

General Certificate of Education
January 2008
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 1

SCY1

Wednesday 9 January 2008 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.
- Parts (e) and (f) of your chosen question should be answered in continuous prose. In these part questions you will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

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** below and answer parts (a) to (f) that follow.

Item 1A

Recent decades have seen major changes in families and households in the United Kingdom. Some sociologists argue that, with the rise of the symmetrical family, the patriarchal power of the husband has disappeared and relationships have become more equal and democratic. However, feminists argue that women still have a dual burden to carry. There have also been many changes in the patterns of marriage. For example, the number of first marriages in England and Wales fell from almost 340 000 in 1970 to just over 161 000 in 2004. On the other hand, the number of remarriages has remained relatively constant since the early 1970s. 5

Equally striking have been the changes in patterns of child-bearing and child-rearing. For example, a growing proportion of children are born to unmarried parents. Forty per cent of births now occur outside marriage – about five times the proportion in 1971. 10

Item 1B

Many sociologists see the state's laws and policies as having an important effect on family roles and relationships. For example, in some countries, the state has pursued policies aimed at encouraging couples to have more children by restricting access to contraception and abortion, lowering the age of marriage and so on. By contrast, in China, the state pursues a 'one child' policy, in which couples are offered incentives to limit their family size, such as lower taxes and preferential treatment in housing and education. 5

Sociologists have differing views about the impact of state policies on family life. For example, some see state provision of welfare benefits as harmful because it undermines the family's 'natural' self-reliance and promotes dependence. Others regard many policies as maintaining the subordination of women or children. 10

- (a) Explain what is meant by the 'dual burden' (**Item 1A**, line 4). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons for changes in the patterns of marriage in England and Wales (**Item 1A**, lines 5–8). (4 marks)
- (c) Identify **three** changes in patterns of child-bearing and/or child-rearing since the 1970s, **apart from** that identified in **Item 1A**. (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** possible reasons for the rise of the symmetrical family (**Item 1A**, line 2). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the relationship between family structure and industrialisation. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 1B** and elsewhere, assess the impact of state policies and laws on family life. (20 marks)

Turn over for Section B

SECTION B: HEALTH

Total for this section: 60 marks

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

Item 2A

According to official statistics, there are significant gender differences both in health chances and in access to health care. In terms of health chances, women on average live longer than men, but they are more likely to report that they are ill. In terms of health care, men make less use of the available provision, such as visits to the GP's surgery. However, what this may indicate is that official statistics on gender and ill-health are a social construct, at least in part. 5

As well as gender differences, there are also class differences in the uptake of health care services. For example, members of the families of manual workers are less likely than those of non-manual workers to use preventative services, less likely to seek or obtain a referral to a specialist, and more likely to have a shorter consultation. 10

Item 2B

The medical profession's traditional view of its role is that it leads 'the fight against disease' and that its techniques have led to new cures. With the assistance of the giant multinational pharmaceutical companies, modern scientific medicine has developed an ever-expanding range of powerful drugs that is steadily conquering disease and disability. 5

In the view of many sociologists, however, these claims are at best overstated and at worst the opposite of the truth. For example, McKeown (1976) argued that the decline of major infectious diseases as causes of death in western societies owed more to improvements in public health measures and living standards than it did to medicine or doctors. Furthermore, infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and measles continue to kill millions in Third World countries. 10

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- (a) Explain what is meant by a 'social construct' (**Item 2A**, line 6). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why men make less use than women of health care provision (**Item 2A**, lines 3–5). (4 marks)
- (c) Suggest **three** reasons why 'women on average live longer than men' **apart from** more frequent visits to the GP's surgery (**Item 2A**, lines 2–3). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** reasons why there are 'class differences in the uptake of health care services' (**Item 2A**, lines 7–8). (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the reasons for differences in the health chances and health care of different ethnic groups. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 2B** and elsewhere, assess sociological explanations of the role of medicine and the medical profession. (20 marks)

Turn over for Section C

SECTION C: MASS MEDIA

Total for this section: 60 marks

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

Item 3A

Unlike modernists such as Marxists and pluralists, post-modernists do not believe that the media are simply a mirror reflecting reality. Post-modernists argue that it is no longer possible to separate media from reality. In post-modern society, we are so bombarded by media-made images of reality that these images have now become part of reality itself. For example, we may now regard characters in soaps as just as real as our friends and neighbours. However, post-modernists ignore the power of the state to influence what we see, hear and read. 5

Media images may change over time. For example, according to Sanderson (1995), until the 1960s there was a symbolic annihilation of homosexuality in the media. However, in recent decades, there has been a significant change, with more positive portrayals of gay and lesbian characters in soaps and dramas. 10

Item 3B

Neo-Marxists argue that the role of the news is to reproduce and spread the ideology of the capitalist class and that this helps to secure their domination over the rest of society. Media professionals who produce the news do this by interpreting news events in terms of the meanings and values of the dominant class. However, neo-Marxists see this as an unconscious rather than a deliberate process. 5

The Glasgow Media Group's studies contain many examples of this process. They note how the different features of television news content and presentation promote the world-view of the powerful. These features include the type of language used in reports and the camera angles from which events are filmed. They also note how agenda-setting and giving greater prominence to the views of the powerful help to reproduce the dominant ideology. 10

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- (a) Explain what is meant by ‘symbolic annihilation’ (**Item 3A**, line 9). (2 marks)
- (b) Suggest **two** reasons why mass media portrayals of gay and lesbian characters have become more positive in recent decades (**Item 3A**, lines 10–11). (4 marks)
- (c) Identify **three** ways in which the state is able to ‘influence what we see, hear and read’ (**Item 3A**, line 7). (6 marks)
- (d) Identify and briefly explain **two** criticisms that other sociologists might make of the post-modernist view of the mass media, **apart from** the one referred to in **Item 3A**. (8 marks)
- (e) Examine the relationship between the mass media and their audiences. (20 marks)
- (f) Using material from **Item 3B** and elsewhere, assess the view that ‘the role of the news is to reproduce and spread the ideology of the capitalist class’ (**Item 3B**, lines 1–2). (20 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page