**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**SEMESTER 2 EXAMINATION 2017-2018**

**IAH 207 – LITERATURES, CULTURES, & IDENTITIES**

**“MONSTERS IN LITERATURE & FILM”**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Choose and answer **ONE** of the threequestions below.

2. You **MAY NOT** write about any texts that you wrote about for the mid-term essay.

3. This is an **OPEN** **BOOK** examination.

4. Each question requires you to write about **TWO** different texts.

5. Your essay should be between 800 and 1000 words long (roughly 3-4 double-spaced pages).

6. The essay is due (via Dropbox on D2L, using TurnItIn) on **Thurs., May 3 (11:59pm)**.

**OPTIONS**

NOTE: The word “text” can refer to any medium or genre, including film, short fiction, novels, graphic novels, etc.

1. Consider the quotation below, by critic Jack Halberstam. After reading the quotation carefully, write a response in which you: a) explain in detail the meaning and significance of the quotation, and b) explain in detail how it relates to TWO texts we’ve studied.

“Monsters are meaning machines. They can represent gender, race, nationality, class, and sexuality in one body. And even within these divisions of identity, the monster can still be broken down. . . . Monsters . . . are therefore technologies, narrative technologies that produce the perfect figure for negative identity. Monsters have to be everything the human is not and, in producing the negative of human, these [texts] make way for the invention of human as white, male, middle class, and heterosexual.” (Jack Halberstam)

2. Consider the following two quotations, by philosopher Julia Kristeva and critic Barbara Creed (respectively). Though the second quotation (Creed’s) is about horror film, it could be said to apply to a number of texts—literature and film—that we’ve studied, regardless of genre. After reading each quotation carefully, write a response in which you: a) explain each of the quotations and their significance (including how they are related), and b) explain in detail how they relate to TWO texts we’ve studied.

“Fear of the archaic mother turns out to be essentially fear of her generative power.” (Julia Kristeva)

“Woman’s birth-giving function has provided the horror film with an important source of many of its most horrific images—its intrauterine iconography, the parthenogenetic mother, evocations of the uncanny and images of alien births.” (Barbara Creed)

[Note: “parthenogenesis” is defined as “reproduction without fertilization”—usually female reproduction without male fertilization.]

3. Consider the following two quotations, by novelist Junot Díaz and journalist David Brooks, respectively. Though the quotations discuss real traumatic events, they could arguably be applied to fictional catastrophes—or fictional portrayals of real ones—with equal insight. After reading each quotation carefully, write a response in which you: a) explain each of the quotations and their significance, and b) explain in detail how they relate to TWO texts we’ve studied.

“[I]f apocalyptic catastrophes have any value it is that in the process of causing things to fall apart they also give us a chance to see the aspects of our world that we as a society seek to run from, that we hide behind veils of denials.” (Junot Díaz)

“[Catastrophes] wash away the surface of society, the settled way things have been done. They expose the underlying power structures, the injustices, the patterns of corruption and the unacknowledged inequalities.” (David Brooks)

**ASSESSMENT**

On the following two pages, you will find the rubric I will use to assess the final exam. To get a 4.0, you would need to achieve “Level 5” in at least three of the four categories.

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| **Criteria** | **Level 5** | **Level 4** | **Level 3** | **Level 2** | **Level 1** |
| **Analysis of Quotation(s)** | Analysis of the quotation(s) is clearly written and evinces a compelling level of complexity. Writer explains multiple aspects of the quotation with close attention to the language. Analysis adds new insights to previous classroom discussions. | Analysis of the quotation(s) is either clearly written but lacking some complexity, or it evinces a compelling level of complexity but requires further clarification. Writer explains multiple aspects of the quotation with some attention to the language. Analysis captures many insights from previous classroom discussions. | Analysis of the quotation(s) captures the main points but lacks nuance or clarity. Writer explains basic aspects of the quotation with minimal attention to the language. Analysis reiterates basic points from previous classroom discussions without providing new insight. | Analysis of the quotation(s) captures the main points but lacks nuance and clarity. Writer explains basic aspects of the quotation with no attention to the language. Analysis reiterates some basic points from previous classroom discussions but may misrepresent them or neglect important aspects. | Analysis of the quotation(s) is extremely limited and/or misinterprets the meaning. Writer fails to explain basic aspects of the quotation(s). Analysis fails to live up to basic points made in class discussions. |
| **Analysis of Text 1** | Analysis of the monster/text is consistently used to clarify aspects of the quotations and related ideas. Evidence and explanation are provided in sufficient detail, without getting lost in summary. They help to illustrate the ideas elaborated in/around the quotations. Interpretations are persuasive. The analysis adds significant new aspects to previous class discussions. | Analysis of the monster/text is often used to clarify aspects of the quotations and related ideas. Evidence and explanation are provided in sufficient detail, without getting lost in summary. They are clearly connected to the quotations and related ideas but are not necessarily persuasive. The analysis captures the best points made in, and adds some new aspects to, previous class discussions. | Analysis of the monster/text is sometimes used to clarify aspects of the quotations and related ideas. Evidence and explanation are provided in sufficient detail, but may get lost in summary. They are often connected to quotation and related ideas, but sometimes fail to demonstrate the point. The analysis reiterates points made in previous class discussions but does not add to them. | Analysis of the monster/text is occasionally used to clarify aspects of the quotation and related ideas. Evidence and explanation are sometimes connected to the argument/thesis, but may get lost in summary, fail to support the argument, or confuse the point. The analysis reiterates some but not all points made in previous class discussions. | Analysis of the monster/text is not clearly connected to the quotation(s). Assertions are made without supporting evidence or examples, or examples are provided without any clear connection to the quotation or related ideas. |
| **Analysis of Text 2** | See above | See above | See above | See above | See above |
| **Synthesis of Ideas** | Essay provides many insightful connections between the quotations (and related ideas) and the monsters/texts discussed. The analyses consistently mutually inform one another, revealing new aspects of both the quotations and the monsters/texts being discussed. Connections to larger course concepts are clear, novel, and productive. | Essay provides some insightful connections between the quotations (and related ideas) and the monsters discussed. The analyses sometimes mutually inform one another, revealing new aspects of either the quotation(s) or the monsters being discussed. Some connections to larger course concepts are made. | Connections between the quotations (and related ideas) and the monsters discussed are clear but limited. The analysis of the monsters illustrates but does not significantly expand upon the quotations and related ideas (or vice versa). A few limited connections to larger course concepts are made. | Connections between the quotations (and related ideas) and the monsters discussed are either limited and static, or unclear. Few useful connections to larger course concepts are made. | Connections between the quotations (and related ideas) and the monsters discussed are limited, static, and unclear. No useful connections to larger course concepts are made. |