

93 学年度碩士班甄試入學考試 [筆試]

Directions: Choose ONE of the questions below. Your answer should be in essay form, with a thesis statement and a detailed argument to support it, and with examples and explanation. (100 points)

1. For passage #1 below, describe what the author is arguing, in the first paragraph, about the representation of perverse sexuality in Victorian Gothic narratives, and then in the second paragraph about how differently positioned viewers can be affected by the power of horror. When you discuss the second paragraph, make sure you explain how this author's position differs from a commonly held opinion. After summarizing the passage, think of an example of a Gothic or horror narrative, or monstrous body in a cultural narrative or media representation, that enables a representation of a sexual practice, desire or identity usually considered perverse in its historical context. This sexual perversion can either be represented directly or implied in the narrative. Then explore some different ways in which readers/viewers could possibly respond to the representation—by identifying with monster or victim, by feeling vulnerable or empowered, etc. (Note: don't use the same examples that are already in the passage).
2. Question #2 asks you to analyze two passages (from two different novels). Both are about the relationship of a maid named Lucy and her female employer. How is this relationship presented in each passage? How might the second passage be an interrogation of the first? In your analysis, look closely at the narrative language, the narrator's position, description and dialogue for the use of irony (or absence of it) in both passages.

In Gothic, as in many areas of Victorian culture, sexual material was not repressed but produced on a massive scale, as Michel Foucault has argued.²⁹ The narrative, then, that professed outrage at acts of sexual perversion (the nightly wanderings of Hyde, for example, or Dracula's midnight feasts) in fact produced a catalogue of perverse sexuality by first showcasing the temptations of the flesh in glorious technicolor and then by depicting so-called normal sex as a sickly enterprise devoid of all passion. One has only to think of the contrast between Mina Harker's encounter with Count Dracula — she is found lapping at blood from his breast — and her sexually neutral, maternal relations with her husband.

The production of sexuality as identity and as the inversion of identity (perversion — a turning away from identity) in Gothic novels consolidates normal sexuality by defining it in contrast to its monstrous manifestations. Horror, I have suggested, exercises power even as it incites pleasure and/or disgust. Horror, indeed, has a power closely related to its pleasure-producing function and the twin mechanism of pleasure-power perhaps explains how it is that Gothic may empower some readers even as it disables others. An example of how Gothic appeals differently to different readers may be found in contemporary slasher movies like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) and *Halloween* (1978). Critics generally argue that these films inspire potency in a male viewer and incredible vulnerability in a female viewer. However, as we shall see in the later chapters of this book, the mechanisms of Gothic narrative never turn so neatly around gender identifications. A male viewer of the slasher film, like a male reader of the nineteenth-century Gothic, may find himself on the receiving end of countless acts of degradation in relation to monstrosity and its powers while the female reader and spectator may be able to access a surprising source of power through monstrous forms and monstrous genres.

(And Lucy, coming into the drawing-room with her tray held out, set the giant candlesticks on the mantelpiece, the silver casket in the middle, turned the crystal dolphin towards the clock. They would come; they would stand; they would talk in the mincing tones which she could imitate, ladies and gentlemen. Of all, her mistress was the weldest - mistress of silver, of linen, of china, for the sun, the silver, the silver off their hinges, Rumpelmayer's men, gave her a sense, as she held the paper-knife on the inlaid table, of something achieved. Behold! she said, speaking to her old friends in the baker's shop, where she had first seen service at Caterham, prying into the glass. She was lady Angela, attending Princess Mary, when in came Mrs Dalloway.)

'Oh, Lucy,' she said, 'the silver does look nice!'
'And how,' she said, turning the crystal dolphin to stand straight, 'how did you enjoy the play last night?' 'Oh, they had to go before the end!' she said. 'They had to be back at ten!' she said. 'So they don't know what happened,' she said. 'That does seem hard luck,' she said for her servants stayed later, if they asked her). 'That does seem rather a shame,' she said, taking the old bald-looking cushion in the middle of the sofa and putting it in Lucy's arms, and giving her a little push, and saying:

'Take it away! Give it to Mrs Walker with my compliments! Take it away!' she cried.

And Lucy stopped at the drawing-room door, holding the cushion, and said, very shyly, turning a little pink, 'Couldn't she help to mend that dress?'

But, said Mrs Dalloway, she had enough on her hands already, quite enough of her own to do without that.

'But, thank you, Lucy, oh, thank you,' said Mrs Dalloway, and thank you, thank you, she went on saying (sitting down on the sofa with her dress over her knees, her scissors, her silks), thank you, thank you, she went on saying in gratitude to her servants generally for helping her to like this, to be what she wanted, gentle, generous-hearted. Her servants liked her. And then this dress of hers - where was the tear? and how her needle to be threaded. This was a favourite dress, one of Sally Barker's, the last almost she ever made, alas, for Sally had now retired, and was at Ealing, and if ever I have a moment, thought Clarissa (but never would she have a moment any more), I shall go and see her at Ealing. For she was a character, thought Clarissa, a real artist. She might of little out-of-the-way things: yet her dresses were never

Mariah and I were saying good night to each other the way we always did, with a hug and a kiss, but this time we did it as if we both wished we hadn't gotten such a custom started. She was almost out of the room when she turned and said, "I was looking forward to telling you that I have Indian blood, that the reason I'm so good at catching fish and hunting birds and roasting corn and doing all sorts of things is that I have Indian blood. But now, I don't know why, I feel I shouldn't tell you that. I feel you will take it the wrong way."

This really surprised me. What way should I take this? Wrong way? Right way? What could she mean? To look at her, there was nothing remotely like an Indian about her. Why claim a thing like that? I myself had Indian blood in me. My grandmother is a Carib Indian. That makes me one-quarter Carib Indian. But I don't go around saying that I have some Indian blood in me. The Carib Indians were good sailors, but I don't like to be on the sea; I only like to look at it. To me my grandmother is my grandmother, not an Indian. My grandmother is alive; the Indians she came from are all dead. If someone could get away with it, I am sure they would put my grandmother in a museum, as an example of something now extinct in nature, one of a handful still alive. In fact, one of the museums to which Mariah had taken me devoted a whole section to people, all dead, who were more or less related to my grandmother.

Mariah says, "I have Indian blood in me," and underneath everything I could swear she says it as

How do you get to be the sort of victor who can claim to be the vanquished also?

I now heard Mariah say, "Well," and she let out a long breath, full of sadness, resignation, even dread. I looked at her; her face was miserable, tormented, ill-looking. She looked at me in a pleading way, as if asking for relief, and I looked back, my face and my eyes hard; no matter what, I would not give it.

I said, "All along I have been wondering how you got to be the way you are. Just how it was that you got to be the way you are."

Even now she couldn't let go, and she reached out, her arms open wide, to give me one of her great hugs. But I stepped out of its path quickly, and she was left holding nothing. I said it again. I said, "How do you get to be that way?" The anguish on her face almost broke my heart, but I would not bend. It was hollow, my triumph, I could feel that, but I held on to it just the same.