

Take-Home Essay Questions for Exam Two

Choose one of the following questions and write an essay in answer that is at least 1,500 words (about 5 pages). You should use your anthology and *Aurora Floyd* for quotations and other supporting material, but do not use any other outside sources. You may only choose texts that we read on and after Tuesday, Feb. 21; however, you may reference all of *Aurora Floyd* that we have read thus far. Your essay must be in MLA format. Be sure to put the number of the question you are answering below your name on the first page of your essay.

1) The late-Victorians spent great deal of time considering the role of art both in terms of aesthetics and society in new and modern ways. Choose one earlier-Victorian writer (you may, for this question only, use texts that were on the previous exam) and one late-Victorian writer, and compare their views on the role of art. Be sure to connect their ideas about art to larger Victorian issues such as class, imperialism, and gender etc.

2) The Victorians often used discourses of imperialism and evolution to represent both class and gender cultural anxieties. Compare and contrast two texts that mobilize imperialism or evolution (or both) to work out either class or gender issues (i.e. you must choose to write on either class or gender, but not both).

3) Science and religion often came into bitter conflict for some Victorian writers, and yet also harmonized for others. Choose two works that deal with the relationship between science and religion. Remember several of the works we have read deal with this issue in some way, not just those in the "Evolution" section. Write an essay comparing and contrasting the different ways in which this tension is represented in the works.

4) Over the past few weeks, we have been discussing the role of secrets in several of the texts we have read. Choose two texts and compare and contrast both what the secret is and what the secret does in the work. Be sure to make an original argument and not simply regurgitate what I have said in class on this subject – you must have something new and interesting to say about the secret in your chosen texts.

5) For the Victorians, the imperial project was as much about defining England and English-ness as it was defining the colonial other. Compare and contrast two works that deal with Victorian England's interactions with colonial others and discuss how they collude with and/or challenge this discourse of nationalism. Remember almost all of the works we have read deal with this issue in some way, not just those in the "Empire and National Identity" section. Be sure to connect the individual author's views with larger Victorian discourses of imperialism.