

## Questioning “Eruvs”

This assignment is based on your understanding of the ideas in “Drawing the Line” and your ability to connect these ideas with your own experience in the rest of the course. The goal is to write a short paper that deals with these questions and demonstrates your understanding of the ideas. As you now re-read this article, start thinking about the following questions, especially in relation to the autobiography you are reading, but also in relation to other topics of the class as well:

- What "eruv-like" things do you encounter in your reading of the autobiography? (Try to identify and describe at least three such things.) In what ways are the things you have named more or less real than an eruv?
- What makes any—or all—such things real? How should we make sense of the word “real” in this context? Identify and describe at least three eruv-like things that you believe in. Are any of the things that you believe in not eruv-like? What is the difference between things that are eruv-like and those that are not?
- What do you see happening when one person encounters someone else's eruv-like things? What happens when one group's eruv-like thing meets another group's eruv-like thing, and they are different from one another?

As much as you can, offer examples from the materials you have been working at understanding (including the autobiography), together with your own experience, to help illustrate or illuminate your thoughts.

Some questions to be answered (incorporate as many of the suggestions above as are useful to your responses):

1. What is an eruv? (This will find out who has done the reading.)
2. Is an eruv real?
3. What makes an eruv real—or anything else for that matter?
4. How are we being accepting of others when what we accept about them isn't real to us?
5. How are we being multicultural if what we accept about others' cultures isn't real to us?
6. Are we really being multicultural or pluralistic if we aren't giving anything' up or changing in any way (this goes back to #4 and #5)?
7. Does America have a common culture? Is it possible to not have a common culture and survive as a society? Where should the reality lines in our common culture be drawn and who should decide when they really matter (i.e., are really real)?

*P.S. These aren't easy questions.... You are encouraged to come back to this essay at a later time during the course to rethink, rewrite, revise, or extend it..*