SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Activity 1: GROWING UP

ITEM A – LOST IN THE FOREST

They were girls. Many unwanted children, particularly girls, were reputed to be exposed by the tribes in the forests around Midnapore. The elder was about eight years old and the younger only about a year and a half. They named the elder Kamala and the younger Amala. The Reverend Singh and his wife washed the sores, and fed them on milk. The girls permitted the care but remained detached, indifferent, taking nourishment but forging no connection, true to their wild selves ... They were aloof and shy of others, particularly hating contact with the other children. They did befriend one other baby at the orphanage, while he was still crawling like themselves. Yet one day, without warning, they suddenly turned and attacked, biting and scratching him hard. From then on, the two girls refused to have anything to do with the little child. Singh speculated as to what had motivated the attack: 'It is presumed that when they found some difference and understood that he was quite different from them, then they commenced to dislike him. After this when they fully came to know that he was not one of them, then they fought with him, which frightened him so much that he left their company altogether and never approached them afterwards.'

The girls lived within themselves, choosing only each other for companion, shunning human society, and longing to return to the jungle from which they had been dragged. Strange physical changes had occurred to them during their life in the woods: their jawbones had altered shape, the canine teeth lengthened, and their eyes in the dark had the peculiar blue glare of cats or dogs. Their night vision was preternaturally acute, as was their sense of smell; also they could hear the minutest sounds at astonishing distances. They ate, drank and walked like dogs, lapping at their bowls of water and milk, running on all fours. Even when sleeping they were 'like little pigs or dog pups', the two of them lying together and overlapping each other for warmth and comfort. They liked the dark, and loved to wander the orphanage compound after nightfall. At sunrise they whined to go inside and shelter from the sun. They had become nocturnal animals, fearless of the dark. They had no sense of humour, no sadness or curiosity or connection to others. They never laughed, and Kamala shed tears only once – on 21 September 1921, when Amala, her little companion, died ...

Singh and his wife pressed on with Kamala's reclamation. They taught her, as best they could, to move, eat, play like any other child. In all her actions, Kamala, although a full-grown child, behaved like a one-and-a-half-year-old baby. She learnt slowly, but nonetheless progress was made. She began to feel the ordinary human fear of the dark, and on night-time walks would now look furtively about her, keeping close to her foster-parents. If the Singhs were present, she would now go to urinate in the bathroom; if left alone, she would pass water wherever she was, as she had done since first being discovered in the woods. Above all, although still silent, she began to understand words, sometimes showing by a gesture that she had taken in what was said. Then she too began to utter a word or two: 'Hoo' for yes, and 'Bha' for 'Bhat' which, in Bengali, means 'rice', and 'Bhal' meaning 'all right'. There were other words too: Kamala was picking up language.

For eight years Kamala grew up in the orphanage, cared for, slowly learning the rudiments of human behaviour; but like most Indian wolf-children, she was not destined to live long. In 1928, her health mysteriously broke down ... and she died.

Source: Mary Evans Picture Library

Source: M. Newton, *Savage Girls and Wild Boys: A History of Feral Children*, Faber & Faber, 2002

Activity 1: GROWING UP (continued)

ITEM B – AFTER YEARS OF ABUSE

Genie – found aged 13 years, Los Angeles 1970 ... She was malnourished, tiny and incontinent. Her short, dark hair was sparse; her eating habits disgusting; she salivated and spat constantly. She would only glance at you, then look away; she smelled objects by holding them close to her pallid face. Stooped and frail, her gait pigeon-toed, her body was bent at the waist, her shoulders hunched forward, her hands held up before her like a rabbit or a comic zombie returned from the dead. She could only make strange sounds in her throat; language was beyond her ... She spat continually, wiping the spit and mucus onto herself. She stank as the spit seeped into her clothes, glistening on her body, her hair. Her eating habits were revolting. As a result of being fed so quickly while tied to her chair, Genie had never properly learnt to chew. So instead she would just store the food in her mouth, waiting for the saliva to break it down, often spitting out the resulting unmasticated goo onto her plate or the table, mushing it up with her fingers. Sometimes she would spit the food out generously, but unwanted, on to someone else's plate.

... She had yet to develop a sense of property. She took people's things wilfully, pulling on their clothes, invading their space. She would go up to them, getting very close, making eye contact and pointing at the thing of theirs that she wanted, demanding possession. On occasion, she would walk up to strangers and charmingly or embarrassingly link arms with them suddenly, ready to stroll on together.

Most difficult of all, she masturbated continually. Many of the things she coveted or stole were for masturbating with ...

Yet most importantly, Genie had not learnt language. She was a child buried in silence – silently watching, silently scared, and silently crying. Even her wild temper tantrums – when she would flail manically, scratching, striking, tearing at herself and smearing her face and hair with her own mucus – were silent ...

With intensive help, Genie gradually acquired speech. She ... 'mastered the essential facets of language: she could produce novel sentences, play with words, listen, take turns in conversation, speak spontaneously, and refer to people or events displaced in time ...'

Despite help from psychologists, Genie remained subject to anti-social behaviour and terrible temper tantrums. At present she lives in a private adult care home, where no doubt she will always remain.

Source: M. Newton, *Savage Girls and Wild Boys: A History of Feral Children*, Faber & Faber, 2002

ITEM C – NEGLECTED AND ABUSED

'Clare' was five years old when she was taken into care by social workers. She was found in a room stinking of excrement and urine. There were no toys, no bed or cot, no bedding, just a sodden mattress. She wore a heavy nappy which had not been changed for a considerable time. Boards were nailed across the door to about five feet in height.

The paediatrician who examined her had never seen a worse case of emotional deprivation. At first, she would remove her clothes and nappy and smear faeces over herself and anything else in the room. She had limited speech and would repeat meaningless words or phrases over and over. She appeared to refuse to have bowel movements but would stain her nappy up to seventeen times a day.

Within a few months of going into foster care she no longer needed nappies and was making significant progress with speech and learning. Clare is now six and making good progress both at school and in her new home.

Source: adapted from the *Sunday Times Magazine*, 29 November 1998

ITEM D – MBUTI CHILDREN

The games Mbuti children play are frequently an imitation of adult behaviour. Little boys only three years old are given tiny bows and arrows by proud fathers and quite seriously stalk and kill butterflies and toads. In time, they graduate to birds and small mammals and reptiles. By the time they reach their early teens they are quite capable of killing enough meat to meet their personal needs and can be seen cooking their catch over their own fires. Sometimes, a pre-pubescent boy and girl will build their own little hut at the edged of the camp and play father and mother. They'll borrow a pot and prepare and cook things they brought back from the forest. I saw such a young couple pretending to copulate in a way so realistic that they could only have learned by observing adults doing the real thing.

I watched little girls of about seven play 'dolls' with a baby. They took turns holding it in nursing position against their chests, carrying it in a sling over their shoulders and bouncing it up and down on their stomachs until it squealed with pleasure.

Source: adapted from K. Duffy, *Children of the Forest*, Robert Hale, 1984

QUESTIONS

1 **What evidence is there in Items A, B and C that we learn patterns of human behaviour?**

2 **In what ways may other members of society react if we fail to do this?**

3 **In Item D the children learn the culture of the Mbuti pygmies. Why is culture so important to human society? Use examples from Item D to illustrate your answer.**

4 **After reading the Items, consider in what ways language plays an important role in human development.**

Activity 2: NORMS AND VALUES

ITEM A – SUTTEE

Behind them came the bier, borne high above the crowd and rocking and dipping to the pace of its bearers ... The body that it bore was swathed in white and heaped about with garlands ... An insignificant object ... for it was not the focus of the crowd's attention. They had not come here to see a dead man, but a still living woman. And now at last she was here, walking behind the bier; and at the sight of her, pandemonium broke loose ...

She was dressed as ... at the wedding ceremony, in the scarlet and gold wedding dress, and decked with the same jewels as she had worn that day ...

She seemed wholly unconscious of the jostling crowds who applauded her, calling on her to bless them and struggling to touch the hem of her skirt as she passed ...

She must know by now what lay ahead; and if so, either the stories ... were true and she had come to love the dead man – and loving him, preferred to die cradling his body in her arms rather than live without him – or else, having steeled herself to it, she was glorying in the manner of her death and the prospect of sainthood and veneration.

When all her ornaments had been removed except for a necklace of sacred tulsi seeds, Shushila held out her slender ringless hands to a priest, who poured Ganges water over them. The water sparkled in the low sunlight as she shook the bright drops from her fingers, and the assembled priests began to intone in chorus ...

To the sound of that chanting, she began to walk round the pyre, circling it three times as once, on her wedding day and wearing this same dress, she had circled the sacred fire, tied by her veil to the shrunken thing that now lay waiting for her on a bridal bed of cedar-logs and spices ...

The silent crowds stood motionless, and none stirred as the suttee mounted the pyre and seated herself in the lotus posture. She arranged the wide folds of her scarlet dress so as to show it to its best advantage, and then gently lifted the dead man's head onto her lap, settling it with infinite care, as though he were asleep and she did not wish to wake him ...

Perhaps it was the brightness of the torch, or the sound of it as the flames streamed up on the still air, that woke her from the dream-world in which she had been moving ... She stared about her, no longer calmly, but with the terrified gaze of a hunted animal ...

The boy's hands, guided by the Brahmin's, lowered the torch until it touched the pyre near the feet of the dead man. Bright flowers of fire sprang up from the wood and blossomed in orange and green and violet ... A brilliant tongue of flame shot skyward, and simultaneously the crowd found its voice and once again roared its homage and approval. But the goddess of their worship thrust aside the head on her lap, and now, suddenly, she was on her feet, staring at those flames and screaming – screaming ...
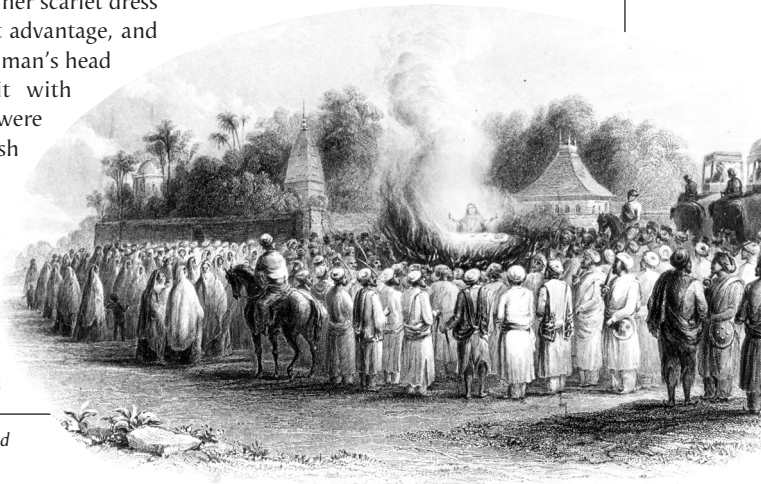
Note: this item is taken from a novel about India under the British Raj between about 1850 and 1870. Suttee has been banned in India for 150 years but is still occasionally practised.

Source: adapted from M. M. Kaye, The Far Pavilions, Allen Lane/Penguin, 1978

Source: Hulton Archive

ITEM B – FORCED MARRIAGES

Violence and intimidation are increasingly being used to force ever-more reluctant British Muslim women into forced marriages.

As second generation British Asians demand the right to choose a partner, clashes between traditionalist parents and modern children are resulting in more women being forced and threatened into marrying against their will.

Police forces, community workers and women's groups report an increase in young women running away to avoid arranged marriages, often to foreigners whom they have never met. Some are hunted down by relatives, friends or professional bounty hunters who demand fees of up to £3,000 for their recovery.

Last month, a police programme helped establish a fresh identity for Rehana Bashir, 20, whose parents were jailed after drugging her and trying to fly her to an arranged marriage in Pakistan. 'If a girl refuses to go through with an arranged marriage she is seen as bringing dishonour to the family and in many cases that will not be tolerated', said a police spokesperson. The girls may be beaten, battered or punished in all sorts of ways by their families. Some have even been killed. One girl who sought help was 19 when she was sent to Pakistan for an arranged marriage. 'You have to forget your past and get a new identity or they will hunt you down like a dog. The bounty hunters show no remorse. They just want the money', she said. 'Many of my friends don't want to marry some stranger who probably can't speak English. The man that I married is waiting for his visa to come to England. I don't want him to find me.'

Source: adapted from S. Bagannan, 'Bounty hunters trail runaway brides', Independent, 20 July 1998

QUESTIONS

1 How might someone from contemporary Western society view the practice of suttee?

2 Using illustrations from Items A and B, outline some of the Western norms and values that are broken by suttee and by the practice of forced marriages.

3 As sociologists, should we act as judge and jury on other people's cultures?

Activity 3: SOCIAL CONTROL

ITEM A – THE WORKPLACE

The first time I went to the Exchange, I looked down from the Visitors Gallery and saw men in top hats with white collars and not a woman in sight.

The girls all got given nicknames by the men – I was the Night Nurse, there was Sweaty Betty, Super Bum, the Grimsby Trawler, the Road Runner, Stop Me And Pick One. They were very cruel. Stop Me And Pick One was because she had acne. They would even suggest you changed your bra from one day to the next. If you were dressed in red from head to foot they'd call you pillar box and try to post letters. You'd think carefully about what you wore.

Men always attributed a loss of temper to your femininity. I bit someone's head off one day. One of my male colleagues looked up and said, 'Wrong time of the month, is it dear?' ...

One day, one of my fellow dealers said 'I don't know how to put this, but you've been offered £250 for the night' ...

I've often wondered about their relationships with women outside the market. Probably they were the kind of people who have compartments for themselves and their home life. I was always high-minded about things like that. You had to work quite hard to get a good name and keep it.

If you stuck it out long enough, you became a human being rather than a piece of meat, but when you first arrived you were undressed mentally every day by several thousand men.

Source: 'They're all something in the City', *Observer Review*, 19 January 1997

ITEM B – CONTROL BY THE STATE

Note: this Item is adapted from George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four, a critical account of a totalitarian society of the future.

Every room held a telescreen. There was no way of shutting it off. The Thought Police could plug into your wire at any time. You had to live with the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, every movement scrutinized. But Winston had found one corner where he was not observed. He sat and wrote in his diary 'Down with Big Brother. Down with Big Brother.' He could not help feeling a twinge of panic. But whether he refrained from writing or not, the Thought Police would get him just the same. Thought crime was not something that he could conceal for ever. It was always at night. A sudden jerk out of sleep, rough hands on your shoulders, lights glaring in your eyes. In the vast majority of cases there was no trial, no report of arrest. People simply disappeared. Your name was removed from the register, every record of everything that you had ever done was wiped out. You were abolished, annihilated, vaporized. But even the unorthodoxy of thought crime was under attack. Every year, thousands more words were destroyed. Earlier, Syme, Winston's colleague from the Ministry of Truth, had lectured him on the virtues of Newspeak. 'Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end, we shall make thought crime virtually impossible because there will be no words in which to express it. Every concept ... will be expressed by exactly one word, with its meaning rigidly defined and all its subsidiary meanings rubbed out and forgotten ... Every year, fewer and fewer words and the range of consciousness still smaller ... How could you have a slogan like "Freedom is Slavery" when the concept of freedom had been abolished? The whole climate of thought will be different ... Orthodoxy means not thinking – not needing to think ... unconsciousness.'

One of these days, thought Winston, Syme will be vaporized. He is too intelligent, he sees too clearly and speaks too plainly. The Party does not like such people. One day he will disappear.

Source: adapted from G. Orwell, *1984*, Secker & Warburg, 1949

ITEM C – ERASING THE PAST

The defacing of a 1934 book containing images of party bosses who subsequently fell from favour

ITEM D – THE GANG

The Latin Kings have become the largest and most notorious street gang on the East Coast of the USA. They are feared and respected for their ruthless discipline, paramilitary organization and secretive creed. During a vicious internal struggle for leadership three Latin Kings took a treacherous member to a deserted Bronx apartment and strangled him, cut the traditional tattoo off his chest, hacked off his hands and head, and set fire to his body.

A former member of a Puerto Rican street gang says 'After being shot, I realized that I didn't want to die in vain. I wanted to do something for my brothers. So I went back to the neighbourhood, working with kids in the Bronx, saying: 'I'm a former gang member, but listen, don't you be like me ...''

Source: adapted from A. Sharkey and S. Hart, 'Brothers in law', *Guardian Weekend*, 2 January 1999

QUESTIONS

1 What means were used by the men working in the Stock Exchange to diminish women? (Item A)

2 In the society described in Item B, what means of social control are used and why are they effective?

3 With reference to Item D, suggest why this peer group has a particularly strong control over its members.

4 What evidence is there in the Items that conformity is never absolute?

Activity 4: HARMONY AND CONFLICT

ITEM A – VALUES

Like many functionalists, Talcott Parsons believes that order, stability and cooperation in society are based on value consensus, that is, a general agreement by members of society concerning what is good and worthwhile. Parsons argues that stratification systems derive from common values. It follows from the existence of values that individuals will be evaluated and therefore placed in some form of rank order. Those who perform successfully in terms of these values will be rewarded with high status, wealth and power.

Source: abridged from M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, HarperCollins, 2004

ITEM B – RICH AND RESPECTED

Richard Branson is Britain's best-known entrepreneur ... when it is his business interests that bring him into the public eye it is more often Branson the public relations man than Branson the entrepreneur that is on display ... almost never does the public see this most public of entrepreneurs doing what he spends most of his time doing. But there should be no mistake: like most people who run companies of comparable size, Branson devotes most of his waking hours to his business ... The private man is a ruthlessly ambitious workaholic; a hard bargainer; an accountant with an instinctive feel for minimizing the losses on each new venture ... He is an empire builder who keeps the inner workings of his empire a business secret and requires senior employees to sign binding confidentiality agreements ... Branson is hugely energetic ... a brilliant and ruthless negotiator. By the 1980s, Branson's image as a popular hero had become a bankable asset for his business, arguably even more valuable than the Virgin brand itself.

Source: from T. Jackson, *Virgin King*, HarperCollins, 1994

ITEM C – A MARXIST VIEW

According to Marx, society is constructed from class. It is people's relationship to the means of production that determines which class they are in. In capitalist societies, where the means of production are privately owned, there are two main classes – the bourgeoisie or owners and the proletariat or workers. The bourgeoisie are powerful since they own the means of production, while the proletariat are weak as they must sell their labour to live. There inevitably develops a division between the rulers and the ruled since the rulers exploit the ruled, skimming off some of the wealth that they generate to enrich themselves. Marx believed that this fundamental conflict of interest between the two classes would lead to the eventual downfall of capitalism. Only under socialism would there be equality.

In the meantime, ruling-class control of political, legal, cultural and institutional life is used to present a distorted image of reality. The mass media and government portray the relationships between employers and workers as fair and just, with the result that few workers realize that they are being exploited.

Source: adapted from M. O'Donnell, *A New Introduction to Sociology*, Polity Press, 1981

ITEM D – WAGE SLAVES

(i) Classroom assistants are becoming increasingly prominent in the government's plans for education ... the Education Secretary has listed more than 20 duties previously carried out by teachers that will now be done by assistants ... they help with tasks such as cutting up paper and cleaning out paint pots, as well as listening to children read and providing the opportunity for individual tuition ...

Classroom assistants are generally paid on an hourly basis at the minimum wage of £4.20. From October 2003 the minimum adult wage is £4.50 and for the 18–22 year-olds £3.80.

(ii) Arranging flowers is a hobby to some, but 30,000 people make a living from selling them. You need to be artistic, creative and dextrous.

Flowers are given on happy and sad occasions, so sensitivity when dealing with customers is essential.

Unqualified florists usually receive the minimum wage, now £4.20 an hour for most adults and £3.50 for anyone under 22.

Flowers don't like the heat so you have to get used to working in the cold.

The work is physical ... Expect to work very long hours at busy times.

(i)   Source: Lucy Balinger, 'Wage slaves', *Observer*, 12 May 2002
(ii)   Source: Ben Flanagan, 'Wage slaves', *Observer*, 19 May 2002

ITEM E – THE SHAREOUT

QUESTIONS

1 **Use the approach adopted in Item A to explain the relative social positions of the individuals described in Items B and D.**

2 **How might a Marxist analysis (see Item C) differ from the above?**

3 **What point is the cartoon in Item E making?**

4 **Using Items A and C, consider how social order is maintained in the face of extremes of inequality.**

Activity 5: C. WRIGHT MILLS – PUBLIC ISSUES AND PERSONAL TROUBLES

ITEM A – SMOKING CAN SERIOUSLY DAMAGE YOUR HEALTH

Most smokers worry about the potential health hazards of their behaviour. They are aware that it damages their lungs and cardio-vascular system. They may feel guilty about the effect that it has on their family by forcing them to become passive smokers and also by the drain it represents on the family's income.

Many of them want to stop smoking. They may experience difficulty in doing this because they are addicted to nicotine or because they experience the effects of smoking as intensely pleasurable. The stigma now attached to smoking may make some smokers feel inadequate and helpless, further reducing their motivation to overcome this powerful habit.

Source: adapted from D. Ford, 'Smoking, health and social policy', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, November 1998

ITEM B – 'PUBLIC ISSUES'

The massive advertising budgets of the twentieth century gave cigarettes a social identity associated with sex, independence, affluence and general well-being. During the 1960s, however, the realization that smoking causes cancer damaged tobacco's image, since when the industry has been struggling to maintain sales in the developed world. In Britain during the 1960s, 70 per cent of the adult population smoked. This has now dropped to 28 per cent of men and 26 per cent of women. Fear of an agonizing death, increased cost and growing social disapproval have all played their part. But these factors have not affected all social classes evenly. Crudely stated, the financially better-off have quit but the poor continue to smoke.

Why should this be? Many studies have shown that poorer people have a lower life expectancy and suffer most from the effects of crime, poor diet, poor housing and a host of other social problems. If you live in a violent neighbourhood where you feel you are taking your life in your hands every time you go out, then the fear of cancer at some future unspecified date might strike you as insignificant. Many people suggest that the best way of encouraging people to quit is to raise the price of tobacco. Indeed, the government has increasingly raised the tax on tobacco, possibly both as a deterrent and also as a way of ensuring that tobacco revenues continue. Common sense might dictate that this would act as a strong incentive for the poor to quit smoking. But people like single mothers and the unemployed are poor whether they smoke or not. No amount of not smoking will improve their housing, reduce their vulnerability to crime, fund a foreign holiday or pay for a pension plan. Perhaps it is the case that to eradicate poor smokers, or any other poverty-linked social problem, we must eradicate poverty.

Source: adapted from D. Ford, 'Smoking, health and social policy', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, November 1998

ITEM C – 'DOCTORS FOR TOBACCO LAW'

Doctors for Tobacco Law were already campaigning for legislation against smoking in 1991.

ROTHMANS OR THE DIVIDEND. £35,000 PER SMOKER WHO DIES.

Source: from D. Ford, 'Smoking, health and social policy', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, November 1998

QUESTIONS

1 Using Item A, demonstrate how smoking can be seen as a 'personal trouble'.

2 How do Items B and C illustrate Mills's idea of 'public issues'?

3 Make a short list of other examples in society where there is a personal trouble and a general public issue.

4 Mills talks about the sociological imagination. Use this concept to explore the relationships between Items A, B and C.

Activity 6: LIFE AND DEATH

ITEM A – LIFE EXPECTANCY

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH: by social class and sex

England & Wales — Years

	1972–76	1977–81	1982–86	1987–91	1992–96	1997–99
Males						
Professional	72.0	74.7	75.1	76.7	77.7	78.5
Managerial and technical	71.7	72.4	73.8	74.4	75.8	77.5
Skilled non-manual	69.5	70.8	72.2	73.5	75.0	76.2
Skilled manual	69.8	70.0	71.4	72.4	73.5	74.7
Semi-skilled manual	68.4	68.8	70.6	70.4	72.6	72.7
Unskilled manual	66.5	67.0	67.7	67.9	68.2	71.1
All males	69.2	70.0	71.4	72.3	73.9	75.0
Females						
Professional	79.2	79.9	80.4	80.9	83.4	82.8
Managerial and technical	77.0	78.1	78.5	80.0	81.1	81.5
Skilled non-manual	78.0	78.1	78.6	79.4	80.4	81.2
Skilled manual	75.1	76.1	77.1	77.6	78.8	79.2
Semi-skilled manual	75.0	76.1	77.3	77.0	77.7	78.5
Unskilled manual	73.9	74.9	75.3	76.2	77.0	77.1
All females	75.1	76.3	77.1	77.9	79.3	79.7

Source: Longitudinal Study, *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM B – INFANT MORTALITY

INFANT MORTALITY:[1] by social class[2]

England & Wales — Rates per 1,000 live births[3]

	Inside marriage		Outside marriage[4]	
	1991	2001	1991	2001
Professional	5.1	3.6	4.2	4.5
Managerial and technical	5.3	3.6	6.6	4.0
Skilled non-manual	6.1	4.5	8.5	5.3
Skilled manual	6.2	5.0	7.7	5.8
Semi-skilled manual	7.1	6.2	9.6	6.7
Unskilled manual	8.2	7.2	11.0	7.5
Other	11.6	6.7	21.2	10.8
All	6.3	4.6	8.8	6.1

[1] Deaths within one year of birth.

[2] Based on father's occupation at death registration.

[3] Figures for live births are a 10 per cent sample coded for father's occupation.

[4] Jointly registered by both parents.

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM C – RISKY WORK

Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

QUESTIONS

1 What points of interest to the sociologist are there in:
(a) Item A?
(b) Item B?

2 Using all the items, consider what explanations for these patterns a sociologist might explore?

3 Consider why this information is important.

Activity 7: RISK SOCIETY

ITEM A – ULRICH BECK

It is reported that sailors who fell into the Thames in the early nineteenth century did not drown, but rather choked to death inhaling the foul-smelling and poisonous fumes of this London sewer. A walk through the narrow streets of a medieval city would also have been like running the gauntlet for the nose: 'Excrement piles up everywhere, in the street, at the turnpikes, in the carriages ... The facades of Parisian houses are decomposing from urine ... the socially organized constipation threatens to pull all of Paris into the process of putrescent decomposition.' It is nevertheless striking that hazards in those days assaulted the nose or the eyes and were thus perceptible to the senses, while the risks of civilization today typically *escape perception* and are localized in the sphere of *physical and chemical formulas* (e.g. toxins in foodstuffs or the nuclear threat).

Source: Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, quoted in A. Giddens (ed.) *Sociology: Introductory Readings*, revd edn, Polity Press, 2001

ITEM B – RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL

A BNFL freighter carrying radioactive material sailed into port yesterday in Barrow-in-Furness, firing its water cannon and protected by armed police. It was followed by a small flotilla of protest ships. A police helicopter hovered overhead as the 5,000-tonne *Pacific Pintail* brought home its 5-ton cargo of plutonium mixed oxide fuel (Mox) at the end of a three-year, 36,000-mile round trip to Japan. After the vessel was hauled into position by two tugs, the 100-tonne transport cask containing the fuel was lifted by crane on to a waiting train for the two-hour journey to the Sellafield plant, further up the Cumbrian coast. There were competing claims from British Nuclear Fuels and Greenpeace, the leading force behind the 20 yachts of the Nuclear-Free Irish Sea Flotilla. BNFL said that the safe passage had drawn a line under the costly episode, which saw the cargo sent back from Takahama in Japan after safety records at Sellafield were found to have been falsified, and opened the way for future business. Environmental campaigners claimed, however, that BNFL's Mox-reprocessing business had been irreversibly damaged. Ben Stewart, for Greenpeace, said: 'Today is a final humiliation for BNFL. This rejected plutonium is now back where it started. In the journey BNFL has taken great risks with environmental safety, ignored the pleas of 80 countries around the world and outraged public opinion across four continents.'

Source: Russell Jenkins, 'Armed police bring Sellafield freighter home', *The Times*, 18 September 2002

ITEM C – THE CJD TIME BOMB

In May 1990 the then Agriculture Minister, John Gummer, fed his four-year-old daughter Cordelia a hamburger on TV in an attempt to convince us that BSE* could not be transferred to humans.

* There is evidence of a causal relationship between the cattle disease, BSE – bovine spongiform encephalopathy – and a new variant of the human affliction, CJD – Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease.

Source: Kevin Toolis, 'Epidemic in Waiting', *Guardian Weekend*, 22 September 2001

ITEM D – MALE FERTILITY

The steady drop in male fertility in Britain could be caused by men ingesting female hormones in drinking water drawn from rivers containing recycled sewage, according to government researchers.

Extensive work for the environment agency shows that in some rivers from which drinking water is taken all the male fish of some species have become feminized. This is because of trace quantities of chemicals in the water, even in rivers officially classed as clean. As a result fish numbers have crashed.

Susan Jobling of Brunel University in west London said this was a warning that the same might be happening to the human population. Over the past 30 years human sperm counts have fallen by half as the birth pill has become increasingly used. Millions are taken every day and the synthetic oestrogen, known as ethanol oestradiol, is ultimately discharged into the sewage system and flushed into rivers, where it remains active for a month ...

Dr Jobling said on the BBC's *Countryfile*: 'This issue is not just about fish. Everything we eat, put on our skin, throw down the drain, ends up in the sewage treatment works and ultimately in the river. One could argue that we are actually living in a sea of chemicals. I think there are very real reasons to be worried about whether male reproductive health could also be affected in the same way as fish.'

Source: Abridged from Paul Brow, 'Fish clue to human fertility decline', *Guardian*, 18 March 2002

ITEM E – WASTE DISPOSAL

The real problem with mass incineration is that it produces ash – mountains of it – and it is not harmless stuff like you get from a fire at home in the grate. Household rubbish is laced with horrors – insecticides, pesticides, cleaning fluids, bleach, dyestuffs, batteries, fluorescent tubes, televisions, computer screens, keyboards, lead solder, wood treatments, PVC ... Burning them releases heavy metals and toxic chemicals that collect and become concentrated in the ash. The very worst of them, the dioxins created by burning chlorine (an ingredient of household cleaners and PVC), are nightmarish carcinogens whose uncontrolled release could be regarded as chemical warfare. For this reason, such ash is usually sent to specially designated landfills. Newcastle City Council, however, thought it had a better idea. Between 1993 and 1996 it dumped more than 2,000 tonnes of Byker's contaminated ash onto the city's footpaths, parks and allotments. Analysis revealed that dioxin levels were 2,000 times higher than the recommended safe limit for topsoil, and that levels in eggs from allotment hens were high enough to double the cancer risk of anyone who regularly ate them.

Source: Richard Girling, 'The Wasting Disease', *Sunday Times*, 10 March 2002

QUESTIONS

1 **Making reference to Item A and at least one other Item, consider the similarities and differences in risks facing a typical person of today compared with 100 years ago.**

2 **Making some reference to the Items, consider the role of (a) scientists and (b) government in the management of risk.**

3 **Consider Items B, C, D and E. To what extent do the risks associated with late modernity affect everyone equally?**

ACTIVITY 1: GROWING UP

Teacher's note

Students are introduced in this item to the idea of socialization and culture. It will help students to read Introduction, pp. vi–xi.

1 The feral children in Item A displayed none of the patterns of behaviour that we accept as human. For example, they found it difficult to relate to another child and lacked both curiosity and a sense of humour. They had no sense of appropriate behaviour and had not learned to speak. If our behaviour patterns were in-born or instinctive, children such as these would have similar skills to other children of a similar age who had been brought up in close contact with other humans. The same unsocialized behaviour can be seen in both Genie and Clare. As recent examples of extreme deprivation the accounts of their behaviour may be more reliable than those of Amala and Kamala. We are told that Genie had neither a sense of people's personal space nor any sense of property. She did not eat in a normal way and was completely uninhibited in expressing her sexual feelings. Once children such as these are placed in a more usual environment they start to learn more normal behaviour. Genie's progress was limited, possibly because she was already 13 years old when she was rescued. However, Clare, after only a year in foster care, was able to attend school and was making good progress there.

2 If we are to be accepted by other members of society, they will expect a high degree of conformity to prevailing norms and values. Those people who are unwilling or unable to conform may be seen as threatening a society's social stability and cohesion. They will therefore experience negative sanctions. They may, for instance, be shunned by other members of society. In Clare's case, when she was first taken into foster care it may have been difficult for the authorities to place such a deprived and apparently disturbed child. It is also probable that other parents would be unwilling to allow their own children to play with Clare, fearing that she would be a 'bad influence', so denying Clare the opportunity to learn from her peers. If Clare had been unable to learn acceptable behaviour as she became older, she might have been referred to a psychiatric unit for various 'treatments' or even to live there on a permanent basis.

Despite being given intensive help, Genie was never able to live independently. Her temper tantrums and anti-social behaviour would make it very difficult for her to be accepted into a family, workplace or community. She might be a danger to herself and to others. Clare was more fortunate. It may initially have been difficult for the authorities to place her in foster care, but they were clearly successful in doing this and she was able successfully to integrate into school and family life.

3 Human beings live in groups. Culture is the learned, shared behaviour of that group or society. As children grow up in their society, they learn from their parents, peers and others what it is to be a member of that society. They learn what behaviour patterns are expected, what they must believe in, their language and the roles that they will play as adults. Without this shared culture the pygmies could not successfully maintain their society. Without a shared language they could not communicate and without shared norms they could not interact effectively. We can see in the Item that boys and girls can cooperate effectively because they have learned shared norms of behaviour. They know how to behave and what to expect from others. They can play at mothers and fathers, building a hut, preparing a meal and even copulating with each other after learning from their parents and other adults what is acceptable behaviour for a mother and father. Likewise, the young boy has learned his role as a hunter throughout the early encouragement and example of his father. He can use a bow and stalk prey and by his early teenage years can feed himself. It is essential to the survival of the group that young boys learn the role of hunter so that the group can be adequately fed. Similarly, the small girls play 'dolls' with a real baby. They learn to feed and care for the child in preparation for their central role as mothers and carers of the next generation of pygmy children. Without the young learning the culture of their society, it is difficult to see how pygmy society could continue.

4 *Key points:*
· The listening and turn taking that take place in speech help to develop

social bonds and cooperative behaviour. These in turn allow us to work together in performing such tasks as house building or hunting.
· Language gives humans the ability to think and talk not only about our present experiences but also about the past and our hopes for the future. This makes culture possible.
· It is through the medium of language that we reflect upon ourselves and our place in society. In so doing we develop our sense of who we are – our identity.

ACTIVITY 2: NORMS AND VALUES

Teacher's note

This activity introduces students to other cultural practices. Students will need to read Introduction, pp. vi–xi.

1 *Key points:*
· Most Western observers would be deeply shocked at the cruelty of burning a person alive, whatever the reason. By today's standards, the interest and excitement shown by the crowd who watch the spectacle would be viewed as ghoulish and barbaric, much like the public hangings of earlier times in Britain.
· The ceremony clearly had a religious significance for the people. The Item recounts that the spectators tried to touch the widow's dress and called out to her to bless them. To venerate a woman in this way might appear to be superstitious to many Western eyes.
· The Item suggests that the woman's apparent acceptance of her fate indicates either that she loved her dead husband so much that she cannot contemplate a life without him, or that she is glorying in the prospect of sainthood. From a Western standpoint, both these reasons for death would be seen as unacceptable. Our society accepts the long tradition of widows remarrying, while the idea of sainthood might, in our more secular age, appear faintly ridiculous.
· To Western eyes, the failure to respond to the woman's screams when the fire is lit would be seen as a final act of cruelty, close to murder.

2 *Key points:*
· One of the central values of Western society is respect for human life. The practice of suttee seems to go against this value, as does the beating and intimidation, and even killing, of Asian women who refuse to go through with forced marriages.
· Also central to Western society is the value placed on individual freedom and liberty. Young people are encouraged to choose their own occupations and friends and to think for themselves on matters such as religion and politics. The young women in Item B have had this freedom removed. (Forced marriages should not be confused with arranged marriages where the parties are both agreeable to the match.)
· In both Items A and B, the 'victims' of the social practices described are female. In today's Western society there is a general acceptance that men and women are equal before the law, at work and at home. There is no mention in the Items that men might be similarly treated.
· In Western society the family is highly valued, but there is less emphasis on obedience and more on individualism. In the case of the Asian families described, the value placed on the family unit has led to norms of obedience. Girls are therefore expected to marry as their parents see fit and punished if they fail to do so.
· Finally, value is placed on 'romantic love' in Western society. This ideal is reflected in teenage and women's magazines and other media. While many real-life marriages fall far short of this ideal, the illusion of romance is a potent force in our society. Marriage to a stranger who may not even speak the same language would appear to be lacking any vestige of romance, at least to Western eyes.

3 Sociologists have been socialized into the norms and values of their own society and their own time. As individuals, their own life experiences also mould their attitudes and interests. It may therefore be impossible for them to judge other societies objectively. It has been argued that sociologists have no right to condemn practices simply because they seem alien to them. The traditional suttee ceremony, for instance, may have made perfect sense in terms of the values and religious beliefs of that

particular time and place. On the other hand, some people believe that there are certain basic human rights which transcend cultural practices and should be seen as absolutes. For example, child abuse, cannibalism, torture and rape should be considered unacceptable in any social context.

ACTIVITY 3: SOCIAL CONTROL

Teacher's note

We look in this activity at the idea of different forms of social control, both formal and informal. Relevant reading can be found in Introduction, pp. vi–xi.

1 The Stock Exchange was very much a male-dominated work environment. The men used sexual innuendo and teasing to make women feel uncomfortable and diminished. They made reference to women's bodily functions and even joked about prostitution. These ploys may have served to ensure that few women traders were able to achieve successful careers at the Exchange.

2 In Item B, the state uses continual surveillance. At any time, the people do not know whether or not the Thought Police are watching them and waiting to strike. The uncertainty and terror that they instil seems to have infected Winston with a sense of the inevitability of his discovery. Still more unnerving is the knowledge that they have the power to completely annihilate a person's entire existence. Names are removed from records and books and it is as if the person has never existed. Even the freedom of independent thought is soon to be restricted by the state. Uncertainty and the fear of physical pain and death have no doubt made this regime highly effective in controlling its members. However, the mind control offered by Newspeak would appear to make these crude measures redundant.

3 To gain membership to a violent gang, recruits will need to adhere absolutely to gang norms and values. In addition there may be initiation rites which involve illegal activities, such as stealing and drug dealing. In the Latin Kings people are 'marked' as lifelong members by their chest tattoo. Since the members generally operate outside the law they will be expected to show total commitment. Any 'weak link' could endanger the whole gang. In the case of the Latin Kings we can see that they are ruthless in punishing traitors, which means that it will be very difficult for gang members to leave.

4 *Key points:*
· In Item A, the female trader resists being crushed by male colleagues and continues to survive in this sexist environment. Eventually she says that she becomes accepted as a 'human being'.
· In Item B, despite his terror, Winston finds a corner in his room where he is unobserved, and writes 'Down with Big Brother'. He not only thinks this, a crime in itself, but he commits the thought to paper. Even Syme expresses insights and understandings which the Party would rather not have expressed.
· We see a real-life example of dissidents having been removed from records in Item C. As in *1984*, critics under Stalin were sometimes not only killed but also all records of them were obliterated. This represented an attempt to repress not only the individuals but also their ideas and what they stood for. If control by the state had been complete then there would have been no need for the doctoring of records, as no one would have dared criticize the regime.
· In Item D, we see that members of street gangs do manage to escape old loyalties, even at risk to their own safety. In the case of this man, a shooting led to his reassessing his life and deciding to try to help young people avoid gang membership. No doubt this stance would put him in some danger of reprisals.

ACTIVITY 4: HARMONY AND CONFLICT

Teacher's note

This activity examines social inequality from a functionalist and a Marxist viewpoint. Students will need to read Introduction, pp. xiv–xviii.

1 *Key points:*
· Talcott Parsons takes the view that people are rewarded in society to the extent that they embody the characteristics valued in that society. Richard Branson appears to combine wide-ranging intellectual abilities with enterprise and initiative, all traits highly valued in Western society.

A functionalist might interpret Branson's apparent popularity with the public as evidence of a consensus in society that such men deserve the financial rewards they receive.
· Following Parsons's reasoning, those individuals who perform less successfully in terms of society's values will receive fewer rewards. The workers described in Item D presumably lie within this category. The low pay of teaching assistants may indicate the relatively low importance placed on caring for children. In addition, it might be argued that teaching assistants need few socially valued skills to carry out their role. A similar argument can be advanced in respect of florists who are treated with relatively little respect and the contribution that they make to society as a whole is seen as minimal.
· From Parsons's point of view, the existence of shared values makes inequality inevitable.

2 *Key points:*
· From a Marxist standpoint, Branson is part of the ruling class. He owes his wealth to his ownership of the means of production. Rather than deserving this wealth he has gained it through the exploitation of his workers. He has siphoned off much of the wealth which they create to become a multi-millionaire. Branson's popularity with the public can, from this perspective, be seen as evidence of the successful operation of ruling class ideology. Ruling class control of the media and other social institutions has led to ordinary people coming to believe that he deserves his wealth.
· In Item D both the teaching assistant and the florist work for low wages. From a Marxist viewpoint both can be regarded as exploited, not paid the true value of their contribution. The teaching assistant does not produce 'profit' so has little value for the bourgeois class, while the florist's long working hours and poor conditions will largely profit the owners of the florist chains. The failure of the workers to complain about their conditions of work is explained by their failure to realize that they are being oppressed and exploited.

3 The cartoon's central theme is the unequal distribution of wealth. The working man is shown prostrate and no doubt exhausted, stretching out his hand in the hope of receiving one meagre coin. He is knelt on by the clerk who is himself knelt on by the manager. Finally, at the top stands the smug owner filling his safe with money, his weight pressing down on the workers below. The supposed relationship between the different social strata is succinctly expressed, and bears a close relationship to the view of society expressed in Item C. The cartoon's message is unashamedly political and may have been intended to stimulate debate within the working class.

4 *Key points:*
· For functionalists, social order is maintained because of the existence of value consensus. The members of society all agree that certain characteristics are valuable – for example, successful business skills. There is an overall acceptance that people with these skills should be highly rewarded, especially since they may be seen as benefiting society as a whole by providing employment and creating wealth.
· For Marxists, order is maintained because the workers are unaware that they are exploited and oppressed. The ruling class uses its control of media, government and other institutions to shape society's values in such a way that they support ruling class interests. The subject class therefore accepts its position and does not attempt to challenge the status quo.

ACTIVITY 5: C. WRIGHT MILLS – PUBLIC ISSUES AND PERSONAL TROUBLES

Teacher's note

This activity examines the contribution of C. Wright Mills to our understanding of the relationship between the individual's life and the social structure. Students are advised to read Introduction, p. xxv.

1 C. Wright Mills believed that it was important for sociologists to explore the relationship between what people experienced in their individual and family lives and the social structure of the society in which they find themselves.

Item A illustrates the personal troubles of a smoker – how their smoking habit affects their own life and that of close family and friends. The problem of quitting smoking is likewise seen in individual terms. Smokers may be advised to get help with their addiction, exercise self-control or show some 'backbone'.

2 *Key points:*
- Mills's idea of 'public issues' involves a consideration of how decisions made within the larger social structures will affect how the individual experiences life. In Item B we see that the advertising campaigns of large tobacco companies were responsible for smoking becoming established within the population. Even now that the risks of smoking are known, the government still continues to rely on tax revenues. Some critics might contend that the government has paid insufficient attention to protecting the health of its citizens.
- Item C shows how the problem of individual smokers is also a problem for the wider public, since smoking-related illnesses create a significant drain on the health budget. The recent publicity given to the ill-effects of passive smoking also has far-reaching ramifications. Employers now need to provide smoking rooms for smokers, while anti-smoking groups press for smoking to be banned in public places such as restaurants and pubs.

3 Some examples of the types of issues which students may raise are:

Private troubles	Public issues
Poverty of workless families	Government policy on social security, employment issues and taxation
Redundancy	Economic decline Recession Social problems in local communities
Delays in hospital treatment	NHS policy and organization Government funding Ageing population
Individual suicide or self-harm Schizophrenia	Government policy on care in the community Funding of NHS
Individual mugged	Policing policy Government funding Education Penal policy
Racial harassment	The law Police policy Attitudes reflected in the media
Divorce	Social security benefits Threats to the institution of the family

4 *Key points:*
- There is a clear relationship between the personal troubles of the smokers described in Item A and the 'public issues' in Items B and C. Their addiction is partly shaped by actions taken in the past by large tobacco companies and by the policy pursued by the government.
- Public issues are experienced by smokers themselves as personal problems. They may be sickly and feel guilty about wasting money, and, if they require hospital treatment, they may encounter condemnation and hostility from doctors and nursing staff. They may be offered little sympathy since they are seen as having brought the problem on themselves.
- Item B suggests that the problems associated with quitting are most keenly felt by one group in society – the poor. If governments seriously want to eradicate smoking, then anti-smoking campaigns are not enough. The problem of poverty as a whole needs to be tackled. This would involve society-wide change.

ACTIVITY 6: LIFE AND DEATH

Teacher's note

This activity tries to develop the idea of the sociological imagination. Students are invited to examine various statistics and then to 'look behind' them to discover their sociological significance. Students may find it beneficial to read Introduction, pp. xxiii–xxiv. This item also has links with Chapter 5, pp. 312–17

1 (**a**) Since 1972, expectation of life has grown for both sexes and all social class groups.
- There continues to exist differences between the sexes: women, on average, are likely to live around four years longer than men. The differences between the sexes do, however, appear to be becoming slightly narrower.
- For both men and women, people in professional occupations and those higher up the social class scale are likely to live longer than those lower down. The gap between the highest social class and the lowest for men is around 7 years and for women around 5 years. Over the course of time, the gap between the social classes has remained fairly constant in the case of women but has become slightly wider in the case of men.

(**b**) Item B shows a general fall in infant mortality since 1991.
- As seen in Item A, social class is a significant influence. The infant mortality rate for children born into professional families is lower than for children born into unskilled manual families. In fact, in 2001, the infant mortality rate for children in unskilled manual households was twice that for children in professional families when children were born within marriage.
- Item B also shows a difference in mortality rate for children born into different types of family. Overall mortality rates are slightly higher among children born outside marriage, with the exception of children of professional fathers in 1991. For both types of family, children born into higher-class families have a better chance of survival. Interestingly, by 2002 there had been a considerable reduction in deaths of children born outside marriage to unskilled manual mothers. This contributes to the overall reduction in infant deaths of children born outside marriage, such that by 2001 the differences between those born inside and outside marriage are very small indeed, especially in the lower social classes.

2 Sociologists might try to explain the differences in mortality rates between the sexes in a variety of ways.
- They might consider the differences in lifestyle between the two. For example, if there were differences in diet, smoking, or drug and alcohol use between the sexes. They might also wish to look at differences in the work that they did. Men and women may choose to do typically 'masculine' or 'feminine' jobs. For example, if men are more likely to choose occupations which expose them to higher risk of accident or pollution then this may help to explain their higher death rates. Other behaviours like choice of leisure activity may also have an influence. We know, for example, that young men are more likely to be involved in road traffic accidents and violent conflicts than are young women. There may also be differences between the sexes in their willingness to consult doctors, take medical advice and so on. Students may be able to think of many more factors of potential importance.
- In both Items A and B, social class seems to be an important factor. While there is not a hard and fast link between social class and standard of living, generally speaking those higher up the social scale will have more money. This will mean that they can afford better housing, providing dry and comfortable accommodation in a desirable location. Moreover, their generally higher income will mean that they can afford better foodstuffs, holidays and transport and so on.
- It has long been known and accepted that factors like good food and housing contribute to a healthy life. They may be all the more important for infants, who are more vulnerable due to their age. This may help us to understand both higher infant death rates among the lower social classes and slightly higher rates among children born outside marriage. These children are more likely to live in lone-parent households where the overall income may be slightly less than in two-parent households. The differences, however, are not great.
- Difference in death rates between social classes may also reflect varying occupational environments. People working in manual jobs are more likely to come into contact with heavy machinery or pollutants, which may affect their health, than those higher up the social scale. This factor will be of less importance in infant mortality rates, but some parents working in those occupations may inadvertently bring home such things as overalls impregnated with chemicals, which might damage a small child.

3 *Key points:*
- Sociologists are interested in the way people live and the factors that affect their lives. While we must all die at some stage, a long, healthy and happy life is sought by most people. The findings from Items A and B may indicate where people are dying unnecessarily. The figures indicate that people lower down the social scale could live longer if their standard of living were raised and their workplace safety improved. Such matters must be of concern for governments and society as a whole.
- Differences in mortality rates between the sexes may indicate that women's lifestyle is more healthy than men's. Those aspects which tend to promote longevity could be stressed in various health promotion campaigns, for example, as we have seen in the campaigns to reduce smoking.
- While the difference in mortality rates in 2002 for children born into different types of household are not great, such findings may be important. The death of a child is not only a personal tragedy, but also the

loss to society of a future citizen. Thus strong healthy children are in everyone's interest. While it may not be possible or desirable to change family patterns, it may be possible to direct various forms of support, both financial and otherwise, to those households where children are most vulnerable.

ACTIVITY 7: RISK SOCIETY

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on an analysis of risk society, making particular reference to the work of Ulrich Beck. Students may wish to refer to the Introduction. This item also has links to Chapter 15, pp. 980–1.

1 As Item A illustrates, the people in the past would face many hazards. Not least would be the danger of contracting contagious and infectious diseases exacerbated by poor water quality and overcrowded housing. Some people might also face a high risk of accident or disease in the workplace, for example in the mining industry or textile mills. Beck believes that these risks were obvious and knowable, since they could be seen and smelled and therefore were of a different order to those faced by people today.

· In Item A, Beck argues that hazards faced by people today are threatening because they are unknown and often unknowable. For example, in Item E the people of Newcastle were quite unaware of the hazards lurking in their footpaths and allotments. Similarly, as outlined in Item D, we may have unknowingly been drinking contaminated tap water believing it to be fully purified.

· Average life expectancy has increased enormously over the last century. It therefore seems that despite the unquestionable risks associated with advanced technology their impact is at present of a lesser order than the impact of risks in simple modernity. However, it is worth noting that we do not know whether these unseen risks may in the future have a devastating effect on the population – for instance, in the case of CJD, the full impact of which is as yet unknown.

2 (**a**) Scientists are at the forefront of technological advance. We rely on them for evidence of the safety of foods, nuclear power and so on. In general, we wish to limit risk for ourselves without hindering the modernization process which delivers material prosperity. The balancing of these two demands may be no easy thing, especially since research is frequently funded by big business. There have been cases of scientists falsifying research results – for example, the scientists employed at BNFL have been accused of falsifying records (Item B). There are also cases where scientists have been proved wrong. For example, we were initially told BSE could not jump the species barrier. These factors cumulatively mean that scientists are no longer completely trusted by the public, who may continue to perceive risk where scientific opinion in general sees very little.

(**b**) In democratic societies we expect government both to reflect the will of the people and to protect its people from threat. Recently, there has been considerable discussion of the safety of GM crops. Much of the British public appears to be against their spread, but the present government is eager for trials to be extended. In Item D we see scientific warnings about water quality, a problem seemingly created by a high-tech solution to birth control. The government is ultimately responsible for the quality of drinking water, but at the present time seems to consider a degree of water pollution an acceptable risk. Therefore, government is often criticized for being too influenced by industry (for example, the US agro-chemical industry), at the expense of the health of people. Item B on the transportation of nuclear waste provides a similar example. Successive governments have permitted the development of the nuclear reprocessing business and the transportation of dangerous materials despite 'outraged public opinion across four continents'.

· Nor is local government exempt from criticism. In Item E we find a city council which has decided to dispose of contaminated ash on city paths and allotments. One can only guess at whether or not this decision was taken in complete ignorance of the dangers of the ash. In all of the above cases, it seems that the government is in the unenviable position of trying to balance the conflictive demands of advanced technology and the safety of people.

3 Beck has argued that the risks produced by the technologies of late or reflexive modernity cannot be completely avoided by anyone. For example, in Item D, which refers to male fertility, the hazards of hormones in drinking water cannot be completely avoided since we must all drink water, wash in it and consume foodstuffs which may have absorbed it. In the case of Item B, where radioactive material is moved around the world, if there is an accident the effects of wind and rain would spread the fallout over a huge area. To say that no group can completely avoid these risks is not, however, to say that every group experiences exactly the same risk. Some groups of people may be better informed than others and take action to reduce that risk. For example, people may choose to drink bottled water and buy homes far from nuclear installations. But many of these avoidance actions rely not only on being well informed but also on having the financial means to take appropriate action. For example, the well-off can afford expensive homes well away from incinerators or landfill sites.

· Certain occupations may also bring people into contact with potentially hazardous material. For example, workmen in Newcastle (Item E) will have been involved in the transportation and spreading of contaminated ash, while slaughterhouse workers may be at greater risk of developing CJD.

· Overall, it seems that the risks of later modernity have some effect on us all. However, once the risks are recognized and cease to be hidden, it can be argued that certain social groups are in a better position than others to reduce their individual exposure to them.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Activity 1: CASTE AND CLASS

ITEM A – CASTE

An invisible line runs through every village in India. It sharply divides the upper castes from the Untouchables, those beneath Hinduism's rigid social hierarchy. Under this system, there are four main castes, each divided into many sub-castes. A goldsmith is higher up the ladder than a blacksmith and a priestly Brahmin is highest of all. The Untouchables, or 'Dalits' (Hindu for 'the oppressed') as they now prefer to be called, are off the ladder completely.

Under this system, people are born into their caste position and have no way of changing it. Their birth is seen as a reflection of their conduct in past lives and is therefore unalterable. It determines their occupation and whom they can marry. The Brahmins at the top of the system are religiously pure while the Untouchables at the bottom are unclean or polluted. So strong is the idea of pollution that even the shadow of an Untouchable moving across the food of a Brahmin would render it unclean.

The Untouchables as a polluted people traditionally tackled the unclean jobs like burning dead animals, skinning carcasses and removing 'night soil' (human excrement). In many villages, Untouchables continue to live in poverty and subjugation. They are forbidden to enter temples or drink from the same wells as the upper castes. In some villages, Dalits are forced to live on the leeward side to prevent the wind that touches their bodies defiling the upper castes.

Increasingly, though, Dalits are challenging the old order which determines whether they be a doctor or a scavenger and whom they marry, all because of their activities in a past life. India is now a democracy and all its people have the vote. The caste system was made illegal in 1950 and increasingly members of the Untouchable caste are gaining an education. Dalits are slowly entering government, the Civil Service and the police force. More state funds are now being channelled to neglected Dalit villages for roads, schools and electricity. In the growing cities, Dalits are able to earn higher wages than in the villages, giving some at least access to televisions and newspapers. Moreover, caste barriers are more difficult to maintain. As a New Delhi social worker says, 'Can we check who cooked the meal in a hotel or who sat beside us on the bus? Can we stop someone from living next door?'

Not surprisingly, many members of the upper castes are resisting any challenge to the old order. This is leading to violence. In Laxmanpur Bath, hungry and desperately poor Untouchables tried to harvest a piece of disputed land. Two hundred upper-caste men decided that it was time to teach them a lesson. For two and a half hours the upper-caste killers went from hut to hut, butchering men, women and children. By morning 61 people lay dead.

Source: adapted from T. McGirk, 'War between the castes', *Time Magazine*, 15 December 1997

ITEM B – CLASS

The old labels 'working' and 'middle' class make less and less sense in the context of radically changing patterns of consumption, income, lifestyle and authority. It is a truism that social mobility abounds and that most of the 'working class' – meaning manual workers – lead what even a generation ago would have been considered a middle-class lifestyle. 'They may well still be C2s relative to everyone else', the columnist Simon Heffer quips about Essex Man, 'but C2s, like almost everyone else, are not what they used to be.' Statistics – everything from video and home ownership to foreign holidays and school staying-on rates – tell the same story ...

Yet ... cultural distinctions and nuances remain legion. Accents, houses, cars, schools, sports, fashion, drink, smoking, supermarkets, soap operas, holiday destinations, even training shoes: virtually everything in life is graded with subtle or unsubtle class tags attached ... and underpinning these distinctions are fundamental differences in upbringing, education and occupation. It is here that we confront head-on the public perception of a class system, in the sense of deep structural barriers and inequalities reflecting and intensifying social segregation.

Source: A. Adonis and S. Pollard, *A Class Act: The Myth of Britain's Classless Society*, Hamish Hamilton, 1997

ITEM C – CLASS HOUSING

In middle-class Britain in the 1990s, it is not how you live – we are all homeowners now – but where you live. Indeed, a recent *Scotsman* poll found that one in three people (36 per cent) regarded where you live as a key indicator of class.
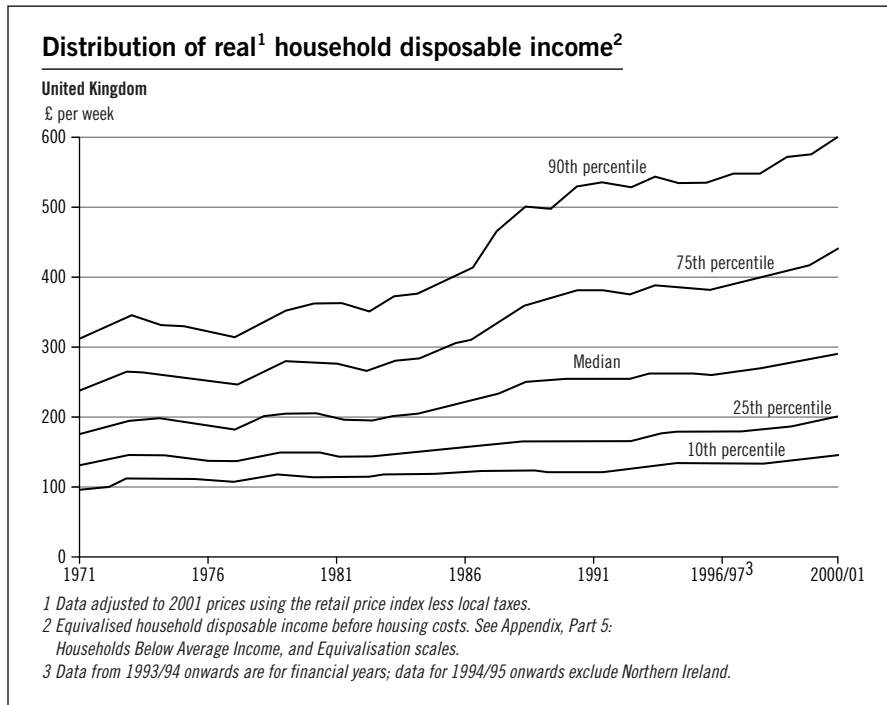
Source: A. Adonis and S. Pollard, *A Class Act: The Myth of Britain's Classless Society*, Hamish Hamilton, 1997

QUESTIONS

1 With reference to Items A, B and C, what are the similarities and the differences between the caste and the class systems?

2 'Status groups are made up of individuals awarded a similar amount of social honour.' With reference to Item A, why have castes often been described as status groupings?

3 Caste conflict in today's world is more likely than class conflict. Briefly discuss this with reference to Items A and B.
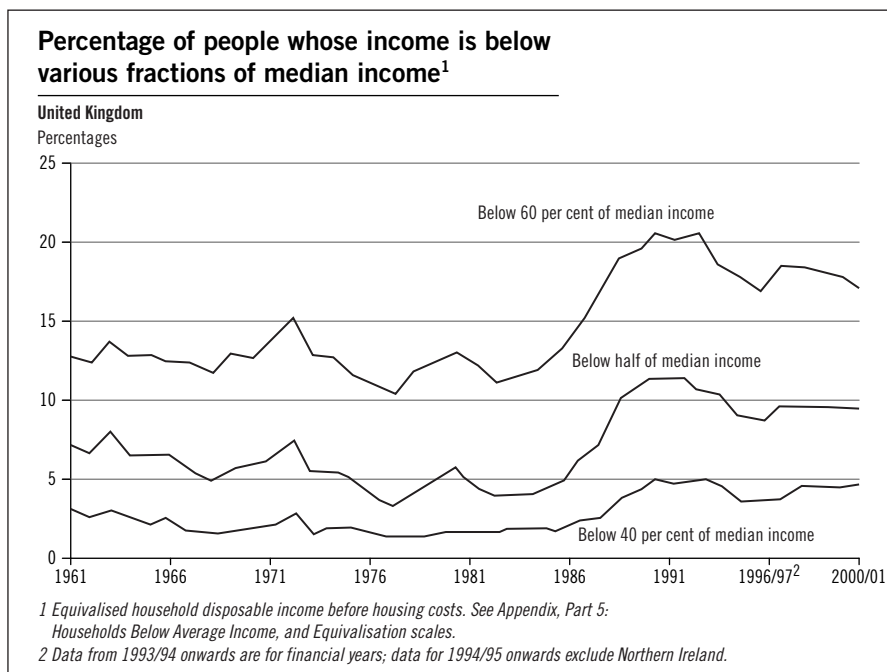
Activity 2: INEQUALITY

ITEM A – DISPOSABLE INCOME

Distribution of real[1] household disposable income[2]

United Kingdom
£ per week

[Line graph showing distribution of real household disposable income in the UK from 1971 to 2000/01, £ per week, y-axis 0 to 600. Lines shown for 90th percentile, 75th percentile, Median, 25th percentile, and 10th percentile. X-axis: 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996/97[3], 2000/01.]

1 Data adjusted to 2001 prices using the retail price index less local taxes.
2 Equivalised household disposable income before housing costs. See Appendix, Part 5:
   Households Below Average Income, and Equivalisation scales.
3 Data from 1993/94 onwards are for financial years; data for 1994/95 onwards exclude Northern Ireland.

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM B – LOW INCOME

Percentage of people whose income is below various fractions of median income[1]

United Kingdom
Percentages

[Line graph showing percentage of people below various fractions of median income in the UK from 1961 to 2000/01, y-axis 0 to 25. Lines shown for Below 60 per cent of median income, Below half of median income, and Below 40 per cent of median income. X-axis: 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996/97[2], 2000/01.]

1 Equivalised household disposable income before housing costs. See Appendix, Part 5:
   Households Below Average Income, and Equivalisation scales.
2 Data from 1993/94 onwards are for financial years; data for 1994/95 onwards exclude Northern Ireland.

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM C – THE INCOME PROCESSION

The average salary in Britain in 1996 was around £19,000 a year – but the average disguises remarkable variation. Two-thirds of wage earners earn the average or below; only a third earn more than this. An imaginary parade of the entire working population dramatizes the point. If the population of Britain were divided according to income, if income were made equivalent to height and if the population then marched past for an hour, it would take a full 37 minutes before the first adult of average height was seen. For the first 15 minutes there would be a parade of dwarves. Stature would increase gradually thereafter, but 57 minutes would have passed before we saw people of twice the average height. Giants of 90 feet or more would appear in the last few seconds, with the last one or two literally miles high.

Source: W. Hutton, *The State We're In*, Jonathan Cape, 1995
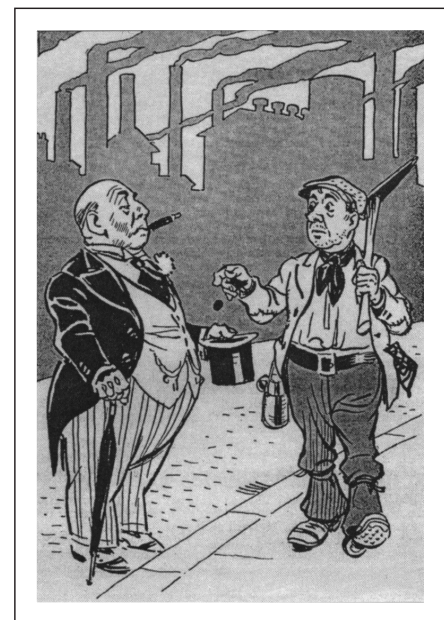
'Pity the poor rich crippled by taxation' (cartoon from 1947)
Source: in M. Haralambos (ed.) *Sociology: A New Approach*, Causeway Press, 1996

QUESTIONS

1 **Briefly summarize the trends in:**
  (a) **Item A**
  (b) **Item B**

2 **What actions could a government take to reduce income inequality? (Item C)**

3 **'Class is disappearing in modern Britain.' Do Items A, B and C lend any support for this statement?**

Activity 3: WINNERS AND LOSERS

ITEM A – CITY TRADERS

Gary left school with a couple of A levels. He'd always wanted to be a futures trader 'because of the hustle and bustle of it, basically'. One day, he was in a pub and ran into a guy he'd known at school who was trading at Liffe. He gave Gary a name to call and, Bob's your uncle, a week later he was in. 'It was a word of mouth thing', he says. 'It's not what you know, it's who you know basically.'

Gary's new employer was more interested in his attitude than his qualifications. 'When I had my interview, they said 'Gary, can you take shit?" "Yeah, course I can."

'There are some very clever people down there who've got qualifications and everything but some of the guys don't even know who the Prime Minister is, if you know what I mean', says Tony. 'If you've got a bit of common sense, you can blag a bit, and if you're quite tough, that's enough to get you through really.' A salary of £150,000 is by no means uncommon for traders like Gary and Tony. And that's before bonuses, which are equally huge.

When Barings Bank collapsed in 1994 after the Nick Leeson affair no fewer than 58 Barings employees were due to receive bonuses of between £250,000 and £499,000 each. Another five were to get between £500,000 and £749,000. As a chronicler of the Barings collapse put it, 'money had become the main, perhaps the sole, standard of judging a person's worth'.

Source: adapted from T. Hulse, 'The end of Liffe as we know it', *Independent*, 6 August 1998; and A. Adams and S. Pollard, *A Class Act*, Hamish Hamilton, 1997

ITEM B – THE JOBLESS

The unemployed of Pennywell estate, Sunderland, which has pockets of 70 per cent joblessness, are discussing the future. The area once relied on shipbuilding but the cranes and gantries are now gone and the riverbank is being landscaped. As one young man said, 'It's not that people don't want to work, it's just that there's nowt for them. I left school when I was 16. I'm 30 now and I've never had a job.'

Parents worry that their children will never find work. They worry too about the impact of low income on their children's health and growth; they just can't afford the right diet or provide a healthy environment. Women are prepared to go without to feed their children. Health worker Elspeth Comm says, 'They tend to skip breakfast and exist on sugary drinks all day and just have a meal at night.'

People feel powerless to change things because they are unemployed, low paid and under pressure. As Paul Woodhead put it, 'Poverty takes away people's ability to be assertive.' They no longer have the motivation to try to change their lives.

Source: adapted from 'It's enough to make you sick', Save the Children 1995, in C. Donnellan (ed.) *The Poverty Trap*, Independence, 1995

ITEM C – LONE MOTHERS

'I've walked about with holes in my shoes, no winter coat and haven't eaten for three days to look after them ... I won't let my kids go without.'
Lone mother, mid-thirties, claiming income support, with three children

'The kids can't just come in and help themselves to food. They don't have access to milk just to drink, milk goes on their cereals. Their hot chocolate at night is mostly water.'
Lone mother, mid-thirties, claiming income support, with two teenage children

'He gets hot nourishing food inside him – he gets meat I can't afford to buy, veg I can't afford to buy, he gets a pudding. If I did a sandwich I'd have to put jam on it. School holidays are a nightmare, trying to give him that extra meal a day is impossible.'
Lone mother, early forties, claiming income support, and referring to her son having free school meals

Source: 'When the cupboard is bare', Family Policy Studies Centre 1995, in C. Donnellan (ed.) *The Poverty Trap*, Independence, 1995

QUESTIONS

1 **Davis and Moore argue that high rewards are necessary to attract the most able and talented to the most functionally important work roles. In what ways does Item A fail to support their theory?**

2 **For Davis and Moore, the desire for high rewards motivates people to compete and, in theory, the most talented win through.**
  (a) **How might the poor diet described in Items B and C affect people's ability to 'win through'?**
  (b) **Are the people described in Item B 'motivated to compete'?**

Activity 4: THE UNDERCLASS

ITEM A – LAYABOUTS

The underclass does not refer to the degree of poverty but to a type of poverty. It is not a new concept. I grew up knowing what the underclass was, we just didn't call it that in those days. In the small town in Idaho where I grew up I was taught by my middle-class parents that there were two types of poor people. One group were those who simply lived on low incomes. The other group didn't just lack money but were defined by their behaviour. Their homes were littered and unkempt. The men in the family were unable to hold a job for more than a few weeks at a time.

Drunkenness was common. The children grew up badly behaved and ill-schooled and contributed a disproportionate share of the local juvenile delinquents.

In modern America, the underclass is growing. Overgenerous welfare benefits have led to more illegitimacy and single parent families, while many black youths have lost interest in getting a job. This growing underclass is a plague, a threat to the social and economic well-being of the country.

Source: adapted from C. Murray, 'The emerging British underclass', in R. Lister (ed.) *Charles Murray and the Underclass: The Developing Debate*, IEA, 1996

ITEM B – 'SUGAR DADDY'

Source: M. Haralambos (ed.) *Sociology: A New Approach*, Causeway Press, 1996

ITEM C – VICTIMS

The underclass in Britain are not scroungers and a danger to the well-being of society but are victims, victims of major social changes and government policy. Successive Conservative governments have tried to persuade us that membership of the underclass is due to personal inadequacy and inferior values. In fact, the underclass share the same values as everyone else but their opportunities are restricted. The real cause of the general growth in the underclass is Thatcherite policies. These led to high levels of unemployment and tax changes which produced a massive redistribution of income in favour of the rich, so widening class differences and economic inequality. It is these structural changes in British society that best explain the growth in the underclass.

Source: adapted from F. Field, *Losing Out: The Emergence of Britain's Underclass*, Blackwell, 1989

ITEM D – LOWER CLASS

The idea that a distinctive underclass exists is controversial. Some sociologists claim that the underclass is really an integral part of the working class rather than a separate class in its own right. Furthermore, they argue that by focusing on it, attention is diverted from the disadvantages experienced by all working-class people. Others maintain that it is a useful concept as its draws attention to those people who are materially deprived, impoverished and insecure.

Source: adapted from P. Taylor et al., *Sociology in Focus*, Causeway Press, 1995

QUESTIONS

1 **Charles Murray has been accused of 'blaming the victim'. Explain this statement with reference to Item A.**

2 **Look at Item B. What message does this cartoon convey?**

3 **Structural accounts of the underclass see the lower strata as the victims of social inequality. Discuss this view with reference to Item C.**

4 **'The term "underclass" is of little use when discussing social stratification.' In the light of Items A, C and D, how far do you agree with this statement?**

Activity 5: MERITOCRACY

ITEM A – INTELLIGENCE COUNTS

Cognitive ability is a function of both genes and environment. The more we succeed in giving every youngster a chance to develop his or her latent cognitive ability, the more we equalize the environmental sources of difference in intelligence. The worry is that, as America equalizes the circumstances of people's lives, the remaining differences in intelligence are increasingly determined by differences in genes. Meanwhile, cognitive ability means more than ever before that the chances of success in life are good and getting better all the time ... success and failure ... are increasingly a matter of the genes that people inherit. 'If you have to choose, is it better to be born smart or rich? The answer is unequivocally "smart".'

Source: R. J. Hernstein and C. Murray, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and the Class Structure in American Life*, Free Press, 1994

The successful
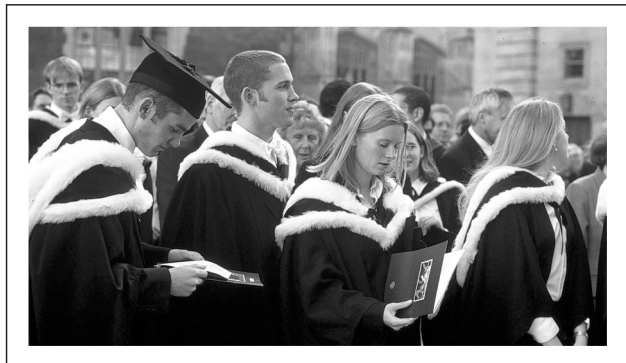
Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

The kind

Source: Photofusion

ITEM B – HOME MATTERS

Using data from the National Child Development Study, Egerton and Savage have found that over 70 per cent of the 'high ability' sons of professional and managerial groups themselves reached managerial and professional jobs, compared to only around 40 per cent of the 'high ability' sons of unskilled manual workers. In fact, the 'low ability' sons of professional fathers tended to do better than the 'high ability' sons of unskilled fathers. They conclude that the relative advantage of middle-class over working-class children persists in modern Britain.

Source: adapted from M. Savage, 'Class and stratification', in M. Haralambos (ed.) *Developments in Sociology*, Vol. 13, Causeway Press, 1997

ITEM C – GENETIC ENGINEERING AND THE FUTURE

Dr Lee Silver believes that we are not far from being on the brink of a brave new world of reproductive genetics where parents will have the choice of what characteristics to pass on to their children. He states that it is a basic instinct for parents to want all possible advantages for their children. He suggests that our technologies will allow us to produce children with traits such as being taller or being resistant to cancer.

He believes that the future will be decided by the market place. 'There are going to be people who want to use the technology, and it will be available, and the people who want to use it will find others also who will take their money.' In other words, genetic selection and engineering will be available to parents with enough money to afford it.

But what of the effect on society? Dr Silver foresees a future where parents with enough money will be able to purchase a 'designer child'. The parents could choose which genes to add to their embryo and then implant it. He says that, in the long term, genetic engineering would do nothing less than split society between the 'naturals' and the 'GenRich'. The logical outcome will be a society torn apart.

Source: adapted from A. Treneman, 'Send in the clones', *Independent*, 22 January 1998

ITEM D – 'A TRULY CLASSLESS SOCIETY'

By 2034, equality of opportunity had become reality. People sank or swam according to their merit. Family background no longer mattered, only hard work and intelligence. Those at the bottom could no longer excuse their failure by blaming an unfair system or poor family background, while those at the top, sure of their worth, became overbearing and self-righteous.

A protest group arose calling for a truly classless society, one based on plural values. Not only IQ should matter but also other characteristics such as kindness, sensitivity and generosity. In this society, every individual would be valued for their unique characteristics.

Source: adapted from M. Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy*, Thames & Hudson, 1958

QUESTIONS

1 **Contrast the positions adopted in Item A and Item B.**

2 **If Dr Silver's predictions in Item C come true, what effects might this have on society?**

3 **Item D is a satirical account of a future society based on meritocratic principles.**
   (a) **With some reference to Item D, what are the disadvantages of meritocracies?**
   (b) **Can you think of anything in their favour?**

Activity 6: THE SUPER CLASS

ITEM A – A SUPER CLASS CREATED

A Super Class of top professionals and managers has arisen since the 1960s. High paid and exclusive, they are divorced from the rest of society. Shaped by the rapid growth in London's financial service sector, at the elite level it has led to the collapse in status of the public sector in favour of a range of private sector professionals. Members of the Super Class achieve their position through meritocratic achievement and to believe in the justice of their status and wealth.

By the 1980s, this professional and managerial elite was unapologetic about the explosion of income differentials, believing itself as a meritocracy deserving 'every penny' of their incomes. In the words of Peter Cole, managing partner of Eversheds, Britain's second largest law firm, 'It is vital to create the environment where people can earn what they think they are worth' – a concept of 'worth' alien to a state sector where, as the government told the pay review bodies for professional staff in 1996, constraining salary growth 'has a key part to play in maintaining healthy public finances and delivering efficiencies and other savings across the public sector'.

Source: adapted from A. Adonis and S. Pollard, *A Class Act*, Hamish Hamilton, 1997

ITEM B – HOW THEY LIVE

London; servants; second homes; globalism; the best of private education; health and leisure; exotic foreign holidays; modern art; an almost total separation from public life; intermarriage between professionals with both partners on large incomes – these are the dominant themes in the life of the Super Class ...

This concentration in London has two effects. Firstly, most of its economic weight is exerted at the very heart of the nation's politics and culture, ensuring it strong political clout although few of its members engage directly in politics. The City, the West End and Westminster are the boundaries of opinion-forming Britain. Secondly, it enables the Super Class to separate itself physically from most of the country. Britain beyond the Home Counties does not feature on its collective horizon. The Super Class is sufficiently large for it to have equipped itself with a highly developed infrastructure of private schools, hospitals and leisure facilities ...

As for servants, education, marriages and lifestyle enter Ms Nicola Horlick, hers is a Super Class tale par excellence. Privately educated at Birkenhead High School, then Balliol College, Oxford her work in the city pays her an annual salary of £1.15 million. She is married to Tim, a head of corporate finance and investment banking on a salary of several hundreds of thousands. They have five children all under ten, with multiple nannies and housekeepers in attendance. The family lives in a £1.3 million five-storey house in Stafford Terrace, Kensington, plus they have a second home in the country. Dubbed 'Superwoman', her response was indignant: 'I'm an ordinary woman doing an ordinary job', she protested. 'I'm usually home by 6.30 p.m. and have until 8 p.m. every night with the children; and every weekend we all go down to our cottage in Hampshire.'

The servants are back, nowhere more numerous than in the homes of two-salary Super Class couples. Agencies confirm that the demand for nannies, housekeepers, butlers, cooks, drivers and occasionally even gardeners, outstrips supply.

Source: adapted from A. Adonis and S. Pollard, *A Class Act*, Hamish Hamilton, 1997

ITEM C – FORCED OUT

Getting a first step on the housing ladder is becoming increasingly hard, especially in London and the Southeast. A recent study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation think-tank warned that by 2022 Britain would be faced with a major social crisis. By then, the rich enclaves will have forced out the last of the service workers and those services will start to decline as housing demand continues to outstrip supply.

To some extent, people who live in hotspots will be able to bypass the public services by sending their children to private schools and joining private healthcare schemes. But the rich will always need the less well-off: it is hard to replace the police and fire services, let alone the cornershops, plumbers and window cleaners whose jobs quietly provide the backbone of most communities.

Source: adapted from P. Harris and J. Kelly, 'Locked out of London', *Observer*, 7 April 2002

QUESTIONS

1 **Use Item A to construct your own definition of the Super Class.**

2 **Consider the social impact of the reduced status of the public sector referred to in Item A.**

3 **With reference to Item B, consider how the Super Class maintains its difference and separation from other social groups.**

4 **Consider the sociological implications of the concentration of the Super Class in London and the Southeast, making some reference to Items B and C.**

Chapter 1: SOCIAL STRATIFICATION – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: CASTE AND CLASS

Teacher's note

This activity is about different forms of social stratification. It explores social class and caste, their similarities and differences. Students can be advised to read Chapter 1, pp. 1–3.

1 *Similarities:*

· They are both systems of social stratification.
· In both societies there exist inequalities between groups of people.
· Members of the top castes and higher social classes have greater access to social rewards than those lower down.
· Different castes and classes live in separate areas from their social inferiors or superiors.
· In both cases the layers or strata within society form a hierarchy, within which people are clearly aware of their position.

Differences:

· Under the caste system, status is determined by birth; under the class system, status is to a large extent achieved.
· In caste societies, a person must stay in the same caste as their parents and follow the same occupation; in class societies, a person's status can be altered by their own actions and efforts and they have a considerable measure of choice over what occupation they follow.
· The class system is relatively open and permits fairly high levels of social mobility, while the caste system is closed, with adult position fixed at birth.
· Unrestricted contact between different castes is not permitted, in the belief that higher castes will be polluted by those at the bottom – the Untouchables. The class system does not contain this element. Everyday contacts between the classes are routine, while marriage between classes is both accepted and fairly common.

2 *Key points:*

· Members of the same caste have a similar amount of social status or prestige. They are very aware of being part of the same group (as can be seen from the dispute arising in Laxmanpur Bath). Because of their status similarity they marry within the caste, live near each other, follow similar occupations and have comparable lifestyles.
· There are strict rules governing the interaction between castes. The existence of restrictions on contact with other groups lends further support to the view that castes can usefully be seen as status groupings.

3 *Key points:*

· The caste system in India is breaking down. The Untouchables are no longer willing to accept a lowly position, and are pressing for reforms. This growing pressure is being resisted by higher-caste Indians who are anxious to maintain their privileged position. Under such conditions of tension, caste conflict is likely to erupt.
· In class societies, resentment at class inequality is held in check by the existence of channels of social mobility. People believe that it is possible to move up the social hierarchy. This advancement is generally accepted by all levels of society. As a result, violent class conflict would seem unlikely.

ACTIVITY 2: INEQUALITY

Teacher's note

This activity is about different ways of conceptualizing social class. It pays particular attention to income inequality. Students can be advised to read Chapter 1, pp.19–23.

1 (a) Between 1971 and 2001, average household disposable income grew, but this growth did not affect everyone equally. Item A shows that the gap between the richer and the poorer members of society grew rapidly, particularly during the late 1980s. Income for those at the ninetieth percentile grew by more than 50 per cent, while those at the tenth percentile gained very little. After 1990 there has been a slowing in the growth of household disposable incomes, which has picked up in recent years. The gap between the bottom and the top seems to have been fairly stable.

(b) Between 1961 and 1981 there was a slight decline in the proportion of people living on relatively low incomes. During the 1980s their percentage of the population grew rapidly. Since 1991, figures have peaked and show some decline. They appear to have stabilized by 1998, but at a higher level than during the 1960s and 1970s.

2 *Key points:*

· Taxation – successive Conservative governments during the 1980s and early 1990s reduced income tax. Since income tax is a progressive tax, which falls more heavily on the rich, the effect of reducing it is to benefit the rich. At the same time, Conservative governments increased indirect taxes on items like fuel and alcohol. These taxes fall more heavily on the less well-off. The consequence of both taxation changes was that the slight reduction in income inequality achieved earlier in the century was reversed. If the present Labour government wishes to return to a policy of reducing income inequality, it could do so by increasing direct taxation and reducing indirect taxation.
· Welfare spending – during the 1980s the number of households dependent on social security payments increased. Payments to the very poorest members of society – the unemployed, single parents, pensioners, the sick and disabled – are important in reducing income inequality. If a government were to raise the level of these benefits there would be a measure of redistribution towards the very poorest people. Moreover, government policy could be used to help some people currently living on welfare payments back into employment. In this way, their standards of living might be raised.
· A national minimum wage – the present Labour government introduced a national minimum wage in 1999, set at £3.60 an hour to employees over the age of 22 and £3.00 an hour to those aged 18–21. Current rates, from 1 October 2003, are £4.50 per hour for those aged over 22 and £3.80 per hour for those aged 18–21. However, there are still problems of enforcement so some people continue to be paid less.

3 Items A, B and C all show that considerable income inequality persists. (Item A shows that the gap between the poorest tenth and the richest tenth of the population has actually widened since 1971.) Since income is an important dimension of class – affecting people's life chances, such as owning their own house, living to be old or receiving higher education – this seems to imply that class remains important in modern Britain.

ACTIVITY 3: WINNERS AND LOSERS

Teacher's note

This activity invites students to test a functionalist approach to explaining the class system against the data provided. In order to do this, students will need to read Chapter 1, pp. 3–6.

1 *Key points:*

· There are no effective methods of measuring people's ability and talent. In any case, does a person need to be able and talented to be an effective market trader? It may be that many thousands of people could do the job quite as well as the young men described in Item A.
· Sociologists like Tumin have pointed out that, even if higher rewards are needed for a time to make up for loss of earnings incurred during student days, at the rates of pay outlined in Item A any losses would be made up very quickly. Such incredibly high rewards would seem to be far in excess of what might be necessary to attract people to these work roles.
· It is difficult to assess the functional importance of jobs. Davis and Moore attempted to do this in terms of functional uniqueness and the degree to which other positions are dependent upon the one in question. Many sociologists, such as Tumin, believe that it comes down to a matter of opinion. Is a market trader more functionally important than a dustman or a teacher? The traders in Item A make no attempt to justify their bonuses in terms of their contribution to society.
· Item A can perhaps best be seen as highlighting many of the criticisms levelled against Davis and Moore's theory of social stratification.

2 (a) People with a poor diet are more likely to suffer from a variety of illnesses, and they may also be lacking in energy and drive. These twin factors will make it more difficult for them to 'win through' in the competition for jobs, since they may not have the energy to do their job well

and may lose wages and promotion opportunities through illness. Similarly, poorly fed children will be at a disadvantage at school. Both adults and children will therefore be handicapped in their attempts to climb the ladder.

(b) The people in Item B feel powerless to change their lives. With 70 per cent unemployment, even those who are fit and able to work will not manage to get their feet onto the first rung of the employment ladder. Moreover, the psychological effect of the situation has caused some people to give up the struggle. The high rewards given to those at the top are failing to act as incentives for those at the bottom to compete.

The behaviour of people in Item B therefore seems to run counter to the predictions made by Davis and Moore and so appears to throw further doubt on the validity of their theory.

ACTIVITY 4: THE UNDERCLASS

Teacher's note

This activity explores the concept of the underclass and the debate surrounding its use. Students will find it useful to read Chapter 1, pp. 59–65.

1 Murray defines the underclass in terms of their behaviour. He believes that a group of people exist at the bottom of the class system who have their own patterns of behaviour and their own attitudes. As Item A outlines, he sees these people as workshy, lazy and dishonest. To some extent he blames them for their situation, since it arises in part from their own actions and the choices that they make. His condemnation can be seen as a form of cultural imperialism – he clearly believes that the poor should conform to more middle-class standards of behaviour, such as hard work and enterprise.

2 The cartoon reinforces the underclass stereotype of a young mother happy to rely on the state for her support and that of her children. The man whom most people in society would judge to be responsible for her and the children's upkeep remains free to pursue his own concerns. The young mother is seen as deserving of little pity. By blaming her for her situation it makes it more socially acceptable to consider reducing the welfare benefits on which she depends.

3 From a structural point of view, the lives of the underclass are shaped by social forces outside their control. For example, Item C refers to the high levels of unemployment during the Thatcher years, and changes in the tax system which meant that the gap between various income groups became much wider. The direct actions of government are therefore seen as having a major role in creating the conditions of deprivation found among the lowest strata of society.

4 *Key points:*
- In Item A, the term 'underclass' is used to describe a group of people who behave in a particular way. By focusing on their behaviour, Murray ignores economic forces which are a major contributor to class position. Furthermore, the term is used in a pejorative and judgemental way. Its use therefore conveys a whole host of negative meanings which may be unhelpful to an objective study of society.
- In Item C, the term is used to describe those people whose economic conditions place them at the very bottom of the stratification system. The term is used in a neutral, non-judgemental way. As such, it can be seen as a useful concept which draws attention to this deprived group of people, as suggested in Item D.
- Item D also points out that, by focusing on the minority of people in the underclass, sociologists could be accused of diverting attention away from an analysis of inequalities which encompass the much larger group of working-class people. Some sociologists therefore believe that it is more useful to see these people as an integral part of the working class.

ACTIVITY 5: MERITOCRACY

Teacher's note

In this activity, students are asked to explore the concept of meritocracy and the implications of such a system for society. Teachers may find it helpful to relate this activity to the factual analysis of social mobility presented in Chapter 1, pp. 72–87.

1 *Key points:*
- It is argued in Item A that cognitive ability or intelligence is the key predictor to success in life. In other words, that America is a meritocratic society. While Hernstein and Murray admit that

background influences a person's cognitive ability, they see genetic endowment as the most significant factor.
- Item B concludes that background still has a very important influence on final class position. The authors' findings that even low-ability people from professional backgrounds tend to do better than high-ability people from unskilled backgrounds run directly counter to Item A. In other words, Britain remains some way away from a situation of equality of opportunity.

2 In time, society would tend to divide into two groups. Those people who had the benefit of genetic engineering would tend to be more intelligent, more talented, more beautiful and more healthy. With these favours they would be likely to monopolize the rewards of society. They would have the most influential jobs, the largest salaries and live in the most favoured locations.

Moreover, the 'GenRich' might feel totally justified in holding these positions, as they would indeed possess superior characteristics. When they married they would be likely to do so within their class. And, with further genetic enhancement, their children might be even more 'perfect'. They could become a kind of 'super class'. In time, the classes might change into castes, with all the concomitant ideas of segregation and pollution.

3 (a) A meritocracy based on the narrow criterion of IQ would be socially divisive, since the winners would reap all the rewards while the losers would be denied even self-respect. This, in turn, could lead to the growth of protest movements. In Item D, Young advocates a plural society where people can be valued, respected and rewarded for their various talents and their different contributions to society.

(b) Elements of meritocracy would appear to produce both a fairer and more efficient society. In terms of our values, most people find it more acceptable that people are promoted on the basis of their ability than on the basis of their backgrounds. Moreover, it would seem to be more efficient to make sure that able rather than incompetent people reached the most important jobs. Some degree of social mobility may also serve to ease social tension in society and defuse conflict.

ACTIVITY 6: THE SUPER CLASS

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on the dynamic nature of the class structure. It examines the rise of a 'super class' over the last twenty years.

1 Students will vary in their definitions of the Super Class, but some of the key factors are as follows:
- It refers to an elite group of professionals commanding both high salaries and influence.
- Members are frequently involved in the financial services industry and therefore centred in the City of London.
- The group is convinced of its worth as it sees itself as a meritocratic elite.
- Its members possess a distinctive lifestyle.

2 The reduced status and lower financial rewards available in much of the public sector may mean that the most able and talented young people are attracted to work in financial services rather than in areas like education, the police and local government. In the longer term this may mean that public services are of a lower quality than would otherwise have been the case. This scenario seems to be upheld by the current political emphasis on improving public services like health and education, which many believe have fallen behind what is now available in comparable European countries.

3 Students may include some of the following points:
- This social class is largely based in London. Members may live in enclaves of similar high-priced housing. New luxury housing developments may be 'gated'.
- The Super Class use private and public schools. Their children will therefore receive the best education and meet other young people from similar backgrounds.
- Domestic arrangements may rely heavily on servants, e.g. gardeners, cleaners, nannies. Frequently, both partners will be professionals earning high incomes made possible partly by this domestic back-up.
- They are users of private healthcare.
- Their leisure pursuits may be exclusive, involving private gyms or health clubs and exotic holidays.

4 *Key points:*

Its concentration in London means that its economic muscle influences political decisions. Although members of the Super Class may not engage directly in politics, they may be significant opinion leaders. The rest of the country may feel ignored by politicians and may press for regional assemblies.

· Since the Super Class is concentrated in a relatively compact area of the Southeast, it has been able to develop its own infrastructure of schools and healthcare, which means that it has diminishing contact with some public services.

· The concentration of wealth in London has contributed to the rise in house prices in London and the Southeast. The purchase of second homes in places like Wiltshire and Hampshire has had a lesser but similar effect in these areas. It is now recognized that one danger of house price inflation is that people on lower incomes will be priced out of the housing market. In consequence it might become increasingly difficult to fill public sector jobs like those of fire-fighters and ambulance drivers and also to house people like plumbers, gardeners, cleaners and so on. Since the Super Class continues to rely to some extent on key public service workers, and is also a significant employer of domestic support, in time its lifestyle may be adversely affected by this trend.

chapter 2

SEX AND GENDER

Activity 1: BOYS AND GIRLS

ITEM A – BOYS WILL BE BOYS

Put half a dozen little boys in a room with a selection of toys and see what happens next. They shove each other around, career about bumping into things and make an unholy mess. Try the same thing with little girls and they settle down to painting, reading and creating mini-masterpieces with PlayDough. Boys will be boys and girls will be girls. Authors of the television documentary *Why men don't iron* are setting out to prove that there are such fundamental differences between the way that male and female brains work that it cannot be any other way.

The nature/nurture debate has raged for much of this century but the more information that we have about brain function and the role of our genes the harder it is to ignore the role of nature in the construction of self. *Why men don't iron* claims that men are quite simply constructed to be better at anything that requires mechanical and spatial skills – the few women successful in fields such as engineering and construction have brains that show distinct male characteristics. Women, meanwhile, have natural advantages when it comes to nurturing and childcare. Men who go in for traditionally female professions such as nursing have displayed typically female patterns. The research which supports this view suggests that the wiring of female and male brains is different – the male brain is more compartmentalized, the female more interconnected.

The notion of biological differences certainly strikes a chord with some parents. New mother Jane Gerrard (34) is a believer. 'I was delighted to hear I was having a girl. Boys are more difficult and boisterous and girls are able to entertain themselves and be constructive. It is shocking to make such huge generalizations but my mother's generation believed that they could bring up boys and girls to be the same – time has proved it just isn't true. Go to any nursery school: girls talk more to each other, boys like jumping around and hitting each other.'

Source: adapted from H. Lacey, 'What men and women do best', *Independent on Sunday*, 21 June 1998

ITEM B – THE NEW BARBIE

Barbie was descended from a swimsuit-clad German porno-toy called Lilli, a 12-inch peroxided nymph with a sidelong glance, designed to be sold to men in tobacconists' shops. At her American debut in the spring of 1959 Barbie was the first toy to be directly marketed to three- to eleven-year-old girls on Saturday morning TV. American girls now own eight Barbies apiece, British girls six. With her non-functional body, boasting a nipple-free bosom more than twice the circumference of her minute waist, legs twice as long as her torso, and feet so tiny that she cannot stand on them, Barbie is unlikely to have been very effective in her career roles as astronaut, vet or stewardess. Realistic-minded little girls ought to be given the option of recognizing her as disabled and supplying her with a wheelchair, but Barbie fans prefer to promote her as an unattached career girl, women's liberation in effigy. At the end of 1996 the Barbie Newsdesk at Mattel UK could report that every two seconds a Barbie is sold somewhere in the world. Though she may come in black or Hispanic or Oriental models, her bodily proportions remain roughly the same. Every year Barbie gets 120 new outfits, including a range of sexy underwear, and a new career. She has thirty-five pets, as well as a kitchen, a bathroom and a patio. She is currently put together by 11,000 Chinese peasant women in two factories in Guangdong Province; 23p of the total price of a Barbie doll is payment for their labour ...

In 1998 a makeover was announced; the millennial Barbie is to stand on flat feet, her bosom and hips are to be slightly reduced and her waist slightly enlarged, but she will still be a far cry from Action Woman. Even so, a US columnist objected, 'Why not just give her a moustache, cellulite and varicose veins too?' The further from the natural a female form, the more attractive it becomes. The further from the natural a female form, the more feminine it is.

Source: Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman*, Doubleday, 1999

ITEM C – NEVER GOOD ENOUGH

I learned fairly early on that a beautiful woman doesn't consider herself beautiful at all. She's often crippled by lack of confidence. Every woman has something they dislike about themselves: if they're blonde they want to be dark, if they are tall they want to be short, if they have big breasts they want to be flat-chested. The list is endless.

Source: Ed Burns (1998) quoted in Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman*, Doubleday, 1999

ITEM D – POPULAR CULTURE

Source: Advertising Archives

QUESTIONS

1 **To what extent does Item A support the model of biological determinism?**

2 **Comment on Items B and C from a feminist viewpoint.**

3 **Making some reference to Item D, consider to what extent popular culture reinforces sexist attitudes towards women.**

Activity 2: THE SEX ROLE SYSTEM

ITEM A – I'M A WOMAN!

Hanging out with Daphne Scholinski can be disconcerting. 'Can I bring you gentlemen a drink?' asks the waiter, smiling at Daphne and me. Only after he had taken a much closer look did the waiter realize that one of us was actually a woman. But while the waiter was embarrassed by his mistake, Daphne is used to people being confused by her appearance.

Daphne's parents sought help for her when she was having trouble at school – she was doing drugs and had become involved in a gang. But the doctors who saw her saw something that troubled them far more. In her first fifteen-minute interview with a hospital psychiatrist she was diagnosed with Gender Identity Disorder, a disorder that was first referred to in 1973. GID is defined as 'persistent discomfort about one's assigned sex'. Daphne's problem, according to the doctor, was that she 'failed to identify as a sexual female'. 'He said what this means is you are not an appropriate female, you don't act the way a female is supposed to act' recalls Daphne, now 31 years old. 'I knew I walked tough and sat with my legs apart and did not defer to men and boys, but I was a girl in the only way I knew how to be.'

Her doctors embarked on a relentless three-year campaign of psychological and physical intimidation. They not only made Daphne take psychotropic drugs but also gave her rewards for putting on makeup, curling her hair, swinging her hips when she walked and wearing girlie dresses.

Source: adapted from C. Goodwin, 'The hidden gender', *Sunday Times*, 4 June 1998

ITEM B – 'WALK NORMALLY'
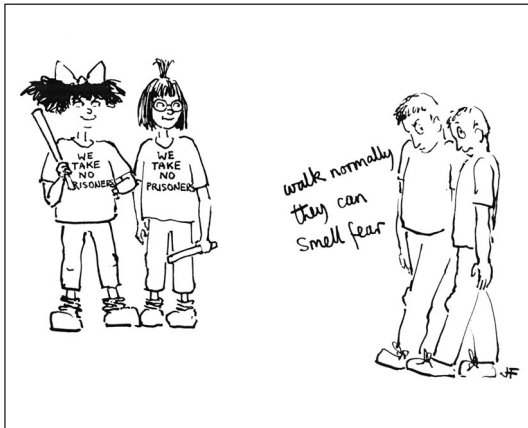
Source: cartoon by Jacky Fleming, *Guardian*, 23 July 1998

ITEM C – BILLY

Billy posed successfully as a man for 54 years – for 37 of them she was married to a succession of wives and brought up three adopted sons as their father.

When Billy was 19 she longed to enter the jazz world in Kansas City. Bands were all men-only territory, and musicians refused to regard women as professionals. So one day she bound her chest with sheeting, dressed like a boy and got herself a job with a band. Her voice descended to high tenor and her manner went from ladyish to laddish. She smoked and mastered such masculine attributes as mending engines. She larked about and had a store of dubious jokes, specializing in those mocking 'queers'. But she always avoided conflict, especially involving fisticuffs.

It is difficult to believe, that this was sufficient cover. But we must remember that she lived in a period of strict sexual reticence. Her succession of 'wives' found Billy a 'lovely human being'. In bed, she was adept at giving pleasure. Her excuse for the wrapping around her chest was an accident that had left unhealed ribs. The same accident was held responsible for her sterility and genital disfigurement.

Source: adapted from C. Reed, 'Guise and dolls', *Guardian*, 13 August 1998

ITEM D – ROSALIND OR DAVID?

Mitchell is a transsexual who recently embarked on the lengthy process of correcting her gender. She has always felt psychologically female and now is living as a woman. Despite eight months of hormone and speech therapy, the question still lingers – is she Rosalind Mitchell or David Spry, a twice-married father?

Rosalind has been refused entry to the Women's Group of the Bristol West Labour Party. They know her as a heterosexual serial dater who just a year and a half ago briefly went out with one of them. At the heart of the matter is the question that the law and medical professions struggle with, namely, can someone born with the physical characteristics of a man ever be a woman?

For Pat Roberts, the fact that Mitchell was born with male physical characteristics means that she can have no appreciation of the experience of being a woman. 'I think that it's impossible for someone who has been brought up and educated and lived half their life as a man to have any knowledge of what it's like to have children, have breast cancer, go for cervical smears, experience domestic violence.' These shared experiences mean that the group has evolved into a 'sanctuary'. Women's barriers come down and they speak about issues they wouldn't feel free to discuss in front of men. The group also allows women to gain confidence in speaking in meetings and they fear that with a one-time man in their midst such a supportive atmosphere would be eroded.

Source: adapted from S. Hall, 'Transsexual mediation', *Guardian*, 6 April 1998

QUESTIONS

1 What light do Items A and B throw on gender stereotypes?

2 Men and women who try to pass as members of the opposite sex will encounter a variety of problems. Making some reference to Items C and D, discuss what aspects of themselves they will need to change.

3 Do you find Item C convincing? Give reasons for your answer.

4 Making some reference to Item D, why do you think that many feminists resent the entry of transsexuals into women's groups? How far do you sympathize with this view?

Activity 3: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

ITEM A – JAYNE'S STORY

For five years Jayne lived at the mercy of her violent husband. He attacked her with his fists, his feet and a knife. He broke her wrist, smashed her teeth and caused a temporary paralysis of her legs. He controlled every aspect of her life, forbidding her even to use the toilet.

One day, with a kick to her pregnant stomach, he killed one of their unborn twins. 'He blamed me and I blamed myself', she falters. 'I'd long since stopped being a human being.'

Except that she hadn't, not quite. One morning she saw her 3-year-old playing with her Ken and Barbie dolls and Ken was beating Barbie over the head and saying, 'Don't worry, I love you really'.

A recent survey of battered women showed that most suffered years of escalating violence because they were paralysed by fear and had become isolated from family and friends. Nearly half had been kept prisoner in their own homes, with telephones removed and windows and doors locked. A third did not involve the police until they had been attacked at least thirty times – mostly because they feared retribution. When they did call for help, many failed to press charges. In a quarter of the cases, the women had been threatened with death if they took the case through the courts.

Jayne was typical. One night, she dialled 999 and the police arrived as her husband was punching and kicking her. They arrested him but released him in the early hours. 'He came in and started punching and kicking me for telling the police.' Even when he smashed down the door and attacked her with a knife he was merely fined £300.

Like most women she had little faith in the police and courts. Researchers found that, although police response to domestic violence has improved and officers are more sympathetic, in four out of five cases there has never been an arrest.

Source: adapted from H. Mills, 'Battered wives', *Observer*, 12 April 1998

ITEM B – VIOLENCE AT HOME

(i) 'A dog, a woman and a walnut tree / The more you beat them the better they be.'

(ii) During the year of a study into domestic violence, in Hackney alone 5,000 children were directly affected by it. As part of the same piece of research, a team interviewed 129 women in GPs' surgeries. It found that in the past year, 25 per cent had been victims of non-physical abuse, 20 per cent had been given punches or slaps and 11 per cent had suffered more serious physical abuse.

(iii) One victim of domestic violence says: 'I thought that it was normal because of what I had seen my mother and father doing to each other.'

(iv) 'As far back as I can remember my father has beaten up my mum ... I used to sit under the kitchen table and sing really loudly so that I didn't have to hear her crying and screaming. For years I thought all families were like ours.'

(i) Source: folklore
(ii) Source: adapted from I. Burrell, 'Britain's wife-beating epidemic', *Independent*, 24 January 1998

(iii) Source: D. Brindle, 'Life lines', *Guardian*, 6 May 1998
(iv) Source: adapted from A. Naik, 'Just 17', quoted in C. Donnellan (ed.) *Domestic Violence*, Vol. 22, Independence, May 1993

ITEM C – SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Crime surveys show that most crimes against women remain unreported. In the US 38 per cent of women experience sexual molestation in youth, 24 per cent endure rape in marriage, and nearly half are victims of rape or attempted rape at least once in a lifetime, some repeatedly, some at the hands of groups of men, nearly all at the hands of men they know. The British Crime Surveys reach much the same conclusions.

Source: Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman*, Doubleday, 1999

ITEM D – THE COURTS

Emma Humphreys was jailed for killing her boyfriend. A teenage prostitute with a deeply troubled childhood, she had killed her lover who had beaten and raped her. Despite the provocation and her clearly disturbed state of mind she was charged with murder rather than the lesser charge of manslaughter.

Zoora Shah, a poor Pakistani woman from Bradford, poisoned the man who for years had tormented her and threatened her daughters. She was convicted of murder and given a recommended minimum sentence of twenty years.

Consultant gynaecologist Grant Harris beat his wife with a hammer and, when she was still alive, threw her out of a window and broke her spine. He then tried to conceal the killing as she lay unattended on the ground. The court heard that the doctor's wife no longer loved him, that he made her cringe and that she wanted a divorce. He produced evidence that he was suffering from a depressive illness at the time of the attack. The male judge told him that he recognized that the killing was 'out of character'. He was given a six-year sentence – a quarter of the time to be served by Emma Humphreys.

David Swinburne received 200 hours' community service after stabbing his wife to death when she told him she was leaving him for her lover. The judge told him he 'recognized the stresses involved'.

Source: adapted from D. Campbell, 'The gender scale of justice', *Guardian*, 9 March 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **With reference to Item A, why is it difficult for battered women to decide to leave home or to involve the police and the courts?**

2 **Using the information in Item B, comment on the statement, 'Wife beating is a normal part of our society'.**

3 **Making some reference to Item C, consider what particular difficulties face a woman considering making a complaint of rape.**

4 **What evidence is there in Item D that the judicial system is more tolerant of domestic killings when men attack their female partners than when women attack their male partners? What sociological explanations can you offer for this?**

Activity 4: WOMEN AT WORK

ITEM A – BUSINESS WOMEN

A big advantage for me is that being a female in a traditionally male environment dislocates expectations; in negotiations the other side never quite knows what to expect and simply having a woman in the room can restrain the worst male aggression.

If a man walks into a room it is assumed that the man is the boss. I enjoy taking a back seat some times; you learn so much when others don't know that you're the boss. It can be fun to play the little woman role.

The greatest asset that a business woman can have is a supportive, understanding and open-minded family. This gives you the strength and the energy to achieve. Without this, there is wrath and resentment which becomes intolerable. 'If everyone at home is against you moving forward in your career it is a nightmare. You cope, you quit or you leave home.'

One thing that all business women have to learn is the art of resisting put-downs. Whether they come in the form of blatant rudeness or subtle and more damaging dismissal, the best defence is a ready phrase or two. You need to develop a thick skin and have the courage of your convictions.

Women tend to work on consensus, where men favour autocracy. Women are more aware that business is a group enterprise and will use a different vocabulary. If a woman asks a junior employee to do something she will preface it with 'I know you've got a lot to do, but ...' While this is effective with junior employees it may sound apologetic to a senior man.

When it comes to promotion, men look to see who is capable of leadership, but they tend to see leadership in their own terms and may see the woman's style as weak, which is why women are often said to make good lieutenants but bad generals.

Source: adapted from A. McIntyre Brown, *Entrepreneur*, December 1996

ITEM B – AFTER BABY

When Gemma Brooks returned to work after having a baby she found that she had been sidelined. She had worked for five years for a technology company running a small department that she had built up herself. She was a dedicated employee. When she returned from maternity leave she was moved to a different department with little responsibility. 'I never dreamed I wouldn't go back to my old job ... my confidence has been knocked for six. I've gone from feeling I held a responsible, respected position to being a dogsbody who is given all the jobs nobody else wants.' She believes that once a woman has a family she is sidelined. 'Employers tend to think you're not committed. It's such a narrow view.'

Source: adapted from L. Yung, 'Back to what future?' *Guardian*, 24 March 1998

ITEM C – SEXISM IN THE CITY

Every morning for a week she had walked into the office to find that pornographic images of women ripped from the pages of various top-shelf magazines had been scattered across her keyboard. As she performed the daily ritual of gathering them up and dropping them into the bin, the men would snigger in crimson-faced glee behind their terminals while inquiring which of the displayed genitalia most resembled her own.

She retaliated by obtaining an obscene, imported publication specializing in transsexuals and left the centrefold on their desks. It worked. The bullies ceased their campaign, but from then on she was labelled not a blushing young trainee but a "slapper" who frequented Soho sex shops.

'It doesn't matter what you do if you are a woman in the City', she admitted afterwards. 'You can never really win.'

Source: Carol Midgley, 'Sexism and the city', *The Times*, 18 January 2002

ITEM D – IT'S JUST A BIT OF FUN

Anya Harris was a broker for ten years, reaching the position of associate director by the age of 29 and earning a salary of £140,000. Seven years ago, tired of chasing money and getting up at 5.40 a.m., she left voluntarily to pursue a new life as a healer in Brighton. She takes a dim view of some sex-discrimination protestations. 'Some of these women are too uptight. They should lighten up', she says. 'Everyone knows the City is tough – that's why people get paid so much. Yes, men were lecherous and they would think they were insulting you if they didn't ask you back to a hotel. But you laugh it off. Most of them were good fun and I'm still in touch with some. I was generally treated very well, but some of the women were more horrible to work with than the men.'

Source: Carol Midgley, 'Sexism and the city', *The Times*, 18 January 2002

Activity 4: WOMEN AT WORK (continued)

ITEM E – WOMEN'S WORK

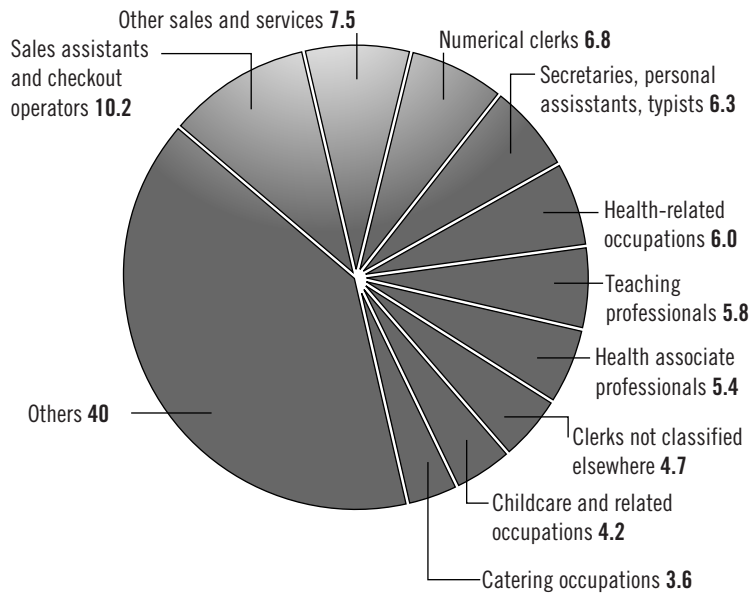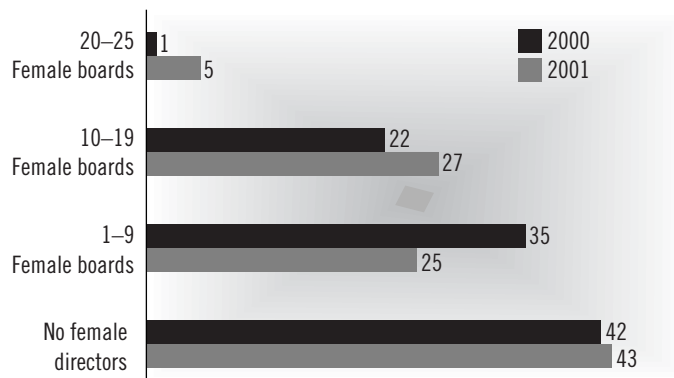**Figure 1 Women's employment in Britain, percentage, 2001**

Other sales and services **7.5**

Sales assistants and checkout operators **10.2**

Numerical clerks **6.8**

Secretaries, personal assisstants, typists **6.3**

Health-related occupations **6.0**

Teaching professionals **5.8**

Health associate professionals **5.4**

Clerks not classified elsewhere **4.7**

Others **40**

Childcare and related occupations **4.2**

Catering occupations **3.6**

Figure 2 Companies and their female director representation, percentage

■ 2000
■ 2001

20–25 Female boards: 1 / 5

10–19 Female boards: 22 / 27

1–9 Female boards: 35 / 25

No female directors: 42 / 43

QUESTIONS

1 Using the material in Item A, discuss the advantages of being a woman in the world of business.

2 'Working women face many problems, even in the modern work environment.'

  (a) With reference to Items A and B, what problems particularly impact on women with children?

  (b) With reference to Items A, C and D, what other problems do working women commonly experience?

3 Comment on the points of sociological interest in Item E.

Activity 5: WOMEN AND HOUSEWORK

ITEM A – ATTITUDES

ATTITUDES TO VARIOUS ACTIVITIES[1] FOR THE HOME: by sex, 2000–01				
United Kingdom				**Percentages**
	Like	**Neither like nor dislike**	**Dislike**	**Do not do activity**
Males				
Cooking a meal	58	15	12	15
DIY repair work	50	14	20	16
Gardening	47	10	23	20
Shopping non-food	48	18	27	7
Cooking a meal for a special occasion	44	10	13	33
Decorating	39	15	28	18
Going to the shops to buy food	38	22	28	12
Tidying the house	33	24	30	13
Helping children with homework[2]	25	5	4	66
Washing clothes	15	22	24	39
Ironing clothes	14	14	30	42
Females				
Cooking a meal	69	16	12	3
DIY repair work	21	11	22	46
Gardening	50	8	20	22
Shopping non-food	75	10	12	3
Cooking a meal for a special occasion	68	8	14	10
Decorating	43	10	20	27
Going to the shops to buy food	51	19	25	5
Tidying the house	49	21	26	4
Helping children with homework[2]	31	5	4	60
Washing clothes	44	34	17	5
Ironing clothes	31	15	46	8

[1] Adults aged 16 and over.   [2] All adults not just parents.

Source: *UK 2000 Time Use Survey*, Office for National Statistics

ITEM B – WOMEN'S WORK

In a recent paper entitled 'Five Myths On Women's Employment', Catherine Hakim says that only a small number of women are truly career minded. Challenging a long-standing feminist assumption that, given a level playing field, most women would opt to work, Hakim claimed that most did not want to work at all. 'The unpalatable truth is that a substantial proportion of women still see homemaking as women's principal activity and income earning as a man's principal activity in life', she wrote.

Those women who tried to combine career and family still accepted that domestic chores were more their responsibility than their male partners', whose role is to be the breadwinner. The proportion of women who accept the homemaker role varies from half to two-thirds. 'Most women still go along with the sexual division of labour, many actively preferred it and colluded with men, others were not sufficiently inconvenienced by it to make a stand', she argued.

She cited a survey in 1988 which showed that two-thirds of British men and women believe that being a housewife can be as fulfilling as paid work. Dr Hakim insisted that the female population is polarized into careerist and home-centred women, often with conflicting interests.

Source: adapted from A. Johnson, 'Feminists fall out', *Guardian*, 24 March 1996

ITEM C – A PASSION FOR CHORES

For centuries, women have been chained to the kitchen sink and now we know why. Housewives find repetitive domestic chores erotically satisfying, according to new research.

Activities such as vacuuming and dusting are characterized by heightened emotions. Scientists believe that they release hormones which lead to feelings of satisfaction and well-being. Of 1,000 women interviewed, more than one half said that they found housework pleasurable, with nearly all saying that they felt heightened emotion of some kind.

One woman said she always did the ironing straight after breakfast because she experienced 'explosions of joy'. Another related how she became 'inflamed with passion' at the merest touch of a dishcloth. Those who felt sexual satisfaction doing housework were happy to be at home. There were almost no working women who felt the same.

Dr Robin Baker, an evolutionary biologist, was not surprised by the findings. 'The caring role is ingrained in women from more than 20,000 years ago. They have always been the ones who kept the area around the children as clean as possible', he said. Others were less convinced. Nanette Newman, who publicly advocates washing up in an advertisement by Fairy Liquid, said, 'I get no pleasure from doing the housework and I don't feel sexually deprived when I'm not doing it. It would not be the top of my list of thrilling experiences.'

Source: adapted from M. Austin, 'Science reveals housework is good clean sex', *Sunday Times*, 25 January 1998

ITEM D – MAINTAINING STANDARDS

Changing standards and notions of cleanliness have made cleaning more time-consuming than ever before. Kitchen tops need to be constantly wiped; kitchen floors need to be mopped whenever a footprint or a pawprint appears; the bath has to be cleaned between baths; once a day is not enough for the toilet. Every few minutes a television commercial illustrates the standard and shows a way of achieving it, tightening the headlock on the 'housewife'.

Source: Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman*, Doubleday, 1999

ITEM E – THE MARKET MECHANISM

Advertising, marketing, even packaging, aim at shaping people's preferences rather than … responding to them.

Source: Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman*, Doubleday, 1999

QUESTIONS

1 In Item A, pick out the tasks which you consider to be most clearly 'gendered'.

2 If Hakim's research findings (Item B) are valid, what influences in the wider society help to explain them?

3 'Item C represents a justification of the status quo.' Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

4 Making some reference to Items D and E, consider what you think the future holds for women and housework.

Activity 6: WOMEN'S CHANGING IDENTITY

ITEM A – LADETTES

Girls are taking on boys at their own game – and they won't rest until they've drunk them under the table, snogged their faces off and puked up in their laps.

Source: Jo Hawkins, Bliss magazine, quoted in Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman*, Doubleday, 1999

ITEM B – GIRLS AND VIOLENCE

Girl power has mutated into a vicious ideology of beatings by female adolescents determined to claim traditional masculine traits, according to a report published yesterday. It found that bullying, punching, kicking and head-butting and stabbing were becoming acceptable tools in the new femininity, mirroring rising violence in girl gangs.

Emotional responses to the aftermath of fights are also changing, with only a quarter of survey respondents feeling remorse, with 15 per cent claiming to feel happy, good or high. The rate of imprisonment for violent attacks by females has increased 43.7 per cent between 1991 and 1996, far outstripping the rise in male imprisonment. Projections suggest that by 2008 adolescent females will outnumber males for violence.

'Girl power is not the Spice Girls. It is about being independent, being able to stand up on their own two feet. If to prove their equality they have to punch someone then so be it.' The research concludes that girls are making conscious choices about their identity, citing the need to protect their image and prove themselves better than others. Popular culture is fuelling this momentum by depicting strong women like Tank Girl and the female lead in the *Terminator* films.

Source: adapted from R. Carroll, 'Gangs put boot into old idea of femininity', *Guardian*, 22 July 1998

ITEM C – WOMEN BOXERS

Shirley is a fighter with attitude, a lean hard body with ten tattoos who lives for the adrenaline rush of the ring. Her 10 stone 5 pound body is solid muscle, her hair is cropped short and she does not waste energy smiling. Some women boxers derive publicity from being pretty – Shirley is not one of them. 'They go on their looks, big hair, big bust. They're just dolly birds', she says contemptuously.

Boxing is the ultimate domination of one person over another, which is perhaps why for so long it has been man's sport. But 'times they are a-changing'. Author of *Deadlier than the Male*, Alex Kirsta, says, 'Women who box aren't afraid to express their natural aggression. They're strong-willed, independent, tough and not in the least bit worried about fitting into other people's stereotypes.'

Source: adapted from A. Baker, 'Women with rights', *Independent on Sunday*, 24 November 1996; and E. Lindsay, 'Women came out fighting', *Observer*, 5 May 1996

ITEM D – WOMEN AND FOOTBALL

Tomorrow, Wendy Toms will become the first woman to referee a Premier League fixture. It will make her the highest-ranked female on-pitch official in British footballing history.

Toms was brought up the daughter of a British Rail worker with a penchant for athletics. She started playing in goal for Bournemouth Ladies and by 21 was playing for the First Division side Southampton Ladies. Within three years her weekends were split between playing and refereeing.

Toms's approach to the job is scrupulous; she does not support a team and watches football only to learn. She says that being a woman refereeing men presents no problems on the field. 'They just forget who you are', she said.
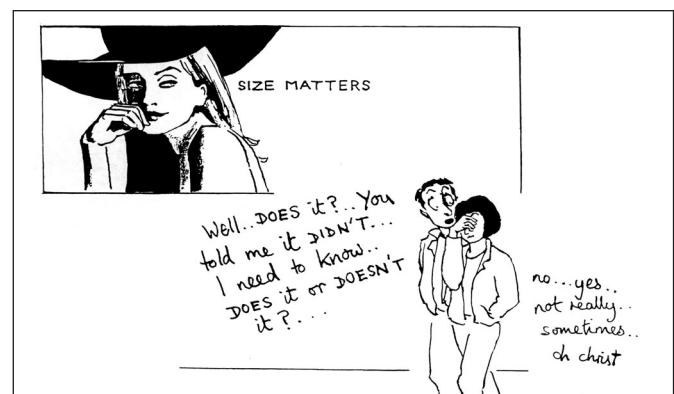
Source: adapted from P. Nichols, 'Toms waves the flag', *Guardian*, 26 August 1997

ITEM E – BOYS. THEY NEVER GET THE JOKE
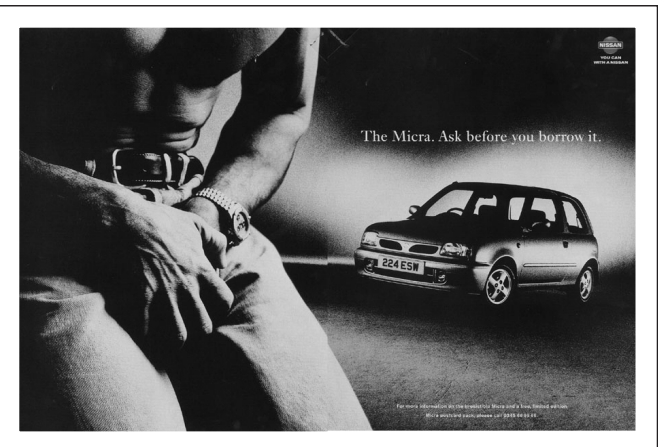
Source: Chris Bailey/John Claridge

ITEM F – SIZE MATTERS

Source: Jacky Fleming, *Guardian*, 10 September 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **Drawing on the material in Items A, B, C and D, how far do you support the view that women's attitudes and self-image are changing?**

2 **Discuss some of the ways in which the images of males and females are changing within popular culture. Refer to Items E and F in your answer.**

3 **Do you welcome the changes discussed in your previous answers? Give reasons for your viewpoint.**

Activity 7: Conflicting expectations

ITEM A – IT'S TOUGH BEING A BOY

A survey called 'Tomorrow's Men' looked at attitudes amongst boys. Many feel that boys are treated unfairly and that the adult world is suspicious and even fearful of them. Richard, aged 16, says, 'Girls get away with it a lot more because they're girls. They're treated more sympathetically, they're let off a lot more. If you're walking along the street, police stop you and if you're with a girl they're rude to the boys and not the girls. It does make me feel angry.' Danny, aged 16, reflects similar concerns – 'teachers treat boys differently. One of my teachers told me she doesn't like teaching in a single-sex boys' school. People are nervous of boys.'

In today's world, there are fewer 'heroes' around for boys. Sportsmen are accused of match fixing. Presidents are the butt of sexual innuendo, and fathers' influence has waned. But boys still have to show that they're real men. In the 1990s it is unclear how they can do this. The transition from childhood to adulthood has become a risky business. Twenty years ago you left school, got a job, found a house, found a woman and had children. Now it can be the other way around. You could be living at home with your parents, have no job but be a father yourself. With unemployment and housing problems it's much more difficult to form your own family than ever before.

Source: adapted from A. Katz, 'Little boys lost', *Guardian*, 29 April 1998; and C. Williams, 'Real life danger: men at large', *Independent on Sunday*, 15 March 1998

ITEM B – NEW MAN, CONFUSED MAN

A major study across four continents and 46 countries comes up with the finding that whatever men try to do, however they try to change, women aren't satisfied. A Canadian says, 'We have a lot of guys wandering around wondering just what the heck they're supposed to be and how they're supposed to act.' Men the world over, the report explains, yearn for a return to traditional values. From Argentina to Australia, Sweden to Singapore, they value physical strength and deep inside still want to be the hunter and breadwinner.

But the greater equality and financial independence of women mean that men are no longer the sole financial providers for the family, nor have sole decision-making authority. This change had affected the USA and northern Europe to the greatest extent. In these countries those who had accepted the idea of equality with women felt unappreciated. When they showed gentleness, sensitivity and acquiescence they felt that women regarded them as wimps. Apparently, what women want are 'real men'. Behind their backs these 'new men' were unfavourably compared with Spanish and Portuguese men where 'women are allowed to be female and men to be male'. But in Madrid and Lisbon women aren't satisfied. They wanted their men to be gentle, sensitive and acquiescent. Men face contradictory expectations. One UK man said, 'Women like to hold these positions of authority but they want you to carry this box for them. They want to be able to shout and holler at you like a man but they also want to use their feminine ways.' Terry is an office worker in his twenties. He says, 'My girlfriend likes men to be men but if I don't go shopping with her there's hell to pay.' David, recently married, said, 'It's great, but she told me she didn't mind me having the odd night out with my mates. But she does.'
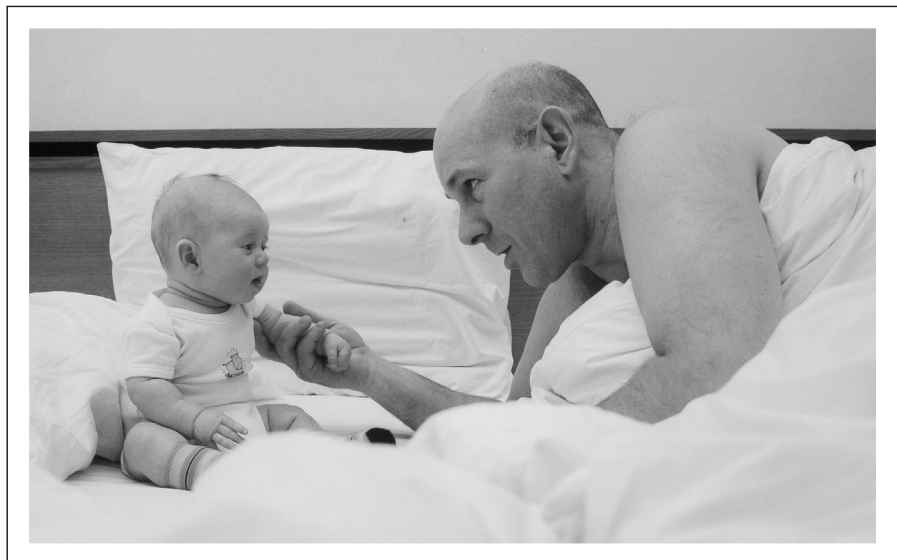
Source: adapted from B. Hugill, 'I'd be a real man if only she would let me', *Observer*, 16 August 1998
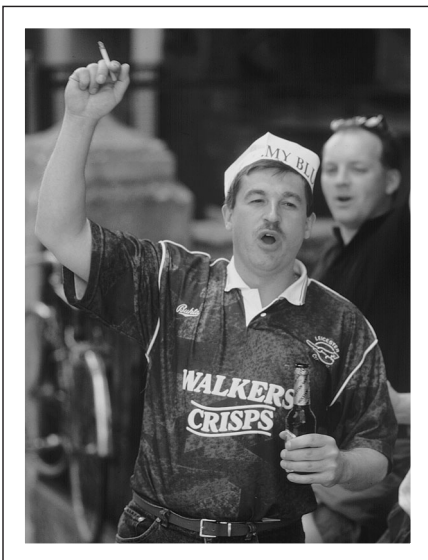
ITEM C – MACHO MAN   ITEM D – SENSITIVE MAN

Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

Source: Photofusion

QUESTIONS

1 'It's tough being a boy.' Do you agree with this statement? Make some reference to Item A in your answer.

2 What contradictions exist in gender roles for modern man? Refer to Items B, C and D in your answer.

Activity 8: THE FUTURE FOR MEN

ITEM A – MEN WHO COUNT

The past ill-served the needs of men. It forced us into a narrow sense of ourselves as workers which fell apart when we were sacked, fell ill or retired. It drove us out of our homes and made us strangers to our children. We sub-contracted our physical and emotional needs to women. They fed us, nurtured us and mediated our social world for us.

But major social changes can free us from all that. Information technology now allows us to work from home. Low birth rates and female income earners release us from being breadwinners.

We must rewrite out notions of being a man.

1 Defining ourselves in terms of our work is not enough. When we see ourselves as a journalist or a printer we pin our identity to something too uncertain. Work is only temporary – we may be sacked or retire or become too sick to work.

2 We must stop thinking of ourselves as the opposite to women. As women do more things, we will be confined to defining ourselves by the few activities like rape and abuse which women don't do.

3 As fathers we must start believing that we can fulfil a child's emotional needs just as well as any woman. British institutions continue to ignore our caring role. Employers make few concessions to fatherhood, divorced fathers have limited access to children and health workers ignore the role of fathers with the newborn. We can change all this.

4 We must re-establish ourselves as role models for young boys. Boys, especially in single parent families, have little access to men. We must become their mentors and help them to grow up.

5 Men must reclaim the home. We continue to let women organize our domestic and social lives, determining what friendships are maintained and how involved we are with family. We must assert our right to be equal in the home as they have asserted their right to be equal at work.

Source: adapted from J. O'Sullivan, 'A Manifesto for men', *New Statesman*, 28 February 1997

ITEM B – DAVID BECKHAM

When asked ... about football achievements Beckham said: 'They're all important but having a child means more than anything.'

Source: Gary Whannel, 'David Beckham, identity and masculinity', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 11, No. 3, February 2002

ITEM C – ARE MEN NECESSARY?

Let us consider how men let the species down. They are more prone to disease, more dumb at school and more troubled at home than girls. They are more violent and in many walks of life becoming less and less needed at work, therefore growing the pool of the unemployed.

Some biologists have described them as genetic sieves which sift out the good genes and discard the bad. However, various changes in the environment and technology may render their reproductive role redundant in the future. A world without men would be a world with less crime, where even the slums of Rio de Janeiro would be safe at night. Pornography would largely disappear. So would rape, classically understood. Children, true, would be brought up in fatherless homes, but the evidence suggests that it is mainly boys who turn bad in these circumstances, not girls.

As a vision of the future a world without men may have much to commend it.

Source: adapted from 'The male dodo: Are men necessary? *The Economist*, quoted in A. Giddens (ed.) *Sociology: Introductory Readings*, revised edition, Polity Press, 2001

ITEM D – GOOD INTENTIONS

Working fathers are treated even worse by their bosses than working mothers, according to a new report which urges the government to bring in six months' 'maternity leave' for men.

Men are resorting to 'stealth parenting' – spending more time with their children, but inventing business meetings to cover absences from the office – for fear that admitting to childcare responsibilities damages their careers.

One study involving 'dummy' applications to take unpaid childcare leave found men's requests were more likely to be rejected than those of women, according to the report by the Work Foundation think-tank.

'For many [fathers], saying to a superior they cannot do a late-night meeting because they have to pick up the kids is fraught with difficulty.' The report adds: 'Some senior managers who are comfortable with female staff playing the "family card" recoil when their male colleagues do so.'

Source: Gaby Hinsliff, 'New dads get raw deal from bosses', *Observer*, 20 October 2002

QUESTIONS

1 How much sympathy do you have with the views expressed in Item A? Give reasons for your answer.

2 'The future is female.' Comment on this view in the light of the Items.

Chapter 2: SEX AND GENDER – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: BOYS AND GIRLS

Teacher's note

This activity introduces students to the nature/nurture conflict. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 2, pp. 92–102.

1 *Key points:*
- The biological determinist model sees gender differences as the result of differences in genes and hormones between the sexes.
- Item A suggests that men's brains are constructed to be better at mechanical and spatial skills, while women have a natural advantage when it comes to childcare and nurturing skills, and that these differences are present at birth.
- However, it is difficult to tell what is cause and what is effect. Research shows that mothers handle babies of different sexes differently from the point of birth. Thus, brain scans showing that male and female brains are 'wired' differently could be the result of differences in early experience and treatment rather than the cause of differences in behaviour.
- A more convincing explanation for exceptions to gender patterns of behaviour may be provided by variations in childhood experience and parenting, rather than genetic abnormalities (i.e. by nurture rather than nature).

2 *Key points*
- From a feminist viewpoint the Barbie doll would appear to encourage young girls to take an almost obsessive interest in their physical appearance. 'Playing' with Barbie probably involves dressing her up in one of her many outfits, trying on 'sexy' underwear, and styling her blonde hair.
- Barbie's body dimensions seem almost guaranteed to define her as a sex object. As the Items suggest, this reflects her origin as a porno-toy. The proportions of her body – big bosom and long legs – seem to pander to modern Western male fantasies. From a feminist viewpoint such a toy might encourage small girls to value themselves in terms of their physical attractiveness to males. This would appear to support Walby's suggestion that 'the key sign of femininity today is sexual attractiveness to men'. Barbie may encourage girls to feel that they must change their bodies, perhaps by diet or plastic surgery, if they are to be truly feminine and desirable to men.
- Item B points out that Barbie can be seen as a 'disabled person', her feet being too tiny to walk on. This is reminiscent of the foot binding once practised in China. Such a disability could be seen as a method of subjugation, and such a girl would be severely restricted in her activities. As the Item points out, she could not effectively work in many occupations – certainly ones demanding physical fitness. Nor could she run, jump or defend herself, perhaps making her an easy target for a male aggressor.
- Even the new Barbie remains unrealistic in her appearance. Item B makes the ironic observation that the further away from a realistic female form the doll is, the more attractive and 'feminine' she seems to be.
- In light of the above it is understandable that Item C describes beautiful women who are still doubtful of their attractiveness. Subjected to comparisons with an unrealistic ideal type, no real woman can quite measure up, and women and girls may feel self-hate or a lack of confidence. Similar problems may face black or oriental girls who may have facial and bodily features even less like Barbie than do Western women.
- Finally, Item B refers to the pitifully low wages paid to Chinese women for producing Barbies. From a feminist viewpoint this is a clear example that there is still a long way to go before women in all parts of the world reach a basic feminist goal of economic equality with men.

3 *Key points:*
- The emphasis on youth and beauty in advertisements and other media – men's and women's magazines, popular literature, television drama, etc. – can be seen as intimidating to women, making more ordinary women feel that they are unattractive and unlovable and even lucky to attract men at all.
- In Item D, sexually attractive young women are used to sell a consumer product. The implication is that the woman is sexually available to the man who buys the car. In advertising, women may be portrayed as sex objects – available to men whether or not they want to be. Exposed to this sort of imagery, women may come to think of themselves as victims and of men as sexual predators. They may become too frightened to walk the streets alone at night and may therefore be restricted to the domestic sphere by their anxiety.

- Advertisements which depict women as the predator – for example, the Lee jeans advertisement where a naked man lies prone under a woman's stiletto heel – are rare.
- In adverts and on television women are still less likely to be seen in positions of power than are men.
- There continues to be a cult of youth and beauty in the media. Even when older women do appear they tend to be physically attractive, rather than plain or obese. This continues to reflect the idea that women must be sexually attractive for men in order to be valued people.

ACTIVITY 2: THE SEX ROLE SYSTEM

Teacher's note

This activity looks at the sex role system and introduces students to the idea of gender identity. Appropriate reading can be found in Chapter 2, pp. 98–102.

1 Daphne is a normal woman but she is not 'feminine'. Because of this she was diagnosed as ill, and subjected to powerful drug treatment and physical intimidation in an attempt to persuade her to conform to society's view of how a woman should behave. Her doctors were clearly unquestioning in their acceptance of the prevailing stereotype of what counted as womanly or feminine behaviour. In a similar way, many girls and women are subject in their everyday lives to such social control mechanisms as teasing, ridicule, abuse and physical punishment if they fail to conform to contemporary ideals of womanhood. However, changing attitudes to gender identity mean that today a girl like Daphne would not find herself the subject of medical intervention.

Item B represents a reversal of normal sexual behaviour. Although women's roles have changed in Western society, we still do not expect women to be potential aggressors, nor do we expect young men to be intimidated by them.

2 *Key points:*
- Physical changes – for example, hormone treatment, electrolysis to remove unwanted hair, changes of hairstyle and dress, and use of makeup. People may also try to change the pitch of their voice.
- Behavioural changes – for example, in Item C, Billy drank and smoked, told dirty stories and larked about, all behaviour traditionally associated with men.
- Explaining the past – people who change their gender must also provide a convincing 'cover story' for their past history.
- The patterns of the sex role system are deeply ingrained within us, and people who attempt to pass as members of the opposite sex must be constantly on their guard against reverting to their old patterns of behaviour and being exposed as impersonators.

3 It is quite difficult to believe that Billy was able to pass himself off as a man so successfully for so many years, since no hormone therapy or operations were used to help him change his physical appearance. However, he changed his behaviour, attitudes and interests to such an extent that he became 'masculine', and people expect 'masculine' behaviour to indicate that a person is a member of the male sex. Thus, inconsistencies in his appearance may have been interpreted merely as slight physical imperfections.

It is also hard to believe that Billy managed to sustain his married life. However, Billy had armed himself with a plausible explanation, and his wives may have been willing to play along as it appears that Billy was a 'good' husband. This would have also helped him sustain his role as a man in professional and social life.

In today's society, in which homosexual and lesbian partnerships are more common than when Billy was young, Billy might arouse more suspicion. However, heterosexual relationships are still the norm and in general we continue to expect family relationships to contain a male and a female partner.

4 *Key points:*
- For feminists, being a woman is much more than having some oestrogen and a pair of breasts. It is about the whole experience of being a woman, which involves being treated differently and having different experiences – both physically and socially. The sex role system is such that women are used to deferring to men, and men are used to being

deferred to. Thus, a person brought up as a man might come to dominate a women's discussion group and change its agenda, destroying the supportive atmosphere of the group.

· It is difficult to think of an area of life where a person's gender does not make a difference to how they are treated and how they are expected to react. At work and at home, at school, in courts of law, and even in shops, banks, pubs and restaurants men and women are treated differently.

· In the light of these huge differences in social experience, it seems that feminists have a strong case for excluding transsexuals. Only after many years of living as a woman would these men develop a real understanding of women's lives.

ACTIVITY 3: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Teacher's note

In this activity we examine various aspects of violence against women. Students may wish to refer to Chapter 2, pp. 103–26.

1 *Key points:*

· Many women put up with years of mental and physical abuse before they decide to take action against their partner. Some women may be held almost as prisoners in their own homes, their lives completely controlled by their violent partners. In these circumstances, it will be difficult for women to organize an escape from their partner, especially as they may have children to take with them. Years of abuse may also mean that they have lost touch with friends and relatives who could give them emotional and practical support.

· Women in this situation are also unlikely to have been able to save any money or organize employment or housing for a new life, and may feel that their children, if not they themselves, will be better off if the family stays together.

· There may also be some women who still love their husbands. They may make excuses for their violent behaviour, hoping that it will change. They may even see violence as a sign of affection, reasoning that at least their partner does not ignore them.

· Fear also plays a part. If a woman leaves home, perhaps for a refuge, she may fear that she and her children will be tracked down and further abused by her partner. If she involves the police she may face further retribution from her partner, and, even if he is taken to court, he may receive only a fine and return to threaten her and her children.

2 *Key points:*

· In the Hackney example, 1 in 5 of the women interviewed had been subjected to punches and slaps and 1 in 10 to more serious violence, indicating that domestic violence is indeed widespread.

· Many young people witness this violence from an early age and will see abuse as a normal part of relationships. When they form relationships themselves they may either become abusers or accept abuse from their partner, thus perpetuating the pattern.

· As the folk rhyme implies, domestic violence is not a recent phenomenon.

· Some feminists believe that the continued existence of domestic violence serves to intimidate all women. They contend that the perceived threat of domestic violence acts to uphold men's authority in relations between the sexes.

· Other sociologists see evidence of changing attitudes in society. They suggest that domestic violence, which was once accepted as normal, is now subject to increasing public censure.

3 *Key points:*

· There may be no physical evidence that rape has taken place. A woman may have been too fearful to resist her partner even if she did not want sex. Without bruising she may feel that she will not be believed.

· There is no one whom she can call for corroboration, as sex is generally a private act.

· A partner will not conform to the popular image of a rapist as a stranger who attacks on the street. Prosecutions may therefore fail.

· She may believe that the police/courts and society feel that either she brought it on herself by her dress or behaviour, or if she is married that sex is part of her duty as a wife.

4 *Key points:*

· The case histories cited suggest that the courts deal differently with men and women who kill their partners. Women are treated more harshly than men even when they have suffered abuse for many years.

· If these cases are in any sense typical they may reflect common assumptions in our society about the nature of male and female behaviour. Women are usually regarded as passive and non-violent. Men, on the other

hand, are often seen as naturally more volatile and aggressive. It may be that men who attack their partners are seen as powerless to change their natures, and their crimes are therefore partly excused as representing a temporary loss of control, brought on by the pressure of the situation.

Conversely, women are believed to tend towards compliance and non-aggression, and so cannot use their biology/rearing as an excuse for their violence. Women who act aggressively have stepped outside normal female behaviour and are therefore seen as not only guilty of the particular crime but of being 'unnatural' as well. The prevalence of these beliefs in society may help to account for the apparently harsher sentences meted out to women involved in domestic killing.

· The courts also take into account the degree of premeditation. A crime committed on the spur of the moment is seen as a crime of passion, and is considered more excusable. Some people, especially feminists, might reject this view, arguing that physical weakness would generally mean that it is impossible for a battered and abused woman to kill her partner in a fit of rage, and that she would be more likely to only bring further violence upon herself. She has no choice but to wait until her partner is asleep, drunk or otherwise incapacitated. From this viewpoint, years of abuse would make such an attack no less excusable than that made by a man on his wife in a fit of rage.

· Race and class may also have an influence on the decision of the courts. Most judges are middle aged, middle class, white and male, and may be more willing to look sympathetically on defendants with whom they can identify or at least feel a point of contact.

ACTIVITY 4: WOMEN AT WORK

Teacher's note

This activity examines aspects of women's experience at work. Students may wish to refer to Chapter 2, pp. 126–37.

1 Advantages:

· A business woman may be able to take advantage of other people's assumption that men are senior to women. In a business meeting it may give her a better opportunity to observe other members without being detected, and to gain insights otherwise denied.

· Since women are generally expected to be much less 'pushy' and ambitious than men, the presence of a woman in a meeting may tend to damp down male aggression and so facilitate discussion. Also, if men see women as less threatening, they will tend to be more willing to share information and ideas with them.

· As women remain a rarity in business, men have no clear idea of how they will behave, and may be temporarily 'wrong-footed' by this uncertainty. This may act to women's advantage during tough negotiations and they may be able to obtain a better deal in consequence.

2 (**a**) *Key points:*

· While attitudes are slowly changing, many employers still assume that once a woman has children she will be less reliable and less committed. Some continue to expect that women will not return to work after taking maternity leave, despite the evidence that increasing numbers of women are returning. In contrast, a man who has a young family is expected to be no less committed to his job.

· These attitudes echo the cultural assumption that a woman's first duty is to her home and family while a man's first duty is to financially support them. This leads to some women being 'sidelined' in their career advancement. However, women tend to take a greater share of responsibility for children and housework than do their partners when they work full-time. From the employer's point of view, this means that mothers cannot give the commitment, flexibility and long hours to their jobs that many fathers can give.

· A supportive family – both in a practical sense and emotionally – is crucial to a woman's success. However, failure to fulfil the expected wife/mother role may cause resentment in the family. In some cases, women have the support of an extended family – mothers or sisters. However, with greater social and geographical mobility and higher overall levels of female employment, such help is not available to all.

(**b**) *Key points:*

· Women may experience a degree of discrimination. Men may find it threatening to be faced with a female boss, and may react by being dismissive of her ideas or even rude. To succeed, a woman may need to develop a 'thick skin'.

· The use of sexist language and generally 'laddish' behaviour can be seen as a way in which men attempt to keep women out of traditionally male environments. Radical feminists might suggest that this sort of

intimidation serves to keep women as a whole in a subordinate position and so perpetuates the system of patriarchy. Other men and women may accept a degree of sexual banter as 'harmless fun'.

· Sexual intimidation may be another problem that career women face, and in some cases it may impede their career advancement. With an increasing number of women reaching senior positions, sexual intimidation of men by women may also be on the increase, though as yet it remains a rarity.

3 *Key points:*

· Figure 1 demonstrates that more than half of employed women continue to work in the traditionally female sectors of the economy. These sectors are those which also tend to be the most poorly paid, e.g. childcare and sales assistants. Even in the case of professionals like teachers we know that women are less likely to be promoted than men, so form a disproportionate number of those remaining on small salaries.

· Figure 2 examines the penetration of women into the top level of management as director of companies. A massive 43 per cent of companies still have no female directors, while only 5 per cent have a representation of 20–25 per cent females. Despite the rhetoric of equality of opportunity, for a variety of reasons women remain largely outside the boardroom. Since it is here that many of the major decisions involving industry are taken, women remain largely without power and influence in this important sphere of life. Here at least the glass ceiling remains very much in place.

ACTIVITY 5: WOMEN AND HOUSEWORK

Teacher's note

In this activity students can explore the relationship between women and their role as housewives. Appropriate reading for the activity can be found in Chapter 2, pp. 103–26.

1 Ironing clothes: a relatively high proportion of men (42 per cent) do not do this task at all, while only 8 per cent of women do not do it. This is despite the fact that 46 per cent of women dislike doing it. Washing clothes: 39 per cent of men do not do this activity, while only 5 per cent of women do not. It is a fairly popular activity among women: 44 per cent say that they like it.

DIY repair work appears to remain a male preserve. Only 16 per cent of men do not do this activity, while as many as 46 per cent of women do not. It is a popular activity with men, 50 per cent saying that they like it.

Three quarters of women said that they liked non-food shopping, while only 48 per cent of men enjoyed this activity.

2 *Key points:*

· If Hakim is right, then most sociologists would agree that part of the reason lies in the socialization of young girls. As Anne Oakley has pointed out, girls continue to be directed towards toys with a domestic 'flavour' such as miniature cooking stoves, tea party sets and Wendy houses. As they grow older they are encouraged to imitate their mothers and will be directed by their parents towards activities like cooking, sewing and ironing.

· The media have been heavily criticized by feminist groups for continuing to reinforce traditional gender stereotypes. Men are still largely portrayed as inept in the kitchen or as needing a domestic product which is particularly simple to use. Women continue to be shown as 'responsible' for the cooking and cleaning and grateful if their partner offers some assistance. Women reared in this climate may feel that they are judged by society on the condition of their home and their role as housekeeper. It is therefore unsurprising that many appear to continue to be attached to this role.

· The sorts of jobs available to women may help to explain why so many seem to express satisfaction with the domestic role. For women with few educational qualifications, the work available may be boring and poorly paid, with little autonomy. By contrast, housework may offer certain attractions. A housewife is free to work at her own speed, organize her own day and is not subject to scrutiny from bosses. Feminists have emphasized the negative aspects of the housewife's role – its isolation, the lack of status and the clear financial disadvantages – but these may appear greater to women who have access to interesting employment than to those facing dead-end jobs. Women who work as housewives, rather than feeling exploited by their husbands, may feel 'saved' from the exploitation of the workplace.

3 The views expressed in Item C could be seen as aspects of a male ideology dedicated to maintaining the suppression of women. The evolutionary biologist Dr Robin Baker argues that the caring role has been ingrained in

women. This behaviour pattern has evolved to ensure that women are able to maximize the transmission of their genes. It is therefore considered to be natural.

Such a viewpoint can be criticized for being ethnocentric in assuming that all social behaviour corresponds with patterns observed in the industrial West. Feminists like Anne Oakley also argue that such views provide a 'scientific' justification for the continuing responsibility which many women feel for domestic work, thus perpetuating their oppression and preserving the status quo.

The suggestion that housework is sexually pleasurable to women can be seen as another example of scientific findings used to maintain women's domestic role and bolster male power. It is significant that working women did not experience the same feelings of erotic arousal. It could be argued that these women have extended their horizons and thus have more opportunities to find pleasure in other activities.

While this newspaper article is written somewhat 'tongue in cheek', it does show how various forms of scientific research have been used to bolster the status quo.

4 *Key points:*

· Item D suggests that housework continues to occupy an important part of women's lives. Despite household equipment like washing machines now being common, standards of cleanliness are constantly being raised. Family members may also 'make' more work by bathing, taking showers and changing their clothes much more frequently than in the past. We have seen in previous answers that women remain largely responsible for performing housework. But they are also judged as women by the cleanliness of their homes in a way that men are not. This makes it difficult for them to abandon cleaning without feeling like bad women.

· Item E points out that the tyranny of housework is encouraged by advertising. As we all know from a glance at the supermarket shelves, there are many cleaning products available. Clearly, it is in the interest of their manufacturers' profits to portray house cleaning as essential, particularly if it involves making specialist purchases. It hardly seems likely, then, that in the future housework will become any less demanding on the time of the majority of women.

ACTIVITY 6: WOMEN'S CHANGING IDENTITY

Teacher's note

We see in this activity how far women have come. We isolate changes in their role and identity which may continue into the future.

1 *Key points:*

· Item A lends some weight to the suggestion that in their pursuit of 'girl power', some girls are modelling their behaviour on the worst aspects of male behaviour. Television and press accounts of girls holidaying (e.g. Club 18–30) in places like Majorca portray an unedifying picture of young women drinking to excess and becoming both sexually promiscuous and predatory.

· Item B continues the theme of Item A. It presents evidence that adolescent girls are becoming more violent than they were, lacking the 'caring' attitudes customarily associated with women and girls. However, the situation may be exaggerated, since incidents of violent female crime are more likely to be reported and punished severely than male crime for the very reason that they seem 'unfeminine' and therefore pathological. Girls also feel the need to 'protect their image and prove themselves'. It may be that this is a sign that more young women today feel that they are capable of independent achievement.

· In Item C, the female boxer goes against the female stereotype, since we do not think of women being 'naturally' aggressive. Shirley has rejected the dominant cultural image of women as sexy and attractive for a view of femininity which emphasizes strength, discipline and aggressive independence.

· Wendy Toms in Item D is one of a growing number of women now taking part in what were traditionally male sports. This can be seen as indicative of a general change in how women see themselves and what activities they consider appropriate. The accepted notion of femininity may be changing in such a way that women feel that they can play these sports without in any way damaging their femininity.

· All four items lend some support to the idea that women's attitudes and self-image are changing. We now live in a society where girls are equally or more successful at school than boys and where many can look forward to professional careers and advancement. However, it seems to be largely among younger women that these changes have

occurred. Very many older women remain tied to traditional ideas and continue to play traditional roles.

2 *Key points:*

· How men and women are represented in our culture can be seen as both a cause and an effect of social change.

· Girl Power challenges previously accepted notions of femininity and its popularity may indicate that young women are open to new interpretations of femininity. A more cynical observer may dismiss Girl Power as a creation of the media aimed at furthering commercial interests.

· Item E depicts a young man on the receiving end of violence from a woman. Although quite strong enough to hit her back, he doesn't – presumably because she is in charge of the car and, presumably, the relationship. An advertisement for Lee jeans carried a similar message, depicting a naked man being trodden on by a woman in stiletto-heeled shoes. Both generated a number of complaints from the public, indicating perhaps that as a society we are not quite ready to accept the aggressively dominant female.

· Item F carries the message that men are no longer necessarily the dominant partners in a sexual relationship. A well-known television advertisement for Coca-Cola carries a similar message. It features an attractive, bare-chested young male window cleaner who is lusted after by a number of female office workers. In this case, the man becomes the 'looked at' rather than the 'looker', representing a reversal of the normal images of male and female sexuality found in advertisements. This remains the exception rather than the rule, however. The predominant message of the media continues to be that women are the object of male desire, rather than the reverse.

3 *Key points*

· Some changes should be welcomed, others not. Most people would welcome greater female independence, but not the increasing levels of violence and anti-social behaviour that seem to characterize Girl Power. However, this view might be criticized as a blatant value judgement. Some forms of 'unfeminine' behaviour may be harmless, and may be seen as representing cultural diversity.

· After many years of women being depicted as sexually passive, their portrayal in advertisements as sexually aggressive might be seen as a gradual movement towards restoring a balance between the sexes.

· Most people would probably see women's greater involvement in traditionally male sports as harmless and even beneficial if it leads to greater understanding and a sharing of interests between the sexes. This might not apply to boxing, though. While some people would defend women's right to be equal, others believe that boxing is an unacceptably dangerous sport and that it should be banned altogether.

· Overall, women may lose something valuable if they change their attitudes and behaviour merely to ape men. As they change, they must consider what aspects of the traditional 'femininities' and 'masculinities' they wish to incorporate into the role of the 'new woman'.

ACTIVITY 7: CONFLICTING EXPECTATIONS

Teacher's note

In this activity we consider some aspects of masculinity, especially men's changing role. Students may wish to read Chapter 2, pp. 143–50.

1 *Key points:*

· Some boys may feel undervalued. The media frequently feature items on boys who fail to make the grade in school, who are unemployed, drunk and behave in a loutish way. These portrayals give the impression that all boys are ne'er-do-wells. Equally as damaging is the frequent theme that men are dispensable, as we hear about the increasing numbers of households headed by young women and even the possibility of choosing a sperm donor on the Internet.

· The stereotype of young men as problem members of society who must be treated with caution is often experienced by boys – for example, at school and in encounters with the police – and is echoed in the media. The understandable anger and resentment that these sorts of attitudes create in boys may result in aggression and belligerence, which fulfil people's worst expectations.

· The transition from boyhood to manhood is becoming increasingly hard in society today, due in part to structural changes. Many young boys live in single-parent families and have women teachers at school, and so have few male role models. Even role models such as sportsmen have become tarnished in some cases. Furthermore, the rites of passage

from adolescence to manhood have been blurred. Structural changes in society mean that many young men can no longer expect to find work, find a home and wife and establish a family. We must remember, though, that these difficulties will be experienced to varying degrees by different social and ethnic groups within society.

2 *Key points:*

· Men may feel that contradictory demands are being made of them. On the one hand, they are expected to show macho characteristics of dominance and strength, but, on the other hand, they are expected to be 'new men', caring and sensitive and supportive.

· The image of toughness, physical strength and achievement has never been attainable by all men. A retreat from 'traditional' role images may actually be a relief to some men.

· 'New men' – those who accept equality at home and at work, who help with the household chores, hug their children and are in touch with their 'feminine side' – may be regarded as wimps, and become the butt of jokes and innuendo from other men. Men who move into caring occupational roles may encounter a degree of resistance from other people – they may be regarded as potential child molesters or as gay. There may also be practical difficulties, such as a lack of appropriate facilities in men's toilets for fathers with young children.

· While men may face contradictions in their role, many sociologists would argue that similar contradictory demands – to be wives, mothers, lovers and workers – are also made upon women.

ACTIVITY 8: THE FUTURE FOR MEN

Teacher's note

This activity continues the theme of men's changing role while speculating about the future.

1 *Key points:*

· The manifesto puts the case that men have been disadvantaged in the past by their traditional role, and that changes in society and working patterns can be seen as an opportunity for men to liberate themselves. As women obtain more power at work and in wider society, the scales must be balanced by men taking more decisions at home and re-establishing themselves as role models for boys and young men.

· This new role may not be a realistic option for many young men. Most men do not have the option of working part-time or from home. Moreover, men continue to be judged in large part by their income and job status.

· There is also the woman's viewpoint to be considered. Many women may be unwilling to 'give up' their domestic domain and share decision making with their partner. Since women continue to have lower pay and lower-status jobs than men, they may feel that it is only in the home that they can exercise any real authority.

· The author of the manifesto could be accused of being somewhat utopian in his outlook. Nevertheless, he has highlighted the need to consider the problems facing both men and women in a changing society.

2 *Key points:*

· Items B and D illustrate that many young men are enthusiastic about taking a greater responsibility for the rearing of their children. David Beckham's statement is important, as he acts as a role model to many young men. But the fact that he should make such a public statement of parental commitment also reflects changing attitudes.

· In Item D, we see that it is far from easy for men in the workplace to take time off for childcare. There appears to be only limited general support for the extension of paternity rights. This may be partly a generational problem – older men in senior positions may feel that 'they' managed without leave, so younger men should do likewise. It may also be that employers/management are concerned with productivity. For example, there is as yet little recognition that older men and women may need time off work to care for elderly, frail or disabled parents. This can be seen as just as legitimate a request as taking time off work for childcare.

· Item C appears to have been written, at least to some extent, with 'tongue in cheek'. However, it does highlight some important points about men and masculinity. It is true that men tend to die earlier than women, tend to be more troublesome as children and tend to be more aggressive. Again, we are brought back to the nature/nurture debate. We must ask ourselves how many of the characteristics which in our culture we label as undesirable (e.g. violence and sexual aggression) are socially produced rather than in-built. Anthropological studies suggest that there are many ways of expressing masculinity. Perhaps if men's behaviour comes to approximate more closely the behaviour advocated in Item A, the less desirable traits of masculinity will in time disappear.

RACE, ETHNICITY AND NATIONALITY

Activity 1: RACE AND IDENTITY

ITEM A – MELTING-POT BRITAIN

Figures from the fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities in Britain show 50 per cent of Caribbean men and 30 per cent of Caribbean women and 20 per cent of Indian and African men with white partners. This reflects the fact that more and more of us are choosing partners according to social proximity, class and shared interests, as opposed to race.

These changes are leading to an explosion in the number of mixed-race children born. The news that 1 in 20 preschool children is of mixed parentage has produced a range of responses, from predictions of future brown Britain, to the idea that such a group could usher in a new era of race relations, to the question of racial identity.

Jo Hodges is of mixed race. She says, 'My experience is of being allowed to eavesdrop on all sorts of conversations that black and white people have about each other. The idea that mixed-race people can create a bridge between races is possible.'

Lenny Kravitz, a black Jewish New Yorker, comments, 'You don't have to deny the white side of you if you're mixed. Accept the blessing of having two cultures but understand that you are black. In this world, if you have one spot of black blood you are black. Get over it!'

Mixed relationships have always attracted a disproportionate amount of interest. In addition, high-profile mixed marriages, like that of comedians Dawn French and Lenny Henry, have created the impression that large numbers of black men and white women are marrying each other.

Yet in both the USA and Britain, mixed-race relationships and people represent a paradoxical picture and generate radically different reactions. Today in the UK, intermarriage is being portrayed, in the media at least, as wholesomely positive – a sign of the power of human relationships to overcome deep-rooted attitudes, and a measure of modern racial tolerance. However, it was only in 1991 that a survey conducted by the *Independent on Sunday* demonstrated that a third of white people thought you should marry within your race.

But perhaps the most important difference will be the profound change which the emergence of numbers of young mixed-race people will have on discussions about their own identity. Mixed heritage has always been seen as a problem and critics of interracial relationships have often argued that the resulting children fall between two cultures and belong nowhere. In the context of a racially oppressed society, all the mixed-race people I have spoken to have mentioned a sometimes-intense pressure to unify and conform to ideas of blackness.

A recent study by Anne Phoenix of children aged between 14 and 18 showed that nevertheless they preferred to identify themselves as mixed and not to deny their own or one of their parents' whiteness.

Of course, describing oneself as black is also read as a statement of political allegiance; a refusal to do so can engender hostility or accusations of naivety. Julia Sudbury welcomes a future in which racially mixed people 'don't have to genuflect to notions of blackness imposed on them by unmixed people'.

Source: adapted from A. Forna, 'Bridge over troubled water', *Independent on Sunday*, 9 August 1998, and Benn Arogundade, 'Showing the true colours of our disunited kingdom', *Observer*, 25 November 2001

ITEM B – TRANS-RACIAL ADOPTION

Paul Boateng has declared war on social workers who are refusing to allow white couples to adopt black or mixed-race children. He believes that social workers who claim that trans-racial adoption destroys identity are wrong. 'Countless couples of different racial origins nurture and care for their own mixed-race children ... there are numerous success stories of children brought up by parents of different racial origins.'

Nuna Tuller was adopted at birth. 'My mum told me I was lucky ... I was chosen and they had particularly asked for an Indian baby ... If I was on the receiving end of racism, I was told not to worry, they were being silly. It hurt, but I felt I was wrong to feel so hurt.

'I had never been taught about the richness of my Indian culture. Even in my early twenties when I was asked what part of India I came from or did I speak Hindi, I just said ... I didn't know because I was adopted. But I felt haunted by sadness ... I will never belong. I have no people, no full Indian cultural identity. I am a black woman with no roots. I have to learn my culture secondhand. Many trans-racial adoptees fear the effects their cultural dispossession will have on their own children. How can you pass on to your children something you yourself don't have?'

Hannah Pool was adopted as a six-month-old baby by a university lecturer and his wife. 'I was never told I was adopted but that's because it's so obvious. I can't say that I was ever aware of being different from mum and dad. I just knew that I was black and they were white, it wasn't a big issue. The problem was always other people.' She describes how at primary school a boy called her 'nigger'. Her dad saw the headteacher and the bullying stopped. But at secondary school the problem got worse. She was called 'Bounty bar' (black on the outside, white on the inside). 'I was mortified. I still get it, though more guarded now. One black guy said, "I'm not as comfortable as you are around white people" – he meant "Bounty bar". Maybe it helped that dad was an expert on Eritrea so I grew up knowing a lot about my culture.'

Source: adapted from B. Hugill and H. Mills, 'Duty that's more than skin deep', *Observer*, 19 April 1998

QUESTIONS

1 What are the positive aspects of being a member of a mixed-race union? Refer to Item A in your answer.

2 Drawing on Item A, what reasons can you put forward to explain why both some black and some white people object to interracial marriages?

3 Why do you think that many children prefer to see themselves as of mixed race rather than black? (Draw on Item A for your answer.)

4 'If you have one spot of black blood you are black.' What does Lenny Kravitz (Item A) mean by this?

5 Making reference to Item B, discuss the problems that black children face when adopted by white parents.

Activity 2: NEWCOMERS

ITEM A – ECONOMIC RENEWAL

The labour market is not as simple as the anti-immigrants argue. Immigrants arrive to make something of themselves because they despair of opportunity in their own country. They tend to do jobs either that the host population do not want to do or, as with Indian and Chinese restaurants, create an industry that did not exist before. In any case, the labour market is dynamic; as long as demand for labour is buoyant, the existence of a supply of immigrant labour at lower wage rates in some sectors will so boost their fortunes that, by increasing employment overall, incomes and output in aggregate will, in turn, be lifted through spending, begetting more spending in a classic Keynesian multiplier. Openness is not just a cultural and democratic asset – it is also economically advantageous. London attracts inward investors, foreign students and tourists because of its multicultural energy and openness. It is also the chief reason why it is now the richest region in Western Europe.

Source: Will Hutton, 'The unholy alliance against immigrants', *Observer*, 23 June 2002

ITEM B – NEGATIVE IMAGES

Source: Rex Features

ITEM C – A LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY

Income support is set at the poverty line – the minimum amount of money needed to maintain a healthy life. Asylum seekers are expected to live on just 70 per cent of that. The system has been designed to make quite sure that asylum seekers are never better off than those holding full citizenship rights. A Mori poll carried out in 2000 suggests that the public greatly overestimate the amount of money that asylum seekers are entitled to. A common myth is that asylum seekers are paid more than pensioners.

While British asylum seekers are given access to education and healthcare, they are banned from working. This is the area where they could potentially make the greatest contribution, but instead they are completely excluded from the labour market for the first six months of their stay, after which getting permission is often hampered by bureaucracy.

Source: adapted from Alexander Garrett, 'Safe: but is asylum in Britain sound?' *Observer*, 12 May 2002

ITEM D – HATE CRIME

A gang of youths had congregated at the entrance to high-rise flats to taunt the refugees who had been housed in spare accommodation in North Glasgow. Men had been attacked and a pregnant woman harassed. There was a real fear that soon someone would be killed.

Three months later a Kurdish asylum seeker called Firsat Dag died after being stabbed while walking back to the estate with a friend.

Source: adapted from Benn Arogundade, 'Showing the true colours of our disunited kingdom, *Observer*, 25 November 2001

QUESTIONS

1 **'We are being swamped by foreigners.' Discuss this viewpoint in the light of Items A and B.**

2 **Making reference to Items A, B, C and D, consider to what extent our attitude to asylum seekers is racist.**

Activity 3: SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS

ITEM A – HIGH HOPES

Mr Powell was coming to Guyana to address the nation. The Chronicle, the Guardian and The Times were there with advertisements to work for Lyons Corner House and different hospitals and so on. We saw it as an opportunity for the country to serve the motherland. There was a chance to work and develop ourselves, to get a good education and to create a better life for ourselves and our families.

Mr Powell told us about the colleges and how you can study and that we could train to be nurses and maybe some even to become doctors. He outlined jobs and what kind of life you'd have. He made it sound very attractive. We were told that work was plentiful. There was no doubt, at least in our minds, that we were needed. I felt that I was coming to a home away from home.

Source: adapted from M. Phillips and T. Phillips, *Windrush*, HarperCollins, 1998

ITEM B – DISILLUSIONED

When the immigrants encountered the reality of British life in the 1950s it was a salutary and dislocating experience. 'The unfriendliness of people, that surprised me ... it's like a shock wave, you know ... the unfriendliness, the coldness, the mask, like, is given for a smile. And that deep down there was this hatred that they have of you ... I was just horrified at things like that, I couldn't believe it.'

There was a shortage of housing – it was still common to see bomb sites. 'This man had done up a coal cellar to rent out ... every time you lit the gas, after about 10 or 15 minutes water started streaming down the walls. I cooked my first Christmas dinner in this country under a male umbrella ... put it up and then nothing would drop on me or in the pot.'

A woman at my church heard of my family's problems. 'She said, 'I'm sorry I can't really let you all a room. I really have to think of the children and the family.' Nobody in her street had taken in any coloureds yet so she was ashamed or afraid to let to coloureds.

In those days there would be signs outside accommodation saying 'No Coloureds'. When a black person could get a place it was usually overcrowded. One person interviewed described one place she lived where they cooked in the bathroom and had a board over the bath which was used as a table. Rents were very high, much higher than for white people.

Many took jobs for which they were overqualified. Like Mrs Phillips. In her home town she was manager of a local store, a businesswoman. But her first job in Britain was packing biscuits. The immigrants soon found that the only jobs open to them were 'white shit' jobs, menial work that white people wouldn't do.

Source: adapted from M. Phillips and T. Phillips, *Windrush*, HarperCollins, 1998; and R. Ramesh, 'They used to tell us "go back home"', *Independent*, 15 June 1998

WINDRUSH IMMIGRANTS

Source: Popperfoto

QUESTIONS

1 Why do you think that many of the *Windrush* immigrants were unprepared for the reception that they received in this country? Make reference to Item A in your answer.

2 What light does Item B throw on British attitudes to immigrants during the 1950s?

Activity 4: STEREOTYPES

ITEM A – IN THE MEDIA

John Motson is a television football commentator. Talking on Radio 5's *Sportsweek* programme he said: 'There are teams where you have got players who, from a distance, look almost identical. And, of course, with more black players coming into the game, they would not mind me saying that that can be very confusing.'

In response to criticism he said: 'Some of the black players would appreciate that it can be more difficult when a lot of black players are on the pitch. I am not a racist. It was not meant that way at all. I am just saying if there are five or six black players in the team and several of them are going for the ball it can be difficult. The comments were perfectly innocent.'

Source: adapted from *Understanding Race*, Harris Open Learning Pack

ITEM B (1) – NATURALLY GIFTED

BIOGRAPHY Colin Ray Jackson
Born: 18 February 1967 in Cardiff.
Event: Men's 110m hurdles.
Junior career: European silver, 1985. World gold, 1986.
World championships:
Outdoor gold medals in 1993 and 1999; silver medals in 1987 and 1997. Indoor gold medal 1999;
silver medals in 1989, 1997.
Olympics: Silver in 1988; seventh in 1992; fourth in 1996; fifth in 2000.
European Championships:
Outdoor gold medals in 1990, 1994, 1998 and 2002.
Indoor gold medals in 1989, 1994 and 2002 (also 60m gold in 1995).

Source: Empics

Commonwealth Games: Gold medals in 1990 and 1994; silver medals in 1986 and 2002.
World records: Outdoors, 110m hurdles, 12.1 seconds (1993). Indoors, 60m hurdles, 7.30 seconds (1994).

Source: Simon Turnbull, 'Man obsessed with time sees it run out on a golden career', *Independent on Sunday*, 9 March 2003

ITEM B (2) – WHITE MEN CAN'T JUMP

During the 1990s, the white English athlete Jonathan Edwards broke all known records for the triple jump. He jumped further than any other human being in history. This did not lead people to reconsider their mistaken assumption that black athletes have 'natural' advantages. Moreover, it did not lead to a public discussion of whether white athletes might have genes that confer advantage in jumping long distances. The truth is that it is foolish and misguided to ask whether blacks, whites or Asians possess a 'special gene' for running, jumping or swimming – it trivializes their achievements as it implies that their skills are in some way 'naturally' given rather than developed through hard work and dedication.

Source: adapted from Ben Carrington and Ian McDonald, 'Sport, racism and inequality', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 2, No. 3, February 2002, Philip Allan Updates

ITEM C – BLACK CRIME WAVE!

Total arrests by ethnic appearance for every 1,000 people in each ethnic group, by police force area, 1996/7

Police force area	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total population
Bedfordshire	35	149	69	9	39
Greater Manchester	44	172	53	51	46
Herefordshire	19	121	42	13	20
Lancashire	48	183	64	12	51
Leicestershire	28	184	28	35	29
Nottinghamshire	44	175	60	88	46
Thames Valley	35	208	101	17	39
West Midlands	46	183	77	100	54
West Yorkshire	47	184	65	9	51

Source: Tony Lawson, 'Official statistics, policing and ethnicity', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 11, No. 3, February 2002, Philip Allan Updates

QUESTIONS

1 How 'innocent' do you regard the comments made by John Motson in Item A?

2 With reference to Item B, consider the harmful effects of biologically based racial stereotyping in sport and beyond.

3 Attempt a sociological interpretation of the figures in Item C.

Activity 5: RACIAL HARRASSMENT

ITEM A – INTIMIDATION

The son is tall and heavily built. He lives with his younger brother, two sisters and his mother in a dingy council house in southeast London. They are what we call 'Asians', although all the children have been born over here and speak with local accents. To a gang of local kids, however, they are 'Pakis', whose lives they make a misery.

One day, the daughters arrived back from school to find a group of white youths hanging around who threw a few stones. The son barged out of the house and confronted them. 'I told them if it ever happened again they would get a slapping.' From here, things escalated. One youth taunted, 'We're gonna get someone to firebomb you.' Now a crowd hangs about the house constantly. If the son goes out, he is followed. He is frightened to leave his mother and sisters alone in case they are attacked. His mother is terrified that he will be stabbed like Stephen Lawrence or arrested and jailed for assault. So they stay in every night.

Source: adapted from B. Cathcart, 'It starts with name calling', *Independent*, 23 July 1998

ITEM B – EVERYDAY HURT

For people who live in the multi-racial parts of Britain, race is felt and understood at the daily level via everyday encounters in shops and on buses; that conversation that you had with an Indian, an African or an English person at work or in a bar, that girlfriend or boyfriend which you had and how it made you feel differently about their kind. That nasty look that the shopkeeper gave you – now was that race or not?

Source: adapted from Diran Adebayo, 'Young, gifted, black', *Observer*, 25 November 2001

ITEM C – BACKLASH

For Abdul, a 17-year-old Eastender, some things are obvious, like 'What do you do if there are police left, right and centre and you still get your head kicked in?' The answer – 'You get the bastards and scum who you know are doing it. You get them before they do it again and again – which is what they're doing now.'

Senior Bangladeshi leaders say, 'We're trying to avoid any kind of backlash with the young kids because you've got a pressure cooker which is just going to explode. The time's going to come when people say "Look, fuck this, but enough is enough. We're not here for white kids to practise their football kicks on, we're here to live. One day, the white kids are going to get it back twice as hard."'

Source: adapted from N. Mann, 'Fighting talk', *New Statesman and Society*, 18 February 1994

ITEM D – MAKING A STAND

Source: Javed A Jafferji/Impact

ITEM E – ROYAL MAIL BULLY BOYS

A black postal worker who killed himself because of racial bullying by managers was posthumously awarded £50,000 compensation yesterday.

The Royal Mail said some of its senior staff had treated Jermaine Lee in an 'utterly shameful' way and had contributed to his decision to commit suicide. Two managers have since been dismissed for gross misconduct and an independent investigation has made 50 recommendations.

It is the first time that a case of racial discrimination has been lodged posthumously. Although the case was settled out of court, lawyers said last night that it was likely to open the door to further actions.

The Royal Mail said in a statement that it was in no doubt that members of its staff were partly responsible for Mr Lee's suicide. 'It was with extreme shock, regret and sorrow that we found the actions of some employees contributed to Jermaine's decision to take his own life', the company said. 'The actions of some managers are regarded as utterly shameful by the Royal Mail.'

Source: Oliver Wright, '£50,000 award for black postman bullied to death', *The Times*, 18 July 2002

QUESTIONS

1 With some reference to Item A, describe the impact of racial harassment on people's lives.

2 Using material from Item B and any other relevant Item, briefly consider some of the problems involved in countering racism.

3 Why are younger members of the Bangladeshi community more likely to 'fight back' against harassment than were their parents? Make reference to Item C in your answer.

4 Which do you consider the more effective way of challenging racism: that described in Item C or that depicted in Item D? Explain the reasons for your answer.

5 Consider the damaging effects of racial bullying in the workplace, making some reference to Item E.

Activity 6: SLAVERY

ITEM A – FAMILY LIFE?

My mother and I were separated when I was but an infant. I was cared for by an old woman too feeble for field work. My father I did not know but it was rumoured that it was my master. I cannot recollect ever seeing my mother by light of day. Only at night would she come and lay down beside me, but long before I woke she was gone. Very little communication took place between us. Death soon ended what little we could have while she lived and with it her hardships and suffering. She died when I was 7 years old. I was not allowed to be present during her illness or at her death or burial. Never having enjoyed to any considerable extent her soothing presence, her tender watchful care, I received the tidings of her death with much the same emotions I would have probably felt for a stranger.

Source: adapted from H. A. Baker (ed.) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas, an American Slave*, Penguin Books, 1982, first published in 1845

ITEM B – LEARNING TO READ

At my lowest point I felt that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit but no ladder to get out. But when more cheerful I knew that I must help my fellows to their enlightenment. To this end I opened a little Sabbath school. When our masters found out they came and broke it up. They would rather we spent our time drinking and wrestling than behaving like intellectual, moral and accountable beings.

Source: adapted from H. A. Baker (ed.) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas, an American Slave*, Penguin Books, 1982, first published in 1845

ITEM C – LYNCH LAW

I began work for my master as an apprentice in a shipyard. Many of the other apprentices were white. They began to say that they felt degraded working with a nigger. They put on airs and said that niggers ought to be killed. On one occasion, a gang of them were not satisfied with taunts but started hitting me with sticks and hard hand spikes. After taking a severe beating I managed to regain my feet and hit out with a hand spike. All this was in front of the carpenters who cried out 'Kill the damned nigger, he struck a white man.' I ran for my life, as to strike a white man is death by lynch law and that is the law in the shipyard.

Source: adapted from H. A. Baker (ed.) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas, an American Slave*, Penguin Books, 1982, first published in 1845

ITEM D – DUMB INSOLENCE

One planter was convinced that slaves 'under the cloak of great stupidity' made 'dupes' of their masters. He felt that 'The most general defect of the character of the negro, is hypocrisy; and his hypocrisy frequently makes him pretend to more ignorance than he possesses ... This ... frequently serves as an apology for awkwardness and neglect of duty.'

Thus, slaves were described as 'slow', 'lazy', in want of 'pushing' and in need of constant supervision. Slaves bedevilled their masters by doing careless work and damaging property. One negro performed his task 'in a headlong careless manner, treading down with his feet or cutting with his hoe the plants he was supposed to cultivate'. One female apparently enjoyed a protracted pseudo-pregnancy during which she continued to reap increased rations as the reward for her pregnancy. She finally had to disappoint and received a flogging.

Source: adapted from K. M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution*, Eyre & Spottiswood, 1964

ITEM E – THE SLAVE-MASTER'S VIEW

Firstly, they must obey at all times with cheerfulness and alacrity. It impairs the happiness of a negro if he is allowed to cultivate an insubordinate temper. Unconditional submission is the only footing on which slavery should be placed. It is precisely similar to the attitude of a minor to his parent or a soldier to his general. The master is to govern absolutely.

Secondly, the bondsman slaves themselves must be implanted with a consciousness of personal inferiority. They have to know to keep their place, to understand that bondage is their natural state. They have to feel their African ancestry as tainted and that their colour is a badge of degradation. On the streets they must give way to even the most wretched of whites.

Thirdly, they must stand in awe of their master's enormous power. The Scriptures say 'He that knoweth his master's will and doeth it not shall be beaten with many stripes.'

Source: adapted from K. M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution*, Eyre & Spottiswood, 1964; and H. A. Baker (ed.) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas, an American Slave*, Penguin Books, 1982, first published in 1845

QUESTIONS

1 **In what ways did slavery undermine the institution of the family? How did this benefit slave owners? Refer to Item A in your answer.**

2 **What mechanisms of social control were used by the white population to control black slaves? Use the information in Items B, C and E in your answer.**

3 **What methods did black slaves use to try to circumvent total control by their masters? Make reference to Item D in your answer.**

4 **Many slave owners regarded themselves as good Christians. How did they justify their treatment of their slaves? Draw on Items D and E in your answer.**

5 **In the southern states of the USA slavery constituted a system of social stratification. Referring to all of the Items in this Activity, discuss the position of slaves in terms of wealth, status and power.**

Activity 7: AN ETHNIC UNDERCLASS

ITEM A – LOW INCOME

The economic activity of Bangladeshi and Pakistani men and women is the lowest of any ethnic group. They also earn the least when in work, with more than 80 per cent of households earning less than half the national average income, according to the latest figures.

Source: Vikram Dodd, 'Hard work at bottom of the job market', *Guardian*, 18 June 2002

ITEM B – BEING A MUSLIM

Mohammed Tabraze, 32, made redundant from a telecoms firm last month

'Once I'm in work there is very little problem, but when I'm sending CVs out and they see a Muslim name, the responses are not forthcoming.

'[In my last job] speaking to potential customers was a problem. A good 25 per cent were more reluctant to engage with me when they heard my name. When I anglicized it, I found it easier. A lot of Muslim people working in sales on high-value accounts shorten their names or anglicize them. Once I get my foot in the door, people realize I'm quite smart.'

Omer Ahmed, 34, trainee solicitor

'Anyone in the labour force knows that one of the best ways to get ahead is to socialize with colleagues. The implications of not going out are often huge. Impressions are formed with management and it affects you professionally. Friends of mine who work on the trading floor have difficulty even finding time to go to the toilet, let alone trying to take time out to pray during the day.'

Source: Vikram Dodd, 'Hard work at bottom of the job market', *Guardian*, 18 June 2002

ITEM C – UNEMPLOYMENT AND ETHNICITY

Unemployment rates: by ethnic group and age[1], 2001–02
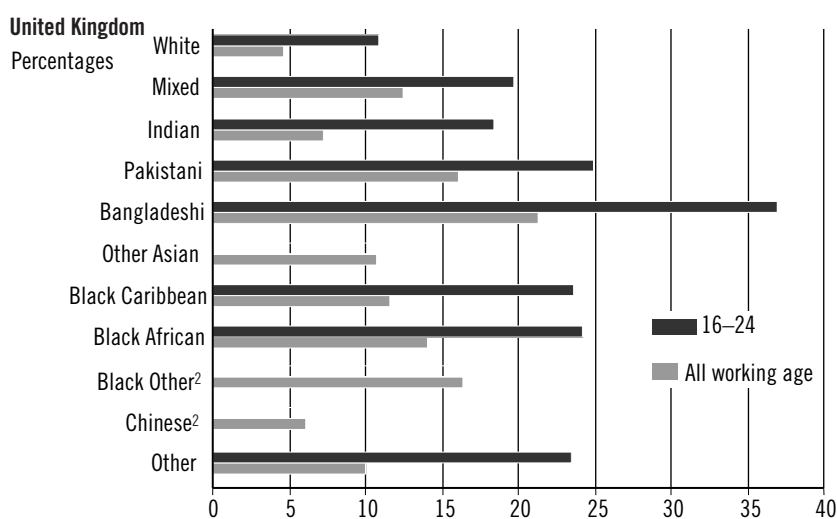
[1] Males up to the age of 64, females up to the age of 59.
[2] 16–24 year olds, sample size too small for reliable estimates.

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM D – ETHNICITY AND INCOME

Distribution of equivalised disposable income: by ethnic group of head of household, 2000/01

Great Britain   Percentages

	Bottom quintile	Second quintile	Third quintile	Fourth quintile	Top quintile	All (=100%) (millions)
Before deduction of housing costs						
White	19	20	20	21	20	52.7
Black Caribbean	24	22	20	17	18	0.7
Black Non-Caribbean	34	22	14	16	14	0.5
Indian	29	17	20	15	19	1.0
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	64	21	8	2	5	1.0
Other	30	17	14	16	23	1.0
After deduction of housing costs						
White	18	20	21	21	20	52.7
Black Caribbean	27	22	18	17	16	0.7
Black Non-Caribbean	46	16	11	12	14	0.5
Indian	26	23	19	14	18	1.0
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	60	24	9	3	4	1.0
Other	34	18	12	14	22	1.0

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

QUESTIONS

1 **How does Item B help to explain Item A? What other factors may be significant?**

2 **Briefly describe how unemployment rates in Great Britain vary between ethnic groups (Item C).**

3 **What information of sociological importance is contained in Item D?**

Activity 8: FINANCIAL SUCCESS

ITEM A – INDUSTRY

Source: Kent News and Pictures

The only surprise when the Patel brothers were voted UK Entrepreneurs of the Year for 2001 was that official recognition had taken so long. They arrived in Britain from Kenya in 1967 with nothing but ambition. Brought up by a hard-working mother, they washed dishes to get by and dreamed of riches. Starting with one chemist shop they have expanded into pharmaceuticals and are now worth around £254m.

Some Asians stress that the younger generation is successful because they not only inherited the traditional work ethos and the community network but also had the benefit of excellent education. 'We eat, sleep and dream work … it's in our bones; we just can't sit still. We're all driven by the urge to do well, to be recognized.'

Source: adapted from 'The Times Rich List 2002', *The Times*, 7 April 2002; and K. Marks, 'Young Asian millionaires prove hard work does pay', *Independent*, 22 March 1998

ITEM B – SUCCESS AND THE LAW

Nicola Williams has a presence and enviable gravitas. She stands tall with a slight aristocratic hauteur, not unpleasant but nevertheless there, projecting impeccable manners and confidence. As a barrister, with this demeanour and obvious intelligence, Williams could amble to the top even though she is a woman and black.

Although she appears to have been born into this role, it has been a long hard struggle. At her London comprehensive school, to be properly black you had to be cool, rebellious and without ambition. Instead, Williams was obsessed with books, dreaming big dreams. 'My teachers didn't see this of course', she laughs. The careers adviser advised her to think within her means and saw her as a future sales girl.

Williams has had to face rejection from white and black clients because she is black. 'I still get taken for the client, the receptionist, anybody but the barrister. I have to make sure I never slip up, because then we somehow represent an entire race.'

Source: adapted from Y. Alibha-Brown, 'Breaking the colour bar', *Guardian*, 7 April 1998

ITEM C – EDUCATION

Dr Spinder Dhaliwal … now a senior lecturer in business … came here as a child from India and moved to Dunstable with her parents and three sisters, where a small grocery shop was duly set up. They lived upstairs and the parents worked night and day. There was no playtime, no teenage madness, not much going out.

And as in so many Asian families, higher education was also non-negotiable. 'My dad insisted on us going to university. But I was still expected to go and help the business during my holidays and sometimes at the weekends.'

Source: from Y. Alibhai-Brown, 'Secret superwomen', *Independent*, 23 March 1998

ITEM D – ROLE MODELS

When people look at Ken George they see an athlete, an actor, maybe a model. When he says he is a teacher they assume he teaches physical education. What never occurs to them is that he is a scientist. It's obvious why – scientists are rarely black. Next week George is addressing a conference on the lack of black people in science, engineering and technology. The conference marks the launch of a campaign in Birmingham entitled 'Respect', to raise awareness of this issue and to provide black schoolchildren with positive images of black people working in science and technology. George, along with other professionals, is acting as a mentor for black students in the Birmingham area, raising their aspirations towards technical careers. 'If blacks who are currently working in science and technology become more visible, their numbers will snowball', says George. 'All it takes is to show something is possible', he says.

Source: adapted from M. Brooks, 'Filling the black hole', *Guardian*, 24 September 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **Using Items A and C, discuss what aspects of their culture appear to contribute to Asians' economic success.**

2 **In what respect do Items B and D challenge racist stereotypes?**

3 **'All it takes is to show something is possible' (Item D). How far do you agree with this statement?**

4 **Making reference to Item B, discuss the negative reactions that some successful blacks may experience from their own communities.**

Activity 9: RIOTS AND DEPRIVATION

ITEM A – BRADFORD: SUMMER 2001

More than 150 police were injured during clashes with Asian youths on Saturday night. The violence was sparked by an attack on a young Asian by white drunks. The tinderbox atmosphere created by rumours of a National Front rally – which never materialized – was ignited by the incident, with young Asian youths pouring onto the streets to 'defend' their community. Their aggression was described by former Lord Mayor Mohammed Ajeeb as the city's greatest challenge. He said, 'They have a very strong sense of insecurity, desperation and frustration.'

Source: adapted from Martin Wainwright, 'Riot-torn city voices dismay at "lawless idiots"', *Guardian*, 10 July 2001

ITEM B – DEPRIVATION

Perhaps the biggest obstacle is unemployment. It is no coincidence that last year's riots hit the poor mill towns of the North, and Bradford is one of the poorest. Its jobless rate is 8.2 per cent, the worst in Yorkshire and far above the national average. It is a problem that affects both poor white and Asian communities, as do the twin evils of drugs and spiralling crime.

But the old myth of favouritism for Asians has created a festering resentment on poor white estates, while many Asians feel safe only in their own parts of town. No wonder, perhaps, that a recent survey, entitled 'Thwarted Dreams', found that more than half of Bradford's youth believed they would never achieve their goals in life.

Source: Paul Harris, 'Riot city reaches boiling point', *Observer*, 30 June 2002

ITEM C – IT'S GETTING WORSE!

A report into Bradford's race relations released in 2001 suggests that relations between different cultural communities are deteriorating. The authors believe that there are signs that communities are fragmenting along racial, cultural and faith lines. Segregation in schools is seen as one indicator of this trend. One in four primary schools in Bradford is more than 70 per cent Asian, while half are totally white. The report concludes that people's attitudes appear to be hardening and intolerance growing.

Prime Minister Blair provides an alternative interpretation of the Bradford disturbances. He describes them as 'thuggery'.

Source: adapted from Paul Harris, 'Riot city reaches boiling point', *Observer*, 30 June 2002; and Vikram Dodd, 'Race divisions highlighted', *Guardian*, 10 July 2001

ITEM D – HAVING A SAY

Riot has classically been a collective weapon of the politically powerless – to get those with power and wealth to share a little more or to take notice.

Source: Jerry White, 'The summer of riots of 1919', *New Society*, 13 August 1981

ITEM E – CLAIRE ALEXANDER

'Race' has become so completely synonymous with ideas of moral and social decline as to become invisible; an absent-presence, the power of which is so much assumed that it no longer needs to be overtly articulated. The silent racialization of images of urbanization, poverty and particularly of 'problem' youth, acts as an unquestioning cause and sufficient explanation – a necessary marker of contemporary life and more so of contemporary breakdown ... – 'race' has become a substitute for analysis.

Source: Claire Alexander, *The Asian Gang*, Berg, 2000

ITEM F – BRADFORD: SUMMER 2001
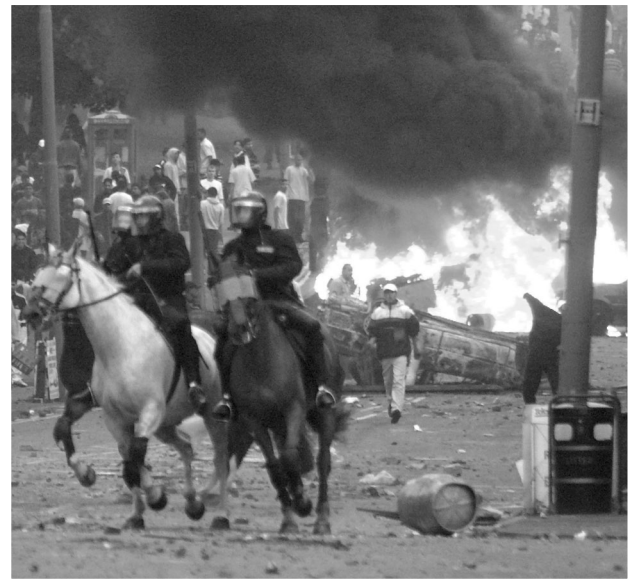
Source: Andrew Wiard

ITEM G – SELF-ESTEEM

When stripped of prospects and diversions, we rely for self-esteem on the glory of our past.

Source: Lesley White, 'Britain's new ethnic minority', *Sunday Times Magazine*, 13 January 2002

QUESTIONS

1 **To what extent can the riots in Bradford be described as 'thuggery'? Refer to whichever Items throw light on this question.**

2 **Briefly say what you think the author of Item E means when she says 'race' has become a substitute for analysis.**

3 **After referring to Items C, F and G, consider why some people may be attracted to right-wing groups like the BNP (British National Party).**

Chapter 3: RACE, ETHNICITY AND NATIONALITY – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: RACE, ETHNICITY AND NATIONALITY

Teacher's note

This activity explores the relationship between race and culture. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 3, pp. 152–8.

1 Many people of mixed race are happy to identify with both parents, and do not want to deny a part of themselves. They benefit from having access to two cultural traditions, and during their upbringing they will have learned about the beliefs and prejudices held by different ethnic groups. As a result, they are uniquely placed to form a bridge between these ethnic groups, which could have a positive effect on race relations in the future.

2 Some people hold racist views. Some white people may believe that black people are inferior and want to have as little as possible to do with them. Some black people object to mixed marriages. Since they are a minority, they may fear that they will be 'swallowed up' into white society and that their own culture will gradually be lost. In the fight against racism they may think that 'marrying out' is weakening the strength of the community as a whole. Some black women are suspicious of white men's motives in forming relationships with them. There may be a feeling that for a black person a white partner represents a badge of success. Clearly, this suggestion is offensive to black people. Critics of interracial marriages may believe that these marriages create problems for the children, who, being neither black nor white, have no clear identity.

3 Since blacks generally have lower status in British society than white people, mixed-race people may not wish to identify with a group that is discriminated against. Children may also feel culturally different from, for example, Afro-Caribbean blacks as they have different life experiences. They may also feel that if they call themselves black then their white parent will feel hurt and rejected. However, some children may feel under pressure from the black community to declare themselves as black in order to show solidarity with a disadvantaged minority.

4 Most people would agree that we live in a racist society. For this reason, people of mixed blood or dark skin may be referred to as black by others, and discriminated against. Adopting the label 'black' becomes a way of expressing a common experience of racism and marginalization in society, and also gives people access to the support of the black community, which will in turn help them to deal with racism.

5 *Key points:*
- Black children adopted by white parents may grow up to think that they have been denied their cultural heritage.
- Black children are likely to experience racism. For example, in Item B both Nuna and Hannah experienced racist bullying at school. White parents may not be aware of the seriousness of the problems their child is facing, and may be ill-equipped to deal with the situation.
- Children may find that they are also rejected by the black community – for being 'black on the outside and white on the inside'. As a result they may feel that they lack a clear identity.

ACTIVITY 2: NEWCOMERS

Teacher's note

This activity raises some of the issues concerning the debate on asylum seekers. It may be useful to students to consider Chapter 3, pp. 159–70.

1 By using the term 'swamped' we are immediately invited to take a negative view of immigrants. In Item A, it is argued that rather than newcomers having a negative impact they have a very positive economic impact. They are often young and ambitious and, as the article argues, eager to make a success of their lives. They may be willing to do unpleasant jobs and generally boost the economy by their efforts. Their youthfulness may also be beneficial in economic terms, at least in the short term, since we have a rapidly ageing population

A fear of being swamped may also have a good deal to do with people's attitudes. The influx of people from different cultures has been seen by some as posing a threat to the indigenous culture and way of life. This ignores the fact that cultures are not static but are constantly changing due to all sorts of influences from within and without. If the cultures of ethnic minorities are not welcomed or valued for their richness and diversity, then the people who carry them will be seen as intruders.

2 *Key points:*
- It can be argued that in the twenty-first century racism is as likely to express itself as a prejudice against different ethnic groups as a prejudice against people of different skin colour. In recent years we have seen episodes of 'ethnic cleansing' in the Balkans, while the growth of Islamophobia in certain parts of the world following the events of 11 September 2001 has been widely reported. In Item B we see a woman from an ethnic minority background begging. The photograph encourages negative impressions by implying that newcomers to the country are a drain on society, thus encouraging racist feelings.
- In Item C, the Mori poll shows that the public greatly overestimate the financial support given to asylum seekers. This may reflect a popular prejudice against them. Moreover, the low level of financial support offered to them and their exclusion from the workplace might be seen as symptomatic of institutional racism.
- Negative attitudes towards asylum seekers may reflect cultural absolutism. We may imagine incoming ethnic groups to be quite different from ourselves, ignoring the overlap between cultures as well as their changing nature over time. An emphasis on cultural 'difference' rather than cultural 'similarity' may itself reflect racist attitudes.
- Britain has in the past been proud of its international reputation of offering safe haven to refugees genuinely in fear of their lives. Many of the asylum seekers come from countries where they are being persecuted. Some claims may be bogus, the asylum seekers migrating for economic reasons. However, if Item A's conclusions are valid, whatever their motives for entry, they may have a positive influence on Britain in the longer term.
- Item D shows an example of the most unpleasant form of racism. People who are justifiably in Britain, at least temporarily, are being harassed and criminal offences committed against them. No person should have to live with such fear and inhumanity.
- It is important to remember that some asylum seekers have entered the country illegally. If this is the case then legal and humane measures taken against them are justified and not the result of racism. Clearly, if they 'jump the queue' legitimate applicants will have less chance of early entry. Moreover, the criminal activities of the few will tend to reflect badly on all asylum seekers, making it all the more difficult for them to enter Britain and to integrate successfully into the community.

ACTIVITY 3: SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS

Teacher's note

This activity is best tackled after Activity 2. It continues the discussion of immigration, focusing on immigration from the West Indies during the 1950s. Students may look at Chapter 3, pp. 159–70, for appropriate reading.

1 During the 1950s, politicians such as Enoch Powell and employers such as London Transport went out to the West Indies to encourage people to come to Britain to fill labour shortages. In some cases employers even paid the fares to allow workers to get to Britain. As Item A highlights, the West Indians were led to feel that they were needed, that they were helping the 'motherland' and that a better life and better opportunities awaited them. Promises from politicians and employers, advertising campaigns and the 'Gold Rush' mentality all built expectations among the immigrants. When they arrived, the culture shock must have been extreme. They had to contend with a radically different climate and poor housing and, instead of the expected welcome and friendliness of the British people, they met hostility.

2 *Key points:*
- When the immigrants from the West Indies arrived in Britain, they appear to have been met with coldness and, in some areas, outright hostility. This

coldness may, in part, have reflected differences between British and Caribbean culture. The former traditionally values a degree of reserve, while the latter tends to place a higher value on expansive behaviour. Also, many West Indian immigrants moved from rural village settings where they had strong ties with neighbours and kin, to cities with less clearly defined communities. This may have made them feel unwelcome and isolated, at least until they were able to establish their own communities.

· However, these factors on their own are far from sufficient to explain the degree of hostility. It seems clear that many British people had strong racist feelings which they felt free to express – for example, Item B shows widespread direct and indirect racial discrimination in the housing market.

· Item B also highlights that many West Indians were disappointed with the employment opportunities in Britain. They arrived with high expectations of bettering themselves, but were seen by employers and fellow workers as a reserve pool of labour which could be used to fill jobs that no one else would take. Again, this demonstrates that, at the time, many British people held racist attitudes and viewed black immigrants as a resource to be exploited.

ACTIVITY 4: STEREOTYPES

Teacher's note

In this activity, racial stereotypes are explored and aspects of racism are discussed. Appropriate reading can be found in Chapter 3, pp. 184–94.

1 *Key points:*
· John Motson appears to believe that all black players look the same. He 'sees' skin colour before he sees other physical characteristics; for example, height. This could be because he considers 'racial' characteristics especially important, which may indicate prejudice against some 'races'.

· By considering all black players as looking the same, John Motson is failing to treat the footballers as individuals. They are just members of a 'racial' group. This is insulting, as it denies black players their individuality.

· John Motson seems to think that black players should sympathize with his 'difficulty'. He appears genuinely surprised that some people have complained about his comments. He protests that he is not a racist, but it could be argued that his observations indicate that that is exactly what he is. It is difficult to imagine that given a similar situation where a group of white players are grouped together he would say that he found it difficult to tell them apart. Perhaps the most offensive thing about his comments is that, after criticism, he still refuses to recognize that such comments broadcast to many homes cannot be regarded as harmless, but rather as likely to reinforce stereotypes and prejudice.

2 *Key points:*
· Item B highlights the popularly held stereotype that black men are 'naturally' athletic. Many of the world's best boxers, runners and so on have been black. But as the Item points out, many have also been white. In order to become successful in sport people must train hard for many years. By believing that success is somehow in-built, this rather detracts from their sporting achievements.

· By perpetuating the view that there are important biological differences between races, it is easy to argue that certain groups are 'naturally' less good at some activities. For example, in the past some psychologists and sociologists argued that black people were on average likely to be less intelligent than white or oriental peoples. A belief in this difference may have led some teachers to expect black children to be less successful academically and a tendency to encourage them into aiming lower than they might. Poor achievement might then become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

· Biologically based racial stereotyping, therefore, can be harmful to all races. White people who wish to pursue careers in areas of music seen as 'black' (for example, soul or reggae), may find themselves at a disadvantage. Conversely, black people aiming for a career in the Foreign Office may meet with obstacles and prejudice.

3 *Key points:*
· The figures show that the police are arresting a higher proportion of people from minority ethnic groups than white people in most police forces. The trend is especially pronounced with black people, who are considerably more likely to be arrested than whites, especially in the Thames Valley. Asians are also more likely to be arrested in every area but Leicestershire, where the proportions are the same.

· As sociologists we must try to determine what this means. One explanation might be that these figures are an expression of racism

within the police. Through their acceptance of cultural stereotypes and possibly as a result of superficial analysis of these types of figures, the police may be more likely to suspect black people of crime, search their premises and arrest them. Social constructionists have drawn our attention to the way in which statistics may be viewed as socially produced rather than as social facts. Any analysis of figures should consider 'how come' some people end up in statistics while others do not. We might also explain the higher arrest rate of Asians in this light. Thirty years ago, figures of this sort would have shown very low levels of arrest for Asians. Now they are higher than for whites. This could be interpreted as the result of changing stereotypes about Asians. They were once regarded as very hard working and law abiding, but more recently – especially with the occurrence of episodes of civil unrest – they are more likely to be seen as 'criminal types'. One might expect more recent figures to reflect this stereotype to an increasing extent, following the events of 11 September 2001 and the riots in Bradford and Burnley in 2002.

· Sociologists who are more committed to a positivistic type of approach to sociology might see the figures as reflecting true differences in offences between groups. Higher black levels of offending could be seen as reflecting structural obstacles to the advancement of blacks through legitimate channels. For example, they may be more likely to come from very poor backgrounds, have dropped out of school early and be handicapped by employer prejudice. Similar sorts of explanation could be applied to the Asian group. Problems of poverty, poor education, prejudice and exclusion may apply to some, although not all, Asian groups.

· Cultural factors may also help to explain differences in arrest rates. Young black men may express their masculine identity in such a way as to bring them into contact with the police. For example, they may spend more time on the streets with peer groups. They may engage in acts of bravado or have a different attitude to drugs use.

· It is notable that different police forces have very different rates of arrest for the various ethnic groups. It seems unlikely that this merely expresses different levels of racism among the police, but it may express different cultural and structural pressures on groups. For example, could Asians have a low arrest rate in Leicestershire because the Asians living there are particularly successful? Is the high rate of arrests for both blacks and Asians in the Thames Valley a reflection of high levels of exclusion in this locality? We must remember that as sociologists we cannot take figures at face value, but must consider what factors lie behind them.

ACTIVITY 5: RACIAL HARASSMENT

Teacher's note

This activity continues the exploration of aspects of racism. It centres on the problem of racial harassment. It would be particularly useful for students to refer to Chapter 3, pp. 184–94.

1 The family described in Item A live in constant fear, and have been forced to adopt a fortress mentality. They, and many others like them, are effectively excluded from society. They may feel that racism is at such a pitch that they have little chance of finding employment. The children attending school may be subject to derision and abuse. Their health may suffer due to the continual strain that they live under. If such behaviour continues unchallenged, then their problems will impact not just on their own lives but also on society in general. These excluded ethnic minority members will become unemployable, unhealthy and resentful. Rather than contributing to society as they wish to do, they may come to be seen as 'problems'.

2 *Key points:*
· There is evidence that racism is widespread, both in society generally and among the police, as shown by the McPherson report. Police racism may mean that some racist attacks are ignored. It may also mean that behaviour is interpreted in such a way as to lay blame on the victim. For instance, in Item A the mother is terrified that if her son tries to protect himself he will be arrested for assault. In such a climate many victims of racism may feel that it is pointless to report it.

· In many cases the police may be powerless to bring the offenders to justice. Many racial attacks are committed anonymously, perhaps by gangs or by arsonists. When the police question members of the community they may be met by a wall of silence, either because of racism within the community or because people are genuinely frightened for their own safety.

· In some cases the victims may think that if they ignore initial incidents the offenders will get bored and leave them alone. Or they may be so terrified that they believe that making a complaint to the police will provoke even more victimization.

- Some victims of racial harassment may try to improve their situation by asking the local authority to rehouse them – but this may just move the problem to another area.
- Item B shows that racism may not always be obvious or explicit. In these circumstances, it is impossible to complain of 'racism' because there is no evidence. The general feelings of being uncomfortable are not sufficient to make a complaint to the police, but may be sufficient to adversely affect people's lifestyles.

3 Younger members of the Bangladeshi community have been born and brought up in Britain, and will be familiar with British institutions and comfortable with the language. They will feel that they are full and equal citizens and have equal rights to protection. As a result, they may be more willing to complain to the police or the press, or to take the law into their own hands. Their parents, many of whom were first-generation immigrants, may have been more ready to accept a degree of hostility as the price they must pay for citizenship. There is also a growing awareness in the media of the problem of harassment, and this may make Bangladeshi youth more confident that their complaints are legitimate and that they have a right to be heard.

4 *Key points:*
- The Bangladeshi youth in Item C may consider that responding to violence with violence will be effective, as their constant presence on the streets will mean that they can respond rapidly to any racial incident. This could serve to give them back a sense of pride and dispel a 'victim' mentality. On the other hand, it could lead to a backlash. Sympathy from whites living in the area could dissolve into fear and distrust. Also, the perpetrators are likely to come into conflict with the police if their activities break the law. Moreover, there may be a counter-response from white vigilante groups, which would lead to an even greater level of violence and further deterioration in race relations.
- Demonstrations, on the other hand, can be a useful weapon against racism. They may encourage right-minded people from all ethnic groups to come together and work towards a common goal. They also attract publicity, which may further swell the ranks of their supporters. Their longer-term impact may be limited unless they lead on to reform and practical actions. This is especially true if people lose interest and feel that they have made a sufficient contribution to race relations simply by attending the demonstrations.

5 *Key points:*
- Racial bullying in any situation is deeply disturbing. In the workplace the object of the bullies will have no means of escape. Most people cannot leave a job easily, as they rely on their income to pay their mortgage and so on. They must therefore face the bullies every day or feign sickness, itself impossible to do in the longer term. In this Item, the bullies are members of the senior staff and therefore have power over their victim. This makes the report particularly disturbing, as they may be in the position to give the victim the most unpleasant jobs. Moreover, they may be responsible for supplying references, making it impossible for the victim to fight back, unless he or she is going to blight their chances of obtaining alternative employment.
- An atmosphere of bullying in a workplace is damaging to all the individuals working there. If senior managers are racial bullies, this may seem to give permission to others to act in a similar way. Those workmates of Mr Lee who found his treatment obnoxious may have felt powerless, guilty and demoralized to see it continuing while feeling unable to intervene on Mr Lee's behalf.
- Reports or experiences of racism by minority groups may mean that minorities come to think of themselves as victims and opt out of contact with the wider society. They may feel that it is safer to rely on social security rather than face a potentially hostile work environment. This will only exacerbate their exclusion from society and the poverty to which some ethnic minorities are prone.

ACTIVITY 6: SLAVERY

Teacher's note

This activity looks at slavery in the southern United States. Its study will help students to understand the main features and dimensions of racial stratification. There is no specific reading for this activity.

1 *Key points:*
- In Item A, Douglas seems hardly to have been a member of a family at all – he experienced no normal family life of shared meals, shared home and shared friends. Added to this there is the uncertainty of his birth. If he was indeed the child of the 'master' then his conception may have been forced upon his mother. A father might normally be expected to guide and protect a child as well as acting as an authority figure. To have a father to whom he was 'property' and considered a social inferior would have been deeply damaging to the child's self-esteem.
- By discouraging normal family ties and relationships, the slave owner would have furthered his control of his slave population, since strong kinship ties might have provided the basis for complaint or rebellion. Also, a slave owner would frequently want to sell a slave away from his or her family – even as children. Strong emotional bonds would lead to slaves being more likely to resist their removal by running away, causing their owner inconvenience and expense in recapturing them. Slave owners may have justified their discouragement of close personal ties between slaves as a kindness to them in the long run, by saving them from the heartache of separation.

2 *Key points:*
- Slave owners attempted to create willing compliance among slaves by indoctrinating them with a view of their natural inferiority. When slaves were exposed to Christian religion their owners would make sure that they were read those parts of the scriptures that would encourage them to believe that it was God's will for them to 'know their place'.
- Slave owners were against slaves learning to read. They believed that reading would make slaves question their position in society and become discontented. It would also give them practical advantages – for example, being able to communicate in writing with other slaves, and being able to read maps and signposts if they escaped. They would also be able to read anti-slavery publications, newspapers and posters. Slave owners were aware that mass uprising was a potential danger.
- In some cases the white population would resort to force, as in Item C. When Douglas retaliates by striking back, he has to 'run for his life' as he knows that the white men could kill him with no fear of punishment.

3 Some tried to challenge their master's authority by learning to read (see above) or by running away. As Item D points out, others used what we today would call 'dumb insolence' – giving the appearance of great stupidity as a cloak to sabotaging the work they were engaged on. Further, it would mean that they would not be trusted to do more valuable skilled work. Force of circumstance may have made developing a hypocritical manner essential to survival. Since masters and overseers would often punish at will, a slave would be wise to be deferential to their faces while behaving quite otherwise behind their backs. The planter referred to in the Item also claims that negroes are lazy. Again, this may have been partly a covert form of opposition to the system and partly for self-protection. Many slaves were worked almost to death, and would need to snatch any chance of some respite from their labour. The Item also describes the ploy of the woman who pretended to be pregnant, thus gaining extra food for a time – for those on a near-starvation diet this may well have been worth the beating when the ruse was discovered.

4 *Key points:*
- At the time there was a widely held belief that there were 'natural' differences between the 'races'. This belief was used to justify cruelty. Slaves were beaten because they were believed to be 'slow and lazy'. If people are believed to be inferior then it is easier to subject them to hard work, poor housing and inadequate food and to ignore their feelings and sensitivities.
- Slaves were also regarded as childlike and in need of stern guidance. If they were punished, it was for their own good. Those slaveholders who were also Christians might additionally justify their treatment of the slaves by calling on selective quotations from the Bible, as shown in Item E.
- To what extent slave owners truly believed in the justice of their cause and to what extent they were motivated by self-interest we have no way of knowing.

5 *Key points:*
- Black slaves were unable to accumulate wealth on their own behalf, and were generally poorer than the poorest class of white people. Moreover, they themselves were property to be bought and sold on the whim of their master. Their only protection was their intrinsic worth as property, since if they were overworked, beaten and underfed to such an extent that they were unable to work, then their capital value to their master would be compromised.
- The status of the slave was determined by birth. Their African ancestry meant that they were treated as less than fully human. The brutalization of the slave ships and plantations would have made it difficult for any slave to maintain a sense of their own worth.

- The black slave also had very little power. They were unable to prevent themselves being sold into slavery from Africa and they were powerless to resist being sold to the highest bidder in the United States. Fear of the lash meant that they must work and, in the case of women, accept the sexual advances of the master or his sons.
- There was little that slaves could do to better themselves. In most cases, they had to accept a harsh life and poor health, followed by early death.

ACTIVITY 7: AN ETHNIC UNDERCLASS

Teacher's note

In this activity we deal with the question of whether or not some members of ethnic minorities find themselves as part of an underclass. Chapter 3, pp. 194–8, provides relevant reading.

1 *Key points:*
- Item B is suggestive that there is a prejudice against Muslims in Britain. Edward Said has written about the long history of Islamaphobia. With the events of 11 September 2001, suspicion and distrust of Muslims have become even greater. This prejudice may help to account for the low rates of employment among Bangladeshis and Pakistanis who are, of course, largely Muslim.
- Mohammed in Item B concludes: 'once I get my foot in the door people realize I'm quite smart'. People's stereotypes may not only make them feel distrustful of Muslims, but they may also assume that Muslims are 'not too smart'. This may throw some light on why even when in work their wage levels are relatively low – they may be consistently judged as not competent enough to warrant promotion.
- Item B gives us some insight into how difficult it must be for some Muslims to work in occupations that require informal contacts through socializing together, perhaps in the pub after work. These sorts of contacts might be against Muslim religious teaching. Moreover, as the Item states, it is impossible for Muslims to perform religious practices while at work – again making a dislocation between their religious beliefs and the demands of the workplace. These sorts of factors may further contribute to poor levels of employment and difficulty in obtaining those occupations or levels of employment where greater informal commitment is expected.

2 *Key points:*
- The unemployment rate for whites is lower than for other ethnic groups.
- The group most likely to be unemployed is the Bangladeshi group, followed by the Pakistanis.
- Closely following the Bangladeshi are the Black Africans and Black Caribbeans.
- When considering unemployment rates we must be aware of the wide difference between different ethnic minorities. Chinese and Indian people, for example, do nearly as well as whites.
- Racism may help to account for these figures, although other factors such as level of educational attainment may be important. It could be that feelings of Islamaphobia discussed earlier will act as a brake on efforts by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis to improve their positions.

3 *Key points:*
- Item D gives us information about the income levels of different ethnic groups.
- The white population are fairly equally distributed in the population within the different income bands.
- This is not the case with other ethnic groups. For example, Pakistani/Bangladeshi are heavily over-represented in the bottom quartile and under-represented in the top two quartiles.
- Black non-Caribbeans are also weighted towards the bottom in income distribution, although to a much lesser extent than the Pakistani/Bangladeshi.
- Income is an important inequality between people. As will be argued elsewhere (see Chapter 4), low income adversely affects many aspects of people's lives, from their life expectancy to their children's education. As such, patterns of income inequality are always of interest to the sociologist.

ACTIVITY 8: FINANCIAL SUCCESS

Teacher's note

This activity highlights blacks and Asians who have been upwardly mobile in the British class system. Their existence contradicts prevailing stereotypes of black people. There is no specific reading for this activity.

1 *Key points:*
- Both Items show that the Asian families valued hard work and enterprise. The Patel brothers initially managed on little money but were willing to take risks so that their business would grow.
- In both Items we see the importance of the family. The Patels were brothers and have obviously cooperated all their adult lives. Similarly, in Item C, all the family members worked together towards the success of the grocery business.
- As immigrants to Britain, the Patels may have felt particularly keen to prove themselves and be successful.
- The stress laid on education in Item C means that the younger people are likely to take advantage of educational opportunities and become skilled and well-qualified members of the community.

2 The law and science are both areas where there are relatively few Afro-Caribbean people. It is suggested in Item D that we tend to associate black people with activities such as athletics and the performing arts. To many people, the popular image of scientists is that they are white and male. As a black man, George does not conform to the usual stereotype of a scientist.

In the same way, we might not immediately assume that a young black woman would be a barrister. Nicola Williams (Item B) clearly had to fight against the stereotypes held by teachers and career officers (presumably white), and even her black peers at school.

3 *Key points:*
- Various structural factors may make entry into some fields difficult. Many blacks come from economically disadvantaged households and receive poor education. They must also overcome racism, both within the community and among employers. They may all too easily become discouraged and abandon their aspirations when faced with these hurdles.
- However, as young black people number more prominently among the successful, prevailing stereotypes are challenged. By entering the professions and succeeding, they undermine racist prejudices. In turn, this will help to convince white people that racial discrimination is unjustifiable and leads to an enormous waste of talent. In the long run, this benefits all black people.

4 In Item B, Nicola Williams goes against the stereotype – 'cool, rebellious and without ambition' – held by her black peers. Successful blacks may encounter hostility, partly through envy, but also because other blacks may fear that the solidarity of the black community is being weakened by their success. Professional blacks who have overcome racism to reach their positions may feel that others can do the same. They may even feel that racism no longer exists. If the success of a minority of black people is taken as evidence that racism no longer exists then this will make life all the more difficult for other black people.

ACTIVITY 9: RIOTS AND DEPRIVATION

Teacher's note

This item discusses some of the issues arising from the Bradford riots in the summer of 2001. There is no specific reading for this activity.

1 *Key points:*
- From one viewpoint the Bradford disturbances represented thuggery. As we can see in Items A and F there was violence, burning and a general destruction of the area in which the rioters lived.
- However, if we look further we can see the violence as a response to insecurity. It started after an attack on an Asian, and in an atmosphere of fear of an impending National Front rally. As Item A points out, some rioters may have felt that they were defending their community. The educational segregation between communities (Item C) may make suspicion and distrust worse, as indeed may have the events of 11 September 2001.
- The riots could also be seen as a response to urban deprivation. As Item B points out, there are high levels of unemployment and urban decay. Both Asian and white people living in such areas are likely to feel dispirited and frustrated – as Item B points out, many young people feel

that they will never realize their ambitions. The riots may have represented a general protest against their deprived housing and social circumstances.

· Item D reminds us that historically riots have been used by many groups to highlight deprivation. As a political weapon they may remind the powerful that they cannot completely ignore or ride roughshod over the ambitions of the powerless. These Asian young men may have felt that they have no legitimate political voice. A Labour government may have been expected to alleviate poverty and social exclusion among all marginalized groups. Certainly at the present time this has not so far been achieved. Black, white and Asian communities may feel in competition with each other for what government support is available, further aggravating divisions.

2 In this Item, Alexander seems to be suggesting that we have come to equate non-white people with social problems. She argues that it is taken for granted that these groups are in social and moral decline. Particularly in the case of Asian youths, they have become something of modern-day folk-devils. The consequences of stereotyping minorities as 'problem' people mean that we are failing to consider the very real problems that impinge on their lives and shape their futures – for example, the high rate of unemployment among Bangladeshi communities.

3 *Key points:*

· White people living in deprived areas of towns like Oldham and Bradford may feel under some of the same sorts of pressures as the rioting Asians, discussed earlier. They will tend to live in poor housing, experience high rates of unemployment and have few opportunities for social mobility. They may feel frustrated by their situation and channel this into aggression and hostility towards minority groups. (This process is sometimes described as the frustration–aggression model of prejudice.) Belittling ethnic minorities may serve to boost their own social standing in comparison.

· Segregation in schools and in residential areas may facilitate insular feeling on both sides. The communities may feel in competition with each other for regeneration grants from the government and local employment. It is all too easy to blame the 'out group' if things don't go according to plan. Right-wing political parties may encourage this blame culture, implying that if some groups were repatriated to their parents' homelands the problems in the country would be largely solved. In other words, scapegoating of certain groups may be encouraged by far-right parties whose policies appear to provide a solution to problems.

· Media pictures of rioting Asians, and pictures of white people who have been attacked by Asians, further demonizes Asian groups. Particularly since 11 September 2001, some Islamic people have complained that they are automatically suspected of terrorism or al Qaeda sympathies. After violence and atrocities on innocent people, right-wing parties may draw support from both the fearful and those intent on revenge.

· Socially excluded white people may feel that right-wing parties give them a legitimate political voice in a way that the Labour Party no longer does. The BNP, for example, targets those people who feel ignored and marginalized. They have recently had considerable success in local elections in Burnley, Lancashire. The BNP stresses its 'Britishness' and 'patriotism' and may in this way attempt to raise feelings of self-esteem and belonging among its members. Similarly, Item H draws our attention to the way in which by associating themselves with the past, the Britain of empire and cricket on the green, the marginal may experience reflected glory and prestige. (It may be that a similar argument could be advanced to help explain the growth of Islamic fundamentalism among Asian youth.)

· We must not forget that there may also be those with personal reasons for joining right-wing parties. They may have psychological problems and find that groups like the National Front appeal to a latent need for hierarchy and toughness. Alternatively, they may just go along to meetings because their friends are there, without having any real convictions themselves.

POVERTY AND
SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Activity 1: ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE POVERTY

ITEM A – HUNGER

Ma walked to the corner and looked down at the man. He was about 50, his whiskery face gaunt and his open eyes vague and staring. The boy stood beside him. 'Your pa?' Ma asked. 'Yeah! Says he wasn' hungry or he just et. Give me the food. Now he's too weak. Can't hardly move. Las' night I wen' an' bust a winda an' stoled some bread. Made him chew 'er down. But he puked it all up an' then he was weaker. Got to have soup or milk. You folks got money to git milk?'

'He's dyin', I tell you! He's starvin' to death.'

Source: J. Steinbeck, *The Grapes Of Wrath*, Heinemann, 1939

ITEM B – COLD

She was faint with hunger, for she had had nothing but a cup of tea and a slice of bread that day, her usual fare for the last three weeks. The house was now almost destitute of furniture. She had sold all she could. It was bitterly cold. On the table were a few cracked cups, a broken saucer, part of a loaf of bread and a basin containing dripping. The woman turned to find her son standing behind her. His clothes were old and ragged, they had been patched at the knees and elbows but the patches were tearing away from the rotting fabric beneath. He had on black socks full of holes and the front part of the sole of one boot was separated from the upper, and his bare toes, red from the cold and covered with mud, protruded through the gaps.

Source: R. Tressall, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, HarperCollins, 1993

ITEM C – TOWNSEND

Individuals can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary or at least widely encouraged or approved in the societies to which they belong.

Source: summarized from P. Townsend, *Poverty in the UK*, Penguin, 1979

ITEM D – A LIMITED LIFE

Poverty means going short materially, socially and emotionally. It means spending less on food, on heating and on clothing than anyone on average income. What matters, though, is what is spent, not what isn't. Poverty means staying at home, not seeing friends, not going out for a drink and not being able to take the children on a treat or for a holiday. It means coping with the stress of managing with little money. It means having to resist the onslaught of society's pressure to consume.

Source: C. Oppenheim and L. Harker, *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1996

ITEM E - PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS

Percentage of each type of household reporting their actual income as lower than the amount they needed to keep out of absolute and general poverty* (Britain 1999)

	Absolute poverty (%)	General poverty (%)
Single pensioner	24	27
Couple pensioner	18	22
Single adult	20	24
Couple	11	13
Couple 1 child	15	29
Couple 2 children	9	13
Couple 3+ children	10	25
Lone parent 1 child	41	54
Lone parent 2+ children	54	62
Other	19	14
All households	**17**	**20**

*General poverty in the table is determined by respondents answers to a question aimed to find out whether their income was 'below the level of income you think is necessary to keep a household such as yours out of poverty'

Source: adapted from D. Gordon et al., *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain: The PSE Survey*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000

QUESTIONS

1 Of Items A–D, which do you think refers to absolute poverty, and which to relative poverty? Explain your answer.

2 (a) What are the advantages and disadvantages of using an absolute definition of poverty?

(b) What are the advantages and disadvantages of using a relative definition of poverty?

3 Making some reference to Item E, briefly discuss why measuring people's perceptions of whether or not they are poor may produce valuable information for the sociologist.

Activity 2: SOCIAL EXCLUSION

ITEM A – EXCLUSION DEFINED

Social exclusion ... refers to the dynamic process of being shut out, fully or partially, from any of the social, economic, political or cultural systems that determine the social integration of a person in society. Social exclusion may, therefore, be seen as the denial (or non-realization) of the civil, political and social rights of citizenship.

Source: adapted from A. Walker and C. Walker, 1997; quoted in D. Byrne, *Social Exclusion*, Open University Press 1999

ITEM B – EMPLOYMENT

Social exclusion is often equated with permanent unemployment, but the reality is that permanent unemployment is a relatively uncommon condition. What exists is a cycle from unemployment to poorly paid work and back, and an equal cycle between full dependency on state benefits to state supplements to low earnings. For the young, there is an additional device on this merry-go-round, time spent in 'training'. The experience is not of low income alone but the combination of low income and insecurity of employment.

Source: D. Byrne, *Social Exclusion*, Open University Press 1999

ITEM C – NO WORK

The centre of Leeds, only a mile or so away, could boast of its success in attracting £700 million of new investment from private companies, but precious little of it was finding its way into Hyde Park. There were no banks here, no new supermarkets, no fancy new restaurants, only the vacuum where so many of the old enterprises had folded and gone. Worse than that, employers in other parts of the city seemed to turn away workers who came from a red-line area [an area considered by business to be useless for investment purposes]. To them, a postcode in Leeds 6 seemed to be worse than a bad reference.

Source: N. Davies, *Dark Heart*, Chatto and Windus, 1997

ITEM D – SOCIAL SPACE

With income there is a sharp break that separates the rich from the rest of us. With space it is the poor who are separated off. Indeed, spatial exclusion is the most visible and evident form of social exclusion. We know the 'ghetto' estates of the cities in which we live. There is a dynamic of movement between social spaces. Households move from areas of dispossession to those that are 'normal' and back again when times are hard. In fact, the expression of social mobility in terms of consumption is most marked by changes in area of residence.

Source: D. Byrne, *Social Exclusion*, Open University Press 1999

ITEM E – TALKING BACK

'Just to be able to go out and mix with people. It's not just having a social life in the first place, you don't meet people, you don't make contacts, you don't develop in any way ... It just restricts your opportunities.' [Group of homeless people]

'As soon as you say you live on Bell Farm, you're some sort of deranged monster ... a criminal can't look after your children, you're in the pub all day.' [Resident of poor estate]

'Even in the church which I belong to, when they were collecting somebody said, "We're collecting for 'you people'." I thought all of a sudden I had become "you people", you know ...' [Group of unemployed people]

Source: M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 Making some reference to Item B, explain why people's position in the labour market is central to any discussion of social exclusion.

2 Using information in Items C and D and from elsewhere, consider what aspects of life ghetto dwellers are most likely to be excluded from.

3 After reading all the Items, briefly consider how useful the term social exclusion is to our understanding of poverty deprivation.

Activity 3: HOW POOR IS POOR?

ITEM A – A CONSERVATIVE VIEW

John Moore, a Conservative social security minister in 1989, argued that relative poverty was not 'poverty' but simply inequality. If the relative poverty concept were used, however rich a society became, the relatively poor would not disappear. He concluded: 'the poverty lobby would, on this definition, find poverty in paradise.'

Source: K. Browne, 'Values and the study of poverty', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 11 No. 2, November 2001

ITEM B – UNDERSTANDING RELATIVE POVERTY

A definition of poverty which is entirely relative to a particular society has a number of problems. If no other standard is applied, a relative definition would deny the existence of poverty in a country where everyone was starving, and if everyone's living standards fell drastically but evenly the numbers of poor people would not change.

Source: J. Roll, *Understanding Poverty: A Guide to the Concepts and Measures*, Family Policy Studies Centre, 1992

ITEM C – TONY BLAIR

'I believe in greater equality. If the next Labour government has not raised the living standards of the poorest by the end of its time in office then it will have failed.'

Source: Tony Blair, 1996, quoted in N. Davies, *Dark Heart: The Shocking Truth About Hidden Britain*, Chatto and Windus, 1997

ITEM E – PSE SURVEY 2000

Perception of adult necessities and how many people lack them (all figures show % of adult population)

	Omnibus survey: items considered		Main stage survey: items that respondents	
	Necessary (%)	Unnecessary (%)	Don't have, don't want (%)	Don't have, can't afford (%)
Beds and bedding for everyone	95	4	0.2	1
Heating to warm living areas of home	94	5	0.4	1
Damp-free home	93	6	3	6
Visiting friends or family in hospital	92	7	8	3
Two meals a day	91	9	3	1
Medicines prescribed by a doctor	90	9	5	1
Refrigerator	89	11	1	0.1
Fresh fruit and vegetables daily	86	13	7	4
Warm, waterproof coat	85	14	2	4
Replace or repair broken electrical goods	85	14	6	12
Visits to friends or family	84	15	3	2
Celebrations on special occasions such as Christmas	83	16	2	2
Money to keep home in a decent state of decoration	82	17	2	14
Visits to school, e.g. sports day	81	17	33	2
Attending weddings, funerals	80	19	3	3
Meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent every other day	79	19	4	3
Insurance of contents of dwelling	79	20	5	8
Hobby or leisure activity	78	20	12	7
Washing machine	76	22	3	1
Collect children from school	75	23	36	2
Telephone	71	28	1	1
Appropriate clothes for job interviews	69	28	13	4
Deep freezer/fridge-freezer	68	30	3	2
Carpets in living rooms and bedrooms	67	31	2	3
Regular savings (of £10 per month) for rainy days or retirement	66	32	7	25
Two pairs of all-weather shoes	64	34	4	5
Friends or family round for a meal	64	34	10	6
A small amount of money to spend on self weekly, not on family	59	39	3	13
Television	56	43	1	1
Roast joint/vegetarian equivalent once a week	56	41	11	3
Presents for friends or family once a year	56	42	1	3
Holiday away from home once a year, not with relatives	55	43	14	18
Replace worn-out furniture	54	43	6	12
Dictionary	53	44	6	5
An outfit for special occasions	51	46	4	4
New not second-hand clothing	48	49	4	5
Attending place of worship	42	55	65	1
Car	38	59	12	10
Coach/train fares to visit friends or family quarterly	38	58	49	16
An evening out once a fortnight	37	56	22	5
Dressing gown	34	63	12	6
Having a daily newspaper	30	66	37	4
A meal in a pub or restaurant once a month	26	71	20	18
Microwave oven	23	73	16	3
Tumble dryer	20	75	33	7
Going to the pub once a fortnight	20	76	42	10
Video cassette recorder	19	78	7	2
Holidays abroad once a year	19	77	25	27
CD player	12	84	19	7
Home computer	11	85	42	15
Dishwasher	7	88	57	11
Mobile phone	7	88	48	7
Access to the internet	6	89	54	16
Satellite television	5	90	56	7

Note: Percentage of people answering 'Don't know' not shown in table

Source: adapted from D. Gordon et al., Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain: The PSE Survey, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000

Activity 3: HOW POOR IS POOR? (continued)

ITEM D – VALUES AND POVERTY

Rowntree's study drew up a list of nutritional and other requirements considered essential. But it was heavily criticized for relying on the values and judgements of those who drew up the list, largely middle-class researchers. These researchers may have had different shopping, cooking and nutritional knowledge from those typically available to the poor.

More recently the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey (PSE) conducted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2000 attempted to overcome this problem. They distinguished between styles of living which people chose not to follow and those that people could not follow due to lack of funds. In an attempt to avoid making value judgements, the researchers carried out a sample survey amongst the public in order to establish a consensus on minimum necessities.
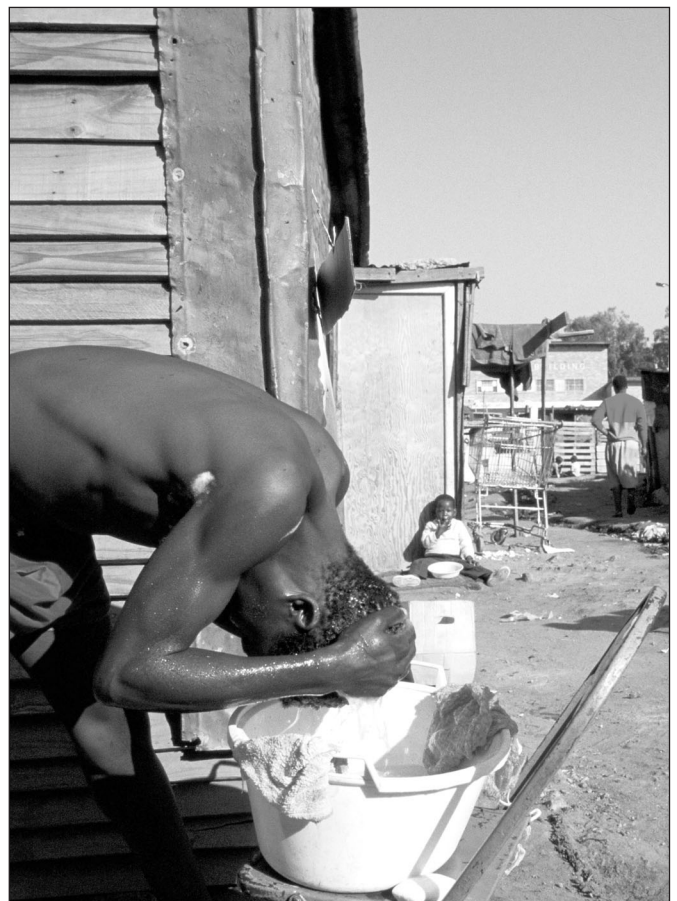
Source: K. Browne, 'Values and the study of poverty', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 11 No. 2, November 2001

ITEM F (1) – POOR?

Source: Network

## ITEM F (2) – POORER?

Source: Network

QUESTIONS

1 **With reference to Items A, B and C, explain the differences between poverty and inequality.**

2 **Look at Items D and E.**

(a) **Make a list of the Items that you think are necessities. Now compare your list with that of your classmates. Does any pattern emerge from your results?**

(b) **To what extent do you think that your choices were governed by your background and values?**

3 **Making reference to Item E, consider how the results of the survey might differ if the questions had not been put to a general sample of the population but to**

(a) **unemployed lone mothers**

(b) **single old-age pensioners.**

4 **After studying all the Items, briefly consider whether it is possible to have objective research into poverty.**

Activity 4: HOW MANY POOR?
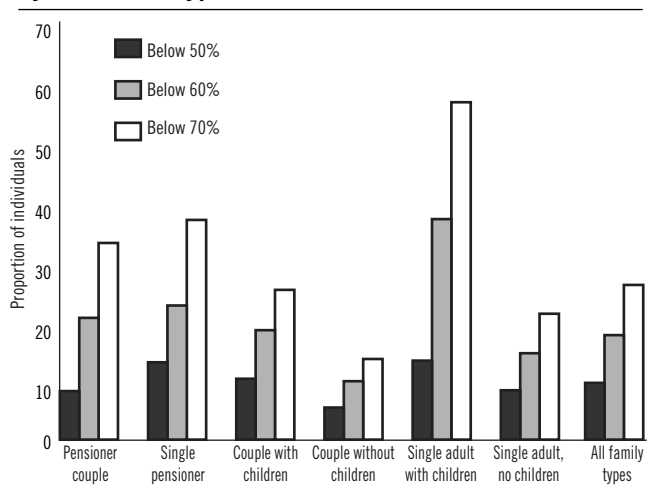
ITEM A – CHANGING INCOME

**Distribution of household income,
United Kingdom, 1971–97**
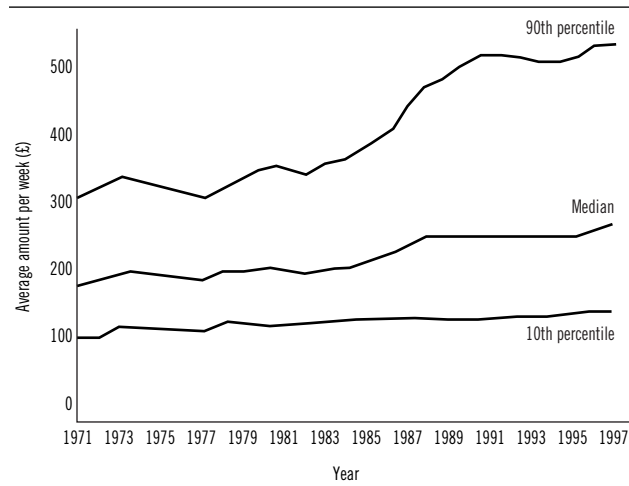
Source: C. Walker and A. Walker, 'Poverty and social exclusion', in M. Haralambos (ed.), *Developments in Sociology*, Causeway Press, 2000

ITEM B – POVERTY AND HOUSEHOLD

Individuals below thresholds of median income, by household type, Great Britain, 1997–98

Source: C. Walker and A. Walker, 'Poverty and Social Exclusion', in M. Haralambos (ed.), *Developments in Sociology*, Causeway Press, 2000

ITEM C – THE DYNAMICS OF POVERTY

Of a group of people coming off income support over a three month period in 1997, 23 per cent were back on income support within 12 months, 33 per cent of lone parents were back on within a year, and 29 per cent of those who were long-term sick or were disabled were back on within a year.

Source: C. Walker and A. Walker, 'Poverty and Social Exclusion', in M. Haralambos (ed.), *Developments in Sociology*, Causeway Press, 2000

ITEM D – THE SHAREOUT

Inequality, it is said, is the price that has to be paid for economic efficiency. The argument is that attempts to divide the pie more equally simply shrink it – and conversely, the more unequally the pie is divided the bigger it will grow. A capitalist society is by its nature unequal and so faces a trade-off: the more unequal it is, the more economically efficient it becomes.

Without the incentive offered by inequality, either as a reward or as a punishment, a capitalist economy simply loses its dynamism.

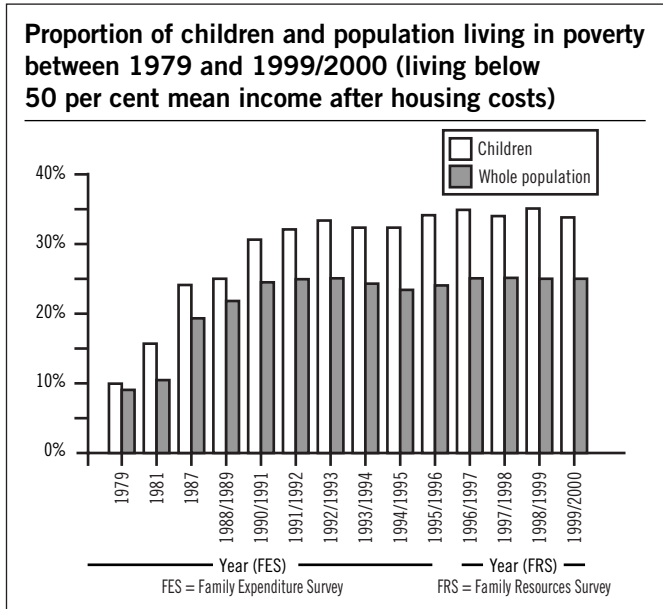Source: W. Hutton, *The State We're In*, Jonathan Cape, 1995

ITEM E – 'TRICKLE DOWN'

It might be possible to justify a growth in inequality – a widening gap between incomes of rich and poor – on the grounds that the beneficial effects on growth would raise the living standards of the poorest, but there is no evidence that this has occurred in the UK: there is no sign of 'trickle-down'.

Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *Inquiry into Income and Wealth*, Vol. 1, 1995

QUESTIONS

1 (a) Describe the changes in income distribution in Item A.

(b) Briefly say why these changes are significant.

2 Look at Item B.

(a) Which household type is mostly likely to experience poverty?

(b) Which household type is least likely to experience poverty?

(c) Give at least one reason to explain the above.

3 Measurements of low income take place at one point in time. With reference to Item C, what problems does this present for measuring poverty?

4 Comment on Items D and E in the light of Item A.

Activity 5: CHILD POVERTY

ITEM A – EXTENT

Proportion of children and population living in poverty between 1979 and 1999/2000 (living below 50 per cent mean income after housing costs)

Legend: ☐ Children ▨ Whole population

Year (FES) — Year (FRS)
FES = Family Expenditure Survey   FRS = Family Resources Survey

Source: M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

ITEM B – TONY BLAIR

In March 1999, the Prime Minister declared that the Labour government was on a 'twenty-year mission' to 'end childhood poverty forever.'

Source: D. Gordon et al., *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain: The PSE Survey*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000

ITEM C – FOOD

(1) 'Worst thing about being poor, you can't go to the supermarket and buy top quality food like they advertise on telly and things like that.'

(2) 'I am on income support and my two children rely on free school meals. However, West Sussex has recently decided to scrap our hot school meals. It is now even more obvious who the free school meal children are, as better-off children are resorting to a packed lunch. I have, therefore, forfeited my entitlement to school meals and provide my own packed lunch for my children. This is very hard financially and makes a very significant difference to our budget, but I do not feel that it is fair to put my children through this stigmatization.'

(3) Mothers, especially those living on the breadline, are being badgered by their children not to buy from low cost shops.

The growth of the school lunchbox appears to have triggered one-upmanship over food labels and brands. In the latest playground culture, children are refusing to have low cost, own brand and value items packed for lunch. Youngsters are ashamed and embarrassed that their schoolmates will find out that their families shop at discount stores like Lidl and Kwiksave.

(1)(2) Source: M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

(3) Source: adapted from V. Elliot, 'Food snob children turn noses up at own-brand lunches', *The Times*, 18 July 2002

ITEM D – PROSPECTS

(1)

(2) Good parenting requires certain permitting circumstances. There must be the necessary life opportunities and facilities. Where these are lacking even the best parents may find it difficult to exercise their skills. (Rutter, quoted in Utting, *Family and Parenthood: Supporting Families, Preventing Breakdown*)

(1) Source: Jonathan Jacob/Gazelian

(2) Source: M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 Outline the points of sociological interest in Item A.

2 Why is diet an especially important issue in the case of children? Make some reference to Item C in your answer.

3 Making reference to Item D and any other relevant Items, consider the effect of long-term poverty on a child's life chances.

Activity 6: POVERTY HURTS

ITEM A – CASE STUDY OF THE DOWNINGS

The Downings have three small children and a baby. Mr Downing is unemployed. They have lived on benefit for ten years. The mother and two of the children have asthma and the baby has a heart defect. Despite budgeting, the Downings have to cut down on heating. 'With him being asthmatic we should have the electric heating on in the bedrooms ... we can't do it, which is why he is like he is now [ill] ... he's chesty all the time.' Their diet is also monotonous and inadequate. They find that they can't afford fruit and vegetables and must go without. They are painfully aware of how their situation is affecting the children. 'The kids, if they go down town with you ... they see stuff ... you feel awful not being able to buy them stuff kids want.' Getting decent clothes and shoes is a nightmare. They have no money left to spend on things such as school trips.

The Downings never have money for leisure, entertainment, to have friends round or even to vary their diet. 'We don't go out, we don't go anywhere, we can't even afford to go to the pictures once a month. ... Imagine spending a year where the best thing you can look forward to is running a Hoover round the living room and washing up. ... The kids are running round screaming their heads off ... you lose your temper, it has an effect on you.'

Mr Downing is aware of the stress caused by their constant money worries. 'By not having enough to do and enough to eat ... it does have an effect on your health, both psychologically and physically. It depresses you looking at what other people have and what you can't have.' He would like to work if he could, find a job where he could earn some money and have a sense of achievement at the end of the day. He believes that if he were in work he would feel more like going out and doing things. He feels that when you have a bit of money in your pocket you feel more optimistic and gain a sense of security.

Source: adapted from R. Cohen, J. Coxall, G. Craig and A. Sadiq-Sangster, *Hardship Britain*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM B – CASE STUDY OF SANDRA COLE

Sandra is in her forties. She has lived on benefit for fifteen years and has seven children between 2 and 17. She lives in a council flat. She helps care for her invalid mother who lives nearby. Two of the children have asthma and Sandra suffers from a stress-related condition (ME) which she puts down to the worry of looking after her mother and financial problems. She constantly fears falling into debt.

Because of lack of money, Sandra cannot keep up the standards she sets for herself and her children. She says she likes to be in control and describes how in her situation 'You feel like life's doing things to you, you're not in control of life.' Her energies are focused on being a good parent and her inability to provide for the children as she would wish leaves her feeling anxious and guilty.

They used to go swimming once a week but she can no longer afford it. She used to attend PTA meetings and church functions but has stopped as she literally has no clothes she feels comfortable attending in.

Sandra feels under relentless and continuing pressure. After years of struggle her health is beginning to give way. She finds it more difficult to cope with the battle to control her finances. 'It's this feeling of never getting on your feet. It's like standing on sand and it's washing away all the time.'

Source: adapted from R. Cohen, J. Coxall, G. Craig and A. Sadiq-Sangster, *Hardship Britain*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM C – MAKING DO

Source: Crispin Hughes/Photofusion

ITEM D – 'I'M TREATED LIKE DIRT!'

'It's a joke, a waste of paper. You sit there with a person who knows nothing about you and they're obviously in a rush so you get about ten minutes of their time and then you sign it and then go.' (Comment made by unemployed person about their feelings when being dealt with by officials.)

Source: M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 **People living in poverty suffer more ill-health and live shorter lives. Using Items A, B and C, explain why this is so.**

2 **'The poor are socially excluded.' Explain and discuss this statement with reference to Items A and B.**

3 **'The experience of poverty may lead to lack of self-respect and a sense of powerlessness.' Discuss this with reference to the evidence in items A, B, C and D.**

Activity 7: A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE?

ITEM A – INFANT MORTALITY

Perinatal and infant mortality rates per 1,000 births (within marriage only) by social class 1978/79 and 1999

Social class	Perinatal		Infant	
	1978/79	1999	1978/79	1999
I	11.9	5.8	9.8	3.8
II	12.3	6.2	10.1	3.8
III (non-manual)	13.9	8.2	11.1	5.0
III (manual)	15.1	7.7	12.4	5.1
IV	16.7	9.9	13.6	6.5
V	20.3	11.0	17.2	8.4
Other	20.4	9.7	23.3	7.3
Ratio class V:I	1.71	1.89	1.8	2.21

Source: M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

ITEM B – LONGSTANDING ILLNESS

Percentage with limiting longstanding illness by socio-economic group, total of all ages, 1998

Socio-economic group	Men	Women
Professional	12	13
Employers/managers	15	17
Intermediate non-manual	17	20
Junior non-manual	15	23
Skilled manual	22	22
Semi-skilled manual	23	27
Unskilled manual	27	29
All	**19**	**21**

Source: M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

ITEM C – SMOKING

Prevalence of cigarette-smoking: by sex and socio-economic group[1]

Great Britain				Percentages
	Males		Females	
	1998	2000	1998	2000
Professional	16	17	14	14
Employers and managers	22	23	21	20
Intermediate/junior non-manual	25	27	24	26
Skilled manual	34	33	30	26
Semi-skilled manual	39	36	33	32
Unskilled manual	44	39	31	35
All non-manual	22	23	22	22
All manual	36	34	31	29
All aged 16 and over	30	29	26	25

[1] Socio-economic group of the household reference person (excluding those in Armed Forces and full-time students)

Source: *Social Trends*, No. 33, HMSO, 2003

ITEM D – CUTTING BACK ON FOOD: THE FACTS

- The PSE Survey showed that 4 per cent of adults could not afford fresh fruit and vegetables daily.
- Another survey published in 1997 found that 1 in 20 mothers sometimes went without food to meet the needs of their children.
- People living in deprived areas of England were likely to have a less healthy diet than those in better off areas.

Source: adapted from M. Howard et al., *Poverty – the Facts*, Child Poverty Action Group, 2001

ITEM E – FOOD DESERTS

Hunger is again stalking the streets of Britain and threatening the health of future generations. Sir Donald Acheson, a former government chief medical officer, says that it is now almost impossible for many of the poorest people to obtain cheap varied food. Local shops have closed down because of the growth of out-of-town supermarkets, creating 'food deserts'. A resident of a rundown estate in Speke, Merseyside, says: 'You have people who came to take some of the shops for a few months around Christmas and then moved out again. They always blame the vandalism.' When local shops do hang on, local residents complain that the prices are too high for them to afford.

One single parent who was interviewed thinks that it's worth spending the £5 out of her weekly £70 benefit to take the bus to shop for herself and her two children. Even then she can afford to serve a proper meal of meat and vegetables only once a week. 'The rest of the time it's soup, scouse [shepherd's pie] and slops – anything to eat.'

Sir Donald says: 'Poverty is unquestionably associated with increased mortality and poor health. Research shows that a woman's diet during pregnancy affects the weight of her baby, and babies with low birth weight are at greater risk of heart disease and diabetes later in life.' Sir Donald says that the food gap between the rich who eat more fruit and vegetables and the poor who eat more fat and salt parallels the health gap. 'Nutrition plays a fundamental role in important diseases including some cancers, heart disease and strokes, osteoporosis, anaemia and obesity.'

The poor are well aware of the benefits of better nutrition. Angela Humphries, a single mother talking about her children, says: 'If you feed them properly then they are healthier and you don't have to go to the doctor's for things for them.' Fiona Winders, a community affairs manager, points out that recent research undertaken by Liverpool University shows that if people do get more income, then the first thing they spend it on is better-quality food. 'The old beer and fags argument just doesn't work.'

Source: adapted from J. Laurance, 'The poor of Britain are going hungry', *Independent*, 15 October 1998; and J. Davison, 'Torment of going to bed without food', *Independent*, 17 October 1998

ITEM F – HEALTH PROMOTION

The government spends millions of pounds on health promotion campaigns. We are urged to eat less fat and salt, more fruit and vegetables, take more exercise, stop smoking and avoid drinking to excess. We are told that we must change our lifestyle if we are to be healthy. The better-off seem more likely to respond to health and social welfare campaigns. They change their diets, take up jogging, stop smoking and visit their GPs for routine tests and health checks. Health promotion campaigns may, therefore, have the unintended consequence of widening health inequalities rather than narrowing them.

Source: adapted from M. Wainwright, 'Currie tells all', *Observer*, 24 September 1986; and 'The poor of Britain are going hungry', *Independent*, 15 October 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **Using information from Items A and B, outline the relationship between infant mortality, ill-health and social class.**

2 **Briefly say what Item C tells us and why the information is important.**

3 **Outline the particular problems that may face poor people living in 'food deserts' (Item E).**

4 **Using information from the Items and from elsewhere, offer some explanation for the patterns found in A and B.**

5 **Tackling ill-health and high mortality rates among the poor requires government action. In the light of the above Items, what would you advise?**

Activity 8: THE CAUSES OF POVERTY

ITEM A – THE UNDERCLASS AND WELFARE DEPENDENCY

If too many people look to the government for the means of life, then this dependency has harmful effects that accumulate over time. The initial harm results from people organizing their affairs so that they qualify for benefit. Having crossed the boundary between independent self-support and reliance on the work of others, individuals are inclined to neglect friendships or relationships with people who could provide a helping hand in a spirit of mutual respect. Because their self-respect diminishes, they often become more shameless in their determination to live at the expense of others. They also fail to join organizations like churches or voluntary associations, where they would meet people who would gladly provide temporary restorative help. As a further consequence, they acquire fewer skills of cooperating with others, and face fewer challenges. In turn, they have fewer opportunities to strengthen their characters by overcoming adversity. As a result, they are more prone to manipulation by politicians, some of whom are only too willing to 'buy' their votes with promises of 'more'. Politicians whose model of society is one of leaders and led are very happy to preserve in being a section of the population that will trade its votes for cash rewards. (Green 1998: vii)

Source: D. Byrne, *Social Exclusion*, Open University Press 1999

ITEM B – POLITICAL DECISIONS

Since many poor people pay little or no direct taxes, it might be thought that fiscal changes would affect their lives very little. But the shift from direct to indirect taxation has meant that people living on low incomes now carry a higher tax burden than they did ten or fifteen years ago. And the reforms of local taxation have, in many cases, added to that burden. Both these changes have had a disproportionate effect on people whose incomes have risen least over that period – people on fixed, low incomes and those dependent on social security for their income. (Kempson 1996: 129)

Source: D. Byrne, *Social Exclusion*, Open University Press 1999

ITEM C – THE LABOUR MARKET

Townsend sees the main reason for the existence of poverty as our system of social stratification. This involves occupational groups receiving very different financial rewards, giving rise to a highly stratified society. Moreover, since our position in the labour market is the main determinant of our position in this hierarchy, those people who are not employed are severely disadvantaged. This includes such people as the old, sick and disabled, as well as lone parents and the long-term unemployed. Many of these must rely on meagre welfare benefits for their subsistence.

Source: summarized from P. Townsend, *Poverty in the UK*, Penguin, 1979

ITEM D – POVERTY AND CAPITALISM

Poverty is not caused by men and women getting married; it is not caused by machinery; it is not caused by 'over-production'; it is not caused by drink or laziness; and it is not caused by 'over-population'. It is caused by private monopoly. That is the present system ... private ownership of land; private ownership of railways, tramways, gasworks, waterworks, factories and other methods of producing the necessities and comforts of life.

The majority work hard and live in poverty in order that the minority may live in luxury without working at all, and, as the majority are mostly fools, they not only agree to pass their lives in incessant slavery and want, in order to pay this rent to those who own the country, but they say that it is quite right that they should have to do so.

In order to do away with poverty we must destroy the causes. To do away with the causes we must do away with the whole system.

'Oh damn the causes of poverty', said one of the new hands. ... He had been out of work for about six weeks previous ... he and his family had been living in conditions of semi-starvation. ... But all the same, the question of what causes poverty had no interest for him.

Source: adapted from R. Tressall, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, HarperCollins, 1993

ITEM E – AN ECONOMIST'S VIEW

Unemployment is now seen as a price worth paying for low inflation. Once it was universally condemned. Now we accept that idle men and women are the basic defence against the economy overheating. Financial markets react well to an increase in joblessness. It weakens wage demands and reduces inflation. For those without money and influence, mild recession is quite comfortable. Inflation hits everyone. Unemployment only damages a few.

Source: adapted from J.K. Galbraith, 'The war against the poor', *Observer*, 29 October 1996

ITEM F – BLAMING THE VICTIM

Poverty acts as a warning to those who fail to conform to prevailing work and social standards. It encourages those in the middle to focus on material success in order to avoid poverty, rather than to question the status quo. Recent credence given to the idea that the poor are to be blamed for their poverty – taken up by the theory of welfare dependency – provides a scapegoat that can be blamed for the social problems we see around us.

Source: N. Davies, *Dark Heart: The Shocking Truth About Hidden Britain*, Chatto & Windus, 1997

QUESTIONS

1 **Explain in your own words the viewpoint expressed in Item A and briefly consider how sympathizers with this approach might attempt to tackle a dependency culture.**

2 **Making reference to Item B, briefly say what the implications are for a government committed to tackling poverty.**

3 **The authors of Items C and D would have different solutions to the problem of poverty. What would they be and how would they differ?**

4 **'Poverty benefits the non-poor in general and the rich and powerful in particular.' Explain and discuss with reference to Items E and F.**

Chapter 4: POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION – answers

ACTIVITY 1: ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE POVERTY

Teacher's note

This activity explores the meaning of the terms 'absolute poverty', 'relative poverty' and 'social exclusion' and helps students to distinguish between them. Relevant reading on this area can be found at the beginning of Chapter 4, pp. 236–47.

1 *Key points:*
- In Item A, the man is starving, clearly an example of absolute poverty.
- Whether Item B also qualifies depends on the standards being adopted. Absolute poverty is usually taken to be the minimum level of food, heating, clothing and housing essential to maintain a healthy life. The mother and boy in Item B could continue for some time in their ill-clad and malnourished state, but probably not indefinitely.
- In Item C, relative poverty is seen in terms of a comparison with what is 'customary' or 'widely encouraged' in a society.
- In Item D, relative poverty is interpreted as spending less than the average on essential items. Those unable to participate in 'normal' activities are seen as socially excluded.

2 (**a**) An absolute standard of poverty has the advantage that it can be used to compare different societies, and to compare the same society over time. Also, by defining poverty in terms of need we can measure it with a degree of scientific precision – for example, nutritional needs.

Critics believe that the idea of a basic subsistence level is erroneous. They argue that there are considerable variations in people's requirements within and between societies – for example, according to one's occupation, or according to climate.

(**b**) A relative measure of poverty has the advantage of taking into account the social environment in which people live. In an affluent and materialistic society people may suffer considerable distress if they are not able to provide their children with new clothes or the right brand of trainers.

Critics have pointed to the difficulty of operationalizing the concept of relative poverty. What standard of living is sufficiently low for people to be shut out of normal life? Various attempts have been made to tackle this problem – for example, see the section on Mack and Lansley, pp. 243–4.

3 *Key points:*
- Whether people see themselves as poor or not is important, as it is these feelings that will influence their behaviour. For example, if people feel seriously deprived this may encourage them to join radical political groups or engage in activities like riots. The more they see their situation as being unjust, the more likely they are to respond negatively towards it.
- Different groups within the population may experience subjective poverty to different degrees. In Item E, lone parents are the group that is most likely to feel that their income is inadequate to keep them out of absolute poverty. In the case of lone parents with two children, more than half felt that they were below an absolute level of poverty, while as many as 62 per cent felt that they were below a general level of poverty. Couples, even those with children, reported a much lower level of poverty. This may be because two-adult households give more flexibility in terms of the home/work balance and also because the costs of housing/heating would be relatively less.
- It may be that some groups within the population protect themselves from feelings of poverty by having low expectations and aspirations. It has, for example, been suggested that the elderly are less likely to 'feel' poor as they were brought up at a time when less consumer durables were available to the average working-class person. Single pensioners fare worse than couple pensioners, possibly because expenses are relatively greater.
- What is particularly interesting is that in a relatively prosperous country like Britain between 1 in 5 and 1 in 6 people perceive their income as insufficient to provide for even basic needs. These levels may be much higher than is often generally assumed by either the public or politicians.

ACTIVITY 2: SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Teacher's note

This activity looks particularly at social exclusion and its consequences for people's lives.

1 *Key points:*
- In the British economy our position in the labour market is crucial to our incomes and therefore to our life chances. It will influence such things as our location and quality of housing, our access to consumer goods and our opportunity to pursue leisure interests or enjoy holidays. People who have poorly paid jobs or no jobs will experience periods of poverty and be excluded from those activities that require money in order to participate.
- Item B is suggestive that there may be very many people experiencing some periods of exclusion from the labour market – many more than the statistics on unemployment may at first suggest. Being generally 'short of money' may therefore influence many more people's lifestyles than statistics sometimes suggest.
- Being unemployed will exclude people from taking part in important areas of social life. Many people rely on their work colleagues for friendship and support. Moreover, work itself is considered by many to be a central aspect of their lives, providing intrinsic satisfaction, social status and a sense of identity.

2 *Key points:*
Living in a ghetto area may exclude people from certain important social goods.
- They may have less access to good state education. This is particularly important since it is through education that children may have the opportunity to experience social mobility in the future.
- They may have less than average health care. GP and other medical personnel may not be attracted to working in such areas, with the consequence that treatment may be of a lesser quality. Paediatric services are particularly important because of their long-term outcomes for children.
- Transport links may be sub-standard. Unprofitable routes may be abandoned and any vandalism means either that services are cut altogether or that residents are frightened of using them.
- Item C points out that there tends to be few banks or financial institutions in ghetto areas. This may mean that people in these parts of town have no access to a bank account or easily available financial advice. Without a bank account it may be more difficult for people to obtain cheap loans, while drawing pensions and benefits in cash may make people vulnerable to muggings. (The poor are generally forced to pay more for credit than are the better off.)
- Ghetto areas may be devoid of a good range of shops. Without supermarkets people may have to pay more for their food, while certain types of fresh food may be difficult or impossible to buy locally.
- The reputation of these areas may mean that they lack social and educational facilities like youth clubs, over 60s groups, historic societies, evening classes, local libraries, art galleries and museums.
- People may find it difficult to exercise their civic rights and duties in severely deprived areas. The reputation of the areas may mean that there is little opportunity to form or join pressure groups or political parties. Canvassers at general elections may 'steer clear' of these areas, exacerbating the tendency of low turn out and denying the people information and the opportunity to quiz candidates.
- We must remember that these negative characteristics do not apply to all ghetto areas. Against the odds, some have successfully established things like residents' associations.

3 *Key points:*
- The term social exclusion broadens the debate on deprivation, going beyond the material aspects to concentrate more specifically on the social aspects. It alerts us to the way in which many poor people can no longer fully participate in society, as seen in item A.
- The term is now widely used in the European Union, and the Labour government has established a Social Exclusion Unit. By focusing on social exclusion, people are forced to consider social deprivation as a

dynamic process, not a static condition (see Item A).

· The actions of other individuals and agencies help to bring about social exclusion. Some sociologists argue that we need to consider not just raising the incomes of the poor, but also building bridges to allow them to move from the margins of society to its centre.

· By broadening our understanding of deprivation, the term social exclusion helps us to understand how and why certain groups like the disabled and some ethnic minority members come to be excluded. Their situation may be alleviated by providing such things as easy access for the disabled and English language classes for newcomers to this country, rather than through raising incomes.

· By using the term social exclusion, some of the stigma associated with being poor (referred to in Item E) may be mitigated.

· Some sociologists fear that focusing attention on improving quality of life for the poor could divert governments from tackling material deprivation. It could be used to justify cuts in welfare expenditure in the belief that this would force people off welfare and into work and so into the key area of economic participation.

ACTIVITY 3: HOW POOR IS POOR?

Teacher's note

Activity 3 will assist students in understanding the differences between poverty and inequality. Students may wish to refer to Chapter 4, pp. 253–8.

1 Key points:

· We live in an unequal society, which means that some people have more wealth, status and power than others. On the other hand, the term poverty implies the lack of something that we need. If we were to use an entirely relative definition of poverty – e.g. those below average income – we would be guilty of confusing inequality with poverty.

· If we see poverty purely in terms of inequality, and do not include some idea of material needs, then the consequences for our understanding of poverty are unhelpful. In a very wealthy society, those at the bottom could be said to be experiencing poverty. Conversely, in a very poor society where everyone was equally poor we could say that no one was living in poverty. Clearly, this is ridiculous.

· It would be quite possible to raise the standard of living of the poorest, yet for inequality to stay the same or increase still further. Conversely, one could envisage a situation where there was greater social equality but because of falling levels of prosperity the real standard of living of the poorest people had actually fallen.

· It may be that inequality itself is damaging to people whether or not this is accompanied by poverty.

2 *Key points:*

(**a**) The answer to this question will depend a good deal on students' individual circumstances and particular preferences. However, students need to bear in mind the consequences of their decisions. For example, people who do not take a daily newspaper may feel some sense of exclusion from news and comments, while some teenagers may feel that a mobile phone is an essential adjunct to their social lives. On many items there is likely to be considerable consensus between students.

(**b**) In answering this question students need to show an awareness that we cannot help but be influenced by our background and surroundings. People do not live in isolation but in a social context. The PSE survey attempted to reach a general consensus and limit value judgements, which is an improvement on much previous research. However, even those people spread generally throughout the population do of course only represent people at that time and place.

3 *Key points:*

Again, students may produce a range of answers to this question.

(**a**) A single mother might place less emphasis on having carpets and more perhaps on having a tumble drier.

(**b**) An elderly single person might put more emphasis on being able to save some money for a rainy day and less on having a washing machine or freezer.

4 *Key points:*

We have seen that poverty is an emotive subject. People feel very strongly about whether or not poverty exists in modern Britain and if it does what can or should be done about it. When conducting sociological research, sociologists must try to put their personal feelings to one side. However, this may be impossible to do completely since we are making a value judgement by operationalizing the concept. Perhaps the best that can be

done is for the sociologist to make explicit their own feelings and present their findings for peer review. Similar problems of maintaining value freedom exist in most areas of sociological research.

ACTIVITY 4: HOW MANY POOR?

Teacher's note

This activity looks at the extent of poverty and some of the problems involved in its measurement.

1 (**a**) Item A shows the changes in income that have taken place over the period 1971 to 1997. It shows the average amount of household income at three points in the income scale, at the median and at the 90th and 10th percentiles.

Over the period shown, we see a clear picture of average income at the 10th percentile remaining overall very flat. In other words, people's incomes at this level have gone up only very little.

In the case of median incomes, there has been some fairly steady rise in average income, especially in the few years before 1989 and since about 1995. The overall rise has, however, been modest.

The incomes of people at the 90th percentile have risen more than for those lower down the income distribution, having nearly doubled. While the increases have been spasmodic, their overall actual and relative position has risen since 1971.

(**b**) It is important to examine these figures, as household income gives us a good picture of how well off people are. Those people at the bottom 10th percentile – who for ease of discussion we could describe as the relatively poor – are living on a similar amount of money as people like them were in the 1970s. On the other hand, those at the 90th percentile have improved both their actual incomes and their relative position. They have 'drawn away' from both the 10th percentile and the median. Clearly, they have more money to spend. This may impact on the sort of things that manufacturers and providers of services are able to sell. For example, there may be a growing demand for more luxury products, e.g. designer clothes, expensive cars and high-quality restaurants, foods and wine. As well as this, the increasing gap between the most well off and the least well off may have negative societal repercussions. It may be that the perception of this gap by the relatively poor, if it is accompanied by a sense of injustice, may lead to growing dissatisfaction and resentment.

2 (**a**) Single adults with children.

(**b**) Couples without children.

(**c**) Single adults with children are less likely to be able to work and if they do may find they can only take less demanding jobs due to their domestic responsibilities. They will also have the added expense of children/child care. The converse is the case with childless couples. They may both be able to work full time and devote themselves to their work, possibly working unsocial hours or long hours. Nor will they have the added expense of providing for children.

3 *Key points:*

· Because measurements of poverty only take place at one point in time, it may be that the number of people who experience periods of poverty is very much higher. Looking at Item C, it seems that many people have been living just above the poverty line and then dipping under from time to time. They may therefore experience long-term shortage of money and a chronic feeling of insecurity. Lone parents may find it difficult to maintain employment due to domestic responsibilities, while the sick and disabled may find that coping with work and an impairment becomes too demanding. However, it is worth noting that these two groups of people may experience prejudice from employers and may only be offered less desirable jobs, further exacerbating their marginality in the labour market.

4 *Key points:*

· Item D suggests that some people believe that incentives produced by inequality will create greater overall social wealth in a capitalist system. Referring to Item A, we can see that overall average income must have gone up, suggesting greater overall social wealth. Income inequality has certainly grown. Whether this means that the economy has become more efficient and dynamic we do not know. Item E seems to be supported by the evidence in Item A; inequality has clearly grown but the living standards of the poorest have hardly changed at all, while the living standards of the medium have gone up only very little. In other words, there seems to have been only a marginal trickle down effect, even to the level of the medium.

ACTIVITY 5: CHILD POVERTY

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on the issue of childhood poverty. There is no particular reading for students.

1 *Key points:*

Item A looks at the changing pattern of childhood poverty and of the whole population between 1979 and 2000.

· The first point of interest is that between 1979 and about 1992, the extent of poverty went up significantly for both groups.

· The second point of interest is that in every period childhood poverty was above whole population poverty. The gap between the two has been generally greater in the 1980s and 1990s.

2 *Key points:*

· Diet is especially important to children for the obvious reason that they are growing. They may therefore need a high level of good nutrition so that they will build healthy bodies and reach their optimum size.

· It is also during childhood that healthy eating habits are established. If children learn to eat less healthy foods they are likely to continue in this pattern during adulthood.

· As a consequence of the above, good childhood diet is important to the future health of the nation.

· In today's Britain, food has become a lifestyle choice. It carries with it certain social messages that may confer either status or stigma. For example, a person whose shopping trolley contains top grade organic fruit, vegetables and meat along with an expensive Burgundy, tells us something about who they are. Conversely, a shopping trolley full of 'value' products and cheap lemonade sends out a different message. Children are subject to peer pressure at school and when playing with their friends. We see in the Item that some mothers are coming under pressure to provide lunch boxes that give out the 'right' message. These children seem very well aware of the stigma attached to certain brands, which may be seen as carrying the message 'I am poor'. Another mother says that she has stopped her children from having free school dinners for a similar reason. Although eating the same food as their classmates, the children are stigmatized for having 'free' meals, which advertises the fact that their parents are poor. In this case, the children may end up having an inferior diet rather than suffer the stigma of free meals.

3 *Key points:*

· We know that children growing up in poverty will experience diminished life chances and an increased probability of experiencing poverty as well as a variety of social disadvantages when adult. We have already discussed the importance of good diet, the lack of which may not only lead to worse job prospects but also tend to retard a child's achievement at school due to frequent absences. Doing well at education would be one way out of poverty for those children pictured. However, the poverty of their background may mean that parents are unable to provide advantages like educational books, toys and outings available to children from more prosperous homes. Moreover, playing out in the streets rather than in a secure garden will mean that those children are more likely to have accidents. It is difficult to see how even parents' ambitions for their children can compensate for the shortcomings of the environment. For example, there may be no suitable clubs, playing fields, swimming baths, libraries and so on available in the area, all of which would extend a child's learning and experience.

· In addition to material disadvantages, children may suffer cultural disadvantages. Some sociologists believe that there is an underclass of poverty where attitudes of dependency exist. If this is the case, then children learning such a culture from parents and each other are less likely to have the motivation to strive to improve their situation.

· The range of negative outcomes of a childhood spent in poverty, coupled with the large numbers of children experiencing poverty, help to explain why Tony Blair (Item B) has made a pledge to end child poverty within 20 years.

ACTIVITY 6: POVERTY HURTS

Teacher's note

Activity 6 aims to develop an awareness of the impact of poverty on people's day-to-day lives. Students are invited to explore the impact of social exclusion on the individual and their family. It may be helpful for students to read Chapter 4, pp. 261–2.

1 Inadequate diet and housing may aggravate conditions like asthma and will make people prey to contagious diseases like influenza, and also to more long-term conditions such as cancer and heart disease. Long-term stress, depression and anxiety will affect not only people's mental health but also their physical well-being. Their psychological condition may lead to serious mental health problems and even suicide.

2 *Key points:*

· In Item A, the Downings' life appears to be very restricted. The family can't afford to have friends round, or have very much in the way of leisure activities. These activities are part of most people's routine and a way of entering into the life of a community. Mr Downing obviously sees himself as separate and cut off from other members of society, and feels that work would give him entrance into a wider world where he could become part of mainstream society.

· In Item B, the family can no longer afford to participate in community activities. Sandra is becoming worn down and exhausted by her situation, and is in no frame of mind to look for employment or to explore new ways of taking part in community life. All her energy is going into just coping.

3 *Key points:*

· In Item B, Sandra's self-respect is very much tied up with her role as mother. She feels that it is impossible for her to be a 'good' mother without money to buy the food, clothing and outings which she feels are necessary for her children. She feels trapped by her situation and can only see her life as a downward spiral.

· In Item A, Mr Downing is unable to play the traditional role of breadwinner and provider. Furthermore, he feels that a job would give him a personal sense of achievement as well as a feeling of security. Both these factors would increase his self-respect and confidence.

· The man in Item C appears to be in a shabby kitchen. In run down housing he and his family will feel no pride in their surroundings and may lose self-respect.

· Acute feelings of powerlessness are evident in items A and B. The families have lost the power to make the smallest decision about what they buy, where they go and what they eat. They are encased in the social equivalent of an iron lung – only surviving because they resist the temptation to indulge in the smallest extravagance.

· People who are living on benefits are to some extent at the mercy of officials. For example, they may rely on them for help in the completion of forms. This may further add to feelings of powerlessness, especially if they feel that they are treated less than with consideration and respect.

· People living on benefits are at the mercy of the law – what level of income is taken to be sufficient for them to live on is decided largely by people who have never experienced poverty themselves. The poor can only accept that they 'should' be able to manage on their incomes.

ACTIVITY 7: A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE

Teacher's note

This activity looks at the link between poverty, social class and health. This activity will also be useful to use in conjunction with Chapter 5, pp. 312–17.

1 *Key points:*

· Item A shows us that for both perinatal mortality and infant mortality there is a consistent relationship between death rate and social class. For children born within marriage, those born into a higher social class have a higher chance of survival. Over the 20-year period covered, there has fortunately been an overall reduction in deaths, but by 1999 the perinatal and infant mortality rates for social class V remain around double that of social class I. The gap between the social classes remains resistant to change.

- In Item B we see that the percentages of people suffering from limiting longstanding illness in 1998 again show a significant link with social class. In the case of both men and women, unskilled manual workers are more than twice as likely to experience longstanding illness than those in professional groups.

2 *Key points:*

- Item C tells us that between 1998 and 2000 there has been a slight decline in the prevalence of smoking in Britain for both men and women. Men are more likely to smoke than women, although the difference is relatively small. The main difference between rates of smoking is between different social classes. Professional people are much less likely to smoke than are unskilled manual workers.
- We know that smoking is a very unhealthy practice and leads to illnesses like lung cancer and heart disease. Its toxicity impacts both on the smokers themselves and on their families and friends who are forced to become passive smokers. The unborn child and infant of a mother who smokes will be particularly affected.

3 *Key points:*

- Many people who live in poverty also live in what have been called 'food deserts'. Here, there are no good, inexpensive shops within easy reach. If people travel to supermarkets they must spend some of their low income on bus fares, leaving less to spend on food. Alternatively, if they shop locally there may be little choice of produce – especially fresh fruit and vegetables – and what is available is likely to be expensive.
- Many poorer people eat more fat and salt. One reason for this is that these foods tend to have a long shelf life and so can be purchased well in advance of their consumption. This makes them attractive to those who live in 'food deserts', as there is less need to shop frequently. Further, such foods are cheap and filling.
- Item E points out that the poor are well aware of the inadequacies of their diet, and the first thing that they spend extra income on is better food. However, low incomes generally prevent these people from doing anything about improving their own and their children's nutrition.

4 *Key points:*

- People from lower social classes are more likely to experience periods of very low income and employment insecurity. They may sometimes experience poverty, which means that they are less likely to be able to afford plentiful supplies of good food, which may adversely affect general health and the health of babies. Item D makes it clear that poorer people are less likely to eat fruit and vegetables, the health advantages of which are well documented.
- Housing conditions may be less favourable – they are more likely to be overcrowded, damp and in a polluted environment. This will affect people's health and particularly impact on the growing foetus and babies.
- Children and adults may be more prone to accidents in poor housing conditions. Also, if children and young people are playing on busy streets they are more likely to be involved in things like road traffic accidents.
- The nature of unskilled manual work is such that people may be more prone to industrial injury. Moreover, there may also be a greater likelihood of coming into contact with substances that are later shown to be health hazards, e.g. asbestos. Infants can be affected if such things as contaminated tools or overalls are brought into the home. In some cases these pollutants may affect an individual's reproductive potential or the development of a foetus, e.g. radiation.
- As we have seen in Item C, unskilled workers are more likely to smoke, affecting both their own health and the health of their children.

5 *Key points:*

- Since lack of money appears to be the main reason for chronic ill-health and high mortality rates among the poor, in order to tackle the problem the government could for example raise the real levels of benefit and ensure that the minimum wage is set at a reasonable level and is enforced. In fact, the current government has recently passed legislation to help raise the level of income within the poorest families, particularly those with children (e.g. family tax credit).
- It is difficult to see how the government can encourage retailers to stay in run-down areas where profits are low, but it might be possible to use changes in planning legislation and extend government grants to encourage regeneration.
- Health promotion campaigns could play a subsidiary role; for example, they could be designed more specifically to target the poor.
- Tighter health and safety legislation at work, coupled with effective enforcement, would give people greater protection from industrial illness or accident.

ACTIVITY 8: THE CAUSES OF POVERTY

Teacher's note

This item examines the different explanations of why poverty exists. It then goes on to invite students to recognise the relationship between supposed cause and proposed solution. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 4, pp. 262–89.

1 *Key points:*

- The author of Item A appears to have sympathy with the ideas of people like Charles Murray, who believes that an underclass exists. In keeping with the ideas of Murray, the author argues that a culture of dependency has a harmful effect on people, leading to a lack of self-respect and a spiral of decline whereby the individuals concerned fail to develop skills and contacts which might help them return to financial independence.
- Some sociologists and politicians who hold similar right-wing views believe that over-generous welfare benefits have helped to create this dependency culture. From this viewpoint, to reduce poverty the state would need to reduce welfare spending, possibly making it conditional on the recipients proving that they were making real attempts to find employment. Living on benefit would, they believe, then become less comfortable, leading to a reduction in unemployment rates and greater self-reliance.
- A criticism of this type of argument is that it can be seen as 'blaming the victim'. In many cases suitable employment is not available, while many groups who are dependent on benefits, like the elderly, disabled and single parents, may not be able to work.
- The author of Item A argues that the group of poor described are particularly vulnerable to manipulation by politicians and are willing to 'trade their votes for cash'. If this were the case, then it could be argued that we might expect benefit levels to be at a higher level than at present.

2 The implication of Item B is that if the government wishes to tackle poverty one action it could take would be to change taxation policy so that indirect taxes were reduced and lost revenue replaced through direct taxation. Indirect taxes are raised against spending and so impact heavily on people with low incomes, since they must spend virtually all their income. Direct taxes are progressive (the more you earn the higher proportion of your income that is taken) and can be focused more precisely on people who can afford to pay more tax.

3 *Key points:*

- Townsend (Item C) sees poverty as stemming from the wide differences in rewards available in the labour market, with those people who do not work at all (such as the old, sick and disabled) often even worse off. From this viewpoint, the solution to poverty would involve narrowing the gap between the pay of different occupational groups. It might also involve helping some who do not work at present back into the labour market. Those who remained dependent on benefits would need to be paid at a higher level than at present so that they could adopt a lifestyle closer to that of other citizens.
- For Tressall (Item D), the cause of poverty lies in the present system of capitalism. Only by setting up a totally different system of production can poverty be tackled. Explanations of poverty in terms of the behaviour of the poor provide a smokescreen which prevents the working class from realizing this.

4 *Key points:*

- In Item E, a certain level of unemployment is seen as benefiting most of society's members since it keeps inflation in check. Only a small number experience the financial hardships of unemployment, while the majority gain from price stability. In particular, shareholders benefit (from rising financial markets), as do employers (from low wage demands).
- In Item F, poverty is seen as helping to maintain the status quo. It encourages the non-poor to work hard and to be materialistic rather than to reflect upon the nature of society. Also, by blaming the poor for social problems, attention is diverted away from other possible causes. As such, the existence of poverty can be seen as particularly beneficial to the rich and powerful, since they have the most to gain from preserving the status quo.

HEALTH, MEDICINE AND THE BODY

Activity 1: IT'S ALL RELATIVE

ITEM A – 'EVERYBODY IS ILL!'

'Everybody is ill', exclaimed Keats to his brother in 1820. This was not a piece of poetic licence, merely an update on family and friends. Sickness was a constant menace. 'One's very body', suggested Tobias Smollett – himself a doctor – 'should be seen as a hospital'. Just as prudence dictated that every man should be his own lawyer, so every man should be his own physician, for he, if anyone, was expert in his own 'case'. It is hardly surprising that the everyday lives of ordinary people reverberated with their own ailments and that of their kin.

Source: adapted from R. Porter and D. Porter, 'Sickness and health in pre-modern Britain', in A. Giddens (ed.) *Sociology: Introductory Readings*, Polity Press, 2001

ITEM B – RISING EXPECTATIONS

Death was once unavoidable. Now it is unacceptable. The virtual elimination in our society of most fatal diseases and rising life expectancy should make us more cheerful. Not a bit of it. According to Nic Marks who runs the well-being project at the New Economics Foundation, our expectations have risen just as fast or faster.

'Objectively our health is better on almost every count', he says. 'But this doesn't translate into people feeling any healthier. People are more aware of their health so they get more anxious about it.'

Health conscious means health anxious.

Source: adapted from R. Reeves, 'Happiness is a warm friend', *Observer*, 19 May 2002

ITEM C – EVERYDAY ACTIONS

Source: Rex Features

Source: Photofusion

QUESTIONS

1 **Read Items A and B and consider why it is difficult to produce an all-encompassing definition of what constitutes 'ill-health'.**

2 **Consider whether social class factors may have an influence on anxieties about health. Refer to Item B in your answer.**

3 **Consider whether or not the behaviours depicted in Item C can be described as healthy.**

Activity 2: THEN AND NOW

ITEM A – DEATH'S DISPENSARY

Source: Mary Evans Picture Library

ITEM E – OBESITY

In ten years obesity will be a bigger killer than smoking. It will be the main cause of preventable death through heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Half of us are now overweight and 1 in 5 medically obese. The number of children who are grossly overweight is the most worrying. Young people lead an increasingly sedentary lifestyle – keener to play on computers and watch TV than to take exercise. MPs are to study the causes of the problem and will seek possible solutions, like controlling the marketing of food by retailers, educating people about the risks of obesity, promoting exercise and urging lifestyle changes.

Source: adapted from J. Dillon and A. Johnson, 'Official inquiry into why the British are so overweight', *Independent*, 11 May 2003

ITEM B – THE BAD OLD DAYS

Dirt defined the Victorian city. Rapid urbanization meant that there was no time to think about waste disposal. Fetching water meant queuing at the street pump, then carrying heavy buckets up to your living quarters. Horse manure filled the streets, while human excrement was removed in night soil carts and sold as manure until it became uneconomical and then it was heaped on street corners or thrown in the river.

Foodstuffs were impure. As late as 1903 more than a third of milk tested in Finsbury, London was found to contain pus and dirt. Ice cream often caused diphtheria, scarlet fever and diarrhoea – in 1898 it was found to contain such things as cotton fibre, lice, bedbugs, fleas and cat and dog hair. Many poor people had only one set of clothes so they were often dirty – soap was a taxed luxury until 1853. In these conditions the filth diseases of cholera, typhus and typhoid were rife. Gradually, improvements took place in water quality and sewerage disposal and social reformers took up the cause of personal hygiene.
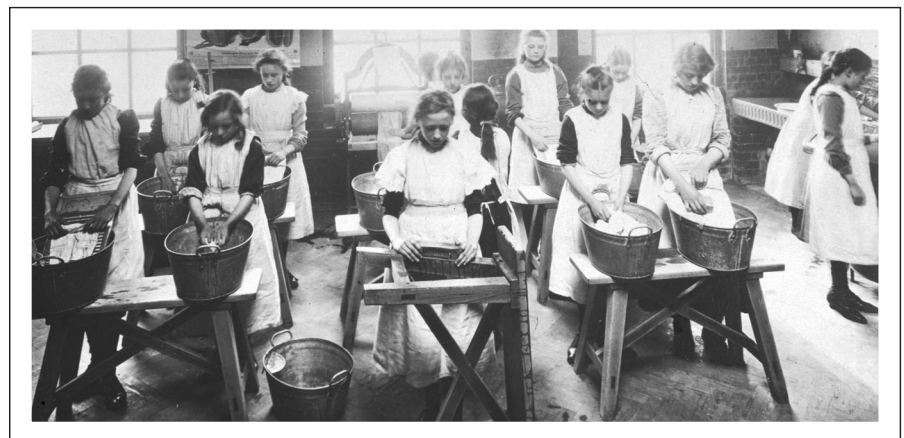
Source: adapted from K. Brewis, 'Dirt', *Sunday Times Magazine*, 22 September 2002

ITEM C – TUBERCULOSIS
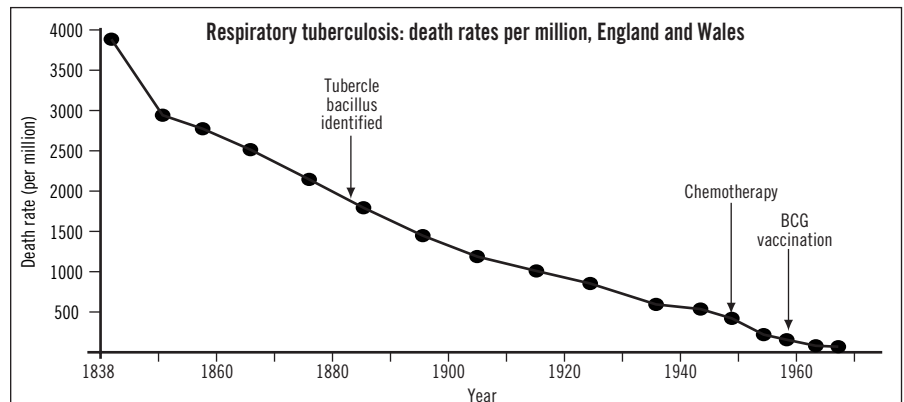
Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Collins, 2004

ITEM D – 1907 DOMESTIC SCIENCE CLASSES

Source: Women's Library/Mary Evans Picture Library

QUESTIONS

1 **There have been significant improvements in health over the last 150 years. Making reference to Items A–D and elsewhere, discuss why these improvements have come about.**

2 **'Today's main killers are lifestyle diseases.' Making some reference to Item E, discuss how far you agree with this statement.**

3 **Briefly say how various changes in people's lifestyles can best be brought about.**

Activity 3: BELIEFS ABOUT ILLNESS

ITEM A – BANGLADESHI IMMIGRANTS

A study of Bangladeshi immigrants in London has shown that while some of their beliefs about diabetes overlap with the medical model, some are very different. As well as recognizing the importance of diet, they blamed heredity, 'germs' and stress. They divided foodstuffs into two categories in terms of their 'strength' and 'digestibility'. Strong foods included white sugar, lamb, beef, solid fat and spices. Such foods were seen as critical to maintain health and at certain festivals. But they were considered dangerous for the young, old or debilitated (including diabetics). Raw, baked or grilled foods were considered indigestible and unsuitable for the elderly, young or ill. Thus the recommendation that diabetics should bake or grill their food rather than fry it would not accord with their food beliefs. By contrast, molasses – a dark form of raw sugar – was considered very safe for diabetics to eat and quite different from white sugar.

The Bangladeshis believed that the onset of diabetes depended on the balance of food entering the body and emissions from the body – e.g. sweat, semen, urine or menstrual blood. An excess of any of these emissions was believed to cause illness and weakness, as in diabetes.

Source: adapted from C.G. Helman, *Culture, Health and Illness*, Arnold, 2001

ITEM B – LOW-INCOME WOMEN IN MICHIGAN, USA

Many saw menstruation as a way of ridding the body of impurities that might otherwise cause illness or poison the system. They saw the uterus as a hollow organ that is tightly closed between periods while it slowly fills with 'tainted blood' and then opens to allow the blood to escape. As a result they reasoned that they could only get pregnant just before, during or after a period when the uterus was still open. When the uterus was open the women believed themselves vulnerable to illness due to entry from such things as cold air, water, germs or witchcraft.

A recurrent fear among the women was that impeding the menstrual flow could lead to a 'back up' and result in cancer, stroke or sterility. Latin American women in particular feared that 'cold' foods like fresh fruit, tomatoes and green vegetables might clot the blood and interrupt the flow.

Source: adapted from C.G. Helman, *Culture, Health and Illness*, Arnold, 2001

ITEM C – ORAL REHYDRATION THERAPY IN PAKISTAN

Researchers found that mothers were ignorant of how ORS should be used to combat dehydration following sickness and diarrhoea. Some of them saw diarrhoea (which was very common in that area) as a natural and expected part of teething and growing up and not as an illness. Some believed it was dangerous to try to stop the diarrhoea lest the trapped 'heat' within it spread to the brain and caused a fever. Others explained infant diarrhoea as due to certain folk illnesses, like malevolent spirits, which should be treated with traditional remedies without recourse to ORT. Some mothers did not connect the fallen fontanelle with severe dehydration and tried to raise it by applying sticky substances to the top of the infant's head and by pushing up on the hard pallet with the finger. Many mothers saw diarrhoea as a 'hot' illness which required a 'cold' form of treatment such as a change in maternal diet. Most Western medicines like antibiotics and even vitamins were considered 'hot' and therefore inappropriate for diarrhoea.

Source: C.G. Helman, *Culture, Health and Illness*, Arnold, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 'Beliefs about health and illness are culture bound.' Discuss this statement making reference to the Items.

2 Why might Western medical practitioners experience frustration when treating the people described in the Items?

Activity 4: TREATING DISEASE

ITEM A – THE "WITCH DOCTOR" OR TRIBAL HEALER

Source: Panos Pictures

ITEM C – THE GP

Consultations with a GP involve healing rituals. From the moment we enter the surgery, give our names and wait for the doctor to see us, we follow implicit and explicit rules of behaviour. The doctor directs an exchange of information followed by practical advice and a prescription. Our symptoms are given a diagnostic label and organized into a named disease, after which the consultation is terminated.

Source: Science Photo Library

ITEM B – DOCTOR JOHN

Doctor John is a traditional healer in rural South Africa. He uses many of the ritual symbols of Western medicine but blends them with traditional African healing. When observed, Dr John was practising from a dilapidated hut. His shelves were crammed with herbs, bulbs, roots and dried skins. Some bottles had recognizable brand names; others had illegible instructions scrawled on them. Within the consultation room labelled 'Dr John's Office' the unqualified healer sat in a white coat, suit and tie. On a table illuminated by two candles lay a number of ritual objects: burning incense, beads, a stethoscope, a syringe and a stack of medical publications. Each patient was asked how they felt and examined with the stethoscope. Dr John then announced he would implore his amakhosi or spirits to aid in the diagnosis. After he had consulted the 'doctor's book' to look for an appropriate treatment, he read out passages from the book, repeating sentences in English. The patient was subsequently given a prescription of appropriate herbs. The prescription always included one or two pharmaceutical products like aspirin, laxatives or cough mixture. Dr John was a popular and effective healer.

Source: adapted from C.G. Helman, *Culture, Health and Illness*, Arnold, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 What does Item A imply about beliefs in the causes of illness in so-called 'primitive' societies?

2 Specify the symbolic cues which communicate a GP's authority – refer to Item C in your answer.

3 Consider why Dr John (Item B) has modified his traditional treatments.

4 'The most powerful treatment is belief in the healer.' Briefly discuss this statement in relation to the Items.

Activity 5: HEALTH AND GENDER

ITEM A – CERVICAL CANCER

This disease is a well-documented example of the role of sexual norms and practices in the distribution of disease. It is rare in nuns and common in prostitutes.

But if the hypothesis of infectious origin is correct, then a woman's risk of getting the disease depends not just on her sexual behaviour but also on that of her partner.

Three types of society have been postulated:

1 Type A, where both men and women are strongly discouraged from pre- or extra-marital relations, e.g. Mormons.
2 Type B, where only women are strongly discouraged from extra-marital sex but where men are expected to have many partners, especially prostitutes, e.g. Latin America.
3 Type C, where both men and women have several sexual partners during their lives, e.g. modern Western societies.

Source: adapted from C.G. Helman, *Culture, Health and Illness*, Arnold, 2001

ITEM C – MAJOR ACCIDENTS AND GENDER

Source: *Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health* (Acheson Report), HMSO, 1999

ITEM D – WOMEN AND 'NERVES'

A study of Greek immigrants to Canada found that 'nerves' were generally suffered by women. The complaint might be characterized by screaming, shouting and throwing things, sometimes accompanied by vague physical symptoms like headaches or dizziness. Its cause can be related to the specific conditions of the immigrants' lives. These included economic pressure, crowded living conditions, the effects of migration of the family, gender role conflicts and women's double burden of running a home and going out to work. It can be seen as a metaphor for distress, a cry for help.

Source: adapted from C.G. Helman, *Culture, Health and Illness*, Arnold, 2001

ITEM B – DRINKING AND SMOKING

Source: © Crispin Rodwell, *Observer*, 27 April 2003

ITEM E – YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO THIN

We don't not eat because we are not hungry: we starve ourselves out of psychological disturbance and, because everywhere we look, thin is beautiful and powerful. Diets are big business – a 1997 survey found that 15 per cent of women would give up five years of their lives to be slim.

For the anorexic, eating becomes a torment. It is hard for the compulsively underweight to put food in their mouths – their response to food is anxious and obsessive. Others will binge eat and then make themselves sick. Before Diana, few people had heard of bulimia – it was an inadmissible illness.

In a Channel 4 documentary, Skinny Kids, a slim 11-year old points to her 'fat' legs and 'fat' tummy. A 6-year old says only her ankles are slim, she hates her thighs. Young girls learn from their mothers to compare their weights and discuss diets. They criticize their immature figures while practising putting on makeup and flirting in front of a mirror.

Source: adapted from N. Gerrard, 'The politics of thin', *Observer*, 5 January 2003 (image by PA Photos)

QUESTIONS

1 **Discuss how cultural practices may affect the distribution of ill-health. Make reference to Items A, B and C in your answer.**

2 (a) **To what extent can 'nerves' among the women described in Item D be seen as due to their position in the social structure?**
  (b) **Do you believe that similar problems affect some British women?**

3 **Suggest reasons why '15 per cent of women would give up five years of their lives to be slim'.**

Chapter 5: HEALTH, MEDICINE AND THE BODY — Answers

ACTIVITY 1: IT'S ALL RELATIVE

Teacher's note

This activity considers the relativity of perceptions of health. Students may wish to read Chapter 5, pp. 290–3.

1 *Key points:*

- What constitutes good health varies from time to time and place to place. It is a relative concept. Even within the same society different groups of people may judge health in different ways. This may be especially true in complex societies. Item A looks at a society where poor health and early death are so common that they are widely accepted and expected. Minor complaints, aches and pains would have been seen as just part of life and hardly worthy of comment.
- On the other hand, in Item B the author suggests that in modern Britain we have become over-anxious about our health. Our expectations of what 'being healthy' should mean have escalated over time so that now anything less than perfection is unacceptable.
- It therefore seems impossible to have an agreed definition of health. People living in developing societies may be much more tolerant of afflictions and pain than are people in Britain. In trying to develop an overall definition, the World Health Organization has acknowledged that health involves not only a physical state but also a wider sense of well-being. This sense of well-being will itself clearly be influenced by people's social surroundings, reference groups and expectations.

2 *Key points:*

- As pointed out in the previous answer, the concept of good health is relative. We know that in Britain people from the lowest social classes are more likely to experience an early death and/or periods of incapacity and ill-health. Many sociologists would agree that both structural and cultural factors contribute to this. It has been suggested that while structural factors like employment experience, low income, housing and so on, adversely affect these people's health, cultural factors may help them accommodate to it. For example, some researchers have found that the poorest people tend to be fatalistic and accepting. (If this is the case, then despite their higher incidence of ill-health, working-class people may be more likely to accept it as an unavoidable part of life.)
- Traditional working-class values have also tended to stress 'toughness' as part of male identity. People in manual occupations, especially those in industries like construction, are more likely to experience injury at work. However, their 'macho' pride may mean that they accept a degree of injury and pain as 'normal' and experience relatively little anxiety about it. If this is indeed the case, it is not to negate the very real implications that these injuries may have on their lives.
- People from higher social classes have many advantages in terms of income, housing and so on. In terms of their subculture, they tend to feel that they are in control and can change their future. Hence these are the people who often seek out information concerning a healthy lifestyle and are also in a position to take advantage of such things as health clubs and better quality food and housing. It could be suggested that because of this attitude they are very aware of their health status. If this Item is correct, constant monitoring of health may lead to anxieties and possibly to unnecessary medical tests.

3 *Key points:*

- Cultural and subcultural factors will influence how behaviours are viewed. The degree to which actions are accepted will be influenced by the norms of the culture and subculture and what is 'known' of the benefit or harm attached to a behaviour.
- Eating a beefburger is a common sight in Britain. However, to some religious groups, eating beef is unacceptable, e.g. Hindus. Moreover, since these burgers are cheap and served in everyday surroundings, some social groups may consider their consumption socially demeaning and avoid McDonald's or similar chains for that reason.
- There have also been claims that eating so-called 'junk' food high in fat and salt can have adverse long-term health effects. Whether or not this 'knowledge' is available or accepted by the subculture of the people in question will further influence whether or not they include these sorts of fast foods in their diets.

- In the second photograph we see a young woman using a mobile phone. Mobile phone use has spread rapidly in Britain in recent years and is widely accepted. Since they are expensive to operate they were used initially by the better off and became both a mark of status and a fashion accessory. Their use therefore carries with it a high status and many young people feel seriously deprived if they do not have a mobile, preferably of the latest style. We do not yet know what the health consequences of their long-term use may be. There is, however, growing anxiety about them among some health professionals, especially when they are used frequently by young people. As yet this 'knowledge' seems to have had relatively little penetration and the phones remain objects of desire.

ACTIVITY 2: THEN AND NOW

Teacher's note

This activity looks at the changing pattern of disease over time.

1 *Key points:*

- One hundred and fifty years ago the main killer diseases were communicable. You could 'catch' them either by contact with infected people or by ingesting impure foods or drinks. The cartoon in Item A graphically illustrates that water-borne disease like cholera and typhoid killed many people. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that public works programmes cleaned up the water supply by such measures as building underground sewers and the incidence of these diseases began to fall.
- In Item B we see that it was not only drinking water that was unclean, but also the streets and rivers were polluted with human and animal waste, forming a breeding ground for a variety of germs. Moreover, foodstuffs were often contaminated. For instance, the ice cream referred to caused diphtheria and scarlet fever, both potentially fatal diseases. The lack of regulation of foodstuffs may also have meant that not only could it give people disease, but also it might have lacked the nutritional value expected. For example, the ice cream referred to has cotton fibre in it and there are cases referred to elsewhere of milk being 'watered down' or flour being adulterated.
- Item B also refers to the dirt in people's homes and on their bodies before the widespread use of soap. This would mean that any illness brought into the house would spread quickly between family members, especially in the overcrowded conditions of the towns.
- Item C demonstrates the decline in TB, most of which took place before the use of either powerful drugs or immunization. Historians like McKeown account for this largely in terms of improvements in people's diets over time. McKeown also recognized the importance of personal cleanliness and hygiene, the cause of which was taken up by social reformers. As a result, we see depicted in Item D a 'domestic science' class teaching young women how to maintain domestic cleanliness. Clearly, such improvements will have had an impact on the spread of TB and other communicable diseases.

2 *Key points:*

- Today's major killer diseases are heart disease, strokes and cancer. These diseases are unlike the main nineteenth-century killers, as they are non-communicable. They also tend to be chronic or long lasting and therefore their management is expensive. It has been suggested that much of this disease could be avoided by people changing their lifestyles. For instance, in Item E we are alerted to the growing problem of obesity and people in Britain getting heavier with each succeeding generation. In the longer term this leads to heart disease, some cancers and diabetes. For the first time in history there are plentiful supplies of food readily available. This, coupled with our increasingly sedentary lifestyle in part due to the decline in manual work and the spread of car ownership, means that we are getting fatter. It has been suggested that our high intake of salt through pre-prepared, highly processed foods means that we are more likely to suffer strokes.
- Some of us choose to abuse alcohol and smoke cigarettes, both of which have been linked to long-term health problems like cancer of the throat and lungs.

- While lifestyle clearly has a bearing on disease, we must also remember genetic factors over which we have no control. Recent advances in our knowledge of DNA suggest that faulty genes may predispose us to diseases like breast cancer or heart disease. Moreover, some people suggest that people may become 'addicted' not only to drink or cigarettes, but also to junk food and that having a predisposition to becoming addicted is itself influenced by genetics.

3 *Key points:*
- The government has attempted to limit smoking by insisting that warnings be put on cigarette packets. Furthermore, cigarette advertising has been virtually banned and many public places like offices are now non-smoking areas so as to protect non-smokers from the risks of passive smoking.
- In recent years the message that it is healthy to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day has also been promoted by the government in order to try to improve diet.
- GPs and other health workers now warn people about the risks of a sedentary lifestyle. People are encouraged to take more exercise and may have a 'prescription' from the doctor for gym sessions.
- The government has also provided health facilities aimed at encouraging people to monitor and take charge of their own health; for example, breast screening and self-examination programmes, cholesterol screening and well-baby clinics.
- We must note that the impact of these programmes varies. Lifestyle messages may change the behaviour of some groups more than others. For example, it has been suggested that the poorest members of society are the least likely to respond to such programmes because material deprivation limits the choices they are able to make.

ACTIVITY 3: BELIEFS ABOUT ILLNESS

Teacher's note

This activity looks at the social construction of health and illness. It gives some examples of different ways in which ill-health and its treatment are understood in different social contexts. It may be helpful to students to read Chapter 5, pp. 301–4.

1 *Key points:*
- After reading the Items, students may feel that some of the responses of the people described are strange, stupid or primitive. This is because we view these responses from our own cultural perspective, which is highly scientific and rests heavily on a bio-chemical model of health and illness.
- In one culture certain bodily symptoms may be considered indicative of underlying illness, whereas in others they are not. For example, in Item C many mothers did not see diarrhoea as an illness, but as a natural part of teething and growing up. The low-income women in Michigan described in Item B clearly saw the time of menstruation as a dangerous one, when they were particularly vulnerable to contracting 'germs' or falling prey to severe illness like cancer if anything were to impede the flow of this 'tainted' blood.
- The causes of different diseases may also be explained in different ways in different cultures. The Western scientific view of the cause of diabetes sees obesity as the problem. To the Bangladeshis in Item A, it is the result of an imbalance between food entering the body and emissions like sweat, semen, urine or menstrual blood. The Pakistani women in Item C sometimes see diarrhoea as the result of malevolent spirits. This, for instance, is very different from the bio-chemical model which holds sway in the West. This model would explain the diarrhoea as due to the invasion of the body by germs or bacteria, which can be combated by the prescription of chemicals (e.g. antibiotics), which will assist the body's natural immune system return the body to health.

2 *Key points:*
- As we have already suggested, Western medicine relies on a scientific approach. Western trained doctors therefore generally believe that their approach is right and other approaches are misguided. For example, the influence of malevolent spirits, referred to in Item C, would be considered unscientific and mere superstition. Moreover, the beliefs of the Pakistani women frequently appear to prevent them from using simple and cheap oral rehydration therapy or antibiotics, considered a hot medicine, in order to treat childhood diarrhoea. A Western doctor working with these Pakistani mothers may well become frustrated at their apparently irrational behaviour.

- Western doctors may also find certain subcultural groups within their own societies difficult to treat. For example, the Bangladeshi immigrants in London failed to follow doctors' advice to grill their food and preferred to continue frying, as this was in keeping with their traditional beliefs. Moreover, they considered molasses (uncrystallized bitter syrup obtained from sugar during refining) to be safe for diabetics to eat.
- Item B provides further examples of the possible discontinuity between doctors' advice and subcultural beliefs. We are told that during menstruation these low-income women will not eat so-called 'cold' foods like fresh fruit and green vegetables. This may lead to these women suffering a vitamin deficiency and generally poor health. More immediately, they may present at their doctor's surgery with an unwanted pregnancy. Since they believe that they can only become pregnant when the uterus is 'open' around the time of a period, they may fail to take contraceptive precautions during other times of the cycle.
- The above example shows that Western doctors may need to show cultural awareness when treating their patients if they are to be effective.

ACTIVITY 4: TREATING DISEASE

Teacher's note

This activity looks at the ways in which different healers treat their patients. It focuses on symbolic aspects of their role. There is no specific reading.

1 The presence of the 'witch doctor' shows that the people believe that illness can be caused by supernatural factors – spirits, curses or spells. This would appear to them just as 'rational' a cause of disease as 'germ theory' would to a Western doctor. Since the 'witch doctor' performs a semi-religious/spiritual role, he is able to neutralize these negative supernatural forces and return the person to full health. His special dress and ritual actions hold symbolic meaning, such that the patient and his family will believe that the evil spirits have been driven away. Western medicine attempts to 'prove' its theories of causation by using empirical means. It would be difficult to test the potency of 'curses' in this way, so most Western doctors would reject this explanation. However, curses are issued when there is disharmony in the social relationships between people. Western doctors are now starting to realize that these 'unscientific' relational and emotional factors may have an important impact on people's health.

2 As Item C illustrates, a consultation with a GP is surrounded by ritual. We visit a special place, the surgery, usually having made an appointment. We wait quietly in the waiting room until our doctor is ready to see us. During the consultation the doctor generally leads the exchange by asking us questions about our symptoms and possibly examining us. His or her authority is often underlined by the presence in their room of such things as a blood pressure monitor, a computer, a stethoscope, an examination bed, spatulas and weighty textbooks (some of which are shown in the photograph). Some GPs and most hospital doctors wear the 'white coat', strongly symbolic of their role as healers. The doctor has the power to give us a diagnosis, which may act as a label that influences our future social relationships. For instance, if it is diagnosed that we are epileptic, we may make important lifestyle decisions based on this (e.g. we may decide not to drive a car or not to have children).

3 Dr John seems to be successfully practising medicine by overlaying traditional remedies with a Western veneer. Local people may have been in contact with the Western media and observed 'Western doctors' in various guises. They will be familiar with white coats, stethoscopes and the other paraphernalia of Western medicine. Since the West has associations with high living standards and low mortality rates, its medicine may carry high status. In the rural area described, it is unlikely that fully qualified Western-type doctors would be available. Moreover, as we have seen elsewhere, Western-style doctors may fail to be sensitive to the cultural beliefs of their patients. Dr John seems to be successfully combining traditional and well-accepted healing methods with high-status Western practices and pharmaceuticals. He is adapting his healing practices to the demands of his 'modern' patients.

4 This statement suggests that if patients believe that their doctor or healer can cure them, then they will be cured – in other words, that a patient's mental state will affect his or her body's ability to heal. Dr John (the traditional healer) and the GP both use symbolic means to impress their patients with their healing powers. At some level these healers are all aware of the importance of the patient's trust in their abilities. While

many illnesses are so serious patients cannot be 'cured' just through belief, in the West it is now becoming accepted that even the progress of serious diseases like cancer may be influenced by the patient's state of mind.

ACTIVITY 5: HEALTH AND GENDER

Teacher's note

Ill-health is unequally distributed throughout society. In this Activity we seek to explore the relationship between gender and health. Students may find it helpful to refer to Chapter 5, pp. 317–18.

1 *Key points:*

· In the case of cervical cancer (Item A), there is a clear link between sexual behaviour and the likelihood of contracting the disease. Simply put, those women who are promiscuous or have promiscuous partners are more likely to contract the disease. Presumably, these women also would be more likely to contract other sexually transmitted diseases. The norms and values of a culture or subculture in as far as they relate to sexual behaviour are then an important determinant of sexual health. As sexual licence has grown in Britain over a number of years, we must expect an increasing number of cases of sexually transmitted disease.

· Item B shows a picture of traditional macho behaviour – men in a pub drinking and smoking together. Within some subcultural groups, heavy drinking and smoking have been associated with masculinity, hence the importance to some men of being 'able to hold their drink'. We know that such behaviours are dangerous. There is ample evidence that smoking frequently leads to lung cancer and arterial disease, while heavy drinking not only damages the liver but is also responsible for many accidents, both inside and outside the home. While many men, especially those in higher social classes, have moderated these activities, increasing gender equality has meant that such activities have increased among young women. More women can now be seen smoking and visiting pubs and clubs.

· In Item C we can see that until the age of 60, males are more likely to be involved in major accidents than females. This again ties in with our ideas of masculinity. Risk taking is generally seen as a masculine characteristic and young boys are often actively encouraged not to be 'sissies'. The main age group for accidents is among teenagers and young men, the time when they are asserting their masculinity and when they may spend a good deal of time with their male peer group. Road traffic accidents at this age are common. A further important explanation for the higher rate of accidents may be men's involvement in the world of work. Men are more likely to be involved in dangerous occupations (e.g. construction) and therefore more prone to serious industrial accidents. If women move into these occupational areas, their rate of injury may increase.

2 (a) *Key points:*

· Greek women coming to Canada will find that their position in the social structure has changed. They may find that very different demands are now placed upon them. For example, we are told that they must now face the duel burden both of running the home and going out to work. This may be particularly stressful since, as new immigrants, the occupational roles open to them may be at the lower end of the job market. We are also told that they face economic pressures. They may 'need' to work while what money does come into the household may be their responsibility to 'stretch'. In low-income families it is often the mothers and wives who must accept the strain in managing an inadequate income to budget for the family's needs. The changes involved in migrating to a very different society will be stressful for the whole family. Since mothers are often seen and see themselves as the affective centres of the family, responsible for establishing a 'happy' home, women may bear the brunt of the whole family's frustrations.

· We are told in the Item that 'nerves' are a cry for help. The fact that women utter this cry rather than men indicates the particular social problems which they may face. It seems that they are translating a sense of social disharmony into an identifiable and socially acceptable illness.

2 (b) It seems that some British women may have much in common with the Greek immigrants described. They too may suffer from the dual burden of paid work and home work. In the case of women at the bottom of the class structure and some single-parent families, they may also experience the stress of low income and overcrowded housing. Trying to manage on a low income may mean that they neglect their health by eating poorly and turning off the heating. It is also these low-income women who are most likely to smoke, possibly to relieve stress and anxiety. In Britain many more women than men are known to visit their GP with 'nerves', again paralleling the Greek women described in Item D.

3 *Key points:*

· The media projects an image of beautiful women as slim. There is often an association made between being slim and beautiful and being loved and desired.

· This obsession with thinness has been taken up by big business, which produce special foods and countless diets, again promoting the view that all women should want to be slim.

· As more women move into high-status occupations in the professions, business and politics, there is a requirement that they be strong and in control. Being fat is often associated with being out of control.

· Children are particularly vulnerable to these pressures, especially when they pick up on the anxieties of their mothers concerning weight.

· The high value placed on slimness may have long-term damaging health consequences for girls, who may become victims of slimming diseases or suffer from psychological problems or infertility.

· By practising 'flirting and putting on makeup' we see that young girls are well aware that they are subjects of the 'male gaze' and may be judged more for their appearance than for their achievements.

CRIME AND DEVIANCE

Activity 1: TIME AND PLACE

ITEM A – HOMOSEXUAL ACTS

This fictitious account is set in 1914, when homosexuality was illegal. A homosexual incident is contrived to bring about a journalist's imprisonment.

'The man with the story I wanted arranged to meet me at the Bandstand on Clapham Common at 11 o'clock that night. So I went and you can guess what happened. A shadowy figure, hat well pulled down, told me to follow. He led me to a quiet spot. Suddenly, I was grabbed from behind by two men. A third man pulled my trousers down. A grinning boy appeared, stripped off his naval uniform and I was pushed on top of him. Then there were flashing torches, whistles, shouts and the police had hold of me. I was remanded in custody at Wandsworth prison. My case was heard on Tuesday 4th August 1914. They gave me five years.'

Source: adapted from R. Goddard, *Closed Circle*, HarperCollins, 1994

ITEM B – GAY POLITICIANS

A majority of British voters support openly gay politicians holding Cabinet posts. According to a Guardian/ICM opinion poll, the days of the British public's intolerance to homosexuals are over. By 56 per cent to 36 per cent, voters say they regard being gay as morally acceptable. The findings will reassure gay Cabinet Ministers that there is no longer automatically a political price to pay for knowledge of their sexuality.

The findings came as MPs turned on the media, particularly the Sun newspaper, over its suggestions yesterday that there is a 'gay Mafia' running Britain.

Source: adapted from A. Travis, 'Public backs gays in Cabinet', *Guardian*, 10 November 1998

ITEM C – HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS

Homosexuality used to be a criminal offence in Britain. In 1969, however, homosexual acts conducted in private between consenting male adults over 21 were made legal, and in 1994 the age of consent was reduced to 18 and in 1998 to 16.

Source: quoted in M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, HarperCollins, 2004

ITEM D – PROMISCUITY IN THE BRAVE NEW WORLD

Two young women, citizens of the Brave New World, sit talking together.

'But after all,' Lenina was protesting, 'it's only about four months now since I've been having Henry.'

'Only four months! I like that. And what's more', Fanny went on, pointing an accusing finger, 'there's been nobody else except Henry all the time. Has there?'

Lenina blushed scarlet; but her eyes, the tone of her voice, remained defiant. 'No, there hasn't been anyone else', she answered almost truculently. 'And I jolly well don't see why there should have been.'

'Oh, she jolly well doesn't see why there should have been', Fanny repeated, as though to an invisible listener behind Lenina's left shoulder. Then, with a sudden change of tone, 'But seriously', she said, 'I really do think you ought to be careful. It's such horribly bad form to go on and on like this with one man. At forty, or thirty-five, it wouldn't be so bad. But at your age, Lenina! No, it really won't do. And you know how strongly the D.H.C. objects to anything intense or long-drawn. Four months of Henry Foster, without having another man – why, he'd be furious if he knew' ...

'Of course there's no need to give him up. Have somebody else from time to time, that's all. He has other girls, doesn't he?'

Lenina admitted it.

'Of course he does. Trust Henry Foster to be the perfect gentleman – always correct. And then there's the Director to think of. You know what a stickler ...'

Nodding, 'He patted me on the behind this afternoon', said Lenina.

'There, you see!' Fanny was triumphant. 'That shows what he stands for. The strictest conventionality.'

Source: A. Huxley, *Brave New World*, Chatto & Windus, 1984

ITEM E – ON THE RESERVATION

Linda, a citizen of the Brave New World, has spent several years stranded amongst the primitives on the reservation. She describes her experiences.

'And if you have people in the ordinary way, the others think you're wicked and anti-social. They hate and despise you. Once a lot of women came and made a scene because their men came to see me. Well, why not? And then they rushed at me ... No, it was too awful. I can't tell you about it.' Linda covered her face with her hands and shuddered. 'They're so hateful, the women here. Mad, mad and cruel. And of course they don't know anything about Malthusian drill, or bottles, or decanting, or anything of that sort. So they're having children all the time – like dogs. It's too revolting.'

Source: A. Huxley, *Brave New World*, Chatto & Windus, 1984

QUESTIONS

1 Deviance varies from time to time and place to place. Discuss this statement using all the Items in your answer.

2 Using information from the Items, discuss why politicians may be hesitant about revealing their sexual behaviour to the public.

Activity 2: THEY JUST CAN'T HELP IT

ITEM A – LOMBROSO

An Italian doctor, Cesare Lombroso, devised his theory of the criminal man and woman in the 1870s. The idea came to him in a 'flash of inspiration' when he was studying the skull of a notorious brigand. 'At the sight of that skull I seemed to see all of a sudden, lighted up as a vast plain under a flaming sky, the problem of the nature of the criminal – an atavistic being who reproduces in his person the ferocious instincts of primitive humanity and the inferior animals.' Enormous jaws, huge eye sockets and handle-shaped ears were the sort of inherited features to be found in 'criminals, savages and apes', Lombroso wrote.

He applied the same reasoning to his study of female criminals. He believed that they too represented a primitive form, which was more like both normal males and criminal males than were normal women. They could be recognized by their heavy lower jaws, muscular strength and erotic tendencies.

'For Lombroso himself, the criminal was conceptualized as a naturally occurring entity, a fact of nature rather than a social or legal product.'

Source: adapted from C. Lombroso and W. Ferrero, 'The criminal type in women and its atavistic origin', in J. Muncie, E. McLaughlin and M. Langan (eds) *Criminological Perspectives*, Sage, 1997. Final quotation from Richard Collier, *Masculinities, Crime and Criminology*, Sage, 1998

ITEM B – CRIMINAL TYPES?
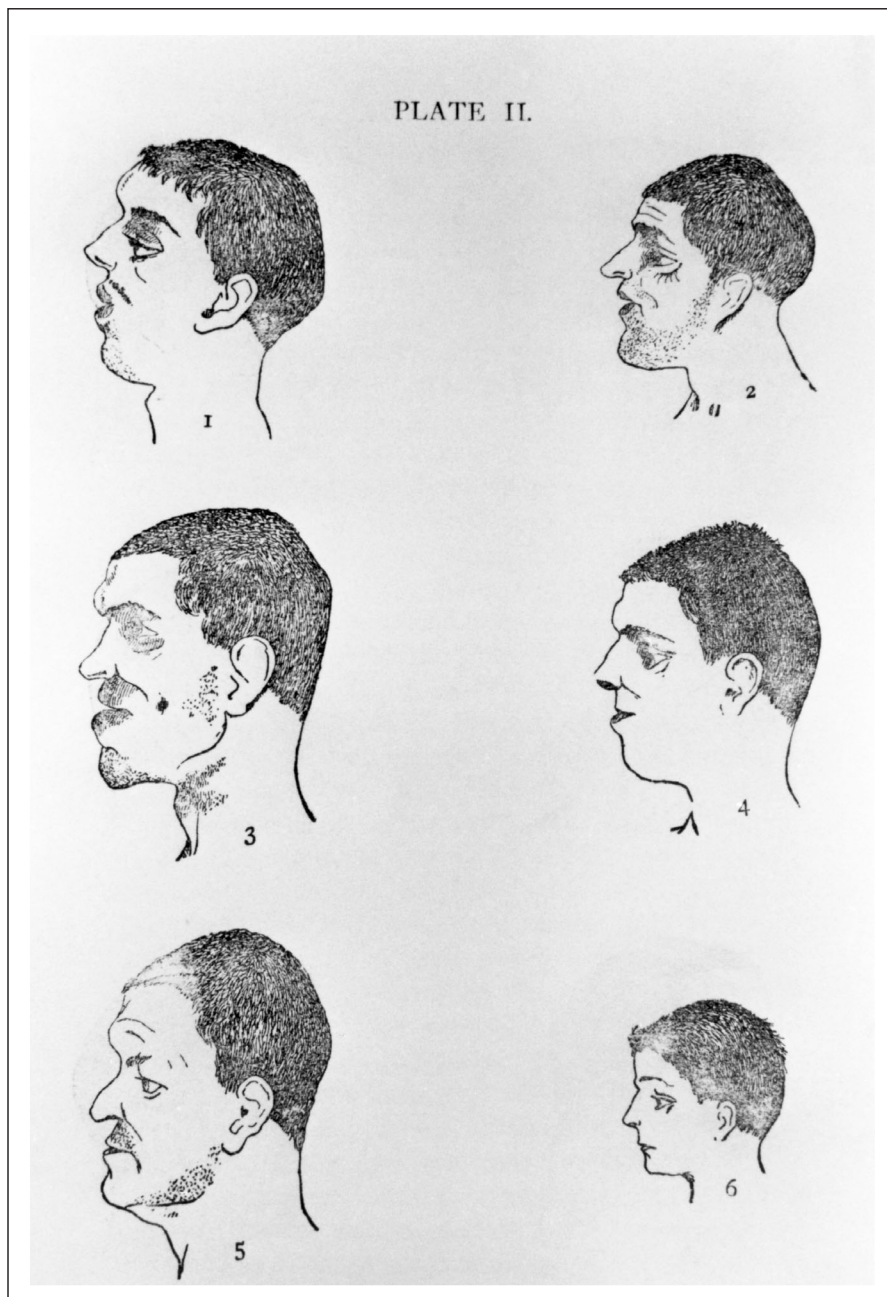
Source: Science Photo Library

Activity 2: THEY JUST CAN'T HELP IT (continued)

ITEM C – IT'S DOWN TO HORMONES

A Home Office study conducted by Professors Rebecca and Russel Dobash of 200 male killers in British jails has found a link between the male hormone testosterone and violence. Their study group was found to have very high levels of this hormone compared to other men. Testosterone levels vary hour by hour and day by day. For example, when male fans attend a football match and their team wins their testosterone levels can double. The Dobashes argue that it is just at such times that domestic violence against women and children is most likely to take place. The peak level of testosterone in the male population occurs between the ages of sixteen and thirty and then declines steeply. It is within just this age group that most violent crime takes place.

The serial killer Michael Ross (Connecticut USA) gave an account of his killings while in prison. His psychiatrist, Dr Frederick Berlin, said that Ross explained that he did not feel in control when doing the killings. He told Dr Berlin that a powerful and irresistible urge to hurt women would come over him. When tested Ross was found to have alarmingly high levels of testosterone. Upon treatment with testosterone reducing drugs, Ross reported that the urge to commit crime had diminished. Ross currently remains on death row. In some states in the USA, drug treatment to reduce testosterone levels has become compulsory. Rather than using this 'chemical castration' as it is known to prisoners, in Germany abnormal sexual drives, such as those affecting paedophiles, may be 'treated' by elective surgical castration. Those who have accepted such surgery appear to be twenty times less likely to commit similar crimes in the future.

High testosterone levels alone may not present a problem – for example, heroes have high levels too. But when it is combined with low serotonin levels, the hormone which puts a break on our activity, it may be dangerous. Dr Frederick Goodwin has made a study of sections of the US military and found that those soldiers who were excessively violent beyond the call of duty, had histories of violence outside of the military. On testing they were found to have very low levels of serotonin.

Animal studies may throw some light on those findings. Dr Dee Higley has found that monkeys who have low levels of serotonin are unpleasant and anti-social and have what are sometimes known as 'psychopathic' personalities. Higley found that monkeys who had been deprived of maternal contact were likely to develop just such personalities. He argues that this maternal deprivation leads to the monkeys developing a brain that permanently produces low levels of serotonin.

Significant in this context may be the findings of the Dobashes' Home Office study, which suggests that 40 per cent of male murderers had experienced childcare disruption. Dr Higley's findings on low serotonin levels in monkeys can be paralleled by the human case of Dion Sanders (USA), who violently attacked and killed his grandparents. Sanders had been a problem child who had moved from one caretaker to the next. Eventually, when rejected by his grandparents, he killed them in a frenzied attack. Sanders was later found to have abnormally low levels of serotonin, a hormone whose absence is progressively being linked to rage, aggression and unrestrained violence. Dion Sanders' lawyer has successfully argued that Sanders' death sentence should be commuted to life on the basis that his low levels of serotonin made him biologically different from other men.

Source: adapted from *Mind of a Murderer*, BBC, broadcast 17 February 2002

ITEM D – PSYCHOPATHS

Potential killers are free to roam the streets because they have personality disorders that are incurable. Dangerous psychopathic personalities who repeatedly offend with little thought for their victims or guilt at their actions are bad but not mad. Are they born this way or is it their upbringing? We do not know. One estimate suggests that as many as 7 in 10 of men leaving prison suffer from personality disorders of this type.

How do we deal with these anti-social personalities? Should we lock them up and throw away the key? Should we drug them or give them electric shock treatment? The answer may lie in recent medical advances. Imaging and scanning techniques mean that it is now possible to use an electronic or magnetic pacemaker to turn on and off different parts of the brain. In the future, psychopathic personalities may be controlled through fitting electrodes directly into their brains.

Source: adapted from A. Mullins, 'Hundreds of psychopaths on streets', *Independent*, 26 October 1998; and R. Carter, 'Inside the mind of a murderer', *Independent*, 30 October 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **Making reference to Items A and B, show how the Victorian stereotype of the criminal lives on in the popular imagination.**

2 **'Criminals are born, not made.' Discuss this view and its implications, making reference to Item C.**

Activity 3: EMILE DURKHEIM

ITEM A – CRIME IS INEVITABLE

According to Durkheim, crime is an inevitable and normal aspect of social life. Crime is present in all types of society; indeed the crime rate is higher in the more advanced industrial countries. According to Durkheim, crime is 'an integral part of all healthy societies'. It is inevitable because not all members of society can be equally committed to the collective sentiments ... of society.

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, HarperCollins, 2004

ITEM B – DURKHEIM AND PUBLICITY

Durkheim argued that the publicity given to deviant acts had a number of consequences:
 1 People are drawn together in collective abhorrence of such an event.
 2 The existing laws which are broken are reinforced.
 3 Positive social change may occur if laws are dramatically broken.

Source: adapted from Jill Swale, '11 September 2001: A sociological analysis', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 11, No. 4, April 2002

ITEM C – 9/11

Source: Reuters

QUESTIONS

1 After reading Item A, consider how crime could exist in a society of saints.

2 Consider the outcomes of the publicity following the events of 11 September 2001, making reference to Item B.

3 How does Durkheim's concept of altruistic suicide relate to the events of 11 September 2001 (Item C)?

Activity 4: YOUTH CRIME

ITEM A – 18TH STREET

18th Street is one of the most violent and most prolific street gangs in the USA. About 60 per cent of members are illegal immigrants. Cars are stolen, homes burgled, people assaulted and robbed.

Although primarily Latino, it has broken with gang tradition, opening its ranks to members of all races from many working-class neighbourhoods. Its recruitment targets are young immigrants. It has ties with the Mexican Mafia and is influential in narcotics and is moving into extortion. Activities are organized by older members – 'veteranos' – who oversee the youngsters, who share an intense loyalty to the gang's values and ambitions. Once in, members are expected to be loyal for life. One 16-year-old says the 18th Street is so huge, so feared, so intoxicating, that it transcends the drudgery of his life. 'Eighteen is the best. We have more respect and most backup.'

Source: adapted from R. Connell and R. Lopez, 'Homeboys' reign of terror', *Observer*, 24 November 1996

ITEM B – RESPECT

There are kids on the estate of 12 and 13 who are going out stealing every day and making more money than their parents earn. They say, 'Why should we study?' And it's not just about money, it's about respect. Khudar Ahmed, who lives on the estate, says, 'The kids just want to prove themselves. They want to be good at something, to be someone.'

There have always been street gangs, but the difference today is that gang culture is no longer a phase kids go through, but is a fully-fledged career option. Today, the muggers and the street drug dealers are the richest kids on the estate, and are heroes to a new generation.

With unemployment in Southwark running at twice the national average, a lot of youths feel that they have few other options. Darren left school early and supports himself entirely through drug dealing. 'If I go out to get a job I take home £150, but I have to take a load of shit with that. So, instead, I do a bit of hustling, trying to make myself a bit of cash just so that I can get a house and a girl and be happy. Life is fucked: the only time that I feel good is when I buy new clothes or go to a party. Otherwise it's just grim.'

Source: adapted from Tony Thompson, 'The Damilola tragedy', *Observer*, 28 April 2002

ITEM C – VIOLENCE

Violence in the gang is highly valued as a means of gaining a 'rep' (reputation). This inversion of social norms is a means of upward social mobility.

A quotation from a member of Egyptian Kings illustrates the point: 'If I would of got the knife, I would have stabbed him ... People ... would say "There goes a cool killer."' He would have then gained respect from his peers as a 'big shot'.

Source: adapted from L. Yablonsky, 'The delinquent gang or near-group', in E. Rubington and M. S. Weinberg, *Deviance – The Interactionist Perspective*, Macmillan, 1987

ITEM D – WANTON DESTRUCTION

The gang mounted an attack on the Granada dancehall. Those outside began hurling full cans of beer and bricks through the windows; those already inside began to smash chairs and draw weapons. The main doors were rushed and entrance gained. The bleeding and terrified bouncers locked themselves in the manager's office. The gang commenced a programme of systematic destruction. Every chair and table, every bottle of lemonade and glass, every window light and balustrade was smashed. Gang slogans were daubed on the walls with spray paint and only the wail of police sirens brought the 'party' to a halt.

Source: adapted from J. Patrick, *A Glasgow Gang Observed*, Eyre Methuen, 1973

QUESTIONS

1 **Robert Merton sees the cause of high levels of working-class crime as located in the social structure. How might this theory be used to explain aspects of behaviour shown in Items A and B?**

2 **Albert Cohen attempts to explain working-class male adolescent crime in terms of 'status deprivation'. What does this mean and what evidence is there in the Items that gang activities compensate for this?**

3 **Cloward and Ohlin argue that there are three main types of delinquent subculture: criminal, conflict and retreatist. Can you find any evidence of these in the Items?**

4 **Jock Young relates the problem of crime to the nature of modernity and the issue of social exclusion. Briefly outline this view and any evidence that you can find in Item B which seems to support it.**

Activity 5: STATISTICS AND CRIME

ITEM A – RECORDED CRIME AND THE BRITISH CRIME SURVEY

Comparison of the British Crime Survey 2001/01 and recorded crimes[1]
Numbers and percentages

	Percentage of BCS crimes reported to the police	Percentage recorded of reported
Vandalism	31	61
All comparable property crime[2]	51	66
Burglary	61	69
Attempts and no loss	44	42
Burglary with loss	84	90
All vehicle thefts[3]	52	69
Thefts from vehicles	48	64
Thefts of vehicles	94	71
Attempted vehicle theft	40	82
Bicycle theft	53	53
Thefts from the person	34	44
Comparable violence[4]	35	48
Wounding	56	53
Robbery	45	46
Common assault	26	45
All comparable crime	42	60

[1] The police recorded crime figures used in this comparison relate to the year up to 30 September 2001, as this is the period most closely comparable with the recall periods covered by BCS interviews in 2001/02.

[2] All comparable property crime comprises all aquisitive crime: includes all burgulary, all vehicle thefts, bicycle theft and theft from the person.

[3] Vehicle interference and tampering became a comparable crime from 1st April 1998; this has been added to attempted thefts of and from, but in some instances may be coded as a nuisance incident or vehicle vandalism when reported to the BCS.

[4] Figures in the table above for violence will differ from figures in table 3.01 because all BCS violence includes: common assault, wounding, robbery and snatch theft. Comparable violence (above) does not include snatch theft.

Source: adapted from M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, HarperCollins, 2004

ITEM B – THE BRITISH CRIME SURVEY

The Survey is based on an interview every two years with 15,000 adults (over 16 years old) about their experience of crime. The sample is drawn from the postcode address file – a listing of all the postcode delivery points. About three-quarters of the people contacted agree to be interviewed. The recently published survey showed a 14 per cent fall in nearly all offences between 1995 and 1997. Nevertheless, the Home Office Survey estimates that there was four times as much crime – 16 million offences – as was officially recorded in police statistics.

Source: A. Travis, 'Crime rate falls for first time in 80 years', *Guardian*, 14 October 1998

ITEM C – ANXIETY

(i) Worry about crime,[1] by household income, 2001/02
England & Wales   Percentages

	Burglary	Mugging	Physical attack	Rape	Insulted or pestered	Theft of car[2]	Theft from car[2]
Less than £5,000	23	24	22	21	14	23	21
£5,000 but less than £10,000	20	21	19	19	11	21	16
£10,000 but less than £20,000	17	16	17	18	10	20	16
£20,000 but less than £30,000	14	12	14	16	7	17	14
£30,000 or more	9	8	9	11	5	13	12

[1] Percentage of people who were 'very worried' about each type of crime.

[2] Based on car owners only.

(ii) Worry about crime[1]: by ethnic group, 2000
England & Wales   Percentages[2]

	White	Black	Asian	All adults
Theft of car[3]	20	37	37	21
Theft from car[3]	15	33	30	16
Burglary	18	37	41	19
Mugging	16	32	38	17
Physical attack	17	35	38	18
Rape	18	34	34	19

[1] Percentage of people who were 'very worried' about each type of crime.

[2] Aged 16–59.

[3] Percentage of car owners.

(i) Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003
(ii) Source: *Social Trends 32*, HMSO, 2002

QUESTIONS

1 (a) Why are some crimes under-reported to the police?

(b) Can you think of any reason why not all offences reported to the police are recorded?

2 The British Crime Survey is a victimization study. Assess its contribution to our understanding of crime, making reference to the methodological comments in Item B.

3 Look at Items C(i) and C(ii).

(a) Which income group is the most worried about crime?

(b) Which income group is the least worried about crime?

(c) Think of one possible reason to explain these differences.

(d) Which ethnic group is the least worried about crime?

(e) Which ethnic group is the most worried about crime?

(f) Offer two possible explanations for these differences.

4 Why are peoples' anxieties concerning crime of importance?

Activity 6: CRIMES WITHOUT VICTIMS?

ITEM A – WHITE-COLLAR CRIME

Another major trading scandal has surfaced in the City of London. John Ho Park has lost a cool £6.2 million over two day's gambling on the rise and fall of the German government bond market. His serious misjudgement has lost money belonging to other traders. The Financial Services Authority say that traders can expect to recover just 50 per cent of their losses. If they discover any evidence of criminal misconduct then the Serious Fraud Squad will be called in.

Mr Park's mistake is small beer compared with the £860 million lost in 1995 by Nick Leeson trading in Singapore, yet there are similarities between the two traders. Both gambled on the notoriously volatile futures markets, both breached trading limits and both apparently allowed one initial mistake to spiral out of control. Both also seem unlikely rogues of the Square Mile. Ho Park, the New York-born son of a Korean millionaire, is widely considered to be a hard-working and ambitious young man, prepared to put in the hours to succeed.

Source: adapted from A. Buncombe and A. Garfield, 'Jo Ho Park', *Independent Review*, 8 January 1999

ITEM B – CAPITALISM

The paucity of action taken thus far on environmental issues portrays vividly the power of the corporate sector. This is an area ... which challenges the lifestyle and philosophy which is the basis of all capitalist systems – the idea that humans have a right to make use of all the resources of the planet, that other life forms such as animals and birds are there to serve our needs, and that we have no long-term obligations to future generations or to the natural world.

Source: Nigel Smith, 'The Criminological Imagination', in M. Haralambos (ed.) *Developments in Sociology, Vol. 16*, Causeway Press, 2000

ITEM C – CORPORATE CRIME

In the Cleveland village of Lazenby, people fear the rain, as it is black with dust. 'If you look carefully you can sometimes see yellow and orange vapour in the air', says a local policeman.

The village is one of the country's most polluted blackspots. Its villagers are the victims of the local ICI plant, which persistently and illegally emits toxic gases into the atmosphere.

According to a 1995 study, women living here are four times as likely to contract lung cancer as the national average. 'On numerous occasions my home has been full of toxic fumes', said Ian Franks.

Britain's most poisonous plant is ICI's Merseyside chemicals factory in Runcorn. Since 1995, it has broken the law 472 times, releasing chemicals, often toxic, into the neighbouring communities. The Environment Agency (the national pollution watchdog) has castigated the management of ICI for 'poor environmental performance ... [and] poor management'. The Agency's Director accused the company of widespread environmental failures – 'I want to see a change in attitude across the company', he said.

ICI has been prosecuted three times in the past three years. It has paid a total of £51,450 in fines and costs. Its annual profit last year was £603 million.

ICI is not Britain's only polluter. Castle Cement operates a plant in Lancashire where it burnt 43,000 tonnes of a mixture of solvents and liquid waste last year as a cost-effective method of heating its kilns. Local GPs have written to the Department of the Environment requesting a full investigation. Studies have found that children in the area suffer high rates of asthma, eye irritations and sore throats. Locals do not trust the Environment Agency to protect their interests. 'The Environment Agency has adopted a very soft approach to industry', said Phil Shiner, the residents' lawyer. 'It should instead be applying and enforcing the law to protect communities ... its procedures have lacked rigour and are characterized by misdirection in law, failure to meet their legal duties, inconsistencies and an unwillingness to refuse industries' applications to pollute the environment.'

A spokesperson for the Environment Agency admitted that prosecution was not the Agency's preferred way of dealing with incidents ... 'We prefer to protect and improve the environment rather than punish'.

Source: adapted from J. Burke et al., 'Poison that blocks out the sun', *Sunday Times*, 1 June 1997

QUESTIONS

1 **Read Item B. Now make a list of any corporations or industries that have been accused of jeopardizing the natural world and/or future generations.**

2 **Are white-collar crimes truly 'crimes without victims'? Discuss this, making reference to Items A and C in your answer.**

3 **Some white-collar crimes remain undetected for many years. Why is this? Draw on Items A and C in your answer.**

4 **Making some reference to Items A and C, explain why:**

(a) **even when detected, many white-collar crimes never reach court;**

(b) **when they do reach court, offenders are often treated leniently.**

Activity 7: LABELLING

ITEM A – THE SAINTS

Eight promising young men, children of good, stable, white, upper-middle-class families, active in school affairs, were some of the most delinquent boys in Hannibal High School.

Their principal daily activity was getting out of school as early as possible. They used an elaborate procedure to feign legitimate excuses for each other to leave class. For example, that they were needed for a drama practice. Since teachers considered them to be 'good' students this ploy usually worked and they were able to meet up and take a drive, perhaps to a café on the other side of town, where they would amuse themselves by 'accidentally' spilling drinks, putting salt into sugar bowls and generally horsing around. At weekends, one of their favourite tricks was to drive to a large town some miles away and remove barriers and lights from soon-to-be-repaired holes in the road. The boys would find a safe vantage point and hang around until an unsuspecting motorist drove into the hole. Then they'd rapidly drive away roaring with laughter. Stolen lanterns would find their way onto the back of police cars or would be hung on street lamps. Abandoned houses were fair game for wanton destruction and spontaneous vandalism. The boys would break windows, urinate on the walls and scrawl obscenities inside. The boys had a spirit of frivolity and fun about their escapades. They did not see themselves as engaged in delinquency.

The boys were highly successful in school, despite their truancy. They helped to maintain their grades by rampant cheating. If their grades were disappointing they managed to persuade the teachers they were capable of much better. If any of their misdemeanours were discovered they were thoroughly contrite and begged for mercy. The local police were convinced that the Saints were good boys just out for a lark. On one occasion, one of the Saints was fined $5 for disturbing the peace, but after apologies from the boys the culprit was assured that there would be no permanent record of the arrest. Hannibal townspeople never perceived the Saints' high level of delinquency. Much of it took place out of town or when driving their cars. They were seen as good boys just out for an occasional prank. After all, they were well dressed, well mannered and had nice cars.

Source: adapted from W. J. Chambliss, 'The Saints and the Roughnecks', in E. Rubington and M. S. Weinberg, *Deviance – The Interactionist Perspective*, Macmillan, 1987

ITEM B – THE ROUGHNECKS

These six boys were the same age as the Saints and engaged in an equal amount of wild-oat-sowing. But everyone agreed that these not so well-dressed, not so well-mannered and not so rich boys were heading for trouble. From the community's viewpoint, the real indication the boys were in for trouble was that they were constantly involved with the police. Some had been picked up for stealing, for fighting or for drinking. They frequently hung about on street corners making a nuisance of themselves by insulting passers-by. There was a high level of mutual distrust and dislike between the Roughnecks and the police. The boys' dislike of the police was mainly due to the police sporadically harassing the group. They would come to the street corner where they hung out and threaten them with arrest for loitering. From the police's point of view, they felt certain that the boys were involved in criminal activity. They knew this from occasionally catching them but mainly from circumstantial evidence. They also shared the community view that the group was under observation. Each member was arrested at least once. Several were arrested a number of times and spent a night in jail, while two were sentenced to six months' incarceration in a boys' school for the delinquent. Confrontations with the police were generally met with hostility and aggression from the Roughnecks.

In school, the Roughnecks were not particularly disruptive and attended school with surprising regularity. But if a teacher bugged them it could lead to trouble, and on one occasion a teacher was threatened. The teachers believed that the Roughnecks were uninterested in making anything of themselves and were heading for trouble.

Since the Roughnecks had no cars, much of their delinquency took place in full view of the townspeople. When they were picked up by the police, their powerless working-class parents tended to acquiesce in the law's definition of their sons' behaviour.

Source: adapted from W. J. Chambliss, 'The Saints and the Roughnecks', in E. Rubington and M. S. Weinberg, *Deviance – The Interactionist Perspective*, Macmillan, 1987

ITEM C – A DEVIANT CAREER

By and large, the Saints and the Roughnecks have lived up to the community's expectations of them. Seven of the Saints graduated from college, one became a doctor, one a lawyer, one went into research and the other four took up managerial and executive positions. Of the Roughnecks, two boys, skilled at football, graduated and became teachers and live stable lives. Of the other four, two have become serious criminal offenders and the other two appear to 'bum around' on the margins of trouble.

In general, as the community responded to the Roughnecks as boys in trouble, the boys accepted this perception, acquired an image of themselves as deviant and went on to select new friends who affirmed this self-image. As that image became more firmly entrenched they became more willing to try new and more extreme forms of deviance. With growing alienation came freer expression of disrespect and hostility for the representatives of legitimate society.

Source: adapted from W. J. Chambliss, 'The Saints and the Roughnecks', in E. Rubington and M. S. Weinberg, *Deviance – The Interactionist Perspective*, Macmillan, 1987

QUESTIONS

1 **Explain how and why the Saints were able to avoid being labelled as deviants. Refer to Item A in your answer.**

2 **Why were the Roughnecks successfully labelled as deviant (Item B)? Show an understanding of stereotyping in your answer.**

3 (a) **What factors contributed to the Roughnecks' developing delinquent careers (Items B and C)?**

(b) **Do you think that such a development is inevitable? Give reasons for your answer.**

## Activity 8: PLAYING THE SYSTEM

ITEM A – ON THE DOLE

Brian and Donna Deigham, along with their ten children, woke up last week to discover that they were the most infamous and loathed family in Britain. They have the dubious honour of being dubbed Britain's biggest spongers. Last Thursday, Brian found his face on the front page of the *Daily Star*, beneath a headline which read 'Cut 'em off ... and his benefits too'. And they weren't referring to his telephone.

Brian is a lazy, scrounging sod, they said, who'd rather stay at home breeding like a rabbit and living the life of Riley on his benefit bonanza of £26,000 a year. Worse still, he's happy to live on handouts and believes he has a right to more money from the likes of you and me.

He's a man who long ago decided that welfare handouts offered an easy and more profitable way of life than work. He's a weak man whose own self-esteem has been extinguished.

Source: adapted from C. Landesman, 'A whole lot of love on the dole', *Sunday Times*, 25 January 1998

ITEM B – ON THE FIDDLE
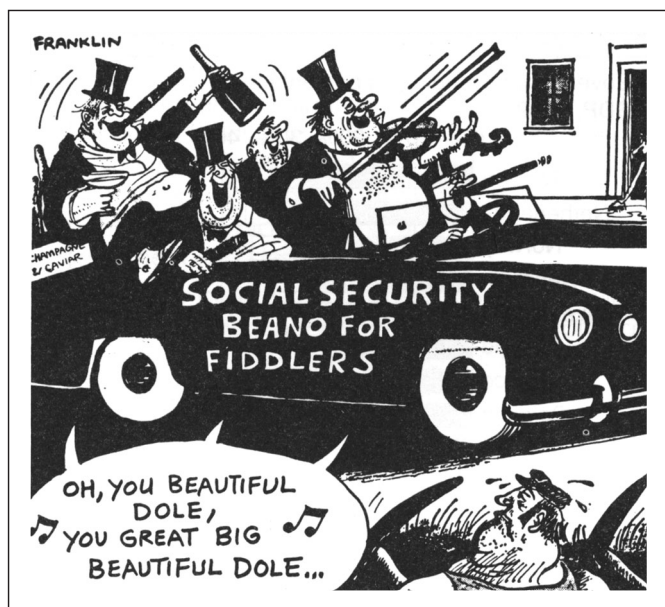
Source: M. Haralambos (ed.) *Sociology: A New Approach*, Causeway Press, 1996

ITEM C – WELFARE FRAUD

The fact is that proven welfare fraud presents a tiny proportion of those claiming benefit and a very small percentage of the sum expended. Evidence suggests that fraud accounts for only 0.42 per cent of the total paid out. The real problem is that many people, especially the elderly, fail to claim benefits to which they are entitled. The problem for the Welfare State is not the number of proven fraudulent claims but the significant number whom the Welfare State fails to reach.

Source: adapted from S. Hall, 'Drifting into a law and order society', in J. Muncie, E. McLaughlin and M. Langan (eds) *Criminological Perspectives*, Sage, 1997

ITEM D – DODGING VAT

Britain is becoming a nation of black marketeers in which the rich as much as the poor flout tax laws to make their money go further. Research reveals that now 1 in 3 consumers regularly negotiates paying for goods and services in cash to avoid VAT at 17.5 per cent.

The upper class are keen participants in the cash economy with the most affluent A and B social groups found to be the worst offenders.

Dr Frank Cowell, Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics, believes that the black market is denying the Treasury £20 billion a year in tax.

The research also revealed that the upper classes are increasingly happy to pay employees in cash to avoid tax. Nearly half the ABs questioned preferred to pay cash to a nanny, gardener or cleaner, saving about 20 per cent by avoiding tax and National Insurance. A leading architect with four children said she talked to her accountant about officially employing her house staff whom she currently pays in notes – 'It sounded too expensive and too complicated', she said. Her husband, a barrister, said he also prefers to be paid in cash – 'If a client offers to pay me in cash for my services, I take it. It means that there is no paperwork, no tax.'

Source: adapted from P. Nuki and E. Hamzic, 'Black market explodes', *Sunday Times*, 9 August 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **Drawing on Items A and B, briefly explain why you think welfare claimants receive such a bad press. Include a Marxist perspective in your answer.**

2 **Many more people are prosecuted for benefit fraud than for tax fraud. Using a traditional Marxist approach, attempt to explain this fact. Refer to Items C and D in your answer.**

Activity 9: GENDER AND CRIME

ITEM A – OFFENCES BY GENDER

Offenders found guilty of, or cautioned for, indictable offences: by gender, type of offence and age, 2000

England & Wales — Rates per 10,000 population

	10–15	16–24	25–34	35 and over	All aged 10 and over (thousands)
Males					
Theft and handling stolen goods	113	205	89	16	142.1
Drug offences	14	143	53	8	76.5
Violence against the person	29	68	28	7	47.1
Burglary	32	53	16	2	31.0
Criminal damage	13	17	6	1	12.0
Robbery	6	11	2	–	5.9
Sexual offences	3	4	2	2	5.2
Other indictable offences	11	96	52	11	66.4
All indictable offences	221	597	250	47	386.2
Females					
Theft and handling stolen goods	65	72	30	6	53.5
Drug offences	2	15	8	1	9.3
Violence against the person	9	11	5	1	8.1
Burglary	3	3	1	–	1.8
Criminal damage	2	2	1	–	1.4
Robbery	1	1	–	–	0.6
Sexual offences	–	–	–	–	0.1
Other indictable offences	3	20	12	2	14.3
All indictable offences	85	123	57	11	88.9

Source: from M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, HarperCollins, 2004

ITEM B – GIRL GANGS

The scar on the woman's face was a neat, livid line running from her ear to her mouth and she wore it with pride. It was cut to show that she is part of a new women's gang emerging on the streets of Brooklyn.

Five years ago, girls in their early teens began joining America's inner-city gangs, attracted by the comfort of a group and the gangster image. For many, with their family lives destroyed by drugs, poverty and jail, gangs offered a sense of security, companionship and protection. They formed auxiliaries to the men's gangs and found that their status in the community suddenly shot up. 'They treated me like a little sister', said one inductee of her new gang pals. 'And if I ever had any problems, they'd help me out. I'd never had that before.'

Initially, their crimes were gang muggings, stealing jewellery and clothes that they could not afford themselves. 'I'd just see something I wanted too bad I'd just take it, I'd pull a knife, I'd just want things', said one 15 year old. But as the new members have grown older, many have progressed to the killings carried out by the male gangs. A group of girls killed a 15 year old on the New York subway for her earnings. 'The women can be as violent as the men, sometimes even more so', said a Brooklyn cop. 'When they are arrested for violent crime, they show no remorse.'

Male gang members have begun to fear the women, who are starting to take key roles in many of the activities. One man ... who recently quit as a gang member, gave his own chilling conclusion on dealing with women in gangs: 'She'll set you up – men are like that with women – she'll draw you in, and then she'll kill you.'

Source: Ruaridh Nicoll, 'Gang babes love to kill', in A. Giddens (ed.) *Sociology: Introductory Readings* revd edn, Polity Press, 2001

ITEM C – GIRLS AND SOCCER

In his study of soccer hooliganism, David Robins asks, 'What were the girls doing while the boys were putting the boot in on the terraces?' Many, he says, were up there with them. There are more boys than girls but the girls do join in the fighting and encourage the boys to fight. Where girl gangs do exist, they not only emulate but may also try to outdo the boys. 'We go to fight', the 'Leeds Angels' told Robins. 'At Norwich and Ipswich there's sometimes more lasses than boys ... When Man United played Norwich ... there were forty arrests and there must have been thirty lasses got arrested.' Robins believes that girls are learning that they can give as good as they get.

Source: adapted from L. Segal, 'Explaining male violence', in J. Muncie, E. McLaughlin and M. Langan (eds) *Criminological Perspectives*, Sage, 1997

ITEM D – MAMMY RUNS THE MOB

Last week, Marisa Merico, daughter of an Italian Mafia boss, was released from prison after serving a sentence for money laundering. In the last four years, police have begun to target women in their investigations and the number of arrests has risen rapidly. Recent prosecutions have shown that women take an active role, getting involved in everything from organizing a prison breakout to ordering hits. The belief that women were not involved in organized crime was sanctioned by a judgement in a Palermo court where the judge said that women were not clever enough to negotiate 'the difficult world of business'. Such views meant that women in organized crime were virtually invisible. The judiciary is only now waking up to the idea that women play a key role in organized crime.

Source: adapted from S. C. Longrigg, 'Mammy runs the mob', *Independent*, 26 January 1998

QUESTIONS

1 With reference to Item A, consider the points of sociological interest.

2 'Girl gangs that are violent do not fit easily into the American idea of femininity.' Explain this statement, making reference to Item B.

3 'Recorded differences in the pattern of crime committed by men and women will completely disappear in the not too distant future.' Comment on this statement, drawing on the information in Items C and D.

Activity 10: NEW MASCULINITIES AND CRIME

The following Items are taken from an ethnographic study conducted in Northeast England during the late 1990s. By this time, heavy manual employment in the shipyards had virtually disappeared and most poorly qualified working-class young men were left with few employment opportunities other than to enter the emerging 'feminized' service sector.

ITEM A – TOUGH GUYS

The masculine protocols and 'gender regime' of the past, of physicality, fighting, fighting ability and the readiness to fight, of autonomy, release and skill are not rejected but merge with new influences and take on new meanings in the postmodern age. Physicality need not be expressed by the hardship of manual labour but by the reshaping of the body to accentuate the male image with a larger and more defined musculature; fighting ability need not be restricted to personal displays of toughness to win the respect of one's peers, but can become a viable commercial asset, a career option or a means of defending one's market share.

Source: Simon Winlow, *Badfellas: Crime, Tradition and New Masculinities*, Berg, 2001

ITEM B – MICHAEL

Michael began to establish his reputation for fighting and violence while still at school. He progressed to football hooliganism, which led him to becoming noticed as a local personality. Football hooligans fight for 'honour, reputation, and above all pride' and in this masculine mix, Michael became the one who went a little bit further in upholding these three values. It began to dawn on him that his violent potential and the fear it could generate could be a means of imposing his will upon others and that this could establish his status in the illegal marketplace. Michael went on to illegal entrepreneurial activities like selling on stolen car parts and dealing drugs in local nightspots. Michael has also made money directly from his reputation for violence. When a friend became embroiled in a dispute with a local drug dealer, Michael confronts the dealer.

Michael: 'It was a pain but I had to do it. I went up where he hangs about, went in a few pubs. He wasn't there, but I asked about for him and word must have gotten back. I went up again, he wasn't there. And again. Now I'm getting a bit pissed with this fucker. People are starting to whisper about this, you know? I eventually caught up with him in this pub before the match. He saw me before I saw him, and he comes up next to me at the bar. People are starting to move away now. He starts off with 'alright, I haven't seen you in ages', all that shit. I told him to get outside. You can feel the eyes. One of his mates starts following us out, and I just fucking let loose on this cocky fucker, swearing my head off at him, telling him to go back inside or I'll murder him. He goes. Now I'm really pissed off. Now he's not in front of his mates, he really wants to be best friends. I say he's been dodging me and I fucking hate that. He says he didn't know what I wanted, if I was looking for trouble. By now I've won. He's shitting himself and I wasn't sure if I should give him a beating for spoiling my match day. Anyways he gives it, 'I didn't know he was your friend' and all the shit's coming out. I just told him, you know, I don't joke with this shit, I'll kill him, like fucking dead, you know? He doesn't want any bother, says he doesn't know how all this shit started. I've won. I send him in the pub to buy me a pint, just so everyone knows I've won and didn't even have to slap the fucker. Made him walk from one side of the pub to the other to give me the pint … He was a drug dealer and wanted to be a gangster, but in the end he bottled it.'

Source: Simon Winlow, *Badfellas: Crime, Tradition and New Masculinities*, Berg, 2001

ITEM C – EXTREME VIOLENCE

A group of men who 'mind' a pub sort out some trouble with an unruly customer.

'Gordon immediately advances on the now prone man, preparing to launch another onslaught. He begins to kick the man and is joined in this by Frankie and Matty. They aim kicks at the man's head, the way you would shape up to strike a football with the utmost force. Frankie is swearing, calling the man a bastard. I see the man role into the foetus position and cover his head with his hands. Matty, clearly drunk, is also swearing and is now raising his foot to stamp on the man's head. Gordon gives up and walks away.

Frankie and Matty, and now Kevin, kick the man for a while longer, and then ease up for a moment. The wounded man, lying on the ground, has stopped moving and I consider seriously the possibility they've killed him. However, he then sparks back into life, rolls on to his other side, re-covers his head and the kicking recommences.

Against all instinct I tell the men to stop. I don't want to, but I feel compelled. I know what doing this can mean. I'm not naive about what these men can do. My stomach is turning as I say, leave him alone, he's had enough. I can feel Matty looking at me. There is an uncomfortable moment of silence before Chris joins in and tells them to leave him alone.'

Source: Simon Winlow, *Badfellas: Crime, Tradition and New Masculinities*, Berg, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 **What changes in expression of working-class masculinity does the author of Item A identify?**

2 **Making some reference to Items B and C, discuss how it could be argued that changing masculinities may predispose young working-class men towards crime.**

3 **With reference to Item B, briefly discuss the methodological implications of using Michael's verbatim account as sociological material.**

4 **What is your opinion of the sort of research enterprise described in Item C?**

Chapter 6: CRIME AND DEVIANCE – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: TIME AND PLACE

Teacher's note

Here we examine the relative nature of deviance. Through examining a variety of material, some fictitious, students are encouraged to develop an understanding of the changing definitions of what counts as deviant behaviour. Students may wish to read Chapter 6, pp. 330–2.

1 *Key points:*
- Sociologists and anthropologists have long been aware that behaviour seen as normal in one social context may be seen as deviant or even criminal in another. Homosexuality is one such example, as outlined in Items A and B. Gradually, over time, sexual norms have changed, and this has been reflected in changes in the law (Item C).
- Items D and E focus on sexual promiscuity. In the Brave New World, what we would regard as conventional attitudes to sex are turned on their heads. Promiscuity has become the prevailing norm in society. In contrast, the behaviour of the primitives on the reservation, who still practise monogamy, is seen as incomprehensible.

2 *Key points:*
- Acceptance of homosexuality is not universal, as is indicated by the *Sun*'s suggestion (Item B) that there is a 'gay Mafia' running Britain. Social attitudes are often slow to change. Many older members of society were brought up at a time when homosexuality was still illegal, and many religious groups continue to disapprove of it. If a Member of Parliament represents a constituency where such views are widely held, then it is likely that a public admission of homosexuality would damage their prospects at the next election.
- Attitudes towards promiscuity also continue to be fairly conservative. For this reason, many politicians attempt to promote the image of being happily married. The revelation of extra-marital affairs may dent public confidence in their political abilities.

ACTIVITY 2: THEY JUST CAN'T HELP IT

Teacher's note

Through this activity, students may examine various explanations of crime which focus on the differences between criminals and the rest of the population. Criminals are perceived as having abnormalities which account for their behaviour.

1 *Key points:*
- In both Items A and B the criminal is seen as fundamentally different from other people, the root of that difference being founded in biology.
- The differences in physical appearance were seen as the result of nature rather than nurture, as a 'fact of nature' and therefore unchanging and unchangeable.
- Modern images of the criminal continue to reflect aspects of this stereotype, particularly in the case of certain crimes like serial murder. Violent offenders are often described as 'born evil', as ' monsters' or 'devils'.
- People continue to believe that some criminals at least can be recognized by their appearance. For example, some people with close-set eyes are described as 'shifty' and untrustworthy or those with thin lips as 'cruel'. This lesson has been well learned by con-artists and fraudsters who recognize that their physical appearance will affect whether or not they are likely to be trusted by their prospective victims.

2 *Key points:*
- Item C follows the tradition of nineteenth-century criminologists in seeing the criminal as different from other people in society.
- The Item raises some interesting questions about how this difference actually comes about. Older theories (for example, those of Lombroso) see biology as leading to behavioural differences. Item C, however, raises the possibility that biological development may actually be shaped by environment experiences. While it is dangerous to make parallels between research conducted on animals and humans, Dr Dee Higley's work is suggestive that early childhood deprivation may shape

the brain in such a way that it is fixed in a particular pattern for the remainder of that person's life. Even when exposed to a positive social environment later in life, the biological differences that had developed in childhood could not be changed.
- If the findings are shown to be valid then there are significant implications for treatment programmes. Those people who believe that killers are produced because of defective socialization or learning have recommended programmes of re-education, challenging offenders to reconsider their values. However, if poor maternal contact has permanently damaged a person's development, this would be of little use. As Item C points out, programmes of drug intervention or surgery might be the only means of changing behaviour.
- When we consider the question of individual responsibility, we find that Sanders' lawyer was able successfully to argue that he should receive clemency because he was different from other people. Those killers with high testosterone levels in the Home Office study might also seek to 'excuse' their actions on the basis that they are 'slaves' to their hormones.

ACTIVITY 3: EMILE DURKHEIM

Teacher's note

This activity invites the student to consider Durkheim's contribution to our understanding of deviant behaviour. Students may wish to refer to pp. 332–3.

1 *Key points:*
- Durkheim believed that society was based on common norms and values shared by its members. The law defines the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Every time a person breaks the law and is punished, those boundaries are made known and reinforced. The publicity given to crimes broadcasts to the community the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and warns them against breaking them.
- If we were all saints then society would still need some way of defining acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. In this situation the smallest deviation from the norm might be seen as a serious transgression; for example, if one of our 'saints' did not conform to appropriate dress or was lazy. The social condemnation which would follow would serve to reinforce the limits of acceptable behaviour. If other members of the saintly community had great sympathy with the wrongdoer, it would be a signal to the community that attitudes were changing and that it was time to modify their rules or laws. To clarify this argument, we could refer to the rules which govern the behaviour of monks or nuns. In the past, many religious communities have had rules concerning when, where and if members can speak to each other. Over time, many orders have relaxed these rules, as they no longer came to reflect the consensus of opinion.
- Following from this boundary-testing function of the law, described above, is the law's function in reinforcing social solidarity. Again, if we take our society of saints as an example, when members jointly condemn a person for his or her deviance from acceptable behaviour, they are drawn together in mutual horror, shock and disgust. This tends to strengthen the bonds between them and so reinforce social solidarity.

2 *Key points:*
- The destruction of the twin towers in New York led to public outrage throughout the Western world. Television, radio and newspapers spent very many hours re-running the destruction, analysing public service responses to it and interviewing people who had been in the vicinity. Prayers were said for the dead and bereaved and three minutes' silence was observed throughout the USA and beyond. Americans were drawn together in collective abhorrence of the act and there was a resurgence of nationalism. This sentiment also spread to Europe, where there was support and sympathy towards both the victims and the United States as a whole. Many individuals were moved to place flowers in prominent positions to demonstrate their grief and sympathy. In the media there appeared virtually no dissent from this line and the attack was condemned throughout many parts of the world.
- After the attack in the United States, laws were tightened to try to prevent a repeat of the event. Powers of arrest of people suspected of terrorist

activities have been extended both in the USA and many European countries. Security has been tightened at international and national airports, such that people are routinely searched and any item which might be used as a weapon, e.g. a razor blade, no longer permitted in hand luggage. Throughout much of the world, general airport security has been tightened. In Britain, tanks were deployed at Heathrow airport in February 2003 following intelligence reports that there might be a terrorist attack and a number of motorists on surrounding roads were questioned by police. There is now stronger legislation surrounding money laundering in order to try to cut off funds from terrorist groups. In Britain, there are attempts to strengthen legislation against illegal immigration and the closer regulation of asylum seekers, some of whom have been accused of terrorist sympathies. There continues to be discussion as to whether or not an identity card should be introduced in Britain to increase public security. All these measures are ways of combating the terrorist threat made real in the public imagination after 11 September.

· It is more difficult to decide whether or not any positive social change has resulted from the 11 September attack. It could be argued that the changes in the law and the political coalition against terror has made people in the Western world more secure against terrorist attacks than previously. The attack in the United States also led to the bombing of Afghanistan and the ousting of the Taliban regime. Many Afghanis believe that this has led to a better and safer society for them. A minority of people have also raised the question of why the USA has become the focus of such animosity. It has been argued that the disparity in wealth between the USA and, to a lesser extent, Europe and less well-developed societies has produced a fertile soil in which animosity has grown. It may be that this debate will lead to the Western world becoming more proactive in the relief of hardship in other parts of the world and a closer consideration of such long-standing questions as the provision of a homeland for Palestinians.

3 *Key points:*

· The behaviour of the terrorists in the 11 September attack led directly to their own deaths. Using Durkheim's classification of suicide, which relates rates of suicide to social structures, these could be classified as altruistic suicides. Durkheim argues that in these societies the individual is subsumed into the group to such an extent that little value is put on individuals, but great value placed on individuals sacrificing themselves for the good of the group. As far as we know, the terrorists died for the cause of al Qaeda. Their loyalty to their cause was greater than their sense of individual survival. They will have viewed themselves much more as martyrs than as terrorists. Durkheim pointed out the importance of family and religion as integrating forces in society. In the case of the terrorists, their fundamentalist Muslim beliefs would have given them a strong sense of loyalty to the group. It may also be that they would be respected and praised by members of their families for taking such courageous actions for the sake of their cause.

· The case of these terrorists, however, does highlight the criticism sometimes levelled at Durkheim that in 'real life' actual suicides can be attributed to any of the four types of suicide. In this case, while altruistic suicide seems an obvious explanation, it may also be that the bombers felt hopeless, that they believed there was no other way but to blow themselves up (fatalistic suicide). Alternatively, their suicide could be described as being egoistic if the bombers' chief motive was to achieve a reward in paradise or high status on earth. Finally, their suicides might also be described as anomic if their behaviour was the result of living in a society characterized by dislocation, disorganization and rapid social change.

ACTIVITY 4: YOUTH CRIME

Teacher's note

We look in this activity at theories of the causes of delinquency. Students are asked to examine descriptions of crime from different theoretical viewpoints. Students should read Chapter 6, pp. 333–7 and 358–60.

1 Merton believes that the main cultural goal in American society is 'money success'. Young people from working-class backgrounds have limited opportunities to reach this goal through legitimate means, and may respond to this situation in a variety of ways. One of these Merton calls 'innovation'. This involves an acceptance of the cultural goals, but a rejection of the institutionalized means of achieving them, that is, career advancement. In Item A, young people may find it virtually impossible to gain money success through legitimate channels, and so use criminal routes, as Merton's theory predicts. Similarly, in Item B, we are introduced to teenagers who live in a deprived area. They find that by stealing or dealing drugs they can make

much more money than their parents do through legitimate channels. These activities therefore become career options.

2 Albert Cohen recognizes that gang delinquency constitutes a way of life in some inner-city areas. He argues that male working-class adolescents are deprived of social status at school. As a result, a subculture develops which turns the values of the school on their heads. Being bad becomes good. The gang provides its members with an immediate means of gaining social status and hitting back at a system which defines them as failures. There are several examples in the Items of the need to gain respect. For example, in Item B, Khudar Ahmed says, 'The kids just want to prove themselves. They want to be good at something, to be someone.' This seems to uphold Cohen's view that youth crime is bound up with the idea of prestige or status. Cohen's theory also seems to provide an explanation for the seemingly mindless behaviour of gang members in Item D. In terms of the subculture, they are able to take their revenge on society by destroying property, while gaining the respect of their peers through defiantly spraying gang slogans on the wall and terrorizing the unfortunate bouncers.

3 Cloward and Ohlin believe that different types of criminal subcultures emerge in different situations.

· Those adolescents who live in an area where there is already an established pattern of adult crime may be able to learn the 'tricks of the trade' and gain success as professional criminals. This seems to be the situation in Item A.

· Cloward and Ohlin's second type is the conflict subculture, which gives rise to fighting gangs. This seems to be the pattern in Items C and D. These gangs tend to emerge where adolescents have no access to either legitimate opportunity structures or the illegitimate opportunities of a criminal subculture. The embittered frustration of their situation often leads to acts of gang violence.

· Cloward and Ohlin's third group is the retreatists, who indulge in illegal drug taking. In Item B, there is evidence of young people taking drugs, but rather than 'retreating', their habit seems to fuel their criminal activity, since they must obtain large sums of money to buy drugs on the streets.

4 *Key points:*

· Jock Young believes that we have moved from an inclusive to an exclusive society. He describes the 1950s and 1960s as a Golden Age when family life was stable, employment secure and the welfare state provided important citizenship rights to everyone. This was a time when core values surrounding work and the family were shared by most people, there was a broad consensus about right and wrong and a sense of community. Young argued that by the 1970s economic changes were creating economic insecurity and unemployment which, in turn, increased the amount of social exclusion. According to Young, a major reason for crime in the exclusive society of high modernity is the problem of relative deprivation. He explains its increase partially in terms of increasing social inequality, an increasing emphasis on material success, high levels of cultural inclusion, which encourage high aspirations, and a general feeling of the injustice of rewards.

· If we refer to Item B, we can see that many of the young people described are relatively deprived. They live in a deprived part of London, yet aspire to having possessions that would not be affordable from the sort of regular job that they could obtain. There is a clear emphasis on materialism. Many youngsters have their own CD players and mobile phones, while one youth admits that the only time that he feels good is when he buys new clothes or goes to a party. The fact that many youths rob children living in their area seems to imply that there is little sense of community or fellow feeling. Darren, quoted in the Item, does not accept the idea that being a drug dealer is wrong – he argues that he is one of the good guys with morals. The apparently widespread practice of using and selling drugs like crack cocaine would seem to imply a shift away from the core values still held by many members of society and enshrined in the law.

ACTIVITY 5: STATISTICS AND CRIME

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on the British Crime Survey and the discrepancies between its findings and official statistics. Students will be aided by reading Chapter 6, pp. 338–46.

1 (a) *Key points:*

· People may feel that the offence is too trivial – for example, in cases of minor vandalism or petty theft. They may feel that the time and effort involved are not worth it, and that in any case the police are unlikely to take any action.

- The victim of a crime may distrust the police. For example, in a case of racial harassment the victim might believe that the police may attribute some blame to them or even accuse them of some other offence.
- A person who has been raped may feel that the ordeal of police examination, questioning and a court case would be too traumatic.
- Others may fear reprisals. In neighbour disputes, for instance, or in some cases of domestic violence, the victim may feel that police involvement would only escalate the problem. It is also difficult for the police to take action in many cases, since there may be little actual evidence on which to build a case.
- The high rate of reporting of thefts of vehicles and burglaries with loss may be because many victims will have their cars and domestic items insured. Insurance companies require thefts to be reported to the police before they will settle claims.

(b) *Key points:*

- The police may not believe the complainant. If there is no evidence and no witnesses it may be one person's word against another's. The police may suspect the complainant of making a malicious complaint or even of attempting to make a false report in order to make an insurance claim.
- The police may believe that there is insufficient evidence on which to proceed.
- In some instances – for example, in some domestic disputes – the complainant may withdraw the complaint, again leading to non-recording on the part of the police.
- The police may decide that no crime has taken place or that it is too trivial to proceed with.

2 *Key points:*

- The methodology of the British Crime Survey may be open to certain errors. In Item B we are told that, although the survey uses a representative sample to select subjects to be interviewed, only about 75 per cent of the sample respond. It may be that the other 25 per cent are substantially different to those who do respond.
- The project will also be subject to all the inaccuracies of interview bias. Respondents may not respond truthfully to all the questions – they may feel ashamed or guilty about being victims of certain crimes, such as sex offences or domestic violence. They may also forget or become confused about events that happened some time ago.
- A national survey of this sort will also be unable to pinpoint crimes in different localities. It will give an overview which may mask huge variations within the country.
- As a victimization study, the survey may not uncover so-called 'crimes without victims', such as fraud.
- Despite its limitations, many people believe that the British Crime Survey comes nearer to representing the 'true' level of crime than do police statistics.
- As the Item states, this survey only covers those over age 16. Since younger people may be responsible for a considerable amount of crime and in some localities have become feared by residents for the mayhem that they cause, this would appear to be a very significant limitation of these studies.

3 (a) The least well off – those with incomes of less than £5,000.

(b) Those with the highest income – £30,000 or more.

(c) It may be that the least well off live in run down inner-city areas. We know that rates of crime in those areas are high, so these people may rightly see themselves as vulnerable.

(d) The white group is consistently less worried.

(e) Asians are the most worried about crime, but are only slightly more worried than blacks.

(f) First, Blacks and Asians may feel that they are likely to be targeted by racists. They may feel that they are more likely to be attacked or robbed because of the colour of their skin. Second, Blacks and Asians are often poorer than white members of society, so may live in areas of poverty or social dislocation.

4 *Key points*

- People's anxieties about crime affect how they behave. If people believe that burglaries and car thefts are increasing, then they may decide to take precautions, such as fitting alarms. Such action may deter potential thieves and actually lead to a reduction in such offences. If, on the other hand, people believe that personal attacks are increasing, then they may be unwilling to go out at night in some inner-city areas. This may lead to them becoming 'no go' areas, potentially more dangerous than before.
- People's fears and anxieties may also be communicated to the police and government. By way of illustration, child abuse has recently been

in the headlines. Police awareness and sympathy for victims may make people more willing to report such offences. This will lead to the numbers of both reported and recorded offences rising. The government and judiciary are also sensitive to public opinion, and this may be reflected in sentencing and policy.

ACTIVITY 6: CRIMES WITHOUT VICTIMS?

Teacher's note

Aspects of white-collar crime and corporate crime are examined in this activity, which also explores some of the reasons why such crime is under-reported in criminal statistics. Students should read Chapter 6, pp. 343–46.

1 Students may think of a wide variety of answers to this question.

Some might be:
- The pharmaceutical industry by producing drugs such as thalidomide which have damaged people/babies.
- Monsanto and the GM crop debate.
- The nuclear industry and its discharge of radioactive waste into the air and sea.
- The chemical industry's discharges into the rivers and air.
- The destruction of the rainforests by logging companies.
- The pollution of coastal areas after spillages from oil tankers.
- The agricultural industry has been criticized for practices that have produced disease in cattle, which has passed to people as CJD.

2 *Key points:*

- Edwin Sutherland defines white-collar crimes as those committed by persons of high social status in the course of their occupations.
- While there is no one obvious 'victim' of Ho Park's activities in Item A, other city traders have lost money and two companies have ceased trading. Thus many people may have been affected. It could be that the public will feel little sympathy with these 'victims'. They may see little difference between the activities of these other traders and Ho Park's 'crimes'.
- In Item C, the victims of polluting industries are the workers in the plants and the people living in the local communities. The taxpayer may also suffer, since those people who become ill will become a drain on the National Health Service. Some may become permanently incapacitated and need long-term financial help to support themselves and their families.

3 *Key points:*

- Financial institutions may remain unaware of losses. Moreover, it is not always clear if a crime has been committed. In the case of Ho Park, for example, it may be that he has merely been unwise in his trading strategies and done nothing illegal.
- In some cases, both parties may see themselves as gaining from the relationship, and so neither would wish to report the crime. In fact, white-collar crimes can become so widespread in business that they become part of accepted practice – for example, overcharging expenses, making private calls on office telephones and taking office stationery home.
- As we see in Item C, industrial pollution may go undetected if people are unaware of the dangers. Some chemicals, for example, may be colourless and odourless, or local inhabitants may be told that the emissions are harmless. It may be only later, when they experience health problems, that they become aware that they have inhaled toxic substances.

4 (a) *Key points:*

- It is not uncommon for the organization concerned to dismiss the culprit, recoup what money it can, but decide not to press legal charges. In this way, it avoids damaging publicity which would dent public confidence. In a similar way, cases of professional misconduct may be dealt with internally, thus preserving the good name of the profession and the standing of its members in the community.
- In the case of industrial pollution, we see from Item C that the Environment Agency seems unwilling to prosecute. The Agency is funded by the government, and it may be that it does not have the resources to perform its role as conscientiously as it might wish. Companies such as ICI have huge financial resources and may be in a position to influence government policy and its implementation. In the light of these factors, the Environment Agency officers may feel that it is only worthwhile mounting a prosecution where there has been a particularly serious breach of regulations.
- Local residents may decide to pursue a case against a local industry, but it is notoriously difficult to prove a direct link of cause and effect between a particular environmental factor and a specific health

condition. For instance, it has taken many years to establish an undeniable causal link between smoking and lung cancer.

- Large companies may prefer to pay compensation to 'victims' without admitting liability. This avoids costly and damaging litigation while they are free to continue polluting the environment.

(b) *Key points:*

- Most white-collar criminals, like Ho Park in Item A, do not fit the popular stereotype of a criminal. To a judge and jury, such an offender would be unlikely to be perceived as a threat to the public. They may therefore be more likely to receive a non-custodial sentence or a short term of imprisonment.
- In the case of industrial pollution, judges may to some extent identify with the senior managers responsible. They are members of the same social stratum and will have many things in common.
- Judges may also be sympathetic to the argument presented by industry that it must be allowed some leeway if the industry is to prosper. It might be argued that closure would cause even greater problems for the local inhabitants by increasing unemployment in the area.

ACTIVITY 7: LABELLING

Teacher's note

This activity adopts an interactionist approach. After completing the activity, students should have an understanding of labelling, stereotyping and the deviant career. Students will find it useful to read Chapter 6, pp. 346–53.

1 *Key points:*

- The Saints were upper-middle-class boys. They came from good homes and were well-mannered. Although highly deviant, they were able to maintain their positive image with the school and the police. This was partly because they did not fit the prevailing stereotype of the deviant, so were cast in the role of good boys with futures, just having a little fun.
- Much of their delinquency was invisible to their own community because it took place well away from their home area. They were able to reach these places in their own cars, which meant they could also escape quickly and avoid being caught.
- The boys themselves did not believe that they were delinquents and were able to project an image to the police as mere pranksters, on the rare occasions when they did have contact with them. No doubt, articulate and influential parents could be called upon if needed to negotiate on the boys' behalf.

2 *Key points:*

- The Roughnecks came from less privileged backgrounds, were less successful at school, had poor manners and were poorly dressed. In other words, they fitted the popular stereotype of the delinquent. Although we are told that they were no more delinquent than the Saints, the Roughnecks were labelled by the community as trouble-makers.
- Unlike the Saints, much of the Roughnecks' delinquency seems to have taken place in full view of the community. They also appear to have been more openly aggressive. Although their behaviour may not have endangered the public to any greater extent than the 'pranks' of the Saints, their manner will have been perceived by the public as threatening and typically delinquent.
- The Roughnecks were regularly involved with the police. We are told that the police constantly suspected them of wrongdoing and threatened them with arrest. This is hardly surprising, as police statistics record high levels of crime among young, lower-class males. Thus, to some extent, police stereotyping may have helped to produce a self-fulfilling prophecy.
- When arrested, the Roughnecks were hostile and aggressive to the police rather than conciliatory like the Saints. Their parents may not have had the confidence or social skills to intervene on the boys' behalf. Gradually, the label of 'delinquent' seems to have been firmly attached to them.

3 (a) The Roughnecks appear to have been powerless to resist labelling by the school, the community and the police. Gradually, the boys came to agree with the community's perception of them and, as they changed their self-image in accordance with that perception, their patterns of deviance were reinforced. They gradually moved away from straight society, adopted progressively more deviant friends and engaged in further delinquent acts.

(b) While Item C shows that the Roughnecks have been far less successful than the Saints in conventional terms, they have by no means all become hardened criminals. Even if a person is labelled from an early age, they may resist that label. Significant others like parents, teachers or youth

leaders may counter the negative identity of a boy in trouble. For example, the two boys who were 'skilled at football' may have avoided the master status of 'delinquent' through this other status. Thus, a delinquent career should not be seen as an inevitable outcome of early community and police labelling.

ACTIVITY 8: PLAYING THE SYSTEM

Teacher's note

This activity invites students to use a traditional Marxist approach in analysing society's view of welfare claimants, welfare fraud and tax fraud. Students will find it helpful to read Chapter 6, pp. 353–5.

1 *Key points:*

- The tone of the Sunday Times article, particularly the reported remarks from the Daily Star, is very judgemental. It is assumed that Brian Deigham is lazy and weak. In Item B, welfare claimants are depicted as 'fiddlers', living the life of Riley at the taxpayer's expense. In both Items the distinction between legitimate claimants and fraudsters seems to have become blurred.
- From a Marxist point of view, the capitalist system relies on exploitation. In order to maintain their privileged position, the rich and powerful must persuade the rest of us to accept the system and our place within it. The media have an important role to play in this. Claimants are portrayed as individual failures, scrounging off the state, rather than as victims of an unjust system. They thus become scapegoats on which the alienated masses can vent their frustration. This serves to direct hostility away from the ruling class while effectively dividing the working class against itself. Also, under capitalism, the ruling class relies upon the labour of the masses.
  Thus, those people who do not work must be roundly condemned in order to act as a deterrent to others.

2 *Key points:*

- Item C points out that there is very little welfare fraud. In fact, many people fail to claim benefits to which they are entitled, no doubt at least in part because of the stigma attached. Item D, on the other hand, cites evidence that there is a high amount of unrecorded tax fraud, particularly among social groups A and B. In contrast, very little stigma appears to be attached to these offences.
- Welfare claimants are poor and largely working class, while tax fraudsters are more likely to be well off. Since claimants are assiduously prosecuted while large-scale tax evasion is largely ignored, it would seem that there is one rule for the rich and one for the poor.
- From a traditional Marxist viewpoint, the law is being used to favour the interests of the ruling class. By focusing on working-class benefit fraud, attention is directed away from ruling-class crime.
- Under capitalism, people are expected to hire out their labour. Those people who receive benefits generally do not work and therefore, according to capitalist values, they are undeserving. On the other hand, tax evaders are likely to be employed and therefore contributing to the overall system. As such, their tax fraud may be more readily condoned.

ACTIVITY 9: GENDER AND CRIME

Teacher's note

This activity examines the changing relationship between gender and crime as reflected in official statistics. Students will find it helpful to read Chapter 6, pp. 382–90.

1 *Key points:*

- In both male and female offenders, the peak rate of offence appears to be within the age group 16–24. This is closely followed by the 10–15 age group. Over the age of 35 there are comparatively few people found guilty or cautioned for indictable offences.
- A significant gender difference can be seen in the amount of offending. In every age group, males are more than twice as likely to appear in the statistics as females.
- Both males and females are most likely to be involved in theft and handling stolen goods. However, there are differences between the genders in relative likelihoods of being involved in sex crimes and violence against the person. Females commit practically no sexual offences and are also responsible for very few crimes of violence.
- These conclusions presuppose that official statistics are reliable and valid, a view not accepted by all sociologists.

2 *Key points:*

· A conventional view of femininity might include such characteristics as being attractive, compliant, non-aggressive and devoted to family, husband and home. The young women in Item B display a disturbing level of violence. From this account the gang members appear to be willing to use knives and kill people for their possessions. The first paragraph also demonstrates an acceptance of a degree of physical violence within the group which, in this case, leads to a disfiguring injury. These types of aggression are very much at odds with how most people expect young women to behave.

· However, there are elements in the behaviour and attitudes of these girls that continue to reflect more traditional and acceptable female behaviour. We are told that the gang offers 'security, companionship and protection' and that 'they treated me like a little sister'. This need for support and a surrogate family appears very much more in line with traditional ideas of femininity.

· In the last paragraph, women are accused by a male ex-gang member of being manipulative. Again, we could argue that this reflects a more traditional idea of women, who have been accused of using their 'feminine wiles' to draw men in. The use of 'cunning', if indeed it exists, might be the result of women having less power in relationships between the sexes than do men.

3 *Key points:*

· If we take the view that people's behaviour is formed from their social experiences, then this prediction may in time come true. As gender roles become increasingly similar, it may be that differences in criminal patterns will gradually disappear.

· Items C and D provide us with two examples of areas of crime which have traditionally been largely masculine. Item C seems to provide evidence of substantial female participation in soccer hooliganism. While girl gangs may as yet be a rarity, partly created by a media hungry for the extraordinary, their existence could also indicate the beginning of a trend.

· Recent prosecutions show that women are heavily engaged in organized crime, and until recently have been able to engage in such crimes virtually unchallenged. Again, given present trends in gender roles, we might expect this involvement to gradually increase.

· We have tended to assume that recorded crime reflects the true rate of crime. It may be that a considerable amount of female crime exists, which in the past has been unrecorded. Since women and girls do not fit the public and police stereotypes of criminals, their offences may have passed unnoticed. As social attitudes change, police may be more willing to charge girls with offences. It could be that the increasing similarity in patterns of offences recorded in the statistics is in part a reflection of these changing attitudes.

ACTIVITY 10: NEW MASCULINITIES AND CRIME

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on changing masculinities and is based on an ethnographic study conducted in the Northeast. There is no particular reading for this activity. Teachers may also wish to use this item in conjunction with Chapter 14, pp. 909–14.

1 The author of Item A recognizes that working-class masculinity has long involved an important element of physical toughness. In the past, in an area like the northeast, this toughness may well have been expressed through dangerous or exacting physical labour – for example in the shipyards. Since this time, changes in the economy have meant that opportunities to obtain employment in this type of occupation have become extremely limited. The author of this extract sees working-class men not as rejecting this physicality but as giving it new meanings and new forms of expression. He refers to the postmodern emphasis on bodybuilding, expressed in the large numbers of young men who now attend gyms and 'work out' with weights. Moreover, he argues that physical prowess not only earns respect from peers as in the past, but also may be used as a career option – as a means of earning a living.

2 *Key points:*

· In Item B, Michael is described early in life as gaining a reputation for violence and fighting. These skills are used largely for gaining status with peers through engaging in football hooliganism. This would obviously bring Michael into contact with the police and possibly the courts.

· As Michael became older he realized that his violent reputation could be put to financial use. While pursuing his business interests – buying and selling illegal drugs – being an intimidating figure would have ensured that Michael could hold his own when dealing with big-time

dealers or customers unwilling to pay promptly for their supplies. Similarly, in his dealing with car thieves, he would be less likely to be 'cheated' if he had a fearsome reputation.

· Michael's verbatim account makes it clear that his reputation is of great importance to him. During the argument with the drug dealer he is very aware of the impression he is making on others. He deliberately makes the drug dealer buy him a pint and bring it across to him so that it is obvious to observers that he has won. It is this reputation that ensures that others are willing to pay him to sort out their problems. In the exchange referred to, Michael's reputation, coupled with aggressive language, meant that he could reach the desired conclusion without even landing a blow. However, it is clear that he was quite willing to hit his adversary, which would have clearly put his conduct outside the law.

· In Item C, we see the sort of extreme violence that can result from 'minding' a pub. These men are paid to prevent trouble in the pub. They are not deterred from meting out extreme violence, obviously an extremely serious offence, even though the so-called troublemaker was unable to fight back or defend himself. After giving out such a beating, the men concerned would have further enhanced their local reputations as hard men. We have no evidence from the Item, but it could be that knowledge of their aggression might form the basis of extortion – local business being encouraged to pay these men not to damage their premises, thus involving them in further crime.

3 *Key points:*

· Michael is acting as an informant in this Item. One problem is that we do not know how truthful is his account of events. He may have his own agenda. He could be exaggerating his role in events in order to impress the researcher. On the other hand, he could be underplaying the amount of violence involved, perhaps because he was nervous that the incident could be reported to the police.

· A second problem is that we do not know whether or not Michael is in any way typical of young men of his class and region. A criticism often made of qualitative research of this sort is that it is impossible to generalize from such accounts. The researcher can only speak to those informants who are willing and at hand.

· Notwithstanding the above, Michael's description of events does seem plausible. It may also be that the researcher is able to check Michael's account through speaking to others involved in the incident. The account certainly provides rich data, which appears to give a valid insight into the sort of life led by tough men operating on the margins of the law.

· When researchers are interested in groups of people who live on the margins of society and may regularly break the law, it is difficult to use more structured quantitative measures. People like petty criminals are unwilling to respond to 'questionnaires', for obvious reasons. Much useful sociological information into deviance has been gathered in the past by people like William Whyte and James Patrick, using similar methods.

4 Students may produce a variety of answers to this question, but some of the most important points might include:

· The researcher involved is with the attackers and so he allows himself to become involved in a serious offence. He appears to stand by in the initial stages of the attack and make no attempt to call the police. Some people would consider this to be immoral.

· The researcher eventually does step in to prevent further harm to the victim, but by doing this he puts himself in considerable jeopardy. The men concerned may have easily turned on him and beaten him up. Thus it could be argued he was risking physical harm or even death.

· The psychological stress placed on the researcher, his family and his supervisor when the researcher becomes immersed in such a culture would be severe. In order to be accepted by the group and establish a rapport with respondents he would need to tolerate a good deal of violence and general bad behaviour. In this case a serious offence took place. Some people would consider the researcher's involvement as foolhardy. When researching a group of thugs, the researcher is therefore endangering himself. With current Health and Safety legislation this may explain why this type of research is now comparatively rare.

· A researcher may 'go native' to such an extent that they become willing to go along with such violence and in some cases even come to accept it. This may introduce bias into the results of the research.

· The researcher clearly adopted a covert role, at least in this part of the research. Some people would regard this as unethical.

· This type of research is open to only very few researchers. The man involved must have been a young, strong male, possibly with a northeast accent and some familiarity with the pub and club scene. Otherwise, he could not have been accepted. It is impossible to imagine, for example, a middle-aged woman having similar access to the day-to-day activities of 'hard men'.

chapter 7

RELIGION

Activity 1: THE FUNCTIONALIST VIEW

ITEM A – EMILE DURKHEIM: THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE

We are a society creating sacred things out of ordinary ones. If society finds a person who seems to embody its main aspirations, its central values and moral beliefs, the person will be treated almost like a god. The deference inspired by such a person is similar to religious respect. It shows itself in the same way – by people keeping a distance from such a high personage, by approaching him or her only with caution, by speech and gesture, using behaviour not used towards ordinary people.

Source: adapted from E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Allen & Unwin, 1968

ITEM C – TALCOTT PARSONS

Do not repay evil with evil ... Live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay' says the Lord.

Romans 12: 17–20

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

1 Thessalonians 4: 13–15

God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven in blazing fire and his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

2 Thessalonians 1: 6–9

Source: *The New Testament and Psalms*, Gideon International

ITEM B – BRONISLAW MALINOWSKI

Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

Source: Rex Features

Source: E. Stocker

QUESTIONS

1 **Using information from Item A, to what extent can past and present members of the British royal family be seen as sacred individuals?**

2 **Malinowski argues that certain situations threaten both social and psychological integration. Using Item B, show how religion might function to reduce this threat.**

3 **Parsons felt that the apparent injustices of life could make life appear meaningless.**

   (a) **Drawing on Item C, how does the Christian religion give meaning to life?**

   (b) **In so doing, how does it contribute to the well-being of society and the individual?**

Activity 2: THE MARXIST VIEW

ITEM A – THE OPIATE OF THE PEOPLE

A group of ragged workmen in the early part of the nineteenth century are discussing religion.

'I don't pretend to 'ave no 'ead knowledge' said Slyme, 'but 'ead knowledge won't save a man's soul; it's 'eart knowledge as does that. I know in my 'eart my sins is all hunder the Blood [of Christ] and it's knowin' that wot's given 'appiness and the peace which passes all understanding to me ever since I've been a Christian.'

Easton holds a different view. 'As for all this religious business, it's just a money-making dodge. It's the parson's trade, just the same as painting is ours, only there's no work attached to it and the pay's a bloody sight better than ours is.'

'Yes', said Harlow, 'they lives on the fat of the land and wears the best of everything, and they does nothing for it but talk a lot of twaddle two or three times a week. The rest of the time they spend cadgin' money off silly old women who thinks it's a sorter insurance.'

Although they laughed at and made fun of these things, the reader must not think that they really doubted the truth of Christian religion ... they had all been brought up by 'Christian' parents and been 'educated' in 'Christian' schools ... It must be remembered that they had been taught self-contempt when they were children. In the so-called 'Christian' schools they attended then they were taught to 'order themselves lowly and reverently towards their betters', and they were now actually sending their children to learn the same degrading lessons in their turn! They had a vast amount of consideration for their betters, and for the children of their betters, but very little for their own children, for each other, or for themselves.
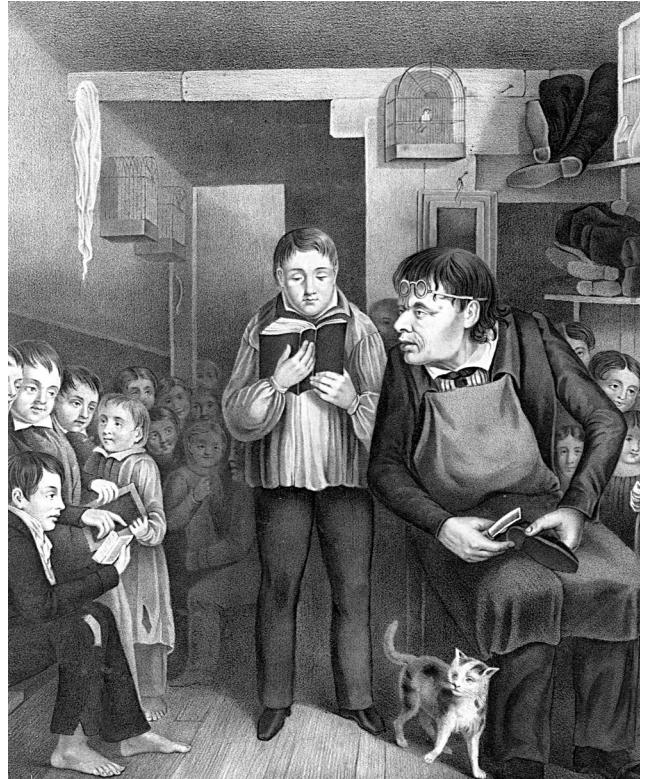
Source: Corbis

Source: adapted from R. Tressall, *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*, HarperCollins, 1993

ITEM B – POLITICAL ACTION

Archbishop Trevor Huddleston was a founder of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in 1957 and its President from 1981 to 1994. He received a Knighthood in the New Year's Honours List in 1998 for his contribution to bringing about democracy in South Africa. As a young Catholic priest working in South Africa in the early 1950s he wrote a book bitterly criticizing the Group Areas Act and the Bantu Educational Act which gave apartheid its backbone. In 1955 he was awarded the African National Congress's highest award, the title of Courageous Warrior. Many times in the early days he feared that he would be arrested. More recently, he would return from visits to Tanzania incensed by the ruthless destabilization of the region by the apartheid regime.

On his death, Bishop Desmond Tutu said: 'If you could say anybody single-handedly made apartheid a world issue then that person was Trevor Huddleston. He was my mentor and inspired me and many others. He made sure that apartheid got on to the world agenda and stayed there.' President Nelson Mandela called him a 'great and venerable figure', while the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, said: 'He will be remembered especially for the battles he fought on behalf of the ordinary black South African'. He had been 'a tireless and compassionate advocate for the poor and marginalized'.

Source: adapted from V. Brittain, 'Scourge of apartheid dies', *Guardian*, 21 April 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **In what respect does Item A support the Marxist view of the role of religion in society?**

2 (a) **Show how the evidence in Item B can be used to argue that Marx's theory does not always apply.**

(b) **Can the work of any neo-Marxists with whom you are familiar add anything to our understanding of Item B?**

Activity 3: SECTS AND CULTS

ITEM A – THE LONDON CHURCH OF CHRIST

It started when a young man stopped me on the street. 'We're a non-denominational Christian Church that's trying to go by the Bible' he said to me. At the meeting I was warmly received and several members told me how joining the church had changed their lives. They didn't tell me that the LCC was an offshoot of an American radical movement which believed that only its members were the true disciples of Jesus. Those outside were considered lost, fated to spend eternity in fiery torment. After attending Bible study with them it was apparent that they saw other denominations as spiritually sub-standard, particularly the Church of England and Roman Catholicism. Eventually, I was convinced and I joined God's elite to become one of a tiny handful of true Christians. My personal life changed dramatically. I was expected to start bringing others. We would engage in street evangelising known as 'blitzing', when passers-by would be approached and if possible their telephone numbers obtained for follow-up. Sometimes we would 'ride the tube' preaching to travellers. When we met a hostile reaction it just helped to fuel the feeling that we were part of a righteous elite battling against the forces of Satan. I had little spare time; there were constant meetings, at which attendance was compulsory. The rest of our time was spent out evangelising. Strict internal discipline was maintained with everyone having a 'discipliner' whose guidance must be accepted. The majority of converts found themselves pushed to move in with other members so that they could play a fuller part in the organization. Males and females lived separately and romantic attachments were discouraged unless endorsed by the church. The pressure to conform was enormous. Decisions of the leaders were often equated with the will of God, so any disobedience brought into question the individual's salvation. If an individual did decide to leave they were described as having 'fallen away', considered worse than never having shown any interest in the first place.

Source: adapted from K. Williams, 'Saved', *Observer Magazine*, 21 May 1995

ITEM B – THE SHAKERS

Sister Frances is an eldress in the Sabbath Day Lake Shakers community in Maine, USA. It is the only remaining active Shaker community. She and Sister Marie are in charge of the kitchen of the dwelling house where all seven of the community live. They are the first out of bed at 6 a.m. and wear either long Shaker dresses or loose smocks with large pockets. Shaker cooking is plain and wholesome. Before eating they have silent grace. The brothers and sisters sit quite separately at their own tables and have separate staircases in the dwelling house. After breakfast they recite psalms and read from the Bible.

Shakers are a Protestant monastic order who live like nuns and monks and try to emulate the life of Christ. Shaker theology embraces three Cs – community, confession and celibacy. Everyone owns everything and no one owns anything. In summer, the sisters bottle fruit and vegetables and make jams to sell in the Shaker shop with Brother Alistair's baskets and traditional maple wood oval boxes. Their community work is helping the homeless and poor families. Last week, Sister Frances wanted to see the film *Titanic* with her Brother Bill. She had to ask Sister June to come with them as she couldn't be seen alone with a man in public because people outside the community might not realize that Bill was her Brother. She believes that Shakers have an important lesson to teach – that in this day and age a group of people who aren't blood relatives and are as different as day and night can live together in peace and harmony.

Source: adapted from S. Fox, 'A day in the life of Sister Frances', *Sunday Times Magazine*, 29 March 1998

ITEM C – SPIRITI LIBERI

Maddelena Stradivari is a 23-year-old member of the occult. Her good looks and ever-ready quotability on the sexually oriented ceremonies in which she participates as a member of the Spiriti Liberi cult have made her a minor celebrity, the glamorous face of Italian Satanists.

'I just want to demystify the legends of these black rituals', says Stradivari. 'I believe there is nothing wrong with what I'm doing. We don't kill people. We don't do any sacrifices. We just recite litanies in order to bring out energies.'

Fifteen devotees, among them musicians, artists and businessmen, attend Spiriti Liberi's secret monthly masses.

Sex plays a dominant role in the two-and-a-half-hour entity-summoning ceremonies.

'It's not really making love; it's a magical act. It allows you to dominate the entity ... The feeling you get when the entity manifests itself is sensational; your body temperature drops to a level you would never think possible, you sweat cold, you start shaking and you rip your clothes off. It's a beautiful sensation, better than an orgasm.'

After meetings, members return rejuvenated to their everyday lives.

Source: adapted from S. Harding, 'Symbol', *Observer Magazine*, 21 May 1995

ITEM D – REACHING A HIGHER PLANE

In 1997 members of 'Heaven's Gate' committed mass suicide. Their charismatic leader, Marshall Applewhite, persuaded 38 of his followers to commit suicide when the Hale Bopp comet appeared. A spaceship cruising in its tail was to take them to 'the level above human'. Members had lived together under an elaborate system of rules, which encouraged them to deny their own individuality. In a 'goodbye video', the previously rational members affirmed their gratitude to their leader.

Source: adapted from J. Swale, 'Suicide: A Synoptic Approach', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4, April 2003

ITEM E – SELLING BABIES

A spokesperson for the cult of Raelians claimed that they have produced the first human clone. Rael, its leader, claims to have met aliens and lunched with Jesus, Buddha and Confucius. Raelians believe that humankind started with the cloning of aliens 25,000 years ago. In a rare interview, Rael talked about selling clones to anyone who could raise the fee of £140,000. 'We will offer a service and we will be asking for money', he said.

Source: adapted from N. Harris, 'Experimenting with life is what all parents do. What's the difference?' *Independent on Sunday*, 29 December 2002

QUESTIONS

1 **How do the sect-type organizations described in Items A and B differ from a church?**

2 **What aspects of church-type religion do the sect members in Item A reject?**

3 **Using examples from Items A, B and C, show how cults differ from sects.**

4 **Cults and sects are often derided in Western society. Can you think of any sociological reasons why this happens?**

5 **Making some reference to Items D and E, consider whether sects and cults represent a danger in society.**

Activity 4: NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND NEW AGE

ITEM A – PROMISE KEEPERS

The Promise Keepers are an all-male Christian evangelical movement which started in the USA in the early 1990s. It is now spreading to Britain. Its message is 'Lead Godly lives, stop failing your family, open up emotionally and find solidarity with other men.' Members are encouraged to meet in small groups where they can bond, pray and unburden themselves.

Promise Keepers are unequivocal about men's place in the home. He is the boss. They believe that they should take control of women and make the final decisions in family life. As one leading member says, 'If there is a decision to be made and it can't be decided upon, the man should take the responsibility.' Moreover, they believe that many of society's ills can be put down to the loss of this clear hierarchical truth.

Feminist critics believe that Promise Keepers are using religion to launch a political and social campaign to move the country over to the right.

However, despite criticism from feminist groups, many Promise Keepers' wives say that their men are vastly improved – they help with housework and become more attentive to their family. But, as one member's girlfriend adds, 'Well, sure, I'm going to be happy if my husband isn't womanizing or drinking or gambling. But what happens when I want to go to work and he says "No"?

Source: adapted from T. Unsworth, 'Join on, no girls', *Sunday Times Magazine*, 16 November 1997

ITEM B – AUM SUPREME TRUTH

Mr Asahara founded Aum Supreme Truth in 1987. Known to his followers as 'Master Asahara' he has attracted fanatical followers to this secretive empire, from Japan, Russia, the USA and Europe. The group is known to keep stockpiles of chemicals and has been implicated in poison attacks on the public.

Mr Asahara purports to have reached a state of nirvana [total bliss] and claims that he can levitate. Based on a mixture of yoga, Hinduism, Buddhism and New Age occultism, he attracted followers with the promise that they could have supernatural powers. Members live a spartan lifestyle. When investigated by the police after a nerve gas attack on the Japanese underground, some were found to be malnourished and allowed to sleep for only three hours a night. One follower says she has reached a higher level of consciousness. Others appear to have been kept against their will. One member describes having been kept for three months in a shipping container and being forced to watch videos of destruction while listening to Asahara preach and chant 'I am the saviour'.

Asahara built Aum's wealth from followers' donations and has opened profitable computer sales shops, restaurants and publishing houses across Japan.

Inside their rural facilities there appears to be immense activity. Neighbours have complained of all-night construction work and strange odours emerging. The sect believes in imminent Armageddon [end of the world]. Only followers will be saved. Some distribute pamphlets and try to convert passers-by with the promise: 'Only members of Aum will survive Armageddon.'

Source: A. Haworth, 'Sarin', *Observer Magazine*, 14 May 1995

ITEM C – NEW AGE

New Age encompasses a broad range of beliefs ranging from Jungian philosophy and yoga to clairvoyance and spiritual healing. When it emerged in the early 1980s in the USA it was treated as a freak show, but its appeal has spread. One follower says: 'Americans are becoming more open to universal spiritual principles ... In the nineties you can pray anywhere, you don't need to be in a place of worship to pay homage to whatever you believe in.' John Hogue, an 'expert' on Nostradamus's prophecies, says: 'We are going to see the end of religion as we know it. Dogmatism and superstitious religion has had its day and the subjective science of self-observation will replace it in the new millennium.' Ken Carey says: 'This spiritual renaissance is not about beliefs but experience.' Its only commandment is 'Be yourself'. Timothy Leary, the 1960s counter-culture guru, said: 'Everyone is learning ways to turn on the great spirit within but there is nothing to join. You do it yourself.'

In Britain, New Age retreats are springing up in different parts of the country. They encourage the spiritually drained to get back in touch with themselves in the confines of monasteries, or secular retreats. 'Something is stirring', said Brother Stuart of the Priory of Our Lady in Burford. 'We used to see one or two guests every few weeks. Now all twelve places are booked for months ahead.' The author of the 'Good Retreat Guide' feels they answer a need. 'People have the house', he said, 'the job, the relationship but they say: "Hey, is there another dimension to where my life is going?"'

Christy Casley, who helps run the Self-Realization, Meditation and Healing Centre, said: 'We send people back to the world changed. When they go back they have more to offer. It is part of self-development.'

Source: adapted from R. Nicoll, 'Search for a little heaven', *Guardian*, 6 February 1998; and M. Wroe, 'DIY spiritualists', Observer, 2 April 1995

ITEM D – HAVE FAITH

Daphne's conversion came unexpectedly about 20 years ago, when she was struck by a life-threatening condition which devastated her emotionally and physically. 'I'd been down the road of conventional treatment, then I received healing from a woman I knew and it lifted me like nothing else.'

Now she works as a healer. She describes her craft as the channelling of energy from a good source, whatever and wherever that may be. She believes that when we are ill or stressed through physical and mental imbalance our energy channels are blocked. When that energy – known as unconditional love – starts to flow again through healing, the balance begins to be redressed.
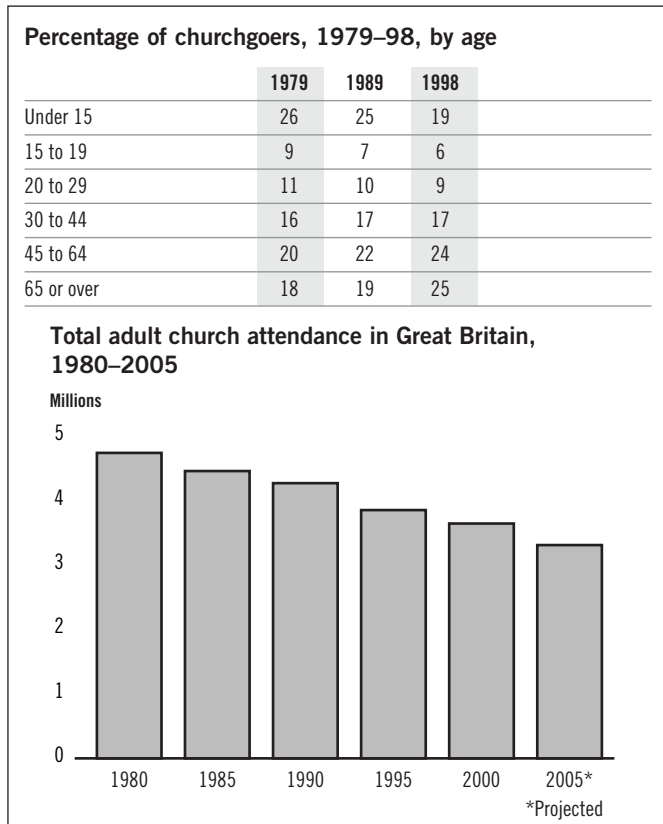
Source: adapted from J. Ameghino, 'Have faith', *Guardian*, 7 April 1998

QUESTIONS

1 **How closely do Items A and B conform to one of Wallis's types of new religious movements – world-accommodating, world-rejecting and world-affirming? Give reasons for your answers.**

2 **Heelas uses Wallis's typology to classify New Age movements. To what extent do Items C and D lend themselves to such analysis?**

3 **In Items A, B, C and D, each movement holds out a promise to its members. Identify that promise and suggest what its appeal is to followers of the movement.**

Activity 5: CHANGING FACE OF RELIGION

ITEM A – CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Percentage of churchgoers, 1979–98, by age

	1979	1989	1998
Under 15	26	25	19
15 to 19	9	7	6
20 to 29	11	10	9
30 to 44	16	17	17
45 to 64	20	22	24
65 or over	18	19	25

Total adult church attendance in Great Britain, 1980–2005

Millions

Source: J. Walliss, 'The secularization debate', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1, September 2002

ITEM B – PEOPLE WHO SEE THEMSELVES AS BELONGING

Belonging to a religion[1]

Great Britain		Percentages
	1996	2000
Church of England/Anglican	29.3	29.8
Roman Catholic	8.9	9.2
Christian – no denomination	4.7	6.3
Presbyterian/Free-Presbyterian/Church of Scotland	3.8	3.5
Baptist or Methodist	3.0	3.4
Other Protestant/other Christian	2.2	2.5
United Reform Church	0.8	0.5
Brethren	0.1	–
Islam/Muslim	1.8	2.0
Hindu	0.6	1.0
Jewish	0.3	0.8
Sikh	0.2	0.4
Other non-Christian	0.4	0.4
Buddhist	0.5	0.1
Refusal/not answered/didn't know	0.8	0.6
None	42.6	39.5

[1] Respondents were asked: 'Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?'

Source: *Social Trends* 32, HMSO, 2002

ITEM C – BELIEF

Belief in God in Britain 1947–2000

				Per cent
	2000	1990	1981	1947
There is a personal God	26	32	41	45
There is some sort of spirit or life force	21	41	37	39
There is something there	23	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked
I don't really know what to think	12	15	16	16
I don't really think there is any sort of God, spirit or life force	15	10	6	Not asked
None of these	3	1	Not asked	Not asked

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Collins Education, London, 2004

QUESTIONS

1 Look at Item A.

   (a) Describe the difference between age groups in church attendance.

   (b) By how much has church attendance fallen in the last 20 years?

2 Outline the points of sociological interest in Item B.

3 What light does Item C throw on the changing nature of belief in Britain over the last 50 years?

Activity 6: THE SECULARIZATION DEBATE

ITEM A – CHANGING TIMES

Source: E. Stocker

ITEM B – MARTYRED FOR HIS FAITH

Source: Corbis

ITEM C – THE MIDDLE AGES

The medieval church made its power felt in every aspect of life. Its teachings accompanied men and women from the cradle to the grave and it insisted that it had power to open and close the door to eternal life. But it also saw the world as God's state and wanted to regulate every aspect of secular life. Anyone opposing the church risked punishment from ecclesiastical or secular courts, which often meant burning.

Every community had its church which was the focal point of life and from which every priest exercised direct control over his flock.

Source: adapted from A. Bullock et al. (eds) *History – Civilization from its Beginning*, Rathbone Books, 1962

ITEM D – SECULARIZATION

Religion in British society is progressively becoming an optional extra. Only a minority of people remain religiously committed. This general decline in significance shows itself in many ways. Except on state occasions such as the Coronation, the church no longer presides over our national life. In the hours after Princess Diana's death in 1997, it was the words of Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, rather than those of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which seemed to capture the spiritual mood of the nation. The days when the Prime Minister took notice of church opinion have passed; influence seems now more likely to pass in the other direction. Furthermore, the church has lost its role as the source of information and guidance. We now turn to the mass media and an army of specialist educationalists, counsellors and social workers for information and guidance. Even religious institutions themselves are becoming secularized, as witnessed by their increasing willingness to accept new social attitudes to sex before marriage, birth control, divorce and homosexuality.

Society seems no longer to depend on divine providence. People make rational decisions based on their particular goals in life. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the workplace, where the desire to 'get on' rather than 'do God's will' dominates people's thinking. The permissive society in which people want to be free to 'do their own thing' is at odds with the tradition of men as 'God's creatures'. As religion appears less and less to guide people's thoughts and direct their actions, participation in organized religion has declined. Church membership and attendance have steadily fallen, Sunday school attendance has slumped and school religious instruction has become 'religious' in name only. Not surprisingly, surveys showed that by the 1960s as many as 40 per cent of people said that they did not believe in life after death.

While there may always be a committed minority who hold strong religious beliefs, for most people involvement is now solely a matter of private individual choice.

Source: adapted from C. Moreton, 'Our church, their club', *Independent on Sunday*, 8 February 1998; and B. Wilson, 'How religious are we?', *New Society*, 27 October 1977

ITEM E – MODERNIZATION

Steve Bruce accounts for the decline in religion in terms of the features of modernization which have developed since the sixteenth century. He argues that firstly the church has gradually been excluded from various spheres of social life – social welfare, health care, education and social control. These have passed to specialized bureaucracies. Secondly, a sense of community has now been lost and replaced by 'society', while in the process the social glue of what Durkheim calls the collective conscience has disappeared. Thirdly, the growth of the nation-state has gone hand in hand with an increasing rationalization of society. He believes that absolute scientific principles and standardized routines and procedures increasingly govern our lives.

Source: adapted from J. Walliss, 'The secularization debate', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1, September 2002

QUESTIONS

1 **What evidence can you find in Items A, B and C to support the view that the influence of religion in society has declined?**

2 **What can Items D and E add to our understanding of the secularization process?**

Activity 7: THE SECULARIZATION DEBATE CONTINUED

ITEM A – HOLY TRINITY, BROMPTON, AND THE ALPHA PROGRAMME

Holy Trinity, Brompton, is probably the richest and the biggest house of worship in the Anglican Church. It is a hybrid of evangelicalism and Anglicanism and attracts a congregation which is predominantly young and middle class. The parish uses an introductory programme to Christianity called Alpha, which has been so successful that some 7,500 churches now use Alpha and there are nearly 1 million graduates in 55 countries. Claiming a 50 per cent success rate, it is one of the most successful evangelising programmes in Britain. Alpha offers the opportunity, rare in secular culture, to discuss the big questions of life and death and their meaning. The programme offers a shared meal, preferably in someone's home, followed by Bible study, discussion and prayer. The group members are chosen carefully, since what they offer is friendship. At the big event, a weekend away, there is squash, table tennis and more food and they discuss the Holy Spirit. This is often where 'It' happens – a direct experience of God where people burst into tears, shake uncontrollably and even fall to the floor.

In the discussion groups, non-churchgoers are surrounded by Christians who gently nudge them in one direction. HTB has found that 'love bombing' is effective. They are smiley, friendly, tactile people who are convinced that they have the truth. While you are being drawn in by the charm and warmth of new friends, you are exposed to hard-line evangelism.

Teaching is rich in references to promiscuity, decadence and the corrupt culture. There are no vestments, no 'dog collars', no service book. After emotional personal testaments in a 'chat show' format, we are spurred on to shout out spontaneous prayers. The babble of voices is accompanied by the congregation punching the air and moaning. Matthew, the vicar, says, 'Unless we feed the hungry for spirituality we will go on experiencing the frustration of people. It's the reason why the streets are dangerous. We have departed from spiritual norms.'

www.alphacourse.org.uk
An opportunity to explore the meaning of life

Alpha

Source: adapted from M. Bunting, 'Happy, clappy … and zappy', *Guardian*, 4 March 1998

ITEM B – SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

The most popular prayer books at the moment are those that refer back to ancient wisdom. Volumes of Celtic night prayer and Celtic day prayer have been bestsellers for HarperCollins in recent times.

The chants and practices of the early Celtic monks who brought Christianity to these shores from the fifth century onwards have been revived. The Reverend Martin Wallace of Saint Cedd on the clifftops in Sussex believes that the simple earthy wisdom of the Celts has a particular appeal in our age. 'It is a less formal way of praying, finding a rhythm, following your own heartbeat, natural energies and evoking strong imagery.'

Another attraction of the Celtic approach is that it is mystical, decidedly non-churchy and profoundly anti-establishment. Indeed, the Celts' dislike of hierarchy and ecclesiastical trappings and their treatment of men and women, ordained and laity, as equals – views that led to their suppression by Rome – have a particular resonance at a time when the institutionalized church is deemed by many people to be irrelevant, introspective and too restrictive for their needs.

In keeping with the privatization of faith, signs of a spiritual revival do not need to be contained within institutions and movements. Often they can be seen in the gestures of individuals, like the laying of flowers at the site of a road accident or, on a larger scale, the laying of flowers outside Kensington Palace after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Source: adapted from P. Stanford, 'Our spiritual health', *Independent on Sunday*, 4 January 1998

ITEM C – SECULARIZATION RIP

The American sociologist Rodney Stark disputes the claims of sociologists like Bruce that the Middle Ages were an 'age of faith'. He argues that historical records show widespread indifference to religion amongst the general population. Clerics were largely ignorant of Christian theology and mumbled with their backs to the congregation in pidgin-Latin.

Stark claims that when people did go to church they did so unwillingly and behaved inappropriately – jostling for pews, buying and selling, scoffing at the priest or breaking wind. He believes that there has been no decline in religious participation as it was never very high anyway. Moreover, in the USA, religion is flourishing and church attendance increasing.

In the case of Western Europe, Stark believes that a significant proportion of the population continue to hold religious beliefs, the decline in church attendance merely showing that they now choose to express these beliefs in a different way.

Source: adapted from J. Walliss, 'The secularization debate', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1, September 2002

ITEM D – THE KENDAL PROJECT: HOW WE FIND OUT?

A group of sociologists are currently examining the significance of religion and spirituality in Britain through an in-depth study of Kendal in Cumbria. Their research objectives are:
1 To examine the nature of different varieties of contemporary religion, especially the beliefs, values and virtues of institutionalized Christianity and New Age spiritualities.
2 To calculate the numbers involved in different forms of contemporary religion.
3 To explore the significance of the sacred in daily and social life, including what religion or spirituality may or may not mean to people.
4 To consider the extent to which there has been a 'turn to life'; in other words, a turn from a concentration on another higher world, the afterlife, to a concentration on this world, the here and now.

Source: adapted from 'The Kendal Project – patterns of the sacred in contemporary society', Lancaster University: www.kendalproject.org.uk

QUESTIONS

1 **Suggest reasons for the religious revival described in Item A.**

2 **Does Item B provide evidence against the secularization thesis?**

3 **Briefly discuss what problems there are in assessing Stark's view (Item C).**

4 **Read item D. Now briefly summarise the aims of the project and say what contribution you think it will make to the secularization debate.**

Activity 8: THE GROWTH OF FUNDAMENTALISM

ITEM A – CREATIONIST SCHOOL

Children in some British schools are learning creationism, the literal biblical explanation of how the world was made by God in six days.

Scientists, humanists and church liberals have denounced Emmanuel City Technology College in Gateshead. The school, backed by evangelical Christians, has presented creationist theories to children as part of their science lessons.

The headteacher says that they offer a variety of views including the biblical one and that his pupils are free to make up their own minds. He argues that committed Darwinism is as much a religious stand as is a fundamentalist Christian one. They are both 'faith positions' he says.

A representative from the Association of Muslim Schools, including four state-funded ones, said that they taught children about Darwin because they had to, but that they also taught a different Koranic view.

The state-funded Seventh Day Adventist School John Loughborough takes a similar biblical line in apparent conflict with the National Curriculum, as do some orthodox Jewish schools. Rabbi Mardechai Fachler said: "We have to do evolution in science but as Orthodox Jews it is not what we believe. We would welcome Darwin and evolution being removed from the National Curriculum."

Dr Vardy, a religious philosopher, said that state funding for faith schools which teach creationism should not be available unless they agree to encourage pupils to question what they are taught. 'I'm more worried about some of the schools such as those run by Muslims and Orthodox Jews where the idea of an open-minded search for the truth isn't tolerated', said Dr Vardy.

Source: adapted from N. Pyke, 'More creationist schools revealed', *Independent on Sunday,* 17 March 2002

ITEM B – ISLAMIC CONVERTS

Twenty-nine year old Akhtar sounds like a typical fanatic as he brands Jews devils and calls for a war on the enemies of Islam. But he is different from other extremists, who gather round certain mosques talking of revolution. He is one of a new generation of white converts being recruited into British Islamic organizations which have links with al-Qaeda.

Al-Muhajiroun represents some of the most rebellious sections of the Muslim community. Its UK chairman said: "We would like to see the implementation of the sharia law in the UK. Under one rule this country would be known as the Islamic Republic of Great Britain."

'Whites, Chinese, Japanese and Indians in this country are all bored with the capitalist system. It is a bankrupt ideal. People want something new. You can tell that from the anti-globalization movement. So we're offering them something pure: a religious mission, the values of sharia law and jihad.'

Another white English convert, Mohamed Khan, said he was disillusioned with Christianity. 'It didn't give me my sense of respect. No one goes to church any more. At least the mosques are full, so Islam obviously has something.'

His friend, a former Christian, said the al-Muhajiroun led by example. 'You look at your average church priest, and what does he do? Who would he go to war with? No one. So how can Christianity claim to be a religion when its followers don't believe in spreading the word? The fact that politicians like Bush and Blair are scared of Islam means that it is a great religion. Sheikh Bakri Low said that: he would die for it.'

'There is a clear rise in the politics of identity', said Paul Weller, Professor of Inter-Religious Studies. 'Young white men who join Islam might be feeling out of place from modern life. So you find that when they join a religion like Islam they have an unbending view. Their views on jihad, for example, might be less compromising than the views of people who were born Muslims.'

Source: adapted from B. Wazir, 'Essex boys sign up for holy war', *Observer,* 24 February 2002

ITEM C – FUNDAMENTALISM IN IRAN

Much of the appeal of Islamic fundamentalism in Iran derives from the failure of economic and political modernization. In his efforts to modernize the Shah of Iran imitated the ways of the West and invited Western companies to manage natural resources. One unintended consequence of this policy was to undermine local sources of prosperity and so perpetuate poverty. The Shah concluded that poverty was the result of Islamic culture and set about banning Islamic dress and establishing a secular educational system. Any prosperity which did result from the exploitation of natural resources (e.g. oil) went largely to a small minority, while the rest of the population remained poor and increasingly dissatisfied.

The ayatollahs (religious leaders) located the cause of the people's suffering as Westernization. They pointed to the glorious history of Islam where the people had triumphed when faithful to Allah.

A revolution resulted in the establishment of an Islamic Republic dominated by clerics. Islamic principles governed all aspects of life and religious observance become obligatory. The regime worked hard to export its revolution, especially its hostility to Christian imperialists, in particular, the United States portrayed as the Great Satan.

Source: adapted from S. Bruce, 'Religion, the global and the postmodern', in M. Haralambos (ed) *Developments in Sociology,* Vol. 17, Causeway Press, 2001

Activity 8: THE GROWTH OF FUNDAMENTALISM (continued)

ITEM D – JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

One of the fastest growing religious movements in the world is the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society – Jehovah's Witnesses. They remain steadfast in their belief that the end of the world is imminent. The movement demands unquestioning loyalty – it is puritanical, conservative and authoritarian. Members live by a strict moral code and draw a clear boundary between themselves and non-believers. They base their ministry on the belief that very soon Christ will return in glory to inaugurate his new kingdom and condemn the wicked to eternal damnation.

They recruit by offering hope, self-confidence, support and direction to those whom the modern world has abandoned – the poor, the disillusioned and those with narrow social horizons. For the Witnesses, the Bible is the inspired word of God and true in a literal sense. Thus the Bible is used to explain catastrophes such as war, famine, murder, genocide, environmental pollution and terrorism. This literal interpretation of a better world to come is a classic feature of fundamentalism.

In the 'postmodern' world of today, some sociologists have argued that society has become fragmented and the moral order damaged, so that there has taken root a widespread feeling of insecurity and confusion. Joining the Witnesses provides people with a sense of certainty in an uncertain world. They believe in an imminent paradise where God will exact revenge on the world's sinners, but where they will be saved.

In the modern world, we are constantly bombarded in the media by images of destruction and catastrophe. Our inability to predict the outcome of actions and events means that even the most optimistic people feel they are living in a hi-tech hell in which risk is impossible to measure and the future impossible to predict. Millenarian movements like the Jehovah's Witnesses offer protective communities in which individuals can resolve the difficulties involved in constructing a meaningful and secure identity in a fluid and fragmented society.
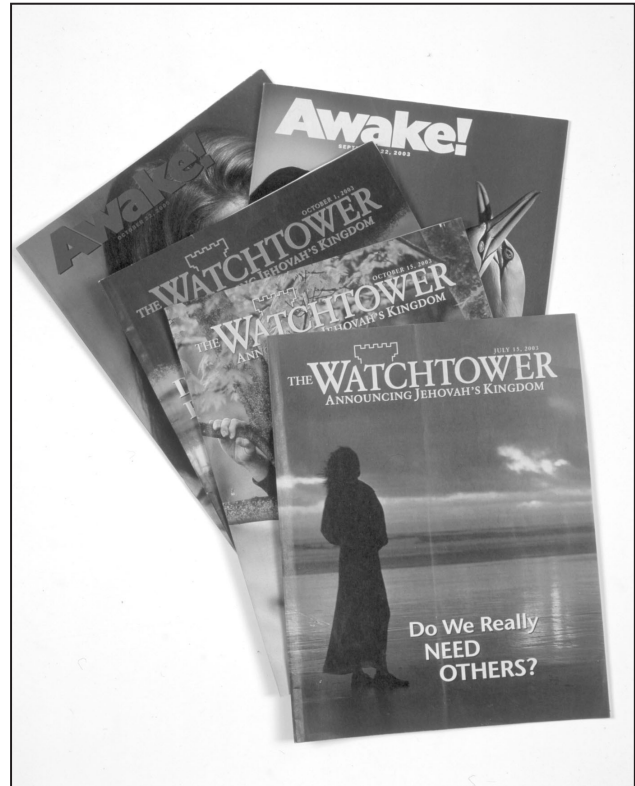
Source: Roger Scruton

Source: adapted from A. Holden, 'Witnessing the future?', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 11, No. 3, February 2002

QUESTIONS

1 After reading Items A, B, C and D, outline what you understand by the term 'fundamentalism'?

2 How does Bruce (Item C) account for the growth of fundamentalism in Iran?

3 Making some reference to Item A, consider the potential impact of a growth in religious fundamentalist schools in Britain.

4 Consider the possible attraction to converts of religious fundamentalist movements. Refer to Items B and D in your answer.

Activity 9: HIGH MODERNITY OR THE POSTMODERN WORLD?

ITEM A – WHAT'S NEW?

The depiction of twenty-first century Britain and the USA as postmodern seems somewhat to exaggerate the changes that have taken place. But the term does have some value in describing late twentieth-century society. According to 'postmodernists', we have lost faith in the possibility of arriving at a single truth, be that scientific, political, cultural or ethical. Instead, we have become relativists, constantly questioning and refusing to accept any single version of reality. We have supposedly lost faith in the notion of progress towards a better future while at the same time being subjected to a risk society where we feel that we cannot accurately assess risk or predict the likely outcome of actions and events.

The 'postmodernists' believe that there has been a change in our source of social identity. While in modern society people's identity stemmed largely from their positions in social institutions or structures – for example, class, gender or race – in the 'postmodern' world group ties have weakened and people are more free to pick and mix different aspects of their identity. 'Postmodernists' argue that consumption has now become more important than production. How we spend our money has become more important than how we earn it. Therefore they see who we are and what we do as no longer largely determined by class but as selected by us as a lifestyle choice.

Source: adapted from S. Bruce, 'Religion, the global and postmodern', in M. Haralambos (ed) *Developments in Sociology*, Vol. 17, Causeway Press, 2001

ITEM B – 'BODY WORK'

Our research into New Age has so far found a preponderance of what we might call 'body work'. Many groups and therapists use work on the body as a way into spirituality. 'Chi' or 'energy' which is thought to run around channels in the body is seen as something that somehow links mind, body and spirit. Pressure point techniques, massage and exercises are seen as a way of stimulating the flow of energy around the body and this in turn is seen as enhancing spiritual well-being. All this is part of a 'holistic' paradigm where mind, body and spirit are seen as essentially one.

Source: adapted from P. Heelas et al., *The Kendal Project*, www.kendalproject.org.uk

ITEM E – YOGA

Source: Frances Smith

ITEM C – THE ESSENCE OF NEW AGE

1 The self is divine
   New Agers see humans as essentially good. They may have been corrupted by their life experiences but these can be stripped away and the 'self within' released. This is very different from Christianity, where people are assumed to be basically bad and only become good through subjecting themselves to God's will.
2 Everything is connected
   New Agers are holistic. They have borrowed from Eastern religions like Buddhism the idea that everything is connected, e.g. us and our environment.
3 The self is the final authority
   There is no single truth, no knowledge that is absolute; there is only what works for the individual. For example, they cannot ask 'Do crystals have healing powers?', they must ask 'Do crystals work for you?' The final arbiter of the truth becomes the individual.
4 The global cafeteria
   If you go to a conservative Baptist or Catholic church, you will be told: 'This is the truth. Here is the checklist of the ten things you must believe and the ten things you must do to placate God.' But go to the Mind-Body-Spirit convention, and you will be confronted with an array of belief systems, therapies and techniques for attaining enlightenment. New Agers are relativists – there is no one truth and many apparently incompatible things can all be true at the same time.
5 Therapy
   Within Christianity, you must obey God whether or not he rewards you with a happy, healthy and contented life. In the New Age, self-improvement and self-gratification are the whole point. Rituals are deliberately therapeutic and intended to make you more successful, healthier and happier.

Source: adapted from S. Bruce, 'God and shopping', *Sociology Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2, November 2002

ITEM D – BUDDHIST CHANTING

Source: Photofusion

QUESTIONS

1 **Using some of the ideas discussed in the Items, consider how you might expect the political affiliations of New Agers to differ from those of Christian fundamentalists.**

2 **Using information from the Items and from elsewhere, briefly consider the following statement: 'The upsurge in New Age beliefs and practices could be seen as a response to the conditions of late twentieth-century life'.**

Chapter 7: RELIGION – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: THE FUNCTIONALIST VIEW

Teacher's note

This activity introduces students to a functionalist approach to the study of religion. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 7, pp. 406–9.

1 *Key points:*
- In the past, the Stuart monarchs, along with contemporary European monarchs, claimed that they were appointed by divine right and that to oppose them would be to act against God.
- Some would argue that the present Queen and the late Queen Mother have been widely seen as embodying a variety of virtues: dignity, graciousness, self-control, hard work and dedication to duty, patriotism and concern for charitable work.
- According to Durkheim, people's responses to sacrilized individuals reflect their feelings of social distance and awe. Ordinary people will behave differently towards them. When meeting the Queen, for example, people might bow and curtsy.
- Other members of the royal family have shown qualities which tend to desacrilize them; for example, showing ordinary personal feelings, as did the Prince of Wales when he admitted adultery, and later by continuing his relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles.

2 *Key points:*
- In Malinowski's view, the situations which threaten both personal and social stability include various life crises, such as birth, marriage and death, and those situations where the outcome is beyond people's control.
- Item B shows a funeral where the bereaved are brought together. They provide mutual support for each other. The religious aspect of the ceremony gives assurance that they will one day be reunited with the deceased. This gives hope for the future and a sense that the life of the universe is ordered and controlled.
- Marriage is an important life event involving considerable change in status and a degree of uncertainty. The couple and their families will need to adjust to changed relationships. The wedding ceremony serves to bring new family members together and underwrite the change in status of the married couple. The ceremony surrounding the marriage can be seen as a way of reducing tensions and unifying the group.
- In the picture showing soldiers praying, the soldiers have no knowledge of the outcome of events and little control over them. People who were previously not interested in religion may turn to it for comfort and support at critical times like these. From the point of view of the society engaged in war, a soldier supported by these beliefs may be more efficient and reliable.

3 (a) People may feel that it is unjust that those who do wrong may appear to go unpunished. In Romans 12 we are assured that God will take vengeance on them. Similarly, in 2 Thessalonians we are assured that on the day of judgement the ungodly will be punished. We are also told that God will 'give relief' to those who are 'troubled'. 1 Thessalonians challenges the meaninglessness of death. The Christian religion promises that those people who 'fall asleep in him' will be raised up in heaven. Christianity can therefore be seen as helping people to make sense of the apparent injustices of life and death.

(b) The explanations and promises offered by Christianity help to counter feelings of anomie and despair. They reinforce the belief that there is fairness and order in the world and that there is something to hope for in the future. Furthermore, by relieving people of the need to avenge themselves on their enemies and limiting the need to grieve for their loved ones, order and normality can be sustained in society, while the individual is relieved from stress and returned to a sense of equilibrium.

ACTIVITY 2: THE MARXIST VIEW

Teacher's note

A Marxist approach to the study of religion is explored in this activity. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 7, pp. 409–12.

1 For Marx, all pre-socialist societies were characterized by alienation. Religious beliefs developed out of this alienation and served to comfort people, by promising salvation and eternal bliss, and making a virtue of suffering. Thus, in Item A, Slyme finds comfort in the belief that he is saved. Marx believed that religion leads people in the wrong direction by distorting the true nature of reality. Christians like Slyme hope for a solution to their troubles in the after-life rather than taking action to change their present lives. At Christian schools, children were taught to accept their lot, thus helping to produce another generation of compliant workers. From this viewpoint, religious beliefs can be seen as a form of false class consciousness, which benefit the ruling class by diverting attention from the injustices of life. While religion promises happiness, for Marx this happiness is an illusion. True happiness and fulfilment are possible only with the ending of capitalism.

2 (a) As we have outlined in answer 1, for Marx, religion provided false hope and diverted attention from the real causes of people's problems. Evidence from Item B would not seem to support this view. Archbishop Huddleston was a lifelong critic of apartheid. From being a parish priest to his eventual position as a senior figure in the Catholic Church, he continued to criticize the system. He found the structural and legal inequalities in South Africa so unjust and unacceptable that he was willing to risk his own arrest to continue his work. This clearly runs counter to Marx's view that religion tends to bolster the existing system of exploitation. Moreover, like Marx, Archbishop Huddleston did recognize that a political system could be sufficiently evil and destabilizing that it must be overthrown.

(b) *Key points:*
- In his later writings, Engels recognized that religion could become a source of resistance to oppression and thus a force for social change. Some neo-Marxists have developed this idea and see religion as capable of playing a more positive role in society.
- Gramsci sees the superstructure as more autonomous and independent than Marx acknowledged. He argues that different forms of religious belief and practices could emerge to challenge ruling-class ideology and to support working-class consciousness.
- Similarly, Otto Maduro, while accepting many aspects of Marx's analysis, sees religion as having relative autonomy from the economic system. He argues that the anguish and distress of the oppressed may be reflected and voiced by members of the clergy. In other words, the clergy may become the vehicle to bring about social revolution. This viewpoint seems to provide a better model for analysing Item B. Archbishop Huddleston was clearly involved in articulating the plight of ordinary black people in his writings and on the world stage. His behaviour seems to be much closer to what might be predicted from reading Gramsci and Maduro than from reading Marx.

ACTIVITY 3: SECTS AND CULTS

Teacher's note

This activity will help students to distinguish between church-, cult- and sect-type religious organizations. Appropriate reading may be found in Chapter 7, pp. 422–35.

1 *Key points:*
- Sects typically limit the amount of contact with outsiders. In Item A, the members are encouraged to live together and all their time is taken up with praying and Bible readings. There is no time for ordinary activities such as seeing friends and family or visiting the cinema. Contact with outsiders is limited to evangelizing. In Item B, the Shakers live together in a separate community. They spend most of their time eating, working and praying together. Their contact with the outside world is limited to their work with the poor and selling their produce in their shop.

- Another typical characteristic of a sect is condemnation of the outside world. In Item A, members of the London Church of Christ believe that they are the only people destined to be saved. Although the Shakers (Item B) do not actively condemn others, they see themselves as providing a lesson to others: that is, that people who are unrelated and different can live and work together in peace.
- In both Items, it is shown that sect members have to be highly committed and are rewarded by a warm feeling of fellowship and support from the group. The group is very tightly knit and insular in outlook.
- Sects generally demand particular standards of behaviour, as is demonstrated in both Items, while churches tend to be less critical, less directive and generally more tolerant.

2 We are told that the London Church of Christ considers other denominations to be spiritually sub-standard. They are often seen by sect members as demanding far too low levels of commitment from their members. Furthermore, other denominations and churches may be criticized for making too many compromises with the wider society.

3 *Key points:*

- Sects require high levels of commitment from their members and often claim a monopoly of the truth. In contrast, cults are far less demanding of their members and see themselves as only one way of seeking the truth. Such groups lack any sharply defined belief system and people are brought together in a fairly loose organization.
- In Item C, Spiriti Liberi seems cult-like in its organization. Commitment to the group seems to involve only monthly meetings after which members return home to their everyday lives. Turnover of such groups is very high – further indication of the lack of any deep commitment on the part of participants.
- In Item B, the Shakers appear to approximate more closely to a sect, as their members are deeply committed. They spend their whole lives together, devoted to a monastic life of work and prayer. Although they do not seem to be openly critical of society at large, they do consider that society has something to learn from them.
- The London Church of Christ also has characteristics more typical of a sect than a cult. Members are expected to show a strong commitment, to the extent that they spend most of their time with other members. They also believe that they have a monopoly of religious truth, since they believe that only through them can people be saved.

4 Sects and cults are often viewed with suspicion as weird and off-beat. They may be perceived as challenging traditional family values in advocating communal living and sexual licence, and frowning on contacts with family and old friends. They are often seen as gaining members through dubious techniques like 'brainwashing'. Sects and cults (terms often used interchangeably by the media and in everyday speech) may therefore be seen as a threat to society and to conventional mores.

5 Whether sects and cults represent a danger to society or the individual depends on the exact beliefs of the group. Some may be bizarre but harmless others may be violent and dangerous. For example, the Heaven's Gate members committed suicide in the belief that they would be taken to a higher plane. Clearly, to non-believers there is little that could be interpreted as more harmful to the individual. Other sects or cults may pose a direct threat to society; for example, those who perform acts of terror like Aum Supreme Truth's sarin attack on the Japanese subway. Similarly, Rael could be seen as acting in a way dangerous to society as a whole. There are both ethical and medical objections to human cloning. For example, it could pose a long-term threat to human health and genetics if it becomes widespread. Moreover, the Raelians are proposing to charge for their services in order to fund their organization. Some people would see this as coming close to selling babies.

ACTIVITY 4: NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND NEW AGE

Teacher's note

We examine new religious movements and the New Age in this activity. Students will find it helpful to read Chapter 7, pp. 422–35 before attempting the questions. This is one of the more demanding activities.

1 *Key points:*

- In Item A, the Promise Keepers seem to be closest to a 'world-accommodating' new religious movement (a denomination). They do not reject secular society, continuing to live and work in the community, but they appear to think that society would be improved if their religious awareness and godly behaviour were to spread. Feminist groups have criticized the Promise Keepers for being political – in other words, for being more concerned with changing society than our classification of them as world-accommodating might imply. This throws into relief one of the problems with a system of classification: different members may well be working to different agendas.
- Item B seems to provide an example of a world-rejecting new religious movement (a sect). There is a strong sense of membership and contact with non-members is minimal. Their rejection of society is so extreme that they have been suspected of organizing a nerve gas attack in the Japanese underground. Like other world-rejecting groups, they claim that only their members will be saved.

2 Items C and D seem to provide examples close to Wallis's world-affirming type (cults). The orientation of such movements to the world is one of acceptance. In both Items we see movements which have no formal church or collective ritual of worship. Many such movements provide access to spiritual powers which help people to cope and be successful in their lives and obtain inner harmony.

3 *Key points:*

- The Promise Keepers in Item A offer members a vibrant religious experience and clear answers to moral dilemmas. In addition, they provide members with 'brothers' to bond with, and they legitimize traditional patriarchal relationships in the family, offering a return to the 'good old days' when men were the undisputed heads of their families.
- In Item B, Aum Supreme Truth seems to be characterized by intense activity, which offers members a sense of purpose and direction in their lives. In the longer term, the group promises its members supernatural powers such as the ability to levitate. Like many sects, Aum offers members the promise that only they will be saved.
- World-affirming movements offer people the chance to harness their inner spirituality. This is seen as leading to a more fulfilling life. In Item C, Christy Casley points out that, after experiencing a retreat, people have 'more to offer'. This may benefit both their personal relationships and their ability to succeed in career terms.
- In Item D, spiritual healing offers believers the reward of good health without undergoing the invasive practices of conventional medicine.

ACTIVITY 5: CHANGING FACE OF RELIGION

Teacher's note

This activity examines the changes taking place in both church attendance and in people's beliefs.

1 (a) People over 45 and children under 15 are the most likely to attend church. Young people between 15 and 29 are the least likely to attend church.

(b) Church attendance has fallen by approximately 1 million.

2 *Key points:*

- Item B looks at whether or not people see themselves as belonging to a religious group. This identification may or may not involve attendance at church or religious gatherings. The pattern of belonging in Britain shows that the biggest group did not regard themselves as belonging to any particular religion. The next largest group was the Anglicans with which around 30 per cent of people identified. The Catholic, Non-conformist and those calling themselves 'Christians' were also a significant presence, Islam being the most important of the non-Christian religions.
- Over the four year period covered by the table there has been a slight increase in the percentage of people identifying with a religious group and a slight fall in the percentage who claimed no religious identification. The group who claim to be 'Christian' rather than members of a particular denomination has increased more than any other.
- Some sociologists believe that identification is as significant a measure of religious feeling as is church attendance. Therefore it is important in the secularization debate. It must be remembered, however, that we do not know to what extent religious identification actually affects people's day-to-day behaviour.

3 *Key points:*

- The table appears to indicate a decline in religious belief. There has been a considerable fall in the percentage of people who believe in a personal God, as well as a decline in those people who feel that there is some sort of spirit or life force.
- The problem remains that even if people say that they believe in a God or

life force, we have no measure of the strength of their commitment. Do they believe it with all their hearts and dedicate their lives and actions to that God? Or is it something they just say but which involves very little real commitment? It may be that people are moving away from religious belief but do not yet feel able to say that they do not believe.

ACTIVITY 6: THE SECULARIZATION DEBATE

Teacher's note

This activity continues the theme of secularization introduced in Activity 5. It focuses on pictures and text and is best tackled after Activity 5. Students will need to read Chapter 7, pp. 436–54.

1 *Key points:*
- It is difficult to know to what extent a society is religious or secular. As we have seen in Activity 5, statistics can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Bryan Wilson, who is a leading writer in this area, believes that we need to examine the strength of religious beliefs and attitudes, religious practices like going to church, and religious institutions.
- Item A shows a religious building which has fallen out of its original use, which would seem to imply that religious practice and religion as a social institution have declined.
- Item B is a medieval artist's impression of hell. For a medieval person, hell was real, since the church preached that those who sinned would be damned. In modern Christian teaching there is little emphasis on hell and damnation and more on God's love and compassion. Also, people today are less concerned with the life to come, perhaps because it seems less imminent and immediate. This therefore seems to provide evidence of a decline in religious beliefs and their immediacy in everyday life.
- Item C points out that in medieval times the church was the focal point of people's lives. Today, churches have no legal courts and religious life is left largely unregulated by the law. Moreover, many people's everyday decisions take little account of religious teachings, while local clerics have only a marginal influence on community life.

2 *Key points:*
- Item D argues that religious institutions have lost their relevance to contemporary life. Their function as a source of information, guidance, support and counsel has been taken over by various specialists, while political leaders rather than religious leaders give voice to the sentiments of the nation. Even the religious institutions themselves have to some extent become secular, as they have adapted to the changing climate of opinion on matters such as divorce.
- Some sociologists believe that growing secularization is a characteristic of modernity and therefore typical of Western industrial society. Writers such as Steve Bruce argue that the role of religion has become marginalized because of reliance on science and rationality. As Item E shows, Bruce, like Wilson (Item D), believes that the church has now been excluded from important spheres of life. Moreover, the disappearance of a collective conscience in society means that we no longer feel as bound to each other as we once did.

ACTIVITY 7: THE SECULARIZATION DEBATE CONTINUED

Teacher's note

In this activity we continue an examination of the secularization debate. It centres on the evidence of religious revival in modern Britain. Appropriate reading can be found in Chapter 7, pp. 436–54.

1 *Key points:*
- Holy Trinity, Brompton, seems to borrow from the charismatic movement, started in the USA, and possesses features previously more typical of sects.
- One appeal may be that it provides an escape into other-worldliness. The rational, materialistic and instrumental are left behind and people feel free to express their emotions. This view is in line with Weber's thinking. He argued that Protestant religions, particularly Calvinism, operated on rational principles and demystified the world. The unintended consequence of this was a decline in religion, since religion could no longer provide meaning for people. The charismatic movement reintroduced mystery and other-worldliness.

- A second appeal is that it provides friendship and support to members. Durkheim refers to the growth of individualism and social fragmentation in an industrial and urban society, which may give rise to feelings of anomie, lessening people's confidence in traditional beliefs and practices. However, Durkheim felt that at a certain point religion would reassert itself, since every society must have sacred symbols and communal ritual in order to survive. Holy Trinity, Brompton, may provide this. The group support, communal prayers and Bible readings provide a hedge against normlessness and social isolation.
- A further appeal may be that it provides a forum in which to discuss the big questions of life and death – which is rare in our society. The Alpha programme seems to fill a void for many people.

2 *Key points:*
- For those who challenge the validity of the secularization thesis, the current interest in early Celtic religion can be seen as evidence of a revival of religious enthusiasm. Likewise, the laying of flowers at the location of an accident can be seen as evidence of spiritual reawakening.
- Some sociologists – particularly postmodernists – see these spiritual stirrings as evidence of a reaction against modernity. In today's world, people have become sceptical about science and technology and wish to return to a more spiritual life. The Celtic religion described in Item B appears to provide this, allowing people to escape into a mystical form of worship more in tune with nature. Also, the Celtic religion rejects hierarchy, treating all members as equals. In a profoundly hierarchical society, this may satisfy a yearning for a simpler and less structured life.
- Item B gives further weight to the view outlined by people like Berger that there has been a privatization of faith. People may find reading books of Celtic prayer more in keeping with their spiritual needs than taking part in more formal acts of worship.
- It is likely that sociologists who support the secularization thesis, such as Bryan Wilson, would not consider movements like the Celtic revival as having any great significance in turning back the tide of declining faith.

3 *Key points:*
- It is difficult to assess the merits of any argument without having access to the research data on which the argument is based.
- What data there is on the Middle Ages may be biased or unrepresentative. Therefore, it is difficult to form firm conclusions.
- When interpreting data, it is difficult to know its true meaning. For example, Stark believes that people in the Middle Ages were unwilling to go to church and often misbehaved when they were there. But we cannot be sure how these people felt about their religion, church attendance or what was their degree of commitment.
- Stark uses as an argument to support his thesis that there is considerable religious commitment in the USA, with high figures for church attendance. Again, we do not know what this means – perhaps people go to church to show their Americanness or to show off their new car.
- Stark seems to adopt a rather different attitude to Western Europe. In this case, he feels that lack of church attendance is not a sign of secularization, but shows that people now express their religious beliefs in a different way. Again, we are presented with the same problem. What does it actually mean to express a belief in God or a divine being and are these beliefs strong enough to affect people's behaviour?

4 The authors of the project hope to use Kendal as a case study to highlight contemporary patterns of religious belief. They are looking at both Christianity and New Age Spirituality and how these beliefs affect people's lives. The researchers also hope to find out the extent to which people today focus on this world rather than the next.

This project will not end the secularization debate but may give some interesting insights into current patterns of belief and behaviour. Since the research is a case study, we do not know the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other parts of the country.

ACTIVITY 8: THE GROWTH OF FUNDAMENTALISM

Teacher's note

This activity examines the growth in fundamentalist religious movements and offers some points which may serve to help explain this growth. Students may wish to refer to pp. 449 and 456–7.

1 *Key points:*
- Fundamentalists appeal to traditional beliefs, often expressed through a literal translation of holy books. For example, the Christian fundamentalists in Item A accept a literal interpretation of the Bible.

- They are often unwilling to debate an issue or accept that their views might be wrong. For example, in Item A, Orthodox Jews would welcome Darwin being removed from the curriculum, presumably so that their students were not presented with a scientific explanation which would bring into question the religious one.
- Members may hold their views passionately and be completely dedicated. For example, in Item B we hear of someone willing to die for Islam.
- Fundamentalists generally anticipate a better world to come. For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the end of the world is imminent and they alone will be saved.
- The deep commitment of fundamentalists may mean that they are willing to enter into conflict to uphold their ideals. For example, some of the Islamic fundamentalists in Item B have contact with al-Qaeda and would like to see Britain as an Islamic republic. In a globalized world where different ethnic and religious groups are in contact with each other, rigid belief systems may create fault lines between civilizations. It is along these boundaries of culture or civilization that conflict may be particularly prone to occur.
- Their strict moral code and rigid beliefs mean that they often deliberately isolate themselves from other members of society.

2 Bruce believes that the growth in fundamentalism in Iran is a response to the way in which the Shah of Iran sought to modernize the country. In the hope of bringing greater prosperity, he invited Western companies to manage natural resources like oil. Rather than bringing greater general prosperity, only a minority benefited while the majority remained in poverty. The Shah responded by locating the problem within Islamic culture, banning Islamic dress and establishing a secular educational system.

A revolution resulted, establishing an Islamic republic. The ayatollahs stressed the glories of the past which they depicted as stemming from strict Islamic observance. As a result, all aspects of life become governed by strict Islamic principles, while the West was portrayed as an enemy.

3 Key points:
- Since fundamentalism allows no criticism of its dogma, fundamentalist schools would tend to accept only children with fundamentalist families. This would ghettoize children and give them little opportunity to make friends and meet other children from different backgrounds. In many cases the religious divides would also involve an ethnic divide. For example, most British Muslims are non-white. Such segregation in schools has been seen as partially responsible for both the 'racial' riots in Bradford in 2001 and the long-term religious and political divide in Northern Ireland.
- Fundamentalist teaching may seriously damage a child's educational development. If, for example, aspects of Darwinism were taught badly or without conviction, it could damage a child's chances of succeeding in science exams or in the longer term of entering a profession of their choice.
- The authoritarianism and ultra conservative attitude of fundamentalist beliefs would tend to stunt a child's critical faculties. At school, children are generally taught to weigh up the pros and cons of various arguments in order to form a judgement. Without developing these critical faculties, an adult might be handicapped in fully engaging in the democratic process.
- By using religious explanations for disasters like famines, the school may not encourage young people to consider more rational explanations. For example, various social and environmental reforms could mitigate much human suffering. Young people are often the motors of social reform. This could be lost.

4 Key points:
- Item B suggests that people may join Islamic fundamentalist groups because they have lost their belief in the capitalist system. In other words it may be that dissatisfaction with an economic system or their particular place within it has attracted them to the movement.
- Item D makes a similar point. It suggests that the poor and marginal tend to be attracted to the Jehovah's Witnesses. They are likely to be the most dissatisfied with the status quo.
- Joining these movements seems to provide the members with a sense of self-respect and self-worth. In Item B, the young man argues that the movement demonstrates its worth by its followers being willing to 'spread the word' and go to war for the cause. In Item D, members gain a sense of worth through their belief that they alone will be saved on the day of judgement, while sinners will be punished.
- It can be argued that modern society is full of uncertainty and confusion. In society there is no longer one generally accepted set of beliefs or code of conduct. It is no longer possible to predict the future or have confidence in its shape. Everything has become relative. All these factors inspire feelings of insecurity. A fundamentalist religion

can be seen as supplying certainty in an uncertain world, order out of chaos. Such movements may therefore appeal to those people who feel disillusioned, abandoned or who are particularly vulnerable.

ACTIVITY 9: HIGH MODERNITY OR THE POSTMODERN WORLD?

Teacher's note

This activity serves as an introduction to the relationship between the growth of New Age and the nature of late twentieth-century society. It would be helpful if students tackled Activity 8 before reading this activity. Appropriate reading can be found in Chapter 7, pp. 432–5.

1 Key points:
- Christian fundamentalists accept a higher authority than themselves. They believe that God knows best and may or may not reward them for obedience. It could be suggested that such feelings would predispose a person to more conservative political beliefs – to continue in an allegiance to the tried and tested truths of the past. Being used to hierarchy, they may also be more likely to belong to established parties and accept guidance from the leaders. They may consider that these people know best, whether or not their lives appear to be improving in the short term.
- New Agers may be more likely not to belong to any particular political party. Over the course of time they may change their allegiances according to how far the particular parties appear to advance them towards their individual goals. They may, for example, favour one party's policy on health care and another's on environmental issues. Their loyalties are likely to shift and change and they may be less likely to accept that politicians know best. Their political involvement and actions might, therefore, be expected to be more issue-based rather than involve long-term loyalty to a particular party or group.
- Clearly, this possible link between religious belief and political behaviour is speculative and would need to be tested.

2 Key points:
- Whether or not we regard recent years as representing a postmodern phase or as the latter stages of modernity, some of the characteristics of New Age outlined in Items B and C could be seen as reflecting or as being in tune with those described in Item A.
- In modern society many people have become disillusioned, as the promised progress has not materialized. Instead, we live in a world of conflict where there is risk and uncertainty about the future. As a result, people have come to reject traditional authority, whether that be cultural, scientific, political or ethical. In the process religious authority has been undermined. Some people have turned to New Age, where the only authority is the self.
- Within present-day society there is a strong emphasis on individualism. This individualism comes to mean that people feel responsible for their own success and happiness. New Age can be seen as providing a solution to this by showing ways in which the individual can achieve better health (as in Items B and E) and personal success. Moreover, modern individualism also involves the idea of inner discovery – of finding the true self. Again, various New Age techniques like meditation might seem to provide a pathway towards this.
- In present-day society, identity tends to become fragmented with the disintegration of community and the reduced overlap in social roles. A search for identity may be partly satisfied by New Age. People can pick and mix between the philosophies on offer – attend yoga classes, visit a spiritualist, chant or meditate and use healing crystals, for example – and so create the identity required.
- Heelas has argued that the consumer culture of the modern world has left people feeling discontented. People may believe that 'perfection', as expressed in the media, can be obtained through following the techniques of New Age, becoming more healthy, more at one with the environment and with oneself. In order to move towards this perfection all the individual need ask is 'does this work for me?' If it does, then it will be accepted; if it does not, then another technique can be tried.
- Not all sociologists would accept the points outlined above. One criticism might be that they tend to reflect a functionalist perspective, i.e. that the growth of New Age essentially constitutes a functional adaptation to changing social conditions.

c h a p t e r   8

FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

Activity 1: DOMESTIC ABUSE

ITEM A – WHO CAN THEY TURN TO?

Third parties contacted by women after violent episodes						
		Violent episode				
Third party	**First**		**Worst**		**Last**	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Parent, other relative	37	33	47	19	42	11
Friend	20	18	20	8	33	9
Neighbour	13	11	24	10	23	6
Doctor	21	18	53	22	43	12
Minister	3	3	5	2	3	1
Social worker	6	5	35	14	63	17
Police	12	11	35	14	47	13
Women's Aid	-	-	14	6	93	25
Other	1	1	13	5	24	6
Total contacts	113	100	246	100	371	100
Number of women making contact	52		88		105	

Source: from R.E. Dobash and R. Dobash, *Violence Against Wives*, Open Books, 1980

ITEM B – ON THE RECEIVING END OF VIOLENCE

Three women recount their experiences:

'It was both mental and physical. You know, I am just thinking of times when he would put the gun to my head, and play Russian roulette with it, with me ˇ but there was no physical harm done then.

He beat me first and kicked me until I was down on the ground and when I was lying there he went in and put on the steel toecapped boots that he wore for work and came back out and started into me again. Kicked me about the stomach and down below when I was pregnant.'

'He trailed me round the house. We had these, you know, drawers and wardrobes that had brass handles on them and he just trailed me by the hair, banged my head off everything. At this stage I was about three or four months pregnant. And he'd kicked me up and down the stairs and trailed me through the kitchen, and through the living room, used my head to open the doors and all. You know, just banged it off the doors. And he brought a Stanley knife and he said, "If you ever do that [go to the police] again I'll mark you for life."

'He said if I ever went – he would kill me – if I ever contacted a solicitor. I was really scared. I think he would kill me. I thought he was going to kill me that night. He was like in a singsong voice: "Come on – see what I've got for you. I've got a big knife waiting for you – come on till you see what you're going to get."

Source: M. McWilliams and J. McKiernan, *Bringing It Out In The Open: Domestic Violence in Northern Ireland*, HMSO, Belfast, 1993, pp. 35, 36, 37

ITEM C – THE ATTITUDES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

The Zero Tolerance Trust campaigns against domestic violence. It is now drawing attention to a report highlighting what the Trust calls disturbing evidence of young people's tolerance of violence. It found that one in five young men and one in ten young women thought violence against women was occasionally acceptable. One in four young men found it acceptable to hit a woman if she slept with someone else, one in eight if a woman was 'nagging', and one in ten if the woman was his wife. A significant minority also thought they might force a woman to have sex if she were his wife or if he was so turned on he couldn't stop.

Source: R. Coward, 'Number crunching', *Guardian*, 16 February 1998

ITEM D: LIFE IMPRISONMENT

A battered wife serving life imprisonment for killing her husband may soon be freed following evidence from her traumatised daughter.

Donna Tinker stabbed her abusive husband with a vegetable knife as he held his arm around her neck and pressed a hot iron against her face.

Despite evidence of the violence – including a black eye, broken tooth and bruised jaw sustained an hour before the stabbing – her defence of provocation was not accepted in court and she was found guilty of murder.

Natalie, then aged five, witnessed what happened that day. There had been a row between the couple about whether or not Natalie could watch a video. Donna had been kneeling down ironing on the floor when her husband kicked her viciously in the head. Later, he came up behind her, put his arms around her throat and picking up the still hot iron, held it to her face. Frantically, she grabbed the first thing that she could reach – a small kitchen knife – and struck out blindly.

Source: adapted from T. McVeigh, 'Daughter's evidence could free battered wife', *Observer*, 24 November 2002

QUESTIONS

1 (a) Describe the pattern of reported incidents of domestic abuse in Item A.

  (b) Making some reference to Item B, attempt to explain this pattern.

2 How might some feminist sociologists account for the attitudes expressed in Item C?

3 Give reasons for the apparently harsh treatment of women by the courts when they attempt to 'fight back'.

4 Violence within the home is clearly widespread. Using information from any of the Items and elsewhere, outline some of the ways in which researchers have tried to explain these episodes.

Activity 2: LONE PARENTS AND GAYS

ITEM A – CHANGING PATTERNS

Percentage of children living in different family types

Great Britain			Percentages
	1981	1992	2002
Couple families			
1 child	18	18	17
2 children	41	39	37
3 or more children	29	27	24
Lone mother families			
1 child	3	4	6
2 children	4	5	7
3 or more children	3	4	6
Lone father families			
1 child	1	1	1
2 or more children	1	1	1
All children	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM B – THE UNDERCLASS

Murray (1994) has agreed that the rise in the numbers of single mothers is a consequence of over–generous welfare allowances, which encourage the development of irresponsible family values, and generate welfare dependency. From this perspective changes in patterns of single motherhood signify a dangerous tendency with inadequate socialization of children leading to a spiral of unemployment, delinquency and crime – the hallmarks of an underclass.

Source: G. Allan and G. Crow, *Families, Households and Society*, Palgrave, 2001

ITEM C – SOCIAL ATTITUDES

A recent Observer poll shows that traditional family values are being swept away by a wave of tolerance for lone–parent mothers, unmarried parents and gay couples. Among the findings were:
· only one person in four believes that parents should stay together for the sake of their children
· two–thirds of the public think that single parents can bring up children just as well as married parents
· only 15 per cent think that the government should favour married parents over single mothers in handing out any new cash to families.

Source: adapted from R. Thomas et al., 'Britain's new family values', *Observer*, 25 October 1998

ITEM D – LONE PARENTS AND POVERTY

Concerns for the welfare of the children within lone–parent households obviously overlap with concerns about the economic circumstances of the lone parent. There has been public concern about the absence of a father figure and the consequences in terms of behavioural and educational difficulties. It is hard to disentangle the effects of economic disadvantage from the effects of continuing negative stereotyping on single parents and the actual effects of parental deprivation in terms of discipline and socialization. While it is the case that children brought up in two–parent families do tend to fare better, we do not know enough about what causes these differences.

Source: adapted from D.H.J. Morgan, 'The family', in M. Haralambos (ed.) *Developments in Sociology – An Annual Review*, vol. 13, Causeway Press, 1997

ITEM E – A RATIONAL CHOICE

The growth of lone parenthood has occurred partly because of two sets of circumstances. For single women from poor backgrounds who get pregnant, lone motherhood is a relatively attractive option beside the alternatives of living with a poor man or staying as a single woman with a poor job. For women in couples with children, a different situation applies. These women are no longer so constrained, by economic necessity and social norms, to remain 'for better for worse' in a traditional two parent family. (Rowlingson and McKay 1998: 206)

Source: David Byrne, *Social Exclusion*, Open University Press, 1999

ITEM F – A LESBIAN COUPLE

Josette and Liz, her partner of 17 years, live in Oxfordshire with Miriam aged 16 years. Josette is Miriam's legal adoptive mother but 'Mummy Liz' is not recognized as her parent in the eyes of the law. As a couple they were not permitted to adopt but as a single woman Josette could. They feel that the system is prejudiced and homophobic.

Source: adapted from Elizabeth Boston, 'Miriam has one legal parent', *Independent on Sunday*, 20 October 2002

QUESTIONS

1 Outline the changes of sociological significance in Item A.

2 Making reference to Items C and E, explain why the above changes may have come about.

3 Many lone parents live in poverty. Account for the relationship between poverty and lone parenthood.

4 After reading the Items, briefly consider why New Right thinkers may see growing numbers of single–parent families as socially undesirable.

5 Assess G.P. Murdock's assertion of the universality of the family in the light of the existence of lone parents and gay couples.

Activity 3: ETHNIC DIVERSITY

ITEM A – MARITAL STATUS

Marital status, adults under 60

	White	Caribbean	Indian	African Asian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Chinese
							Percentages
Single	23	41	21	21	19	22	34
Married	60	39	72	72	74	73	62
Living as married	9	10	3	2	3	1	1
Separated/divorced	7	9	3	3	3	1	3
Widowed	1	2	2	1	2	3	–
Weighted count	4,194	1,834	1,539	960	1,053	344	467
Unweighted count	4,187	1,298	1,560	951	1,709	815	271

Note: Analysis based on all individuals in survey households, who were neither dependent children, nor 60 or more.

Source: from T. Modood *et al.*, *Ethnic Minorities in Britain*, Policy Studies Institute, 1997

ITEM B – LONE–PARENT FAMILIES

Proportion of families with children which were lone-parent families, 1974–94

	White	Caribbean	South Asian
1974 (household definition)	n/a	13	1
1982 (household definition)	10	31	5
1994 (household definition)	16	36	5

Source: from M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, HarperCollins, 2004

ITEM C – FAMILY TIES

Karam Chand lived and worked in Britain alone for ten years before he brought his wife and children to join him from the Punjab. Although he knew that living in Wolverhampton would mean changes, it never seriously occurred to him to revise his notion of family life. Karam Chand's old home in India remains a benchmark for his family life in Wolverhampton. The household that lived in his roomy accommodation around the courtyard included his parents and his unmarried sisters, his own family and also those of his two younger brothers.

A special relationship exists between fathers and sons in Asian families. Thus, all their dependants are included as part of the extended family. Within the family there is not only shared housekeeping but totally shared financial responsibility. Often they run a business together. The individual is considered less important than the group. Members are therefore not free to 'do their own thing' but, in return for submitting to the authority of the elder male, members of the household can expect support and protection.

In Britain, it has not always been possible for the Asian family to continue living together as a domestic unit. There are relatively few houses large enough to accommodate them. As a result, some Asian families have bought adjoining terraced houses and knocked through a connecting door. Others have accepted that in Britain there is little alternative but to split the family into several domestic units. They generally buy closely adjoining units and can constantly be found visiting each other, eating and taking their leisure wherever seems most convenient.

Source: adapted from R. Ballard, 'South Asian families', in R.N. Rapoport, M.P. Fogarty and R. Rapoport, *Families in Britain*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982

ITEM D – ARRANGED MARRIAGE

My sister and I have always looked older than we are and we began to get offers of marriage at age 13. My parents were keen for me to finish my education and meet someone myself as long as he was a Sikh.

Now I am 27 and they are panicking. My father thinks I am past my 'sell by date' and all my family find my single status a source of embarrassment. Last week, to keep the peace, I agreed to meet a man recommended by my auntie. But when I met him he said if we married he would expect me to move in with his parents and always be home from work by 5.30, impossible for a journalist.

It is amazing that arranged marriage has such a hold on people who have lived in Britain for so long. But Asian society relies on worry about what people think – no one wants to break rank or appear to lose control of their children.

I can't see things changing in the near future. Meanwhile, girls like me must tread a thin line between accepting the constraints of a traditional marriage and breaking with their parents.

Source: Sabi Phagura, 'The trials of an Asian bride', *Sunday Times*, 16 February 2003

ITEM E – BEING IN LOVE

Giddens (1992) has argued that in late modernity the notion of expressing the self through exclusive, intimate relationships has attained far greater cultural prominence. The absence of an intimate loving relationship can make life appear 'empty'. The dominance of Western cultural imagery means that such imagery is increasingly pertinent to other cultures. Through the media adolescents are heavily socialized into the ways of romantic and sexual love. This is evident in many aspects of 'youth culture', from music and magazines to soap operas.

Source: adapted from G. Allan and G. Crow, *Families, Households and Society*, Palgrave, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 **Describe the differences between the ethnic groups:**

   (a) in Item A

   (b) in Item B.

2 **What expectations and beliefs exist within the Asian family described in Item C?**
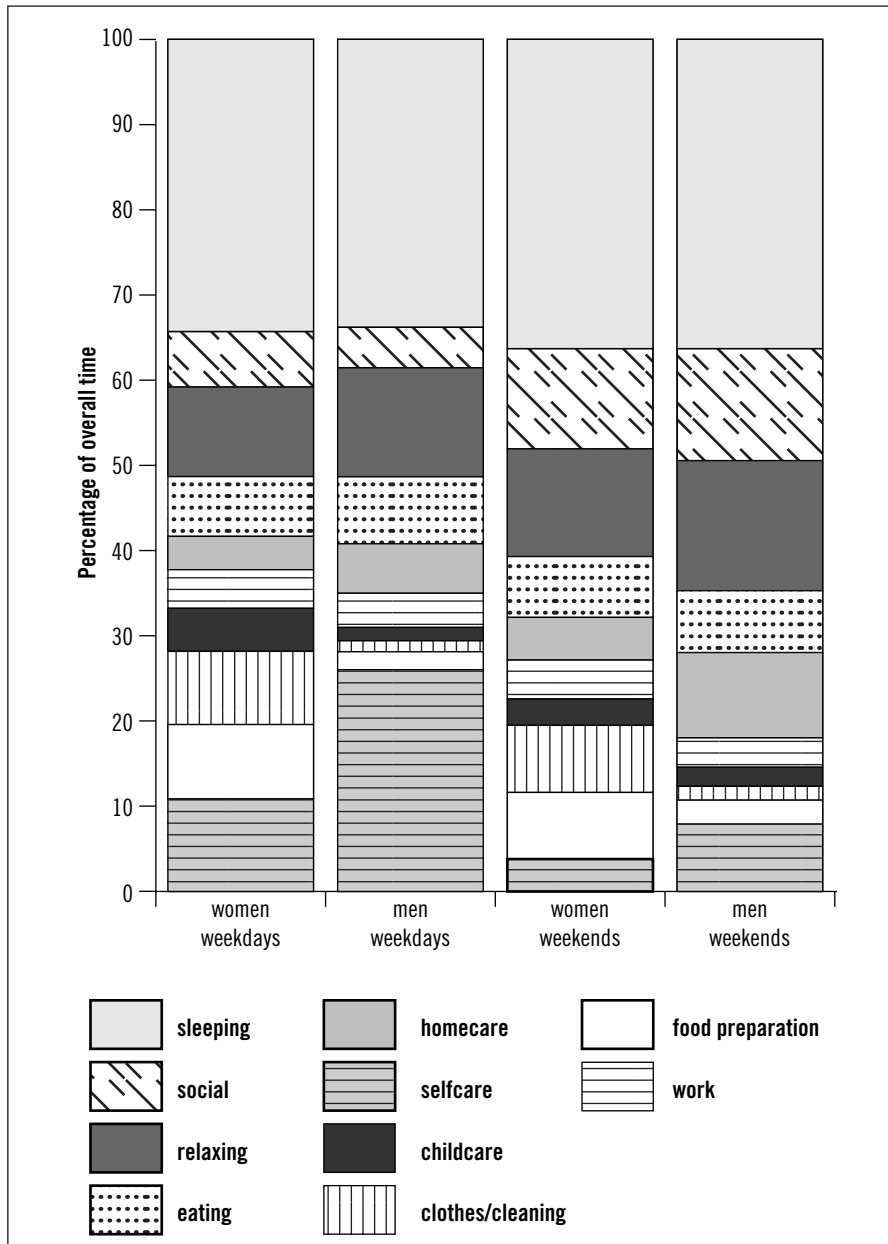
3 **To what extent do these expectations and beliefs clash with prevailing beliefs about the nuclear family?**

4 **Consider whether or not the nuclear family will gradually become the prevailing norm for Asian families in Britain. Make some reference to Item C in your answer.**

5 **Read Items D and E and briefly consider whether you believe that the 'arranged marriage' is becoming a thing of the past.**

Activity 4: CONJUGAL ROLES

ITEM A – WHO DOES WHAT?

Source: from M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, HarperCollins, 2000

ITEM C – DECISION MAKING

Couples were asked about decision making. The decisions that were presented were: organizing finance; buying a car; buying consumer goods such as washing machines; what to do about Christmas; where to go on holiday; deciding something to do with the husband's job; deciding something to do with the wife's job.

Dominant partner in decision making

Employment	Husband	Both equally	Wife
Both employed	17	19	14
Wife only	–	1	–
Husband only	22	15	3
Neither employed	6	3	2
Total	**45**	**38**	**19**

Source: from J. R. Pahl, *Money and Marriage*, Macmillan Education, 1989

ITEM B – A NEW ARRIVAL

A new study reveals that fathers' levels of well–being and personal happiness after birth rise significantly more than those of mothers. A new father will lose 616 hours of sleep but a new mother will lose 1,968.

Dad will have to give up 2,200 hours of leisure time in pubs and restaurants during the first 16 years of his child's life. But mum will miss out on almost 3,700 hours of fun.

Researcher Dr Jonathan Scales said, 'The big picture is that parenthood has a significantly different impact for men and women'.

New mother Nicola Redwood says she and her husband both get great pleasure from their baby. But she feels her husband does have it easier. 'He comes in from work and plays with Billy. I then get on with the dishes and doing the dinner.'

Source: adapted from Ben Summerskill, 'Why new dads have all the fun', Observer, 2 June 2002

Activity 4: CONJUGAL ROLES (continued)

ITEM D – GAY HOUSEHOLDS

In many gay relationships couples struggle to mark their difference from heterosexual patterns. Importantly, they are less grounded in a socially validated division of labour. These relationships often remain contingent on continuing mutual satisfaction rather than 'marriage vows', so they are often more reflexive and give a higher priority to equality.

Source: adapted from G. Allan and G. Crow, *Families, Households and Society*, Palgrave, 2001

ITEM E – CHANGING ROLES

Until two years ago I worked in the oil industry as a marine surveyor. The last job I had was surveying the sea bed around Indonesia. When the trouble in that region began, my company pulled out and I was made redundant. My wife had been a full–time housewife looking after our two young children. After I lost my job she found a good job in the careers service very quickly. We found that it suited us for her to work nine to five and for me to stay at home and look after our daughters. Although our income isn't as high as it was, we are all happy with this arrangement. My wife enjoys having adult company, I see more of the kids, and the girls are more contented now that I'm not away for seven or eight weeks at a time. I'm very practical, so I enjoy household jobs and cooking.

   At first it felt a bit strange not supporting the family. There are quite a few men who drop their children off at school in the morning, but not many are full–time homemakers. The mothers at school were a bit reticent towards me at first, but now I'm accepted and they are quite happy for their kids to come round to have tea and play with my girls after school. I think both men and women can be good carers, you know it's something you learn. I pride myself that I'm a lot more patient with my children than many mothers are.
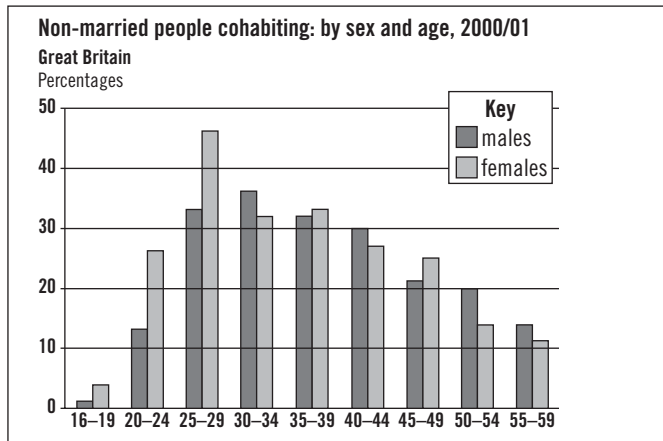
Source: adapted from an unpublished interview conducted with a house–husband, January 2000 (pictures, E. Stocker)

QUESTIONS

1 **Briefly describe the patterns of domestic activity in Item A.**

2 **Why do sociologists want to gather information on 'who does what' within different households? Refer to relevant Items in your answer.**

3 **What conclusions can we draw from Item C? What other areas of family decision making might it be important for sociologists to explore?**

4 **Using Item E, discuss how conjugal roles are changing.**

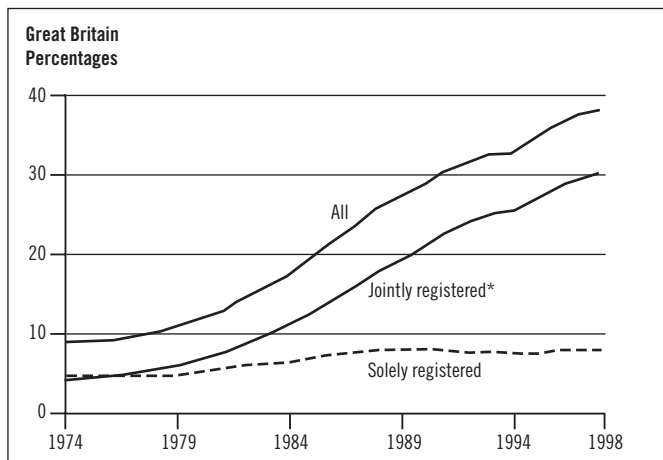5 **Which of the two pictures in Item E is more typical?**

Activity 5: FAMILY MATTERS

ITEM A – COHABITATION

Non-married people cohabiting: by sex and age, 2000/01
Great Britain
Percentages

Key
males
females

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM B – BIRTHS OUTSIDE MARRIAGE

Great Britain
Percentages

All

Jointly registered*

Solely registered

Source: *Social Trends 30*, HMSO, 2000

ITEM C – TRIAL MARRIAGE

People cohabit for many different reasons and in many different ways. But more and more often and especially amongst the young, cohabitation serves as a sort of trial marriage. If it works out, you get married; if it doesn't you move on and marry someone else. But only if you want to. The most recent British Attitude Survey found that two thirds of 18–24 year olds do not believe that you have to marry before you have children.

Source: Maureen Freely, 'Mum, dad, 2.4 children: what next?', *New Statesman*, 4 February 2002

ITEM D – BEAN POLE FAMILIES

The nuclear family of mum, dad and 2.4 kids is breaking down. Researchers have coined a name for the emerging British household – the Bean Pole. They 'live together' and have 1.8 children.

The traditional family of married parents with two or more children is giving way to cohabiting couples with a single child.

'Twenty years ago', says a recent study conducted by Mintel, 'family groups were horizontally broad', comprising two or three generations with several children in each nuclear family. The next 20 years will see rapid growth of the bean pole families – long thin family groups of three or four small generations. The change to one or two children in a family has led some sociologists to believe that children will become more individualistic and selfish. Pressure on 40–60 year olds may also be growing. This 'sandwich generation' is caught between children who need financial help, and elderly relatives who need looking after.

The rising divorce rate, the study predicts, 'will make family structures more fluid and lead to a rise in boomerang children' who leave home only to return later when a marriage or long–term relationship breaks down.

Source: adapted from John Arlidge, 'Nuclear family goes into meltdown', *Observer*, 5 May 2002

ITEM E – GRANDPARENTS

Frequency of adults having contact with their grandchildren, 2001

Great Britain	See their grandchildren	Other types of contact
At least once a week	61	60
At least every month	17	12
Only in school holidays or once every three months	10	3
Less often	10	9
Never	2	16
All	**100**	**100**

Percentages

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM F – KIN

Number of kin in neighbourhood

	percentage
1–4 relatives	63
5–9 relatives	21
10–19 relatives	11
20–29 relatives	4
30+ relatives	5

At the time of this sample, 72 per cent had been visited by a relative at their home within the last week.

Source: M. O'Brien, 'Family life', in M. Haralambos (ed.) *Developments in Sociology*, vol. 16, Causeway Press, 2000

QUESTIONS

1 **Comment on the information expressed in Item A.**

2 **Look at Item B. What trends are apparent in the graph?**

3 **'The family is in terminal decline.' Discuss this statement in the light of the Items.**

Activity 6: MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

ITEM A – MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES

Marriages and divorces
United Kingdom
Thousands
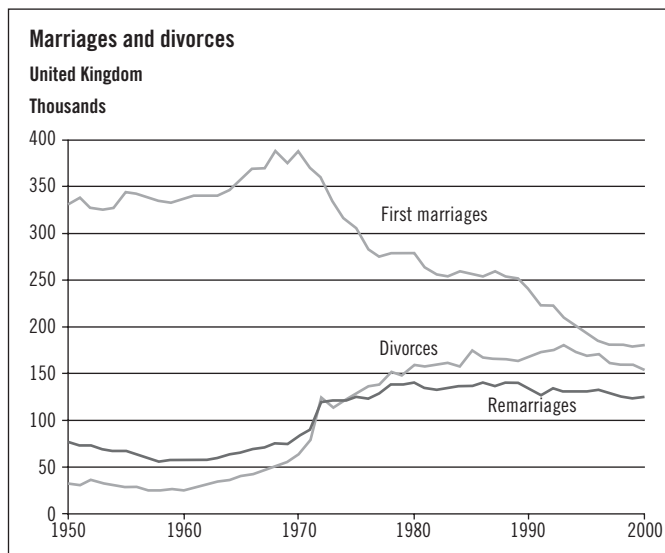
Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM B – MARRIAGE AND HEALTH

Scientific evidence that married people live longer has been accumulating since the nineteenth century. Recent data shows that married people have lower incidences of cancer, heart disease, strokes and many other ailments than never–married, widowed and divorced people.

Since the 1970s, when feminists expounded the idea that marriage boosted men's health but boded ill for women, it has been widely accepted that marriage is better for men. While it is still true that men probably gain more than women in both physical and psychological terms, newer research suggests that each gender benefits in different ways.

It is a cliché, but women look after their mates. 'Being married encourages men to lead healthier lives', says Linda Waite, a sociologist. 'They sleep more, eat better, don't drink as much and don't drink and drive as much.'

When women marry their material circumstances improve, which can be a ticket to better health. Married women also report that they are happier than their unattached sisters. Evidence that married women live longer is less consistent than for married men. Ingrid Waldron's research found that marriage improved the physical health of women who didn't work outside the home, but not that of employed women.

Source: adapted from E.L. Baker, 'In sickness and in health', *Guardian*, 9 February 1993

ITEM C – WORKING AT MARRIAGE

Couples who seek to end their misery by getting divorced are less likely to find lasting contentment than those prepared to work at their marriages.

A survey conducted by Linda Waite at Chicago University appears to fly in the face of conventional wisdom. It suggests that the benefits of divorce have been oversold and that staying together for the sake of the children can have huge benefits for the parents too.

Her study found that of unhappy couples who were questioned five years later, of those who stayed together two thirds were now happy, while of those who divorced only one half were happy. Those who reported being stuck in the most troubled marriages reported the biggest turnaround – 80 per cent of these reported their marriages as happy five years later.

'Divorce didn't reduce symptoms of depression, raise self–esteem or increase a sense of mastery compared with those who stayed married', said Ms Waite. An explanation may be that while divorce eliminates some sources of stress, it simultaneously creates others.

Source: adapted from Alexandra Frean, 'Unhappy couples should not put faith in divorce', *The Times*, 17 July 2002

ITEM D – ONE OPTION

A National Children's Bureau report suggests that young people aged 11–16 regard marriage as a choice rather than a must. It is viewed as an option in the 'future landscape' says the report's author, Sue Sharpe. 'When I conducted research in schools in the 1970s, a third of girls wanted to be married by 20, and three–quarters by 25. That was seen as a critical cut–off age by which point you really should be married.' Returning to the same schools in the late 1990s, Sharpe discovered that attitudes had changed dramatically. 'Young people had witnessed adult relationships breaking up and being reconstituted all round them. Girls in particular were far more wary of marriage. By then only 4 per cent wanted to be married by 20, although there was still a feeling of 'A wedding day – that sounds good fun.'

Source: Fiona Gibson, 'Oops, I did it again', *Observer Review*, 24 February 2002

ITEM E – THE LAW

The Civil Partnership Bill has just had its second reading in The Lords. The Bill gives gay couples some of the rights now held only by married couples. If it became law then unmarried heterosexual couples will also be able to register their civil partnership. On doing so, they will have the same pensions rights, bereavement damages and inheritance rights as married couples.

Baroness Young said that when marriage is equated with 'other arrangements' it is 'downgraded'.

Source: adapted from Maureen Freely, 'Mum, dad, 2.4 children: what next?', *New Statesman*, 4 February 2002

QUESTIONS

1 (a) **Describe the trends shown in Item A.**

(b) **Do you think that divorce statistics are always an accurate reflection of marital breakdown?**

2 **Offer a sociological explanation of the findings in Item B.**

3 **What stresses do you think may be created by divorce? Refer to Item C in your answer.**

4 **'Marriage is just one option.' Briefly consider this statement in the light of Items D and E.**

Activity 7: WORK AND THE FAMILY

ITEM A – A MAN'S VIEW

I was earning £100,000 a year, travelling around the world, coming back to Britain once every two weeks and dealing with contracts worth millions of pounds.

When we talked of having children, I realized that the life I was living would mean that I wouldn't have heard my children's first words and certainly wouldn't have been back to see them born. I didn't really have a choice – I wanted to be there to have an influence on their upbringing. Now I earn a third of what I did, although I wasn't entirely stupid and made sure I had a proper pension and boosted my savings as much as possible beforehand. I know that the rewards of watching my children grow up outweigh everything I have lost.

Source: A. Hill, 'Life in the fast lane bad for dads – and others', *Observer*, 15 June 2003

ITEM B – TIME FOR THE KIDS

It's a dilemma of modern working parents: finding enough time for their children. Now a major study reveals that parents who fail to do so put their teenagers at risk of problems including drug use and teenage pregnancies.

Teenagers who felt emotionally 'connected' to at least one parent were up to a third less likely to show some type of problem behaviour.

Professor Blum, the author of the report, said that it's not about cramming teenagers' lives with joint family outings. Instead, parents should supervise free time or get other trusted adults to do so – and make themselves available at the four key times of the day: early mornings, immediately after school, suppertime and bedtime.

Source: adapted from G. Hinsliff, 'Peril of the parents who have no time', *Observer*, 14 April 2002

ITEM C – TIRED AND STRESSED

In an American study, children were asked about their parents' work and what impact parents' work had on their lives (Galinsky 1999). The nationally representative sample contained over 1,000 children from 7 to 18 years of age with parents working in a range of occupations. One of the survey questions asked the children to make a wish: 'If you were granted one wish to change the way that your mother's or father's work affects your life, what would that wish be?' The largest proportion of children wished that their parents would be less tired and less stressed. Many children reported that their parents were rushed and hurried.

Source: adapted from M. O'Brien, 'Family life', in M. Haralambos (ed.) *Developments in Sociology*, vol. 16, Causeway Press, 2000

ITEM D – HOUSEWIFE AND MOTHER

The government will be told this month that a stark new class divide is opening between career women and the mothers who give up work to become housewives.

While working mothers are able to build on the increased 'social capital' that a modern education and equal access to the workplace have afforded them, stay–at–home mothers rapidly lose their social status.

If women, on the birth of a child, withdraw from the labour market they experience a progressive reduction in accumulated work experience, perhaps the loss of promotion so the wife's capital falls. American research has shown that women who dropped out of their careers to have children were still not back on their original career trajectory up to 24 years later. 'By taking time out of the labour force you are actually signalling to potential employers that you do have other claims on your time that you take seriously.'

Source: adapted from J. Elliot and W. Iredale, 'Housewives go backwards in status race', *Sunday Times*, 1 June 2003

ITEM E – FAMILYISM

A new survey has found that one in three working women has turned down promotion because of family pressures. Many women questioned felt they must put their children and family first – they often didn't go for promotion because they felt they couldn't do the job properly due to home commitments.

Source: adapted from Jonathan Thompson, 'Women sacrificing careers for families', *Independent*, 7 July 2002

ITEM F – CHOOSING TO BE CHILD FREE

Women are refusing to become mothers as they fear having children will undermine their sense of identity. Even some married women in their twenties and thirties are saying that being a parent is 'unfulfilling', 'repellent' and 'dreary'.

Dr Rosemary Gillespie, author of the study, says, 'Not having children has traditionally been framed in terms of the tragedy and suffering associated with involuntary childlessness and infertility. What is new is the increasing numbers of women who eschew motherhood and that increasingly are able to articulate their rejection in ways not generally available to previous generations.'

Bea Cambell, the feminist writer, says, 'Society demands of mothers total sacrifice of their attention, bodies and resources. The conditions in which motherhood happens are absolutely desolate, apart from the joy and richness the child itself brings.'

Julie Bieles, 31, a mature student, said, 'I don't think children are the defining feature of what makes a woman. If I ever have kids, which I may or may not, I would still want my career as well.'

Source: adapted from Sophie Goodchild, 'Young women believe having babies is "dreary"', *Independent on Sunday*, 13 April 2003

QUESTIONS

1 Why may the option taken by the man described in Item A not be open to many parents?

2 'Struggles over time appear to be a constant theme in modern family life.' Discuss this statement in the light of Items A, B and C.

3 Making reference to Items C, D, E and F, consider some of the disadvantages of motherhood.

Chapter 8: FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: DOMESTIC ABUSE

Teacher's note

This activity examines some of the negative aspects of family life. It focuses particularly on violent assaults. Students may wish to read Chapter 8, pp. 472–82.

1 (a) Item A shows that the most usual contact after the first episode is a parent or relative (33 per cent). Friends and neighbours are also frequently contacted. When an attack is severe, a woman is more likely to contact her GP, but still only does so in 22 per cent of cases. Her contacts with police and social workers are also limited (in each case 14 per cent of worst episodes). There is also a significant amount of reporting to Women's Aid.

(b) *Key points:*

- Item A shows clearly that women are very unwilling to report their situation to anyone. When they do discuss it is most likely to be with a family member. Item B gives us some insight into why this may be the case. Clearly, these women are terrified of their partners and in fear for their lives if they report the attack to anyone official. They may be more likely to tell a family member, as they trust them not to repeat the story lest their partners should find out. In some cases they may feel that a family member can give useful advice or perhaps informally talk to the aggressor.
- Women may fail to report incidents of violence, as they feel ashamed. Their partner may also have persuaded them that they are in some way to blame. The number of incidents reported to the police is relatively low. As Item B illustrates, this may provoke further violence from an already violent partner, and lead to a general escalation of tension and violence within the household, adversely affecting the children, both emotionally and physically.
- Women may have little confidence that police action can improve the situation. Many women are financially dependent on their partners, and may feel that they cannot leave as they have nowhere to go and no means of support.
- Item A reveals that, for the last attack, only 13 per cent were reported to the police but 25 per cent to Women's Aid. Women's Aid may be perceived as being more effective than the police because it gives practical help in the form of a secure temporary home for women and their children and protection within a hostel from their partners. The police can only prosecute the offender.
- Finally, the under–reporting may have something to do with police image. In the past, the police have been criticized for being unsympathetic to battered women and labelling disputes as 'domestics'. However, with changing attitudes towards domestic violence, most forces are making a concerted effort to deal sympathetically with the victims of domestic violence.

2 *Key points:*

- Many feminists see domestic violence as a reflection of patriarchal relations within the family, and within society as a whole. They see society as organized in such a way that men can dominate women, violence against women being the most extreme expression of this domination. By 'sleeping around' a woman would be rejecting the male's right to the monopoly of her body and his right to the automatic paternity of her children. Likewise, a woman who 'nags' is questioning her partner's authority and power within the relationship. Using these examples, some feminists might argue that the sorts of occasions where assaults on women are seen as justifiable are just those occasions where male dominance is questioned.
- The findings of the Zero Tolerance Trust relate to the young. However, since we have no way of comparing the group with older generations, it is impossible to know whether acceptance of violence is rising, falling or remaining at similar levels to those in the past. We also do not know whether the individuals questioned also had a high tolerance of violence directed towards men or children.

3 *Key points:*

- The legal system is part of society and generally expresses prevailing values. (From a functionalist viewpoint the law reflects value consensus, from a Marxist viewpoint ruling class hegemony.) As Item C shows, there seems to be a measure of social acceptance of violence towards women.
- Because of women's lack of physical strength, they may not respond to violence immediately, in which case they are more likely to be charged with murder than manslaughter.
- The courts have been accused of being dominated by older men. If we accept the view often stressed by some feminists that violence against women to some extent benefits all men, then harsher sentences for women are hardly surprising.
- It may be that since we continue to view women as 'naturally' passive and non–aggressive, those women who do use violence against their partner are seen as unnatural and more pathological and dangerous than a man might be. Such 'unnatural' behaviour may therefore be seen as in need of greater 'correction' by the penal system.

4 *Key points:*

- Some sociologists have attempted to explain domestic violence in terms of individual psychology the 'mad' or 'bad' syndrome. Certainly in Item B the men described in common sense terms seem far from well balanced. One could, for example, easily imagine the incident of 'Russian roulette' being the action of someone either mentally ill or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- A more common explanation of domestic violence locates the source in the social structure of society. The family can be seen as under stress from the pressures of low income and poor housing, which may precipitate violence. A woman's pregnancy may make these stresses all the more intense. It may also be that violence is used by men to compensate for their low job status.
- Domestic violence may also give men a sense of power and control that they do not experience in their work environment. This approach may also help us understand why so many women do not report abuse and stay in these dangerous relationships. They may perceive their situation as more rewarding than the alternative, which is likely to involve poor work and low income.
- Domestic violence is seen by some feminists as a reflection of the unequal power relations between men and women in society as a whole. Dobash and Dobash (1980), for example, argue that in a patriarchal society men's violence serves to help control all women and is maintained by the legal system, as demonstrated by the case of Donna Tinker and others.

ACTIVITY 2: LONE PARENTS AND GAYS

Teacher's note

This activity explores some of the questions surrounding lone and gay parenthood. After completing the activity, students will have a better understanding of some of the reasons why lone parents continue to be perceived as a 'social problem'. Students may find it useful to read Chapter 8, pp. 466–8 and 494–500.

1 Over the twenty–year period covered by the table the largest proportion of children continues to be brought up in couple households. However, this percentage has been in decline. The proportion of children brought up in lone–mother households during the period has virtually doubled, while the proportion brought up by lone fathers remains stable at a low level.

2 *Key points:*

- In general, there is a much greater acceptance of lone parenthood now than in the past (Item C).
- Since the 1960s, feminists have challenged the dominant ideology of the traditional nuclear family. They have accused it of being patriarchal and some feminists argue that it is against the best interests of women. This may mean that both women and men are now more likely to question their relationships, and to feel that it is justifiable to leave an unsatisfactory relationship. Lone parenthood has therefore come to be seen by some as an entirely legitimate alternative to the nuclear family.

- It can be argued that the general decline in religious beliefs and the growth of individualism provide a further ideological justification for the pursuit of personal fulfilment at the expense of social obligation to family members.
- It is worth pointing out that as the numbers of lone–parent families increase, they challenge the statistical norm of the nuclear family. As we all come to know single parents and the children of single parents, or even to experience lone parenthood ourselves, it is no longer possible to stereotype them in negative ways.
- Item E highlights that our present economic/welfare system means that for some women lone parenthood has now become economically more attractive than in the past.

3 *Key points:*
- The financial burden of parenthood tends to fall more heavily on women than men. A woman who takes time off work to have children and bring them up will substantially reduce her lifetime earnings. A single parent who decides to return to work will be met by the further financial barrier of payment for appropriate day care for her children.
- The present government is trying to tackle the problem of poverty among lone parents by attracting them back into employment. In order to assist in this it has provided a system that gives some financial support for day care.
- Some lone mothers do not wish to return to employment, at least while their children are young. They feel that 'motherhood' is a real job and that children benefit from having a mother at home. This view has been backed by some feminists, who argue that mothers should receive a social wage in recognition of their contribution to society. Clearly, such a wage would raise the status of 'mothers' and help tackle deprivation. At present a social wage seems unlikely, but the present government has increased financial support for all children, which will help in particular the poorest children in society.

4 *Key points:*
- The New Right, especially Charles Murray, have seen lone parents as responsible in part for the growth of the underclass. Murray argues that lack of a male role model who is employed and supporting his family leads to many young people, especially men, accepting a life spent living on benefits without working and taking little responsibility for their own children. In other words these children are seen as inadequately socialized and creating long–term problems for society (e.g. delinquency and unemployment).
- The relationship between poverty and lone parenthood has been observed by sociologists of many shades of opinion. In Item D, the author points out that the disadvantages that children from single–parent families experience may have as much to do with their poverty as any inadequacies in their socialization.

5 Murdock believed that the nuclear family was a universal social institution. In his definition he includes ideas of common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. He argues that a family includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom have a socially approved sexual relationship, with one or more children. Single–parent families do not 'measure up' to his definition, as there is only a single adult. Nor do gay relationships, as they do not contain adults of different sex. Thus either the family is not universal or Murdock's definition is too narrow. It may be that we can more clearly understand 'the family' by seeing it as a unit of one woman who has prime charge of a child or children. This would cover most lone parents and lesbian couples; however, it still excludes single fathers and gay male couples with children.

ACTIVITY 3: ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Teacher's note

In this activity we develop the idea of family diversity introduced in the last activity on lone parenthood, focusing on Asian families. Students may wish to read Chapter 8, pp. 501–6.

1 **(a)** Indians, African Asians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are the most likely to be married. These groups are also the least likely to be cohabiting or divorced. Of all groups, Caribbeans are least likely to be married and most likely to be single.

(b) During the twenty years covered, there has been an increase in lone parenthood among all groups. The increase appears to have been most rapid among ethnic minority groups. Lone parenthood is still at a low level among Asian families but has seen a five–fold increase. Lone parenthood among Caribbean families has almost trebled and by 1994

stood at a level more than twice as high as the white group.

2 In the traditional Asian family, members of the extended family expect to be able to rely on each other. Domestic responsibilities are shared and the family often forms an economic unit of production, frequently jointly owning a business. Members expect to be under the authority of older male members of the household, but in return they are sheltered by them. The family seems to be central in their lives and more important than the individuals who compose it.

3 The modern nuclear family is a small unit, generally consisting of two parents with children, living relatively isolated from kin. Usually, the parents work for wages, which are seen as their own and upon which kin have no claim. While children are formally under the control of their parents, many nuclear families appear to be fairly democratic. Young people expect to make their own decisions and organize their own lives while still living with their parents.

To Western eyes the authority vested in adult males in traditional Asian families may be in direct conflict with the Western belief in self–determination. The practice of arranged marriages, for example, runs contrary to the ideal of romantic love and freedom of choice, which lies at the heart of the nuclear family.

4 *Key points:*
- It seems probable that the number of nuclear family units among Asian families will increase. This is partly because large houses suitable for extended families are difficult to come by, as seen in Item C. Furthermore, there are now more Asians who have been born and brought up in this country. Among this group we would expect traditional norms of residence to be less strong. With more Asian men employed outside the family business, and more Asian women being employed, some sociologists believe that couples may gradually come to expect more independence from their families.
- It may be that, nevertheless, the extended family remains of central importance in people's lives. Asians may spend considerable amounts of their leisure time with kin. Also, many members of the Asian community have experienced racism. In a situation where they feel under threat, both culturally and physically, the larger group of the extended family may offer some protection. The kin network may also offer practical support, such as help with children at times of sickness, or financial help.
- Continued respect for the extended family might, to some extent, rest on tradition. Asian cultural and religious beliefs emphasize the importance of family relationships. As a result of early socialization, many Asian people will continue to remain attached to their traditional beliefs despite their residence in Britain.

5 In all societies people experience emotional attachments to others, which we may call love. However, not all societies see this as a legitimate basis for a marriage. In traditional Asian culture, where the authority and importance of the father are significant, other factors may be seen as more important. Those Asians who have been brought up in Britain will have been subject to the ideas of romantic love central to media images. Moreover, from a practical viewpoint, if the nuclear family structure is replacing extended families, it is less important that the prospective spouse be the choice of parents. The author of Item D clearly feels that a traditional marriage will not fit in with her modern life, education and outlook. It may therefore be the case that the modern Asian family adapts to changing social circumstances by giving their children increased choice of marriage partner.

ACTIVITY 4: CONJUGAL ROLES

Teacher's note

This activity examines the changing roles played by men and women within the family. Students will need to read Chapter 8, pp. 508–17.

1 Men and women spend similar times in sleeping, socializing, relaxing and eating. However, there are important gender differences in other activities. Men go out to work for longer, while women spend longer cooking, cleaning and looking after children.

2 Knowing 'who does what' within a household can tell us the extent to which marital roles are symmetrical. This may in turn help us to understand people's attitudes to their relationships, childbirth and possible reasons for dissatisfaction. It may also reflect on the extent of equality as an ideal in a relationship. Item D is suggestive that this may be greater in

same–sex relationships. Item C seems to show that equality in decision making may be greater where women have an independent income.

3 *Key points:*

· In terms of these particular areas of decision making, the husband appears to be the more dominant partner. This is especially true where only the husband works. Where both partners are employed, the wife's role is much more equal to that of her husband and the majority of decisions are jointly taken. If the evidence from this table is reliable, we can conclude that a woman's employment situation has a direct effect on her power within the home.

· Other areas which might have been explored are the decision about whether or not to move house, decisions about when and how many children to have, and decisions about children's education. These decisions may be made infrequently but are of great importance to people's lives.

· A range of less important decisions might also have been included, such as what clothing to buy for children, what curtains to choose, and where to go on a Saturday night. These types of decision are likely to be made more frequently but are of less consequence. In the context of an analysis of power within the family, it might be interesting to know whether working wives took a greater share in making important decisions, about finance, for instance, or moving house, or whether their greater influence only extended to having a greater say in less important areas like what to do at weekends or where to go on holiday.

· It is important to remember that making a decision does not necessarily mean that the decision is made in that person's own interest. For example, a mother may control the household spending but she may use the money to buy food and goods that please her children and her husband rather than herself. Of course, she may do this to validate her self–image as a 'good' wife and mother and gain a sense of self–worth from this. Thus interpreting the meaning of 'who makes decisions' is complex.

4 In recent years, there has been a growing acceptance in society that gender roles are interchangeable. As women have entered such occupations as engineering and the law, previously the preserve of men, so more men have learned to cook and clean and care for their children. This trend has been influenced by women's increasing participation in paid employment. Since geographic and social mobility mean that women can no longer rely on mothers and sisters for help, their increasing employment outside the home means that either services must be 'bought in' an alternative for a growing number of middle–class couples or husbands and partners must help. In some cases the husband takes on the role of homemaker while the wife supports the family. Although increasing numbers of couples organize their lives in this way, either from choice or necessity, Item E notes that there is still a degree of suspicion surrounding the reversal of roles. Gradually more and more men are seen taking as an active part in childcare and domestic work, so attitudes are likely to continue changing.

5 The picture of a man painting is a more traditional image of a man's role and is likely to be more typical of an older age group. The picture of a young man ironing reflects a 'new man's' view, which may be more typical of young men who are either in same-sex relationships or heterosexual partnerships before a child is born.

ACTIVITY 5: FAMILY MATTERS

Teacher's note

This activity looks at some changing aspects of couple and family behaviour. There is no particular reading for this activity.

1 Key points:

· Cohabitation is common for both men and women.

· Women's rate of cohabitation is higher in the younger age groups (under 29s) than is men's.

· Men's rate of cohabitation is higher in the older age groups (over 50s) than is women's.

· Since the figure represents a 'snapshot' in time, we do not know the extent to which the high rates of cohabitation at ages 25–35 will be translated into marriage or will continue in years to come.

· Lower rates of cohabitation in the 55–59 age group may reflect attitudes to cohabitation now considered 'old fashioned' by younger groups.

· The very young are unlikely to cohabit even if they approve such behaviour, as they are less likely to be financially independent or in an established relationship.

2 Item B reveals that the percentage of live births outside marriage has increased rapidly since the early 1980s. There has been a slight increase in the number of babies registered just by their mothers, but most of the increase is accounted for by births registered jointly by both parents. Of these, three–quarters are living together at the same address, i.e. cohabiting.

3 *Key points:*

· Many couples that start off by cohabiting continue to live together and produce children, and in many cases marry. Whether or not they are legally married, those households function as families, accepting responsibility for each other, children, parents and in–laws. Declining fertility rates coupled with people living longer means that the nature of the family will change in response to changing circumstances. We would expect this to happen to any vibrant social institution if it were not to lose its relevance to contemporary life.

· With respect to wider kinship ties of family, Items E and F show that these continue to be of great significance. In Item E, we see that 61 per cent of grandparents see their grandchildren every week, with only 10 per cent seeing them less than three monthly. Similarly, Item F shows that very many children had kin living nearby and nearly three–quarters had been visited by a relative at their home within the last week.

Clearly, the extended family continues to play an important role in children's lives.

ACTIVITY 6: MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Teacher's note

In this activity we look at marriage and divorce. After completing the activity, students should have a better understanding of some of the reasons for rising divorce rates. Students should first read Chapter 8, pp. 517–24.

1 (a) Item A shows that since 1970 there has been a gradual decline in the number of first–time marriages. There has been a corresponding increase in the number of divorces and remarriages. By 1995 the number of divorces and the number of first–time marriages were at roughly the same level.

(b) The divorce statistics are just one way of measuring marital breakdown. There has always been an unknown number of 'empty shell' marriages, where couples continue to live together but lead separate lives. There are also ways of ending a marriage other than divorce; for example, legal separation and annulment.

2 *Key points:*

· If a couple are happily married then their stress levels may reduce because they have the benefits of companionship, love and friendship, and someone who can be relied upon for help and support in times of trouble.

· Marriage may also mean an improvement in diet for both parties: from a woman's point of view, being better off financially may mean that she is able to improve her diet; her husband may also benefit from a better choice of foods and 'home cooking' if his wife cooks for him. If he himself cooks then he may be more conscientious about preparing nutritious meals for his family than he would be if he were single.

· If the couple are financially better off, then they may be able to live in a higher quality home. This could mean that they benefit in practical ways perhaps by being in a warmer and drier environment and also psychologically, since the insecurity of living in a poor housing area, with high rates of crime and social disintegration, can affect people's mental health.

· The Item also refers to lifestyle changes among men who, when married, tend to 'sleep more and drink less'. Women also report being happier when married.

· The group that does not seem to benefit is married women who continue to be employed. This might be because many of these women carry a dual burden of employment and responsibility for housework and childcare.

3 *Key points:*

· Financial stresses. In many cases there will be insufficient money to provide two independent households. Women who divorce are often relatively poor in subsequent years.

· The children may need to move house if the parental home is sold, possibly moving to a new area and school and having to make new friends.

- Day–to–day life may change considerably. Men may see much less of their children, while women may need to obtain employment or work longer hours than previously.
- If one partner embarks on a new relationship there may be jealousies and friction. Parents may have to adapt to being stepparents; children may have to adapt to other children coming to share their home.
- Some people may see divorce as representing a personal failure. They may feel guilty and ashamed and lack self–esteem.
- Extended kinship networks will change, possibly involving bad feeling. For example, children may no longer see paternal kin or grandparents.

4 *Key points:*
- Item D seems to show that many young people no longer see marriage as a 'must'. Especially in the case of girls, they are wary and less eager to enter into marriage at an early age. It does seem to remain as a romantic ideal · both in terms of the big wedding day and in terms of popular romantic media images ·   but less so than thirty years ago.
- Baroness Young may be right in her belief that equating marriage with other arrangements downgrades it. Item E shows clearly that the law is making marriage only one of several possible arrangements between couples which have official recognition. This seems to reflect a general change in social attitudes, where alternatives to marriage are no longer considered deviant, immoral or inferior.

ACTIVITY 7: WORK AND THE FAMILY

Teacher's note

This activity looks at the relationship between work and family life. This item may also be used in conjunction with Chapter 10.

1 The man in Item A is a person well used to a high income. He is probably well educated, of a mature age and in possession of a wide range of marketable skills. Given these factors, he is in a position to 'downshift' to a less demanding job that will give him more time with his family. We must note that he will still be earning over £30,000 a year and has made sure that he has proper pension provisions and savings. Many men and women are not in such a fortunate position and could not afford to work fewer hours.

2 *Key points:*
- We are routinely reminded in the media that many British people work longer hours than most other Europeans and as a result people constantly feel rushed and short of time. When people have children, they have many more demands on their time. Item B refers to research that suggests that children may suffer long–term damage if they do not feel emotionally 'connected' to at least one parent. It refers to the risk of teenage drug use and pregnancy. Professor Blum, the author of the report, suggests that parents be there for children at breakfast, on return from school, suppertime and bedtime. Clearly, this makes ideal parenting difficult to combine with any but part–time work, an option which many mothers take. It is worth noting that while lone parents are actively encouraged by the government to take employment (thus reducing the child's contact time with the parent who is generally the main carer), some lone mothers are also criticized for inadequately socializing their children, such that they become drug users, unmarried mothers and unemployed. This seems to be something of a contradiction.
- How we treat children and how long we spend with them is a matter of cultural expectation. We must remember that in many societies children have not been regarded as in need of such close contact with parents and in many cases have seen very little of parents. The children referred to in Item C do, however, clearly have an expectation that ideally their parents be less stressed and tired. This is suggestive that it may be less important how much time is spent with children than the quality of the interaction.

3 *Key points:*
- Item D suggests that it is women who decide to have children and spend some time at home who become seriously disadvantaged in the labour market. Most women drop out of the labour market for a time when their children are small, so we would expect large numbers of them to experience this fall in 'social capital'. The research finds that they are still disadvantaged after 24 years. (It may be that women in well–paid high–status jobs are able to protect themselves to some extent from this by employing expensive nannies so that their careers can continue virtually uninterrupted.)
- Item E gives us an insight into the process whereby the careers of some working mothers do not progress. Women's loyalty to their families may lead to them passing up offers of promotion. Again, this will have long–term financial implications.
- Item F suggests that some women's attitudes to child bearing are changing. We know that birth rates are falling. This may be at least in part explained by the descriptions of motherhood as 'unfulfilling' and 'dreary'. This may have something to do with the isolation of mothers, pointed out by many feminists. Today's conditions of motherhood tend to take place within the home, with only one or two children, rather than in the community and on the street with three or four children. The work can therefore be very lonely. One of the women in the article also suggests that she would 'lose her identity' by becoming a mother. This tells us something about what aspects of identity are valued. It could be argued that the role of mother has a degraded value in our society. Women may prefer to identify themselves in terms of, for example, their career. Also, images in the media tend to portray 'femininity' as having more to do with conforming to a particular body shape accepted as sexually attractive than with giving birth and caring for children. While being a single career girl about town enjoying a variety of sexual exploits is seen as glamorous, being a mother with pushchair and toddler in tow rarely is!
- Women today have a real choice about whether to be mothers or not. In the past, lack of effective contraceptives made motherhood inevitable for most.
- Women now have alternative outlets for their energies. We have noted the importance of career as an aspect of identity, but many young women also wish to become involved in sport, clubbing, voluntary work, travelling and so on. All of these things are difficult to combine with motherhood.

POWER, POLITICS AND THE STATE

Activity 1: THE LEGITIMATE USE OF POWER

ITEM A – THE MONARCH

Louis XIV
When Louis XIII died, the throne passed to Louis XIV. Under his strong, orderly rule, France and his palace at Versailles became the envy of Europe. Louis himself was known as the Sun King because of the splendour about him.

Source: Mary Evans Picture Library

ITEM C – THE COMMISSIONER

Sir John Stevens, Metropolitan Police Commissioner

Source: Press Association

ITEM B – THE CHANCELLOR

Adolf Hitler
Massed flags emblazoned with swastikas (the Nazi symbol) added drama to the appearance of Adolf Hitler at the Nuremberg rally. His impassioned oratory inspired impoverished and despairing Germans with a fanatical belief in their destiny as the master race. One admirer described how listening to Hitler he felt as if under a hypnotic spell. He described how Hitler's will seemed to flow into him and likened his experience to a religious conversion.

Source: Hulton Getty

ITEM D – THE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Enforcement officers working in local authority town planning departments have powers under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. They have the right to enter land to ensure that planning regulations are being met and demand information on behalf of the local planning authority. If landowners or building occupiers are not complying with the regulations under the Act then an Enforcement Notice can be issued. Failure to comply with the Notice can lead to a fine, while failure to provide information could lead to a fine or imprisonment.

Source: adapted from material supplied by Wyre Borough Council, April 1999

QUESTIONS

1 To which of Weber's ideal types of authority (charismatic, traditional or rational – legal) do Items A, B, C and D most closely approximate?

2 In reality, those who exercise power may derive it from a mixture of these three sources. Discuss this, using examples from the Items.

Activity 2: PRESSURE GROUPS

ITEM A – GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD

Last weekend Luke Anderson, an environmentalist, organized a demonstration at a local supermarket which stocked GM [Genetically Modified] foods from abroad. One hundred people turned up. Some dressed as vegetables crossed with chickens, others in Grim Reaper suits; they handed out leaflets to customers which said, 'Thank you for taking part in our experiment'.

The movement will soon revive the civil disobedience tactics of the anti–nuclear campaigns – the Snowball. It involved members of CND cutting a single strand of perimeter wire at nuclear bases. Although causing minimal damage, the vandalism led to hundreds of arrests and court appearances, which were avidly followed by the press. 'Snowball was a PR triumph', suggested one activist. 'We could do the same in a field of GM crops, individuals digging up one plant at a time.'

Source: adapted from N. Hopkins, 'Sowing new seeds of dissent', *Guardian*, 13 June 1998

ITEM B – PROTEST

Source: Rex Features

Source: Rex Features

ITEM C – FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS

There are 8.6 million disabled people in Britain. They are becoming increasingly politicized. What makes the disabled movement uniquely powerful in the 1990s is the strong alliance between the big charities such as Mencap, RADAR and Scope and the disabled activists. In the 1980s, the charities were mainly service providers and soft–focus campaigners. According to Agnes Fletcher, Parliamentary Officer for RADAR, 'For the first time they began to take a more oppositional stand, to put more direct pressure on the government for anti–discriminatory legislation'.

It was that powerful alliance of militancy and establishment pressure that pushed a reluctant Major government to pass the Disability Discrimination Act in 1995, the first piece of legislation to acknowledge that discrimination against the disabled actually exists.

New Labour knows that the disability lobby has clout and must be listened to. The government has announced the establishment of the long–awaited Disability Rights Commission.

Source: adapted from M. Benn, 'A very able body', *Guardian*, 15 December 1998

ITEM D – INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS

Pressure groups can be divided into insider and outsider groups based on the way in which the group is treated by the government. Insider groups are generally consulted by the government on issues that concern them. They are accepted as having useful expertise and may be invited to give information to government bodies. In return, they are able to influence decisions and some may receive financial support. For example, about one–fifth of Mind's funds come directly from government. Outsider groups, on the other hand, have no direct access to government. In the case of groups like CND and Animal Liberation, they may use illegal means to achieve their aims, even terrorist tactics. Outsider groups are often highly critical of government and value their independence. Greenpeace, for instance, boasts 'complete independence from all political parties anywhere in the world'.

Source: adapted from D. Roberts, *British Politics in Focus*, Causeway Press, 1995

QUESTIONS

1 **Using examples from Items A and B and elsewhere, discuss the various methods used by pressure groups to influence decision making.**

2 **What are the merits of being an insider pressure group? Refer to Items C and D in your answer.**

3 **Pressure groups are an essential component of a healthy democracy. Discuss this view, using any relevant information from the Items.**

4 **Briefly say whether the organizations mentioned in the items can be described as new social movements.**

Activity 3: PLURALISM EXAMINED

ITEM A – GOVERNMENT DECISIONS

Hewitt's study covered the period 1944–64, during which time both Labour and Conservative governments were in power. He examined 24 issues under the headings of foreign policy, welfare, social policy and the economy. His study attempts to examine the distribution of power using the 'issue method'. The table summarizes his findings. It shows the issue, the decision made by parliament, the views of various interest groups and the direction of public opinion based on opinion poll findings. 'Pro' and 'anti' indicate for and against. 'Divided' indicates that members of the interest groups themselves held different views, and a dash (–) indicates that no data were available for the group.

Policy issues and outcomes

Issue	Policy outcome	Government reflects views of:		
		Business	Unions	Public
India	Independence for India	–	–	Yes
Russia	Hard–line policy to Russia	–	Yes	–
Abadan	Sanctions against Iran	Yes	–	–
Suez	Military intervention	–	No	Divided
Nuclear deterrent	Independent deterrent policy	No	Divided	–
Central Africa	Federation	–	–	–
US loan	Loan negotiated	–	–	–
Road haulage	Nationalization	No	Yes	–
Steel	No effective nationalization	Yes	Yes	Yes
Resale price maintenance (RPM)	Abolition of RPM	No	–	Yes
Common Market	No entry	No	Yes	–
Railways	Beeching's rationalization policy	Yes	No	Divided
Education	1944 Education Act	Yes	Yes	Yes
National Health	National Health Service	–	–	Yes
National Insurance	National Insurance Act	No	Yes	Yes
Rent Act	Rent decontrol	Yes	No	–
Comprehensives	No support for comprehensives	–	–	–
Motorways	Motorway programme	Yes	Yes	Yes
Town and country	Town and Country Planning Act	No	Yes	Yes
Divorce	No change in divorce laws	–	–	–
Capital punishment	Abolition of capital punishment	–	–	No
Television	Commercial television	Divided	No	Divided
Immigration	Immigration control	–	–	Yes
Clean Air	Clean Air Act	Divided	–	Yes

Source: from C.J. Hewitt, 'Elites and the distribution of power in British society', in P. Stanworth and A. Giddens (eds) *Elites and Power in British Society*, Cambridge University Press, 1974

ITEM B – A CRITICAL VIEW

The test of power is not who decides but what is decided and what is not. Pluralist examination of disputes among social groups on a number of 'key' issues, measuring their respective power by the outcome of these disputes, is irrelevant. Pluralists have nothing to say about issues that do not come into dispute at all. Such issues may be excluded through the capacity of one group to manipulate them off the agenda. This capacity is certainly power – the power of non–decision making. But still more important is the power to exclude, which involves no manipulation, nothing more tangible than assumption. For the most part, these are unspoken assumptions, which go unquestioned. At their core is the everyday acceptance of private property. It is taken for granted that profit should be the normal yardstick of investment and that living standards of the propertyless majority should be set primarily by the terms on which they sell their labour. What we must consider is whose and what interests these core assumptions favour.

Source: adapted from J. Westergaard and H. Resler, *Class in a Capitalist Society*, Heinemann, 1975

ITEM C – NEW LABOUR

'With this last budget of the twentieth century … we leave behind the century–long sterile conflicts between governments on the left that have too often undervalued enterprise and wealth creation, and governments of the right, too often indifferent to public services and fairness.'

Source: Gordon Brown, quoted in the *Independent Budget Review*, 10 March 1999

QUESTIONS

1 Hewitt's study uses the 'issues method' to measure power (Item A). What conclusions does this lead him to?

2 What are the arguments for and against the 'issues method' as a way of analysing the distribution of power? Make use of Items A and B in your answer.

3 With reference to Item C:

(a) give one example of a policy decision made by New Labour which can be seen as in the interests of business;

(b) give one example of a policy decision made by New Labour which can be considered in the interests of labour.

Activity 4: ELITES

ITEM A – THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

I found several of my subjects at the same awards ceremony, the connecting tissue between them as close as a large family. Lord Bingham, Lord Chief Justice of England, had once taught Latin to General Sir Roger Wheeler, the Army Chief of General Staff, on a ship coming back from the Far East. Professor Sen, Master of Trinity, is married to Emma Rothschild, who comes from a distinguished academic family, and is a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge.

The Establishment does not necessarily hold you from the cradle to the grave, but it helps to have been born in the right place at the right time, to be put down for the right school, to enrol at the appropriate college and join a distinguished regiment. Nobody exemplifies the merger of political, artistic and business lives better than Lord Gowrie, former Chairman of the Arts Council of England. He was educated at Eton and Balliol [Oxford], brought up at Windsor Castle, has 24–hour access to Baroness Thatcher and drops in on Ted Heath. It seems to me that this is the core of the Establishment: a 'chumminess', in his words, 'a radioactive influence of people' who move in the same circles and have the calling card of access, often from birth. The old school tie is still alive and well.

Source: adapted from N. Danziger, 'Corridors of power', *Sunday Times*, 7 March 1999

ITEM B – LONDON CLUBS

Clubs ranked by fees	Founded	Address
1 Boodle's	1762	St James's St, SW1
2 Brooks's	1764	St James's St, SW1
3 Reform	1836	Pall Mall, SW1
4 White's	1693	St James's St, SW1
5 Athenaeum	1824	Pall Mall, SW1
6 Travellers'	1819	Pall Mall, SW1
7 Turf	1868	Carlton House Terr., SW1
8 Carlton	1832	St James's St, SW1
9 Pratt's	1841	Park Place, SW1
10 Army and Navy	1837	Pall Mall, SW1

Source: from J. Scott, *Who Rules Britain?*, Polity Press, 1991

ITEM D – PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public school fees, 1990 (annual boarding fees)	
Ampleforth	£7,830
Charterhouse	£8,700
Eton	£8,496
Harrow	£8,850
Marlborough	£8,100
Rugby	£7,575
Shrewsbury	£8,100
Westminster	£7,950
Winchester	£8,658

Source: adapted from J. Scott, *Who Rules Britain?*, Polity Press, 1991

ITEM C – A DAY OUT

Source: Topham Picturepoint

Activity 4: ELITES (continued)

ITEM E – EDUCATION OF CANDIDATES, 2001 GENERAL ELECTION

	Labour		Conservative		Liberal Democrat	
	elected	defeated	elected	defeated	elected	defeated
Elementry +	2	–	–		–	– –
Secondary	46	19	3	50	4	84
Secondary + poly/coll	83	55	9	99	8	158
Secondary + univ	213	119	48	151	22	231
Public School	2	1	6	15	1	4
Public Sch + poly/coll	4	8	10	26	3	21
Public Sch + univ	62	26	90	133	14	89
Unknown	–	–	–	3	–	–
Total	**412**	**228**	**166**	**474**	**52**	**587**
Oxford	43	13	42	39	9	38
Cambridge	22	10	37	27	5	23
Other univs	210	122	59	218	22	259
All universites	**275** **(67%)**	**145** **(64%)**	**138** **(83%)**	**284** **(60%)**	**36** **(70%)**	**320** **(55%)**
Eton	2	1	14	8	2	1
Harrow	–	–	–	2	–	–
Winchester	–	–	1	1	–	1
Other Public Sch	66	34	91	163	16	112
All public schools	**68** **(17%)**	**35** **(15%)**	**106** **(64%)**	**174** **(37%)**	**18** **(35%)**	**114** **(19%)**

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Collins, 2004

ITEM F – OCCUPATIONS OF CANDIDATES, 2001 GENERAL ELECTION

	Labour		Conservative		Liberal Democrat	
	elected	defeated	elected	defeated	elected	defeated
Professions						
Barrister	13	12	18	28	2	7
Solicitor	18	10	13	34	4	19
Doctor/dentist/optician	2	1	3	7	3	13
Architect/surveyor	1	2	4	9	1	3
Civil/chartered engineer	5	5	1	12	1	14
Accountant	2	3	3	22	1	30
Civil service/local govt	30	21	2	13	3	23
Armed services	1	1	11	9	–	8
Teachers: University	18	6	1	1	2	15
Polytech/coll.	31	11	–	5	1	16
School	49	32	6	19	9	66
Other consultancies	3	6	2	12	–	24
Scientific/research	6	4	–	1	–	5
TOTAL	**179** **(43%)**	**114** **(50%)**	**64** **(39%)**	**172** **(36%)**	**27** **(52%)**	**243** **(41%)**
Business						
Company director	5	5	18	57	6	23
Company executive	10	9	31	66	7	42
Commerce/insurance	2	8	6	46	–	33
Management/clerical	12	2	2	12	1	21
General business	4	4	3	23	–	27
TOTAL	**33** **(8%)**	**28** **(12%)**	**60** **(36%)**	**204** **(43%)**	**14** **(27%)**	**146** **(25%)**
Miscellaneous						
Miscellaneous white collar	73	35	2	29	1	90
Politician/pol. organiser	44	16	18	29	4	39
Publisher/journalist	32	19	14	18	4	20
Farmer	–	1	5	12	1	4
Housewife	–	–	2	2	–	4
Student	–	1	–	3	–	14
TOTAL	**149** **(36%)**	**72** **(32%)**	**41** **(25%)**	**93** **(20%)**	**10** **(19%)**	**171** **(29%)**
Manual workers						
Miner	11	–	1	–	–	2
Skilled worker	37	13	–	4	1	16
Semi-skilled worker	3	1	–	1	–	9
TOTAL	**51** **(12%)**	**14** **(6%)**	**1** **(1%)**	**5** **(1%)**	**1** **(2%)**	**27** **(5%)**
GRAND TOTAL	**412**	**228**	**166**	**474**	**52**	**587**

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Collins, 2004

QUESTIONS

1 Britain has been described as increasingly meritocratic. What light do the recruitment patterns in Items E and F throw on this statement?

2 Why do you think that sociologists consider the leisure interests of elites to be of significance? (See Items B and C.)

3 To what extent do the Items provide evidence of the existence of a cohesive elite in British society?

Activity 5: WOMEN IN POLITICS

ITEM A – JOBS FOR THE BOYS

Men form the ministry			
Department	Male	Female	Percentage ratio
Scottish Office	2047	1822	53:47
Home Office	1327	931	59:41
Health	2799	1705	62:38
Northern Ireland	925	536	63:37
Social Security	4761	2659	64:36
Education and Employment	270	144	65:35
Culture, Media, Sport	382	143	73:27
Welsh Office	460	163	74:26
International Development	43	13	77:23
Foreign Office	55	18	75:25
Trade and Industry	2539	841	75:25
Treasury	68	23	75:25
Environment	784	232	77:23
Cabinet Office	57	17	77:23
Lord Chancellor's Dept	4340	1251	78:22
Agriculture	756	104	88:12
Defence	244	10	96:4

Source: *Public Bodies 1997*, 1997

ITEM B – WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT

The current number of women MPs is 118, while the current number of male MPs is 540.

Source: http://www.parliament.uk/directories/ September 2003

ITEM D – SEXISM

Labour women MPs allege they are being harassed by a group of sexist Tory MPs whose behaviour is making their lives a misery and destroying their confidence. Lorna Fitzsimons MP says, 'They try to put you off your stride by talking about your body rather than you. They talk about your legs, and pull faces, making farmyard noises.' Jane Griffiths MP described how the MPs 'put their hands in front of them as if they are weighing melons' when women speak in the Chamber. 'It is real schoolboy stuff', she said.

Nicholas Soames rejected suggestions of harassment. 'Their complaints are ridiculous; if they can't take it they should get out'.

Source: adapted from Z. Brennan, 'Blair babes rail at sexist Tories', *Sunday Times*, 14 December 1997

ITEM C – CHANGES AFOOT IN WESTMINSTER

Of Labour's 419 MPs, 101 are women, most of them new to Westminster. It has not taken them long to challenge parliament's male-dominated traditions. Margaret Hodge MP wants to introduce job-sharing to help MPs find time for their families. She believes that electing two MPs per constituency, each serving three days a week with Sundays off, is a real option. 'Just because it hasn't been done before doesn't mean it can't be done', she says. A number of other female MPs are reluctant to stay late at the Commons night after night. In defiance of the party Whips, they may refuse to be 'lobby fodder'.

Others are objecting to the difficulties of commuting between Westminster, their constituency and home. They find themselves dependent on faxes and pagers to keep in contact with their children. Sally Keeble MP says, 'There is quite a small amount of time that you actually need to be here. Thought has got to be given to the way parliament is organized.'

The radicals want to know why parliament does not adopt more flexible attitudes and more modern technology. Electronic systems, commonplace in the USA and on the Continent, could make voting speedier. 'Things could be done to make the Commons a more family-friendly place', says Helen Brinton MP.

Source: adapted from J. O'Reilly and W. Ellis, 'Parliament's mothers call for change', *Sunday Times*, 15 June 1997

ITEM E – MARGARET THATCHER

Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister 1979–90
She holds the record for the longest serving twentieth–century prime minister.


Source: Rex Features

QUESTIONS

1 **With reference to Items A, B and E:**

   (a) **What do the Items indicate about women's access to political elites?**

   (b) **Why is the number of women in parliament considered to be important?**

   (c) **Do you consider women's representation in parliament and on public bodies is likely to increase in the future?**

2 **Drawing on Items C and D, discuss what factors continue to restrict women's access to political power.**

Activity 6: VOTING AND THE 2001 GENERAL ELECTION

ITEM A – PARTY IDENTIFICATION
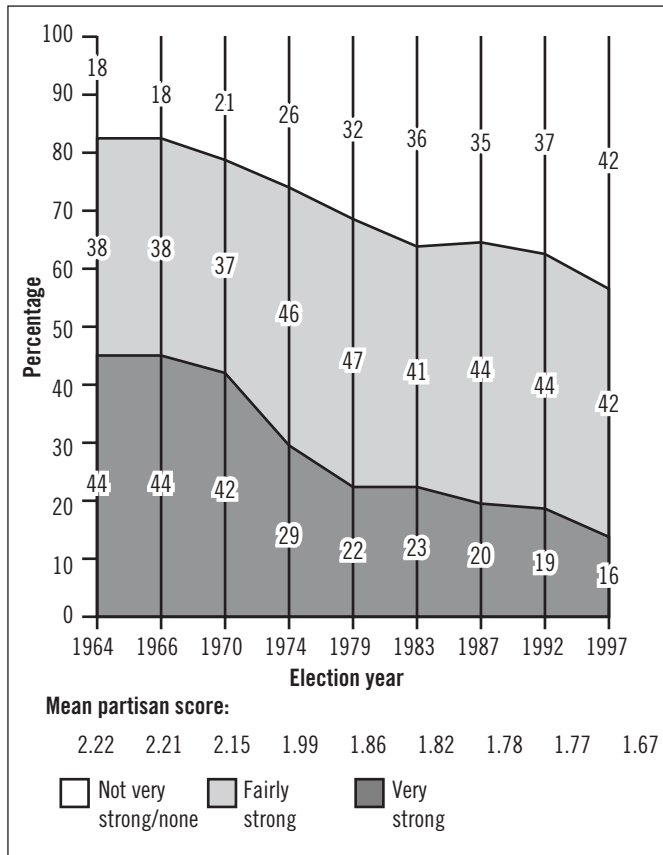
Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Collins, 2004

ITEM B – ELECTION 2001: FROM APATHETIC TO INVOLVED

Levels of electoral participation can be divided in the following way:

a Apathetics – they have little or no interest in elections

b Minimalists – they do not follow the campaign but say they have some interest

c Spectators – they follow the campaign in the media

d Talkers – discuss the election and politics with others

e Proselytizers – these are talkers who try to influence the direction in which other people vote

f Helpers – give money to a party or help out in campaigns

g Gladiators – are active and committed party supporters who work in campaigns

There may be some overlap between the different categories, e.g. gladiators are also likely to be helpers, talkers and proselytizers.

Category	Turnout %	Estimate of % of electorate falling into each category
Apathetics	29	12
Minimalists	54	8
Spectators	62	37
Talkers	68	27
Proselytizers	71	7
Helpers	73	8
Gladiators	91	2

Source: adapted from David Denver, *'Who Voted in 2001'*, Sociology Review, vol. 12 no. 2, November 2002

ITEM C – VOTING INTENTIONS

The 2001 election was notable for its low turnout. In our research we compared people's stated 'likelihood of voting' with 'social class'. We found a third of those 'unlikely to vote' were in the DE social class category, whereas only 18 per cent of unlikely voters were in the AB category.

   If we take a measure of people's interest in the election, we find out the level of motivation for people to vote. We found DE classes were the least interested to vote and ABs the most interested. We also found that women were not as interested in the election and not as highly motivated as men were to vote.

Source: adapted from Antony Billinghurst, *'General Election 2001'*, Sociology Review, vol. 11, no. 2, November 2001

QUESTIONS

1 Briefly summarize the trends in Item A and comment on their significance.

2 With reference to Item B:

  (a) Into which particular category do the majority of the electorate fall?

  (b) In which category are the highest proportion of people likely to vote?

  (c) Why may it be helpful for politicians to possess the sort of information contained in Item B?

3 After reading Items B and C, briefly consider the impact of different levels of interest and participation on the operation of the democratic process.

Activity 7: GLOBALIZATION AND THE TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION

ITEM A – ONE WORLD

Globalization does not signal the end of the nation–state or the death of politics. But it does mean that politics is no longer and can no longer be based simply on nation–states. The challenge of the global age is to rethink our values, institutions and identities so that politics can remain an effective vehicle for human aspirations. In a world where power is exercised on a transnational scale and where risks are shared by people across the world, we need to evolve institutions which can tackle global problems.

Source: adapted from David Held et al., 'Globalization', in A. Giddens (ed.), *Sociology Introductory*, Polity Press, 1997

ITEM C – WAL-MART

The recipe that has made Wal-Mart the largest retailer in the world ... is straightforward enough. First, build stores two or three times the size of your closest competitors. Next, pile your shelves with products purchased in such great volume that the suppliers are forced to give you a substantially lower price than they would otherwise. Then cut your in–store prices so low that no small retailer can begin to compete with your 'every day low prices'.

Source: Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, Flamingo, 2000

ITEM E – THIRD WORLD MANUFACTURE

In order to reduce production costs, manufacturers have become resolutely intent on driving down wage levels and evading all commitments to their workforce.

Human Rights Watch in Mexico found that it was not uncommon within companies like Panasonic, General Motors and General Electric for pregnant women to be mistreated to encourage them to resign – they might be required to work night shifts, take on long hours of unpaid overtime, perform physically strenuous tasks or refused time off work to see their doctor.

Source: adapted from Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, Flamingo, 2000

ITEM B – THE POWER OF THE CORPORATE BRAND

By the late 1990s corporate advertising sought to 'position a corporation, its values, its personality and character'. A new breed of businessman was informing us that Brand X was not a product but a way of life, an attitude, a set of values, a look, an idea. In the late 1980s a Nike executive announced that its mission was not to sell shoes but to 'enhance people's lives through sport and fitness'.

Gradually, the quality of the product became less important than the brand and its image. Increasing amounts of money were spent on advertising and less on production.

When working in an Esprit store an assistant reported that mothers would come in with their 6–year–old daughters and ask for 'Esprit' shirts with the trademark printed across the front in bold letters. 'She won't wear anything without a name', mom would confide. The reign of logo terror had begun.

Source: adapted from Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, Flamingo, 2000

ITEM D – THE MCJOB

McDonald's and Starbucks staff frequently earn less than employees of single–outlet restaurants, which is why McDonald's is frequently credited for pioneering the throwaway 'McJob' that the entire fast food industry has since moved to emulate.

Source: adapted from Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, Flamingo, 2000

ITEM F – RESISTANCE

I picture the reality in which we live in terms of military occupation. We are occupied the way the French and Norwegians were occupied by the Nazis during World War II, but this time by an army of marketeers. We have to reclaim our country from those who occupy it on behalf of their global masters.

Source: Ursula Franklin, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto, 1998, quoted in Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, Flamingo, 2000

ITEM G – CHANGING THE MESSAGE

Source: Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, Flamingo, 2000

QUESTIONS

1 **Read Item A, then make a short list of global problems which you feel cannot be dealt with on a national level.**

2 **After reading Items B and C, briefly consider:**

  (a) **Why many transnational companies spend an increasing amount of their budgets on advertising?**

  (b) **What other methods such companies use to achieve market dominance?**

3 **Making reference to Item C, briefly say what the impact of such policies is on consumer choice.**

4 **Making reference to Items D and E, briefly outline the negative impact of these strategies on employment.**

5 **What do you think the author of Item F means?**

6 **What point is Item G making?**

Chapter 9: POWER, POLITICS AND THE STATE – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: THE LEGITIMATE USE OF POWER

Teacher's note

This activity examines Weber's three ideal types of authority: traditional, charismatic and rational–legal. Students are asked to consider the extent to which these forms of authority are exercised by different individuals. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 9, pp. 538–42.

1 *Key points:*
- Item A most closely approximates to traditional authority. Louis became king through the hereditary principle, as the eldest son of Louis XIII. The ordinary people at the time generally accepted that the monarch was rich and powerful and had complete authority over their lives.
- Hitler's success as a leader owed much to his force of personality and his ability to rouse people through his impassioned speeches. We are told that his audiences fell under his 'hypnotic spell'. He therefore appears to have been a charismatic leader.
- The Police Commissioner's powers are determined by legal rules which set out the limits of his office. He has gained his position through a series of promotions over many years. Both other policemen and the general public will generally accept his authority while he continues to hold the rank of Commissioner. His authority therefore most closely approximates to Weber's rational–legal type.
- The enforcement officers described in Item D again rely on rational–legal authority. Their powers stem from their employment by the local authority, and rest with their office, not with the individuals themselves.

2 *Key points:*
- Louis XIV may have enhanced his power through force of personality. There are many cases of monarchs who were less successful because they were unable to inspire their people. By surrounding himself with the trappings of grandeur, Louis XIV gained his reputation as the Sun King. He therefore seems to have enhanced his traditional authority with a charismatic appeal.
- Hitler relied on elements of traditional and rational–legal authority. He followed in the tradition of strong German leaders such as Bismarck, and evoked traditional Germanic loyalties. He had also risen to the top of a state bureaucracy and used that bureaucracy to control the army and set up concentration camps. His authority in part stemmed from his position and can therefore be described as partially rational–legal.
- Although senior policemen such as the Commissioner rely largely on rational–legal authority, the most successful will be those who inspire their subordinates and command respect for their leadership. Elements of charismatic leadership may therefore distinguish a notable Commissioner from an indifferent one. To a lesser extent, traditional authority may also play a part. Certainly, in the past, authority figures like policemen were respected in the community, and some remnants of this traditional respect may remain.
- People accept the authority of enforcement officers because they see the law on which their actions are based as legitimate. The officers themselves may use the force of their personality to bring about compliance with the law without recourse to prosecutions, but this will be of secondary importance in the performance of their duties.

ACTIVITY 2: PRESSURE GROUPS

Teacher's note

In this activity the role of pressure groups in a democratic society is explored. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 9, pp. 543–9 and 589–98.

1 *Key points:*
- In order to influence democratic governments, pressure groups will attempt to gain as much public support for their cause as possible. In Item A the demonstration seems to be peaceful and light-hearted. It will no doubt have produced positive publicity. As a peaceful protest on an environmental issue it is likely to appeal to the sympathies of middle England.
- Similarly, the anti-war march shown in Item B was widely attended and received considerable media coverage. This and similar marches stimulated public criticism of government policy in Iraq.
- Some of the protestors in Item A wished to carry their protest further. They proposed to dig up GM crops, which would lead to clashes with the law, court appearances and the attendant publicity. This form of direct action proved a 'PR triumph' when used by CN protestors.
- Increasing numbers of groups now favour some form of direct action. For example, environmental protestors (Item B) have taken to the trees to protest against the construction of a football stadium in an environmentally sensitive area. As well as gaining public sympathy such actions increase costs for developers.
- Other groups have taken direct action still further and organized violent assaults and 'terrorist-style' attacks. For example, some extremist groups who oppose live animal experimentation. These groups run the risk of losing public sympathy.

2 Insider pressure groups benefit by having direct access to government and being consulted by them. They may also receive funding. One of the reasons why this close relationship persists is that insider groups tend not to launch major critical attacks on government policy, as do outsider groups such as Greenpeace. As a result, they may be criticized by radicals as being too moderate and 'selling out'. However, Item C demonstrates how insider groups like Mencap can combine with more militant groups and achieve considerable influence over government policy.

3 It is through pressure groups that ordinary citizens are able to make their views known to the government. While some issues may be championed by existing political parties, the range of issues and the shades of opinion are so great that they are more effectively expressed by the many interest groups in existence. Together, they help serve to preserve democracy by representing minority interests in the political arena. However, some critics have pointed out that the influence of pressure groups is not always proportional to their support. For whatever reason – whether it is less effective organization, lack of financing, or opposition from powerful vested interests – some groups seem to achieve relatively little. For instance, although there was widespread public disquiet, anti-war protests did not prevent the 2003 Iraqi War.

4 Hallsworth might see environmental groups as new social movements since these groups are trying to protect the natural environment, which can be perceived as under threat. Protestors for the disabled could also been seen as members of a new social movement, as they are asserting the rights of a historically marginalized group. Hallsworth considers such groups as novel in terms of the issues which they raise and the values which they challenge, as well as in their informal structures and the forms of political activity which they favour. A converse view is held by Cohen and Rai, who argue there is no clear distinction between old and new social movements. They believe groups which represent non–class issues like the Temperest movements and communes have existed for many years. Similarly, some marginalized groups have previously been represented through movements like anti–apartheid and anti–torture groups.

ACTIVITY 3: PLURALISM EXAMINED

Teacher's note

Students will discover in this activity the various ways in which power can be measured, and recognize that different forms of measurement will give rise to different assessments of the distribution of power. Students may wish to read Chapter 9, pp. 543–9 and 555–65.

1 *Key points:*
- Hewitt's research appears to show that no one interest group dominates decision making. Influence is shared between the various groups. When they attempt to influence government they meet with varying degrees of success. For example, business interests opposed the Town and Country Planning Act, yet it was still approved.

- The most consistent relationship seems to be between government policy and public opinion. With the exception of the issue of capital punishment, the public and the government appear to be in general agreement, which implies that the government takes notice of the views of ordinary people.
- Hewitt's research would lead him to the conclusion that Britain operates as a democracy in which there is wide distribution of power, since, over time and on different issues, many groups influence decision making.

2 *Key points:*

- The issues method has been used by pluralists, as they believe that it gives a quantitative and objective measure of how successful different interest groups are in influencing government.
- The authors of Item B, however, believe that we need to take account of non–decisions, since some groups exert their power by making sure that certain issues are never discussed. For example, there might be debates in local government about how to reduce spending – whether perhaps to close a school, an old people's home or a library – but the question of whether the cuts should take place at all might never be debated. The issues method can never measure this kind of power.
- A further dimension of power referred to in Item B is the ability to promote 'unspoken assumptions which go unquestioned'. From a Marxist point of view, the ruling class is seen as using its power to impose ruling–class ideology. Thus the powerful go unchallenged and are able to continue increasing their wealth and privilege at the expense of others. Item B implies that a more effective way of approaching the study of power is to examine who are the winners and who are the losers in society.
- In summary, the issues method of measuring power has been rejected by many theorists who believe that it ignores vital dimensions of power. Moreover, the apparently objective results of studies like Hewitt's could be criticized for themselves contributing to people's acceptance of the status quo.

3 Students may give a variety of answers to (a) and (b). Examples might be:

(a) Failure to repeal those Conservative Acts of Parliament which restrict the rights of workers to withdraw their labour, e.g. secondary picketing.

(b) The imposition of a minimum wage for workers.

ACTIVITY 4: ELITES

Teacher's note

This activity begins to explore whether or not British society is dominated by a cohesive elite. It is one of the more demanding activities. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 9, pp. 549–54.

1 *Key points:*

- A meritocratic society exists where people are able to reach the highest positions in society irrespective of their background.
- Item E shows that within the Conservative Party, and to a lesser extent within the Liberal Democrat Party, having been to a public school is an advantage. The fees of such schools (Item D) mean that a public school education is largely confined to the children of the rich. Item F also shows that there is a strong link between higher business positions and the Conservative Party. There does, therefore, seem to be a degree of social closure at the top, making it more difficult for outsiders to enter elite positions.
- The pattern of recruitment is different in the Labour Party. While the majority of its members attended university, many were educated in state schools. Moreover, their ranks contain a significant number of people who have 'moved up' from school teaching. This provides evidence that an element of meritocracy exists within the Labour Party.
- It may be that elites within other organizations – for example, trade unions – recruit people from more varied social backgrounds, according to merit rather than which school or university they went to. It can be argued that the ability of such groups to influence government decisions ensures that political power is not concentrated solely in the hands of a ruling class or power elite whose members are predominantly recruited from an upper class.

2 What people do during their leisure time and who they choose to spend that leisure time with tell us something about them. The London clubs listed in Item B have all been established for many years and no doubt subscriptions are costly. Within these clubs friendships are doubtless forged and business deals done. Many of the members will already have links with each other through their attendance at public schools and Oxford and Cambridge. Similarly, leisure events like Ascot and the Henley Regatta will further reinforce a sense of oneness. It is through such leisure activities that men and women from similar elitist backgrounds will meet and marry, forming new family alliances. Some sociologists may cite these common leisure pursuits as evidence of the existence of a cohesive power elite or ruling class.

3 *Key points:*

- As Item A demonstrates, members of the Establishment tend to be drawn from the same upper–class background. They are linked by education, common leisure pursuits, kinship, friendship and background. Some sociologists would argue that all these factors combine to create a sense of oneness – in Lord Gowrie's words, a 'chumminess' – which means that, although there may be some differences of opinion between groups, overall they have common interests.
- It can be argued that evidence of common background and schooling does not necessarily mean that elite members will act as a cohesive group. There may be real competition between them. For instance, within a political party there may be competing factions.
- If a completely cohesive elite existed it would be difficult to explain why some members of the Labour Party come from upper–class backgrounds (such as Tony Benn, originally Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Viscount Stansgate), and why several members of the Labour Party are public school and Oxbridge educated – for example, Tony Blair. We might have expected these people to ally themselves with the Conservative Party, since it is the party most commonly associated with the wealthy.

ACTIVITY 5: WOMEN IN POLITICS

Teacher's note

This activity is directed towards exploring the role that women play in politics. There is no specific reading.

1 *Key points:*

(a) Item A shows that women remain under–represented in the elites of public bodies. In the light of recent armed conflicts it is perhaps significant that women have the lowest representation in defence. They are also significantly under–represented in the Treasury, often regarded as a particularly important department.

- Item B tells us that women are still significantly under–represented in the House of Commons, despite there having been a long–serving female prime minister (Item E). The more women MPs that are in the Commons, the more likely it is that women will reach the upper levels of decision making. The example of Margaret Thatcher does show us that it is now possible for a woman to reach the highest level of political power.

(b) Some campaigners believe parliament would be more representative if there were equal numbers of men and women. Others believe we should be more concerned with the quality of the MPs elected rather than the numbers of men and women. They contend that it might be counter–productive to artificially boost the number of female MPs by, for example, calling for women–only shortlists in some constituencies. It can be argued that male MPs are perfectly capable of representing the interests and opinions of women as well as those of men.

(c) General changes in society mean that women as a whole are taking a more active part in public life, and it therefore seems likely that more women will enter elite positions. Increased numbers of female MPs may help future generations of women to gain access to political influence.

2 *Key points:*

- Item C highlights some of the problems faced by women MPs. The organization of the House of Commons is far from family friendly, and this may be one of the key reasons why more women of ability and aptitude do not put their names forward as parliamentary candidates.
- Reforms such as job–sharing and a faster electronic voting system would help to make the House of Commons a more attractive working place to women, and men, with families.
- In Item D we see examples of blatant sexism. The sorts of remarks and behaviour described would be out of place in any modern workplace. Some women may feel intimidated by the general atmosphere of male dominance of the House of Commons, and this may be a further disincentive to those women considering a parliamentary career.

ACTIVITY 6: VOTING AND THE 2001 GENERAL ELECTION

Teacher's note

This activity looks at some aspects of the 2001 General Election. It draws attention to levels of participation in the electoral process.

1 Item A appears to show a long–term trend of decline in party identification. For example, 44 per cent of voters in 1964 strongly identified with a political party, but by 1997 it was only 16 per cent. If party identification is low, it may mean that people are more likely to change their party allegiance from election to election. Parties may also find it more difficult to recruit party workers if their core group of supporters is eroded. Furthermore, with the increase in the number of people with not very strong or no party loyalty, there may be a lower turnout at elections.

2 (a) Most people are spectators, followed by talkers and apathetics.

(b) The Gladiators. Although the smallest number of people belong to this committed group, not surprisingly, they nearly all turn out to vote (91 per cent).

(c) Item B gives some indication of the different levels of involvement of different groups within society. When voting campaigns are being planned it may be useful to know what the nature of political interest covers and the sorts of proportions of people likely to fall within each category. Politicians may then decide on which people to target their campaign. For example, a campaign may target spectators by trying to ensure that the media gives them a positive coverage. Another strategy might be to visit the homes of talkers and obtain their support through face–to–face persuasion. A party could decide that it is not worth the time, energy and money to take account of those who are completely apathetic and thus choose to focus their energies elsewhere.

3 *Key points:*
- In democratic societies, citizens are able to influence political decisions. They may do so directly through voting in a referendum, but more often they do so by electing a representative whose party they believe will most closely reflect their views. Between elections people may also seek to influence governments through joining various pressure groups.
- As we have seen, if people do not have any real interest in the political process they will often fail to register their vote and so have no say at all in the composition of the government elected. Even when they do vote their lack of information may mean that they have inadequate information to vote for the person or party which truly most closely reflects their views. They may also be more likely to be subject to propaganda than better informed members of the community.
- On the one hand, it can be argued that people with little interest in politics are less likely to join pressure groups which attempt to influence government policy decisions. On the other hand, it may be that some people, who say they have little interest in politics and fail to vote, express their discontent through becoming active in more radical pressure groups, e.g. by taking direct action.
- Given the relatively large numbers of people who do not vote and show little interest in politics, the elected government cannot truly be regarded as representative of the people's wishes as a whole. An important point to make is that these people are not randomly distributed throughout the population. As Item C points out, the lower social classes and women are more likely to be under–represented. This may in turn mean that governments are less likely to follow policies which are in their sectional interests.

ACTIVITY 7: GLOBALIZATION AND THE TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATION

Teacher's note

This activity looks at some of the consequences of the power of transnational corporations. Students are advised to read Chapter 9, pp. 595–8. This item can also be used by students when studying Chapter 10.

1 Students may give a variety of answers after discussion. Some of the most likely are: global warming, the spread of GM crops, global terrorism, overfishing, pollution of the oceans, nuclear power–plant safety.

2 (a) If Item B is true, then it appears that many transnational companies are now more concerned with image than with what they make. Building up a brand name which will be positively viewed by consumers must be done by advertising the brand in such a way as to give a positive image. It must, in youth–speak, be considered 'cool'. For example, Nike is shown to be cultivating an image of a company that seeks to improve people's lives rather than earn profit. Successful advertising can lead to the situation described, where young people will only buy branded goods. Hence companies like Gap display their logo prominently on their merchandise, while the swoosh of Nike is instantly recognized and generally approved. In an attempt to maintain their image they may extend their advertising to situations previously advert free – for example, to schools and colleges.

(b) *Key points:*
- They may use a variety of means to put the opposition out of business. For example, Wal–Mart (Item C) undercuts its rivals. When they have disappeared they may feel free to 'adjust' their pricing.
- Corporations may try to block any negative publicity or images by using their economic resources to silence critics.
- Large corporations may try to associate themselves with the latest aspects of youth culture so as to appear 'cool', e.g. they may borrow ideas and images from black urban youths.
- Companies may try to appear anti–capitalist (see Nike in Item B). Sometimes they try to associate themselves with radical messages to mask their true natures.

3 By eliminating other retail outlets in the area in which they operate, the consumer is forced to shop with them. This means they may have less choice in the products they can buy.

4 *Key points:*
- Item D shows us that the actions of big firms may serve to drive down the wages of their employees. In time this will tend to lead to the lowering of wages in the whole sector.
- The firms have been accused of de–skilling jobs and encouraging the casualization of labour. Such trends have spread to many areas of the labour market, perhaps creating a less satisfied and less secure workforce.
- In order to drive down the cost of manufacture many large producers are leaving Europe and North America and using factories in less developed countries where labour is cheap and employment protection law less restrictive. This may mean that jobs in European and North American production disappear forever, creating unemployment.
- The impact in the countries to which these producers move may also be negative. They may be exploitative of their workers or depress the local economy by removing workers from other sectors.

5 This writer is clearly critical of the power of transnational corporations. She believes we must take action to rid ourselves of their dominance.

6 This shows an example of culture jamming, where the message intended by the advertiser has been subverted. Adverts are an obvious target for protestors against the power and influence of transnational corporations. In many cases those corporations which are the most powerful also display the largest number of adverts.

WORK, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LEISURE

Activity 1: WORK AND LEISURE

ITEM A – DEFINING WORK AND NON-WORK

Supposedly they are set free from 'work' in order that they may do something that is not 'work'. But what is work and what is not work? Is it work to dig, to carpenter, to plant trees, to fell trees, to ride, to fish, to hunt, to feed chickens, to play the piano, to take photographs, to build a house, to cook, to sew, to trim hats, to mend motor-bicycles? All of these things are work to somebody, and all of them are play to somebody. There are in fact few activities which cannot be classed either as work or play according as you choose to regard them.

Source: George Orwell, *The Road To Wigan Pier*, Gollancz, 1937

ITEM C – DANCING
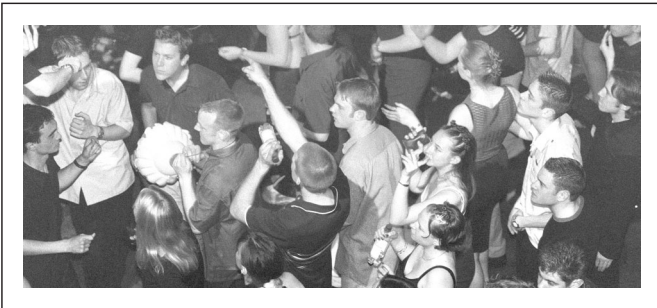
Source: Alamy Images

ITEM D – PERSONAL HYGIENE
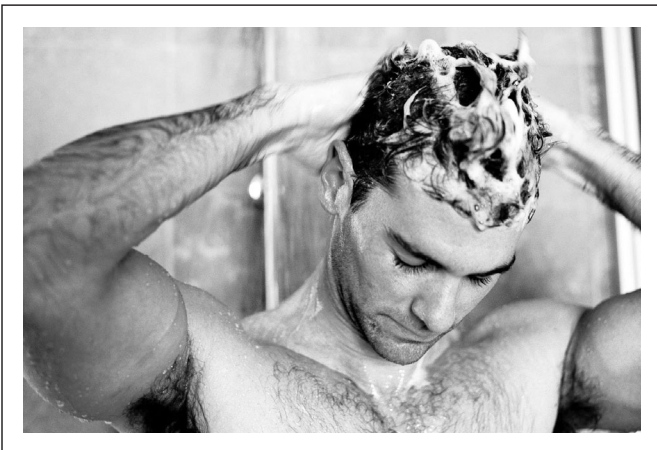
Source: Rex Features

ITEM B – GARDENING

Source: E.Stocker

ITEM E – WOMEN'S WORK

Male economists of the twentieth century generally classified unpaid housework and childcare as an 'unproductive' activity. Because it has been unpaid, they have failed to recognize that it is 'real' work. More recently, with the growth of feminism, more people are starting to accept that unpaid housework and childcare are 'real' work. These women directly contribute to the economy by producing meals, coping with laundry, dealing with the shopping and cleaning, and tending to children and the elderly. However, there remains a lingering tendency among some economists to define real work solely in terms of waged labour. By doing this they place themselves in the ridiculous position of accepting paid nannies and cleaners as performing a useful economic role, while mothers and housewives, who do exactly the same work, are seen as 'unproductive'.

Source: Frances Smith

QUESTIONS

1 (a) Make a list of what you have been doing for the past three or four days. Say which of these activities you regard as work and which you regard as leisure.

 (b) Read Item A. Now compare your list with those of fellow students. Discuss any differences and similarities in your allocation and try to account for these.

2 Look at the photographs in Items B, C and D.

 (a) Do you think that the people in the photographs are working or pursuing leisure activities?

 (b) What additional information would be useful to help you make your decision?

3 Read Item E. Do you consider that women could achieve greater equality with men if they were paid for their roles as housewives and mothers? Give reasons for your answer.

Activity 2: ALIENATION AND WORK

ITEM A – THE AUTO LINE

Monday and Friday in auto plants were management's most harrowing days because of absenteeism. Each Monday, more hourly-paid workers failed to report for work than on any other normal workday; Friday ran a close second. It happened because, after paychecks were handed out on Thursday, many workers began a boozy or drugged weekend and afterwards Monday was a day for catching up on sleep or nursing hangovers.

Outsiders who toured auto plants often assumed that workers there became reconciled, in time, to the noise, smell, heat, unrelenting pressure and endless repetition of their job. But it was a lie. Few people who ever worked on factory production lines for long periods had ever intended to make their work a lifetime's occupation. Usually, when hired they looked on it as temporary until something better came along. But to many – especially those with little education – the better jobs were always out of reach, forever a delusive dream.

Eventually, a trap was sprung. It was a two-pronged trap with a worker's own commitments on one side – marriage, children, rent, instalment payments – and on the other the fact that pay in the auto industry was high compared with jobs elsewhere. But the work was grim and dispiriting. Much of it was physically hard, but the greatest toll was mental – hour after hour, day after day, of deadening monotony. And the nature of their jobs robbed individuals of pride. A man on a production line lacked a sense of achievement: he never made a car, he merely made or put together pieces – adding a washer to a bolt, fastening a metal strip, inserting screws. And always it was the identical washer or strip or screw over and over again, while working conditions – including an overlay of noise – made communications difficult, friendly association impossible. Thus, a production line worker's ambition, like that of a prisoner, centred on escape.

Source: Hulton Archive

Source: adapted from Arthur Hailey, *Wheels*, Book Club Associates, 1973

ITEM B – FAST FOOD

Instead of personalized service and traditional cooking techniques, the McDonald brothers used assembly-line procedures for cooking and serving food. Every employee was trained to do a limited number of things in precisely the same way. In place of trained cooks, the brothers' 'limited menu allowed them to break down food preparation into simple repetitive tasks that could be learned quickly even by those stepping into a commercial kitchen for the first time'. Time allocation for each task was limited, and the best possible way of doing a job prescribed by a manual. For example, the manual told operatives exactly how to draw milk shakes, grill hamburgers and fry potatoes. It specified precise cooking times for all products and temperature settings for all equipment. It fixed standard portions for every food item down to the quarter-ounce of onions placed on each hamburger patty and the thirty-two slices per pound of cheese. Employees were told not only what they must do but also what they must say. Conversations with customers are scripted, the operatives being required by management to memorize responses so that highly predictable interactions could be created. Organizational control of workers is rendered complete by management and supervisors whose job it is to ensure that every worker toes the line.

Source: adapted from G. Ritzer, *The McDonaldization of Society*, Pine Forge Press, 1996

QUESTIONS

1 Briefly discuss the similarities and differences in the work situations described in Items A and B.

2 What are the advantages and disadvantages of using material taken from a novel (Item A) as sociological data?

3 McDonald's fast food outlets are characterized by high labour turnover. Read Item B and attempt an explanation of this from the viewpoint of:

(a) a sociologist who gives primacy to the production process;

(b) a Marxist sociologist.

Activity 3 : GROWTH IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

ITEM A – LOADS OF DOSH

Money broking is a necessary cog in the greater machine of the financial markets. You cannot compare the job with anything else. Huge wages are paid to comparatively young men and women. In 1990 at 24, I was earning £70,000; at 25 £100,000 and after being headhunted and made a deputy managing director at 26, almost £400,000. I was typical of the money broking fraternity: unqualified but with confidence in bucket loads, a bit of nous and plenty of chat.

Source: adapted from S. Bussey, 'Sex, drugs and cash: Another day at the office', *Sunday Times*, 13 July 2003

ITEM B – HARD WORK FOR LOW PAY

I took work with an agency as catering assistant in Lambeth School kitchens for £4.12 an hour. The pay rises to £4.50 after four months but there is no paid holiday or sick pay for six months. I needed a bus and a tube to get there and there were only 15 hours a week work. Many of my working colleagues were women trapped in a low pay cycle by their children. Low pay meant they couldn't afford childcare or time for training. The hours meant they could get home and perhaps get cleaning work in the evening.

The running of the kitchen was fast and furious: the day made up of cleaning vast stoves, washing enormous utensils, moving chairs and tables. Why such a frantic pace of work? In theory, our shift ended at 2.30, but that was only if we took our full half hour unpaid lunchbreak. As it was we took five minutes for lunch and worked at a maniacal speed. We usually managed to get the work done in our paid time plus five or ten minutes. We had pride in our work but this pride has always been traded on by employers. We had no money or respect. We were just doing mothers' work at mothers' pay.

Source: adapted from Polly Toynbee, *Hard Work*, Bloomsbury, 2003

ITEM C – CALL CENTRES

In Britain's declining industrial regions a new kind of factory is springing up. Where once there were steelworks now there are call centres. Critics call them the new sweatshops or telephone battery farms.

The call centres are usually staffed by women. Many call centres arrange shifts to suit young mothers, and provide crèches. But critics say the family-friendly policies are the acceptable face of a new form of tyranny, arguing that they represent the ultimate industrialisation of white-collar work.

Management monitors every aspect of a worker's input and output. The seven-day continuous nature of the business and the shifts to cover the 24-hour operation are like factory schedules. Like a production line, the speed at which operators accept calls is completely controlled. Autonomy over work is minimal – the computer-generated script dictates the shape of the conversation.

But constant supervision is only part of the stress of the job. Many staff are on performance contracts and know that their pay depends on how quickly they can make the sales or deal with the enquiry. Operators may also take a lot of flak from disgruntled callers. 'People feel free to rant and rave at a disembodied voice' said one operator.

Despite the high intensity of the tasks, which leads to the operators burning out quickly, most staff seem to be satisfied. Sue Fernie and David Metcalf from the London School of Economics found that the higher rates of pay compensated for the stress.

Source: adapted from C. Denny, *'Remote control of the high street'*, Guardian, 2 June 1998

ITEM D – CLEANING

Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

QUESTIONS

1 **Contrast the work situations described in Item A and Item B.**

2 **Making some reference to Items B and D, briefly discuss why women may get trapped in low paid work.**

3 **Drawing on the information in Item C and elsewhere, discuss the proposition that the growth in service industries is leading to deskilling.**

Activity 4: NEW PATTERNS OF WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

ITEM A – IT'S 'COOL' TO WORK AT HOME

Geoffrey Patterson is chief executive of a software house. He spends two weeks a month working from his Swiss chalet, for the other two weeks he is in his London office.

'Businesses can't survive ... without being flexible with their employees', he says. 'Businesses need people to be inspired. Some people need to work in a room with others; some don't. Some want rigid rules; some are better off working their own way. Employers need to be able to adapt.'

Neil McLockin of BT thinks that home working increases productivity. 'Companies find their absenteeism rate dwindles to virtually nothing for homeworkers. Very often, when you're unwell, you're well enough to work but not well enough to travel to work. And if you spend more time working from home, you are less likely to pick up bugs.'

But John, a home-based journalist, has a rather different viewpoint – he would jump at an office-based job. 'You've got to be very disciplined – even more than when you're at work in an office. You've got to set the alarm and get up when it goes off. Writer's block does exist and it's terrible. In the office you have people there ... asking why you aren't getting stories ... I've had people calling me at 7.30 a.m. and 1.00 a.m.'

Source: adapted from N. Jewson and A. Felstead, 'New Ways of Working and Living', in A. Giddens (ed.) *Sociology: Introductory Readings*, Polity Press, 2001

ITEM C – FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS AND FAMILY LIFE

'Flexible work' means more work, it's wrecking our day of rest. The British weekend is being quietly abolished. Little wonder to the two-thirds of us who feel that we 'never have enough time'.

The weekend is under attack from three different directions: white-collar workers putting in extra hours to get ahead, lower-paid employees who must do overtime to make ends meet, and increasing numbers of people doing two jobs.

Bharti Patel, Director of the Low Pay Unit, believes 'Flexibility in the UK market is a one-way street, where employees are expected to be infinitely flexible while employers are not expected to be flexible at all.'

The case of Annette Bell illustrates the strains that can be put on family relationships. Annette asked her 13-year-old son if he would like to go out and 'do something nice'. His reply was abrupt. 'Not with you, I don't hardly know you.' The outburst was upsetting but hardly surprising. Annette Bell works from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week as a care worker for the mentally ill. Her husband works 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Saturday. Mrs Bell gets the odd day off but no holidays. 'The last time I had a weekend', she says, 'was three years ago. I can't go anywhere with the children.'

Source: adapted from R. Thomas, 'Too busy earning a living to live', *Observer*, 11 October 1998

ITEM B – 24 HOURS WORKING

Our concept of time is shifting massively. At any one given 15 minute period during the night 300,000 people are working. Within the next decade, this number is set to swell to 2 million or more working in the evening and 750,000 working in the middle of the night. High streets are becoming more like airports.

Futurists predict that by 2005, 30 per cent of all shopping trips, visits to the doctors, hairdressers, libraries and dry cleaners could take place between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m.

The week is becoming shapeless. An amorphous mass of worktime spreading out before us. Weekends are merged into working days.

Judgement is generally impaired in the middle of the night. Doctors, air traffic controllers, pilots and operators in nuclear plants sometimes have to make vital decisions when they are least capable. The nuclear accident at Three Mile Island began at 4 a.m., Chernobyl at 1.30 a.m. and the explosion at Union Carbide in India at 12.40 in the night.

As Geoff Scobie, senior psychology lecturer at Glasgow University, says, 'From a psychological point of view, we need some mechanism which separates day from night. Night is naturally when we sleep and we're moving away from that. If 3 a.m. becomes like any other part of the day, there will be little time when there is peace and quiet.'

Source: adapted from L. Stuart 'Clocking on to a new way of life', *Guardian*, 6 June 1998

ITEM D – WORKING AT HOME

Source: Maggie Murray/Photofusion

QUESTIONS

1 **Discuss the advantages of flexible working for both the employer and the employee. Refer to any of the Items in your answer.**

2 **Making reference to Items A, B, C and D, briefly discuss the possible effects of flexible working on family and community life.**

Activity 5: INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

ITEM A – STRIKES

British strike statistics (annual averages), 1895–1998			
Year	No. of Stoppages	Workers involved	Working days lost
1895–9	777	–	7,470,000
1900–4	484	–	2,888,000
1905–0	445	–	4,204,000
1910–14	932	993,250	16,120,000
1915–19	890	1,060,600	10,378,000
1920–4	857	1,061,000	30,277,000
1925–9	393	472,000	13,207,000
1930–4	412	289,000	3,980,000
1935–9	863	359,000	1,938,000
1940–4	1491	499,000	1,813,000
1945–9	1881	507,000	2,235,000
1950–4	1701	584,000	1,903,000
1955–9	2530	742,000	4,602,000
1960–4	2512	1,499,000	3,180,000
1965–9	2380	1,213,000	3,920,000
1970–4	2884	1,567,000	14,039,000
1975–9	2310	1,658,000	11,663,000
1980–4	1363	1,297,000	10,487,000
1985–9	890	783,000	3,939,000
1990–4	334	223,000	824,000
1995–6	240	269,000	859,000
1997	216	129,000	235,000
1998	166	91,000	282,000

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Harper Collins, 2004

ITEM B – SABOTAGE

On the ship there was no running water. Sometimes, buckets would disappear with no apparent cause. Quite obviously, some enraged individual was throwing them over the side. It was not unusual for catering staff to feel so fed up that they would heave a whole pile of dirty dishes through an open porthole rather than wash them up. Stewards who did personal laundry would 'make mistakes' and burn through shirts with an iron. Sailors loading stores would let a sling load crash to the wharf below, their reaction usually one of suppressed glee rather than sorrow. Deck crews who were driven too hard could quite calmly paint over oil and water and take a malicious delight in doing so.

Source: L. Taylor and P. Walton, 'Industrial sabotage: motives and meaning', in S. Cohen (ed.) *Images of Deviance*, Penguin, 1971

ITEM C – INDUSTRIAL CONFRONTATION

Source: Rex Features

QUESTIONS

1 **Examine Item A.**

  (a) Summarize the main trends.
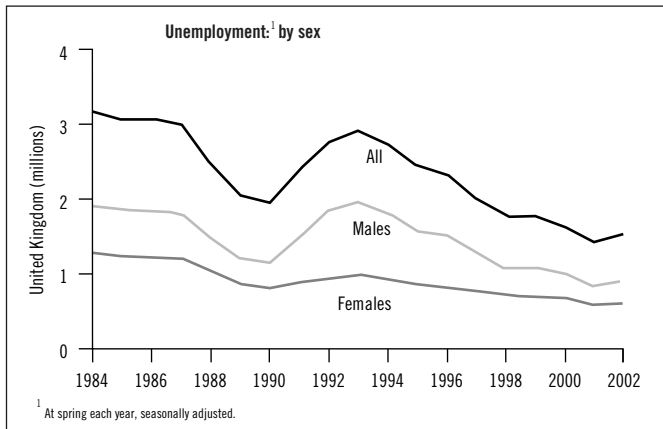
  (b) Offer a brief explanation of these trends.

2 **In what ways other than through strikes may workers express their dissatisfaction with the work environment? Make some reference to Item B in your answer.**

3 **How might sociologists in the interactionist tradition attempt to explain the behaviour described in Item B?**

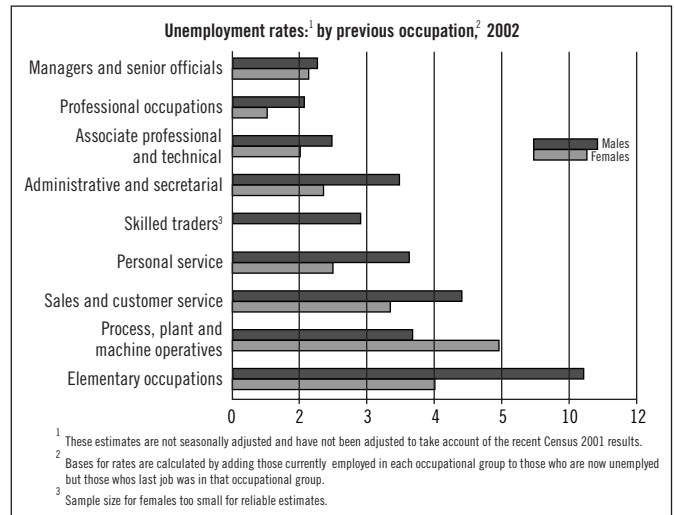4 **Look at Item C. Do strikes represent a problem for society?**
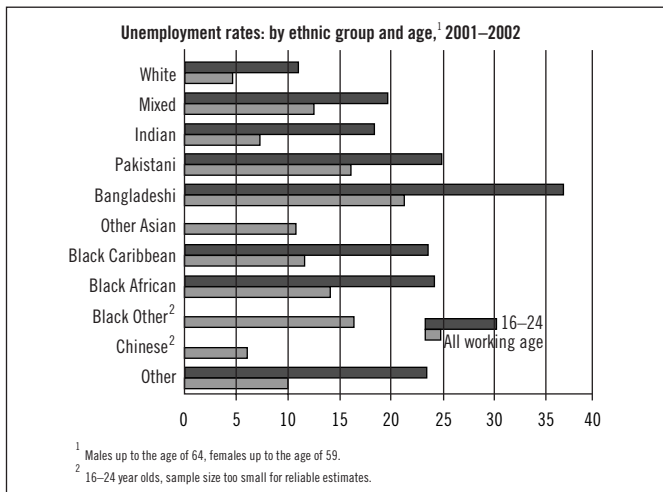
Activity 6: WHO WORKS?

ITEM A – GENDER

Unemployment:[1] by sex

[1] At spring each year, seasonally adjusted.

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO 2003

ITEM B – OCCUPATION

Unemployment rates:[1] by previous occupation,[2] 2002

[1] These estimates are not seasonally adjusted and have not been adjusted to take account of the recent Census 2001 results.
[2] Bases for rates are calculated by adding those currently employed in each occupational group to those who are now unemployed but those whos last job was in that occupational group.
[3] Sample size for females too small for reliable estimates.

Source: *Social Trends 33*, HMSO, 2003

ITEM C – ETHNICITY

Unemployment rates: by ethnic group and age,[1] 2001–2002

[1] Males up to the age of 64, females up to the age of 59.
[2] 16–24 year olds, sample size too small for reliable estimates.

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Harper Collins, 2004

ITEM D – DISABILITY

Economic activity status of disabled[1] people: by gender, spring 1998			
United Kingdom		**Percentages**	
	Males	**Females**	**All**
In employment			
Working full-time	33	16	25
Working part-time	5	18	11
All in employment	38	34	37
Unemployed[2]	7	4	6
Economically inactive	54	61	58
All disabled (=100%) (millions)	2.8	2.4	5.3

1 Work-limiting disabled. Males aged 16 to 64, females aged 16 to 59.
2 Based on the ILO definition

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Harper Collins, 2004

QUESTIONS

1 (a) Describe the trends in unemployment shown in Item A.

(b) Offer an explanation of the difference of unemployment rates of men and women.

2 Making reference to Item B, consider

(a) Which group of workers is most favoured in terms of employment opportunity?

(b) Account for this situation.

3 (a) Summarize the information in Item C.

(b) Can you offer any explanation for this pattern?

4 Briefly comment on Item D.

Activity 7: EXPERIENCING UNEMPLOYMENT

ITEM A – NOT ENOUGH MONEY

Mrs Chandray's husband is unemployed. She describes her experiences.
'I just worry about paying the bills ... I can't think about when the children grow up ... The worst thing is just not having enough money to pay the bills, buy the food and look after the children ... I have asthma and when I get worried or I'm not warm I get worse ... we put on heaters for the children because you have to but for ourselves we say no.' Mrs Chandray went on to say that quite often the children have to do without fruit and meat even though the parents put their needs first.

Source: adapted from R. Cohen *et al.*, *Hardship Britain*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM B – A MOTHER'S VIEW

I have actually had to swallow my pride until it hurts ... it makes me feel a complete failure because I had such high ideals ... I wanted to give my children the best, not to the point of spoiling them but just so they would, you know, feel confidence in themselves. So when I can't do that it makes me feel I'm failing.
Sandra Cole, an unemployed mother

Source: adapted from R. Cohen *et al.*, *Hardship Britain*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM C – SELF-ESTEEM

I think the real problem of being on the dole is it destroys your self-esteem ... I think I'd really like to have a job where I could go out ... and earn some money and have a sense of achievement at the end of the day ... I tend to get quite apathetic in some ways ... when you've got a bit of money in your pocket you feel a lot more optimistic ... you feel like going out and not just going out spending money but going out and doing other things. I've got money in my pocket, I've got security.
Neil Shorter, an unemployed man

Source: adapted from R. Cohen *et al.*, *Hardship Britain*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM D – RELATIONSHIPS

You end up pulling your hair out because you can't get away for a night out like working people ... Tensions build when you can't get a bit of time on your own ... When people call for a drink you can't go ... I feel embarrassed to go with relations in case they think we're sponging ... then we row with each other.
Andrew Downing, an unemployed man

Source: adapted from R. Cohen *et al.*, *Hardship Britain*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM E – MENTAL HEALTH

Unemployment is an important risk factor for mental health problems. Unemployment rates have been found to be strongly correlated with psychiatric admission rates. Financial problems resulting from unemployment are an important cause of mental health problems, but a more important reason may be the effects of losing the non-financial benefits that work provides. Most of these are due to a 'loss of status, purpose and social contacts and a time structure to the day'.

Source: A. Dennehy *et al.*, *Not to be Ignored*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM F – SUICIDE

Unemployment is a potentially important contributor to suicide. Unemployment increases the likelihood of other adverse life events and lessens the psychological and social resources needed to cope with these. The sense of hopelessness associated with chronic unemployment must act as a further adverse factor conducive to suicide.

The importance of the underlying social pressures in affecting suicide rates was noted by Durkheim. He suggested that many suicides in modern society could be explained by a reduction in the social integration of some groups in society, together with poverty, feelings of isolation, and loss of community life. This may help to explain the rises in youth suicide in today's highly individualistic society.

Source: A. Dennehy *et al.*, *Not to be Ignored*, Child Poverty Action Group, 1992

ITEM G – RIOTS

Throughout Britain there are communities where young people have attacked and destroyed houses, shops and community facilities. Most rioters are young, male, usually out of work, defiant of authority and often aggressively reckless. There were 28 recorded violent disturbances or riots between 1991 and 1995. The riots took different courses but shared many features. They always happened in low-income areas with long-standing social problems and poor reputations. Unemployment levels were far above the national average. One estate was so poor that the doctor's surgery redrew its catchment area to exclude it. These factors make for a dangerous combination: large numbers of out-of-work young males with no stake in society, living on low incomes, work-poor households, in areas where school performance was below half the national average and truancy was exceptionally high. Many young men with virtually no qualifications saw no harm in stealing cars, attacking the police, intimidating older residents or forming gangs to strengthen their control of outdoor spaces. Unemployment has been cited as a significant reason for the race riots in Bradford in 2003. A recent survey entitled 'Thwarted Dreams' found that half of Bradford's youth believes they would never achieve their goals. In such an atmosphere there grows an acceptance of violence and illegal actions which set them apart from the mainstream from which they feel excluded.

Source: adapted from A. Power and R. Tunstall, 'Estates of siege', *Guardian*, 25 June 1997 and P. Harris, 'Riot city reaches boiling point', *Observer*, 30 June 2002

QUESTIONS

1 Describe the effects of unemployment on people's health, self-esteem and family relationships as depicted in Items A to D.

2 In what respects can the unemployed be said to be excluded? Use information from Items A to D in your answer.

3 Is it fair to say that unemployment is a cause of mental illness and suicide? Refer to Items E and F in your answer.

4 Discuss the relationship between unemployment and violent disturbances, drawing on Item G.

Chapter 10: WORK, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LEISURE – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: WORK AND LEISURE

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on the nature of work. Students are asked to explore the relationships between work and non-work. Chapter 10, pp. 618–21, will be of assistance.

1 (a) *and* **(b)**
Through their discussion, students should become aware that people classify work and leisure in different ways. Some students may regard work as only including those activities for which they are paid. Others will certainly view their activities at school and college as real work even though they are not paid. Other unpaid activities such as washing up, cooking, cleaning and looking after children may be seen either as work or non-work by students. In deciding, they may be influenced by their freedom to choose whether or not to perform these tasks and their intrinsic enjoyment of them. In a mixed group, it may be that students of different age, sex, social class and ethnic background will express different opinions.

2 (a)
· The young person shown gardening illustrates the difficulty of making a firm decision between work and leisure. This activity could be a paid gardening job. It could be undertaken for pleasure or it could be a household chore which has been 'allocated' to this teenager.
· In Item C, the young dancers are clearly enjoying a night out. People would class this as part of their leisure activities.
· Dealing with personal cleanliness is perhaps the most difficult activity to see as either work or leisure. It is generally conducted in leisure time and may be enjoyed as a sensual experience. Alternatively, it could be seen as a daily chore or even as an activity linked to employment – for example, for those working in dirty occupations like mining.

(b))
Different activities can be defined in different ways. When people are paid, the activity is almost invariably described as work. When they are not paid it is more difficult to classify. Keith Grint believes that work is socially defined and its definition specific to a particular time and place. Hence in answer 1, students may have found they had fairly similar opinions to their classmates. However, there are individual differences related to background and experience. The only way to be sure exactly how a particular activity is regarded is to ask the people involved how they regard what they are doing.

3 *Key points:*
· Despite the fact that increasing numbers of women work outside the home, they still shoulder the main responsibility for housework, childcare and care of the elderly. This dual responsibility puts women at a disadvantage in the labour market, as they tend to have extended career breaks, and may be unwilling to accept promotion in case this puts further strain on themselves and their families.
· If women who are mothers and housewives received a wage for their work, their contribution to society would be recognized and their self-esteem enhanced. As a result, their status and income would rise and, by association, possibly the status and wages of such female-dominated occupations as nannies, nursery school teachers and carers of the elderly. Many lone parents might be recognized as contributing to society while simultaneously being removed from poverty.
· Any attempt to secure wages for domestic labour is unlikely to succeed, as no government is likely to want to finance such a costly scheme. There are also those who feel that activities such as childcare or caring for an elderly relative should remain 'labours of love'.

ACTIVITY 2: ALIENATION AND WORK

Teacher's note

This activity explores the relationship between alienation and work. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 10, pp. 621–3 and 626–9.

1 *Key points:*
· Both Items describe work situations which involve assembly-line systems of production. In each, the work is highly specialized, repetitive and boring, and the workers are strictly supervised. There is little opportunity to vary the task or show initiative or imagination.
· The physical working conditions of the auto plant are probably considerably more unpleasant than the fast food restaurant. We are told that the work is physically demanding and the plant noisy.
· In McDonald's, the work is probably less strenuous and less noisy. It may be possible for workers to have conversations with fellow workers.
· We are told that in the auto plant the workers are well paid, but this is not the case in McDonald's. Here, rates of pay are notoriously low and outlets rely heavily on cheap student and short-term contract labour.

2 *Key points:*
· A novel may be able to provide a lively account of people's experiences which will vividly bring to life a particular time and place. For example, this Item helps us to understand how workers may feel trapped in their jobs. An insight into how they experience their work will help sociologists to understand, for example, the high rate of absenteeism. The frustrations of work appear to spill over into the workers' leisure time – drugs and drink compensating for the mental and physical toll that the workplace takes.
· However, sociologists must exercise caution. An author is primarily involved with telling a story. The characters and situations in Item A may be exaggerated for dramatic effect, and may not be typical of workers' experiences in general. Research has shown that other workers employed in similar conditions are instrumental in their approach. They feel satisfied with their work because it is well paid.
· In summary, the novel may provide useful insights but, especially for sociologists in the positivist tradition, it cannot be a substitute for empirical study.

3 (a)
The way that meals are produced in McDonald's gives little control to the operatives. All their actions are prescribed by a manual, and even their conversations with customers are scripted. They appear to have no opportunity to exercise their judgement or make decisions. Moreover, the work itself requires little skill. It is broken down into specialized repetitive tasks which can be learned in minutes. Such work will soon become monotonous and boring. From this viewpoint, the work will become dehumanizing and alienating and therefore lead to dissatisfaction, which shows itself in a high rate of labour turnover.

(b)
From the point of view of a Marxist sociologist, the workers in McDonald's are no more than wage slaves. They are exploited by the owners to make profits. Since they do not own the product of their labour, work cannot be a creative and fulfilling activity. Instead, it is merely a means of earning a living. Unable to express their true natures in their work, these workers are estranged from themselves and cut off from their fellow workers. They might become aware that they are dissatisfied and change jobs frequently, but they do not realise the true cause of their dissatisfaction, which is the system of capitalist product.

ACTIVITY 3: GROWTH IN THE SERVICE SECTOR

Teacher's note

This activity looks at aspects of the expanding service sector of the economy. Students may find it helpful to read Chapter 10, pp. 629–34.

1 *Key points:*

- In Item A the workers receive very high rewards for their work. They do not appear to be especially well trained or knowledgeable, but they are able to command high salaries. This results from their employment in the city, where the traders are able to make huge profits for the banks and are therefore well rewarded.
- The women in Item B are providing school dinners. Their work is poorly paid although they appear to be working hard, and in the case of the 'cooks' will be skilled. Their pay may be low partly because they are employed by an agency, which will demand its own profit margin, but also because their work produces no immediate monetary gain to the economy.
- Our acceptance of the differences in reward for the people in their two very different service industries gives some insight into our social system. From a functionalist viewpoint it reflects value consensus and from a Marxist viewpoint it illustrates ruling class hegemony.

2

Women often perform much of the low-paid work in the service sector. This is because they tend to find employment in traditional 'caring' roles. Hence they clean, cook and baby mind. As Item B points out, in this sector women receive 'mother's work' for 'mother's pay'. They are often trapped in these jobs because of domestic responsibilities. They may need to be at home for their children's return from school or in school holidays. Often their wages are too low to allow them to have their own children cared for while they pursue further study. As the Item points out, the employer reaps the benefit of their sense of pride in a job well done.

3 *Key points:*

- Call centres have been criticized for providing unskilled repetitive work. Operators have no opportunities to exercise any skill or judgement in their work and have no way of alleviating the monotony of the task. They are also under constant supervision and control.
- There are many other jobs in the service sector where little skill is required. For example, in fast food outlets (as discussed in Activity 2), and in retailing, where employees may merely operate computerized tills without having any overall knowledge of the products on sale.
- The growth in the service industries may also involve a growth in the numbers of professional and highly skilled employees. As a community, we demand more doctors, nurses and teachers. Unfortunately, these occupational roles are less typical of the majority of new service-sector jobs than are the call centre operators described in Item C.

ACTIVITY 4: NEW PATTERNS OF WORK AND LIFE

Teacher's note

This activity discusses changing work patterns in relation to the work-life balance. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 10, pp. 641–9.

1 *Key points:*

- Students will need to show that they recognize that the term 'flexible working' covers a wide range of different situations.
- Making reference to Item A, employers may gain from home working of staff, as they will not need to provide as much costly office accommodation as they would otherwise.
- Item A also indicates that absenteeism and sickness may be reduced among those working at home. Staff may be less tired and stressed if they no longer have to deal with a long commute into work.
- In Item B, employers may find that their profits rise by providing services beyond 9-5. For example, many people now shop on a Sunday.
- In Item C, Mrs Bell's employers gain in that they avoid using expensive agency staff to 'fill in', which saves money and provides more continuity of services to residents. Shift working also means that employers can provide a 24-hour service while avoiding paying staff overtime.
- In Item D the outworker is cheap to employ as there are few overheads.

- They are often paid very low wages.
- The extent to which flexible working benefits the employee will depend a good deal on the particular situation.
- In Item A, Geoffrey Patterson enjoys home working from his Swiss chalet. Clearly, he is a very high status worker with a superb home working environment. He will experience ever greater control of his time at home and may therefore suffer less stress. He feels that other home workers will also benefit by feeling more inspired and empowered.
- Shift work patterns (Items B and C) may suit employees if they fit in with their personal needs. For example, mothers of young children may find it convenient to work in the late evening. School holiday leave, as given by some major retailers, may also help parents.

2 *Key points:*

- If employees can work hours which fit around family life, then flexible working may be a great advantage by providing extra income and job satisfaction to a parent who might otherwise be bored and frustrated. On the other hand, workers may use the inflexibility of those with parental responsibility as an excuse to pay very low levels of pay. For example, outworkers (Item D) tend to work hard for little money.
- In Mrs Bell's case (Item C), flexibility means very long hours away from home, so she misses out on contact with her children and husband. She ends up permanently tired and bad tempered, which may lead to domestic tensions while the quality of her work also suffers.
- If people work at weekends and evenings then they will have fewer opportunities for social contact with friends, neighbours and relatives. This may have negative consequences by eroding family and community bonds.
- Certain shift patterns may lead to stress and ill-health with clear negative effects on the rest of the family.
- People working during the night may be more likely to suffer personal injury or make errors of judgement, as described in Item B. Some of these errors may have far reaching consequences for the community, e.g. Chernobyl nuclear accident.

ACTIVITY 5: INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

Teacher's note

This activity examines industrial unrest, which may be expressed formally through strikes or informally through lack of cooperation or sabotage. Students will need to read Chapter 10, pp. 649–61.

1 (a)

The graph shows considerable fluctuation over time in the number of strikes and time lost. During the 1960s and 1970s the numbers of strikes and days lost grew rapidly, peaking in the late 1970s. Since the 1980s strike action has been at a lower level, gradually declining until 1995-6, by which point it was at its lowest level for the past 100 years.

(b)

One problem in explaining the trends is the unreliability of the figures. Some employers will under-represent stoppages, in the hope of giving an impression of good industrial relations, while others may report every stoppage in the hope of providing evidence in support of legal restrictions on strikes. The figures are also strongly influenced by any major stoppage. For instance, the prolonged miners' strike of 1984 explains the dramatic increase in working days lost for that year. Overall, though, there does seem to have been a dramatic reduction in the number of strikes since the mid-1980s. This owes much to legal measures taken under the Thatcher government directed towards limiting the powers of trade unions. Changes in the workplace have also led to far fewer people joining unions than was the case in the 1960s. Many more people now negotiate their own contracts, or have fixed-term contracts or performance-related pay. It has also been suggested that strike activity is related to the extent of social integration. Workers such as miners and dockers live in occupational communities, relatively isolated from the outside world. This may create a feeling of solidarity, and mean that the collective act of striking is more likely. With the decline in traditional industries the number of such workers and communities has greatly reduced.

2 *Key points:*

- Absenteeism is one way of expressing dissatisfaction. Workers may award themselves extra days off to make up for their perception that their wages are too low.
- They may feel dissatisfied and frustrated with the job itself. This may show itself in the form of labour turnover, but it is not always easy to leave a job, especially at times of recession.

- In Item B, catering staff throw dishes from the window to relieve their frustration. The sailors drop their loads onto the wharf as a way of getting back at management. They may also win a few minutes' reprieve from the monotony of loading. The painters who deliberately paint over oil and water may actually be making themselves extra work, but they achieve a 'malicious delight' in thwarting the efforts of supervisors who are driving them too hard.

3

Some of the actions outlined in Item B might be described as pointless vandalism. Interactionists would argue that acts such as these become understandable in terms of the motives and meanings of the actors involved. For example, the steward's behaviour may be perfectly rational and plausible in the context of how he sees his working environment. If the workers feel that the work expected of them is unacceptable, then interactionists would argue that we should accept the workers' interpretation of the situation as valid, no matter what an 'objective' assessment of their working conditions might suggest.

4 *Key points:*
- A firemen's strike, e.g. the strike of 2002 shown in Item C, could have serious consequences for members of the public.
- Industrial disputes, e.g. the protracted miners' strike of 1984, disrupt production and the economy.
- The human relations school of management believes that strikes arise from a breakdown in communication between management and workers. The role of management is to foster good relationships and develop a sense of common purpose and team spirit. A strike represents a failure to establish this positive working environment.
- Some sociologists believe that the media often exaggerate the problems represented by strikes. While initially the firemen's strike received generally positive comment from the media, later coverage emphasised the threat to public safety – especially in light of potential terrorist attack.
- To Marxists conflict is an inevitable consequence of how work is organized under capitalism. Workers are alienated and exploited and will therefore continue to react accordingly.

ACTIVITY 6: WHO WORKS?

Teacher's note

This activity requires students to analyse a variety of data in order to explore the patterns of employment to be found in modern Britain. Students will find relevant reading in Chapter 10, pp. 661–65.

1 (a)
Unemployment fell rapidly during the 1980s to a low of around 2 million. It then increased and peaked at just under 3 million in the early 1990s. Since then it has generally fallen until 2001, when it increased slightly to around 1 million. Women's levels of unemployment have throughout been lower than men's and have also been less liable to fluctuation.

(b) *Key points:*
- Lower levels of unemployment among women may reflect changes in the industrial base, e.g. the growth of the service sector. Women have also been more willing to accept part-time or flexible working with low wages and little job security. Many men find these jobs unattractive.
- There may be considerable hidden female unemployment. Some women are ineligible for unemployment benefits due to gaps in employment stemming from childcare responsibilities. If this is the case, they may not bother to register as unemployed even if they are actively seeking work. Others may work part time but would prefer full-time employment if they had the opportunity. Thus the real level of female unemployment is particularly difficult to judge.

2 (a) Professional workers.

(b) *Key points:*
- Professional areas of work have traditionally been secure. They continue to offer many workers like doctors and solicitors permanent full-time employment contracts.
- The contraction in manufacturing or fluctuations in the trade cycle are unlikely to affect this group of workers.
- If workers in these areas are made redundant, they are likely to have transferable skills which will allow them to practise their profession with a different organization or in a slightly different field. For example, a solicitor leaving a large firm might transfer to private

practice or to work with a local authority.
- Their proven educational track record may mean that new employers are confident in investing in them by providing further training. For example, an accountant joining a company might be sponsored to complete an MBA (Master of Business Administration).

3 (a)
Item C shows that there are significant differences in the unemployment rates of different ethnic groups. Bangladeshis are the most likely to be unemployed and white people the least likely. Pakistanis and blacks also have high unemployment rates. In every ethnic group young people are more likely to be unemployed than older people.

(b) *Key points:*
- Bangladeshi, Pakistani and black people are likely to have poor educational qualifications and therefore work in manual occupations which are prone to job insecurity.
- Many immigrants were originally attracted to areas where relatives already lived and where they believed they could find suitable work. For example, many Pakistani families settled in Leicester and Bradford, where they were employed in the textile industry. These industries have been in decline in recent years and so the impact of redundancies has been heavy on these groups.
- Racism may be a factor – employers may consciously or unconsciously prefer to employ white people.
- Bangladeshi and Pakistani people who have arrived in this country relatively recently may also experience language and cultural barriers.
- Young people may experience higher rates of unemployment because employers stop recruiting during times of recession. They may tend to keep on older workers who are expensive to make redundant, and reduce employment numbers through natural wastage (people leaving on their own account). If employers do take on more staff, they may select slightly older people who already have some work experience to offer.

4 *Key points:*
- Item D shows that over 60 per cent of disabled people are without work. Some of these people will be unable to work due to their physical or mental condition.
- Relatively few disabled people work full time. This is particularly true for women.
- The disabled have a comparatively high rate of unemployment (6 per cent).
- Some disabled people may wish to work but may not register as unemployed if they are not eligible for benefits. Hence, the real level of unemployment may be higher.
- Some disabled people may give up the struggle to find work, having encountered prejudice and inflexibility on the part of employers. These people will become long-term economically inactive.
- The figures presented may well represent a considerable waste of talent.

ACTIVITY 7: EXPERIENCING UNEMPLOYMENT

Teacher's note

This activity attempts to explore aspects of the personal impact of unemployment on people's lives. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 10, pp. 670–1.

1 *Key points:*
- Many people who experience unemployment also experience poverty. If their unemployment lasts for long they will become dependent on benefits and have to change their lifestyle accordingly. Poverty brings with it worries about money, stress, poor housing conditions and poor diet. All of these factors can have a long-term adverse effect on health.
- All four Items highlight the negative effects that unemployment can have on self-esteem. In Item B, Sandra cannot live up to her ideals of parenting because she is unable to give her children 'the best'. In Item C, Neil Shorter's self-confidence is undermined by his inability to find work. His lack of money also makes him feel insecure, pessimistic and apathetic about life.
- The stress of being at home all day with few outlets can lead to family tensions, as we see in Item D. Lack of money will mean that neither parents nor children will be able to engage in leisure activities. The psychological well-being of the whole family may thus be affected.

2 *Key points:*
- The most obvious way in which the unemployed are excluded is that

they do not belong to the workforce, and so miss out on work friendships and the sense of worth and identity that people get from their occupation. Without work, they may feel isolated from their peers, and old social contacts may disappear.

· They cannot afford to take part in leisure activities, or to participate in the consumer society, which emphasizes the need to own a particular brand of trainers or drive a particular car.

· Perhaps most invasive of all is the apathy which Neil Shorter (Item C) describes. His unemployment has affected his general attitude to life so that he no longer feels like 'going out and doing other things'.

3 *Key points:*

· Common sense would lead us to believe that the stress of unemployment can be an important cause of mental health problems, as described in Item E. However, a correlation between unemployment rates and high rates of psychiatric illness could also mean that people with mental health problems are more likely to become unemployed.

· Similarly, it could be that those people who are anxious and depressed tend to be at risk of unemployment and at risk of suicide. It is difficult to unravel the interrelationships between these various factors.

· Durkheim was the first to notice the link between a reduction in social integration and suicide. It can be argued that when people lose their jobs they also lose social ties and a sense of being part of a common enterprise. They may also be more prone to feelings of isolation, which may well be a predisposing factor towards suicide.

4 *Key points:*

· Item G points out that social disturbances tend to occur in low-income areas with long-standing social problems. They tend to involve young men who are unemployed and possess few qualifications.

· In such areas the young people will feel that they have little hope of escaping their situation by finding work and moving out. They have little stake in society and may feel excluded from it.

· For some of the young people, rather than isolating them, their unemployment has made it possible for them to spend time together with their peers. They may be members of gangs and engage in violence and illegal behaviour.

· Older unemployed men and women may feel quite different. They may feel isolated and trapped at home with fewer social contacts, as we have seen in Items A to D. They may well feel apathetic and demotivated.

· The unemployed are a varied group and have no one interest group or organization representing them. As people move in and out of work, membership of the ranks of the unemployed will change. They are therefore unlikely to form a united group and take part in political protest action.

· In some areas the problems of unemployment and ethnicity have become intertwined, making for a particularly explosive situation.

EDUCATION

Activity 1: DEGREES OF PRIVILEGE – AT SCHOOL

ITEM A – THROUGH-TRAIN FOR THE MONEYED

Grimsdell is the new pre-prep division of Mill Hill, a public school. It symbolizes the trend towards younger entry into the public school system and offers moneyed parents a head start for their children from 2 or 3 years of age. Mrs Mills, the head teacher, says: 'The difference is mostly a question of money and class size. We have an in-house music teacher, a full-time PE and dance specialist, and they start learning French at six.' The pre-prep, at £5,340 a year, feeds 7-year-olds into the prep school, at £6,411 a year. This is even better equipped. It has its own chapel, rose garden, playing fields, six tennis courts and a networked computer system. With a teacher for every eleven pupils, the children go on French exchange at age 10, and, by 11, nearly half are significantly above the reading and maths levels set by the government, and very few below. From here, pupils pass on to the main school at age 13. Costing £8,205 a year, it is set in the same leafy 150-acre campus. The full cost of the child's education until 18 is £100,000. The state spends barely a quarter as much. Britain's educational apartheid seems firmly entrenched.

Source: adapted from A. Adonis and M. Bright, 'Trapped in the economy class', *Observer*, 15 February 1998

ITEM B – COLLECTING BADGES

Tony Little, the headmaster of Eton, announced that boys arriving this year won't bother with GCSEs, as they are 'too easy', like collecting Boy Scouts badges. His pupils will move straight to 'A' levels.

Jacky Chapman/Photofusion

Source: G. Bedell and S. Gill, 'Class struggle', *Observer Magazine*, 24 August 2003

ITEM C – SOCIAL CAPITAL

Well, I know some GPs who sort of teach there [at university]. I know one who teaches at Imperial and one who teaches at UCL [University College London], and they both recommended it. And then we went to the open days and I really liked them both. I really liked UCL – and I went to a 'Women in Maths' day at UCL and that was really good as well ... Then there's the teacher whose daughter went to Cambridge [University] – and so I spoke to her about it, her course ... And then on my work experience I got to speak to about four or five different GPs, because I was spending time with lots of them, so they all told me which one they would recommend.

(Lara, Maitland Union)

A middle-class sixth former preparing to apply for university

Source: S.J. Ball, 'It's not what you know ...', *Sociology Review*, vol. 13, no. 2, November 2003

ITEM D – PRIVATE TUITION

In London and other big cities private tutoring is booming. It has become one of the most important factors in a child's school performance. It undermines any pretensions to a comprehensive system that we might have. One tutor said, 'The whole thing is really dishonest. In the best schools, half the pupils are tutored and they get really terrific results.'

Source: adapted from J. Russell, 'The secret lessons', *New Statesman*, 8 April 2002

ITEM E – THE RIGHT ADDRESS

Parents are paying nearly £50,000 extra in property prices to guarantee their children places at top state primary schools, according to a government-funded study.

'Selection by house price has led to the exclusion of those on low incomes from the benefits of good local schooling.'

The findings confirm fears that leading state primary schools have become the preserve of middle-class families who can afford properties near top-performing schools.

Source: F. Islam and M. Bright, '£50,000 – the official cost of moving to a decent school', *Observer*, 24 March 2002

QUESTIONS

1 Making reference to Item A, outline what advantages a private school education can confer on a child.

2 Examine Item B. What strategies do public schools use to maintain their exclusivity?

3 Should we abolish private education? Briefly consider this question, drawing on Items A and B.

4 Making some reference to Item C, briefly consider how social capital may be acquired and used to their advantage by middle-class children.

5 What light do the Items cast on the equality of opportunity debate?

Activity 2: DEGREES OF PRIVILEGE – UNIVERSITY

ITEM A – ELITISM

There is no denying the elitism of Oxford University. Around 47 per cent of the students come from fee-paying schools, which account for only about 8 per cent of pupils nationwide. Even the state school intake is disproportionately drawn from the remaining grammar schools and comprehensives with large professional-class clienteles.

Oxford is the apex of the great divide in English education. Although state funded and formally open to all, the university is, in practice, largely a finishing school for children with an expensive private school education. Most of its graduates go on to the City or top professions and, in turn, send their children to the best, often private, schools.

Moreover, the elitism of Oxford is echoed in other universities. Bristol has 40 per cent of students from private schools and Durham similar numbers. Deep structural and class divisions dominate not only our schools but also our universities. Until these are tackled, the Great Divide in British education will remain.

Source: adapted from A. Adonis and M. Bright, 'Inner-city exclusion zone', *Observer*, 1 March 1998 and D. Aaronovich, 'Being fair is harder than it seems', *Observer*, 2 March 2003

ITEM C – PAYING YOUR WAY

Adrienne Gammie's coursework is suffering. She would like to spend more time studying for her psychology degree. Instead, she spends much of her time in a bar. Not that she's drinking or socializing – she's working flat out – 16 hours a week to make ends meet. A new report reveals that six out of ten students are taking jobs during term time, which is having a devastating impact on their studies. There is danger of a class divide in universities, with better-off students going to high status universities with low rates of term-time working, while the poor attend lower ranked universities where term-time working is accepted.

Source: adapted from R. Dobson and S. Bloomfield, 'Six out of ten students are forced to take term-time jobs', *Independent*, 5 October 2003

ITEM B – CLASS WAR AT BRISTOL UNIVERSITY

Paul comes from an inner-city state school. He has spent the entire term feeling belittled and intimidated by private and grammar school students – 'the Oxbridge rejects', as he calls them. The ones that go around in massive groups, the boys proudly wearing their old school ties and exchanging stories about their boarding school days. 'They make you feel like you're nothing, they do it on purpose because to them you are nothing', he said.

The private school dominance could be at an end at Bristol after the university admissions said that it is offering lower admission exam grades to students from less privileged backgrounds. The university said that reduced offers are only offered to exceptional students who have experienced exceptional disadvantage.

But this is not accepted by many private school undergraduates. Peter, a medic from the Royal Grammar School in Guildford, said: 'Anyone with potential who applies themselves to their 'A' levels should be able to get the necessary grades no matter what their background or disadvantage. I would be deeply bitter if, having worked hard to get here, I found a state school student had been able to slip in on lower grades without my motivation.'

Source: adapted from A. Hill, 'Inside a university challenged', *Observer*, 9 March 2003

ITEM D – FINDING WORK

Good graduate jobs remain available only to an elite. One major employer told researchers it received more than 14,000 applications for 426 graduate jobs. Oxford graduates had a one in eight chance of success, while the ratio of those applying from new universities was one in 235.

Employers not only look for good grades but also personal qualities like experience of travel, varied work experience and wider life skills.

Source: S. Cassidy, 'WC graduates are less likely to get jobs', *Independent*, 12 October 2003

QUESTIONS

1 **Making reference to Items A and B, do you have more sympathy with the views expressed by Peter or those expressed by Paul?**

2 **'Embarking on higher education represents a much greater risk for students from less wealthy homes.'**
  Comment on this statement using evidence from relevant Items and your own knowledge.

Activity 3: UNDERACHIEVEMENT AND CLASS

ITEM A – WE ARE WHAT WE EAT

New research highlighted in a report from the New Policy Institute and the Kids' Club Network shows that children who come to school hungry or who have inadequate diet may benefit less from teaching. Those who miss breakfast show lower educational performance, worse behaviour and poorer attendance. The report 'Fit for School' reveals that nearly 6 per cent of all children aged 8 to 16 years missed breakfast. The rate for children from socio-economic classes D and E is double that of children from professional families, showing that missing breakfast is often linked to poverty. In one recent study, it was found that one in three people in an inner-city school in London regularly had no breakfast and many of those who did have breakfast had only a packet of crisps and sweets.

International research shows that eating breakfast improves children's problem solving, memory and visual perception and creative thinking. Furthermore, breakfast programmes have improved children's behaviour – they spend more time on their set tasks and less time out of their seats.

John Dunford, General Secretary of the Secondary Headteachers Association, has said, 'some of the kids would start to look grey around the gills at ten in the morning and I'd think "If only I could spend the school's money on feeding them I'd do a lot for their education."'

Source: adapted from N. Donovan, 'A start in life', *Guardian*, 23 June 1999

ITEM B – THE ATTITUDE OF PARENTS

The people of St Anne's have a sense of hopelessness and powerlessness. Many are resigned to their situation and believe that there is little that they can do to change it. Few show any signs of optimism or self-confidence.

Source: adapted from K. Coates and R. Silburn, *The Forgotten Englishman*, Penguin, Harmondsworth (1970)

ITEM C – CHILDREN LIMIT THEIR HORIZONS

A recent report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows that children living in poverty learn from an early age to limit their expectations, hopes and aspirations for the future. By learning to accept less and learning ways to cover their disappointments they are learning to be poor. They are also more likely to want to do a job that does not need qualifications. Few of the poor children in this study hoped one day to do a professional job – teaching, the legal profession and so on. The study, published in March 1999, was based on interviews with 400 children.

Source: adapted from *A Level Sociology Magazine*, May 1999

ITEM D – WHERE THEY LIVE

Source: Photofusion

ITEM E – GCSE

GCSE attainment[1]: by parents' socio-economic classification, 2000

England & Wales Percentages

	5 or more GCSE grades A*–C	1–4 GCSE grades A*–C[2]	5 or more GCSE grades D–G	1–4 GCSE grades D–G	None reported
Higher professional	74	17	6	1	2
Lower professional	61	22	13	2	2
Intermediate	51	26	18	3	3
Lower supervisory	36	31	24	4	4
Routine	29	34	26	5	7
Other/not classified[3]	24	29	26	8	13

1 For pupils in year 11. Includes equivalent GNVQ qualifications achieved in year 11
2 Consists of those with 1–4 GCSE A–C and any number of other grades
3 Includes a high percentage of respondents who had neither parent in a full-time job.

Source: *Social Trends* 33, 2003 HMSO page 61

ITEM F – WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY

Socio-cultural factors including such things as language, values and aspiration have been the focus of much educational research. It may not be over-cynical to claim that factors like poverty, overcrowding and poor housing have been unpopular because while their cure was obvious, society was unwilling to undertake it.

Source: Ivan Reid, 'Gender, social class and education', in M. Haralambos (ed.) *Developments in Sociology*, vol. 16, Causeway Press, 2000

QUESTIONS

1 **Outline the material disadvantages faced by the children in Items A and D.**

2 **How might the attitudes expressed in Items B and C affect children's performance in school?**

3 **Assess the relative significance of material and cultural factors in explaining low levels of achievement among the poor.**

4 **Outline the key points in Item E.**

5 **Briefly comment on Item F.**

Activity 4: GENDER AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

ITEM A – STUDENTS IN FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Students[1] in further and higher education: by type of course and sex

United Kingdom   Thousands

	Males				Females			
	1970/71	1980/81	1990/91	2001/02	1970/71	1980/81	1990/91	2001/02[2]
Further education								
Full-time	116	154	219	543	95	196	261	543
Part-time	891	697	768	1,528	630	624	986	2,376
All further education	1,007	851	987	2,071	725	820	1,247	2,198
Higher education								
Undergraduate								
Full-time	241	277	345	519	173	196	319	620
Part-time	127	176	193	257	19	71	148	380
Postgraduate								
Full-time	33	41	50	86	10	21	34	86
Part-time	15	32	50	140	3	13	36	151
All higher education[3]	416	526	638	1,003	205	301	537	1,238

1 Home and overseas students
2 Further education data for 2001/02 are not available so figures for 2000/01 have been shown
3 Figures for 2001/02 include a number of higher education students for which details are not known at any level.

Source: *Social Trends* 33, 2003 HMSO

ITEM B – LOWERING HER SIGHTS

My exam results weren't all that good this year. I went to the [careers] adviser and they said, 'Well, what do you want to do?' – the big question. So I said, 'Well, I want to be a doctor.' 'Oh', he said, and we'd talked about it before, and I didn't think I've got – I think I'd have to be really brainy to get in, because I'm a girl. My teacher suggested radiologist.

Source: Margaret in 1972, quoted in S. Sharpe, *Just Like a Girl,* Penguin, 1994

ITEM C – CAREER GIRLS

I think it's important to have a career, rather than just wait to get married, although I love children. I don't think women still have to choose [between a career and a family]. I think if they really want a family they can work round it. It might be a bit of a struggle at first but I think they can do it. My mum did it. A lot of my friends want a career, they're set on careers. I think more girls now want careers, and families later, which I think is good.

Source: Melanie in 1991, quoted in S. Sharpe, *Just Like a Girl,* Penguin, 1994

ITEM D – A LADDISH CULTURE

We must challenge the laddish, anti-learning culture which has been allowed to develop over recent years and should not simply accept that boys will be boys.

Source: quoted from Stephen Byers by E. Mitsos and K. Browne, 'Gender differences in education' in A. Giddens (ed.) *Sociology: Introductory Readings,* Polity Press, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 **Comment on the points of sociological interest in Item A.**

2 **Attempt to explain the patterns you have observed in Item A, drawing on information in Items B and C.**

3 **Using material from the Items and elsewhere, say whether or not you consider the concern expressed in Item D to be justified.**

Activity 5: GENDER AND THE CURRICULUM

ITEM A – BOYS HATE SHAKESPEARE

Research in Coventry showed that boys saw English as a 'feminine' subject that was 'alien' to their way of thinking and working: they felt uncomfortable, while in science they felt safe. 'Science is straightforward; you don't have to think about it. There are definite answers.' English, on the other hand, 'is about understanding, interpreting ... the answers depend on your view of things.'

This relates to adult roles. Men occupy the positions of economic, political and ideological power, which means that men have to be seen as strong, sure of themselves, always be right and always in control.

Source: adapted from E. Mitsos 'Classroom voices' in A. Giddens (ed.), *Sociology: Introductory Reading*, Polity, 2001

ITEM B – SEXIST TEACHERS

In maths, as long as you've got a modicum of intelligence you can get a very long way ... But when it comes to seeing through a problem, where a bit of flair is needed, then I think the boys have an edge. When it is just a routine approach – you know, you do one on the board and they do others with just a few small variations – then the girls, by virtue of following carefully what you've done, and taking it down neatly and reading about it and so on, they do better. I think the boys, if you want to devise another way of doing the problem, other than the one you've shown them, I think I would plump for a boy finding that.

Source: Mr Ginga, Millbridge Deputy Head, quoted in S.I. Riddell, *Gender and the Politics of the Curriculum*, Routledge, 1992

ITEM C – A MODERN GIRL

I like fiddling around with things at home, electronic kits, and I've been doing Meccano since I was about six. I want to work backstage on telly, anything fiddling around with cameras or lights. I'm doing that for work experience. I want to do a degree in engineering. I know a guy who is an electronic engineer, and going round his house is really good fun, he's got all the stuff there and you can muck about. He says it's what he does at work!

Source: Harriet in 1991, quoted in S. Sharpe, *Just Like a Girl*, Penguin, 1994

ITEM D – GENDER AND THE CURRICULUM

A level entries by gender, 2003

Subject	Gender	% of total number sat
Biology	Male	5.8
	Female	7.8
	Both	6.9
Business Studies	Male	5.6
	Female	3.4
	Both	4.4
Chemistry	Male	5.1
	Female	4.6
	Both	4.8
Computing	Male	6.0
	Female	1.8
	Both	3.8
Economics	Male	3.5
	Female	1.4
	Both	2.4
English	Male	6.7
	Female	13.7
	Both	10.5
Drama/Expressive Arts	Male	1.3
	Female	3.1
	Both	2.3
French	Male	1.4
	Female	2.6
	Both	2.1
History	Male	5.9
	Female	5.3
	Both	5.6
Maths	Male	10.2
	Female	5.1
	Both	7.5
Physics	Male	6.8
	Female	1.7
	Both	4.1
Psychology	Male	2.9
	Female	7.8
	Both	5.6
Sociology	Male	1.7
	Female	4.6
	Both	3.3
PE/Sport	Male	3.6
	Female	1.7
	Both	2.6
Technology subjects	Male	3.1
	Female	1.6
	Both	2.3

Source: adapted from the *Guardian*, 14 August 2003

QUESTIONS

1 **Using information from Items A, B, C and D, discuss how far, in your view, traditional attitudes towards the curriculum are breaking down. Give reasons for your answers.**

2 **Do the continuing differences in the subject choices of males and females really matter?**

3 **What changes in curriculum choice, if any, do you expect to see in the future?**

Activity 6: ETHNICITY AND EDUCATION

ITEM A – RACISM

Devante Smith, aged 16, arrived for his first day at a new school. There was only one other black face among the 350 pupils but Devante didn't mind. He hoped to go to university to study computer programming.

He felt optimistic, but not for long. The abuse from pupils started on his first day: racist slurs hissed during class, bellowed during break, punches and kicks after school.

'They seemed scared of something different. They'd wind me up as soon as I walked into the class, calling me smelly and worse things … By the time the teacher arrived I wouldn't be able to concentrate. I didn't hate my lessons but I'd snap at anything … If there was trouble the class would side with the ones who were annoying me, so the teacher wouldn't believe me and would throw me out.'

The teachers never appeared racist but failed to control the environment, said Devante, now 17. 'I complained many times but to them I was just a pain.'

Source: adapted from R. Smithers and J. Carvel, 'I complained to the teachers many times but to them I was just a pain', *Guardian*, 11 March 1999

ITEM B – UNDERACHIEVERS

Many Afro-Caribbean children in British schools underachieve. Just 29 per cent achieve five good grades at GCSE, although girls do better than boys. The figure for whites is 47 per cent and for Indians 54 per cent. The Ofsted Report 2000 suggests: 'Inequalities of Afro-Caribbean pupils became progressively greater as they move through the school system.' And the gap between different ethnic groups seems to be widening. School inspectors suggest that racial stereotyping and low expectations among teachers are to blame for the poor performance of Afro-Caribbean, black, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and gypsy travelling children.

They suggest that there can be a breakdown in communication between white teachers and black pupils. In some schools, teachers' assessment of black and Asian pupils is considerably lower than their test results, the report says. Renaldo La Rose, who is taking three 'A' levels, said: 'After we got our GCSE results, teachers were going up to black pupils and saying they were surprised they had done so well. They used to put black pupils down.'

Marlon Trotman is angry that teachers would not let him take the higher tier GCSE exam for IT and instead made him take the lower tier, which meant that he could not achieve higher than Grade C. 'There were white students and Asians who were put in for the higher paper who were not as good as me', he said.

Source: adapted from J. Judd, 'Young, gifted and black', *Independent*, 11 March 1999 and E. Mitsos, 'Racism and schooling', *Sociology Review*, vol. 12, no. 3, February 2003

ITEM C – MAINTAINING DISCIPLINE

Gillborn studied a co-educational 11–16 comprehensive in the mid-1980s. Despite the fact that teachers seemed committed to the goal of equality of opportunity, they believed 'that Afro-Caribbean pupils represented a greater challenge to their authority than any other group in the school'.

Believing 'the myth of an Afro-Caribbean challenge', they sought to nip it in the bud. The result was that Afro-Caribbean pupils experienced a disproportionate amount of punishment, and that they were sometimes exclusively criticized, even when peers in different ethnic groups shared in the offence.

A high level of tension and, indeed, conflict was evident between white teachers and Afro-Caribbean pupils, who responded to their differential treatment in some cases by resistance and in other cases by accommodation.

Mac an Ghail studied a boys' comprehensive in the early 1980s and later a sixth form college. Again, conflict was evident between white teachers and black pupils. The school was rigidly streamed by behavioural criteria rather than cognitive ones, again disadvantaging Afro-Caribbean pupils. One teacher justified this approach in the following terms: 'There are boys of relatively higher ability in the lower sets, especially among the West Indians. I've told you before, Johnson and Brian were marvellous at maths, especially problem solving. But it's there, it's the West Indians' attitude and that must decide it in the end. You can't promote a boy who is known to be a troublemaker, who's a dodger. It will look like the reward for bad behaviour.'

Source: adapted from A. Pilkington, 'Ethnicity and education' in M. Haralambos (ed.) Developments in Sociology, vol. 13, Causeway Press, 1997

ITEM D – CHANGING TIMES

Changes in GCSE attainment by ethnicity, 1988–97

Ethnic group	Five or more higher grade passes			Improvement
	1988	1995	1997	1988–97
White	26%	42%	44%	+18
Black	17%	21%	28%	+11
Indian	23%	44%	49%	+26
Pakistani	20%	22%	28%	+8
Bangladeshi	13%	23%	32%	+19

Source: adapted from D. Gillborn and H.S. Mirza, 'Educational inequality: mapping race, class and gender – a synthesis of research evidence', Ofsted, 2000

QUESTIONS

1 (a) **Briefly suggest what effect the types of experience described in Item A might have on young blacks.**

  (b) **Comment on the teachers' response.**

2 **Use Items B and C to assess the impact of racial stereotyping on the educational achievement of ethnic minority groups.**

3 **Comment on the changes in ethnic performance outlined in Item D.**

Chapter 11: EDUCATION – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: DEGREES OF PRIVILEGE – AT SCHOOL

Teacher's note

This Activity explores some of the inequalities which impact on children during their school years. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 11, pp. 743–5.

1 *Key points:*
- Children tend to be taught in small groups in independent schools, and the facilities are of the highest standard, with specialist teaching from an early age.
- Children start as young as 2 years, and are given encouragement and stimulation in an environment that places a high value on education.
- Children are drawn largely from middle- and upper-class families, since only parents with a high income can afford the fees. Such families usually provide material advantages to children at home as well, and have attitudes and cultural characteristics which tend to help their children to be successful in school.
- Parents paying large sums in fees will no doubt make sure that the school provides their child with the help, encouragement and tuition they need to succeed in examinations.

2 *Key points:*
- The main criterion for entry to a public school is money. While they may provide some scholarships, the majority of the pupils will be from homes able to afford the fees.
- Schools may intentionally make their pupils feel set apart by using a distinctive uniform, often archaic in design and supplied through specialist shops.
- Top schools are often housed in distinctive buildings. They are frequently old and often of architectural merit, possibly set in parkland or behind high fencing so that they are not an integral part of the local community.
- Within the school there may be plaques listing former school pupils who have been successful entrants to Oxbridge, or perhaps have died in the service of their country.
- Some public school head teachers, as in Item B, may try to make the education provided to the children in some way different and of a higher status than that provided in state schools. Tony Little is disparaging about the GCSE, while some schools are currently moving from 'A' level to studying for the Baccalaureate. It is now almost exclusively within the private sector that the study of the classics – Latin and Greek – is available.
- Pupils at public and many private schools may therefore come to see themselves as set apart and different from other young people, in some cases as superior.

3 *Key points:*
- Some people believe that the existence of private education is a major factor in creating a class-divided society. The sense of separateness fostered by many independent schools may lead to attitudes of superiority and antagonisms between ordinary people and those who attend public schools.
- On the other hand, in a free society it could be argued that we must allow people to decide for themselves how they spend their money. However, this freedom of choice is a reality for only a few. The majority of people do not have the financial resources to 'choose' and have no option but to accept state education.
- The success of public/private schools indicates that greater financial investment in state education would result in an improved educational outcome for many children.

4 *Key points:*
- Bourdieu has argued that social capital can provide a social network and sense of belonging, which can be utilized to give support and access to valued resources. Being in possession of the right sort of social capital can therefore give an educational advantage to young people.
- The young people most likely to possess effective social capital are those with a middle-class background and those who have attended a private school.
- In Item C we see social capital being used to advantage in the process

of university application. We do not know if the school attended by the student is a state or private school, but the Item indicates that the school is providing social capital, which helps the student with her university application in several ways. She has a teacher whose daughter goes to Cambridge, so she gains insider knowledge of what it might be like to study there. It also seems that the school has been able to provide her with work experience placements which were highly relevant to her chosen career. This 'experience' will have helped her gain a place at her chosen university, while we are told that the GPs advised her on the 'best' courses to apply for.
- There is also evidence in Item C of social capital mobilized by her parents. She 'knows' GPs who teach at Imperial and UCL, both prestigious universities. She has clearly been taken to or encouraged to attend open days at the universities and a 'Women in Maths' day. This young woman will be in a privileged position when making her application, since she will have gained appropriate knowledge, experience and support.

5 *Key points:*
- Some people believe that when children enter school there should exist a 'level playing field', so that every child has the same chance of success. This view was expressed by many during the 1960s and 1970s, but has been less strongly voiced since New Right views on education have become popularized.
- Evidence from the Items implies that some children have a clear head start towards educational success.
- The existence of private education clearly benefits the minority. These children are virtually guaranteed educational success.
- Items D and E show us that even within the state system there are considerable inequalities. While it is a mistake to confuse social class with income, those people who are in professional and managerial positions are likely to have the finances to be able to employ tutors to help their children.
- They may also have the financial resources to move house to be in the catchment areas of the most successful schools, or alternatively to pay for the transportation of their children to a non-local school. Effective school selection and private tutoring may work in conjunction: predominantly middle-class schools obtaining better results because pupils are tutored; better results attract more middle-class parents to the area, who in turn provide private tuition for their children.
- Social capital may be utilized at all levels of education. Middle-class parents may use social networks to discover which are the best schools and become what S. Gewirtz calls privileged or skilled choosers. For example, they may deploy social capital to ensure their children gain entry to 'good' primary schools, especially where parents and children are interviewed for places. Their choice of primary may also be informed as to whether it is a 'feeder' school to the best secondary school. Overall, middle-class parents are therefore more likely to be able to put their children at an advantage, both for material and cultural reasons.

ACTIVITY 2: DEGREES OF PRIVILEGE – UNIVERSITY

Teacher's note

This Activity continues the theme of educational inequality addressed in Activity 1. It would be helpful for students to read Chapter 11, pp. 748–51.

1 *Key points:*
- Paul clearly feels there is a social divide at Bristol University. Those students with a different educational and social background from his own are making him feel inferior and excluded. Some people may have considerable sympathy with Paul. They are likely to agree with a university policy that attempts to recruit students on the basis of a young person's potential rather than on the basis of his or her achievement. This would result in more students from comprehensives and from intermediate and working-class backgrounds being drawn into the university system. The universities would be creating more equality of opportunity and reducing the current wastage of talent. On the other hand, some people might feel that Paul is only experiencing the prejudices he may face in later life and should 'get over it' and learn to cope.

- Peter believes it is wrong for a university to take account of 'exceptional disadvantage' when allocating university places. His belief is that those with the potential and aptitude will 'win through' no matter what the obstacles. Peter is clearly an able young man to have obtained a place to study medicine in a prestigious university and he feels any positive discrimination, which might have operated against his interests, would be unjust. This is the view usually taken by private school head teachers. But we must remember that Peter has himself been educated at a prestigious private school and is unlikely to have experience of the disadvantages that people like Paul may have encountered, e.g. larger classes, demotivated and frequently changing staff, less well equipped and ill-disciplined classrooms. The evidence presented in Item A makes it clear that it is very much more difficult for people from less successful state schools and working-class backgrounds to enter the elite universities. Some people might argue that Bristol University does not go far enough to redress the balance in favour of those who have not been able to 'purchase' educational success at exclusive private schools. They might argue that only with positive discrimination policies will the universities be able truly to select those young people with the greatest talent and aptitude.

2 *Key points:*

- It can be argued that students entering higher education take on a variety of interrelated risks.
- These may be financial. Students entering higher education must now contribute substantial funds to their maintenance/education. Those from privileged backgrounds may have the majority of their expenses covered by their parents. However, those from more modest backgrounds may have to work during holidays and term time (see Item C) and incur debts to be repaid after university. Attending university therefore involves greater financial risk for the least well-off students. Moreover, their background may mean that the prospect of a student loan of, perhaps, £12,000, or possibly much more in the future, 'sounds' much more daunting than the prospect of a similar loan might be to a student from a wealthy background, thus acting as a disincentive to enter higher education.
- Students also face the risk of academic failure. Item C demonstrates that a student working during term time is likely to jeopardize their academic progress. In short, the more they must work for money the less likely they are to get a good degree.
- Item A shows that students from more privileged backgrounds tend to be concentrated in the most prestigious universities. Those who must work during term time, for this and other reasons, tend to be concentrated in the new universities (Item C). In some cases these may not be as well funded as universities like Oxford and Cambridge. The likelihood of larger classes and lack of cutting-edge equipment may mean that these students obtain a less satisfactory higher education than those attending the top universities.
- Item D demonstrates that it is much more difficult for students from the new universities to obtain good graduate employment than it is for students from Oxford. These are often the very students who, due to class background, have incurred the greatest financial burden, which may in consequence hang over them for many years. Moreover, the difficulty that they have in obtaining good positions may be exacerbated by their lack of effective social capital. Item D points out that employers are often looking for people who have travelled, had carefully selected work experience and are perhaps used to mixing and communicating with different types of people. These skills are also more likely to have been acquired by students from middle-class and/or private school backgrounds.

ACTIVITY 3: UNDERACHIEVEMENT AND CLASS

Teacher's note

This activity examines some of the factors that may help to explain why children from poor homes tend to underachieve in education. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 11, pp. 731–51. Students may like to link this activity to their study of poverty in Chapter 4.

1

We see from Item A that inadequate diet can adversely affect children's educational progress. The children pictured in Item D may live in overcrowded accommodation. They may have no access to garden areas where they can play. In their homes there may be a lack of toys and books. As they grow older they may be handicapped by a lack of suitable conditions in which to study. Poor neighbourhoods may lack facilities like parks, play areas, libraries and so on, and children may be left to play in polluted, dangerous streets.

2

We know that parental attitudes and encouragement are important to a child's educational progress. If parents lose their optimism and self-confidence, these attitudes will tend to be passed on to their children. Children brought up in these situations may lack self-esteem and ambition, and come to see school and education as irrelevant in their lives. Some may join anti-school peer groups. All these various factors will combine to produce progressive failure.

3 *Key points:*

- It is difficult to say whether material or cultural factors are more important in explaining low levels of achievement. The two interact with each other.
- Those sociologists who see parental attitudes and encouragement as the most important factors might cite the many examples of people who have come from poor homes yet have achieved a high educational standard and gone on to become influential figures in society.
- Other sociologists believe that material factors severely constrain what it is possible for parents to provide for their children. Poverty may force people to live in unsatisfactory accommodation, and may make it impossible for parents to provide an adequate diet or afford the educational advantages of trips out, holidays and newspapers.
- Also, material conditions may shape cultural attitudes, creating the poor self-image and feelings of resignation and powerlessness described in Item B.

4

This table on GCSE attainment clearly demonstrates the link between socio-economic position and children's educational success at GCSE. Almost three-quarters of the children of higher professionals obtained five or more A–C grades at GCSE, while for routine workers only one-third reached this level. The majority of their children were in the 1–4 A–C grade and five or more D–G grade categories. These children would be less likely to go on to 'A' levels and university education. Category 6 – other/non classified – included a high percentage of respondents who had neither parent in full-time employment. This would be the group most likely to experience poverty. Its members did worst of all.

5

The author of Item F takes the view that material factors are the prime determinant of educational success or failure. It could be implied from this that cultural explanations are largely a convenient excuse for society to avoid an unpalatable truth. The 'solution' to much educational failure would therefore become dependant upon massive redistribution of wealth and income. This is clearly not on the political agenda in Britain, at least for the foreseeable future.

ACTIVITY 4: GENDER AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Teacher's note

The relationship between gender and educational achievement is explored in this activity. It concentrates on the rapid improvement in the levels of education attained by girls over the last 30 years. Students will find Chapter 11, pp. 757–73, useful.

1 *Key points:*

- Item A shows that further education has expanded over time. In 1970/71 there were more males than females in further education. By 2001/02 the situation was reversed.
- At undergraduate level, there has also been a substantial increase in the numbers of students, both male and female. However, while in 1970/71 there were more male undergraduates than female, by 2001/02 there were more females than males studying at this level.
- Postgraduate education has also experienced an expansion, especially among female students. In 1970/71 there were more than three times as many full-time male postgraduates than female and five times as many part-time male students. By 2001/02 females equalled males in full-time postgraduate education and exceeded them in part-time postgraduate education. If we take the numbers of females in both higher and further education as a whole, their number exceeds the total numbers of males. A considerable amount of the expansion in higher and further education has therefore been to the advantage of young women.

2 *Key points:*

- In the early 1970s many girls still saw their main career in life as that of home and family, and so may have regarded staying on at school as a waste of time. They may also have been aware of a degree of

discrimination against them. Item B suggests that girls may have been encouraged to lower their sights and therefore underachieve. If Margaret had been a boy, the teacher might well have recommended extra study rather than downgrading her career aspirations.

- Since the 1970s the women's movement and feminism have helped to raise both women's self-esteem and their expectations. Feminists have challenged women's traditional roles and helped to improve women's rights in many areas of life. The underachievement of girls has been recognized, and schools have set in place mechanisms to encourage equal opportunities. For example, teaching material has been monitored to try to make it more 'girl friendly', and teachers have been encouraged to become more sensitive to gender stereotyping in classroom situations.
- Item C gives us a much more contemporary expression of girls' attitudes. For Melanie, a good career matters. In recent years, employment opportunities for women, especially in the service sector, have been growing. As a result, girls may feel more confident about their ability to earn their own living, especially since many have working mothers who provide positive role models. These factors may have provided more incentives for girls to gain qualifications.

3 *Key points:*

- It has been suggested that boys feel threatened and diminished by the growing success of girls in schools and in the labour market, and that some may react by downgrading education. They may maintain their self-esteem by rejecting education and joining a laddish culture which provides different ways of gaining status. Other boys may react by trying to exclude girls from areas of the curriculum which at present continue to be dominated by males, such as maths, physics and electronics. They may claim that these subjects have a higher status.
- Some feminists might argue that our recent concern with the school failure of some 'lads' is a chauvinistic response to girls' growing success in a society where the positions of power are still largely dominated by men. But the question of the success rates of different sexes is not a separate question from that of the success rate of different social classes. The two are intertwined. Working-class 'lads' still tend to 'fail' at school, as do working-class girls. Much of the expansion in higher and further education has been among the daughters of the middle classes. Stephen Byers seems then to be making a relevant point: if a laddish anti-learning culture leads to underachievement, then it should be challenged whether it is followed by lads or ladettes.

ACTIVITY 5: GENDER AND THE CURRICULUM

Teacher's note

This activity continues our discussion of the relationship between education and gender. In this case, attention is focused on gender divisions in subject choice. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 11, pp. 757–73.

1 *Key points:*

- Both boys and girls are now encouraged to study the full range of subjects at school, and in the National Curriculum maths, science and English are compulsory for all students up to age 16 in state schools.
- There continue to exist deeply held convictions among some members of society that boys and girls have different aptitudes and abilities and should be prepared for different adult roles.
- Some researchers into brain function have argued that boys are genetically endowed with a predisposition towards the sorts of cognitive skills required for subjects such as maths and engineering, while the female brain is more suited to subjects such as English and history which require linguistic skills. They argue that genetic differences help to explain why boys and girls tend to opt for different subjects when given a choice.
- An alternative view is that, due to early socialization, boys have more opportunity to develop certain skills than girls, and are encouraged by parents and teachers to think of themselves as competent in subjects such as maths and science. Sexist attitudes, like those of the teacher in Item B, still exist in schools and colleges, but one of the advantages of the National Curriculum is that teachers will get used to teaching maths and science to both boys and girls. This may lead to a reduction in such attitudes.

2

A qualification in certain subjects is often necessary for entry into particular professions and occupations. As Item D demonstrates, men still dominate in the subjects that lead to higher-status and better-paid occupations. Early choices may steer girls towards careers which tend to be of lower status and less well rewarded. Choice of subject and career may therefore have a lifelong effect on women's standards of living.

3 *Key points:*

- Within the English National Curriculum all children in state schools are taught science, English and maths until the age of 16. It is likely that, as more girls succeed at GCSE maths and science, more girls will recognize their abilities and continue to study these subjects to higher levels.
- Further, as more women spend substantial parts of their lives in full-time work, and increasing numbers head single-parent families, their need to pursue an independent career is increasingly recognized. Consequently, it is likely that more girls will enter previously male-dominated areas of study and work.
- If Item A is valid, then boys may continue to opt for science/maths subjects as more in keeping with the 'masculinity' they are developing. They may also be aware that subjects like computing are more likely to lead to high status and remunerative employment. The extent to which images of masculinity change in the future may of course affect subject choice.

ACTIVITY 6: ETHNICITY AND EDUCATION

Teacher's note

In this activity we examine the impact of ethnicity on educational achievement. Students will find it helpful to read Chapter 11, pp. 773–87.

1 (a)

Devante's experience must have been both deeply demoralizing and frightening. As a result of his treatment he was unable to concentrate on his work and was clearly showing signs of stress. For any young black, such an atmosphere would destroy their self-confidence and motivation.

(b)

The teachers seem to have 'turned a blind eye' to what was going on. It is difficult to believe that they failed to notice such blatant displays of racism. Although Devante does not accuse the teachers of racism, it seems that this is the most likely explanation for their response. Negative labelling by both teachers and pupils may well create a self-fulfilling prophecy and encourage pupils like Devante to completely reject school.

2 *Key points:*

- Item B suggests that the low educational performance of some ethnic minority groups can be explained by teacher expectations. If teachers feel that certain groups are less gifted academically, they will tend to select them for lower streams or sets and enter them for lower-level exams. Stereotyped attitudes are also demonstrated in the teachers' surprise at the success of black pupils.
- In Item C black pupils are stereotyped by teachers as potential troublemakers. By treating them differently, the predominantly white staff may actually create the trouble they fear by generating resentment. Furthermore, these negative views of the behaviour of Afro-Caribbean pupils become confused with their abilities. Keeping the higher-ability boys back because they are seen as troublemakers may generate a self-fulfilling prophecy. Bored by their undemanding work and resentful of their treatment, these Afro-Caribbean boys may become increasingly disruptive.

3 *Key points:*

- Item D demonstrates the differences in attainment of good GCSE passes between different ethnic groups. In the first column, we can see that the highest attainment group in 1988 was the white group, closely followed by the Indian. The lowest level of attainment was among Bangladeshis, followed by blacks.
- Between 1988 and 1997 all groups' attainments have risen, but the biggest improvement has been within the Indian group at 26 per cent, followed by the Bangladeshi and white groups at 19 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively. Pakistanis and blacks have made smaller gains. As a result, by 1997 the Indian group had overtaken the white group in achievement. At this date the lowest level of attainment was held jointly by blacks and Pakistanis at 28 per cent. But this level of attainment was still higher than that obtained by whites in 1988 and should therefore be regarded as an important advancement.
- This table gives no breakdown by gender. Research suggests there may be considerable differences between the achievements of girls and boys within ethnic groups. For example, H.S. Mirza has suggested that the achievements of black women are consistently underestimated.

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

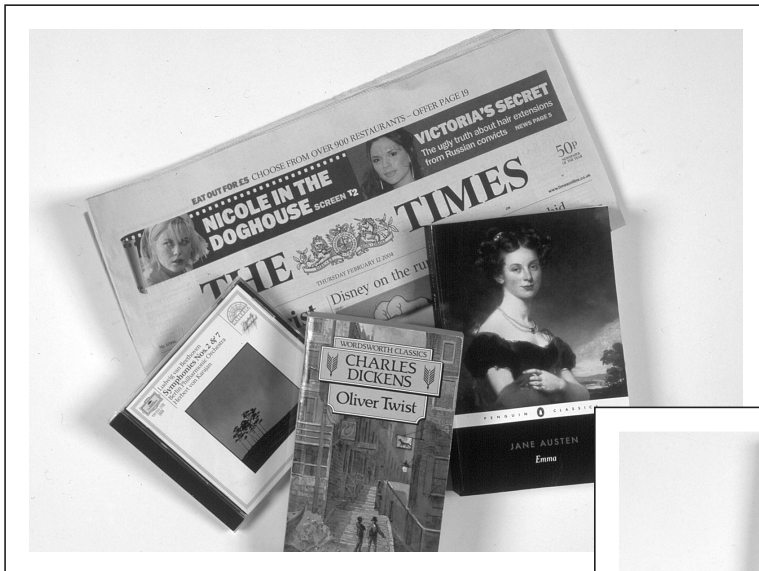## Activity 1: HIGH CULTURE, POPULAR CULTURE AND SOCIAL CLASS

ITEM A – HIGH CULTURE

Source: © Roger Scruton

ITEM B – LOW CULTURE/ POPULAR CULTURE

Source: © Roger Scruton

ITEM C – SOAPS

The humble soap opera has rescued individuals from isolation by acting as a virtual community and uniting a divided nation, a BBC executive argued last night.

He believes that characters and storylines from programmes such as EastEnders and Coronation Street cut across social boundaries to provide the 'sole remaining shared experience' available to the population.

The modern soaps like Brookside and EastEnders are more powerful than politics in influencing attitudes, he says. He believes that they are a power for good since 'they have become our virtual communities, doing more to knock down social and class barriers than any government could ever do. When they are good they unify the nation.'

He added: 'Governments come and go, politics change ... but soap provides the constant in our lives. They set out to reflect society but end up affecting, gently changing, the way we think about our lives and those around us. ... As real life communities and the family group have deconstructed, so our reliance on the virtual communities of soap has become more important in our lives.'

Source: adapted from J. Gibson and J. Hartley-Brewer, 'Soaps are now the "soul of the nation"', *Guardian*, 17 September 1999

QUESTIONS

1 (a) **How might sociologists define high culture, low culture and popular culture? Refer to Items A and B in your answer.**

(b) **Make a list of any other examples of high culture, low culture and popular culture that you can think of.**

2 **Is high culture inherently superior to popular culture? In the light of the Items, briefly consider this question.**

3 (a) **Making reference to Item C, explain how a functionalist might interpret the existence of popular culture.**

(b) **How might the views of a Marxist differ?**

Activity 2: GENDER IDENTITIES

ITEM A – NEW FEMALE IDENTITIES
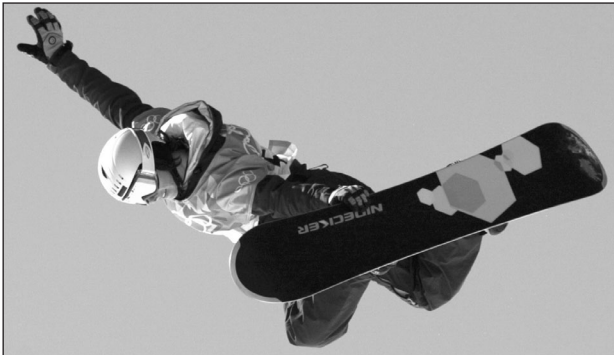
Source: PA Photos

Source: PA Photos

Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

ITEM B – NEW MALE IDENTITIES

Source: Getty Images

Source: Corbis

Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

ITEM C – HOUSEMAIDS

Three lean, mean and clean lads have come up with a novel way of making money. A newspaper ad reads 'Ladies – fed up with those everyday household chores? Now you can have your home professionally cleaned by your own male housemaid. Fully/semi-clothed.'

For £15 an hour, Don Russo, Nick Jones and Jay James will clean, cook, iron and polish, fully clothed in a suit or in a maid's outfit or whatever tickles your fancy …

For £22.50 an hour they will do the same while sporting nothing more than a G-string and frilly apron.

When a colleague mentioned that some frustrated women may be looking for hidden extras, Mr Russo gasped and said, 'Oh no, we are a straight commercial cleaning service and nothing else.'

Source: adapted from M. Kirby et al., 'John Bull's diary', 1996, in *Sociology in Perspective*, Heinemann, 1997

QUESTIONS

1 **'Men and women can now choose exactly who they want to be.' Evaluate this statement in the light of Items A, B and C.**

Activity 3: THE BODY

ITEM A – A PRETTY FACE

That jutting chin you fondly hope makes you look imposing. Those uneven teeth, that ski-jump nose you prefer to call 'Roman'. In fact, all those little flaws you've learned to live with are bad news, says American psychologist Dr Nancy Etcoff. They hold your career back. They make others reluctant to extend a helping hand. If you're in a criminal dock they make it more likely that you'll be sent down. Research even shows that mothers with less attractive babies are less attentive to them. It seems that beauty is one of the most powerful assets you can have. Good-looking children and students are routinely given better marks by teachers. One piece of research found that children in care were disproportionately likely to be unattractive. In the office environment, 'lookism' is a form of discrimination in the workplace. Good-looking men are more likely to be hired, get a higher salary and be promoted faster than unattractive men. As for women who are tactfully called 'homely', they are less likely to get jobs, less likely to earn a competitive salary and less likely to marry a man with resources and prospects.

Source: adapted from M. Lacery, 'The beautiful and the damned', *Independent on Sunday*, 14 March 1999

ITEM B – GOLDEN OLDIES

Source: Getty Images

ITEM C – THE MATSIGENKA PEOPLE

Douglas Yu and his colleagues have recently published research on the Matsigenka people. They live in a remote area of southeastern Peru and have had little contact with Western images of female beauty. Male members of the tribe were shown pictures of women with different body shapes. The Matsigenka men favoured the more 'rounded' female body, arguing that slim-waisted females looked skinny or pallid – and were perhaps recovering from a bout of diarrhoea!

The researchers then tested the perception of men who had once lived in the same area but had since moved to towns where television and advertising were common. These men preferred the slimmer female forms.

Source: adapted from M. Senior, 'With the body in mind', *Sociology Review*, vol. 8, April 1999

ITEM D – PROUD TO BE DIFFERENT

Source: Zed Nelson/Katz

QUESTIONS

1 **Using Items A to D, consider how far our appearance affects:**
   (a) **our identity**
   (b) **our life chances**

2 **Making some reference to the Items, briefly consider whether or not you think the use of cosmetic surgery is 'liberating'.**

Activity 4: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

ITEM A – LABELLING

Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labelling them as outsiders. From this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits, but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender'. The deviant is one to whom the label has successfully been applied; deviant behaviour is behaviour that people so label.

Source: quoted in H.S. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, Macmillan, 1993

ITEM B – ACCEPTING THE LABEL

The labelling of people as deviant will tend to mark them out. The label may indeed become a 'master status' which overrides all other statuses so that the individual is no longer seen as a parent, a friend or a worker, but as a mentally ill social deviant or a homosexual. Rejected by conventional society, they may embark on a deviant career, engage in further acts of deviance, and ultimately join an 'organized deviant group'. Public labelling may, in short, become a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby the person labelled as deviant not only commits further deviant acts but also eventually accepts the label.

Source: adapted from P. Taylor et al., *Sociology in Focus*, Causeway Press, 1996

ITEM C – SOCIALIZING THE BLIND

An example of how social reaction can shape people's experience of disability is provided by Scott's (1969) study of blindness. Psychological theory suggests that blindness produces particular personality characteristics like compliance and passivity. From his studies of the interactions between professionals and blind patients in the United States, Scott provides a rather different explanation. He maintains that the 'blind personality' is the product of a socialization process in which the experts emphasize the problems of the client's psychological adjustment to the loss of sight. Scott argues that blindness is a 'learned social role' whereby the blind come to accept the experts' view of who they are. In societies like Sweden where blindness is viewed as a technical handicap rather than as a loss, blind people are less likely to show evidence of the blind personality.

Source: adapted from S. Taylor, 'Beyond the medical model: the sociology of health and illness', *Sociology Review*, September 1994

ITEM D – WISING UP

New research by the fundraising charity Scope has found that disabled children have a very positive self-image and very similar aspirations to able-bodied children. They do not see limits to their lives; they want to be rich and famous, film stars and footballers.

A second piece of research by the Leonard Cheshire charity included the views of older people. It paints a very different picture, showing that disabled people remain the victims of prejudice and discrimination and that many become disillusioned. So great are the obstacles to full participation in society that the charity believes that the disabled should fall within the remit of the government's Social Exclusion Unit.

Source: adapted from H. Lacey, 'Just give us a chance', *Independent on Sunday*, 31 May 1998

ITEM E – BODY ART
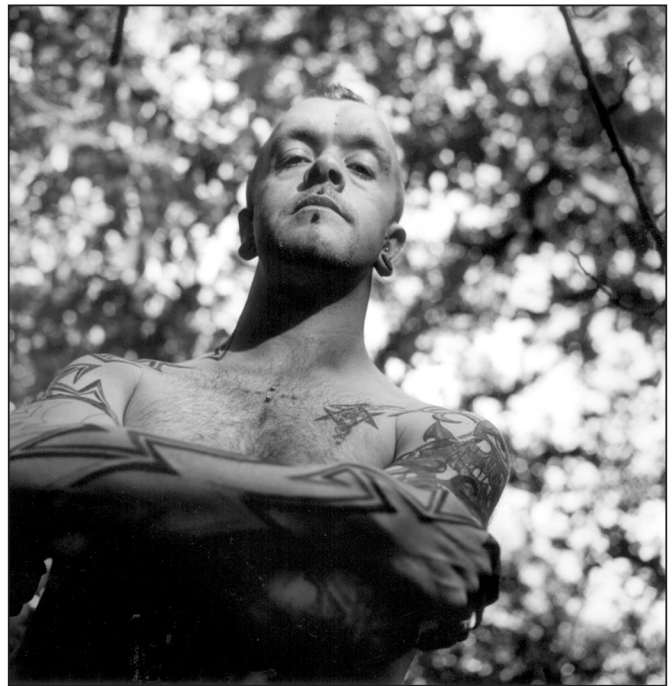
Source: Karen Robinson/*Observer*

QUESTIONS

1 **Drawing on Item A, discuss how the following acts can be interpreted in different ways in different social situations:**
   (a) **nudity**
   (b) **the taking of human life**
   (c) **drug taking**

2 **Making reference to Item B, briefly discuss how the following labels might affect a person's identity and behaviour:**
   (a) **alcoholic**
   (b) **fraudulent claimer of social security benefits**
   (c) **HIV positive**

3 **'Disability is more the result of how people are labelled than their physical limitations.' Examine this viewpoint in the light of Items C and D.**

4 **Use E. Goffman's concept of 'impression management' to comment on Item E.**

Activity 5: MIXED IDENTITIES

ITEM A – AYAAN HIRSI

Ayaan Hirsi, a 32-year-old Somali-born Muslim, has launched a stinging attack on Islam, a religion she has now rejected. From her adopted home in the Netherlands, she has savaged the cruelty and abuse she saw as meted out to many Muslim women in the West.

Calling Islam a 'backward religion', she claimed that Muslim men frequently indulge in domestic violence against women as well as incest and child abuse. She accused the Muslim community of covering up such practices.

She has received several death threats, apparently from extremist Muslims. Her criticisms of Islam carry weight as she herself underwent the 'cruel ritual' of female circumcision at age 5 and for much of her youth was kept veiled and locked indoors.

'If the West wants to help to modernize Islam it should invest in women, because they educate the children', she said. She would like to see Dutch law pursue male offenders more vigorously and an end to the practice of teaching immigrants in their own language. She would like the Dutch authorities to cease their contributions to the country's 700 Islamic clubs as she says they are 'run by deeply conservative men and perpetuate the segregation of women'.
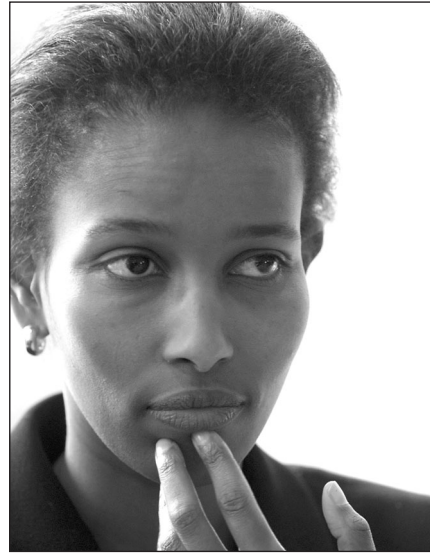
Source: PA Photos

Source: adapted from Andrew Osborn, 'She dared to criticize Islam. Now she is fleeing for her life', *Observer*, 10 November 2002

ITEM B – SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In 1991 the president of the USA nominated Clarence Thomas as a judge. Thomas was black but politically conservative. A public scandal arose when he was accused of sexual harassment by a black woman who was a former junior colleague.

Some blacks supported Thomas on racial grounds. Others supported him on sexual grounds. Black women were divided, depending on whether their identities as blacks or women prevailed. Black men were also split, depending on whether their sexism overrode their liberalism. White men were divided not only depending on their politics but also on how they identified themselves as to racism and sexism. Thomas was largely supported by white conservative women, partly on political grounds but also because they opposed feminism. White feminists, who tended to be liberal on race, opposed Thomas on sexual grounds. Because the woman was a junior employee at the time of the alleged incident, there were additional issues of social class.

Source: adapted from S. Hall et al. (eds) 'The question of identity', in *Modernity and Its Future*, Polity Press, 1992

ITEM C – BRITISH AND ASIAN

Source: Guzelian

QUESTIONS

1 **Making reference to Item A, briefly discuss the responses to Ayaan Hirsi's writing that you might expect from Dutch Muslims.**

2 **Using Item B, discuss which groups were more or less likely to support Thomas, giving reasons for your views.**

3 **Making reference to Item C, consider what symbolic markers are shown of hybrid identity.**

Activity 6: NATIONAL IDENTITY

ITEM A – THE JUBILEE

Source: PA Photos

ITEM B – WINNING THE RUGBY WORLD CUP

Source: Getty Images

ITEM C – BEING ENGLISH

The source of our identity has been made meaningless. England is no longer the preserve of the 'English'. The tradition and history associated with Englishness – fox hunting, the empire, the national anthem, the House of Lords – are either under threat or have disappeared. Moreover, our Englishness is further threatened by a European identity, itself an amalgam of countless other cultural identities.

Source: adapted from Ziauddin Sardar, 'Nothing left to belong to', *New Statesman*, 25 February 2002

ITEM D – THE NATIONAL FRONT

Source: Rex Features

QUESTIONS

1 **Using Items A and B, comment on Item C.**

2 **Using evidence from Item D and elsewhere, briefly consider the possible negative consequences of a strong sense of nationalism.**

Chapter 12: CULTURE AND IDENTITY – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: HIGH CULTURE, POPULAR CULTURE AND SOCIAL CLASS

Teacher's note

This activity looks at differences between high culture and popular culture. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 12, pp. 790–6.

1 (**a**) High culture is generally used to describe the activities of the higher classes, particularly those who are also members of the intelligentsia or educated elite. In contrast, the culture of the lower classes or masses is often described as low culture and seen as easily accessible and inferior. The examples in Item A assume that readers have a high degree of literacy and are interested in serious political and social events. Those in Item B could be described as more frivolous, providing easy entertainment for all.

Many sociologists prefer to use the term 'popular culture' rather than 'low culture', since 'popular' conveys the idea that it is open to all, without implying that it is necessarily inferior to high culture.

(**b**) Students may include a wide range of activities in their answers. The best lists will emphasize the value of creative and artistic achievements as part of high culture.

High culture	Low/popular culture
Classical music (e.g. Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert)	Popular music (e.g. Black Eyed Peas, Westlife)
Acclaimed literature (e.g. Shakespeare, Milton, Ibsen, Dickens)	Literature for mass audiences (Mills and Boon, romances, thrillers, detective novels)
Ballet, opera	Discos, karaoke, Soap operas (e.g. *Hollyoaks*, *EastEnders*)
Fine art (e.g. Rembrandt, Van Gogh)	Popular videos (e.g. Love Actually) Football

2 Absolutist views of culture assume that one form of cultural expression is inherently superior to another. However, some sociologists believe we must adopt a more relativistic viewpoint. Although popular culture may on the surface appear mundane, closer examination may lead us to discover deeper messages and meanings. In Item C, for example, it is argued that popular soaps have the power to shape our attitudes and behaviour. Such aspects of popular culture may then be deserving of the same academic scrutiny as more 'highbrow' activities. From a relativistic viewpoint, no one form of cultural expression is innately superior to another.

3 (**a**) Both Durkheim and Parsons believed it was important for a society to encourage the creation of a common culture shared by all its members. This would serve to unify society and prevent conflict. Item C suggests that television soap operas provide a 'shared experience' available to everyone, and that they serve to unify the nation by creating 'virtual communities'. From a functionalist viewpoint, popular culture such as soaps may thus be seen as performing a unifying and stabilizing role in society.

(**b**) While Marxists vary in their views, they argue that in capitalist societies the ruling class typically owns and controls the means of cultural production (newspapers, publishing houses, theatres, museums and so on). It therefore follows that its ideas, interests and tastes will circulate in society and become dominant. From a Marxist viewpoint, the culture of the ruling class is therefore little more than ruling-class ideology.

The different classes develop different cultures precisely because of their different conditions of material existence. However, the continuing existence of a mass culture benefits members of the ruling class in two ways. First, it benefits them financially, since they own and control the industries involved in cultural production and, of course, reap profits from the products promoted through advertising. Second, mass culture acts as a harmless diversion for the working class – a sort of modern-day 'opium of the people' – which militates against the development of class consciousness.

ACTIVITY 2: GENDER IDENTITIES

Teacher's note

This activity looks at gender issues of identity. There is no specific reading for it. Students may find it useful to read Chapter 12, pp. 818–31.

1 *Key points:*

· It has been suggested by some sociologists that in a postmodern society we are free to pick and mix our identities. Gender identities are therefore seen as flexible – individuals decide for themselves which gender roles they will choose. In Item A, we see women in a variety of non-traditional roles. Extreme sports, for example, have in the past tended to be the preserve of men, whom we have seen as risk takers. More women may now be participating in these and other active/dangerous activities as a lifestyle choice. In terms of work roles, we are starting to see women choose occupations within traditionally male dominated industries like construction. Lesbian lovers, while having existed largely behind closed doors in the past, may now be choosing to openly express a feminine love and forming families without the presence of a male partner.

· The expressions of maleness depicted in Item B can also be interpreted as showing greater flexibility and choice of role. Men are now able and willing to enter occupational areas like midwifery and child care with greater freedom from prejudice than in the past. Most do not choose to do this, but 'caring roles' are now seen as a legitimate choice among many alternatives for men. The man working out in the gym may be influenced by both 'traditional' and 'modern' views of male identity. Physical strength and endurance has long been seen as a 'macho' characteristic and highly prized, especially among men involved in heavy industries like shipbuilding. On the other hand, this man may be working out in order to improve his physical appearance. Looking muscular and fit may make a man feel more sexually attractive in 'postmodern' society, which has been seen as valuing form over content. This man may then be working towards an identity as a desirable partner. Lastly, the men who are having the pedicure may be adopting a male identity which includes the idea that being pampered in a beauty salon as well as having healthy, comfortable feet is an important part of personal grooming. They apparently have no qualms that their behaviour could be seen as 'sissy', which may have been the case in 'modern' society when masculinity was more tightly defined.

· In Item C, young men have chosen to adopt a traditional female role as cleaners. They do so either dressed in a suit or in more provocative outfits. This is a light-hearted account presented rather tongue-in-cheek and might be classed by some as 'postmodern irony'. What it does show is that young men are willing to present their semi-clad bodies to the 'female gaze' while the female clients seem quite happy to pay them to do so. These young men may see themselves as valued by women for their sexual allure rather than for the traditional male attributes of power and status. This represents a change in both how some men and how some women see themselves, at least at this particular point in their lives.

· Lastly, we must point out that not all sociologists would accept this idea of 'free choice' of roles and identities. Some sociologists believe that gender is largely learned and that we can never completely escape our early socialization. Girls and boys continue to be reared in different ways. Moreover, there has been recent emphasis on a degree of inevitability of gender difference in behaviour resulting from genetic and hormonal factors beyond our control. Belief in elements of biological determinism may actually encourage different gender rearing practices and so create a self-fulfilling prophecy. It may be that some people 'believe' that we are choosing different gender identities for ourselves, but this choice could itself be the result of early socialization.

ACTIVITY 3: THE BODY

Teacher's note

This activity encourages students to explore some of the issues surrounding their physical characteristics. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 12, pp. 818–31.

1 (**a**) *Key points:*

· A person's identity is the way that they see themselves. It is a social concept which develops through the medium of language as we take part in social life. At one level there is the inner self, the 'real you' that has hopes and dreams and often persists through life. For example, old people may say that they feel they are the same person they were at 18, only their outer shell has changed. At another level, there is a sense of identity based on our identification with a particular group. We may feel we are black or that we are female. Often these identities are ascribed at birth. There are, however, cases of people who are born female, for example, but 'feel' male. Their identification with men may be so strong that they feel they are trapped in a body that does not conform to who they really are.

· Our sense of identity develops as we reflect upon ourselves as we grow up and as we become aware of other people's reactions to us. C. Cooley has used the term 'looking glass' self to communicate the idea that to some extent at least we see ourselves as others see us. The attitude of other people within our culture to our bodies will therefore have an impact on how we think of ourselves. People who are told by others in words and actions that they are beautiful and desirable will come to believe it. Fatness in our society is generally seen as an undesirable trait and regarded as unattractive, possible implying that the person is self-indulgent or out of control. In a similar way people who are elderly may come to feel unattractive, worthless and stupid if this image of them is projected by others.

· While we do not all accept what others think of us, their views are hard to ignore. Since the body is the first characteristic of a person that others will experience it will have an immediate impact on their reactions. People who have disfigurements of one sort or another may find that people react to them in terms of their disfigurement and make negative judgements about their abilities based on prejudice. The extent to which people respond to our appearance may be brought home particularly forcefully if we are suddenly disfigured, e.g. following an accident.

· We could conclude then that our identity represents a balance between who we think we are and who others are willing to accept us as.

(**b**) The argument presented in Item A suggests that those who are considered beautiful are more likely to be successful. In the light of this, it is not surprising that people who are fat frequently complain that they are discriminated against. Similarly, many people with disabilities believe that employer prejudice rather than their physical limitations makes it difficult for them to find employment. Older people may also be the victims of discrimination. Elsewhere (Chapters 2 and 3), we have seen that gender and ethnicity are major factors in limiting people's life chances. We must therefore conclude that, overall, our physical characteristics have a far-reaching impact on our life chances.

2 *Key points:*

· Some feminists have argued that by modifying their bodies women are liberating themselves. Making reference to the previous answer, it may be that through conforming more closely to the socially constructed images of beauty they may achieve greater success both in the market place and in terms of attracting a mate. Radical means of changing the body could also be justified as bringing the body closer to inner identity, who we truly are. For example, the elderly women pictured, if given face lifts, might feel that their external selves matched more closely to their internal selves. Similarly, following an accident, a person might wish to be 'returned' to their previous appearance.

· An alternative view might be that by using such means as plastic surgery people are being encouraged to mutilate themselves in order to conform to images of beauty which are themselves socially constructed. The creation of a beauty industry could be seen as itself an aspect of patriarchic society used to oppress and control women.

· Selling anything from makeup to breast enlargement involves profit for the entrepreneur/business involved. Marxists might see the beauty industry as an example of the creation of false needs in order to generate profit.

ACTIVITY 4: THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

Teacher's note

This activity adopts the approach of symbolic interactionism. It explores the ways in which some theorists have explained how people adopt a social identity. Students will find appropriate reading in Chapter 12, pp. 818–31.

1 Students may think of many examples for discussion here, and may wish to widen the debate to include other cultures and societies.

(**a**) Becker makes the point that deviance is not a quality of an act but the result of that act being labelled by others. If people are naked in the privacy of their bedrooms, this is seen as quite normal. Nudity in a public place, on the other hand, may be interpreted in a variety of ways depending on the situation. Nude bathing on certain beaches is generally accepted, but if a man 'exposes himself' at a bus stop his behaviour will be interpreted as perverted and he may be prosecuted. 'Streakers' at sporting events may provoke a still different reaction. While they may be removed or arrested, their behaviour may be treated with amusement on the part of the crowd.

(**b**) War provides an example of a situation in which killing is generally regarded as legitimate and may be seen as noble and patriotic. Euthanasia and assisted suicide are also tolerated in some Western societies, since those involved are seen as acting from a sense of humanity. In contrast, a person who kills in the course of a bank robbery or rape will be labelled as evil and selfish and will be subject to punishment.

(**c**) How drug taking is interpreted will also depend to a large extent on the social situation. Taking antibiotics for a chest infection, or taking drugs on a long-term basis for certain disorders such as diabetes and epilepsy, is seen as legitimate use. Some groups in society may regard the recreational use of cocaine, ecstasy and marijuana as relatively harmless. Conversely, other groups, including members of the police and judiciary, may take the opposite view. Those people who conform to the popular stereotype of the 'drug addict' are likely to be generally condemned by society and may be labelled as a public menace.

2 (**a**) Alcoholics may initially see themselves as ordinary members of society who enjoy drinking. However, if their drinking leads other members of society to label them as 'alcoholic' then they may find that they are gradually excluded from mainstream society. They may cease to be invited to social functions, lose their jobs or be ousted from their families. In this case, they may come to accept the label of 'alcoholic' and embrace a new identity dominated by the use of alcohol.

(**b**) When people first claim benefits to which they are not entitled, they may excuse their behaviour in a number of ways – for example, they may see it as a legitimate way to care for their children or as an 'entitlement' after having paid taxes for a number of years. They may continue to see themselves as normal everyday citizens. However, if they are prosecuted and labelled by the courts and by the community as criminals, they may be forced to reassess their identity. If friends and family react to them in terms of this new label they may come to think of themselves as criminals. Excluded from mainstream society, they may resort to further criminal acts. In this case, the label of criminal has become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

(**c**) A person who is HIV positive is likely to have no outward signs of infection, and they may continue their everyday lives unimpeded by their diagnosis. But HIV is a stigmatizing condition which tends to evoke fear and condemnation from other members of society. If it becomes necessary for HIV sufferers to reveal their status they will tend to be labelled in terms of it. They may find themselves excluded from their usual social contacts and seen only in terms of their diagnosis. They may gradually accept an identity as a social pariah and seek out the company of other HIV sufferers with whom they can feel accepted.

3 *Key points:*

· Both Items seem to lend support to the view that many of the problems of people with disabilities result from other people's reactions to their disabilities.

· Item D compares young people with disabilities with older people with disabilities. While the young still have a very positive sense of self and aspire to a successful future, it appears that, for the older people, interaction with 'normal' society has resulted in their losing many of their aspirations.

· Item A illustrates the mechanisms by which this loss may take place.

Scott's research suggests that the blind, along with other groups with disabilities, learn to limit their horizons and accept a disabling identity as a result of their interactions with both professionals and the public.

· In conclusion, it is important to remind ourselves that it can be dangerous to adopt an 'over-socialized' view of people. There exist many people with disabilities who do not accept a disabling identity, have a positive self-image and fully participate in society.

4 Goffman has highlighted the way in which individuals may take the initiative in presenting a chosen identity to others. He has argued that we are involved in a series of performances in our lives wherein we engage in 'impression management'. The person depicted has chosen to change his appearance with tattoos and piercings. These give signals to others about the sort of person he is. For example, people may interpret his appearance as indicating a person who is strongly identified with a group of rebellious young people. As a result of this interpretation, people adjust their responses to him. For example, older conventional people may find him a rather intimidating figure. Since he has chosen to change his body in this way, he has 'made a stand' on who he is. Interactionists believe that our identity may change over time. It could be then in years to come this individual no longer feels that his tattoos express either the person he really is or the person he wants to be taken as by others. At this point he may seek to have his tattoos removed.

ACTIVITY 5: MIXED IDENTITIES

Teacher's note

This Activity explores mixed identities.

1 There might be a wide range of responses from Muslims. The Item points out that Ayaan Hirsi has already had death threats, presumably from extremists. More moderate Muslims might be worried by these threats and their implied questioning of freedom of speech. They might also be concerned that these threats could lead to a backlash from whites against all Muslims. Women Muslims may have more or less sympathy with her views, depending on how traditional they are in their beliefs.

2 *Key points:*

· Similar questions of identity arise in the case of Clarence Thomas. People in the USA have loyalty to their class, their ethnic group, their gender and their political beliefs and so on.

· It therefore seems that the most likely people to support Thomas would be other black conservative men. They would be aware that having a black man selected for the Supreme Court would tend to raise the status and power of black people in general. They might dismiss the 'harassment' as little more than harmless flirtation.

· Black women might support Thomas on the basis of race, but if they believed the allegations they might feel that his actions barred him from such high office.

· White men may also have been divided in their loyalty. The more liberal would have endorsed the promotion of a black man, but they may have found Thomas's politics unacceptable. Moreover, they might be more likely to accept the feminist view that sexual harassment is a serious offence. Conservative white men may have been hostile to Thomas's promotion on the basis of his race, but sympathetic to his sexism and conservatism.

· White conservative women may have been reluctant to accept a black judge, but may have supported him because of his conservative politics and opposition to feminism. White liberal women would be more likely to be critical of Thomas for his conservative views and alleged sexism. However, at the same time some may have felt a responsibility to support Thomas because his appointment represented a significant promotion for a member of a minority group.

3 *Key points:*

· Many sociologists have argued that with the influence of global media and markets, and the movement of people, the boundaries between cultures have become blurred. Many more people may have come to see themselves as possessing merged or hybrid identities. In Item C, an elderly Asian man continues to wear part of his traditional costume but now wears a Western sweater, coat and carries an umbrella. This choice of clothes can be regarded as a symbolic marker of his identity – part Asian and part Western. Moreover, he has kept his traditional facial hair and by his expression appears to be looking disapprovingly towards a young Asian drinking alcohol from a can. He therefore appears to have kept many of his traditional Muslim beliefs.

· Which aspect of his identity – his Britishness or Asian origins – comes to the fore, may depend upon the situation. If, for example, there were a debate concerning old age pensions he might feel thoroughly British and his age may be more important than his origins. On the other hand, in any discussion on immigration, his membership of an ethnic minority might be the key factor in influencing his attitudes.

· It is worth noting that while we have choice about certain aspects of our identity (e.g. style of clothes and religion), others are more difficult to change. For example, this man has no choice about his age, sex and skin colour.

ACTIVITY 6: NATIONAL IDENTITY

Teacher's note

This Activity looks at national identity. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 12, pp. 818–31.

1 *Key points:*

· Item C seems to present a rather exclusive view of nationalism. It suggests that England is no longer the preserve of the English, seeming to imply an unwillingness to accept 'foreigners' (e.g. ethnic minorities) as truly English. Some people would empathize with this view and possibly regret the passing of various English traditions like fox hunting and the empire. However, while a national sense of identity relies to some extent on a belief in a shared past, others might argue that there continues to exist many potent symbols of national identity which can be shared by all groups. For example, the jubilee celebrations attempted to be inclusive of all social groups. Moreover, everyday symbols of Britishness are all around us – in our common currency, in our British press and weather forecasts, at sporting events or in the way that politicians talk about 'the nation' and 'us'.

· In recent years there has been a growth of nationalist feeling in Scotland and Wales, culminating in the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly. Some fear that this represents the start of a break-up of Britain. Others feel that it provides the opportunity to express more local feeling of nationalism. As we can see in Item B, the English flag is now becoming increasingly seen, especially at sporting events.

· The author of Item C fears the influence of Europe on our national identity. Others believe that we can still maintain a strong sense of nationhood through our distinctively British customs, rituals and symbols and that we should welcome a breakdown in an insular 'little Englander' mentality.

2 Some people who see themselves as intensely nationalistic may also display a hatred of foreigners or ethnic groups, whom they see as outsiders. Some extremist parties have used British symbols like the Union Jack to symbolize not an inclusive Britain, but one that wants rid of anyone who might be defined as different. This type of nationalism can be destabilizing and dangerous. For example, such minority movements can lead to cases of violent attack. In turn, the minority groups attacked may feel fearful and harbour resentments, leading to a defensive backlash from them. In the longer term, if extremist parties gain political power, situations can arise where 'ethnic cleansing' takes place under the banner of nationalism (e.g. Nazi Germany, Serbia).

COMMUNICATION AND THE MEDIA

Activity 1: ROYALS AND THE MEDIA

ITEM A – POSITIVE IMAGES

Source: Rex Features

Source: PA Photos

Source: Rex Features

Source: Radio Times/Cecil Beaton

ITEM B – CRITICAL IMAGES

Source: John Frost Newspapers

QUESTIONS

1 'The Royal Family plays a crucial role in the creation of national identity.'
Comment on this statement in the light of Item A.

2 Assess the extent to which Items A and B support:

(a) a Marxist hegemonic model of the media

(b) a pluralist model of the media.

Activity 2: MEDIA VIOLENCE

ITEM A – AN EXPERIMENT

Albert Bandura designed an experiment to examine the effects of observing violence in a group of nursery school children. The experimental group first watched an adult punching, kicking and using a mallet to hit a bobo doll [an inflatable rubber doll]. This group of children, along with a control group which had not seen the violence, were then subjected to a frustrating experience. They were led to believe that they could play with an exciting range of toys but instead were taken individually to a room containing boring toys together with the bobo doll and a mallet. As Bandura expected, those children who had previously seen the bobo doll being abused were more likely to imitate this behaviour and show aggression towards the doll.

Source: adapted from R.O. Gross, *Psychology*, Arnold, 1987

ITEM C – COMPUTER GAMES

John Naisbit's latest book High Tech, High Touch describes the effect that interactive computer games are having on our children. About 65 per cent of American homes now possess such games and nearly half the players are under 18 years old. The terrifying point is that children have an appetite for the most violent of games, which account for 70 per cent of the market and are being promoted with such slogans as 'more fun than killing your neighbour's cat'.

In 1998 an advertisement appeared in a children's magazine promoting a game called 'Vigilance'. It encouraged players aged 13 and over to 'put your violent nature to good use'. The advertisement was illustrated by a boy's jeans-clad legs, the barrel of a shotgun at his side and two dead classmates at his feet. The latest of games feature rape, torture and mass killing. By the time the player reaches the highest level of the game, 'Carmageddon', they will have run over and killed 33,000 pedestrians. These games give children the sensation of being active killers. Soon, players will feel the recoil of a gun, the impact of a punch or the dripping of a victim's blood and hear the screams of pain and terror as the child 'kills' hundreds of people.

While children are being programmed as killing machines, soldiers are now being trained through electronic war games which provide high-tech simulation training and conditioning. Laser engagement systems in which blank shots trigger laser pulses on soldiers' vests have spawned children's games such as 'Laser Tag'. Its derivative 'Paintball' was used by the schoolboy killers at Columbine High School, Littleton, Colorado, as training for their attack earlier this year. They were not alone. After a previous school shooting at Paducah, Kentucky, in 1998, it was revealed that the 14-year-old killer had fired with robotic accuracy because he had had so much practice through video games that had programmed him to shoot people.

Source: abridged from M. Phillips, 'They can program your child to be a killer', *Sunday Times*, 28 November 1999

ITEM B – THE CASE OF ST HELENA

The recent arrival of television on one of the most remote islands in the world suggests that watching television does not make children violent, a study claims.

St Helena, in the South Atlantic, received television for the first time three years ago. Children there, whose behaviour has been monitored since then, show no signs of copying violence or altering their conduct.

Tony Charlton, who has been carrying out the study, said, 'The argument that watching violence on television turns youngsters to violence is not borne out, and this study on St Helena is the clearest proof yet. The children have been watching the same amount of violence, and in many cases the same programmes, as British children. But they have not gone out and copied what they have seen on TV ... On St Helena, families tend to watch TV together. Parents take an interest in what children are watching and programmes are discussed afterwards. Parents also exercise control and stop children seeing some of the more violent programmes which they consider inappropriate. Stability and communal interest in what's on television appear to strongly influence behaviour.'

Source: adapted from C. Midgeley, 'TV violence has little impact on children, study finds', *The Times*, 12 January 1998

ITEM D – VIOLENCE AND VIDEO NASTIES

In 1993 two 10-year-old children (Jon Thompson and Robert Venables) murdered the toddler Jamie Bulger. Many newspapers at the time argued that there was a direct link between the video 'Child's Play 3' and the murder.

To claim that only some indisputable proof of causal link could justify the curtailing of 'freedom of experience' is an evasion of an obvious truth: a society that accepts vividly enacted brutality is ipso facto [actually] making such acts conceivable, and even encouraging the belief that they are commonplace. This is not a matter of proof; it is self-evident.
(*The Times*, 26 November 1993)

Our gut tells us that they must have seen the evil doll Chucky. They must have loved the film. And they must have seen it over and over again, because some of the things they did are almost exact copies of the screenplay. We all know that violence begets violence.
(*Mirror*, 1 December 1993)

In fact, senior police officers at the time agreed that there was no evidence that either of the children had ever seen the video. Venables's favourite film was The Gooneys, a Spielberg fantasy, while Thompson preferred Bugs Bunny.

Source: adapted from J. Petley, 'In defence of "video nasties"', *British Journalism Review*, vol. 5, no. 3, 1994

QUESTIONS

1 **Do you consider that the research evidence of Items A and B can provide a useful basis for making social policy decisions? Give reasons for your answer.**

2 **Making reference to Item C, consider why interactive video games are seen as a particularly dangerous influence on children.**

3 **Do the views expressed in Items C and D amount to a moral panic?**

Activity 3: MEDIA AND POSTMODERNISM

ITEM A – TELEVISION

'In one hour's television viewing, one of us is likely to experience more images than a member of a non-industrial society would in a lifetime' (Lacey, 2002).

Source: M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Harper Collins, 2004

ITEM B – MOVIE FAVOURITES

Source: Roger Scruton

ITEM C – PRINCESS DIANA

At the end of the day, perhaps it is the television set that presents an even more obvious motive for Diana's presence in the everyday life of Australian living rooms? People talk about Charles and Di and Wills and Harry and Dodi as if they were personal friends, as if we own them – a common recurrence in the global village, where we are better acquainted with Cindy and Cher ... than neighbours or relatives ... Intimacy then has become a virtual intimacy, tied to a particular mode of looking. From the familiar spaces of our homes, we can witness a star performance on a global scale.

Meanwhile, we exercise the skills of 'knowing' – the textual practices of reading the screen that ensures legitimate membership in late twentieth-century spectatorship ... At home, with television, we find our 'connection' to Diana is assured.

Source: J. Durez and C. Johnson, 'Mourning at a distance', quoted in A. Kear and D.L. Steinberg (eds)
Mourning Diana: Nation, Culture and the Performance of Grief, Routledge, 1999

ITEM D – DIANA MOURNED

In the Philippines, hundreds of Filipinos queued at the British Embassy in Manila to take flowers for Diana, whose funeral was broadcast live around the globe.

Source: Erik de Castro/Popperfoto/Reuters

ITEM E – STRINATI

The postmodern world involves confusion of time and space. The maps of the places where we live, and our ideas about 'the times' in which we organize our lives, have become subject to distortion and confusion. Through the medium of television, we can be present at a worldwide BandAid concert, or in the Middle East, or at the release of Nelson Mandela. Previously unified ideas about space and time have become less stable and comprehensive, more confused, more incoherent and more disunified.

Source: adapted from D. Strinati, 'Postmodernism and popular culture', *Sociology Review*, vol. 1, no. 4, April 1992

QUESTIONS

1 **Read Item A. Make a list, individually or in groups, of all the locations in time and space referred to in your TV viewing yesterday.**

2 **'Postmodern culture is a culture sans frontières, outside history' (Strinati, 1992). Comment on this statement in the light of the Items presented.**

Activity 4: SEXY LADIES

ITEM A – 'NEWSGIRLS'

More women in the newsroom cannot be regarded necessarily as a significant step forward on the road to equality ... Rather than seeing women news professionals as exemplifying the new (higher) status of women in public domains, it is possible to detect an altogether more cynical rationale underlying their employment; that is, that women (in television news at least) make news more human, more watchable, and they improve ratings ... The issue of fanciability for newsreaders ... now forms the focus of much public debate ... Newswomen are caught in a double bind: they are viewed as sexual objects even when engaging in the serious business of news reporting and at the same time they are criticized for trivializing the news because they are too decorative and can distract from the content of their words.

Source: K. Ross, 'Selling women (down the river)', quoted in E.R. Meehan and E. Riordon (eds) *The Political Economy of Broadcast News*, University of Minnesota Press, 2002

ITEM B – VIDEO GAMES

According to Eugene Provenzo in *Video Kids* (1991), strictly limited roles for both males and females are available in video games. After analysis of a number of these games he concludes that women are generally portrayed in passive roles and they are usually anonymous. Games are generally macho in orientation with both males and females depicted as young and physically ideal.

Source: adapted from M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology Themes and Perspectives*, Harper Collins, 2004
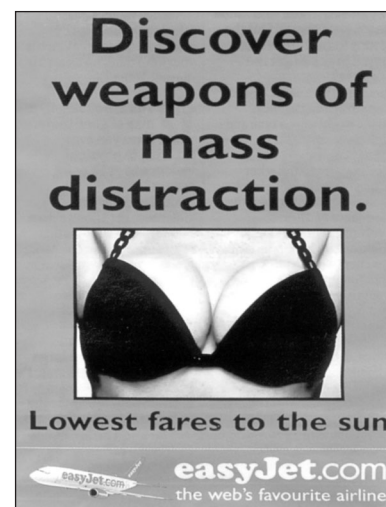
ITEM C – WOMEN IN SPORT

Anna Kournikova

Source: Rex Features

ITEM D – WOMEN IN ADVERTISING

Source: Advertising Archives

ITEM E – PORN ONLINE

Online illegal adult porn attracts little attention from the police or government. Not one person has been sent to prison in Britain for adult cyberporn offences. Amongst men, its use is extensive – one study recorded 98 million visits to five free porn sites per month.

One frequent user said, 'I can't see how anyone would have a problem with something you do in your bedroom'. The degrading situations in which women appear now seem only to attract criticism from the margins of feminist debate and from distressed Christians reminding us of sin. The emotional effects of porn have been largely forgotten.

Experiments carried out on 'normal' men by Edward Donnerstein, reported that 'on the first day, when they see women raped and aggressed against, it bothers them. By day five, it does not bother them at all. In fact, they enjoy it.' Before long they got the feeling that women were to blame for being raped, and actually quite liked it. Even porn that wasn't violent made men feel aggressive towards women.

Nine out of ten children aged 8 to 16 have seen pornography on the Internet. They don't even have to be looking for it. Try 'Black Hole' for science homework and you come up with close up shots of black women's vaginas.

Source: adapted from D. Aitkenhead, 'Net porn', *Observer*, 30 March 2003

QUESTIONS

1 Making some reference to Items A, B and C, consider how far the media reflects women's true position in society.

2 Look at Item D. From a Marxist perspective, discuss how images of women are manipulated.

3 Consider the possible social effects of sexually explicit images appearing on the Internet (Item E).

Activity 5: BIAS AND THE MEDIA

ITEM A – THE IRAQ WAR 2003

Source:
www.cartoonstock.com

Source:
www.cartoonstock.com

ITEM B – SHORTAGE IN *NINETEEN EIGHT-FOUR*

This Item is taken from George Orwell's fictitious account of life in 1984. The announcement from the Ministry of Plenty on the telescreen provides misinformation and no one seems to notice.

Attention Comrades! We have glorious news for you. Returns now completed of the output of all classes of consumption show that the standard of living has risen by no less then twenty per cent over the past year.

It appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grams a week. And only yesterday, Winston reflected, it had been announced that the ration was to be reduced to twenty grams a week. Was it possible that they would swallow that, after only 24 hours. Yes, they swallowed it. Was he, then, alone in the possession of a memory?

Source: George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Secker and Warburg, 1949

ITEM C – *NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR* AND NEWSPEAK

Winston talks to his comrade Syme. They both work in the Ministry of Truth, where they spend their time doctoring the news, entertainment, education and the fine arts in line with the dictates of the Party. Syme's particular job is to change the language from Oldspeak to Newspeak, a process which involves the ongoing destruction of thousands of words. He talks enthusiastically to Winston about his progress on the 11th edition of the Dictionary.

'Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end, we shall make thought crime literally impossible, because there will be no words to express it. Every year, fewer and fewer words, and the range of consciousness always a little smaller. How could you have a slogan like "Freedom is slavery" when the concept of freedom has been abolished? The whole climate of thought will be different. In fact, there will be no thought, as we understand it now. Orthodoxy means not thinking – not needing to think. Orthodoxy is unconsciousness.'

Source: abridged from George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Secker and Warburg, 1949

ITEM D – ULTIMATE CONTROL

Newspeak is the extreme example of the powerful becoming the mind managers of the powerless, the ultimate conspiracy of control from above of the many by the few.

Source: quoted in J. Eldridge (ed.) Glasgow University Media Group, *Getting the Message*, Routledge, 1993

QUESTIONS

1 (a) **What is the message contained in the images in Item A?**

   (b) **Is it socially responsible to publish them in time of war?**

2 **Making some reference to Items B, C and D, comment on the dangers inherent in government regulation of the media.**

Chapter 13: COMMUNICATION AND THE MEDIA – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: ROYALS AND THE MEDIA

Teacher's note

In this activity media images of the royal family are used to explore their role in the creation of national identity, and the extent to which their media presentation conforms to a Marxist or a pluralist view of the media. Students should read Chapter 13, pp. 834–43.

1 *Key points:*

· Nations are, to some extent, artificial constructions. They generally include people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds, different regions, different religions and different social classes. If they are to develop a sense of national identity, then they must develop a shared sense of belonging. It can be argued that the British royal family has played a central role in the creation of our sense of Britishness.

· As the head of state, the queen symbolizes national unity. Item A demonstrates some of the unifying roles that the queen plays. At the state opening of parliament she stands at the head of the British government and British society. She presides over important national and religious events. She was present for the celebration of the new millennium, standing side by side with the prime minister.

· The crown, orb and sceptre are symbols of our history and tradition. The Union Jacks demonstrate the extent to which the royal family and nationalism are linked.

· The queen's symbolic and ritualistic role is supported by the media. She stands above the day-to-day disputes of party politics. Most media reports are deferential and show the queen in a favourable light, emphasizing her service to the nation, her dedication to duty and her selflessness, rather then focusing on her membership of a wealthy and privileged elite.

2 (a)

According to the Marxist hegemonic model, the ruling class protect their economic interests through their control of the cultural life of the nation – through institutions like the family, education and the mass media. The mass media is owned and controlled by a relatively small group of people who, as part of the capitalist class, have an interest in maintaining the status quo. They therefore promote positive media images of the royal family (Item A) and stress that our society has prospered on its acceptance of tradition, private wealth and inherited privilege. The concentration of ownership of the media means that few people have the opportunity to consider radical alternatives to our present social structure. For example, there is little coverage in the press of the advantages of a republican Britain. To Marxists, the negative images of royalty portrayed in Item B might be seen as a 'sop' to our notions of freedom of speech. They may serve to give the false impression that the press represents all shades of opinion in the country. Such negative coverage is rare and can be seen as representing a safety valve rather than any serious challenge to prevailing ideology.

(b)

Unlike Marxists, pluralists do not see the media as narrowly ideological. For them, society is made up of a number of interest groups whose views are reflected in the media. Market forces ensure that the media provide the public with what they wish to buy. Therefore, the media is characterized by diversity and choice. This is demonstrated by the different viewpoints shown in Items A and B. Pluralists would argue that the publication of critical images ensures that all points of view are reflected, and that the fact that the majority of the coverage of the queen and the royal family is positive simply reflects their enduring popularity.

ACTIVITY 2: MEDIA VIOLENCE

Teacher's note

This activity examines images of violence in the media and the possible effect that they may have on their audience. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 13, p. 863.

1 *Key points:*

· Item A describes a controlled 'laboratory' experiment. Laboratory experiments are often described as artificial, since people are not used to being monitored and observed by scientists, and they may behave differently from normal as a result. Further, the researchers have no way of knowing what has happened to the subjects immediately prior to the experiment. It could be, for example, that they had been exposed to a real act of violence. While the experimental method can be used to produce reliable data in the physical sciences, it is a less appropriate research tool in the social sciences. For this reason, many people would be hesitant about using such research findings to direct social policy decisions.

· Item B describes a piece of research conducted in a real-life situation, and would therefore seem to provide more reliable information than the experiment described in Item A. In addition, its longitudinal design means that the researchers will have been able to monitor the processes at work. It would appear that research of this sort provides a more reliable basis for influencing social policy.

2

Many of the games are extremely violent and, although they have a recommended age, it may well be that younger children are playing them. The games themselves are vivid and dramatic, and they are often played in isolation. Children may well be alone in their bedrooms, totally absorbed in the game and oblivious to anything else around them. Also, many video games are designed so that children must move on to higher levels in order to complete the game. Because of these factors some people believe the games to be addictive. Item C points out that the military use electronic war games to train soldiers to be effective killers, and that violent interactive games may also have the same effect on children. The concern surrounding the growing popularity of violent video games may mean that, in the future, research funds are directed towards detailed study of their likely effects on behaviour.

3 *Key points:*

· There is a degree of moral panic in Item C. The fact that the schoolboy killers had played violent interactive video games in no way provides evidence of any causal link. It may be that very many other teenagers had played these same games but had not become killers. The outrage against interactive video games may reflect their relative newness. When television was first widely available it was criticized for creating violence among young people, as indeed were the 'penny dreadful' magazines of the late nineteenth century.

· Again, in Item D there is a degree of moral panic against 'video nasties'. Despite the lack of evidence, the link between exposure to violent images and violence itself is assumed in both newspapers to be self-evident. It seems that violent videos have become a convenient scapegoat providing an explanation for apparently senseless behaviour. Thus, a simple explanation is provided for complex behaviour while diverting our attention away from the need to consider other negative aspects of our society, which might have a causal link to violent behaviour.

ACTIVITY 3: MEDIA AND POSTMODERNISM

Teacher's note

This activity introduces students to some of the ideas of postmodernism, particularly the impact of a globalized media. Students should read Chapter 13, pp. 848–949.

1

Students may choose to make a list either individually or in groups. The list is likely to demonstrate a wide variety of destinations. News programmes, in particular, provide an ideal example of this.

2 *Key points:*

- The point of Strinati's statement is that popular culture is without limits in terms of space and time. As we can see from Item A, in a short period of time a person may be transported to far-off parts of the globe, even outer space, and whisked from one historical period to another. Similarly, the funeral of Princess Diana was broadcast worldwide – through the media she had come to be a significant figure in the lives of people who had no connection with her.
- The confusion and incoherence to which Strinati refers may be encouraged by the sorts of films and videos presented in Item B. In *Terminator 3* the characters come back from the future and affect the present, while in *Vanilla Sky* Tom Cruise lives in a virtual afterlife. The other movies project similarly confused ideas of space and time. In this way, our sense of the past as being complete and undisputed is challenged. The linear line of history is broken.
- Bombarded with images from the past and the future, we are no longer as firmly rooted in the present. As Strinati points out, our sense of time becomes blurred and unstable. Likewise, we flash via the media from one place to another. Such disruption to reality may divorce people from their own lives and erode their sense of identity while providing them with only a superficial and simplistic view of the lives of others, past and present.

ACTIVITY 4: SEXY LADIES

Teacher's note

This activity looks at some of the ways in which women are typically presented in the media. Students will find appropriate reading in Chapter 13, pp. 849–62.

1 *Key points:*

- During the last thirty years women's position in society has changed quite considerably. Many women are now heading households, more women are in full- and part-time employment and more women are working in traditionally masculine areas of employment.
- Item A shows that women are now significantly represented as newsreaders, previously an area of the media dominated by men. However, the Item proposes that there is still a tendency to view them in traditional stereotypical ways – largely as decorative objects rather than as serious professional journalists.
- In Item B we see that, in video games, women continue generally to be portrayed as passive, subordinate and physically attractive. Such video games are regularly played by children and so may promote such stereotypes among young people. It is worth noting here the success of 'Tomb Raider', featuring Lara Croft. The film and video portray a young woman who is far from submissive but who still sports a physique with breasts of unlikely proportions – perhaps pandering to a male gaze.
- Item C depicts a well-known female tennis player. Although this young woman has reached a high level of competence in her sport, she is still shown in sexually titillating positions. Clearly, the viewer is invited to see her sexual allure as more noteworthy than her expertise on the court.
- These Items tend to promote an impression that women are valued only for their good looks and charms. They tend to be seen as forever young, attractive and as accessories to men.

2 *Key points:*

- Marxists argue that the ruling class help to make their position secure by promoting their ideas, which become the ruling ideas.
- Adverts, in particular, demonstrate this fact. They are used by the capitalist class to promote a desire to acquire material goods and services that generate profit.
- In Item D an airflight ticket is linked with a sexual image of a woman. By using this image the product becomes associated with positive thoughts, feelings and desires which help to sell the product. This association is found in a wide range of adverts – from selling cars to selling chocolates.

3 *Key points:*

- Views on the effects of sexually explicit images on the Internet are diverse.
- For some, its function may be cathartic, avoiding more destructive ways of releasing energies and emotions.
- It can even be argued that the more mild images are educational and informative for some people.
- Other commentators who see the media as used largely for self-gratification might argue it is acceptable in acting as an aid to sexual practices like masturbation. It may be little more than a pastime, but for some viewers it may replace real social relationships.
- Item E points out that pornographic material may have a serious negative impact through desensitizing viewers to violence against women. Feminists may argue such material demeans and objectifies women and encourages rape.
- Long-term exposure to such material may also influence the viewers' understanding of the real world. The Item points out that it is sometimes viewed by children, who may have a less sophisticated attitude to interpreting material and so view demeaning acts as 'normal' adult sexual behaviour.
- The effect on the viewer may vary according to their personal interpretation of it and the views of others with whom they may discuss the experience. However, we must remember that whether we are talking about fairly innocuous sexual acts at one end of the spectrum or hard porn at the other, will obviously shape peoples' views as to its effects.

ACTIVITY 5: BIAS AND THE MEDIA

Teacher's note

This activity explores media bias in war reporting, and some of the dangers to democracy of political control of the media. Students should read Chapter 13, pp. 839–43.

1 (a)

These images are critical of the involvement of Britain and the USA in a war against Iraq. They bring to mind that war involves death and destruction.

(b)

At times of war the people in a country are urged to support their government and troops. Many people feel that it is their duty to do this and that critical material should be censored. They would argue that such material would dispirit the troops and give greater resolve to the enemy. Moreover, such people may go further and justify biased reporting of the conflict as a way of confusing the enemy while maintaining morale at home. They may believe that by publishing misinformation the enemy will be misled and demoralized and so the conflict will be brought to a speedier conclusion, saving lives for both sides.

An alternative viewpoint is that in a democracy all shades of opinion should be heard. This particular war was surrounded by controversy and many people in Britain took part in marches protesting against it. Anti-war supporters might argue that the publication of such images would have a negligible affect on its outcome since it involved a 'David and Goliath' struggle where the final success of the allies was a foregone conclusion.

2 *Key points:*

- If governments control the media then they have the power to control what information reaches the population. As we see demonstrated in Item B, a government could use its monopoly of the media to persuade the public that life was improving when, in fact, it was not. In the totalitarian society of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, control through the media has come to encompass control of language and thought. As Item D says, this is an extreme example of control from above, the 'powerful becoming the mind managers of the powerless'.
- In a democratic society, government is by the people and for the people. People need to have access to the full range of information if they are to make effective choices between competing policies and political parties. Therefore, there must be open government with freedom of information. The sort of control of information and thought described in Items B, C, and D is clearly incompatible with democratic society.

METHODOLOGY

Activity 1: SUICIDE

ITEM A – HEAVEN'S GATE

'We couldn't be happier,' said one member of the Heaven's Gate video farewell. 'There's nothing on this planet for me.' This was one of thirty-nine people who apparently willingly took their own lives in a mass suicide to attain a new life on another planet. They believed that there was a spaceship located behind the Hale-Bopp comet which was going to transport them to a higher plane. The leader of the cultists, Marshall Applewhite, died with them. The group apparently carried out a meticulous suicide plan after they spent an evening together in a restaurant. They split themselves into three groups to kill themselves over the following three days. Although they had all taken a toxic cocktail of barbiturates, alcohol and a sweet sauce, the coroner's report showed that many of them had died as a result of suffocation. It therefore suggests that some deaths were actually 'assisted suicides'. A verdict of suicide was given on the deaths.

Source: adapted from M. Jones, 'Suicide revisited', *Sociology Review*, vol. 8, no. 1, September 1998

ITEM C – WAR AND SUICIDE

By studying various European conflicts, Durkheim discovered that suicide rates dropped in wartime. British and American research from the Second World War supports his findings. More recently, the link between suicide and war has been observed in Northern Ireland. A surprising effect of the peace is that the once-low suicide rate has risen suddenly and dramatically. Similarly, a study of the Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka found that just a few months of peace led to a rise in the suicide rate. As soon as the conflict resumed, the rate fell.

Source: adapted from R. Persaud, 'War and suicide', *A Level Sociology Magazine*, 1 September 1998

ITEM E – DURKHEIM'S CLASSIFICATION
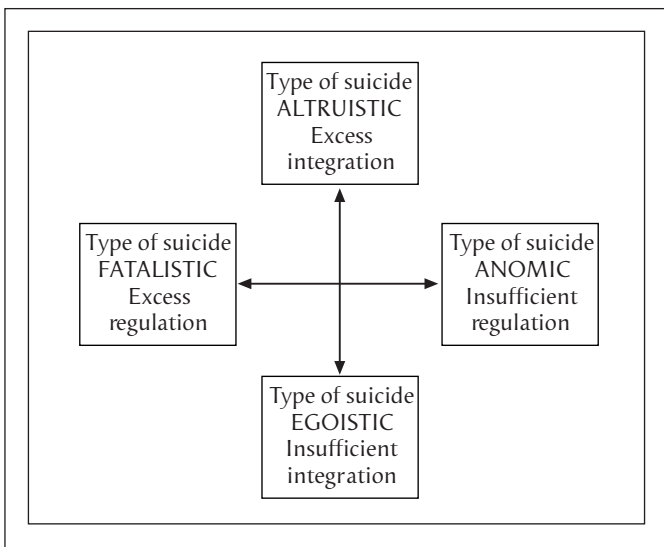
ITEM B – MICHAEL HUTCHENCE

In November 1997, the body of Michael Hutchence, lead singer with INXS, was discovered in his hotel bedroom. He was found hanging from his belt. The idea of suicide was challenged at first, as he had been seen in the company of some young actresses – a possible accidental death from some group sex act was inferred. However, later reports showed him to have been depressed, anxious and deeply affected by the acrimonious divorce and custody battles of his partner, Paula Yates, and her ex-husband, Sir Bob Geldof. A verdict of suicide was eventually given.

Source: adapted from M. Jones, 'Suicide revisited', *Sociology Review*, vol. 8, no. 1, September 1998

ITEM D – A SUICIDE BOMBING

A victim is carried from the British Embassy in Istanbul after the suicide bomb attack.

Source: Rex Features

Source: from M. Haralambos and M. Holborn, *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 6th edn, HarperCollins, 2004

QUESTIONS

1 Using Durkheim's classification of suicide (Item D), attempt to explain Items A, B, C and D.

2 Consider how sociologists from an interpretative tradition might explain suicide. Use examples taken from the Items.

Activity 2: SAMPLING

ITEM A – STRATIFIED SAMPLES

A simple random sample will, on average, be representative of the population. However, an individual sample may be quite unrepresentative. Suppose we were to study the career aspirations of university students and had the resources to interview 125 students. Using simple random sampling it would be possible to draw a sample which under-represented students from some departments and over-represented others. Since career aspirations are likely to be closely linked with the subjects studied, it is desirable that the sample should have the correct representation of the students' departments. By stratifying the sample by department, the final sample will contain exactly the same proportion of students from the physics department, for instance, as are in the university as a whole.

Source: adapted from N. Gilbert (ed.) *Researching Social Life*, Sage, 1993

ITEM C – HOUSEWIVES AND HOUSEWORK

The aim of my study was to discover what housewives think of housework. I was aware that little previous research had been carried out in this area, so my research was conceived very much with this in mind. My sample consisted of 40 London housewives who were aged between 20 and 30 and were all mothers. They were selected from the medical records of two GPs, one in a predominantly working-class area and one in a predominantly middle-class area. The names of potential respondents were selected from the practice lists on an alphabetical basis. Two names were selected for each letter of the alphabet – the first two names of married female patients born between 1940 and 1950 with at least one child under the age of 5. This criterion was used to yield a fairly homogeneous sample of young housewife mothers. This method yielded 71 names. After discussion with the doctors, the final sample was reduced to 65, as we wished to exclude those from ethnic minority groups and those with serious medical or psychiatric problems. GP recommendation was used to introduce the researcher to the interviewees. In no case did a woman refuse to cooperate with the research.

Source: adapted from A. Oakley, *The Sociology of Housework*, Blackwell, 1974

ITEM B – MULTI-STAGE OR CLUSTER SAMPLING

Clustering is used to reduce the time and cost of research. Suppose we wish to interview a national sample of 2,000 nurses to find out their views on health care. The first sample might be made of the hospitals and then a sample of nurses taken from each hospital. A highly clustered sample of only 5 hospitals with 400 nurses in each might be used, or 5 nurses from 400 hospitals. In reality, a figure somewhere between the two would be selected.

Options available

Number of hospitals selected	Number of nurses selected	
5	400	Lower cost,
10	200	lower precision
20	100	
40	50	
50	40	Optimum
80	25	
100	20	
200	10	Higher cost,
400	5	higher precision

Source: adapted from N. Gilbert (ed.) *Researching Social Life*, Sage, 1993

QUESTIONS

1 **With reference to Item A:**
   (a) **Why was this sample stratified?**
   (b) **For what other characteristics might it be useful to stratify?**

2 **What are the advantages of multi-stage or cluster sampling? Make reference to Item B in your answer.**

3 (a) **Evaluate Ann Oakley's sampling technique (Item C).**
   (b) **Ann Oakley obtained a full response rate in her research.**
      (i) **What problems does non-response create?**
      (ii) **Why do you think that some sample members fail to respond when questioned?**

4 **Suppose you wished to research the impact of epilepsy on family relationships. Using what you have learned from Items A, B and C, make a brief list of points that you would need to consider when selecting your sample. (Students may wish to discuss this in groups.)**

Activity 3: CASE STUDIES

ITEM A – 'THE COUNTER-CULTURE'

One main case study of twelve non-academic working-class lads constitutes the basis of my research. They live in a working-class industrial town, and all attend the same secondary school, where they are members of an oppositional culture. I made contact with the group in the second term of their penultimate year and followed them right through into the first six months of their working lives. They were studied intensively by means of observation, participant observation, recording group discussions, interviews and diaries.

The lads' opposition to school and teachers involves a caged resentment. Settled in class, as near a group as they can manage, there is a continuous scraping of chairs, a bad-tempered 'tut-tutting' at the simplest request, and a continuous fidgeting, which explores every permutation of sitting or lying on a chair. During private study, some openly show disdain by apparently trying to go to sleep with their head sideways down on the desk. There is an aimless air of insubordination – comics, newspapers and nudes under half-lifted desks melt into elusive textbooks.

Having a 'laff' is central to the lads' day at school. The lads go in search of incidents to amuse, subvert and incite. During assembly, one lad empties the side pockets of someone sitting in front of him and asks ostentatiously 'Who does this belong to?'; another lad clips jackets to seats; and others ruin the collective singing.

There is a continuing urge to create excitement and incident which dominates their lives both inside and outside school.

The lads see themselves as superior to the teachers and to the 'ear 'oles', the school conformists. The term 'ear 'ole' itself connotes their passivity and absurdity for 'the lads'. It seems that they are always listening, never doing, never animated with their own internal life but formless in rigid reception. The 'ear 'oles' are an obvious target for 'the lads' intent on having 'a laff'.

The lads are sexist. There is a traditional conflict in their view of women – they are both sexual objects and domestic comforters. The lads are full of lascivious tales of sexual conquest, and jokes turning on the passivity of women and the particular sexual nature of men are regular topics of conversation.

The lads look forward to leaving school and getting manual work which they see as real work superior to that of 'pen pushers'. Drinking, smoking and chasing girls are all ways in which they identify with the adult world.

The counter-culture has many profound similarities with the culture its members are mainly destined for – shop-floor culture. Here too an alienating situation is interwoven with interest and diversion, and satisfaction is gained from activity. The masculinity and toughness of counter-school culture reflect one of the central themes of shop-floor culture – a form of masculine chauvinism. The pin-ups are an example of blatant sexism, but in a more generalized sense the shop floor still reflects the masculine values of toughness, machismo and a sense of doing a hard job well.

Source: adapted from P. Willis, *Learning to Labour*, Saxon House, 1977

ITEM B – THE RECONSTITUTED FAMILY

I had known Frank for two years before I was allowed to meet his children. When we first met he had been living with his wife, but they were now in the process of divorcing. It was hard for Frank to spend more time with my children than with his own, it felt disloyal. He would cry that he had failed his children. When I first met his children we were stiff. I spoke in a sugary voice which sounded insincere and reflected my feelings of guilt. We couldn't seem to feel comfortable with each other. I longed for the day when we could all spend time together and be a real family. When the divorce was finally through, we introduced our children to each other. Although of similar ages, mine attended private school and had had a Bohemian existence, living in Spain, Turkey, California and Florida. Frank's attended the local comprehensive and had never taken a foreign holiday. From the start, they quarrelled and told tales on each other. I thought that Frank was too harsh with my children and too lenient with his. When I became pregnant I thought that the family would finally mesh together, but the children were horrified. My husband's ex-wife remained a shadowy figure in all our negotiations. I realized that Frank's children could never show me affection without feeling disloyal to their mother.

Source: adapted from M. Freely, 'Stepmother', *Sunday Times*, 22 November 1998

ITEM C – THE LIFE HISTORY

The life history reveals the inner life of people. We can see their moral struggles and their success or failure in controlling their future lives. The validity and value of life histories are not dependent on their objectivity; on the contrary, their value lies in their reflection of personal attitudes and interpretations. Thus, rationalizations, fabrications, prejudices and exaggerations are quite as valuable as objective description. If people define situations as real, they are real in their social consequences.

Source: adapted from C.R. Shaw, 'The case study technique – value of a delinquent boy's own story', in M. Wolfgang, L. Savitz and N. Johnston (eds) *The Sociology of Crime and Delinquency*, Wiley, 1962

QUESTIONS

1 **What contribution can case studies make to our understanding of society? Make reference to Items A, B and C in your answer.**

2 **What are the limitations of case studies?**

3 **When designing an interview schedule, sociologists may first read a number of case studies. What points of sociological interest are raised by Item B which could guide the design of a structured interview?**

Activity 4: INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

ITEM A – MOTHER LOVE

The following Item is taken from Ann Oakley's book *Becoming a Mother*. In this book she examines the experience of becoming a mother in modern British society, having found her own transition to motherhood problematical. She carried out a series of intensive informal interviews with 66 young mothers before and after their babies were born. All the women were attending the same London hospital.

The women were all asked: 'Can you describe your feelings when you first held the baby?' The following are two responses.

Sasha Morris had an epidural, but she used the phrase 'completely numbed' to describe her emotional reaction:

I was absolutely stunned. I couldn't say that I felt anything for her for a while. The next day I was reluctant to admit it to anyone – I said oh I was delighted, but I wasn't … and of course Ben was very moved by the whole thing. He had tears in his eyes which is most unusual for him, because he's a very tough businessman – he wouldn't have tears in his eyes for anybody, he's not the emotional sort, but he was extremely moved. Which pleased me: I was delighted by his reaction. But I had none of my own. I felt nothing. I couldn't relate to her at all. And I never asked if she was all right. I said nothing. Everybody said she's a girl. I thought oh how tremendous.

When I looked at her I thought she was lovely. When I held her I said to Ben, you take her, I didn't want to hold her for a long time. And when they took her away I wasn't saying where are you going with her? And I think the same night they brought her for a feed and I put her beside me and I thought she was lovely, but I didn't want to pick her up and hug her. I just wanted to go to sleep. And I couldn't. I was so tired.

I was very amazed at my own reaction when she was born. I was completely numbed. I thought I'd be delighted. I think a lot of people won't admit their feelings. They say they're absolutely delighted but I'm sure half of them aren't. It's quite normal, isn't it?

Dawn O'Hara:

Oh cripey. It was the best moment of my life. You know if I ever see that advertisement for Sterling Health on television it brings back memories, you know? I could cry!

Feelings on first holding the baby	
Not interested	70%
Amazed, proud	20%
Euphoric	10%

Source: from A. Oakley, *Becoming a Mother*, Martin Robertson, 1979

ITEM B – CHANGING OUTCOMES

Ann Oakley sees the interview situation as an interactive human encounter. She notes that the interviewees are not passive respondents but ask questions back. She did not flinch from answering these questions to the best of her ability. At the end of the research she asked her interviewees: 'Do you feel that being involved in this research – my coming to see you – has affected your experience of becoming a mother in any way?' The following are two responses.

Clare Dawson: It's made me think about things I've never thought about before. For instance, when you said to me does it matter to you if you don't see the same doctor? And I began to think: I wonder if it does? At the time I said no. And then I thought about it more. And I suppose it made me assess more what happened. I think I've found it helpful, actually. To talk about it: it's been good to talk about it … I think it would be interesting to see what other people thought or felt. I can't see what can come out of it, in a way, because everybody's so different. I can't see how you can compare …

Pauline Diggory: It's been very…, I've really enjoyed it. Yes, it

has helped me because I probably would have been even more worried. I mean, I think you know a lot. I mean, there you are with all these different mothers and I mean all I've got to say is, do you think Hannah's a bit sick, and you say, oh no, I've seen about so many … Now that just helps, just to say you've seen a few.

Ann Oakley: But of course I'm not a doctor.

Pauline: Oh I know. But I mean a doctor's not interested in a baby being sick anyway.

Has the research affected your experience of being a mother?	
No	27%
Yes	73%
thought about it more	30%*
found it reassuring	25%*
a relief to talk	30%*
changed attitudes/behaviour	7%*

*percentages do not add up to 100 per cent because some women gave more than one answer

Source: from A. Oakley, *Becoming a Mother*, Martin Robertson, 1979

QUESTIONS

1 **What are the advantages of letting women explain their own feelings in their own way rather than asking them to complete a questionnaire? Refer to Item A in your answer.**

2 **Making reference to Items A and B, discuss the advantages of developing a close rapport with subjects. Are there any disadvantages?**

3 **Why do you think that Ann Oakley has included some statistics in her analysis? Refer to Items A and B in your answer.**

Activity 5: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

ITEM A – A DELINQUENT GANG

I worked in a Scottish Approved School. Due to common interests in football, pop music and swimming, I quickly became friends with Tim. After admitting that I knew nothing about what the boys did on leave from the school, Tim invited me to join his juvenile gang. I accepted, discussing with him when and where to meet, what clothes to wear and the bond of silence and loyalty that would have to exist between us. At first, Tim thought I ought to be introduced as an approved school teacher, but I pointed out the difficulty and dangers of this arrangement. For a start, I would never see typical behaviour. I resolved to become a participant observer but a passive participant, a role it became increasingly difficult to abide by. My greatest worry was that incidents might be staged for my benefit or that Tim's behaviour might be radically altered. Tim's willingness to introduce me to the group solved the problem of entry, but from then on I had to play it by ear. I had to recognize that I was bound to change what I was observing just by observing it. Also, there was the problem of role confusion. I was a middle-class teacher during the week, a juvenile gang member at the weekend – this produced a real conflict in me. In fact, it was the internal struggle between identification with the boys and abhorrence of their violence that finally forced me to quit.

I was to pass myself off to other gang members as Tim's 17-year-old 'hau fer' (best friend) from approved school. I cut my nails down as far as possible, leaving them ragged and dirty, and bought a midnight-blue suit with a twelve-inch middle vent. My hair I grew long. Even here I made two mistakes. Firstly, I bought the suit outright for cash, attracting disbelief in the gang when I innocently mentioned it, and secondly I fastened the middle button of my suit jacket while the boys in the gang fastened only the top button so they could stand with their hands in their pockets (to look 'cool').

A major problem to my acceptance was language. Born and bred in Glasgow I thought myself familiar with local dialect – a serious mistake as it turned out. So confused was I on the first night that I had to 'play daft' to avoid too many questions and concentrate on what was being said. This first meeting with the gang was on their turf in a rundown pub. I was so nervous that the following day I found great difficulty in recalling the first few minutes of the meeting. I wanted to say as little as possible and avoid answering questions, as both the answers and the accent it was delivered in were likely to be wrong.

Source: adapted from J. Patrick, *A Glasgow Gang Observed*, Eyre Methuen, 1973

ITEM B – A PYGMY GROUP

My main interest and lifelong love affair has been with Africa. I have lived and worked in Africa for many years, studied four African languages and made sixteen documentary films. On previous visits I had camped in the forest with the more eastern Efe Mbuti pygmies – the archers. Now was my chance to camp with a band of the Mbuti who hunt the antelope with nets. I found a Mbuti who would take me northeast into the forest to a hunting camp about six hours' walk.

When we arrived at the camp some hours later, the adults quickly recognized my guide and greeted me courteously. They were astonished to see me walk out of the forest but soon accepted me, as they would anyone in need of a place to stay for the night. The children were startled by my white skin and six-foot frame, and when they first saw me ran screaming into their mothers' arms or bolted into the nearest hut.

After a polite interval, I enquired about a hut being built for me. The only problem was where. I politely rejected two prominent spots in the centre of the camp and pointed to an empty space between two huts. Although on low ground and liable to flood, it was the only site left which would not place me too far in or out of the social circle. I was already so very different as a European I did not want to stand out even more by having my hut built in a place eccentric to traditional ways.

When the hunters returned, a respected elder hunter, Mikubasi, presented me with the back leg of an antelope. It was generous of him and also marked my acceptance into the community. I asked if I could accompany them on the next day's net hunt and they agreed. Later, Abeli came past my newly completed hut carrying an empty cooking pot. 'Rice', he asked. 'Do you want some rice cooked?' I nodded and handed him my bag of rice. I watched as he poured rice enough for about ten people into the pot. I was glad that the women would cook for me since a man could not do this chore for himself without ridicule. The rice would be shared with my hosts and would show my gratitude to these people who were allowing me to become part of their daily lives.

Source: adapted from K. Duffy, *Children of the Forest*, Robert Hale, 1984

ITEM C – EXTREME VIOLENCE

The following is an account of a participant observer who 'hangs out' with local bouncers who mind a nearby pub.

We approached a man pointed out by the publican as one of the troublemakers. Gordon immediately turns and starts walking urgently towards the identified man. Frankie beats him to it, runs the short distance and punches the man in the face. Frankie is a big powerful man and his knowledge of violence is considerable. When he pulls his arm back and delivers a punch he intends to do extreme harm and it is not unrealistic to envisage death. Gordon advances and starts to kick the prone man and is joined by Frankie and Matty. They aim kicks at the man's head. Matty is drunk and raises his foot to stamp on the man's head.

The wounded man on the ground has stopped moving and I seriously consider the possibility that we have killed him.

Source: adapted from Simon Winlow, *Badfellas: Crime Tradition and New Masculinities*, Berg, 2001

QUESTIONS

1 **In what ways were the problems of acceptance different for the two participant observers in Items A and B?**

2 **How may the backgrounds of the participant observers have influenced their observations? Refer to Items A and B in your answer.**

3 **What are the main advantages of participant observation as demonstrated in Items A and B?**

4 **Read Item C and consider how you would have reacted if faced with this problem.**

5 **Using any of the Items, consider what problems are associated with participant observation.**

Activity 6: HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

ITEM A – THE POLITICAL DIARY

The publication of a political diary after an interval of ten or fifteen years is a conscious political act designed to open up the past to more detailed scrutiny than is possible through the media or memoirs. It provides both documentation on events which journalists would not know about at the time, and also a valuable resource for historians.

It is a record of a learning process and I have not attempted to remove any of the opinions I expressed and actions I took which now embarrass me.

Diarists do not enjoy the advantages of the writers of memoirs, who have the benefit of hindsight but who must inevitably be tempted into self-justification. Nor is there anything more faulty than human memory. But if diarists accurately record the events of the day as they occur and do not tamper with the text, they leave behind a valuable contemporary record. Of course, no two diarists describe and interpret experiences in the same way.

Source: adapted from T. Benn, *Against the Tide: Diaries 1973–76*, Hutchinson, 1989; *Out of the Wilderness: Diaries 1963–67*, Hutchinson, 1987; and *Years of Hope: Diaries 1940–62*, Hutchinson, 1994

ITEM B – THE SLAVE NARRATIVE

Between 1820 and 1860, Afro-Americans produced numerous written accounts of America's 'peculiar institution' (slavery). They sketched the complex ethical and psychological orientations towards slavery and demanded its abolition. Written by ex-slaves, the slave narratives reveal a common pattern of the slaves' experiences, their journey to freedom and their subsequent dedication to the abolitionist principle and goals. Slave literature was published by abolitionists as an effective weapon that would reach a wide audience. The stories not only offered ready evidence for the arguments of anti-slavery, such as the cruelty, but also showed that Afro-Americans must possess higher intellectual powers to be capable of writing such accounts.

The narratives were an extension of the dramatic and oratorical role of the slave at any abolitionists meeting. They provided living proof of the tremendous effects of slavery. Visible scars and less visible psychological scars were brought to life by vivid and thrilling personal accounts. Once committed to print, they could reach an international audience and so help to bring about change.

Source: www.blacknetworkinggroup.co.uk/Hawkins_biography.htm

Source: adapted from H.A. Baker (ed.) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas, an American Slave*, Penguin, 1982, first published in 1845

ITEM C – POSTERS

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

Sources: (i) Mary Evans Picture Library; (ii) Topham Picturepoint; (iii) Art Archive/Eileen Tweedy; (iv) Bridgeman Art Library

QUESTIONS

1 **Compare the sociological value of the evidence produced from the Benn diaries (Item A) with that produced from the slave narrative (Item B).**

2 **(a) How might a sociologist interpret the posters in Item C?**
(b) What criticism of this interpretation could be made?

3 **Why do researchers often combine evidence obtained from different sources? Make some reference to Items A, B and C in your answer.**

Activity 7: BEING IMPARTIAL

ITEM A – 'OBJECTIVE' SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Very often the sponsors of research have a strong influence on the methods and topics of research and often on what can be published. In the case of BSE, for instance, MAFF (UK Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) denied researchers access to necessary data and attempted to influence research funding priorities. MAFF censored scientific reports and bullied scientists into changing their supposedly 'independent' advice.

Moreover, the increasing role of the market in scientific research since the 1980s has meant that the number of independent scientists who have not accepted research or consultancy money from corporations has shrunk. Academic culture has adapted so that fewer and fewer researchers can see a problem with these links. When a researcher does speak out on an issue of public interest, they run the risk of being silenced. For instance, Dr A. Pustzai from the Rowatt centre spoke out on the potential dangers of GM foods and was removed from his job.

Source: Rex Features

ITEM B – VALUE FREEDOM: HOWARD BECKER

Becker posed this question: 'whose side are we on?' All knowledge favours someone, he argued, and therefore we must chose whom to favour. He believed value neutrality was both impossible and undesirable and that, instead, we should 'side with the underdog'. Sociologists should be committed to social change and human improvement and take responsibility for the moral implications of their work. Modern-day sociologists have called this 'empowerment research' as it seeks to improve the lives of those they study.

Becker's commitment to value-laden sociology did not mean that he believed sociologists should be any less objective in their methods, only that the choice of research is legitimately committed to a particular value position.

Source: adapted from Ken Browne, 'Science as a social product', *Sociology Review*, vol. 11, no. 2, Philip Allan Updates, 2001 and W. Kidd and G. Czerniawski, 'Research and value freedom' in *Sociology Review*, Vol. 13, no. 3, Philip Allan Updates, 2004

ITEM C – SURFING THE NET

Borneo and Sumatra, home to the world's last orang-utans, have lost a staggering 90 per cent of their populations over the past 100 years. There are now around 30,000 orang-utans left and it is likely that they will become extinct in the wild in as little as 20 years' time if this decline continues.

Dr Marc Ancrenaz, Director of the Kinabatangan Orang-utan Conservation Project, who works with the WWF and who has studied the primates in Sabah, Borneo, said, 'Orang-utans – the only living great apes in Asia – will disappear unless immediate conservation measures are taken. There are an estimated 13,000 orang-utans remaining in Sabah, making this the last stronghold for the animals in Malaysia.'

Source: www.wwf.org.uk/orangutan

ITEM D – VALUE FREEDOM: MAX WEBER

Weber recognised that all human thought was selective or 'biased'. Therefore, a 'value free' sociology was impossible. So how does he argue that objectivity is possible when carrying out research? He does so by distinguishing between *value reference* and *value freedom*. Value reference indicates a particular set of interests which leads to our selection of a particular topic for study. But it still remains the responsibility of the researcher to determine the facts in a value free manner.

Source: adapted from W. Kidd and G. Czerniawski 'Research and value freedom' in *Sociology Review*, vol. 13, no. 3, Philip Allan Updates, 2004

QUESTIONS

1 **'When science loses its objectivity it becomes dangerous.' Briefly consider this statement in the light of Item A.**

2 **Making reference to Items A, B and D comment on the nature of 'value freedom'.**

3 **What factors would you need to take into account when assessing the usefulness of Item C?**

Chapter 14: METHODOLOGY – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: HEAVEN'S GATE

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on suicide. Its main aim is to help students to understand Durkheim's analysis of suicide and some of the problems associated with accepting suicide statistics as social facts. Students will find Chapter 14, pp. 873–80, of assistance.

1 Durkheim believed suicide rates were dependent upon the degree to which individuals were integrated into social groups and the extent to which societies regulated individual behaviour. On this basis, he distinguished the four types of suicide shown in Item E.

· The mass suicide described in Item A comes closest to Durkheim's altruistic suicide. The members appear to have been overly committed to their leader and to each other. They were sacrificing themselves for a higher ideal. But there also appears to have been a degree of egoism in their choice. Presumably, cult members believed that their new life on another planet would be preferable.

· The death of Michael Hutchence seems to come closest to Durkheim's egoistic suicide. In egoistic social structures, individual rights, interest and welfare are heavily stressed while loyalty to the wider group is weak. This sort of social structure which stresses the importance of individual happiness is typical of Western societies. Alone in his hotel room without his family around him and possibly without any deep religious commitment, he may have felt lonely, isolated and depressed. His dislocated life as a rock star may have added to his negative feelings and triggered his suicide. Alternatively, Hutchence's suicide could be seen as related to his position in an anomic social structure. Durkheim believed that people measured their wants against social guidelines. In times of rapid social change – economic improvement or decline – people may feel lost and bewildered. With no standards against which to measure their behaviour the resulting disillusionment may lead to suicide.

· If the statistics referred to in Item C are correct and suicide rates do indeed drop during times of war, then it may be that wars mitigate against anomic suicide. The existence of an external enemy may serve to strengthen social solidarity and integration. Collective sentiments like patriotism may be reinforced and the alienation of the individual reduced. From a Durkheimian perspective, these changes in society may account for the fall in suicide rates.

· A suicide bomber (Item D) appears to come close to Durkheim's altruistic suicide. Such people are so highly integrated into their group that they are willing to give up their lives for the sake of a cause. In the West such acts are widely reported in the media and draw global attention to grievances. However, such acts can also be interpreted as fatalistic. The people may feel trapped and hopeless in the face of what they see as a repressive regime.

Alternatively, such suicides could be described as anomic, as the result of living in a society undergoing far-reaching and disorientating changes. Finally, some suicide bombers could be seen as acting in an egoistical way, as they may hope to be revered as martyrs by their countrymen and women and to reap rewards in Paradise.

· The above examples illustrate one criticism of Durkheim. In real life it is often difficult to classify suicides. If they can be seen as fitting several of his types of suicide then the theory is less scientific than it appears.

2 *Key points:*

· Many sociologists have questioned Durkheim's assumption that suicide statistics are social facts. Attention has been drawn to the role of the coroner in making decisions about how a particular death is interpreted.

· In the case of the Heaven's Gate sect, the coroner may have taken considerable notice of the group's farewell video explaining their behaviour. Family members may also have testified to the strong influence Marshall Applewhite exerted over their relatives. If this 'made sense' to the coroner then he would be more likely to record a suicide verdict. The coroner chose to define the deaths of those members who died of suffocation as assisted suicides. However, the cult members may have changed their minds about wanting to die and been murdered by their fellows. This demonstrates how the interpretations made by

coroners can be seen as actually creating suicide statistics.

· The suicide of Michael Hutchence was a very different act. He appears to have died alone rather than with the support of a group, and in a depressed rather than an optimistic state of mind. Again, the coroner involved will have interpreted the situation in terms of his own meanings. To come to a decision, the coroner will have questioned the family, who may have overly stressed Hutchence's depression, rather than an alternative interpretation – that Hutchence was involved in a sex game.

· Interactionists emphasize that it is important to try to understand the meanings and motives which lie behind suicide. Hutchence's suicide could be interpreted in a variety of ways. He may have been trying to take revenge, or to attract sympathy. It could be that his death was actually an attempted suicide, a cry for help, which accidentally went wrong.

· If we view Item C from an interpretative point of view, it could be argued that, rather than demonstrating greater social integration, the statistics demonstrate systematic attempts on the part of coroners to maintain morale. In times of war, coroners may feel that it is unpatriotic for people to commit suicide and so classify their deaths in other ways – for example, as accidents.

· In the case of suicide bombers, they may be classified in different ways by different social groups. For example, Israelis may regard Palestinian suicide bombers as murderers who commit suicide in the course of their objective. Palestinians may view them as freedom fighters or soldiers who die making war.

· It seems that there is considerable scope for negotiation and interpretation between the parties involved in the classification. From this viewpoint, it might be possible to obtain more reliable suicide statistics if we were able to allow for the systematic distortions that may take place.

ACTIVITY 2: SAMPLING

Teacher's note

This activity looks at some aspects of sampling. Relevant reading may be found in Chapter 14, pp. 894–7.

1 (a)
The researchers have chosen to stratify by subject because they believe that the subject studied will have a direct bearing on the career aspirations of students. Therefore, it is important that the sample accurately reflects subject choice.

(b) The researchers might decide to stratify for other variables if they believed that these might have a direct bearing on career aspiration. For example, they might stratify by ethnic group, sex or year of study.

2 The main advantage of cluster sampling is that it saves the researcher time and money. Using a small number of hospitals would cut down travel and subsistence allowance costs, as well as administrative costs. In this example, choosing only five hospitals would be the cheapest option, but such a highly clustered sample has the disadvantage of sacrificing randomness and precision. The optimum choice of sample is likely to lie somewhere between a highly clustered and a more dispersed sample.

3 (a)
Virtually all young women with children will be registered with a GP, so the choice of GP lists appears to be an appropriate sampling frame. Since Ann Oakley wished to compare social classes, she chose one GP list in what appeared to be a typical middle-class area and another in what seemed to be a typical working-class area. By selecting both samples from the London area she would exclude regional variations in attitude, and also minimize her expenses.

By systematically selecting the first two women conforming to her criteria from each letter of the alphabet, Oakley tried to avoid any bias. If she had merely chosen two names 'at random' she may have inadvertently selected women with familiar or unusual names, so introducing a degree of bias.

Considering the small scale of her research, Oakley seems to have made every effort to make her sample as representative as possible.

(b) (i) The results of the research will be biased to the extent that non-

respondents differ in significant respects from respondents. If a researcher can achieve a full response, as in Item C, then this source of bias is removed.

 (ii)   Respondents may be suspicious of the purpose of the research, and of the researcher. Ann Oakley obtained introductions to her sample from their GPs, which will have improved her chance of a good response, since people generally trust their GP. People also need to be convinced of the importance of the research and the significance of their role within it. Continuing cooperation tends to be greater if people enjoy the process of being questioned and, in the case of interviews, find the interview congenial and reassuring.

4 Students may provide a wide variety of responses to this question. The following are examples:
· What sampling frame to use. Appropriate lists of epileptic patients might be obtained from GP records or from general hospital records.
· How extensive the research is to be. In a fairly large-scale piece of research, we might use multi-stage sampling to select a number of GPs or general hospitals in particular geographic areas. At the second stage we might wish to stratify on the basis of characteristics we believed could be significant, such as age, sex, class and ethnicity.
· How best to ensure a good response. Whatever method of data selection we used, we would need to make every effort to contact all members of our sample and persuade them to take part in the research. A low response could introduce bias into our results, since those people who failed to respond might be those whose epilepsy had been the most disruptive to their family relationships.

ACTIVITY 3: CASE STUDIES

Teacher's note

We look in this activity at case studies. Students are asked to consider the contribution that this method of social investigation can make to our understanding of society. Students may wish to read Chapter 14, pp. 897–8.

1 By focusing on just one example, the case study can provide us with an in-depth picture. In Item A, Paul Willis uses several qualitative techniques – participant observation, interviews and so on – to provide a very detailed account of the culture of a group of boys. The concentration of time and resources on one group allows the researcher to focus his efforts, which results in the production of rich and lively material. The reader can almost step into the shoes of the boys described.
· Item B gives a very personal account of a woman's experience of second marriage. Life histories, as Item C points out, can allow us to see the 'inner life' of the subject. We may be better able to understand what happens to the family in Item B, and indeed 'the lads' in Item A, if we know how individuals interpret what is happening to them. As with other case studies, the insights provided by the experiences of one woman, or one particular group of boys, may provide the basis for the development of more general ideas and theories which could be tested later.
· A final contribution which the case study can make to our understanding of society is its role in falsifying a generally accepted theory in society. If case studies produce examples of cases that do not conform to previously held accepted truth, then it may be that the original theory needs either modification or rejection.

2 The case study can lay no claim to being typical. In Item A the author chooses to question just twelve boys in one particular school in one particular industrial town. It could be that these boys are not even typical of boys in their own school, let alone boys in other schools around the country. Likewise, Item B looks at the experiences of just one woman. It could be that she was particularly unfortunate or just personally ill-equipped to deal with a new family situation. It might be possible to overcome some of these difficulties if a series of case studies were conducted in similar situations at the same time.

3 Item B provides us with many insights into the sorts of problems experienced by reconstituted families:
· The new couple's feelings of guilt about separating their children from their birth mother or father.
· The problems of trying to combine children from different backgrounds with different attitudes and educational experiences into one family group.
· The potential for the children's antagonisms to spill over into resentment and conflict between the parents.
· The impact on the family of the introduction of a baby of the new

couple and whether this might be a force for greater integration or more conflict.
· The conflicts and changes facing the children.
These issues could be used as the basis for designing an interview schedule which could probe the various points in greater depth. If the interviews were administered to appropriate couples then the researchers would have a better idea of whether the experiences of the woman described in Item B were in any way typical of other women in similar family situations.

ACTIVITY 4: INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

Teacher's note

This activity is concerned with informal interviews. It is based on aspects of the research undertaken by Ann Oakley in her book Becoming a Mother. It is one of the less demanding activities for students to tackle. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 14, pp. 904–9.

1 The topic of this study was a highly emotional one. The process of childbirth involves major psychological changes, and the interviewees were likely to be feeling vulnerable and unsure of what an appropriate response to motherhood ought to be. In this situation the choice of an informal method of interview, allowing the women to tell their story in their own way, seems to be highly appropriate. A more structured method or a questionnaire might appear like an interrogation and elicit self-protective rather than genuine responses. From the reader's point of view, we are able to relate to the women's experiences and empathize with their feelings. The informal interview is also an ideal strategy for discovery in a new area, since our knowledge may be too limited for us to be able to construct standardized questions. While the use of an informal interview is relatively expensive and time consuming, in research situations like this it produces rich data.

2 When a researcher seeks to ask questions on highly personal matters, they need to establish a feeling of trust between themselves and the interviewee. Ann Oakley, as a woman and a mother herself, was able to establish a trusting relationship with the women by sharing information and engaging them in general conversation. Without this, it is unlikely that the women would have revealed such intimate thoughts. Also, by developing a close rapport with her subjects, in some cases Ann Oakley has actually changed their lives. For example, Pauline Diggory says she feels less worried as a result of being involved in the research. In line with elements of critical sociological research, Oakley may see this as justifiable. She may have truly come to know her subjects by such means. Nevertheless, critics may feel that her intimacy with the mothers and willingness to answer their questions introduced an unwelcome element of bias into her results.

3 By including a statistical summary of the women's responses to the questions, Ann Oakley allows us to take an overview of the findings of her research. We are given few details of her sample, other than that 66 women were questioned at one London hospital, but from the statistics we are able to identify a generalized pattern of similarities and differences in the women's experiences. By combining verbatim interviews with a statistical overview it is possible for each type of data to go some way towards compensating for the limitations of the other. The interview accounts provide highly personal descriptions of a unique event in a woman's life. The statistics show us how widespread such feelings were among the sample.

ACTIVITY 5: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Teacher's note

This activity examines the uses of participant observation as a research tool, and some of its limitations. Students will need to read Chapter 14, pp. 909–14.

1 The participant observer in Item A was a covert observer and as such was concerned not to arouse suspicion. Despite the fact of his being a young Glaswegian himself and having an informant (Tim), he admits that he made some mistakes and at times found the gang's language hard to follow. A major problem for his acceptance was his attempt to participate as little as possible in the group's activities. It was difficult for him to

maintain his cover yet avoid participating in violence, and it was this problem which eventually led to his withdrawal from the gang.

· The participant observer in Item B could not act as a covert observer, since he was so obviously different from the Mbuti pygmy group. However, he was happily welcomed as a guest. He had the advantage of being introduced by someone the group knew well and of knowing their language. His prior knowledge of how the pygmy people lived facilitated his acceptance by the group and made it less likely that he would offend against their customs. Also, as an obvious 'outsider', any mistakes that he made would be accepted by the group.

2 · When sociologists engage in research, it is impossible to leave personal values behind – perhaps the best that can be done is to make them explicit. The researcher in Item A was clearly educated and middle class, while the gang members were largely working class and drawn from deprived areas of the city. His choice of career suggests that he was committed to 'reform', and this will have affected what he saw, what he thought important and how he interpreted the actions of gang members. For instance, behaviour which may have been interpreted as 'just a bit of fun' by the gang may have been interpreted by him as far more serious.

· The observer in Item B will likewise have brought his personal background to the research situation. The contrast between the way of life of the average Westerner and a Mbuti pygmy is extreme. The author admits to having a 'lifelong love affair' with Africa, and it may be that this has led to a rather idealistic or 'rose tinted' view of the people that he is observing. Like all participant observers, the authors of Items A and B will have tried to be objective, but inevitably their research will say something about themselves.

3 · The delinquent gang in Item A would be unlikely to welcome outsiders, or to respond frankly to questions from a middle-class interviewer, so covert participant observation seems a good choice of research tool. The Item illustrates some of the advantages of participant observation. The researcher admitted that he 'knew nothing' about what boys do on leave from an approved school, so he would have entered this situation with few preconceived ideas and would have been more likely to view the world from the boys' point of view. He was also able to play the situation 'by ear' as it developed, since he had no clear research plan. In this way he hoped to discover the meanings and motives which lay behind gang activities without his presence distorting their behaviour.

· The researcher in Item B follows the example of many early anthropologists by living with the group under study. It is difficult to see how any other method of research would have been effective, since the people live a life so very different from that of Westerners. By living with them as their guest he was able to observe their everyday lives, watching and joining in where appropriate, and gradually coming to understand their customs and beliefs.

4 The researcher is in a situation where a man is being seriously assaulted. Many people would believe they must intervene to save the victim. By doing so, however, the researcher would not only 'blow his cover' but might also be attacked himself.

5 · In Item C we see clearly demonstrated that one of the problems of conducting participant observation with a group of potentially violent people is that the researcher may become drawn into the violence. Any lack of enthusiasm would be treated as suspicious.

· Participant observers also run the risk of 'going native' or developing too close an identification with the group that they are studying. In Item A, it was the 'internal struggle between identification with the boys and abhorrence of their violence' which led the observer to abandon his research.

· A major problem for participant observers is the degree to which their presence distorts the behaviour of the group. The author of Item A recognizes this.

· Participant observation can impose a considerable strain on the researcher. In Items A and C the strains inherent in the situation will have made accurate record keeping difficult. The researcher would not be able to use a tape recorder, so would need to write notes after the event, relying on memory. Memory tends to be highly selective, perhaps even more so when the researcher is already tired and strained.

· In Item B the fieldworker is leaving his home and family to spend time in the forest. The hunting and unfamiliar diet may have increased the chance of his suffering an accident or illness.

· Participant observation can be very disruptive for members of the researcher's family.

ACTIVITY 6: HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

Teacher's note

This activity focuses on historical documents as a useful secondary source for the sociologist. Students will find relevant reading in Chapter 14, pp. 920–5.

1 *Key points:*

· As a day-to-day record of political events and the author's immediate reflections upon them, the diary should be an accurate record, and as such is valuable to the sociologist. The author cannot 'adjust' his record of what happened or his opinions, with hindsight. The political diary may provide information about past events which is not available from other sources. However, as pointed out, a diary is a subjective account. What people observe and how they interpret what they see will vary. The diary as a record of the past can only be one individual's viewpoint rather than an objective record of the past.

· The slave narrative provides a vivid and insightful view into a way of life that is difficult for us to imagine. It produces rich data. However, when using such material we must bear in mind several factors. First, as initially spoken accounts, they were intentionally dramatic and vivid, to hold the attention of the audience. Second, the accounts had a distinctive political motive: to promote social change. The life stories of the slaves may therefore have been modified with this end in view. Furthermore, the ex-slaves may have made genuine errors of memory or changed accounts of their own behaviour to present themselves in a more favourable light. However, having said this, Item B seems to suggest that there is a high level of consistency between the accounts given by different ex-slaves, which helps to justify our use of them.

· As with other historical documents, the researcher must be sure that both the slave narrative and the diary are 'genuine' and not written by someone other than the given author. Also, with a document written some time in the past and in a different social setting, it is always difficult for the sociologist to leave on one side modern-day norms and values. Thus, when considering the food and accommodation given to a slave, it might be helpful for a sociologist also to know the sort of food and accommodation typical of poor white farmhands.

· Both the diary and the slave narrative have a useful part to play in providing evidence for the sociologist. The narrative, like the biography, has the benefit of hindsight and may be able to provide insights which the diary lacks. On the other hand, the diary, as a more immediate record of events, may be a more objectively accurate account of the past.

2 (a)

The posters all reflect upon the women's emancipation movement. They give some clues to the ways in which suffragettes viewed themselves and were viewed by others. Sociologists might interpret the posters in the following ways:

Poster I: The forced feeding of a suffragette in prison is depicted in this poster. The audience is invited to sympathize with the helpless young suffragette and denounce the practice of forced feeding. We can see from the poster that by this stage the suffragettes were claiming the status of political prisoners. This poster is clearly political and aimed at undermining the Liberal government of the day.

Poster II: This poster appears to take a fairly balanced view of the suffragettes. It depicts a 'modern girl' who is dreaming of 'bookish' matters previously the preserve of men. She is an attractive young woman, modern-dressed, with a strong, forceful stance. She is trampling on a pretty young girl in a traditional dress and a young man, presumably symbolizing her rejection of the old-fashioned idea of women solely as wives and mothers. Her parents look on, her father rather grudging and cross and her mother anxious. They are powerless to control their daughter, who seems eager to stride out and make a career for herself. The cartoon demonstrates that suffragettes want independence and equality, but that this does not mean that they are necessarily unattractive and mannish.

Poster III: This poster is clearly anti-suffragette but it is good natured in tone. The two women are depicted as plain and unattractive; they carry umbrellas as weapons and are not averse to striking the unfortunate policeman. For his part, we are told that he is 'distressed' at having to remove them and has been 'tattered and torn' by their onslaught. The purpose of this poster seems to be to make fun of suffragettes and enlist the public's sympathy for the police whose job it is to protect 'the house that man built'.

Poster IV: This leaflet was handed out by suffragettes to persuade politicians that women should have the vote. It describes all the roles which women successfully fill, and contrasts them with some of the roles which less deserving or less competent men fill. The aim seems to be to persuade politicians of the justice of the case for the extension of the vote to women and to enlist their support.

(b)

Each person brings to their interpretation their own attitudes and prejudices. It is impossible to do otherwise. We can try to put ourselves in the position of the people of the past, but even at the time these posters were produced they would probably have meant different things to different people and would still do so today. Perhaps the best that can be done is to recognize that we can never completely immerse ourselves in the concerns of another age. By seeking out further historical evidence, sociologists may be able to improve their interpretations and analysis of this type of evidence.

3 *Key points:*

· When sociologists are using historical documents, they must attempt to assess their quality and applicability. They will generally do this by comparing documents from various sources so as to check their consistency. The authors of these documents will have had different motives, and the researcher must try to ascertain whether or not a document is genuine or a forgery. Some years ago, for instance, 'Hitler's diaries' were discovered – they subsequently proved to be forgeries.

· The researcher must also be sure that they fully understand what is written – a particular problem when examining very ancient documents or those written in a foreign language. Equally importantly, does the researcher understand the same meanings as the original audience? In the case of both the slave narrative and the posters, it is difficult to be confident of this. Consequently, researchers will attempt to check the validity and reliability of documents by comparing them with contemporary records. Such a precaution will also reveal how 'typical' a particular account is, or whether it is just a 'one off'.

ACTIVITY 7: BEING IMPARTIAL

Teacher's note

This activity looks at objectivity and value freedom in research. Students may wish to read Chapter 14, pp. 923–5 and 931–3.

1 If research is to be objective, both the method of research and the results of the research must be independent of the values, beliefs and interests of the researcher. If research is funded by a government or company which has its own agenda, then bias may be introduced into the results of that research. This may work against the interests of both individuals and communities. For example, the failure effectively to research initial outbreaks of BSE has also led to the distress and expense of widespread culling of animals, both here and abroad. More importantly, many people have died as a result of catching the human form of BSE (CJD) through eating contaminated beef. The apparent failure of scientists to be accurate in their predictions about BSE has also contributed to science itself being brought into disrepute. Partly as a consequence of this, some people have become sceptical about accepting other scientific evidence which has potential benefits for them, e.g. new immunizations.

The problem of funding affects both the social sciences and natural sciences. Therefore, it seems fair to conclude that any scientific research which fails to be objective in its methodology and conclusions could be seen as at best misleading and at worst dangerous.

2 Weber (Item D) believed that sociologists should be value free, that their personal values and beliefs should be kept out of research and that they should not make judgements – in other words, that the process of research should be objective. However, Weber did admit that values enter into the choice of topic to be studied. He refers to this as 'value reference' and believes that it is legitimate to select subjects which the sociologist believes important for society. Becker (Item B) celebrates this relationship and takes it further. He believes that sociologists should choose topics whose research may improve society. This view assumes that sociologists have free choice. As can be seen in Item A, if sociologists are to obtain funding and progress in their careers, they may be in no position to choose the research topic – it may be decided by government or business. These funding organizations may prefer that some areas of social life remain unresearched and therefore largely ignored.

3 Item C is taken from an Internet website for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). When assessing the material, we must remember that while it is eminently respectable, the WWF does have its own agenda. It is committed to wildlife conservation. This will clearly influence the choice of topic discussed, the expert quoted and their purpose in producing the website. The authors of Item C are unashamedly expressing their value orientation – in this case, the preservation of orang-utans. With respect to the objectivity of the research, we are given no information about how their statistics were obtained. The assertion that Borneo and Sumatra have lost 90 per cent of their population of orang-utans over the last 100 years may need to be taken with caution, considering the difficulty of estimating populations of 100 years ago. However, since the WWF are a well-established and respected organization we would hope and expect that most of their findings could be relied upon as objective. The expert witness quoted adds weight to this hope and expectation, since a well-known expert would be unwilling to endorse inaccurate information.

chapter 15

SOCIOLOGICAL
THEORY

Activity 1: PROMOTING ORDER

ITEM A – GRAFFITI ARTISTS

Source: Alamy Images

ITEM C – BRITISH TROOPS IN BASRA

Source: Atef Hussan/Reuters

ITEM E – THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE

ITEM B – SENTENCED TO DEATH
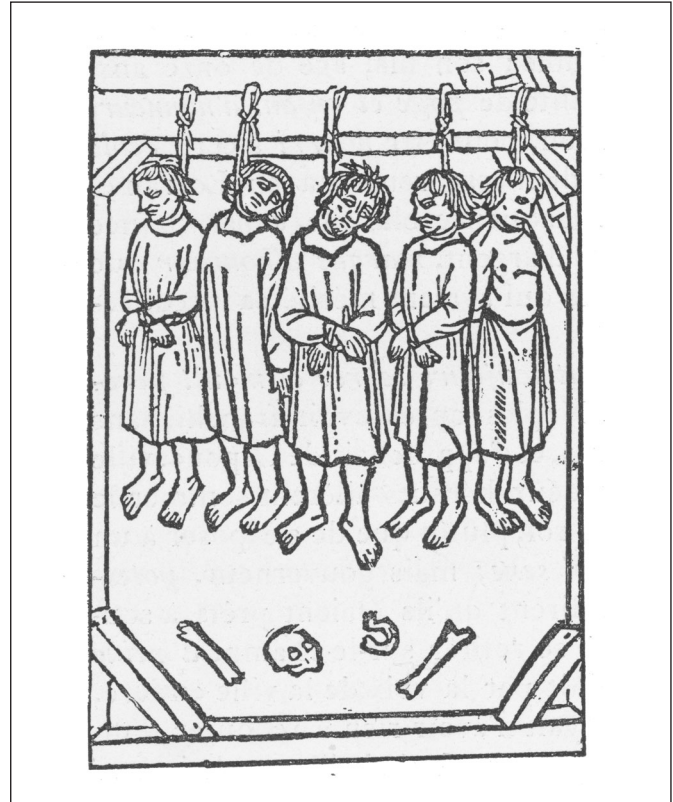
Source: Frank Baron/Mary Evans Picture Library

ITEM D – RUGBY FANS

Source: Mark Dadswell/Getty Images

Source: Mark Dunlea/PA/Reuters

QUESTIONS

1 Explain why Emile Durkheim might have seen Items A and B as beneficial to society.

2 Would you classify Items C, D and E as demonstrating functional or dysfunctional behaviours? Explain your answer.

Activity 2: MARXISM, POLITICAL PROTEST AND THE WELFARE STATE

ITEM A – COUNCIL TAX
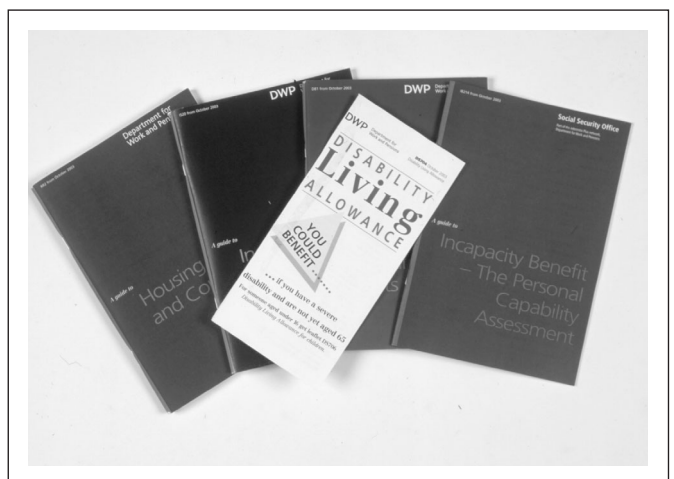

Source: PA Photos

ITEM B – ANTI-WAR PROTEST

London's Embankment disappears under part of the hundreds of thousands who turned out to march through the capital to a rally in Hyde Park in February.

Source: Dan Chung *Observer,* 28 December 2003

ITEM C – TOP-UP FEES

Source: PA Photos

ITEM D – BENEFITS

Source: Roger Scruton

QUESTIONS

1 **Marxists believe that all political confrontations have their roots in the class system. Consider the extent to which Items A, B and C undermine this view.**

2 **Using a traditional Marxist perspective, consider how Item D might be interpreted as in the interests of the ruling class.**

Activity 3: MAX WEBER AND BUREAUCRACY

ITEM A – THE HOLOCAUST

Zygmunt Bauman contends: 'The Holocaust may serve us as a paradigm of modern bureaucratic rationality.' ... The Holocaust can be seen as an example of modern social engineering in which the goal was the production of a perfectly rational society. To the Nazis, this perfect society was free of Jews (as well as gypsies, gays, lesbians and the disabled) ...

The Holocaust has all the basic characteristics of rationalization ... First, it was an efficient mechanism for the destruction of massive numbers of human beings. For example, early experiments showed that bullets were inefficient; the Nazis eventually settled on gas as the most efficient means of destroying people. The Nazis also found it efficient to use members of the Jewish community to perform a variety of tasks (for example, choosing the next group of victims) that they otherwise would have had to perform themselves. Many Jews cooperated because it seemed like the 'rational' thing to do (they might be able to save others, or themselves) in such a rationalized system.

Second, the Holocaust emphasized calculability, for instance, how many people could be killed in the shortest period of time.

There was certainly little attention paid to the quality of the life, or even of the death, of the Jews as they marched inexorably to the gas chambers.

In another quantitative sense, the Holocaust has the dubious distinction of being seen as the most extreme form of mass exterminations: 'Like everything else done in the modern-rational, planned, scientifically informed, expert, efficiently managed, coordinated way, the Holocaust left behind and put to shame all its alleged premodern equivalents, exposing them as punitive, wasteful and ineffective by comparison. Like everything else in our modern society, the Holocaust was an accomplishment in every respect superior ... it towers above the past genocidal episodes.'

Third, there was an effort to make mass murder predictable. Thus, the whole process had an assembly-line quality about it. Trains snaked their way toward the concentration camps, victims lined up and followed a set series of steps. Once the process was complete, camp workers produced stacks of dead bodies for systematic disposal.

Finally, the victims were controlled by a huge non-human technology including the camps, the train system, the crematoria, and the bureaucracy that managed the entire process. Here is how Feingold describes some elements of this non-human technology: '[Auschwitz] was also a mundane extension of the modern factory system. Rather than producing goods, the raw material was human beings and the end-product was death, so many units per day marked carefully on the managers' production charts. The chimneys, the very symbols of the modern factory system, poured forth acrid smoke produced by burning human flesh. The brilliantly organized railroad grid of modern Europe carried a new kind of raw material to the factories. It did so in the same manner as with other cargo ... Engineers designed the crematoria; managers designed the system of bureaucracy that worked with a zest and efficiency ... What we witnessed was nothing less than a massive scheme of social engineering.'

Source: G. Ritzer, The McDonaldization of Society, Pine Forge Press, 1996

ITEM B – GERMAN PROPAGANDA

A 1935 cartoon from the magazine Der Stürmer showing a Jewish butcher making sausages out of rats.
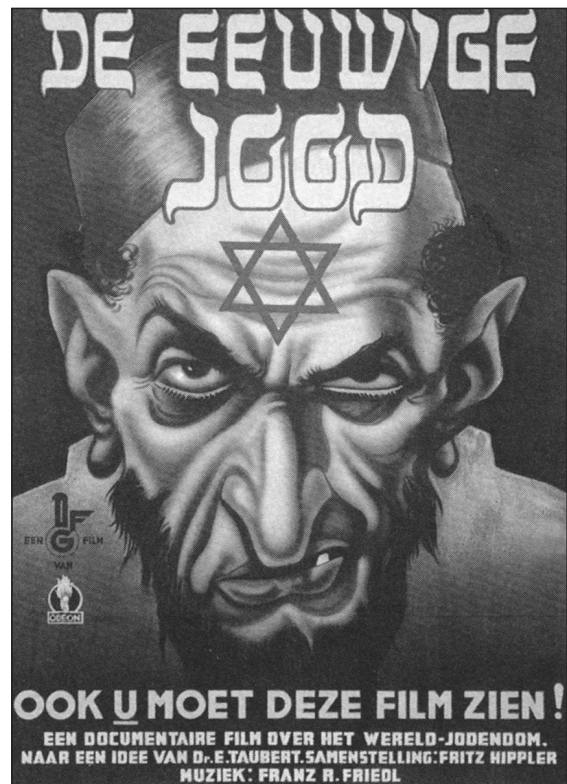
A poster in Dutch from 1941 for a German anti-Jewish film.

Source: M. Haralambos (ed.) Sociology: A New Approach, Causeway Press, 1996

QUESTIONS

1 Weber saw modern society as dominated by a process of rationalization. Explain this term, making reference to Item A.

2 How might the propaganda message contained in the cartoons (Item B) contribute to the 'efficiency' of mass murder?

3 What elements of the irrationality of rationality are apparent in Item A?

Activity 4: SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

ITEM A – CYRIL MEETS PIERRE

He hardly noticed the tall, dark Frenchman sitting behind a pot of palms ... this was none other than Pierre Melon, the most dangerous criminal in France ... As Cyril waddled past, Pierre Melon's black eyes glittered ... A year or so before, Cyril had ... almost by accident ... been responsible for the capture and arrest of the dangerous international criminal Madame Big. This had got back to France, though not entirely correctly. Pierre remembered it was two rival criminal gangs, one led by Bonhamy, one by Madame Big. There had been a terrible battle. The Bonhamy gang had won. Pierre looked through the leaves of the palm tree. So this was the great Cyril Bonhamy – astonishing. Pierre could not disguise the evil looking scar down one cheek but he did at least wear a thick black wig. But this Bonhamy, his only disguise was a little tent of paper on his nose. [Cyril wore the paper to protect his sunburned nose from further damage.] Amazing! Such courage would be useful when you were about to carry out the most dangerous raid of your life. Especially when your right-hand man had just collapsed with crab poisoning.

Pierre looked carefully round the lounge, then pulled the wig low down over his forehead until it almost touched his eyebrows. Arriving at Cyril's sofa, he bowed low and said, 'Excuse me – but can I 'ave the honour of meeting so distinguished an eengleeshman?' Cyril looked up from the telly. 'Of course, how do you do?'

'Ah, the great Mr Bonhamy.'

'Oh you're too kind', said Cyril modestly. 'A few books, an article or two ...'

Pierre filled their glasses. 'A votre santé', he said.

'A votre santey, Mr Melon', said Cyril.

'So you speak French', said Pierre, still more delighted. 'Vous parlez français?'

'Oh, wee', said Cyril airily. 'Wee wee.'

Pierre now put his mouth close to Cyril's ear and began to talk very rapidly in French. Cyril nodded and said 'wee' without the faintest idea what he was talking about, until suddenly he heard the words Bibliothèque de Nice. At once everything became clear. This charming man was obviously a high official, probably even the Director of the Nice Public Library. He had heard of Cyril's difficulty over le Beebles. He had come to apologise and arrange a special visit. At one point, Pierre unrolled a map of little roads and streets. Some of them seemed to be rivers. This baffled Cyril until he realized that it was a map of medieval Nice, the time when le Beebles were painted. 'Wee', said Cyril, nodding and smiling. 'Wee, wee, wee.'

'And so', finished Pierre, 'we meet here tomorrow night at the same time? That is agreed?'

'Wee', said Cyril, 'I'm delighted'.

Source: J. Gaythorne-Hardy, *Cyril Bonhamy and the Great Drain Robbery*, Jonathan Cape, 1983

ITEM B – THE ROBBERY

Promptly, at eleven o'clock the next night, Pierre appeared in the telly lounge of the Hotel Splendid. 'Isn't it rather late to see Bibles?' Deirdre had asked. 'Oh no, not in France', Cyril had said.

Bold as he was, Pierre had not quite dared to set out on the most dangerous robbery of his career disguised only in a wig. He had added a large ginger moustache and dark glasses. He was deeply impressed, therefore, to see that the great Cyril Bonhamy, the most wanted criminal in England, still had no more than the little tent of paper covering his nose. As Cyril came up, Pierre couldn't help pointing at his nose. 'Such courage', he said admiringly. 'Courage', said Cyril, slightly nettled. 'I don't see how it takes much courage ...'. Anyway thought Cyril, I don't really think your appearance is suitable for the Director of the Bibliothèque de Nice. However, he was too polite to say anything about the ginger moustache. Too polite as well to ask Pierre why on earth he was wearing gum boots.

Outside the Hotel Splendid, there was another surprise. Standing in the warm, night air under a street lamp, the Director of the Bibliothèque de Nice put his fingers in his mouth and gave a low whistle. Instantly, two large figures came silently from the shadows and joined them.

Cyril supposed that they were visiting professors, except they simply looked like two thugs. They were dressed in sweaters and jeans and were also wearing gum boots. They were each carrying sacks, bulging with – with what? Perhaps they had brought more Beebles to add to the collection. One was called Gaston Something, the other Michelle, Something else ...

Pierre crossed the wide almost empty street towards the Bibliothèque de Nice. But, on the other side, instead of continuing up the broad steps and in through the large doors of the library, Pierre stopped on the pavement ... To Cyril's astonishment, he then began to lever up a manhole cover in the pavement ... Pierre handed Cyril a torch and whispered 'queeek'. With some difficulty Cyril got through the hole and down the steep iron ladder ... They were in darkness ... Cyril flashed his torch about ... He could see the round openings of four tunnels, one of which was an underground way of getting into the library and the room with the Beebles ... The air was warm and smelled rather unpleasant ... you could actually see chunks of 'la sewarge' bobbing about in the black stream ... it was not just sewers part of the way, it was all sewers and only sewers. It suddenly dawned on Cyril that sewers were the whole point. There has been a most embarrassing mistake. Pierre Melon and these men were nothing to do with the Beebles at all, but belonged to some sort of club for exploring sewers ...

After an hour it became plain the club was lost ... This time they took the middle sewer and after about half an hour had apparently reached their destination. To Cyril it just looked like any other part of any other awful French sewer, but now Gaston and Michelle became extremely busy. They took several lumps of what Cyril recognized as explosives out of one of the sacks and began to fix them to the sewer ceiling ...

At last, thought Cyril, they are doing something sensible. No doubt if you get lost in the sewers you are allowed to sort of explode yourself free.

There was a short pause, then the echoing 'crrrupt' of an explosion. Bricks were everywhere and a good deal of 'la sewarge' had been blown about but a fair sized jagged hole had been blown in the roof. They all looked up – Cyril could see no sign of the street in the blackness above.

... they lifted him carefully up through the hole and Cyril managed to pull himself onto the floor of the room they had exploded into ... The walls were lined with shelves covered with metal boxes. Some of the metal boxes on the floor had been burst open by the explosion, scattering their contents. Necklaces, rings, bracelets, some with huge diamonds and rubies, lay everywhere ... Cyril realized the terrible truth. These men were not learned professors interested in Beebles. Nor were they members of a club for exploring sewers. They were robbers – and robbers, he could now see, of the most dangerous and violent sort ...

Source: J. Gaythorne-Hardy, *Cyril Bonhamy and the Great Drain Robbery*, Jonathan Cape, 1983

QUESTIONS

1 **Look at Item A. What verbal and non-verbal cues did Cyril and Pierre use to make sense of their encounter?**

2 **'Individual actions need to be examined from the point of view of the actor's interpretation of the situation in which they find themselves.' How does this statement help us to understand the behaviour of Cyril Bonhamy as described in Item B?**

3 **Briefly suggest why the Items are amusing.**

Activity 5: AN INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVE

ITEM A – TOTAL INSTITUTIONS

A total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life.

Source: E. Goffman, Asylums, Penguin Books, 1961

ITEM C – NEGOTIATED ORDER

In Michael Reece Hospital, as unquestionably in most sizeable establishments, hardly anyone knows all the exact rules, much less exactly what situation they apply to. Rules would be forgotten or fall into disuse, a situation exacerbated by considerable staff turnover. What generally happened was that, as in other establishments, rules were called upon by the nurses when it suited them. They were stretched, broken or enforced according to what would make their work easier. The administrative structure recognized the value of this flexible attitude to rules, as it was seen by them as more effective in achieving the central aim of the institution of good patient care. Other than a few legal rules, most house rules were the subject of negotiation – 'Does this rule apply here? To whom? To what degree? For how long? With what sanctions?' Negotiation is ongoingly apparent in the treatment of patients. While all members of staff can be seen as holding the same general aim of good patient care with a view to returning the patient to the community, how this could be achieved is often viewed differently by different professional groups. For example, some put faith in drug treatment and electric shock therapy, others favour talking problems through with patients. Physicians may, therefore, have to work hard to obtain the cooperation of nurses in their therapeutic programme. Nurses are in a position to subvert the programme, complain to the administration staff or openly disagree. Negotiation between the various parties must be continuous. Similarly, aides [non-professional workers] see themselves as having an important role in patient care. They spend considerable time talking to patients and may recognize little difference between what they do and psychotherapy. Like other members of staff, they wish to control their working environment as far as possible and may engage in games of give and take, cooperating in the decisions made by the doctors and nurses in return for more control over where and how they work.

The situation is further complicated by different assessments of what 'being cured' actually means. Nurses and aides tend to see this in terms of day-to-day behaviour, while psychiatrists' evaluations involve less obvious personality changes. Members of the team might therefore disagree on how successfully a particular treatment was progressing. Since each patient is regarded as an individual with particular treatment needs, no formal rules can be applied to their treatment. Again, it is a matter of negotiation between the various parties involved.

We must not forget that patients also take part in this complex web of negotiation. They may enter into bargaining both to gain privileges and influence their own course of treatment. They too have some power. Often they play an important role in maintaining order on the ward by making demands on other patients and personnel to keep down volumes of noise or by keeping potential violence to a minimum. Their cooperation in day-to-day activities must be obtained for the smooth running of the organization.

If an organization is marked by personnel trained in different fields, or occupational groups trained in different traditions, then the concept of negotiated order is likely to apply to them. Therefore, in universities, corporations and government agencies as well as in hospitals, rules will become a matter of ongoing negotiation.

Source: adapted from A. Strauss, L. Schatzman, D. Ehrlich, R. Bucher and M. Sabshin, 'The hospital and negotiated order', in P. Worsley (ed.) Modern Sociology, 2nd edn, Penguin Books, 1978

ITEM B – TOTAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE SELF

The recruit comes into the establishment with a conception of himself made possible by certain stable social arrangements in their home world. Upon entrance, they are immediately stripped of the support provided by these arrangements – they begin a series of abasements and degradations of self. Their selves are systematically mortified.

Upon admission to the total institution, the individual is likely to be stripped of his usual appearance and the equipment that sustains it – clothing, comb, soap, shaving equipment, cosmetics, needle and thread. There will be a violation of their informational preserves regarding self. During admission, facts about the inmate's social status and past behaviour – especially discredited facts – are collected and recorded in a dossier available to staff. Later, individual confessions may be expected, for example, to the psychiatrist.

There may be a sense of contamination reflected in unclean food, soiled towels and dirty showers and toilets. This may be exacerbated by close contacts with other inmates whom one would normally wish to avoid. There may be a heightened sense of physical insecurity – fear of electric shock therapy in the mental hospital, fear of beatings in prison or even fear of rape or other molestation from other inmates. Privacy will be non-existent and all decisions will be taken out of the hands of the inmates. While this mortification process goes on, the inmate receives instruction in the privilege system. Insofar as mortification has stripped them of their civilian identity, the privilege system provides a framework for personal reorganization. 'Rewards and privileges are held out in exchange for obedience to staff in action and spirit.' The privilege system is the means by which the organization obtains cooperation from inmates who may have little cause to cooperate.

Privileges consist of such things as having a better job, better rooms and beds, minor luxuries like coffee, a little more privacy and going outside the ward without supervision, having more access to doctors and being treated with some kindness and respect.

Punishments which can be applied are suspension of privileges, ridicule, corporal punishment threats, locking the inmate up, putting the inmate on the list for shock treatment, and regular assignments to such unpleasant tasks as cleaning up after the soilers.

Source: adapted from E. Goffman, Asylums, Penguin Books, 1961

QUESTIONS

1 **With reference to Item A, briefly describe the main characteristics of total institutions. Give some examples of total institutions in your answer.**

2 **Goffman has described total institutions as 'forcing houses for changing people'. Making some reference to Item B, describe the process by which 'self' is changed.**

3 **'Rules within social institutions are negotiable.' Discuss this statement with reference to Item C.**

Activity 6: POSTMODERNISM AND HIGH MODERNITY

ITEM A – TRAVELLERS

Source: Rex Features

ITEM B – CREATURE COMFORTS

Source: Sally & Richard Greenhill

ITEM C – NO JOBS

Source: CP Photo Archive

ITEM D – THE BIG FREEZE

Global warming is altering the salinity of the oceans, a change that scientists think could chill Britain's climate for hundreds of years by turning off the Gulf Stream. It is possible that within our lifetimes we will see icebergs in the English Channel.

Source: adpated from *Independent on Sunday*, 25 January 2004

ITEM E – WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION
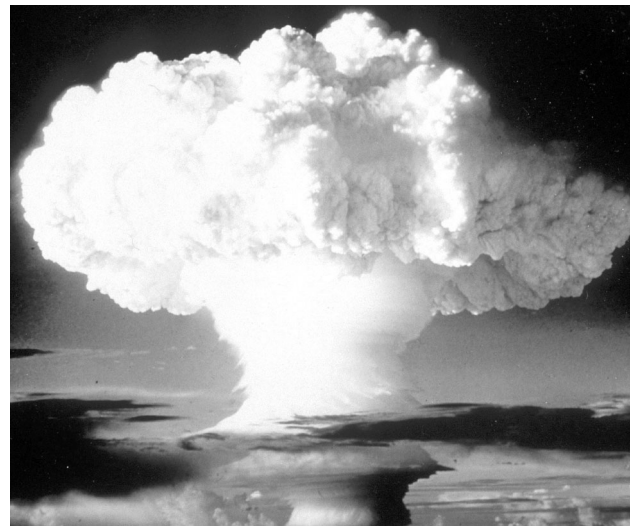
Source: Rex Features

ITEM F – BIG BROTHER

Source: Rex Features

QUESTIONS

1 'People's choices remain constrained by growing inequalities of wealth and income.' Assess this statement in the light of Items A and B.

2 Making reference to Items D, E and F:
  (a) What risks are endemic within high modernity?
  (b) Why are such risks difficult to tackle?

Chapter 15: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY – Answers

ACTIVITY 1: PROMOTING ORDER

Teacher's note

This activity examines aspects of the functionalist approach to sociology. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 15, pp. 936–44.

1 *Key points:*

· Durkheim believed that a limited amount of crime and deviance in society was functional and stabilizing. From his viewpoint, society could not exist without it, since it serves to test the boundaries of the collective conscience. The graffiti artists in Item A could be arrested and punished. If they were, the public could react by either feeling sympathy for them or by condemning them. If they are condemned, then this demonstrates that they have indeed transgressed against the collective conscience, while simultaneously reinforcing the boundaries of what is acceptable. But if there is sympathy for them – perhaps because they are seen as expressing generally held feelings of alienation – then their behaviour may usher in social change. For Durkheim, the role of deviance in promoting social change is fundamental, since without it societies would become static and would atrophy.

· Making reference to Item B, the people whom the law punishes by hanging are generally people who have transgressed against the central mores of society. Their deaths make a clear statement that they have gone too far in flouting the collective conscience. The publicity and drama surrounding such deaths will serve to make known to everyone in society what are the outer limits of acceptable behaviour and warn others against what Durkheim believed to be the ever-present danger of people giving way to selfish self-interest.

2 *Key points:*

· An activity can be seen as functional if it appears to contribute to the overall smooth running and stability of society. The cheerful celebration of fans after the Welsh rugby victory seems to do just this (Item D). The victory brings people closer together and celebrates such values as fair play, team loyalty, competition and nationalism. Such victories and their celebration can be seen as integrating and stabilizing within society and in this case helping to maintain a Welsh identity.

· In a similar fashion the jubilee celebrations might be seen as functional. They celebrate a rite of passage, in much the same way as any anniversary, marking the time when the Queen has reigned for 50 years. They bring together members of society in celebration, and reiterate the people's acceptance of her as monarch and Head of State.

· Classifying Item C is more difficult on the one hand the troops pictured could be seen as dealing with public disorder which, if allowed to continue, might lead to a total breakdown in law and order. Their presence could therefore be seen as functional. On the other hand, since they are since they are controlling a population who have not invited them into their society they can equally well be seen as an occupying force. If they are viewed in this second way then their presence may be dysfunctional or destabilizing. It may be that social stability can only be reestablished when those occupying forces leave the country.

ACTIVITY 2: MARXISM, POLITICAL PROTEST AND THE WELFARE STATE

Teacher's note

In this activity we examine aspects of the Marxist approach to protest movements. Appropriate reading may be found in Chapter 15, pp. 944–50.

1 *Key points:*

· It is difficult to know whether there is any social class basis to the protests depicted. In Item A the pensioners are protesting against the level of local taxation. Council tax is currently levied on a sliding scale, more tax being paid by those who live in more valuable properties. The Item does not give us very much information about who the protestors

are. They could be pensioners with very low incomes living in small houses. On the other hand, they could be people living in valuable properties who are relatively well off but feel that it is unjust that they should pay a relatively high rate of taxation. The financial and class characteristics of the elderly vary widely. They are in no way a homogenous group, although they may have particular interests in common, e.g. living on fixed incomes, and therefore come together to protest on the basis of those interests. This protest may well have been largely organized and attended by people from the middle class living in larger and more valuable homes whose age and consequent lack of employments have made this tax particularly onerous.

· Item B shows protestors against the Iraqi war. It has been argued by some that this particular war benefits Western capitalism by safeguarding the availability of oil from the Middle East. Moreover, the war may well generate large profits for the manufacturers of military hardware, both directly and through the incentive it gives to other societies to arm themselves 'just in case' they are attacked. If we see these military manufacturers as part of a capitalist class, and Western capitalist societies as exploitative of less developed societies, then this protest might well be seen as a class protest. However, it may be that many of the people marching are in no way self-consciously protesting against capitalism, but rather expressing a general abhorrence of war. Moreover, the protestors may well have been drawn from every level of society.

· As we know from our study of education (see Chapter 11), students are much more likely to be drawn from middle-class homes than unskilled manual backgrounds. The protest by students in Item C could then be seen as a largely middle-class protest. The present Labour government has argued that it must increase fees if universities are to be adequately funded and access is to be widened to include more working class young people. But many opponents of these plans believe that raising the level of fees will make access even more problematical for underprivileged groups and discourage them further. Which of these viewpoints people find the more convincing will influence whether or not these young people can be seen as acting to promote wider access and greater equality of opportunity, or whether they are acting in support of largely middle-class interests.

2 *Key points:*

· Item D illustrates important aspects of the welfare state. Welfare benefits may be viewed by Marxists as sops to the working class, doing nothing to redistribute income and wealth but serving to diffuse opposition. These benefits undoubtedly give security to working people by providing a level of financial assistance in times of unemployment or incapacity. However, evidence suggests that these benefits are largely financed from the working class itself, so they do not cost the capitalist class anything. Moreover, a welfare reserve pool of labour may be called back into employment when needed by the economy. From this viewpoint, the welfare state can be seen to be very much in the interests of the capitalist class.

ACTIVITY 3: MAX WEBER AND BUREAUCRACY

Teacher's note

This activity deals with rationalization and the characteristics of bureaucrats. Particular attention is paid to Weber's ideal-type bureaucracy. Reading that will assist with this topic can be found in Chapter 15, pp. 953–61.

1 In rational action, people have a clear goal and make a systematic assessment of the most efficient ways of reaching that goal. The goal of the Nazis was the establishment of a purified race by eliminating those who they believed to be inferior, and in Item A we are told how they carefully assessed the most efficient means of achieving this goal. The system was similar to assembly-line production in a factory: raw materials went in at one end and a standardized product emerged at the other. In other words, the system was highly predictable. The whole organization was presided over and directed by a bureaucracy. For Weber, a bureaucracy was the prime example of the process of rationalization –

rational action in an institutional form. It is therefore in line with his predictions that a systematic process of mass murder be presided over by a bureaucratic organization.

2 The cartoons depict stereotypes of Jews. The impact of both is to dehumanize Jews, depicting them as less than human and unlike other people. Acceptance of these images will have made it easier for guards and soldiers to take part in the Holocaust without any feelings of guilt or reluctance. The 'efficiency' of mass murder would therefore be enhanced by such propaganda.

3 Weber feared that the development of modern bureaucracies would lead to bureaucrats becoming little men clinging to their jobs, following rules regardless and showing no judgement or initiative. With reference to Item A, it seems that these fears were realized. It is hardly believable that normal individuals would administer such a system of mass destruction unless they had abandoned all personal initiative and had come to rely entirely on rules and obedience to superiors.

The Holocaust can be seen as representing the extreme of irrationality. Those involved were dehumanized to such an extent that it was impossible for any normal human relationships to flourish. The German propaganda machine (see Item B) was enlisted to dehumanize the victims, who were reduced to names and numbers on a list. Moreover, the operatives of this system were dehumanized by becoming mass murderers who acted in an unthinking way. Finally, the whole process was unreasonable and irrational in that the goal of a 'pure' race was an illusion, unobtainable in reality.

ACTIVITY 4: SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Teacher's note

In this activity we try to help students understand symbolic interactionism by applying aspects of this approach to the examination of a popular book of children's fiction. Chapter 15, pp. 961–4, will assist with this topic.

1 *Key points:*
· Pierre defines the situation in terms of what he believes he already knows about Cyril. On the basis of an unreliable account of Cyril's encounter with Madame Big, Pierre recognizes Cyril as a dangerous criminal. In the light of this assumption, he defines Cyril's paper tent as a disguise. The ineffectiveness of this disguise he sees as further evidence of Cyril's courage. Cyril saying 'Wee' and 'A votre sante' is enough to persuade Pierre that Cyril must speak fluent French. As a result, he is happy to explain his plan to Cyril in French and delighted to include this complete stranger in his planned robbery.
· When Cyril is initially approached by Pierre, he accepts being called the 'great Mr Bonhamy' by a complete stranger as he believes himself to be an important person on the basis of a few published books and articles. Pierre's approach and proffered drinks are therefore calmly accepted. Cyril clearly believes that he understands more French than he does and even when he has not 'the faintest idea' what Pierre is talking about he makes sense of the situation in terms of what he thinks he already knows.
· Both parties in this encounter use verbal and non-verbal cues to make sense of the situation, while ignoring those cues which might require them to re-examine their original assumptions.

2 This extract illustrates the way in which people's actions are often a response to what they believe is taking place rather than what is actually happening. Cyril manages to dismiss or explain away all the conflicting evidence because he is convinced that his original interpretation of the situation is correct. When he is finally forced to reassess his interpretation, he does so in such a way as to minimize his sense of his own stupidity – he concludes that he must be with members of a club who explore sewers. Having accepted this redefinition of the situation Cyril adheres to it even when the gang produces explosives and blasts a hole in the roof. It is only when he is faced with the indisputable evidence of 'huge diamonds and rubies' that he is forced to abandon his previous assumptions and recognize that he is taking part in a robbery with a desperate band of criminals.

3 These extracts are amusing because of the apparent foolishness of the people involved. The actors stick rigidly to their initial definitions of the situation and are unwilling to change despite the many verbal and non-verbal cues which point to the need to reassess their initial assumptions. As the action proceeds it becomes even more absurd that Cyril can stick

to his view that a night-time rendezvous taking him through the sewers of Nice with a band of strangers can have an innocent purpose.

ACTIVITY 5: AN INTERACTIONIST APPROACH

Teacher's note

Here we explore further aspects of the interactionist perspective. There is no essential reading for this activity, but students may wish to refer to Chapter 15, pp. 961–4.

1 In a total institution, all of a person's life is lived within the same institution, and interactions will involve the same group of people. Inmates are cut off from long-standing family relationships, friends and workmates and from involvement in everyday affairs. Total institutions involve a formally ordered and administered daily routine. For example, in a boarding school or in a military camp there will be certain times set for getting up, going to bed, having meals. Monasteries, prisons, concentration camps and hospitals, while established for quite different purposes, have many similar characteristics and can be classed as total institutions.

2 *Key points:*
· Inmates entering the mental hospital are systematically stripped of their identity. They lose the established relationships with family, friends and workmates who reflect the sense of who they are. They may also lose their names, their clothes, personal possessions, makeup and so on, which present to the world the image of both who they think they are and who they want to be. In monastic orders and prisons people may have to wear regulation clothes which are often coarse and may have been worn by others. In concentration camps people were stripped of their names and became mere numbers. The inmates may also feel a further loss of identity through degrading procedures which might involve stripping, body searches and shaving the head.
· People's sense of identity is also tied up with the feedback they get from other people. When on the 'outside', who we are is reflected in the words and actions of our family and friends. Once 'inside', our identity is reflected by other inmates and custodians. Staff may treat inmates as the sort of people that they do not feel they are. Enforced contact with other inmates will have a similar effect. In prisons, for example, inmates cannot choose their cellmates. They may be forced to mix with people whom they would normally avoid. They may feel propelled towards accepting a despised identity, for example, as a 'con'.
· The individual's sense of self may be further assaulted by a feeling of contamination fostered by the physical surroundings in which they find themselves. Toilets may be unclean, and food may be of an inferior quality. Inmates may be frightened that they will be assaulted or raped or even subject to electric shock therapy. Each represents an assault both on the body and also on their sense of who and what they are.
· This 'mortification' process may also involve personal abasement – for example, having to accept abuse, or having to seek permission for the smallest activity. In some respects the inmate is reduced to the status of a child. Personal privacy may be reduced to such an extent that toilet doors must remain unlocked or personal excrement is publicly displayed, as was the case in the notorious 'slopping out' procedure in prisons.
· Once people have been stripped of their identity, they may slowly rebuild an identity through the privilege system, as described in Item B.
· Despite these attempts to change personal identity, Goffman believes that for many inmates permanent changes to the self do not occur. This is partly because they are able to defend themselves from the assault of the institution by using such strategies as 'playing it cool'.

3 *Key points:*
· Item C adopts an interactionist perspective in its examination of a mental hospital. It recognizes that there are both rules and a hierarchy of social roles but, in practice, neither is fixed or inflexible.
· How rules are applied involves negotiation between the parties involved. The individual therapeutic needs of the patient, as perceived by the different parties involved (patients, doctors, nurses, aides, administrators), will be considered, as will the needs of each group to make their work and life more pleasant. In this process of negotiation, each party has some power. For instance, nurses can circumvent doctors' decisions, patients can be uncooperative. Thus, the outcome of each negotiation is unique and depends upon the dynamics of that particular interaction.
· Similarly, the hierarchy is not fixed. Doctors may need to persuade nurses and aides to cooperate with their treatment plan. Likewise,

nurses and aides may rely on patients to help maintain a satisfactory working environment on the ward, and their relationships with the patients will be tempered by this recognition.

ACTIVITY 6: POSTMODERNISM AND HIGH MODERNITY

Teacher's note

This activity addresses aspects of postmodernism and high modernity. Relevant reading can be found in Chapter 15, pp. 972–83.

1 Postmodernists generally hold the view that individuals are free to choose their identity as they see fit. They see people as no longer constrained by their backgrounds – their ethnicity, gender or class – but free to make life style choices that express their current feelings of who they are. The wide range of consumer products available in much of the world following globalization means that there are any number of options on offer. What we choose to wear, where we live, our car and the food that we eat – all become expressions of ourselves. The views outlined in the question clearly challenges this. Among others, G. Philo and D. Miller have argued that our choices are constrained, especially by our incomes and wealth. If we refer to the Items, it may be that many of us would choose to live in the house depicted, but few of us could afford to do so. However, it can be argued that there is a limited element of choice even for those on low incomes. For example, rich and poor alike can reject materialism and adopt an alternative lifestyle. Similarly, people from any income group have choice over the ways in which they express their sexuality.

2 (a) *Key points:*
· Sociologists such as Anthony Giddens have referred to the risks inherent in high modernity. Item A illustrates the problem of unemployment. Under our current system of capitalism, economies experience periods of boom and slump. These economic cycles affect not only single states but can also rapidly spread to trading partners and result in worldwide recession.
· There are ever-present ecological risks, one of which is referred to in Item D. Industrialization has had some unforeseen consequences, like global warming and the depletion of the ozone layer. There may also be risks that we have not yet identified.
· Over the course of time, advances in science and technology have meant that the instruments of war have become all the more deadly (Item E). There is now a variety of weapons of mass destruction available, possibly held by many different nations, some of which might be considered politically unstable.
· Some people fear that with our modern technology total population control has become a possibility. Surveillance cameras watch us in the street (Item F), satellite tracking is now being used on offenders, and the use of mobile phones permits the pinpointing of our location, while vast amounts of personal information is stored on computer. There may then be a danger that a totalitarian state could emerge.

2 (b) *Key points:*
· At present, most political decisions are made at the national level. But we can see that many of the risks facing high modernity are international or global. Many attempts have been made to establish international agreement on a variety of issues, such as the level of greenhouse gas emissions. Unfortunately, talks often break down and even when agreements are reached, parties may fail to comply. In the face of these setbacks, individual governments may feel that it is either pointless or not their responsibility to act independently. Therefore, little is done to tackle problems.
· In some instances, it is difficult to know how to act to prevent a possible disaster. Well-intentioned interventions based on current scientific knowledge could have unforeseen consequences which might make the problem still worse in the longer term.