

LIT 4930 Midterm Questions

Choose two out the three essay questions below to answer in a formal essay. Each question should be answered in 3-5 typed pages in **MLA format** (don't forget to make sure your margins are actually 1 inch). Please indicate at the top of each essay to which question you are responding. The essays are due at the beginning of class on **Monday, October 3rd**.

A Few Additional Guidelines:

- In each of the questions, be sure to pay attention to the time period, class, gender, and nationality of the writers and texts that you are discussing.
- You must have your essays stapled when you turn them in. Please staple each question separately (i.e. everyone will turn in two stapled essays).
- You must have a works cited page for each of your essays. This page, of course, should be in MLA format.
- You should look over the Essay Editorial Advice and Structure Tips page before you do your final proofreading and turn in your essays.

The Questions:

- 1) Throughout our readings thus far, education has been a critical issue for nineteenth-century feminists and their detractors. What exactly women ought to be taught was heatedly debated on both sides of the Atlantic, and central to this debate was a parallel discussion of women's purpose in society. Choose two texts and compare and/or contrast the authors' use of education to define women's place in nineteenth-century society.
- 2) In the nineteenth-century, the issue of marriage was very important to the burgeoning feminist movement and its opponents. With the growing presence of single women and the increasing attention given to women's struggles within the married home, many writers argued for very specific changes in both the social and legal laws governing this most hallowed institution. Choose a conservative and a radical text (realize that you must make the argument how a particular text falls into either category) and discuss how each seeks to redefine marriage and women's place with that economically, socially, and psychologically significant relationship.
- 3) When we read and discussed selections from Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* and John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women*, I argued that we would see the influence of these seminal texts throughout the semester. Choose two works that we have read thus far and compare and/or contrast how each mobilizes a particular idea or argument from either Mill or Wollstonecraft.