

## MR-74 Third Paper Questions

Write a 5-6 page paper (double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman) in response to **one** of the following two questions. Your paper is due **Monday, May 4, 2009** by 8:00 PM to the electronic mailbox of your TF.

1. In *Democracy's Discontent* (1996), Michael Sandel argues that both republicanism and what he calls the "procedural republic" have informed American politics since the Founding. Sandel makes an attending empirical claim that "republicanism predominated earlier in American history, liberalism later." But these distinct visions of public life are independently *timeless*, i.e., applicable to the issues which have organized American politics from 1776 to the present day.

Begin your essay with an explanation of the core differences between these two "public philosophies." Next, consider Alexander Hamilton's *Report on Public Credit* (1790), in particular the section (*Writings*, pp. 537-542) where he discusses whether the federal government's plan for repaying Revolutionary War debt ought to make special provision for the original creditors (e.g., war veterans) who sold their IOUs during the 1780s to speculators at a fraction of their face value. What might opposing sides of a debate conducted on republican terms look like? Conversely, what might a debate between opposed proceduralists look like? In answering this part of the question, bear in mind that you must articulate **four** distinct positions on this issue. Finally -- and very briefly: Does either rendering of this debate capture what you consider to be the core issue(s) at play?

2. "Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future. Standing with God and the crushed and bleeding slave on this occasion, I will, in the name of humanity which is outraged, in the name of liberty which is fettered, in the name of the constitution and the Bible, which are disregarded and trampled upon, dare to call into question and to denounce, with all emphasis I can command, everything that serves to perpetuate slavery – the great sin and shame of America!"

-- Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?", Address of July 5, 1852

Reflect on Frederick Douglass' critiques of slavery in the "Fourth of July" Oration, and in his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Does Douglass offer us a republican critique of slavery? How is his conception of freedom distinct from those of the Founders? How relevant, in your opinion, would his critique of slavery be for late 19th century opponents of wage labor?

Suggestions: (1) Go through the question carefully and read it more than once. Address the entire question (all parts of it) in your essay.

(2) Consider a counterargument or two against the position you take.

(3) Proper spelling, orthography and grammar are a must. Check your paper before turning it in.