

Sociology of Gender: Comprehensive Exam
Spring 2018

I. Answer ONE of the following questions:

The construction of the gendered subject/self is important and seen throughout gender scholarship. Explain such a construction utilizing the various perspectives of psychoanalysis, symbolic interactionism, and postmodernism/poststructuralism.

What would constitute a distinctively feminist methodology or epistemology? Would this methodology or epistemology differ from other sociological approaches? If so, how? If not, why not?

II. Answer ONE of the following questions:

"Compulsory heterosexuality" was a term used by Rich and Rubin in early classic pieces on gender and sexuality. Write an essay that (1) describes these first uses of the concept "compulsory heterosexuality" and (2) discusses whether this term is of any use in contemporary theorizing about gender and sexuality. In other words, you should discuss how the terrain of gender and sexuality studies changed since this term was coined and what, if anything, this concept might contribute to its contemporary form?

Discuss the relationship between gender, work and family, as three interrelated social institutions, and the role that these have in producing gender inequality. Pay particular attention to the changes in these institutions over time and the relative durability of gender inequality.

III. Answer the following question:

Many important works in the sociology of gender emphasize the intersections between gender and race, ethnicity and/or class. What does the attention to intersectionality add to the study of gender? What problems does it introduce to the researcher? Give examples of works from this subfield that address intersectionality particularly well and particularly poorly. What are the key elements of these works that distinguish them from one another? How will you incorporate these insights into the research question that most interests you in your own work?