Chapter V
Psychological Instability and Mystery

Poe employs a variety of narrators in his short stories that exhibit characteristics of a psychopath. However, in his bizarre, gothic stories, Poe provides us with these fundamental attributes of a psychopath almost 100 years before the introduction of modern psychology. This indicates that Poe created his narrators based on his own interpretation of a psychopath, which ironically ends up closely resembling the traits that modern psychologists have explored. The narrators in “The Cask of Amontillado” “The Black Cat,” and “The Tell-Tale Heart” want to understand why they behaved immorally. However, because of the circumstances, these narrators prove unreliable.

Poe creates “The Cask of Amontillado” as a dry, psychological horror that explores vengeance as a powerful, driving force behind human beings. Poe wrote this story to adhere to a sensationalist era of writing where penny papers and mass-produced pamphlet novels were very common. To satisfy the readers who craved sensation, Poe created a psychological thriller that explores vengeance as a powerful driving force behind his main character. Throughout his story, Poe examines the precise and cunning tactics that Montresor uses to carry out his vengeful plan against Fortunato to ensure he will not get caught. Poe uses these tactics to explore the psychological mindset of a human being motivated by vengeance and ends up creating a riveting story with a horrifying climax.

In the beginning of the story, Montresor explains how he had been irreparably insulted by his acquaintance, Fortunato, though he never tells us exactly what happened. He seeks revenge against this man, but wishes to do so in a precise and clever way that
will exempt him from punishment. “I must not only punish but punish with impunity” (TCA 6). The first tactic that Montresor uses to execute his vengeful plan is to approach Fortunato during carnival season. In England, carnival season is a time of celebration, drunkenness, costumes, and intricate masks. Montresor sees the carnival as the perfect opportunity to disguise him. He wears a cap and black silk mask, which symbolizes his villainous intentions. Fortunato, on the other hand, wears a clownish ensemble with a silly hat to match, which symbolizes his foolish tendencies. David Reynolds writes in his *Poe’s Art of Transformation* that, “Who would know Montresor was with Fortunato the night of the latter’s disappearance if both were in a carnival disguise?” (Reynolds 105). No one would normally expect someone to execute a plotted murder during the celebratory commotion of a carnival. Montresor believes it will be impossible for anyone to know he was with Fortunato that night, as they would both be hidden by their costumes. It will pose no risk for him. Poe’s bizarre carnival setting prepares the stage for a bizarre story to come, and marks Montresor’s first step in his vengeful, carefully plotted murder.

Montresor also uses a reverse psychology tactic to complete his plan without putting himself at risk of suspicion. He does not actually ever invite Fortunato into his home, but instead uses the man’s vanity to lure him into the wine vaults. Montresor approaches him at the carnival and tells him that he has obtained a wine that could pass for Amontillado, knowing that Fortunato would not pass up an opportunity that would test his intelligence and knowledge of wine. Fortunato is the one who insists that they go into the vaults so he can test the wine out for himself. Montresor uses this reverse psychology to ensure punishing his acquaintance without revealing himself as responsible. He also uses this tactic on the servants in his home. As he says:
I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given
them explicit orders not to stir from the house… I well knew, to insure
their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was
turned. (TCA 6)

Montresor does not want anyone in his home at all upon his arrival with
Fortunato, but knows that they will grow suspicious if he tells them flat out to take the
night off. Instead, he knows that his servants will leave by choice if he told them he will
not be returning until morning. When the two men arrive and begin descending into the
vaults, Fortunato begins to cough from the niter covering the walls, which marks another
example of Montresor’s reverse psychology. “We will go back; your health is precious,
you are rich, respected, admired, beloved” (7). Montresor suggests they leave the vaults,
knowing that Fortunato’s vanity would make him resist this statement and want to
continue, despite his cough. Poe uses Montresor’s brilliant reverse psychology as a
significant element of darkness behind his vengeful plan.

Finally, Poe employs alcohol as an element of Montresor’s execution of his
vengeful plan. When Poe first introduces us to Fortunato, the man is intoxicated, and
Montresor uses Fortunato’s love for wine as a way to successfully carry out his plan.
Reynolds writes in his Poe’s Art of Transformation that, “As for Fortunato, he is so vain
about his knowledge of wine and so fixated on the supposed Amontillado that he goes
willingly to his own destruction” (197). Montresor tempts Fortunato with Amontillado,
which sets off the timeline to his demise. After they are inside the vaults, Montresor
opens a bottle of Medoc, an expensive red wine, to share with Fortunato, which is another
example of alcohol as a key role in his plot. Montresor knows that he will come off as
sincere by offering Fortunato an expensive French wine.
Fortunato will not suspect in the least what is about to happen. Montresor also knows that the wine will send Fortunato further into his drunken state where he will be completely incapable of thinking logically. Fortunato is dressed in a clownish costume that he wore for the carnival in the beginning, which symbolizes him as a fool who fall victim to Montresor. “He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while the bells jester” (TCA 7). With each sip of the Medoc, Fortunato is advancing further and further toward his mental and physical destruction, and Poe uses the jingling bells on his hat to symbolize him as a fool. However, at the end of the story, the alcohol begins to wear off of Fortunato as Montresor walls up the crypt to trap him inside. As the author writes:

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was not the cry of a drunken man. (7)

Poe intends for Fortunato to be coherent during this part of the story to express the darkness and horror of being buried alive. He uses alcohol as a dark element of Montresor’s vengeful plan against his enemy.

Through “The Cask of Amontillado,” Poe explores the psychological ramifications of a human being seeking vengeance. Montresor examines the finest details of his plan and uses manipulation to guarantee “punishment with impunity” (7), which is a warning sign of a psychopath (Knight-Jadzyk). He uses brilliant reverse psychology to target Fortunato’s vanity and lure him into the vaults, and to also get the servants out of his home. Finally, he uses alcohol at first to tempt Fortunato and later to intentionally intoxicate him and disrupt his logic. However, while Montresor’s plan succeeds and he does not get caught, we cannot help to doubt his sanity. An “insult” is not worthy of
murder. While Montresor acts in brilliant and clever ways, the readers cannot help but to recognize him as mad. Fortunato is sympathised as the victim of a horrendous and unreasonable crime.

The narrator in “The Black Cat” commits a variety of morbid, senseless, and disturbing acts that land him in a prison cell on death row. The narrator writes the story the day before he is to be executed, and explains from the beginning how guilty he feels about what he has done. “In their consequences, these events have terrified – have tortured – have destroyed me” (TBC 3). Poe wrote this story in first-person perspective, which he did not do frequently, to really convey how the narrator feels about his behaviour. Benfey writes in his *Poe and the Unreadable*, “The fear of the criminals is not the fear of being caught, it is the fear of being cut off, of being misunderstood” (Benfey 36). The narrator uses this story as an opportunity to make the reader really understand what happened by revealing the external forces that conquered his mind and made him act in these ways. In particular, he blames alcohol and perverseness for his irrational thinking that caused the morbid events to take place.

The narrator explains that his moral breakdown began when he started to drink heavily. Alcohol caused him to experience violent mood swings and wrecked his personality. He discusses how it interfered with his grasp on reality and he eventually began to abuse his wife and pets. The aspect of alcohol is ironic, as Poe had uncontrollable alcohol abuse during his lifetime and may have used the narrator to express the grim effects of alcohol on the mind. “… Through the instrumentality of the Fiend Intemperance had (I blush to confess it) experienced a radical altercation for the worse” (3). The narrator regards alcohol as a fiend. He believes it to be a source of evil that completely disrupted his logic and caused him to behave in irrational ways. “One night, returning home, much intoxicated from one of my haunts about town, I fancied that
the cat avoided my presence” (4). He comes home one night after drinking heavily and believes that Pluto, one of his cats, is avoiding him. Infuriated, the narrator grabs Pluto and cuts one of his eyes out with a knife.

The narrator believes that alcohol was the first external force that took over his mind and set off his demonic path. However, while the narrator blames alcohol, we cannot help but still look at this event as very unusual. Torturing animals is an evil and morbid act, even with the presence of alcohol, and is a telltale sign of a psychopath. He attempts to use alcohol to bring a sense of normalcy to this type of behavior, but in reality, no circumstances could justify brutality towards animals.

The narrator also introduces the concept of perverseness as an external force that causes him to act in the ways that he does. The narrator describes perverseness as “one of the primitive impulses of the human heart” (3). He describes it as an uncontrollable and irresistible impulse that acts as a distinct part of human nature. For example, after the narrator cuts Pluto’s eye out, he wakes up a feeling slightly remorseful. However, he feels a perverseness that gives him a desire to continue down his dark path. He sets out to intentionally do more wrong, and he takes Pluto and hangs him from the limb of a tree.

The narrator writes, “Who has not, a hundred times, found himself committing a vile or a silly action, for no other reason than because he knows he should not? Have we not a perpetual inclination to violate that which is Law, merely because we understand it to be such?” (3).

He describes perverseness as a part of all mankind and uses it to justify his behavior. He sets out to convince the reader that this perverseness was another external force that took over his mind and caused him to act in gruesome and irrational ways. However, perverseness is only acceptable to an extent. For example, perverseness can be considered normal, say, when referring to a teenaged girl intentionally missing their
curfew to spite her parents. When it comes down to it, perverseness cannot rationalize hanging a mutilated cat from the limb of a tree.

Through “The Black Cat,” Poe explores a man’s downward spiral into a murderous rampage and highlights the characteristics of a psychopath. The narrator uses this story as a confession and tries to help the readers understand his story. He discusses both alcohol and perverseness as different elements that took over his mind and sparked his demonic and vicious pathway. He states from the beginning that he is sane, and uses the rest of the story to convince the reader of this. Poe was a chronic alcoholic during his lifetime, which most likely provided his inspiration to delve into the effects of alcohol on the psyche (Edgar Allen Poe, Drugs, and Alcohol 76). The narrator blames alcohol for wrecking his personality and distorting his reality.

He attempts to make the reader recognize perverseness as another force that is instilled within human beings and caused him to continue his behavior. However, while the narrator tries to gain our empathy, we cannot help but to recognize his psychotic nature and his dark soul that is ultimately responsible, and we instead empathize with his victims. He tries to blame everyone and everything else for the events that occurred, which is one of the warning signs of a psychopath. Although the narrator attempts to prove his sanity to the reader, the reader thinks of him as insane.

In “The Tell-Tale Heart” Poe constructs yet another compelling tale of a horrific murder. Like a few of his other short stories, Poe develops a narrator that is plagued by guilt and wishes to use the story to confess his murder. The narrator tells his story in the first person with attempts to better connect to the reader. He fears being misunderstood, and sets out to explain to the reader the circumstances of what happened and essentially prove his sanity to the reader. In the beginning, the narrator writes, “How, then, am I
mad? Hearken! And observe how healthily – how calmly I can tell you the whole story” (TTH 12).

The narrator states from the beginning that, while the reader maybe doubtful, he is not mad. Specifically, he uses his hypersensitivity and his attention to defend his sanity, attempting to convince the reader that these traits are not those of a madman. From the beginning, the narrator attempts to defend his sanity. Knowing that he needs to prove his point, he continues on and tells the story of his gruesome murder. However, he illustrates different details of his hypersensitivity, or his abnormally strong reaction to sight and noise, to claim his sanity. He writes: “He had the eye of a vulture -- a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees- very gradually- I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and this rid myself of the eye forever” (12).

While the narrator states in the beginning that the old man had never wronged him, he is nonetheless excessively bothered by the man’s eye, which he blames on his own “hypersensitivity.” He writes, “I saw it perfect with distinctness – all a dull blue, with a hideous veil over it that chilled the very marrow in my bones” (12). The narrator’s language conveys the disgust he had toward the old man’s eye, and continues saying, “And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness us but over-acuteness of the sense?” (12). The narrator even breaks from his storytelling to blatantly inform the readers that while they may consider this to be associated with insanity, they are mistaking his hypersensitivity for madness. He displays self-pity and blame, which are traits of a psychopath.

The narrator moves forward to describe yet another detail of his hypersensitivity. He writes: “It was the beating of the old man’s heart. It increased my fury, as the beating of a drum stimulates the soldier into courage” (13). He blames the enhancement of his
rage on the man’s heartbeat, something that clearly would not trouble a normal human being. Toward the end of the story, his hypersensitivity brings him even more anxiety that causes him to reveal himself to the police. It was a low, dull, quick sound – much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton (13). The narrator eventually convinces himself, and attempts to convince the reader, that the sound comes from the heartbeat of the old man that he has hidden underneath the floorboards of the bedroom. The sound grows louder and louder causing him unbearable agony as he tries to compose himself in front of the police.

Eventually, it becomes intolerable, “Villains!” I shrieked. ‘Dissemble me no more! I admit the deed! – Tear up the planks! Here, here! – It is the beating of his hideous heart!” (TTH 14). The agony of the sound caused the narrator to reveal himself to the police. While the narrator incorporates many details of his hypersensitivity throughout the story to defend his sanity, we cannot help but to recognize him as mad. In reality, hypersensitivity may cause some discomfort, but it cannot be blamed for something as relentless as murder. His conscience should have interfered and prevented him from behaving this way, which it did not, and a lack of conscience indicates psychopathic behaviour.

The narrator also uses his cleverness and skill to prove his sanity to the reader. However, we end up interpreting this in the opposite way from which he intended it. In the beginning, just after informing of his decision to end the old man’s life, he writes, “Now this is the point. You fancy me mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely I proceeded – with what caution – with what foresight – with what dissimulation I went to work!” (14). The narrator proclaims that insane people do not execute their plan carefully and with detail. He makes it a point to state that, while we may want to relate his behavior to psychosis, his caution and
attention to detail prove him otherwise. “Oh, you would have laughed to see how cunningly I thrust it in! I moved it slowly – very, very slowly, so that I might not disturb the old man’s sleep” (14). The narrator attempts to demonstrate the extent of his caution and vigilance. He writes, “So I opened it – you cannot imagine how stealthily, stealthily…” (15). He repeats the word “stealthily” to emphasize the discretion of his ways, and uses phrases like “you cannot imagine” to connect with the reader. However, these words do not interfere with our recognition of the narrator’s mental instability, and he fails to gain our sympathy. Later in the story, after he has murdered the old man, he writes, “If still you think me mad, you will think so no longer when I describe the wise precautions I took for the concealment of the body” (15).

He uses his detail-oriented persona as a mask to protect him from the profile of a madman. He again speaks directly to the reader and references the clever way that he executed his plan, which he believes is an attribute that a mad man does not possess. Once again, his attempts go unsuccessful. No matter how many times he directly references the reader, we focus on the facts and still render him incapable of being sane.

He moves on to say:

I replaced the boards so cleverly, so cunningly, that no human eye – not even his – could have detected anything wrong. There was nothing to wash out – no stain of any kind – any blood-spot whatever. I had been too wary for that. (TTH 15)

After dismembering the body and placing it below the floorboard, the narrator highlights his caution in making sure that not a single speck of evidence could be detected. Even at the end of the story, the narrator implies that it was not his carelessness that revealed him, but rather his hypersensitivity. The narrator highlights multiple points in the story where he acted cleverly and cunningly, which he trusts will prove to the
reader that he is sane. However, what we recognize as readers, and what the narrator overlooks, are the circumstances of this skill and intelligence. He used these attributes to execute and cover up a murder. Because of this, we cannot help but identify him as a mentally unstable murderer.

In “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the narrator feels the need to be understood. He writes a confession and admits to his behavior, but highlights his hypersensitivity and his attention to detail as a way of convincing the reader that he is not mad. He obsessively references his sanity at several points in the story to remind the reader of his overall purpose and to attempt to gain their understanding. However, ironically, we cannot help as readers but to recognize him as a sick man. He blames his hypersensitivity and the way that he acts cleverly and cautiously, but these characteristics ironically only prove his insanity.

As Knight-Jadzyk says in his *An analysis of the Religion as a Fake Concept* that “He pities himself and blames outside circumstances for his behaviour, which are indicators of a psychopath” (Knight-Jadzyk 123). Sanity refers to the soundness and health of the mind, which the narrator does not exhibit. He has obsessive thoughts and pretends that his actions were normal, implying that anyone in his situation would have done the same. In reality, his conscience should have prevented him from committing a gruesome murder. The fact that he did not do so implies that he does not have a conscience, which is another characteristic of a psychopath. The psychopath also does not respond well to guilt, and often searches for good reasons for their actions, which is another attribute of this narrator.

He develops this story primarily to explain his reasoning to the reader. These circumstances cause us to doubt his sanity. Each of the narrators in Poe’s stories exhibits the trademark characteristics of a psychopath. According to modern psychology, some of these traits include egocentricity, lack of remorse or guilt, lack of empathy, deceitfulness
and manipulative behavior, and shallow emotions. “Psychopaths are masters of fake emotions in order to manipulate others” (Knight-Jadzyk).

One psychologist reports that if somebody actually catches someone in the act of committing a crime, or telling a lie, “they will immediately justify their actions by self-pity and blaming another, by creating a heart-rending scene of faked emotional feelings” (Knight-Jadzyk 134). In “The Black Cat,” and “The Tell-Tale Heart,” both narrators commit heinous crimes, but end up getting caught. Because of this, they both immediately attempt to justify their actions and try to gain our sympathy by blaming other people and outside circumstances. The narrator in “The Cask of Amontillado” never gets caught for his crime, but still goes to extreme measures to guarantee that he will not be found out and will not encounter punishment, and uses manipulation in order to make sure of this. These circumstances help us recognize them as psychopathic.

Ligeia is an outside culture with characteristics of Hebrews, Greeks and Tares. Her eyes are and she sees more I she knows more, as she is a “free spirit” Victorian censorship forced Poe to convert erotic content in florid rhetoric. “Ligeia” is Poe’s rebuttal by the conventional fair lady Rowena who is an ideal woman of “ethereal nature” but she also has a body. She is passionate with hair rave-black. The tradition of the fair lady, an icon of virtues and values versus Dark lady, an icon of sin was centuries old in western literature which Poe used to express his iconoclasm. Contrary to Victorian gender typing Ligeia has unimpressive head.

An intensity in thought or speech was in her or at leaf on index of that gigantic violation during the intercourse. In a moment of his mental alienation she seems to be fit to the narrator “Successor of the Ligeia”. Soon he seems to loathe her with a hatred more than demon to man. Rowena symbolizes English romanticism and yet “unspritualized” by German. Consequently she represents a shallow pretence of Romanticism and on this
point the text is plain - it is a part of Poe’s joke to make her Romantic in nothing to save her borrowed name.

In Jungian term, Ligeia is both shadow and ideal female of the narrator anima representing her psyche:

In beauty of face no maiden ever equaled her. It was the radiance of an opium-dream-an airy and spirit-lifting vision more wildly divine.” Ligeia is numinous and a projection embodies archetypal characteristics of the transcendental mode of consciousness explained in “Model of Metaphors.” (“Ligeia” 115)

Poe could not escape the toning conditioning of sex and feel both delighted and appalled. Ligeio is stern and wears black leather and chains with a creaking. Sex before intellect is the order in Poe’s narrative. To compensate his horny priorities he deifies Ligeia his goddess of learning and wisdom more than of any man, “the acquisitions of Ligeia were gigantic, were astounding; yet I was sufficiently aware of her infinite supremacy to resign myself” (“Ligeia” 116). She becomes his spiritual guide to a transcendental consciousness, a gothic one very different from New England transcendentalism.

The archetypal individuation is expressed here not by the journey into the vertical mode of consciousness which has no pastoral phase, but his love of Legeia, who takes him down. The sky imagery is further evidence of verticality and Poe believes the ultimate truth lies downward. The direction of Pym’s quest to the south pole and body to the grave. Individuation which Poe dramatizes as the quest for wisdom by Ligeia and Roderick usher, ultimately a plunge in to the depths in this case in to Ligeia.

As with Roderick, he eventual price of the dedicated quest for truth is debilitation and death: “The wild eyes blazed with too-too glorious effulgence… saw that she must
die” (“Ligeia” 116). Ligeia represents both his truth and price he pays for it and she is supremely the femme fatale. She wrestled with the shadow as the narrator did with her – his shadow. She recites to him a deterministic poem depicting humans as mere puppets chasing phantoms with “Horror the soul of the plot.” Life ends in extinction, a tragedy to the wise, completely gothic otherwise, “its hero the conqueror Worm.” After denying immortality, she cries, “O God! O Divine Father! Shall these things be undeviatingly so? – shall this conqueror be not once conquered?” If she were a Christian she would not have written her gothic poem asking whether death can ever be conquered. Poe includes the conventional appeal to God to avoid the outraging of his Victorian readers. As she dies, Ligeia repeats the quotation opening the story, indicating, she tries to survive death by asserting her strong will. The narrator returns from romantic Germany to fair England and chooses to live in an abbey with “verdant decay hanging about it” comparable to the house of usher.

Poe’s detective stories seem to have a different relation to the dark. Dupin and the narrator avoid the daylight as much as possible. As in “Speckled Band” the murders of Mme. L’ Espanaye and her daughter are committed in the midnight. The darkness of this crime is so deep that the newspaper report of the murder proclaims, only Dupin who lives in shadows can make any sense of mystery. Holmes too, prowls dark environments in search of his answers in the dingy opium den in “The Man with the Twisted Lip.” Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle mean to say that one must be acquainted with darkness in order to understand such dark acts.

Poe is quick to profess that he is not writing a treatise. “The Murders of the Rue Morgue” is certainly a reminiscent of art and analysis. This process of analysis establishes Poe’s intention from the start, that the method involved is what he values. Poe demonstrates his regard for process through the critical essays “Letter to B, Eureka and
the Poetic principle” (1850) proposing a framework to assess the structure and value of an artistic form. In this part of “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” Poe describes the characteristics of the analyst and he is “Preternatural” when he engages in the ‘moral activity” of the analysis. This language suggests a mystical quality which results in the detective fiction, has supernatural versus science. It is unclear whether his superior analytical skills are merely proficiency in scientific reasoning or to a supernatural omnipotence. This dichotomy reflects the notion of the “Bi-Part soul.” The rationality of science and the irrational nationality of the supernatural. This dilemma shows the nineteenth – century literature which reflects advances in the fields of science which were superseding the religious thoughts. Detective fiction has mirrored the society in which it was written providing the prevalent issues of the time. One could see this notion in “The Murders of Rue morgue.” Poe asserts that the analyst takes ‘pleasure’ unraveling the ‘enigmas’ which a problem may present. This description resembles the technique associated with solving a puzzle, which is a metaphor that continues throughout his detective trilogy. He states that the process of analysis is by mathematical study yet Poe makes an important distinction to calculate is not in itself to analyze (TMRM 142) by illustrating this point using the three games: chess draughts and whist. Chess is dismissed as ‘frivolous games. This concept is subsequently applied by the Parisian police at a later stage in this tale.

The variety of moves of pieces in chess means that it is convoluted but victory is not achieved through skill full play but it is gained by those who are more ‘attentive’ and defeat will be due to an ‘oversight’ (142). A retentive memory and ability to proceed by the book will ensure a victory in chess (142). Draughts makes use of the ‘higher powers of the reflective intellect’ and an advantage is obtained by the superior acumen of the player (142). Poe equates draughts player to the analyst and to his detective Dupin. The
proficient draughts player must throw himself into the spirit of his rival, the export draughts player error (142). In order to outwit his opponent he must think like his opponent and this idea is developed in the third tale of Poe’s trilogy, “The Purloined Letter,” When Dupin refers to marbles, as a ‘game of odd and even’, where success lies in observation of his opponents (TPL 290). Doubling is thus inherent in Dupin’s method of detection: in “The Purloined Letter” locating the fifty stolen letters depends upon the detective ‘doubling’ wits with his opponent’s thought processes.

This deductive method relies on the supposition that the detective is capable of re-enacting the thoughts and feelings of the criminal and consequently, implies that he is the criminal’, as the detective “partakes wholly in the psychology of the crime” (Molden Hauer’s Poe manuscripts of texas 312). This theme of the detective doubling the criminal powerfully manifests throughout ‘Murders in the Rue Morgue’ (1841). Whist is the third game analyzed and it makes use of the ‘calculating powers’ which are inherent to the faculty of analysis (142).

This is a game where’ mind struggles with mind’ to find on advantage. (142). An analyst plays the game by adhering to the ‘rule book’ (141) and he ‘examines’ and ‘recognizes’ the minutiae of his opponent, assessing changes in the facial expression (143). This process is almost scientific but requires more than mere logic to be successful. Poe declares that the analyst must be ‘ingenious’ but notes that the ingenious are not always adept at analysis, declaring that some intelligent people can border on ‘idiocy’ (144). Poe proceeds to clarify the distinction between ingenuity and analytical ability and fancy and imagination. The ingenious are always fanciful, whereas the ‘truly imaginative never otherwise than analytic’ (144). This brings the readers back to Poe’s initial argument that ‘to calculate is not in itself to analyze’ (141). This imperative shows itself throughout Poe’s detective trilogy and culminates in “The Purloined Letter” (1844).
when refers to his opponent, Minister D as ‘a poet Mathematician’ who ‘As poet and mathematician would not have reasoned at all’ (TPL 295). Poe, therefore, demonstrates a respect for the ‘combining power’ of the imagination and reason throughout his detective trilogy and this reflects the unification of his polar philosophical beliefs of Idealism and Materialism and personified in the ‘Bi – Part soul’ of his detective (TMRM 144). Part Two of this dually structured tale opens with an account of the detective and setting through the eyes of the narrator. Poe uses a companion to chronicle the successes of a fictional detective. This has become a mainstay of the genre and this dynamic is most closely associated with Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson. The narrator provides a device by which explication can be vocalized externally for the reader but he, also creates a distance between the reader and the insights of the analytical mind of the detective by which the mystery can be maintained.

The role of the narrator in Poe’s detective trilogy is to simultaneously reveal and with hold information with the intention as a foil to Dupin’s abilities. “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” is set in Paris during the spring and summer of an unidentified year in the nineteenth century where Poe set his trilogy, an appropriate location as it was the city associated with universal reason, after the French enlightenment and the home of Romanticism.

It is apparent that Dupin exemplifies the characters associated with the skilled analyst. Like the whist players, Dupin states that men wear ‘Windows in their bosoms’ and he is able to read their intimate thoughts (TMRM 146). The detective demonstrates a propensity to read the narrator’s mind and Dupin is described in these episodes as ‘frigid and abstract, his eyes vacant’, with his voice rising to ‘a treble’ that has a ‘deliberateness’ and ‘distinction of the enunciation (146). These physical changes and the detective’s insight into the narrator’s thought suggest a spiritual possession; Dupin’s method is
scientific and uses the techniques of the whist player. By examining precisely and at
length, a series of events, reactions, movements and postures, the detective retraces
psychological ‘steps’ from their ‘starting point’ through to their manifest action and
therefore he is able to decipher his companions thoughts (147-148). The detective’s polar
psychology, alternates between ‘delight’ and vacant, prompts the narrator to introduce the
notion of a ‘double Dupin’ with a ‘Bit–Part Soul’ (144 & 146). Bram Lingur remarks in
his *Doubling and Division in the Detectives of Edgar Allen Poe* thus:

> It consolidates the idea of ‘duality’ or the theme of the double which
> pervades Poe’s detective trilogy and goes on to be a defining trope of the
detective genre. In addition, it builds on Poe’s earlier comments in part one
> of “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” on the “combining power” reason
> and imagination. (144)

The narrator dismisses the notion of the Bi–Part Soul being either romantic or
mysterious but rather attributes it to an excited or diseased intelligence (146). The anti-
heroic nature of the fictional detective became a bastion of the detective genre. Dupin’s
idiosyncratic psychology and the unique method of detection which he pioneered have
been replicated in numerous quirky detectives throughout literature. The Victorian era
alone conceived a range of detective characters such as Charles Dickens: Mr. Bucket in
*Bleak House* (1853), Wilkie Collins’ Sergeant Cuff in the *Moon Stone* (1868) and Conan
Doyle’s *Sherlock Holmes*.

Dupin has created a psychological mould for multifaceted protagonists in detective
fiction across the centuries to the present day, from Conan Doyle’s Holmes and his
penchant for cocaine at the turn of nineteenth century through to the contemporary hard
drinking anti–heroes of modern fiction including Henning Mankell’s Kurthvallander and
Ian Rankin’s John Rebus. The ability Dupin has to recount ‘precisely’ the narrator’s most
intimate thoughts, the interests they share, combined with their common temper means that they could be two halves of a singular whole (TMRM 145). J. A. Leo Lemay argues in Poe’s The Business Man: Context and Satire of Franklin’s Autobiography that ‘Dupin is a Doppelgänger for the narrator’ and qualifies this statement by asserting that, ‘Dupin, of course, is the analyst; and the narrator, who tells the tale, is the creator... the analyst is simply the reverse of the creator’ (169).

Thus, it can be argued that the narrator ‘personifies the creative half’ of the detective’s dual psychology and exists as the component of Dupin’s divided self (Roseheim 31). The symbolic unity of the divided self, comprising the creator and the analyst, is represented in the artistic and reasoned attributes of the ‘Bi–Part Soul’.

“The Mystery of Marie Roget” is actually based on the murder of a girl, Mary Cecilia Rogers, near New York City. Because the crime had not been solved when Poe wrote the story, he made use of the facts of the case to tell a story of the murder of a young Parisian girl, Marie Roget, as a means of demonstrating his superior deductive ability. When the prefect of police having has failed to solve the Marie Roget case himself, he is worried about his reputation and asks Dupin for help. Dupin’s method is that of classic armchair detective, he gathers all the copies of the newspapers that have accounts of the crime and sets about methodically examining each one. He declares the case more intricate than that of Rue Morgue because, ironically it seems so simple.

Dupin is Featured in the trilogy: “The Murder in Rue Morgue”, “The Mystery of Marie Roget” and the famous “The Purloined Letter.” The capital of France is also that of the most concrete and visible consequence of the change of values entailed by the Enlightenment century, namely the French Revolution, which consolidated an entire change of consciousness in a very tangible historical event. In “Murder in Rue Morgue” France serves both as the scene of the crime and as the detectives’ natural environment;
the text abounds with animal in the busied Boilogne far from where the murders took place. “The Mystery of Marie Roget” conceived as a sequel to “Murder in Rue Morgue” is just as indicative of relationship between Paris, which remains the center of enlightened and post-enlightened thought and the truth as it is represented in modern detective fiction. Most of the narration consists of Dupin’s analytical reflecting on the different newspaper articles that dealt with the disappearance of Marie Roget, including lengthy quotes from the journalists themselves that present each a different point of view as to what may have really happened to the unfortunate young lady, and this inflated value of the subject ‘newspaper’ corresponds to an urban, essentially logo-centric conception of the transmission of information: in the new bourgeois social organization that has emerged after the French revolution, the printed press has become the privileged vehicle for the truth, responding to the brand new concept of “public opinion”.

By elaborating his own theory upon those found in the newspapers, Dupin enters a public debate, the object of which is to reach the Truth – that could only take place in the city, for it is where newspapers are both generated and read where they function as instruments of political and social debate. Literacy is not only issue at stake here although evidently as the new European bourgeois class learns how to read throughout the nineteenth century. It does so faster in the city than in the country. The city newspapers also represent the written space where opinions are presented and defended. They exceed a simple informative function and participate fully in the search for the truth. “The Mystery of Marie Roget” also presents a peculiarity that reinforces the semiotic value of Paris as the center of understanding and consequently shows the path to the truth. Even though the historical event that is known to have inspired Poe, that is the true murder of one Mary Cecilia Rogers, took place in the vicinity of New York.
The short story is set in the French capital. Mary Cecilia Rogers, the original cigar girl murder is never elucidated in real life. She has become a young perfumery employee with a French name for the circumflex accent on her last name, “Roger” which is often dropped in many modern versions of the texts in actuality quite uncanny in the French language. This particular graphic representation of otherwise common French name “Roger” functions as a semiotic micro structure the competes French spelling of “Marie.” The real murder of Mary Cecelia Rogers might remain unsolved in New York. Marie Roget in Paris can be analyzed and comprehended thanks to the tools of post-enlightened epistemology by a French detective, the Chevalier Auguste Dupin. Although “The Mystery of Marie Roget” contains some of the primary conventions that find their way into later detective stories, it is the least popular of the Dupin narratives not only because it contains reasoning and very little narrative but also because it is so long and convoluted. Of the many experts of detective fiction who have commented on Poe’s contribution to the genre, only Dorothy L. Sayers has praised “The Mystery of Marie Roget,” calling it a story especially for connoisseurs, a serious intellectual exercise rather than a sensational thriller such as “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (Poe 678).

According to Zimmerman, “The Tell-Tale Heart” begins with a preparation: The narrator prepares his audience for the topic he wants to discuss. In this case, he tries to convince the reader that the murderer is not mad and does not suffer from a mental disease. However, he points out that the deed is not done because of overwhelming aggression but that it is the eye’s “fault” that the man was killed - this stylistic device called aetiologia makes sure that a reason for something already done is given (Poe 679).

Poe uses these rhetorical techniques in an ironic way: Although the eye of an old man is no reason to kill a person for mentally healthy people, the narrator believes that his aetiologia is a justifiable cause and sticks to his view throughout the whole tale.
Concurrent to the *aetiologia* is the *dicaelogia*; not only the *giving* of a reason, but also the *defiance* of an act "Whenever the eye fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees—very gradually -- I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever" (Poe 568). Thus the mystery in the stories of Poe create psychological instability to the characters.