

Analyzing Literature Rudy DeLarosa

Characterization:

S – what the character *says and how he or she says it*

T – what the character *thinks*

A – How the character *acts and interacts to/with others, situations, etc.*

R – how the character *reacts*

Types: Protagonist; Antagonist; Major; Minor; Dynamic; Static; Stereotype; Foil

Character as hero

- **Aristotelian tragic hero**
- **Classical hero:** a variation on the tragic hero
- **Romantic hero:** larger than life; charismatic; possess an air of mystery; “Saves the day” or the heroine; embodies freedom, adventure, and idealism; often outside the law; fights for the good of the people/society
- **Modern hero:** “The everyman”; possess human weaknesses and flaws; caught in the ironies of the human condition; struggles for insight
- **Hemingway hero:** Brave; endures; maintains a sense of humor; exhibits grace under pressure
- **Antihero:** Protagonist is notably lacking in heroic qualities; may be considered evil or immoral but at some point in the story will help/inspire/save/(sacrifice themselves for) others in spite of their views or beliefs.

Setting: Where and when does the story take place? Why here? Why this era? How does the setting influence/impact the story? Characters? Themes of the work? Does the setting act as a character itself (antagonist)?

Plot: How does the structure and progression of the plot impact/affect the story? Readers’ perception? How is the narrative arranged?

Point of View:

- **First Person:** The narrator is the story’s protagonist/character.
- **Third-person objective:** The narrator is an onlooker reporting the story (a camera recording the events).
- **Third-person omniscient:** “God’s-eye view;” the narrator reports the story and provides insight and information unknown to the characters.
- **Stream of consciousness:** a narrative technique that places the reader in the mind and thought processes of the narrator, no matter how random and spontaneous that may be.
- **Stage Manager:** This technique incorporates a character who comments omnisciently but is never really involved in or a part of the story.
- **Interior monologue:** reflects the inner thoughts of the character.

Types of Novels:

- **Epistolary:** utilizes the convention of letter writing and are among the earliest novel forms.
- **Picaresque:** episodic novel concentrating on the misadventures of a young rogue.
- **Autobiographical:** told in the first person and allows readers to directly interact with the protagonist.
- **Gothic:** concerned with the macabre, supernatural, and exotic.

- **Historical:** grounded in a real context and relies heavily on setting and factual detail.
- **Romantic:** idealistic, imaginative, and adventuresome. The romantic hero is the cornerstone of the novel, which often includes exotic locales.
- **Allegorical:** representative and symbolic; it operates on at least two levels; its specifics correspond to another concept.

Tone: the subtle feeling created by the author through diction. In poetry, the tone of the poet and of the speaker may not be the same. Here is a list of words used to describe tone (notice they are all adjectives):

bitter	objective	idyllic (peaceful; calm)
sardonic	naïve	compassionate
sarcastic	joyous	reverent
ironic	spiritual	lugubrious (gloomy)
mocking	wistful	elegiac (mournful)
scornful	nostalgic	gothic
satiric	humorous	macabre
vituperative (insulting)	mock-serious	reflective
scathing	pedantic (dull)	maudlin (over-sentimental)
confidential	didactic	sentimental
factual	inspiring	patriotic
informal	remorseful	jingoistic (nationalistic)
facetious	disdainful	detached
critical	laudatory (praising)	

Levels of Interpretation:

Literal level: what *literally* happens in the story; straightforward response.

Social level: what the novel explores/says about society, roles in society, etc.

Psychological level: what the novel explores/says about human nature, motivations, desires, dreams, needs, madness, insanity, etc., of characters in the story and, more universally, the readers.

Religious level: loss of soul to temptation, devil figures, Christ-like parallels, Christian themes, motifs, how religion influences/impacts/distorts characters and their views/motivations.

Sexual level: gender issues; abortion; homosexuality; sexual repression; budding sexuality; sexual curiosity; envy of men.

Political level: praises socialism, condemns capitalism (or vice versa); discusses the poor, class structure, class revolts, etc. What does the work say about political issues of its day?

Milieu- an environment or a setting.