

INDIGENOUS THOUGHT AND SETTLER COLONIAL STUDIES

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM QUESTION BANK

January 2024

1. What is settler colonialism? How is it distinct from other forms of colonialism? How does it intersect with other systems of oppression, such as racism, patriarchy, and capitalism? To what extent should settler colonial theory be centered in Indigenous scholarship concerning Indigenous peoples and Indigenous-settler relations? Why?
2. What role has racism played in the colonization of Canada? How, if at all, has the form of anti-Indigenous racism changed over time? What role does it continue to play? To what extent should decolonial change efforts focus on combatting white supremacy? How and why?
3. Consider the concept of settler colonialism. To what extent would you describe Canada as a settler colonial society? Why? What features of Canada's history, or of Indigenous-Canada relations, make it so? Are there features that would challenge this interpretation?
4. What are Indigenous research methods? Discuss different Indigenous methodologies and the key features of them. How, if at all, are they differentiated from "traditional" social scientific methods encountered in sociology?
5. Indigenous feminisms have, in part, sought to address gendered violence as well as Indigenous ideas about gender and sexuality. How does Indigenous feminist thinking integrate Indigenous ways of knowing into a deeper understanding of gender, sexuality, and violence? How do Indigenous feminisms trouble and/or complicate settler colonial ideas about these categories?
6. Indigenous understandings of the sociopolitical often rely on discussions of law, governance, and treaty-making. What are the key issues identified in these topics from an Indigenous perspective? How has/does law, governance, and treaty-making in Canada impact the social lives of Indigenous peoples and communities?
7. What role have educational institutions played in the colonization of Canada? How would you describe Indigenous peoples' experiences with Canadian educational systems? How have these experiences changed over time? What would it mean to Indigenousize education?
8. Indigenous-led social movements have a longstanding presence in public life within Canada. What are some examples of key Indigenous-led social movements identified in the literature? What have Indigenous-led social movements sought to achieve? Are there common interests identified across different Indigenous-led movements? In what ways (issues, contexts, cultures, etc.) are they distinct?

9. Under what conditions do alliances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples develop? What are the potential benefits of such alliances? What are the key challenges and how can these challenges be mitigated? What roles can and should Indigenous and non-Indigenous alliance partners play?
10. Is there a place for settlers in decolonization? In resurgence? In reconciliation? Outline some different perspectives on this issue. Which perspective do you find most compelling, and why?