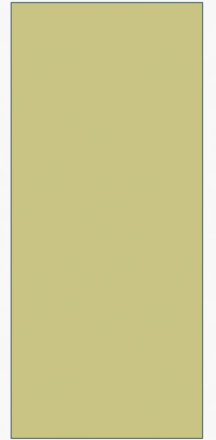


# DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE

SOURCES & GENRE



# TRADITION OF THE GOTHIC NOVEL (E. G., THE CASTLE OF OTRANTO, *FRANKENSTEIN*)

- Gothic fiction: set in distant times and countries, gloomy landscapes and environments, sensational plots, ruined castles, supernatural events, decaying or worn out ancestral lines, secret manuscripts or documents, “ghost” of old crimes
- J & H both draws on but adapts the Gothic tradition: Set in London, horror lies within a respectable individual, evil reflects on a broad section of society, scientific plausibility, multiple narrative perspectives
- Gothic fiction – repressed desires manifest themselves as monstrous because these desires are usually suppressed in society. What, exactly, are these desires?? (See Course Notes—Jekyll and Hyde link)

# SCIENCE

- Story as a warning against science's excess
- Use of science that separates scientist from others
  - "Incident of the Letter" – Dr Jekyll's house/lesson
  - "Henry Jekyll's Full Statement" – thrill of discovery
  - Jekyll's science
- Creator and Creation/Theme of the double
  - "Search for Mr Hyde" – dream
  - Physical appearance: J & H – emphasis on ethical and social horror, not physical (find examples)
  - Father and Son
  - Focus on biology and psychology

# DETECTIVE STORY

- Jekyll and Hyde invokes the tradition of the detective story but also adapts it.
- There is a mystery, but it has multiple facets.
  - What is Hyde's relationship to Jekyll? What does Hyde have on Jekyll? Why was Carew killed? Why does Jekyll slam his window shut suddenly after briefly talking to Utterson and Enfield? What about the handwriting on Hyde's letter? What causes Lanyon's decline and death? These are just a few questions that reveal multiple mysteries.

# DETECTIVE STORY

- Story is structured by inquiries into a mystery by an inquirer
- Here, it is Utterson, a lawyer (“strange case”)
  - Utterson uses reason to try to answer questions. Belief in science and scientific method. Thinks there must be simple solutions. But reason doesn’t answer all questions. Juxtaposed to Inspector Newcomen—official arm of the law.
  - Utterson wants to keep secrets – protect Jekyll
  - Utterson’s character—divided subjectivity parallel to Jekyll’s. Repressed feelings and desires (Opening of “The Story of the Door”)

# DETECTIVE STORY

- *Mystery is solved*
  - The last chapter answers many questions and seems to resolve the story, yet questions still remain.
  - Identity is not stable and coherent, but fluid and varied
  - Writing (letters, wills) leads to ambiguity rather than clear meaning.

# VICTORIAN REALISTIC FICTION

- Descriptions of London (your examples)
- Narrator—3<sup>rd</sup> person omniscient (shifts to 1<sup>st</sup> person)
- Social criticism: fog, law, conditions of urban life, social conventions and mores, gender (novel without women?)
- Tradition of Christmas crawler: sensational tale containing supernatural incident intended to create chills

# THEMATIC STATEMENTS

- Moral: Warning about scientific pursuit
- Horror story – what is horror?
- Tension of unresolved Oedipal rage/struggle between the id and superego (id---ego---superego)
- Post-Darwinian world: animals/humans, biological relatedness, limits of the law (legal system), claustrophobic environment (presence of God?)
- Philosophical questions: Is evil inherent in all humans or is it the effect of unrestrained pleasures/desires. Also, psychological doubles
- Male friendships and celibacy (no women)/Gentleman – middle-class professionals
- Storytelling/Scientific method – how we read and interpret