

Paper 1 Assignment
EN130 – Science/Fiction
29 September 2017

Purpose: For this assignment, you will exercise the critical reading and contextualizing skills we have been practicing in class on one of the assigned texts for the course. You will practice your ability to close-read a text and to put it into conversation with its historical context, a critical context, or in literary context with another text we've read so far.

Task: In a paper between **1250 and 1750** words in length, you must make a sustained argument about one or more of the primary texts we've read thus far. Your argument should have something to do with the *nature of the human*. You may (but are not required) to utilize the secondary material on the syllabus or on the secondary source resource sheet. Similarly, you may but are not required to do additional research.

Potential questions / topics: You may answer any one of these questions, some combination of several of these questions, or make your own prompt entirely. Choose whatever excites, interests, or frustrates you most. You should think of these questions as starting points for your own analysis and argument, and should not feel obligated to answer every sub-question. If you wish to make your own prompt, ***email me before Monday, October 2nd with your topic.***

- Take a particular text and discuss what separates the *human* from the *non-human*, the *sub-human*, or the *post-human* in it. For example, what makes Frankenstein's monster a monster while leaving Frankenstein a man?
- How is the question of identity and 'who gets to be human' tied up in the text or texts of your choice with 'othered' identity categories like gender, race, or sexuality?
- How do *physical descriptions* in your text or texts embrace or deny a certain theory of humanity? Perform a series of close readings of the physical descriptions
- How do the framing devices of your text impact your reading of certain characters within that text? What does a close analysis of those frames offer you in terms of understanding the characters or the action of the texts?
- Frankenstein warns Walton, near the end of the novel, about the monster's *eloquence*. Analyze the concept of eloquence and rhetoric as it appears in *Frankenstein*. How does this question play into your understanding of the human?
- How does the question of paternity, maternity, and family relate to the question of the human in your texts? What can we say about 'the human' by looking at the question of genealogy?

Comments: Whatever topic you choose, you **must** support your argument with quotations from your texts. Additionally, these quotes should be chosen because they support your argument *and* you should spend the necessary time unpacking your quotations to say *why* they matter. Whatever texts you choose to work with must be cited in proper MLA format. If you are having trouble with any part of the assignment, feel free to either email me. Alternatively, set up a meeting with me. I will be on campus all next week!

Logistics:

First Draft due in class 10/6

Final Draft due in class 10/20