

What do we know about Dupin?

What are his methods?

What are *Poe's* methods?

For convincing us about Dupin

Poe, in a letter

“...people think [these stories] more ingenious than they are – on account of their method and *air* of method. In the ‘Murders in the Rue Morgue,’ for instance, where is the ingenuity in unraveling a web which you yourself (the author) have woven for the express purpose of unraveling?”

Let's indulge in some anachronism

Features of these stories that make
them a compelling *type* or *figure* for
later problems and ideas

“Mind reading”

Human beings' special trick:
attributing mental states

Two examples

- Reading the narrator's mind in "Rue Morgue"
- Unveiling the solution in "Purloined Letter"

Understanding other people as intentional beings like ourselves

With mental states *like* ours, but potentially different

Dupin's mind-reading

Pages 8-10

Gaze monitoring

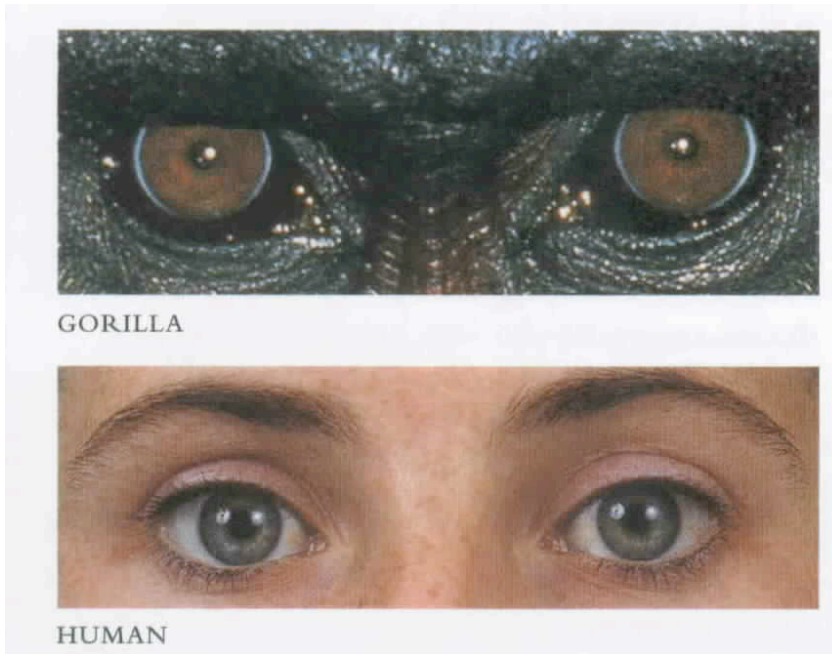
We are highly attuned to what other people are looking at

Gaze monitoring

And use that information explicitly to make important inferences about what they're thinking about and attending to

Gaze gaze gaze

- Specialized resources for discriminating gaze direction
- Sensitivity to gaze cues in development



Disambiguating



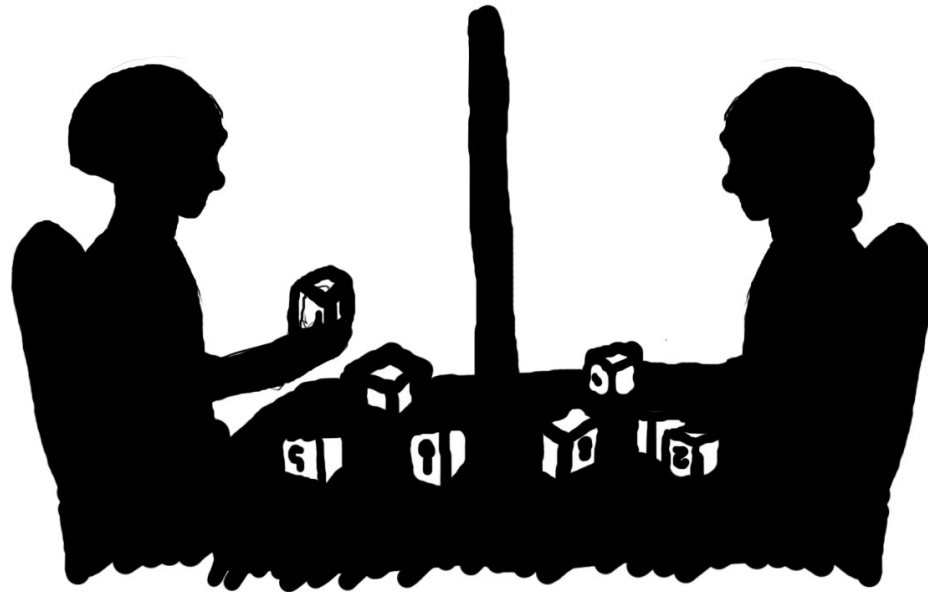
Exploiting this very ability
for narrative effect



Illustrative counter-example

Krauss and Glucksberg 1977

3-4 year olds



Speaker: It's a bird.

Listener: Is this it?

Speaker: No.

Krauss and Glucksberg 1977

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Krauss and Glucksberg 1977

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Krauss and Glucksberg 1977

Compare to Dupin's performance

Compare to Dupin's performance

- Verisimilitude?
- Unifying source of his superior reasoning abilities?
- Characterization as “analysis” vs. “ingenuity”? (“The ingenious man is often remarkably incapable of analysis”)
- Is Dupin *empathetic*?

Freudian matters

Free association

In psychoanalysis, c. 1892-1898
(“Rue Morgue” published 1841)

The relationship between analyst and analysand

Freudian readings *of* Poe

Bringing us back to the Purloined
Letter

Dupin understands that D– knew
how the police would think

And his own practical technique
for doing similarly

What is the connection between
Dupin's ingenuity and his solutions?

And what about Poe's ingenuity?

Your assignment

- 500 words: Find a passage or moment in which the nature of Dupin's mind/capacity for insight is presented in some surprising or otherwise interesting way. Provide a close analytic reading of that moment, demonstrating, with as much specificity as possible, why and how it is surprising, intriguing, interesting.