

# UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

*University of London*

## EXAMINATION FOR INTERNAL STUDENTS

*For the following qualifications :-*

*M. Sc.*

### **ESGA13: Decoding Homes and Houses**

COURSE CODE : ENVSGA13

DATE : 15-MAY-02

TIME : 10.00

TIME ALLOWED : 3 hours

## Decoding Homes and Houses Examination Questions

ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS: 3 hours

*Wherever possible you should illustrate your answer by reference to examples.*

1. "If we had to choose an index of solidarity from the time-space structure of homes, the strongest indicator would not be the stoutness of the enclosing walls but the complexity of co-ordination". (Mary Douglas, The Idea of Home, 1991) Present and evaluate Douglas's account of attitudes towards the concept of 'home' and the strategies that household members adopt in order to create social solidarity.
2. Give a reasoned account of the influences that Amos Rapoport proposes (House Form and Culture, 1969) in order to account for the forms and layouts of traditional and vernacular dwellings. Describe how you would set about testing Rapoport's thesis using 'space syntax'? What additional insights might you expect to gain from a configurational analysis of a sample of houses?
3. "In sixteenth century Italy, a convenient room had many doors; in nineteenth century England a convenient room had but one. The change was important not only because it necessitated a rearrangement of the entire house, but also because it radically recast the pattern of domestic life", (Robin Evans, Figures, Doors and Passages, 1978). Describe the physical and social changes that Evans is referring to here. What are the implications of his ideas for recent housing design guidance?
4. "The functional zoning of the house depends on proper separation of socially defined realms. Walls and locks must separate the adults with their privacy from the children with theirs, and must separate both from the family community zone where mixing may take place under favourable conditions." Chermayeff and Alexander, Community and Privacy, 1963). Describe and evaluate Chermayeff and Alexander's opinion on the well-designed home.
5. What do you understand by a 'space code'? Compare and contrast Roderick Lawrence's (1987) and Julienne Hanson's (1998) studies of domestic space codes as set out in Housing, dwellings and home and Decoding homes and houses.
6. Define what Pierre Bourdieu means by the term 'habitus' (Outline of a Theory of Practice, 1977), illustrating your account with examples drawn from his classic study of the Berber house.
7. Compare and contrast approaches to the study of the material culture of the home as exemplified by Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (The meaning of things, 1981) and Wood and Beck (Home Rules, 1994). Describe any additional studies with which you are familiar that will augment an understanding of the role played by the material culture of people's homes and spell out what these insights might be.
8. Describe and evaluate Goffman's 'dramaturgical analogy' as set out in The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959). How might his ideas be interpreted in a domestic setting?
9. Describe and compare two recent morphological studies of speculative suburban housing with which you are familiar. In what ways, if at all, do people's homes reflect their social status?

**END OF PAPER**