

學年學期 97 學年第 2 學期  
課程名稱 Contemporary American Fiction  
開課單位 英博--文學組  
授課教師 劉建基 (Prof. Chienchi Liu)

#### 課程目標

This course will concentrate on: (1) the texts of contemporary American novelists, such as Alice Walker, John Gardner, Kurt Vonnegut, Marge Piercy, Eric Liu, James McBride, and Gish Jen; (2) some important recent narrative theories or cultural issues, such as Feminist Utopia, Postmodernism, Meta-fiction Parody, Sci-Fi Fantasy, Race and Ethnicity. Besides, to familiarize students with recent novel-writing practices, this course will provide some examples of readings of texts which employ the various theories that are dominant at the present time.

#### 課程大綱

##### **Main Textbooks:**

##### **A: Fiction:**

1. *The Accidental Asian* (by Eric Liu)
2. *Breakfast of Champions* (by Kurt Vonnegut)
3. *Woman on the Edge of Time* (by Marge Piercy)
4. *Grendel* (by John Gardner)
5. *Mona in the Promised Land* (by Gish Jen)
6. *The Color of Water* (by James McBride)
7. *By the Light of My Father's Smile* (by Alice Walker)

##### **B. Reference Works:**

1. *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Ed. Stuart Hall, David Held, Don Hubert, and Kenneth Thompson, 1997)
2. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (by Chris Barker, 2000)
3. *The Flaneur* (Ed. Keith Tester, 1994)
4. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (by Patricia Waugh, 1984)
5. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (by Patricia Hill Collins, 1991)
6. *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction* (by Rosemarie Putnam Tong, 1998)
7. *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Postmodern* (by Margaret A. Rose, 1993)
8. *Parody* (by Simon Dentith, 2000)
9. *Discourse* (by Sara Mills, 1997)
10. *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations* (by Steven Best & Douglas Kellner, 1996)
11. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (by Rosemary Jackson, 1981)
12. *The Production of Space* (by Henry Lefebvre, 1991)

## Notes:

1. Literary texts and critical essays will be discussed alternately.
2. Each participant taking this course for credit should hand in a mid-term paper (about 8 pages long) and a term paper (about 12 pages long).
3. Each student is required to give two or more oral reports.
4. Participation in classroom discussion constitutes a significant factor in the final grading.

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Week1-18 Course: Contemporary American Fiction

*Mikhail Bakhtin* (by Katerina Clark & Michael Holquist)

“Discourse in Life and Art” 197-211; “The Theory of the Novel” 275-294”

Patricia Waugh’s *Metafiction*

Chapter 1: “What is Metafiction and Why Are They Saying Such Awful Things about It?” pp.1-19 “Literary Evolution: the Place of Parody” pp. 63-86

Sara Mills’s *Discourse*

“Discourse and Ideology” (Chapter 2) and “Feminist Theory and Discourse Theory” (Chapter 4) in, pp. 29-49,77-104.

Chris Barker’s *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* ).

“Ethnicity, Race and Nation” pp.192-223. & “Sex, Subjectivity and Representation” in *Cultural Studies*. pp.224-58. “Issues of & Subjectivity and Identities” in *Cultural Studies* pp. 165-176.

Patricia Hill Colins’s *Black Feminist Thought*

Chapter 5: “The Power of Self-Definition” pp.91-114 & Chapter 9: “ Sexual Politics and Black Women’s Relationships” pp.181-98

Rosemarie Tong’s *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction*

Chapter 7: “Existentialist Feminism” pp195-216 .

Chapter 8 of *Feminist Thought* : “Postmodern Feminism” 217-38

*Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*

“The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power” &. “The Question of Cultural Identity” (from, pp.185-227; pp. 596-634)

*Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (Ed. By Stuart Hall) “The Work of Representation” pp13-65

Identity and Difference(Ed Kathryn woodward)

“Concepts of Identity and Difference” (by Kathryn Woodward) pp. 07-62 &

“Diaspora and the Detours of Identity” (by Paul Gilroy) pp. 299-347

## Syllabus for the Course

1. 16/2 Introduction
2. 23/2 Chapter 1: “What is Metafiction and Why Are They Saying Such Awful Things about It?” pp.1-19 “Ethnicity, Race and Nation” pp.192-223. “The Theory of the Novel” 275-294”
3. 2/3 *The Accidental Asian* (by Eric Liu) Critical Essay (by choice)
4. 9/3 “Discourse in Life and Art” 197-211 “Discourse and Ideology” (Chapter 2) 29-49 “The Work of Representation” pp13-65
5. 16/3 *Breakfast of Champions* (by Kurt Vonnegut) Critical Essay (by choice)
6. 23/3 Chapter 8 of *Feminist Thought* : “Postmodern Feminism” 217-38
7. 30/3 “Sex, Subjectivity and Representation” in *Cultural Studies*. 224-58.
8. 6/4 *Woman on the Edge of Time* (by Marge Piercy).  
Critical Essay 1: “Worlds in Confrontation: Marge Piercy’s *Woman on the Edge of Time*” in *Feminism and the Postmodern Impulse: Post-world War II Fiction*(by Magali Cornier Michael) 109-134  
Critical Essay 2: Chapter II and Chapter III of *The Feminist Utopia in the Postmodern Science Fiction: Marge Piercy’s Woman on the Edge of Time* (M.A Thesis) 16-80
9. 13/4 “Feminist Theory and Discourse Theory” (Chapter 4) 77-104.
10. 20/4 “Literary Evolution: the Place of Parody” 63-86
11. 27/4 *Grendel* (by John Gardner) Critical Essay (by choice)
12. 4/5 “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power” 185-227 “The Question of Cultural Identity” 596-634
13. 11/5 *Mona in the Promised Land* (by Gish Jen) Critical Essay (by choice)
14. 18/5 Chapter 5: “The Power of Self-Definition” .91-114; Chapter 9: “ Sexual Politics and Black Women’s Relationships” 181-98
15. 25/5 *The Color of Water* (by James McBride) Critical Essay (by choice)
16. 1/6 “Issues of & Subjectivity and Identities” in *Cultural Studies* 165-176  
“Concepts of Identity and Difference” 7-62
17. 8/6 *By the Light of My Father’s Smile* (by Alice Walker) Critical Essay (by choice)
18. 15/6 Chapter 7: “Existentialist Feminism” pp195-216 .