

Herman Melville Notes

- Wrote in 1840's – 1860's after a tough life
revival of fame in 1920's
- Friendship w/ Hawthorne
- *Moby Dick* – 1851
Conferred epic dignity on sailors.
Saw injustice while sailing (whaler).
Wrote "Bartleby the Scrivener."

Themes

- Believed in evil in the universe
 - injustice
 - cruelty
- Quest for knowledge
 - raised philosophical questions
 - no final certainty of knowledge possible
 - If people try to "know" they will destroy themselves.

Style:

- Combines realism + symbolism
- Skepticism