



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level Examination
June 2015

General Studies (Specification B)

GENB4

Unit 4 Change

Insert

Stimulus Material

These texts are to be read in conjunction with the questions in unit GENB4.

The questions arise from the texts, but they should **not** be answered by reference to the texts alone.

Text A

Women in Parliament

A UN document which contains the world averages for the levels of women's representation shows that just under 20% of members in single or lower chambers of parliament are women. The UK is normal in this regard. Fewer than 25 nations meet the requirement that no fewer than 30% of representatives in parliament should be women. There has been a slow change: over ten years, there has been a steady increase in female representation in parliamentary assemblies in UN countries.

The issue of under-representation of women should be framed in terms of men's over-representation. There is a powerful 'justice' argument for equal representation. There has been research on the possible strategies for improving representation of women, the first of which is to wait for change to occur at a natural pace. Other options involve intervention, which could address supply or demand of female candidates. It is extremely important to look at both. The emphasis within existing research has been on how to create demand; researchers have only recently begun to look at the issue of supply.

There are several barriers to female representation: institutions are gendered because they were largely set up for and by men, and they do things in a way that is culturally coded as male. This problem is well established and deep-seated, especially in the media which is the elephant in the room on this issue. The media tend to favour masculine images and views of politics. Despite the presence of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister in Britain, there has been very little feminization of media coverage of politics. Women representatives are never allowed by the media to forget that they are women representatives.

Quotas* provide a mechanism for changing the equilibrium of gender representation. On the whole, this is seen by most commentators as a temporary measure, and, in the UK, there are people who dislike them because, they argue, gender should not be prioritized over ethnicity or social class. This argument is flawed since women make up part of both these categories. However, quotas did bring in a greater diversity of women. Because of this, quotas make it possible to examine claims that women change things and act on certain women's issues. In the UK, there are items on the political agenda now that were not there before the representation of women increased, such as welfare, and recent debates about abuse in care-homes.

It is important to increase the quantity of women in parliament. It isn't possible to find out what women will do in positions of power without having them there to observe. The masculine presentation of politics has the effect of discouraging women from entering politics. Polls show that women are not interested in politics – but issues like health, welfare, and childcare are all political issues. More female role-models are needed to show women that politics applies to them.

Source: adapted from a speech by Dr. Joni Lovenduski, Birkbeck College, University of London, in the Summary Report 'Representation of Women in Parliament, Politics and Public Life', 6–8 Nov. 2012
International Parliamentary Conference on Gender & Politics (IPCGP)

*Quota – fixed proportions of women on lists of candidates at elections

Text A continued
Percentage of parliamentary seats in single or lower chamber occupied by women, in selected countries

Country	2000	2005	2010	2012
Australia	22	25	25	25
Belgium	23	35	39	38
Canada	20	21	22	25
China	22	20	21	21
Cuba	28	36	43	45
Finland	37	38	40	43
France	11	12	19	27
Germany	31	33	33	33
Japan	7	7	11	11
Norway	36	38	40	40
Russian Federation	8	10	14	14
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	0
United Kingdom	18	20	22	22
United States	13	15	17	17

Source: UN data © United Nations Statistics Division, December 2012

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Text B

Love and Loyalty

My latest 'mystorical' floats the idea that Jane Austen had a secret love affair with a French naval officer, brought home as a captive by her brother, Frank, a British navy officer who fought in the Napoleonic Wars and rose to become Admiral of the Fleet.

What inspired me to write the novel? Some years ago, in 1997, my husband, a historian with an interest in medals, shoved an auction catalogue under my nose which contained a detailed biography of Frank Austen because his five medals were being sold by the auction house. Jane's brother achieved the highest rank in the navy, and, because of his duties, just missed the Battle of Trafalgar. I started thinking: why didn't Jane Austen mention anything about the major concerns of her era in which she must have been deeply interested, with two brothers fighting in the Navy?

Did she, I wondered, have a personal agenda for concentrating on the love interest of her characters? The title came to me suddenly: love for her man would conflict with her loyalty to her country and her brothers and family.

I was a little over-awed by tackling Jane herself as I knew a lot of 'Janeites' might not like me taking liberties with their author, but the tale was now becoming pressing, so I set about my research and the time-line seemed to fit. I began, I thought, to 'know' Jane – and the novel just flowed once I had started. The dénouement*, I hope, not only explains why her love affair is not 'public' but also why she concentrates on the love interest of her characters.

I adore researching for my novels and it was great to visit Bath and Chawton as well as dipping into the costumes of the era and the horrors of being a sailor in the 18th/19th Centuries. I am pleased to say that one reviewer has said that the scenes at sea are good and realistic and will appeal to a male readership, so my novel is not all 'love and loyalty', but has some political and social connotations as well.

Source: article by Jay Margrave about her novel 'Love and Loyalty', 2013
published on www.historicalnovelsociety.org

*dénouement – unfolding of plot

Text C**A 21st Century Religion**

G.K. Chesterton said that ‘when people stop believing in orthodox religion, rather than believe in nothing, they will believe in anything’. One of the artificial religions which fills the void in recent years is belief in ‘catastrophic man-made global warming’. It claims to be based on science. But it has all the characteristics of a doom-mongering cult.

It has its own priesthood and ecclesiastical establishment – the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; they alone can interpret its sacred scriptures – the Assessment Reports; it condemns to outer darkness those ‘deniers’ who cast doubt on its certainties; above all, it predicts imminent doom if we do not follow its precepts and make the sacrifices it prescribes.

What most clearly distinguishes the Catastrophic Global Warming cult from science is that it is not disputable by facts. As Parliament enacted the Climate Change Bill, on the presumption that the world was getting warmer, it snowed in London in October – for the first time in 74 years. Supporters explained “extreme cold is a symptom of global warming”!

The Met Office – whose climate model is the cult’s crystal ball to forecast centuries ahead – has made a series of spectacularly unreliable short-term forecasts: “Our children will not experience snow” (that was 2000, before the recent run of cold winters), a barbecue summer (before the dismal 2011 summer), the drought will continue (spring 2012, before the wettest summer on record). Now they say that rain and floods are the new normal. But – hot or cold, wet or dry – global warming is always to blame.

This cult enables adherents to feel morally superior at little personal cost. Buy a Prius¹ or vote Green and save the planet. Unfortunately, costly renewables are driving many into fuel poverty and manufacturing jobs overseas. Action is pointless unless China, India, and Africa join in. They are most vulnerable to climate change. But they are vulnerable because they are poor. They will remain poor unless they harness energy like us. Requiring them to forgo fossil fuels in favour of renewables costing several times more condemns them to remain poor. The cult requires sacrificing the poor to Gaia².

Source: adapted from an article by Peter Lilley, ‘Global Warming as A 21st Century Religion’
The Huffington Post, 22 June 2012

¹Toyota Prius – car powered by electricity and petrol

²Gaia – Greek mother of the Earth

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Text D

Green Growth

It's clear that short-term Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a profoundly inadequate measure of human progress. And if it's true, as management gurus have long argued, that 'what gets measured gets done', it seems likely that there are opportunities to improve both our wellbeing and our sustainability by focusing on better metrics that relate more strongly to our current and future quality of life.

The country pushing this idea most strongly is the small Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan, which has been getting noticed by the world's media in recent years with an alternative metric, Gross National Happiness, designed to reflect 'the peace and happiness of our people and the security and sovereignty of the nation'. Some Western policy-makers have made cautious moves in a similar direction. In 2008, Nicolas Sarkozy, then president of France, commissioned a major report on alternative economic indicators from a panel of leading economists, chaired by Nobel prize-winner Joseph Stiglitz. The commission concluded that 'the time is ripe for our measurement system to shift emphasis from measuring economic production to measuring people's wellbeing'.

In Britain, Prime Minister David Cameron instructed the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to increase its efforts to measure wellbeing in order to keep more meaningful tabs on 'how the country is doing'. In the academic sphere, mainstream economists are also exploring new metrics, for example, 'national balance sheets setting out assets and liabilities', designed to ensure that each generation passes on as much income-generating potential to future generations as we currently enjoy.

This is all promising talk and could help pave the way for societies that are both happier and less nervous that taking action on climate change might slow down GDP. But new measures like this need to be taken seriously. They need the power that GDP has had – and so far they're simply not getting it.

Source: adapted from 'The Burning Question' by Mike Berners-Lee and Duncan Clark, Profile Books, 2013

Text E**The Public Face of CERN**

As the tram trundles through the suburbs of Geneva, a huge lit-up globe by the side of the road lets me know I have arrived at CERN (the European Centre for Nuclear Research). This is the Mecca of particle physics. Most of it looks like a fairly undistinguished campus. “The money has not been spent on the buildings,” I am repeatedly told. “The money is all underground.” Underground, of course, are the tunnels where beams of light are smashed into each other. Under my feet are the colliders and detectors that are helping us to understand what the universe is actually made of.

“Will I see anyone doing any physics?” I muse to myself without having any real idea what that might look like.

CERN, indeed, physics itself, has entered popular consciousness in recent years. Geeks are pretty cool, and theoretical physics has replaced philosophy as a signifier of intellectual prowess. Carl Sagan may have said that “we are all made of stars”, but here this translates as “we are all made of numbers”, and if you are not a numbers person, CERN is another planet. Often when I am talking to people, they will jump up and down and draw a quick graph to make their point, which only further confuses me.

Everyone I talk to bristles when I ask if, having found the Higgs boson research has now stalled. The Higgs boson has actually thrown up more unknowns, from anti-matter and dark matter to super-symmetry and the inability of the standard model to incorporate gravity. All this work and these massive machines are about proving theories that are decades old. This is a long game.

Steve McMahon commutes between CERN and the Appleton Rutherford lab in Oxfordshire. As he talks about everything from luminosity to his four children, to explaining the new dimensions and all the other bits of the universe to be explored (which is most of it), a Russian guy knocks on his door excitedly. He has had some good news on funding. “You know people say, ‘It’s not rocket science’?” says Steve. “Well, it is. He is a rocket scientist.”

Source: adapted from an article by Suzanne Moore, ‘This is a beautiful thing’,
The Guardian, 9 November 2013 © Guardian News & Media Ltd, 2013

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