Rutkowski
20th c American novel
Posting on the electronic bulletin board

Location
It’s at http://www.geneseo.edu/~rutkowsk/bb/

How it works
1. You MUST register. At the menu at the very top, click on Register. You can give as little or as much information as you’d like. The only requirement is you must choose a username that somewhat resembles your real name so I can easily tell who’s posting; e.g. BobSmith or BobS instead of koolguy05. If you have common name (Sarah, Dave), use at least some of your last name too.
2. To post, simply click on the “forum” you wish to post under, such as “introduce yourself” (the first topic on the list). Click “new topic” to start a new topic or “post reply” to reply to someone else’s message.

What you have to do
1. You must log in every single time you visit this page and post, or the website won’t record your posts.
2. Over the course of the semester, you must post to the bulletin board ten times. This basically means you have to post every week, although you can skip three times. The “introduce yourself” post does not count toward this total.
3. Posts are due on Sunday evenings by 6 PM. If you complete your reading early, you can post any time before this deadline. This gives a chance for your classmates (and me) to read the posts before Monday’s class.
4. Posts should treat reading due the following day. If several readings are assigned, you may post on one or all of the readings.
5. If you start a new topic, you must give your post a representative title, such as “black/white imagery” or “Eva’s function in ch 6.” This way students visiting the bulletin board after you who are interested in posting on the same topic will know to click on your topic and respond to you.
6. Write down or print out your post so if you’re called on in class you’ll remember what you said.
7. Last, students who are posting that week are required to read the rest of the posts. I realize this is a lot of work, but it’s necessary if this tool will be useful to us in this course.

What the posts should look like
- new topics: they can include your personal reactions and initial impressions but must go deeper than that, asking a significant question, suggesting an interpretation and giving as many specifics as possible, especially page numbers. They should be brief – maybe 2-4 sentences (at the most!) but meaty.
- another option is to respond to someone else’s post; but you can’t merely agree – you must add something to the discussion.
Examples

**Topic: Stowe’s feminism**
We’ve talked a lot in class about the extent to which Stowe give power to her female characters and – almost uniformly – denigrates her male characters. I’m wondering how her portrait of Marie St. Clare either reinforces this or perhaps complicates this. Marie is perhaps the worst mother – ever, in the history of the world – and her arrogance and selfishness are hard to take at times (see, for ex, p. 343 and 350). What is the reader meant to think about this character and how does she fit in with the other major female characters in the book?

*example of a good response (writer is responding to post about the teenaged protagonist’s embarrassment about his Chinese family):*
I agree with you in some regards—it is not uncommon for the family to be a source of embarrassment to some degree for most kids, but I think Donald's reaction to Chinese culture is more than just connected to his loathing for his families distinct practices and ceremonies. Donald is a minority and that seems to be the driving force behind his divergence from everything Chinese. As he says on page 42, "Hey, everybody's gotta give up the old and become American. If all these Chinese were more American, I wouldn't have all my problems." It seems to me that Donald would try anything to not be recognized as Chinese (Fred Astaire?), and that if his family would just act more "American" he could stop seeing them as crazy people who just make his life more miserable.

**Evaluation**
- These posts will be graded portfolio-style. This means that at the end of the semester, you’ll hand in both evidence you’ve posted the minimum number of times (see below) as well as your five best posts.
- I’ll look for originality, complexity, specificity (did you include page numbers, for example?) and a variety of both posting new topics and thoughtful responses to your classmates.

**To check how many times you’ve posted:**
1. click on your username anywhere it appears as a hyperlink
2. this should give you a “viewing profile” screen, which lists any info you’ve provided about yourself as well as number of times you’ve posted.
3. you should have at least eleven posts by the end of the semester (because this includes the “introduce yourself” post. When you hand in your portfolio of posts, please print this page and include it.