her lifetime, she is now recognized as one of the most distinctive and eminent of American poets. Sidney Lanier published his experiments in versification based on the meters of music; the *African-American* author Paul Laurence Dunbar wrote both poems and novels between 1893 and 1905; and in the 1890s Stephen Crane, although he was only twenty-nine when he died, published short poems in free verse that anticipate the experiments of Ezra Pound and the *Imagists*, and wrote also the brilliantly innovative short stories and short novels that look forward to two later narrative modes: naturalism and impressionism. The years 1900–1914—although James, Howells, and Mark Twain were still writing, and Edith Wharton was publishing her earlier novels—are sometimes discriminated as the **Naturalistic Period**, in recognition of the powerful although sometimes crudely wrought novels by

naturalism, under *realism* and *naturalism*.

1914–1939. The era between the two world wars, marked by the trauma

“modern literature,” which in America reached

modernism.) *Poetry* magazine, founded in Chicago by Harriet

—authors who wrote in an unexampled variety of poetic
Imagism of Amy Lowell, H. D. (Hilda Doolittle),

, merged with the intellectual and figurative methods of the English
. Among the major writers of prose fiction were Edith

’Neill, as well as a group of

The literary productions of this era are often subclassified in a variety of

” a title popularized by F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *Tales of the Jazz Age*

African-American writers. (See *Harlem Renaissance*.)

Many prominent American writers of the decade following the end of

“puritanical” re-

Lost Generation. A number of these writers

” as Malcolm Cowley called them (*Exile’s Return*, 1934), came back
’s *The Sun Also Rises* and Fitzgerald’s
are novels that represent the mood and way of life of two

groups of American expatriates. In “the radical ’30s,” the period of the Great Depression and of the economic and social reforms in the New Deal inaugurated by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, some authors joined radical political movements, and many others dealt in their literary works with pressing social issues of the time—including, in the novel, William Faulkner, John Dos Passos, James T. Farrell, Thomas Wolfe, and John Steinbeck, and in the drama, Eugene O’Neill, Clifford Odets, and Maxwell Anderson. See Peter Conn, *The American 1930s: A Literary History* (2009), and Morris Dickstein, *Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression* (2009).

1939 to the Present, the contemporary period. World War II, and especially the disillusionment with Soviet Communism consequent upon the Moscow trials for alleged treason and Stalin’s signing of the Russo-German pact with Hitler in 1939, largely ended the literary radicalism of the 1930s. A final blow to the very few writers who had maintained intellectual allegiance to Soviet Russia came in 1991 with the collapse of Russian Communism and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. For several decades the *New Criticism*—dominated by conservative southern writers, the **Agrarians**, who in the 1930s had championed a return from an industrial to an agricultural economy—typified the prevailing critical tendency to isolate literature from the life of the author and from society and to conceive a work of literature, in formal terms, as an organic and autonomous entity. (See John L. Stewart, *The Burden of Time: The Fugitives and Agrarians*, 1965.) The eminent and influential critics Edmund Wilson and Lionel Trilling, however—as well as other critics grouped with them as the **New York Intellectuals**, including Philip Rahv, Alfred Kazin, Dwight McDonald, and Irving Howe—continued through the 1960s to deal with a work of literature humanistically and historically, in the context of its author’s life, temperament, and social milieu, and in terms of the work’s moral and imaginative qualities and its consequences for society. See Alexander Bloom, *Prodigal Sons: The New York Intellectuals & Their World* (1986); V. B. Leitch, *American Literary Criticism from the Thirties to the Eighties*, 1988, chapter 4. For a discussion of radically new developments in American literary theory and criticism in the 1970s and later, see *poststructuralism*.

The 1950s, while often regarded in retrospect as a period of cultural conformity and complacency, was marked by the emergence of vigorous anti-establishment and antitraditional literary movements: the *Beat writers* such as Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac; the American exemplars of the literature of the *absurd*; the **Black Mountain Poets**, Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, and Robert Duncan; and the **New York Poets**, Frank O’Hara, Kenneth Koch, and John Ashbery. It was also a time of *confessional poetry* and the literature of extreme sexual candor, marked by the emergence of Henry Miller as a notable author (his autobiographical and fictional works, begun in the 1930s, had earlier been available only under the counter) and the writings of Norman Mailer, William Burroughs, and Vladimir Nabokov (*Lolita* was published in 1955). The **counterculture** of the 1960s and early 1970s continued some of these modes, but in a fashion made extreme and fevered by the rebellious youth movement and the vehement and sometimes violent

PERIODS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

The Making of a Counter Culture (1969), and for
Gates of Eden: American Culture in the
(1978). See *modernism and postmodernism*, and for radical developments
Black Arts Movement.

Important American writers after World War II include, in prose fiction,

“minority,” or **ethnic** literary group. (An
” consists of individuals who are distinguishable, within a

identity theorists, under *humanism*.) This is the era of the notable
novelists and essayists Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Richard

performance poetry.)

Three American Litera-

(1982).

The contemporary literary scene in America is crowded and varied, and

canon of American literature.

: For convenience of discussion, historians divide

” The exact number, dates, and names of these periods vary, but

the list below conforms to widespread practice. The list is followed by a brief comment on each period, in chronological order.

- 450–1066 Old English (or Anglo-Saxon) Period
- 1066–1500 Middle English Period
- 1500–1660 The Renaissance (or Early Modern)
 - 1558–1603 Elizabethan Age
 - 1603–1625 Jacobean Age
 - 1625–1649 Caroline Age
 - 1649–1660 Commonwealth Period (or Puritan Interregnum)
- 1600–1785 The Neoclassical Period
 - 1660–1700 The Restoration
 - 1700–1745 The Augustan Age
 - 1745–1785 The Age of Sensibility (or Age of Johnson)
- 1785–1832 The Romantic Period
- 1832–1901 The Victorian Period
 - 1848–1860 The Pre-Raphaelites
 - 1880–1901 Aestheticism and Decadence
- 1901–1914 The Edwardian Period
- 1910–1936 The Georgian Period
- 1914– The Modern Period
- 1945– Postmodernism

The **Old English Period**, or the **Anglo-Saxon Period**, extended from the invasion of Celtic England by Germanic tribes (the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes) in the first half of the fifth century to the conquest of England in 1066 by the Norman French under the leadership of William the Conqueror. Only after they had been converted to Christianity in the seventh century did the Anglo-Saxons, whose earlier literature had been oral, begin to develop a written literature. (See *oral poetry*.) A high level of culture and learning was soon achieved in various monasteries; the eighth-century churchmen Bede and Alcuin were major scholars who wrote in Latin, the standard language of international scholarship. The poetry written in the vernacular Anglo-Saxon, known also as Old English, included *Beowulf* (eighth century), the greatest of Germanic epic poems, and such lyric laments as “The Wanderer,” “The Seafarer,” and “Deor,” all of which, although composed by Christian writers, reflect the conditions of life in the pagan past. Caedmon and Cynewulf were poets who wrote on biblical and religious themes, and there survive a number of Old English lives of saints, sermons, and paraphrases of books of the Bible. Alfred the Great, a West Saxon king (871–99) who for a time united all the kingdoms of southern England against a new wave of Germanic invaders, the Vikings, was no less important as a patron of literature than as a warrior.

See S. B. Greenfield, *A Critical History of Old English Literature* (1965);
A Study of Old English Literature (1966).

Middle English Period. The four and a half centuries between the

“modern English”—that is, close enough to the language we speak and

The span from 1100 to 1350 is sometimes discriminated as the **Anglo-**
 , because the non-Latin literature of that time was written

’s *Lais*

—which may have been written while Marie was at the royal court
 ’ and Jean de Meun’s *Roman de la Rose*
 –75?), and Chrétien de Troyes’ *Erec et Enide* (the first Arthurian
Yvain (c. 1177–81). When the native vernacular—

Middle English—

—

—was the second half of the fourteenth century. This was
 ’s great religious
Piers Plowman, and of the anonymous master who wrote
alliterative meter, including *Pearl* (an elegy) and
 . This last work is the most accomplished of
chivalric romances in verse; the most notable prose romance was
 ’s *Morte d’Arthur*, written a century later. The outstanding
 “Scottish Chaucerians,” who included

folk ballads, as well as the flowering time of the *miracle*
morality plays, which were written and produced for the general public.
 See W. L. Renwick and H. Orton, *The Beginnings of English Literature to*
 (rev. 1952); H. S. Bennett, *Chaucer and the Fifteenth Century* (1947);
Middle English Survey: Critical Essays (1965).

The **Renaissance**, 1500–1660. See the entry *Renaissance*. There is an in-
early modern to denote this era.

Elizabethan Age. Strictly speaking, the period of the reign of Elizabeth I
 –1603); the term “Elizabethan,” however, is often used loosely to refer

to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, even after the death of Elizabeth. This was a time of rapid development in English commerce, maritime power, and nationalist feeling—the defeat of the Spanish Armada occurred in 1588. It was a great (in drama the greatest) age of English literature—the age of Sir Philip Sidney, Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, Sir Walter Raleigh, Francis Bacon, Ben Jonson, and many other extraordinary writers of prose and of dramatic, lyric, and narrative poetry. A number of scholars have looked back on this era as one of intellectual coherence and social order; an influential example was E. M. W. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture* (1943). Recent historical critics, however, have emphasized its intellectual uncertainties and political and social conflicts; see *new historicism*.

Jacobean Age. The reign of James I (in Latin, “Jacobus”), 1603–25, which followed that of Queen Elizabeth. This was the period in prose writings of Bacon, John Donne's sermons, Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and the King James translation of the Bible. It was also the time of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies and tragicomedies, and of major writings by other notable poets and playwrights including Donne, Ben Jonson, Michael Drayton, Lady Mary Wroth, Sir Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, John Webster, George Chapman, Thomas Middleton, Philip Massinger, and Elizabeth Cary, whose notable biblical drama *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Faire Queene of Jewry* was the first long play by an Englishwoman to be published.

See Basil Willey, *The Seventeenth Century Background* (1934); Douglas Bush, *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century* (1945); C. V. Wedgwood, *Seventeenth Century English Literature* (1950).

Caroline Age. The reign of Charles I, 1625–49; the name is derived from “Carolus,” the Latin version of “Charles.” This was the time of the English Civil War fought between the supporters of the king (known as “Cavaliers”) and the supporters of Parliament (known as “Roundheads,” from their custom of wearing their hair cut short). John Milton began his writing during this period; it was the time also of the religious poet George Herbert and of the prose writers Robert Burton and Sir Thomas Browne.

Associated with the court were the **Cavalier poets**, writers of witty and polished lyrics of courtship and gallantry. The group included Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, and Thomas Carew. Robert Herrick, although a country parson, is often classified with the Cavalier poets because, like them, he was a **Son of Ben**—that is, an admirer and follower of Ben Jonson—in many of his lyrics of love and gallant compliment.

See Robin Skelton, *Cavalier Poets* (1960).

The **Commonwealth Period**, also known as the **Puritan Interregnum**, extends from the end of the Civil War and the execution of Charles I in 1649 to the restoration of the Stuart monarchy under Charles II in 1660. In this period England was ruled by Parliament under the Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell; his death in 1658 marked the dissolution of the Commonwealth. Drama almost disappeared for eighteen years after the Puritans closed the public theaters in September 1642, not only on moral and religious grounds, but

's political pamphlets, of Hobbes' political treatise *Leviathan*

The **Neoclassical Period**, 1660–1785; see the entry *neoclassic and romantic*.
Restoration. This period takes its name from the restoration of the

Restoration com-
, and Dryden, Thomas Otway, and other playwrights developed the dis-
heroic drama. Dryden was the major poet and

Oroonoko, the tragic story of a noble African slave,
See Basil Willey, *The Seventeenth Century Background* (1934); L. I. Bredvold,
(1932).
Augustan Age. The original Augustan Age was the brilliant literary
–AD 14). In the eighteenth century and later, however, the term was

neoclassicism.) A major representative of popular, rather than clas-

Age of Sensibility. The period between the death of Alexander Pope in

' *Poems, Chiefly in Scottish Dialect*. (Alternative

.) An older name for this half century, the **Age of Johnson**,

stresses the dominant position of Samuel Johnson (1709–84) and his literary and intellectual circle, which included Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, James Boswell, Edward Gibbon, and Hester Lynch Thrale. These authors on the whole represented a culmination of the literary and critical modes of *neoclassicism* and the worldview of the *Enlightenment*. The more recent name, “Age of Sensibility,” puts its stress on the emergence, in other writers of the 1740s and later, of new cultural attitudes, theories of literature, and types of poetry; we find in this period, for example, a growing sympathy for the Middle Ages, a vogue of *cultural primitivism*, an awakening interest in ballads and other folk literature, a turn from neoclassic “correctness” and its emphasis on judgment and restraint to an emphasis on instinct and feeling, the development of a *literature of sensibility*, and above all the exaltation by some critics of “original genius” and a “bardic” poetry of the sublime and visionary imagination. Thomas Gray expressed this anti-neoclassic sensibility and set of values in his “Stanzas to Mr. Bentley” (1752):

But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration given,
That burns in Shakespeare’s or in Milton’s page,
The pomp and prodigality of Heaven.

Other poets who showed similar shifts in thought and taste were William Collins and Joseph and Thomas Warton (poets who, together with Gray, began in the 1740s the vogue for what Samuel Johnson slightly referred to as “ode, and elegy, and sonnet”), Christopher Smart, and William Cowper. Thomas Percy published his influential *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), which included many *folk ballads* and a few medieval metrical romances, and James Macpherson in the same decade published his greatly altered (and in considerable part fabricated) versions of the poems of the Gaelic bard Ossian (Oisín) which were enormously popular throughout Europe. This was also the period of the great novelists, some realistic and satiric and some “sentimental”: Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, and Laurence Sterne.

See Northrop Frye, “Toward Defining an Age of Sensibility,” in *Fables of Identity* (1963), and ed., *Romanticism Reconsidered* (1965); F. W. Hilles and Harold Bloom, eds., *From Sensibility to Romanticism* (1965).

Romantic Period. The Romantic Period in English literature is dated as beginning in 1785 (see *Age of Sensibility*)—or alternatively in 1789 (the outbreak of the French Revolution), or in 1798 (the publication of William Wordsworth’s and Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads*)—and as ending either in 1830 or else in 1832, the year in which Sir Walter Scott died and the passage of the Reform Bill signaled the political preoccupations of the Victorian era. For some prominent characteristics of the thought and writings of this remarkable and diverse literary period, as well as for a list of suggested readings, see *neoclassic and romantic*. The term is often applied also to literary movements in European countries and America; see *periods of American literature*. Romantic characteristics are usually said to have been manifested first in

Gothic

by William Beckford, Matthew Gregory Lewis, William Godwin,

Victorian Period. The beginning of the Victorian Period is frequently

–70), and Late Victorian
–1901). Much writing of the period, whether imaginative or didactic,

“Victorian,” see *Victorian*

.) Among the notable poets were Alfred, Lord Tennyson,

For prominent literary movements during the Victorian era, see the entries
Pre-Raphaelites, *Aestheticism*, and *Decadence*.

Edwardian Period. The span between the death of Victoria (1901) and

Celtic Revival such as Lady

—works by Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad, Ford Madox Ford,

The Wings of the Dove, *The Ambassadors*, and
, between 1902 and 1904.

Georgian Period is a term applied both to the reigns in England of the
–1830) and (more frequently) to the reign of
–36). The term **Georgian poets** usually designates a group

Georgian Poetry, which were published by Edward Marsh between 1912 and 1922. Marsh favored writers we now tend to regard as relatively minor poets such as Rupert Brooke, Walter de la Mare, Ralph Hodgson, W. H. Davies, and John Masefield. “Georgian poetry” has come to connote verse which is mainly rural in subject matter, deft and delicate rather than bold and passionate in manner, and traditional rather than experimental in technique and form.

Modern Period. The application of the term “modern,” of course, varies with the passage of time, but it is frequently applied specifically to the literature written since the beginning of World War I in 1914; see *modernism and postmodernism*. This period has been marked by persistent and multidimensioned experiments in subject matter, form, and style, and has produced major achievements in all the literary genres. Among the notable writers are the poets W. B. Yeats, Wilfred Owen, T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Robert Graves, Dylan Thomas, and Seamus Heaney; the novelists Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, Aldous Huxley, Graham Greene, Doris Lessing, and Nadine Gordimer; the dramatists G. B. Shaw, Sean O’Casey, Noel Coward, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill, Brendan Behan, Frank McGuinness, and Tom Stoppard. The modern age was also an important era for literary criticism; among the innovative and influential English critics were T. S. Eliot, I. A. Richards, Virginia Woolf, F. R. Leavis, and William Empson. (See *New Criticism*.)

This entry has followed what has been the widespread practice of including under “English literature” the works of **anglophone authors**—that is, authors who speak and write in the English language—in all the British Isles. A number of the writers listed above were in fact natives of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Of the Modern Period especially it can be said that much of the greatest “English” literature was written by the Irish writers Yeats, Shaw, Joyce, O’Casey, Beckett, Iris Murdoch, and Seamus Heaney. And in recent decades, some of the most notable achievements in the English language have been written by authors who are natives or residents of recently liberated English colonies. They are often referred to as **postcolonial authors**, and include Doris Lessing in Rhodesia; the South Africans Nadine Gordimer, Athol Fugard, and J. M. Coetzee; the West Indians V. S. Naipaul and Derek Walcott; the Nigerians Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka; and the Indian novelists R. K. Narayan, Anita Desai, and Salman Rushdie. See Terry Eagleton, *Exiles and Emigrés* (1975), and refer to *postcolonial studies*.

The **Postmodern Period** is applied to the era from the end of World War II (1945) to approximately 1990. See *modernism and postmodernism* and, for innovations during the postmodern period in critical theory and practice, *poststructuralism*. Refer also to *periods of American literature*.

peripety (pěřip’ ětē): 297; 409.

periphrasis (pěřif’ rāsīs): 298.

perlocutionary act: 373.

: These terms reflect the tendency in recent criticism

discourse. To conceive a work as an utterance

Rhetoric

ethos,

's arguments. The current concern with the nature
's presence in a work of imaginative literature is

rhetoric, rhetorical criticism, and speech-act theory.) Specific
"persona," "tone," and "voice" vary greatly and in—
—concepts such
"the self," "personal identity," "role-playing," and "sincerity." This essay

Persona was the Latin word for the mask worn by actors in the classical
dramatis personae for the list of
"per-
" a particular individual. In recent literary discussion "persona" is often

's
(who in the opening passages of various books of that epic

Gulliver's Travels; the "I" who carries on most of the conver-
's satiric dialogue *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*; the genial
's *Tom Jones*, who pauses frequently for leisurely dis-

's "Tintern Abbey"; the Duke who tells the emissary
's "My Last Duchess"; and the fan-
"biographer" who narrates Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. Calling such diverse
"personae" indicates that they are all, to some degree, adapted to the

's Gulliver and Browning's Duke, who are entirely fictional
's *Epistle* and
's *Tom Jones*, who are presented as closer to their authors, although

Paradise Lost, in "Tintern
" and in "Ode to a Nightingale," where we are invited to attribute the

In an influential discussion, I. A. Richards defined **tone** as the expression of a literary speaker's "attitude to his listener." "The tone of his utterance reflects ... his sense of how he stands toward those he is addressing" (*Practical Criticism*, 1929, chapters 1 and 3). In a more complex definition, the Soviet critic Mikhail Bakhtin said that tone, or "intonation," is "oriented in *two directions*: with respect to the listener as ally or witness and with respect to the object of the utterance as the third, living participant whom the intonation scolds or caresses, denigrates or magnifies." ("Discourse in Life and Discourse in Art," in Bakhtin's *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique*, trans. 1976.) The sense in which the term is used in recent criticism is suggested by the phrase "tone of voice," as applied to nonliterary speech. The way we speak reveals, by subtle clues, our conception of, and attitude toward, the things we are talking about, our personal relationship to our auditor, and also our assumptions about the social level, intelligence, and sensitivity of that auditor. The tone of a speech can be described as critical or approving, formal or intimate, outspoken or reticent, solemn or playful, arrogant or prayerful, angry or loving, serious or ironic, condescending or obsequious, and so on through numberless possible nuances of relationship and attitude both to object and to auditor. In a literary narrative, the *narratee* (the person or persons to whom the narrator addresses the story) is sometimes explicitly identified, but at other times remains an **implied auditor**, revealed only by what the narrator implicitly takes for granted as needing or not needing explanation or justification, and by the tone of the narrator's address. *Feminist critics*, for example, point out that much of the literature by male authors assumes a readership of males who share the narrator's views, interests, and values. See Judith Fetterley, *The Resisting Reader* (1978).

Some current critical uses of "tone" are broader, and coincide in reference with what other critics prefer to call "voice."

Voice, in a recently evolved usage, signifies the equivalent in imaginative literature to Aristotle's "ethos" in a speech of persuasive rhetoric, and suggests also the traditional rhetorician's concern with the importance of the physical voice in an oration. The term in criticism points to the fact that we are aware of a voice beyond the fictional voices that speak in a work, and of a persona behind all the dramatic personae, and behind even the first-person narrator. We have the sense, that is, of a pervasive authorial presence, a determinate intelligence and moral sensibility, who has invented, ordered, and rendered all these literary characters and materials in just this way. The particular qualities of the author's ethos, or voice, in Henry Fielding's novel *Tom Jones* (1749) manifest themselves, among other things, in the fact that he has chosen to create the wise, ironic, and worldly persona who ostensibly tells the story and talks to the reader about it. The sense of a distinctive authorial presence is no less evident in the work of recent writers who, unlike Fielding, pursue a strict policy of authorial noninterference and, by effacing themselves, try to give the impression that the story tells itself (see *point of view*). There is great diversity in the quality of the authorial mind, temperament, and sensibility which, by inventing, controlling, and rendering the particular fiction, pervades works—all of them "objective" or impersonal in narrative technique—such as

PERSONAL LYRICS:

's *Ulysses*, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, Ernest Hemingway's
" and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. For a particular
's implicit presence as this is sustained
critics of consciousness. For a discussion of the relation
's speaking voice in real life and the qualities of his or her
Poetry and the Physical Voice (1962).

Of the critics listed below who deal with this concept, Wayne C. Booth
implied author over "voice," in order better to indicate that

's view
"an ideal, literary, created version of the real
"—that is, the implied author, although related to the actual author, is

's "false voice" and his "true
" and regard the latter as the expression of the author's genuine self or
's true "voice" is to discover oneself. All

Refer to Bakhtin's view of the multiplex voices in narrative fiction, in the
dialogic criticism. See Richard Ellmann, *Yeats: The Man and the Masks*
' theory of a poet's "masks" or "personae," in
"The Speaking Voice," in *Fields of*
(1951); Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (rev. 1983), chapter 3;
The Barbarian Within (1962); J. O. Perry, ed., *Approaches to the*
(1965)—in which section 3, "Tone, Voice, Sensibility," includes selec-

(1970); Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (1972);
The Literary Persona (1982).

; 7, 298. See also *invocation*; *pathetic fallacy*.

(pěträr' kan): 58; 64.

(fālög' ösēn'' trik): 125.

phenomenology and criticism: The philosophical perspective and method called **phenomenology** was established by the German thinker Edmund Husserl (1859–1938). Husserl set out to analyze human consciousness—that is, to describe the concrete **Lebenswelt** (lived world), as this is experienced independently of any prior suppositions, whether these suppositions come from philosophy or from common sense. He proposes that consciousness is a unified **intentional** act. By “intentional” he does not mean that it is deliberately willed, but that it is always directed to an “object”; in other words, to be conscious is always to be conscious of something. Husserl’s claim is that in this unitary act of consciousness, the thinking subject and the object it “intends,” or is aware of, are interinvolved and reciprocally implicative. In order to free itself of prior conceptions, the phenomenological analysis of consciousness begins with an **epoché** (suspension) of all presuppositions about the nature of experience, and this suspension involves “bracketing” (holding in abeyance) the question whether or not the object of consciousness is real—that is, whether or not the object exists outside the consciousness which “intends” it.

Phenomenology had widespread philosophical influence after it was put forward by Husserl in 1900 and later, and was diversely developed by Martin Heidegger in Germany and Maurice Merleau-Ponty in France. It greatly influenced Hans-Georg Gadamer and other theorists concerned with analyzing the conscious activity of understanding language (see *interpretation and hermeneutics*), and, directly or indirectly, affected the way in which many critics analyze the experience of literature. In the 1930s the Polish theorist Roman Ingarden (1893–1970), who wrote his books in both Polish and German, adapted the phenomenological viewpoint and concepts to an innovative formulation of the way we understand and respond to a work of literature.

In Ingarden’s analysis, a literary work originates in the intentional acts of consciousness of its author—“intentional” in the phenomenological sense that the acts are directed toward an object. These acts, as recorded in a text, make it possible for a reader to re-experience the work in his or her own consciousness. The recorded text contains many elements which are potential rather than fully realized, as well as many “places of indeterminacy” in what it sets forth. An “active reading” responds to the sequence of the printed words by a temporal process of consciousness which “fills out” these potential and indeterminate aspects of the text, and in so doing, in Ingarden’s term, the reading **concretizes** the schematic literary work. Such a reading is said to be “co-creative” with the conscious processes recorded by the author, and to result in an actualized “aesthetic object” within the reader’s consciousness which does not depict a reality that exists independently of the work, but instead constitutes a “quasi-reality”—that is to say, its own fictional world. See Roman Ingarden, *The Literary Work of Art* (1931, trans. 1973), and *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art* (1937, trans. 1973); also, the exposition in Eugene Falk, *The Poetics of Roman Ingarden* (1981). For German critics strongly influenced by Ingarden, see Wolfgang Iser under *reader-response criticism*, and Hans Robert Jauss under *reception theory*.

The term **phenomenological criticism** is often applied specifically to **Geneva School** of critics, most of whose

's at Johns Hopkins University, was in his earlier career *deconstructive criticism*) the leading American representative

Geneva critics regard each work of literature as a fictional world that is *Lebenswelt* of its author and embodies the author's unique

formalism, both in its *New Criticism*. Its roots instead go back *expressive criticism*

"This *living reading*, this divination into

") In the course of time, however, Geneva critics

cogito, or dis—related to, but
's "empirical," or biographical, self—pervades a
"con—
" of the work; that is, of the objects, characters, imagery, and style into
's personal mode of awareness and feeling imaginatively pro—
voice; refer also to *objective and*
.) By "bracketing" their own prepossessions and particularities, the

critics of consciousness,

" As Georges Poulet put it in
" (1969): "When I read as I ought ... with the
" then "I am thinking the thoughts of
.... But I think it as my very own.... My consciousness behaves as
" (It should be noted that whereas
's aim in phenomenology was to describe the essential

critics' quite different aim is to identify—and also to identify oneself with—the unique consciousness of each individual author.)

Within this framework, critics of consciousness differ in the extent to which they attend to specific elements in the “external” contents, formal structure, and style of a text, on their way toward isolating its author’s “interior” mode of consciousness. A conspicuous tendency of most of these critics is to put together widely separated passages within a single work, on the principle, as J. Hillis Miller says in his book *Charles Dickens*, that since all these passages “reveal the persistence of certain obsessions, problems, and attitudes,” the critic may, by analyzing them, “glimpse the original unity of a creative mind.” Furthermore the critics of consciousness often treat a single work not as an individual entity, but as part of the collective body of an author’s writings, in order, as Miller said of Dickens, “to identify what persists through all the swarming multiplicity of his novels as a view of the world which is unique and the same.” Georges Poulet has also undertaken, in a number of books, to tell the history of the varying imaginative treatments of the topic of time throughout the course of Western literature, regarding these treatments as correlative with diverse modes of lived experience. In these histories Poulet sets out to identify “for each epoch a consciousness common to all contemporary minds”; he claims, however, that within this shared period-consciousness, the consciousness of each author also manifests its own uniqueness. The influence of the criticism of consciousness reached its height in the 1950s and 1960s, then gave way to the explicitly opposed critical modes of *structuralism* and *deconstruction*. Many of its concepts and procedures, however, survive in some forms of *reader-response criticism* and *reception aesthetic*.

Robert R. Magliola, *Phenomenology and Literature* (1977), deals with various types of phenomenological poetics and criticism in the context of an exposition of Husserl, Heidegger, and other phenomenological philosophers. Brief introductions to the Geneva School of criticism are Georges Poulet, “Phenomenology of Reading,” *New Literary History* 1 (1969–70), and J. Hillis Miller, “The Geneva School . . .,” in *Modern French Criticism*, ed. J. K. Simon (1972). In “Geneva or Paris? The Recent Work of Georges Poulet,” *University of Toronto Quarterly*, Vol. 39 (1970), Miller indicates his own transition from the criticism of consciousness to the very different critical mode of deconstruction. A detailed study of the Geneva School is Sarah Lawall’s *Critics of Consciousness: The Existential Structures of Literature* (1968); see also Michael Murray, *Modern Critical Theory: A Phenomenological Introduction* (1976). Among the writings of Geneva critics and other critics of consciousness available in English are Georges Poulet, *Studies in Human Time* (1949), *The Interior Distance* (1952), and *The Metamorphoses of the Circle* (1961); Jean Starobinski, *The Invention of Liberty, 1700–1789* (1964); Gaston Bachelard, *Subversive Humanist: Texts and Reading*, ed. Mary M. Jones (1991); J. Hillis Miller, *Charles Dickens: The World of His Novels* (1959), *The Disappearance of God* (1963), and *Poets of Reality* (1965). Other critical works influenced by phenomenology are Paul Brodtkorb, *Ishmael’s White World: A Phenomenological Reading of Moby Dick* (1965); David Halliburton, *Edgar Allan Poe: A Phenomenological View* (1973);

True Correspondence: A Phenomenology of Thomas Hardy's
(1983).

: **193**.

(fō' nēm): **195**.

(fōnēt' ĭks): **195**.

(fōnōsēn' trīk): **77**.

(in verse): **221**.

(pīk' ārēsk''): **253**; 15, 295.

In Plato's *Symposium* 210–12, Socrates recounts the doctrine

“from one
” then up from the beauty

“beauty absolute, separate, simple, and everlasting.”

Neoplatonists (the “new Platonists,” a school of Platonic

—as well as all goodness and truth—is an “ema-
” (radiation) from the One or Absolute, which is the essence and source

PLOT

—as Henry
“What is character but the determination of incident? What is
” (See *character and characterization.*)
story—that is, a bare synopsis

.... It is only

narrative and narratology.)

There are a great variety of plot forms. For example, some plots are
genre. Each of these types in turn exhibits

The chief character in a plot, on whom our interest centers, is called the
(or alternatively, the **hero** or **heroine**), and if the plot is such

antagonist. Elizabeth Bennet is the protagonist, or heroine, of Jane
's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813); Hamlet is the protagonist and King Clau-
's play, and the relation between them is

conflict. If the antagonist is evil, or capable of cruel and criminal ac-
villain. Many, but far from all, plots deal with a
's play *Our Town* (1938), for example, does not. In

' *Portrait of*

) the chief conflict is between opposing desires or values in the prota-
's own temperament. For the recent employment of an anti-traditional
antihero.

A character in a work who, by sharp contrast, serves to stress and highlight
foil. Thus Laertes

's *1 Henry IV*; and in

, the gentle and compliant Jane Bennet serves as a foil to her
“Foil” originally signified “leaf,” and came to be

If a character initiates a scheme which depends for its success on the

intrigue. Iago is a villain who intrigues against Othello and
's tragedy *Othello*. A number of comedies, including

Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1607) and many *Restoration* plays (for example, William Congreve's *The Way of the World* and William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*), have plots which turn largely on the success or failure of an intrigue.

As a plot evolves it arouses expectations in the audience or reader about the future course of events and actions and how characters will respond to them. A lack of certainty on the part of a concerned reader about what is going to happen, especially to characters with whom the reader has established a bond of sympathy, is known as **suspense**. If what in fact happens violates the expectations we have formed, it is known as **surprise**. The interplay of suspense and surprise is a prime source of vitality in a traditional plot. The most effective surprise, especially in realistic narratives, is one which turns out, in retrospect, to have been grounded in what has gone before, even though we have hitherto made the wrong inference from the given facts of circumstance and character. As E. M. Forster put it, the shock of the unexpected, "followed by the feeling, 'oh, that's all right' is a sign that all is well with the plot." A "surprise ending," in the pejorative sense, is one in which the author resolves the plot without adequate earlier grounds in characterization or events, often by the use of highly unlikely coincidence; there are numerous examples in the short stories of O. Henry. (For one type of manipulated ending, see *deus ex machina*.) *Dramatic irony* is a special kind of suspenseful expectation, when the audience or readers foresee the oncoming disaster or triumph but the character does not.

A plot is commonly said to have **unity of action** (or to be "an artistic whole") if it is apprehended by the reader or auditor as a complete and ordered structure of actions, directed toward the intended effect, in which none of the prominent component parts, or **incidents**, is nonfunctional; as Aristotle put this concept (*Poetics*, section 8), all the parts are "so closely connected that the transposal or withdrawal of any one of them will disjoint and dislocate the whole." Aristotle claimed that it does not constitute a unified plot to present a series of episodes which are strung together simply because they happen to a single character. Many *picaresque narratives*, nevertheless, such as Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), have held the interest of readers for centuries with such an *episodic* plot structure; while even so tightly integrated a plot as that of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749) introduces, for variety's sake, a long story by the Man of the Hill, which is related to the main plot only by parallels and contrasts.

A successful later development which Aristotle did not foresee is the type of structural unity that can be achieved with **double plots**, familiar in *Elizabethan* drama. In this form, a **subplot**—a second story that is complete and interesting in its own right—is introduced into the play; when skillfully invented and managed, the subplot serves to broaden our perspective on the main plot and to enhance rather than diffuse the overall effect. The integral subplot may have the relation of analogy to the main plot (the Gloucester story in *King Lear*), or else of counterpoint against it (the comic subplot involving Falstaff in *1 Henry IV*).

Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590–96) is an instance of a narrative romance which interweaves main plot and a multiplicity of subplots into

PLOT

polyphonic art of contemporary Elizabethan music, in which
The order of a unified plot, Aristotle pointed out, is a continuous
beginning initiates the main
middle
follows from what has gone before but requires nothing more; we feel
“initiating action,” or “point of attack”) need not be the initial stage
in medias res, “in the middle of things” (see *epic*), many short

’s *Romeo and Juliet* opens with a street fight
Hamlet with the apparition
exposition of essential prior matters—the feud between the
—Shakespeare weaves rapidly and skillfully into the dialogue of

flashbacks:
naturalized, as a memory,

’s play
(1949) and Ingmar Bergman’s film *Wild Strawberries*

The German critic Gustav Freytag, in *Technique of the Drama* (1863), in-
Freytag’s Pyramid. He

Hamlet, for example, the **rising action** (a section that Aristotle
complication) begins, after the opening scene and exposition,
’s telling Hamlet that he has been murdered by his brother

climax of the hero’s fortunes
’s guilt by the device of the play within a play (III.
crisis, the reversal or “turning point” of the fortunes of

falling action; from now on the antagonist, Claudius, largely
catastrophe, or outcome, which is

“Catastrophe” is usually applied to tragedy only; a more general

term for this precipitating final scene, which is applied to both comedy and tragedy, is the **dénouement** (French for “unknotting”): the action or intrigue ends in success or failure for the protagonist, the conflicts are settled, the mystery is solved, or the misunderstanding cleared away. A frequently used alternative term for the outcome of a plot is the **resolution**.

In many plots the *dénouement* involves a **reversal**, or in Aristotle’s Greek term, **peripety**, in the protagonist’s fortunes, whether to the protagonist’s failure or destruction, as in tragedy, or success, as in comic plots. The reversal frequently depends on a **discovery** (in Aristotle’s term, **anagnorisis**). This is the recognition by the protagonist of something of great importance hitherto unknown to him or to her: Cesario reveals to the Duke at the end of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* that he is really Viola; the fact of Iago’s lying treachery dawns upon Othello; Fielding’s Joseph Andrews, in his comic novel by that name (1742), discovers on the evidence of a birthmark—“as fine a strawberry as ever grew in a garden”—that he is in reality the son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson.

Since the 1920s, a number of writers of prose fiction and drama—building on the example of Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, as early as 1759–67—have deliberately designed their works to frustrate the expectations of chronological order, coherence, reliable narration, and resolution that the reader or auditor has formed by habituation to traditional plots; some writers have even attempted to dispense altogether with a recognizable plot. (See, for example, literature of the *absurd*, *modernism* and *postmodernism*, *antinovel*, the *new novel*.) Also, various types of critical theory have altered or supplemented many traditional concepts in the classification and analysis of plots. The *archetypal critic* Northrop Frye reduced all plots to four types that, he claims, reflect the myths corresponding to the four seasons of the year. Structuralist critics, who conceive diverse plots as sets of alternative conventions and codes for constructing a fictional narrative, analyze and classify these conventional plot forms on the model of linguistic theory. (See *structuralist criticism* and *narratology*, and the discussion of plots in Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics*, 1975, pp. 205–24.) And some *poststructuralist* critical theorists have undertaken to explode entirely the traditional treatments of plots, on the ground that any notion of the “unity” of a plot and of its “teleological” progress toward a resolution are illusory, or else that the resolution itself is only a façade to mask the irreconcilable conflicts and contradictions (whether psychological or social) that are the basic components of any literary text. See under *poststructuralism*.

For recent developments in the concept of plot, see *narrative* and *narratology*. Refer to Aristotle, *Poetics*; E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927); R. S. Crane, “The Concept of Plot and the Plot of *Tom Jones*,” in Crane, ed., *Critics and Criticism* (1952); Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (rev. 1983); Elder Olson, *Tragedy and the Theory of Drama* (1966); Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (1966); Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (1967); Eric S. Rabkin, *Narrative Suspense* (1974); Tzvetan Todorov, *The Poetics of Prose* (trans. 1977); Seymour

Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film (1980);
Reading for the Plot: Design and Invention in Narrative (1984).
plot in other entries, see pages 54, 234.

: 13.

(pō'' ětās' tēr): 52.

The term **diction** signifies the kinds of words, phrases, and sen-

's diction can be analyzed under a great variety of

style.

Many poets in all ages have used a distinctive language, a "poetic dic-
 " which includes words, phrasing, and figures not current in the ordinary
poetic license.) In modern discussion, however, the
poetic diction is applied especially to poets who, like Edmund Spenser

"poetic diction" is narrowed to specify the special style developed by *neo*-
 writers of the eighteenth century who, like Thomas Gray, believed that
 " (letter to Richard
neoclassic poetic diction was in large part derived from

decorum, according to which a poet must adapt the "level"
style).

's "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" (1735),

's direct commentary on everyday matters,
 —indeed required—the use of language really spoken by urbane

Prominent characteristics of this eighteenth-century poetic diction were its
 and its use of recurrent *epithets*; its preference for resounding words
 "refulgent," "irriguous," "umbrageous"); the frequent *invo*-
 to, and *personifications* of, abstractions and inanimate objects; and above
periphrasis (a roundabout, elaborate way of saying

's *The Seasons*

(1726–30) are “the finny tribe” for “fish,” “the bleating kind” for “sheep,” and “from the snowy leg ... the inverted silk she drew” instead of “she took off her silk stocking.” The following stanza from Thomas Gray’s excellent period piece, “Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College” (1747), manifests all these devices of neoclassic poetic diction. Contemporary readers took special pleasure in the ingenuity of the periphrases by which Gray, to achieve the stylistic elevation appropriate to an ode, managed to describe schoolboys at play while evading the use of common—hence what were considered to be unpoetic—words such as “swim,” “cage,” “boys,” “hoop,” and “bat”:

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race
Disporting on thy margent green
The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle’s speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

In William Wordsworth’s famed attack on the neoclassic doctrine of a special language for poetry, in his preface of 1800 to *Lyrical Ballads*, he claimed that there is no “essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition”; decried the poetic diction of eighteenth-century writers as “artificial,” “vicious,” and “unnatural”; set up as the criterion for a valid poetic language that it be, not a matter of artful contrivance, but the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings”; and, by a drastic reversal of the class hierarchy of linguistic decorum, claimed that the best model for the natural expression of feeling is not an idealized version of upper-class speech, but the actual speech of “humble and rustic life.”

See Thomas Quayle, *Poetic Diction: A Study of Eighteenth-Century Verse* (1924); Geoffrey Tillotson, “Eighteenth-Century Poetic Diction” (1942), reprinted in *Eighteenth-Century English Literature*, ed. James L. Clifford (1959); J. Arthos, *The Language of Natural Description in Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (1949); M. H. Abrams, “Wordsworth and Coleridge on Diction and Figures,” in *The Correspondent Breeze* (1984). For general treatments of the diverse vocabularies of poets, refer to Owen Barfield, *Poetic Diction* (rev. 1973); Winifred Novotny, *The Language Poets Use* (1962); Emerson R. Marks, *Taming the Chaos: English Poetic Diction Theory since the Renaissance* (1998). For references to *poetic diction* in other entries, see page 8.

poetic drama: 93.

poetic justice: Poetic justice was a term coined by Thomas Rymer, an English critic of the later seventeenth century, to signify the distribution, at the end of a literary work, of earthly rewards and punishments in proportion to the

's view was that a poem (in a
decorum and morality and not by the ran-
's day have acceded, in any but a highly qualified

tragic flaw, or error of judgment.

See "Introduction" to *The Critical Works of Thomas Rymer*, ed. Curt A.
Poetic Justice in the Drama (1912); Martha
Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life (1995).

: John Dryden in the late seventeenth century defined poetic
"the liberty which poets have assumed to themselves, in all ages,
" In its
poetic diction alone, to justify the
's departure from the rules and conventions of standard spoken and
eye-rhymes (wind-bind,

's *Paradise Lost* (1667), for example, departs

's high subject and the tradition of the epic form.
In a broader sense "poetic license" is applied not only to diction, but to all

conventions, and the representation of fictional characters
1 *Henry IV*, for example, Shakespeare follows Samuel Daniel's

foil to the
anachronism—the placing

Julius Caesar, which is set in
"poetic
" is sometimes extended to a poet's violation of fact from ignorance,

The Winter's Tale,
"On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (1816),

See Geoffrey N. Leech, *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry* (1969),
"Varieties of Poetic License." For the view by *Russian Formalists*

that varieties of poetic license are used to freshen our perceptions both of literary language and of the world it represents, see Victor Erlich, *Russian Formalism* (1965).

poetry happenings: 271.

poetry slam: 271.

point of view: Point of view signifies the way a story gets told—the mode (or modes) established by an author by means of which the reader is presented with the characters, dialogue, actions, setting, and events which constitute the *narrative* in a work of fiction. The question of point of view has always been a practical concern of the novelist, and there have been scattered observations on the matter in critical writings since the emergence of the modern *novel* in the eighteenth century. Henry James' prefaces to his various novels, however—collected as *The Art of the Novel* in 1934—and Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction* (1926), which codified and expanded upon James' comments, made point of view one of the most prominent and persistent concerns in modern treatments of the art of prose fiction.

Authors have developed many different ways to present a story, and many single works exhibit a diversity of methods. The simplified classification below, however, is widely recognized and can serve as a preliminary frame of reference for analyzing traditional types of narration and for determining the predominant type in mixed narrative modes. It deals first with by far the most widely used modes, first-person and third-person narration. It establishes a broad distinction between these two modes, then divides third-person narratives into subclasses according to the degree and kind of freedom or limitation which the author assumes in getting the story across to the reader. It then goes on to deal briefly with the rarely used mode of second-person narration.

In a **third-person narrative**, the **narrator** is someone outside the story proper who refers to all the characters in the story by name, or as "he," "she," "they." Thus Jane Austen's *Emma* begins: "Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her." In a **first-person narrative**, the narrator speaks as "I," and is to a greater or lesser degree a participant in the story, or else is the *protagonist* of the story. J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), an instance of the latter type, begins: "If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll really want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap..."

I. Third-person points of view

- A. **The omniscient point of view.** This is a common term for the many and varied works of fiction written in accord with the *convention* that the narrator knows everything that needs to be known

about the agents, actions, and events, and has privileged access to the characters' thoughts, feelings, and motives; also that the narrator is free to move at will in time and place, to shift from character to character, and to report (or conceal) their speech, doings, and states of consciousness.

Within this mode, the **intrusive narrator** is one who not only reports, but also comments on and evaluates the actions and motives of the characters, and sometimes expresses personal views about human life. Most works are written according to the convention that the omniscient narrator's reports and judgments are to be taken as **authoritative** by the reader, and so serve to establish what counts as the true facts and values within the fictional world. This is the fashion in which many of the greatest novelists have written, including Henry Fielding, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Leo Tolstoy. (In Fielding's *Tom Jones* and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, 1869, the intrusive narrator goes so far as to interpolate commentary, or short essays suggested by the subject matter of the novels.) On the other hand, the omniscient narrator may choose to be **unintrusive** (alternative terms are **impersonal** or **objective**). Flaubert in *Madame Bovary* (1857), for example, for the most part describes, reports, or "shows" the action in dramatic scenes without introducing his own comments or judgments. More radical instances of the unintrusive narrator, who gives up even the privilege of access to inner feelings and motives, are to be found in a number of Ernest Hemingway's short stories; for example, "The Killers" and "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place." (See *showing and telling*, under *character*.) For an extreme use of impersonal representation, see the comment on Robbe-Grillet's *Jealousy*, under *novel*.

Gérard Genette subtilized in various ways the analysis of third-person point of view. For example, he distinguishes between **focus of narration** (who tells the story) and **focus of character** (who perceives what is narrated in one or another section of the story). In Henry James' *What Maisie Knew*, for example, the focus of narration is an adult who tells the story, but his focus is on events as they are perceived and interpreted by the character Maisie, a child. Both the focus of narration and the focus of character (that is, of perception) in a single story may shift rapidly from the narrator to a character in the story, and from one character to another. In *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf shifts the focus of character in turn to each of the principal participants in the story; and Hemingway's *short story*, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," is a third-person narrative in which the focus of perception is, in various passages, the narrator, the hunter Wilson, Mrs. Macomber, Mr. Macomber, and even, briefly, the hunted lion. See Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (1972, trans. 1980). For an analysis of the grammatical shift in pronouns, indicators of time and place, and the tenses of verbs as the

focus and the mode of narration shifts within a story, see *free indirect discourse*, under *narration*, *grammar of*.

- B. **The limited point of view.** The narrator tells the story in the third person, but stays inside the confines of what is perceived, thought, remembered, and felt by a single character (or at most by very few characters) within the story. Henry James, who refined this narrative mode, described such a selected character as his “focus,” or “mirror,” or “center of consciousness.” In a number of James’ later works all the events and actions are represented as they unfold before, and filter to the reader through, the particular perceptions, awareness, and responses of only one character; for example, Strether in *The Ambassadors* (1903). A short and artfully sustained example of this limited point of view in narration is Katherine Mansfield’s story “Bliss” (1920). Later writers developed this technique into *stream-of-consciousness narration*, in which we are presented with outer perceptions only as they impinge on the continuous current of thought, memory, feelings, and associations which constitute a particular observer’s total awareness. The limitation of point of view represented both by James’ “center of consciousness” narration and by the “stream-of-consciousness” narration sometimes used by James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, and others, is often said to exemplify the “self-effacing author,” or “objective narration,” more effectively than does the use of an unintrusive but omniscient narrator. In the latter instance, it is said, the reader remains aware that someone, or some outside voice, is telling us about what is going on; the alternative mode, in which the point of view is limited to the consciousness of a character within the story itself, gives readers the illusion of experiencing events that evolve before their own eyes. For a revealing analysis, however, of the way even an author who restricts the narrative center of consciousness to a single character nonetheless communicates authorial judgments on people and events, and also controls the judgments evoked from the reader, see Ian Watt, “The First Paragraph of *The Ambassadors*: An Explanation,” reprinted in David Lodge, ed., *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism: A Reader* (1972). See also *persona*, *tone*, and *voice*.

II. **First-person points of view**

This mode, insofar as it is consistently carried out, limits the matter of the narrative to what the first-person narrator knows, experiences, infers, or finds out by talking to other characters. We distinguish between the narrative “I” who is only a fortuitous witness and auditor of the matters he relates (Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* and other works by Joseph Conrad); or who is a participant, but only a minor or peripheral one, in the story (Ishmael in Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick*, Nick in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*); or who is himself or herself the central character in the story (Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders*, Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* and *Villette*, Charles Dickens’ *Great Expectations*, Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, J. D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*).

Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* manifests a complex narrative mode in which the protagonist is the first-person narrator, whose *focus of character* is on the perceptions of a third party—white America—to whose eyes the protagonist, because he is black, is “invisible.” For a special type of first-person narrative, see *epistolary novel*, under *novel*.

Second-person points of view

This name has been given to a mode in which the story gets told solely, or at least primarily, as an address by the narrator to someone he calls by the second-person pronoun “you,” who is represented as experiencing that which is narrated. This form of narration occurred in occasional passages of traditional fiction, but has been exploited in a sustained way only since the latter part of the twentieth century and then only rarely; the effect is of a virtuoso performance. The French novelist Michel Butor in *La Modification* (1957, trans. as *Second Thoughts* in 1981), the Italian novelist Italo Calvino in *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler* (trans. 1981), and the American novelist Jay McInerney in *Bright Lights, Big City* (1984), all tell their story with “you” as the *narratee*. McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City*, for example, begins:

You are not the kind of guy who would be at a place like this at this time of the morning. But here you are, and you cannot say that the terrain is entirely unfamiliar, though the details are fuzzy. You are at a nightclub talking to a girl with a shaved head. The club is either Heartbreak or the Lizard Lounge.

involved fiction, by involving
” the reader, in the fabrication of the narrative itself. His novel opens:

You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino's new novel, *If on a winter's night a traveler*. Relax. Concentrate.... Best to close the door, the TV is always on in the next room. Tell the others right away, “No, I don't want to watch TV!” ... Or if you prefer, don't say anything; just hope they'll leave you alone.

“Narrative ‘You’ in Contemporary Literature,”
 , Vol. 2 (1965); Brian Richardson, “The Poetics and
erson Narrative,” *Genre*, Vol. 24 (1991); Monika Fludernick,
a Test Case for Narratology,” *Style*, Vol. 28 (1994);
“Second-Person Narrative: A Bibliography,” *Style*, Vol. 28 (1994).

Two other frequently discussed narrative tactics are relevant to a consid-

The **self-conscious narrator** shatters any illusion that he or she is telling

is a work of fictional art, or by flaunting the discrepancies between its patent fictionality and the reality it seems to represent. This can be done either seriously (Henry Fielding's narrator in *Tom Jones* and Marcel in Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, 1913–27) or for primarily comic purposes (Tristram in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, 1759–67, and the narrator of Lord Byron's versified *Don Juan*, 1819–24), or for purposes which are both serious and comic (Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, 1833–34). See Robert Alter, *Partial Magic: The Novel as a Self-Conscious Genre* (1975), and refer to *romantic irony*, under the entry *irony*.

One variety of self-conscious narrative exploited in recent prose fiction is called the **self-reflexive novel**, or the *involuted novel*, which incorporates into its narration reference to the process of composing the fictional story itself. An early modern version, André Gide's *The Counterfeiters* (1926), is also one of the most intricate. As the critic Harry Levin summarized its self-involution: it is "the diary of a novelist who is writing a novel [to be called *The Counterfeiters*] about a novelist who is keeping a diary about the novel he is writing"; the nest of Chinese boxes was further multiplied by Gide's publication, also in 1926, of his own *Journal of The Counterfeiters*, kept while he was composing the novel. Vladimir Nabokov is an ingenious exploiter of involuted fiction; for example, in *Pale Fire* (1962). See *metafiction* under the entry *novel*.

We ordinarily accept what a narrator tells us as authoritative. The **fallible** or **unreliable narrator**, on the other hand, is one whose perception, interpretation, and evaluation of the matters he or she narrates do not coincide with the opinions and norms implied by the author, which the author expects the alert reader to share. (See the commentary on reliable and unreliable narrators in Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, rev. 1983.) Henry James made repeated use of the narrator whose excessive innocence, or oversophistication, or moral obtuseness, makes him a flawed and distorting "center of consciousness" in the work; the result is an elaborate structure of ironies. (See *irony*.) Examples of James' use of a fallible narrator are his short stories "The Aspern Papers" and "The Liar." *The Sacred Fount* and *The Turn of the Screw* are works by James in which, according to some critics, the clues for correcting the views of the fallible narrator are inadequate, so that what we are meant to take as factual within the story, and the evaluations intended by the author, remain problematic. See, for example, the remarkably diverse critical interpretations collected in *A Casebook on Henry James' "The Turn of the Screw,"* ed. Gerald Willen (1960), and in *The Turn of the Screw*, ed. Deborah Esch and Jonathan Warren (2d ed., 1999). The critic Tzvetan Todorov, on the other hand, has classified *The Turn of the Screw* as an instance of **fantastic literature**, which he defines as deliberately designed by the author to leave the reader in a state of uncertainty whether the events are to be explained by reference to natural causes (as hallucinations caused by the protagonist's repressed sexuality) or to supernatural causes. See Todorov's *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (trans. Richard Howard, 1973); also Eric S. Rabkin, *The Fantastic in Literature* (1976).

Drastic experimentation in recent prose fiction has complicated in many

fiction; persona, tone, and voice; and

. On point of view, in addition to the writings mentioned above,
 “Point of View in Fiction,” *PMLA*, Vol. 70
The Modern Psychological Novel (rev. 1964), chapters 3–4;
The Rhetoric of Fiction (rev. 1983); Franz Stanzel, *A Theory*
 (1979, trans. 1984); Susan Lanser, *The Narrative Act: Point of View*
 (1981); Wallace Martin, *Recent Theories of Narrative* (1986). For refer-
point of view in other entries, see pages 57, 82, 209, 228, 231, 259.

: 248.

(pörtmān tō’): 13; 78.

. The critical analysis of the history, culture, literature, and

An important text in establishing the theory and practice in this field of
Orientalism (1978) by the Palestinian-American scholar Edward
 ’s historicist critique of
new historicism) to analyze what he called “cultural
 ” This mode of imperialism imposed its power not by force, but

that assumed the normality and pre-eminence of everything “occi-
 ” correlatively with its representations of the “oriental” as an exotic
orientalism is now sometimes applied to

Since the 1980s, such analysis has been supplemented by other theoretical
 ’s redefinition of the Marxist

theory of *ideology* and the *deconstructive* theory of Derrida. The rapidly expanding field of postcolonial studies, as a result, is not a unified movement with a distinctive methodology. One can, however, identify several central and recurrent issues:

1. The rejection of the “master narrative” of Western imperialism—in which the colonial “other” is not only subordinated and marginalized, but in effect deleted as a cultural agency—and its replacement by a counter-narrative in which the colonial cultures fight their way back into a world history written by Europeans. In the influential book *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (2d ed., 2002), Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin stress what they term the **hybridization** of colonial languages and cultures, in which imperialist importations are superimposed on indigenous traditions; they also draw attention to a number of postcolonial countertexts to the *hegemonic* texts that present a Eurocentric version of colonial history.
2. An abiding concern with the construction, within Western discursive practices, of the colonial and postcolonial “subject,” as well as of the categories by means of which this subject conceives itself and perceives the world within which it lives and acts. (See *social constructs* and *subject*, under *poststructuralism*.) The **subaltern** has become a standard way to designate the colonial subject that has been constructed by European discourse and internalized by colonial peoples who employ this discourse; “subaltern” is a British word for someone of inferior military rank, and combines the Latin terms for “under” (*sub*) and “other” (*alter*). A recurrent topic of debate is how, and to what extent, a subaltern subject, writing in a European language, can manage to serve as an agent of resistance against, rather than of compliance with, the very discourse that has created its subordinate identity.
3. A major element in the postcolonial agenda is to disestablish Eurocentric norms of literary and artistic values, and to expand the literary *canon* to include colonial and postcolonial writers. In the United States and Britain, there is an increasingly successful movement to include, in the standard academic curricula, the brilliant and innovative novels, poems, and plays by such postcolonial writers in the English language as the Africans Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka, the Caribbean islanders V. S. Naipaul and Derek Walcott, and the authors from the Indian subcontinent G. V. Desani and Salman Rushdie. Compare *ethnic writers under periods of American literature*, and see Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (1994). For a survey of the large and growing body of *anglophone* literature by postcolonial writers throughout the world, see Martin Coyle and others, *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism* (1990), pp. 1113–1236; and Gaurav Desai and Supriya Nair, *Postcolonialisms: An Anthology of Cultural Theory and Criticism* (2005).

Postcolonial scholarship also studies forms of imperialism other than European, including the domination of some southern-hemisphere groups or

Cultures of United States Imperial-
(1993). In recent years, scholars in postcolonial studies have turned their

Writing Diaspora: Tactics of In-
(1993) and *The Protestant Ethnic and*
(2002); and Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cul-*
(1996). Ania Loomba provides an overview
Colonialism/Postcolonialism (2d ed., 2008).
Comprehensive anthologies: Henry Schwarz and Sangeeta Ray, eds.,
(2000); David Theo Goldberg and Ato
Relocating Postcolonialism (2002); and Bill Ashcroft and others,
The Post-Colonial Studies Reader (2d ed., 2006). In addition to titles listed
The Wretched of the Earth (trans. 1963), and
(trans. 1967); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other*
(1987), and Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, eds.,
(1988); Christopher L. Miller, *Theories of Africans:*
(1990); Homi K. Bhabha, ed.,
(1990); Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Litera-*
(1992); Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993); Chris Weedon,
(2d ed., 1997); Robert J. C. Young,
(2001); and Neil Lazarus, ed., *The*
(2004). For a useful intro-
Post-Colonial
(2d ed., 2008).
Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, Ella Shohat, eds., *Dangerous Liaisons:*
(1997), stress the convergence of
feminism. Much postcolonial inquiry takes its point

(rev.
Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World (1993).
Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies. For references to
in other entries, see page 72.

: 208.

: Poststructuralism designates a broad variety of critical per-

other signifying systems. A conspicuous announcement to American scholars of the poststructural point of view was Jacques Derrida's paper on "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," delivered in 1966 to an International Colloquium at Johns Hopkins University. (The paper is included in Derrida's *Writing and Difference*, 1978.) Derrida attacked the systematic, quasi-scientific pretensions of the strict form of structuralism—derived from Saussure's concept of the structure of language and represented by the cultural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss—by asserting that the notion of a systemic structure, whether linguistic or other, presupposes a fixed "center" that serves to organize and regulate the structure yet itself "escapes structurality." In Saussure's theory of language, for example, this center is assigned the function of controlling the endless differential play of internal relationships, while remaining itself outside of, and immune from, that play. (See *structuralism*.) As Derrida's other writings made clear, he regarded this incoherent and unrealizable notion of an ever-active yet always absent center as only one of the many ways in which all of Western thinking is "logocentric," or dependent on the notion of a self-certifying foundation, or absolute, or essence, or ground, which is ever-needed but never present. See *deconstruction*.

Other contemporary thinkers, including Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, and (in his later phase) Roland Barthes, although in diverse ways, also undertook to "decenter" or "undermine" or "subvert" traditional claims for the existence of self-evident foundations that guarantee the validity of all knowledge and truth, and establish the possibility of determinate communication. This **antifoundationalism** in philosophy, conjoined with skepticism about traditional conceptions of meaning, knowledge, truth, value, and the subject or "self," is evident in some (although not all) current exponents of diverse modes of literary studies, including *feminist*, *new historicist*, and *reader-response* criticism. In its extreme forms, the poststructural claim is that the workings of language inescapably undermine meanings in the very process of making such meanings possible, or else that every mode of discourse "constructs," or constitutes, the very facts or truths or knowledge that it claims to discover.

"Postmodern" is sometimes used in place of, or interchangeably with, "poststructural." It is more useful, however, to follow the example of those who apply "postmodern" to developments in literature and other arts, and reserve "poststructural" for theories of criticism and of intellectual inquiries in general. (See *modernism and postmodernism*.)

Salient features or themes that are shared by diverse types of poststructural thought and criticism include the following:

1. The primacy of theory. Since Plato and Aristotle, discourse about poetry or literature has involved a "theory," in the traditional sense of a conceptual scheme, or set of principles, distinctions, and categories—sometimes explicit, but often only implied in critical practice—for identifying, classifying, analyzing, and evaluating works of literature. (See *criticism*.) In poststructural criticism what is called "theory" came to be foregrounded, so that many critics felt it incumbent to "theorize" their individual positions and practices. The nature of theory, however, was conceived in a new

and very inclusive way; for the word **theory**, standing without qualification, often designated an account of the general conditions of signification that determine meaning and interpretation in all domains of human action, production, and intellection. In most cases, this account was held to apply not only to verbal language, but also to psychosexual and socio-cultural “signifying systems.” As a consequence, the pursuit of literary criticism was conceived to be integral with all the other pursuits traditionally classified as the “human sciences,” and to be inseparable from consideration of the general nature of human “subjectivity,” and also from reference to all forms of social and cultural phenomena. Often the theory of signification was granted primacy in the additional sense that, when common experience in the use or interpretation of language does not accord with what the theory entails, such experience is rejected as unjustified and illusory, or else is accounted an ideologically imposed concealment of the actual operation of the signifying system.

A prominent aspect of poststructural theories is that they are posed in opposition to inherited ways of thinking in all provinces of knowledge. That is, they expressly “challenge” and undertake to “destabilize,” and in many instances to “undermine” and “subvert,” what they identify as the foundational assumptions, concepts, procedures, and findings in traditional modes of discourse in Western civilization (including literary criticism). In a number of politically oriented critics, this questioning of established ways of thinking and of formulating knowledge is joined to an adversarial stance toward established institutions, class structures, and practices of economic and political power and social organization.

subject. The oppositional stance of many poststructural critics is manifested in a sharp critique of what they call “humanism”; that is, of the traditional view that the human being or human author is a coherent identity, endowed with purpose and initiative, whose design and intentions effectuate the form and meaning of a literary or other product. (See *humanism*.) For such traditional terms as “human being” or “individual” or “self” poststructuralists tend to substitute “subject,” because this word is divested of the connotation that it has originating or controlling power, and instead suggests that the human being is “subjected to” the play of external forces; and also because the word suggests the grammatical term, the “subject” of a sentence, which is an empty slot, to be filled by whoever happens to be speaking at a particular time and place. *Structuralism* had already tended to divest the subject of operative initiative and control, evacuating the purposive human agent into a mere location, or “space,” wherein the differential elements and codes of a systematic *langue* precipitate into a particular *parole*, or signifying product. Derrida, however, by deleting the structural linguistic “center,” had thereby also eliminated the possibility of a controlling agency in language, leaving the use of language an unregulatable and undecidable play of purely relational elements. In the view of many deconstructive critics, the subject or author or narrator of a text becomes itself a purely linguistic

product—as Paul DeMan has put it in *Allegories of Reading* (1979), we “rightfully reduce” the subject “to the status of a mere grammatical pronoun.” Alternatively, the subject-author is granted at most the function of trying (although always vainly) to “master” the incessant freeplay of the decentered signifiers. For a collection of essays on “the subject” in writings on politics, philosophy, psychoanalysis, and history, see Eduardo Cadava, Peter Connor, Jean-Luc Nancy, eds., *Who Comes After the Subject?* (1991).

Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes both signaled the evacuation of the traditional conception of the subject who is an author by announcing the “disappearance of the author,” or even more melodramatically, “the **death of the author**.” (Foucault, “What Is an Author,” 1969, in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, 1977; Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” 1968, in *Image, Music, Text*, 1977.) They did not mean to deny that a human individual is a necessary link in the chain of events that results in a parole or text. What they denied was the validity of the “function,” or “role” hitherto assigned in Western discourse to a uniquely individual and purposive author, who is conceived as the *cogito*, or origin of all knowledge; as the initiator, purposive planner, and (by his or her intentions) the determiner of the form and meanings of a text; and as the “center,” or organizing principle, of the matters treated in traditional literary criticism and literary history. In addition, a number of current forms of *psychoanalytic*, *Marxist*, and *new historicist* criticism manifest a similar tendency to decenter, and in extreme cases to delete, what is often called the “agency” of the author as a self-coherent, purposive, and determinative human being. Instead, the human agent is said to be a disunified subject that is the product of diverse psychosexual conditions, and subjected to the uncontrollable workings of unconscious compulsions. Alternatively, the subject is held to be no more than a “construction” by current forms of ideology; or a “site” traversed by the *cultural constructs* and the discursive formations engendered by the conceptual and power configurations in a given era. (See *author and authorship*.)

3. Reading, texts, and writing. The decentering or deletion of the author leaves the reader, or interpreter, as the focal figure in poststructural accounts of signifying practices. This figure, however, like the author, is stripped of the traditional attributes of purposiveness and initiative and converted into an impersonal process called “reading.” What this reading engages is no longer called a literary “work” (since this traditional term implies a purposive human maker of the product); instead, reading engages a “text”—that is, a structure of signifiers regarded merely as a given for the reading process. Texts in their turn (especially in deconstructive criticism) lose their individuality, and are often represented as manifestations of *écriture*—that is, of an all-inclusive “textuality,” or writing-in-general, in which the traditional “boundaries” between literary, philosophical, historical, legal, and other classes of texts are considered to be both artificial and superficial. See *text and writing (écriture)*.

A distinctive poststructural view is that no text can mean what it seems to say. To a deconstructive critic, for example, a text is a chain of

signifiers whose seeming determinacy of meaning, and seeming reference to an extra-textual world, are no more than “effects” produced by the differential play of conflicting internal forces which, on closer analysis, turn out to deconstruct the text into an undecidable scatter of opposed significations. In the representation of Roland Barthes, the “death” of the author frees the reader to enter the literary text in whatever way he or she chooses, and the intensity of pleasure yielded by the text becomes proportionate to the reader’s abandonment of limits on its signifying possibilities. In Stanley Fish’s version of *reader-response criticism*, all the meanings and formal features seemingly found in a text are projected into the printed marks by each individual reader; any agreement about meaning between two individuals is contingent upon their happening to belong to a single one among many diverse “interpretive communities.”

term “discourse,” especially in application to passages representing conversations between characters in a literary work, and in the 1970s there developed a critical practice called *discourse analysis* which focuses on such conversational exchanges. This type of criticism (as well as the *dialogic criticism* inaugurated by Mikhail Bakhtin) deals with literary discourse as conducted by human characters whose voices engage in a dynamic interchange of beliefs, attitudes, sentiments, and other expressions of states of consciousness.

In poststructural criticism, **discourse** has become a very prominent term, supplementing (and in some cases displacing) “text” as the name for the verbal material which is the primary concern of literary criticism. In poststructural usage, however, the term is not confined to conversational passages but, like “writing,” designates all verbal constructions and implies the superficiality of the boundaries between literary and nonliterary modes of signification. Most conspicuously, discourse has become the focal term among critics who oppose the deconstructive concept of a “general text” that functions independently of particular historical conditions. Instead, they conceive of discourse as social parlance, or language-in-use, and consider it to be both the product and manifestation not of a timeless linguistic system, but of particular social conditions, class structures, and power relationships that alter drastically in the course of history. In Michel Foucault, discourse-as-such is the central subject of analytic concern. Foucault conceives that “discourse” is to be analyzed as totally anonymous, in that it is simply “situated at the level of the ‘it is said’ (*on dit*).” (*The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 1972, pp. 55, 122.) For example, *new historicists* (for whom, in this respect, Foucault serves as a model) may attend to all Renaissance references to usury as part of an anonymous “discourse,” which circulates through legal, religious, philosophical, and economic writings of the era; it circulates also through those literary writings, such as Shakespeare’s sonnets or *The Merchant of Venice*, in which usury is alluded to, whether literally or figuratively. Any allusion to usury is conceived to be better understood if it is referred to the total body of

discourse on that topic, as well as to the social forces and institutions that have produced the conception of usury at that time and in that place.

5. Many socially oriented analysts of discourse share with other poststructuralists the conviction (or at any rate the strong suspicion) that no text means what it seems to say, or what its writer intended to say. But whereas deconstructive critics attribute the subversion of the apparent meaning to the unstable and self-conflicting nature of language itself, social analysts of discourse—and also *psychoanalytic critics*—view the surface, or “manifest” meanings of a text as a disguise, or substitution, for underlying meanings which cannot be overtly said, because they are suppressed by psychic, or ideological, or discursive necessities. By some critics, the covert meanings are regarded as having been suppressed by all three of these forces together. Both the social and psychoanalytic critics of discourse therefore interpret the manifest meanings of a text as a distortion, displacement, or total “occlusion” of its real meanings; and these real meanings, in accordance with a particular critic’s theoretical orientation, turn out to be either the writer’s psychic and psycholinguistic compulsions, or the material realities of history, or the social power structures of domination, subordination, and marginalization that obtained when the text was written. The widespread poststructural view that the surface or overt meanings of a literary or other text serve as a “disguise” or “mask” of its real meanings, or **subtext**, has been called, in a phrase taken from the French philosopher of language Paul Ricoeur, a **hermeneutics of suspicion**.
6. Many poststructural theorists propose or assume an extreme form of both cognitive and evaluative **relativism**. The claim is that, in the absence of an absolute and atemporal standard or foundation or center, all asserted truths and values and cultural norms are relative to the predominant culture at a given time and place; or else to the *ideology* of a particular economic, social, ethnic, or interpretive class; or else to the subjective conditions of a particular individual or type of individuals. A general relativism is affirmed even by some theorists who are also political activists, and advocate (by explicit or implicit appeal to social justice as a fundamental and universal value) emancipation and equality for sexual, racial, ethnic, or other oppressed, marginalized, or excluded minorities.

The primacy of “theory” in poststructural criticism has evoked counter-theoretical challenges, most prominently in an essay “Against Theory” by Steven Knapp and Walter Benn Michaels (1982). Defining theory (in consonance with the widespread poststructural use of the term) as “the attempt to govern interpretations of particular texts by appealing to an account of interpretation in general,” the two authors claim that this is an impossible endeavor “to stand outside practice in order to govern practice from without,” assert that accounts of interpretation in general entail no consequences for the actual practice of interpretation, and conclude that all theory “should therefore come to an end.” Such a conclusion is supported by a number of writers, including Stanley Fish and the influential philosophical pragmatist

Against Theory: Literary Studies and the New Pragmatism, 1985,

“theory,” which he regards as an attempt to impose a
 “language-games” that constitute discourse;
The Postmodern Condition (1984). One response to this skepticism about
new
) is that, while no general theory of meaning entails conse-
 “en-
 ”), it is a matter of common observation that diverse current theories

“What’s the Use of Theorizing about the Arts?” (1972,
Doing Things with Texts, 1989).
 Jonathan Culler’s *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (1997) analyzes
 undaries of diverse poststructural the-
Superstructuralism: The Philosophy of Structuralism
 (1987); Anthony Easthope, *British Poststructuralism since 1968*
Modern Criticism and Theory (1988); K. M. Newton, ed.,
 (1988); Robert Con Davis and Ronald Schleifer,
Contemporary Literary Criticism (rev. 1989). The most inclusive collection,
The Norton Anthology of
 (2001). For discussions and critiques of poststructuralist the-
Poststructuralism;
 (1991); John McGowan, *Postmodernism and*
 (1991); Jonathan Arac and Barbara Johnson, eds., *Consequences of Theory*
The Emperor Redressed: Critiquing Critical Theory
Reason and the Nature of Texts (1996); Wendell V.
Beyond Structuralism (1996); Daphne Patai and Will H. Corral, eds.,
’s Empire: An Anthology of Dissent (2005).
 For references to *poststructuralism* in other entries, see pages 74, 87.

: 68.

; 344.

Pre-Raphaelites: In 1848 a group of English artists, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt, and John Millais, organized the “Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.” Their aim was to replace the reigning academic style of painting by a return to the truthfulness, simplicity, and spirit of devotion which they attributed to Italian painting before the time of Raphael (1483–1520) and the other painters of the high Italian *Renaissance*. The ideals of this group of painters were taken over by a literary movement which included Dante Gabriel Rossetti himself (who was a poet as well as a painter), his sister Christina Rossetti, William Morris, and Algernon Swinburne. Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s poem “The Blessed Damozel” typifies the medievalism, the pictorial realism with symbolic overtones, and the union of flesh and spirit, sensuousness and religiousness, associated with the earlier writings of this school. Other examples are Christina Rossetti’s remarkable poem “Goblin Market” (1862) and William Morris’ narrative in verse *The Earthly Paradise* (1868–70). See Graham Hough, *The Last Romantics* (1949); T. J. Barringer, *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites* (1999); Jan Marsh and Pamela Gerrish Nun, *Pre-Raphaelite Women Artists* (1999); Christopher Wood, *The Pre-Raphaelites* (2d ed., 2001); Elizabeth Helsinger, *Poetry and the Pre-Raphaelite Arts: William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti* (2007).

presence (in deconstruction): 77.

primitivism and progress: A **primitivist** is someone who prefers what is “natural” (in the sense of that which exists prior to or independently of human culture, reasoning, and contrivance) to what is “artificial” (in the sense of what human beings achieve by thought, activities, laws and conventions, and the complex arrangements of a civilized society). A useful, although not mutually exclusive, distinction has been made between two manifestations of primitivism:

1. **Cultural primitivism** is the preference for what is conceived to be “nature” and “the natural” over “art” and “the artificial” in any area of human culture and values. As the intellectual historian A. O. Lovejoy has neatly summarized it, the “natural” is “a thing you reach by going back and leaving out.” For example, in ethics a cultural primitivist lauds the natural (that is, the innate) instincts and passions over the dictates of reason and prudential forethought. In social philosophy, the ideal is the simple and natural forms of social and political order in place of the anxieties and frustrations engendered by a complex and highly developed social organization. In milieu, a primitivist prefers outdoor “nature,” unmodified by human intervention, to cities or artful gardens. And in literature and the other arts, the primitivist lauds spontaneity, the free expression of emotion, and the intuitive productions of “natural genius,” as against a calculated adaptation of artistic means to foreseen ends and a conformity to “artificial” forms, rules, and conventions. Typically, the cultural primitivist asserts that in the modern world, the life, activities, and products of “primitive” people—who are considered to live in a way more accordant

to “nature” because they are isolated from civilization—are at least in some ways preferable to the life, activities, and products of people living in a highly developed society, especially in cities. The eighteenth-century cult of the **Noble Savage**—who was conceived to be “naturally” intelligent, moral, and possessed of high dignity in thought and deed—and the concurrent vogue of “natural” poetry written by supposedly uneducated peasants or working folk, were both aspects of primitivism. Cultural primitivism has played an especially prominent and persistent role in American thought and literature, where the “new world” was early conceived in terms of both the classical *golden age* of the distant past and the Christian millennium of the future. The American Indian was sometimes identified with the legendary Noble Savage, and the American pioneer was often represented as a new Adam who had cut free from the artifice and corruptions of European civilization in order to reassume a “natural” life of freedom, innocence, and simplicity. See Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land* (1950), and R. W. B. Lewis, *The American Adam* (1955).

Chronological primitivism designates the belief that the ideal era of humanity’s way of life lay in the very distant past, when men and women lived naturally, simply, and freely, and that the process of history has been a gradual “decline” from that happy stage into an increasing degree of artifice, complexity, inhibitions, prohibitions, and consequent anxieties and discontents in the psychological, social, and cultural realms. In its extreme form, the ideal era is postulated as having existed in “the state of nature,” before social organization and civilization had even begun; more commonly, it is placed at some later stage of development, and sometimes as late as the era of classical Greece. Many, but not all, cultural primitivists are also chronological primitivists.

A historical concept that is antithetic to chronological primitivism emerged in the seventeenth century and reached its height in the nineteenth century. This is the idea of **progress**: the doctrine that—by virtue of the development and exploitation of art, science, and technology, and by the application of human rationality—the course of history represents an overall improvement in the life, morality, and happiness of human beings from early barbarity to the present stage of civilization. Sometimes it is also claimed that this historical progress of humanity will continue indefinitely, possibly to end in a final stage of social, rational, and moral perfection. (See *Enlightenment* and *utopia*.)

Primitivism is as old as humanity’s recorded intellection and imaginings,

Neoclassic Period, in a European movement in which Jean-
-78) was a central figure. D. H. Lawrence (1885–

’s personal and social wholeness, his high regard for “primitive”

modes of life that still survive outside the bounds of sophisticated societies, and his attacks on the disintegrative effects of modern science and technology and on the economy and culture that science and technology have generated. There are also strains of cultural primitivism in, for example, James Fenimore Cooper's *Leather-Stocking Tales*, in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, and in the outlook and lifestyle of dropouts and various kinds of subcultures in our own time, as well as in the establishment of communes whose ideal is a radically simplified individual and social life close to the soil. (Refer to *ecocriticism*.) But most men and women, and many writers of literature, are primitivists in some moods, longing to escape from the complexities, fever, anxieties, and "alienation" of modern civilization into what are taken to be the elemental simplicities of a lost natural life. That imagined life may be identified with the individual's own childhood, or with the prehistoric or classical or medieval past, or may be conceived as existing still in some primitive, carefree, faraway place on earth.

See H. N. Fairchild, *The Noble Savage* (1928); J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (1932); Lois Whitney, *Primitivism and the Idea of Progress* (1934); A. O. Lovejoy and George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (1948); A. O. Lovejoy, *Essays in the History of Ideas* (1948); Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge* (1983). Marianna Torgovnick's *Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives* (1990) argues that modern Western culture has been formed in dialectical opposition to presumably nonmodern or premodern cultures. Friedrich Nietzsche's *The Genealogy of Morals* (1887) and Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1949; see *psychoanalysis*) involve aspects of cultural primitivism, in their stress on the compelling needs of the body and of the natural human instincts, especially sexuality, which require a complex and perhaps impossible reconciliation with the repressions and inhibitions that are inescapable in a civilized society. A work of radical cultural primitivism that was influential on the rebellious youth movements of the 1960s and 1970s is Norman O. Brown's *Life against Death* (1959); refer to *Beat writers*, and to the *contemporary period*, under *periods of American literature*.

printing: 339.

problem play: A type of drama that was popularized by the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen. In problem plays, the situation faced by the protagonist is put forward by the author as a representative instance of a contemporary social problem; often the dramatist manages—by the use of a character who speaks for the author, or by the evolution of the plot, or both—to propose a solution to the problem which is at odds with prevailing opinion. The issue may be the inadequate autonomy, scope, and dignity allotted to women in the middle-class nineteenth-century family (Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, 1879); or the morality of prostitution, regarded as a typical product of the economic system in a capitalist society (George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, 1898); or the crisis in racial and ethnic relations in present-day America (in numerous current dramas and films). Compare *social novel*.

A subtype of the modern problem play is the **discussion play**, in which

’s *Getting*
 , and Act III of his *Man and Superman*; also his book on Ibsen’s plays,
 (1891).

In a specialized application, the term **problem plays** is sometimes
 ’s plays, also called “bitter comedies”—
Troilus and Cressida, *Measure for Measure*, and *All’s Well That Ends*
 —which explore ignoble aspects of human nature, and in which the res-

” in *Shakespeare: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. Leonard

: 316.

(stage): 364.

(prōsēn’ ēūm): 3; 64.

Prose is an inclusive term for all discourse, spoken or written, which is
meter.

“that other
 ” is no less an art than distinguished verse; in all literatures,

“literary”—whether its function is descriptive,
 —it exhibits more patent, though highly

“the prose poem.” **Prose**
 are compact, rhythmic, and usually sonorous compositions which

’s *Little Poems in Prose* (1869) and

Arthur Rimbaud's *Illuminations* (1886), and in English, excerptible passages in Walter Pater's prose essays, such as his famous meditation on Leonardo da Vinci's painting the *Mona Lisa*, in *The Renaissance* (1873). John Ashbery's *Three Poems* (1972) are prose poems, in that they are printed continuously, without broken lines. Farther still along the formal spectrum, we leave the domain of prose, by the use of line breaks and the controlled rhythms, pauses, syntactical suspensions, and cadences that identify *free verse*. At the far end of the spectrum we get the regular, recurrent units of weaker and stronger stressed syllables that constitute the meters of English verse.

See *style* (including the list of readings), and for a special form of elaborately formal prose, *euphuism*. Refer to George Saintsbury, *A History of English Prose Rhythm* (1912); George L. Trager and Henry Lee Smith, Jr., *An Outline of English Structure* (1951); Robert Adolphe, *The Rise of Modern Prose Style* (1968). E. D. Hirsch discusses the development of English prose in *The Philosophy of Composition* (1977), pp. 51–72. See also Richard A. Lanham, *Analyzing Prose* (2d ed., 2003). On the prose poem, refer to Jonathan Monroe, *A Poverty of Objects: The Prose Poem and the Politics of Genre* (1987); and David Lehman, ed., *Great American Prose Poems: From Poe to the Present* (2003). For forms of literature written in prose, see the references under *genre*.

prose poem: 318.

prose romance: 254; 54.

prosody: Prosody signifies the systematic study of **versification** in poetry; that is, the principles and practice of *meter*, *rhyme*, and *stanza* forms. Sometimes the term “prosody” is extended to include also the study of speech-sound patterns and effects such as *alliteration*, *assonance*, *euphony*, and *onomatopoeia*.

prosopopoeia (prōsō' pōpē' a): 132.

prospect poem: 406.

protagonist: 294; 254, 301.

proverbs: 10.

pseudostatements: 128.

psychoanalytic criticism: 320; 311, 313.

psychobiography: 322.

psychological and psychoanalytic criticism: **Psychological** criticism deals with a work of literature primarily as an expression, in an indirect and fictional form, of the state of mind and the structure of personality of the individual

expressive view of the nature of literature; see *criticism*. By 1827 Thomas
 “with the best of our own critics at
 ” is one “mainly of a psychological sort, to be answered by discovering
 ” During the
 , we find widely practiced all three types of the critical proce-

’s distinctive mental
 ’s personality in order to explain

critics of consciousness). We even find that John
On the Healing Power of Poetry—published in
 —proposed a thoroughgoing
 “Poetry,” Keble claimed, “is the indirect
 ... of some overpowering emotion, or ruling taste, or feeling, the
 ” This repression is imposed
 ’s sentiments of “reticence” and “shame”; the conflict between

’s ability to give “healing relief to secret mental emotion,
 ” by a literary “art which under certain
 ... reveals the fervent emotions of the mind.” This disguised
 “a safety valve, preserving
 ” (The emergence and the varieties of romantic psycholog-
The Mirror and the Lamp, 1953,

formalism, New Criticism, structuralism, and deconstruction.
 Since the 1920s, a widespread type of psychological literary criticism
psychoanalytic criticism, whose premises and procedures
 –1939). Freud had developed the
 “psychoanalysis” as a procedure

’s brief comment on the workings of the artist’s imagination at the end
Introduction to Psychoanalysis (1920), supple-

“classical” psychoanalytic
literature and the other arts, like dreams and neu-

“libidinal”) wishes come into con-
 “censor” (the internalized representative within each individual of

a society's standards of morality and propriety) and are repressed by the censor into the unconscious realm of the artist's mind, but are permitted to achieve a fantasied satisfaction in distorted forms that serve to disguise their real motives and objects from the conscious mind. The chief mechanisms that effect these disguises of unconscious wishes are (1) "condensation" (the omission of parts of the unconscious material and the fusion of several unconscious elements into a single entity); (2) "displacement" (the substitution for an unconscious object of desire by one that is acceptable to the conscious mind); and (3) "symbolism" (the representation of repressed, mainly sexual, objects of desire by nonsexual objects which resemble them or are associated with them in prior experience). The disguised fantasies that are available to consciousness are called by Freud the **manifest content** of a dream or work of literature; the unconscious wishes that find a semblance of satisfaction in this disguised expression he calls the **latent content**.

Also present in the unconscious of every individual, according to Freud, are residual traces of prior stages of psychosexual development, from earliest infancy onward, which have been outgrown, but remain as "fixations" in the unconscious of the adult. When triggered by some later event in adult life, a repressed wish is revived and motivates a fantasy, in disguised form, of a satisfaction that is modeled on the way that the wish had been gratified in infancy or early childhood. The chief enterprise of the psychoanalytic critic, in a way that parallels the enterprise of the psychoanalyst as a therapist, is to decipher the true content, and thereby to explain the emotional effects on the reader, of a literary work by translating its manifest elements into the latent, unconscious determinants and fixations that constitute their real but suppressed meanings.

Freud also asserts, however, that artists possess special abilities that differentiate them radically from the patently neurotic type of personality. The artistic person, for example, possesses to an especially high degree the power to **sublimate** (that is, to shift the instinctual drives from their original sexual goals to nonsexual "higher" goals, including the goal of becoming proficient as an artist); the ability to elaborate fantasied wish fulfillments into the manifest features of a work of art in a way that conceals or deletes their merely personal elements, and so makes them capable of satisfying the unconscious desires that other people share with the individual artist; and the "puzzling" ability—which Freud elsewhere says is a power of "genius" that psychoanalysis cannot explain—to mold an artistic medium into "a faithful image of the creatures of his imagination," as well as into a satisfying artistic form. The result is a fantasied wish fulfillment of a complex and artfully shaped sort that not only allows the artist to overcome, at least partially and temporarily, personal conflicts and repressions, but also makes it possible for the artist's audience "to obtain solace and consolation from their own unconscious sources of gratification which had become inaccessible" to them. Literature and art, therefore, unlike dreams and neuroses, may serve the artist as a mode of fantasy that opens "the way back to reality."

This outline of Freud's theory of art in 1920 was elaborated and refined, but not radically altered, by later developments in his theory of mental structures, dynamics, and processes. Prominent among these developments was

's model of the mind as having three functional aspects: the **id** (which
superego (the internaliza-
ego (which tries as

New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis
An Outline of Psychoanalysis (1939).

Freud asserted that many of his views had been anticipated by insightful

's *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*,
King Lear. He also wrote a brilliant analysis of Fyodor Dostoevsky's *The*
and a full-length psychoanalytic study, *Delusion and Dream*
Gradiva by the Danish writer Wilhelm Jensen. Especially

Hamlet and
(1949) by the psychoanalyst Ernest Jones. Building on earlier suggestions
's inability to make up his mind to kill
Oedipus complex—that is, the repressed but con-
's unconscious of the male infant's desire to possess

' Greek tragedy *Oedipus the King*, whose protagonist has
's conflict is "an echo of a similar one in Shakespeare himself," and
's powerful and continued response to the

In more recent decades there has been increasing emphasis by Freudian
's later writings, on the role of "ego psy-
" in elaborating the manifest content and artistic form of a work of

"Literature and Psychology," in *Relations of Literary Study*, ed. James
"Psychology and Literature: Some Contem-
" in *New Literary History*, Vol. 12 (1980). Norman Holland

's individual
"transactive" engagement between his or her

reader-response criticism.

The term **psychobiography** designates an account of the life of an
biography) that focuses on the subject's psychological development,

relying for evidence both on external sources and on the author's own writings. It stresses the role of unconscious and disguised motives in forming the author's personality, and is usually written in accordance with a version, or a revision, of the Freudian theory of the stages of psychosexual development. A major exemplar of the mode was Erik H. Erikson's *Young Man Luther* (1958), in which Erikson stressed the importance of Luther's adolescent "identity crisis." Other notable instances of literary psychobiography are Leon Edel, *Henry James* (5 vols., 1953–72); Justin Kaplan, *Mark Twain and His World* (1974); and Bernard C. Meyer, *Joseph Conrad: A Psychoanalytic Biography* (1967). Prominent and diverse examples of Freudian literary criticism can be found in the collections listed below. It should be noted, in addition, that many modern literary critics, like many modern authors, owe some debt to Freud; such major critics, for example, as Kenneth Burke, Edmund Wilson, and Lionel Trilling assimilated central Freudian concepts into their overall critical views and procedures.

Carl G. Jung is sometimes called a psychoanalyst, but although he began as a disciple of Freud, his mature version of depth psychology is very different from that of his predecessor, and what we call **Jungian criticism** of literature departs radically from psychoanalytic criticism. Jung's emphasis is not on the individual unconscious, but on what he calls the **collective unconscious**, shared by all individuals in all cultures, which he regards as the repository of "racial memories" and of primordial images and patterns of experience that he calls *archetypes*. He does not, like Freud, view literature as a disguised form of libidinal wish fulfillment that to a large extent parallels the fantasies of a neurotic personality. Instead, Jung regards great literature as, like the *myths* whose patterns recur in diverse cultures, an expression of the archetypes of the collective racial unconscious. A great author possesses, and provides for readers, access to the archetypal images buried in the racial memory, and so succeeds in revitalizing aspects of the psyche which are essential both to individual self-integration and to the mental and emotional well-being of the human race. Jung's theory of literature has been a cardinal formative influence on *archetypal criticism* and *myth criticism*. See Jung, *Contributions to Analytic Psychology* (1928) and *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (1933); also Edward Glover, *Freud or Jung* (1950).

Since the development of *structural* and *poststructural* theories in the latter half of the twentieth century, there has been a strong revival of Freudian theories, although in diverse reformulations of the classical Freudian scheme. Close attention to Freud's writings, and frequently the assimilation of some version of Freud's ideas to their own views and procedures, are features of the criticism of many current writers, whether they are Marxist, Foucauldian, or Derridean in theoretical commitment or primary focus. Harold Bloom's theory of the *anxiety of influence* specifically adapts to the composition and reading of poetry Freud's concepts of the Oedipus complex and of the distorting operation of defense mechanisms in dreams. A number of *feminist critics* have attacked the male-centered nature of Freud's theory—especially evident in such crucial conceptions as the Oedipus complex and the notion of "penis envy" on the part of the female child; but many feminists have also adapted a

Psychoanalysis and

(1975); Mary Jacobus, *Reading Woman* (1986); Nancy Chodorow, (1990); Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Freud on* (1992); Rosalind Minsky, ed., *Psychoanalysis and Gender: An* (1996).
 Jacques Lacan, "the French Freud," developed a *semiotic* version of Freud,

linguistics in literary criticism.) Typical
 's oft-quoted dictum, "The unconscious is structured like a language."
 's key concepts and mechanisms into the

's revision, for example, both *gender* and

Lacanian literary criticism is Lacan's reformulation of Freud's

imaginary and the stage after the acquisition of **symbolic**. In the imaginary stage, there is no clear

, the moment when the infant learns to identify with his or her

"position" in such linguistic oppo-

's theory, is the realm of the law of the father, in which the
 " (used in a symbolic sense to stand for male privilege and authority) is
 " that serves to establish the mode for all other signifiers.
 's views of the mental workings of
signifiers, converting Freud's

" for a lost and unachievable object, move incessantly (as in Derrida's
deconstruction) along a chain of unstable signifiers, without any possibil-

Ecrits:

, 1977; *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, 1998; and *The*
 -60, 1997. See also

's much discussed reading of Edgar Allan Poe's short story *The Purloined*
 as an allegory of the workings of the linguistic signifier, in *Yale French*
 , Vol. 48, 1972; and Malcolm Bowie, *Lacan*, 1991.) Lacan's notions of

the inalienable split, or “difference,” that inhabits the self, and of the endless chain of displacements in the quest for meaning, have made him a prominent reference in *poststructural theorists*. And his distinction between the pre-Oedipal, maternal stage of the prelinguistic imaginary and the “phallogocentric” stage of symbolic language has been exploited at length by a number of French feminists; see Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray, and Julia Kristeva under *feminist criticism*.

See Jerome Neu, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Freud* (1991). Many of Freud’s psychoanalytic writings on literature and the arts have been collected by Benjamin Nelson, ed., *Sigmund Freud on Creativity and the Unconscious* (1958). Anthologies of psychoanalytic criticism by various authors are William Phillips, ed., *Art and Psychoanalysis* (1957), and Leonard and Eleanor Manheim, eds., *Hidden Patterns: Studies in Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism* (1966). Useful discussions and developments of Freudian literary theory are Frederick J. Hoffman, *Freudianism and the Literary Mind* (rev. 1957), which also describes Freud’s wide influence on writers and critics; Norman N. Holland, *Holland’s Guide to Psychoanalytic Psychology and Literature-and-Psychology* (1990); and Peter Brooks, *Psychoanalysis and Storytelling* (1994). Elizabeth Wright, *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice* (1984), reviews various developments in psychoanalytic theories and their applications to literary criticism. For two major traditional critics who have to an important extent adapted Freudian concepts to their general enterprise, see Edmund Wilson, *The Wound and the Bow* (1941), and Lionel Trilling, “Freud and Literature,” in *The Liberal Imagination* (1950). Frederick C. Crews, who in 1966 wrote an exemplary Freudian critical study, *The Sins of the Fathers: Hawthorne’s Psychological Themes*, later retracted his Freudian commitment; see his *Skeptical Engagements* (1986). For *feminist* views and adaptations of Jacques Lacan, see Jane Gallop, *Reading Lacan* (1985); Shoshana Felman, *Jacques Lacan and the Adventure of Insight* (1987); and Elizabeth Grosz, *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction* (1990). The psychoanalytically trained philosopher Slavoj Žižek has argued for the primacy of Lacan as an ethical and political thinker. See *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (1989) and *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture* (1991).

Ptolemaic universe (tōl’ ěmā’ ik): 340.

pun: Pun (which traditional rhetoricians call **paranomasia**) denotes a play on words that are either identical in sound (**homonyms**) or very similar in sound, but are sharply diverse in significance; an example is the last word in the title of Oscar Wilde’s comedy, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895). Puns have often had serious literary uses. The authority of the Pope in Roman Catholicism goes back to the Greek pun uttered by Jesus in Matthew 16:18, “Thou art Peter [Petros] and upon this rock [petra] I will build my church.” Shakespeare and other writers used puns seriously as well as for comic purposes. In *Romeo and Juliet* (III. i. 101) Mercutio, bleeding to death, says grimly, “Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man”; and John Donne’s solemn “Hymn to God the Father” (1633) puns throughout on his own name and the past participle “done.” Milton was an inveterate inventor

Paradise Lost. In the eighteenth century and thereafter, how-

's *Finnegans Wake* (1939), which exploits puns

portmanteau word.

A special type of pun, known as the **equivoque**, is the use of a single

"come to dust" in a

's *Cymbeline*: "Golden lads and girls all must, / As

" An epitaph suggested for a bank teller con-

He checked his cash, cashed in his checks,

And left his window. Who is next?

epigram by Hilaire Belloc (1870–1953) ends in an equivoque:

When I am done, I hope it can be said:

His sins were scarlet, but his books were read.

On Puns: The Foundation of Letters (1988).

A translation of Horace's Latin phrase "purpureus . . . pannus" in his *Ars Poetica* (first century BC). It signifies a marked heightening of style in

—especially a descriptive passage—stand out from its context. The term is

's *Richard II* (II. i. 40ff.), beginning:

This royal throne of kings, this scept' red isle,

This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,

This other Eden, demi-paradise....

's depiction of the Duchess of Richmond's

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto III, xxi–xxviii

's prose description of the *Mona Lisa* in his essay

The Renaissance (1873). Usually, however, "purple

" connotes disparagement, implying that one has self-consciously girded

' satiric novel, *Cold*

, the fictional narrator is proud of her purple descriptive passages,

's guidebooks by marking them with

"Dawn crept over the Downs like a sinister white

”





quantitative meter: 217; 222.

quarto: 34.

quatrain: 376, 23.

queer reading: 328.

queer theory: Queer theory is often used to designate the combined area of gay and lesbian studies, together with the theoretical and critical writings about all modes of variance—such as cross-dressing, bisexuality, and transsexuality—from society’s normative model of sexual identity, orientation, and activities. The term “queer” was originally derogatory, used to stigmatize male and female same-sex love as deviant and unnatural; since the early 1990s, however, it has been adopted by gays and lesbians themselves as a noninvidious term to identify a way of life and an area for scholarly inquiry. See Teresa de Lauretis, *Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities*, 1991; and Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction*, 1996.

Both **lesbian studies** and **gay studies** began as “liberation movements”—in parallel with the movements for *African-American* and *feminist* liberation—during the anti-Vietnam War, anti-establishment, and countercultural ferment of the late 1960s and 1970s. Since that time these studies have maintained a close relation to the activists who strive to achieve, for gays and lesbians, political, legal, and economic rights equal to those of the heterosexual majority. Through the 1970s, the two movements were primarily separatist: gays often thought of themselves as quintessentially male, while many lesbians, aligning themselves with the feminist movement, characterized the gay movement as sharing the anti-female attitudes of the reigning patriarchal culture. There has, however, been a growing recognition (signalized by the adoption of the joint term “queer”) of the degree to which the two groups share a history as a suppressed minority and possess common political and social aims.

In the 1970s, researchers for the most part assumed that there was a fixed, unitary identity as a gay man or as a lesbian that has remained stable through human history. A major endeavor was to identify and reclaim the works of nonheterosexual writers from Plato to Walt Whitman, Oscar Wilde, Marcel Proust, Andre Gide, W. H. Auden, and James Baldwin, and from the Greek poet Sappho of Lesbos to Virginia Woolf, Adrienne Rich, and Audre Lorde. The list included writers (William Shakespeare and Christina Rossetti are examples) who represented in their literary works homoerotic subject matter, but whose own sexuality the available biographical evidence leaves uncertain. (See Claude J. Summers, *The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage: A Reader’s Companion to the Writers and Their Works, from Antiquity to the Present*, 1995.) In the 1980s and 1990s, however—in large part because of the assimilation of the viewpoints and analytic methods of Derrida, Foucault, and other *poststructuralists*—the earlier assumptions about a unitary and stable gay or lesbian

A number of queer theorists, for example, adopted the deconstructive *binary oppositions* of Western culture, such as

deconstruction.) In
“Compulsive Heterosexuality and Lesbian
” Adrienne Rich posited what she called the “lesbian continuum”

’s partnerships and social groups, as

Queer reading

Another prominent theoretical procedure has been to undo the “essentialism” assumption that heterosexual and homosexual are universal and trans-

—that is, by proposing that they are *cultural constructs* that emerged *essentialism* under *humanism*.) A central text is the first volume of Michel Foucault’s *History of Sexuality* (1976), which claims that, while there had long been “homosex-

” as a special type of human *subject* or identity, was a construction by the

Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990), de-
performative, in the sense

“One Is Not Born a Woman” (1981) by Monique Wittig, in *The* (1992).

The constructionist view has been elaborated by considering the cross-

"Toward a Black Feminist Criticism," 1977, reprinted in *Within the Circle: An Anthology of African-American Literary Criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Angelyn Mitchell, 1994; and Ann Allen Stickley, "The Black Lesbian in American Literature: An Overview," in *Conditions: Five Two*, 1979.) Sustained debate among queer theorists concerns the risk of a radical constructionism, which would dissolve a lesbian or gay identity into a linguistic and discursive product specific to a particular culture, as against the need to affirm a special and enduring type of human identity, in order to signalize and celebrate it, as well as to establish a basis for concerted political action.

A number of journals are now devoted to queer theory and to lesbian, gay, and transgender studies and criticism; the field has also become the subject of regularly scheduled learned conferences, and has been established in the curriculum of the humanities and social sciences in a great many colleges and universities. Anthologies: Karla Jay and Joanne Glasgow, eds., *Lesbian Texts and Contexts: Radical Revisions* (1990); Diana Fuss, ed., *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (1991); and Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale, and David M. Halperin, eds., *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader* (1993), which includes selections by almost all the theorists and critics mentioned in this entry. *Out Takes: Essays on Queer Theory and Film*, ed. Ellis Hanson (1999), is a collection of essays in queer criticism devoted to a variety of motion pictures. There is a large and rapidly growing body of books on these subjects. In addition to the texts listed above, see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1985) and *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990); Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature, and Difference* (1989); Richard Dyer, *Now You See It: Studies on Lesbian and Gay Film* (1990); Gregory W. Bredbeck, *Sodomy and Interpretation, Marlowe to Milton* (1991); Susan J. Wolfe and Julia Penelope, eds., *New Lesbian Criticism: Literary and Cultural Readings* (1992); Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (1993); Michael Warner, ed., *Fear of a Queer Planet* (1993); Lee Edelman, *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (1994); Gregory Woods, *A History of Gay Literature: The Male Tradition* (1998). See also the readings listed under *feminist criticism* and *gender studies*. For references to *queer theory* in other entries, see page 97.

quest (romance): 48; 255.





271; 72.

: Reader-response criticism does not designate any *theory*, but rather a focus on the process of reading a literary text

's

"production"
"creation" of the individual reader, hence that there is no one correct

's responses; (2) in the place at which they
"objectively" given in a text and the "subject-"
" responses of an individual reader; and as a result of this difference, (3) in

" a reader's responses, so as to justify the rejection of at least some

The following is a brief survey of the more prominent forms of reader-

The German critic Wolfgang Iser developed the phenomenological anal-

's views, see *phenomenology and criticism*.)
's view the literary text, as a product of the writer's intentional acts, in
's responses, but always contains (to a degree that has
"gaps" or "inde-"
" These the reader must fill in by a creative participation

implied reader, who is estab-

"response-inviting structures" of the text, and the "actual"
" whose responses are inevitably colored by his or her accumulated

private experiences. In both cases, however, the process of the reader's consciousness serves to constitute both the partial patterns (which we ordinarily attribute to objective features of the work itself) and the coherence, or unity, of the work as a whole. As a consequence, literary texts always permit a varied range of possible meanings. The fact, however, that the author's intentional acts establish limits, as well as incentives, to the reader's creative additions to a text allows us to reject some readings as misreadings. (For an application of phenomenological analysis to the history, from era to era, of ever-altering reader responses to a given text, see *reception theory*.)

French *structuralist criticism*, as Jonathan Culler said in *Structuralist Poetics* (1975), "is essentially a theory of reading" which aims to "specify how we go about making sense of texts" (pp. viii, 128). As practiced by critics such as Culler in the course of his book, this mode of criticism stresses literary conventions, codes, and rules which, having been assimilated by competent readers, serve to structure their reading experience and so make possible, at the same time as they impose constraints on, the partially creative activity of interpretation. The structuralist Roland Barthes, however, in his later theory encouraged a mode of reading that opens the text to an endless play of alternative meanings. And the poststructuralist movement of *deconstruction* is a theory of reading that specifically subverts the structuralist view that interpretation is in some part controlled by linguistic and literary codes, and instead proposes a "creative" reading of any text as a play of "differences" that generate innumerable, mutually contradictory, and "undecidable" meanings.

American proponents of reader-response types of interpretive theory often begin by rejecting the claim of the American *New Criticism* that a literary work is a self-sufficient object invested with publicly available meanings, whose internal features and structure should be analyzed without "external" reference to the responses of its readers (see *affective fallacy*). In radical opposition to this view, these newer critics turn their attention exclusively from the verbal text to the reader's responses; they differ greatly, however, in the factors to which they attribute the formation of these responses.

David Bleich, in *Subjective Criticism* (1978), undertakes to show, on the basis of classroom experiments, that any purportedly "objective" reading of a text, if it is more than an empty derivation from theoretical formulas, turns out to be based on a response that is not determined by the text, but is instead a "subjective process" determined by the distinctive personality of the individual reader. In an alternative analysis of reading, Norman Holland accounts for the responses of a reader to a text by recourse to Freudian concepts (see *psychoanalytic criticism*). The subject matter of a work of literature is a projection of the fantasies—engendered by the interplay of unconscious needs and defenses—that constitute the particular "identity" of its author. The individual reader's "subjective" response to a text is a "transactive" encounter between the fantasies projected by its author and the particular defenses, expectations, and wish-fulfilling fantasies that make up the reader's own identity. In this transactive process the reader transforms the fantasy content, "which he has created from the materials of the story his defenses admitted," into a unity,

“meaningful totality,” that constitutes the reader’s particular interpretation

“identity themes” are
 ’s re-creation of a text to his or

In his theory of reading, Harold Bloom also employs psychoanalytic con-
 ’s concept of the mind’s mechanisms of

“defense mechan-
 ” against the “influence,” or threat to the reader’s imaginative autonomy,

“reading is ... misreading”; the only difference is that between a “strong”
 “weak” misreading. (See *anxiety of influence*.)

Stanley Fish is the proponent of what he calls **affective stylistics**. In his

“literary competence.” In following the

“the meaning of an utterance” is the reader’s
 —all of it,” and the reader’s mistakes are “part of the experience
 ’s language,” these mistakes are an integral part of the
 “Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics,” pub-
Self-Consuming Artifacts:
 , 1974, and in *Is There a Text*
 1980.) Fish’s analyses of large-scale literary works were designed

’s *Paradise Lost*, and by various essayists and poets of the seventeenth

Fish’s early claim was that he was describing a universal process in all

interpretive communities, each of which is com-
 “strategy,” or “set of
 ” Fish, in consequence, now presented his own

“creates”
 “inten-
 ” that we may infer from the text. The result is
 “right reading” of any text; the validity of any

other members of a particular interpretive community. Fish's claim is that all values, as well as meanings, of a text are *relative* to the concept or scheme of a particular interpretive community; furthermore, that such conceptual schemes are "incommensurable," in that there is no available standpoint, outside of all interpretive communities, for translating the discourse of one community into that of another, or for mediating between them. (See Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*, 1980; and for a concise exposition of philosophical critiques of Fish's claims for interpretive and evaluative relativism and incommensurability, see James Battersby, *Reason and the Nature of Texts*, 1996.) In a later book, *Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies* (1989), Fish analyzes, and defends, the role of the professional "interpretive community" of academic critics in literary studies; he also extends his views of literary interpretation into the domain of legal interpretation.

Since the early 1980s, as part of a widespread tendency to stress changing cultural and political factors in the study of literature, reader-response critics have increasingly undertaken to "situate" a particular reading of a text in its historical setting, in the attempt to show the extent to which the responses that constitute both the interpretation and evaluation of literature have been determined by a reader's *ideology* and by built-in biases about race, class, or gender. See Peter J. Rabinowitz, *Before Reading: Narrative Conventions and the Politics of Interpretation*, 1987; and for *feminist* emphasis on the male biases that affect the responses of readers, Judith Fetterley, *The Resisting Reader* (1978); and Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocinio Schweikart, eds., *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts* (1986).

A survey of a number of reader-response theories of criticism is included in Steven Mailloux's own contribution to this mode in *Interpretive Conventions* (1982); a different survey, from the point of view of deconstructive theory, is Elizabeth Freund, *The Return of the Reader: Reader-Response Criticism* (1987). Anthologies of diverse reader-response essays: Susan Suleiman and Inge Crossman, eds., *The Reader in the Text* (1980); Jane P. Tompkins, ed., *Reader-Response Criticism* (1980). Important early instances of a criticism that is focused on the reader: Walter J. Slatoff, *With Respect to Readers* (1970); Louise Rosenblatt, *The Reader, the Text, the Poem* (1978); Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader* (trans. 1979).

In addition to the titles mentioned in this essay, the following are prominent exemplars of reader-response criticism: Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in "Paradise Lost"* (1967); Norman Holland, *The Dynamics of Literary Response* (1968) and *Five Readers Reading* (1975); Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader* (1974) and *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (1978). For critiques of Fish's "affective stylistics": Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs* (1981); Eugene Goodheart, *The Skeptic Disposition in Contemporary Criticism* (1984); M. H. Abrams, "How to Do Things with Texts," in *Doing Things with Texts* (1989). For references to *reader-response criticism* in other entries, see page 336.

: **Realism** is applied by literary critics in two diverse

realistic novel, under
) , and (2) to designate a recurrent mode, in various eras and literary

Realistic fiction is often opposed to romantic fiction. The *romance* is said
—more picturesque, fantastic, adventur-

—although most of them prefer

—but they must render their materials in ways that make them

magic realism achieve

Russian formalists, followed more systematically by *structuralist critics*,

convention
naturalize, in a way

” in *French Literary Theory Today*, ed. Tzvetan Todorov,
Structuralist Poetics, 1975, chapter 7, “Convention
”) Some theorists draw the conclusion that, since all liter-

(For philosophical discussions of conventionality and reality, see the essays by Hilary Putnam, Nelson Goodman, and Menachem Brinker in *New Literary History*, Vol. 13, 1981, and Vol. 14, 1983.)

Naturalism is sometimes claimed to give an even more accurate depiction of life than realism. But naturalism is not only, like realism, a special selection of subject matter and a special way of rendering those materials; it is a mode of fiction that was developed by a school of writers in accordance with a particular philosophical thesis. This thesis, a product of post-Darwinian biology in the nineteenth century, held that a human being exists entirely in the order of nature and does not have a soul nor any access to a religious or spiritual world beyond the natural world; and therefore, that such a being is merely a higher-order animal whose character and behavior are entirely determined by two kinds of forces: heredity and environment. Each person inherits compulsive instincts—especially hunger, the drive to accumulate possessions, and sexuality—and is then subjected to the social and economic forces in the family, the class, and the milieu into which that person is born. The French novelist Émile Zola, beginning in the 1870s, did much to develop this theory in what he called “le roman expérimental” (that is, the novel organized in the mode of a scientific experiment on the behavior, under given conditions, of the characters it depicts). Zola and later naturalistic writers, such as the Americans Frank Norris, Stephen Crane, and Theodore Dreiser, try to present their subjects with scientific objectivity and with elaborate documentation, sometimes including an almost medical frankness about activities and bodily functions usually unmentioned in earlier literature. They tend to choose characters who exhibit strong animal drives such as greed and sexual desire, and who are helpless victims both of glandular secretions within and of sociological pressures without. The end of the naturalistic novel is usually “tragic,” but not, as in classical and Elizabethan *tragedy*, because of a heroic but losing struggle of the individual mind and will against gods, enemies, and circumstances. Instead the protagonist of the naturalistic plot, a pawn to multiple compulsions, usually disintegrates, or is wiped out.

Aspects of the naturalistic selection and management of subject matter and its austere or harsh manner of rendering its materials are apparent in many modern novels and dramas, such as Hardy’s *Jude the Obscure*, 1895 (although Hardy largely substituted a cosmic determinism for biological and environmental determinism), various plays by Eugene O’Neill in the 1920s, and Norman Mailer’s novel of World War II, *The Naked and the Dead*. An enlightening exercise is to distinguish the diverse ways in which the relationship between the sexes is represented in a romance (Richard Blackmore’s *Lorna Doone*, 1869), an ironic comedy of manners (Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, 1813), a realistic novel (William Dean Howells’ *A Modern Instance*, 1882), and a naturalistic novel (Émile Zola’s *Nana*, 1880, or Theodore Dreiser’s *An American Tragedy*, 1925). Movements originally opposed to both nineteenth-century realism and naturalism (although some modern works, such as Joyce’s *Ulysses*, 1922, combine aspects of these and other novelistic modes) are *expressionism* and *symbolism* (see *Symbolist Movement*).

See *socialist realism*, and refer to Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation* (reprinted 2003); Ian Watt, *The Rise of the* (1957); Ernst Gombrich, *Art and Illusion* (1960); Harry Levin, *The Gates* (1963); René Wellek, "The Concept of" in *Concepts of Criticism* (1963); J. P. Stern, (1973); Ioan Williams, *The Realist Novel in England* (1975); Donald *Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (rev. *The Gold Standard and the Logic of Naturalism The Portable American Realism* (1997); Harry E. Shaw, *Narrating Reality: Austen, Scott, Eliot* (1999); *Realism* (2003).

: 254.

(in American literature): 275.

Reception theory is the application to literary history of *reader-response* theory that was proposed by Hans Robert Jauss in " (in *New Literary History*, -71). Like other reader-response criticism, it focuses on the 's reception of a text; its prime interest, however, is not on the

"objective meaning," it

's own "horizon of" and the confirmations, disappointments, refutations, and reformation "challenged" by the features

" of critical interpretations and evaluations of a given literary

), Jauss represents this tradition as a continuing " or "dialogue," between a text and the ever-altering horizons of

This mode of studying literary reception as a dialogue, or "fusion" of **reception aesthetic**, it "defines" the

semantic and aesthetic “potentialities” which become manifest only as they are realized by the cumulative responses of readers over the course of time. In its other aspect as a **reception history**, this mode of study also transforms the history of literature—traditionally conceived as an account of the successive production of a variety of works with relatively fixed meanings and values—by making it a history that requires an “ever-necessary retelling,” since it narrates the changing yet cumulative way that selected texts are interpreted and assessed, as the horizons of successive generations of readers alter over the passage of time.

See Hans Robert Jauss, *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception* (1982), and *The Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics* (1982); and for a history and discussion of this viewpoint, Robert C. Holub, *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (1984).

recto: 34.

recuperation (in reading): 401.

reflection (in Marxist criticism): 205.

Reformation: 339.

refrain: A line, or part of a line, or a group of lines, which is repeated in the course of a poem, sometimes with slight changes, and usually at the end of each *stanza*. The refrain occurs in many *ballads* and work poems, and is a frequent element in Elizabethan songs, where it may be merely a nonverbal carrier of the melodic line, as in Shakespeare’s “It Was a Lover and His Lass”: “With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino.” A famous refrain is that which closes each stanza in Edmund Spenser’s “Epithalamion” (1594)—“The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring”—in which sequential changes indicate the altering sounds during the successive hours of the poet’s wedding day. The refrain in Spenser’s “Prothalamion”—“Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song”—is echoed ironically in Part III of T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922), where it is applied to the Thames in the modern age of polluted rivers.

A refrain may consist of only a single word—“Nevermore,” as in Poe’s “The Raven” (1845)—or of an entire stanza. If the stanza refrain occurs in a song, which all the auditors join in singing, it is called the **chorus**; for, example, in “Auld Lang Syne” and many other songs by Robert Burns in the late eighteenth century.

regional novel: 257.

regular ode: 262.

relativism: 331.

RENAISSANCE

: Renaissance (“rebirth”) is the name commonly applied to the

–74) is described as the last great Renaissance poet.
periods of English literature.)

Many attempts have been made to define “the Renaissance” in a brief

“periods” are not intrinsic in history, but invented

“the Renaissance,” it is possible

Beginning in the 1940s, a number of historians have replaced (or else
“Renaissance” with **early modern** to designate

“Renaissance/Early Modern
” in *Redrawing the Boundaries*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles

The innovations during this period may be regarded as putting a strain on

scholars, thinkers, artists, or adventurers. Prominent among these developments were:

1. The new learning. Renaissance scholars of the classics, called *humanists*, revived the knowledge of the Greek language, discovered and disseminated a great number of Greek manuscripts, and added considerably to the number of Roman authors and works which had been known during the Middle Ages. The result was to open up a sense of the vastness of the historical past, as well as to enlarge immensely the stock of ideas, materials, literary forms, and styles available to Renaissance writers. In the mid-fifteenth century the invention of **printing** on paper from movable type (for which Johann Gutenberg of Mainz, Germany, is usually given credit, although the Chinese had developed a similar mode of printing several centuries earlier) made books for the first time cheap and plentiful, and floods of publications, ancient and modern, poured from the presses of Europe to satisfy the demands of the expanding population who had learned to read. The rapidity and range of the spread of ideas, discoveries, and types of literature in the Renaissance was made possible by this new technology of printing. (See *book* and *book history studies*.) The technology reached England in 1476, when William Caxton set up a press at Westminster, where he published, among many other books, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*.

The humanistic revival sometimes resulted in pedantic scholarship, sterile imitations of ancient works and styles, and a rigidly authoritarian rhetoric and literary criticism. It also bred, however, the gracious and tolerant humanity of an Erasmus, and the high concept of a cultivated Renaissance aristocracy expressed in Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* ("The Courtier"), published in 1528. This was the most admired and widely translated of the many Renaissance **courtesy books**, or books on the character, obligations, and training of the man of the court. It sets up the ideal of the completely rounded or **Renaissance man**, developed in all his faculties and skills—physical, intellectual, and artistic. He is especially trained to be a warrior and statesman, but is capable also as athlete, philosopher, artist, conversationalist, and man of society. The courtier's relationships to women, and women's to men, are represented in accordance with the quasi-religious code of *Platonic love*, and his activities and productions are crowned by the grace of **sprezzatura**—the Italian term for the seeming spontaneity and casual ease with which a trained person may meet the requirements of complex and exacting rules. Leonardo da Vinci in Italy and Sir Philip Sidney in England are often represented as embodying the many aspects of the courtly ideal.

2. The new religion. The **Reformation** led by Martin Luther (1483–1546) was a successful heresy which struck at the very foundations of the institutionalism of the Roman Catholic Church. This early Protestantism was grounded on each individual's inner experience of spiritual struggle and salvation. Faith (based on the word of the Bible) alone was thought sufficient to save, and salvation itself was regarded as a direct transaction

with God in the theater of the individual soul, without the need of intermediation by church, priest, or sacrament. For this reason Protestantism is sometimes said to have been an extreme manifestation of “Renaissance individualism” in northern Europe; it soon, however, developed its own type of institutionalism in the theocracy proposed by John Calvin (1509–64) and his Puritan followers. Although England officially broke with the Catholic Church during the reign of Henry VIII, the new religious establishment (the Anglican Church), headed by the monarch, retained many of the characteristics of the old church while embracing selected Protestant theological principles. The result was a political and theological compromise that remained the subject of heated debate for centuries.

and widespread belief in the old Greek idea that the world is a globe, sailed west to find a new commercial route to the East, only to be frustrated by the unexpected barrier of a new continent. The succeeding explorations of this continent and its native populations, and its settlement by Europeans, gave new materials to the literary imagination. The magic world of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, for example, as well as the treatment of its native inhabitants by Prospero and others, is based on a contemporary account of a shipwreck on Bermuda and other writings about voyages to the New World. More important for English literature, however, was the fact that economic exploitation of the new world—often cruel, oppressive, and devastating to the native peoples—put England at the center, rather than as heretofore at the edge, of the chief trade routes, and so helped establish the commercial prosperity that in England, as in Italy earlier, was a necessary though not sufficient condition for the development of a vigorous intellectual and artistic life.

Christian theology was **Ptolemaic** (that is, based on the Greek astronomer Ptolemy, second century) and pictured a stationary earth around which rotated the successive spheres of the moon, the various planets, and then the fixed stars. Heaven, or the Empyrean, was thought to be situated above the spheres, and Hell to be situated either at the center of the earth (as in Dante’s *Inferno*) or else below the system of the spheres (as in John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*). In 1543 Copernicus published his new hypothesis concerning the astronomic system; this gave a much simpler and more coherent explanation of accumulating observations of the actual movements of the heavenly bodies, which had led to ever greater complications within the scheme of the Ptolemaic world picture. The **Copernican theory** proposed a system in which the center is the sun, not the earth, and in which the earth is not stationary, but only one planet among many planets, all of which revolve around the sun.

the world picture of Copernicus and of the scientists who followed him (sometimes referred to as the **new philosophy**) delivered an immediate and profound shock to the theological and secular beliefs of thinking

people. For example in 1611, when Donne wrote in "The First Anniversary" that "new Philosophy calls all in doubt," for "the Sun is lost, and th' earth," he did so only to support the ancient theme, or literary *topos*, of the world's decay, and to enforce a traditional Christian "contemptus mundi" (contempt for the worldly). Still later, Milton in *Paradise Lost* (1667) expressed a suspension of judgment between the Ptolemaic and Copernican theories; he adopted, however, the older Ptolemaic scheme as the cosmic setting for his poem, because it was more firmly traditional and better adapted to his narrative purposes.

6. Much more important, in the long run, was the effect on opinion of the general principles and methods of the **new science** developed by the great successors of Copernicus in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, such as the physicists Johannes Kepler and Galileo and the English physician and physiologist William Harvey. Even after Copernicus, the cosmos of many writers in the Elizabethan era (exemplified in a number of Shakespeare's plays) not only remained Ptolemaic, it also remained an animate cosmos that was invested with occult powers and inhabited by demons and spirits, and was widely believed to control men's lives by stellar influences and to be itself subject to control by the powers of witchcraft and of magic. The universe that emerged in the course of the seventeenth century, as a product of the scientific procedure of posing hypotheses that could be tested by precisely measured observations, was the physical one propounded by the French philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650). "Give me extension and motion," Descartes wrote, "and I will construct the universe." The universe of Descartes and the new science consisted of extended particles of matter which moved in space according to fixed mathematical laws, free from interference by angels, demons, human prayer, or occult magical powers. This universe was, however, subject to the manipulations of experimental scientists who set out in this way to discover the laws of nature, and who, in the phrase of the English thinker Francis Bacon, had learned to obey nature in order to be her master. In Descartes and other philosophers, the working hypotheses of the scientists about the physical world were converted into a philosophical worldview, which was made current by popular expositions, and—together with the methodological principle that a controlled observation is the criterion of truth in many areas of knowledge—helped constitute the climate of eighteenth-century opinion known as the *Enlightenment*.

Joan Kelly inaugurated a spirited debate among *feminist* and other scholars with her essay, published in 1977, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" (in *Women, History and Theory*, 1984). Her own answer to the question, based primarily on evidence from central Italy, was that women did not. For a book by a feminist scholar who counters this claim, by reference to women's changing roles in the family, in the church, and in positions of political and cultural power, see Margaret L. King, *Women of the Renaissance* (1991).

Refer to J. Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (first *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science English Literature in the 16th Century* (1954); Marjorie *Science and Imagination* (1956); Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Copernican* (1957); Paul O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholas-* (rev. 1961); John R. Hale, *The Civilization of Europe* (1993); Jerry Brotton, *The Renaissance* (2006).

(historical period): **280**; 24, 161.

(rěp' ärtē''): **421**; 55.

(in new historicism): **245**.

(of a plot): **297**.

; 282, 421.

(in a plot): **297**; 365.

(in American literature): **274**.

: In his *Poetics* the Greek philosopher Aristotle defined poetry as a mode *imitation*—a fictional representation in a verbal medium of human beings —and focused his discussion on

Rhetoric, on the other hand, Aristotle defined rhetorical discourse as the “discovering all the available means of persuasion in any given case,”

’s point of view. Most of the later

think and feel or act in a particular way. (A notable exception is the major Roman rhetorician Quintilian who, in the first century, gave rhetoric a moral basis by defining it as the art “of a good man skilled in speaking.”) In a broad sense, then, rhetoric can be described as the study of language in its practical uses, focusing on the persuasive and other effects of language, and on the means by which one can achieve those effects on auditors or readers.

Following Aristotle’s lead, classical theorists analyzed an effective rhetorical discourse as consisting of three components: *invention* (the finding of arguments or proofs), **disposition** (the arrangement of such materials), and *style* (the choice of words, verbal patterns, and rhythms that will most effectively express and convey these materials). This last topic of “style” came to include extensive classifications and analyses of *figurative language*. Rhetoricians also discriminated three main classes of oratory, each of which uses characteristic devices to achieve its distinctive type of persuasive effect:

1. **Deliberative**—to persuade an audience (such as a legislative assembly) to approve or disapprove of a matter of public policy, and to act accordingly.
2. **Forensic**—to achieve (for example, in a judicial trial) either the condemnation or approval of some person’s actions.
3. **Epideictic**—“display rhetoric,” used on appropriate, usually ceremonial, occasions to enlarge upon the praiseworthiness (or sometimes, the blameworthiness) of a person or group of persons, and in so doing, to display the orator’s own talents and skill in rising to the rhetorical demands of the occasion. Abraham Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” is a famed instance of epideictic oratory. In America, it remains traditional for a chosen speaker to meet the challenge of the Fourth of July or other dates of national significance by appropriately ceremonious oratory. The *ode* is a poetic form often used for epideictic purposes. A composition in prose or a public speech in sustained and elaborate praise of a person, group, or deed is called a **panegyric**.

Figurative language, although dealt with at length in classical and later traditional rhetorics, had been considered as only one element of style and, often, as subordinated to the overall aim of persuasion. Within the past century, however, the analysis of the types and functions of figurative language has been increasingly excerpted from this rhetorical context and made an independent and central concern, not only by critics of literature but also by language theorists and by philosophers. (See *metaphor, theories of*.) Some recent theorists regard all modes of discourse to be constituted by “rhetorical” and figurative elements which are inherently nonreferential and counterlogical, and therefore subvert attempts to speak or write in ways that have decidable meanings, or logical coherence, or reference to a world beyond language. (See *deconstruction*.) Other theorists undertake to develop a **cognitive rhetoric**, from the viewpoint of “cognitive science”—that is, representations of the most general operations of the mind and brain (based in part on the workings of high-level computers), which cut across the standard distinctions between literary and nonliterary, and between rhetorical and nonrhetorical mental and

Reading Minds: The Study of English in
(1991) and *The Literary Mind* (1996).

Refer to *ethos* (the rhetorical concept of a speaker's projected character
persona, tone, and voice; also *rhe-*

. See Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, ed. Lane Cooper (1932), and George A.
Aristotle on Rhetoric (1991); Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*
–22); M. L. Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome: A*
(1953); George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (1963);
Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (4th ed., 1998);
Encyclopedia of Rhetoric (2001). For a brief history of

Rhetoric (trans. 1989). Walter J. Ong, in *Orality and Literacy*:
(1982), discusses the central and pervasive role

For references to *rhetoric* in other entries, see page 65.

: The Roman Horace in his versified *Art of Poetry* (first cen-

's distinction
rhetoric). Such *pragmatic*
became the dominant form of literary theory from late classical times

expressive theories of literature (which

objective theories of literature (which maintain that a work should be

Since the late 1950s, however, there has been a strong revival of interest

rhetorical criticism which, without departing

The Rhetoric of Fiction (rev. 1983),
“the rhetorical resources available to the writer of epic, novel,

world upon the reader.” A number of recent critics of prose fiction and of narrative and non-narrative poems have emphasized the author’s use of a variety of means—including the authorial presence or “voice” that he or she projects—in order to engage the interest and guide the imaginative and emotional responses of the readers to whom, whether consciously or not, the literary work is addressed. (See *persona, tone, and voice*.) Since the 1960s there has also emerged a reader-response criticism which focuses upon a reader’s interpretive responses to the sequence of words in a literary text; most of its representatives, however, either ignore or reject the rhetorical view that such responses are effected by devices that, for the most part, are contrived for that purpose by the author. See *reader-response criticism*.

For recent examples of the rhetorical criticism of poetry and fiction see (in addition to Wayne Booth) Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1955); M. H. Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism* (1963); Donald C. Bryant, ed., *Papers in Rhetoric and Poetic* (1965); Edward P. J. Corbett, ed., *Rhetorical Analyses of Literary Works* (1969); Brian Vickers, *Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry* (2d ed., 1989).

rhetorical figures: It is convenient to list under this heading some common “figures of speech” which depart from what is experienced by competent users as the standard, or “literal,” use of language mainly by the arrangement of their words to achieve special effects, and not, like metaphors and other tropes, by a radical change in the meaning of the words themselves. (See *figurative language*.) A number of current theorists, however, reject the distinction between figures of speech and tropes; some reject even the general distinction between literal and figurative language. (See *metaphor, theories of*.)

Anaphora (Greek for “repetition”) is the deliberate repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of each one of a sequence of sentences, paragraphs, lines of verse, or *stanzas*. “A Song” by the seventeenth-century English poet Thomas Carew begins:

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past the fading rose....

Each of the remaining four stanzas also begins with the words: “Ask me no more.” Anaphora is frequent in the Bible and in verse or prose strongly influenced by the Bible, such as Walt Whitman’s poems, or sermons by eloquent black preachers. In the powerful address to Civil Rights marchers by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., in front of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963, five successive sentences begin, “I have a dream,” and six later sentences begin, “Let freedom ring.”

An **apostrophe** is a direct and explicit address either to an absent person or to an abstract or nonhuman entity. Often the effect is of high formality, or else of a sudden emotional impetus. Many *odes* are constituted throughout in the mode of such an address to a listener who is not literally able to listen. So John Keats begins his “Ode on a Grecian Urn” (1820) by apostrophizing the

—“Thou still unravished bride of quietness”—and directs the entirety of
 ’s fine lyric “Recollections of Love” (1817) is an apostrophe ad-

But when those meek eyes first did seem
 To tell me, Love within you wrought—
 O Greta, dear domestic stream!
 Has not, since then, Love’s prompture deep,
 Has not Love’s whisper evermore
 Been ceaseless, as thy gentle roar?
 Sole voice, when other voices sleep,
 Dear under-song in clamor’s hour.

of the nonhuman object that is addressed. (See Jonathan Culler,
 ” in *The Pursuit of Signs*, 1981.)

If such an address is to a god or muse or other supernatural being to assist

invocation. An invocation often

voice;

Paradise Lost:

And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all temples th’ upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me....

Chiasmus (derived from the Greek term for the letter X, or for a cross-

Works without show, and without pomp presides.

’s summary of the

A fop their passion, but their prize a sot.

’ “An Irish Airman Foresees His Death” (1919), the chiasmus consists

The years to come seemed *waste of breath*,
 A *waste of breath* the years behind.¹³

“An Irish Airman Foresees His Death” reprinted with permission of Scribner, an imprint of Simon and
The Poems of W. B. Yeats: A New Edition, edited by Richard J. Finneran.

And as a reminder that all figures of speech occur in prose as well as in verse, here is an instance of chiasmus in the position of the two adjectives in Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* (1821): "Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds."

In **paralipsis** someone says that he need not, or will not, say something, then proceeds to do so. The most familiar use of the figure is on public occasions in which an introducer says that a speaker needs no introduction, then goes on to introduce him or her, often at considerable length. The classic literary example is Mark Antony's funeral oration, in the third act of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, which is constructed around the repeated and devastatingly ironic use of this figure. The speech begins, for example, with the statement "I came to bury Caesar, not to praise him," then proceeds to eulogize Caesar and to incite his auditors against the "honorable men" who have assassinated him.

A **rhetorical question** is a sentence in the grammatical form of a question which is not asked in order to request information or to invite a reply, but to achieve a greater expressive force than a direct assertion. In everyday discourse, for example, if we utter the rhetorical question "Isn't it a shame?" it functions as a forceful alternative to the assertion "It's a shame." (In terms of modern *speech-act theory*, its "illocutionary force" is not to question but to assert.) The figure is often used in persuasive discourse, and tends to impart an oratorical tone to an utterance, whether in prose or verse. When "fierce Thalestris" in Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) asks Belinda,

Gods! Shall the ravisher display your hair,
While the fops envy, and the ladies stare?

she does not stay for an answer, which she obviously thinks should be "No!" (A common form of rhetorical question is one that won't take "Yes" for an answer.) Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" (1820) closes with the most famous rhetorical question in English:

O, Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

This figure was a favorite of W. B. Yeats. A well-known instance is "Among School Children," which ends with the rhetorical question, "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" In this instance the poetic context indicates that the question is left hanging because it is unanswerable, posing a problem for which there is no certain solution. In a *deconstructive* reading of this and other examples in his *Allegories of Reading* (1979), Paul de Man proposed that it is impossible to decide, not only what the answer is to the question, but also whether it is or is not a question.

Zeugma in Greek means "yoking"; in the most common present usage, it is applied to expressions in which a single word stands in the same grammatical relation to two or more other words, but with an obvious shift in its

Or *stain* her honour, or her new brocade.
Obliged by hunger, and request of friends.

Don Juan (1819–24), Canto 2:

And the waves oozing through the port-hole *made*
 His berth a little damp, and him afraid.

The loud tempests *raise*
 The waters, and repentance for past sinning.

To achieve the maximum of concentrated verbal effects within the
closed couplet, Pope in the early eighteenth century

Other linguistic patterns or “schemes” that are sometimes classified as rhe-
Glossary; see *antithesis*, *alliteration*,
 , rhetorical *climax* (under *bathos*), and *parallelism*. For concise defini-

A Handlist of Rhe-
 (2d ed., 1991); Edward P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Mod-*
 (4th ed., 1998); and Arthur Quinn’s entertaining and informative
 (1993). See references under “fig-
 .”

: 347.

: In English versification, standard rhyme consists of the repetition, in the

End rhymes, by far the most frequent type, occur at the end of a verse
Internal rhymes occur within a verse line, as in the Victorian poet
 ’s

Sister, my sister, O *fleet sweet* swallow.

’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” illustrates the

In mist or *cloud*, on mast or *shroud*,
 It perched for vespers *nine*;
 Whiles all the *night*, through fog-smoke *white*,
 Glimmered the white moon-*shine*.

The numbered lines in the following stanza of Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper" (1807) are followed by a column which, in the conventional way, marks the terminal rhyme elements by a corresponding sequence and repetition of the letters of the alphabet:

1. Whate'er her theme, the maiden sang	<i>a</i>
2. As if her song could have no <i>ending</i> ;	<i>b</i>
3. I saw her singing at her work	<i>c</i>
4. And o'er the sickle <i>bending</i> —	<i>b</i>
5. I listened, motionless and <i>still</i> ;	<i>d</i>
6. And as I mounted up the <i>hill</i> ,	<i>d</i>
7. The music in my heart I <i>bore</i> ,	<i>e</i>
8. Long after it was heard no <i>more</i> .	<i>e</i>

Lines 1 and 3 do not rhyme with any other line. Both in lines 5 and 6 and in lines 7 and 8 the rhyme consists of a single stressed syllable, and is called a **masculine rhyme**: *stíll*–*híll*, *bóre*–*móre*. In lines 2 and 4, the rhyme consists of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable, and is called a **feminine rhyme**: *éńdńg*–*béńdńg*.

A feminine rhyme, since it involves the repetition of two syllables, is also known as a **double rhyme**. A rhyme involving three syllables is called a **triple rhyme**; such rhymes, since they coincide with surprising patness, usually have a comic quality. In *Don Juan* (1819–24) Byron often uses triple rhymes such as *comparison*–*garrison*, and sometimes intensifies the comic effect by permitting the pressure of the rhyme to force a distortion of the pronunciation. This maltreatment of words, called **forced rhyme**, in which the poet gives the effect of seeming to surrender helplessly to the exigencies of a difficult rhyme, has been comically exploited by the poet Ogden Nash:

Farewell, farewell, you old rhinoceros,
I'll stare at something less prepoerous.¹⁴

If the correspondence of the rhymed sounds is exact, it is called **perfect rhyme**, or else "full" or "true rhyme." Until recently almost all English writers of serious poems have limited themselves to perfect rhymes, except for an occasional *poetic license* such as **eye-rhymes**: words whose endings are spelled alike, and in most instances were once pronounced alike, but have in the course of time acquired a different pronunciation: *prove*–*love*, *daughter*–*laughter*. Many modern poets, however, deliberately supplement perfect rhyme with **imperfect rhyme** (also known as **partial rhyme**, or else as **approximate rhyme**, **slant rhyme**, or **pararhyme**). This effect is fairly

Lines from "The Rhinoceros" by Ogden Nash, from *Verses from 1929 On* by Ogden Nash. Copyright © 1933 by Ogden Nash, renewed. Reprinted by permission of Curtis Brown, Ltd.

RHYME

folk songs such as children's verses, and it was employed occasion-

-18, wrote the following six-line stanza using only two sets

The centuries will burn rich loads
With which we groaned,
Whose warmth shall lull their dreamy lids,
While songs are crooned.
But they will not dream of us poor lads,
Lost in the ground.¹⁵

"The Force That Through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower"

-rose, rocks-wax, tomb-worm, and
-destroyer-fever.

Rime riche (French for "rich rhyme") is the repetition of the consonant

The Canterbury Tales,
"seke," which has two diverse meanings, "seek" and
"The pilgrims go to Canterbury
the holy blissful martyr for to seke
That hem hath holpen whan they were seke.

The passages quoted above will illustrate some of the many effects that
"making ends meet in
"—the pleasure of the expected yet varying chime; the reinforcement

consonance in partial

"Miners" by Wilfred Owen, from *The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen*. Copyright 1963 Chatto & Windos,

Yet ne'er one sprig of laurel graced these ribalds,
From slashing Bentley down to piddling Tibalds,

the rhyme of "Tibalds," as W. K. Wimsatt has said, demonstrates "what it means to have a name like that," with its implication that the scholar is as graceless as his appellation. And in one of its important functions, rhyme ties individual lines into the larger pattern of a *stanza*.

See George Saintsbury, *History of English Prosody* (3 vols., 1906–10); W. K. Wimsatt, "One Relation of Rhyme to Reason," in *The Verbal Icon* (1954); Donald Wesling, *The Chances of Rhyme: Device and Modernity* (1980); John Hollander, *Rhyme's Reason: A Guide to English Verse* (1981). For an analysis of the complex interrelations between sound repetitions and meaning, see Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," in his *Language and Literature* (1987). For references to *rhyme* in other entries, see page 140.

rhythm: 217.

rime riche: 350.

rime royal: 376.

rising action: 296.

rituals: 230.

roman (the genre) (rōmān'): 252.

roman à clef (French for "novel with a key"): A work of prose fiction in which the author expects the knowing reader to identify, despite their altered names, actual people of the time. The mode was begun in seventeenth-century France with novels such as Madeleine de Scudéry's *Le Grand Cyrus* (1649–53). An English example is Thomas Love Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey* (1818), whose characters are entertaining *caricatures* of such contemporary literary figures as Coleridge, Byron, and Shelley. A later instance is Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928), which represents, under fictional names, well-known English personages of the 1920s such as the novelist D. H. Lawrence, the critic Middleton Murry, and the right-wing political extremist Oswald Mosely.

romance, the: 48; 8. See also *prose romance*; *chivalric romance*; *Gothic romance*; *romantic comedy*; *wilderness romance*.

romance novels: Love stories that focus on the heroine rather than the hero, in which, after diverse obstacles have been overcome, the plots end happily with the betrothal or marriage of the lovers. This narrative form was exemplified early in such classic novels as Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and in all six of Jane Austen's novels, published between 1811 and 1818. The term

” however, is usually applied specifically to works published
published by Harlequin Enterprises, which is head-

detective stories and *science fiction*.

The history and analysis of this novelistic form has increasingly become

Journal of Popular Romance Studies, begun in 2010. Refer to Carol
The Romance Revolution (1987); and Pamela Regis, *A Natural History*
(2003).

(ideas and aims): **238**.

; 21, 30, 189.

(linguistic): **197**.

(neoclassic): **237**.

; 7. See also *formalism*.



S

sarcasm: 186.

satire: Satire can be described as the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation. It differs from the *comic* in that comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire derides; that is, it uses laughter as a weapon, and against a butt that exists outside the work itself. That butt may be an individual (in “personal satire”), or a type of person, a class, an institution, a nation, or even (as in the Earl of Rochester’s “A Satyr against Mankind,” 1675, and much of Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, 1726, especially Book IV) the entire human race. The distinction between the comic and the satiric, however, is sharp only at its extremes. Shakespeare’s Falstaff is mainly a comic creation, presented primarily for our enjoyment; the puritanical Malvolio in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night* is for the most part comic but has aspects of satire directed against the type of the fatuous and hypocritical Puritan; Ben Jonson’s *Volpone* (1607) clearly satirizes the type of person whose cleverness—or stupidity—is put at the service of his cupidity; and John Dryden’s *MacFlecknoe* (1682), while representing a permanent type of the pretentious *poetaster*, satirized specifically the living author Thomas Shadwell.

Satire has usually been justified, by those who practice it, as a corrective of human vice and folly; Alexander Pope, for example, remarked that “those who are ashamed of nothing else are so of being ridiculous.” Its frequent claim (not always borne out in the practice) has been to ridicule the failing rather than the individual, and to limit its ridicule to corrigible faults, excluding those for which a person is not responsible. As Swift said, speaking of himself in his *ironic* “Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift” (1739):

Yet malice never was his aim;
He lashed the vice, but spared the name....
His satire points at no defect,
But what all mortals may correct....
He spared a hump, or crooked nose,
Whose owners set not up for beaux.

Satire occurs as an incidental element within many works whose overall mode is not satiric—in a certain character or situation, or in an interpolated passage of ironic commentary on some aspect of the human condition or of contemporary society. But for some literary writings, verse or prose, the attempt to diminish a subject by ridicule is the organizing principle of the whole, and these works constitute the formal *genre* labeled “satires.” In discussing such writings the following distinctions are useful:

1. Critics make a broad division between formal (or “direct”) satire and indirect satire. In **formal satire** the satiric *persona* speaks out in the first

person. This “I” may address either the reader (as in Pope’s *Moral Essays*, 1731–35), or else a character within the work itself, who is called the **adversarius** and whose major artistic function is to elicit and add credibility to the satiric speaker’s comments. (In Pope’s “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot,” 1735, Arbuthnot serves as *adversarius*.) Two types of formal satire are commonly distinguished, taking their names from the great Roman satirists Horace and Juvenal. The types are defined by the character of the persona whom the author presents as the first-person satiric speaker, and also by the attitude and *tone* that such a persona manifests toward both the subject matter and the readers of the work.

In **Horatian satire** the speaker is an urbane, witty, and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness, and hypocrisy, and who uses a relaxed and informal language to evoke from readers a wry smile at human failings and absurdities—sometimes including his own. Horace himself described his aim as “to laugh people out of their vices and follies.” Pope’s *Moral Essays* and other formal satires for the most part sustain an Horatian stance.

In **Juvenalian satire** the speaker is a serious moralist who uses a dignified and public utterance to decry modes of vice and error which are no less dangerous because they are ridiculous, and who undertakes to evoke from readers contempt, moral indignation, or an unillusioned sadness at the aberrations of humanity. Samuel Johnson’s “London” (1738) and “The Vanity of Human Wishes” (1749) are distinguished instances of Juvenalian satire. In its most denunciatory instances, this mode of satire resembles the *jeremiad*, whose model is not Roman but Hebraic.

Indirect satire is cast in some other literary form than that of direct address to the reader. The most common indirect form is that of a fictional narrative, in which the objects of the satire are characters who make themselves and their opinions ridiculous or obnoxious by what they think, say, and do, and are sometimes made even more ridiculous by the author’s comments and narrative style.

One type of indirect satire is **Menippean satire**, modeled on a Greek form developed by the Cynic philosopher Menippus. It is sometimes called **Varronian satire**, after a Roman imitator, Varro; Northrop Frye, in *Anatomy of Criticism*, pp. 308–12, suggests an alternative name, the **anatomy**, after a major English instance of the type, Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). Such satires are written in prose, usually with interpolations of verse, and constitute a miscellaneous form often held together by a loosely constructed narrative. A prominent feature is a series of extended dialogues and debates (often conducted at a banquet or party) in which a group of loquacious eccentrics, pedants, literary people, and representatives of various professions or philosophical points of view serve to make ludicrous the attitudes and viewpoints they typify by the arguments they urge in their support. Examples are Rabelais’ *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1564), Voltaire’s *Candide* (1759), Thomas Love

Peacock's *Nightmare Abbey* (1818) and other satiric fiction, and Aldous Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928); in this last novel, as in those of Peacock, the central satiric scenes are discussions and disputes during a weekend at an English country manor. Frye also classifies Lewis Carroll's two books about Alice in Wonderland as "perfect Menippean satires."

It should be noted that any narrative or other literary vehicle can be adapted to the purposes of indirect satire. John Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* turns Old Testament history into a satiric allegory on Restoration political maneuverings. In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift converts to satiric use the early eighteenth-century accounts of voyage and discovery, and his *Modest Proposal* is written in the form of a project in political economy. Many of Joseph Addison's *Spectator* papers are satiric essays; Byron's *Don Juan* is a versified satiric form of the old episodic picaresque fiction; Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*, Molière's *The Misanthrope*, Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, and Shaw's *Arms and the Man* are satiric plays; and Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*, and other works such as John Gay's eighteenth-century *Beggar's Opera* and its modern adaptation by Bertolt Brecht, *The Threepenny Opera* (1928), are satiric operettas. T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) employs motifs from myth in a work which can be considered by and large as a verse satire directed against what Eliot perceives as the spiritual dearth in twentieth-century life. The greatest number of modern satires, however, are written in prose, and especially in novelistic form; for example Evelyn Waugh's *The Loved One*, Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, and Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s *Player Piano* and *Cat's Cradle*. Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936) and *The Great Dictator* (1940) are classic instances of dramatic satire in the cinema. Much of the satiric thrust in current *black humor* is directed against what the author conceives to be the widespread contemporary condition of social cruelty, inanity, or chaos.

Effective English satire has been written in every period beginning with the Middle Ages. Pieces in the English *Punch* and the American *New Yorker* demonstrate that formal essayistic satire, like satiric novels, plays, and cinema, still commands a wide audience; and W. H. Auden is a twentieth-century author who wrote superb satiric poems. The proportioning of the examples in this article, however, indicates how large the Restoration and eighteenth century loom in satiric achievement: the century and a half that included Dryden, the Earl of Rochester, Samuel Butler, Wycherley, Aphra Behn, Addison, Pope, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Swift, Gay, Fielding, Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and late in the period (it should not be overlooked) the Robert Burns of "The Holy Fair" and "Holy Willie's Prayer" and the William Blake of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. This same span of time was also in France the period of such major satirists as Boileau, La Fontaine, and Voltaire, as well as Molière, the most eminent of all satirists in drama. In the nineteenth century, American satire broke free of English domination with the light satiric touch of Washington Irving's *Sketch Book*, the deft satiric essays of Oliver Wendell Holmes (*The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*), and above all the satiric essays and novels of Mark Twain.

See also *light verse*. The articles on *burlesque*, on *irony*, and on *wit, humor*, describe some of the derogatory modes and devices available to
English Satire (1958); Gilbert Highet, *The*
 (1962); Alvin B. Kernan, *The Plot of Satire* (1965); Matthew
Satire (1969); Charles Sanders, *The Scope of Satire* (1971); Michael
Satiric Inheritance, Rabelais to Sterne (1979); Dustin Griffin, *Satire: A*
 (1994); Fredric V. Bogel, *The Difference Satire Makes:*
 (2001). Anthologies: Ronald Paulson,
Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism (1971); Ashley Brown and John L.
Satire: An Anthology (1977), which includes both satiric writ-
A Companion to Satire
satire in other entries, see pages 8, 37.

(skǎn' shǔn): **220**.

(in drama): **3**.

(figures of speech): **130**.

These terms encompass novels and short stories

science fiction is applied to those narratives in which—unlike in pure
 —an explicit attempt is made to render plausible the fictional world

Mary Shelley's remarkable *Frankenstein* (1818) is often considered a pre-

's *Journey to the Center of the*
 and H. G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds*. More recent important authors

Star Trek

Fantasy is as old as the fictional *utopias*, and its *satiric* forms have an impor-
 's
 's *Travels* (1726). Among the notable twentieth-century writers of

fantasy are C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien (*The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*), whose works incorporate materials from classical, biblical, and medieval sources. Ursula Le Guin is a major author of both science fiction and works of fantasy.

Some instances of science fiction and fantasy project a future utopia (Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*), or else attack an aspect of current science or society by imagining their dystopian conclusion (George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 1949, and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, 1986); and many writers use their imaginary settings, as Swift had in *Gulliver's Travels*, for political and social satire (Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and much of Kurt Vonnegut's prose fiction). See *utopia and dystopia* and *satire*.

Cyberpunk emerged in the early 1980s as a *postmodern* form of science fiction in which the events take place partially or entirely within the "virtual reality" formed by computers or computer networks, in which the characters may be humans, or aliens, or artificial intelligences. Well-known instances are William Gibson's novel *Neuromancer* (1984), and the *Matrix* films (1999, 2003). See the essays in *Fiction 2000: Cyberpunk and the Future of Narrative*, eds. George Slusser and Tom Shippey (1992), and Larry McCaffery, ed., *Storming the Reality Studio* (1991).

For other novelistic forms that depart radically from the world of ordinary experience, see *magic realism* and *metafiction*, under *novel*. Refer to Kingsley Amis, *New Maps of Hell: A Survey of Science Fiction* (1960); H. Bruce Franklin, *Future Perfect: American Science Fiction of the Nineteenth Century* (rev. 1978); Robert Scholes and Eric S. Rabkin, *Science Fiction: History, Science, Vision* (1977); Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Language of the Night: Essays on Fantasy and Science Fiction* (1979); Gary K. Wolfe, *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy* (1986); Jane Donawerth, *Frankenstein's Daughters: Women Writing Science Fiction* (1997); Adam Roberts, *Science Fiction* (2d ed., 2006).

scriptoria: 32.

second-person points of view: 304.

self-conscious narrator: 304.

self-reflexive novel: 305.

semantics: 195.

semiology: 357.

semiotics: At the end of the nineteenth century Charles Sanders Peirce, the American philosopher, proposed and described a study that he called "se-miotic," and in his *Course in General Linguistics* (1915) the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure independently proposed a science that he called "semiology." Since then **semiotics** and **semiology** have become alternative

signs (conveyors of meaning) is not limited

—our bodily postures and

—also convey

, the highly developed science of language, in fact has for the most

C. S. Peirce distinguished three classes of signs, defined in terms of the

icon functions as a sign by means of inherent similarities, or

index is a sign which bears a natural relation of cause or of

symbol (or in a
“**sign proper**”), the relation between the signifying

“Stop!” The major and most complex examples of this third type of

Ferdinand de Saussure introduced many of the terms and concepts
linguistics in modern criti-

. Most important are the following: (1) A sign consists of two inseparable
signifier (in language, a set of speech sounds, or of
signified (the concept, or idea, which is the meaning
’s term, is “arbitrary.” That is, with
onomatopoeia (words which we perceive as similar to

“positive qualities,” or objec-
differences, or a network of

parole (a single verbal utterance, or a particular use of a
langue (that is, the general

accordingly, is not in interpreting a particular instance of signification but in establishing the general signifying system that each particular instance relies upon.

Modern semiotics, like structuralism, has developed in France under the aegis of Saussure, so that many semioticians are also structuralists. They deal with any set of social phenomena or social productions as *texts*; that is, as constituted by self-sufficient, self-ordering, hierarchical structures of differentially determined signs, codes, and rules of combination and transformation which make significant materials “meaningful” to members of a particular society who are competent in that signifying system. (See *structuralist criticism*.) Claude Lévi-Strauss, in the 1960s and later, inaugurated the application of semiotics to cultural anthropology, and also established the foundations of French structuralism in general, by using Saussure’s linguistics as a model for analyzing, in primitive societies, a great variety of phenomena and practices, which he treated as quasi-languages that manifest the structures of an underlying signifying system. These include kinship systems, totemic systems, ways of preparing food, myths, and prelogical modes of interpreting the world. Jacques Lacan has applied semiotics to Freudian psychoanalysis—interpreting the unconscious, for example, as (like language) a structure of signs (see Lacan under *psychological and psychoanalytic criticism*). Michel Foucault developed a mode of semiotic analysis to deal with the changing medical interpretations of symptoms of disease; the diverse ways of identifying, classifying, and treating insanity; and the altering conceptions of human sexuality (see under *poststructuralism*). Roland Barthes, explicitly applying Saussurean principles and methods, has written semiotic analyses of the constituents and codes of the sign systems in advertisements which describe and promote women’s fashions, as well as analyses of many “bourgeois myths” about the world which, he claims, are exemplified in such social sign systems as professional wrestling matches, children’s toys, cookery, and the striptease. (See his *Mythologies*, trans. 1972.) In his earlier writings Barthes was also a major exponent of *structuralist criticism*, which deals with a literary text as “a second-order semiotic system”; that is, it views a literary text as employing the first-order semiotic system of language to form a secondary semiotic structure, in accordance with a specifically literary system of conventions and codes.

For a related field of study, which can be characterized as the semiotics of culture, see *cultural studies*. Introductions to the elements of semiotic theory are included in Terence Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics* (1977); Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs* (1981); Robert Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation* (1982); also in the anthologies, Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., *The Tell-Tale Sign: A Survey of Semiotics* (1975); and Robert E. Innis, ed., *Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology* (1985). See also Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (1976); Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology* (trans. 1967); Thomas A. Sebeok, *Semiotics in the United States* (1991). Among the semiotic analyses of diverse social phenomena available in English are Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (1968) and *The Raw and the Cooked* (1966); Roland Barthes, *Selected Writings*, ed. Susan Sontag (1983); Jacques Lacan, *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language*

(1968); and Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* (1965),
 (1972), and *The Birth of the Clinic* (1973). On
An Introduction to Literary Semi-
 (1978); Michael Riffaterre, *Semiotics of Poetry* (1978); and, in application
Theatre Semiotics: Signs of Life (1990).
From Prague to Paris

For references to *semiotics* in other entries, see pages 196, 324.

: When a contemporary critic talks of a poet's
 , the reference is to a characteristic way of responding, in percep-

set in with the poetry of John Milton and John Dryden,
 's

literature of sensibility, the reference is to

' claims, in *Leviathan* (1651), that a human

"—wishing other persons well—is an innate human sentiment

"sensibility"—that is, a hair-trigger responsiveness to another
 's distresses and joys. (See *empathy and sympathy*.) "Sensibility" also con-

sublimity, whether in nature or in art, and such responsiveness
 's gentility—that is, to one's

Emphasis on the human capability for sympathy and wishing others well—
 's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*
 —helped to develop social consciousness and a sense of communal re-

's *Theory of the Moral*
 to literature, see Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 1990,

chapter 14.) Highly exaggerated forms of sympathy and manifestations of benevolence, however, became prominent in eighteenth-century culture and literature. It was a commonplace in widespread views of morality that readiness to shed a sympathetic tear, quite apart from moral actions, is the sign both of polite breeding and a virtuous heart; and such a view was often accompanied by the observation that sympathy with another's grief, unlike personal grief, is a pleasurable emotion, hence to be sought as a value in itself. Common phrases in the cult of sensibility were the *oxymorons* "the luxury of grief," "pleasurable sorrows," and "the sadly pleasing tear." A late eighteenth-century mortuary inscription in Dorchester Abbey reads:

Reader! If thou hast a Heart fam'd for Tenderness and Pity, Contemplate this Spot. In which are deposited the Remains of a Young Lady.... When Nerves were too delicately spun to bear the rude Shakes and Jostlings which we meet with in this transitory world, Nature gave way; She sunk and died a Martyr to Excessive Sensibility.

It is clear that much of what in that age was called, with approval, "sensibility" we now call, with disapproval, *sentimentalism*.

In literature these ideas and tendencies were reflected in the **drama of sensibility**, or **sentimental comedy**, which were representations of middle-class life that replaced the tough amorality and the comic or satiric representation of aristocratic sexual license in *Restoration comedy*. In the contemporary plays of sensibility, Oliver Goldsmith remarked in his "Comparison between Sentimental and Laughing Comedy" (1773), "the virtues of private life are exhibited rather than the vices exposed, and the distresses rather than the faults of mankind make our interest in the piece"; the characters, "though they want humor, have abundance of sentiment and feeling"; with the result, he added, that the audience "sit at a play as gloomy as at the tabernacle." Plays such as Richard Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1722) and Richard Cumberland's *The West Indian* (1771) present monumentally benevolent heroes and heroines of the middle class, whose dialogue abounds with elevated moral sentiments and who, prior to the manipulated happy ending, suffer tribulations designed to evoke from the audience the maximum of pleasurable tears.

The **novel of sensibility**, or **sentimental novel**, of the latter part of the eighteenth century similarly emphasized the tearful distresses of the virtuous, either at their own sorrows or at those of their friends; some of them represented in addition a sensitivity to beauty or sublimity in natural phenomena which also expressed itself in tears. Samuel Richardson's *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) exploits sensibility in some of its scenes; and Laurence Sterne, in *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey*, published in the 1760s, gives us his own inimitable compound of sensibility, self-irony, and innuendo. The vogue of sensibility was international. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's novel *Julie, or the New Héloïse* (1761) dealt with lovers who manifest sensibility, and in his autobiography, *The Confessions* (written 1764–70), Rousseau represented himself, in

The Sorrows of Young Werther (1774) was an enormously popular presen-

An extreme English instance of the sentimental novel is Henry Mackenzie's
(1771), which represents a hero of such exquisite sensibility

"If all
" declares an editor of the novel, Hamish
"the poor man could hardly have been more debile." Jane Austen's
Sense and Sensibility

' *Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) and the
's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852).
melodramas, as well as in many

"tearjerkers."

In *The Politics of Sensibility* (1996), Markman Ellis departs from the usual

In America, sentimental novels were referred to as "woman's fiction" or
" and often involved the story of a young girl who must
Woman's Fiction:
-70 (2d ed., 1993).

's point of view, and in some cases achieved
"Sentimental Power: *Uncle*
's *Cabin* and the Politics of Literary History," chapter 5 in *Sensational*
-1860 (1985).

See *Age of Sensibility* under *periods of English literature*. Refer to Arthur
English Sentimental Drama (1957); R. P. Utter and G. B. Needham,
's *Daughters* (1963); R. S. Crane, "Suggestions toward a Genealogy of
'Man of Feeling,'" in *The Idea of the Humanities* (2 vols., 1967); Janet
Sensibility: An Introduction (1986); John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability*:
(1988); G. J. Barker-Benfield,
(1992);

Satire and Sentiment 1660-1830 (1994); Jerome McGann,
(1996); Paul Goring, *Rhetoric of Sensibility in*
(2005).

sentimental comedy: 361.

sentimental novel: 361.

sentimentalism: Sentimentalism is now a derogatory term applied to what is perceived to be an excess of emotion to an occasion, and especially to an overindulgence in the “tender” emotions of pathos and sympathy. Since what constitutes emotional excess or overindulgence is relative both to the judgment of the individual and to large-scale historical changes in culture and in literary fashion, what to the common reader of one age is a normal and laudable expression of humane feeling may seem sentimental to many later readers. The emotional responses of a lover that Shelley expresses and tries to evoke from the reader in his “Epipsychidion” (1821) seemed sentimental to the *New Critics* of the 1930s and later, who insisted on the need for an ironic counterpoise to intense feeling in poetry. Most readers now find both the *drama of sensibility* and the *novel of sensibility* of the eighteenth century ludicrously sentimental, and respond with jeers instead of tears to once celebrated episodes of pathos, such as many of the death scenes, especially those of children, in some Victorian novels and dramas. A staple in current anthologies of bad poetry are sentimental poems which were doubtless written, and by some people read, with deep and sincere feeling. A useful distinction between sentimental and nonsentimental is one which does not depend on the intensity and type of the feeling expressed or evoked, but labels as sentimental a work or passage in which the feeling is rendered in commonplaces and *dichés*, instead of being freshly verbalized and sharply realized in the details of the representation.

See *pathos*, and *sensibility*, *literature of*, and refer to I. A. Richards, *Practical Criticism* (1929), chapter 6; and the discussion of sentimentality by Monroe C. Beardsley, “Bad Poetry,” in *The Possibility of Criticism* (1970). Suzanne Clark has written a *feminist* reconsideration of sentimentalism in literature, *Sentimental Modernism and the Revolution of the Word* (1991), and Shirley Samuels has edited a collection of essays on *Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in Nineteenth-Century America* (1992).

sequential art: 152.

sestet: 370.

sestina (sěstě' na): 378.

setting: The overall setting of a narrative or dramatic work is the general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which its action occurs; the setting of a single episode or scene within the work is the particular physical location in which it takes place. The overall setting of *Macbeth*, for example, is medieval Scotland, and the setting for the particular scene in which Macbeth comes upon the witches is a blasted heath. The overall setting of James Joyce's *Ulysses* is Dublin on June 16, 1904, and its opening episode is set in the

atmosphere of their
opsis (“scene,” or “spectacle”) is now occasionally

When applied to a theatrical production, “setting” is synonymous with
 , which is a French term denoting both the scenery and the **proper-**
 , or movable pieces of furniture, on the stage. The French **mise en scène**
 ”) is sometimes used in English as another synonym for “set-
 ”; it is more useful, however, to apply the term more broadly, as the
 ’s overall conception, staging, and directing of

: 364.

In medieval and later Christian theology these sins were usu-

“deadly” because they were considered to put the soul of

Sloth was accounted a deadly sin because it signified not simply

accidie, “dejection,” and “spiritual dryness”; it was

The seven deadly sins (or in an alternative term, **cardinal sins**) were

—sometimes in elaborately developed *personifications*—includ-
 ’s *Piers Plowman* (B, Passus 5), Geoffrey Chaucer’s
 ’s Tale,” William Dunbar’s “The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis,”
 ’s *Faerie Queene* (Book I, Canto 4). See Morton W.
The Seven Deadly Sins (1952).

The seven deadly or cardinal sins were balanced by the **seven cardinal**
 . Three of these, called the “theological virtues” because they were

—see St. Paul’s *I Corinthians* 13:13: “And now abideth faith, hope, and
 ” The other four, the “natural virtues,” were derived from

Refer to Robert W. Ackerman, *Backgrounds to Medieval English Literature*

English authors, see W. H. Auden, Cyril Connolly, Patrick Leigh-Fermor, Edith Sitwell, Christopher Sykes, Evelyn Waugh, and Angus Wilson, *Seven Deadly Sins: Common Reader Edition* (2002).

Shakespearean sonnet: 370.

shaped verse: 61.

shifters (in grammar): 233.

short short story: 366.

short story: A short story is a brief work of prose fiction, and most of the terms for analyzing the component elements, the types, and the narrative techniques of the *novel* are applicable to the short story as well. The short story differs from the **anecdote**—the unelaborated narration of a single incident—in that, like the novel, it organizes the action, thought, and dialogue of its characters into the artful pattern of a plot, directed toward particular effects on an audience. (See *narrative and narratology*.) And as in the novel, the plot form may be comic, tragic, romantic, or satiric; the story is presented to us from one of many available *points of view*; and it may be written in the mode of fantasy, realism, or naturalism.

In the **tale**, or “story of incident,” the focus of interest is primarily on the course and outcome of the events, as in Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Gold Bug* (1843) and other tales of detection, in many of the stories of O. Henry (1862–1910), and in the stock but sometimes well-contrived western, *detective*, and adventure stories in popular magazines. “Stories of character” focus instead on the state of mind and motivation, or on the psychological and moral qualities, of the protagonists. In some of the stories of character by Anton Chekhov (1860–1904), the Russian master of the form, nothing more happens than an encounter and conversation between two people. Ernest Hemingway’s classic “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” consists only of a curt dialogue between two waiters about an old man who each day gets drunk and stays on in the café until it closes, followed by a brief meditation on the part of one of the waiters. In some stories there is a balance of interest between external action and character. Hemingway’s “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” is as violent in its packed events as any sensational adventure tale, but every particular of the action and dialogue is contrived to test and reveal, with a surprising set of *reversals*, the moral quality of all three protagonists.

The short story differs from the novel in the dimension that Aristotle called “magnitude,” and this limitation of length imposes differences both in the effects that the story can achieve and in the choice and elaboration of the elements to achieve those effects. Edgar Allan Poe, who is sometimes called the originator of the short story as an established *genre*, was at any rate its first critical theorist. He defined what he called “the prose tale” as a narrative which can be read at one sitting of from half an hour to two hours, and is

SHORT STORY

“a certain unique or single effect” to which every detail is subordi-
’s *Twice Told Tales*, 1842). Poe’s com-

setting, keeps the complications down, and clears up the *dénoue-*
quickly—sometimes in a few sentences. (See *plot*.) The central incident is
’s life and

Many distinguished short stories depart from this paradigm in various

short short story, which is a slightly elaborated

’s *Billy Budd* (c. 1890), Henry James’ *The Turn of the Screw*
’s *Heart of Darkness* (1902), and Thomas Mann’s *Mario*
(1930). In such works, the status of middle length between

novelette, or *novella*. This form has been especially
Novelle) after it was introduced

The short narrative, in both verse and prose, is one of the oldest and most

Glossary, are the *fable*,
exemplum, the *folktale*, the *fabliau*, and the *parable*. Early in its history, there
frame-story: a preliminary narrative within

The Arabian Nights (see
The Arabian Nights, trans. Husain Haddawy, 1990). This

Decameron (1353) and by Chaucer for his versified *Canterbury Tales*

’s frame-plot, each story constitutes a complete and rounded narra-

vehicle for the quarrels and topics of argument en route. In its more recent forms, the frame-story may enclose either a single narrative (Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*) or a sequence of narratives (Joel Chandler Harris' stories as told by Uncle Remus, 1881 and later; see under *beast fable*).

The type of prose narrative which approximates the present concept of the short story was developed, beginning in the early nineteenth century, in order to satisfy the need for short fiction by the many **magazines** (periodical collections of diverse materials, including essays, reviews, verses, and prose stories) that were inaugurated at that time. Among the early practitioners were Washington Irving, Hawthorne, and Poe in America, Sir Walter Scott and Mary Shelley in England, E. T. A. Hoffmann in Germany, Balzac in France, and Gogol, Pushkin, and Turgenev in Russia. Since then, almost all the major novelists in all the European languages have also written notable short stories. The form has flourished especially in America; Frank O'Connor has called it "the national art form," and its American masters include (in addition to the writers mentioned above) Mark Twain, William Faulkner, Katherine Anne Porter, Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor, John O'Hara, J. F. Powers, John Cheever, and J. D. Salinger.

See Sean O'Faolain, *The Short Story* (1948, reprinted 1964); Frank O'Connor, *The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story* (1962); R. L. Pattee, *The Development of the American Short Story* (rev. 1966); Ian Reid, *The Short Story* (1977); Malcolm Bradbury, ed., *The Penguin Book of Modern British Short Stories* (1987); Julie Brown, ed., *American Women Short Story Writers* (1995); John Updike, ed., *The Best American Short Stories of the Century* (1999). On the novella: Ronald Paulson, *The Novelette Before 1900* (1968); Mary Doyle Springer, *Forms of the Modern Novella* (1976); Martin Swales, *The German Novelle* (1977).

showing (in narrative): 47.

sign: 358.

sign proper (in semiotics): 358.

significance (in interpretation): 178.

signified (in linguistics): 195; 358.

signifier: 195; 358.

simile (sīm' ilē): 130; 212.

Skeltonics: 93.

slam (poetry): 271.

: 349.

Socialist Realism was a term used by Marxist critics for no-
—that is, novels that accorded

“Socialist Realism” was the officially

See *Marxist criticism*, *proletarian novel*, and *realism*, and refer to Georg Lukács,
(trans. 1964); Mark Slonim, *Soviet Russian Literature*
Marxist Models of Literary Realism (1978).

Most literary historians and critics have taken some

Russian formalism, *New Criticism*, *structuralism*, *deconstruction*.)
“sociology of literature,” however, is applied only to the writings

’s class status, gender, and political

’s profession and of the publication and

—in the choice and

evaluations of the modes of life it renders, and even in its formal qualities—by the social, political, and economic organization and forces of its age. Such critics also tend to view the interpretation and assessment of a literary work by a reading public as shaped by the circumstances specific to that public's time and place. The French historian Hippolyte Taine is sometimes considered the first modern sociologist of literature in his *History of English Literature* (1863), which analyzed a work as determined by three factors: its author's "race," its geographical and social "milieu," and its historical "moment."

For prominent sociological emphases in recent critical writings, see *feminist criticism*—which emphasizes the role of male interests and assumptions as determinants of the content, values, and interpretations of the standard literary canon—and also *Marxist criticism*. For an influential Marxist version, see Lucien Goldmann, *Essays on Method in the Sociology of Literature*, 1980. For approaches by the *Frankfurt School* of Marxist criticism, see two essays by Leo Lowenthal, both titled "On Sociology of Literature," 1932, 1948, reprinted in *Literature and Mass Culture*, 1984. It should be noted that Marx's views of the economic basis of social organization, class *ideologies*, and class conflict have influenced the work of many critics who, although not committed to Marxist doctrine, stress the sociological context and content of works of literature. The most thoroughgoing treatments of literary works as cultural products that are embedded in the circumstances and discourses of a time and place are by advocates of the current modes of criticism called the *new historicism*. For late developments in the sociology of literary texts, see *book history studies*.

See the readings listed under *authors and authorship*, *book history studies*, *feminist criticism*, *Marxist criticism*, and *new historicism*. Refer also to the pioneering study by Alexandre Beljame, *Men of Letters and the English Public*—that is, in the eighteenth century (1883, trans. 1948); Levin Schücking, *The Sociology of Literary Taste* (rev. 1941); Hugh Dalziel Duncan, *Language and Literature in Society, with a Bibliographical Guide to the Sociology of Literature* (1953); Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays in Art and Literature* (1996). Bourdieu's views have been applied to the formation of the canon of literature by John Guillory in *Cultural Capital* (1995). See also two books on the sociology of the production of popular literature and its audience by Janice Radway, *A Feeling for Books: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire* (1997), and *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (1991). Collections of essays in sociological criticism include Joseph P. Strelka, ed., *Literary Criticism and Sociology* (1973); Elizabeth and Tom Burns, eds., *Sociology of Literature and Drama: Selected Readings* (1973); and the issue of *Critical Inquiry* devoted to the sociology of literature, Vol. 14 (Spring 1988).

Socratic irony: 186.

solecism (sōl' ēsizm): 203.

SOLILOQUY

: Soliloquy is the act of talking to oneself, whether silently or aloud. In *convention* by which a character, alone on the stage, utters

's motives and state of mind, or

's *Dr. Faustus* (first per-

' frantic mental and emotional state during his

's speech which begins "To be or not to be." Compare *monologue*.
A related stage device is the **aside**, in which a character expresses to

's state of mind, and for conveying exposi-
'Neill, however, revived and

Strange Interlude (1928). For references to *soliloquy* in other entries,
63, 64, 94.

: A *lyric* poem consisting of a single *stanza* of fourteen iambic pentameter
meter and *rhyme*.) There

Italian or **Petrarchan sonnet** (named after the fourteenth-century Italian poet Petrarch) falls into two main parts: an **octave** (eight lines) rhyming *abbaabba* followed by a **sestet** (six lines) rhyming *cdecde* or some variant, such as *cdccdc*. Petrarch's sonnets were first imitated in England, in both their stanza form and their standard subject—the hopes and pains of an adoring male lover—by Sir Thomas Wyatt in the early sixteenth century. (See *Petrarchan conceit*.) The Petrarchan form was later used, for a great variety of subjects, by Milton, Wordsworth, Christina Rossetti, D. G. Rossetti, and other sonneteers, who sometimes made it technically easier in English (which does not have as many rhyming possibilities as Italian) by introducing a new pair of rhymes in the second four lines of the octave.

tury also developed a stanza form called the **English sonnet**, or else the **Shakespearean sonnet**, after its greatest practitioner. This sonnet falls into three *quatrains* and a concluding *couplet*: *abab cdcd efef gg*. There was a notable variant, the **Spenserian sonnet**, in which Spenser linked each quatrain to the next by a continuing rhyme: *abab bcbc cdcd ee*.

John Donne shifted from the hitherto primary subject, sexual love, to a variety of religious themes in his *Holy Sonnets*, written early in the seventeenth century; and Milton, in the latter part of that century, expanded the range of the sonnet to other matters of serious concern. Except for a lapse in the English *Neoclassic Period*, the sonnet has remained a popular form to the present day and includes among its distinguished practitioners, in the nineteenth century, Wordsworth, Keats, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Christina Rossetti, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and in the twentieth century, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Edna St. Vincent Millay, W. B. Yeats, Robert Frost, W. H. Auden, and Dylan Thomas. The stanza is just long enough to permit a fairly complex lyric development, yet so short, and so exigent in its rhymes, as to pose a standing challenge to the ingenuity and artistry of the poet. The rhyme pattern of the Petrarchan sonnet has on the whole favored a statement of a problem, situation, or incident in the octave, with a resolution in the sestet. The English form sometimes uses a similar division of material, but often presents instead a repetition-with-variation of a statement in each of the three quatrains; in either case, the final couplet in the English sonnet usually imposes an *epigrammatic* turn at the end. In Drayton's fine Elizabethan sonnet in the English form "Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part," the lover brusquely declares in the first quatrain, then reiterates in the second, that he is glad that the affair is cleanly ended, then hesitates at the finality of the parting in the third quatrain, and in the concluding couplet suddenly drops his swagger to make one last plea. Here are the third quatrain and couplet:

Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes;
Now if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou mightst him yet recover.

Following Petrarch's early example, a number of Elizabethan authors arranged their poems into **sonnet sequences**, or **sonnet cycles**, in which a series of sonnets are linked together by exploring the varied aspects of a relationship between lovers, or else by indicating a development in the relationship that constitutes a kind of implicit plot. Shakespeare ordered his sonnets in a sequence, as did Sidney in *Astrophel and Stella* (1580) and Spenser in *Amoretti* (1595). Later examples of the sonnet sequence on various subjects are Wordsworth's *The River Duddon*, D. G. Rossetti's *House of Life*, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, and the American poet William Ellery Leonard's *Two Lives*. Dylan Thomas' *Altarwise by Owl-light* (1936) is a sequence of ten sonnets which are abstruse meditations on the poet's own life. George Meredith's *Modern Love* (1862), which concerns a bitterly unhappy marriage, is sometimes called a sonnet sequence, even though its component poems consist not of fourteen but of sixteen lines.

On the early history of the sonnet and its development in England through Milton, see Michael R. G. Spiller, *The Development of the Sonnet: An*

(1992). See also L. G. Sterner, *The Sonnet in American Literature Themes and Variations in Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1963); *The Sonnet Sequence: A Study of the Strategies* (1997); *The Art of Shakespeare's Sonnets* (1997); Stephen Burt and *The Art of the Sonnet* (2010).

: Speech-act theory, developed by the philosopher John Austin (1962), and was explored and expanded by other "ordinary-language" including John Searle and H. P. Grice. Austin's theory is di-

"logical obsession," that the standard sentence—of
—is a statement that describes a situation
's adop-
's speech-act theory opposes to these views the
—
—we

speech acts: (1) We utter a sentence;
"locution." (2) We refer to an object, and predicate

The **illocutionary act** performed by a locution may indeed be the one

"I will leave you tomorrow," may in a particular verbal and situational
"illocutionary force" either of an assertion, or of

's term, "felicitously." A felicitous performance of a
"appropriateness condi-
" which obtain for that type of act; these conditions are tacit linguistic

"felicitous," or suc-
"I will come

to see you tomorrow,” depends on its meeting its special set of appropriateness conditions: the speaker must be capable of fulfilling his promise, must intend to do so, and must believe that the listener wants him to do so. Failing the last condition, for example, the same verbal utterance might have the illocutionary force of a threat.

In *How to Do Things with Words*, John Austin established an initial distinction between two broad types of locutions: **constatives** (sentences that assert something about a fact or state of affairs and are adjudged to be true or false) and **performatives** (sentences that are speech acts that accomplish something, such as questioning, promising, praising, and so on). As he continued his subtle analysis, however, Austin showed that this initial division of utterances into two sharply exclusive classes does not hold, in that many performatives also involve reference to a state of affairs, while constatives also perform an illocutionary act. Austin, however, drew special attention to the “explicit performative,” which is a sentence whose utterance itself, when executed under appropriate institutional and other conditions, brings about the state of affairs that it signifies. Examples are “I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth”; “I apologize”; “I call this meeting to order”; “Let spades be trumps.”

If an illocutionary act has an effect on the actions or state of mind of the hearer which goes beyond merely understanding what has been said, it is also a **perlocutionary** act. Thus, the utterance “I am going to leave you,” with the illocutionary force of a warning, not only may be understood as such, but may have (or fail to have) the additional perlocutionary effect of frightening the hearer. Similarly, by the illocutionary act of promising to do something, one may please (or else anger) the hearer; and by asserting something, one may have the effect either of enlightening, or of inspiring, or of intimidating the hearer. Some perlocutionary effects are intended by the speaker; others occur without the speaker’s intention, and even against that intention. For a useful exploration of the relations, in diverse cases, of illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts, see Ted Cohen, “Illocutions and Perlocutions,” in *Foundations of Language*, Vol. 9 (1973).

A number of deconstructive theorists have proposed that the use of language in fictional literature (which Austin had excluded from his consideration of what he called “seriously” intended speech acts) is in fact a prime instance of the **performative**, in that it does not refer to a pre-existing state of affairs, but brings about, or brings into being, the characters, action, and world that it describes. On the other hand, since performative linguistic acts can’t avoid recourse to statement and assertion, some deconstructive theorists convert Austin’s constative/performative distinction into an undecidable deadlock, or oscillation, of irreconcilable oppositions. See *deconstruction* and refer to Barbara Johnson, “Poetry and Performative Language: Mallarmé and Austin,” in *The Critical Difference* (1980); Sandra Petrey, *Speech Acts and Literary Theory* (1990); Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (1997), chapter 7, “Performative Language.” Judith Butler has proposed that the terms we use to identify a person’s gender and sexuality are modes of performative language, in that the reiterated application of such terms to persons,

“perform”) the identities and the modes of
Gender Trouble: Fem-
 (1990) and *Excitable Speech* (1997); refer also
queer theory.

Since 1970 speech-act theory has influenced in conspicuous and varied

.) Speech-act theory has also been used in a more radical

fiction and truth). What
 —or else what the author’s invented narrator—
 “pretended” set of assertions, which are in-

’s ordinary commitment to the truth of what he or she asserts.

—whether these are asser-
 —are held to be responsible to ordinary il-

imitation). Traditional mimetic critics had
literature imitates reality by representing in a verbal medium the

“mimetic
 ” A lyric, for example, is said to be an imitation of that form of

’s *The History of Tom Jones*, 1749), or autobiography
 ’ *David Copperfield*, 1849–50), or even a scholar’s annotated
 ’s *Pale Fire*, 1962). See Barbara Herrnstein
On the Margins of Discourse: The Relation of Literature to Language (1978).
 For basic philosophical treatments of speech acts see John Austin, *How to*
 (1962); John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Phi-*
 (1970); and H. P. Grice, “Logic and Conversation,” in
 , Vol. 3 (1975). On the application of speech-act theory
metaphor, theories of, and discourse anal-
 . Among the attempts to model the general theory of literature, or at least
 “Speech
 ” *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, Vol. 4 (1971);
 “The Logical Status of Fictional Discourse,” in his *Expression*
 (1979), chapter 3; refer also to the entry *fiction and truth*. A de-
 ’s *Toward a Speech Act*
 (1977). For views of the limitations of speech-act
 “How to Do

Things with Austin and Searle: Speech-Act Theory and Literary Criticism,” in *Is There a Text in This Class?* (1980); and Joseph Margolis, “Literature and Speech Acts,” *Philosophy and Literature*, Vol. 3 (1979). For Jacques Derrida’s deconstructive analysis of Austin’s views, and John Searle’s reply, see under *deconstruction*. For references to *speech-act theory* in other entries, see pages 128, 347.

Spenserian sonnet: 370.

Spenserian stanza: 377.

spiritual autobiography: 27; 62.

spirituals (African-American): 166.

spondaic (spōndā’ ĭk): 219.

sprezzatura (sprēts’ ātoo’ rā): 339.

sprung rhythm: 222.

stable irony: 185.

stanza: A stanza (Italian for “stopping place”) is a grouping of the verse lines in a poem, often set off by a space in the printed text. Usually the stanzas of a given poem are marked by a recurrent pattern of rhyme and are also uniform in the number and lengths of the component lines. Some unrhymed poems, however, are divided into stanzaic units (for example, William Collins’ “Ode to Evening,” 1747), and some rhymed poems are composed of stanzas that vary in their component lines (for example, the *irregular ode*).

Of the great diversity of English stanza forms, many lack specific names and must be described by describing the number of lines, the type and number of metric *feet* in each line, and the pattern of the *rhyme*. Certain stanzas, however, are used so often that they have been given the convenience of a name.

A **couplet** is a pair of rhymed lines that are equal in length. The **octosyllabic couplet** has lines of eight syllables, usually consisting of four iambic feet, as in Andrew Marvell’s “To His Coy Mistress” (1681):

The grave’s a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Iambic pentameter lines rhyming in pairs are called **decasyllabic** (“ten-syllable”) **couplets** or “heroic couplets.” (For examples, see the entry *heroic couplet*.)

The **tercet**, or **triplet**, is a stanza of three lines, usually with a single rhyme. The lines may be the same length (as in Robert Herrick’s “Upon Julia’s Clothes,” 1648, written in tercets of iambic tetrameter), or else of

STANZA

's "Wishes to His Supposed Mistress"
iambic dimeter, trimeter, and

:

Who e'er she be
That not impossible she
That shall command my heart and me.

Terza rima is composed of tercets which are interlinked, in that each is
aba, bcb, cdc, and so on.
Divine Comedy (early fourteenth century) in terza rima;

" (1820), and it occurs also in the poetry of Milton,

The **quatrain**, or four-line stanza, is the most common in English versi-
ballad
(in alternating four- and three-foot lines rhyming *abcb*, or less fre-
abab) is one common quatrain; when this same stanza occurs in *hymns*,
common measure. Emily Dickinson is the most subtle, varied,
partial

prevents monotony:

Purple—is fashionable twice—
This season of the year,
And when a soul perceives itself
To be an Emperor.

heroic quatrain, in iambic pentameter rhyming *abab*, is the stanza of
's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751):

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness, and to me.

Rime royal was introduced by Chaucer in *Troilus and Criseyde* (the latter

"the Scottish Chaucerian," King James I of Scotland, in
The Kingis Quair ("The King's Book"), written about 1424. It is a
ababbcc. This form was quite
"A Lover's

" and *The Rape of Lucrece*, which begins:

From the besieged Ardea all in post
Borne by the trustless wings of false desire,
Lust-breathèd Tarquin leaves the Roman host
And to Collatium bears the lightless fire

Which, in pale embers hid, lurks to aspire
 And girdle with embracing flames the waist
 Of Collatine's fair love, Lucrece the chaste.

Ottava rima, as the Italian name indicates, has eight lines; it rhymes *abababcc*. Like terza rima and the sonnet, it was brought from Italian into English by Sir Thomas Wyatt in the first half of the sixteenth century. Although employed by a number of earlier poets, it is notable especially as the stanza which helped Byron discover what he was born to write, the satiric poem *Don Juan* (1819–24). Note the comic effect of the *forced rhyme* in the concluding couplet:

Juan was taught from out the best edition,
 Expurgated by learned men, who place,
 Judiciously, from out the schoolboy's vision,
 The grosser parts; but, fearful to deface
 Too much their modest bard by this omission,
 And pitying sore his mutilated case,
 They only add them all in an appendix,
 Which saves, in fact, the trouble of an index.

Spenserian stanza is a still longer form devised by Edmund Spenser for *The Faerie Queene* (1590–96)—nine lines, in which the first eight lines are iambic pentameter and the last iambic hexameter (an *Alexandrine*), rhyming *ababbcbcc*. Enchanted by Spenser's gracious movement and music, many poets have attempted this stanza in spite of its difficulties. Its greatest successes have been in poems which, like *The Faerie Queene*, evolve in a leisurely way, with ample time for unrolling the richly textured stanzas; for example, James Thomson's "The Castle of Indolence" (1748), John Keats' "The Eve of St. Agnes" (1820), Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Adonais" (1821), and the narrative section of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Lotos-Eaters" (1832). The following is a stanza from Spenser's *Faerie Queene* 1.1.41:

And more, to lulle him in his slumber soft,
 A trickling streame from high rocke tumbling downe
 And ever-drizling raine upon the loft
 Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne
 Of swarming Bees, did cast him in a swowne:
 No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cries,
 As still are wont t'annoy the wallèd towne,
 Might there be heard: but carelesse Quiet lyes,
 Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enemies.

There are also various elaborate stanza forms imported from France, such as the rondeau, the villanelle, and the triolet, containing intricate repetitions, at set intervals, both of rhymes and of entire lines; these stanzas have been used mainly, but not exclusively, for *light verse*. Their revival by W. H. Auden, William Empson, and other mid-twentieth-century poets was a sign of

’ “Do not go gentle
 ” is a **villanelle**; that is, it consists of five *tercets* and a
 , all on two rhymes, and with systematic later repetitions of lines 1
 One of the most intricate of poetic forms is the **sestina**: a poem of six

envoy, or
 ” is a short formal stanza which is appended to a poem by way of

See *meter*. Poetic stanzas and nonstanzaic forms of verse discussed else-
Glossary are *ballad stanza*, *blank verse*, *free verse*, *heroic couplet*, *limer-*
 , and *sonnet*. The pattern and history of the various stanzas are described and
English Verse (1903), and in Paul Fussell, *Poetic*
 (rev. 1979). For references to *stanza* in other entries, see
 351.

: Stock characters are types of persons that occur repeatedly in
conventions of
Old Comedy of the Greeks had three stock characters whose
alazon, or impostor and self-
eiron, or self-derogatory and understating character,
bomolo-
 , or buffoon, whose antics add an extra comic element. (See Lane Co-
An Aristotelian Theory of Comedy, 1922.) In his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957),
agroikos—the
 —and identified the persistence of these

’arte revolved around such stock characters as Pulcinella and
commedia dell’arte.
 The plot of an Elizabethan *romantic comedy*, such as Shakespeare’s *As You*
 and *Twelfth Night*, often turned on a heroine disguised as a handsome

’s *Volpone*, connives with his
gull. Nineteenth-century

Beat or hipster or

alienated protagonist who, with or without the help of drugs, has opted out of the Establishment is a more recent stock character.

In some literary forms, such as the *morality play* and Ben Jonson's *comedy of humours*, the artistic aim does not require more than type characters. (See also *flat character*, under *character and characterization*.) But even in realistic literary forms, the artistic success of a protagonist does not depend on whether or not an author incorporates an established type, but on how well the type is re-created as a convincing individual who fulfills his or her function in the overall plot. Two of Shakespeare's greatest characters are patently conventional. Falstaff is in part a re-rendering of the *Vice*, the comic tempter of the medieval morality play, and in part of the familiar braggart soldier, or **miles gloriosus**, of Roman and Renaissance comedy, whose ancestry goes back to the Greek *alazon*; and Hamlet combines some stock attributes of the hero of Elizabethan *revenge tragedies* with those of the Elizabethan melancholic man. Jane Austen's delightful Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) can be traced back through Restoration comedy to the type of intelligent, witty, and dauntless heroines that enliven Shakespeare's romantic comedies.

For references to *stock character* in other entries, see pages 55, 58.

stock response: A derogatory term for a reader's reaction that is considered to be habitual and stereotyped, in place of one which is genuinely and aptly responsive to a given literary passage or text. The term is sometimes applied to the response of authors themselves to characters, situations, or topics that they set forth in a work; usually, however, it is used to describe standard and inadequate responses of the readers of the work. I. A. Richards, in his *Practical Criticism* (1929), chapter 5, gave currency to this term by citing and analyzing stock responses by students and other respondents who wrote critiques of unidentified poems presented for their interpretation and evaluation.

stock situations: Stock situations are the counterparts to *stock characters*; that is, they are recurrent types of incidents or of sequences of actions in a drama or narrative. Instances range from single situations or events—the eavesdropper who is hidden behind a bush or in a closet, or the suddenly discovered will or birthmark—to the overall pattern of a plot. The Horatio Alger books for boys, in mid-nineteenth-century America, were all variations on the stock plot of rags-to-riches-by-pluck-and-luck, and we recognize the standard boy-meets-girl incident in the opening episode of much popular fiction and in many motion pictures.

Some recent critics distinguish certain recurrent character types and elements of plot, such as the sexually irresistible but fatal enchantress, the sacrificial scapegoat, and the underground journey, as “archetypal” components which are held to recur, not simply because they are functional literary conventions, but because, like dreams and myths, they express and appeal to universal human impulses, anxieties, and needs. See *archetype*, and for structuralist analyses of recurrent plot types, *narrative and narratology*.

: 234; 294.

A phrase used by William James in his *Principles of* (1890) to describe the unbroken flow of perceptions, memories,

introspection,
's

' brother Henry James, to many novelists of the present era. The long
' *Portrait of a Lady*, for example, is entirely given over to
's description of the sustained process of Isabel's memories,

Les Lauriers sont coupés ("The Laurels
") which undertakes to represent the scenes and events of the

"stream of consciousness" is the name

's mental process, in which

Some critics use "stream of consciousness" interchangeably with the term
. It is useful, however, to follow the usage of critics who

"Interior monologue" is then reserved for that species of stream of

's mind. In interior mono-

conventions

Transparent Minds: Narrative
(1978).

James Joyce developed a variety of devices for stream-of-consciousness
Ulysses (1922). Here is a passage of interior monologue from the
" episode, in which Leopold Bloom saunters through Dublin,

Pineapple rock, lemon platt, butter scotch. A sugar-sticky girl shov-
eling scoopfuls of creams for a christian brother. Some school treat.

Bad for their tummies. Lozenge and comfit manufacturer to His Majesty the King. God. Save. Our. Sitting on his throne, sucking red jujubes white.

Dorothy Richardson sustains a stream-of-consciousness mode of narrative, focused exclusively on the mind and perceptions of her heroine, throughout the twelve volumes of her novel *Pilgrimage* (1915–38); Virginia Woolf employs the procedure as a prominent, although not exclusive, narrative mode in several novels, including *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927); and William Faulkner exploits it in the first three of the four parts of *The Sound and the Fury* (1929).

Refer to *narratology* and *point of view*, and see Leon Edel, *The Modern Psychological Novel* (1955, rev. 1964); Robert Humphrey, *Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel* (1954); Melvin Friedman, *Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method* (1955). For a review of early and more recent scientific writings on the stream of consciousness, see Oliver Sachs, “In the River of Consciousness,” *New York Review of Books*, 15 Jan. 2004.

stress (in linguistics): 197.

stress (in meter): 197.

strong-stress meter: 221.

strophe (strō' f ē): 262.

structural irony: 185.

structuralism: 381; 196, 310.

structuralist criticism: Almost all literary theorists beginning with Aristotle have emphasized the importance of *structure*, conceived in diverse ways, in analyzing a work of literature. (See *form and structure*.) “Structuralist criticism,” however, now designates the practice of critics who analyze literature on the explicit model of structuralist linguistics. The class includes a number of *Russian formalists*, especially Roman Jakobson, but consists most prominently of a group of writers, with their headquarters in Paris, who applied to literature the concepts and analytic distinctions developed by Ferdinand de Saussure in his *Course in General Linguistics* (1915). This mode of criticism is part of a larger movement, French **structuralism**, inaugurated in the 1950s by the cultural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who analyzed, on the model of Saussure’s linguistics, such cultural phenomena as mythology, kinship relations, and modes of preparing food. See *linguistics in literary criticism*.

In its early form, as employed by Lévi-Strauss and other writers in the 1950s and 1960s, structuralism cuts across the traditional disciplinary areas within and between the humanities and social sciences by undertaking to provide an objective account of all social and cultural practices, in a range that

STRUCTURALIST CRITICISM

that have a set significance for the members of a particular culture, and

's *langue*, the

's exposition, are not objective facts
"relational" entities; that

"codes" that determine significant

parole but in the *langue*; that is, not in any particular cultural phe-

As applied in literary studies, **structuralist criticism** conceives *literature*

and *morphemic* levels of organization, or between *paradigmatic* and *syn-*
relationships; and some critics analyze the structure of a literary text
syntax in a well-formed sentence. The undertaking of a

New Criticism) to provide the

grammar (the system of rules and codes) that governs the forms and

"to construct a poetics which
" (*Structuralist Poetics*, 1975,

Structuralism is in explicit opposition to *mimetic criticism* (the view that
expressive criticism (the view

the radical forms of structuralism depart from the assumptions and ruling ideas of traditional humanistic criticism. (See *humanism*.) For example:

1. In the structuralist view, what had been called a literary “work” becomes a *text*; that is, a mode of writing constituted by a play of internal elements according to specifically literary conventions and codes. These factors may generate an illusion of reality, but have no truth-value, nor even any reference to a reality existing outside the literary system itself.
2. The individual author, or *subject*, is not assigned any initiative, expressive intentions, or design as the “origin” or producer of a work. Instead the conscious “self” is declared to be a construct that is itself the product of the workings of the linguistic system, and the mind of an author is described as an imputed “space” within which the impersonal, “always-already” existing system of literary language, conventions, codes, and rules of combination gets precipitated into a particular text. Roland Barthes expressed, dramatically, this subversion of the traditional humanistic view, “as institution, the author is dead” (“The Death of the Author,” in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. 1977). See *author and authorship* and the *subject*, under *poststructuralism*.
3. Structuralism replaces the author with the reader as the central agency in criticism; but the traditional reader, as a conscious, purposeful, and feeling individual, is replaced by the impersonal activity of “reading,” and what is read is not a work imbued with meanings, but *écriture*, writing. The focus of structuralist criticism, accordingly, is not on the sensibility of the reader, but on the impersonal process of reading which, by bringing into play the requisite conventions, codes, and expectations, makes literary sense of the sequence of words, phrases, and sentences that constitute a text. See *text and writing* (*écriture*).

In the late 1960s, the structuralist enterprise, in its rigorous form and inclusive pretensions, ceded its central position to deconstruction and other modes of poststructural theories, which subverted the scientific claims of structuralism and its view that literary meanings are made determinate by a system of invariant conventions and codes. (See *poststructuralism*.) This shift in the prevailing point of view is exemplified by the changing emphases in the lively and influential writings of the French critic and man of letters, Roland Barthes (1915–80). His early work developed the structuralist theory that was based on the linguistics of Saussure—a theory that Barthes applied not only to literature but also to decoding, by reference to an underlying signifying system, many aspects of popular culture. (See Barthes’ *Mythologies*, 1957, trans. 1972, and refer to *cultural studies*.) In his later writings, Barthes abandoned the scientific aspiration of structuralism, and distinguished between the “readerly” text such as the realistic novel that tries to “close” interpretation by insisting on specific meanings, and the “writerly” text that aims at the ideal of “a galaxy of signifiers,” and so encourages the reader to be a producer of his or her own meanings according not to one code but to a multiplicity of codes. And in *The Pleasure of the Text* (1973) Barthes lauds, in contrast to the

“jouissance” (or orgasmic bliss) evoked by a text

text and writing (écriture).

Structuralist premises and procedures, however, continue to be deployed

semiotics, cultural studies, stylistics, and narrative and narratology.

A clear and comprehensive survey of the program and accomplishments

Structuralist Poetics (1975); also Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature* (1974). For an introduction to the general movement of *Structuralism: The Art of the Intelligible* (1960); *The Concept of Structuralism: A Critical Analysis* (1975); and *Structuralism and Semiotics* (1977). For critical views of structuralism, see *Literature against Itself* (1979); Frank Lentricchia, *After* (1980), chapters 4–5; J. G. Merquior, *From Prague to Paris: A* (1986); Leonard Jackson, (1991). Some

The Structuralists: From Marx to Lévi-Strauss (1972); David Robey, ed., (1973); see also Richard Macksey and Eugenio *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the* (1970). Among the books of structuralist literary criticism available, see *Critical Essays* (1964); Stephen *The Nouveau Roman: A Study in the Practice of Writing* (1972); Tzvetan *The Poetics of Prose* (trans. 1977) and *Introduction to Poetics* (trans. *Figures of Literary Discourse* (trans. 1984). Structuralist *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema Language of Film* (1973).

For references to *structuralist criticism* in other entries, see pages 149, 163, 400.

: **138**. See also *structuralism*.

: Style has traditionally been defined as the manner of linguistic expression —as *how* speakers or writers say whatever it is that they say.

rhetoric); the characteristic *diction*, or choice of words; the type *syntax*; and the density and kinds of *figurative*

In standard theories based on Cicero and other classical rhetoricians, **high** (or “grand”), **middle** (or “mean”), and the **low** (or “plain”) **style**. The doctrine of

decorum, which was influential through the eighteenth century, required that the level of style in a work be appropriate to the social class of the speaker, to the occasion on which it is spoken, and to the dignity of its literary genre (see *poetic diction*). The critic Northrop Frye introduced a variant of this long-persisting analysis of stylistic levels in literature. He made a primary differentiation between the **demotic style** (which is modeled on the language, rhythms, and associations of ordinary speech) and the **hieratic style** (which employs a variety of formal elaborations that separate the literary language from ordinary speech). Frye then proceeded to distinguish a high, middle, and low level in each of these classes. See *The Well-Tempered Critic* (1963), chapter 2.

In analyzing style, two types of sentence structure are often distinguished: The **periodic sentence** is one in which the component parts, or “members,” are so composed that the close of its syntactic structure remains suspended until the end of the sentence; the effect tends to be formal or oratorical. An example is the eloquent opening sentence of James Boswell’s *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), in which the structure of the syntax is not concluded until we reach the final noun, “task”:

To write the life of him who excelled all mankind in writing the lives of others, and who, whether we consider his extraordinary endowments, or his various works, has been equaled by few in any age, is an arduous, and may be reckoned in me a presumptuous task.

In the **nonperiodic** (or **loose**) **sentence**—more relaxed and conversational in its effect—the component members are continuous, but so loosely joined that the sentence would have been syntactically complete if a period had been inserted at one or more places before the actual close. So the two sentences in Joseph Addison’s *Spectator* 105, describing the limited topics in the conversation of a “man-about-town,” or dilettante, could each have closed at several points in the sequence of their component clauses:

He will tell you the names of the principal favourites, repeat the shrewd sayings of a man of quality, whisper an intrigue that is not yet blown upon by common fame; or, if the sphere of his observations is a little larger than ordinary, will perhaps enter into all the incidents, turns, and revolutions in a game of ombre. When he has gone thus far he has shown you the whole circle of his accomplishments, his parts are drained, and he is disabled from any farther conversation.

Another distinction often made in discussing prose style is that between parataxis and hypotaxis:

A **paratactic style** is one in which the members within a sentence, or else a sequence of complete sentences, are put one after the other without any expression of their connection or relations except (at most) the non-committal connective “and.” An example is the passage just quoted from Addison’s *Spectator*. Ernest Hemingway’s style is characteristically paratactic. The members in this sentence from his novel *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) are

“ands”: “It was dim and dark and the pillars went high up,

” The curt paratactic sentences in his short story “In-
” omit all connectives: “The sun was coming over the hills. A bass

”

A **hypotactic style** is one in which the temporal, causal, logical, and

“when,” “then,” “because,” “therefore”) or by phrases (such as “in
” “as a result”) or by the use of subordinate phrases and clauses. The
Glossary is mainly hypotactic.

A very large number of loosely descriptive terms have been used to
“pure,” “ornate,” “florid,” “gay,” “sober,”

” “elaborate,” and so on. Styles are also classified according to a lit-
“the *metaphysical* style,” “Restoration prose style”);

“biblical style,” *euphuism*); according to an
“a scientific style,” “journalese”); or according to the dis-

”; “Johnsonese”). Historians of English prose style, especially in the sev-
“Shakespearean” or “Miltonic

“Ciceronian style” (named after the characteristic practice of the Roman

“Attic” or “Senecan” styles

Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm: Essays by Morris W. Croll (1966),
The Senecan Amble: A Study in Prose Form from Bacon

(1951).

Francis-Noël Thomas and Mark Turner, in *Clear and Simple as the Truth*

“a series of relationships: What can be known? What

” An analysis based on all these elements yields an indefinite number
“families,” of styles, each with its own criteria of excellence. The

“the classic style” exemplified in writings like
, *Discourse on Method* (1637) or Thomas Jefferson’s “Declara-

” (1776), but identify and discuss briefly a number of
“plain style,” “practical style,” “contemplative style,” and

„

For some recent developments in the analysis of style based on modern
stylistics and *discourse analysis*.

English Prose Style (1928); Bonamy Dobree, *Modern Prose Style* (1934); W. K. Wimsatt, *The Prose Style of Samuel Johnson* (1941); P. F. Baum, *The Other Harmony of Prose* (1952); Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (trans. 1953, reissued 2003); Josephine Miles, *Eras and Modes in English Poetry* (1957); Louis T. Milic, ed., *Stylists on Style: A Handbook with Selections for Analysis* (1969).

See also *connotation and denotation*; *decorum*; *stream of consciousness*. For features of style, see *ambiguity*; *antithesis*; *archaism*; *bathos and anticlimax*; *bombast*; *cliché*; *conceit*; *concrete and abstract*; *epithet*; *euphemism*; *euphony and cacophony*; *euphuism*; *figurative language*; *grand style*; *imagery*; *purple patch*.

stylistics: Since the 1950s the term **stylistics** has been applied to critical procedures which undertake to replace what is claimed to be the subjectivity and impressionism of standard analyses with an “objective” or “scientific” analysis of the style of literary texts. Much of the impetus toward these analytic methods, as well as models for their practical application, was provided by the writings of Roman Jakobson and other *Russian formalists*, as well as by European *structuralists*.

We can distinguish two main modes of stylistics, which differ both in conception and in the scope of their application:

1. In the narrower mode of formal stylistics, style is identified, in the traditional way, by the distinction between what is said and how it is said, or between the content and the form of a text. (See *style*.) The content is now often denoted, however, by terms such as “information,” “message,” or “propositional meaning,” while the style is defined as variations in the presentation of this information that serve to alter its “aesthetic quality” or the reader’s emotional response. The concepts of modern *linguistics* are used to identify the stylistic features, or “formal properties,” which are held to be distinctive of a particular work, or else of an author, or a literary tradition, or an era. These stylistic features may be phonological (patterns of speech sounds, meter, or rhyme), or syntactic (types of sentence structure), or lexical (*abstract* vs. *concrete* words, the relative frequency of nouns, verbs, adjectives), or rhetorical (the characteristic use of *figurative language*, *imagery*, and so on). A basic problem, acknowledged by a number of stylisticians, is to distinguish between the innumerable features and patterns of a text which can be isolated by linguistic analysis, and those features which are functionally stylistic—that is, features which make an actual difference in the aesthetic and other effects on a competent reader. See, for example, Michael Riffaterre’s objection to the elaborate stylistic analysis of Charles Baudelaire’s sonnet “Les Chats” (The Cats) by Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss, in *Structuralism*, ed. Jacques Ehrmann (1966).

Stylisticians who aim to either replace or supplement the qualitative judgments of literary scholars by objectively determinable methods of research exploit the ever-increasing technological resources of computers in

the service of what has come to be called **stylometry**: the quantitative measurement of the features of an individual writer's style. *Literary and Linguistic Computing* is a journal devoted to the use of computers in literary studies. See also B. H. Rudall and T. N. Corns, *Computers and Literature: A Practical Guide* (1987). Other analysts of style who use non-quantitative methods adopt concepts derived from language theory, such as the distinction between *paradigmatic* and *syntagmatic* relations, or the distinction between surface structure and deep structure in *transformational linguistics*, or the distinction between the propositional content and the *illocutionary force* of an utterance in *speech-act theory*. For a stylistic analysis of the ways a character's speech and thought are represented in narratives, refer to *free indirect discourse*, under *point of view*.

Sometimes the stylistic enterprise stops with the qualitative or quantitative determination, or "fingerprinting," of the style of a single text or class of texts. Often, however, the analyst tries also to relate distinctive stylistic features to traits in an author's psyche; or to an author's characteristic ways of perceiving the world and organizing experience (see Leo Spitzer, *Linguistics and Literary History*, 1948); or to the typical conceptual frame and the attitude toward reality in an historical era (Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, reissued 2003); or else to semantic, aesthetic, and emotional functions and effects in a particular literary text (Michael Riffaterre and others).

Stanley Fish wrote a sharp critique of the scientific pretensions of formal stylistics; he proposed that since, in his view, the meaning of a text consists of a reader's total response to it, there is no valid way to make a distinction in this spectrum of response between style and content ("What Is Stylistics and Why Are They Saying Such Terrible Things about It?" in *Is There a Text in This Class?* 1980; see also *reader-response criticism*). For extended critiques both of traditional analyses of style, and of modern stylistics, based on the thesis that style is not a separable feature of language, see Bennison Gray, *Style: The Problem and Its Solution* (1969), and "Stylistics: The End of a Tradition," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 31 (1973). In *Clear and Simple as the Truth* (1994), Francis-Nöel Thomas and Mark Turner claim that standard stylistic analyses concern merely the surface features of writing, and propose a set of more basic features by which to define styles of writing; see under *style*. On the other side, the validity of distinguishing between style and propositional meaning—not absolutely, but on an appropriate level of analysis—is defended by E. D. Hirsch, "Stylistics and Synonymity," in *The Aims of Interpretation* (1976).

mid-1960s, proponents greatly expand the conception and scope of their inquiry by defining stylistics as, in the words of one theorist, "the study of the use of language in literature," involving the entire range of the "general characteristics of language ... as a medium of literary expression."

(Geoffrey N. Leech, *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*, 1969; see also Mick Short, "Literature and Language," in *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*, ed. Martin Coyle and others, 1990.) By this definition, stylistics is expanded so as to incorporate most of the concerns of both traditional literary *criticism* and traditional *rhetoric*; its distinction from these earlier pursuits is that it insists on the need to be objective by focusing sharply on the text itself and by setting out to discover the "rules" governing the process by which linguistic elements and patterns in a text accomplish their meanings and literary effects. The historian of criticism René Wellek has described this tendency of stylistic analysis to enlarge its territorial domain as "the imperialism of modern stylistics."

A comprehensive anthology is *The Stylistics Reader from Roman Jakobson to the Present*, ed. Jean Jacques Weber (1996). On formal stylistics see Thomas A. Sebeok, ed., *Style in Language* (1960); Seymour Chatman, ed., *Literary Style: A Symposium* (1971); Howard S. Babb, ed., *Essays in Stylistic Analysis* (1972); Richard Bradford, *Stylistics* (1997). For an exhaustive stylistic analysis of a twelve-line poem, see Roman Jakobson and Stephen Rudy, *Yeats's "Sorrow of Love" Through the Years* (1977).

In the practice of some critics, stylistics includes the area of study known as *discourse analysis*, which is treated in a separate entry in this *Glossary*. For inclusive views of the realm of stylistics, see M. A. K. Halliday, *Explorations in the Functions of Language* (1973); G. N. Leech and M. H. Short, *Style in Fiction* (1981); Roger Fowler, *Linguistic Criticism* (1986); Ronald Carter and Paul Simpson, eds., *Language, Discourse and Literature: An Introductory Reader in Discourse Stylistics* (1989).

stylometry (stīlō' mētrē): **388**.

subaltern: **307**.

subject, the (in poststructural criticism): **310**; *19*, **383**.

subjective: **261**.

sublimate: **321**.

sublime: The concept was introduced into the criticism of literature and art by a Greek treatise *Peri hupsous* ("On the sublime"), attributed in the manuscript to Longinus and probably written in the first century AD. As defined by Longinus, the sublime is a quality that can occur in any type of discourse, whether poetry or prose. Whereas the effect of *rhetoric* on the hearer or reader of a discourse is persuasion, the effect of the sublime is "transport" (*ekstasis*)—it is that quality of a passage which "shatters the hearer's composure," exercises irresistible "domination" over him, and "scatters the subjects like a bolt of

SUBLIME

” The source of the sublime, according to Longinus, lies in the
—the use of figurative lan-
—are matters of art

“loftiness of thought” and “strong and inspired
” The ability to achieve sublimity is in itself enough to prove the tran-
’s charac-
“sublimity is the ring of greatness in the soul.” Longinus’ examples of

“the law-
”: “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light,
’ and there was land.”
Longinus’ innovative treatise exerted a strong and persistent effect on

*expressive theory of
impressionistic criticism* (see under *criticism*). In the eighteenth

“the sublime,” from a quality of linguistic discourse that origi-
’s mind, to a quality inherent in external

’s highly influential *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin*
, published in 1757, attributes the
“in any sort terrible”—that
“fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger”—

“delightful
” (Compare *distance and involvement*.) The features of objects which

’s examples of the sublime include vast architectural
’s description of Satan in *Paradise Lost*, the description of
’s army in Shakespeare’s *1 Henry IV*, and natural phenomena; a sub-
“the noise of vast cataracts, raging
” all of which evoke “a great and awful sensation
”

During the eighteenth century, tourists and landscape painters traveled to

“the sublime ode,” such as Thomas Gray and William Collins, sought

ode.) Authors of *Gothic novels*

narrated. Samuel H. Monk, a pioneer historian of the concept of the sublime in the eighteenth century, cites as the “apotheosis” of the natural sublime the description of Simplon Pass in Wordsworth’s *The Prelude* (1805), 4.554ff.:

The immeasurable height
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
And everywhere along the hollow rent
Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and forlorn,
The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
The rocks that muttered close upon our ears—
Black drizzling crags that spake by the wayside
As if a voice were in them—the sick sight
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light....

(Samuel H. Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in Eighteenth-Century England*, 1935)

In an extended analysis of the sublime in his *Critique of Judgment* (1790), the German philosopher Immanuel Kant divided the sublime objects specified by Burke and other earlier theorists into two kinds: (1) the “mathematical sublime” encompasses the sublime of magnitude—of vastness in size or seeming limitlessness or infinitude in number. (2) The “dynamic sublime” encompasses the objects conducive to terror at our seeming helplessness before the overwhelming power of nature, provided that the terror is rendered pleasurable by the safe situation of the observer. All of Kant’s examples of sublimity are scenes and events in the natural world: “the immeasurable host” of starry systems such as the Milky Way, “shapeless mountain masses towering one above the other in wild disorder,” “volcanoes in all their violence of destruction, hurricanes leaving desolation in their track, the boundless ocean rising with rebellious force, the high waterfall of some mighty river.” Kant maintains, however, that the sublimity resides “not in the Object of nature” itself, but “only in the mind of the judging Subject” who contemplates the object. In a noted passage he describes the experience of sublimity as a rapid sequence of painful blockage and pleasurable release—“the feeling of a momentary check to the vital forces followed at once by a discharge all the more powerful.” In the mathematical sublime, the mind is checked by its inadequacy to comprehend as a totality the boundlessness or seeming infinity of natural magnitudes, and in the dynamic sublime, it is checked by its helplessness before the seeming irresistibility of natural powers. But the mind then goes on to feel exultation at the recognition of its inherent capacity to think a totality in a way that transcends “every standard of sense,” or else at its discovery within itself of a capacity for resistance which “gives us courage to be able to measure ourselves against the seeming omnipotence of nature.” In Kant’s view, the experience of the sublime manifests on the one hand the limitations and weakness of finite humanity, but on the other hand its “pre-eminence over nature,” even

“immeasurability” of nature’s magnitude and the
” of its might.

In *The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcen-*
(1976), Thomas Weiskel undertook to translate Kant’s theory of the

semiotic theory and of *psychoanalytic* theory. See also the development of
’s views by Neil Hertz, *The End of the Line: Essays on Psychoanalysis and*
(1985). Slavoj Žižek applied the concept of the sublime to a
ideology (see under *Marxist criticism*) in *The Sublime*
(1989). For the argument that eighteenth-century debates

Solitude and the Sublime: Romanticism and the Aesthetics of
(1992).

Refer to Elder Olson, “The Argument of Longinus’ *On the Sublime*,” in
, ed. R. S. Crane (1952); W. J. Hipple,

(1957); Marjorie Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain*
(1959); Steven Knapp, *Personification and the Sublime: Milton to Coleridge*
The Sublime (2005).

(in linguistics): **197.**

(in linguistics): **198.**

(in a plot): **295.**

(“superrealism”): Surrealism was launched as a concerted artistic
’s *Manifesto on Surrealism* (1924). It was
Dadaism, which emerged in

The expressed aim of surrealism was a revolt against all restraints on free creativity, including logical reason, standard morality, social and artistic conventions and norms, and all control over the artistic process by forethought and intention. To ensure the unhampered operation of the “deep mind,” which they regarded as the only source of valid knowledge as well as art, surrealists turned to *automatic writing* (writing delivered over to the promptings of the unconscious mind), and to exploiting the material of dreams, of states of mind between sleep and waking, and of natural or drug-induced hallucinations.

Surrealism was a revolutionary movement in painting, sculpture, and the other arts, as well as literature; and it often joined forces, although briefly, with one or another revolutionary movement in the political and social realm. The effects of surrealism extended far beyond the small group of its professed adherents such as André Breton, Louis Aragon, and the painter Salvador Dalí. The influence, direct or indirect, of surrealist innovations can be found in many modern writers of prose and verse who have broken with conventional modes of artistic organization to experiment with free association, a broken syntax, nonlogical and non-chronological order, dreamlike and nightmarish sequences, and the juxtaposition of bizarre, shocking, or seemingly unrelated images. In England and America such effects can be found in a wide range of writings, from the poetry of Dylan Thomas to the flights of fantasy, hallucinative writing, startling inconsequences, and *black humor* in the novels of Henry Miller, William Burroughs, and Thomas Pynchon.

For a precursor of some aspects of surrealism, see *decadence*; for later developments that continued some of the surrealist innovations, see literature of the *absurd*, *antinovel*, *magic realism*, and *postmodernism*. Refer to David Gascoyne, *A Short Survey of Surrealism* (1935); A. E. Balakian, *Literary Origins of Surrealism* (1947); Maurice Nadeau, *History of Surrealism* (trans. 1989); Mary Ann Caws, *The Poetry of Dada and Surrealism* (1970); Mary Ann Caws, ed., *Surrealist Painters and Poets: An Anthology* (2001); Paul C. Ray, *The Surrealist Movement in England* (1971); David Hopkins, *Dada and Surrealism* (2004). In *Dada Turns Red* (1990), Helena Lewis explores the relations between Surrealists and Communists from the 1920s to the 1950s. In *Automatic Woman: The Representation of Women in Surrealism* (1996), Katharine Conley writes a *feminist* analysis of the obsessive and complex concern of male surrealists with the female body, which they often represented in a distorted or dissected form; she also discusses the work of two female surrealists, Unica Zürn and Leonora Carrington.

suspense (in a plot): 295.

syllabic meter: 217.

symbol: In the broadest sense a symbol is anything which signifies something else; in this sense all words are symbols. In discussing literature, however, the

SYMBOL

“symbol” is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or

“conventional” or “public”: thus “the
” “the Red, White, and Blue,” and “the Good Shepherd” are terms

“private” or “personal symbols.” Often

Take as an example the word “rose,” which in its literal use signifies a
, line “O my love’s like a red, red rose,”
“rose” is used as a *simile*; and in the lines by Winthrop Mackworth
–39),

She was our queen, our rose, our star;
And then she danced—O Heaven, her dancing!

“rose” is used as a *metaphor*. In *The Romance of the Rose*, a long me-
dream vision, we read about a half-opened rose to which the dreamer’s
“Fair Welcome,” but impeded or for-
“Reason,” “Shame,” and “Jealousy.” We
allegory about an elab-

emblem (that is, an object whose

’s love and her lovely body.
’s poem “The Sick Rose.”

O Rose, thou art sick.
The invisible worm
That flies in the night
In the howling storm
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy,
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.

vehicle for a simile or metaphor, because it lacks the
—“my love,” or the girl referred to as “she,” in the examples
—which is an identifying feature of these figures. And it is not an
The Romance of the Rose, it is not

rose is made determinate by its role within the literal narrative. Blake's rose *is* a rose—yet it is patently also something more than a rose: words such as “bed,” “joy,” “love,” which do not comport literally with an actual flower, together with the sinister tone, and the intensity of the lyric speaker's feeling, press the reader to infer that the described object has a further range of suggested but unspecified reference which makes it a symbol. But Blake's rose is a personal symbol and not—like the symbolic rose in the closing cantos of Dante's fourteenth-century *Paradiso* and other Christian poems—an element in a set of conventional and widely known (hence “public”) religious symbols, in which concrete objects of this passing world are used to signify, in a relatively determinate way, the objects and truths of a higher and eternal realm. (See Barbara Seward, *The Symbolic Rose*, 1960.) Only from the implicit suggestions in Blake's poem itself—the sexual connotations, in the realm of human experience, of “bed” and “love,” especially in conjunction with “joy” and “worm”—supplemented by our knowledge of similar elements and topics in his other poems, are we led to infer that Blake's lament for a crimson rose which has been entered and sickened unto death by a dark and secret worm symbolizes, in the human realm, the destruction wrought by furtiveness, deceit, and hypocrisy in what should be a frank and joyous relationship of physical love. Various critics of the poem, however, have proposed alternative interpretations of its symbolic significance. It is an attribute of many private symbols—the White Whale in Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851) is another famed example—as well as a reason why they are an irreplaceable literary device, that they suggest a direction or a broad area of significance rather than, like an emblem in an allegorical narrative, a relatively determinate reference.

In the copious modern literature on the nature of the literary symbol, reference is often made to two seminal passages, written early in the nineteenth century by Coleridge in England and Goethe in Germany, concerning the difference between an allegory and a symbol. Coleridge is in fact describing what he believes to be the uniquely symbolic nature of the Bible as a sacred text, but later commentators have assumed that he intended his comment to apply also to the symbol in secular literature:

Now an allegory is but a translation of abstract notions into a picture-language, which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses.... On the other hand a symbol ... is characterized by a translucence of the special [i.e., of the species] in the individual, or of the general [i.e., of the genus] in the special, or of the universal in the general; above all by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal. It always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that unity of which it is the representative. [Allegories] are but empty echoes which the fancy arbitrarily associates with apparitions of matter....

(Coleridge, *The Statesman's Manual*, 1816)

Goethe had been meditating about the nature of the literary symbol in

There is a great difference, whether the poet seeks the particular for the sake of the general or sees the general in the particular. From the former procedure there ensues allegory, in which the particular serves only as illustration, as example of the general. The latter procedure, however, is genuinely the nature of poetry; it expresses something particular, without thinking of the general or pointing to it.

Allegory transforms the phenomenon into a concept, the concept into an image, but in such a way that the concept always remains bounded in the image, and is entirely to be kept and held in it, and to be expressed by it.

Symbolism [however] transforms the phenomenon into idea, the idea into an image, and in such a way that the idea remains always infinitely active and unapproachable in the image, and even if expressed in all languages, still would remain inexpressible.

Maxims and Reflections, Nos. 279, 1112, 1113)

It will be noted that, whatever the differences between these two cryp-

—even boundlessly—suggestive in its signif-

Romantic Period, critics until

“mystified” (confused and deceived) about its

“The Rhetoric of Tempo-

” in *Interpretation: Theory and Practice*, ed. C. S. Singleton (1969), and (1979).

See also W. B. Yeats, “The Symbolism of Poetry” (1900), in *Essays and* (1961); H. Flanders Dunbar, *Symbolism in Medieval Thought*

The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition

“A Dialogue on Symbolism,” in R. S. Crane, ed.,

(1952); W. Y. Tindall, *The Literary Symbol* (1955); Harry

“Symbolism and Fiction,” in *Contexts of Criticism* (1957); Isabel C.

Poetic Discourse (1958), chapter 5; Maurice Beebe, ed., *Literary*

(1960); Michael Ferber, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols* (1999).

Symbolist Movement, and for references to a literary symbol in other

symbolic (in Lacanian criticism): 324.

symbolism: 397.

Symbolist Movement: Various poets of the *Romantic Period*, including Novalis and Hölderlin in Germany and Shelley in England, often used private symbols in their poetry (see *symbol*). Shelley, for example, repeatedly made symbolic use of objects such as the morning and evening star, a boat moving upstream, winding caves, and the conflict between a serpent and an eagle. William Blake, however, exceeded all his romantic contemporaries in his recourse to a persistent and sustained **symbolism**—that is, a coherent system composed of a number of symbolic elements—in both his lyric poems and his long “prophetic,” or epic poems. (See, for example, Northrop Frye, *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake*, 1947.) In nineteenth-century America, a symbolist procedure was a prominent element in the novels of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville, the prose of Emerson and Thoreau, and the poetic theory and practice of Poe. (See Charles Feidelson, Jr., *Symbolism and American Literature*, 1953.) These writers derived the mode in large part from the native Puritan tradition of divine typology (see *interpretation: typological and allegorical*), and also from the theory of “correspondences” of the Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772).

In the usage of literary historians, however, **Symbolist Movement** designates specifically a group of French writers beginning with Charles Baudelaire (*Fleurs du mal*, 1857) and including such later poets as Arthur Rimbaud, Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Paul Valéry. Baudelaire based the symbolic mode of his poems in part on the example of the American Edgar Allan Poe, but especially on the ancient belief in **correspondences**—the doctrine that there exist inherent and systematic analogies between the human mind and the outer world, and also between the material and the spiritual worlds. As Baudelaire put this doctrine: “Everything, form, movement, number, color, perfume, in the *spiritual* as in the *natural* world, is significative, reciprocal, converse, *correspondent*.” The techniques of the French **Symbolists**, who exploited an order of private symbols in a poetry of rich suggestiveness rather than explicit signification, had an immense influence throughout Europe, and (especially in the 1890s and later) in England and America on poets such as Arthur Symonds and Ernest Dowson (see *Decadence*) as well as W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, Dylan Thomas, Hart Crane, e. e. cummings, and Wallace Stevens. Major symbolist poets in Germany are Stefan George and Rainer Maria Rilke.

The *Modern Period*, in the decades after World War I, was a notable era of symbolism in literature. Many of the major writers of the period exploit symbols which are in part drawn from religious and esoteric traditions and in part invented. Some of the works of the age are symbolist in their settings, their agents, and their actions, as well as in the objects they refer to. Instances of a persistently symbolic procedure occur in lyrics (Yeats’ “Byzantium” poems, Dylan Thomas’ series of sonnets *Altarwise by Owl-light*), in longer poems

SYMBOLISTS

's *The Bridge*, T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Wallace Stevens' "The
"), and in novels (James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*,
's *The Sound and the Fury*).
See Arthur Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899, reprinted
Axel's Castle (1936); C. M. Bowra, *The Heritage of*
(1943); Edward Engelberg, ed., *The Symbolist Poem* (1967); Anna
The Symbolist Movement in the Literature of European Languages
The Influence of French Symbolism on Modern American
(1920, trans. 1985).

; 142, 258.

(sĭnkron' ĭk): **193.**

(sĭnĕk' dōkē): **132.**

Synesthesia, in psychology, signifies the experience of two or more

"sense
" or "sense analogy") is this passage from Shelley's "The Sensitive
" (1820):

And the hyacinth purple, and white, and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odor within the sense.

"Ode to a Nightingale" (1819), calls for a draught of

Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth;

Occasional uses of synesthetic imagery have been made by poets ever
Romantic
, and was especially exploited by the French *Symbolists* of the middle
's sonnet "Correspondences,"
's sonnet on the color of vowel sounds "A black, E white,
,"

Refer to the detailed analyses of literary synesthesia in Richard H. Fogel, *The Imagery of Keats and Shelley* (1949), chapter 3; also Simon Baron-Cohen, *Synaesthesia: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (1996); and John E. Harrison, *Synaesthesia: The Strangest Thing* (2001).

syntagmatic (sɨn' tǎgmăt' ĭk): **197**.

syntax: **195**.

syuzhet (in Russian formalism): **234**.



T

(in narrative): 47.

(of a metaphor): 131; 213.

Tension became a common descriptive and evaluative word in the criticism. *New Critics*, “lopping the prefixes off the logical terms tension and intension.” In technical logic the “intension” of a word is the

“extension” of a word is the class of

“is its ‘tension,’ the full organized body of all the extension” (“Tension in Poetry,” 1938, in *On the*, 1948.) It would seem that by this statement Tate meant that a

concrete and abstract.

Other critics use “tension” to characterize poetry that manifests an equilibrium “a pattern of resolved stresses,” or a

New Criticism for conceiving

’s logical derivation of the term, simply apply “tension” to any

(tūr’ sēt): 375.

(tēr’ tsā rē’ mā): 376.

(tētrām’ ētēr): 219.

Traditional critics conceived the object of their criticism “work”; that is, a human product whose form is its design and its meanings by the author’s intentional. *structuralist* critics, on the other hand, deprecate “work,” but an imperfect **text**, a manifestation of the social institution called **écriture** (writing).

into a particular text. The interpretation of this writing is effected by “lecture” (in French, the process of reading) which, by bringing to bear expectations formed by earlier exposure to the functioning of the linguistic system, invests the marks on the page with what merely seem to be their inherent meanings and references to an outer world. Structuralists differ about the degree to which the activity of reading a text is constrained by the literary conventions and codes that went into the writing; many *deconstructive critics*, however, propose that all writing, by the internal play of opposing forces, necessarily disseminates into an indefinite array of diverse and opposed meanings.

The system of linguistic and literary conventions that constitute a literary text are said by structuralist and *poststructuralist* critics to be “naturalized” in the activity of reading, in that the artifices of a nonreferential “textuality” are made to seem **raisonnable** (credible)—that is, made to give the illusion of referring to reality—by being brought into accord with modes of discourse and cultural stereotypes that are so familiar and habitual as to seem natural. **Naturalization** (an alternative term is **recuperation**) takes place through such habitual procedures in reading as assigning the text to a specific *genre*, or taking a fictional text to be the speech of a credibly human narrator, or interpreting its artifices as signifying characters, actions, and values that represent, or accord with, those in an extratextual world. To a thoroughgoing structuralist or poststructuralist critic, however, not only is the text’s representation of the world no more than an illusory “effect” generated by the process of reading, but the world is itself held to be in its turn a text; that is, simply a structure of *signs* whose significance is constituted by the cultural conventions, codes, and *ideology* that happen to be shared by members of a cultural community. The term **intertextuality**, popularized especially by Julia Kristeva, is used to signify the multiple ways in which any one literary text is in fact made up of other texts, by means of its open or covert citations and *allusions*, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earlier texts, or simply its unavoidable participation in the common stock of linguistic and literary conventions and procedures that are “always-already” in place and constitute the discourses into which we are born. In Kristeva’s formulation, accordingly, any text is in fact an “intertext”—the site of an intersection of numberless other texts, and existing only through its relations to other texts.

Roland Barthes in *S/Z* (1970) proposed a distinction between a text which is “lisible” (readable) and one which, although “scriptible” (writable) is “illisible” (unreadable). Readable texts are traditional or “classical” ones—such as the realistic novels by Honoré Balzac and other nineteenth-century authors—which for the most part conform to the prevailing codes and conventions, literary and social, and so are readily and comfortably interpretable and naturalizable in the process of reading. An “unreadable” text (such as James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*, or the French *new novel*, or a poem by a highly experimental poet) is one which largely violates, parodies, or innovates upon prevailing conventions, and thus persistently shocks, baffles, and frustrates standard expectations. In Barthes’ view an unreadable text, by drawing attention in this way to the pure conventionality and artifice of literature, laudably

The Pleasure of the Text (pub-
 “plaisir”
 “jouissance”
 ’ view, jouissance is “a
 ”

, p. 192).

For related matters and relevant bibliographic references, see *structuralist*
 , *poststructuralism*, and *semiotics*.

Textual criticism expounds the principles and procedures that

editions of a printed

book editions and *book format*.) Until recently the ruling principle, whether

In the mid-twentieth century, most scholarly editors subscribed to the
copy-text, as propounded in a highly influential paper by

“authoritative” or “defini-
 ” text that represented the “final intentions” of the author at the conclu-
 “copy-text,” that one of the existing texts judged to be closest to what the

’s written manuscript of a
 ’s own intentions.

“substantive” changes (changes in wording) that are judged
 ’s
 ” (Such nonauthorial intrusions and changes in the words of a
 “corruptions” or
 ” of the original text.) The copy-text is further emended to

herself, and that therefore may be assumed to embody the author's "final intentions." The resulting published document (often with copious editorial footnotes and other materials to identify all these emendations and to record the textual "variants" that the editor has rejected) is known as an **eclectic text**, in that it accords with no single existing model, but is constructed by fitting together materials from a variety of texts—materials that are sometimes supplemented by the editor's own conjectures.

Beginning in the late 1920s, two developments helped to bring the copy-text theory under increasing scrutiny and objection. One was the appearance of scholarly publications that made available a multitude of diverse forms of a single literary work, in drafts, manuscripts, transcriptions (sometimes with changes and insertions) by family and friends, and corrected proof sheets, even before the poem was originally published. The many volumes of the *Cornell Wordsworth*, for example, begun in 1975 under the general editorship of Stephen Parrish, record all such variants; for a number of Wordsworth's writings, they also print "reading copies" of the full text at sequential stages in the author's composition and revision of a single work. There are being printed also a number of texts from manuscripts that are versions of works by novelists that were rejected by the author, or radically revised before the final text was published. An early example was *Stephen Hero*, published in 1944, part of the first draft of *A Portrait of the Artist*, which James Joyce had published thirty years earlier; other examples are uncut versions from manuscript of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*, and Richard Wright's *Native Son*. Another development was the poststructural climate of critical opinion, which brought into radical question the centrality of the "subject," or author, and denied the validity of appealing to the intention of a writer as determinative of text or meaning. A number of poststructural theorists also stressed the role of social factors in "constructing" the meanings of a text, or emphasized the variability in the reception and interpretation of a text over time. (See *author and authorship*, *poststructuralism*, and *reception theory*.)

Scholarly endeavors at a single, eclectic, and definitive text of a literary work are now often derogated as resulting in an "ideal" text that never in fact existed, and is apt to incorporate the inclinations of the editor, labeled as the intentions of the author. In a *Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (1983, reissued 1992), Jerome McGann expounded his **social theory of textual criticism**, in which he attributes "textual authority" to the cumulative social history of the work, including the contributions not only of the author, but also of the editor, publisher, printer, and all others who have cooperated in bringing into being and producing a book that is made available to the public; all these components, in McGann's view, are valid determinants of a text and its meanings, considered as social constructions. (See *social constructs*, under *new historicism*, and *book history studies*.) In later writings, McGann has stressed also the material features of a book—including its typography, paper, format, and even pricing and advertising—as cooperative with its verbal element in generating its total cultural significance. (See McGann, *The Textual Condition*, 1991; refer also to D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and Sociology of Texts*, 1986.) Attempts to edit by

's final intentions have been brought into further question
multiple author-
 . See Jack Stillinger's *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius*

Despite such critiques, the Greg-Bowers copy-text theory has continued

A Rationale
 , 1989). Many editors now subscribe to some form of a
versions, of which an early exponent was James Thorpe
Principles of Textual Criticism (1972). The growing consensus is that the

"version," of the pro-

"ver-
 " of a work that accords with the circumstances of the particular case, and
 's purpose is to approximate what the

For a concise survey of the history of textual theory and criticism, see
Textual Scholarship: An Introduction (1992). Greetham has
Scholarly Edit-
 (1995), which includes a survey, written by specialists,

" reprinted in his *Collected Papers*, ed. J. C.
Bibliography and Textual Criticism (1964);

's *Two Versions of "King Lear"* (1983);
Romantic Texts and Contexts (1982); George Bornstein
Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities

The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory
 , ed. Michael Groden and Martin Kreiswirth (1994).

theodicy (thēōd' īsē): 155.

theoretical criticism: 67.

theories and movements in recent criticism: The entry in this *Glossary* on *criticism* describes traditional types of literary theory and of applied criticism from Aristotle through the early twentieth century. Since World War I, and especially since the 1960s, there have appeared a large number of innovative literary theories and methods of critical analysis, including revised and amplified versions of the earlier forms of *Marxist criticism* and *psychoanalytic criticism*. An entry on each of these latter-day critical modes is included in the *Glossary*, according to the alphabetic order of its title. Following is a table of the approximate time when these modes became prominent in literary criticism:

1920s–1930s	<i>Russian Formalism</i>
1930s–1940s	<i>archetypal criticism</i>
1940s–1950s	<i>New Criticism</i> ; <i>phenomenological criticism</i>
1960s	modern forms of <i>feminist criticism</i> ; <i>structuralist criticism</i> ; <i>stylistics</i>
1970s	theory of the <i>anxiety of influence</i> ; <i>deconstruction</i> ; <i>discourse analysis</i> ; various forms of <i>reader-response criticism</i> ; <i>reception theory</i> ; <i>semiotics</i> ; <i>speech-act theory</i>
1980s	<i>cultural studies</i> ; <i>dialogic criticism</i> ; <i>gender criticism</i> ; <i>new historicism</i> ; <i>queer theory</i>
1990s	<i>Darwinian literary studies</i> ; <i>ecocriticism</i> ; <i>postcolonial studies</i>
2000ff	<i>cognitive literary studies</i>

See the entry *poststructuralism* for current uses of the term “theory,” as well as for a description of some critical perspectives and practices shared by a number of the theories that have appeared after the 1960s.

theory (in poststructuralism): 310.

theory (in traditional criticism): 67.

thesis (of a literary work): 129.

thick descriptions: 245.

third-person narrative: 301.

third-person point of view: 301.

three unities: In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, critics of the drama in Italy and France added to Aristotle’s *unity of action*, which he describes in his

, two other unities, to constitute one of the so-called *rules* of drama
 “the three unities.” On the assumption that **verisimilitude**—the
 —requires

“unity of
 ” (that the action represented be limited to a single location) and the
 “unity of time” (that the time represented be limited to

neoclassicism as they did criticism in Italy and France. A final

’s “Preface to
 ” (1765). Since then in England, the unities of place and time (as

See René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, Vol. 1, *The Later*
 (1955); Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in*
 (1961).

(thrēn’ ōdē): **102.**

.

.

Topographical poetry, also called **local poetry**, com-

“Life of John Denham” (1779), attributed its
 ’s fine poem *Cooper’s Hill*, first written in 1642; as Johnson
genre, “local poetry” is a species “of which the fundamental subject

” See the analysis of a passage from *Cooper’s Hill*, under *heroic couplet*.
 This poetic type had an enormous vogue through the eighteenth century;
Topographical Poetry in XVIII-Century England (1936), lists

“Cooper’s Hill,” are **pros-**
 that describe the landscape that is visible from a high point of
 ’s “Grongar Hill” (1726) and
 ’s “Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College” (1747). Local
descriptive-

, which is characterized by a sustained flow of consciousness;

a subtle interweaving of perceptions, thoughts, and feelings; and an integrated design. Early examples are Coleridge's "The Eolian Harp" (1796) and "Frost at Midnight" (1798), and Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" (1798); formal variants of the mode include Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode" (1802) and Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (1807). See M. H. Abrams, "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric," in *The Correspondent Breeze: Essays on English Romanticism*, 1984.

Related to the topographical poem is the **country house poem**, which had a brief vogue in the seventeenth century. This form describes and praises a rural estate and its grounds, and uses the occasion, by sometimes ingenious connections, to extol also its owner and the owner's family and family history. It was inaugurated by Aemilia Lanyer's "The Description of Cooke-ham" (1611) and Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" (1616). Andrew Marvell's "Upon Appleton House" (1651) is the longest (776 lines), the most intricately wrought, and the wittiest of the country house poems.

topos (töp' ös): 229.

touchstone: A touchstone is a hard stone used to determine, by the streak left on it when rubbed by a piece of gold, whether the metal is pure gold, and if not, the degree to which it contains an alloy. The word was introduced into literary criticism by Matthew Arnold in "The Study of Poetry" (1880) to denote short but distinctive passages, selected from the writings of the greatest poets, which he used to determine the relative value of passages or poems which are compared to them. Arnold proposed this method of evaluation as a corrective for what he called the "fallacious" estimates of poems according to their "historic" importance in the development of literature, or else according to their "personal" appeal to an individual critic. As Arnold put it:

There can be no more useful help for discovering what poetry belongs to the class of the truly excellent ... than to have always in one's mind lines and expressions of the great masters, and to apply them as a touchstone to other poetry.... If we have any tact we shall find them ... an infallible touchstone for detecting the presence or absence of high poetic quality, and also the degree of this quality, in all other poetry which we may place beside them.

The touchstones he proposed are passages from Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton, ranging in length from one to four lines. Two of his best-known touchstones are also the shortest: Dante's "In la sua volontade è nostra pace" ("In His will is our peace"; *Paradiso*, III. 85), and the close of Milton's description in *Paradise Lost*, IV, 271–2, of the loss to Ceres of her daughter Proserpine, "... which cost Ceres all that pain / To seek her through the world."

trace (in deconstruction): 78.

TRADITIONAL BALLAD

The term is broadly applied to literary, and especially to dramatic, re-
protagonist (the chief character). More precise and detailed discussions of
—although they should not end—with Aristo-
's classic analysis in the *Poetics* (fourth century BC). Aristotle based his the-

—types that Aristotle had no way of foreseeing.
's analysis to apply to later tragic forms

's discussions apply in some

Aristotle defined tragedy as “the imitation of an action that is serious and
” in the medium of poetic

“incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish the
” (See *imitation*; and for an enlightening discussion
“pity and fear,” refer to Martha C. Nussbaum, “Tragedy
” *Oxford Studies in*
, Vol. 10, 1992, 107–59.) Precisely how to interpret Aristotle's
—which in Greek signifies “purgation,” or “purification,” or both—is

“the pleasure of pity and
” as the basic way to distinguish the tragic from comic or other forms,
's aim to produce this effect in the highest degree

Accordingly, Aristotle says that the **tragic hero** will most effectively

“better than we are,” in the sense that he is of higher than

hamartia—his “error” or “mistake of judgment” or, as
tragic flaw.
hubris, that “pride”

warning or to violate an important moral law.) The tragic hero, like Oedipus in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, moves us to pity because, since he is not an evil man, his misfortune is greater than he deserves; but he moves us also to fear, because we recognize similar possibilities of error in our own lesser and fallible selves. Aristotle grounds his analysis of "the very structure and incidents of the play" on the same principle; the plot, he says, which will most effectively evoke "tragic pity and fear" is one in which the events develop through complication to a *catastrophe* in which there occurs (often by an *anagnorisis*, or discovery of facts hitherto unknown to the hero) a sudden *peripeteia*, or reversal in his fortune from happiness to disaster. (See *plot*.)

Authors in the Middle Ages lacked direct knowledge either of classical tragedies or of Aristotle's *Poetics*. **Medieval tragedies** are simply the story of a person of high status who, whether deservedly or not, is brought from prosperity to wretchedness by an unpredictable turn of the wheel of fortune. The short narratives in "The Monk's Tale" of *The Canterbury Tales* (late fourteenth century) are all, in Chaucer's own term, "tragedies" of this kind. With the Elizabethan era came both the beginning and the acme of dramatic tragedy in England. The tragedies of this period owed much to the native religious drama, the *miracle* and *morality plays*, which had developed independently of classical influence, but with a crucial contribution from the Roman writer Seneca (first century), whose dramas got to be widely known earlier than those of the Greek tragedians.

Senecan tragedy was written to be recited rather than acted; but to English playwrights, who thought that these tragedies had been intended for the stage, they provided the model for an organized five-act play with a complex plot and an elaborately formal style of dialogue. Senecan drama, in the Elizabethan Age, had two main lines of development. One of these consisted of academic tragedies written in close imitation of the Senecan model, including the use of a *chorus*, and usually constructed according to the rules of the *three unities*, which had been elaborated by Italian critics of the sixteenth century; the earliest English example was Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton's *Gorboduc* (1562). The other and much more important development was written for the popular stage, and is called the **revenge tragedy**, or (in its most sensational form) the **tragedy of blood**. This type of play derived from Seneca's favorite materials of murder, revenge, ghosts, mutilation, and carnage, but while Seneca had relegated such matters to long reports of offstage actions by messengers, Elizabethan dramatists usually represented them on stage to satisfy the appetite of the contemporary audience for violence and horror. Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1586) established this popular form; its subject is a murder and the quest for vengeance, and it includes a ghost, insanity, suicide, a play-within-a-play, sensational incidents, and a gruesomely bloody ending. Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (c. 1592) and Shakespeare's early play *Titus Andronicus* (c. 1590) are in this mode; and from this lively but unlikely prototype came one of the greatest of tragedies, *Hamlet*, as well as John Webster's fine horror plays of 1612–13, *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The White Devil*.

TRAGEDY

Many major tragedies in the flowering time between 1585 and 1625, by

's *Othello* is one of the few plays which accords closely
's basic concepts of the tragic hero and plot. The hero of
, however, is not a good man who commits a tragic error, but an

's *Richard III* presents first the success, then the ruin, of a

's para-
comic
, which were in various ways and degrees made relevant to the tragic
tragicomedy, a popular non-Aristotelian form

heroic tragedy.
Until the close of the seventeenth century almost all tragedies were

A Yorkshire
(of uncertain authorship), had as the chief character a man of the

or **domestic tragedy**, which was written in prose and presented

's *The London Merchant: or, The History*
(1731), about a merchant's apprentice who succumbs to a

Since that time most of the successful tragedies have been in prose and

A Doll's House, Ghosts, An Enemy of the People) revolve around
problem play.) One of
's *Death of a Salesman*

antihero); while in

some recent works, tragic effects involve elements that were once specific to the genre of farce (see literature of the *absurd* and *black comedy*).

Tragedy since World War I has also been innovative in other ways, including experimentation with new versions of ancient tragic forms. Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931), for example, is an adaptation of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, with the locale shifted from Greece to New England, the poetry altered to what is for the most part rather flat prose, and the tragedy of fate converted into a tragedy of the psychological compulsions of a family trapped in a tangle of Freudian complexes (see *psychoanalysis*). T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) is a tragic drama which, like Greek tragedy, is written in verse and has a chorus, but also incorporates elements of two early Christian forms, the medieval *miracle play* (dealing with the martyrdom of a saint) and the medieval *morality play*. A recent tendency, especially in some critics associated with *new historicism*, has been to interpret traditional tragedies primarily in political terms, as incorporating in the problems and catastrophe of the tragic individual an indirect representation of contemporary social or ideological dilemmas and crises. See Froma I. Zeitlin and John J. Winkler, eds., *Nothing to Do with Dionysos? Athenian Drama in Its Social Context* (1990) and Linda Kintz, *The Subject's Tragedy: Political Poetics, Feminist Theory, and Drama* (1992).

See *genre*, and refer to A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904); H. D. F. Kitto, *Greek Tragedy* (rev. 1954); Elder Olson, *Tragedy and the Theory of Drama* (1961); George Steiner, *The Death of Tragedy* (1961); R. B. Sewall, ed., *Tragedy: Modern Essays in Criticism* (1963); Adrian Poole, *Tragedy: A Very Short Introduction* (2005). For other theoretical treatments of tragedy, see Linda Bamber, *Comic Women, Tragic Men: A Study of Gender and Genre in Shakespeare* (1982); and Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (1985). Richard H. Palmer, *Tragedy and Tragic Theory: An Analytical Guide* (1992), is a useful survey of contested issues in the theory and criticism of tragedy, with many quotations by theorists from the ancient Greeks to the present. For references to *tragedy* in other entries, see pages 335, 411. See also *heroic drama*; *tragic irony*; *tragicomedy*.

tragedy of blood: 409.

tragic flaw: 408; 300.

tragic hero: 408.

tragic irony: 186.

tragicomedy: A type of *Elizabethan* and *Jacobean* drama which intermingled the standard characters and subject matter and the typical plot forms of *tragedy* and *comedy*. Thus, the important agents in tragicomedy included both people of high degree and people of low degree, even though, according to the reigning critical theory of that time, only upper-class characters were appropriate to

decorum. Also, tragicomedy represented a serious

The Faithful Shepherdess (c. 1610), tragicomedy “wants [that is, lacks]

.... A god is as lawful in [tragicomedy] as in a tragedy, and mean [that
” (See *comedy* and *tragedy*.)

Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* is by these criteria a tragicomedy, because

’s ingenious casuistry in the trial scene. Francis Beaumont and John
Philaster, and numerous other plays on which they collaborated

catastrophe. Shakespeare wrote
Cymbeline and *The Winter’s Tale*, between 1609 and 1611, in
romance. The name “tragicomedy”

double plots, under *plot*.

Refer to E. M. Waith, *The Pattern of Tragicomedy in Beaumont and Fletcher
Tragicomedy* (1955). Gordon McMullan and Jonathan
The Politics of Tragicomedy: Shake-
(1992).

A philosophical and literary movement,

Transcendental Club. In the seven years or so that the group

k Henry Hedge, W. E. Channing and

The Dial (1840–44) printed many of the early essays,

Transcendentalism was neither a systematic nor a sharply definable philos-

of the movement tend to take as its central exponents Emerson (especially in *Nature*, "The American Scholar," the Divinity School Address, "The Over-Soul," and "Self Reliance") and Thoreau (especially in *Walden* and his journals). The term "transcendental," as Emerson pointed out in his lecture "The Transcendentalist" (1841), was taken from the writings of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Kant had confined the expression "transcendental knowledge" to the cognizance of those forms and categories—such as space, time, quantity, causality—which, in his view, are imposed on whatever we perceive by the constitution of the human mind. Emerson and others, however, extended the concept of transcendental knowledge, in a way whose validity Kant had specifically denied, to include an intuitive cognizance of moral and other truths that transcend the limits of sense experience. The intellectual antecedents of American Transcendentalism, in addition to Kant, were many and diverse, and included post-Kantian German Idealists, the English thinkers Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle (themselves exponents of forms of German Idealism), Plato and Neoplatonists, the occult Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg, and some varieties of Asian philosophy.

What the various Transcendentalists had in common was less what they proposed than what they were reacting against. By and large, they were opposed to rigid rationalism; to eighteenth-century empirical philosophy of the school of John Locke, which derived all knowledge from sense impressions; to highly formalized religion, especially the Calvinist orthodoxy of New England; and to the social conformity, materialism, and commercialism that they found increasingly dominant in American life. Among the counterviews that were affirmed by Transcendentalists, especially Emerson, were confidence in the validity of a mode of knowledge that is grounded in feeling and intuition, and a consequent tendency to accept what, to logical reasoning, might seem contradictions; an ethics of individualism that stressed self-trust, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency; a turn away from modern society, with its getting and spending, to the scenes and objects of the natural world, which were regarded both as physical entities and as correspondences to aspects of the human spirit (see *correspondences*); and, in place of a formal or doctrinal religion, a faith in a divine "Principle," or "Spirit," or "Soul" (Emerson's "Over-Soul") in which both humanity and the cosmos participate. This omnipresent Spirit, Emerson said, constitutes the "Unity within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other"; it manifests itself to human consciousness as influxes of inspired insights; and it is the source of the profoundest truths and the necessary condition of all moral and spiritual development.

Walden (1854) records how Thoreau tested his distinctive and radically individualist version of Transcendental values by withdrawing from societal complexities and distractions to a life of solitude and self-reliance in a natural setting at Walden Pond. He simplified his material wants to those he could satisfy by the bounty of the woods and lake or could provide by his own labor, attended minutely to natural objects both for their inherent interest and as correlatives to the mind of the observer, and devoted his leisure to

–47) by

The Blithedale

(1852).

The Transcendental movement, with its optimism about the indwelling

counterculture of the

See *periods of American literature*, and refer to F. O. Matthiessen, *American* (1941); the anthology edited, together with commentary, by Perry *The Transcendentalists* (1950); Joel Porte, *Emerson and Thoreau: Transcendentalism* (1966); Lawrence Buell, *Literary Transcendentalism: Style and* (1973). For a collection of writings on transcendentalism, see *Transcendentalists: An Anthology* (1971), *Transcendentalism: A Reader* (2000). See also *Encyclopedia of Transcendentalism*, ed. Wesley T. Mott (1996).

(trĩm' ěter): **219**.

(trōkã' ĭk): **218**.

(figurative) (trōp): **130**.

trope (liturgical): 224.

troubadour: 66.

truth (in fiction): 128.

type (in biblical interpretation): 181.

type (in characters): 46.

typological interpretation: 180; 17.





(oo' bē sūnt mōtēf''): 229.

(narrator): 302.

: The term **utopia** designates the class of fictional writ-

Utopia (1515–16), a book written in Latin by the Renaissance

“eutopia” (good place) and
 ” (no place). The first and greatest instance of the literary type was
 ’s *Republic* (later fourth century BC), which sets forth, in dialogue, the

’s
 (1623), Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* (1627), Edward Bellamy’s
 (1888), William Morris’ *News from Nowhere* (1891), Char-
 ’s *Herland* (1915), and James Hilton’s *Lost Horizon*

The utopia can be distinguished from literary representations of imaginary

satire on contemporary human life and society; nota-
 ’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) and
 ’s *Erewhon* (1872). Samuel Johnson’s *Rasselas* (1759) presents
 “Happy Valley,” which functions as a gentle satire on humanity’s stub-

see chapters 1–3. The term **dystopia** (“bad place”) has recently come to be applied to works of fiction, including science fiction, that represent a very unpleasant imaginary world in which ominous tendencies of our present social, political, and technological order are projected into a disastrous future culmination. Examples are Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), and Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1986). Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* (2006), set in a bleak, postnuclear landscape, represents a dystopian extreme. Ursula K. Le Guin’s *The Dispossessed: An Ambiguous Utopia* (1974) contains both utopian and dystopian scenarios.

For utopias and dystopias based on future developments in science and technology, see *science fiction*. Refer to Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (1934); Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (1962); Nell Eurich, *Science in Utopia* (1967); Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel, *Utopian Thought in the Western World* (1979). For collections of Utopian writings, see *Utopian Literature: A Selection*, ed. J. W. Johnson (1968), and *The Utopia Reader*, ed. Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent (1999). Francis Bartkowski has analyzed *Feminist Utopias* (1989), from Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s *Herland* (1915) to the present.





(văr ēōr' ūm): **33**.

(vārō' nian): **354**.

(of a metaphor): **131**; *212*.

(vēr' īsimīl'' ītood): **406**.

(vēr' dē sōsyātā''): **192**.

(vēr' lē' br): **142**.

(of a text): **404**.

(vūr' sō): **34**.

(the character): **224**.

In its value-neutral use, “Victorian” simply iden-
 —1901. (See *Victorian period*, under *periods of English literature*.) It
 —changes that made small-scale England, in the
 ’s surface. The pace and

while it produced great wealth for an expanding middle class, led also to the deterioration of rural England, a mushroom growth of often shoddy urbanization, and massive poverty concentrated in slum neighborhoods. Charles Darwin's theory of evolution (*On the Origin of Species* was published in 1859), together with the extension into all intellectual areas of **positivism** (the view that all valid knowledge must be based on the methods of empirical investigation established by the natural sciences), engendered sectarian controversy, doubts about the truth of religious beliefs, and in some instances, a reversion to strict biblical fundamentalism. Contributing to the social and political unrest was what was labeled "the woman question"; that is, the early *feminist* agitation for equal status and rights.

The Victorian age, for all its conflicts and anxieties, was one of immense, variegated, and often self-critical intellectual and literary activities. In our time, the term "Victorian," and still more **Victorianism**, is frequently used in a derogatory way, to connote narrow-mindedness, sexual priggishness, the determination to maintain feminine "innocence" (that is, sexual ignorance), and an emphasis on social respectability. Such views have a valid basis in attitudes and values expressed (and sometimes exemplified) by many members of the expanding middle class, with its roots in Puritanism and its insecurity about its newly won status. Later criticism of such Victorian attitudes, however, merely echo the vigorous attacks and devastating ridicule mounted against prevailing beliefs and attitudes by a number of thinkers and literary authors in the Victorian age itself.

Refer to G. M. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age* (republished 1977); David Thomson, *England in the Nineteenth Century* (1950); Jerome Buckley, *The Victorian Temper* (1951); W. E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind* (1957). On Victorian attitudes to love and sexuality see Peter Gay, *The Bourgeois Experience, Victoria to Freud* (Vol. 1, *Education of the Senses*, 1984; Vol. 2, *The Tender Passion*, 1986); and on the undercover aspect of Victorian sexual life, Steven Marcus, *The Other Victorians* (republished 1974).

Victorian Period: 284; 189, 211.

Victorianism: 419.

villain (in a plot): 294.

villanelle (vīl' āněl''): 378.

voice (in a literary work): 287.

vraisemblable (vrā' sōmblā' bl): 401.





: 99.

: At present both “wit” and “humor” designate
comic; that is, any element in a work of literature, whether a

“wit” and “humor,” however, had a

The term “wit” once signified the human faculty of intelligence, inven-
“half-wit.” In the

“wit” was often applied to the figu-
metaphysical poetry. And in the eighteenth
false wit of Abraham Cowley

“true wit,” regarded as the apt rephrasing of truths whose

“true wit” in his *Essay on Criticism* (1711) as
’er so well expressed.” See *neoclassic*.

The most common present use of the term derives from its seventeenth-
Wit, that is, now de-

. The surprise is usually the result of a connection or distinction be-
’s expectation, only to

“History repeats

” Thus the trite comment about history

“Too much of a good thing can be—*wonderful*.” The resulting

“from the sudden transformation of a strained expectation into noth-
”; it might be more precise to say, however, “from the sudden satisfaction
”

Mae West’s remark is what the *psychoanalyst* Sigmund Freud called
” which evokes a laugh or smile that is without malice.
“tendency wit,” on the other hand, is aggres-

“Mr. James Payn,” in Oscar Wilde’s barbed com-
“hunts down the obvious with the enthu-

”

Repartee is a term taken from fencing to signify a contest of wit, in which each person tries to cap the remark of the other, or to turn it to his or her own advantage. Attacking his opponent Disraeli in Parliament, Gladstone remarked that “the honorable gentleman will either end on the gallows or die of some loathsome disease.” To which Disraeli rejoined: “That depends on whether I embrace the honorable gentleman’s principles or his mistresses.” *Restoration comedies* often included episodes of sustained repartee; a classic example is the give-and-take in the discussion of their coming marriage by the witty lovers Mirabel and Millamant in William Congreve’s *The Way of the World* (1700), Act IV.

“Humor” is a term that goes back to the ancient theory that the particular mixture of the *four humours* determines each type of personality, and from the derivative application of the term “humorous” to one of the comically eccentric characters in the Elizabethan *comedy of humours*. As we now use the word, **humor** may be ascribed either to a comic utterance or to a comic appearance or mode of behavior. In a useful distinction between the two terms, a humorous utterance may be said to differ from a witty utterance in one or both of two ways: (1) wit, as we saw, is always intended by the speaker to be comic, but many utterances that we find comically humorous are intended by the speakers themselves to be serious; and (2) a humorous saying is not cast in the neatly epigrammatic form of a witty saying. For example, the chatter of the old Nurse in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* is verbose, and humorous to the audience, but not to the speaker; similarly, the discussion of the mode of life of the goldfish in Central Park by the inarticulate and irascible taxi driver in J. D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) is unintentionally but richly humorous, and is not cast in the form of a witty turn of phrase.

More important still is the difference that wit refers only to the spoken or written word, while humor has a much broader range of reference. We find humor, for example, in the way Charlie Chaplin looks, dresses, and acts, and also in the sometimes wordless cartoons in *The New Yorker*. In a thoroughly humorous situation, the sources of the fun may be complex. In Act III, Scene iv of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, Malvolio’s appearance and actions, and his utterances as well, are humorous, but all despite his own very solemn intentions; and our comic enjoyment is increased by our knowledge of the suppressed hilarity of the plotters who are hidden auditors onstage. The greatness of a comic creation like Shakespeare’s Falstaff is that he exploits the full gamut of comic possibilities. Falstaff is humorous in the way he looks and in what he does; what he says is sometimes witty, and at most other times humorous; while his actions and speech are sometimes unintentionally humorous, sometimes intentionally humorous, and not infrequently—as in his whimsical account to his skeptical auditors of how heroically he bore himself in the highway robbery, in the second act of *1 Henry IV*—they are humorous even beyond his intention.

One other point should be made about humor and the comic. In normal use, the term “humor” refers to what is purely comic: it evokes, as it is sometimes said, sympathetic laughter, or else laughter which is an end in itself. If

's distinction between harmless and tendency wit, we can say
"harmless" form of the comic. There is, however, another
"tendency comedy," in which we

—the laughter is derisive, with some element of con-

satire, the literary art of derogating by deriding a subject.

On the alternative use of the term "comic" to define the formal features
comedy; on the form of humor-
black humor. For diverse theories

Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious (1916); Max Eastman,
(1936); D. H. Monroe, *The Argument of Laughter* (1951);
The Thread of Laughter (1952); Stuart M. Tave, *The*
(1960); Jerry Palmer, *Taking Humor Seriously* (1994).

's studies: 126.



(zoog' mā): 347.





Index of Authors

This index lists significant references to authors; it does not include passing references or the authors listed for supplementary reading. Following each name are the page numbers of general references and then, in alphabetic sequence, the page numbers of references to works written by the author.

- Abrams, M. H., "Art-as-Such" 135; *The Mirror and the Lamp* 128, 138, 149, 320; *Natural Supernaturalism* 100; "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric" 407; "What's the Use of Theorizing about the Arts?" 314.
- Adams, James Eli, *Dandies and Desert Saints* 147.
- Addison, Joseph, *Spectator* 114, 385.
- Adorno, Theodor, 205–6.
- Aesop, 9.
- Albee, Edward, 2.
- Alfred the Great, 279.
- Alger, Horatio, 379.
- Althusser, Louis, 206–7, 244.
- Ammons, A. R., "Small Song" 144.
- Apollinaire, Guillaume, 61.
- Aquinas, St. Thomas, 181.
- Aristophanes, 55.
- Aristotle, 148, 212, 293, 295–97, 344, 409–10; *Poetics* 67, 86, 171–72, 342, 405–406, 408; *Rhetoric* 286, 342.
- Arnold, Matthew, 162, 247; "Dover Beach" 115; "The Study of Poetry" 407.
- Ashberry, John, *Three Poems* 319.
- Auden, W. H., 355; "O where are you going?" 11.
- Auerbach, Erich, *Mimesis* 83, 388.
- Augustine, St., of Hippo (354–430), 181; *Confessions* 27, 56.
- Austen, Jane, 74, 351; *Emma* 301; *Northanger Abbey* 38, 151; *Pride and Prejudice* 47, 184, 379; *Sense and Sensibility* 362.
- Austin, John, 81; *How to Do Things with Words* 372–73.
- Babbitt, Irving, 162.
- Bacon, Francis, 341; *Essays* 114.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail, 85–87, 245, 287–88, 312; "Discourse in the Novel" 86; *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* 86; *Rabelais and His World* 86, 156.
- Balzac, Honoré de, 334.
- Bamber, Linda, *Comic Women, Tragic Men* 54.
- Baraka, Amiri (LeRoi Jones), 29.
- Barth, John, 2.
- Barthes, Roland, 309, 312, 331; "The Death of the Author" 19–20, 311, 383; *Mythologies* 72, 359; *The Pleasure of the Text* 383; *S/Z* 401.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

- Romantic Ecology* 100.
The Burden of the Past
 174.
Fleurs du
 168, 397; *Little Poems in Prose*
 –19.
Aesthetica 4.
Feminism and American
 99; *Woman's Fiction* 124.
The Second Sex
Waiting for
 2.
Vathek 151.
 “The Work of Art
 ” 206.
 132, 167.
The Unsettling of America
Travels 96.
Dialogic Criticism 87.
 “Metaphor” 213.
 –108, 153, 189, 231,
The Marriage of Heaven and
 355; “The Sick Rose” 394.
Subjective Criticism 331.
The
 174; *The Western*
 141.
Work on Myth 230.
Decameron 252.
Archetypal Patterns in Poetry
The Rhetoric
 92, 344; *A Rhetoric of Irony*
Life of Samuel Johnson 27,
Family Shakespeare 37.
 Brecht, Bertolt, 7, 110, 205–6; *Threepenny*
Opera 39.
 Breton, André, *Manifesto on Surrealism* 392.
 Brooks, Cleanth, 42, 170, 187, 241–42;
The Well-Wrought Urn 68, 229, 267.
 Brown, Norman O., *Life against Death* 317.
 Brown, William Hill, 274.
 Browning, Robert, “Meeting at Night”
 264; “My Last Duchess” 94, 286; “Pied
 Piper” 116; “Soliloquy of the Spanish
 Cloister” 185.
 Bryant, William Cullen, “Thanatopsis”
 154.
 Bullough, Edward, 92.
 Bunyan, John, *Grace Abounding to the Chief*
of Sinners 28; *The Pilgrim's Progress* 7, 8,
 88, 95.
 Bürger, G. A., “Lenore” 24.
 Burke, Edmund, *Philosophical Enquiry into*
the Sublime and the Beautiful 390.
 Burns, Robert, 136, 394; “O my love's
 like a red, red rose” 130; “The Holy
 Fair” 355; “To a Mouse” 105.
 Bush, Douglas, 119.
 Butler, Judith, 126, 328; *Gender Trouble*
 147, 328, 374.
 Butler, Samuel (1613–80), *Hudibras* 39, 93.
 Butler, Samuel (1835–1902), *Erewhon* 416.
 Butor, Michel, *Second Thoughts* 304.
 Byrom, John, 111.
 Byron, George Gordon, Lord, *Childe*
Harold 240, 326; *Don Juan* 26, 187, 293,
 348–49, 377.
 Calvin, John, 340.
 Calvino, Italo, *If on a Winter's Night a*
Traveler 304.
 Camus, Albert, “The Myth of Sisyphus” 1.
 Capellanus, Andreas, *The Art of Courtly*
Love 66.
 Capote, Truman, *In Cold Blood* 257.
 Carew, Thomas, “A Song” 345.
 Carlyle, Thomas, 189, 320.
 Carroll, Joseph, *Evolution and Literary*
Theory 74.
 Carroll, Lewis, 192; *Alice in Wonderland* 95;
Through the Looking Glass 13.
 Carson, Rachel, *Silent Spring* 97.
 Cary, Elizabeth, *The Tragedy of Mariam*
 281.

- Castiglione, Baldassare, *The Courtier* 293, 339.
- Caxton, William, 339.
- Chandler, Raymond, 84.
- Chaplin, Charlie, 355, 421.
- Chartier, Roger, 36.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey, 158, 222; *Canterbury Tales* 350, 366; *The Legend of Good Women* 266; "The Miller's Tale" 119; "The Monk's Tale" 409; "The Nun's Priest's Tale" 9–10; "The Pardoner's Tale" 10.
- Chekhov, Anton, 365.
- Chomsky, Noam, 194–95; *Reflections on Language* 164; *Syntactic Structures* 198.
- Chopin, Kate, 275.
- Chrétien de Troyes, 280.
- Christie, Agatha, 84.
- Cixous, Hélène, 125.
- Cohn, Dorrit, *Transparent Minds* 380.
- Coleridge, Hartley, 38.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 129, 132, 137, 201, 230, 239, 396; *Biographia Literaria* 119–20, 139; "Christabel" 19, 222, 269–70; "Recollections of Love" 346; "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" 24, 130, 348; *The Statesman's Manual* 395.
- Collins, Wilkie, *The Moonstone* 85.
- Collins, William, 390; "Ode on the Poetical Character" 8; "Ode to Evening" 11, 375.
- Columbus, Christopher, 340.
- Congreve, William, *Way of the World* 421.
- Conley, Katharine, *Automatic Woman* 393.
- Cooper, James Fenimore, *Leather-Stocking Tales* 317.
- Copernicus, 340.
- Cowley, Abraham, 263, 420.
- Cowley, Malcolm, 276.
- Cowper, William, *The Task* 51.
- Crabbe, George, *The Village* 269.
- Crane, R. S., 172; *Critics and Criticism* 149; *The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry* 138.
- Crane, Stephen, 275, 335.
- Crashaw, Richard, 25; "Saint Mary Magdalene" 59.
- Culler, Jonathan, 402; *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* 164, 314; *Structuralist Poetics* 297, 331, 382.
- Cumberland, Richard, *The West Indian* 361.
- cummings, e. e., 62; "Chanson Innocente" 142–43.
- Dante (Dante Alighieri), 61, 293, 395; *Divine Comedy* 88, 95, 109, 182, 376, 395; *Inferno* 340; *Paradiso* 407.
- Darnton, Robert, "What Is the History of Books?" 35.
- Darwin, Charles, 74; *On the Origin of Species* 419.
- Davidson, Donald, "What Metaphors Mean" 213.
- Defoe, Daniel, *Moll Flanders* 15, 253, 334; *Robinson Crusoe* 253, 334.
- DeMan, Paul, 3, 9, 80, 133, 311, 347; "The Rhetoric of Temporality" 396.
- Denham, John, *Cooper's Hill* 158, 406.
- Derrida, Jacques, 13, 77–80, 129, 133, 310; *Of Grammatology* 77; "Structure, Sign and Play" 309; *Writing and Difference* 79.
- Descartes, René, 341.
- Dickens, Charles, 156; *David Copperfield* 255–56; *The Old Curiosity Shop* 270, 362.
- Dickinson, Emily, 275, 376.
- Dilthey, Wilhelm, 162, 176–78.
- Disraeli, Benjamin, 421.
- Dollimore, Jonathan, 250.
- Donne, John, 42, 101, 215–16; "The Canonization" 59, 94, 267; "Death, Be Not Proud" 267; "The First Anniversary" 341; "The Flea" 59, 94; *Holy Sonnets* 371; "Hymn to God the Father" 325; "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" 59.
- Dowson, Ernest, 76.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan, 63, 84.
- Drayton, Michael, "Since there's no help" 371.
- Dreiser, Theodore, 335.
- Dryden, John, 27, 159, 215, 282, 300, 318; "Absalom and Achitophel" 7, 39, 355; *All for Love* 160; "Discourse Concerning Satire" 183; *MacFlecknoe* 353.
- Dujardin, Edouard, 380.
- Dunbar, Paul Laurence, 275.

4. -8; *The Ideology of the*
 4.
 "The
 " 60;
 " 91; *Murder*
 411; *The Waste Land* 12,
 The Politics of Sensibility 362.
 Invisible Man 304.
 Thinking about Women 121.
 "The
 " 413.
 Seven Types of
 13; *Some Versions of Pastoral*
 -4.
 Young Man Luther 323.
 224.
 The Resisting Reader 105,
 Joseph Andrews 38,
 Tom Jones 286-87, 295, 302; *Tom*
 31.
 -13, 332-33, 388;
 68.
 Tales of the Jazz Age 276.
 Madame Bovary 168,
 Aspects of the Novel 46.
 -45,
 History of
 328; "What Is an Author?"
 -20, 311; "What Is Enlightenment?"
 The Golden Bough 16,
 -24, 420;
 317.
 Technique of the Drama 296.
 Anatomy of
 17, 46, 54, 149, 184, 354, 378;
 Fearful Symmetry 397; *The Well-*
 Tempered Critic 385.
 Gadamer, Hans-Georg, 90, 289, 336;
 Truth and Method 178-79.
 Gallie, W. B., 234.
 Gautier, Théophile, 4, 76.
 Gay, John, *Beggar's Opera* 39; *Shepherd's*
 Week 269.
 Geertz, Clifford, 90, 245.
 Genet, Jean, 2.
 Genette, Gérard, 234; *Narrative Discourse*
 302.
 Gibbons, Stella, *Cold Comfort Farm* 326.
 Gide, André, *The Counterfeiters* 305.
 Gilbert, Sandra, *The Madwoman in the Attic*
 123; *No Man's Land* 124.
 Ginsberg, Allen, 142; *Howl* 26.
 Gladstone, William Ewart, 421.
 Godwin, William, *Caleb Williams* 85.
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 396;
 Erlkönig 24; *Maxims and Reflections* 395;
 The Sorrows of Young Werther 362.
 Goldsmith, Oliver, 55; "Comparison
 between Sentimental and Laughing
 Comedy" 361.
 Gomringer, Eugen, 61.
 Gramsci, Antonio, 207.
 Grass, Günter, 2.
 Gray, Thomas, 298, 390; "Elegy Written
 in a Country Churchyard" 8, 154, 376;
 "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat"
 26, 39; "Ode on a Distant Prospect of
 Eton College" 299; "Stanzas to Mr.
 Bentley" 283.
 Greenblatt, Stephen, 22, 246-47;
 "Visible Bullets" 249.
 Greg, W. W., 402.
 Grice, H. P., 179, 372; *Studies in the Way of*
 Words 90.
 Gross, Milt, 153.
 Gubar, Susan, *The Madwoman in the Attic*
 123; *No Man's Land* 124.
 Guedalla, Philip, 420.
 Gutenberg, Johann, 32, 339.
 Hall, Stuart, 72, 208.
 Hamburger, Käte, *The Logic of Literature*
 233.
 Hammett, Dashiell, 84.

- Hardy, Thomas, 200; "In Tenebris I" 116; *Jude the Obscure* 335; *The Return of the Native* 19, 136; *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* 129, 186.
- Harpham, Geoffrey Galt, *The Humanities and the Dream of America* 165; *On the Grotesque* 156.
- Harris, Joel Chandler, 9.
- Havel, Vaclav, 3.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 254; *The Blithedale Romance* 414.
- Hazlitt, William, 68.
- Heidegger, Martin, 289; *Being and Time* 178.
- Heller, Joseph, 2.
- Hemingway, Ernest, 276–77, 302, 378; "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" 365; "Indian Camp" 386; "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" 302, 365; *The Sun Also Rises* 385–86.
- Henry VIII, 340.
- Henry, O., 200, 295, 365.
- Herbert, George, 61, 216; "Virtue" 63.
- Herder, Johann Gottfried, 290.
- Herrick, Robert, 281; "To the Virgins" 44.
- Hertz, Neil, *The End of the Line* 392.
- Hesiod, *Works and Days* 151.
- Heywood, John, 225.
- Hirsch, E. D., 178; *Stylistics and Synonymity* 388; *Validity in Interpretation* 177–79.
- Hitchcock, Alfred, 85, 156.
- Hobbes, Thomas, *Leviathan* 360.
- Hogarth, William, 153.
- Hoggart, Richard, *The Uses of Literacy* 72.
- Holland, Norman, 322, 331.
- Homer, 110, 113; *The Iliad* 108; *The Odyssey* 108.
- Hopkins, Gerard Manley, 284; "Inversnaid" 98; "The Wreck of the Deutschland" 222.
- Horace, 263, 354; *Ars Poetica* 21, 69, 82, 237, 326, 344; *Odes* 44.
- Horkheimer, Max, 205.
- Howells, William Dean, 334.
- Hughes, Langston, "Mother to Son" 143.
- Hulme, T. E., 170.
- Hurston, Zora Neale, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* 157.
- Husserl, Edmund, 289–90.
- Huxley, Aldous, *Point Counter Point* 351, 355.
- Huysmans, J. K., *À Rebours* 76.
- Ibsen, Henrik, 410; *A Doll's House* 317.
- Ingarden, Roman, 289, 330.
- Ionesco, Eugène, 2.
- Irigaray, Luce, 125.
- Irving, John, 2.
- Iser, Wolfgang, 330.
- Jakobson, Roman, 132, 139–40, 197, 351, 387.
- James, Henry, 47, 294, 303; *The Art of the Novel* 63, 257, 301; *Portrait of a Lady* 294, 380; "The Turn of the Screw" 305; *What Maisie Knew* 302.
- James, William, 380.
- Jameson, Fredric, 8, 207, 209; *The Political Unconscious* 208–9.
- Jarry, Alfred, *Ubu Roi (Ubu the King)* 1.
- Jauss, Hans Robert, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory" 336.
- Jefferson, Thomas, 274.
- Jensen, Wilhelm, *Gradiva* 322.
- Johnson, Barbara, 81; *The Critical Difference* 81; *A World of Difference* 126.
- Johnson, Mark, 53.
- Johnson, Samuel, 83, 215, 238, 283, 354; "Life of Cowley" 59; "Life of John Denham" 406; "Life of Milton" 103, 162; *Lives of the English Poets* 27; "Preface to Shakespeare" 42, 406; *Rasselas* 15, 416.
- Jones, Ernest, *Hamlet and Oedipus* 322.
- Jones, Inigo, 210.
- Jonson, Ben, 46, 55, 210, 262; "Drink to me only with thine eyes" 166; *Every Man in His Humour* 57; "To the Memory of My Beloved, The Author Mr. William Shakespeare" 22; *Volpone* 353.
- Joyce, James, 45; *Finnegans Wake* 13, 95, 326; *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 111–12, 148; *Stephen Hero* 403; *Ulysses* 109, 113, 363, 380.
- Jung, Carl, 17, 323.
- Juvenal, 354.
- Kafka, Franz, 1, 8, 117, 156, 334.
- Kant, Immanuel, 71, 168, 420; *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* 4, 70, 92, 135, 391; "What Is Enlightenment?" 106.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

- The Grotesque in Art and*
156.
- " 61, 104, 159, 220; "The
" 113, 115; *The Fall of*
95; "Ode on a Grecian Urn"
–46; "Ode to a
" 60, 64; "Ode to Psyche"
"To Autumn" 8.
On the Healing Power of Poetry
- The Genesis of Secrecy*
- On the Road* 26.
- "Against Theory" 313.
- The Lay of the Land*
–99; *The Land before Her* 99.
- "Poetry" 272.
Dr. Strangelove 2.
The Spanish Tragedy 409.
- More Than Cool Reason*
- Piers Plowman* 11, 95,
- A Sand County Almanac* 97.
Gil Blas 253.
Manhood and the American
147.
- Structural*
230.
Poetic Image 169.
- Lewis, Matthew Gregory, *The Monk* 151.
Lillo, George, *The London Merchant* 410.
Lincoln, Abraham, "Gettysburg Address"
16, 343.
Locke, John, 413; *Essay Concerning Human*
Understanding 213.
Lodge, Thomas, *Rosalynde* 54.
Longinus, *On the Sublime* 69, 389–90.
Lord, Albert, 265.
Lovejoy, A. O., 315.
Lowell, Amy, *Some Imagist Poets* 170.
Lowell, Robert, *Life Studies* 62.
Lubbock, Percy, *The Craft of Fiction* 301.
Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 88.
Lukács, Georg, 368; *Theory of the Novel* 109;
Writer and Critic and Other Essays 205.
Luther, Martin, 165, 339.
Lyly, John, *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*
116.
Lyotard, François, 314.
- Macherey, Pierre, *A Theory of Literary*
Production 207.
MacKenzie, Henry, *The Man of Feeling*
362.
Maclean, Norman, 262.
Malory, Thomas, *Morte d'Arthur* 49, 280.
Mansfield, Katherine, "Bliss" 303.
Marie de France, 191; *Lais* 280.
Marlowe, Christopher, *Dr. Faustus* 31,
370; *Edward II* 50.
Márquez, Gabriel García, *One Hundred*
Years of Solitude 258.
Marsh, Edward, 285.
Martial, 110.
Marvell, Andrew, 216; "The Garden"
131; "To His Coy Mistress" 44, 166.
Marx, Groucho, 131.
Marx, Karl, 203–4, 250, 368–69.
Mather, Increase, 189.
McGann, Jerome, *Critique of Modern*
Textual Criticism 403; *The Textual*
Condition 36.
McInerney, Jay, *Bright Lights, Big City* 304.
McKenzie, D. F., "The Book as an
Expressive Form" 35; *Bibliography and*
the Sociology of Texts 36.
Melville, Herman, *Moby-Dick* 395.
Meredith, George, *The Idea of Comedy* 56;
Modern Love 371.

- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 289.
 Michaels, Walter Benn, "Against Theory" 313.
 Miles, Hamish, 362.
 Miller, Arthur, *Death of a Salesman* 410.
 Miller, Henry, 277.
 Miller, J. Hillis, 290; *Charles Dickens* 291; *Theory Then and Now* 81.
 Millett, Kate, *Sexual Politics* 121.
 Milton, John, 162, 201, 338; "Comus" 210; *Il Penseroso* 8; *L'Allegro* 8; "Lycidas" 65, 102, 132; "Of Education" 83; "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" 166; *Paradise Lost* 7, 30, 38, 89, 107–9, 110, 132, 155, 229, 267, 286, 300, 340–41, 346, 407.
 Moi, Toril, 168.
 Momaday, N. Scott, 99.
 Monk, Samuel H., *The Sublime* 391.
 Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley, 282; "The Lover: A Ballad" 45.
 Montaigne, Michel de, *Essays* 27, 114.
 Montrose, Louis, 245.
 Moore, Marianne, "The Steeple-Jack" 169.
 More, Paul Elmer, 162.
 More, Sir Thomas, *Utopia* 416.
 Mouffe, Chantal, 208.
 Mukarovsky, Jan, 139.
 Munch, Edvard, *The Cry* 117.

 Nabokov, Vladimir, 277–78; *Pale Fire* 185, 258, 305.
 Nash, Ogden, 349.
 Nashe, Thomas, "Litany in Time of Plague" 12; *The Unfortunate Traveller* 253.
 Neal, Larry, "The Black Arts Movement," 29.
 Nietzsche, Friedrich, 49; *The Genealogy of Morals* 317.
 Norton, Thomas, *Gorboduc* 409.
 Nussbaum, Martha, 163, 360; *Women and Human Development* 164.

 Odets, Clifford, *Waiting for Lefty* 89.
 O'Neill, Eugene, *The Emperor Jones* 118; *Mourning Becomes Electra* 411; *Strange Interlude* 370.
 Ong, Walter, 288, 344; *Orality and Literacy* 265.

 Origen, 181.
 Orwell, George, *Animal Farm* 9.
 Overbury, Sir Thomas, 46.
 Owen, Wilfred, 350.

 Paine, Thomas, 274.
 Parrish, Stephen, 403.
 Parry, Milman, 265.
 Passmore, John, *Man's Responsibility for Nature* 100.
 Pater, Walter, 68–69; *The Renaissance* 5, 319, 326.
 Patmore, Coventry, 123.
 Peacock, Thomas Love, *Nightmare Abbey* 351; "The War Song of Dinas Vawr" 191.
 Peirce, Charles Sanders, 357–58.
 Pekar, Harvey, 153.
 Percy, Thomas, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* 23.
 Petrarch (Francesco Petrarca), 58, 293, 370.
 Phillips, John, "The Splendid Shilling" 38.
 Philo Judaeus, 181.
 Pindar, 262–63.
 Pinsky, Robert, 114.
 Pinter, Harold, 2.
 Plato, 148, 186, 230–31; *The Republic* 416; *Symposium* 292.
 Plautus, 55.
 Plotinus, 292.
 Plutarch, *Parallel Lives* 27.
 Poe, Edgar Allan, 84, 365, 397; "The Masque of the Red Death" 210; "The Poetic Principle" 5; *The Purloined Letter* 324; "The Raven" 337.
 Pope, Alexander, 88, 158, 346, 348, 350, 353; "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" 15, 286, 298, 354; "Essay on Criticism" 51–52, 114, 237, 264, 420; "Essay on Man" 155; *Imitations of Horace* 172; *Moral Essays* 354; "Of the Characters of Women" 159; "On Bathos" 25; *Pastorals* 268–69; "Rape of the Lock" 15, 38, 113, 184, 347; "The Universal Prayer" 83–84.
 Porter, Cole, 60, 192.
 Poulet, Georges, 290–91; "Phenomenology of Reading" 290.
 Pound, Ezra, 170; "In a Station of the Metro" 157, 171.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

- The Morphology of the
 234.

 “The Evil That Men Do”
 Institutes of Oratory 130.
 The Mysteries of Udolpho
 A Feeling for Books 36.
 –42, 264;
 ’s Body 61.
 The Adding Machine 118.
 Philosophy of Rhetoric 131,
 –13, 241; Practical Criticism 287,
 Principles of Literary Criticism 6, 187;
 128.
 Pilgrimage 381.
 Pamela 38, 254, 351,
 –88.
 Illuminations
 Jealousy 258.

 “A Satyr against Mankind”
 , 95, 394.

 “The Blessed
 ” 315.
 Julie, or the
 361.
 , 45
 –70; The Stones of
 156.
 Gorboduc 409.
 Orientalism 306.
- Salinger, J. D., *The Catcher in the Rye* 301,
 421.
 Sapir, Edward, 194.
 Sartre, Jean-Paul, 1.
 Sayers, Dorothy, 84.
 Saussure, Ferdinand de, 78, 193–96, 208,
 309, 357–59, 381–82; *Course in General
 Linguistics* 193–94.
 Schelling, F. W. J., 231.
 Schiller, Friedrich, *Naïve and Sentimental
 Poetry* 168.
 Schlegel, Friedrich, 186, 231.
 Schleiermacher, Friedrich, 176.
 Scholes, Robert, 258.
 Scott, Sir Walter, 191; *Ivanhoe* 256.
 Scudéry, Madeline de, *Le Grand Cyrus*
 351.
 Searle, John R., 180, 372; *Expression and
 Meaning* 128, 214; *Speech Acts* 179.
 Sedgwick, Eve, *Between Men* 146–47, 328.
 Seneca, 409.
 Shakespeare, William, 21–22, 27, 46, 50,
 59, 131, 149, 156, 170, 318, 379, 421;
Antony and Cleopatra 12–13; *As You
 Like It* 268; *Cymbeline* 326, 412; *Hamlet*
 18, 266, 296, 322, 409; *1 Henry IV* 183,
 300, 421; “*It Was a Lover and His Lass*”
 337; *Julius Caesar* 300, 347; *King Lear*
 105, 270; *Love’s Labour’s Lost* 116;
Macbeth 363, 410; *Merchant of Venice*
 412; *Othello* 166, 410; “*The Rape of
 Lucrece*” 376; *Richard II* 326; *Richard
 III* 410; *Romeo and Juliet* 296, 325, 421;
Sonnets 11; *The Tempest* 105, 210, 249,
 340; *Twelfth Night* 186, 353, 421;
 “*Venus and Adonis*” 104; *Winter’s Tale*
 50, 412.
 Shaw, George Bernard, 318; *Mrs. Warren’s
 Profession* 317.
 Shelley, Mary, *Frankenstein* 356.
 Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 42, 239, 397; *Defence
 of Poetry* 112, 347; “*Epipsychidion*” 293,
 363; “*Ode to the West Wind*” 347,
 376; *Prometheus Unbound* 210; “*The
 Sensitive Plant*” 398.
 Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, 55; *The Rivals*
 203.
 Shklovsky, Victor, 139.
 Showalter, Elaine, 121, 123; *A Literature of
 Their Own* 124.

- Sidney, Sir Philip, 112, 162, 339; *Apology for Poetry* 128; *Arcadia* 268; *Astrophel and Stella* 12; "Leave me, O love" 266.
- Silko, Leslie Marmon, 99.
- Sinclair, Upton, *The Jungle* 89.
- Sinfield, Alan, 250.
- Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 11, 49.
- "Sir Patrick Spens" 23.
- Skelton, John, *Colin Clout* 93.
- Smith, Adam, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* 360.
- Smith, Barbara Herrnstein, *Margins of Discourse* 129.
- Sondheim, Stephen, 211.
- Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* 186, 322, 409.
- Southey, Robert, 136.
- Spender, Stephen, 130.
- Spenser, Edmund, 162, 293, 370;
"Epithalamion" 112, 337; *The Faerie Queene* 8, 16, 44, 88, 109, 295–96, 377;
Four Hymns 166; *Shepherd's Calendar* 268.
- Spiegelman, Art, *Maus* 153.
- Spitzer, Leo, *Linguistics and Literary History* 388.
- Spurgeon, Caroline, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us* 170.
- Steele, Sir Richard, *The Conscious Lovers* 361.
- Stein, Gertrude, 226, 276.
- Sterne, Laurence, *Tristram Shandy* 187, 297, 361.
- Stillinger, Jack, *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius* 180, 404.
- Stoppard, Tom, 2.
- Storey, Robert F., *Mimesis and the Human Animal* 75.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* 89, 270, 362.
- Strout, Cushing, 273; *The Veracious Imagination* 257.
- Suckling, Sir John, "A Ballad upon a Wedding" 113.
- Surrey, Henry Howard, Earl of, 30, 370.
- Swift, Jonathan, *Gulliver's Travels* 286, 353, 355–56, 416; "A Modest Proposal" 185, 355; *A Tale of a Tub* 167; "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift" 353.
- Swinburne, Algernon, 76, 348.
- Taine, Hippolyte, 369.
- Tanselle, G. Thomas, 404.
- Tate, Allen, "Tension in Poetry" 400.
- Tennyson, Alfred, Lord, 95; "Come Down, O Maid" 264; *In Memoriam* 169.
- Terence, 55.
- Theocritus, 96, 102, 268.
- Theophrastus, *Characters* 45–46.
- Thomas, Dylan, 60; *Altarwise by Owl-light* 371; "Do not go gentle into that good night" 378; "The Force That Through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower" 350.
- Thomas, Francis-Noël, *Clear and Simple as the Truth* 386, 388.
- Thomson, James, *The Seasons* 96, 149, 298–99; *The Tragedy of Sophonisba* 31.
- Thoreau, Henry David, 98, 413–14; *Walden* 96, 413.
- Thorpe, James, 404.
- Thurber, James, *Fables for Our Time* 9.
- Todorov, Tzvetan, *The Fantastic* 305.
- Tolstoy, Leo, *War and Peace* 129, 302.
- Tompkins, Jane, 362; *Sensational Designs* 36.
- Toomer, Jean, *Cane* 157.
- Turner, Mark, *Clear and Simple as the Truth* 386, 388; *The Literary Mind* 10; *More than Cool Reason* 214; *Reading Minds* 344.
- Twain, Mark, *Huckleberry Finn* 317.
- Tyler, Royall, *The Contrast* 274.
- Verne, Jules, 356.
- Virgil, 96, 102, 110; *The Aeneid* 108; *Eclogues* 268; *Georgics* 88.
- Vivas, Eliseo, 243.
- Voltaire, 155.
- Vonnegut, Kurt, Jr., 2.
- Waller, Edmund, "Go, Lovely Rose" 44.
- Walpole, Horace, *The Castle of Otranto* 151.
- Walton, Izaak, *Lives* 27.
- Warren, Robert Penn, 187, 241.
- Watt, Ian, 303.
- Webster, John, 409; *The Duchess of Malfi* 266.
- Weiskel, Thomas, *The Romantic Sublime* 392.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

- Poems on Various Subjects*
- Natural History and*
96.
- Leaves of Grass* 142.
- The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*
- The Importance of*
56, 325.
- Our Town* 50, 294.
- Culture and*
72.
- Sociobiology: The New*
74.
- The Verbal Icon*
- Wolfson, Susan J., *Formal Changes* 141.
- Woolf, Virginia, 381; *A Room of One's Own* 121; *Orlando* 286; *To the Lighthouse* 302.
- Wordsworth, Dorothy, *Journals* 27.
- Wordsworth, William, 83, 239; *Lyrical Ballads* 238–39, 299; “Michael” 167, 269–70; “Nutting” 99; *The Prelude* 25, 28, 112, 239–40, 391; “She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways” 169; “The Solitary Reaper” 233–34, 349; “Tintern Abbey” 30, 94, 286; “We Are Seven” 24.
- Wyatt, Sir Thomas, 58, 370.
- Yeats, William Butler, 45; “Among School Children” 347; “An Irish Airman Foresees His Death” 346; *A Vision* 231.
- Yorkshire Tragedy, A* 410.
- Žižek, Slavoj, 392.
- Zola, Émile, 335.