

淡江大學八十七學年度碩士班入學考試試題

系別：西洋語文研究所

科目：美國文學

本試題共 一 頁

The exam includes three parts, consisting of FIVE short essays. Each question will take 20 points, making a perfect score of 100 points. While answering each question, it is *highly* advisable that you draw specific evidence from characters, images, scenes, plots, settings, or passages to support your arguments.

I. Choose any TWO of the following: each question in this section asks two related sub-questions; remember to answer BOTH.

1. What is the significance of Hester Prynne—to Hawthorne himself (in relation to his view of sin/evil) and to a contemporary feminist critic?
2. What is the significance of Emily Dickinson—to her contemporary transcendentalists, and to postmodern feminist critics?
3. What is the significance of Billy Budd—to Melville himself (in relation to his concern with “natural depravity,” and to the idea of the American Adam?)
4. What is the significance of Walt Whitman—to his contemporary transcendentalists, and to later American poets (remember to give examples).

II. Answer any TWO of the following.

1. What is the significance of *My Antonia* (1918)? How is Willa Cather’s heroine on a Nebraska farm different from or similar to Kate Chopin’s in the New Orleans sea shores (1899)?
2. What is the significance of *The Great Gatsby* (1925)? If T. S. Eliot regarded it as the “first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James,” would you support or object to Eliot?
3. What is the significance of John Barth? Why did critics once refer to him as “narrative chauvinist pig”? Use one of his novels to explain.
4. What is the significance of Gary Snyder? How is his view of nature different from or similar to transcendentalists of the nineteenth century?

III. Nobel laureate Toni Morrison states in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992) that “the very manner by which American literature distinguishes itself as a coherent entity exists because of this unsettled and unsettling population [of African Americans.]” Qualify the “coherent entity” of American literature by drawing on elements and details of a text of your choice.