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Given text: paraphrase this text By Dr Oliver Tearle (Loughborough University) 'The Man of the Crowd' is one of the shorter short stories written by Edgar Allan Poe. Written in 1840, the story is enigmatic and prefigures later fiction, including modernism. The narrative of 'The Man of the Crowd' may be understood as an extension or reinterpretation of Poe's earlier work, 'William Wilson'. In 'William Wilson', the protagonist is pursued by his doppelganger, who serves as a representation of his conscience. Similarly, in 'The Man of the Crowd', the narrator becomes fixated on an old man who appears to be a stranger, symbolizing the individual's deep-seated desire for connection and understanding with others. Through this lens, it can be argued that Poe may have intentionally crafted 'The Man of the Crowd' as a companion piece to 'William Wilson', exploring the theme of doubles from different angles. The old man in the crowd may be seen as an older version or reflection of the narrator himself. The story also touches upon the idea of the uncanny, a concept explored by Nicholas Royle. The uncanny refers to the experience of encountering something that is familiar yet unsettling, often due to its deviation from societal norms. In 'The Man of the Crowd', this theme is exemplified through the narrator's fascination with the old man. Poe's use of language, such as his repeated emphasis on the stranger's identity, serves to highlight the dual nature of the character and the tension between the two individuals. However, the story fails to provide any conclusive evidence linking the narrator and the old man, leaving the reader to ponder the true nature of their connection. Furthermore, the title 'The Man of the Crowd' can be seen as a commentary on urban alienation and loneliness. The narrative portrays a world where individuals are surrounded by others yet feel deeply disconnected from them. This sense of isolation is further underscored by the narrator's obsession with the old man, who represents an elusive and enigmatic figure. Ultimately, 'The Man of the Crowd' can be viewed as a multifaceted exploration of urban life, touching upon themes such as anonymity, human curiosity, and the dehumanization of modern society. Fear of Mortality Leads to Objectification and Lack of Empathy among People. The old man's fast pace symbolizes the inevitability of mortality, highlighting humanity's struggle with life's fleeting nature. This fear raises existential questions about existence's meaning and our insignificance in death.

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