

MID TERM EXAM, PART II

As you write your responses to the following questions, keep in mind that the underlying theme of this course has been the perplexities of American pluralism. As you respond to each of these questions, draw on and refer to as much supporting material from the course as is appropriate and instructive. It is not necessary to do this in great detail but in ways that bolster or substantiate your comments by referencing, in some specific way, the biographies, articles, videos, lectures, discussions, etc., to which you were exposed in this course.

DUE WITH FINAL PORTFOLIO, DECEMBER 6

Place in the box outside my office in the Soc Dept, 217T Cramer Hall

#1. Alex Haley (13%)

- (a) In what way was Alex Haley's identity affected by the so-called "one drop of blood" rule?
- (b) Whether or not you think this is an inappropriate or erroneous rule, identify two net benefits and two costs, socially speaking, of eliminating such a rule?
- (c) What was Haley's other lineage?

#2. Drawing the Line (15%)

- a) What is an eruv? (In responding to this question provide both a literal and a figurative definition.)
- (b) Using your figurative definition, identify and describe an "eruv" of your own, stipulating how "real" your eruv really is.
- (c) Is your eruv "more real" than the one in the article "Drawing the Line" and, if so, how come?

#3. Black, White, and Brown (12%)

- (a) In what ways is Cornel West black?
- (b) In what ways is he white?
- (c) In what ways is he Anglo?
- (d) What about De Alba – what color is he?

#4. Richard Rodriguez (15%)

You've just recently seen an interview with Richard Rodriguez.

- (a) How would you summarize his argument in a single sentence?
- (b) In what ways do you agree/disagree with this argument?
- (c) Using his distinctions, in what ways are you brown?
- (d) In what ways are you not brown?
- (e) Do you think your children will be browner than you?

#5. Group Presentations during the last week of class (15%)

Identify as specifically as possible at least one new insight, realization, or aspect of understanding that you drew from the in-class Group Presentations, including your own. You should list six: one for each of the diverse groups that was reported on (Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Jewish/Russian/European Americans, Arab/Islamic Americans. (You should answer these after you have heard the in-class group presentations.)

**THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS SHOULD BE COMPLETED
AFTER YOU HAVE ASSEMBLED YOUR FINAL PORTFOLIO:**

#6. News Clippings (10%)

Reflecting on all the materials in your Portfolio, what do you see as the most intriguing, bothersome, difficult perplexity that has to do with American pluralism? In what ways do you think we should have pursued this topic further in class? (You may name more than one.)

#7. Future Perplexities (10%)

Identify at least two perplexities of pluralism that you anticipate your children's generation will be dealing with 20 to 30 years from now and explain why you think this will be so.

#8. Reflections on Yourself (10%)

As a result of this course, how have you come to understand your own identities, (in terms of the various categories we've used throughout the course), your own status set, and your own "place" in American society – and what have you learned about yourself as a result?

EXTRA CREDIT QUESTIONS (You must answer both questions well in order to give your final grade a little boost, nudge, or tweak.)

A. The packet article by Benjamin Schwarz titled "The Diversity Myth," although written in 1995, seems especially relevant to our current activities in Iraq.

- (a) Explain why this might be the case.
- (b) Indicate what pertinent lessons you draw from Schwarz's analysis in regard to our involvement in the Middle East.

B. Identify the article or reading in the reading packet that was the most interesting to you, and say why.

**YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO READ OVER YOUR EXAM BEFORE
TURNING IT IN TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE RESPONDED
COMPLETELY TO EACH OF THE QUESTIONS.**