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Barron's Simplified Approach to Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter

Seminar paper from the year 2001 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1.5, University of Freiburg (English Department), 22 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: Since its publication in 1850, Hawthorne's masterpiece romance The Scarlet Letter has been hailed by average readers and literary critics alike as one of the finest pieces of literature ever to have come out of the pen of an American writer. Not only regarded as "Hawthorne's most widely read and admired novel"³, The Scarlet Letter has also given numerous generations of critics bountiful opportunity for in-depth analysis of the novel's plot, characters, and meaning. A fair amount of scholarly attention has, for instance, been devoted to Hawthorne's "imposing splendor of portraiture"⁴. In the case of The Scarlet Letter, this has been evidenced by critics' particular interest in Hawthorne's portrayal of two of the novel's central characters: the Boston townswoman Hester Prynne and the pastor Arthur Dimmesdale. Against the backdrop of mid-17th century Puritan society in the newly founded American colonies, Hawthorne describes how these two characters' lives are, each in its very own way, dramatically changed by one moment of adulterous passion. It is the aim of the present paper to deliver a careful analysis of Hester and Arthur at the center of which shall be the difficult social and psychological circumstances the two characters encounter in the wake of their adultery. It will equally be shown that Hester and Arthur embrace different strategies in dealing with their situation. A plot analysis reveals a clear dilemma and duality of a confession versus concealment theme which impacts greatly on the two characters and their behavior. Having been forced to confess to adultery charges, Hester manages to reshape her life by confronting present demands while also hoping for future opportunities. By contrast, Arthur is tormented and obsessed by his moment of moral weakness in the past, wavering between revelation and dissimulation of his deed as he doubletalks his way through the novel's plot. The first chapter of this study intends to establish a framework for the ensuing character analysis. Its aim will be to portray Puritan society as shown in Hawthorne's work, so that Hester's and Arthur's situation in the novel's plot will become clear. An interpretation of the two characters will follow in chapter two. First, Hester's behavior and the role she plays in the novel shall be analyzed under the aforementioned confession theme. [...] ³ Waggoner, p. 118. ⁴ Ripley, p. 26.

The Scarlet Letter

Like all of Hawthorne's novels, "The Scarlet Letter" has but a slender plot and but few characters with an influence on the development of the story. Its great dramatic force depends entirely on the mental states of the actors and their relations to one another, —relations of conscience, — relations between wronged and wrongers. Its great burden is the weight of unacknowledged sin as seen in the remorse and cowardice and suffering of the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale. Contrasted with his concealed agony is the constant confession, conveyed by the letter, which is forced upon Hester, and has a double effect, — a healthful one, working beneficently, and making her helpful and benevolent, tolerant and thoughtful; and an unhealthful one, which by the great emphasis placed on her transgression, the keeping her forever under its ban and isolating her from her fellows, prepares her to break away from the long repression and lapse again into sin when she plans her flight. Roger Chillingworth is an embodiment of subtle and refined revenge. The most striking situation is perhaps "The Minister's Vigil," in chapter xii. The book, though corresponding in its tone and burden to some of the shorter stories, had a more startling and dramatic character, and a strangeness, which at once took hold of a larger public than any of those had attracted. Though imperfectly comprehended, and even misunderstood in some quarters, it was seen to have a new and unique quality; and Hawthorne's reputation became national.

The Scarlet Letter

Seminar paper from the year 2009 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,0, University of Frankfurt (Main) (Amerikanistik), course: Life and Letters in the 19th Century, language: English, abstract: "The Scarlet Letter" by Nathaniel Hawthorne was his first novel published under his own name. Also it is considered to be his best and/or most famous piece of work. It was written in the 19th century and until today still knows how to capture the readers attention. But why does this book still appeal to many readers and is now being published in its 66th edition, although one might think that it's topics might be a little outdated by now and modern readers would lack the possibility to relate? To answer this question we will have to take a closer look Hawthorne, his book and the themes therein. One might say that the letter did not have the effect on her as it was intended and as the novel progresses the letter 'A' seems of alter his meaning to certain people Hester interacts with. That is why I want to have a closer look at this famous scarlet letter, his different and how this is able to change throughout the novel. Especially the context of a puritan society has to be taken into account, or as Richard H. Millington noted: "Culture is a structure of meaning that is not 'natural' or automatic but locally variable, historically changing and thus both inescapable and humanly revisable – as the changing meaning of Hester's letter within the Puritan community makes clear." It might be that people living in our world today could not be able to relate to the problematic for Hester Prynne. Day in, day out there are people committing adultery and give birth to illegitimate children. But there is no real consequences for the adulterer or women living alone with child. We have to consider the context of the story to be able to understand the conflicts and sheer catastrophic events which build the start for Hawthorne's novel. Hester Prynne's story is a story of conflict with her society, the puritan society. Therefore we will have to take a brief look at the Puritans, then we will progress with the relation between them and Hawthorne impaled in his novel and lastly we will explore the meaning of the letter itself

Scarlet Letter, The: Literary Touchstone Classic

This English/Spanish edition of Hawthorne's classic "The Scarlet Letter" is useful for English speakers wanting to learn Spanish, Spanish speakers wanting to learn English, persons who know both languages but want to conveniently compare the original with the translations.

The Visible and the Invisible Letter A - Puritanism and the Dualism of Confession and Concealment in Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter

The Scarlet Letter, published in 1850, is an American novel written by Nathaniel Hawthorne and is generally considered to be his magnum opus. Set in 17th-century Puritan Boston, it tells the story of Hester Prynne, who gives birth after committing adultery, refuses to name the father, and struggles to create a new life of repentance and dignity. Throughout the novel, Hawthorne explores questions of grace, legalism, sin and guilt.

The Scarlet Letter

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The Scarlet Letter

This Elibron Classics title is a reprint of the original edition.

Decoding Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*

Like all of Hawthorne's novels, "*The Scarlet Letter*" has but a slender plot and but few characters with an influence on the development of the story. Its great dramatic force depends entirely on the mental states of the actors and their relations to one another, --relations of conscience, -- relations between wronged and wrongers. Its great burden is the weight of unacknowledged sin as seen in the remorse and cowardice and suffering of the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale. Contrasted with his concealed agony is the constant confession, conveyed by the letter, which is forced upon Hester, and has a double effect, -- a healthful one, working beneficently, and making her helpful and benevolent, tolerant and thoughtful; and an unhealthful one, which by the great emphasis placed on her transgression, the keeping her forever under its ban and isolating her from her fellows, prepares her to break away from the long repression and lapse again into sin when she plans her flight. Roger Chillingworth is an embodiment of subtle and refined revenge. The most striking situation is perhaps "*The Minister's Vigil*," in chapter xii. The book, though corresponding in its tone and burden to some of the shorter stories, had a more startling and dramatic character, and a strangeness, which at once took hold of a larger public than any of those had attracted. Though imperfectly comprehended, and even misunderstood in some quarters, it was seen to have a new and unique quality; and Hawthorne's reputation became national.

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The Scarlet Letter

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The Scarlet Letter

The Scarlet Letter Nathaniel HAWTHORNE (1804 - 1864) *The Scarlet Letter: A Romance* is an 1850 work of fiction in a historical setting, written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, and is considered to be his best work. The story begins in seventeenth-century Salem, Massachusetts, then a Puritan settlement. A young woman, Hester Prynne, is led from the town prison with her infant daughter, Pearl, in her arms and the scarlet letter "A" on her breast. The scarlet letter "A" represents the act of adultery that she has committed; it is to be a symbol of her sin for all to see. She will not reveal her lover's identity, however, and the scarlet letter, along with her public shaming, is her punishment for her sin and her secrecy. A 19th century classics literature edition.

The Scarlet Letter (Illustrated)

The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a real classic. You should grab it and read it to experience it yourself. Here's a simple plot to *The Scarlet Letter*: In Puritan Boston, Massachusetts, a crowd gathers

to witness the punishment of Hester Prynne, a young woman who has given birth to a baby of unknown parentage. She is required to wear a scarlet "A" on her dress when she is in front of the townspeople to shame her. The letter "A" stands for adulteress, although this is never said explicitly in the novel. Her sentence required her to stand on the scaffold for three hours, exposed to public humiliation, and to wear the scarlet "A" for the rest of her life. As Hester approaches the scaffold, many of the women in the crowd are angered by her beauty and quiet dignity. When demanded and cajoled to name the father of her child, Hester refuses. As Hester looks out over the crowd, she notices a small, misshapen man and recognizes him as her long-lost husband, who has been presumed lost at sea. When the husband sees Hester's shame, he asks a man in the crowd about her and is told the story of his wife's adultery. He angrily exclaims that the child's father, the partner in the adulterous act, should also be punished and vows to find the man. He chooses a new name, Roger Chillingworth, to aid him in his plan. The Reverend John Wilson and the minister of Hester's church, Arthur Dimmesdale, question the woman, but she refuses to name her lover. After she returns to her prison cell, the jailer brings in Roger Chillingworth, a physician, to calm Hester and her child with his roots and herbs. He and Hester have an open conversation regarding their marriage and the fact that they were both in the wrong. Her lover, however, is another matter and he demands to know who it is; Hester refuses to divulge such information. He accepts this, stating that he will find out anyway, and forces her to hide that he is her husband. If she ever reveals him, he warns her, he will destroy the child's father. Hester agrees to Chillingworth's terms although she suspects she will regret it. Following her release from prison, Hester settles in a cottage at the edge of town and earns a meager living with her needlework, which is of extraordinary quality. She lives a quiet, somber life with her daughter, Pearl, and performs acts of charity for the poor. She is troubled by her daughter's unusual fascination with Hester's scarlet "A". The shunning of Hester also extends to Pearl, who has no playmates or friends except her mother. As she grows older, Pearl becomes capricious and unruly. Her conduct starts rumors, and, not surprisingly, the church members suggest Pearl be taken away from Hester. Hester, hearing rumors that she may lose Pearl, goes to speak to Governor Bellingham. With him are ministers Wilson and Dimmesdale. Hester appeals to Dimmesdale in desperation, and the minister persuades the governor to let Pearl remain in Hester's care. Because Dimmesdale's health has begun to fail, the townspeople are happy to have Chillingworth, a newly arrived physician, take up lodgings with their beloved minister. Being in such close contact with Dimmesdale, Chillingworth begins to suspect that the minister's illness is the result of some unconfessed guilt. He applies psychological pressure to the minister because he suspects Dimmesdale is Pearl's father. One evening, pulling the sleeping Dimmesdale's vestment aside, Chillingworth sees a symbol that represents his shame on the minister's pale chest. Tormented by his guilty conscience, Dimmesdale goes to the square where Hester was punished years earlier. Climbing the scaffold, he admits his guilt but cannot find the courage to do so publicly.... .. The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

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The Scarlet Letter(classics Illustrated)

The Scarlet Letter: A Romance is a work of historical fiction by American author Nathaniel Hawthorne, published in 1850. Set in Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony during the years 1642 to 1649, the novel tells the story of Hester Prynne, who conceives a daughter through an affair and then struggles to create a new life of repentance and dignity. Containing a number of religious and historic allusions, the book explores themes of legalism, sin, and guilt. The Scarlet Letter was one of the first mass-produced books in America. It was popular when first published and is considered a classic work today. It inspired numerous film, television, and stage adaptations. Critics have described it as a masterwork and novelist D. H. Lawrence called it a "perfect work of the American imagination".

The Scarlet Letter(Original Illustrations)

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The Scarlet Letter

Hailed by Henry James as "the finest piece of imaginative writing yet put forth in the country, " Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter" reaches to our nation's historical and moral roots for the material of great tragedy. Set in an early New England colony, the novel shows the terrible impact a single, passionate act has on the lives of three members of the community: the defiant Hester Prynne; the fiery, tortured Reverend Dimmesdale; and the obsessed, vengeful Chillingworth. With "The Scarlet Letter," Hawthorne became the first American novelist to forge from our Puritan heritage a universal classic, a masterful exploration of humanity's unending struggle with sin, guilt and pride.

The Scarlet Letter (a Classics Novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne(illustrated Edition)

A guide to reading "The Scarlet Letter" with a critical and appreciative mind encouraging analysis of plot, style, form, and structure. Also includes background on the author's life and times, sample tests, term paper suggestions, and a reading list.

The Scarlet Letter

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The Scarlet Letter

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The Scarlet Letter Annotated Edition

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The Scarlet Letter (With Original Illustrations) Illustrated Classic

Key Features: Study methods Introduction to the text Summaries with critical notes Themes and techniques Textual analysis of key passages Author biography Historical and literary background Modern and historical critical approaches Chronology Glossary of literary terms

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The Scarlet Letter

Classic tale about Hester, her lover, their child, and Hester's husband, and the effect of sin on the mind and spirit of these characters.

The Scarlet Letter

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Understanding the Scarlet Letter [eBook - ABC-Clio Via NC Live]

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The Scarlet Letter

Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter is his major novel first published in 1850. It takes place in the Massachusetts Bay Colony during 1640s. Hester Prynne is the main character. She get pregnant and has a daughter without being married to the father. This novel tells the story of her hardships, living as an outcast within the society of the time.

The Scarlet Letter

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The Scarlet Letter

The Scarlet Letter

