

Race/Ethnicity Comprehensive Exam
6 Hours – In House
Spring 2023

General Instructions:

1. You must answer three questions: choice one **question from each of the three sections**. You may answer the questions in any order you wish, but identify your answer by both set and number (e.g., II, 1).
2. You are allowed to bring in food and drink and to take individual short breaks as needed.
3. Email your answer to Tammy Simpson-Turner (tsimpson@udel.edu). You may want to email yourself the file as a backup. You should not email the file to anyone else.

-

**Race and Ethnicity Comprehensive Exam
Spring 2020**

Part I: Theories of Race and Structural Racism. Please answer one of the following questions:

- (1) Please describe the major tenets of W.E.B DuBois' (1903) *Double Consciousness Theory*? What does the founding of *Double Consciousness Theory* have to do with DuBois' (1903) upbringing or early socialization around race? Also, what does DuBois (1903) mean by his prophetic argument that the most pressing challenge of the 20th Century will be "the color line"?; and what does he mean by his provocative race question, "how does it feel to be a problem?". How has DuBois' (1903) warning to broader America held up or compare to racial circumstances in the 21st Century? Specifically, what was the state of employment and educational affairs for Black America as noted by DuBois (1903)?; or what implications did *Double Consciousness Theory* have for Black students and adults in the late 1800's? Also, please use 1-2 contemporary arguments to describe whether *Double Consciousness Theory* is either relevant or not relevant for Black students and/or adults in the workplace?
- (2) Critical Race Theory (CRT) is under attack in schools, organizations, and other public/political arenas. For example, there are a number of state legislatures debating bills to seek to ban its use in K-12 classrooms. And one conservative organization, Heritage Foundation, has attributed CRT for BLM protests, the existences of LGBTQ clubs in schools, diversity training in federal agencies, California's recent curriculum changes to ethnic studies just to name a few. In this essay, what's an explanation for why CRT specifically is under attack? In your explanation, be sure to describe what CRT means, its major principles/tenets and concept/definitions. What is the critique of CRT and/or reasons for the attack? Last, is this attack new or is it in line with race-based attacks historically?
- (3) Eduardo Bonilla-Silva's theory of color-blind racism has been one of the most influential to contemporary debates in the sociology of race and ethnic relations. Explain the theory in detail and its contribution to the field. Additionally, how is Michelle Alexander's use of "color-blind" similar or different to Bonilla-Silva's theory? Can Bonilla Silva's theory inform Alexander's critique of the criminal justice system and her vision for dismantling mass incarceration in the U.S.?

Part II: Intersectionality: Understanding Race, Gender and Class. Please answer one of the following questions:

- (1) What makes research intersectional? Intersectionality brings critical insight into race class, gender, sexuality, nation and age but these are only some categories. Despite consensus that these constructs are reciprocal rather than exclusive categories, what counts as intersectionality has been debated. In this essay, draw upon key scholars and their work to describe what makes research intersectional.

Be sure to outline or delineate a set of principles that distinguish intersectionality. Then provide an example (or examples) of scholarship that you believe offers intersectionality as the core praxis to inform our discipline.

- (2) Please describe Patricia Hill Collin's theory of Black Feminist Thought? What are the major tenets of this theory and what are the core "controlling images" she argues Black women have been forced into? How have these controlling images been expanded by other feminists? Also, what is Collin's arguments about white feminism and this literature's impact on Black women and/or Black feminism? Additionally, how does Audre's Lorde's and bell hooks arguments on white feminism jibe with Collin's argument on white feminism?
- (3) William Julius Wilson's seminal contribution to the sociology of race relations demonstrates the interconnectedness of race and class inequality. At the same time, Wilson's own perspective on why race and class matter for understanding persistent racial inequalities has evolved over time. Considering Wilson's early to his more recent work, how have his arguments evolved? Finally, pick a topic of personal interest and write a brief case study that highlights the strengths and limitations of Wilson's central arguments.

Part III: Community Approaches on Race, Ethnicity and Inequality. Please answer one of the following questions:

- (1) How does research that centers the lived experiences of individuals (e.g., Anderson, Feagin, Fleury-Steiner, and others) contribute to our understanding of racial inequality in America? In answering this question, you should demonstrate an understanding of key findings as well as the theoretical and methodological approaches used in prior qualitative research on lived experiences. Finally, propose a future study in this tradition of research that clearly explains how your study is informed by prior research and how it contributes to our understanding of racial inequality in America.
- (2) Please describe what dominant community-based methods have been used in the field of sociology and criminology to examine questions grounded in race, gender and class. How have quantitative and qualitative methods been drawn on to examine notions of race, gender and class? Also, what are the strengths and limitations of both of these methodological approaches? Make sure to offer between 3-4 examples of how sociologists and criminologist have drawn on to examine race, gender and class? Lastly, how have these methods evolved over the 20th and 21st centuries?
- (3) The social sciences, including sociology and criminology, have offered a considerable amount of research on immigration. In addition to the U.S. becoming increasingly diverse, children of immigrant parents are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. Drawing on literature in sociology or criminology, what do we know about growing up a child of immigrant parents or immigrant children in the U.S.? What are the experiences of immigrant

children? What are the challenges facing children of immigrants specifically? In what ways have sociologists and criminologists studied this rapidly growing group?