

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

Life History

- Born in Boston - Parents died when he was young.
 - mother died of tuberculosis, when Poe was 2
 - Adopted by John and France Allan
 - John Allan was disappointed with Poe
 - At 17, Poe attends University of Virginia -- one term
 - John Allan didn't give him money, so he gambled, and was then expelled.
 - Attended West Point -- joined army to avoid debtor's prison
 - drops out
 - Poe moves in with an aunt, Maria Poe Clemm and her daughter, Virginia
 - Marries Virginia; she was 13; he was 26
 - Virginia died of tuberculosis in 1847
 - After her death he became unstable and sick
- In 1849, he was found in a tavern, wet, dirty, an delirious
- He died 4 days later

Literary Importance

- Poe was the father to the modern detective story
- Poe believed that short stories should be read in one sitting
- Poe believed works should create a single effect
 - "An author should work toward a preconceived effect, structuring the tale and everything within it to produce that effect."
- He explored the criminal mind, give psychological insight
- He wanted to explore the "dark side" of humanity