Thweatt ENG 231 Fall 2012 Cultural Criticism Research Essay

250 Points

The Assignment:

Your assignment is to write a researched essay in which you analyze the cultural forces at work in shaping a literary text (short story, novel, poem/s, drama, essay, religious text) written before 1600. You may choose any piece that we have covered in class. Choose something that interests you, something you *want to know more about*.

Questions to ask about a literary work for cultural criticism:

1. What kinds of behavior, what models of practice, does this work seem to enforce?

4. Upon what social understandings does the work depend?

5. Whose freedom of thought or movement might be constrained implicitly or explicitly by the work?

Assignment Requirements

- Your analysis must attempt to answer one (or more) of the above questions.
- Present a thesis statement that provides an answer to the question(s) you've chosen to investigate
- Support your thesis using evidence from the primary text and your secondary sources
- Develop paragraphs that support your thesis in a logically organized way
- Effectively incorporate and interpret direct quotes and paraphrases from your primary text and secondary sources
- Incorporate 3 additional secondary, scholarly, peer reviewed sources
- MLA formatting throughout
- Be a minimum of 4-5 pages, not counting your Works Cited page.
- Be clear engaging, and error free.

Due Dates

Research Essay Topic Proposal: Due Wednesday, September 550 points

This proposal should be a minimum of 1 page long. In it you must discuss the literary work and the cultural question(s) you have chosen to focus your analysis on. You should include a discussion of why this text and question got you curious to know more.

Annotated List of Working Sources: Due Wednesday, October 3 50 Points

You must submit an Annotated Bibliography of a minimum of three sources that you plan on using in your essay. It should be in standard MLA format.

First Draft of Research Essay for Workshop: Due Monday, November 26 50 points

Final Draft: Due Wednesday, December 5

200 points

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Evaluative Rubric

Development of Thesis (definition of thesis, explanation of ideas, etc.) /20

✓ The thesis is compelling, insightful, and presented clearly throughout with strong logical connections. (19-20)

- \checkmark The thesis shows insight and is presented clearly with connections among most points. (17-18)
- \checkmark The thesis shows limited insight with gaps in connections among points. (15-16)
- \checkmark Ideas are presented, but lack full explanation or logical connection. (13-14)
- \checkmark Ideas are not presented, or are too vague or unoriginal. (0-12)

Support (use of details, examples, quotations, etc. from appropriate sources) /30

- \checkmark Ideas are supported by relevant examples and especially vivid details. (28-30)
- \checkmark Ideas are supported by related examples and specific details. (25-27)
- \checkmark Ideas are supported with some gaps in relevance or specifics. (22-24)
- ✓ Ideas are supported, but support lacks specificity, relevance, or clarity. (19-21)
- \checkmark Ideas are not supported by sufficient examples or details. (0-18)

Organization (paragraph focus, ordering of points, transitions, etc.) /20

- ✓ Paragraphs develop focused ideas and build upon related ideas in order. (19-20)
- ✓ Paragraphs develop ideas one at a time and support each other's ideas. (17-18)
- ✓ Paragraphs develop ideas with some gaps in focus or ordering. (15-16)
- ✓ Paragraphs develop ideas, but lack clear organization or order. (13-14)
- ✓ Paragraphs lack organization or do not develop ideas. (0-12)

Grammar & Style (sentence structure, punctuation, spelling, etc.) /20

- ✓ Grammar and style show mastery over language usage throughout. (19-20)
- ✓ Grammar and style show strong control over language usage. (17-18)
- \checkmark Grammar and style show control over language usage, with some errors. (15-16)
- ✓ Grammar or style shows lack of control over language usage. (13-14)
- \checkmark Grammar or style hinders the clear communication of ideas. (0-12)

Format

/10

- ✓ Paper fulfills format requirements. (8-10)
- ✓ Paper does not fulfill format requirements. (0-7)

Grade: /100 x 2 = **Final Grade:**

Comments: