

Principles of Literary Study  
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Office hours: Mondays 2:00–3:00 or by appointment

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## sonnets, typical and atypical: form

- ▶ 14 lines
  - ▶ but Meredith, “Modern Love”: 16 ll.
- ▶ iambic pentameter
  - ▶ but *Astrophil and Stella* I: hexameter
- ▶ rhyme schemes: two principal types
  - ▶ Petrarchan: *abbaabba* + *cdecde* or permutations
  - ▶ Shakespearean: *ababcdcdefefgg*
  - ▶ but Yeats, “Leda and the Swan”: mixed type
  - ▶ but Heaney, “Clearances”: slant rhymes (mostly)

## sonnets, typical and atypical: rhetoric

- ▶ Shakespearean couplet is also rhetorical: closure effect
  - ▶ but: Sonnet 116
- ▶ Petrarchan *volta*: change in stance at l. 9
  - ▶ but: Heaney, “Clearances” 7 (I’ll come back to this)
- ▶ rhetorical setting: private reading, “lyric” norm
  - ▶ Yeats: “all politics went out of it” (!?)
  - ▶ but Brooks, “rites”: “Oh oh. Too much. Too much.”
  - ▶ but Kavanagh: “Epic”

# sonnets, typical and atypical: theme

- ▶ the sonnet is a poem about love
  - ▶ especially Platonic or frustrated love
- ▶ **BUT**
  - ▶ Donne, “Holy Sonnets”
  - ▶ Wordsworth, “Westminster Bridge”
  - ▶ Yeats, “Leda and the Swan”
  - ▶ Brooks, “rites for Cousin Vit”
  - ▶ Kavanagh, “Epic”
  - ▶ ...

## but Heaney, “Clearances” 7

(1) In the last minutes he said more to her	a
Almost than in all their life together.	a
‘You’ll be in New Row on Monday night	b
And I’ll come up for you and you’ll be glad	c
When I walk in the door ... Isn’t that right?’	b
His head was bent down to her propped-up head.	c
She could not hear but we were overjoyed.	d?
He called her good and girl. (2) Then she was dead,	c
The searching for a pulsebeat was abandoned	e?
And we all knew one thing by being there.	a
(3) The space we stood around had been emptied	d?
Into us to keep, it penetrated	d?
Clearances that suddenly stood open.	e??
(4) High cries were felled and a pure change happened.	e?

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(3) The <b>space</b> we stood around had been emptied	d?
Into us to keep, it penetrated	d?
<b>Clearances</b> that suddenly stood open.	e??
(4) High cries were felled and a pure change happened.	e?

Keats

# Keats

- ▶ 10 ll. iambic pentameter
- ▶ rhymed *abab cdedce*
  - ▶ triplet order varies: *cdedce cdedced cdecde cdecde cdedce*
  - ▶ “more sweetly than our rhyme” (4)?

## stanza as stance

- ▶ consider just one stanza in isolation
- ▶ think: what is particular to this stanza?
  - ▶ What kind of sentences?
  - ▶ What kind of images?
  - ▶ What kind of address?
  - ▶ What mood (how do you know?)
  - ▶ Why doesn't (5: does) the poem just stop here?

## motto

“Beauty is truth, truth beauty,”—that is all

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty,—that is all

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty.—That is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. (49–50)

## next

- ▶ speakers and addressees (implied and actual)
- ▶ focus on:
  - ▶ Wheatley, “On Being Brought...”
  - ▶ Melville, “Shiloh”
  - ▶ Eliot, “Prufrock”
- ▶ read Warner’s quite challenging essay on “Shiloh”
  - ▶ pay attention to how Warner discusses speech and address