

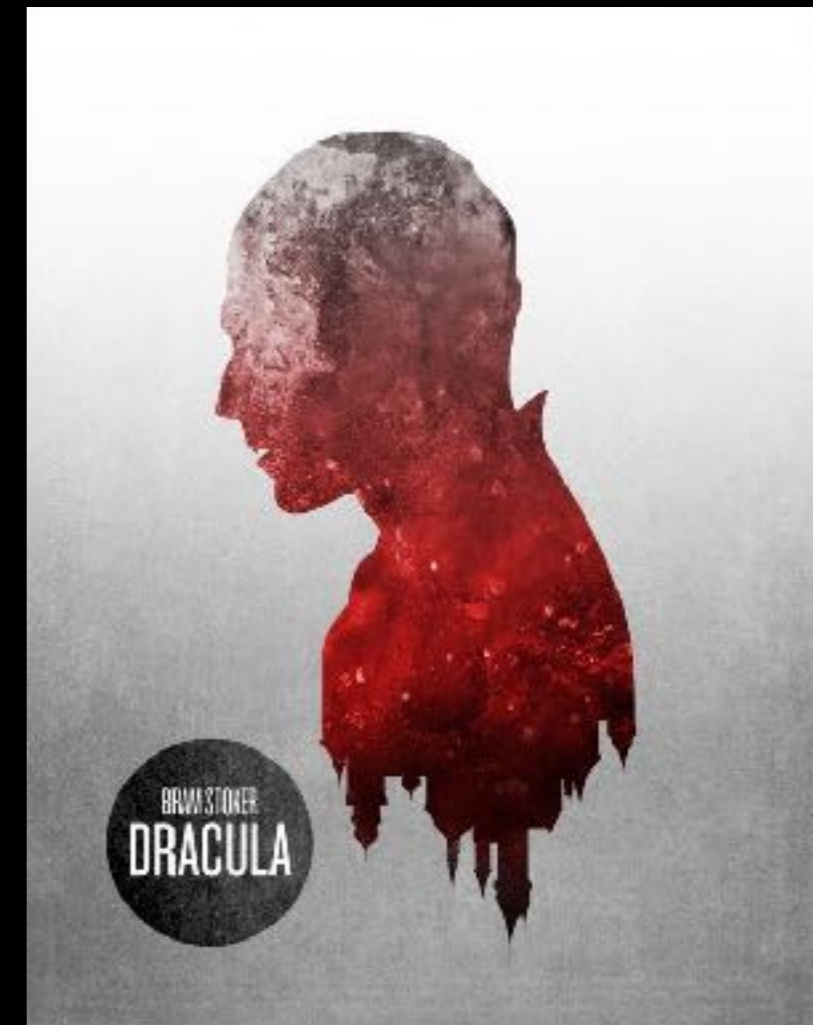


SOUTHERN
GOTHIC

- Southern Gothic is a sub-genre of the Gothic style which was popular in Europe in the 1800s.

- Mary Sheley's Frankenstein

- Bram Stoker's Dracula



- Southern Gothic is **UNIQUE** to American Literature.

- It relies on supernatural, ironic, or unusual events to guide the plot, explore social issues, and reveal the cultural character of the American South.

SG takes the classic Gothic archetypes, such as the monster or the hero, and turns them into American Southerners.

- a spiteful, reclusive spinster
- an uneducated drunk
- A quiet, wise lawyer



The Grotesque

- A character with negative qualities or something in the town (a house, a farm, etc.) that is bizarre or falling apart that allows the author to highlight unpleasant aspects of Southern culture.

Defining Features of Southern Gothic

- Off-Kilter Characters
- The Grotesque
- The Innocent
- Freakishness
- The Outsider
- Imprisonment
- Violence
- Sense of Place



Off-Kilter Characters

- Cast of characters with broken bodies, minds, or souls
- Used to symbolize problems, and to question morality



The Innocent

A common character, who may or may not be “broken,” but who often acts as a redeemer for others.

A good example is Scout from To Kill a Mockingbird, which we will study this unit.



Freakishness

In most Southern Gothic stories, there is an important character (not always the protagonist or antagonist) who is set apart from the world in a negative way by a disability or an odd, and often negative perception of the world.



The Outsider

Southern Gothic novels are filled with characters who are set apart from the established cultural pattern, but who end up being heroes because their difference allows them to see new ways of doing things that ultimately helps to bring people out of the dark.

Imprisonment

- This is often both literal and figurative.
- Many Southern Gothic tales include an incident where a character is locked up, locked away, or kept in seclusion from others.
- There are also Southern Gothic characters that live in fate's prison.



Violence



- Racial, social, and class difference often create underlying tension in SG novels that threatens, and often erupts into violent ways.

Sense of Place

Complete picture of
a small, Southern
town

- Old, small towns
- Stately, but worn
or run-down
buildings
- Similar mindsets of
the inhabitants



“A Rose
for Emily”

William Faulkner



“A Worn
Path”

Eudora Welty



“A Good
Man is Hard
to Find”

Flannery
O'Connor





TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

Harper Lee