

# Postmodern Fiction

Dr. Yael Maurer

In this course we will examine texts that have come to be considered "postmodern". The term "postmodernism" is difficult to define, yet, as we shall see, it has had a very significant influence on the culture, literature and film. In our reading of the novels (and films), we will focus on the ways they question notions of "self", "body", "narrative" and "history". We will examine the ways in which these particular texts deconstruct the idea of coherent subjectivity in different thematic, narrative and generic forms. We will watch two filmic adaptations. One is the iconic science fiction film *Blade Runner*, an adaptation of Dick's novel, and the other is an adaptation of Vonnegut's novel.

Our reading of the texts is by no means the *only* way or the *right* way. That would not be very "postmodern". My aim in this course is to introduce you to texts I find intriguing and challenging. I hope to demonstrate how these texts enact some of the concerns of the postmodern moment.

## Literary Texts

*Slaughterhouse Five* by Kurt Vonnegut

*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* by Philip K. Dick

*Fury* by Salman Rushdie

## Theoretical Texts

Jean Baudrillard, "In the Shadow of the Millennium", *Simulacra and Simulation*

Francois Lyotard *The Postmodern Condition*

Brian McHale *Postmodernist Fiction*

Fredric Jameson *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*

Donna Haraway *A Cyborg Manifesto*

## Films

*Blade Runner*

*Slaughterhouse Five*

## Course Requirements

Attendance and 2 short responses: 20%

Mid-term paper (in class): 16%

Final take home paper: 64%