

RACE, CLASS, GENDER EXAM QUESTIONS
July 2018

Choose one question from each of the following three pairs:

1.

Question A

Even though work on intersectionality is careful not to privilege one form of inequality over another, there are many examples of research that place race at the foreground that could potentially be subject to a fuller intersectional analysis. Select at least three readings that are *primarily* focused on race and subject them to an intersectional analysis. What new insights emerge? What knowledge about the processes used to generate and maintain racial inequality might be lost without a primary focus on racial differences?

Question B

Is it possible to have a materialist, intersectional analysis, or does intersectionality necessarily require a purely institutional or cultural lens? Discuss at least three readings that demonstrate or advocate a materialist approach to inequality and compare them to intersectional analyses/perspectives (using Hill, McCall and at least one other intersectional theorist).

2.

Question A

Social inequality is central to the readings on Race, Class, and Gender. Based on the readings, distinguish the main schools of thought in how inequality is created and maintained through race, class, and gender. How persuasive are the answers that these different schools have offered to understanding the link between social inequality and race, class, and gender? In your view, what are the most important issues that remain open or unsettled? What are the issues that are likely to inform research in this area in the coming decade?

Question B

Social class has been a foundational concept for sociological theory and research since the discipline's 19th century origins. Discuss the concept of class, first from the Marx, Weber, and Wright readings, and then how the concept has evolved in more recent schools of thought. Then, discuss how class has been used to reveal a fuller understanding of race and gender. Finally, turn your attention forward. What questions in the subfield are in need of further elaboration that can be addressed through a greater focus on social class, and what are the biggest challenges facing contemporary research on the relationship between social class and race, gender, or both? Please discuss with concrete examples of how the field might be moved forward.

3.

Question A

Your reading list can be divided into authors that focus on work and labor markets as the source of inequalities and other authors that claim that inequalities are more complex and emanate from broader social and cultural forces that are transmitted through workplace institutions. What evidence is there for each of these views? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each?

Question B

Design a research project that fully incorporates a race, class, and gender perspective. All methodologies are acceptable as long as the project incorporates all three dimensions. The project should also address a question that is not addressed by the literature in your reading list. In your answer, be sure to convince us that the question you're addressing is important.