

**Prelim Exam – Race & Ethnicity / History of Science**

**Spring 2006**

**Section I. Race and Culture.**

**(Answer the following question: NOTE: There is only one question here, but it allows you to range widely in discussing the general topic over which you should be able to display a certain mastery.)**

You have been invited to the University of Delaware to lecture to a class of undergraduate history majors in their new “race and history” core course. Your topic: “Science versus Society: Conceptions of Race in Western Europe and America Since 1850.” How would you organize this lecture? What key texts and historical figures would feature in your presentation? How would you narrate this history? How would your narrative end?

We post the first question in this way because we would like you to think about how the fields of “race” and the “history” intersect and we would like you to both display your mastery of these fields (however selectively; they are vast, after all) and to share with us your observations about how these two ways of looking at race have coexisted and, perhaps, overlapped over the past century and a half.

**Section II. Race and Ethnicity.**

**(Answer one of the following questions.)**

**IIa.**— Benedict’s Anderson *Imagined Communities* and Hobsbaw’n’s and Ranger’s *Invention of Tradition* display the inventiveness of ethnicity and the traditions that are used to establish conceptions of ethnicity. Assess the responses by scholars of ethnicity and identity to these works and assess the value of these critiques.

**IIb.**— Colonialism is a force of significant racial and cultural reformulation of Native American and African groups. Address various scholars’ explanations for the way racial and cultural identities emerged in this era. Pay particular attention to the conceptual frameworks employed by these authors.

**IIc.**— In the continents of North America and Africa, nationalism has strong connections to ethnicity. Write an essay that addresses the interconnectiveness between ethnicity and nationalism in both continents in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**IId.**— Frederick Barth argues that ethnicity is always defined relative to surrounding communities. This process creates ethnic boundaries that are continuously redefined. Address his theory relative to recent works on ethnicity and identity.

**Section III. Race and Science.**

(Answer one of the following):

**IIIa.**—Nineteenth-century popular conceptualizations of race were based mainly on externally visible human traits, such as skin color, facial features, etc. By the turn-of-the-century, conceptualizations had changed to more internally measured characteristics, such as IQ and cognitive ability. (A) Illustrate *how* and argue *why* the scientific debate about “race” has evolved over the centuries. Identify and discuss the major intellectual and social ideas, writers, and practices that historians argue have influenced these changes. (B) In this new millennium, what is the next frontier in this debate? (Be sure to locate your answer to this question within your own work.)

**IIIb.**—Discuss the discourses surrounding “Man’s place in nature” that have been important in Western thought from the evolutionary thinkers, racial theorists, and eugenicists in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In light of such discussions, how would you characterize the interrelations of scientific and social thought?

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**IIa.**—Benedict’s Anderson *Imagined Communities* and Hobsbawm’s and Ranger’s *Invention of Tradition* display the inventiveness of ethnicity and the traditions that are used to establish conceptions of ethnicity. Assess the responses by scholars of identity and identity to these works and assess the value of these critiques.

**IIb.**—Colonialism is a force of significant racial and cultural reformation to Native American and African groups. Address various scholars’ explanations for the way racial and cultural identities emerged in this era. Pay particular attention to the conceptual frameworks employed by these authors.

**IIc.**—In the regions of North America and Africa, nationalism has strong connections to ethnicity. Write an essay that addresses the interrelationships between ethnicity and nationalism in both continents in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**IId.**—Fredrik Barth argues that ethnicity is always defined relative to surrounding communities. This process creates ethnic boundaries that are continuously redefined. Address his theory relative to recent work on ethnicity and identity.

