

- The wind in the willows
  - Kenneth Grahame b. 1859
    - Scottish
    - Mother died when he was 5 so he and his siblings moved in with grandmother in the English countryside
    - Father moved to France and Grahame rarely saw him after that
    - Wanted to go to Oxford
      - Fam couldn't afford it
    - 1879
      - Went to work at Bank of England
    - 1888
      - Had his first magazine article published
    - 1893
      - Collection of his articles published
      - Pagan Papers
    - 1895
      - NOVEL - series of episodes in the life of some children
      - The Golden Age
      - Loosely based on his life
    - 1898
      - Sequel to that
      - Dream Days
    - 1899
      - Married Elspeth Thompson
      - He was 40, she was 37
    - 1900
      - First and only child
      - Alastair
      - Serious eye condition

TWitW cont.

- Wrote stories to entertain his children
- Wrote a manuscript with 2 less chapters than the publication
- First title: The Wind Amongst the Reeds
- Never wrote another major piece again

The animal characters - fantasy novel

- Good children's stories should entertain and instruct
- Water Rat (really a water vole)
  -
- Themes of children's literature
  - Importance of the natural world, exercise, interacting through the natural world, parenting, importance of intervening in the lives of friends for their benefit
- Toad

- 15cm long
- Badger
  - 90cm long
  - 30cm high
  - 17 kg
  - So real life badgers are much bigger than toads water-voles and moles. Badgers are a similar size to an otter
- Some literary terms
  - Fantasy
  - Anthropomorphism
    - The assignment of human characteristics, motivation of behaviour to something that is not human
  - Personification
    - A figure of speech in which non-human things or abstractions are referred to as having human attributes
      - P. 6 & 28
  - Satire
    - A mode of writing that exposes the failings of individuals, groups, institutions, or even societies to ridicule or scorn
  - Arcadia
    - An idealized rural world of peace and simplicity. The river bank is generally arcadian
  - Foreshadowing
    - Basically a strong hint or implication that something is going to happen later
      - Wild wood folk break out sometimes(9-10)
      - Wide world is a place to avoid(10)
    - More obviously:
      - Comments on p. 21&22
- Narrator
  - The one who tells the story. They vary according to the extent that they participate in the story. In the case of TWitWthe narrator is not a character in the story(so not 1st person) but it is outside it - so 3rd person.
  - ...thinking , and can tell us about events happening in different places. So he's omniscient. So .. he's third-person omniscient
- The animal characters generally
  - How BIG are they?
    - Their size seems to be fluid: they operate a horse-drawn caravan, toad drives a human car, but, ... see early in Ch. IX
  - How ANIMAL are they?
    - rat(like mole in ch.1) is affected by seasonal urges(ch. IX)
    - The animals have paws not hands(ch.1, p.8; ch. III, p.36)

- Badger and mole live underground, rat's home is in the riverbank
  - On the other hand they talk, reason, wear clothes, eat human foods. Rat has pistols and a rowboat, etc.
  - Although of course, real badgers and moles etc. are wild animals. Interestingly, Mole knows he is not actually cut out for the wild(47)
  - Humorous implication of their human/animal blends
  - "i m going to make an animal of you, my boy" (29)
  - Toad is perhaps the most human(lives in a mansion, not a burrow). It is also he who interacts with humans in the Wide World. Comes unstuck because of it
  - Their friend otter is the most animal(11-12)
- Not all human characters are bad
- Chapter 1
  - This chapter introduces all the main characters of the book and establishes the book's three geographical areas: the Riverbank, the Wild Wood, and the Wild World
  - Where is the Mole when it starts?
    - D
  - In which season of the year is it?
  - What's he do on the first couple of pages or so, and why?
  - Mole has a nasty little joke at the expense of the rabbit, why nasty?
    - Jokes at the expense of mole
      - His "black velvet smoking suit" (8)
      - His dislike of animals that have runs ending in "earth-heaps"(53)
- Social class
  - Toad
    - Upperclass but not aristocrat
    - Nouveau riche
      - Father seems to have bought Toad Hall, rather than inherited it (Ch.XI)
      - And toad describes his

### Social class

- Toad
  - Upper class but not an aristocrat - nouveau riche
  - Father seems to have bought toad hall rather than inherited it
    - Ch XI
  - Toad describes his home in terms of real estate
    - Ch VIII
  - Also somewhat selfish and decadent wealthy fellow
    - Interested solely in enjoying himself
    - Uninterested in effects his lifestyle has on others
  - Needs to be reformed
- Badger

- Upper middle class
- Seems to have authority, has a big home
- Has connections with the land that go back a long way
  - Ch V
- Rat
  - Middle class
  - Seems educated, cozy home
- Mole
  - Lower-middle class, shabby home etc
    - Ch V
- Working class group in text
  - Wild wooders
    - Untrustworthy, potentially dangerous, rebellious
      - Ch I
    - Live en mass
      - slum/ghetto?
    - Have narrow faces, hard eyes
      - Ch III
    - Revolt against those socially above them, threaten the stability of middle and upper class life and have to be crushed and put in their place

#### Psychological or psychoanalytical aspects

- Both toad and the wild wooders may represent the anarchic, hedonistic part of our minds
- The unconscious, that seeks only gratification: the id

#### Both toad and the wild wooders seem to dislike restraints:

- Toad goes from one interest to the next, then drives recklessly, steals the same car twice - once escaping the River Bank, once coming back - always likely to go out of control. Cannot resist boasting, even when pretending to be washerwoman(Ch X)
- The Wild Wooders “break out sometimes” and are dangerous - terrify mole and take over Toad Hall.
- Must be repressed. Represent the dangers of sexuality? Note they are ferrets, weasels, stoats ... phallic shape?
  - Grahame did not marry until 40 years old, married a woman in late 30s
  - One child only
  - Marital difficulties
- Faint hint of sex re:toad too?
  - Note the description of how he gratifies (through displacement or substitution) his desire to drive
    - Ch VI
  - As an aside -- a more obvious though ambiguous sexual overtone - homo-erotic -- in the description of the Friend and Helper?
    - Ch VII

#### Gender

- Important female animals?
  - None
- Human females in the text?
  - 1. Washerwoman whose clothes toad buys in order to escape from jail
  - 2. Bargewoman
  - 3. Gaoler's daughter
- Of these, the last is the most positive
  - Kind, helps toad escape prison, BUT is:
    - (a) pretty - which appeals to toad's vanity (Ch VIII) - though he is mistaken as to her interest in animals
    - (b) a servant - favourite part of description of toad hall is ...?
- Note comments concerning women on pgs 65 and 121
- Dressed as the washerwoman Toad suffers humiliations
- Toad's adventures as a washerwoman combine embarrassments of class and gender, and he refers to the part he is playing as "this humiliating character"(86)
  - This humiliation extends to the job the barge-woman gives him
  - Washing what, particularly ...?
    - Her underwear

#### Poetry and story-telling

- Not surprising the a writer(graehame) should privilege artistic individuals, such as story-tellers and poets
- RAT is the main poet and story-teller
  - Note that its rat who first hears "distant piping" first
    - CH VII
  - Then later hears the melody's words the mile cannot
  - Part of rat's therapy attempt to go to sea is thwarted by Mole is...?
    - - End of Ch XI
- poems/songs/stories important for other characters too
  - Toad has songs
    - Real toads puff themselves up to look bigger, and toad's songs usually puff up Toad (Ch X 114-115) and "Toad's Last Little Song" (Ch XII)
  - The Friend and Helper/Pan figure has a song that explains his importance to the animals and also tells of the 'gift' he gives those who see him
    - Ch VII
  - The Sea Rat is one of the most compelling story tellers in the book - virtually mesmerizing Rat with his stories of voyages along the coasts of italy, greece, etc
    - Ch IX
    - Graehame was fond of mediterranean countries and visited Alassio (100) a number of times
    - Its important to note the Sea Rat's eyes and what alarms mole about Rat's eyes
- Poetry and Storytelling CONT'D

- The Sea Rat is one of the most compelling story tellers in the whole book - virtually mesmerizing Rat with his stories of voyages along the coasts of Italy, Greece, etc (IX),
  - It's significant that Mole here understands both the importance of poetry to Rat (see above) and the power of narrative (to influence others. See end of IX where Mole uses narrative to persuade. Sign of his growing maturity?
- Home
  - Note the longecity of Badger's home; originally the work of...(45) However badgers there even before that (46). So badger represents a sort of continuity. (Conversely...)
  - His home is important - He takes in Rat and Mole when they are lost; it is his home that is a base for the recapture of Toad Hall
  - His home, especially the kitchen, gets the most glowing description; it's a safe anchorage (38)
  - Home generally dominates the text. Mole lives away from his own home with Rat, but then strongly feels the pull of home (V)
  - This is one of the places where the difference between animals and humans is made clear and here the narrator privileges animals
  - Mole is able to strike a balance (CH.V) Later Rat is persuaded by mole to stay home (end of IX)
  - Toad returns from prison, Mole and Badger are assaulted and evicted while house sitting for Toad (XI) but then bravely helps him retake Toad Hall
- Escape
  - in contrast to the attraction to an fuck that he moved the page whatever
  - Toad goes caravanning, drives cars all over the place
  - Eventually Toad deviously sneaks out of his own home while seeking to escape the controls and the house arrest imposed on him through his friends' intervention.
    - All modes of escape are modes of transport, demonstrates how fickle Toad is, in to fads, materialistic
  - Only Badger never seeks to escape, he is the most settled.
- Friendship
  - Saturated with friendship and hospitality, most of which are fairly obvious
  - Rat welcomes mole into his home and then seeks to find him when he's lost (Ch. 1 and3)
  - Rat only goes caravanning with toad because Mole wants to
  - Badger welcomes Mole, Rat and sundry other animals into his home after heavy snow
  - Mole hosts a christmas party, friendship extends to saving a friend from himself AND stopping that friend from impacting negatively on his friends' respectability (VI). Requires an intervention
  - Mesmerised Rat needs to be saved himself

- Spirituality
  - Friend and Helper - clearly Pan - has “pan” pipes, horns, shaggy legs, hooves
  - Pan pipes made of originally...?
  - Homo-erotic description of the Friend and the Helper (77)
  - Friend and Helper looks after animals, but also ensures that their lives are not overshadowed by experiencing his presence
  - MORE CONVENTIONAL religious connection in the text - see the carol the field mice sing (Ch. V)
- Satire
  - Ch VI
    - Sentencing
    - Description of jail, jailers, etc.
- Maturity
  - Toad is, at least superficially, “indeed an altered Toad” by the end(144)
    - Overcompensating, feels inadequate - leads to boasting
      - Realizes he gets more respect if he doesn’t boast
  - Mole matures. At the beginning of the text he is naive, foolish, and impulsive (boat incident, Wild Wood incident, inability to to but clues together)
    - BUT
      - 1. He is able to prevent Rat leaving
        - Ch IX
      - 2. He proves himself able to operate as something of an intelligence operative
        - Ch XI
- Conservative or Progressive text?
  - In real life in early 1900s, push for the vote etc, for women
  - In Grahame’s novel - COMPLETE lack of female *animal* characters
  - In real life, much agitation by working class through political representation, through unions etc, for more power. Novel ENDS with the MOST dangerous, anarchic element subdued. Respectful, cowed Wild Wood folk
- Badger
  - the most stable, patriarchal, parental, authority figure. See above(the continuity embodied in his home, continuity of badgers -- pre-city, post-city, etc.)
  - ...suffer episodes where they are overcome with emotion - HYSTERIA