



## English 368, Post-Modern American Literature

Dr. Fred Svoboda

Winter 2012, **On Line**

*We will consider representative American works of literature written since the Second World War. Among the works and authors likely to be discussed (a tentative schedule):*

### ***Fiction:***

Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*

Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot Forty-Nine*

Gish Jen's *The Love Wife*.

Charles Johnson's *Middle Passage*

Tim O'Brien's *Going After Cacciato*

### ***Poetry:***

*Selections from:*

Sylvia Plath

Denise Levertov

Elizabeth Bishop

and others

Robert Lowell

Randall Jarrell

Allen Ginsberg

Richard Wilbur

Anne Sexton

Gwendolyn Brooks

### ***Major Themes and Concerns:***

- Backgrounds to Modernism and Post-Modernism:
  - Literary Realism & Literary Naturalism.
  - The Literary Tradition, both Western and Eastern.
- The "Modern" and "Post-Modern" Views of the World:
  - Considering Language and Literary Experimentation;
  - The Influence of Modern Art;
- Changing Moral Standards;
- Developments in the Political World.
- The Experience of World War II:
- Loss of Meaning, Moral, Historical and Personal.
- The Nature of America After the War:
- Continuing the Loss of Meaning?
- The Loss of Tradition, both Literary and Otherwise.
- The Retreat to Normalcy.
- The Challenge of Normalcy:
  - The Search for Meaning.
  - The American Character Adrift.
- Alternatives to Drift:
  - The Road,
  - Authenticity,
  - Self-Knowledge &
  - Immediate Experience.
- The Role of the Artist.
- The Beats & The Counterculture.
- Empowering and Examining Excluded Groups:
  - Racial, Ethnic & Sexual Minorities; Women.