DARK ROMANTICISM

An emphasis on human fallibility that gives rise to lapses in judgement that allow even good men and women to drift toward sin and self-destruction, and also tends to draw attention to the unintended consequences and complications that arise from well-intended efforts at social reform.

BASIC REPRESENTATIVES: Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe.

specificities:

* A focus on the grotesque, the fantastic, and the morbid
* A shadowy approach to the fantastic
* Creepy symbols (the raven)
* Horrific themes (death, madness…)
* The psychological effect of guilt and sin
* Evil and sin are everywhere
* Evil is able to take control
* Explores the dark side of humanity

The dark romatic characters:

* Often deranged or go mad (Arthur Dimmesdale, Captain Ahab…)
* Offer a psychological exploration on how the mind works
* A focus on the dark side of the character
* Guilt, sin, descent into madness
* Human will is weak and we will all inevitably fail

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TRANSCENDENTALISM** | **DARK ROMANTICISM** |
| Nature - divine | Nature – a threatening spiritual force |
| Humanity – good | The human heart is evil.  Humanity – imperfect  People are liable to sin and self-destruction. |
| Optimistic approach | Evil taking control over good |