

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level

SOCIOLOGY

2251/01

Paper 1

May/June 2006

2 hours 30 minutes

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet/Paper

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

If you have been given an Answer Booklet, follow the instructions on the front cover of the Booklet.
Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen.
You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs or rough working.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer Question 1 and **three** questions from Sections **B** to **D**.
At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.
The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

Section A: Research Methods

Statistics collected by the government are one type of secondary data available to sociologists. The official records provide a useful source of information about such social phenomena as rates of suicide, marriage, divorce, crime, poverty, birth and death rates. However, statistics need to be interpreted carefully. Official crime statistics, for example, present only a partial picture of the extent of crime in society. Many offences are never reported to the police and not all of the crimes that the police know about are solved.

Other sources of secondary data that may be used in sociological research include letters, diaries, books, historical documents, newspaper reports and television. These may provide some very useful qualitative data. Sociologists working within the interpretive tradition often use qualitative data, whereas sociologists working within the positivist tradition prefer to use statistical data obtained from quantitative research methods.

In using newspapers and television as sources of secondary data, sociologists may use a method known as content analysis. This is a technique for decoding the images and messages that people are exposed to through the mass media.

1 (a) In sociological research, what is meant by the following terms:

- (i)** secondary data [2]
- (ii)** qualitative data [2]
- (iii)** interpretive sociologists [2]
- (b)** Suggest **two** reasons why official statistics may contain bias. [4]
- (c)** Describe **two** problems that might arise when using historical documents in sociological research. [4]
- (d)** Describe **two** advantages of using secondary data in sociological research. [4]
- (e)** Describe **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of content analysis. [4]
- (f)** Identify and explain **two** advantages and **two** disadvantages of quantitative research. [8]

Section B: Culture and Socialisation

- 2 People learn how they are expected to behave in society through interaction with other human beings. This is a life-long process of learning.
- (a) What is the sociological term that describes how people learn their roles in society? [2]
 - (b) Describe **two** roles that a person may perform in society. [4]
 - (c) Why is social learning a life-long process? [6]
 - (d) Why are interactions with other human beings so important for people in learning how to behave in society? [8]
- 3 Social control is necessary in order to ensure that people conform to the norms and values of society. There are two types of social control: formal and informal.
- (a) What is meant by *formal social control*? [2]
 - (b) Describe **two** examples of informal social control. [4]
 - (c) How are formal social controls enforced? [6]
 - (d) To what extent does social control serve the interests of the most powerful groups in society? [8]

Section C: Social Stratification

- 4 Absolute poverty is widespread in many less industrialised societies. The poverty that exists in the richer, industrialised countries is mainly 'relative'.
- (a) What is meant by *relative poverty*? [2]
 - (b) Describe **two** reasons why absolute poverty is rare in modern industrial societies. [4]
 - (c) Which groups are likely to experience poverty in modern industrial societies? [6]
 - (d) What social factors are most important in explaining the causes of poverty? [8]
- 5 A study of social mobility can help to indicate the life chances of members of society.
- (a) What is meant by the term *life chances*? [2]
 - (b) Describe **two** ways in which a person may achieve upward social mobility. [4]
 - (c) What problems are there in measuring social mobility? [6]
 - (d) To what extent do class barriers still exist in modern industrial societies? [8]

Section D: Power and Politics

- 6 Even in representative democracies, a small minority of people who form elite groups may control political power.
- (a) What is meant by the term *representative democracy*? [2]
 - (b) Describe **two** examples of elite groups. [4]
 - (c) Through what means may elite groups seek to maintain their power? [6]
 - (d) How far is political power monopolised by elite groups in modern industrial societies? [8]
- 7 Political socialisation is the key to understanding why there is a strong link between social class and voting behaviour in many modern industrial societies.
- (a) What is meant by the term *political socialisation*? [2]
 - (b) Describe **two** examples of how a person may acquire political views. [4]
 - (c) What factors other than social class may influence voting behaviour? [6]
 - (d) How far has the influence of class on voting behaviour declined in recent years? [8]