



VNiVERSiDAD  
D SALAMANCA

CAMPUS DE EXCELENCIA INTERNACIONAL



FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

UNIVERSIDAD DE SALAMANCA

FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES

Trabajo de Fin de Grado

Unmasking the Truth: Insane Narrators in  
Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"  
and "The Black Cat"

Alumna: Blanca Hidalgo Herrero

Tutora: Dr. María Mercedes Peñalba García

Salamanca, 2017



VNiVERSiDAD  
D SALAMANCA

CAMPUS DE EXCELENCIA INTERNACIONAL



FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

UNIVERSIDAD DE SALAMANCA

FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES

Trabajo de Fin de Grado

Unmasking the Truth: Insane Narrators in  
Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart"  
and "The Black Cat"

This thesis is submitted for the degree of English Studies

Date 4 July 2017

Tutor: Dr. María Mercedes Peñalba García

Vº Bº

Signature

**ABSTRACT**

This essay is an attempt to prove that the narrators of both “The Black Cat” (1843) and “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843), written by Edgar Allan Poe, are irrational and unstable individuals, even though they claim they are completely sane. After considering how the author reflects his psychological interest and the insanity defence controversy of his time in these tales, I will analyse how both narrators suffer from the so-called ‘moral insanity,’ as well as how readers can detect the narrators’ derangement through their behaviours and actions. Both protagonists attempt to exonerate responsibility but they unconsciously unveil their dementia by exposing how their obsessions guide them to commit murder. Additionally, this instability is further proved by their constant hallucinations and hypocrite attitude. This essay also explores the interesting contrast between animals and human beings and how Poe reverses their roles, endorsing the unmasking of both narrators’ madness. It is expected that this analysis will shed light on what lies behind the deceptions and illusions that constitute both madmen’s guilty pleas.

**KEY WORDS:** Edgar Allan Poe, “The Black Cat,” “The Tell-Tale Heart,” moral insanity, irrationality, perverseness, obsessions, supernatural, hypocrisy, role reversal, animality.

**RESUMEN**

Este ensayo es un intento de demostrar que los narradores de tanto “El Gato Negro” (1843) como de “El Corazón Delator” (1843), escritos por Edgar Allan Poe, son individuos irracionales e inestables, incluso aunque ellos afirmen que están completamente sanos. Tras considerar cómo el autor refleja su interés psicológico y la polémica defensa por demencia de su tiempo en estos cuentos, analizaré cómo ambos narradores sufren la llamada ‘locura moral,’ al igual que cómo los lectores pueden detectar el desvarío de los narradores a través de sus comportamientos y acciones. Ambos protagonistas intentan exculparse de la responsabilidad, pero inconscientemente revelan su locura mostrando cómo sus obsesiones les guían a asesinar. Además, esta inestabilidad se demuestra aún más por sus constantes alucinaciones y su actitud hipócrita. Este ensayo también explora el interesante contraste entre animales y humanos y cómo Poe invierte sus roles, respaldando el desenmascaramiento de la locura de ambos narradores. Se espera que este análisis arroje luz sobre lo que yace tras los engaños e ilusiones que conforman las declaraciones de culpabilidad de ambos dementes.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Edgar Allan Poe, “El Gato Negro,” “El Corazón Delator,” locura moral, irracionalidad, perversidad, obsesiones, sobrenatural, hipocresía, inversión de roles, animalidad

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	4
<b>1. THE INSANITY DEFENCE CONTROVERSY: Moral Insanity</b> .....	4
<b>1.1. Giving meaning to “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Black Cat”:</b>	
<b>Context for both tales</b> .....	5
<b>1.2. How Poe’s narrators embody the symptoms of monomania or</b>	
<b>moral insanity through excuses and self-ignorance</b> .....	6
<b>2. READERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE NARRATORS’ MADNESS</b> .....	8
<b>2.1. Obsessions as the decisive point to determine insanity: The spirit</b>	
<b>of perverseness and the vulture eye</b> .....	9
<b>2.2. The supernatural dilemma</b> .....	10
<b>2.3. Hypocrisy as the actual telltale</b> .....	11
<b>3. ROLE REVERSAL IN BOTH TALES: HUMANS AS IRRATIONAL AND</b>	
<b>BRUTE BEASTS VS. ANIMALS AS SAGACIOUS AND AFFECTIONATE</b>	
<b>BEINGS</b> .....	12
<b>3.1. Lack of morality and remorse in both narrators</b> .....	13
<b>3.2. Maniacs guided by impulses instead of by reason</b> .....	14
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	14
<b>WORKS CITED</b> .....	16

## INTRODUCTION

Edgar Allan Poe frames his horror *oeuvre* within the cusp of American literature by exposing a unique approach to the human mind and original portraits of unreliable narrators. The influence of the Gothic genre and his puzzling plots causes the reading of his tales to be conditioned by disturbance and possible deceit. In both “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843) and “The Black Cat” (1843) Poe portrays the confession of first-person narrators who attempt to elude responsibility and insist on their mental sanity alluding to external odd forces that drive them to commit murder. Personally, Poe’s purpose is not to explore supernatural events experienced by innocent men, but to deepen the limits of the psyche through murderers whose behaviour hides a truth that readers need to discover: their insanity. Bearing in mind that both tales were written at the time of the insanity defence controversy, I will analyse how the narrators’ deceptions, illusions and obsessions along with their illogical behaviour, make them fall into their own game and be finally unmasked as unstable and irrational individuals.

### **1. THE INSANITY DEFENCE CONTROVERSY: Moral insanity**

The reading of these tales cannot be detached from the commotion generated around the criminal defence in the eighteenth century, and particularly in the mid-nineteenth century. Irrational criminals, unable to use their reason and to be aware of their actions, were treated and imprisoned like rational criminals until the end of the eighteenth century. After several reforms, medical tests were used at court to differentiate both types of outlaws, so unstable individuals were gradually distinctly and thoughtfully treated. At the time in which these tales were written and published, controversy emerged around a possible exculpation in criminal prosecutions: Individuals may be suffering a disease, not physical or rational, but moral, so they were not able to control themselves and to be aware

of their deeds (Cleman 629). This moral insanity or monomania has been defined by Susan Amper as “a condition in which a person, while retaining his intellectual faculties, is nevertheless considered incapable of conducting himself with decency or propriety” (40). To understand the importance of my study, it is necessary to locate these shadowy narratives in this context.

### **1.1. Giving meaning to “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Black Cat”: Context for both tales**

Being interested in hoaxes and parodies, Poe displayed in his tales wilful deceit and misdirection through unreliable narrators. The author himself claimed that his tales “were intended for half banter, half satire” (qtd. in Amper 7). Moreover, the Victorian medical advances in mental disorders and this insanity defence debate became very influential in Poe’s work. His commitment to human psychological dilemmas constituted his most remarkable focus, predating even the tenets of psychoanalytic theory developed by Sigmund Freud at the end of the nineteenth century. Poe’s stay in Philadelphia from 1838 to 1844 was marked by several trials that became famous public issues because of their contentious absolution: Singleton Mercer was acquitted for killing his sister’s lover, just as James Wood was for killing his daughter. Both criminals were considered insane and unable to control themselves (Cleman 626). Poe reflects this controversy in “The Tell-Tale Heart” and “The Black Cat.” In the first tale, the narrator tells how he killed his housemate after having observed him, hidden, during seven nights. He loved the old man, but his eye was reason enough to commit murder. In the second one, the narrator tells how he killed his cat and how this crime tormented him and conducted him to murder his wife. Because of a simple animal, he ends with her life. Both narrators attempt to prove their sanity but

their obsessions, illusions and behaviour unconsciously expose them as illogical and insane men.

## **1.2 How Poe's narrators embody the symptoms of monomania or moral insanity through excuses and self-ignorance**

Before being judged, both narrators present the reasons for their atrocities in an ambiguous manner, shedding light on their madness: the narrator of "The Black Cat" alleges his mental stability but alludes to "some intellect [...] which will reduce my phantasm to the commonplace," stating that his mind is more excitable, less calm and less logical than others (Poe 203). He purports to be calm and logical but, guided by uncontrollable impulses, he snatches the eye of his cat to kill it afterwards, and murders his wife with any hesitation. Similarly, the narrator of "The Tell-Tale Heart" defends his mental health, but by exploring his attitude towards the old man, how he laughs at the man's terror, or the protagonist's constant nervousness, "I undid the lantern cautiously – oh, so cautiously – cautiously [...] I undid it just so much that a single thin ray fell upon the vulture eye" (199), it is easy to determine his irrationality. He also commends his meticulousness and the delicacy of his procedures, "You should have seen how wisely I proceed –with what caution –with what foresight –with what dissimulation I went to work!" (199), but ironically, he confesses the crime due to mere imagined heartbeats. He shows prudence and attention, even though he claims to be extremely nervous, "It took me an hour to place my whole head within the opening so far that I could see him as he lay upon his bed" (199). Thus, the contradictions between their allegations and their actions are countless. Although they display tranquillity, they show hardly any remorse, guilt or awareness, as I will then analyse. What utterly proves their mental instability is the mask of sanity that they constantly use (Cleman 632).



The use of recurrent pretexts to excuse themselves is further evidence of the above-mentioned moral insanity. Their own responsibility is far from being assumed and accepted. The narrator's tenderness with animals in "The Black Cat" may seem a mere anecdote, connected with the case, but functioning as a gentle description of himself, "From my infancy I was noted for the docility and humanity of my disposition [...] I was especially fond of animals, and was indulged by my parents with a great variety of pets" (Poe 203). However, it actually constitutes a well-thought appeal to pathos, in that he aims to seek mercy on the readers and excuse his culpability. He also blames alcohol as the main cause of disturbance in his mind, "my disease grew upon me – for what disease is like Alcohol!" (204), but it was not what guided him to kill his wife, "The moodiness of my usual temper increased to hatred of all things and of all mankind" (207). All these excuses situate him between a rock and a hard place. In "The Tell-Tale Heart," the narrator also justifies his mental illness in an attempt to escape his feelings of guilt, "the disease had sharpened my senses – not destroyed – not dulled them" (199). His mayor pretext is his over-acuteness of the sense of hearing, one of the clearest reflections of his insanity, "I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell" (199). It may seem supernatural, but this over-acuteness is an invention of his own mental disturbance. As claimed by Susan Amper, "Internal contradictions are among the most compelling telltales" (14), both protagonists betray themselves by appealing to unmanageable agents of crime that became inexplicable for any rational person.

These psychotic protagonists are unaware of what they do or feel, and this self-ignorance is decisive to determine their mental illness. The narrator of "The Tell-Tale Heart" gradually appears more excited and amazed at his own acts, as if he has no power over them, so his actions irremediably shock him, "never before that night had I felt the

extent of my own powers – of my sagacity” (Poe 200). Even more interesting is his astonishment and incredulity on the sounds of the heartbeats, “I felt myself getting pale [...] I talked more freely to get rid of the feeling; but it continued and gained definitiveness [...] I found that the noise was *not* within my ears” (201). What he feels is fear to be discovered, and what he hears comes from his own heart, which is beating faster due to his nervousness. However, he is unable to realize it. In “The Black Cat,” the narrator is not aware of the severity of his crime, since he is blinded by killing the animal. After the crime, and considering the cat disappeared, he claims to have slept calmly for the first time since the cat initially came into sight (208), even with his wife’s murder onto his backs. These protagonists unconsciously condemn themselves, and by constantly defending their sanity, they prove that they have not understand who they are and what have they just experienced (Maxson 429). Their self-ignorance, along with their recurrent pretexts to evade responsibility, contributes to their condemnation and to the unmasking of their dementia.

## **2. READERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE NARRATORS’ MADNESS**

After having determined the narrators’ moral insanity, it is crucial to analyse how readers can identify this madness through the maniacs’ obsessions, hallucinations and hypocrisy. They have to establish a connection with these unreliable figures and unmask them by discovering what is real and what is imagined in the indicted’s guilty pleas. As Debra A. Ripley has pointed out, “readers read in the hope of immersion, authors write in the hope of immersing” (10). This is Poe’s main purpose in both tales: to assure the readers’ engagement with the narrators’ stories. In “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the criminal’s praise of his delicacy and smartness and the justification of his *modus operandi* contrast with the reader’s perception of his dementia. Obviously, he cannot be trusted. He declares, “ha! – would a madman have been so wise as this?” (Poe 199), but he mistakenly thinks that the

policemen are mocking at him, revealing his lack of cleverness, “They heard! – they suspected! – they *knew!* –they were making a mockery of my horror! – this I thought, and this I think” (202). Both storytellers wear a mask that hides, but not completely, the maniac inside them. Readers have to discover the madness that lies behind their mask attending to their obsessions, illusions and cynical attitude.

### **2.1. Obsessions as the decisive point to determine insanity: The spirit of perverseness and the vulture eye**

These protagonists are blinded by obsessions that guide them to murder without hesitation. These *idées fixes* cannot be rationally sustained, so they are further proof of the narrators’ insanity. The criminal of “The Black Cat” acts violently towards his wife and his pets guided by what he calls ‘Fiend Intemperance,’ or alcoholism, “my general temperament and character – through the instrumentality of the Fiend Intemperance – had [...] experienced a radical alteration for the worse” (204). However, he introduces the role of an unmanageable force, “a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured” (204) that dominates him completely: the spirit of perverseness. This spirit is qualified by Poe in “The Imp of the Perverse” (1845) as a human impulse that governs our self-control and strongly influences us to “do wrong for the wrong’s sake [...] a *mobile* without motive, a motive not *motivirt*” (212). It is used as a moral excuse for his crimes. When the protagonist is drinking in one of his hangouts, he sees a cat standing over a hogshead and describes this vision as if it were an unearthly appearance: it has no owner and it has never been spotted before, “I at once offered to purchase it of the landlord; but this person made no claim to it – knew nothing of it – had never seen it before” (206). It seems the result of his own illogical mind. Here, he is totally driven by the obsession of being followed by perverseness. By killing the dreadful cat, he might kill this evil spirit inside him. As Adam Frank asserts, Poe

exposes a “masochistic strategy of amplifying negative affect for the purpose of making it disappear” (162). He increases the narrator’s fear towards his obsession to conduct him to act ambiguously and to reveal his instability. For readers, perverseness represents the long-awaited justice that will attack the insane man’s inner evil. The narrator of “The Tell-Tale Heart” cannot resist the attraction of his obsessions either, and hence exposes his irrationality. He initially warns the reader of an upcoming fixation that will entangle the action: “It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night” (Poe 199). There is no economic or emotional reason to kill the man, just an obsession, “Object there was none. Passion there was none. [...] I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this!” (199). A simple eye becomes the reason of his misfortune and of the old man’s too. Matthey Bynum emphasizes the nineteenth-century belief of madmen as weak individuals afraid to look into people’s eyes (qtd. in Amper 44). The maniac of “The Black Cat” also focuses on eyes, especially on the lack of an eye in his two cats. The eye evokes their obsession and terror and, whereas the old man’s murderer wants to get rid of it, “His eye would trouble me no more” (Poe 201), the other narrator shows dread for its disappearance, “What added [...] to my hatred of the beast, was the discovery [...] that, like Pluto, it also had been deprived of one of his eyes” (206): “the eye defends a unified perspective, and makes the self compulsively hate, abhor and pursue” (Ki 28).

## **2.2. The supernatural dilemma**

Both protagonists are encapsulated in a supernatural bubble that, along with their obsessions, distorts their confession and reveals their insanity. The title of “The Black Cat” implies the popular superstition of cats as witches, which is then mentioned by the narrator, “for no better reason than that it happens, just now, to be remembered” (Poe 203). He wants to capture the readers’ attention into this uncanny point, so that they will judge him

afterwards considering that he is victim of the supernatural. Matthew Taylor has underscored Poe's focus on a cosmic energy which antagonises human pursuits and "relegates humankind to an ephemeral existence" (198). He presents psychotic men possessed by transcendental forces which are embodied by the cat in "The Black Cat" and by the presence of death in "The Tell-Tale Heart." In the latter tale, the narrator seems to abandon his nervousness – masterly represented by Poe's writing of short sentences and repeated words – to introduce an idea that sheds light on the supernatural, "Death, in approaching him, had stalked with his black shadow before him, and enveloped the victim" (Poe 200). He alludes to an otherworldly feeling that, "many a night, just at midnight, when all the world slept, [...] has welled up from my own bosom, deepening, with its dreadful echo, the terrors that distract me" (200). Uncanny terrors paralyse both narrators and distort their viewpoints. Their senses are damaged by hallucinations and delirium. As Walter Shear points out, these senses "are structured as invading forces formulating a provocative frame of uncertainty for [their] sensibilities" (285). Their fear of the supernatural causes their confession not to be trustworthy, and their constant illusions only serve to emphasize the vision of the narrators as madmen.

### **2.3. Hypocrisy as the actual telltale**

Despite being weak and tormented individuals, both protagonists show jubilantly self-confidence and bravery which happen to be untrue. This hypocrite attitude leads readers to be suspicious of the narrators' instability. In "The Tell-Tale Heart," the murderer's infliction of pain towards the old caring man reveals an incongruous behaviour, "I knew what the old man felt, and pitied him, although I chuckled at heart" (Poe 200). It even results ironic because this enjoyment turns against him when the policemen supposedly mock at him, "I could bear these hypocritical smiles no longer!" (202). He

deliberately makes fun of the old man's fear, however, he cannot bear the officers' attitude, displaying thus a clear cynicism. In "The Black Cat," the hypocrite narrator also exposes his irrationality on beating his cane against the wall where his wife lies in the very presence of the police, "through the mere frenzy of bravado, I rapped heavily with a cane [...] upon that very portion of the brickwork behind which stood the corpse of the wife of my bosom" (208). This attitude leads both narrators to their self-condemnation, which according to Shen, "implicitly [tells] the reader how one's self-satisfying hypocrisy can lead to one's downfall" (336). This hypocrisy, alongside fixations and hallucinations, is a crucial factor to determine the criminals' mental insanity.

### **3. ROLE REVERSAL IN BOTH TALES: HUMANS AS IRRATIONAL AND BRUTE BEASTS VS. ANIMALS AS SAGACIOUS AND AFFECTIONATE BEINGS**

Personally, one of the author's pivotal reflections in these tales is the contrast between human beings and animals and their role reversal. This comparison may have been underestimated in several critical analyses on these Poe's tales, but it has to be studied in order to endorse the narrators' insanity. Both narrators act savagely and without compassion: "I then smiled gaily, to find the deed so far done" (Poe 201), as stated by the old man's murderer; or "my immediate purpose is to place [...] a series of mere household events" (203), as explained by the other maniac, who has introduced an axe in his wife's head. The scene, more than grotesque, seems even unreal. While Poe portrays humans as wild beasts, animals are presented as rational beings: as the narrator of "The Black Cat" claims, "there is something in the unselfish and self-sacrificing love of a brute, which goes directly to the heart of him who has had frequent occasion to test the paltry friendship and gossamer fidelity of mere *Man*" (203). In "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), Poe

already reversed these identities, causing the policemen and the readers to strive on relating the crimes to a brute and uncontrollable murderer – that is why the criminal ends up being an orangutan rather than another animal. In these tales, Poe reflects the famous eighteenth-century “wild beast” test to reinforce the perception of the narrators as insane. This test proved that insane individuals were limited to act as brute animals rather than as rational beings (Cleman 628). Both narrators embody animal features: the cold-hearted maniac of “The Black Cat” kills his wife guided by impulses, showing any remorse or morality. In “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the murderer also acts as a dangerous animal, stalking his prey at night, keeping an eye on every movement and ready to attack. Thus, both men endorse this “animality.”

### **3.1. Lack of morality and remorse in both narrators**

Instead of feeling guilty and repentant, thus showing a rational sentimentality, both men act regardless of any feeling of culpability or morality. The following statement by the murderer of “The Black Cat” is nothing but another exemplification of their deceitfulness: “[I] hung it with the tears streaming from my eyes, and with the bitterest remorse at my heart” (Poe 205), he assumes his insensibility afterwards, “there came back into my spirit a half-sentiment that seemed, but was not, remorse” (205). Their supposed repentance is just another component of their mask. They appear as immoral men, unconcerned about the victims’ deaths, as if they were illogical beasts: In “The Black Cat,” the maniac claims, “My happiness was supreme! The guilt of my dark deed disturbed me but little” (208), and in “The Tell-Tale Heart,” the narrator even jokes about his crime, “I then replaced the boards so cleverly [...] that no human eye – not even *his* – could have detected any thing wrong” (201). As Christopher Peterson states, “an ostensibly human criminal is unveiled as truly *animal*” (162). So Poe here reverses the repulsion caused

during his time towards animals and primates (qtd. in Peterson 159) with a feeling of rejection, even misanthropy, towards humankind. The narrators' instability is further evidenced by this lack of morality and guilt.

### **3.2. Maniacs guided by impulses instead of by reason**

Poe's narrators are driven to murder for no other *prima mobile* than mere impulses: "They [...] possess one feature in common, the *irresistible, motiveless impulse to destroy life*" (qtd. in Cleman 629). These unconscious protagonists react impulsively and, as mentioned above, show a cynical disregard for their victims. Even though the murderer of the old man plans his assassination "for seven long nights" (Poe 199), his nervousness and motiveless crime betray his incapability to act reasonably and prudently, "I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult" (199). The aforementioned definition of perverseness perfectly fits with this impulsiveness, since it is "one of the primitive impulses of the human heart" (204), according to the murderer of "The Black Cat." In this tale, the narrator is utterly controlled by his inner instincts, and when his wife tries to stop them, he kills her without blinking. All these reactions not only exclude any credibility on the deranged narrators' self-defence, but also condemn them and uncover their irrefutable dementia.

## **CONCLUSION**

Edgar Allan Poe presents in his tales "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Black Cat" similar narrators who endeavour to prove their sanity and to exonerate themselves for their deadly crimes. However, their irrational behaviour and actions lead to their condemnation and to the revelation of their insanity. It has been analysed how both narrators embody the symptoms of the contentious moral insanity through their meticulous misdirection and



their self-ignorance. Both maniacs unmask themselves claiming that their obsessions and illusions drove them to murder those who they loved. Poe delves into the psyche of these characters portraying them as irrational and hypocrite beings who exhibit bravery but their impulsive and unrepentant behaviour along with their weakness, unveil their dementia. Further analysis should be done endorsing Poe's intention to depict deranged and savage criminals who cannot control themselves, instead of determining that both narrators are sane individuals who lie or who experience uncanny circumstances.

### Works Cited

- Amper, Susan. *Masters of Deceit: Poe's Lying Narrators*. Diss. Fordham U, 2000, University Microfilms International, 2001.
- Cleman, John. "Irresistible Impulses: Edgar Allan Poe and the Insanity Defense." *American Literature*, vol. 63, no. 4, Dec. 1991, pp. 623-640. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2926871>. Accessed 1 Feb. 2017.
- Frank, Adam. "Medium Poe." *Criticism*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2006, pp. 149-174. *ProQuest Central*, <https://mv-ezproxy-com.ezproxy.usal.es/docview/200407633?accountid=17252>. Accessed 3 Feb. 2017.
- Ki, Magdalen Wing-chi. "Ego-Evil and 'The Tell-Tale Heart'." *Renaissance*, vol. 61, no. 1, 2008, pp. 25-38. *ProQuest Central*, <https://mv-ezproxy-com.ezproxy.usal.es/docview/194940338?accountid=17252>. Accessed 7 Feb. 2017.
- Maxson, Helen F. "Richard Poirier and Edgar Allan Poe: Reassessing the 'World Elsewhere'." *The Midwest Quarterly*, vol. 41, no. 4, 2000, pp. 416-431. *Arts & Humanities Database*, <https://mv-ezproxy-com.ezproxy.usal.es/docview/195719520?accountid=17252>. Accessed 3 Feb. 2017.
- Peterson, Christopher. "The Aping Apes of Poe and Wright: Race, Animality, and Mimicry in 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' and *Native Son*." *New Literary History*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2010, pp.151-171. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40666489>. Accessed 13 Mar. 2017.

- Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Black Cat." *The Complete Tales & Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by Wilbur S. Scott, Castle Books, 2002, pp. 203-209.
- - -. "The Imp of the Perverse." *The Complete Tales & Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by Wilbur S. Scott, Castle Books, 2002, pp. 211-215.
- - -. "The Tell-Tale Heart." *The Complete Tales & Poems of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by Wilbur S. Scott, Castle Books, 2002, pp. 199-202.
- Ripley, Debra Ann. *Cognitive narratology: A Practical Approach to the Reader-Writer Relationship*. Diss. Marquette U, 2005, University Microfilms International, 2005.
- Shear, Walter. "Poe's Fiction: The Hypnotic Magic of the Senses." *The Midwest Quarterly*, vol.47, no. 3, 2006, pp. 276-289. *Arts & Humanities Database*, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.usal.es/docview/195700896?accountid=17252>. Accessed 12 Mar. 2017.
- Shen, Dan. "Edgar Allan Poe's Aesthetic Theory, the Insanity Debate, and the Ethically Oriented Dynamics of 'The Tell-Tale Heart'." *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol. 63, no. 3, 2008, pp. 321-345. *Arts & Humanities Database*, <https://mv-ezproxy-com.ezproxy.usal.es/docview/211930722?accountid=17252>. Accessed 8 Feb. 2017.
- Taylor, Matthew A. "Edgar Allan Poe's (Meta)physics: A Pre-History of the Post-Human". *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol.63, no. 2, 2007, pp. 193-221. *Arts & Humanities Database*, <https://mv-ezproxy-com.ezproxy.usal.es/docview/211946111?accountid=17252>. Accessed 1 Feb. 2017.