

**A Psychoanalytic Reading of Edgar Allan  
Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher***

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Poe's short story *The Fall of the House of Usher* begins with the eerie description of the Usher's mansion in the perspective of an unnamed narrator, we only learn of him as a boyhood friend of Roderick Usher who is the main character in the story. Poe examines the psychological complexity of love and hate, emphasizing the ways they enigmatically blend into each other. His psychological insight anticipates the theories of Sigmund Freud. Like Freud, Poe too interpreted love and hate as universal emotions, thereby served from the specific conditions of time and space.

E. Arthur Robinson says that the story parallels with the tripartite existence (that is studied in Christian Theology) of that of *body, soul* and the *spirit*. Roderick Usher represents the soul or the mind, Lady Madeline represents the body and the House of the Usher represents the spirit. By attributing life and emotions to an inanimate object such as the house, Poe highlights on the aspect of sentience in the story. Also, Roderick Usher and Madeline Usher, together represent the concept of *dualism*, where in the eighteenth century doctrines were understood by two principles –*irreducible* and *coeternal*. Along with this, we learn that the siblings are twins and this adds to the notion of the two entities of the same personality; and that the deceased mind affects the body, while the house is non-distinguishable from its dwellers, thus, showing the body, soul and spirit as a *single* entity.....

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