

國立中央大學九十學年度碩士班研究生入學試題卷

所別: 英美語文學系 不分組 科目: 批判閱讀 共二頁 第一頁

SPRING 2001 GRADUATE STUDENT EXAM: Critical Reading and Writing

Please answer **TWO (only two)** of the following questions. Both have an equal value. Focus your analyses on the quoted passages themselves. You have 100 minutes to write the exam so manage your time accordingly. A relatively short, thoughtful, well-written answer will score higher than one that is merely long.

Question 1

Contained in de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* is this account by the eighteenth-century botanist John Bartram of the moment when he first recognized what he would do with his life. Bartram is extremely successful in his new profession, becoming co-founder of the American Philosophical Society and a celebrated member of the new scientific establishment in the United States. What does his account tell us about the nature (i.e., motives, consequences) of his choice to leave the land, especially as it involved forms of labor and the development of class identities and class relations?

I was very busy in holding my plough (for thee see'st that I am but a plough-man), and being weary, I ran under the shade of a tree to repose myself. I cast my eyes on a daisy; I plucked it mechanically and viewed it with more curiosity than common country farmers are wont to do, and observed therein very many distinct parts, some perpendicular, some horizontal. "What a shame," said my mind, or something that inspired my mind, "That thee should have employed so many years in tilling the earth and destroying so many flowers and plants without being acquainted with their structures and their uses!" ... I hired a man to plough for me and went to Philadelphia.

Question 2

This is an entry made in the diary of Sophia Hawthorne, wife of the famous American author Nathaniel Hawthorne. Despite being highly educated, Sophia, like most middle-class woman of her time, devoted herself to keeping house and raising children, including the couple's son, Julian. What might we conclude from this anecdote about the nature of gender relations in the period, in particular relations within the home?

Julian cried hard to get out at noon when it was red hot & I could not quiet him, till at last I said—"Here is a little boy who I believe pretends he loves his mother—" He interrupted me with "I don't *pretend*."—"Well I think you do not & and yet what love is this that gives his mother so much pain instead of happiness?—Because his mother will not let him get sick, if she can help it, he cries & complains so as to hurt her very much, especially as today she is not well. If I did not love you, I would say—"Go & play in the hot sun as much as you like—it is nothing to me." He stopped & was perfectly still & when I saw his face again, a smile was struggling out of his beautiful eyes.—I never saw a sweeter effort to prove real love and it lasted all the rest of the day.

Question 3

Following is an excerpt from a memoir by Zora Neale Hurston, one of the best-known American women writers of the twentieth century. Hurston was African American and Howard is an African American University. How does her account suggest that college life sought to make her a good citizen—perhaps even a good African American citizen? How might her experience have been different if the university had been Harvard instead of Howard, and if she had been a white instead of black, middle-class instead of poor, and a man instead of a woman?

I shall never forget my first college assembly, sitting there in the chapel of that great university. I was so exalted that I said to the spirit of Howard, "You have taken me in. I am a tiny bit of your greatness. I swear to you that I shall never make you ashamed of me."

It did not wear off. Every time I sat there as part and parcel of things, looking up there at the platform crowded with faculty members, the music, the hundreds of students about me, it would come down on me again. When on Mondays we ended the service by singing Alma Mater, I felt just as if it were the Star Spangled Banner [the American national anthem]:

Reared against the eastern sky
Proudly there on hill-top high
Up above the lake so blue
Stands Old Howard brave and true.
There she stands for truth and right,
Sending forth her rays of light,
Clad in robes of majesty
Old Howard! We sing of thee.

My soul stood on tiptoe and stretched up to take in all that it meant. So I was careful to do my classwork and be worthy to stand there under the shadow of the hovering spirit of Howard. I felt the ladder under my feet.

Question 4

The Constitution of the United States begins with the words "We the People." Why does it begin with this phrase, and what necessary role does it perform in the process of constituting a nation as a form of social organization?