Gothic Literature, Prof. Sean Scanlan

Final Essay Assignment

Fall 2015

DIRECTIONS: Write a three-page essay (minimum 800 words) in which you examine *Interview with the Vampire* in terms of at least one of these scholarly articles:

1. “Blood Relations: The Gothic Perversion of the Nuclear Family in Ann Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire*,” by Candace R. Benefiel

2. “‘Mute and Beautiful’: The Representation of the Female in Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire*,” by Lorna Jowett

3. “Dreams of Social Flying,” in *Consuming Youth: Vampires, Cyborgs, and the Culture of Consumption*, by Robert Latham

These three options that may help you decide how to approach your own essay:

A. Chose one article and argue that the author is right, but that she or he does not go far enough or in the direction that you want. Suggest alternate scenes or examples that reinforce the author’s point, but ones that the author of the article did not mention. Application-type essay.

B. Chose one article and argue that the author provides an unsatisfying reading of the novel. Suggest alternate ideas and readings to support your views. In this type of essay you will have to move carefully because the article’s author cannot be simply called “wrong.” Think about (a) providing a clear articulation of what seems inaccurate of miscalculated, and (b) provide a clearly argued counterclaim. Argument-type essay.

C. Chose two articles and decide which is stronger. Be careful in this type of essay not simply to summarize each article. Comparison-type essay.

It may help to know that each article deals with a slightly different way or method of reading. I will explain each of them to you in class, but briefly: Benefiel is interested in family dynamics; Jowett is interested in Claudia, gender, and power; and Latham is interested in economics, consumerism, finance, and lifestyle. Also, it may help to have a list of what scenes in the novel you know and like. Make a list of your favorite 10 scenes. Do any of these match up to the article(s)?

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Essay Details:

1. Begin with a strong thesis that you support by using evidence from the text. Also, use direct quotations that you properly cite from the original text.

2. Write using clear paragraphs that contain declarative topic sentences.

3. End with a conclusion that does more than just repeat or summarize your own thesis.

4. Three full pages; use proper, one-inch margins, MLA formatting, standard 12 point font, black ink, no cover page.

5. If you have questions about format, writing a thesis, paragraph structure, conclusions, or citations, please study the Purdue OWL website that is on our OpenLab course page. If you still have questions after trying to answer questions on your own, then ask me.

6. If you have an alternate idea for an essay, just ask me. Chances are that I will approve it.

Important Dates:

\* Due date for Draft: December 3

\* Due date for Final Draft: December 10

\* Final Exam: December 17