Tasmanian Certificate of Education

SOCIOLOGY

Senior Secondary

Subject Code: BHS315111

External Assessment

2014

Time: Two Hours

On the basis of your performance in this examination, the examiners will provide results on each of the following criteria taken from the course statement:

Criterion 4  Analyse and evaluate ideas and information related to sociology.
Criterion 5  Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological terms and concepts.
Criterion 6  Construct an argument that includes alternative theoretical explanations.

Pages: 12
Questions: 8

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CANDIDATE INSTRUCTIONS

You MUST make sure that your responses to the questions in this examination paper will show your achievement in the criteria being assessed.

You must answer ONE question from each section.

It is recommended that you spend a total of 60 minutes on each section.

Answer each section in a separate answer booklet.

All THREE criteria are assessed on each question.

All written responses must be in English.
SECTION A
SOCIALISATION: CONFORMITY AND DEVIANCE

In essay form, answer ONE question from this section, in response to the material in any one or more of the extracts provided.

It is recommended that you spend a total of 60 minutes on this section.

This section assesses Criteria 4, 5 and 6.

Use a separate answer booklet for this section.

Stimulus 1 – Drunken thugs bring city shame

Hobart’s CBD has a black mark as Tasmania’s assault hot spot, analysis of Australia’s crime statistics show.

While police look for ways to tackle alcohol-fuelled violence and ‘coward’s punches’, new analysis of crime statistics reveals Hobart had 215 reported cases of public assault last year, putting the city ahead of Launceston and Devonport for violent incidents.

In the latest public place assault reported by Hobart police, a woman fractured her skull when she hit her head on the pavement after an assault in the early hours of Thursday.

Witnesses allege the 21-year-old woman fell after being slapped or hit by a man and police are asking anyone with information to come forward. … Independent Bureau of Statistics figures show that violence in and around licensed premises are at the lowest levels in 15 years. This is thanks to the co-operation between hoteliers and police, said John Green, the Australian Hotels Association’s director of policing.

Efforts to change Australia’s alcohol culture are still falling short, according to the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre. Professor Shakeshaft from the centre said: ‘We are an alcohol-centric society. Alcohol is cheap and there are no controls on advertising. Telling 15-year-olds not to drink does not impact their behaviour at 20 because of the values they’ve grown up with.’

Licensed venues have become a convenient scapegoat in the debate about public violence, the state’s hospitality industry peak body says. Tasmanian Hospitality Association general manager, Steve Old said, Tasmanian venues were taking serious steps to curb antisocial behaviour.

(Source: Adapted from The Sunday Tasmanian, 12 January, 2014.)

Section A continues.
Section A (continued)

Stimulus 2 – The Self as an Individual

The world in which we live is one of rapid communication through instant messaging, mobile phones, emails, YouTube, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace.

This new network-based informational economy has permeated the ways in which we conduct our lives through work, leisure and social interactions.

Both Ulrich Beck (2009) and Anthony Giddens (2001) believe that we live in a world of late modernity, characterised by a break with traditions and replaced with a world of risk and uncertainty. It is a world in which individual identity has become more important and one in which individuals write their own biographies — a manifestation of this can be as online identities on, for example, Facebook where one of the first tasks when registering an account is to create a profile made up of text, photographs, video and other markers with which to construct an online identity.

(Source: Adapted from Public Sociology: An Introduction to Australian Society (2nd edition) Germov & Poole 2011, p. 38)

Stimulus 3 – The Concept of Deviance

(Source: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/244742560973349735/)

Section A continues.
Section A (continued)

Stimulus 4 – Socialisation: What shapes us?

In the past, socialisation was seen as deterministic, in that social interactions and social forces constantly shape us within our culture. This view ignores agency — that is the ways in which individuals mediate, interpret, and adapt the messages they receive from others and resist the pressure to conform. Rapid advances in genetics have provided us with information on the interplay of genetics and environment in making us who we are. Technological advances in electronic communications have had an impact on our peer group socialisation and the ways in which we interact with others. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of socialisation is our flexibility, and the fact that we are always changing as we encounter different life situations. At each stage in our life process, we adapt to produce a distinctive sense of self.

(Source: Public Sociology: An Introduction to Australian Society (2nd edition) Germov & Poole 2011, p. 104)

In essay form, answer ONE question from this section. Use the material in any one or more of the extracts (stimuli) provided in Section A, as well as information from the course. Use sociological terms and concepts in your answer.

Question 1

Explain and evaluate alternative sociological theories as to why some groups of people are more likely to be involved in acts that are considered deviant, such as young people involved in alcohol-fuelled violence. Use information from the extracts and from the course.

Question 2

Using information from the extracts and from the course, explain how socialisation plays a major role in shaping an individual’s sense of identity. Evaluate alternative theories in relation to the development of self.

Question 3

Using information from the extracts and from the course, explain why deviance as a concept is difficult to define. Discuss what is meant by the relativity of deviance. Use alternative theories and examples to illustrate your answer.

Question 4

Socialisation involves the internalisation of norms. Using information from the extracts and from the course, discuss and evaluate alternative theories about the process of socialisation and mechanisms of social control.
In essay form, answer ONE question from this section in response to the material in any one or more of the extracts provided.

It is recommended that you spend a total of 60 minutes on this section.

This section assesses Criteria 4, 5 and 6.

Use a separate answer booklet for this section.

Stimulus 5 – Education

Parents not fazed by waiting lists and fees in rush to enrol their children in top schools

Some Tasmanian parents are putting their children on waiting lists for private schools even before they are born.

That is despite fees close to $10 000 for kindergarten and more than $16 000 for Year 12.

While many small independent schools in regional Tasmania are struggling to survive amid the economic downturn, Hobart’s most expensive schools are reporting increasing enrolment numbers, particularly for primary school years.

Tony Crehan [Executive Director – Independent Schools Tasmania] said Tasmanian private schools experienced a greater intake of students at the senior school level than schools interstate, with many parents believing it would give their children a career head start.

‘On the CV they think that, all things being equal, some employers might regard a graduate from an independent school, particularly one with a good reputation, as more employable than someone from a public school,’ Mr Crehan said.

(Source: Adapted from The Sunday Tasmanian, 12 January, 2014)
Section B (continued)

Stimulus 6 – Family and Education

Smith Family says real cost of educating public primary school student tops $2000 a year

Children are avoiding enrolling in some subjects because they know their parents are stressed about the cost, a leading charity says.

In some cases teachers had quietly guided children away from design and technology or home economics because they knew the family could not afford it.

The Smith Family tallied essentials and put the ‘real cost’ of educating a public primary school child at more than $2000 a year, not counting excursions and other optional activities.

‘Young people who show real aptitude and ability in certain subjects are being advised to pursue other streams of study because of the costs involved and the family’s inability to pay,’ said Smith Family Tasmania general manager Alison Standen.

‘The truth is that the cost ... of attending school is getting beyond many disadvantaged families.’

‘The average parent is looking at spending more than $700 on uniforms, shoes and stationery, and that’s a conservative estimate based on the least expensive purchases at nationally accessible chain stores.’

‘But once in the gate, and depending on whether your child goes to primary or high school, parents encounter a whole new raft of expenses.’

One charity worker said: ‘I have heard of students opting out of non-compulsory school activities because they know their parents are stressed about money and they don’t want to ask them for anything extra.’

(Source: Adapted from The Hobart Mercury, 24 January, 2014)
Section B (continued)

Stimulus 7 – Changes in Age at Marriage

Median age at first marriage

The median age for first marriage has increased gradually over time for both males and females. In 2008, the median age of males married for the first time was 29.6 years, and 27.7 years for females. The gradual increase in the age profile of people marrying for the first time is shown in the graph above. Part of this increase can be attributed to the increasing incidence of de facto relationships. Another factor is that young people stay in education longer.

(Source: http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Products/3310.0~2012~Chapter~Marriages)

Stimulus 8 – Power and Politics

‘Many sociologists argue that political sociology is the study of power in its broadest sense. In these terms, any social relationship which involves power differentials is political. Political relationships would extend from parents assigning domestic chores to their children to teachers enforcing discipline in the classroom, and from a manager organising a workforce to a general ordering troops into battle.’

(Source: Sociology: Themes and Perspectives Van Krieken, et al. 2000, p. 93)
Section B (continued)

Stimulus 9 – Work

Changes in our experience of work have deep social ramifications that affect everybody. The working environment is a social environment in which culture, power, gender and class are both formed and refracted*. Work remains an intrinsically social experience despite technological and managerial change and wide variations in the tasks performed at work.

The problems of unemployment and underemployment will continue to be very serious and a major cause of poverty for citizens in advanced industrial societies. A major problem … is the growth of the working poor.

*to refract – to experience a change

(Source: Adapted from *Australian Sociology: A changing society* Holmes, Hughes & Julian. 2003, p. 370)

Stimulus 10 – Mass Media

The media — newspapers, radio and television — not only inform us selectively about events; they shape them. Politicians or public relations agencies or advertisers construct ‘media events’ in ways that will maximise their coverage by the media and create images of a favourable kind.

The media play a key role in cultural, economic, and political activities. They largely create popular culture. They are crucial to the functioning of the economy because of their role in the marketing of goods and services. Politicians use them to manipulate voters, and elections may well be won or lost through them. Indeed, one of the first things that the leaders of any revolution or military coup will do is to seize control of the radio and television studios.

There are several important public concerns about the mass communications media:

- concentrations of ownership
- the effects mass media have on their audiences; for example, showing particular political attitudes or violence
- its shaping societal attitudes; for example, legitimating social inequality.

Section B (continued)

In essay form, answer **ONE** question from this section. Use the material in any one or more of the extracts (stimuli) provided in Section B, as well as information from the course. Use sociological terms and concepts in your answer.

**Question 5**

Sociology theorises that institutions (family, education, work, mass media) contribute to the creation and maintenance of social stratification.

Using information from the extracts and from the course, construct an argument that evaluates alternative theoretical explanations for the role that **at least two** of these institutions play in stratification in contemporary Australian society.

**Question 6**

Power, according to Max Weber, is the ability of people or groups to exert their will over others. Power is exercised in societal institutions (family, education, work, mass media).

Using this definition of power, and information from the extracts and from the course, construct an argument that evaluates alternative theoretical explanations regarding the dimensions of power and politics in **at least two** of these institutions in contemporary Australian society.

**Question 7**

Institutions (family, education, work, mass media) do not exist in isolation. They interact with each other.

Using information from the extracts and from the course, construct an argument that uses alternative theoretical explanations to discuss the interrelationships between **two or more** of these institutions in contemporary Australian society.

**Question 8**

Institutions (family, education, work, mass media) are not static. They change over time.

Using information from the extracts and from the course, construct an argument that evaluates alternative theoretical explanations of the ways **two or more** of these institutions have changed over time in contemporary Australian society.
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