The
SHORT STORY
Story

DEFINITION

- Short, brief
- Fictional
- Prose
- Narrative, story

CHARACTERISTICS

- ***Few* characters**
- ***Single* effect**
  - often moral
  - theme
  - didactic
  - instructive

CHARACTERISTICS

Dictates of the FORM:

- **Setting =**
  - sparse, economical
- **Plot =**
  - concise
  - simplistic (lack of complex plot)
- **Character =**
  - disclosed in action & encounter
  - rarely fully developed

19th CENTURY

- **Short Story's short history**
- **Relatively modern genre (19thC.)**
- **SKETCHES vs. TALES**
  - extremes
  - from which modern SS grew
- **Poe, Hawthorne, Gogol, Hoffman, Kleist, Merimee:**
  - Tale + Sketch = Short Story
  - combined elements from both: less fantasy & conventionality of Tale, less strict factuality of Sketch

HISTORY

- **Short prose fiction = as old as language**
  - Jests
  - Anecdotes
  - Purposeful digressions
  - Allegorical romances
  - Fairy tales
  - Short myths
  - Short legends

HISTORY

- **Short prose fiction = from Oral Tradition**
  - **Early storytellers used memory aids =**
    - Stock phrases, fixed rhythms, rhyme
  - **As a result**
    - Most early stories = IN VERSE
    - *Poetic Tales*

HISTORY

- **EARLY SHORT TALES=**
  - **Poetic**
  - **Didactic, moralizing, good vs. bad behavior**

ANCIENT WORLD

The Short Story Story

MIDDLE EAST

- **Ancient BABYLONIA-**
  - poetic tales, in verse
  - *Epic of Gilgamesh*
  - "The War of the Gods"
  - "The Story of Adapa"
- **CANAAN-**
  - "The Heavenly Bow"
  - "The King Who Forgot"
- **c.2000BC**

EGYPT

- **EGYPT-**
  - mostly in prose
  - on papyrus
    - (verse = reserved for religious hymns & other songs)
  - didactic, moralistic
  - "The Shipwrecked Sailor"
  - "King Kofu & the Magicians"
  - "Anpu & Bata (the 2 brothers)"
- **c.2000-1000BC**

INDIA

- **INDIA-**
  - **instructional parables**
  - **Buddhist ethical teachings**
  - **secular behavior & practical wisdom**
  - ***The Brahmanas***
  - ***The Jatakas***
  - ***The Panchatantra***
    - akin to Aesop's animal fables
    - quite popular – translated into several languages
- **c.900-100BC**

HEBREW

- **BIBLE & APOCRYPHA-**
  - **didactic**
  - ***Tobit, Judith, Susanna***
  - ***Ruth, Esther, Jonah***
- **c.500-100BC**

GREEKS

- **GREEKS-**
  - **Fables = most common form (like India)**
    - Moralizing
    - Didactic
  - **Myths = popular too**
    - stories of GODS (love, war)
    - basis of later Hesiod, Homer, tragedians
- **c.300-100BC**

GREEKS

- **GREEKS-**
  - **Digressions**
    - on-point
    - within larger works
    - narrative interpolations – episodes w/in the whole
      - Herodotus: *History* with "logoi" (tales, pointed digressions)
  - **Romances**
    - "invented" by Greeks
    - love, catastrophe, reunion
    - erotic, bawdy – less didactic
    - Parthenius of Nicaea, Aristides of Miletus
- **c.300-100BC**

ROMANS

- **ROMANS-**
  - **longer works**
    - Rhetoric → fuller, more comprehensive development
    - Tales = digressions
  - **Digressions**
    - like the Greeks
    - on-point episodes within larger works
    - Ovid's *Metamorphoses*
    - Lucius Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*
    - Gaius Petronius Arbiter's *Satyricon*
- **c.100BC**

MIDDLE AGES

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MIDDLE AGES

- **Short Tale –**
  - **proliferation of the form**
  - **a diversion, amusement**
  - **imitation over development**

SCANDINAVIA

- **SCANDINAVIA & ICELAND-**
  - invading Germanic barbarians
  - myths & sagas
    - aggressive, violent
    - grim, bleak

CELTS

- **CELTS-**
  - **Ireland, Wales, Brittany/Breton**
  - **magic, myth, & splendor**
  - ***Longes mac n-Uislenn***
    - influenced the later chivalric romances
  - **3 major "matters":**
    - Matter of Britain (King Arthur & his knights)
    - Matter of France (Charlemagne cycle)
    - Matter of Rome (antiquity, Paris & Helen, Pyramus & Thisbe)
  - **c.800**

CELTS

- **CELTS-**
  - ***too LONG to be considered short stories**
  - **shorter = c.1100s**
    - Chretien de Troyes (French, Arthurian legend)
    - Marie de France
      - Breton lays: short (600-800 lines) narrative poems @ love, chivalry, supernatural, fairies

HIGH & LOW

- **MIDDLE AGES-**
  - Exemplum: short , didactic tale
    - lives of saints = role models
    - *Deeds of the Romans/Gesta Romanorum*
    - C.1000-1100
  - Popular Fiction:
    - common people
    - beast fables, jests, ribald fabliaux
      - common sense, secular humor, sensuality
      - Boccaccio's & Chaucer's fabliaux
    - running counter to the exemplar

FRAMING

- **MIDDLE AGES-**
  - FRAMING:
    - frame collection of stories by a single circumstance
      - unifying situation
    - all stories = autonomous (added, removed)
    - BUT also
    - part of the whole
    - *The Seven Sages of Rome* (link) 7 advocates tell stories to postpone prince's execution, until his innocence is proven
      - Eastern & Western countries, BC to MA
    - *The Thousand and One Nights* (700-1700) Scheherazade tells stories to postpone her execution

MA: REFINEMENT

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MA: REFINEMENT

- **REFINEMENT-**
  - **still Framing**
  - **still same types of stories (beast fables, sermons exemplar; fabliaux, romances, exempla)**
  - **BUT**
  - **experimentation with FORM**
    - mix forms
    - tale = reflection o f the teller
    - relationships between tellers
    - = dramatic quality

MA: REFINEMENT

- **REFINEMENT-**
  - **BOCCACCIO:**
    - *Decameron* (10 days) c.1349/53
    - height of Black Death plague in Florence
    - 10 people, 10 stories per
    - character = subordinate to story
  - **CHAUCER:**
    - *Canterbury Tales* c.1387/1400
    - pilgrimage to Canterbury shrine
    - character through actions, assertions

ITALY

- growing popularity
- imitation (of Boccaccio)
- c.1300-1600
- short story = "novelle"
- Franco Sacchetti, Giovanni Fiorentino, Giovanni Sercambi, Masuccio Salernitano
- Matteo Bandello, Agnolo Firenzuolo
  - romances, surprise, deception, ribaldry, irony - realism
- Giamattista Basile (1600s) folktales w/realism
  - + amusing diversion + framing *The Five Days* (= Boccaccio)

FRANCE

- c.1400-1600
- Boccaccio:
  - framed
  - amusing
  - diversions

SPAIN

- c.1300-1600
- Europe's most influential/powerful country
- short stories = part of novels
- Miguel de Cervantes' *Exemplary Novels*
  - 1613
  - experimental
  - not didactic
  - not diversionary
  - but @ man's secular existence

MA: DECLINE

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DECLINE

- c.1600-1700
- birth of novel
- imitations of Boccaccio & Chaucer
- same forms
- escapism, amusing diversions
- rebirth of drama & poetry
  - Neo-Classicism
- birth of journalistic sketches

DECLINE

- c.1600-1700
- **birth of journalistic sketches**
  - seriousness
  - realism
  - fascination w/foreign countries
  - interest in social conditions
    - travel books, sermons, biographies, essays

MIDDLE AGES	RENAISSANCE & ENLIGHTENMENT
• amusing • diversionary • escapist • framing • imitations • fantasy	• seriousness • fact • realism • social issues • foreign lands • rebirth of old forms • birth of new forms

MODERN SHORT STORY: 19th C.

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MODERN SHORT STORY

- c.1800s
- “simultaneously”
- Germany
- United States
- France
- Russia

MODERN SHORT STORY

- c.1800s
- **Why then?**
  - rise in middle class
  - rise in literacy
  - rise in literate middle class
    - realism & at the same time fantasy
  - stifled by Neo-Classicism (decorum)
  - back to own past – myths, fables, Old Days
  - [what gave birth to Romanticism]

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **GERMANY-**
- **Goethe, Christoph Wieland, Friedrich Schleiermacher**
- ***Heinrich von Kleist**
  - like Poe: psychological, confrontations w/fantastic
- ***ETA Hoffmann**
  - exotic places, supernatural phenomenon
- **Ludwig Tieck**
  - some = realistic, journalistic
  - others = fantastic, intense, ironic, true to character

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **UNITED STATES-**
- **Realism:**
  - regionalism (Bret Harte, SO Jewett)
  - objectivity, real places & events & people
- **Impressionism:**
  - narrator's consciousness & psychological attitudes
  - subjective, narrator's POV (unreliable, biased, insane)
  - less realistic in the sense of an objective reality

SKETCH	TALE

• intercultural (from culture to culture)	• culturally specific motifs, characters, symbols →
	  • best understood by *that* culture
	  • tales = intracultural
	  • culture speaking *to* itself *about* itself
	  • perpetuating its values & identity
	  • passing along from generation to generation

• 16thC.: rise in middle class & their interest in social realism (*journalistic*) + foreign places (*intercultural*)
• concerned with the *present*
	• older than the Sketch
	• a narrative way for a culture to express its vision of itself
	  • *past* (ancestors & gods) &
	  • *present* (place in universe)

• suggestive, incomplete, understated, subtle	• hyperbolic, overstated
• mode = written	• mode = spoken, oral
• written as if there (*journalistic*)	• told as if removed from event (a recreation of the past)
• factual & journalistic, photographic • more analytical & descriptive • less narrative & dramatic	• fantastic, mythic • dramatic
• Irving's *The Sketch Book* • Howell's *Suburban Sketches*	• Poe's *Tales of the Grotesque & Arabesque* • Melville's *The Piazza Tales*

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **UNITED STATES-**
- ***Edgar Allan Poe**
  - psychological, confrontations w/fantastic
  - narrator = unreliable, distorts, hallucinates
  - *reader gets only narrator's impressions of the scene
  - "Tell-Tale Heart," Imp of the Perverse," *Fall of the House of Usher*
- ***Washington Irving**
  - BOTH realistic sketches & impressionistic stories
  - narrator's imagination, symbolic surreality of dreams
  - "Rip van Winkle," The Stout Gentleman"
- ***Nathaniel Hawthorne**
  - BOTH realistic & impressionistic
  - historic facts & events w/symbolic importance
    - details = symbols
  - "Endicott & the Red Cross"

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **IMPRESSIONISM-**
- ***Poe, Henry James, Melville, Bierce**
- **"impressions" registered by events on the characters' minds**
  - *not* focusing on objective reality
- **Story = account of someone's impression of an event**
- **subjective: realistic *to that person***
- **Narrator = unreliable**
  - distorting, fabricating, fantasizing

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **IMPRESSIONISM-**
- **Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener"**
- **Twain's "Celebrated Jumping Frog…"**
- **Bierce's "Occurrence at OC Bridge"**
- **James' "Turn of the Screw"**

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **SERIOUSNESS @ ART-**
- **LITERARY CRITICISM**
- ***Edgar Allan Poe (unity of effect)**
- **critical attention paid to the short story**
  - discussing it as a serious art form
  - what is good, bad
- **craftsmanship**
- **artistic integrity**
- **seriousness**

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **FRANCE-**
- **Prosper Merimee "Carmen"**
  - (turned into famous opera)
  - detached observation of emotional event
- **less impressionism**
- **Honore de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert**
- **Alfred de Vigny, Theophile Gautier**
- **Alphonse Daudet: "Letters from My Mill"**
  - BOTH fantastic & realistic

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **FRANCE-**
- ***Guy de Maupassant**
- **objective**
- **anecdotes**
  - revealing moments
  - in middle class lives

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **RUSSIA-**
- **fables early on**
  - Ivan Krylov = most read fabulist, help make short fiction popular in Russia, borrowed heavily from Aesop & other sources
- **Aleksandr Pushkin: poet & writer**
  - objective/detached account of emotional event
  - "The Queen of Spades"

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **RUSSIA-**
- ***Nikolay Gogol:**
  - impressionistic- hallucinatory, mix of dream & reality
  - realism + fantasy
  - *Arabesques*, "The Overcoat"
- ***Ivan Turgenev:**
  - calm, restraint, simple use of language
  - detached observation
  - antithetical to Gogol
  - *A Sportsman's Sketches*

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **RUSSIA-**
- ***Fyodor Dostoyevsky:**
  - experimented w/impressionism
  - human motives
  - "White Nights"
- ***Leo Tolstoy:**
  - human motives
  - non-impressionistic means to capture psychological
  - "Kreutzer Sonata," *Death of Ivan Ilyich*

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **RUSSIA-**
- ****Anton Chekhov:**
  - **objective story**
    - perception *yet* compassion
  - **less on plot, character = #1**
  - **"The Grasshopper," "In the Ravine," "The Darling"**

MODERN SHORT STORY: 20th C.

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MODERN SHORT STORY

- **20th CENTURY-**
- **Developments:**
  - **world-wide**
    - Kafka, Pirandello, JL Borges
  - **explosion due to literary journals**
    - Ford Maddox Ford's *Transatlantic Review*
    - *Scribner's Magazine*

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **20th CENTURY-**
- **CHANGES:**
  - **19th c:**
    - overwhelming or unique event that informed the story
  - **20th c:**
    - subtle actions & unspectacular events
      - less about plot
      - "nothing happens in these stories"
      - (b/c of TV & movies)
    - psychological (not physical) conflict
      - any action reveals the psychological underpinnings of story

MODERN SHORT STORY

- **20th CENTURY-**
- **CHANGES:**
  - **20th c:**
    - experimentation w/FORM
      - less plot
        - more psychological
      - play w/archetypal characters & plots
    - Hemingway, KA Porter, DH Lawrence, K. Mansfield
    - William Faulkner, James Joyce
  - **though some authors still focused on Plot (O. Henry)**

RECAP

The Short Story Story

SHORT STORY

FABLE	TALE	TALL TALE	FAIRY TALE	PARABLE
• brief, moral, flat characters, simple • plot & theme over character	• means "speech" • brief, strange events, bare summary, flat characters • plot & theme over character • SUMMARY ○ terse, general narration ○ skipping ahead, jumping time ○ "and it came to pass" "then one day" "it wasn't long before"	• folk story, recount of superhero or narrator's imaginary experience • Bragging • told straight-faced • scoffed at by audience	• magical world (witches, goblins) • by/for uneducated	• didactic • to instruct, • to shape the thoughts & behaviors of the audience • to set forth a truth @ our world/condition • tied to the oral tradition

SHORT STORY

SHORT STORY	TALE, Fable, Parable
• made to seem real • Plot & Theme • more Characterization, Setting • more than Summary – description (realism) • longer • tied to a Written Tradition	• made to seem imaginative, unreal • Plot & Theme • less Characterization, Setting • Summary • brief • tied to the Oral Tradition

END

The Short Story Story