

Qualifying Exam
Gender and Sexuality
Spring 2025

The questions below constitute the qualifying exam for the Gender & Sexuality Exam. To complete the exam, you must answer one question from each of the three sections below in an essay format. Each answer should be a self-contained essay approximately 8–10 pages long (i.e., 2,000–2,500 words). Although you must cite to referenced work in each essay, one comprehensive bibliography for all three questions will be sufficient. You may consult materials from the reading list you’ve been provided, as well as any other scholarly sources you’ve read during the exam period.

Section I:

Intersectionality and Black Feminist Thought

1. How has intersectionality reshaped sociological understandings of inequalities?
 - a) Discuss **key theoretical contributions** from Black feminist thought.
 - b) Evaluate how these have informed empirical research on inequalities? Draw on **3-4 empirical texts** to support your argument.

Gender, Work, and Institutions

2. How is gender embedded in organizations and institutions? Draw on theory and empirical research to explain how institutional practices reproduce or resist gender inequality. **Employ 3-4 empirical texts** to support your argument.

Section II:

Queer Theory/Gender & Sexuality

1. Queer theory’s usage has been contested in the Sociology of Gender & Sexualities.
 - a) Define and trace the major tenets of queer theory and sociology (you might want to explain how it differs from LGBT Studies).
 - b) Draw on **3-4 texts** (can be empirical or theoretical) that use queer theory and explain their major contributions to our theoretical understandings of gender and/or sexuality in Sociology.

Transnational Gender and Sexuality:

2. There is vast literature on transnational gender and sexuality studies, however, they often don't get engaged with in mainstream sociological studies of gender and sexuality as they are treated as about "other" places.
 - a) Define transnational feminism and its major theoretical tenants.
 - b) Pick **three transnational empirical readings** from the text and explain their major contributions and how they can advance our understandings of non-transnational studies of gender and/or sexualities?

Section III:

Masculinities

1. While much of the Sociology of Gender has emphasized women's lives and experiences, we have not critically engaged masculinity and men's sociological experiences as intentionally.
 - a) Explain how the sociology of gender has engaged with masculinity and men's experiences by drawing on key texts and their contributions to the discipline.
 - b) What are the benefits and tensions in centering men and masculinities in the Sociology of Gender and Sexuality and how might hyper-marginality within these topical areas (transmen, women performing masculinity, etc.) expand our theoretical possibilities.

Sexualities and the State

2. While many studies on gender and sexualities focus on the micro level, how has the Sociology of Gender and Sexualities drawn on the state?
 - a) Pick three readings and explain how the state is defined and how it helps us understand both the macro and micro.
 - b) Why is it important to pay attention to states and structures in the study of gender and sexualities?