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THE RICHARD STOCKTON COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY



Richard Stockton College Professor's Study Redefines Literary Genre

Kristin Jacobson's Latest Book Analyzes American Domestic Fiction

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Galloway Township, NJ- Dr. Kristin Jacobson, associate professor of American literature and coordinator of the women's, gender and sexuality studies program at Stockton College, has read and analyzed nearly every work of American domestic fiction ever written.

American domestic fiction is a literary genre, historically associated with white, middle-class women, in which the plot and characters focus on the home. The underlying theme of homemaking "provides a window into American culture at the local, national, and global scales," explained Jacobson.

Neodomestic American Fiction, Jacobson's recently published book, analyzes a number of late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century novels and identifies a trend in the novels of that era. Jacobson illustrates through literary examples that authors of that time period often depicted unstable home life in contrast to the American ideal of stable home life.

Jacobson's book also serves as a close study of post-1980 American domestic fiction.

Over the course of her study, Jacobson came to a number of conclusions that reshape the way that the genre fits into American literature.

Throughout her book, Jacobson explained that she "traces and extends domestic fiction's time period into the twenty-first century," and "redefines the genre to include male as well as female authors and protagonists." She also identifies a new subgenre, which she calls neodomestic fiction.

More than 30 novels are cited as examples of domestic fiction that do not conform to the genre's conservative gender, racial and sexual politics, and therefore fall into the subgenre of neodomestic American fiction.

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Neodomestic American Fiction/ page 2

“Whereas, traditionally, only those novels written by and focused on women are labeled ‘domestic fiction,’ *Neodomestic American Fiction* revises this custom and identifies a new subgenre, neodomestic fiction, which has distinctive spatial characteristics,” explained Jacobson.

The Ohio State Press, Jacobson’s publisher, said, “Unlike previous redefinitions and reevaluations, *Neodomestic American Fiction* reads domestic novels alongside feminist geography and architectural history to map the links and disjunctions among a range of authors writing during the same period as well as across centuries and cultures.”

Jacobson hopes that her book will advance our understanding of domestic fiction, and more broadly, American literature and culture. Jacobson said, “The various places I have inhabited, especially during the time spent working on this book, have blessed me with the time, encouragement and knowledge to write.”

Jacobson, a resident of Galloway, earned her Ph.D. in English from The Pennsylvania State University in 2004. Both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees are in English, from the University of Colorado-Boulder and Carthage College respectively.

For more information on *Neodomestic American Fiction*, visit the Ohio State University Press’s website by clicking [here](#).

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