

## Morrison (3)

I also want my work to capture the vast imagination of black people. That is, I want my books to reflect the very practical, shrewd, day to day functioning that black people must do, while at the same time they encompass some great supernatural element. We know that it does not bother them one bit to do something practical and have visions at the same time. So all the parts of living are on an equal footing. Birds talk and butterflies cry, and it is not surprising or upsetting to them. These things make the world larger for them. Some young people don't want to acknowledge this as a way of life. They don't want to hark back to those embarrassing days when we were associated with "haints" and superstitions.

Nellie Y. McKay, "An Interview with Toni Morrison" (1983), in *Conversations with Toni Morrison*, ed. Danille Taylor Guthrie (UP of Mississippi, 1994), 153.

### REALISM PRINCIPLES

- 5.4 In fiction, *realism* is a literary mode, used in a variegated family of fictional (especially novelistic) genres. It has been the novelistic norm since about 1750.
  - 5.4.1 Realism's conventions include: few or no improbable events, no supernatural interventions, "ordinary" (prototypically, middle-class) rather than heroic or noble protagonists, the possibility of seriousness alongside comedy, and denotative reference to particularized details of everyday life rather than allegorical reference.
  - 5.4.2 None of these characteristics are necessary or sufficient conditions for realism, which is a loose, historical category.
  - 5.4.3 When the bar on the supernatural is lifted but the other principal features of realism are conserved, especially in relation to postcolonial literatures incorporating indigenous or folk traditions, we speak of *the marvelous real* or *magical realism*.

### FICTION AND HISTORY (AGAIN)

- 6.2 Fiction participates in the construction of history—with its own conventions.
  - 6.2.1 Whether and how fictions can be said to tell historical truths is a matter for investigation into every component, and every convention, of each fiction.
  - 6.2.2 Fictions transform historical source texts according to implicit interpretations.
- 6.5 The historical horizons of any text include the time of composition, the time of setting, and all the times of circulation and reception.