DAY 2 Sub-Specialization Exam - Crime

You have six questions. Please answer any three.

1. Few Supreme Court cases have been as consequential as Furman v. Georgia. Why did the court conclude that the death penalty was applied in an "arbitrary and capricious" manner? What changes did states make to answer the court's charges? What does contemporary evidence (i.e., post-Furman) indicate about racial discrimination in the application of the death penalty today?

2. There has been considerable research over the past few decades on racial/ethnic biases in the criminal justice system. What conclusions do you draw from this research? What are some of the questions that still need to be addressed and how would you address them?

3. For some offenses (e.g., homicide, robbery), Black/White differences in offending are quite large. What social and historical factors might account for this difference? What empirical evidence can you cite in support of your argument?

4. Elijah Anderson's *Code of the Street* is seen as a decisive piece of work in the sociology of race/ethnicity regarding moral life and violence in inner cities. In this answer:
   a) Please contextualize Anderson's work within other sociologies of the inner city such as William Foote Whyte's 1943 *Street Corner Society* and Mitch Duncier's 1992 *Slim's Table*.
   b) What are the criticisms of Anderson's work?

5. Why has it been so difficult for researchers to draw systematic conclusions about the extent of racial profiling by the police in the U.S.? What are some of the theoretical and methodological issues involved in research on racial profiling? Illustrate with existing studies.

6. What is the basic argument put forth by the "culture of poverty?" Who are the main contributors to this literature? What are the criticisms of the "culture of poverty?"