

Questions on Anderson, Gold and Kromer

First Reading

1. How does Anderson's view of a hobo as a hiker on the railroad perhaps challenge our modern idea of a hobo? (pg. 202)
- 2.) What is Anderson's view of a hobo in relation to his idea of a "walking, beaten worker?" (pg. 202)
- 3.) Who would make a good hobo? Why would anyone choose this way of life? What are the benefits? (pg. 203)
- 4.) Are all hobos men? Are all hobos white?
- 5.) Is 'hobohemia' a specifically American experience? (see page 207)
- 6.) With all the troubles hobos faced in these readings, is the "milk and honey route" an accurate name for the railroads? (pg 202)

Second Reading

- 1.) How does Gold structure his argument for class wars prevailing over race wars? Do you agree? Is there perhaps a blending of the two? (pg. 213)
- 2.) How does Gold argue that Communism could be a vehicle for Black's freedom? Do you agree? (pg. 214)
- 3.) What parallels can be drawn between the treatment of Jews in Russia and Blacks in the United States? (pg. 214)
- 4.) What do Black intellectuals and businessmen have to gain from not speaking out for their race? Do we see evidence of this kind of behavior, from Blacks and other groups, in our society today? (pg. 215)
- 5.) To whom is Gold speaking? Only workers? What about the dispossessed? Would Kromer consider Gold's view as salvation for the American stiff?
- 8.) Is the comparison between Jews in Russia and Blacks in America a plausible and true comparison? (pg 214)

Third Reading

- 1.) Compared to Kromer's account, is Anderson's hobo romanticized? Would they agree?
- 2.) How necessary was the hobo life and life without work in general and was it worth living at all?
- 3.) What does Kromer's portrait of impoverished America suggest about the moral substance of our economic system? Is there any accountability? What ultimately causes stiffs to suffer such disaffection from society? Is this perhaps better for the development of something that is essentially American?
- 4.) pg 221, What is Kromer implying happens to the human character when abject poverty does nothing but turn a person to violence?