

## The Fascination of the Double

**Luogo / Data:** Locarno, 08.11.2019

**Docenti destinatari:** Docenti d'inglese delle SMS

**Organizzatore:** prof. Raphael Stoll, docente d'inglese del Liceo di Locarno

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### ***The Fascination of the Double, Robert Hill***

Two literary motifs will be the focus of our day – the double (two persons who are identified as the same character) and the dual (one person who splits into two personalities) – and we will explore not only how these two motifs occur in literature but also in painting and film. This fascinating topic is vast, so we must be selective! However, we aim to include the following:

- twins as doubles, used by Shakespeare among others as a source of confusion of identity for comic effect, but also representing the physically 'uncanny, *Das Unheimliche* as Freud expressed it (e.g. in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*)
- similar but different from twins, *doppelgänger* figures in the rise of the Gothic horror genre (such as E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Die Doppelgänger* and, in particular, Edgar Allen Poe's *William Wilson*)
- the 'golden age' of the double, the 19<sup>th</sup> century, will be our focal point, beginning with reference to the curious, fascinating 'cult' novel *The Private Confessions of a Justified Sinner* by James Hogg, an influence on Robert Louis Stevenson
- Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* will require special attention, together with Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and we will also notice how key scenes from these have been interpreted in film versions
- Stevenson's novel and to a lesser extent Wilde's have become emblematic of the 'double life' – outward respectability versus private indulgence – of male middle-class Victorian society: the 'double standards' seen in the sexual behaviour allowed

for males and females at this time will be demonstrated with examples from Victorian art, including Pre-Raphaelite artists

- we will look at the accidental yet curious ‘doubling’ between *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and the events of the Whitechapel murders (the ‘Jack the Ripper’ crimes), another example of the overlap between fiction and fact
- moving into the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, we will see how double/dual motifs have become pervasive in popular culture, for example *in stories in DC Comics and the Marvel ‘universe’, such as Batman, Superman, Spider-man, Iron Man, Green Lantern, The Incredible Hulk (and we will examine the debt of the ‘Hulk’ to ‘Jekyll and Hyde’, and the similarities and differences)*
- still in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the high profile of the double/dual will be examined in Hitchcock’s *Vertigo* (obsessive love) and *Psycho* (modern Gothic horror), and then in a variety of more recent films such as *Mulholland Drive, Fight Club, Black Swan* and, to bring us right up to date, *Tarantino’s Once Upon A Time in Hollywood*.

*Teaching activities to exploit the texts, films and paintings will be demonstrated during the day. Participants will also be given the PowerPoint presentation used by Robert Hill, as well as the notes, worksheets and a brief webography.*

Inizio 09:00; pausa pranzo 12:00; inizio pomeriggio 13:30; chiusura 16:30

Punto d’incontro: aula docenti C03 alle 08:50