

*Slaughterhouse-Five
or The Children's Crusade: A Duty
Dance with Death*

Kurt Vonnegut

Pop Quiz Answers

- Subtitle?
- Anti-war/anti-glacier?
- POV?
- Slaughterhouse five?
- Billy's profession?
- Common phrase?
- City bombed?
- "Unstuck in Time" meaning?
- Genre Rosewater reads?
- Items in Billy's coat?
- Billy's co-habitant on Tralfamadore?
- Tombstone?
- Billy's death?
- Lily reads?
- Final word of novel?

Mid-term Exam Discussion

- Artist-Figure
- Passage Analysis

“We had long thought of them as a tableau. Emily, a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground, his back to her and clutching a horsewhip, the two of them framed by the back-flung front door. So when she got to be thirty and was still single, we were not pleased exactly, but vindicated; even with insanity in the family she wouldn't have turned down all of her chances if they had really materialized”

Kurt Vonnegut-Style

- Satire
- Gallows humour
- Science Fiction (not read/reviewed as such)
- Pacifist
- Humanist
- Postmodernism
- Metafiction
- Personally “appears” regularly

Kurt Vonnegut – History

- Student with army (mechanical engineer)
- Moved to combat unit
- Captured during Battle of the Bulge
- Imprisoned at Dresden
- Witnessed Dresden bombing Feb. 1945
- Liberated May 1945
- Purple Heart
- Anthropology student, journalist, writing prof

World War II

- Battle of the Bulge
 - December '44-January '45
- Bombing of Dresden
 - 13-15 February 1945 by RAF and USAAF

Dresden

“The Dresden atrocity, tremendously expensive and meticulously planned, was so meaningless, finally, that only one person on the entire planet got any benefit from it. I am that person. I wrote this book, which earned a lot of money for me and made my reputation, such as it is. One way or another, I got two or three dollars for every person killed. Some business I’m in.”

-Introduction to the 1976 Franklin Library edition of *Slaughterhouse Five*

Postmodernism

- Late 20th century (1970s on for literature)
- Parody
- Bricolage and intertextuality
- Jean-Francois Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* (1979)
- Rejecting tradition for the unexplained
- Merging of self & other, subject & object
- Relative truths. No one truth for all.

Narrator/Metafiction

- Self-reference
- Question art/fiction and reality
- Elements of the narrator's life matching that of the author's. Examples?
- The narrator is NOT the author
- Kilgore Trout as stand-in

Plot

- What happens in the story?
- How is the novel structured?