

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES
BA DEGREE IN SOCIAL SCIENCES (NEW SYLLABUS) – LEVEL 3
FINAL EXAMINATION - 2014/2015
SSU1251 – UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY AND CULTURE
DURATION: THREE HOURS (03 HOURS)



Date: 08th November 2014

Time: 09.30 a.m. -12.30 p.m.

Answer only five (05) questions. Each question carries 20 marks.

1. What are the different ways in which culture has been defined? Which of these definitions make the most sense to you and why? Illustrate your argument with relevant examples.
2. Discuss changes that have taken place within the family structure and how these reflect the broader changes that have taken place within modern society.
3. In a recent survey conducted among youth in Sri Lanka, it was reported that youth said that they are more conscious of their ethnic identity since the war ended in 2009 than before. Based on sociological explanations of the linkages between ethnicity and identity, critically examine why youth might feel this way.
4. Discuss the differences between the 'individual' self and the 'relational' self. How do these differences affect social relationships in different contexts?
5. Explain the difference between a culturally relativist approach to religion and an ethnocentric approach to religion using relevant examples.
6. The city of Colombo has been recently undergoing massive transformations. Some of these 'beautification' projects have involved evicting people from their homes. Using Weber's definition of power, examine how unequal power relations can affect certain population groups.

7. Describe the key features of functionalism and examine why functionalism has been critiqued in recent times.
8. Discuss the significance of symbols and language within the symbolic interactionist perspective.
9. Explain what is meant by binary thinking. Critically examine how binary categories are used in everyday language.
10. Write short notes on the following:
 - a. Second Wave Feminism
 - b. Dialectical materialism
 - c. Social Action
 - d. Power and discourse

*******Copyrights Reserved*******