

Fall 2015

Social Combination: Teaching Two Fa(u)lkners and Digital Literacy

Koichi Fujino

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SOCIAL COMBINATION: TEACHING TWO FA(U)LKNEERS
AND DIGITAL LITERACY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Koichi Fujino

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

December 2015

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of English

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Koichi Fujino

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Kenneth Sherwood, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English, Advisor

Todd Thompson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English

Tanya Heflin, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of English

ACCEPTED

Randy L. Martin, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: Social Combination: Teaching Two Fa(u)lkners and Digital Literacy

Author: Koichi Fujino

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Kenneth Sherwood

Dissertation Committee Members: Dr. Todd Thompson
Dr. Tanya Heflin

This dissertation explores the ways to teach the literary works of William Clark Falkner and William Faulkner to ESL (English as a Second Language) students in today's digital environment. William Faulkner's great-grandfather, William Clark Falkner, wrote romantic literary works, and William Faulkner critically uses the motifs of his great-grandfather's works to establish his literary world. Applying Bakhtin's dialogical theory, this study explores how these two authors imagine the social formations of the American South differently in their literary works. The coined term, social combination—which is defined as the individuals' mutual effort to have equal relationships for a certain time—is used as a key term to examine how these two authors depict the characters' personal relationships. William Faulkner employs his characters' social combination as a resistance against the American South's romantic illusions that are represented by William Clark Falkner's literary works. William Faulkner's historical perspective is beneficial for today's ESL students, who explore their new egalitarian formations in their digitally expanded world. The last part of this study outlines how an American literary teacher can connect the works of William Clark Falkner and William Faulkner when teaching ESL students by using today's digital environment. Using three digital platforms—Moodle, WordPress, and Google Drive—a teacher composes egalitarian relationships among class members and inspires students' autonomous discussion on these two authors' works. Through these activities, ESL students are expected to comprehend that the literature of the American South is not only the historical development of the foreign region, but the phenomenon that is connected to their own social formations.