

The Rhetoric of the Primitive Savior in
Cooper's The Deerslayer, Melville's Moby Dick and
Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter and The Blithedale Romance

Samuel Gordon Paley

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English
Department of English

Central Connecticut State University
New Britain, Connecticut

May 2005

Thesis Advisor

Dr. John A. Heitner
Department of English

Samuel Gordon Paley
 John A. Heitner
 English 599
 10 April 2000

ABSTRACT:

The Rhetoric of the Primitive Savior in Cooper's The Deerslayer, Melville's Moby Dick, and Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter and The Blithedale Romance

This project proposes to situate Cooper's Chingachgook and Hetty, Melville's Queequeg, and Hawthorne's Pearl and Priscilla, as rhetorical characters of what shall be termed the primitive-as-savior tradition of American fiction. This rhetoric (persuasive technique) in The Deerslayer, Moby Dick, The Scarlet Letter, and The Blithedale Romance, manipulates reader emotions through pairing a character of the heroic mode with one of the primitive. The character in the heroic mode (a hero or heroine) is directly involved in the novel's main action, commands the most interest or sympathy from the reading audience, and embodies valuable human qualities such as honesty, bravery, and compassion. The heroic character seeks escape from the strictures of his or her ever-expanding Anglo American civilization, and travels (forced or willingly) on a voyage to the frontier (any space outside the bounds of westernized society).

The primitive character accompanies the heroic on this voyage. The character in the primitive mode embodies the qualities of cultural primitivism—being more natural, more instinctive, and more spontaneous than the heroic (Bell, Primitivism 80). The primitive character is also a marginalized character—a social outsider to the western culture. The primitive character is excluded from the full benefits of the heroic character's society because he or she may be described as one of the following—being non-white, non-Christian, lower class, or poor. As a social outsider, the primitive feels a spiritual bond with the hero—or at least feels compassion for the freedom the hero seeks. The primitive having spent most of his or her existence marginalized from society, better understands the psychological and physical challenges of the frontier, and guides the hero toward survival through word and deed (Bell, Primitivism 11).

As an outsider with the answers, the primitive is a powerful source of irony. While readers anticipate that their encounter with the primitive will comfortably reinforce their society's negative stereotypes of marginalized peoples, the reverse happens. The early nineteenth century audience is bewildered as their Anglo-American social philosophy fails them and the primitive's way is depicted as the path to salvation.

The rhetoric of the primitive savior refers to a persuasive technique, in which authors depict a marginalized (primitive) character and a modern (heroic) character in a relationship in which the marginalized character's mode of existence, for the purpose of irony, is shown to be the answer to the hero's salvation. Through the lens of critics such as Michael Bell, Wayne Booth, Joseph Campbell, and John Gardner, this study examines the achievement of this irony as a multidimensional process, combining at least seven elements. These elements include arguments of characterization (ethos), arguments of emotion (pathos), and arguments of reason (logos).

Chapter one, examines how authors use myths to color readers' first impression of a primitive characters vice or virtue. Two elements are analyzed as arguments of ethos: the myth of the frontier (element 1) and the myth of the Native American (element 2). The second chapter discusses arguments of pathos--examining narrative strategies of how each author presents primitive characters to gain reader attention (element 3), and how each author's narrative portrays primitive characters in order to gain audience empathy (element 4). The third chapter examines archetypal patterns, such as that of the hero's initiation (element 5), and that of the primitive as teacher (element 6) create arguments of reason suggesting that the primitive character has social value. The final chapter attempts a holistic evaluation of how the relationship of primitive and heroic characters in each novel makes the works life affirming and socially redeeming ones (element 7), qualifying each work as a work worthy of being termed Literary under John Gardner's theory of moral fiction. In conclusion, while each element on its own is rhetorically significant, by viewing these elements on a holistic level, it becomes clear that the combination of these seven elements serve to create something that is far more rhetorically captivating and literary, than any one element analyzed independently.

Table of Contents

Detailed Table of Contents	6
Introduction	12
Chapter 1: Arguments of Ethos:	
(Part A) The Myth of the American Frontier and the Rhetoric of the Primitive Savior	28
(Part B) The Myth of the Native American and the Rhetoric of the Primitive Savior	46
Chapter 2: Arguments of Pathos:	
(Part A) The Novelists use of the Shocking Primitive . . .	51
(Part B) Narrator Empathy--the Art of Befriending Readers	68
Chapter 3: Arguments of Logos:	
(Part A) Novels of the Primitive-as-Savior Tradition are Novels of Initiation	76
(Part B) The Primitive Savior Teaches Life Lessons . . .	100
Chapter 4: The Reflective Argument--A Holistic Approach: How the Rhetoric of the Primitive-as-Savior Tradition Enables Moral Fiction	106
Conclusion: Discussion and Implications	120
Appendixes	123
Works Cited	152

Detailed Table of Contents

Introduction

Section	Title	Page
0.1	What is rhetoric? / What is a primitive? / What is the heroic mode? / What is Irony? / What is a savior? / What is the rhetoric of the primitive savior?	12
0.2	Seven Essential Elements of the Primitive-as-Savior Tradition	14
0.3	How is the rhetoric of the primitive-as-savior a tradition of the American Novel?	16
0.4	Where do the critics disagree? / How can Hawthorne's Pearl and Priscilla be primitives?	17
0.5	Goals and Methods	18
0.6	Literature Review	20

Chapter 1: Arguments of Ethos

(Part A)

An Argument of Ethos: The Myth of the American Frontier and the Rhetoric of the Primitive Savior

Section	Title	Page
1A.1	Introduction--How do Cooper, Melville, and Hawthorne use the myth of the American frontier to create dramatic tension and empower the rhetoric of the primitive-as-savior tradition in their novels?	28
1A.2	Cooper's Frontier Myth as a Rhetoric of Ethos in <u>The Deerslayer</u> :	31
1A.3	Melville's use of Frontier Myth as a Rhetoric of Ethos in <u>Moby Dick</u> :	35

1A.4	Hawthorne's Frontier Myth as a Rhetoric of Ethos in <u>The Scarlet Letter</u> :	39
1A.5	Hawthorne's Frontier Myth as a Rhetoric of Ethos in <u>The Blithedale Romance</u> :	42

(Part B)

**Another Argument of Ethos:
The Myth of the Native American and the
Rhetoric of the Primitive Savior**

Section	Title	Page
1B.1	Introduction--How does an author's references to myths of America's indigenous and non-white peoples influence a reader's perception of a primitive character's personal qualities and ethics?	46
1B.2	Cooper's Myth of the Native-American as an Argument of Ethos in <u>The Deerslayer</u> :	49

Chapter 2**(Part A)**

**An Argument of Pathos:
The Novelists use of the Shocking Primitive**

Section	Title	Page
2A.1	Introduction--Authors Impassion Reader Emotion by Introducing Their Primitive-as-Savior Characters in a Shocking Way	51
2A.2	Cooper's Hurry Harry and Hetty Hutter as Shocking Primitives:	52
2A.3	Melville's Queequeg as a Shocking Primitive:	59
2A.4	Hawthorne's Pearl as a Shocking Primitive:	63
2A.5	Hawthorne's Priscilla as a Shocking Primitive:	66

(Part B)

**Another Argument of Pathos:
Narrator Empathy—the Art of Befriending Readers**

Section	Title	Page
2B.1	Introduction--The art of narrative empathy--Why Cooper, Melville, and Hawthorne befriend their readers at the expense of their primitive-as-savior characters:	68
2B.2	Melville's use of Narrative Empathy for Pathos in <u>Moby Dick</u> :	68

Chapter 3

(Part A)

**An Argument of Logos: Novels of the Primitive-as-Savior
Tradition are Novels of Initiation**

Section	Title	Page
3A.1	Introduction--How do primitive characters gain the respect of readers by guiding heroic characters through the challenges of the American frontier?	76
3A.2	Initiation in <u>The Deerslayer</u> :	76
3A.3	Initiation in <u>Moby Dick</u> :	82
3A.4	The hero's/heroine's initiation in <u>The Scarlet Letter</u> and <u>The Blithedale Romance</u> :	87

(Part B)**Another Argument of Logos:
The Primitive Savior Teaches Life Lessons**

Section	Title	Page
3B.1	Introduction-- Introduction: Primitive characters demonstrate their worth by teaching valuable life lessons to a hero and the hero's community.	100
3B.2	Life Lessons in <u>The Scarlet Letter</u> :	100
3B.3	Life Lessons taught by Priscilla in <u>The Blithedale Romance</u> :	103

Chapter 4**The Reflective Argument--A Holistic Approach:
How the Rhetoric of the Primitive-as-Savior
Tradition Enables Moral Fiction**

Section	Title	Page
4.1	Introduction: How does the Rhetoric of the Primitive-as-Savior Enable Moral Fiction?	106
4.2	The Novels are Inclusive in Nature:	112
4.3	The Novels Show the Fragility of Life:	113
4.4	Life has a Purpose:	114
4.5	The Novels Value Human Connectedness:	115
4.6	The Novels Value Selflessness:	116
4.7	In the Novels Suffering exists for a Reason:	117
4.8	Chapter Conclusion:	118

Conclusion: Discussion and Implications

Section	Title	Page
5.1	Review of Purpose and Supporting Studies:	120
5.2	Review of Methods and Procedures:	120
5.3	Results and Implications for Future Research:	121

Appendixes

Appendix 1:

**Additional Arguments of Ethos Related to the
Myth of the Native American**

Section	Title	Page
AP_1.1	Melville's Myth of the Native-American as an Argument of Ethos in <u>Moby Dick</u> :	123
AP_1.2	Hawthorne's Characterization of Native Americans as an Argument of Ethos in <u>The Scarlet Letter</u> :	125
AP_1.3	Hawthorne's Myth of the Native-American as an Argument of Ethos in <u>The Blithedale Romance</u> :	131

Appendix 2:

Additional Arguments of Pathos Related to Narrative Empathy

Section	Title	Page
AP_2.1	Cooper's use of Narrative Empathy for Pathos in <u>The Deerslayer</u> :	137
AP_2.2	Hawthorne's Narrative Empathy for Pathos in <u>The Scarlet Letter</u> :	141

AP_2.3	Hawthorne's Narrative Empathy for Pathos in <u>The Blithedale Romance</u> :	142
--------	---	-----

Appendix 3

Additional Arguments of Ethos Related to Life Lessons Taught by the Primitive

Section	Title	Page
AP_3.1	Life Lessons in <u>The Deerslayer</u> :	145
AP_3.2	Life Lessons Queequeg teaches in <u>Moby Dick</u> :	149

Works Cited

Section	Title	Page
	Works Cited	152