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HUM 3306: History of Ideas--The Age of Enlightenment to the Age of Anxiety  
Summer 2012

**ESSAY#2 INSTRUCTIONS: DUE BY MIDNIGHT (i.e. the late evening of) WEDNESDAY June 13th**

This is a Gordon Rule Writing course, and so the writing-aspect, regardless of what is being written upon, is taken quite seriously.

You must read and re-read (or at least re-read key passages of) the book you are writing on, seeing how different passages/scenes/ideas relate. You must write a draft and let it sit for a day or two, and then go back adding more pertinent, more nuanced reflections. You must approach essay writing not as if you are just letting the professor know that you've read the assignments and lecture notes and more or less understand them, but as if you are sculpting a work of art. (Yes: I know ... you are perhaps taking lots of classes; it's difficult to linger on writing and revising. Still, I ask you to do this to the best of your ability within the semester calendar limitations.)

If you had problems in the first essay in respect to the writing, you should try to make an extra effort to improve in Essay#2. The two essays are weighted equally in terms of your overall course grade (25% each), but improvement can impact the final assessment of your course grade, when that grade is hovering in the border b/w two grades.

- All the general instructions for ESSAY#1 apply, except that this essay should be about 1500 words long or longer (again quality, not quantity), and it incorporates research/secondary materials. The topic options are listed below.
- Use whatever citation method that you have been taught in your Composition classes here at FIU or elsewhere or which you typically use in your own discipline/major. If you do not include a proper Bibliography page, your essay will not be read or it will be lowered a grade or more.
- Read the last two sentences again.
- Do not consult more secondary sources than provided in the options below or in the prefatory/supplemental scholarly materials in the editions ordered for the course (an introduction in a different edition is o.k.). If I find that additional secondary materials, other than below or in a book's editorial introduction, have been used, the essay will likely receive an immediately "F". If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you will receive an "F" in the course. Please take note: I have a pretty clear sense of your writing style from your first essay and discussion forum entries, so it is very easy to detect plagiarism. And, also,

the "Turnitin" site filters for plagiarism.

- Read the last paragraph again. It's a sad state of educational affairs when I have to write the previous warning ... I do not want to distrust students, but every semester ... well, let's put it this way: I have a separate drawer in my office desk dedicated to student misconduct cases or potential-to-be-discovered-misconduct cases.
- For secondary, research materials: each option below comes with links to online professional/scholarly journals or articles or to the ProjectMuse journal database accessed through the FIU library system. Students sometimes have difficulty figuring out how to get to the links. Follow the directions closely, and you'll figure it out.
- Incorporate the supplied (linked) secondary materials by paraphrasing their arguments or part of their arguments, or by quoting a section of their arguments/key points. Do this in the main body of your essay (not the introduction or conclusion). Your goal is not to show that you've read the secondary materials per se, but that, having read the materials, your own argument/points have become more sophisticated and developed, because you have consulted authoritative wisdom about the topic you are working on. It is, of course, possible to dispute such "authoritative wisdom."
- Definitely note that I have not quantified how many times you should quote or paraphrase or refer to a secondary source's argument. I'm asking you to develop your own analytical ideas and then judiciously incorporate outside ideas/sources. That said, no more than 20% of your paper should be quoted material, whether from the main texts or secondary sources.
- You have to know what your argument is and you have to know the arguments/main points of the secondary material. Only then can you integrate secondary research. Half-hearted tossing in of information from a secondary source--as if it's some strange vegetable you don't have a taste for--is not appropriate. Research typically requires reading a lot of material that ends up not being useful: that's part of the discipline of doing research, ferreting out the useful from the non-useful. Do it (from the provided links)!
- If you do not incorporate the secondary materials supplied (in a qualitative, not quantitative sense), your essay will automatically be dropped at least a letter grade. Get it? Pay attention to these instructions!
- You have to take responsibility and learn how to get access to the FIU library resources from home or from on campus on your own. Or ask assistance from the library staff.

### **OPTION ONE: FRANKENSTEIN**

Focus on the theme or issue of the family or intimate relations in the novel, and make the scene(s) when the monster hangs out in the woodshed spying on the impoverished family central to or important for an interpretation of the novel. It may be that you start right off

in your introduction establishing why the monster's interaction with the cottage family is crucial to our understanding of the novel's overall meaning; it may be that you look almost exclusively at just the cottage scenes in terms of how the monster's sensibility expands or grows; or it may be that you establish a sequence/trajectory of broader or more encompassing ideas in which you use the cottage episode or refer to it specifically only ½ or 2/3rd of the way through your paper. It is possible, as you develop your ideas, that the family theme becomes subordinate to another theme (e.g., Victor's ambition). That's fine.

For a more elaborate example of the last point: say you think the novel is mainly about Victor's inability to maintain connection with his family (because of his ambition or ego). Certainly the scenes in which the monster wants to be part of the cottage family would be key or linked to that main idea--but you might not review the pertinent scenes as evidence until midway in your paper; you would, presumably, start by showing how Victor is alienated, by his ambition, from his own family. Your paper might be about alienation from family structure or dynamics, with a key piece of evidence/interpretation being the cottage scene.

Literary analysis requires a shaping idea or theme or thesis, spelled out or implied in your opening paragraph or opening paragraphs (an introduction can be longer than one paragraph!). But unlike some other forms of analysis, the KEY scene that the analysis hooks around, if there is one key scene, might not be trotted out in your analysis until midway through. Interpretation of literature--that is, somebody reading YOUR interpretation--can become fun because it is a process of discovery, an inductive argument that builds complexity upon complexity, rather than a deductive argument by which you state the main point, and then follow up with subpoints and evidence. (See a review of inductive and deductive analysis in the instructions for the first essay: the first "builds up" an argument, the second "breaks it down".)

Here is a sample organizational roadmap for a hypothetical essay on Frankenstein, using the topic above:

--intro.

--1st 5th: author's anxieties about family/mothering/nurturing

--2nd 5th: translates into a narrative about education and family structures needed for education/development of a sensibility

--3rd 5th: Victor's alienation from his family; seeking of knowledge at the cost of sacrificing relationships

--4th 5th: what other critics have said on these issues + monster's take on education (cottage scene)

--5th 5th: the consequences of a bad or interrupted education for the monster

Please do not overly rely (i.e. you can rely somewhat) on above to structure your paper if you elect this option. I'm offering it so that you see the pattern of how analysis can proceed in stages.

### *Secondary material links:*

Go to the main online page for FIU Libraries, click on the link to connect from home (if you are working from home), click on "Find Articles and Do Research" link, find the "A-Z" list of electronic journals/resources, find the electronic journal database "Project Muse," do a search using the terms (without quote marks) "Frankenstein family" or "Frankenstein parents," and choose what seem to be the most pertinent two articles, for your purposes, from the among the first 10 or so listed.

### **OPTION TWO: DARWIN**

Darwin--a moderately devout man himself, although increasingly doubtful as he grew older--well knew that Origin of Species would be attacked upon various grounds, especially for its supposed impiety. In what ways do you see Darwin anticipating a less than receptive audience, an audience that will feel its traditional beliefs are being challenged? You might consider not only the sequence of chapters (why does he begin with domestic or artificial selection?), but also specific passages (e.g., the famous "Tree of Life" passage on page 74 or the concluding passage on pages 120-121). How do you account for Darwin's fairly frequent recourse to adjectives such as "wonderful" or "beautiful" when speaking of adaptations? Do not simply answer these questions one after another; I'm offering them as brainstorming tools to help you get ideas, not as paint-by-numbers questions that you "fill in" in your actual paper. You need to devise your own thesis about Darwin's book (not just Darwin himself or evolutionary theory), and select suitable quotes. Ideally, your paper should show that you understand 1) the relationship of Darwin's theory to the intellectual currents of the historical period in which he was writing (read the lecture notes!), 2) Darwin's basic argument in his book, and 3) the strategic or rhetorical ways in which he conveys his argument in his book. Again, do not just mechanically "answer" the previous 1,2,3: the basic goal is to show you understand how Darwin's specific book--the content of the treatise and the way he presents that content--relates to and responds to its intellectual/cultural context.

Again, ponder stages of analysis, including historical context. Your paper might not even begin talking about Darwin or his book per se (except for your intro., until page three or so).

### *Secondary material links:*

Link #1. Go to the main online page for FIU Libraries, click on the link to connect from home (if you are working from home), click on "Find Articles and Do Research" link, find the "A-Z" list of electronic journals/resources, find the electronic journal "Project Muse," and do a search to find this essay: Cosans, Chris

### [Was Darwin a Creationist?](#)

Link #2. Also use "Project Muse" to find this essay: Campbell, John Angus

## [Why Was Darwin Believed? Darwin's Origin and the Problem of Intellectual Revolution](#)

### **OPTION THREE: LOCKE, ADAM SMITH, AND MARX**

Locke, Adam Smith (in the [Wealth of Nations](#) excerpt/e-text link), and Marx are concerned about the value of our laboring activity. Write an essay on labor's value, which substantially uses and analyzes Locke's, Smith's, and Marx's notions. This is NOT a comparative paper per se, but rather an essay focusing on an ethical, political, and/or philosophical issue that requires you to consult, as it were, three great thinkers on the subject. If you wrote on Locke previously, you may still do this topic—but do not repeat major portions of your previous essay. This essay gives you more latitude to inject your own ideas (as it were) but be sure to convey your knowledge of Locke, Smith, and Marx as you do so; please note that you aren't required to devote 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of your paper to Locke, 1/3<sup>rd</sup> to Smith, and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> to Marx—the percent will vary depending on your topic. Please note, also, that you don't have to be pro-Marx; if you want to argue against Marx, or more specifically against the “surplus value”=“accumulated labor”=“exploitation” concept, you are welcome to do so—you do not need to follow the prof's avowed take on this issue (the prof. does expect a well-argued paper, though).

*Secondary material links:*

#1. Go to this link and use some aspect of its analysis or data:

<http://sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/wealth.html>

#2. Use the Bibliography (in the essay it's called "Further Information") at the end of the above link/article to find another relevant link/article.

*Alternatively, or if links#1 and#2 above have died, use the link immediately below:*

<http://www.rogerwendell.com/wealth.html>