

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**  
**PH.D. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN GENDER**  
**AUGUST 23-27**

---

You are required to answer THREE (3) QUESTIONS (ONE QUESTION FROM EACH OF PARTS A, B & C). Each answer should be 10-12 pages (12-point font and double-spaced) in length. The complete exam should not total more than 36 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font), not including references. THE COMMITTEE WILL NOT READ PAST THE 36TH PAGE.

**Part A**

- 1) Put the literature on the social construction of gender (may include Judith Butler) and conversation with the literature on occupational segregation to develop an explanation of why gender segregation and the pay gap have proven such sticky challenges. In your essay, use theories of the social construction of gender to make sense of the empirical findings about segregation and the pay gap, being sure to address changes over the past decades as demonstrated in the empirical literature.
- 2) Critically evaluate the claims that the gender division of labor at home and the gender division of labor in the paid labor market are linked, and that they serve to mutually reinforce women's subordination. Draw from the "Family Relations and Social Reproduction" and "Organizations and (mostly paid) Work" sections to analyze the nature and causes of the gender inequalities found in each type of work, providing between 2 and 4 empirical examples to support your arguments about each type of work (4 to 8 examples total).

**Part B**

- 1) Intersectionality has become a foundational theoretical framework in the Sociology of Gender, yet critics argue that it lacks a coherent methodological application, assumes aspects of gender and race essentialism, and does not always hold up well when applied outside the global north. Explain the intervention that intersectionality made compared to gender theory that is not attentive to intersecting oppressions. Choose one of the three critiques of intersectionality described above and explain whether you think the critique is reasonable by drawing on both empirical and theoretical literature from across the reading list.
- 2) Discuss two theoretical perspectives that researchers have used to frame and address questions about gender. Describe how theorists conceptualize gender and how these conceptualizations help us think about social inequalities. What understanding does each approach offer? What limitations does each approach have?

### **Part C**

- 1) The list has a section titled “theories of sexuality” and one titled “sexuality”. Compare and contrast the uses of “sexuality” within and between the two sections. In your essay, give a brief overview of how sexuality is defined and used in each section, and then select one or two pieces from each section for a more in-depth comparison.
  
- 2) During the past decade or so, the notion of “gender equality” has become a tool for conservative exclusionary politics, in Europe but also elsewhere. Draw on the literature in the state section to show the various ways in which gender equality is mobilized in contemporary exclusionary politics. In your answer, reflect on why you think gender equality has been so useful for those promoting racism, Islamophobia and anti-immigrant policies and politics. Is it possible that feminists who put the issue of gender equality on the political agenda during past decades may have enabled this usage? Note that while you have to draw from the state section, you are allowed but by no means required to incorporate some of the material from other sections of the list.