


**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**  
**Prof. Neelima Talwar**  
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**Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay**

**Lecture - 19**  
**Critical Reading of Important Writers: Margaret Atwood**

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## Lecture Outline

**Part 1:** Reading as a writer. Stages of the writing process.

**Part 2:** Margaret Atwood: i) autobiographical postcolonial perspective; ii) on the “modern writer’s equivocal sense”; iii) the writer’s double: the double within

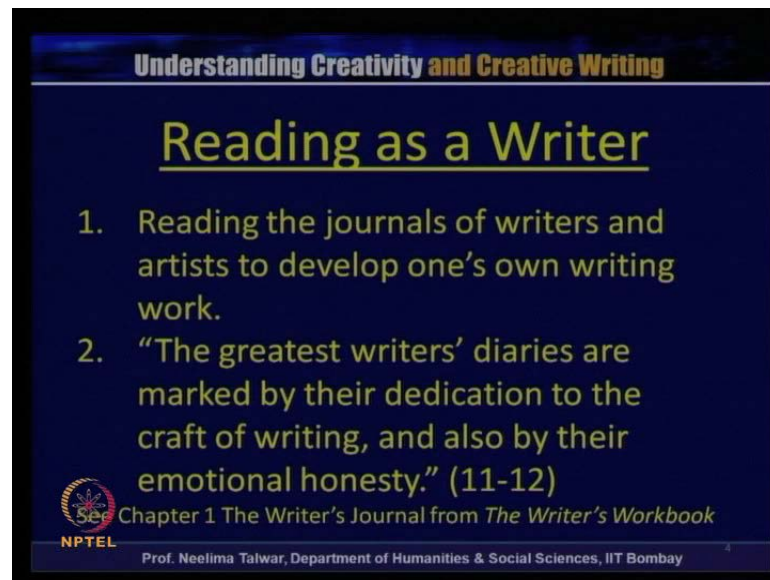
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This lecture is titled critical reading of important writers this lecture is divided into 2 parts, reading as a writer and stages of the writing process. We keep a sharp eye on the processes and therefore, we would like to draw your attention to the stages of the writing process and of the implication of that term are.

In the second part we look at Margaret Atwood the great Canadian writer her autobiographical postcolonial perspective her point of view about the modern writer’s equivocal sense and also thereby the writers double, the double within that is a very, very different position from the position of Albert Camus.


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## Reading as a Writer

1. Reading the journals of writers and artists to develop one's own writing work.
2. "The greatest writers' diaries are marked by their dedication to the craft of writing, and also by their emotional honesty." (11-12)


 Chapter 1 The Writer's Journal from *The Writer's Workbook*

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And therefore, let us also go over some of the ground that we covered last time when we indicated that the reading of the journals of writers and artist is very useful in helping you develop your own writing work and in addition to Albert Camus example which is not covered in by the writers work book. You can look at other examples that they have chosen, but I quite like what they have to say about the writers journals because they this statement captures the unique value of this genre.

According to the writers journal writer the greatest writer's diaries are marked by their dedication to craft of writing and also by their emotional honesty. So, that is a very important outlook and there are many, many examples that you can explore and see which one suits you most.

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## The Writer's Journal

- Camus's insistence that *Carnets* are literary notebooks. An attempt to work out a separation between autobiographical writing and fictional crystallization of experience, observations, themes.
- Notations show the constant engagement "of self with self". Camus says in *Carnets* :  
"I do not know what I could wish for rather than this continued presence of self with self." (I 4-5)

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Camus off course had pointed out in the carnets that these were literary note books and he made an attempt to work out a separation between autobiographical writing and fictional crystallization of experience observations themes, but of course you know all what can say is that these are attempts because it is a very difficult thing to separate out these kinds of ideas. But you see these sign ports that is the term we had used last time and the other point that perhaps will become very important as we go along is related to the notations in carnets regarding the constant engagement of self with self.

Camus says in carnets I do not know what I could wish for rather than this continued presence of self with self. As I said this is a very important outlook and sure enough we really we will have to problematize it because Atwood's points of view is entirely different and therefore, when we investigate these writers as we have indicated earlier these are prescribed text. But they are not prescriptive in any way because I think creativity really demands that you explore ideas with the sense of provisionality and a sense of independence at the same time you have to learn to examine ideas of a particular writer from his or her own point of view. Inter link reading was another concept that we introduced you to this is not really in some ways very unusual concept but the reason we devise this term.

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## Reading Stages

Interlinked reading: Writer's journal along with the writer's literary work.

- Discovering points of contact between the two.
- Getting a glimpse into first person narrative and fictional distancing.
- Interpreting the view of the world presented or implied in the work.

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Inter link reading is related to writers journals along with the writers literary work discovering points of contact between the two, and this in particular helps you get a glimpse into first person narrative and fictional distancing you can see that whole process unfold and it also helps you position your own writing. I make by remind you of module one where Salman Rushdie had talked about midnight's children and how he was really he fell like he did not really have a sort of feel for a form that would suit him till he actually discover the first person point of view and also related issues.

Camus too has talked about these issues, but I think what will be very useful for you write now is to understand it textually. So, you can read the out Sider and you can see how you know Camus has tried to deal with it. So, you get a glimpse into first person narrative and also fictional distancing and you learn to interpret the view of the world presented or implied in the work. There is a useful statement that Paul Dowson has made with reference to composition which is a result of this reading process and I like to places that observation before you.

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## Focus of Reading

Recreate the process of composition as if you were the writer. "...the student writer's focus should be on the choices authors considered when composing. Writing students need to become active readers - to study the point of view, the tone, the plotting and other techniques that the authors employ." (94)


See Paul Dawson's *Creative Writing and the New Humanities*

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He says recreate the process of composition as if you were the writer, the student writer's focus should be on the choices authors considered when composing. Writing students need to become active readers to study the point of view the tone the plotting and the other techniques that the authors employ, what caught my attention was this phrase as if that he has used a phrase that later on in the third module you will discover again because (( )) the great teacher of acting he pose that as a basic device of getting in to the world view of the character. The actor and character sort of dynamics which requires transformation and sense of the other.

And in that sense I think this is a very interesting outlook also the element of magic you can add here. So, you can magically become a particular writer and try and examine the word from the point of view of this writer. But in any case whatever you read whichever way you want to apply it for composition this exercise of interlink reading will certainly help you understand form and content much better.

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**Composition Based on Preliminary Exposure**

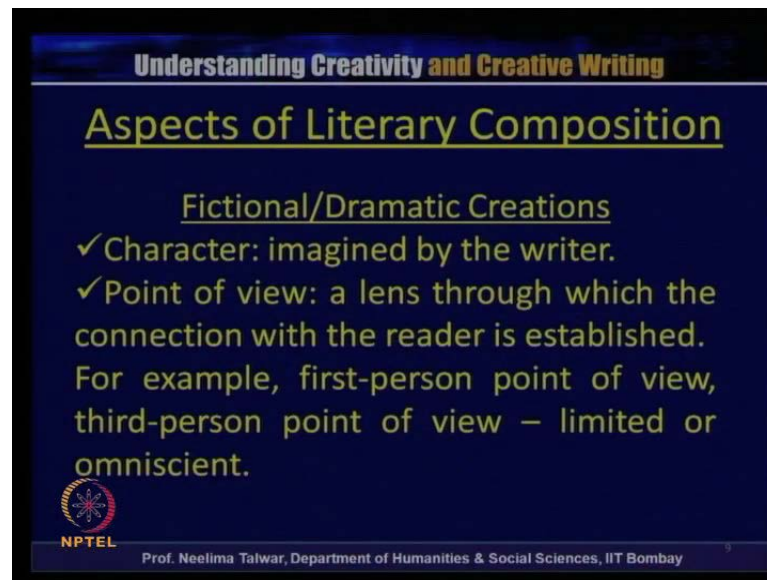
- ✓The Creativity and Creative Writing course is an elective which assumes preliminary exposure to introductory Literature course/s which provide the experience of reading and interpretation of significant milestones of literature.
- ✓For Creative Composition: We encourage students to try out their own independent writing project. At the same time, analysis of the impulse to write should be undertaken to generate momentum for writing.

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In the creativity and creative writing course there was certain assumption regarding this process that we made are video course also assumes us sort of some kind of preliminary exposure to introductory lecture courses which provide the experience of reading and interpretation of significant milestones of literature. So, we take it that you are already used to certain amount of sustained close reading, but at the same time now we would like you to modify your you know approach to reading and read for your own composition. So, this sort it puts different demands on you for creative composition we encourage our students to try out their own independent writing project.

At the same time analysis of the impulse to write should be undertaken to generate momentum for writing it should not be just a sort of purely spontaneous thing I think analysis really helps you sustain that word better understand your own consciousness better. So, that is also a process of search that we have you know emphasized earlier and we would like to remind you that this is where we are located. So, this interlinked dreading helps you understand certain aspects of literary composition.

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## Aspects of Literary Composition

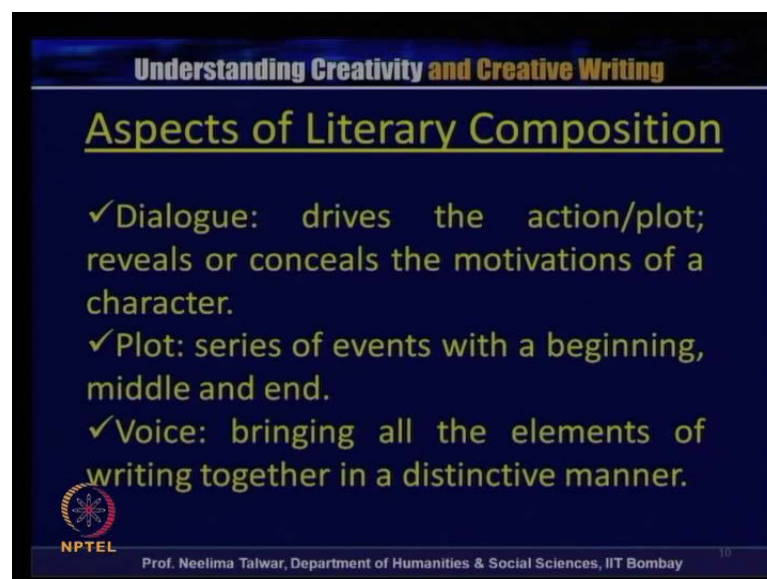
### Fictional/Dramatic Creations

- ✓ Character: imagined by the writer.
- ✓ Point of view: a lens through which the connection with the reader is established. For example, first-person point of view, third-person point of view – limited or omniscient.

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For example, in fictional or dramatic creations you have character who is imagined by the writer for example, Albert Camus imagined Meursault that is he created character Meursault and the feelings and thoughts of this character are presented in first person a point of view through the first person narrative technique, point of view is a lens through which the connection with the reader is established. So, you have first person point of view third person point of view limited or omniscient.

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## Aspects of Literary Composition

- ✓ Dialogue: drives the action/plot; reveals or conceals the motivations of a character.
- ✓ Plot: series of events with a beginning, middle and end.
- ✓ Voice: bringing all the elements of writing together in a distinctive manner.

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You have dialogue which drives the action it reveals or conceals the motivations of a character for example, the character of Meursault does not reveal his inner agony or his inner sense of void through explicit statements you have to infer it. In fact, many of the dialogues hide or complicate this sense inner sense of Meursault. So, dialogue does not necessarily add to understanding of the character sometimes it is actually away of concealing and complicating the inner world of the character. Plot consist of series of events with a beginning middle and end. Voice brings all the elements of writing together in a distinctive manner. So, I would say that we have really given primacy to the process of writing.

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**Primacy Given to the Process of Writing**

- ✓ This preliminary understanding is necessary for further development of writing.
- ✓ Although it is fruitful to read writers' notebooks and essays on writing with the individual writer's creative work but, in a departure from traditional literary approach, we have given primacy to writing-oriented texts by significant writers.

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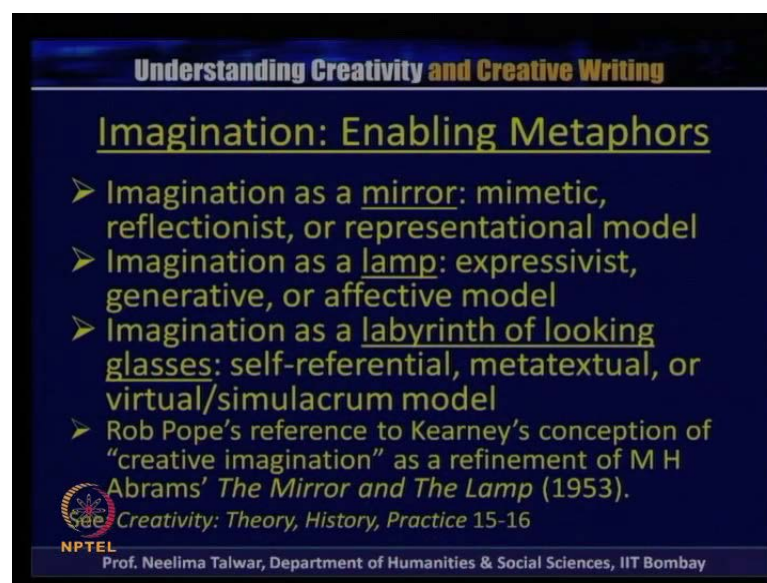
And this preliminary understanding is absolutely necessary for further development of writing although it is fruitful to read writers notebooks and essays on writing with the individual writer's creative work, but in a departure from traditional literary approach we have given primacy to writing oriented text by significant writers.

The qualities of the chosen writers imagination can be critiqued we feel only after reading some of their significant work it is beneficial also to deal with philosophical or theoretical implications of their ideas you can try and locate the qualities of the specific writers imagination within the metaphors referred to in are first module lecture 10. Now, let me explain that little bit to you. When we talk about the imagination of the writer we certainly are using the word imagination in number of different ways, but at this point in

time I would like you to look at some of the enabling metaphors that were referred to earlier.

We have suggested at that time that you could start thinking about it about those concepts and ideas today we will explain those ideas in some detail although will at the same time leave them open ended. So, that you can place Camus and Atwood in your own way and you can also continue to use those metaphors in order to generate both creative and critical analyses.


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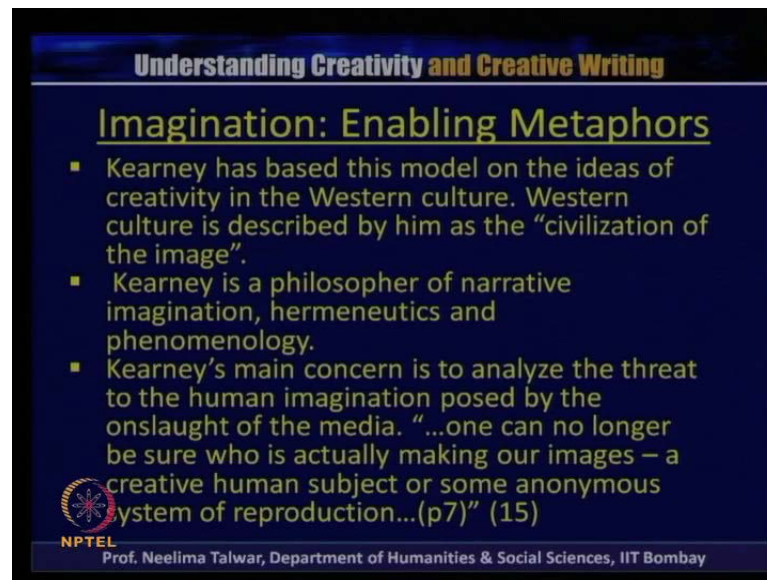
**Imagination: Enabling Metaphors**

- Imagination as a mirror: mimetic, reflectionist, or representational model
- Imagination as a lamp: expressivist, generative, or affective model
- Imagination as a labyrinth of looking glasses: self-referential, metatextual, or virtual/simulacrum model
- Rob Pope's reference to Kearney's conception of "creative imagination" as a refinement of M H Abrams' *The Mirror and The Lamp* (1953).

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So, the idea that we had mention was related to imagination, was related to imagination as a mirror this is from Rob Pope's book were interned he has referred to Kearney's conception of creative imagination. As a refinement of M H Abrams the mirror and the lamp. So, these 3 metaphors are imagination as a mirror which he describes as mimetic reflectionist or representational model. Imagination as a lamp which is an expressivist, generative or affective model and imagination as a labyrinth of looking glasses and this metaphor is self-referential, metatextual or virtual simulacrum model. Now, some of the terms may confuse you, but we will explain them you know little by little so we this is right now like a building block for your discussion as for your consideration.

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**Imagination: Enabling Metaphors**

- Kearney has based this model on the ideas of creativity in the Western culture. Western culture is described by him as the “civilization of the image”.
- Kearney is a philosopher of narrative imagination, hermeneutics and phenomenology.
- Kearney’s main concern is to analyze the threat to the human imagination posed by the onslaught of the media. “...one can no longer be sure who is actually making our images – a creative human subject or some anonymous system of reproduction...(p7)” (15)

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This as we indicated derives from Kearney’s model and he in turn has based this model on the ideas of creativity. So, he is concerned with creativity in the western culture, according to him western culture is civilization of the image Kearney himself is a philosopher of narrative imagination hermeneutics and phenomenology and his main concern in this book I think it is called the wake of imagination. It seems to be to analyze the threat to the human imagination posed by the onslaught of the media.

Has he says one can no longer be sure who is actually making our images a creative human subject or some anonymous system of reproduction. So, there is a lot of stress a lot of tension around traditional modes of critiquing the human imagination because the modes of making images itself has undergone such radical transformation. So, this is just to give you a sense of where these ideas come, come from I think Kearney has sort of argued that we need to revisit the older metaphors and what they offer to us by way of finding our own bearings in contemporary very complex set up. So, the 3 metaphors are placed historically to show their differences and contemporary possibilities. Each is built around this enabling metaphor and it may be used to model a particular kind of imagination as well as a specific historical stage.

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Imagination: Enabling Metaphors

- Therefore the three metaphors are placed historically to show their differences and contemporary possibilities.
- “Each is built round an enabling metaphor and may be used to model a particular *kind* of imagination as well as a specific historical *stage*.” (15-16)
- The three historical stages are:
  - I. Classical and early modern: a mirror
  - II. Romantic and post romantic: a lamp
  - III. Modern and postmodern: a labyrinth of looking glasses

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The 3 historical stages one can say are classical and actually I am coating from Rob Pope classical and early modern. So, for as the metaphor of the mirror is concerned it evokes this period on this the practices the dominant practices of this period romantic and the post romantic linked to the image of a lamp and modern and post modern is you know linked to a labyrinth of looking glasses. So, with that open ended sort of possibility we would now shift our attention to Margaret Atwood whether notion of the self is problematized in entirely different ways, but let see who Margaret Atwood is and how she has articulated these issues in the book we have chosen.

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Classroom Reading of Selected Chapters

*Negotiating with the Dead*  
*A Writer on Writing*  
by Margaret Atwood

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This is based on the classroom reading of selected chapters of her book negotiating with the dead a writer on writing. Margaret Atwood is a marvelous presence highly engaged writer.

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## Margaret Atwood

☐ Canadian poet, novelist, literary critic, essayist and environmental activist.

Photo credit: George Whiteside  
<http://www.rit.edu/news/release.php?id=47378>

Atwood's Website  
<http://www.margaretatwood.ca/>



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She is a Canadian poet novelist, literary critic, essayist and environmental activist. We would like you to go to her website where she has very generous comments and resources that she is offered for young writers. She also has her take on lots of issues that are placed there very methodically.

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## Margaret Atwood

☐ Currently, "immersed in the final draft of *Other Worlds: SF and the Human Imagination*." Deeply engaged with the imperialist political system that define the economics and politics of Globalization.

☐ The dark shadows of these systems are revealed through fiction and non-fiction. Highly evocative feminine/humanistic consciousness.

To quote from her novel *Lady Oracle*, she creates "Gothic gone wrong" (232).



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In addition to that she has we have picked up one or two remarks from this website where she says that currently she is immersed in the final draft of other worlds, science fiction and the human imagination. Now, to me personally this is a matter of great interest because I deal in my research work with cultural narratives and constructs around the notion of science you know constant shifts and balances and changes that these cultural narratives display. And I was I remember quite amazed that she rejected the terms science fiction very vociferously earlier by labeling her fiction as speculated fiction.


So, I would be really really very interested in looking at her observations. Margaret Atwood has been deeply engaged with the imperialist political system if we may describe it that way that defined the economics and politics of globalization. And what she seems to have done is to look at the dark shadows of these systems both through her fiction and through her nonfiction you can read more of her to discover this in greater depth. Her writing is highly evocative and evocative in the sense one associates that term with feminine, humanistic, consciousness. That is I think there is very unique vantage point from which she looks at the systems that have been constructed over centuries. To quote from her novel Lady Oracle she creates gothic gone wrong very provocative indeed.

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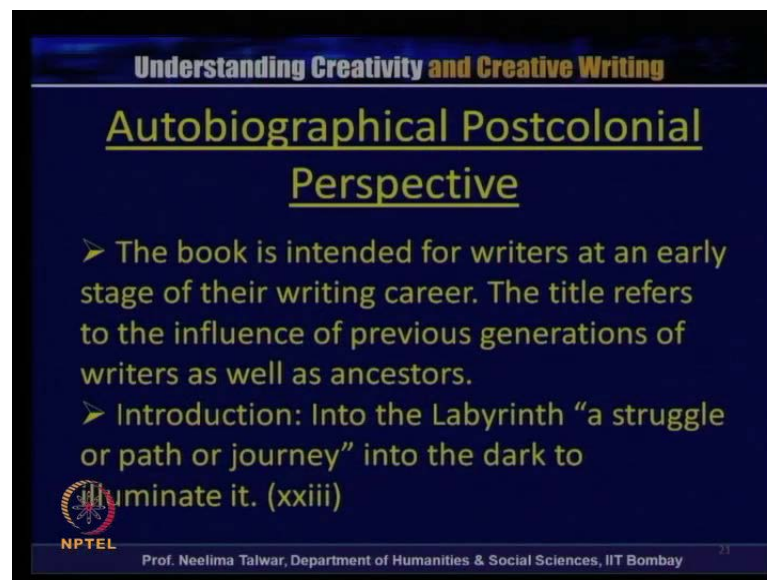
*Negotiating with the Dead*  
*A Writer on Writing*

- A series of six Empson lectures at the University of Cambridge for the year 2000
- Delivered to an audience of students, scholars and the general public
- Deals with the process of writing and its products

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These are the book the particular book that we have chosen these are a series of 6 Empson lectures that she gave at the University of Cambridge in year 2000 and it was delivered to an audience of students, scholars and the general public. As we said earlier also pointed out to earlier this is with the process of writing and its products.

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**Autobiographical Postcolonial Perspective**


- The book is intended for writers at an early stage of their writing career. The title refers to the influence of previous generations of writers as well as ancestors.
- Introduction: Into the Labyrinth “a struggle or path or journey” into the dark to illuminate it. (xxiii)

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The book is intended for writers that an early stage of they are writing career that is what she has mentioned time and again although I think it has relevance for other writers at a mature level of their writing carrier also its very interesting observation of the writers processes. The title refers to the influence of previous generations of writers the dead writers, but also the influence that they are writing exists and also ones relationship with one's ancestors I think she refers to that in a very large sense of that term.

The introduction is titled in to the labyrinth you remember in terms of the enabling metaphors this was the addition that Kearney made in the labyrinth, but in any case there are no looking glasses that she mentions here, but she talks about writing as a struggle or path or journey into the dark to illuminate it. I would recommend that you look at the you tube short piece on Atwood's creative process to get a feel for this idea, the idea itself otherwise will seem very daunting if you read the full introduction, but certainly in terms of this basic outlook this is like taking a leap in that into the dark areas of human consciousness and trying to in order to retrieve light at the end of it.

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## Autobiographical Postcolonial Perspective

- The first chapter is autobiographical and it deals with the writer's struggles for her voice with a mixture of postcolonial & postmodern concerns.
- Postcolonial – related to colonization and its consequences on the thought processes of the colonized.
- Postmodern – all the previous certainties and definitions are questioned. Form of writing is viewed ironically.


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The first chapter of this book is autobiographical and it deals with the writers struggles for her voice with a mixture of postcolonial and post modern concerns. Now, we have placed these 2 terms here and we have used this terminology earlier too I wanted to ensure that we are on the same page and therefore, I have tried to give a simple definition of the 2 terms postcolonial is related to colonization and its shall we say insidious consequences on the thought processes of the colonized.

Postmodern refers to all the previous certainties and definitions that you know writing and thought and knowledge systems after the modern period have questioned. This term is sometimes used in a sort of chronological sense in order to show a sharp division between modern and what happened after the modernism reached its peak its seen also with reference to the two world war and the post world war 2 phenomenon that unfolded.

I think the best a introductory guide is provided by the Cambridge book of post modernism in which not only literature, drama, fiction, poetry, but also all the other branches of knowledge are put together in order to show the postmodern direction in the work in engineering science, architecture, etcetera. So, it is a very sort of broad term, but certainly what it denotes is a questioning of previously a widely held definitions in different fields of knowledge and human endeavor. So, far as writing is concerned in postmodernism the form of writing itself is viewed ironically. So, nothing is taken for granted in other words.

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## Autobiographical Postcolonial Perspective


- Experimentation with different forms. The sense of marginalization of Canadian literature.
- In this process of search, Northrop Frye's statement seemed revolutionary in the postcolonial framework: '...the centre of reality is wherever one happens to be, and its circumference is whatever one's imagination can make sense of.' (23)

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Margaret Atwood herself describes her experimentation with different forms and also the acute sense of marginalization of Canadian literature that she experienced in others like her experienced. And in her process of search Frye's statement during her university days had a revolutionary impact on her where a Northrop Frye mentioned that the center of reality is wherever one happens to be and its circumference is whatever once imagination can make sense of.

In other words you know the Post colon in the postcolonial situation since Canada was also colony you know there was always the sense that nothing important happen there everything happened everything that was important and culturally valuable happen in metropolitan centers elsewhere and therefore, this was a sort of with the shock of recognition many writers in that period realized that their own lives really needed articulation in a totally different way and they need not look at models outside in an imitative mode. So, this was a very key point of growth as far as my understanding goes this is where she locates her change of consciousness and her increase confidence as a writer.

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## The Writing Life

“There is one characteristic that sets writing apart from most of the other arts – its apparent democracy by which I mean its availability to almost everyone as a medium of expression.” (25)

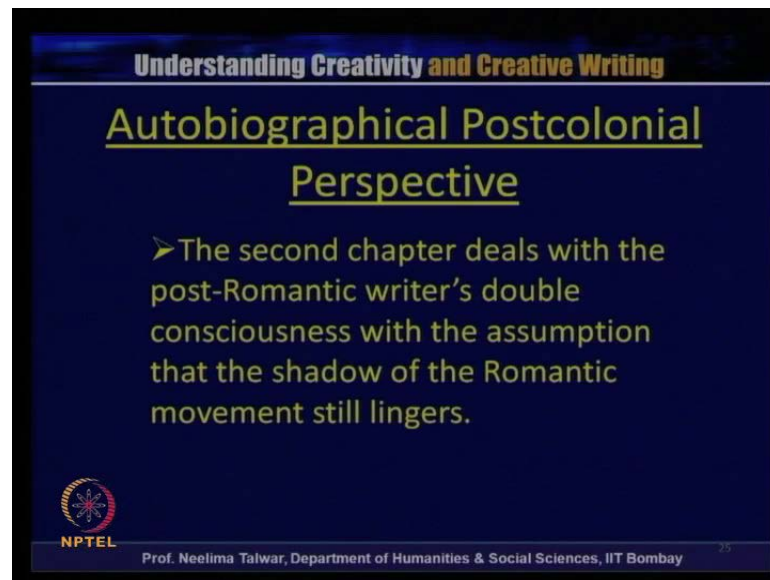
Our take: Yes and No  
What about the non-literates?  
What about their oral traditions?  
What about the “cultures of silence” which are linked to lack of access to literacy and power.

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There is according to her one characteristic that sets writing apart from most of the other arts and I thought I would place this idea before you because apart from this idea about the postcolonial consciousness and its struggle internal struggle struggles in order to find one's own authentic voice I think the other idea that she mentions is related to the democratic elements of writing and let me read this. There is one characteristic that sets writing apart from most of the other arts, it is apparent democracy by which I mean its availability to almost every one as a medium of expression.

Although this seems to be definitely a very important observation and at the same time immediately once feeling was that this does not really taken to account the non literates and their oral traditions and also cultures of silence which are actually not all that silent, but they are they are perceived a silent because they are not linked to literacy and power, but this is just a way strong response to her observation. But certainly within the parameters of literate cultures this is an important idea because writing does not demand anything, but one's own sort of sense of the self and one's ability to express one idea in any language form that one wants.


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## Autobiographical Postcolonial Perspective

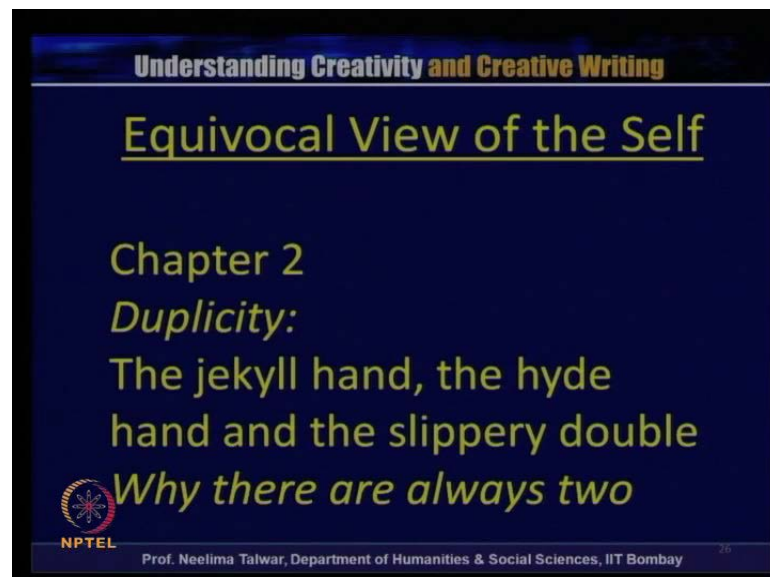
➤ The second chapter deals with the post-Romantic writer's double consciousness with the assumption that the shadow of the Romantic movement still lingers.

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The second chapter deals with the post romantic writers double consciousness and I paused here because now this is a slightly different kind of take on the writing process, and she locates this sense of the writers double consciousness to certain lingering you know sort effects of romantic movement.


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## Equivocal View of the Self

Chapter 2  
*Duplicity:*  
The jekyll hand, the hyde hand and the slippery double  
*Why there are always two*

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So, let us see how this can be understood we thought the best way would be to look at a second chapter which is titled duplicity the Jekyll hand, the Hyde hand and the slippery double why there are always two. So, remember she is taking about a writers you know

sense of doubleness and she links it to a certain amount of uncertainty about the writers own craft and art she calls it the equivocal sense view of the self its certain uncertainty about it. Now, let us see how she develops this idea.

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### Atwood's Argument

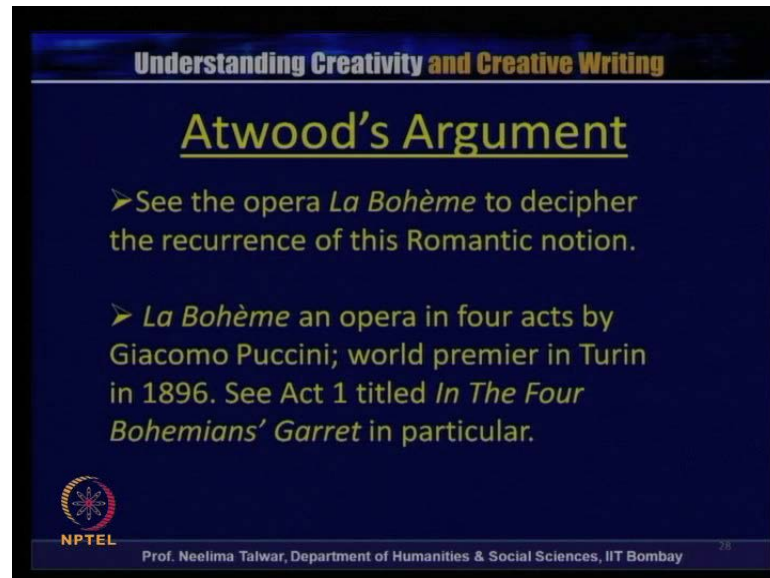
- The lineage of the Romantics.
- The Romantics fixed "doubleness in the popular consciousness as a thing to be expected, and expected above all of artists." (32)
- The secret identities and powers of artists: "Yet it is the artists who possess the secret identities, the secret powers..." (32)
- "Them in their garrets, starving and creating works of genius..." (32)

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The lineage of the romantics off course has already has been mentioned in my last slide itself. According to her the romantics fixed doubleness in the popular consciousness as a thing to be expected and expected above all of artists on the same page. She goes on to say that the secret identities and powers of artists were constantly referred to in different ways by the romantics according to this take it is the artists who possess the secret identities the secret powers.

So, they are very special people with secret identities and secret powers and therefore, they have excess to knowledge they have excess to insights that really others have lost touch with. Then in the garrets starving and creating works of genius. So, they also strive to be in touch with these secret identities and these secret powers in their garrets, starving and creating works.

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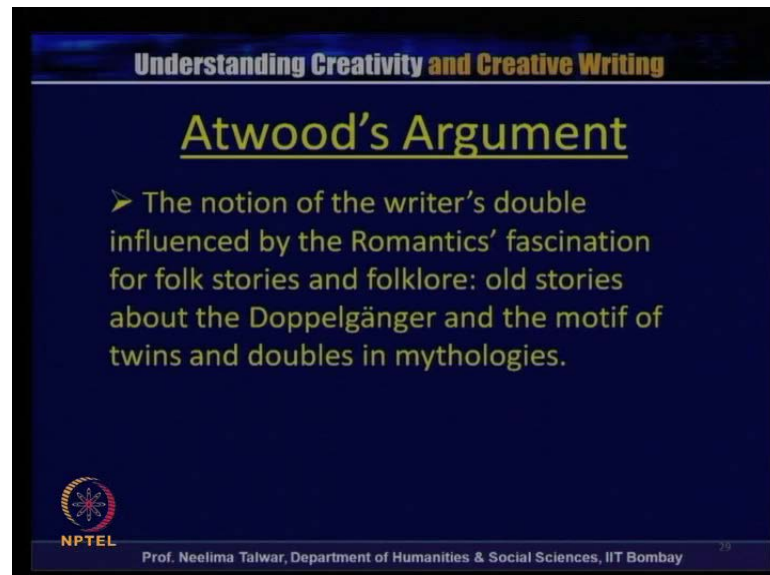
## Atwood's Argument

- See the opera *La Bohème* to decipher the recurrence of this Romantic notion.
- *La Bohème* an opera in four acts by Giacomo Puccini; world premier in Turin in 1896. See Act 1 titled *In The Four Bohemians' Garret* in particular.

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And we suggest that you have look at the opera La Boheme to decipher the recurrence of this romantic notion Puccini's La Boheme act one title the 4 Bohemians garret in particular is highly recommended. I think this you will immediately give you a sense of what this whole metaphors is all about.

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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

## Atwood's Argument

- The notion of the writer's double influenced by the Romantics' fascination for folk stories and folklore: old stories about the Doppelgänger and the motif of twins and doubles in mythologies.

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Now, the notion of the writers double is was also influenced according to Atwood by the romantics fascination for folk stories and folklore old stories about the Doppelganger, and the motif of twins and doubles in mythologies.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

## The Romantics' Ambivalence

- The rise of Romanticism in mid-eighteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- The Doppelgänger theme and the conventions of Gothic literature.

Gothic (often not capitalized): "...a form of artistic expression that focuses on what is mysterious and beyond the realm of human control." (83)


 See "Teaching the Gothic and the Scientific Context" in *Approaches to Teaching Gothic Fiction: The British and American Traditions*

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So, for us the term romanticism is concerned it covers mid eighteenth and early twentieth centuries practices and it really is used in wide variety of ways, but we will restrict ourselves to whatever Atwood has to say. In this choice of the Doppelganger theme and the conventions of gothic literature one can discern certain amount of a ambivalence on the one hand the since of the secrete power.

But also there are others elements of certain kind of ambivalence that you begin to discern and that is why we would like you to also look at term gothic here, which refers to form of artistic expression that focuses on what is mysterious and beyond the realm of human control. So, this is beginning Atwood talked about writing you know by calling it in the labyrinth, I think that sense will be captured better when you have the sense of the gothic. The narratives that Atwood has selected are those of the sinister double.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

## The Double Within

Narratives Selected by Atwood

- The sinister double, for example: Jekyll and Hyde - The tale of an earnest physician leading a double life partly as himself and partly as “a fanged madcap”.
- The noble double, for example: Brothers Grimm’s folktale *The Gold Children* in which through twists and turns of fortune the gold-child is saved by his twin.

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So, this is the notion of the double and the double within, but she also looks at number of sort of varieties number of references that we would you like to look at also. The sinister double for example, Jekyll and Hyde which of course, you know this novel refers to the tale of an earnest physician leading a double life partly as himself and partly as a fanged madcap. So, this sense of the double within is it sinister or is it a helpful. So, that is the question I think that she is trying to the articulate by also pointing out how this whole plot unfolds if you look at it thematically.

The noble double for example, is other option here which she refers to through brother Grimm’s folktale, the gold children in which through twists and turns of fortune the gold child is saved by his twin. So, that is a helpful a twin the helpful other, if your locating these stories within the notion of the double within.

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The slide is titled "Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing" at the top. Below that, the main title is "The Double Within" in a large, bold, yellow font. Underneath the title is the subtitle "Narratives Selected by Atwood" in a smaller, yellow font. The slide contains three bullet points, each preceded by a yellow arrowhead. The first bullet point is "➤ The double within: the story of Narcissus and Borges's *Borges and I*". The second bullet point is "➤ Narcissus: The myth of self-love which torments Narcissus leading to his annihilation." The third bullet point is "➤ Borges, the great Argentine writer's story *Borges and I*: The intriguing and unresolvable connection between the protean self and the writer's persona." At the bottom left of the slide is the NPTEL logo, which consists of a stylized 'N' and 'P' in a circle. At the bottom right of the slide is the text "Prof. Neelima Talwar, Department of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT Bombay" and the number "12".

Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

## The Double Within

Narratives Selected by Atwood

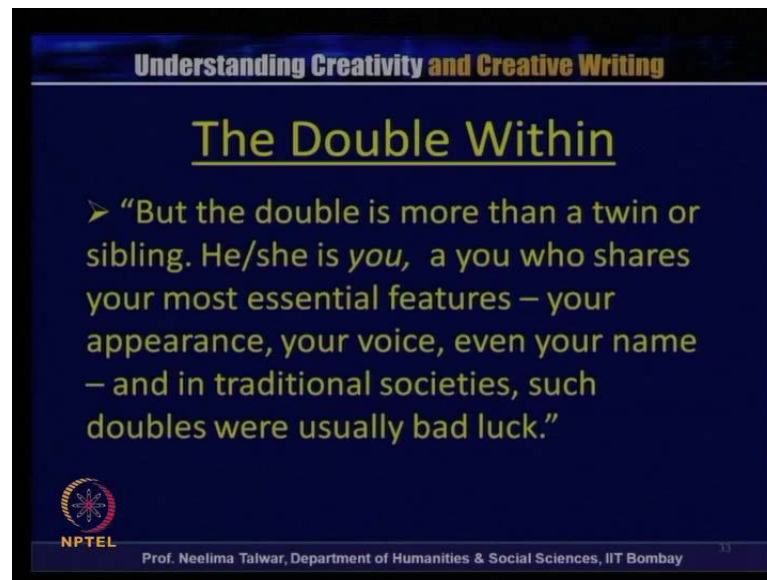
- The double within: the story of Narcissus and Borges's *Borges and I*
- Narcissus: The myth of self-love which torments Narcissus leading to his annihilation.
- Borges, the great Argentine writer's story *Borges and I*: The intriguing and unresolvable connection between the protean self and the writer's persona.

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The double within, she emphasizes through the story of Narcissus and Borges and I by the great argentine writer. The narcissus the myth is the myth of self love which torments Narcissus leading to his annihilation we will place this stories before you in the next lecture and we will also show you the response of our students to these through their creative composition. Borges refers to this intriguing and unresolvable connection between the protean self and the writer's persona.

So, there is basically the sense of the split that Margaret Atwood describes to the romantics there impact and also the Doppelganger theme that she explores almost as a sort of romantic writer, but off course she is trying to understand where this contemporary implication of the double within comes from.

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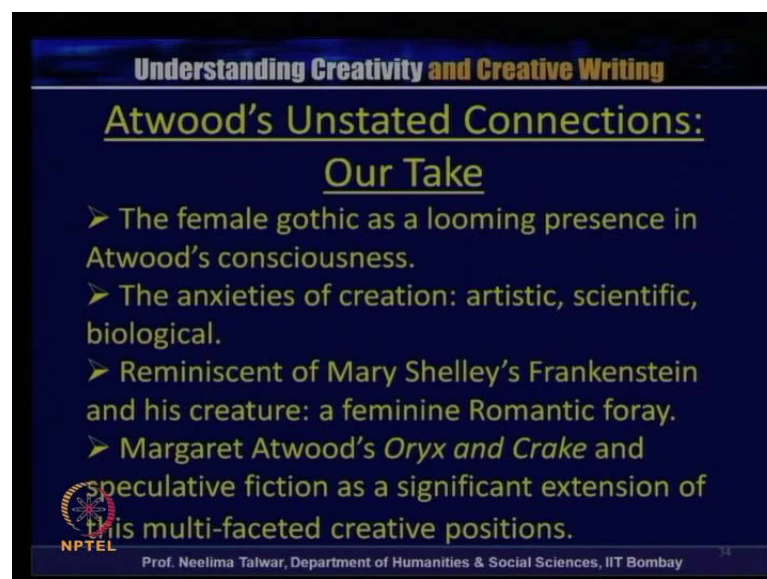
## The Double Within

- “But the double is more than a twin or sibling. He/she is *you*, a you who shares your most essential features – your appearance, your voice, even your name – and in traditional societies, such doubles were usually bad luck.”

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According to her the double within is more than a twin or sibling he or she is you, a you shares your most essential features your appearance, your voice, even your name and in traditional societies such double were usually bad luck.

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Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing

## Atwood's Unstated Connections: Our Take

- The female gothic as a looming presence in Atwood's consciousness.
- The anxieties of creation: artistic, scientific, biological.
- Reminiscent of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and his creature: a feminine Romantic foray.
- Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and speculative fiction as a significant extension of this multi-faceted creative positions.

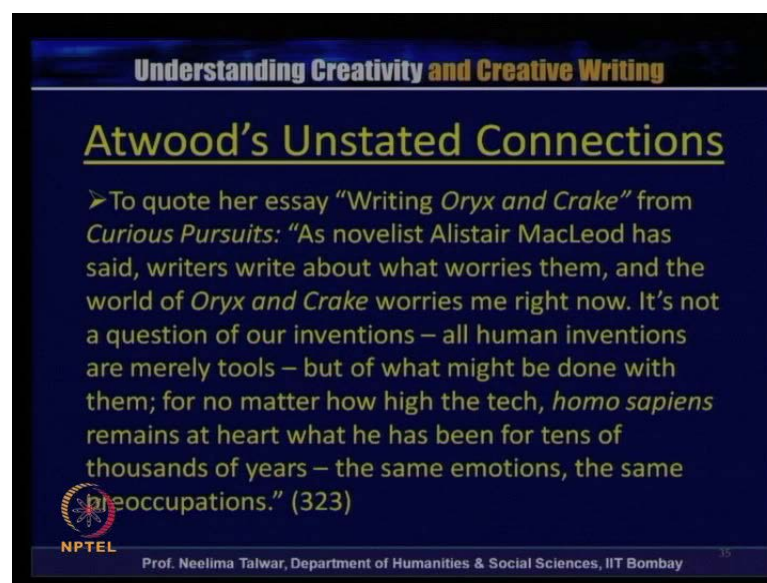
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Now, our take is that there are certain unstated connections that one can one decencies in this articulation of Atwood's where the female gothic seems to be a looming presence in her consciousness. Although she has not really developed that idea in the this essay at all and this is I think result of her interlining readings there they she also seems to a sort of

locate the ambivalence in anxieties of creation whether it is artistic, scientific or biological.

And this take of hers of the split within is reminiscent of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and his creature which again was a feminine romantic foray that we will discuss later on textually if possible. And in terms of interlinked reading we would like to refer to *Oryx and Crake* which is as we you know pointed out earlier is speculative fiction and it is a significant extension of this multifaceted multifaceted creative position.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

### Atwood's Unstated Connections

➤ To quote her essay "Writing *Oryx and Crake*" from *Curious Pursuits*: "As novelist Alistair MacLeod has said, writers write about what worries them, and the world of *Oryx and Crake* worries me right now. It's not a question of our inventions – all human inventions are merely tools – but of what might be done with them; for no matter how high the tech, *homo sapiens* remains at heart what he has been for tens of thousands of years – the same emotions, the same preoccupations." (323)

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To quote her essay you know in terms of creative anxieties writing *Oryx and Crake* she says that the as novelist Alistair Macleod has said writers write about what worries them and the world of *Oryx Crake* worries me right. Now, it is not a question of our inventions all human invention are merely tools, but of what might be done with them for no matter how high the tech homo sapience remain at heart what he has been for 10's of 1000's of years the same emotions the same preoccupations.

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**Understanding Creativity and Creative Writing**

### Atwood's Unstated Connections

- *Oryx and Crake* projects a dystopic future to warn readers about the dangers contemporary hi-tech has created for the human race as well as the environment.
- In the very first chapter, *Snowman* describes his stages of extinction in phrases such as "...there are a lot of blank spaces in his stub of a brain, where memory used to be...".

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*Oryx and Crake* projects a dystopic future to warn readers about the dangers contemporary hi-tech has created for the human race as well as the environment. In the very first chapter *snowman* describes his stages of extinction in phrases such as there are a lot of blank spaces in his stub of a brain where memory used to be and so on and so forth. So, in other words I think Margaret Atwood's notion of the double is a problematic one although in this particular essay she relates it to the inner quest of the writer and in that sense, she also locates that in terms of a kind of transformation that occurs in the process of writing, but we personally feel this a very complex idea.

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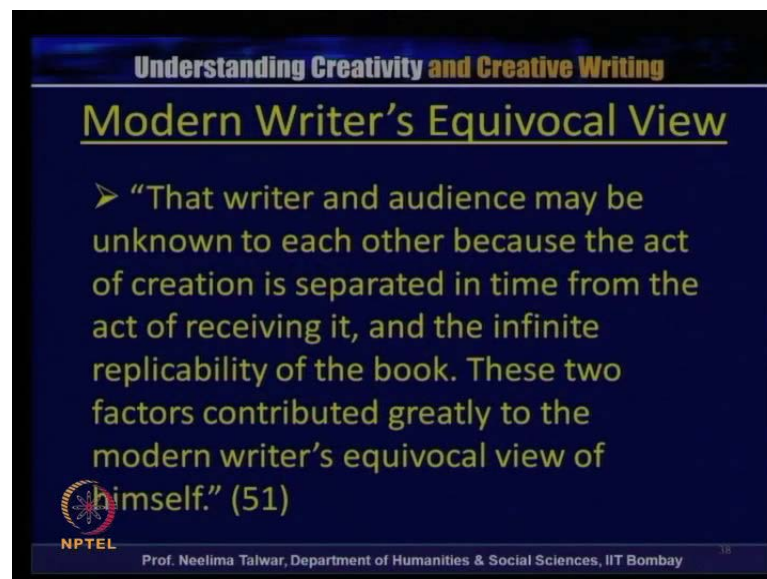
### Print Culture & the Writer's Other Self

- Features of writing as a form that have contributed to this syndrome. "- the syndrome of the writer's anxiety about his other self, as well as his suspicion that he has one."
- This is linked to the wider dissemination of printed work wherein the work gains different meanings in different contexts.

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However, if we were to stick to this essay she says that another reason why this equivocal sense of the writer is very, very pronounced element of contemporary writers consciousness that is perhaps related to features of writing as a form that have contributed to this syndrome, the syndrome of the writers anxiety about this other self, as well as the suspicion that he has one. She feels that this is linked to the wider dissemination of printed work wherein the work gains different meanings in different contexts to quote her.

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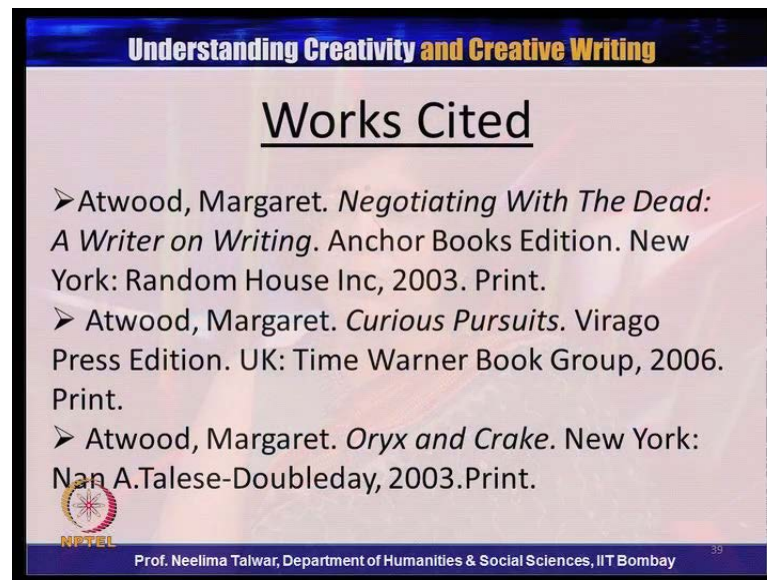
**Modern Writer's Equivocal View**

➤ "That writer and audience may be unknown to each other because the act of creation is separated in time from the act of receiving it, and the infinite replicability of the book. These two factors contributed greatly to the modern writer's equivocal view of himself." (51)

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That writer and audience may be unknown to each other because the act of creation is separated in time from the act of receiving it and the infinite replicability of the book. These two factors contributed greatly to the modern writer's equivocal view of himself. Seems very gender way of the putting the ideas, but I think we will leave it at that we have as usual the works cited list provided.

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And we definitely encourage you to look at it teaching the gothic and the scientific context in particular although it is a short essay we think it provides very interesting connections for our own generative search and we will have that for further discussion. Enjoy the ideas and see whether Atwood helps you out understand your writing process better or it is Albert Camus or is some other writer or in the process of you know being provoked by these possibilities you have found your own voice. That will be the ideal situation we will move on to the work that our students did you know with the reference to Atwood in the next lecture.

Thank you.