

General Certificate of Education
January 2007
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 1

SCY1

Wednesday 10 January 2007 1.30 pm to 2.45 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is SCY1.
- This paper is divided into **three** Sections. Choose **one** Section and answer **all** parts of the question from that Section. Do **not** answer questions from more than one Section.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use an appropriate form and style of writing, to organise relevant information clearly and coherently, and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate. The legibility of your handwriting and the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will also be considered.

Choose **one** Section and answer **all** parts of the question from that Section.

SECTION A: FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

Total for this section: 60 marks

- 1** Read **Items 1A and 1B** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

Item 1A

Functionalist, Marxist and many feminist sociologists have seen the nuclear family of a married couple, with segregated conjugal roles, together with their offspring, as the norm in modern industrial society. They see the nuclear family as performing a number of important functions for particular individuals and groups, or even for society as a whole.

However, some sociologists see this norm as being challenged and undermined by recent trends towards family diversity. For example, the proportion of lone-parent families has increased from 8 per cent of all families in 1971 to 27 per cent in 2002. 5

Nevertheless, others argue that the nuclear family, even if in slightly modified form, remains very popular in Britain today, despite the apparent increase in family diversity.

Item 1B

Functionalists argue that different social institutions, such as the family and the economy, are closely integrated and operate in harmony with each other. In particular, the family adapts itself to meet the needs of the economy. Thus, when society moves from an agricultural to an industrial economy, the family changes its structure from extended to nuclear, in a process that Talcott Parsons called 'structural differentiation'. In this process, the family sheds many of its functions, which are then taken over by specialist institutions such as the welfare state, health care and education. 5

However, many sociologists and historians dispute the functionalist view of the relationship between the family and industrialisation. For example, some argue that the nuclear family was already common before industrialisation, and even that this helped to bring about industrialisation in the first place. 10

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘segregated conjugal’ roles (**Item 1A**, line 2). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Identify **two** pieces of evidence in support of the view that ‘the nuclear family, even if in slightly modified form, remains very popular in Britain today’ (**Item 1A**, lines 8 – 9). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** functions that the nuclear family might perform (**Item 1A**, lines 3 – 4). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why there are more lone-parent families now than in 1971 (**Item 1A**, lines 6 – 7). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the factors affecting the domestic division of labour and power relations between couples. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess sociological views of the relationship between the family and industrialisation. *(20 marks)*

Turn over for Section B

Turn over ►

SECTION B: HEALTH

Total for this section: 60 marks

2 Read **Items 2A and 2B** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

Item 2A

Many sociologists see illness and disability as socially defined and constructed. That is, although such conditions may be caused by bacteria, viruses and so on, whether a condition *counts as* illness or disability is determined by society. For example, some sociologists regard ‘mental illness’ as simply a label that some members of society apply to others. Similarly, different groups and societies often define conditions differently, so that what one counts as illness, another may accept as normal. This makes comparative studies of morbidity patterns extremely difficult. 5

However, an alternative approach sees differences in health and illness as real differences with real, objective causes. For example, as epidemiological studies show, women on average live longer than men. Similarly, there is evidence that some ethnic groups receive poorer health care than others, and this results in worse health chances. 10

Item 2B

According to writers such as Parsons (1951) and Millerson (1964), doctors enjoy high status, income and power for several reasons. For example, doctors have a high value to society partly because of their altruism. That is, they act in the interests of others rather than their own self-interest. Similarly, because of the high level of theoretical knowledge and technical expertise that the role requires, society has to offer high rewards to encourage talented individuals to undergo the lengthy specialised training needed. 5

There are several ways of ensuring doctors’ altruism and competence. They must first pass a series of formal examinations. Once qualified, they are governed by a code of professional conduct laying down standards of practice, and this is enforced by an independent professional organisation to which all doctors must belong, such as the British Medical Association. 10

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘morbidity’ (**Item 2A**, line 7). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** examples of ways in which illness or disability could be seen as ‘socially defined and constructed’ (**Item 2A**, line 1). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons why ‘women on average live longer than men’ (**Item 2A**, lines 9 – 10). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why ‘some ethnic groups receive poorer health care than others’ (**Item 2A**, lines 10 – 11). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine reasons for the unequal health chances experienced by different social classes. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess the view that doctors enjoy high status, income and power because of their altruism and technical expertise. *(20 marks)*

Turn over for Section C

Turn over ►

SECTION C: MASS MEDIA

Total for this section: 60 marks

3 Read **Items 3A and 3B** and answer parts (a) to (f) which follow.

Item 3A

For many years, supporters of the hypodermic syringe model of media effects have been concerned about the portrayal of violence in the mass media, particularly cinema, television and now computer games. They fear that it might stimulate viewers to commit acts of violence themselves. More recently, there has been concern that frequent viewing of crime-related material in television programmes may cause viewers to develop an increased fear of crime. 5

On the other hand, some critics claim that the mass media have little effect on their audiences, who are able to resist the influence of media messages, or to respond to them in different ways. For example, while encouraging some viewers to imitate the violence they view, media portrayals may have a cathartic effect on others. 10

However, the difficulties in studying these issues make it hard to reach firm conclusions about the effects of the mass media on their audiences.

Item 3B

The mass media present their audiences with representations of different social groups. However, many sociologists argue that the picture offered is a distorted one, which misrepresents and under-represents certain groups. For example, Best's (1993) study of children's early reading schemes showed that female characters are rarely shown outside the home, and are shown in fewer roles than males. 5

However, it should be noted that not all media represent members of the same group in the same way. For example, women tend to be portrayed differently in soap operas and action movies. Similarly, there is some evidence of change over time. For example, McRobbie (1996) argues that teenage girls' magazines now portray females as more independent and sexually assertive than in the 1970s. 10

- (a) Explain what is meant by a ‘cathartic’ effect (**Item 3A**, line 10). *(2 marks)*
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why mass media portrayals of violence ‘might stimulate viewers to commit acts of violence themselves’ (**Item 3A**, lines 3 – 4). *(4 marks)*
- (c) Suggest **three** difficulties sociologists might face in studying the effects of the mass media on their audiences (**Item 3A**). *(6 marks)*
- (d) Identify and briefly describe **two** models or theories that see audiences as being ‘able to resist the influence of media messages’ (**Item 3A**, line 8). *(8 marks)*
- (e) Examine the role of editors, journalists and owners in influencing the output of the news media. *(20 marks)*
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess sociological explanations of the ways in which the mass media portray gender. *(20 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page