



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

FINAL EXAMINATION
C.S. 204

TIME: TWO HOURS

June 5, 2000
Nassar

I. In the following two quotations, (1) Identify the author (2) Analyze the quotation (3) Connect it to another major idea you have come across this semester. (30%)

1. People are always telling him he will die suddenly because of the masses of fat pressing round his heart. But how will death harm him when his life is merely a prolonged sleep?
2. "My soul contained not a drop of sense of fun--just as Mrs. Robinson had said. The women I enticed to my bed included girls from the Salvation Army. Quaker societies and Fabian gatherings. When the Liberals, the Conservatives, Labour, or the Communists. held a meeting, I would saddle my camel and go."

II. Choose one of the following questions and write a well-developed essay of argument. Please remember that argument is not explanation. In argument, you take a position, then you offer strong reasons in defense of this position. You should also present the arguments that are against your position and show that they are wrong. Refer to the texts you read whenever possible. (70%)

1. In A Brief History of Time, Hawking wrote:
"It has certainly been true in the past that what we call intelligence and scientific discovery has conveyed a survival advantage. It is not so clear that this is still the case: our scientific discoveries may well destroy us all." In the light of Darwin's theories of the struggle for existence and de Beauvoir's idea that the human mind is programmed to draw lines and react with hostility towards the Other, do you believe that world peace is possible, or is the human species moving towards a high-tech holocaust?
2. Is it true that human life is a hopeless, ridiculous wait for Godot, as Beckett says, or does it have meaning, as Naguib Mahfouz seems to believe? In brief, does human life have value? Argue for or against.

