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English 102

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April 2, 2018

Edgar Allan Poe: A Battle Between Fantasy and Reality

Edgar Allan Poe was born on January 19, 1809. Poe’s father abandoned him and his mother as a small child, a year later his mother also passed away leaving Poe alone and sad at a young age. A family in Baltimore took in the young Edgar and he then fell in love with his cousin Virginia. Doomed for sadness at a young age the poor writer couldn’t catch a break as his beloved Virginia lay on her death bed shortly after they fall in love. It is said that Edgar felt extremely guilty for his wife’s death and it marked the down spiral of his life. Rufus Griswold was Edgar’s literary advisor when he passed away, which means he had all the rights to his works which was ironic because when the young writer passed away, Griswold published a memorial article in Edgar’s memory depicting him as a drunk, sad, womanizer which is not accurate, Poe showed great respect and love for woman and often described women as angelic figures in society. Edgar Allan Poe was a beautiful, creative writer with a noticeable love for the themes dreams, fantasy, and subconscious fascinations, but did his struggle between reality and fantasy contribute to the death of the talented Poe? One hundred and fifty years later after he is gone people continue to read and enjoy his dark work that could have not been possible if it wasn’t for the “unstable” mind that many claimed Edgar portrayed. The death and loss that Poe experienced young sparked the fascination and “madness” found in his work, he uses strong symbols such as the raven to symbolize the never-ending remembrance of the ones he has lost over the years. Although the tragic events Poe went through when he was a young child had long term affects on the writer, the use of narcotics and alcohol are said to also contribute to the madness and gruesome imagination of Edgar. (eapoe.org) The long-term abandonment issues and the use of drugs and alcohol lead the talented poet to mildly mix his reality and fantasy worlds as I believe he did days leading up to his death, but these psychological issues that Edgar battled also helped contribute to the unique horrific ways he is so widely known for today. Edgar emphasizes one theme fairly consistently through out his different pieces of work such as “The Bells”, “The Raven”, “The Cask of Amontillado” and plenty more is death. The fascination of death was with Edgar at young age due to losing his mother, losing his wife also added onto the fetish and allowed Poe to contain his demons by writing his well-known stories and poems. Instead of acting upon these things and actually performing the horrific acts in Poe’s work, he channels his inner cravings and demons by turning fantasies and ideas into fictional stories.