

Race and Ethnicity Comprehensive Exam
April 2016

Part I: Answer one of the following

1. W.E.B. Du Bois is arguably one of the most important scholars of the sociology of race relations in particular and the discipline more broadly. Discuss three ways Du Bois employed the concept of race in his work. Considering the state of contemporary race relations in the U.S. today, how does Du Bois's concepts and empirical studies remain relevant?
2. Compare and contrast the various theories of assimilation that exist at present to Omi and Winant's concepts of racism and racial projects, and the privileged position it gives to the morphology of the human body.

Part II: Answer one of the following

1. In recent years, many publications in the sociology of race and ethnic relations have either explicitly or implicitly criticized the discipline for "white washing" race. How have the most well-known examples of these critiques been made on both theoretical and methodological grounds? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments made?
2. In *Racism Without Racists* Eduardo Bonilla-Silva asks: "how is it possible to have this tremendous degree of racial inequality in a country where most whites claim that race is no longer relevant (2014, p. 2)?" Discuss how Bonilla-Silva and other sociologists have explored the ideology of color-blindness in the United States. What are emerging areas of inquiry related to the study of color-blindness?

Part III: Answer one of the following:

1. How and to what extent does present-day social science knowledge of the multiple and variegated racial identities of ethnic members of various immigrant groups in the US, including their extensive practice of passing for whites, be advanced by the merging of racial and ethnic theoretical conceptualizations? What present-day demographic patterns accentuate the need for this merging?
2. Although inequality/social stratification has long been a specialty area in numerous sociology programs across the country, growing interest in race/ethnicity specifically has led many universities to offer new graduate seminars and hire professors in this important area. Assuming you are hired at a PhD granting university and asked to teach the first graduate seminar in race/ethnicity, what would you propose? In this essay, you are to articulate why a seminar in race/ethnicity is important at the graduate level. Then you must provide an overview of the major themes or topics that you believe are essential to cover in a race/ethnicity course. Be sure to provide examples of key studies or works as support for each of your themes/topics.