

## Answer Key for In-Text Questions

### Chapter 7

**Title:** Chapter 7 Questions for Review

**Question/Prompt:** 1. Define *gender* and *sex* and explain how they are distinct from one another.

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Gender is the social and cultural expectations associated with different categories (including but not limited to men and women), often associated with sex and the body, in terms of emotions, intellect, psychology, appearance, behaviours, preferences, and social roles and expectations. Sex is the biological or anatomical markers associated with either males or females. Sex is usually determined by chromosomes, genitalia, hormones, or any combination of these. Conventional definitions of sex are premised on a false binary and often exclude trans and intersex identities.

**Question/Prompt:** 2. What does the word *cisgender* mean?

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Cisgender describes harmony between the gender that an individual identifies with and the biological sex they were assigned at birth.

**Question/Prompt:** 3. Explain how the functionalist approach looks at gender and discuss what unique insights it provides.

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Functionalism argues that social gendering is universal and inevitable as the most effective and efficient way to carry out a society's tasks of reproduction and socialization. The functionalist argument rests on the idea that "the survival of society"—rather than equality or individual rights—is a determining factor in social relations. This approach does raise many interesting questions about whether the supposed benefits of gender differentiation can be achieved without gendering or through reversed gendering. For example, can the benefits be achieved by stay-at-home fathers (or grandparents) in combination with breadwinner mothers?

**Question/Prompt:** 4. How has the distribution of housework changed over time in Canada for heterosexual households?

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Historically, men were typically the income earners or “breadwinners” and they had more control of the household’s finances, while housework was generally considered primarily the domain of women and was considered lesser work. Increasingly, however, women have entered the labour force in large numbers. Despite these changes to the labour market, women still spend significantly more time than men on domestic work and more time caring for their children and aging relatives. Many Canadian women are employed full-time and still do most of the housework and caretaking—work that is often referred to as women’s “second shift.”

**Question/Prompt:** 5. Why do some women stay in abusive relationships and not leave after the first instance of physical or psychological abuse? Focus on both individual-level factors and structural factors in society that are discussed in the chapter.

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Many people stay in abusive relationships because they cannot imagine leaving and living without their partner. If someone has been psychologically abused, they may come to doubt their own judgment and ability to make decisions for themselves. Gaslighting, by which an abuser makes the victim question their own reality and sanity, is a common and powerful tactic that can prolong an abusive relationship.
- Many people do not leave after a first assault because they think the situation is temporary and may improve. Feelings of guilt and shame, at least in the early stages of abuse, are mixed with a hope that things will get better.
- Women often use “techniques of neutralization” to rationalize the actions of their abuser as normal, acceptable, or at least justifiable. Often survivors don’t want to believe or admit to themselves or others that they have chosen an abusive person as their partner.
- Many survivors stay from a realistic fear of the violence that might occur if they were to leave.
- A lack of sufficient resources—social capital, education, and income—may also keep some people from leaving abusive relationships.
- Many survivors stay because they worry that they have nobody to ask for help or that they will be judged and disbelieved if they go to anyone for help. In addition, some cultures consider divorce a personal failure.
- Having children makes it difficult for women to leave an abusive relationship. Mothers often put the physical needs of their children over their own safety and may also be concerned about the safety of their children were they to leave.
- Abuse and controlling behaviour can lead to long-term debilitating effects such as posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts.

**Title:** Chapter 7 Questions for Critical Thought

**Question/Prompt:** 1. Do you think that a strict gender binary is changing in Canadian culture? Explain your position.

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Until the mid-1950s, discussions around gender were considered either unimportant or private and personal in Canadian society. Since then, there has been a general reduction in the stigma associated with being an individual outside “typical” notions of sex and gender, which has allowed for greater understandings of the diversity that exists in and between sex, genders, sexual identities, and sexual orientations.
- Advances in science and technology have transformed how we experience, portray, and talk about gender. Science and technology have helped make visible and legitimize the variety of gender identities that we find in our world today.
- Many trans people have taken to new media, in particular YouTube channels, to share their stories and experiences with broad and diverse audiences that may not have had access to such content otherwise.
- Bill C-279, which adds gender identity as a prohibited ground of discrimination to the Canadian Human Rights Act, was passed by the Senate in June 2017. The bill provides transgender people rights in terms of using the washrooms, change rooms, and other public facilities appropriate to their gender identity. Transgender advocates say the bill is essential to protect transgender Canadians from further discrimination and harassment.

**Question/Prompt:** 2. Why do queer theorists critique the gender binary? How is their critique of the gender binary similar to Butler’s definition of *performativity*?

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Queer theory contends that people’s gender identities and sexual orientations are not fixed or stable but rather complex and fluid. Queer theorists challenge what we assume is “normal” and “natural” about binaries related to gender and sexuality, opening up possibilities for different identities and lifestyles. This critique is similar to Judith Butler’s definition of performativity, in which she argues that gender is a social and cultural construct that is “performed” and is not inherent or “natural.”

**Question/Prompt:** 3. Why is it important to consider intersectionality in relation to the pay gap between men and women in Canada? What insights can an intersectional approach provide to a sociological analysis of the pay gap?

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Intersectionality recognizes the interlocking nature of social identity categories (such as ethnicity, class, and gender) that creates more complex, interdependent systems of oppression and marginalization.
- It is important to note that the pay gap also exists between women. For example, racialized women, particularly immigrants and especially refugees, earn less than their white female peers. Indigenous women are also paid less than non-Indigenous women in Canada; the hierarchy of pay by ethnicity has Indigenous women at the bottom.
- There is also a sexuality-based pay hierarchy in Canada, with straight men at the top, then gay men, then lesbian women, and then straight women. In this one case, the marginalized status of lesbian women works in their favour—by being seen as less feminine, the gender biases of the workplace do not work as strongly against them.
- In the case of transgender Canadians, according to one study transgender women found their wages decreased by nearly one-third after transition, while transgender men found their wages increased slightly.
- Discrimination based on sexuality and gender identity continues to affect career opportunities and financial stability in several very real ways.

**Question/Prompt:** 4. Why are there relatively few women working in STEM jobs? What societal norms, biases, and expectations continue to alienate women from these industries and what changes are needed for industries to be more inclusive of women?

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Research suggests that deep-rooted problems surrounding socialization account for why there are relatively few women working in STEM jobs.
- The construction of gender occurs in schools and leads students toward different social roles and identities. Teachers often place different expectations on girls and boys in elementary and secondary schools.
- Traditional gender norms expect girls to have better social skills and be more focused on children and family. By contrast, boys are expected to be good at mathematics and science and be more focused on financial gain and status. As a result, STEM fields are often considered more aligned to male gender roles than to female ones.
- Women often have the academic background to pursue STEM degrees, but, for other reasons, such as uncertainty about their own abilities and feeling in the minority in male-dominated fields, they end up in non-STEM fields.

**Question/Prompt:** 5. Why do women often remain silent about their experiences of sexual assault? Discuss the reasons why the majority of women who have been sexually assaulted do not report their assault to the police.

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Women are more often the victims of violence at the hands of people they know— such as family members and former, current, or potential romantic partners—rather than strangers.
- Many reported sexual assaults are dropped as “unfounded” before any investigation occurs. In addition, a woman’s likelihood of being believed is a “lottery” based on where she lives.
- Increasingly, the line has blurred between consensual and nonconsensual sex, and between violent and nonviolent sex. This has happened because nonphysical (for example, psychological) coercion is hard to measure—and hard to prove in courts of law or sometimes even in survivors’ minds.
- The pervasiveness of rape culture in Canada, a culture in which sexual violence is normalized, accepted, and even encouraged, makes it very difficult for many survivors to recognize their experiences of sexual violence as such.

**Question/Prompt:** 6. In what way is the vulnerability of Indigenous women in Canada an example of intersectionality? How have social media campaigns led by Indigenous women helped increase awareness of Indigenous women’s struggles?

**Correct Answer Example(s):**

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Intersectionality recognizes the interlocking nature of social identity categories (such as ethnicity, class, and gender) that creates more complex, interdependent systems of oppression and marginalization. The intersection of inequalities that Indigenous women in Canada experience creates a unique circumstance that accounts for the increased risk of violence and victimization that they face.
- Recently, a national conversation has taken Canada by storm. Reports over the number of missing and murdered Indigenous women has outraged communities across the country, prompting a national inquiry after years of resistance from Canadian governments and mainstream media.
- While coverage in mainstream media is important, social media and blogs have emerged as alternative spaces for debate. Using hashtags such as #NoMoreStolenSisters, #MMIW (missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls), and #ourinquiry, alternative narratives and stories are shared, bringing much needed attention to the issue.