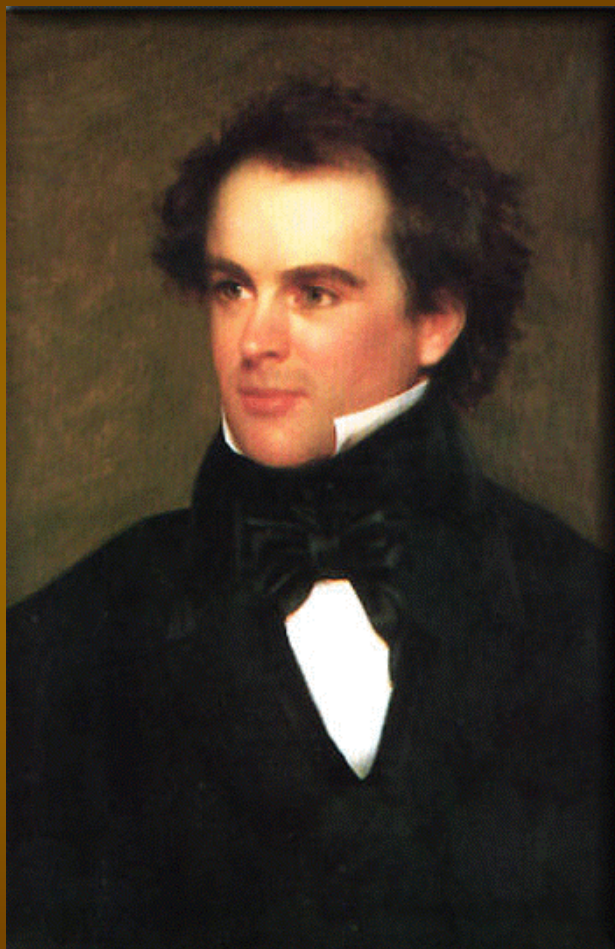


Nathaniel Hawthorne

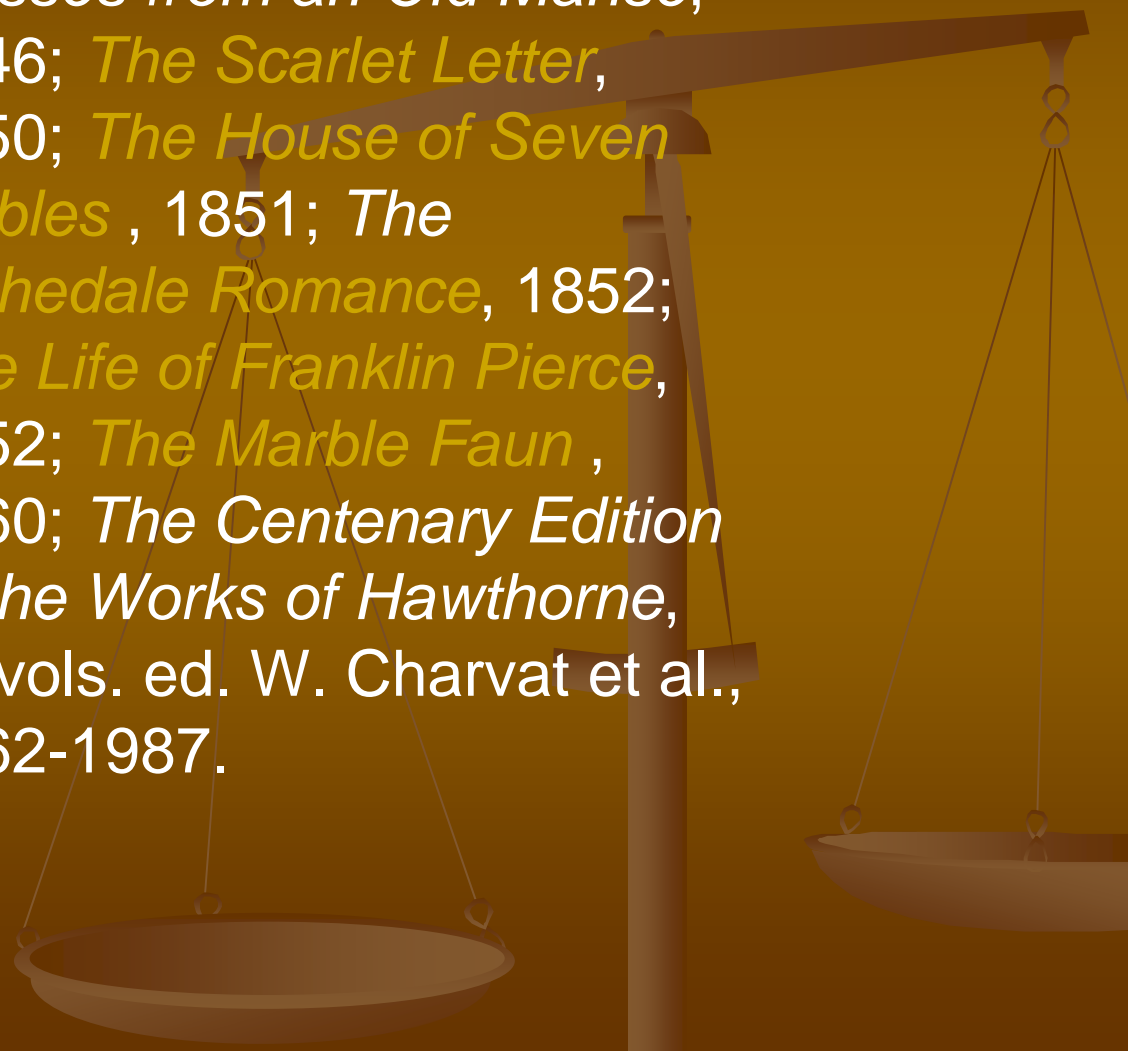


1804-1864

Primary Works

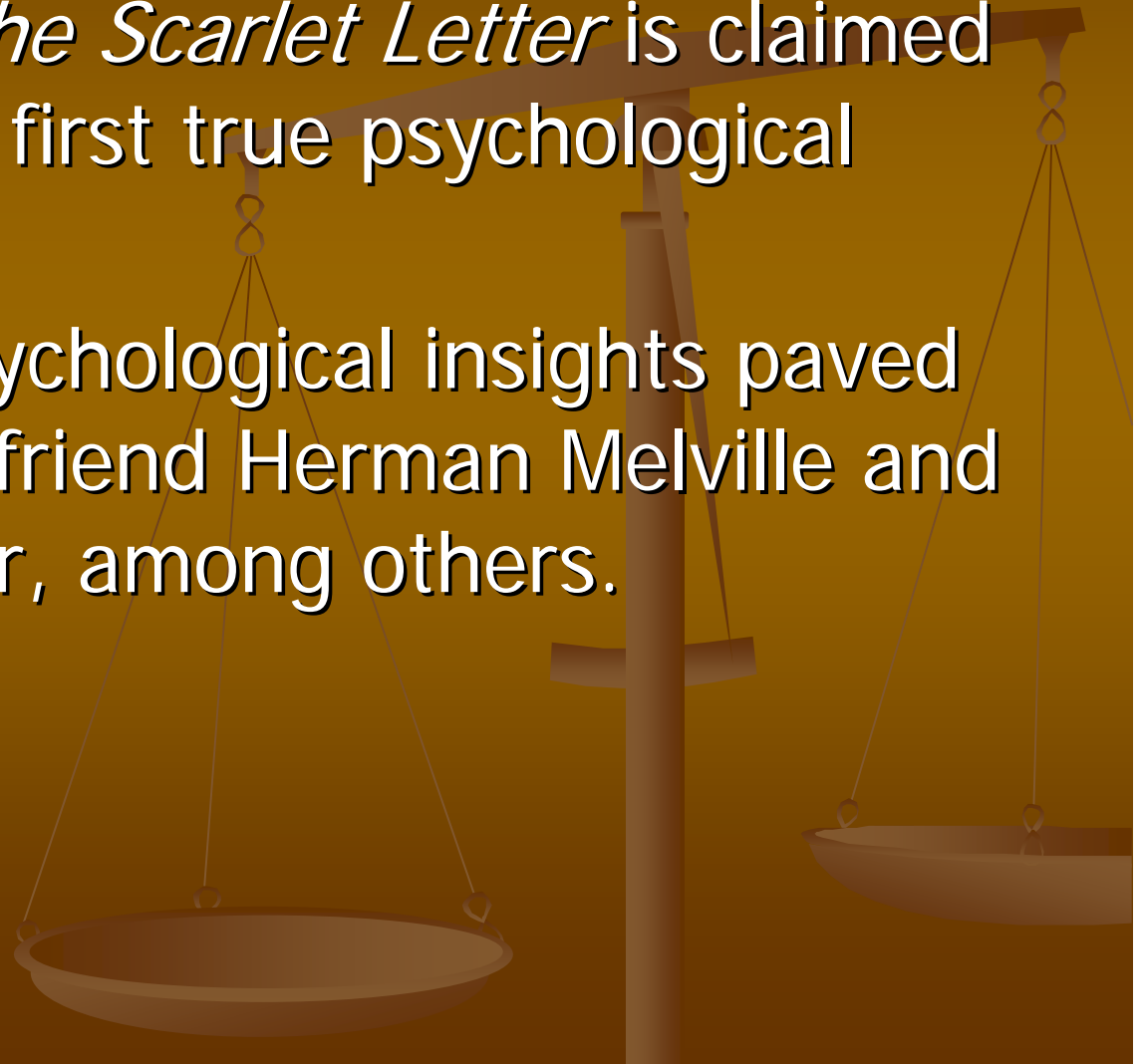


Twice-Told Tales, 1837;
Mosses from an Old Manse,
1846; *The Scarlet Letter*,
1850; *The House of Seven
Gables* , 1851; *The
Blithedale Romance*, 1852;
The Life of Franklin Pierce,
1852; *The Marble Faun* ,
1860; *The Centenary Edition
of the Works of Hawthorne*,
18 vols. ed. W. Charvat et al.,
1962-1987.



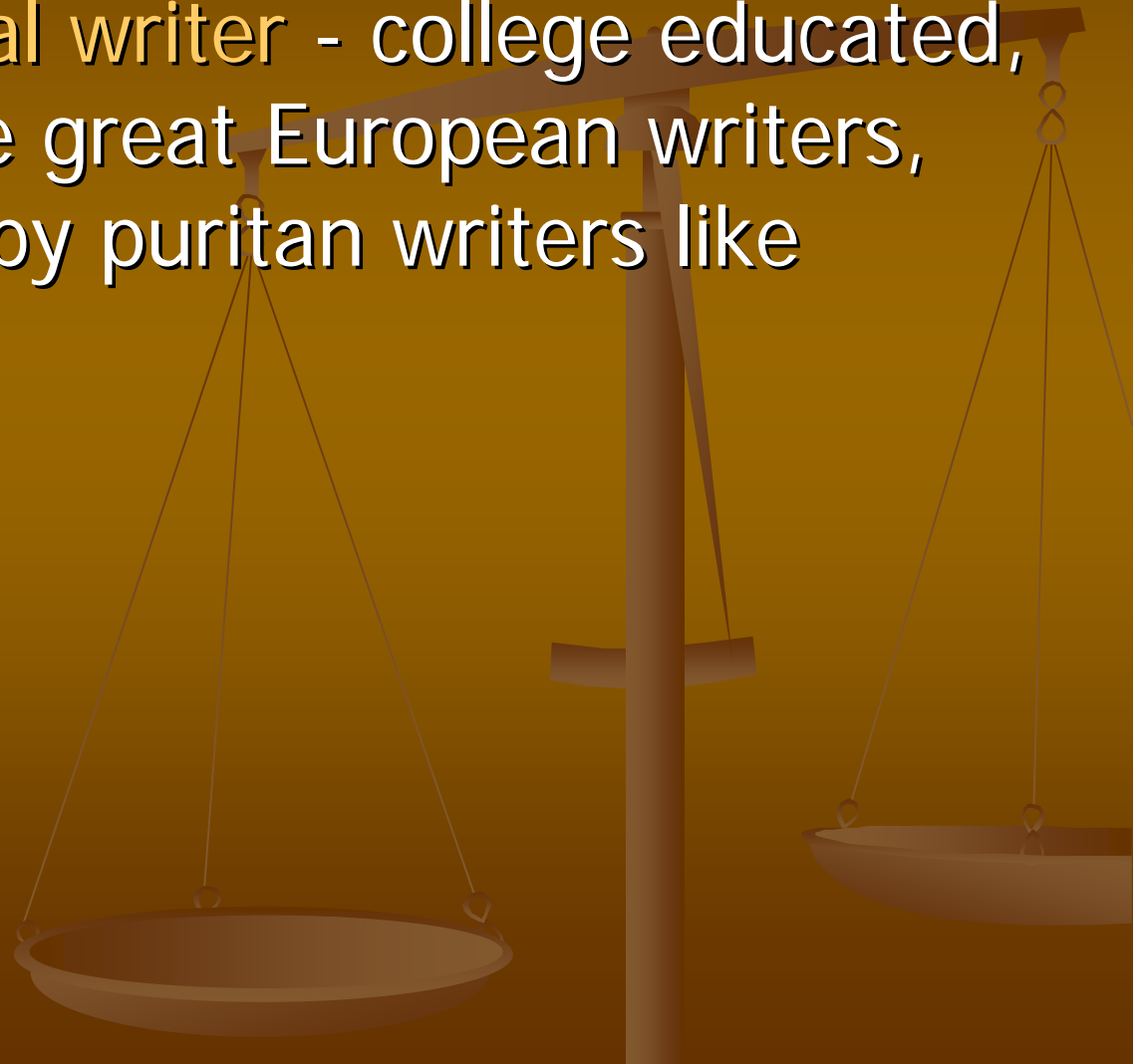
Hawthorne's contributions

- Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* is claimed to be America's first true psychological novel.
- Hawthorne's psychological insights paved the way for his friend Herman Melville and William Faulkner, among others.



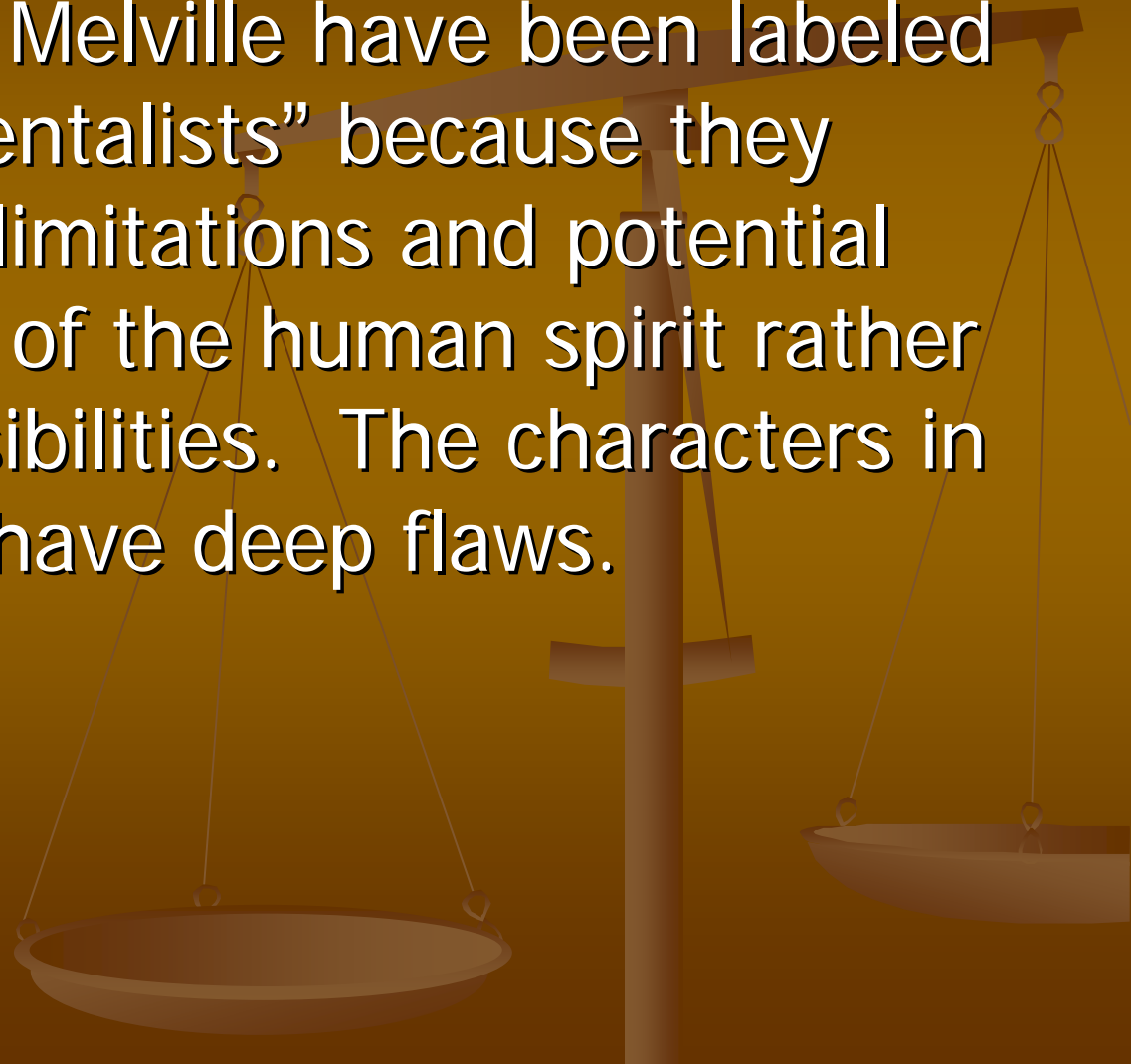
Hawthorne as a Writer

- First professional writer - college educated, familiar with the great European writers, and influenced by puritan writers like Cotton Mather.



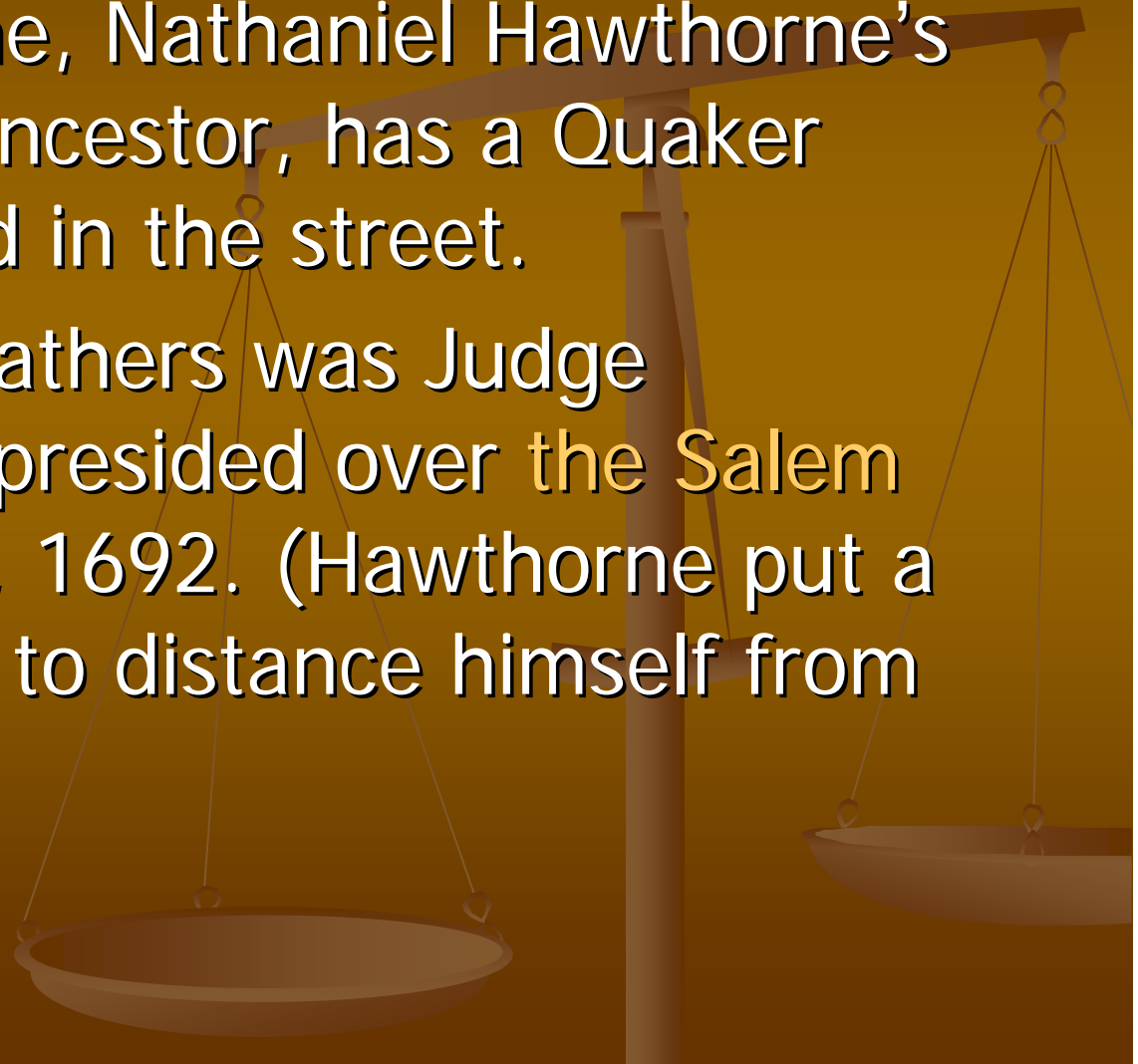
Anti-transcendentalists

- Hawthorne and Melville have been labeled “anti-transcendentalists” because they focused on the limitations and potential destructiveness of the human spirit rather than on its possibilities. The characters in their stories all have deep flaws.



Puritan family background

- William Hathorne, Nathaniel Hawthorne's first American ancestor, has a Quaker woman whipped in the street.
- One of his forefathers was Judge Hathorne, who presided over the Salem witchcraft trials, 1692. (Hawthorne put a "w" in his name to distance himself from his ancestors.)

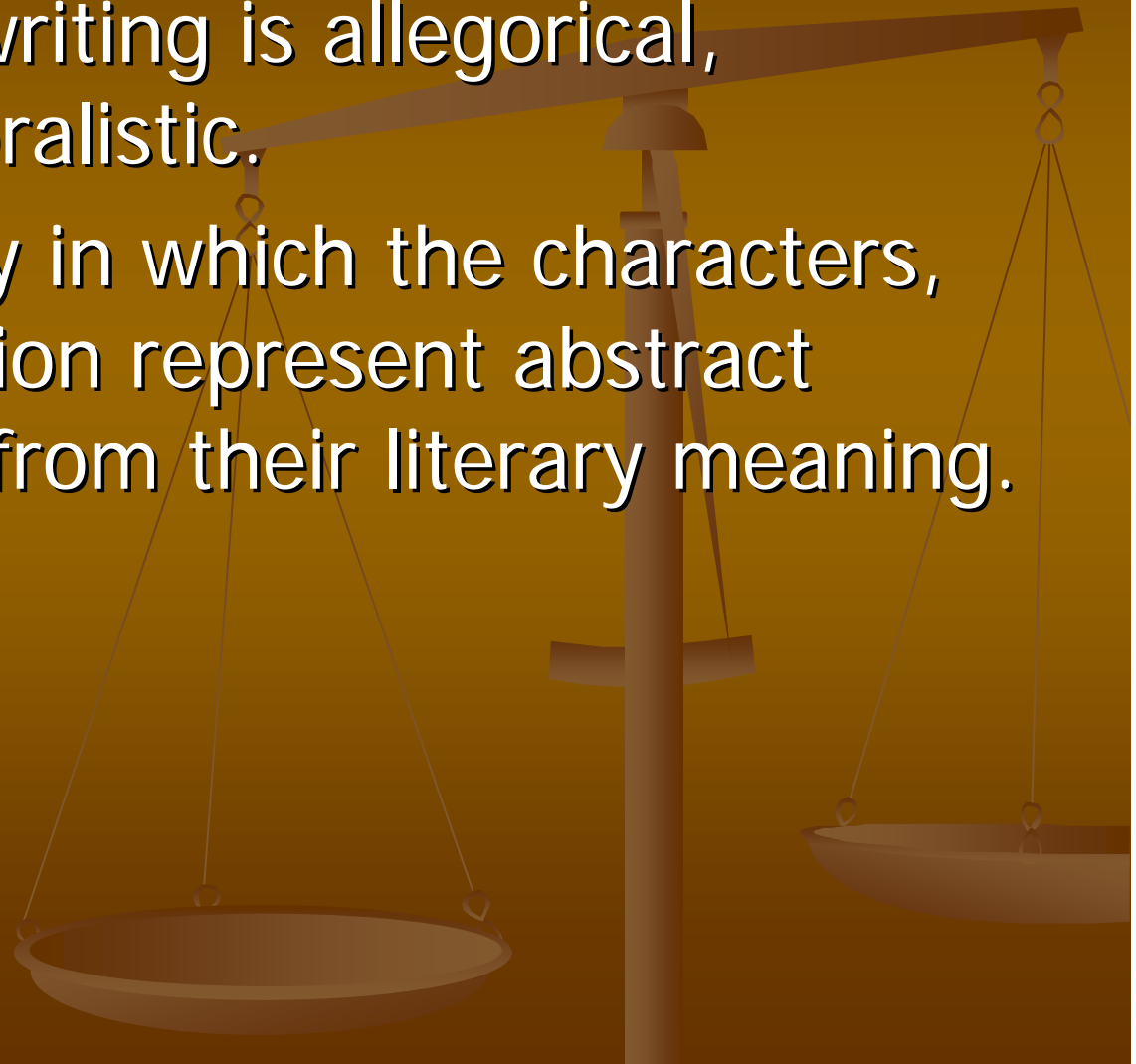


Romance

- Hawthorne called his fictions romances. Novels are realistic; romances aren't. In the 19th century, a romance was a prose narrative that told a fictional story that dealt with its subjects and characters in a symbolic, imaginative, and nonrealistic way. Typically, a romance deals with plots and people that are exotic, remote in time or place from the reader, and obviously imaginary.

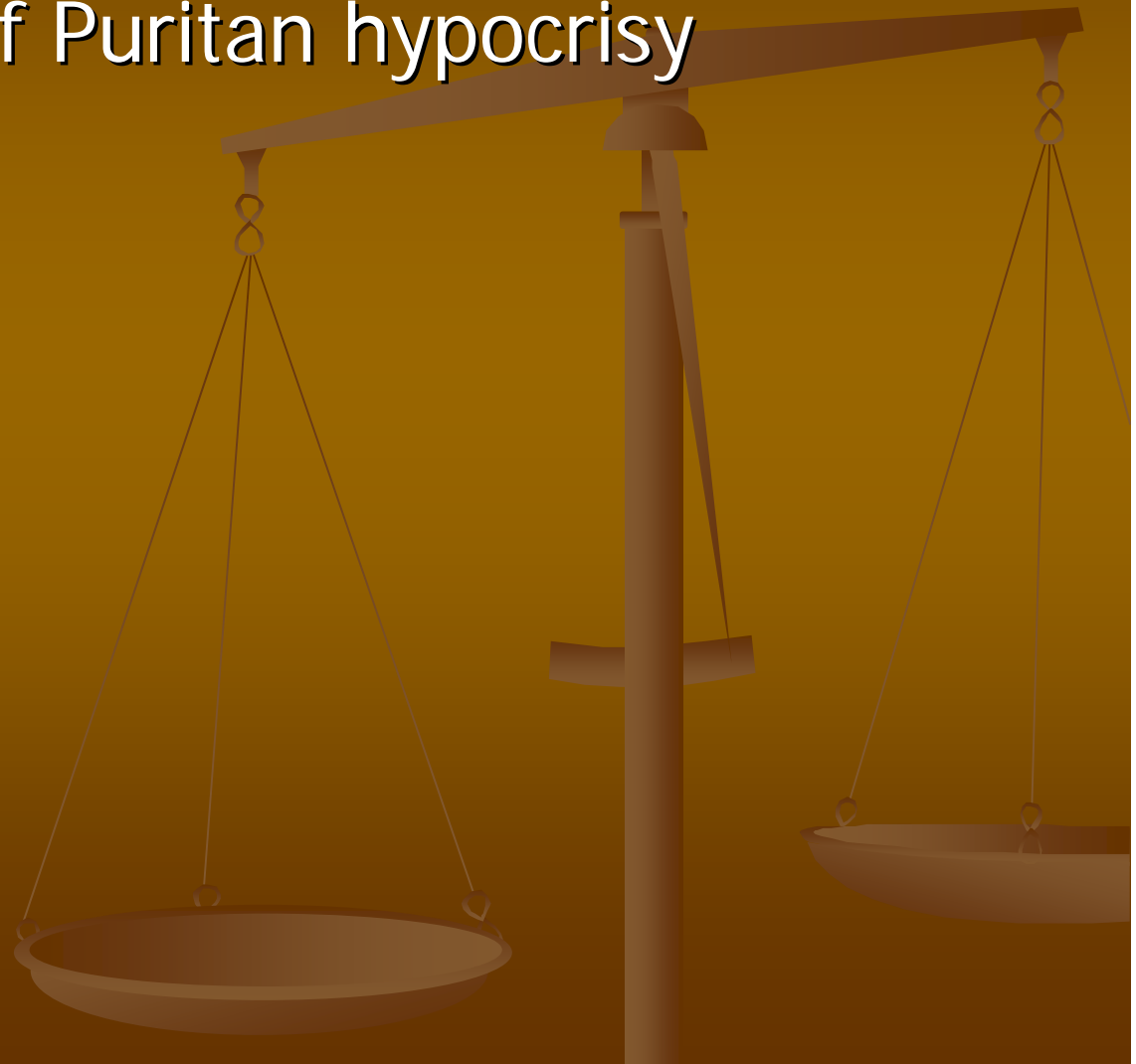
Allegory

- - Hawthorne's writing is allegorical, didactic and moralistic.
- Allegory: a story in which the characters, setting, and action represent abstract concepts apart from their literary meaning.



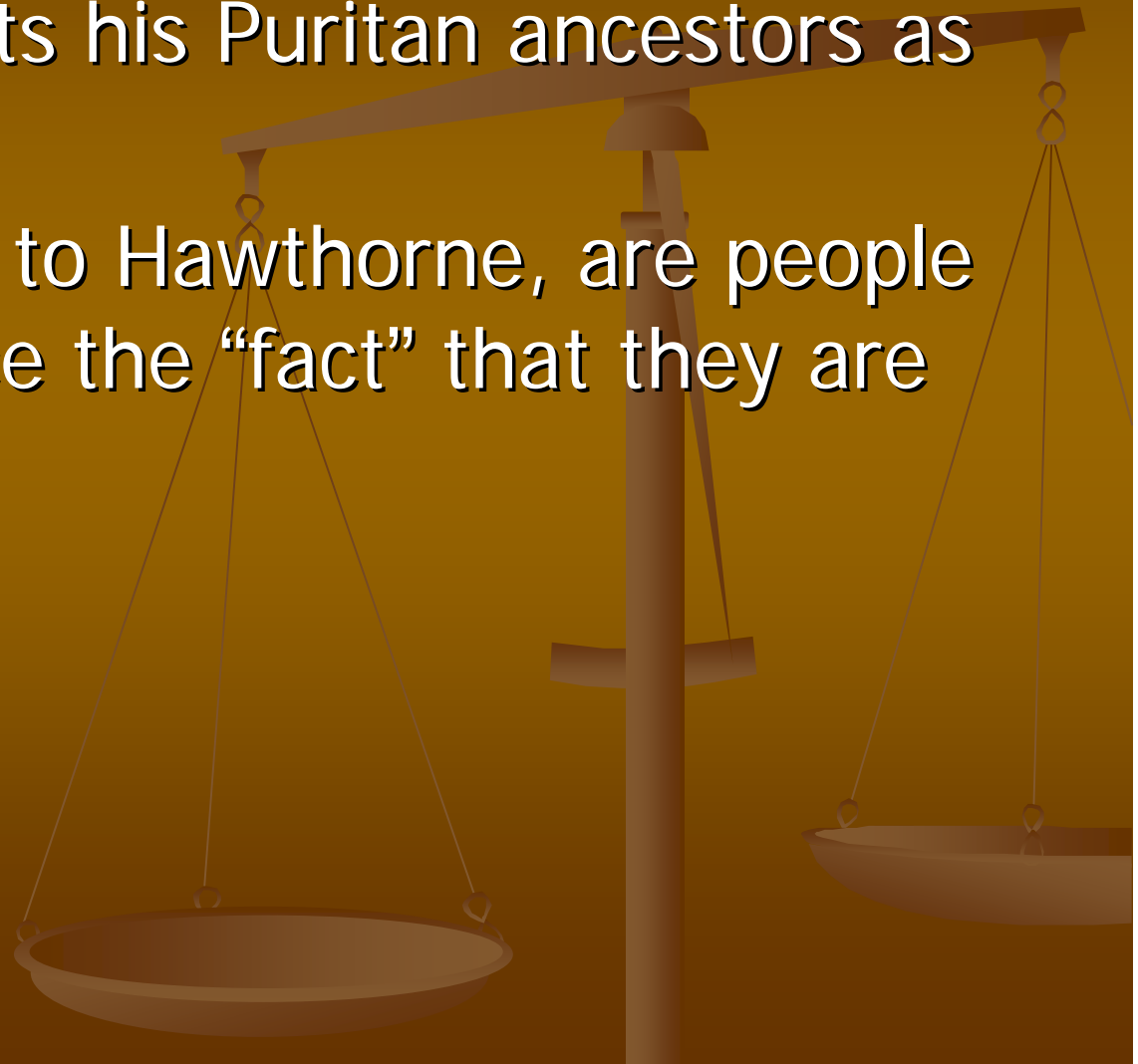
Major Themes

- An indictment of Puritan hypocrisy
- Sin
- guilt



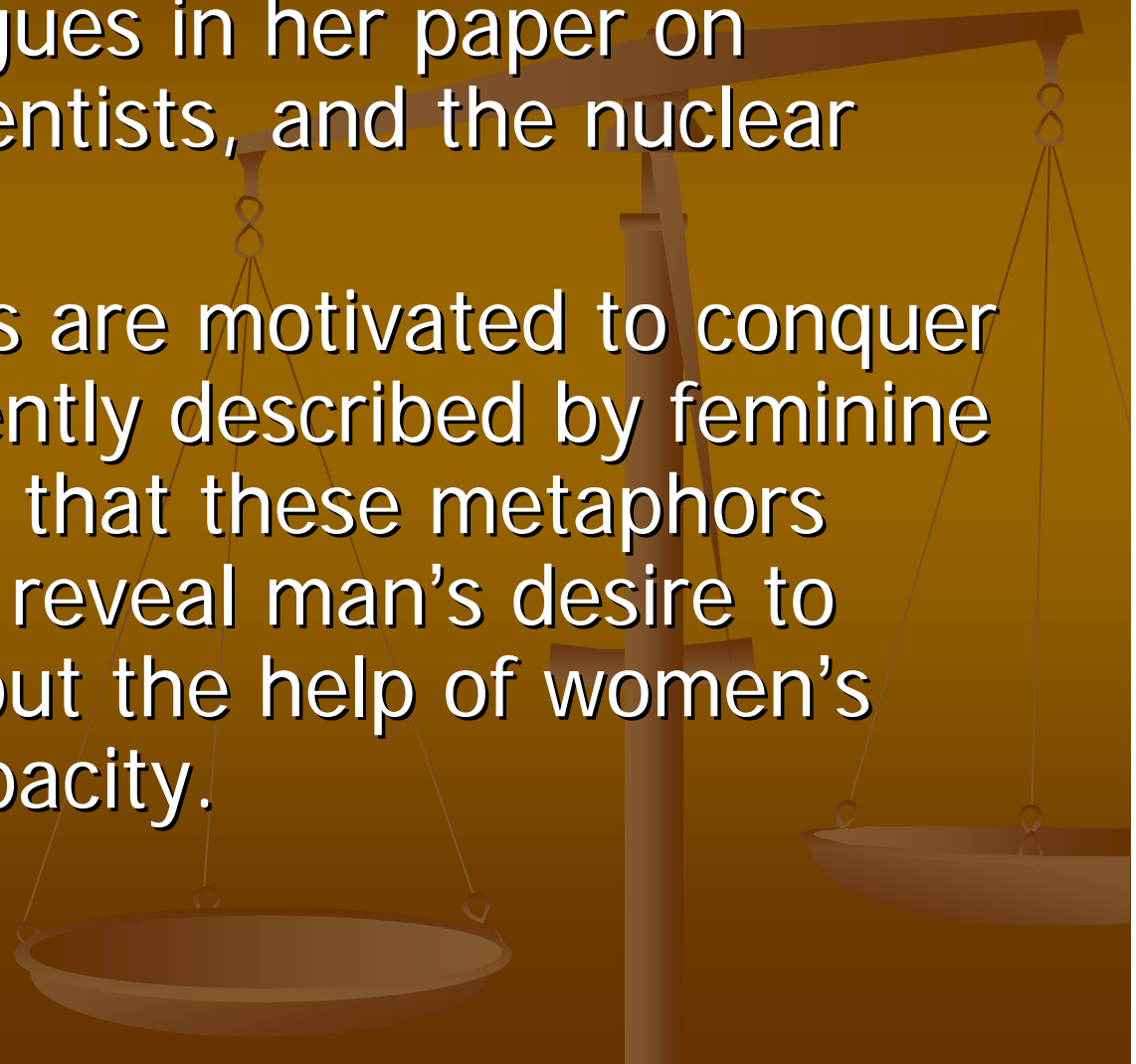
“The Minister’s Black Veil”

- Hawthorne treats his Puritan ancestors as hypocrites.
- How, according to Hawthorne, are people supposed to face the “fact” that they are all sinners?

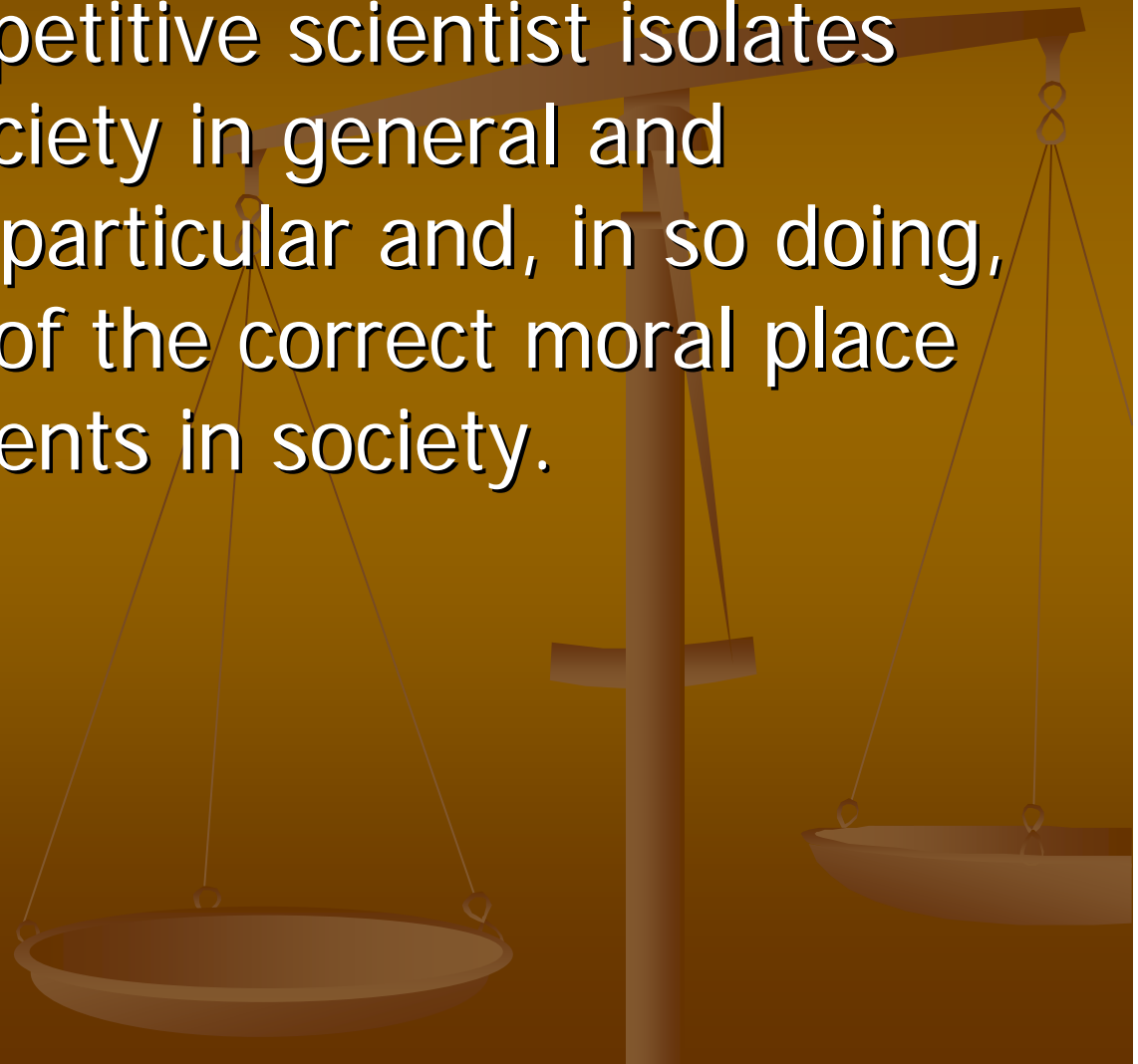


“The Birth-Mark”

- Brian Easlea argues in her paper on masculinity, scientists, and the nuclear arms race
- 1. that scientists are motivated to conquer nature, consistently described by feminine metaphors, and that these metaphors and this history reveal man’s desire to create life without the help of women’s childbearing capacity.

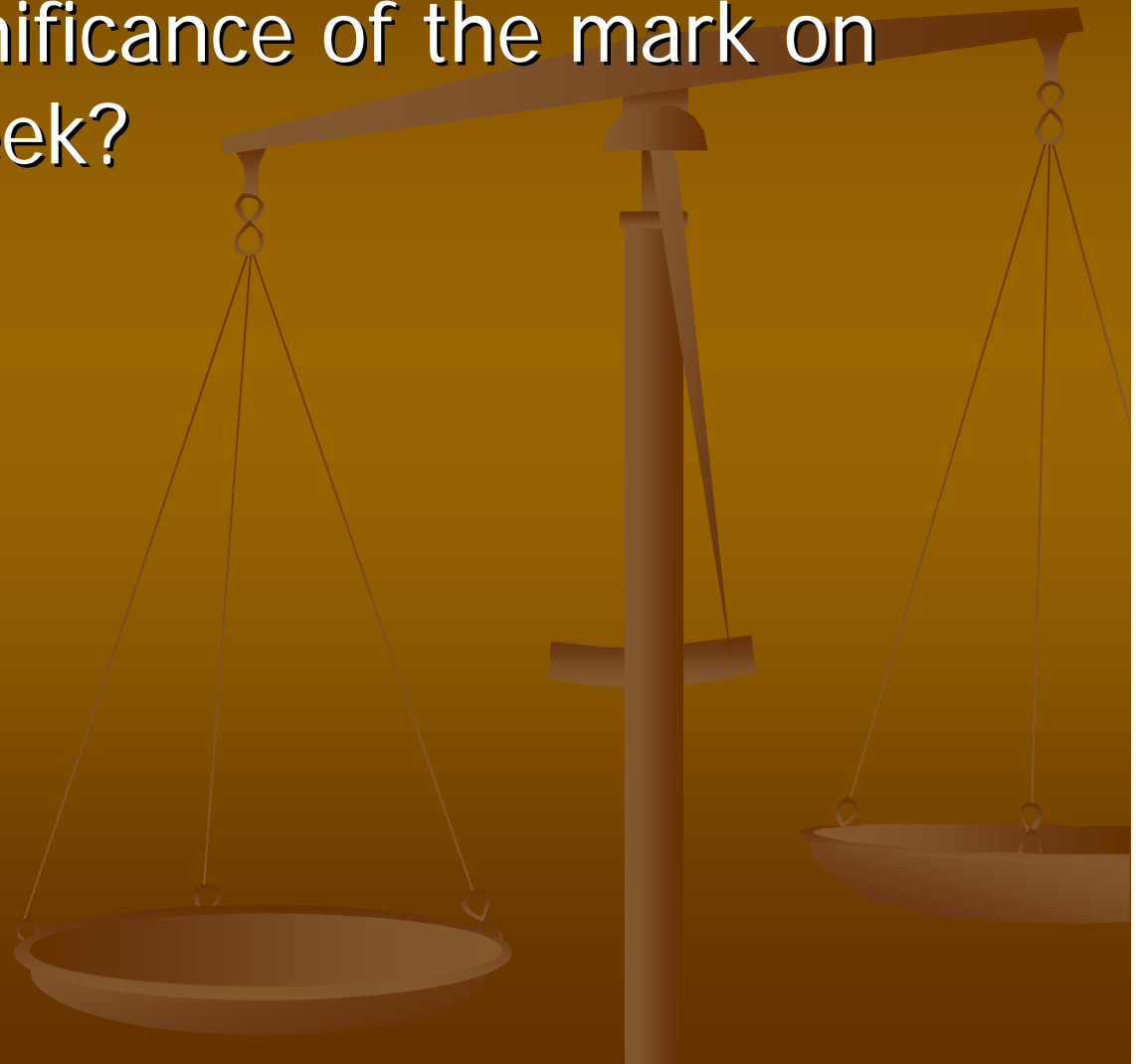


- 2. that the competitive scientist isolates himself from society in general and domestic life in particular and, in so doing, loses his sense of the correct moral place of his achievements in society.



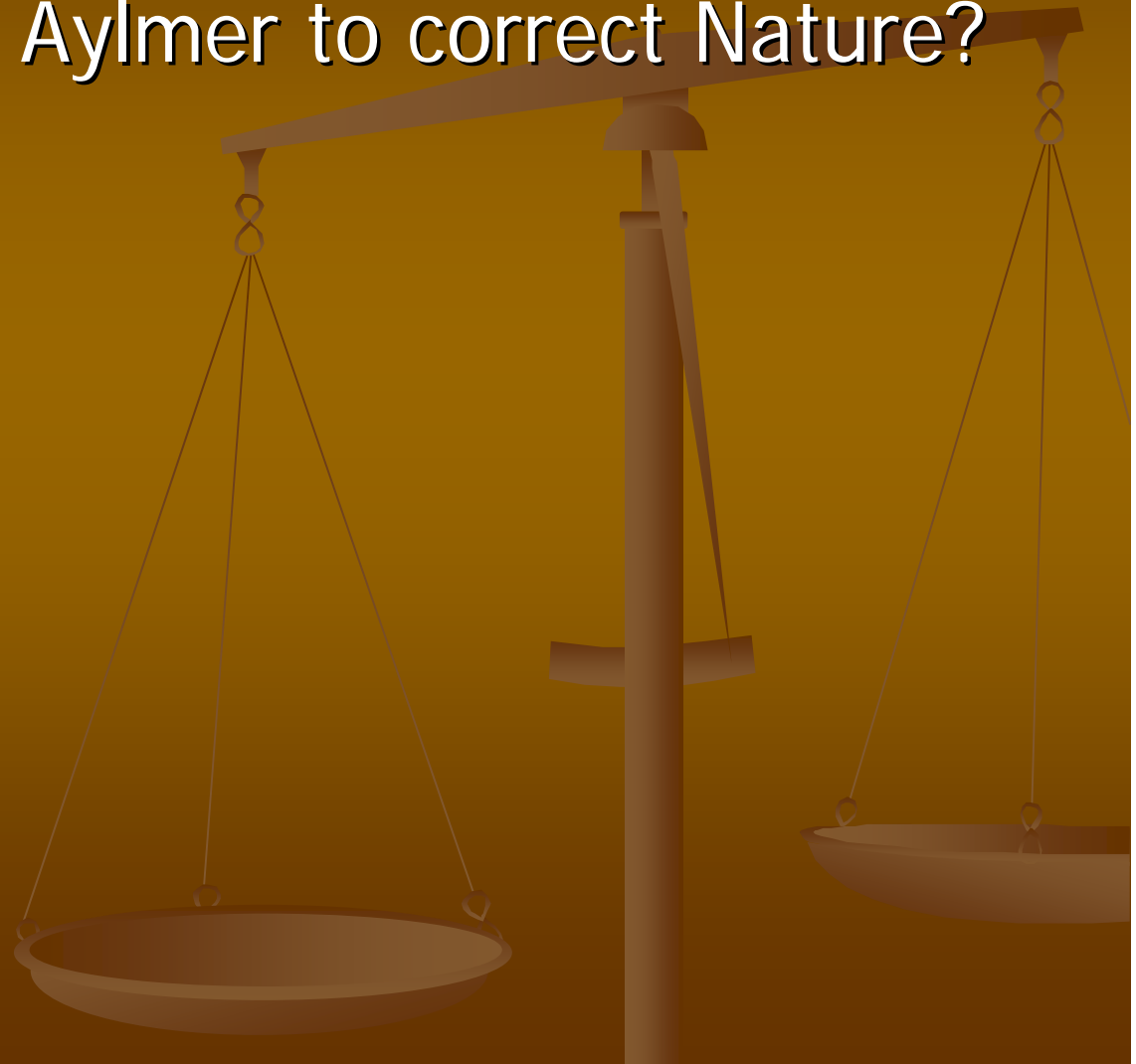
Question

- What is the significance of the mark on Georgiana's cheek?



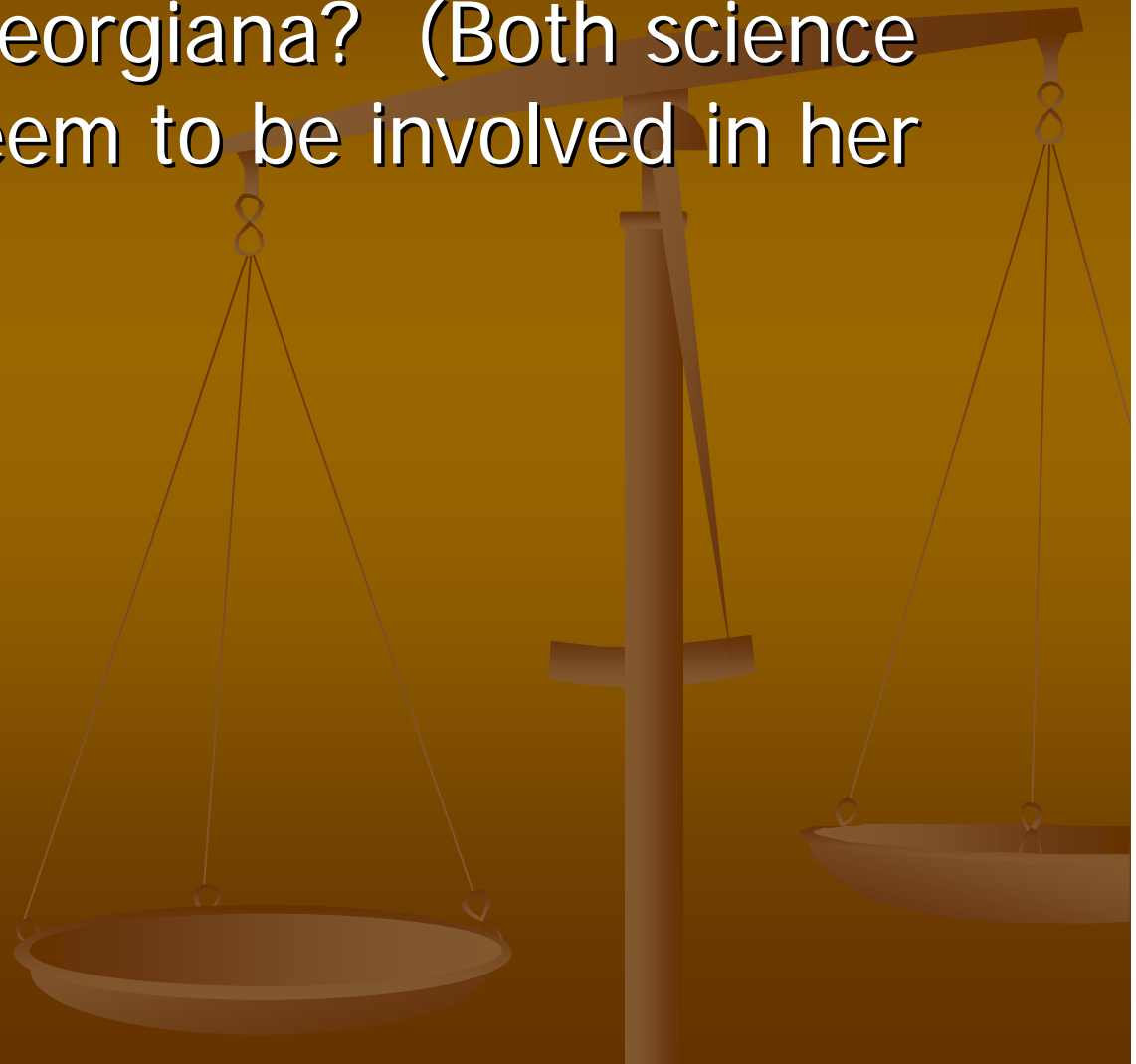
Question

- What motivates Aylmer to correct Nature?



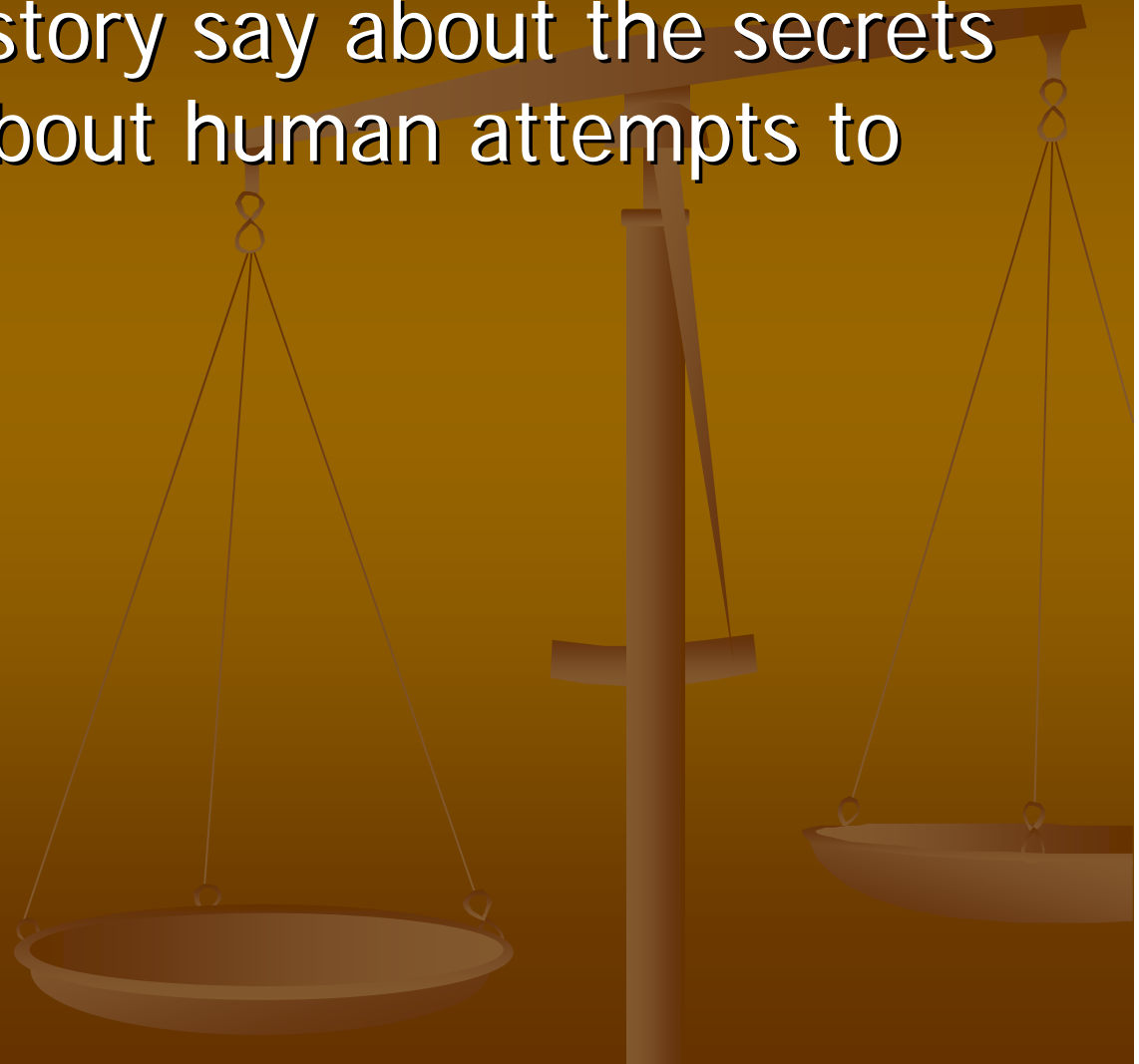
Question

- Who murders Georgiana? (Both science and romance seem to be involved in her death.)



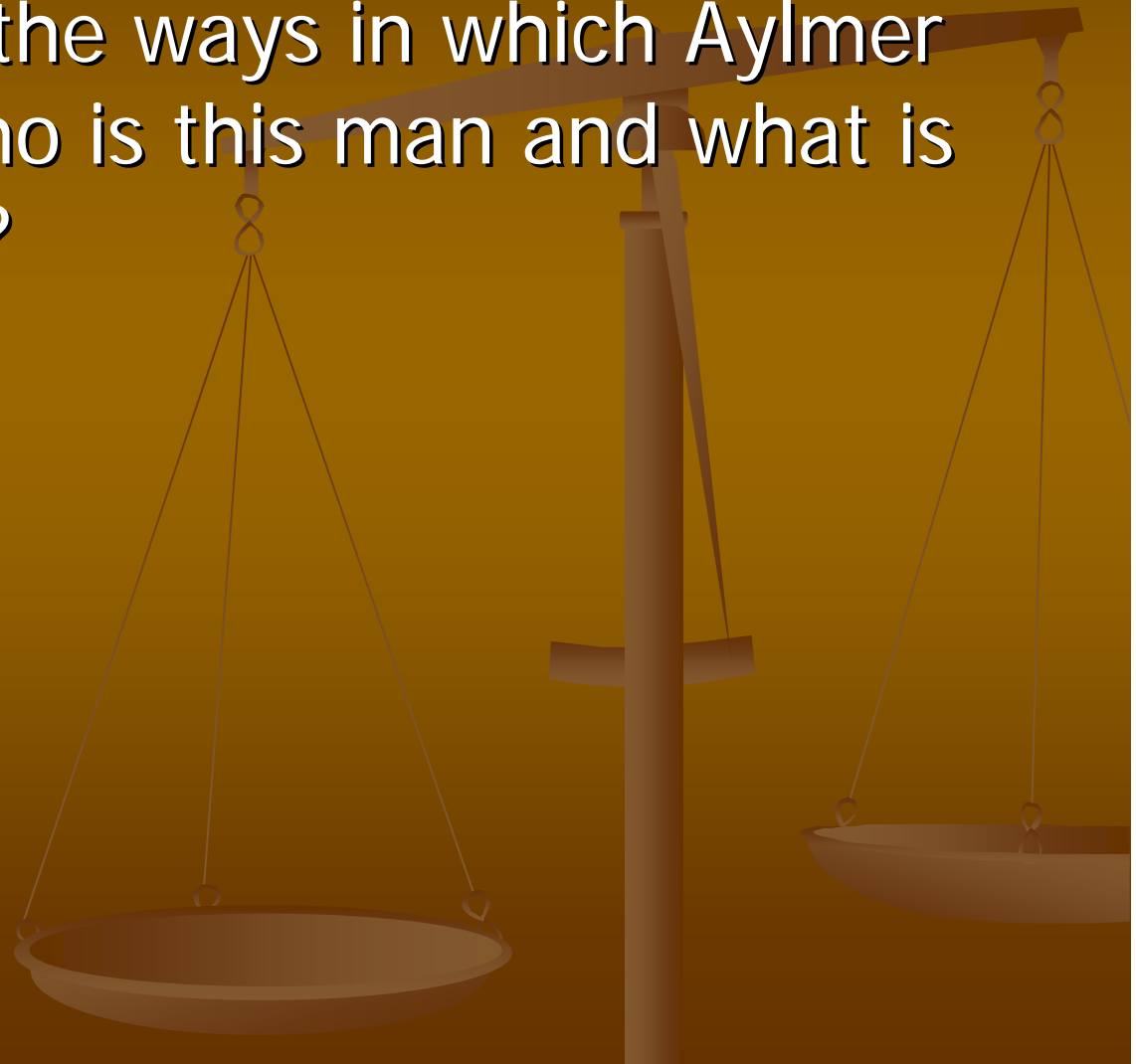
Question

- What does the story say about the secrets of nature and about human attempts to learn them?



Question

- Look closely at the ways in which Aylmer is described; who is this man and what is his significance?



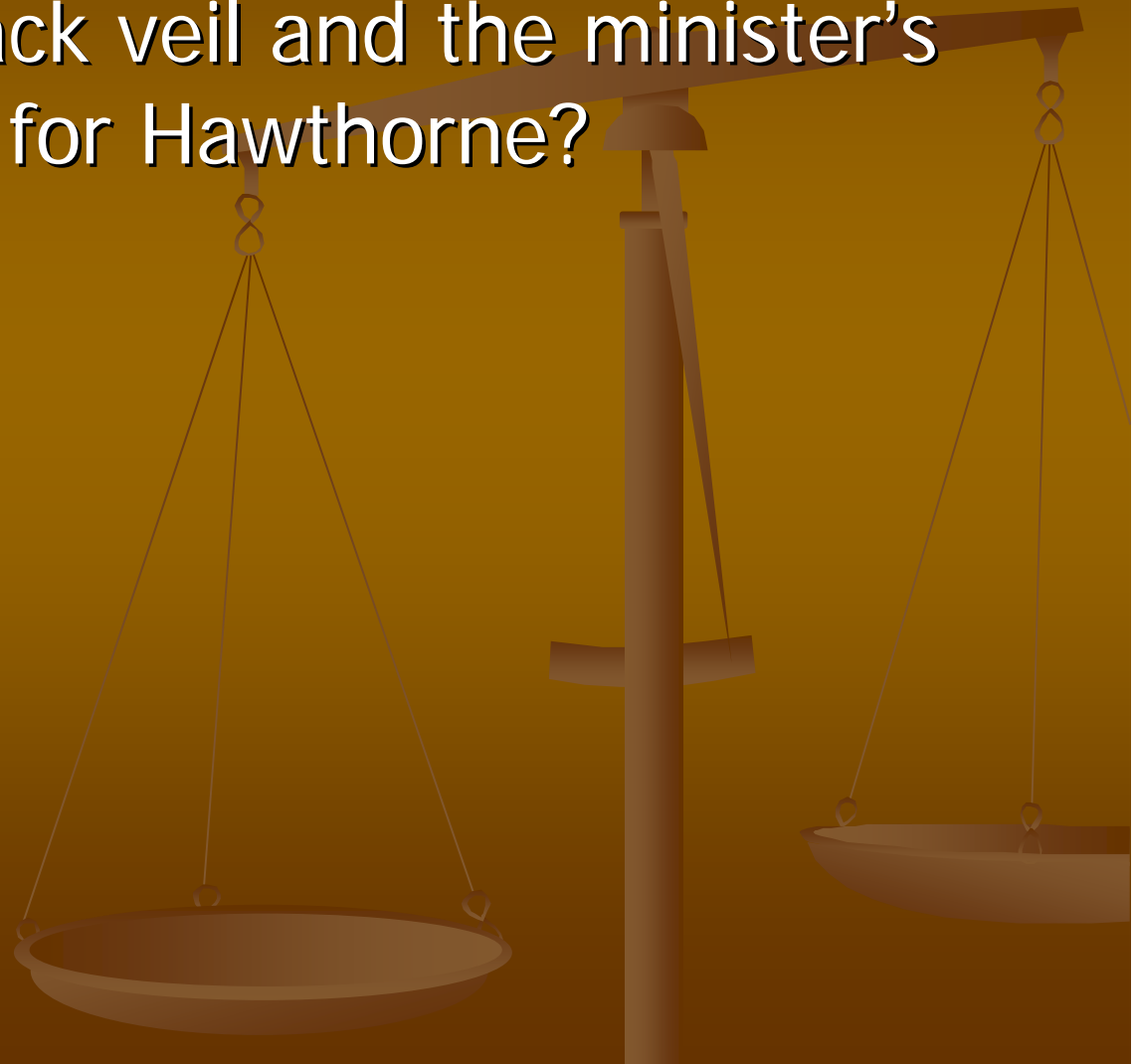
Question

- How does “The Minister’s Black Veil” open and why?



Question

- What do the black veil and the minister's smile represent for Hawthorne?



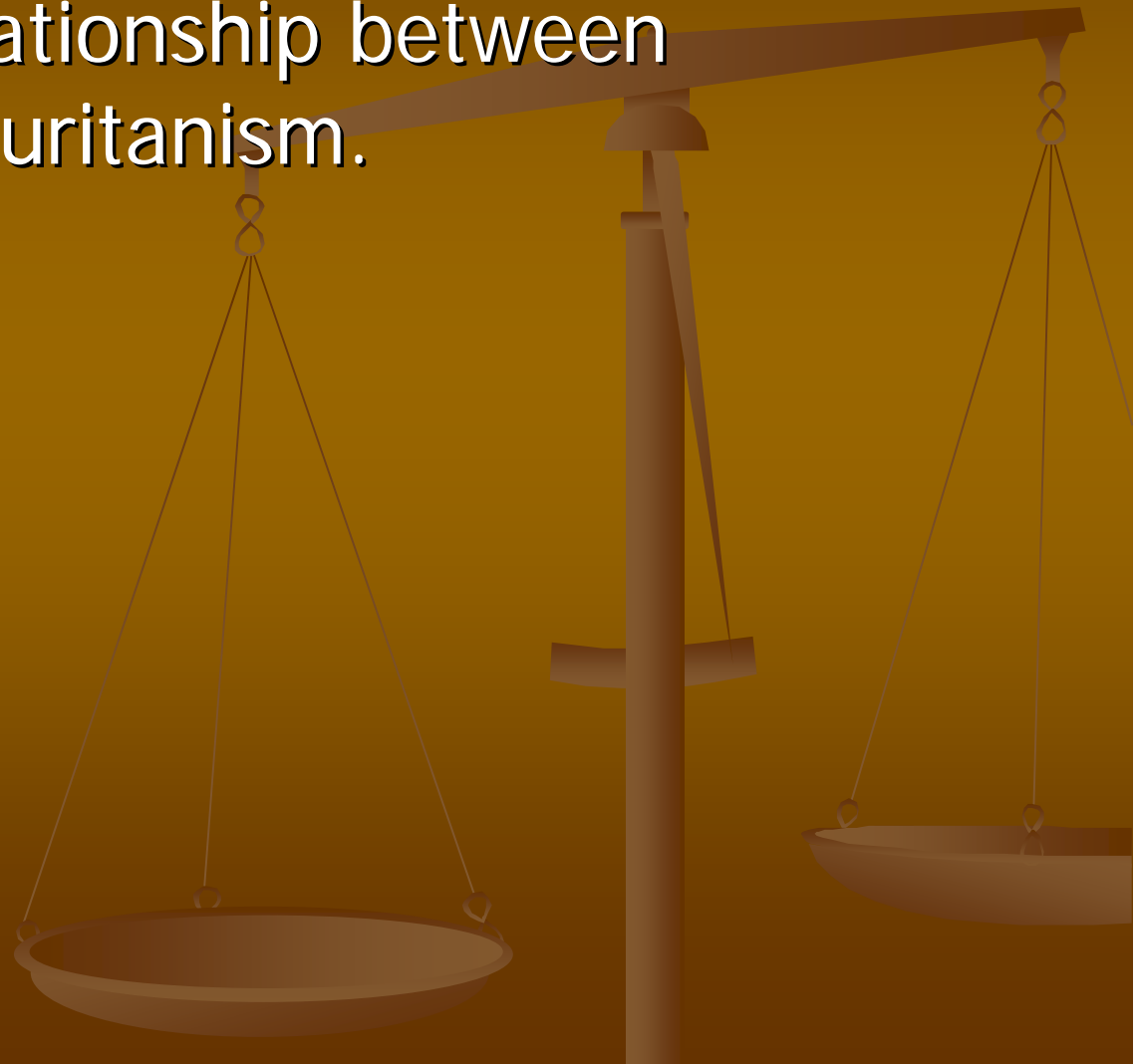
Question

- Why is “The Minister’s Black Veil” called “a parable”?



Work by Yourself

- Find out the relationship between Calvinism and Puritanism.



Reference



Reuben, Paul P. "Chapter 3: Early Nineteenth Century - Nathaniel Hawthorne." *PAL: Perspectives in American Literature- A Research and Reference Guide*. WWW URL: <http://www.csustan.edu/english/reuben/pal/chap3/hawthorne.html>

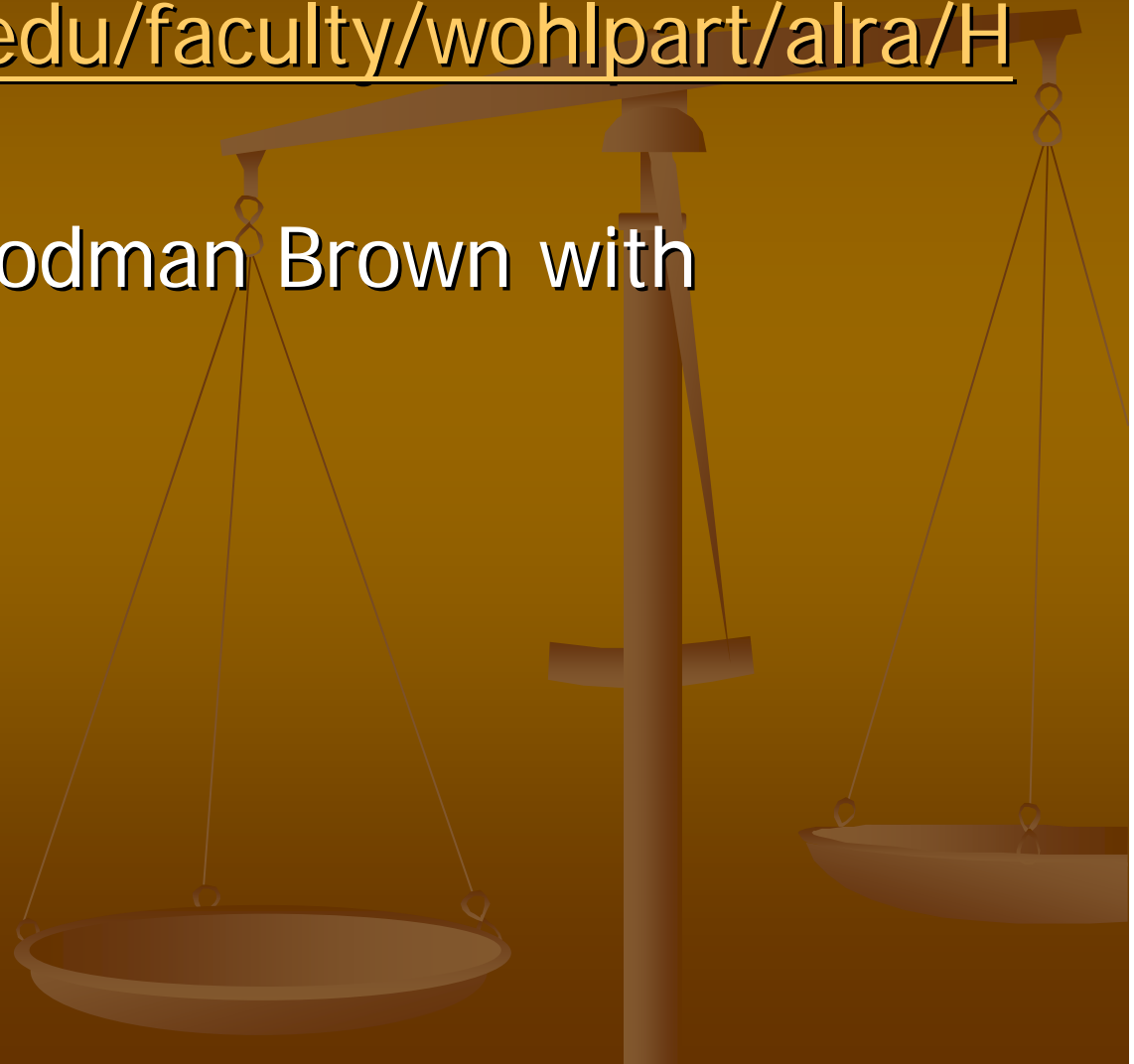
The Scarlet Letter

<http://www.bartleby.com/310/1/>

Website for the selection

<http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/wohlpart/alra/Hawthorne.htm>

Text of Young Goodman Brown with annotations



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