

THE CHRISTIE METHOD

CAPE · SOCIOLOGY · UNIT 1

CAPE SOCIOLOGY, UNIT 1

*The Sociological Perspective — Society, Studied for
the Exam*



THE WATER LILIES OF NUMBER NINETEEN, CORENTYNE

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THE CHRISTIE METHOD

CAPE SOCIOLOGY, UNIT 1 — THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

*Sociological Concepts, Perspectives and Methods · Social
Institutions · Social Stratification — A Christie Method Study
Guide for the CXC CAPE Sociology Examination*



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The Christie Method: CAPE Sociology, Unit 1 — The Sociological Perspective
Sociological Concepts, Perspectives and Methods · Social Institutions · Social
Stratification — A Christie Method Study Guide for the CXC CAPE Sociology
Examination

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*For my parents, who built everything I stand on — long nights
and sacrifice of love.*

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A Note Before We Begin — How to Use This Book

This is *The Christie Method: CAPE Sociology, Unit 1 — The Sociological Perspective*. It covers, completely, the three Modules of Unit 1 of the CXC CAPE Sociology syllabus: **Sociological Concepts, Perspectives and Methods; Social Institutions: Family, Religion, Education; and Social Stratification**. Its companion volume, *Unit 2 — Development and Social Change*, covers Population and Development, Crime and Deviance, and Caribbean Social Issues.

Three promises govern every page.

1. **The syllabus is the map.** This book is written to the syllabus in force, **CXC A27/U2/13** (effective for examinations from May–June 2014), which replaced CXC A27/U2/04.¹ Every chapter opens with a syllabus box telling you exactly which Specific Objectives and Content items it covers, cited by number, so that you can check me against the document the examiner is checking you against. Get your own copy: it is a free download from cxc.org, and the examiner writes every question from it.
2. **Everything is receipted.** Every thinker, study and figure in this book is real and checkable. Studies carry their authors and dates; Caribbean scholars are named as the examiner expects them to be named; statistics carry their source. The endnotes and the bibliography let you verify anything you doubt. I walk with receipts, and so should you — a sociology essay without named sociologists is a newspaper column, and it is marked like one.
3. **Guyana first, the Caribbean always.** Where a Guyanese study or example exists, it leads: this is your society, studied by scholars who walked your villages. But CAPE is a Caribbean examination, and

almost every essay question asks you to write about "a named Caribbean society." You will meet Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Haiti throughout, because the strongest scripts can compare two territories and say what is Caribbean and what is only Guyanese.

Every chapter walks the same five beats:

Beat	Name	What it does
1	The Story	Why this topic matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life — you see home first, theory second.
2	The Law of the Topic	The core content, plainly, mapped to the syllabus objective it serves. ("The law of a topic" is the Christie Method's name for what a thing <i>is</i> and how it <i>works</i> .)
3	Worked Receipts	An exam answer built step by step — nothing skipped.
4	Counsel Says	The strategy box: what the examiner rewards, the trap in the question, how top scripts open.
5	Try It Yuhself	Practice in exam format — with answer plans in Appendix I. Never answer-less drilling.

The assessment, in one view (from the syllabus itself).² Paper 01 — 45 compulsory multiple-choice items, 15 on each Module, 1 hour 30 minutes, weighted to 90 marks, **30 per cent**. Paper 02 — six essay questions, two on each Module; you answer **three, one from each Module**, 25 marks each, 2 hours 30 minutes, **50 per cent**. Paper 03/1 — the School-Based Assessment, a research paper of 1,300–1,500 words, marked out of 60, **20 per cent**; for Unit 1 the project must concern a social group or organisation in your community. Private candidates sit Paper 03/2 instead — three compulsory questions of 20 marks each in 1 hour 30 minutes, testing concepts, Caribbean institutions and research design. Chapter Fourteen is the private candidate's war room.

How Paper 02 essays are marked — learn this before you learn anything else. Each 25-mark essay is marked holistically against three qualities: **Knowledge and Understanding (8 marks)**, **Interpretation and Application (10 marks)** and **Analysis and Evaluation (7 marks)**.³ Notice where the weight sits. Ten of the twenty-five marks are for *applying* sociology to a real Caribbean society with examples and named studies, and seven are for *concluding* — weighing the argument and saying where you stand. A candidate who

knows every theorist and never applies or evaluates is capped near the middle of the scale. The examiners then place the whole essay on a seven-level ladder: Level 1, outstanding, 25 marks; Level 2, excellent, 22–24; Level 3, very good, 19–21; Level 4, good, 16–18; Level 5, satisfactory, 13–15; Level 6, limited, 10–12; Level 7, unsatisfactory, 0–9.⁴ In 2025 the mean Paper 02 score across the region was 79.06 out of 150 — just under 53 per cent.⁵ The gap between the mean and a Level 2 script is not knowledge; it is *application and conclusion*. This book drills both in every chapter.

The verbs are commands. The syllabus ends with a glossary of the behavioural verbs the examiners use, and each one is an instruction about the *shape* of the answer.⁶ *Discuss* means define the key concepts, explore the issues, present reasoned arguments for and against with detailed examples — a conclusion is welcome but not compulsory. *Evaluate* means weigh evidence and make a judgement; both sides must be considered, and the logic of your reasons matters more than the view you hold. *Assess* means present reasons for the importance of particular structures, relationships or approaches. *Analyse* means examine methodically, in detail, and then draw a conclusion. *Examine* means define, state what is, and explore related concepts. When a question says "assess the extent to which," the words "the extent to which" are the whole question: the examiner wants a measured verdict — *largely, partly, only in these respects* — not a yes or a no.

A word about this book and your teacher. Nothing here replaces the classroom, the SBA supervision or the syllabus. It is written to sit beside them: the friend at the next desk who has read everything twice, kept the receipts, and knows what the examiner is looking for.

This book is always free for students at littlerockgy.com/study-guides. If you are holding a paid copy, thank you — the paid edition supports the free library, so that the next student pays nothing.

Walk good, and let us begin where sociology itself begins — with the ordinary morning that is not ordinary at all.

ENDNOTES — A NOTE BEFORE WE BEGIN

1. Caribbean Examinations Council, *CAPE Sociology Syllabus*, CXC A27/U2/13 (Effective for examinations from May–June 2014), p. 3:

"This document CXC A27/U2/13 replaces CXC A27/U2/04 issued in 2005." Structure of the syllabus at p. 3.

2. CXC A27/U2/13, "Outline of Assessment," pp. 26–28; "Regulations for Private Candidates," p. 37; "Assessment Grid," p. 38.
3. CXC A27/U2/13, "CAPE Sociology — Holistic Mark Scheme, Paper 02 Essay Questions" (specimen mark scheme appended to the syllabus).
4. CXC A27/U2/13, "Procedures for Holistic Marking: Sociology Paper 2," levels table; restated in Caribbean Examinations Council, *Report on Candidates' Work in the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination, May–June 2025, Sociology Unit 1* (2025), p. 1.
5. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 3 (Paper 02 mean 79.06/150 in 2025 against 83.01/150 in 2024).
6. CXC A27/U2/13, "Glossary of Behavioural Verbs Used in the Sociology Examination," pp. 39–40.

**PART ONE — MODULE 1:
SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS,
PERSPECTIVES AND METHODS**



Chapter One — The Sociological Eye: What Sociology Is and Where It Came From



SYLLABUS MAP — *This chapter covers CAPE Sociology Unit 1, Module 1, Specific Objective 1: trace the development of Sociology from the classical to the contemporary period in mainstream and Caribbean Sociology — Content 1(a) development of Sociology as a discipline and 1(b) the development of Sociology in the Caribbean.*¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Stand at the Stelling in New Amsterdam at half past six on a weekday morning and watch. The speedboats come across the Berbice River from Rosignol loaded with schoolchildren in five different uniforms; the market women are already at their stalls; a minibus conductor calls a route in a rhythm his grandfather would recognise; somebody's phone plays a chutney song, somebody else's plays gospel. Nobody organised this. No one wrote the timetable. And yet it repeats itself every morning, in the same order, with the same faces in the same places, as regular as the tide the river runs on.

That regularity is the first thing a sociologist notices, and it is the thing everyone else walks past. Why do the children wear uniforms at all? Why does the market woman's daughter now sit a CAPE examination her grandmother was never allowed near? Why do some families in that crowd eat rice from their own backdam while others buy it, and why are the two groups not randomly mixed? Why is the conductor a young man, and the vendor a woman? None of these questions can be answered by looking at one person. They can only be answered by looking at the *pattern* — at the way individuals are held together, sorted, taught and

constrained by something larger than any of them.

That "something larger" is what sociology studies. The syllabus puts it exactly: sociology is "a scientific study of social interactions, social institutions, social patterns and social change of human society guided by sociological theories and methods."² Notice every word. *Scientific* — it is evidence, not opinion. *Interactions, institutions, patterns, change* — the four things you will study for two years. *Guided by theories and methods* — the tools you will be examined on.

The American sociologist C. Wright Mills gave the habit a name in 1959: the **sociological imagination**, the ability to connect "personal troubles" to "public issues" — to see that one unemployed man has a trouble, but fifteen thousand unemployed men in one county have an issue whose causes lie in the structure of the economy, not in the character of the men.³ You already have this imagination in rough form; every Guyanese who has ever said "is not he alone, is the whole system" has used it. This Module teaches you to use it with precision, and to name the people who used it before you.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. Why sociology was born when it was born

Sociology is a child of upheaval. Three revolutions between about 1750 and 1850 broke the old order of Europe so completely that thinking people were forced to ask a new question — not "how should society be?" (philosophers had asked that for two thousand years) but "how does society actually *work*, and why is it changing under our feet?"

- The **Industrial Revolution** pulled people off the land into factory towns, created a wage-working class and a new class of owners, and made poverty, crowding and disease visible on a scale never seen before.
- The **French Revolution** of 1789 showed that a social order believed to be God-given could be overthrown in a season, and asked what, if anything, held a society together once kings and priests no longer did.
- The **scientific revolution** and the Enlightenment gave thinkers a model: if Newton could find laws governing the planets, perhaps

there were laws governing societies, discoverable by the same methods of observation and reason.

The Frenchman **Auguste Comte** (1798–1857) gave the discipline its name. In the fourth volume of his *Cours de philosophie positive* (1838) he coined the word *sociologie* for what he had been calling "social physics," and argued that human knowledge passes through three stages — theological, metaphysical and finally *positive*, or scientific.⁴ Sociology, in his plan, would be the queen of the sciences, discovering the laws of social order (*statics*) and social progress (*dynamics*). The label he gave his method — **positivism** — is still the name of one whole side of the methods debate you will meet in Chapter Five.

2. The three founders every candidate must know

The examiner does not expect a history of philosophy. The examiner expects you to name the three classical thinkers, say what question each asked, and use them as the roots of the perspectives in Chapter Three.

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), France. Durkheim's question was the French Revolution's question: *what holds a society together?* His answer was **social solidarity**, and his method was to treat social phenomena as **social facts** — ways of acting and thinking that exist outside any individual and exercise a constraining power over him, to be studied "as things."⁵ In *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893) he argued that simple societies are held together by *mechanical solidarity* (everyone alike, bound by a shared *collective conscience*) while modern societies are held together by *organic solidarity* (everyone different, bound by interdependence). In *Suicide* (1897) he did something no one had done before: he took the most private act imaginable and showed, with official statistics from across Europe, that suicide rates varied with the degree of social integration and regulation — higher among Protestants than Catholics, among the unmarried than the married, and in times of rapid economic change, a condition he named **anomie**, normlessness.⁶ Durkheim is the root of **functionalism**.

Karl Marx (1818–1883), Germany and England. Marx's question was the Industrial Revolution's question: *who owns what, and what follows from it?* For Marx the engine of history is the **conflict between classes** over the **means of production** — land, factories, capital. Under capitalism there are two great classes: the **bourgeoisie**, who own

the means of production, and the **proletariat**, who own only their labour and must sell it to live. The relationship is one of **exploitation** (the worker produces more value than he is paid) and **alienation** (the worker is estranged from his product, his work, his fellows and himself). Society's economic *base* shapes its legal, political and cultural *superstructure*, and the ruling ideas of any age are the ideas of its ruling class — a **false consciousness** that hides exploitation from the exploited.⁷ Marx is the root of the **conflict perspective**, and, as you will see in Module 3, of the Caribbean plantation school.

Max Weber (1864–1920), Germany. Weber's question was subtler: *what does social action mean to the people who perform it?* Against Marx, he argued that ideas can drive economic change as well as follow it: in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904–05) he showed how the Calvinist anxiety about salvation produced a disciplined, thrifty, hard-working ethic that helped modern capitalism take root.⁸ Against Durkheim, he insisted that sociology must practise *Verstehen* — interpretive understanding of the meanings behind action — not just count external facts. He also gave us the three-dimensional view of stratification (**class, status and party**) that Module 3 relies on, and the analysis of **bureaucracy** and **authority** (traditional, charismatic, legal-rational). Weber is the root of **interpretivism** and a grandfather of **interactionism**.

Two more names complete the classical shelf. **Herbert Spencer** (1820–1903) drew the **organic analogy** — society as a body whose institutions, like organs, each perform a function for the whole — that functionalism inherited.⁹ **Harriet Martineau** (1802–1876), who translated Comte into English and wrote *Society in America* (1837) from her own fieldwork, is increasingly recognised as a founding sociologist in her own right, and as the first to insist that the position of women was a test of any society's claims to freedom.

3. From the classical to the contemporary

The classical thinkers set the questions; the twentieth century built the perspectives. In the United States, **Talcott Parsons** (1902–1979) turned Durkheim's insights into a grand theory of the **social system**, and **Robert K. Merton** refined it with the ideas of *manifest* and *latent* functions and *dysfunction*. At the University of Chicago, **George**

Herbert Mead, Charles Horton Cooley and later **Herbert Blumer** and **Erving Goffman** built **symbolic interactionism** from the inside of everyday life. In Europe and America after the 1960s, **feminist sociology** (Ann Oakley, Sylvia Walby, bell hooks) exposed the fact that the founders had written a sociology of men, and **neo-Marxists** (Antonio Gramsci's idea of *hegemony*, Louis Althusser's *ideological state apparatuses*) updated the conflict perspective for societies where the ruling class rules by consent as much as by force. All of these you will meet properly in Chapter Three.

4. The development of sociology in the Caribbean – Content 1(b)

Here is where most textbooks written elsewhere stop, and where your examiner starts paying attention. The 2025 examiners' report on Unit 1 recommended in plain words that candidates "should be more familiar with Caribbean theorists and studies."¹⁰ Learn this section as a story with dates.

The colonial social survey (1930s–1940s). Caribbean sociology did not begin at a university; it began in the smoke of the labour riots of 1934–1938 that swept from St Kitts to Jamaica to British Guiana. The British Government's **Moyne Commission** (1938–39) investigated the conditions behind the unrest, and its report — so damning that its publication was delayed until 1945 — described housing, wages, health and family life across the region with an outsider's eye.¹¹ **T. S. Simey**, sent out as social welfare adviser, wrote *Welfare and Planning in the West Indies* (1946), which classified Caribbean families into types and, in the manner of the day, treated the working-class family as a problem to be corrected.¹²

The first institutions (1948 onward). The University College of the West Indies opened at Mona, Jamaica, in 1948, and with it the **Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER)** — later the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) — and its journal *Social and Economic Studies*, which from 1953 became the place where Caribbean society was first studied by scholars who lived in it.¹³

The founding studies (1950s–1960s). Read these names as a roll-call; the examiner does.

- **Lloyd Braithwaite**, "Social Stratification in Trinidad" (*Social and Economic Studies*, 1953) — the first Caribbean study of how colour, class and ethnicity were fused into one ladder in a colonial society.¹⁴
- **R. T. Smith**, *The Negro Family in British Guiana* (1956) — a study of three Afro-Guyanese villages that gave the world the concept of the **matrifocal family**.¹⁵ The Caribbean's most famous family concept was minted in *your* country.
- **Edith Clarke**, *My Mother Who Fathered Me* (1957) — a Jamaican woman's study of three Jamaican communities, and the classic account of how economic circumstance shapes family form.¹⁶
- **M. G. Smith**, whose essays collected as *The Plural Society in the British West Indies* (1965) argued that Caribbean societies are held together not by shared values but by the political domination of one cultural section over others.¹⁷
- **Edward Kamau Brathwaite**, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770–1820* (1971), which answered Smith with the idea that a new, *creole* culture was forged out of the meeting of Europe and Africa.¹⁸
- **George Beckford**, *Persistent Poverty* (1972), and the **New World Group** (Lloyd Best, Kari Levitt, Norman Girvan), who explained Caribbean underdevelopment through the **plantation economy** that was never dismantled.¹⁹
- **Rex Nettleford**, *Mirror Mirror: Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica* (1970), on the cultural and racial identity of the post-independence Caribbean.²⁰

The critical turn (1980s onward). Susan Craig's edited volumes *Contemporary Caribbean: A Sociological Reader* (1981–82) — on your syllabus reading list — took stock of the field and asked whether the region was still importing its theories.²¹ **Caribbean feminist sociology** arrived with Rhoda Reddock's *Women, Labour and Politics in Trinidad and Tobago* (1994), Eudine Barriteau's *Confronting Power, Theorizing Gender* (2003) and Olive Senior's *Working Miracles* (1991), and Christine Barrow's *Family in the Caribbean* (1996) gathered the whole family debate into one book.²² In Guyana, Leo Despres's *Cultural Pluralism and Nationalist Politics in British Guiana* (1967), Brackette Williams's *Stains on My Name, War in My Veins* (1991) and Ralph Premdas's *Ethnic Conflict and Development: The Case of Guyana* (1995)

applied and tested the plural-society idea on the society that tests it hardest.²³

The pattern to remember for the examiner: Caribbean sociology moved from *being studied by outsiders as a problem* (Simey), to *studying itself* (ISER and the founding generation), to *theorising itself* (plural, creole and plantation society), to *criticising its own borrowed tools* (Craig, the feminists).

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *"Sociology in the Caribbean began as the study of a problem and became the study of a people." Discuss this statement with reference to the development of Sociology in the Caribbean.*

Step 1 — Decode the verb and the claim. *Discuss* means define, explore both sides with examples, and reason. The claim has two halves ("a problem" / "a people") and a direction ("began ... became"). Your essay must show the movement and then judge whether the claim is fair.

Step 2 — Knowledge and Understanding (8 marks). Define sociology (the syllabus definition). Show you know the mainstream roots — Comte, Durkheim, Marx, Weber — in one tight paragraph, because Caribbean sociology inherited their tools. Then set out the Caribbean timeline: Moyne Commission and Simey; ISER 1948 and *Social and Economic Studies*; the founding studies of the 1950s; the theories of the 1960s–70s; the critical and feminist turn.

Step 3 — Interpretation and Application (10 marks). This is where the marks are. Take the "problem" half: Simey's *Welfare and Planning* classified the working-class family as disorganised, measured against a European nuclear ideal. Take the "people" half: R. T. Smith in British Guiana and Edith Clarke in Jamaica lived in the villages, described the matrifocal household as an adaptation to economic life, not a failure. Then show the theorising: M. G. Smith's plural society, Brathwaite's creole society, Beckford's plantation society were *explanations built from Caribbean history*, not imported.

Step 4 — Analysis and Evaluation (7 marks). Is the claim fair? Largely yes — but complicate it. Even the founding generation borrowed

its methods (Smith and Clarke were trained in British social anthropology); Susan Craig argued in the 1980s that the region still imported theory; and feminist sociologists showed that "the people" studied were, until the 1990s, mostly men studied by men. Conclude: the movement from problem to people is real, but it is unfinished, and the honest word is *becoming*.

Step 5 — The opening sentence. Top scripts open by taking a position in the first line: *"The statement is broadly true: Caribbean sociology was born in the reports of colonial commissioners who saw a problem, and matured in the work of scholars who saw a society — but the maturity is still incomplete, and this essay will show why."*

BEAT 4 · COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Name, date, finding.** Every Caribbean scholar you cite should come with all three: *R. T. Smith (1956) found, in three Afro-Guyanese villages, that...* A name without a finding is decoration; the examiner is looking for what the study *showed*.
- **The examiner's own list.** The 2025 report named M. G. Smith, Lloyd Braithwaite, Edward Kamau Brathwaite, George Beckford, Selwyn Ryan, Derek Gordon, Carl Stone and Rhoda Reddock.²⁴ If those names appear correctly in your scripts, you are already writing above the mean.
- **Guyana is a named Caribbean society.** When a question says "a named Caribbean society," Guyana qualifies — and it comes with a home advantage: the matrifocal family (R. T. Smith), plural society at its most tested (Despres, Premdas) and the plantation (Rodney) are all *Guyanese* case studies.
- **The trap:** writing a history of European philosophy for a page and a half and reaching the Caribbean in the last paragraph. The classical founders get one paragraph. The Caribbean gets the essay.
- **Budget your minutes.** Three essays in 150 minutes is fifty minutes each: five to plan, forty to write, five to read back. A plan of six lines — position, three application points, two evaluation points, conclusion — is the difference between a Level 4 and a Level 2.

BEAT 5 · TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Assess the contribution of any TWO classical sociologists to the development of Sociology as a discipline. (25 marks)

Essay 2. With reference to named studies, examine the view that the founding generation of Caribbean sociologists (1950s–1970s) built theories from Caribbean history rather than importing them. (25 marks)

Quick checks (Paper 01 style).

1. The term *sociologie* was coined by (A) Durkheim (B) Comte (C) Spencer (D) Weber.
2. Durkheim's *Suicide* (1897) is famous chiefly because it (A) explained suicide psychologically (B) used official statistics to show that a private act has social causes (C) rejected the scientific method (D) studied one individual in depth.
3. The concept of the *matrifocal family* was developed from fieldwork in (A) Jamaica (B) Trinidad (C) British Guiana (D) Barbados.
4. *Verstehen* is most associated with (A) Weber (B) Marx (C) Comte (D) Parsons.
5. The journal *Social and Economic Studies* is published by (A) CXC (B) the ISER/SALISES at UWI (C) the University of Guyana (D) CARICOM.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Three (the four perspectives grow from these roots) · Chapter Five (positivism and interpretivism begin with Comte, Durkheim and Weber) · Module 3, Chapter Eleven (M. G. Smith, Beckford and Brathwaite in full).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER ONE

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 1, Specific Objective 1; Content 1(a)–(b), p. 4.
2. CXC A27/U2/13, "Rationale," p. 1.
3. C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), ch. 1.

4. Auguste Comte, *Cours de philosophie positive*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1838), where the term *sociologie* first appears; on the law of three stages, vol. 1 (1830).
5. Émile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895; English trans., New York: Free Press, 1938), ch. 1 ("What is a social fact?") and ch. 2 (the rule that social facts be treated as things).
6. Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893); *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (1897; English trans., London: Routledge, 1952), Book II on egoistic, altruistic and anomic suicide.
7. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), Part I; Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1 (1867), Part III on surplus value; Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology* (written 1845–46), on ruling ideas.
8. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904–05; English trans. Talcott Parsons, London: Allen & Unwin, 1930); on *Verstehen*, Weber, *Economy and Society* (1922; English ed., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), Part I, ch. 1.
9. Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Sociology*, 3 vols. (London: Williams & Norgate, 1876–96), Part II, "The Inductions of Sociology," on society as an organism.
10. Caribbean Examinations Council, *Report on Candidates' Work, CAPE Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 7 (Recommendations, Module 3).
11. *West India Royal Commission Report* (the Moyne Report), Cmd. 6607 (London: HMSO, 1945); the Commission sat 1938–39.
12. T. S. Simey, *Welfare and Planning in the West Indies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946).
13. The Institute of Social and Economic Research was established at the University College of the West Indies, Mona, in 1948; *Social and Economic Studies* has been published from 1953; renamed the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) in 1999.
14. Lloyd Braithwaite, "Social Stratification in Trinidad: A Preliminary Analysis," *Social and Economic Studies* 2, nos. 2–3 (1953): 5–175.
15. Raymond T. Smith, *The Negro Family in British Guiana: Family Structure and Social Status in the Villages* (London: Routledge &

- Kegan Paul, 1956).
16. Edith Clarke, *My Mother Who Fathered Me: A Study of the Family in Three Selected Communities in Jamaica* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957).
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 23. Leo A. Despres, *Cultural Pluralism and Nationalist Politics in British Guiana* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1967); Brackette F. Williams, *Stains on My Name, War in My Veins: Guyana and the Politics of Cultural Struggle* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991); Ralph R. Premdas, *Ethnic Conflict and Development: The Case of Guyana* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995).
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Chapter Two — The Grammar of Society: The Fundamental Concepts

SYLLABUS MAP — *This chapter covers Module 1, Specific Objective 2: discuss the fundamental concepts of Sociology — Content 2: social order (structure, function, power); social change; status and roles; values, norms and sanctions; social group (primary and secondary, in-group and out-group); socialisation (types and agents — school, family, peer group, mass media, religion); culture (elements and characteristics).*¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

A Guyanese child learns the grammar of society before she learns the grammar of English. By the age of five she knows that you say "good morning" to a grown-up on the road whether you know them or not, and that failing to say it will be reported to your mother before you reach home. She knows that the eldest cousin gives instructions at the wake-house and the youngest carries chairs. She knows which uncle you do not ask for money and which auntie you do not cross. She knows the difference between the teasing of her own street (in-group) and the teasing of the next street (which is a fight). Nobody sat her down and taught her any of this in a lesson; she absorbed it the way she absorbed the language — by living inside it. Sociologists call that absorption **socialisation**, and the rules she absorbed **norms**, and the reasons behind the rules **values**, and the whole inherited design **culture**.

This chapter gives names to the things you already know. That sounds simple. It is not: the examiner tests these concepts in every paper, at every level, and the fifteen Paper 01 items on Module 1 lean on them heavily. More importantly, every essay you will ever write in this subject

uses these words as its bricks. A candidate who writes "society" when she means "social structure," or "role" when she means "status," is building on sand.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. Social order: structure, function, power

Social order is the fact that social life is patterned and predictable rather than random — the Stelling at half past six. Sociology explains order in three registers, and the syllabus names all three.

- **Structure.** The **social structure** is the enduring framework of relationships, institutions and positions within which individuals act: the family, the economy, the school system, the state, the pattern of classes and ethnic groups. Structure exists before you were born and will outlast you; it constrains what you can do (a Berbice fisherman cannot decide to be a Berbice fisherman if the river is fished out, or the licence system excludes him) and enables it (the same structure gives him a market to sell in).
- **Function.** A **function** is the contribution an institution or practice makes to the maintenance of the whole. The family socialises the young; religion binds the community; the school sorts people into occupations. Functionalists (Chapter Three) explain order by function.
- **Power.** **Power** is the capacity to achieve one's will despite resistance, in Weber's classic formulation; Weber distinguished raw power from **authority**, power that is accepted as legitimate — *traditional* (the village elder), *charismatic* (the preacher, the revolutionary) and *legal-rational* (the magistrate, whose authority comes from the office and the rules, not the person).² Conflict theorists explain order by power: society is orderly because some groups have the means to make it so.

2. Social change

Social change is a significant alteration over time in the structure, institutions or culture of a society. It may be *evolutionary* (gradual: the slow rise of women's participation in Caribbean higher education) or

revolutionary (sudden: emancipation in 1834–38, independence in 1966). Its sources include technology (the mobile phone remade Caribbean courtship and commerce in a decade), demographic movement (indentureship changed the ethnic structure of Guyana and Trinidad permanently), ideas (nationalism, feminism), conflict and environment. Every sociological perspective has a theory of change: functionalists see adaptation and differentiation, Marxists see class struggle, Weberians see ideas and rationalisation.

3. Status and roles

A **status** is a position in the social structure — mother, teacher, magistrate, Rastafarian, Berbician. The American anthropologist Ralph Linton (1936) drew the distinction the examiner loves: an **ascribed status** is assigned at birth or without choice (sex, ethnicity, birth order, being the eldest); an **achieved status** is earned by effort or choice (attorney, CAPE candidate, pastor).³ A **master status** is the one that overrides all others in how people treat you — in the plantation Caribbean, colour was the master status; in a courtroom, "the accused" is.

A **role** is the behaviour expected of a person occupying a status — the script that goes with the position. One status carries many roles (the teacher's role toward pupils, toward the head, toward parents: a **role set**, in Merton's term). **Role conflict** arises when the demands of two statuses collide — the nurse who is also the mother of a sick child on the night of her shift. **Role strain** arises within one status — the pastor who must both comfort and correct. Write these into essays on the family (the changing role of Caribbean women) and on education (the teacher's role set).

4. Values, norms and sanctions

A **value** is a shared idea about what is good, right and desirable — respect for elders, education as the road up, "family first." A **norm** is a specific rule of behaviour that puts a value into practice — greet adults on the road; do not wear shoes into the mandir; stand for the National Anthem. William Graham Sumner (1906) separated **folkways** (customary norms whose breach draws only mild disapproval — eating with the wrong hand) from **mores** (norms carrying strong moral weight — the incest taboo, the prohibition on stealing from your own family),

and from **laws**, mores that the state has written down and will enforce.⁴ A **sanction** is the reward or punishment that enforces a norm: **positive** (praise, a prize, a promotion) or **negative** (the steups, the shaming, the lash, the fine, the jail); **formal** (the school's detention, the court's sentence) or **informal** (the neighbour's silence). Together norms and sanctions are the machinery of **social control**, a concept Unit 2 returns to in Crime and Deviance.

5. Social groups

A **social group** is two or more people who interact regularly, share a sense of identity and expect certain behaviour of one another; a crowd at a cricket match is not a group until it starts to behave like one. Charles Horton Cooley (1909) distinguished **primary groups** — small, intimate, face-to-face, enduring, an end in themselves (the family, close friends, the yard) — from **secondary groups** — larger, impersonal, goal-directed (the school, the workplace, a political party).⁵ Sumner (1906) added **in-groups** ("we," to whom we feel loyalty) and **out-groups** ("they," toward whom we feel indifference or hostility); much of the sociology of ethnicity in the Caribbean, and of gang life, is the sociology of in-groups and out-groups.⁶ A **reference group** is one we measure ourselves against, whether or not we belong to it — the successful cousin abroad is a reference group of one for many Guyanese families.

6. Socialisation: types and agents

Socialisation is the lifelong process by which we learn the culture of our society and become able to take part in it. Sociologists separate **primary socialisation** (in early childhood, chiefly in the family: language, basic norms, the sense of self) from **secondary socialisation** (later, through school, peers, religion, media and work: the roles and rules of the wider society). **Anticipatory socialisation** is rehearsing a role before you occupy it (the sixth-former who already talks like a lawyer); **resocialisation** is the unlearning of an old self and the learning of a new one, most dramatically in what Goffman called **total institutions** — prisons, barracks, asylums.⁷

The syllabus names five **agents of socialisation**, and Paper 01 will ask you to distinguish them.

Agent	What it teaches	Caribbean illustration
Family	Language, gender roles, basic values, religion, the first self	The Indo-Guyanese joint household teaching deference to elders; the matrifocal household teaching a girl that women run things
School	Discipline, punctuality, competition, national identity, the hidden curriculum (Chapter Nine)	The uniform, the morning assembly, the anthem, the NGSA and CSEC "race"
Peer group	Independence from adults, youth culture, informal norms of the age set	The lime, the sports club, the WhatsApp group
Mass media	Consumption, images of success and beauty, foreign norms	Cable television and social media carrying North American norms into Caribbean living rooms; Marcia Forbes's <i>Music, Media and Adolescent Sexuality in Jamaica</i> (2010), on your syllabus list, is the Caribbean study to cite ⁸
Religion	Morality, ritual, community, meaning	The church, the mandir and the masjid as the first secondary institution most Guyanese children enter

Two theorists of the *self* are examinable here and belong to the interactionist perspective. **Cooley's looking-glass self** (1902): we come to see ourselves as we imagine others see us — we imagine our appearance to others, imagine their judgement, and feel pride or shame accordingly.⁹ **Mead's "I" and "me"** (1934): the self has an active, spontaneous side (the "I") and a socialised side made of internalised attitudes of others (the "me"); it develops through the *play stage* (taking the role of particular others — playing mother, playing teacher) and the *game stage* (taking the role of the **generalised other** — the whole team's rules at once).¹⁰

7. Culture: elements and characteristics

Edward Burnett Tylor gave the discipline its first definition in 1871: culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."¹¹ Sociologists divide it into **material culture** (the physical things a society makes — the logie, the koker, the tassa drum, the minibus) and **non-material culture** (its ideas — beliefs, values, norms, language, symbols).

Elements the examiner expects you to list: **symbols** (the flag, the Golden Arrowhead, a gesture), **language** (the carrier of culture — in Guyana, English, Creolese and the Indigenous languages, each carrying a world), **values, norms, beliefs**, and material objects. **Characteristics** the examiner expects: culture is **learned** (not inherited biologically), **shared** (it belongs to a group, not a person), **transmitted** (passed between generations — hence socialisation), **symbolic, cumulative** and **adaptive** (it changes to meet new conditions — chutney-soca is the sound of Indo-Caribbean culture adapting), **integrated** (its parts fit together) and **variable** (it differs from society to society and within one society).

Three more terms close the chapter. A **subculture** is a group within the society with its own distinct norms and values but broadly within the mainstream (Rastafari, the Berbice rice-farming community, the gaming generation). A **counterculture** rejects mainstream values outright. **Ethnocentrism** is judging another culture by the standards of your own; **cultural relativism** is the discipline of understanding a culture on its own terms — the sociologist's professional stance, and a stance the multi-ethnic Caribbean has had to learn the hard way.

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *With reference to a named Caribbean society, examine the role of any THREE agents of socialisation in transmitting culture from one generation to the next.*

Step 1 — Decode. *Examine* = define, state what is, explore. Three agents, one named society, and the concept being tested is *transmission of culture* — so the essay must connect each agent to *what* of culture it carries and *how*.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define socialisation (primary/secondary), culture (Tylor; elements; the characteristic that matters here — *transmitted*), and each chosen agent. Cite Cooley and Mead on how the self is built through others.

Step 3 — Application (10). Guyana. *Family*: primary socialisation of language and value — the Indo-Guyanese household transmitting religious observance and the norm of deference to elders; the

Afro-Guyanese matrifocal household transmitting female authority and self-reliance (R. T. Smith, 1956). *School*: the anthem, the pledge, the uniform, national heroes — transmitting a *Guyanese* identity across ethnic lines, which the family alone could not do; plus the hidden curriculum of punctuality and hierarchy. *Religion*: the mandir, masjid and church transmitting ritual, calendar (Phagwah, Eid, Easter) and moral norms; note that in Guyana religion is also an ethnic boundary. *Media* as the contrast case: the one agent transmitting a culture that is *not* the parents' — foreign norms of consumption and beauty (Forbes, 2010, on Jamaica).

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Which agent transmits *most*? Argue that the family transmits the deepest layer (language, self), the school the widest (a national culture), and the media the newest — and that the agents can conflict: the school teaches "One People, One Nation, One Destiny" while the home may teach ethnic loyalty, and the media teaches a third thing. Conclude that transmission in a plural society is a *negotiation* among agents, not a single pipe.

Step 5 — Open with the position: *"In Guyana, culture is not handed down by one hand but by several, and they do not always agree: the family transmits the self, the school transmits the nation, and the media transmits the world."*

BEAT 4 · COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Define, then use.** The examiner gives Knowledge marks for accurate definitions, but Application marks only when the concept *does work* in your example. "Ascribed status" earns once when defined and again when you show that colour was the master status of plantation society.
- **Pair the concept with its author.** Ascribed/achieved — Linton. Primary/secondary group — Cooley. In-group/out-group and folkways/mores — Sumner. Looking-glass self — Cooley. "I" and "me" — Mead. The name turns a common-sense point into a sociological one.
- **Paper 01 loves the pairs.** Fifteen items per Module: expect at least three on these concepts, usually as "which of the following is an example of...". Practise sorting: *being Amerindian* (ascribed), *being a*

CAPE candidate (achieved), *the yard* (primary group), *the ministry* (secondary group), *a steups* (informal negative sanction), *a fine* (formal negative sanction).

- **The trap:** describing culture as if it were only festivals and food. Culture is also the norm that says who speaks first at a meeting and the value that says a girl must "have something in her hand" before she marries. Depth of concept beats a list of festivals every time.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Assess the extent to which the family remains the most important agent of socialisation in contemporary Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 2. "Norms and sanctions are the invisible police of any society." Discuss this statement with reference to a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. A status assigned at birth is (A) achieved (B) ascribed (C) master (D) secondary.
2. According to Cooley, a primary group is characterised by (A) large size and impersonality (B) intimacy and face-to-face relations (C) formal rules (D) profit-making.
3. The "generalised other" is a concept of (A) Mead (B) Marx (C) Merton (D) Malinowski.
4. A steups directed at a badly behaved child is an example of (A) a formal positive sanction (B) an informal negative sanction (C) a folkway (D) a value.
5. Which of the following is NOT a characteristic of culture? (A) It is learned (B) It is shared (C) It is genetically inherited (D) It is transmitted.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Three (each perspective reads these concepts differently) · Chapter Seven (the family as primary socialiser) · Chapter Nine (the school's hidden curriculum) · Unit 2, Module 2 (social control, norms and

sanctions in Crime and Deviance).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER TWO

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 1, Specific Objective 2; Content 2, p. 5.
2. Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (1922; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), Part I, ch. 1, §16 (power, *Macht*) and ch. 3 (the three pure types of legitimate authority).
3. Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1936), ch. 8 ("Status and Role").
4. William Graham Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals* (Boston: Ginn, 1906).
5. Charles Horton Cooley, *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind* (New York: Scribner's, 1909), ch. 3 ("Primary Groups").
6. Sumner, *Folkways* (1906), ch. 1, §§13–15 (in-groups, out-groups, ethnocentrism).
7. Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (New York: Anchor, 1961).
8. Marcia Forbes, *Music, Media and Adolescent Sexuality in Jamaica* (Kingston: Arawak Publications, 2010) — listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 1 Resources, p. 6.
9. Charles Horton Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order* (New York: Scribner's, 1902), ch. 5.
10. George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), Part III.
11. Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London: John Murray, 1871), vol. 1, p. 1.

Chapter Three — Four Ways of Seeing: The Theoretical Perspectives



SYLLABUS MAP — This chapter covers Module 1, Specific Objective 3: evaluate the theoretical perspectives of Sociology — Content 3: (a) Consensus/Functionalist; (b) Conflict/Marxist; (c) Interactionist; (d) Feminist.¹ The same four perspectives are applied to the family, religion and education in Module 2, to stratification in Module 3, and to every Module of Unit 2 — so this is the most re-used chapter in the book.

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Four people stand at the koker at Number 19 on a Sunday afternoon and look at the same trench full of water lilies. The rice farmer sees drainage: a system of sluices, canals and pumps that keeps the land alive, each part doing its job for the whole — and if the koker fails, the whole polder floods. His daughter, home from the University of Guyana, sees ownership: who holds the land behind the dam, who leased it from whom after emancipation, why the big estate sold the front lands and kept the back, and who profits when the price of paddy moves. Her grandmother sees the meanings: the lilies are for Phagwah, the trench is where the boys learned to swim, the koker is where she met her husband — none of it is "just water." And a cousin visiting from Georgetown, who works with the women's shelter, asks a question nobody else has thought to ask: where are the women in this picture — who fetched water from that trench for a hundred years, and whose name is on the lease?

Those four ways of seeing are the four theoretical perspectives of the syllabus: **functionalism** (the farmer — parts serving a whole), **Marxism** (the daughter — ownership and conflict), **interactionism**

(the grandmother — meanings made in interaction), and **feminism** (the cousin — where are the women?). None of the four is wrong. Each sees something the others miss. The examiner will ask you, again and again, to *evaluate* them — to say what each sees, what each misses, and which sees a Caribbean situation best. This chapter arms you.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. The consensus/functionalist perspective

Core idea. Society is a system of interrelated parts, each of which performs a **function** that contributes to the stability of the whole; the system rests on a **consensus** — shared values and norms — into which members are socialised. It is a *structural* and *macro* perspective: it starts from society and works down to the individual.

Roots. Comte's search for the laws of social order; Spencer's **organic analogy** — society is like a living body, its institutions like organs, each necessary to the survival of the whole; Durkheim's **collective conscience** and his insistence that a social institution must be explained by the function it performs.²

Talcott Parsons (1951) is the perspective's architect. Every social system, he argued, must solve four **functional prerequisites**, remembered as **AGIL**: *Adaptation* to the environment (the economy), *Goal attainment* (the political system), *Integration* of members (religion, law, education), and *Latency* or pattern maintenance (the family, socialisation).³ Order is secured by **value consensus**: institutions socialise members into shared values, and the values are backed by sanctions.

Robert K. Merton (1949) made functionalism usable by loosening it. Not every practice is functional for everyone: a **dysfunction** is a consequence that harms the system (crime destabilises; but so, Merton noted, can too rigid a conformity). Functions may be **manifest** (intended and recognised — the school teaches literacy) or **latent** (unintended and hidden — the school keeps teenagers off the labour market and marries off the middle class to itself).⁴ Functionalists therefore look for *functional alternatives*: if the church declines, what else integrates?

Strengths. It explains stability, continuity and the sheer *fit* of institutions — why the family, school and economy seem designed for each other. It takes socialisation and shared values seriously, and it is testable in the Durkheimian way, with data. **Weaknesses.** It is conservative: whatever exists is assumed to serve a function, so inequality, patriarchy and the colour bar all look "functional." It cannot explain conflict or rapid change well, and it treats people as puppets of socialisation — "oversocialised," in Dennis Wrong's phrase.⁵ In the Caribbean, functionalism struggles hardest with the plural society: what value consensus held together enslaved Africans and the planters who owned them? M. G. Smith's answer — none; force did — is the Caribbean's standing objection to Parsons.

2. The conflict/Marxist perspective

Core idea. Society is not a consensus but an arena of **conflict between groups with opposed interests**, above all classes defined by their relation to the **means of production**. Order exists, but it is *imposed* by the powerful and *maintained* by ideology, not agreed. Change comes through struggle. It is also structural and macro — but it starts from the economy.

Marx's mechanism. The economic **base** (forces and relations of production) shapes the **superstructure** (law, politics, religion, education, ideas). Under capitalism the **bourgeoisie** extract **surplus value** from the **proletariat**; the state is "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie"; religion and the ruling ideas produce **false consciousness**, so that workers accept a system that exploits them.⁶ History moves by the **contradictions** in each mode of production, and capitalism's contradictions will produce **class consciousness** and, eventually, revolution.

Neo-Marxism. The twentieth century saw capitalism survive, and Marxists explained why. **Antonio Gramsci** (writing in a fascist prison, 1929–35) argued that the ruling class rules by **hegemony** — cultural and moral leadership that makes its worldview seem simply "common sense" — as much as by force; resistance therefore has to be cultural too.⁷ **Louis Althusser** (1970) distinguished the **repressive state apparatuses** (police, army, courts) from the **ideological state apparatuses** (family, church, school, media) that reproduce the relations of production by

shaping people's minds.⁸ Both ideas return in Module 2 on education and religion.

The Caribbean conflict school. Here the perspective was not imported but *reforged*. George Beckford's *Persistent Poverty* (1972) treated the plantation as a total institution whose ownership structure — foreign capital, local labour, export crops — reproduces poverty a century after emancipation; Lloyd Best's "pure plantation economy" model (1968) and Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972) and *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881–1905* (1981) are conflict analyses with the Caribbean, not the Manchester mill, as the case.⁹ Carl Stone's *Class, Race and Political Behaviour in Urban Jamaica* (1973) showed class and race interlocking in the politics of the post-independence city.¹⁰

Strengths. It explains inequality, power and change — the things functionalism explains worst. It connects the economy to culture and ideas. It fits the Caribbean's history of slavery, indenture and the plantation better than any other perspective, which is why the syllabus names Beckford and Brathwaite under stratification. **Weaknesses.** It is **economically deterministic**: not everything reduces to class. In the Caribbean, *race and colour* have often cut across class in ways Marx did not foresee — a point Braithwaite (1953) and M. G. Smith made against it — and *ethnicity* (Guyana, Trinidad) organises politics in ways a two-class model cannot capture. It predicted a revolution that did not come, and, like functionalism, it can treat the individual as a product of structure.

3. The interactionist perspective

Core idea. Society is not a thing out there but is *produced and reproduced in everyday interaction*. People act on the basis of the **meanings** things have for them; meanings arise from interaction and are handled and modified through an **interpretive process**.¹¹ It is a *micro, social action* perspective: it starts from the person and the encounter and works up.

Roots and builders. Weber's *Verstehen*; Cooley's looking-glass self and Mead's "I" and "me" (Chapter Two); **Herbert Blumer**, who coined the name "symbolic interactionism" (1969) and stated its three premises; **Erving Goffman**, whose *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) analysed social life as **dramaturgy** — front stage and back stage,

impression management, the roles we perform and the props we use¹² — and whose *Stigma* (1963) analysed the management of a "spoiled identity"; and **Howard Becker**, whose **labelling theory** (1963) — "deviance is not a quality of the act ... but a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an 'offender'" — is the interactionist idea the syllabus uses most, in education (the teacher's label) and in crime (the police's).¹³

Strengths. It restores the human being: choice, meaning, negotiation, the self. It explains how labels become destinies (the "dunce" who becomes one; the "bad boy" from the "bad area"), and it generated the qualitative methods — participant observation, unstructured interviews — of Chapter Six. **Weaknesses.** It is blind to structure and power: it can describe the teacher labelling the child but not *why* teachers from one class label children from another, or who wrote the rules the label enforces. It is hard to generalise from and hard to test. In the Caribbean it has produced fine studies of everyday life — Peter Wilson's *Crab Antics* (1973) on reputation and respectability, for instance¹⁴ — but it cannot on its own explain slavery, the plantation or the plural society.

4. The feminist perspective

Core idea. Mainstream sociology, from Comte to Parsons, was a sociology of men, by men, about men. Feminism puts **gender** — the socially constructed roles and expectations attached to biological sex — at the centre, and treats **patriarchy** (a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women, in Sylvia Walby's definition) as a structure as fundamental as class.¹⁵ It is a conflict perspective — but the conflict is between men and women, and it runs through the family, the workplace, religion, education, the law and the state.

Strands the examiner accepts. **Liberal feminism** seeks equality within the existing system through law, education and changed socialisation (Ann Oakley's *Sex, Gender and Society*, 1972, established the sex/gender distinction). **Marxist/socialist feminism** sees women's oppression as serving capitalism — the unpaid housewife reproduces the labour force for free (Margaret Benston; Oakley's *The Sociology of Housework*, 1974). **Radical feminism** treats patriarchy as the primary oppression, older than capitalism, rooted in the control of

women's bodies and labour (Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics*, 1970). **Black feminism** (bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman*, 1981) argues that race and class cannot be separated from gender — that a white feminism speaking for "all women" erased Black women — an insight the Caribbean took up as its own.¹⁶

Caribbean feminist sociology. Rhoda Reddock's *Women, Labour and Politics in Trinidad and Tobago* (1994) recovered the history of women's work under slavery, indenture and after; Olive Senior's *Working Miracles* (1991) documented women's lives across the English-speaking region; Eudine Barriteau's *Confronting Power, Theorizing Gender* (2003) — on your syllabus list — built a Caribbean theory of gender systems; Patricia Mohammed's work on Indo-Trinidadian gender relations extended it to the Indian-descended population.¹⁷ These are the names that turn a generic feminist essay into a Caribbean one.

Strengths. It exposed a blindness in every other perspective and generated whole fields — the sociology of housework, of domestic violence, of gender and education. In the Caribbean it made visible the matrifocal household's women, the indentured woman's labour and the "male marginalisation" debate. **Weaknesses.** It can treat women as a single category (the black-feminist objection), it can underplay the differences among men and the disadvantages some men face (Errol Miller's *Marginalization of the Black Male*, Chapter Nine), and radical versions can be as deterministic as classical Marxism.

5. Evaluating the four together

	Functionalist	Marxist	Interactionist	Feminist
Level	Macro / structure	Macro / structure	Micro / action	Macro and micro
Society is...	a system in consensus	an arena of class conflict	a negotiated order of meanings	a patriarchal structure
Order comes from...	shared values	ideology and force	routine interaction	male power
Change comes from...	adaptation, differentiation	class struggle	changed meanings	women's struggle

	Functionalist	Marxist	Interactionist	Feminist
Key names	Durkheim, Parsons, Merton	Marx, Gramsci, Althusser; Beckford, Best, Rodney	Mead, Blumer, Goffman, Becker	Oakley, Millett, Walby, hooks; Reddock, Barribeau, Senior
Best Caribbean fit	explaining continuity of institutions	plantation, class, underdevelopment	labelling in schools and courts	matrifocality, women's work, violence
Chief weakness	cannot explain conflict; conservative	economic determinism; misses race and ethnicity	blind to structure and power	may homogenise women; underplays male disadvantage

The syllabus verb for this content is *evaluate*, and evaluation in this subject has a standard shape: **state the perspective; apply it to a Caribbean case; show what it explains; show what it cannot; bring in a rival that explains that; conclude on which is more useful for this case.** The sample mark scheme for the syllabus's own specimen paper rewards exactly this: candidates "may allude to the weaknesses of this approach and suggest that another perspective is better suited."¹⁸

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *Assess the extent to which the functionalist perspective is useful for understanding social order in a named Caribbean society.*

Step 1 — Decode. *Assess the extent* = give a measured verdict. The concept is *social order*; the society is yours to name; the perspective is functionalism — but "the extent to which" invites a rival.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define social order and the functionalist account of it: Durkheim's collective conscience and solidarity; Parsons's value consensus and AGIL; Merton's manifest/latent functions and dysfunction.

Step 3 — Application (10). Guyana. *Where functionalism works*: the interdependence of institutions after 1966 — schools socialising a national identity ("One People, One Nation, One Destiny"), the legal system regulating disputes, religion integrating communities; the latent functions of Mashramani and national holidays in integrating six peoples;

Durkheimian organic solidarity in the interdependence of coast and interior, rice and gold. *Where it strains*: Guyana's order was for most of its history an order of the plantation, held by force and law, not consensus (Rodney, 1981); post-independence order has been repeatedly broken along ethnic lines (Despres, 1967; Premdas, 1995) — a plural society in M. G. Smith's sense, held by the domination of one section rather than by shared values.

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Weigh it: functionalism explains the *maintenance* of order through institutions once order exists, but not the *creation* of order in a colonial society or its breakdown along ethnic lines; the plural-society and conflict perspectives explain those. Conclude: useful "to a limited extent — for the institutional machinery of order, not for its foundations." That is a Level-2 conclusion because it is *measured*, *reasoned* and *backed by named Caribbean theory*.

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Every perspective, every time.** The perspectives chapter is the one you will reuse in *every* essay for two years. Learn the table in section 5 by heart; it is your planning grid for any "assess the perspective" question.
- **"Suggest that another perspective is better suited."** That sentence, from CXC's own specimen mark scheme, is the seven Evaluation marks in one line. Never evaluate a perspective in a vacuum: always bring the rival in.
- **Caribbean names or nothing.** A functionalist essay with Durkheim and Parsons scores Knowledge. The same essay with M. G. Smith's objection scores Evaluation. A Marxist essay with Marx scores Knowledge; with Beckford and Rodney it scores Application and Evaluation.
- **The trap:** the "perspective parade" — a paragraph each on all four perspectives regardless of the question. If the question names one perspective, that one gets two-thirds of the essay; rivals appear only to evaluate it.
- **Language of measure.** "To a large extent," "only partially," "in the institutional sphere but not the political" — these phrases are how a script signals that it has assessed *extent* rather than recited.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. "Society is held together by shared values." Evaluate this claim with reference to the functionalist and conflict perspectives and a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 2. Assess the extent to which the interactionist perspective offers a better understanding of everyday social life in the Caribbean than the structural perspectives. (25 marks)

Essay 3. Discuss the contribution of the feminist perspective to Caribbean sociology. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. The concept of *latent function* is associated with (A) Parsons (B) Merton (C) Marx (D) Blumer.
2. *Hegemony* is a concept developed by (A) Althusser (B) Gramsci (C) Weber (D) Walby.
3. Which perspective begins its analysis from the meanings people attach to their actions? (A) Functionalist (B) Marxist (C) Interactionist (D) Neo-Malthusian.
4. Walby defines *patriarchy* as (A) a family with a male head (B) a system of structures and practices in which men dominate women (C) the rule of elders (D) biological difference.
5. A Caribbean scholar associated with the plantation-economy analysis is (A) Edith Clarke (B) George Beckford (C) Erving Goffman (D) Talcott Parsons.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter One (roots) • Chapter Seven, Eight and Nine (the perspectives applied to family, religion and education) • Chapter Eleven (the perspectives and the Caribbean theorists of stratification) • Unit 2 throughout.

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER THREE

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 1, Specific Objective 3; Content 3(a)–(d), p. 5.

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3. Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1951); the AGIL scheme is set out in Parsons, Bales and Shils, *Working Papers in the Theory of Action* (1953).
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5. Dennis H. Wrong, "The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern Sociology," *American Sociological Review* 26, no. 2 (1961): 183–193.
6. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848), Part I (the state as "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie"); Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859), Preface (base and superstructure).
7. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. and trans. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971).
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10. Carl Stone, *Class, Race and Political Behaviour in Urban Jamaica* (Kingston: ISER, 1973).
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12. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre, 1956; New York: Anchor, 1959); Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

13. Howard S. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York: Free Press, 1963), p. 9.
14. Peter J. Wilson, *Crab Antics: The Social Anthropology of English-Speaking Negro Societies of the Caribbean* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).
15. Sylvia Walby, *Theorizing Patriarchy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 20.
16. Ann Oakley, *Sex, Gender and Society* (London: Temple Smith, 1972); Ann Oakley, *The Sociology of Housework* (London: Martin Robertson, 1974); Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (New York: Doubleday, 1970); bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981).
17. Reddock, *Women, Labour and Politics in Trinidad and Tobago* (1994); Senior, *Working Miracles* (1991); Barriteau, *Confronting Power, Theorizing Gender* (2003), listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 3 Resources, p. 13; Patricia Mohammed, *Gender Negotiations among Indians in Trinidad, 1917–1947* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).
18. CXC A27/U2/13, specimen Paper 02 mark scheme, Unit 1, Question 4 (Analysis and Evaluation).

Chapter Four — Six Peoples, One Trench: Culture and the Social Order in the Caribbean

SYLLABUS MAP — *This chapter covers Module 1, Specific Objective 4: discuss issues related to cultural diversity and popular culture — Content 4(a) Caribbean socio-cultural diversity: continuity and change, conflict and assimilation, creole and plural societies and 4(b) Caribbean popular culture, for example, music, dance, art, theatre or folklore (historical background and social context).*¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

On the first Monday of Phagwah in a Corentyne village the whole road is purple by nine o'clock. The abeer goes on everyone — the Hindu family whose festival it is, the Christian neighbour who came over with a bucket, the Muslim shopkeeper who sells the powder, the Afro-Guyanese teacher who drove out from New Amsterdam because her pupils invited her. A week later the same road will be quiet for Good Friday, and in the evening the drums will start for somebody's queh-queh. In Georgetown at the end of February the same nation will put on feathers and float down Church Street for Mashramani, a festival invented in 1970 for a republic that was itself only four years old.

Is that *one* culture, or several living side by side, or several becoming one? That question — the exact question the syllabus puts under "creole and plural societies" — is not an examiner's abstraction in Guyana. It is the question of the country. Two of the region's most important theories were built to answer it, and both were built with Caribbean material: M.

G. Smith looked at the West Indies and saw a **plural society** of separate cultural sections held together by power; Kamau Brathwaite looked at Jamaica and saw a **creole society** in which the sections had made something new together. Guyana and Trinidad, with their large Indian- and African-descended populations, are the societies on which the two theories have been tested most fiercely. You live inside the examination question.

BEAT 2 · THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. The vocabulary of cultural contact

Caribbean societies were made by the forced and semi-forced meeting of peoples: Indigenous nations already here; Europeans (Spanish, Dutch, French, British); Africans brought in slavery (to about 1807 in the British colonies, emancipation 1834–38); then indentured labourers — Portuguese from Madeira (Guyana from 1835), Indians (Guyana from 5 May 1838, Trinidad from 1845, until 1917), Chinese (from 1853) — and later Middle Eastern and other migrants. Sociologists describe what happens when cultures meet with a small set of terms the examiner expects you to use precisely.

- **Acculturation** — the process by which a group takes on elements of another culture, usually the dominant one; under slavery it was compulsory and one-directional (Christianity, English, European dress).
- **Assimilation** — the absorption of a minority into the dominant culture so that its distinctiveness disappears; Caribbean colonial policy *aimed* at assimilation to European norms, and largely failed.
- **Interculturation** — Brathwaite's word for the *two-way* exchange in which the dominant culture is itself changed by the dominated: the planter's children raised by African nurses, the European language reshaped into Creole.²
- **Syncretism** — the blending of distinct traditions into a new form: Revival and Pocomania in Jamaica, Shango/Orisha in Trinidad, Comfa in Guyana, all fusing African religion with Christianity.

- **Retention** (or survival) — an element of an ancestral culture that persists: Anansi stories, the drum, the queh-queh, Hindu observance in the Corentyne. Melville Herskovits's *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941) made the case that African culture *survived* the Middle Passage; E. Franklin Frazier had argued that slavery destroyed it.³ The retention-versus-destruction debate is the historical root of the whole family argument in Chapter Seven.
- **Cultural pluralism** — the coexistence of distinct cultural groups within one political unit.
- **Creolisation** — the process by which the meeting of cultures produces a new, locally born (*creole*) culture that belongs to no ancestral homeland.

Continuity and change; conflict and assimilation — the syllabus's four words — are the *dynamics* these terms describe: a culture *continues* (retention), *changes* (acculturation, creolisation), *conflicts* (plural society) or is *assimilated*. Every Caribbean society shows all four at once, in different proportions; your job in an essay is to say which proportion, with evidence.

2. The plural society — Furnivall and M. G. Smith

The idea began in colonial Asia. J. S. Furnivall, a British administrator, described Burma and Java as *plural societies* in which distinct peoples "mix but do not combine," meeting only in the marketplace, each holding its own religion, culture and language, "living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit."⁴

M. G. Smith (1965) adapted the idea to the Caribbean. A society, he argued, is plural when its sections practise *different institutional systems* — different family forms, religions, languages, economic practices, values — and when it is held together not by consensus but by the **political domination** of one section (in the colonial West Indies, the white minority) over the others.⁵ Smith identified three cultural sections in the colonial British West Indies — white, brown and black — each with its own institutions, ranked by the colour hierarchy. Pluralism, for Smith, explained why Parsons's consensus theory could not work here: the sections did not share values; they were held in place by force and law. The critical point for the examiner is that Smith located the *cause of order in power*, which makes plural-society theory a cousin of the conflict

perspective.

Applied to Guyana and Trinidad. Smith's own model was built on the three-section colonial Caribbean; Guyana and Trinidad, with their large Indo-Caribbean populations, complicated it. Leo Despres (1967) applied Smith's theory directly to British Guiana, arguing that the Afro- and Indo-Guyanese populations formed distinct cultural sections whose competition, once mass politics arrived in the 1950s, produced the ethnic party system.⁶ Ralph Premdas (1995) followed the argument through independence: ethnicity, he showed, organised political loyalty more powerfully than class.⁷ Brackette Williams (1991), in a study of a Guyanese village, showed how the categories themselves are negotiated daily — how "Coolie," "Black," "Buck" and "Putagee" are used, resisted and reworked in ordinary talk.⁸

Critique. Smith's model is static: it explains how sections are held apart, not how they mix — and they visibly do (the road on Phagwah morning). It underplays class within each section (a wealthy Indo-Guyanese businessman and a Corentyne cane-cutter are not one "section" in any meaningful economic sense) and treats culture as fixed. It also risks *justifying* separateness by describing it. Its great strength is the opposite of functionalism's: it takes force, race and colonial history seriously.

3. The creole society — Kamau Brathwaite

Edward Kamau Brathwaite, the Barbadian historian and poet, studied Jamaica between 1770 and 1820 and saw, not sections that never combined, but a society in the act of *becoming something new*. In *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (1971) he argued that white and black Jamaicans, however unequal, were bound together in a single process of **creolisation**: a "cultural action" in which each group, "in its own way, and to its own extent," adapted to the new environment and to each other.⁹ The whites *acculturated* the blacks; the blacks, through nurses, cooks, language and religion, *interculturated* the whites; and the product — Jamaican Creole, Jamaican cuisine, Jamaican religion, the Jamaican sense of self — belonged to neither Africa nor Europe.

Brathwaite was honest about the limit of the process: creolisation happened *within a hierarchy*. The European end of the continuum carried prestige — what he called the **"white bias"** of creole society —

and the African end carried stigma; Rex Nettleford's *Mirror Mirror* (1970) explored the same wound, the Jamaican's tendency to see himself in a mirror that Europe held.¹⁰ This is why creole-society theory is as much about *stratification* as about culture, and why the syllabus lists Brathwaite under Module 3 as well.

Critique. Brathwaite's model was built for a two-group society (Europeans and Africans). The specimen mark scheme's own criticism is that it fails "to accommodate cultural diversity as against the cultural dichotomy in its elaboration" — that is, "other cultural groups are excluded."¹¹ In Guyana and Trinidad the Indian-descended population, the Chinese, the Portuguese and the Indigenous peoples do not fit a two-ended continuum. A later generation of scholars (Nigel Bolland among them) argued that the truth is *dialectical*: Caribbean societies are plural *and* creolising at once — separate at the level of institutions like religion and family, blended at the level of language, food, music and everyday manners.¹²

4. Plantation society — Beckford (and the third answer)

Because the examiner names three Caribbean theorists together (Content 3(e) in Module 3), learn the third here too. George Beckford's *Persistent Poverty* (1972) argued that the Caribbean is neither simply plural nor simply creole but a **plantation society**: a society whose whole structure — its stratification, its family forms, its values, even its landscape — was shaped by the plantation as a *total institution*, and whose dependence on the plantation's foreign ownership and export crops persists after emancipation and independence.¹³ Culture, in this reading, is downstream of economics: creole and plural patterns alike are the plantation's cultural residue.

5. Caribbean popular culture — Content 4(b)

The syllabus asks for the *historical background and social context* of popular cultural forms. Learn two or three thoroughly, with dates and social meaning, rather than a list.

Music. *Calypso* grew in Trinidad out of the kaiso of the French-creole plantation and the chantwell of Carnival; by the 1930s it was the voice of the urban working class, and Gordon Rohlehr's *Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad* (1990) is the standard study

of how it carried social commentary the colonial press would not print.¹⁴ *Reggae* rose in Kingston in the late 1960s from ska and rocksteady, fused with Rastafari, and became the world's Caribbean sound; its social context was the urban poor of West Kingston and the politics of the 1970s. *Chutney* and *chutney-soca* — Indo-Caribbean folk song, once confined to weddings and matikor, brought into the public dancehall in Trinidad and Guyana from the 1970s and 1980s — is the clearest example of creolisation *within* an Indian-descended community, and of the tension between retention (the older generation's Bhojpuri songs) and change.

Carnival, Masquerade and Mashramani. Trinidad Carnival descends from French planters' masquerade balls and from the *Canboulay* processions of the formerly enslaved after 1838; its history is one of conflict (the Canboulay riots of 1881, colonial attempts to suppress the drum) and eventual national adoption.¹⁵ Guyana's *Mashramani* — the word taken from an Indigenous term for a celebration after cooperative work — was created in 1970 for the first Republic Day, 23 February, the date chosen to honour the Berbice Rising of 1763: a festival *designed* by a new state to build a national culture across ethnic lines.¹⁶ Compare the older Afro-Guyanese *masquerade* bands of Christmas — flouncers, Mother Sally, the Bam-Bam Sally and the "Bad Cow" — retentions with West African roots.

Folklore and theatre. The *Anansi* stories, carried from the Akan peoples of West Africa to the whole Caribbean, teach through a trickster who survives by wit — the cultural weapon of the powerless. Guyanese folklore adds the Ol' Higue, the Bacoo, the Moongazer, the Massacuraman and Kanaima — figures that encode moral warnings and Indigenous, African and Indian elements together. Caribbean theatre moved from the colonial playhouse to the yard: Errol Hill, Derek Walcott and the Trinidad Theatre Workshop (1959), Sistren in Jamaica (1977), and *Carifesta*, the Caribbean Festival of Arts, first held in Guyana in 1972 — a regional state project to make popular culture into shared regional identity.¹⁷

The social context to state in every case: who made the form (usually the poor and the dominated), what it did for them (identity, commentary, resistance, joy), how the powerful responded (suppression, then adoption), and how it changed with commerce and media (the

global music industry; the festival as tourism product).

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *Assess the extent to which the plural society thesis explains cultural diversity in a named Caribbean society.*

Step 1 — Decode. *Assess the extent* » a measured verdict. The thesis is Smith's; the society should be one where the thesis has been tested: Guyana.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define cultural diversity and the plural society (Furnivall; Smith's cultural sections, differential institutions, order by political domination). Set the rival — Brathwaite's creole society — in a sentence, ready for evaluation.

Step 3 — Application (10). Guyana as plural: distinct institutional systems by ethnic section — religion (Hinduism and Islam concentrated among Indo-Guyanese, Christianity among Afro-Guyanese, with Indigenous and other traditions), family (the Indo-Guyanese joint family and arranged marriage historically versus the Afro-Guyanese matrifocal pattern — R. T. Smith 1956; Smith and Jayawardena 1959), residence (village and estate patterns since indenture), and above all politics (Despres 1967; Premdas 1995 — ethnic voting). Guyana as creole: a shared Creolese, a shared cuisine (pepperpot beside roti), shared festivals attended across lines (Phagwah, Mashramani, Christmas), intermarriage and the "Mixed" category — nearly a fifth of the population at the 2012 census.¹⁸

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). The thesis explains the *institutional and political* layer of diversity well and the *everyday* layer poorly; it is static where the society is moving. Bring in Bolland's dialectic — plural at the level of institutions, creole at the level of daily life. Conclude: "to a considerable but limited extent — the plural society thesis names the fault line, but not the bridge across it."

Step 5 — Opening line: *"Guyana is the society M. G. Smith's theory was made for and the society that most tests it: institutionally plural, politically divided by section, and yet daily, in language and food and festival, creolising under the theory's nose."*

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Three theorists, three sentences each.** Smith — sections, separate institutions, order by domination. Brathwaite — creolisation, acculturation and interculturalisation, white bias. Beckford — plantation as total institution, persistent poverty. You should be able to write those nine sentences from memory before you sit Paper 02.
- **Use the syllabus's own criticism.** The specimen mark scheme faults creole-society theory for handling a "cultural dichotomy" rather than diversity. Quote the substance: it turns a good essay into a scheme-matching one.
- **Popular culture questions want context, not a playlist.** "Historical background and social context" means: origins, who made it, what it did socially, how it changed. Two forms in depth beat six forms in passing.
- **Guyana's home advantage.** Mashramani (a state-built festival, 1970), Phagwah (a retention that became national), chutney (creolisation inside a section), and the 2012 "Mixed" category (creolisation in numbers) are four examples nobody outside Guyana will use as well as you can.
- **The trap:** treating "plural" as a compliment ("Guyana is a beautiful plural society"). In sociology *plural* is a technical, and somewhat grim, word — it means held together by domination. Use it that way.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Assess the extent to which the Creole Society theory is relevant to an understanding of any TWO elements of culture in a named Caribbean society. Support your answer with reference to acculturation and interculturalisation. (25 marks)

Essay 2. With reference to ONE form of Caribbean popular culture, discuss its historical background and its social significance for the society that produced it. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. The term *interculturization* is associated with (A) M. G. Smith (B) Kamau Brathwaite (C) Furnivall (D) Beckford.
2. According to M. G. Smith, a plural society is held together primarily by (A) shared values (B) the market (C) political domination by one section (D) religion.
3. Mashramani was first celebrated in (A) 1966 (B) 1970 (C) 1972 (D) 1838.
4. The blending of African religion with Christianity in forms such as Revival and Comfa is an example of (A) assimilation (B) syncretism (C) ethnocentrism (D) anomie.
5. *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), arguing for African cultural retentions, was written by (A) Frazier (B) Herskovits (C) Simey (D) Nettleford.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Seven (retention versus destruction and the origins of Caribbean family forms) · Chapter Eight (syncretic religions) · Chapter Eleven (Smith, Brathwaite and Beckford as theorists of stratification) · Chapter Twelve (plantation society as a closed system).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER FOUR

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 1, Specific Objective 4; Content 4(a)–(b), p. 5.
2. Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (1971), ch. 20 ("Creolization").
3. Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (New York: Harper, 1941); E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939).
4. J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), p. 304.
5. M. G. Smith, *The Plural Society in the British West Indies* (1965), esp. ch. 4 ("Social and Cultural Pluralism") and ch. 10.
6. Despres, *Cultural Pluralism and Nationalist Politics in British Guiana* (1967).

7. Premdas, *Ethnic Conflict and Development: The Case of Guyana* (1995).
8. Williams, *Stains on My Name, War in My Veins* (1991).
9. Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (1971), p. 296 and ch. 20.
10. Nettleford, *Mirror Mirror* (1970).
11. CXC A27/U2/13, specimen Paper 02 mark scheme, Unit 1, Question 1 (Analysis and Evaluation).
12. O. Nigel Bolland, "Creolization and Creole Societies: A Cultural Nationalist View of Caribbean Social History," in Alistair Hennessy (ed.), *Intellectuals in the Twentieth-Century Caribbean*, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1992).
13. Beckford, *Persistent Poverty* (1972), chs. 2–3 on the plantation as a total institution (a term borrowed from Goffman, *Asylums*, 1961).
14. Gordon Rohlehr, *Calypso and Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad* (Port of Spain: the author, 1990).
15. Bridget Brereton, *A History of Modern Trinidad, 1783–1962* (Kingston: Heinemann, 1981), on Canboulay and the 1881 riots.
16. Mashramani was first held on 23 February 1970, the day Guyana became a Cooperative Republic; the date commemorates the Berbice Rising of 23 February 1763.
17. Errol Hill, *The Trinidad Carnival: Mandate for a National Theatre* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972); Carifesta '72 was held in Georgetown, Guyana, 25 August–15 September 1972.
18. Bureau of Statistics, Guyana, *2012 Population and Housing Census — Compendium 2* (Population Composition), reporting the "Mixed Heritage" group at just under 20 per cent of the population. (Figures should be checked against the Bureau's published tables before quoting precisely.)

Chapter Five — Is Sociology a Science? Principles and Ethics of Research



SYLLABUS MAP — *This chapter covers Module 1, Specific Objective 5: explain the principles and practices of scientific research and Objective 8: apply the ethical principles in research — Content 5(a) Sociology as a science and 5(b) Ethical issues in research.*¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

A woman in a Region Six village tells you, with total confidence, that "everybody know" teenage pregnancy went up since the pandemic. A man on the same street tells you, with the same confidence, that it went down because "the girls dem on the phone all day now." Both are certain; both are sincere; they cannot both be right. What separates the sociologist from the two of them is not intelligence — it is *method*: the decision to go and count, to define what "teenage pregnancy" means before counting, to ask a sample that was not chosen because it agreed with you, to write down what you found even when it was not what you expected, and to let someone else check.

The 2025 examiners' report on Unit 1 says something every candidate should read twice: candidates who "referred to Durkheim's study on suicide" to support the view that sociology can be studied as a science "scored higher," while many others "could not effectively apply" positivism and interpretivism to a topic and had "misjudged the question as a simple/basic one."² This chapter is written so that you are in the first group.

BEAT 2 · THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. What makes an inquiry scientific

A **science** is not a subject matter; it is a *method*. Its features are usually listed as: **empirical** (based on observation and evidence, not authority or intuition); **objective** (the researcher's values are kept out of the findings); **systematic** (following procedures that others can follow); **reliable** (repeatable — another researcher using the same method would get the same result); **valid** (the method actually measures what it claims to measure); **cumulative** (each study builds on the last); and, on the model of natural science, **predictive** and **law-seeking**. Science works by the **hypothetico-deductive method**: form a *hypothesis*, deduce what should be observed if it is true, test it against evidence, and revise.

Two philosophers of science sharpen the debate and impress examiners. **Karl Popper** argued that a claim is scientific only if it is **falsifiable** — capable in principle of being proved wrong by evidence; a theory that explains everything (Popper had Marxism and Freud in mind) explains nothing.³ **Thomas Kuhn** argued that science does not proceed by steady testing at all but within **paradigms** — shared frameworks of assumptions that scientists work inside until anomalies pile up and a revolution replaces the paradigm.⁴ Sociology's four perspectives look, to a Kuhnian eye, like competing paradigms that have never been resolved.

2. Positivism: yes, sociology is a science

Positivism is the view that society can and should be studied by the methods of the natural sciences. Comte named it; Durkheim practised it. Its principles: social reality exists *objectively*, outside the individual (Durkheim's social facts); it shows *regularities* that can be observed and measured; the sociologist's task is to discover the **causes** of those regularities and, ideally, state them as **laws**; the proper tools are therefore **quantitative** — statistics, surveys, experiments where possible — and the proper stance is **value-free detachment**.

The model study is *Suicide* (1897). Durkheim took official suicide statistics from across Europe, found that rates were stable within societies and varied between them, and explained the variation by two social variables — **integration** (the strength of bonds to a group) and

regulation (the strength of society's control over desires) — producing egoistic, altruistic, anomic and fatalistic suicide.⁵ The private act, studied as a rate, revealed social causes. That is the positivist claim in one demonstration, and it is why the examiners reward candidates who cite it.

3. Interpretivism: no — or not that kind of science

Interpretivism (also called the *anti-positivist*, *phenomenological* or *social action* approach) replies that people are not molecules. Human beings act on the basis of **meanings**; the same behaviour (a raised hand, a kept silence, a death) can mean different things to different actors; and a sociology that counts without understanding counts the wrong things. Weber's *Verstehen* — interpretive understanding, putting yourself in the actor's place — is the founding principle; Mead, Blumer and Goffman (Chapter Three) built the perspective; and the methods that follow are **qualitative** — participant observation, unstructured interviews, life histories — producing *validity* (truth to the actor's meaning) even at the expense of *reliability*.

The interpretivists' reply to *Suicide* is precise and examinable: **J. Maxwell Atkinson** (1978) showed that suicide statistics are not facts found but *verdicts made* — coroners decide what counts as suicide using common-sense theories about notes, methods and life circumstances — so Durkheim was studying the social construction of the statistics, not suicide itself.⁶ Jack Douglas (1967) made a similar argument about the meanings of suicide.⁷ Official crime statistics, as Unit 2 shows, fall to the same objection.

4. The middle positions

Realism (Roy Bhaskar, Andrew Sayer) holds that sociology *is* a science, but that science itself is not the naïve fact-collecting positivists imagine: the natural sciences also study unobservable structures (gravity, class) through their effects, and so can sociology. **Weber's own position** was a middle one — causal explanation *and* interpretive understanding, both required. In practice most working sociologists use **triangulation** (Chapter Six), and most examiners reward the candidate who says that the science question depends on what you mean by science — and then shows she knows what each side means.

Two further points make an answer complete. **Values.** Weber argued for **value-freedom** in the *conduct* of research while admitting that *value-relevance* guides the choice of topic; Alvin Gouldner attacked the "myth of a value-free sociology" (1962), and Howard Becker asked "Whose side are we on?" (1967).⁸ **Objectivity and the Caribbean.** Caribbean feminist and anti-colonial scholars have pointed out that "objective" colonial sociology (Simey, the Moyne Commission) was value-laden through and through — it measured Caribbean families against a European ideal and called the difference disorganisation.

5. Ethical issues in research — Content 5(b)

Ethics is the part of method that protects the people you study. Learn the principles as a list, with a case for each; the 2025 Module 1 question asked explicitly for "three ethical considerations."⁹

- **Informed consent** — participants must know what the research is, what it involves and that they may withdraw, and agree freely. Children and vulnerable people require a guardian's consent and special care.
- **Confidentiality and anonymity** — what participants tell you must not be traceable to them; names are changed, villages are given pseudonyms (as R. T. Smith and Edith Clarke did), data are stored securely.
- **Avoidance of harm** — physical, psychological, social, legal or financial harm to participants must be avoided; a study of domestic violence that puts a woman at risk in her home fails this test however important the topic.
- **No deception**, except where the research could not otherwise be done, the deception is harmless and participants are debriefed afterward. **Covert observation** is the sharpest case: Laud Humphreys's *Tearoom Trade* (1970), in which the researcher posed as a lookout to observe men's sexual encounters and then traced their home addresses through car number plates, is the textbook example of a study that produced knowledge and violated consent, privacy and the risk-of-harm principle at once.¹⁰ Stanley Milgram's obedience experiments (1963) deceived participants into believing they were administering electric shocks and left some in distress.¹¹

- **Honesty and integrity** — no fabrication, no falsification, no plagiarism; findings reported even when unwelcome.
- **Respect for the community** — research in small Caribbean communities, where everyone knows everyone, raises the confidentiality bar: a "pseudonymous village" of 800 people is not anonymous to its neighbours. Researchers also owe the community access to what was found.
- **Legal and cultural sensitivity** — research on drug use, sexual behaviour or illegal activity can expose participants to prosecution; research among Indigenous communities requires consent of the village council as well as the individual.

The SBA angle. Your own 1,300–1,500-word research project is governed by these principles. The syllabus's mark scheme rewards a research design that is "appropriate" and instruments that are "well sequenced and address relevant variables"; a design that ignores consent or confidentiality is not appropriate.¹² Build an ethics paragraph into Section Two of your project: who consented, how anonymity was protected, what harm was considered.

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *"Sociology can never be a science because human beings are not objects." Evaluate this claim with reference to the positivist and interpretivist approaches to research.*

Step 1 — Decode. *Evaluate* = weigh both sides, make a judgement, reasons matter more than the verdict. The claim is absolute ("never"), which invites you to show it is too strong.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define science (the features list). Define positivism (Comte, Durkheim, social facts, quantitative, value-free). Define interpretivism (Weber, *Verstehen*, meanings, qualitative). Add Popper and Kuhn in a sentence each.

Step 3 — Application (10). Use *Suicide* as the positivist demonstration — and Atkinson's coroners as the interpretivist answer. Then a Caribbean case: teenage pregnancy in a Guyanese region — a positivist would take Ministry of Health birth registrations by mother's age and correlate with school enrolment and household income; an

interpretivist would interview the girls, their mothers and the fathers to understand what a pregnancy *means* (a claim to adulthood? a bid to hold a partner? a lack of information?). Show what each method finds and misses.

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). The claim is too strong: positivist methods *do* find regularities that have social causes (Durkheim), and realists argue that "unobservable" objects are studied in physics too; but the interpretivists are right that meanings must be understood, and the statistics are themselves social products. Conclude: sociology is a science *in the realist sense* — evidence-based, systematic, self-correcting — but not a physics of people; the best Caribbean research (Clarke, Smith) combined counting and understanding.

Step 5 — Open with the position: *"The claim mistakes one kind of science for the only kind: sociology cannot be a physics of people, but it can be — and in Durkheim's hands already was — a disciplined, evidence-based study of social causes, provided it also does what physics never needs to do: understand what its objects mean."*

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Durkheim's *Suicide* is the receipt.** The examiners said so. Know the four types, the two variables, and Atkinson's objection, and you have both sides of the science debate in one study.
- **Three-part questions are three-part answers.** The 2025 question asked for the research process *and* a topic *and* three ethical considerations; "several candidates failed to discuss adequately" all three. Number the parts in your plan and tick them off.
- **Ethics needs cases.** "Confidentiality is important" scores nothing. "Confidentiality — which is why Edith Clarke gave her three Jamaican communities pseudonyms, and why Humphreys's *Tearoom Trade* is condemned" scores Application.
- **Do not hide from the SBA.** Paper 02 questions on methods are often written *from* the SBA — "with reference to an identified research topic." Use your own project as the identified topic; you know it better than any other.
- **The trap:** ending the science question with "so sociology is both." That is a shrug, not an evaluation. Say *in what sense* it is a science

and *in what sense* it is not, and name the realist position if you can.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. With reference to sociological research and an identified research topic, discuss the basic steps in the research process. In your discussion, include three ethical considerations that would guide the conduct of the research. (25 marks — the 2025 Module 1 question, restated)

Essay 2. Assess the usefulness of Durkheim's *Suicide* (1897) as evidence that sociology can be a science. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. The principle that a scientific claim must be capable of being proved wrong is associated with (A) Kuhn (B) Popper (C) Comte (D) Weber.
2. Atkinson's study of coroners is an argument against (A) interpretivism (B) the reliability of official suicide statistics as social facts (C) feminism (D) the use of interviews.
3. *Verstehen* means (A) counting (B) interpretive understanding (C) sampling (D) falsification.
4. Which of the following is a breach of research ethics? (A) Using pseudonyms for villages (B) Obtaining informed consent (C) Observing participants covertly and tracing their addresses without consent (D) Debriefing participants.
5. A positivist would most likely prefer (A) participant observation (B) unstructured interviews (C) a large-scale survey with closed questions (D) a life history.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter One (Comte, Durkheim, Weber) • Chapter Six (the methods that follow from each position) • Chapter Fourteen (research design in Paper 03/2) • Unit 2, Module 2 (official crime statistics and the dark figure).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER FIVE

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 1, Specific Objectives 5 and 8; Content 5(a)–(b), p. 5.

2. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 4.
3. Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London: Hutchinson, 1959; German original 1934); Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations* (London: Routledge, 1963).
4. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).
5. Durkheim, *Suicide* (1897), Book II, chs. 2–5.
6. J. Maxwell Atkinson, *Discovering Suicide: Studies in the Social Organization of Sudden Death* (London: Macmillan, 1978).
7. Jack D. Douglas, *The Social Meanings of Suicide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).
8. Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation" (1919) and "'Objectivity' in Social Science" (1904), in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (New York: Free Press, 1949); Alvin W. Gouldner, "Anti-Minotaur: The Myth of a Value-Free Sociology," *Social Problems* 9, no. 3 (1962): 199–213; Howard S. Becker, "Whose Side Are We On?" *Social Problems* 14, no. 3 (1967): 239–247.
9. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 4 (Module 1, Question 1).
10. Laud Humphreys, *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places* (Chicago: Aldine, 1970).
11. Stanley Milgram, "Behavioral Study of Obedience," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (1963): 371–378.
12. CXC A27/U2/13, "Criteria for Marking the School-Based Assessment Research Project," Section Two, pp. 33–34.

Chapter Six — Going and Finding Out: Research Methods and the Research Project

SYLLABUS MAP — *This chapter covers Module 1, Specific Objectives 6 and 7: distinguish among the various research methods and apply the research methods to a sociological issue — Content 6(a) positivism and interpretivism, (b) quantitative, qualitative and triangulation, (c) surveys and sampling methods, (d) document studies, (e) observation (participant and non-participant), (f) cross-sectional and longitudinal studies.¹ It also walks the School-Based Assessment (Paper 03/1) section by section.*

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Raymond Smith arrived in British Guiana in 1951, a young anthropologist from Cambridge, and instead of reading about the "Negro family" in the colonial reports he went and lived in three villages — on the East Coast, the West Coast and up the river — for the better part of two years. He counted households and recorded who lived in each; he sat through weddings, wakes and Saturday nights; he traced who owned which house-plot and who sent money to whom. The book that resulted, *The Negro Family in British Guiana* (1956), overturned the colonial verdict that the Afro-Guyanese family was "disorganised": it showed a **matrifocal** household that was a rational, orderly adaptation to a world in which men's wages were low and uncertain and women's kin networks were reliable.² He did not find that by asking a questionnaire. He found it by *method* — and by choosing the right one.

Every research method is a way of seeing, and every way of seeing has a blind spot. The syllabus wants you to know each method's logic, its strengths, its limits, and — this is the Application mark — *which method fits which problem*. And it wants you to have done it: your SBA is a research project, marked out of 60, and worth a fifth of the Unit.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. The two roads: quantitative, qualitative — and both

The choice of method follows from Chapter Five's choice of philosophy. **Positivists** prefer **quantitative** methods — numbers, large samples, standardised instruments, statistical analysis — because they seek regularities, causes and generalisations, and prize **reliability** and **representativeness**. **Interpretivists** prefer **qualitative** methods — words, small numbers, open instruments, immersion — because they seek meanings, and prize **validity** (truth to the actor's world) and **depth**. **Triangulation**, a term Norman Denzin (1970) borrowed from surveying, means using more than one method, source, researcher or theory on the same problem so that the weaknesses of each are covered by the strengths of another — a survey to establish the pattern, interviews to explain it.³ Most good Caribbean research triangulates; so should your SBA.

The three technical words the examiner tests on every method: **reliability** (would the method give the same result if repeated?), **validity** (does it measure what it claims?), **representativeness** (can the findings be generalised from the sample to the population?).

2. Surveys and sampling — Content 6(c)

A **social survey** collects standardised information from a sample of a population, usually by **questionnaire** or **structured interview**, in order to describe the population or test a hypothesis.

Questionnaires may be self-completed (postal, online, handed out) or administered face to face. **Closed questions** (tick boxes, scales) give reliable, quantifiable answers; **open questions** give depth but are harder to compare. Strengths: cheap, quick, large samples, reliable, low researcher effect, anonymous — good for sensitive topics. Weaknesses:

low response rates, shallow, no chance to probe, assume literacy and shared meanings, and the questions impose the researcher's categories. **Pilot** every questionnaire.

Interviews run from **structured** (a questionnaire read aloud — reliable, comparable) through **semi-structured** to **unstructured** (a guided conversation — valid, deep, flexible). Weaknesses: costly, small numbers, **interviewer effect** (the answer changes with who asks — a young woman asking Corentyne men about domestic violence will get different answers from an older man), and social-desirability bias. **Focus groups** interview several people at once and capture interaction, but the loud dominate.

Sampling. A **population** is everyone the research is about; a **sample** is the part actually studied; a **sampling frame** is the list from which it is drawn (the electoral roll, a school register, a church membership book). **Probability (random) samples** give every member a known chance of selection and allow generalisation: **simple random** (names from a hat, a random-number table); **systematic** (every n^{th} name); **stratified** (divide the population into strata — by sex, ethnicity, region — and sample each in proportion, which for a Guyanese study on almost any topic is essential); **cluster/multi-stage** (sample areas, then households within them — how the census pilot and national surveys work). **Non-probability samples** cannot be generalised but are often the only option: **quota** (interviewers fill quotas of types — market research), **purposive** (chosen because they fit the study), **snowball** (each participant leads to the next — the only way to reach hidden populations such as drug users or undocumented migrants), **convenience/opportunity** (whoever is available — the weakest, and the one most SBAs quietly use; say so and justify it).

3. Document studies — Content 6(d)

Secondary data are data collected by someone else. **Official statistics** — the census (Guyana's most recent, 2022, following 2012), the Bureau of Statistics' labour and household surveys, Ministry of Health and Guyana Police Force returns, CARICOM and UN data — are cheap, large, longitudinal and often the only national picture; but they are collected for administrative, not sociological, purposes, use the state's categories, and may be socially constructed (Atkinson's coroners; the crime "dark figure"

in Unit 2). **Historical documents** — Colonial Office papers, estate records, newspapers, missionary reports — are the raw material of Rodney's history of the working people and Brathwaite's creole society. **Personal documents** — letters, diaries, autobiographies — give validity and voice; Thomas and Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant* (1918–20) founded the method with 764 letters.⁴ **Content analysis** counts and classifies the content of media — how often women appear as victims in a newspaper, how often a dancehall lyric references guns; it is the quantitative face of document study and a favourite SBA method. Judge every document by John Scott's four tests: *authenticity, credibility, representativeness, meaning*.⁵

4. Observation — Content 6(e)

Non-participant observation watches from outside — the researcher at the back of the classroom with a schedule of behaviours to tick (structured) or a notebook (unstructured). Reliable when structured; but people behave differently when watched (the **Hawthorne effect**, named for the Western Electric studies of the 1920s–30s).⁶

Participant observation joins the group and lives its life — the interpretivist's crown jewel. It may be **overt** (the group knows) or **covert** (it does not). The classic is William Foote Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1943), three and a half years in an Italian-American slum; the Caribbean classic is Ken Pryce's *Endless Pressure* (1979), four years among West Indian lifestyles in Bristol; the Guyanese classics are Smith's villages and Chandra Jayawardena's *Conflict and Solidarity in a Guianese Plantation* (1963), a study of Indo-Guyanese sugar-estate life.⁷ Strengths: unmatched validity, depth, discovery of the unexpected, access to meanings. Weaknesses: unreliable (no two observers see the same), unrepresentative (one group), slow and expensive, "going native" (losing detachment), ethical risk in the covert form, and the observer's presence still changes things. Peter Wilson's *Crab Antics* (1973), on reputation and respectability in a Caribbean island community, shows the method finding a moral world no survey could have mapped.⁸

5. Cross-sectional and longitudinal studies — Content 6(f)

A **cross-sectional** study takes one measurement at one time across a sample — a snapshot: a survey of Form 5 students' career hopes in 2026.

Cheap, quick, good for describing patterns; poor at showing change or cause. A **longitudinal** study follows the same people (a **panel**) or the same category of people (a **cohort**, such as everyone born in one year) over time — a film: the British birth-cohort studies that have tracked children born in 1946, 1958 and 1970 through their whole lives. Strengths: shows change, sequence and therefore cause; weaknesses: expensive, slow, **attrition** (people drop out or emigrate — in Guyana, a serious problem), and the researcher's own categories date. The syllabus's specimen question asks how useful a longitudinal approach is for studying HIV/AIDS or teenage pregnancy: the answer is *very* — it can show whether a pregnancy at sixteen leads to poverty at twenty-six — *if* attrition and ethics (following vulnerable young women for a decade) can be managed.⁹

6. The research process and the SBA — Paper 03/1

The syllabus fixes the structure and the marks; learn them as a template.¹⁰

Section	What it must contain	Marks
One — Introduction	Background and definition of the research problem (5); aims and objectives — purpose and value (5); literature review — previous research and perspectives (8); communication (2)	20
Two — Research design	The design/plan (4); the sociological perspective underlying it (3); sample and selection (3); data-collection instruments (3)	13
Three — Presentation and analysis	Presentation of findings — tables, charts (5); analysis — trends, patterns, anomalies (8); communication (2)	15
Four — Discussion and conclusion	Discussion of findings related to purpose and perspective (7); bibliography (3); communication (2)	12
	Total	60

Length: 1,300–1,500 words, not counting the bibliography, tables and appendices; more than 10 per cent over and the teacher must deduct 10 per cent of the mark.¹¹ Unit 1 projects concern a social group or organisation in the community — family, church, school, political group, NGO, youth group, sports club.

The steps (this is what the 2025 question asked for): choose and *narrow* a topic (the 2025 moderators' first complaint was topics "too broad... which cannot be researched in the time given"¹²); state the problem and the aims; review the literature and pick a perspective (functionalist? feminist?) — this is the three marks most candidates throw away; design (method, sample, instrument, ethics); collect; present (tables with titles, percentages, a chart or two); analyse (what pattern? what anomaly? why?); discuss against the literature and the perspective; conclude; bibliography in a consistent format. A word of warning from the same moderators, worth quoting because it now decides marks: students are "advised to exercise caution in the indiscriminate use of AI in their SBAs, especially in the literature review."¹³ A literature review that cites studies which do not exist is a fabrication, and a moderator can tell.

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an SBA design, step by step*

Topic (narrowed): *Why do boys drop out of a named secondary school in Region Six before Form 5? A study of one school, 2024–2026.*

Section One. Background: national concern with male underachievement (Errol Miller, 1986/1991; the 2025 examiners on male "marginalisation"); the school's own roll. Problem: the drop-out rate of boys is higher than girls'. Aims: to describe the pattern; to identify the reasons boys and their parents give; to assess the school's response. Literature: Miller's marginalisation thesis; Mark Figueroa's "male privileging" counter-thesis (2004); Bowles and Gintis on correspondence; the interactionists on labelling (Becker; Rosenthal and Jacobson) — with a paragraph saying which perspective you will use and why (interactionist, because you want the boys' meanings; with a functionalist question about the school's role held in reserve for the discussion).

Section Two. Design: mixed methods, triangulated — a short closed questionnaire to all Form 4 boys (n = 40) to establish the pattern of attitudes, plus semi-structured interviews with six boys who have left, two parents and two teachers. Sample: whole-class for the questionnaire (a census of the class, so no sampling error); purposive and snowball for the leavers (the school has no reliable list of them — say so; that is

honesty, and it scores). Instruments: the questionnaire (appendix), the interview guide (appendix). Ethics: head's permission; parental consent for under-18s; pseudonyms; the right to withdraw; no questions that could expose a boy to discipline.

Section Three. Present: a table of questionnaire results by item; a bar chart of "main reason for leaving" from the interviews; two or three verbatim quotations. Analyse: the pattern (most leavers cite money and "school not for me"), the anomaly (two leavers had good grades — labelling? a job offer?), the trend (leaving spikes after Form 3).

Section Four. Discuss against the literature: does the interactionist account (labelled as "hard ears," then living up to it) fit better than the structural account (the family needs the wage)? Probably both, and say so. Conclude, recommend, list the bibliography properly — author, title, place, publisher, year — and check the word count.

That design would score in the top band of every section because it *narrows, names a perspective, justifies the sample honestly, triangulates, and analyses against the literature.*

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Method questions are "fit" questions.** The examiner rarely asks "describe participant observation." She asks which method is *most useful* for a given issue. Answer in the shape: what the issue needs (pattern or meaning? a hidden group?), which method gives it, what the method costs, and how triangulation covers the cost.
- **Name a study for each method.** Survey — Durkheim's statistics or the census. Participant observation — Whyte; Pryce; Smith in British Guiana. Documents — Rodney's archives. Longitudinal — the British birth cohorts. A method with a study attached is worth twice a method alone.
- **The three words.** Reliability, validity, representativeness — use all three, correctly, in every methods essay. Examiners look for them.
- **Your SBA is your best example.** "With reference to an identified research topic" is an invitation to use your own project. You know its sample, its ethics and its problems better than any textbook example.
- **The trap:** describing the research process as a list of eight steps and stopping. The 2025 examiners were explicit — the candidates who

scored "successfully identifi[ed] a specific research topic and associat[ed] it with an appropriate research methodology." Every step must be *about your topic*.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Assess the extent to which a longitudinal approach is useful for the study of either HIV/AIDS or teenage pregnancy in the Caribbean. (25 marks)

Essay 2. Evaluate the usefulness of participant observation for the study of a named social group in a Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 3. "Official statistics are facts about society." Discuss this statement with reference to the use of document studies in sociological research. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. A sample in which the population is divided into groups (for example, by sex and ethnicity) and each group is sampled in proportion is (A) a snowball sample (B) a stratified sample (C) a quota sample (D) a convenience sample.
2. The Hawthorne effect refers to (A) people changing their behaviour because they are being observed (B) the loss of participants over time (C) interviewer bias (D) the use of pseudonyms.
3. Using a survey and interviews on the same problem is an example of (A) a cross-sectional design (B) triangulation (C) covert observation (D) content analysis.
4. The main weakness of a longitudinal study is (A) it cannot show change (B) attrition of participants over time (C) it is too quick (D) it uses no sample.
5. The Unit 1 SBA research report is marked out of (A) 25 (B) 50 (C) 60 (D) 90.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Five (the philosophy behind each method; ethics) • Chapter Fourteen (Paper 03/2 for private candidates) • Unit 2, Module 2 (crime statistics and the dark figure) • Unit 2, Module 1 (census and population

data).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER SIX

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 1, Specific Objectives 6–7; Content 6(a)–(f), p. 5.
2. R. T. Smith, *The Negro Family in British Guiana* (1956), chs. 1–2 (the villages and the method) and ch. 10 (the matrifocal household).
3. Norman K. Denzin, *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods* (Chicago: Aldine, 1970).
4. W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 5 vols. (Boston: Badger, 1918–20).
5. John Scott, *A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), ch. 1.
6. Elton Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York: Macmillan, 1933), on the Hawthorne Works studies.
7. William Foote Whyte, *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943); Ken Pryce, *Endless Pressure: A Study of West Indian Life-styles in Bristol* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979); Chandra Jayawardena, *Conflict and Solidarity in a Guianese Plantation* (London: Athlone Press, 1963).
8. Wilson, *Crab Antics* (1973).
9. CXC A27/U2/13, specimen Paper 02, Unit 1, Question 2, and its mark scheme.
10. CXC A27/U2/13, "Requirements of the School-Based Assessment" and "Criteria for Marking the School-Based Assessment Research Project," pp. 29–36.
11. CXC A27/U2/13, "Length of the report," p. 31.
12. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 8 (Paper 031, "Topics").
13. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 8.

Module 1 — Revision Checklist



Tick each line only when you can do it from memory, on paper, in under three minutes.

- Define sociology in the syllabus's words, and name the three revolutions that produced it.
- State the question and the key work of Comte, Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Spencer.
- Tell the story of Caribbean sociology in four stages, with a name and a date for each: Moyne/Simey » ISER/SES » the founding studies (Braithwaite 1953, R. T. Smith 1956, Clarke 1957, M. G. Smith 1965, Brathwaite 1971, Beckford 1972, Nettleford 1970) » the critical and feminist turn (Craig, Reddock, Senior, Barriteau, Barrow).
- Define and pair with an author: social structure, function, power/authority (Weber); status ascribed/achieved (Linton); role set and role conflict (Merton); folkways/mores, in-group/out-group (Sumner); primary/secondary group (Cooley); looking-glass self (Cooley); "I"/"me," generalised other (Mead); culture (Tylor) and its elements and characteristics.
- List the five agents of socialisation with a Caribbean example each.
- Reproduce the four-perspective table (level, view of society, source of order and change, key names, best Caribbean fit, chief weakness) from memory.
- State Smith's plural society, Brathwaite's creole society and Beckford's plantation society in three sentences each, and the syllabus's own criticism of Brathwaite.
- Give the historical background and social context of two forms of popular culture.

- Explain positivism and interpretivism, cite *Suicide* and Atkinson, and name Popper, Kuhn and the realist position.
- List seven ethical principles with a case each (Humphreys, Milgram, Clarke's pseudonyms).
- For each method — questionnaire, interview, survey and sampling, documents, observation, cross-sectional, longitudinal — state its logic, one strength, one weakness, one study, and use *reliability*, *validity*, *representativeness* correctly.
- Write out the four SBA sections with their marks (20 / 13 / 15 / 12 = 60) and the word limit.

PART TWO — MODULE 2: SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS: FAMILY, RELIGION, EDUCATION



Chapter Seven — The House on the Dam: The Family in the Caribbean



SYLLABUS MAP — This chapter covers Module 2, Specific Objectives 1–3: explain the characteristics, functions and transformations of the family in the Caribbean; evaluate the main theoretical perspectives commonly used for the analysis of the family; discuss the issues associated with the Caribbean family — Content 1(a) family types: nuclear, single parent, extended, joint, matrifocal, reconstituted, other; 1(b) theoretical perspectives: consensus, interactionist, conflict and feminist; 1(c) changing Caribbean kinship patterns ... the impact of slavery, indentureship, industrialisation, migration and contemporary factors; 1(d) issues facing the Caribbean family.¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Walk down any dam in Berbice and count the houses, and then try to say what a "family" is. In the first house, a grandmother, her daughter, the daughter's three children by two fathers, and a grandson home from Trinidad "for a while." In the second, a married couple with two children and the husband's mother. In the third, a widower alone whose children are all in New York and send money every month. In the fourth, an Indo-Guyanese household of three generations under one roof — the sons' wives came to live with the father, as their mothers did before them. In the fifth, a young woman and her children whose partner "visits." Which of those is the family?

Colonial officials looked at that dam and saw disorder. Sociologists who lived on it — Raymond Smith in three Guyanese villages, Edith Clarke in three Jamaican ones — saw something else: *forms*, each with a

logic, each shaped by history and economy, each doing the work a family does. The syllabus asks you to know the forms, the perspectives that explain them, the history that made them and the issues that strain them. It is the most examined institution on the paper, and the one you know most about from the inside — which is exactly why you must be careful to write sociology and not memoir.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. What a family is, and what it does

George Peter Murdock (1949), surveying 250 societies, defined the family as "a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction," containing adults of both sexes in a socially approved sexual relationship and their children, and claimed that the **nuclear family** was universal.² He gave it four **functions** — *sexual* (regulating sexual behaviour), *reproductive*, *economic* (a unit of production and consumption) and *educational* (socialisation). Caribbean forms tested his claim of universality to breaking point: many households contain no resident adult male, and many children are raised by kin who are not their parents. The working definition most Caribbean sociologists use separates the **household** (people who live under one roof and eat from one pot) from the **family** (people related by blood, marriage or adoption, wherever they live) — the distinction that makes the dam intelligible.

2. Family types in the Caribbean — Content 1(a)

- **Nuclear** — two parents and their dependent children; the colonial and church ideal, and today the majority form among the middle classes.
- **Single-parent** — one parent (overwhelmingly the mother) and her children; across the region a large minority of households are female-headed — commonly cited at around 40 per cent or more in Jamaica and Barbados, though the census figure for any territory should be quoted from the census.³
- **Extended** — the nuclear unit plus other kin (grandparents, aunts, cousins) in one household or in close, cooperating households; the

commonest way Caribbean families absorb migration, illness and poverty.

- **Joint** — the classic Indo-Caribbean form: a father, his married sons and their wives and children under one roof or in one yard, property held in common, authority with the eldest male. Smith and Jayawardena (1959) documented it among Indo-Guyanese, and its slow loosening as sons moved to their own house-lots.⁴
- **Matrifocal** — R. T. Smith's term (1956): a household in which the *mother* (or grandmother) is the emotional and often the economic centre, whether or not a man is present; men are marginal to the domestic group though not absent from it.⁵ Note the precision: matrifocal does not mean "no father"; it means the *focus* is on the mother.
- **Reconstituted (blended)** — a household formed when parents with children from earlier unions form a new union.
- **"Other"** — the syllabus's own word for forms that fit no European box: the **visiting union** (partners maintain separate residences and the man visits); the **common-law union** (co-residence without legal marriage, recognised by law in most territories); **sibling households**; **grandmother households** where parents have migrated — the "barrel children" studied by Claudette Crawford-Brown in Jamaica.⁶ Edith Clarke, T. S. Simey and Hyman Rodman all described a *sequence* rather than a set of types: visiting » common-law » marriage, as a couple ages and prospers.⁷

3. The theoretical perspectives — Content 1(b)

Consensus/functionalist. Murdock's four functions; Parsons (1955) reduced them for industrial society to two *irreducible* functions — the **primary socialisation** of children and the **stabilisation of adult personalities** — and argued that the isolated nuclear family "fits" industrial society because it is mobile and free of kin obligations; within it he saw an **instrumental** (male, breadwinning) and an **expressive** (female, nurturing) role.⁸ *Application:* the family transmits culture (Chapter Two) and adapts — the extended household absorbing migration is *functional*. *Critique:* it assumes harmony, ignores the "dark side" (violence, abuse), universalises a white American middle-class form, and in the Caribbean must explain why the nuclear family was *not*

the majority form for most of history.

Conflict/Marxist. Friedrich Engels (1884) argued that the monogamous nuclear family arose with private property so that men could pass wealth to legitimate heirs — the family as the guardian of inheritance and class.⁹ Eli Zaretsky (1976) saw the family as a refuge from capitalism that also *serves* it — reproducing the labour force, absorbing the worker's frustrations, consuming.¹⁰ *Application:* the plantation deliberately prevented stable families among the enslaved (marriage discouraged, families sold apart) because a labourer without ties is a cheaper labourer — the conflict reading of matrifocality's origin. *Critique:* economic determinism; it says little about the family's emotional life and nothing about why forms differ by ethnicity.

Interactionist. The family is not a structure but an ongoing set of interactions in which roles are negotiated: Berger and Kellner (1964) described marriage as a "conversation" that constructs the couple's shared reality; interactionists study the labelling of the "bad mother" and the "absent father," and the meanings of "outside child," "child-father" and "deputy husband" in Caribbean speech.¹¹ *Application:* Barry Chevannes's *Learning to Be a Man* (2001) and Brown and Chevannes's *Why Man Stay So* (1998) interviewed Caribbean men about what fatherhood *means* to them — and found men who saw themselves as fathers to children they did not live with.¹² *Critique:* blind to the economy and the law that shape the negotiations.

Feminist. The family is the primary site of patriarchy: Oakley (1974) showed housework to be unpaid, unending and unvalued work; Delphy and Leonard (1992) described the household as an economic system in which men exploit women's labour; radical feminists point to domestic violence and marital rape as the family's "dark side."¹³ *Caribbean application:* the matrifocal household is a two-edged case — evidence of women's authority and self-reliance, but also of women bearing the whole cost of reproduction while men are free; Olive Senior (1991) documented that double burden; Christine Barrow (1996) gathered the debate.¹⁴ *Critique:* the specimen mark scheme itself notes that the claim "all women are exploited is overstated" — many Caribbean women are educated, employed and heads of household by choice; the perspective must account for women's *power* as well as their oppression.¹⁵

4. Where Caribbean family forms came from — the great debate

The examiner's favourite question under Content 1(c) is *why* the Caribbean family looks as it does. Four answers, in the order they were given.

1. **The African-retention thesis** — Melville Herskovits (1941): matrifocal and polygynous patterns survive from West Africa, where the mother–child bond was the core unit and men had several households.¹⁶
2. **The slavery thesis** — E. Franklin Frazier (1939) for the United States, and the colonial commissioners for the Caribbean: slavery destroyed African family life — sale, forced separation, the prohibition or discouragement of marriage, the master's sexual access to enslaved women — and left the mother–child unit as the only one that could survive. Orlando Patterson's *The Sociology of Slavery* (1967) is the Jamaican statement.¹⁷
3. **The economic-adaptation thesis** — Edith Clarke (1957) and R. T. Smith (1956): family form tracks *economic circumstance*. Clarke's three communities — a sugar-estate town, a poor peasant village and a prosperous farming village — showed unstable unions where men's wages were low and casual, and stable marriage where land and steady income made a man a reliable provider.¹⁸ Smith argued that matrilocality is the normal *developmental* outcome where men's low and uncertain status leaves them marginal to the household. **Hyman Rodman** (1963, 1971) added the "**value stretch**": lower-class Trinidadians do not *reject* marriage as an ideal; they stretch their values to accept visiting and common-law unions as legitimate alternatives when the ideal is out of reach.¹⁹
4. **The cultural-pluralist thesis** — M. G. Smith (1962): different ethnic sections have different family *institutions*, and the differences are cultural, not merely economic; the Indo-Caribbean joint family is the standing proof that poverty alone does not produce matrilocality.²⁰

Indentureship and the Indo-Caribbean family. The indenture ships carried far more men than women (the colonial recruiting target was a minimum ratio of women to men, often unmet), which for a generation made marriage competitive and wives scarce; the estate

barrack and the later village re-established the patrilineal joint household, arranged marriage, dowry and the authority of elders; and Hindu and Muslim marriages, not recognised in law until the twentieth century, produced children the state called illegitimate.²¹ Smith and Jayawardena (1959) and Jayawardena (1963) are the Guyanese studies; Patricia Mohammed (2002) traces gender negotiations among Indo-Trinidadians from 1917.

5. Changing kinship patterns – Content 1(c)

- **Marriage and divorce rates.** Marriage rates in the region are low by European standards and divorce has risen since the reform of divorce laws; but *union* – not marriage – is the meaningful measure, and most Caribbean children are born to parents in visiting or common-law unions.
- **Men and fatherhood.** The "marginal male" of Smith's villages has been re-examined: Chevannes and Brown found men engaged as fathers on their own terms; Errol Miller (Chapter Nine) argued that men were being marginalised by the economy and the school; feminists replied that men's marginality in the *home* coexists with their dominance in the *society*.
- **Female-headed and single-parent households** have grown with urbanisation, migration and women's employment.
- **Industrialisation and urbanisation** pulled families from the estate and the village to the town and the wage, weakening the extended household and the joint family.
- **Migration** – the Caribbean's defining fact – produces transnational families: the "barrel children" raised by grandmothers, the remittance household, the returnee. Guyana, which has lost a large share of its population abroad, is the extreme case: entire kin networks stretched between Berbice, Brooklyn and Toronto.
- **Contemporary factors:** women's education and employment (women now outnumber men in Caribbean tertiary education), contraception, the law (recognition of common-law unions; maintenance and domestic-violence legislation), religion, and the media's images of family life.

6. Issues facing the Caribbean family – Content 1(d)

Domestic violence. Every territory now legislates against it — Guyana's Domestic Violence Act of 1996 gave courts the power to issue protection orders, and the region has followed with successive reforms; the Caribbean Journal of Criminology's work on domestic violence (Roberta Clarke, on your syllabus list) documents its extent.²² Sociologically: a feminist issue (male power), a conflict issue (economic stress), and an interactionist one (the label "wife-beater" and its absence).

Poverty, the **changing roles of women and men** (the woman as breadwinner and the man displaced from the provider role — a source of both liberation and conflict), **child abuse** (including the "outside child" and the step-relationship), **conjugal separation and divorce**, **teenage pregnancy** (a large share of births in several territories are to teenage mothers; the consequences run through education and poverty, and Unit 2 returns to it), **sexual orientation** (the family's response to gay and lesbian members in a region where colonial-era laws and religious norms remain strong — an issue the examiner expects you to discuss sociologically, not morally), and **social pathology** — the old term for deviance and breakdown, now used with care.

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *Assess the extent to which the feminist perspective is applicable to an understanding of the female role in the family in contemporary Caribbean society.* (The syllabus's own specimen question.)

Step 1 — Decode. *Assess the extent* » measured verdict on *applicability*. The perspective is feminism; the object is the female role; the setting is *contemporary* Caribbean — so history matters only as contrast.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define the feminist perspective (patriarchy — Walby; liberal/Marxist/radical strands; Oakley on housework; Delphy and Leonard). Define family types with women at the centre (matrifocal — R. T. Smith; single-parent; visiting). State the traditional female role (domestic, subordinate) and the contemporary one.

Step 3 — Application (10). *Where feminism applies:* the double burden (Senior, 1991) — women in paid work *and* the whole of housework and child care; domestic violence as the family's dark side; the matrifocal household as women carrying reproduction alone; maintenance laws that under-enforce men's obligations. *Where it strains:* Caribbean women's *authority* — the grandmother who rules the yard, the female head who chooses her unions; women's advances in education and employment; the Indo-Caribbean joint family, where the relevant power line may be *age* (mother-in-law over daughter-in-law) as much as sex. Use Guyana: the East Coast matrifocal village (Smith) beside the Corentyne joint family (Jayawardena) — feminism reads both, but differently.

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Follow the mark scheme's own lead: the claim that all women are exploited is "overstated"; women's roles have changed through education and economic opportunity as much as through patriarchy's persistence; consider whether the *conflict* or the *interactionist* perspective explains particular cases better. Conclude: feminism applies *to a large extent to the burden* and *to a limited extent to the authority* of Caribbean women — and a Caribbean feminism (Barriteau, Reddock) that sees both is the better tool.

Step 5 — Opening line: *"The Caribbean woman is the feminist perspective's best evidence and its hardest case: nowhere is the double burden heavier, and nowhere does a woman more often rule the house she carries."*

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Say "matrifocal" precisely.** It is Smith's word; it means mother-*centred*, not man-absent. Candidates who define it as "single-parent" lose the Knowledge mark and the examiner's confidence.
- **Four origins, four names.** Herskovits (retention), Frazier/Patterson (slavery), Clarke and Smith (economic adaptation), M. G. Smith (pluralism), plus Rodman's value stretch. That set answers any "why does the Caribbean family look like this" question.
- **Two ethnic families, one country.** Guyana and Trinidad candidates have a comparison no one else has: the matrifocal and the

joint family in one society. Use it in every family essay — it shows that culture, not just poverty, shapes form.

- **Issues need policy.** When the question says "issues," the top scripts name the law: Guyana's Domestic Violence Act (1996), the recognition of common-law unions, maintenance legislation. Application marks are for showing the society *responding*.
- **The trap:** memoir. "In my family my grandmother..." earns nothing unless it is turned into a concept — *the matrifocal three-generation household described by Smith*. Sociologise every example.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Evaluate the view that slavery, rather than African retention or economic circumstance, explains the origins of the matrifocal family in a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 2. With reference to a named Caribbean society, discuss the impact of migration on Caribbean kinship patterns. (25 marks)

Essay 3. Assess the usefulness of the functionalist perspective for understanding the Indo-Caribbean joint family. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. The term *matrifocal* was introduced by (A) Edith Clarke (B) R. T. Smith (C) Murdock (D) Parsons.
2. Rodman's *value stretch* refers to (A) rejecting marriage (B) stretching values to accept alternative unions as legitimate when the ideal is out of reach (C) the joint family (D) Engels's theory of inheritance.
3. Parsons identified the two irreducible functions of the family as (A) sexual and reproductive (B) primary socialisation and stabilisation of adult personalities (C) economic and educational (D) inheritance and consumption.
4. A household in which a father lives with his married sons, their wives and children is (A) nuclear (B) reconstituted (C) joint (D) visiting.
5. *My Mother Who Fathered Me* (1957) studied three communities in (A) Jamaica (B) Trinidad (C) British Guiana (D) Barbados.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Two (socialisation) · Chapter Three (the perspectives) · Chapter Four (retention versus destruction) · Chapter Nine (Miller and male marginalisation) · Unit 2, Module 2 (domestic violence and juvenile delinquency) · Unit 2, Module 3 (poverty and female-headed households).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER SEVEN

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 2, Specific Objectives 1–3; Content 1(a)–(d), pp. 7–8.
2. George Peter Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), p. 1.
3. See Christine Barrow, *Family in the Caribbean* (1996), ch. 1, for a survey of the census evidence on household headship across the region; quote a territory's figure from its own census report.
4. Raymond T. Smith and Chandra Jayawardena, "Marriage and the Family amongst East Indians in British Guiana," *Social and Economic Studies* 8, no. 4 (1959): 321–376.
5. R. T. Smith, *The Negro Family in British Guiana* (1956), ch. 10; developed in Smith, *The Matrifocal Family: Power, Pluralism and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 1996), listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 2 Resources, p. 10.
6. Claudette Crawford-Brown, *Who Will Save Our Children? The Plight of the Jamaican Child in the 1990s* (Kingston: Canoe Press, 1999).
7. Simey, *Welfare and Planning in the West Indies* (1946); Clarke, *My Mother Who Fathered Me* (1957); Hyman Rodman, *Lower-Class Families: The Culture of Poverty in Negro Trinidad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).
8. Talcott Parsons and Robert F. Bales, *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1955), chs. 1–2.
9. Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884).
10. Eli Zaretsky, *Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life* (London: Pluto Press, 1976).

11. Peter Berger and Hansfried Kellner, "Marriage and the Construction of Reality," *Diogenes* 12, no. 46 (1964): 1–24.
12. Barry Chevannes, *Learning to Be a Man: Culture, Socialization and Gender Identity in Five Caribbean Communities* (Kingston: UWI Press, 2001); Janet Brown and Barry Chevannes, "Why Man Stay So": *Tie the Heifer, Loose the Bull – An Examination of Gender Socialisation in the Caribbean* (Kingston: UWI, 1998).
13. Oakley, *The Sociology of Housework* (1974); Christine Delphy and Diana Leonard, *Familiar Exploitation: A New Analysis of Marriage in Contemporary Western Societies* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992).
14. Senior, *Working Miracles* (1991); Barrow, *Family in the Caribbean* (1996).
15. CXC A27/U2/13, specimen Paper 02 mark scheme, Unit 1, Question 3 (Analysis and Evaluation).
16. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941).
17. Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939); Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery: An Analysis of the Origins, Development and Structure of Negro Slave Society in Jamaica* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1967).
18. Clarke, *My Mother Who Fathered Me* (1957), chs. 3–4.
19. Hyman Rodman, "The Lower-Class Value Stretch," *Social Forces* 42, no. 2 (1963): 205–215; Rodman, *Lower-Class Families* (1971).
20. M. G. Smith, *West Indian Family Structure* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962).
21. Jayawardena, *Conflict and Solidarity in a Guianese Plantation* (1963); Mohammed, *Gender Negotiations among Indians in Trinidad, 1917–1947* (2002).
22. Domestic Violence Act 1996, Cap. 11:09, Laws of Guyana; Roberta Clarke, *Domestic Violence in the Caribbean* (UNIFEM/Caribbean Journal of Criminology, 1999), listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 2 (Unit 2) Resources, p. 20.

Chapter Eight — Sacred Ground: Religion in the Caribbean

SYLLABUS MAP — This chapter covers Module 2, Specific Objectives 4–6: explain the characteristics, functions and transformation of selected religions in the Caribbean; evaluate the main theoretical perspectives commonly used for the analysis of religion; discuss the issues associated with religion in the Caribbean — Content 2(a) types of belief systems; (b) organisation of religious groups: church, cult, denomination, sect; (c) theoretical perspectives; (d) the emergence, character and dynamics of one world religion and two Afro-Caribbean religions; (e) issues: prejudice, discrimination, intolerance, secularisation.¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

There is a stretch of the Corentyne road where, in less than a mile, you pass a mandir with its jhandi flags in the yard, a masjid with its green minaret, an Anglican church that was there before either, a Pentecostal assembly in a converted shop, and a Seventh-day Adventist hall. On a Sunday morning one is full and the others are quiet; on a Friday afternoon another; on a Saturday a third; and on the night of a wake in an Afro-Guyanese yard, the drums of a tradition none of those buildings officially houses will sound until morning. Guyana's 2012 census recorded a population roughly two-thirds Christian, about a quarter Hindu, and under a tenth Muslim, with small numbers of Rastafari, Bahá'í and others and a few per cent professing no religion.² No other single road in the Caribbean carries so many gods so closely.

Sociology does not ask whether any of those gods is real. It asks what religion *does* — for the individual, for the group, for the powerful and the powerless — and how it changes. Durkheim looked at religion and saw society worshipping itself; Marx saw the sigh of the oppressed; Weber saw ideas that could move economies; the feminists saw men's rules in God's voice; and the Caribbean's own religions — Rastafari, the Spiritual Baptists, Orisha, Revival, Vodou, Comfa — saw that a dominated people can build a faith that gives them back their dignity. That is the chapter.

BEAT 2 · THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. Types of belief system — Content 2(a)

Sociologists classify religions by what they hold sacred. **Animism** — the belief that spirits inhabit natural objects, animals and places (Tylor, 1871, thought it the earliest form; Indigenous Guyanese cosmologies, with their spirits of river, forest and rock, are animist in structure).³ **Naturism** — the worship of natural forces and phenomena themselves, the sun, the thunder, the river (Max Müller's theory of religion's origin).⁴ **Polytheism** — many gods, each with a domain; **monotheism** — one God (Judaism, Christianity, Islam; the Hinduism practised in the Caribbean is often described as polytheistic in form and monotheistic in philosophy, and a careful candidate says so). **Totemism** — the sacred identification of a clan with an animal or plant, which Durkheim took as the elementary form. Add **secular belief systems** (nationalism, humanism) if the question allows.

2. The organisation of religious groups — Content 2(b)

Ernst Troeltsch (1912) drew the first distinction: the **church** — large, inclusive, born into, aligned with the state and the powerful, with a professional priesthood (the Anglican Church in colonial Guyana, the Catholic Church in Haiti); the **sect** — small, exclusive, joined by conversion, in tension with the world, lay-led, often of the poor (the early Pentecostals; the early Rastafari).⁵ H. Richard Niebuhr (1929) added the **denomination** — a sect that has grown respectable: large, tolerant of other faiths, not state-aligned (the Methodists, the Seventh-day Adventists, and in the Caribbean today the Pentecostal assemblies that

were sects a generation ago).⁶ The **cult** — in Roy Wallis's (1984) typology of new religious movements — is loosely organised, individualistic, focused on the self and often on a charismatic leader; Stark and Bainbridge (1985) distinguished cults, which *innovate*, from sects, which *revive*.⁷ The examiner rewards the dynamic: sect » denomination is a *process* (Niebuhr's), and Rastafari's journey from persecuted sect in the 1930s to global cultural presence is the Caribbean's example.

3. The theoretical perspectives — Content 2(c)

Consensus/functionalist. Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912) defined religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things ... which unite into one single moral community called a Church all those who adhere to them," and argued, from the totemism of Australian Aboriginal peoples, that in worshipping the totem a clan worships *society itself*: religion's function is **social solidarity** — ritual reaffirms the collective conscience.⁸ Bronisław Malinowski (1925) added the *psychological* functions: among Trobriand Islanders, magic and ritual surrounded dangerous open-sea fishing, not safe lagoon fishing — religion manages anxiety at moments of stress (death, danger, life crises).⁹ Parsons: religion supplies the ultimate values of the value consensus. *Application*: the nine-night and the wake as rituals of solidarity; the mandir and the masjid as the centre of Indo-Guyanese village life; Guyana's religious holidays as national integration. *Critique*: it ignores conflict *between* religions (Guyana's road again), religion as a source of division and oppression, and secularisation.

Conflict/Marxist. Marx's famous line, from the introduction to his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843–44): religion "is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people."¹⁰ Religion is part of the superstructure: it *justifies* inequality (the divine right of kings; the slave-holder's Christianity; caste), *consoles* the oppressed with a reward hereafter, and so *disables* revolt. Gramsci softened the view: religion can be part of hegemony or a site of counter-hegemony — the church that taught obedience also produced Sam Sharpe, the Baptist deacon who led the 1831–32 Jamaican rising. *Application*: colonial missionary Christianity teaching the enslaved patience; the planters' suspicion of the "Native Baptists"; and, on the other side, Rastafari as religion *against*

Babylon — a counter-hegemonic faith. *Critique*: religion has repeatedly been a force for change (Weber's Calvinists, liberation theology, the civil-rights movement), and people are not simply drugged by it.

Weber and social action. *The Protestant Ethic* (1904–05) showed religion *causing* economic change; Weber's broader sociology of religion analysed prophets, charisma and the "theodicy" (explanation of suffering) that each faith offers the dispossessed. *Application*: the growth of Pentecostalism among the Caribbean poor as an "ethic" of discipline, sobriety and upward mobility.

Interactionist. Peter Berger's *The Sacred Canopy* (1967): religion is a humanly constructed "canopy" of meaning that shelters people from chaos — and that is *plausible* only while a community sustains it; when the canopy is shared by many competing faiths, each becomes a matter of choice, and its plausibility weakens.¹¹ Interactionists study conversion, the labelling of "cultists," the meanings of ritual for participants. *Application*: Berger's canopy on the Corentyne road — where five faiths sustain five plausibility structures side by side. *Critique*: it says little about religion's relation to power and economy.

Feminist. Religion is patriarchal in scripture, organisation and practice: a male God, a male priesthood, women's subordination as divine order (Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 1949; Karen Armstrong, 1986; Nawal El Saadawi, 1980, on the *misinterpretation* of Islam to serve patriarchy rather than Islam itself).¹² *Application*: the exclusion of women from the pulpit and the pandit's role; purity rules; the reversal in Afro-Caribbean religions, where women have long been leaders — the Revival "Mother," the Spiritual Baptist "Mother," the Orisha priestess. *Critique*: religion has also been a source of women's community, leadership and resistance; treating it only as oppression misreads the "Mothers."

4. One world religion: Christianity in the Caribbean — Content 2(d)(i)

Emergence. Christianity arrived with conquest — Catholicism with Spain and France, Anglicanism and the dissenting churches (Moravians, Methodists, Baptists) with Britain and the Dutch Reformed Church with the Netherlands in Berbice and Essequibo. For most of the slavery period the established churches ministered to the planters and barely to the

enslaved; it was the *nonconformist* missionaries — Moravians from 1732 in the Danish islands, Methodists and Baptists from the 1780s — who evangelised the enslaved, and who were suspected by planters of sedition. The Demerara rising of 1823 was blamed on the missionary John Smith, who died in prison awaiting the King's pardon; the 1831–32 rising in Jamaica is remembered as the "Baptist War."¹³ **Character.** After emancipation the churches ran the schools (Chapter Nine), the missions to the indentured Indians (with limited success), and the moral order of the village. **Dynamics.** In the twentieth century the historic churches declined and *Pentecostalism* grew explosively across the region — in Guyana's 2012 census the Pentecostal group was the largest single Christian body.¹⁴ Sociologically: a sect becoming a denomination; a faith of the poor with an ethic of discipline; a religion of experience (spirit baptism, healing) that met needs the historic churches had ceased to meet.

(The syllabus asks for one world religion; a Guyanese candidate may profitably contrast Hinduism and Islam, which arrived with indenture from 1838, were denied legal recognition of their marriages for generations, and rebuilt their institutions — mandir, masjid, jamaat, the Maha Sabha and the Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana — in the villages.)

5. Two Afro-Caribbean religions — Content 2(d)(ii)

Rastafari (Jamaica, 1930s » the world). *Emergence:* the coronation of Ras Tafari Makonnen as Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia on 2 November 1930, read by Jamaican preachers — Leonard Howell chief among them — through Marcus Garvey's call to look to Africa for a black king, as the fulfilment of prophecy; Howell's Pinnacle commune (from 1940) was raided repeatedly by the colonial state.¹⁵ *Character:* the divinity of Selassie; Africa (Ethiopia) as Zion and the West as Babylon; repatriation; the dreadlocks, the ital diet, the sacramental use of ganja, the reasoning session and the drum; the Nyabingi order and the Twelve Tribes of Israel among its "houses." *Dynamics:* persecution — the Coral Gardens incident of April 1963, in which Rastafarians were rounded up and brutalised after a violent episode near Montego Bay; the 1960 University College report by Smith, Augier and Nettleford that first studied the movement seriously; Selassie's visit to Jamaica on 21 April

1966; the movement's carriage on reggae to the world; and its slow passage from sect to accepted presence, with formal apologies from the Jamaican state for Coral Gardens in 2017.¹⁶ Leonard Barrett's *The Rastafarians* (1977) and Barry Chevannes's *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology* (1994) are the studies to cite.¹⁷ Sociologically it is *all four perspectives at once*: solidarity for the dispossessed (Durkheim), a counter-hegemony against Babylon (Gramsci), a constructed canopy of meaning (Berger), and — feminists note — a movement in which women's roles were long subordinate and are still contested.

The Spiritual Baptists (Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, St Vincent) and Orisha. *Emergence*: a syncretic Christianity of the formerly enslaved, blending Baptist worship with African spirit possession, "mourning" rituals, bell and candle; associated with, but distinct from, the *Orisha* (Shango) tradition of Yoruba origin. *Character*: lay leadership, the "Mother" and "Leader," possession by the Spirit, baptism by immersion. *Dynamics*: outlawed in Trinidad by the **Shouters Prohibition Ordinance of 1917**, which banned their worship as a public nuisance; repealed only in 1951 after a long campaign; and since 1996 honoured by a public holiday, Spiritual Baptist/Shouter Liberation Day, 30 March.¹⁸ Frances Henry's *Reclaiming African Religions in Trinidad* (2003) traces the Orisha and Spiritual Baptist faiths from persecution to national recognition.¹⁹

*(Other examinable cases: Jamaican **Revival** and **Pocomania**; Haitian **Vodou**, syncretising West African religion with Catholicism, born in the plantation and central to the revolution of 1791, and officially recognised by the Haitian state only in 2003; and Guyana's own **Comfa**, the Afro-Guyanese spirit-possession tradition studied by Kean Gibson (2001).²⁰ Two in depth are enough; the examiner wants emergence, character and dynamics for each.)*

6. Issues — Content 2(e)

Prejudice, discrimination and intolerance. Colonial law criminalised African religion (the obeah laws, several still on the statute books; the Shouters Ordinance); schools expelled dreadlocked children; Rastafari were beaten and shorn by police; Hindu and Muslim marriages were unrecognised; and religious difference in Guyana has overlapped with ethnic difference, so that each can inflame the other.

Secularisation — Bryan Wilson's (1966) "the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance" — is measured by attendance, belief, and the withdrawal of religion from public institutions (the state takes over the schools, marriage, welfare).²¹ Is the Caribbean secularising? The evidence is mixed: the historic churches have emptied, but Pentecostalism, Islam and Hinduism are vigorous; the census "no religion" category is small but growing; and religion remains loud in public life — on the radio, in Parliament, in the school assembly. Berger's own later view was that the world is "as furiously religious as it ever was," and the Caribbean is his evidence.²²

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *With reference to ONE Afro-Caribbean religion, assess the extent to which the conflict perspective explains its emergence and development.*

Step 1 — Decode. One religion (Rastafari). Assess the *extent* to which conflict theory explains emergence *and* development — two phases.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define the conflict perspective on religion (Marx: opium, legitimization of inequality; Gramsci: hegemony and counter-hegemony). Define Rastafari — emergence (1930, Howell, Garvey), character, dynamics (Pinnacle, Coral Gardens, 1966, reggae, acceptance).

Step 3 — Application (10). *Emergence:* the conflict reading fits — a faith of the black poor of colonial Jamaica, rejecting the planters' God and Babylon's order; the colonial state's response (raids, imprisonment of Howell, Coral Gardens) is class and race conflict in religious dress. *Development:* the sect-to-denomination path and Rastafari's global spread through reggae look less like class struggle and more like Niebuhr's process and Berger's canopy; the state's later embrace (1966 visit, 2017 apology) suggests co-optation — which is itself a Gramscian idea. Bring in the functionalist reading (solidarity for the dispossessed) and the feminist critique (women's place in the movement) as rivals.

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Conflict theory explains the *emergence* to a large extent and the *development* only partly — Marx's "opium" fits

Rastafari worst of all, since it was a stimulant to resistance, not a sedative; Gramsci's counter-hegemony fits better than Marx. Conclude on which version of conflict theory, and what it cannot see.

Step 5 — Opening line: *"Rastafari was born in conflict — with Babylon, with the colonial state, with the planters' Christianity — and if Marx's 'opium' explains it badly, Gramsci's counter-hegemony explains it well: this essay assesses how far, and where the explanation runs out."*

BEAT 4 · COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Durkheim's definition and Marx's sentence.** Learn both by heart. They are the two quotations the examiner expects and the two the mark scheme rewards; one each is enough.
- **Emergence, character, dynamics.** The syllabus's three words for the religions are your three paragraphs for each. Date the emergence, list the character, narrate the dynamics (persecution » acceptance).
- **Rastafari is not "reggae and ganja."** Howell, 1930, Garvey, Pinnacle, Coral Gardens 1963, 1966, Barrett, Chevannes. A dated, sourced Rastafari paragraph is the single most reliable Application-mark paragraph on the whole Unit 1 paper.
- **Church—sect—denomination is a process.** Show the movement: Pentecostalism from storefront sect to the largest Christian body in Guyana's census; the Spiritual Baptists from the 1917 ban to a public holiday.
- **The trap:** writing theology. The examiner does not want to know whether Selassie is divine or whether Comfa is "real." She wants to know what the belief *does* for those who hold it and how the society responded.

BEAT 5 · TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. "Religion unites; religion divides." Discuss this statement with reference to the functionalist and conflict perspectives and a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 2. Assess the extent to which secularisation is occurring in a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 3. Examine the emergence, character and dynamics of any TWO Afro-Caribbean religions. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. Durkheim argued that in worshipping the totem, the clan worships (A) nature (B) its ancestors (C) society itself (D) the sun.
2. The type of religious organisation that is large, inclusive and aligned with the state is the (A) sect (B) cult (C) church (D) new religious movement.
3. Malinowski's study of Trobriand fishing showed that religion (A) causes capitalism (B) manages anxiety in situations of danger (C) is the opium of the people (D) oppresses women.
4. The Shouters Prohibition Ordinance (1917) was passed in (A) Jamaica (B) Trinidad and Tobago (C) British Guiana (D) Haiti.
5. Haile Selassie visited Jamaica in (A) 1930 (B) 1963 (C) 1966 (D) 1977.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Three (perspectives) · Chapter Four (syncretism and retention) · Chapter Twelve (religion and the colour hierarchy) · Unit 2, Module 2 (religion as an institution of social control).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER EIGHT

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 2, Specific Objectives 4–6; Content 2(a)–(e), p. 8.
2. Bureau of Statistics, Guyana, *2012 Population and Housing Census*, Compendium 2, religious affiliation tables. Quote exact percentages from the Bureau's published tables.
3. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (1871), vol. 1, ch. 11 (animism).
4. F. Max Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (London: Longmans, 1873).
5. Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (1912; English trans., London: Allen & Unwin, 1931).
6. H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York: Henry Holt, 1929).
7. Roy Wallis, *The Elementary Forms of the New Religious Life* (London: Routledge, 1984); Rodney Stark and William Sims

- Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
8. Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912; English trans. J. W. Swain, London: Allen & Unwin, 1915), Book I, ch. 1 (the definition) and Book II (totemism).
 9. Bronisław Malinowski, "Magic, Science and Religion" (1925), in *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1948).
 10. Karl Marx, "A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* (1844).
 11. Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967).
 12. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (1949); Karen Armstrong, *The Gospel According to Woman* (London: Elm Tree Books, 1986); Nawal El Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World* (London: Zed Press, 1980).
 13. Emilia Viotti da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries: The Disintegration of Jamaican Slave Society, 1787–1834* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982).
 14. Bureau of Statistics, Guyana, *2012 Population and Housing Census, Compendium 2*.
 15. Barry Chevannes, *Rastafari: Roots and Ideology* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994), chs. 5–6.
 16. M. G. Smith, Roy Augier and Rex Nettleford, *The Rastafari Movement in Kingston, Jamaica* (Kingston: ISER, UCWI, 1960); on Coral Gardens (April 1963) and the Government of Jamaica's apology of April 2017, see the Public Defender's report on the Coral Gardens incident (2015).
 17. Leonard E. Barrett, *The Rastafarians: The Dreadlocks of Jamaica* (Kingston: Sangster's, 1977).
 18. Shouters Prohibition Ordinance, No. 27 of 1917 (Trinidad and Tobago), repealed 1951; Spiritual Baptist/Shouter Liberation Day, 30 March, a public holiday since 1996.

19. Frances Henry, *Reclaiming African Religions in Trinidad: The Socio-Political Legitimation of the Orisha and Spiritual Baptist Faiths* (Kingston: UWI Press, 2003).
20. Kean Gibson, *Comfa Religion and Creole Language in a Caribbean Community* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001); on Vodou's recognition, the Haitian presidential decree of April 2003.
21. Bryan R. Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society: A Sociological Comment* (London: Watts, 1966), p. xiv.
22. Peter L. Berger (ed.), *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), p. 2.

Chapter Nine — The Long Bench: Education in the Caribbean

SYLLABUS MAP — This chapter covers Module 2, Specific Objectives 7–9: explain the characteristics, functions and transformations of educational systems in the Caribbean; evaluate the main theoretical perspectives commonly used for the analysis of education; discuss the issues associated with education in the Caribbean — Content 3(a) theoretical perspectives; (b) development of education in the Caribbean; (c) establishment and expansion (post-emancipation, post-independence, decolonisation and regionalism); (d) education in the twenty-first century; (e) issues: inequality, underachievement, delinquency, dropouts, globalisation.¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Every Guyanese family has a story that turns on a school. A grandmother who left at ten to mind children; a mother who sat Common Entrance and got the school that changed her life, or did not; a cousin who sat the NGSA last year and whose whole street knew his mark before he did. Education in the Caribbean is not one institution among many. It is *the* road — the one legitimate ladder out of the estate, the village and the class you were born to, in societies where the plantation once made sure there was no ladder at all. That is why the examination results are printed in the newspaper, why a scholarship is a family event, and why a boy who drops out is a family wound.

It is also why the sociology of education is so sharply argued. Functionalists see the school as the engine of meritocracy; Marxists see it as the factory that reproduces the class structure while pretending to be a

ladder; interactionists see the teacher's label becoming the child's fate; feminists see who is taught what; and Caribbean scholars have argued for forty years about why the boys are falling off the bench. In 2025 the Module 2 essay question asked how formal education contributes to social and economic development in a named Caribbean society and what governments can do about equal access; the examiners reported that "the bulk of responses" fell in the lower levels and that outstanding scripts combined "a historical context (pre- and post-independence)," theory, "Caribbean-specific data, and government policies."² This chapter is built to that specification.

BEAT 2 · THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. *The theoretical perspectives — Content 3(a)*

Consensus/functionalist. Durkheim (1925): the school's first function is *moral* — to transmit the norms and values of society and turn the child into a member of a collective larger than the family; it also teaches the specialised skills the division of labour requires.³ Parsons (1959): the school is the *bridge* between the particularistic, ascribed world of the family and the universalistic, achieved world of adult society; it socialises children into the value of **achievement** and operates as a **meritocracy** in which all compete on the same terms and are ranked by ability and effort.⁴ Davis and Moore (1945): education is the mechanism of **role allocation** — it sifts and sorts people into the positions their talents fit and attaches rewards to the most important positions.⁵ *Application:* the CSEC and CAPE examinations as the region's meritocratic sorting machine; the school assembly as Durkheim's moral education; the scholarship as role allocation. *Critique:* is the competition really equal? (Bourdieu and the Marxists say no.) Is the ranking really by talent? And the "bridge" is built on a particular culture — the middle-class, the urban, the Standard-English culture.

Conflict/Marxist. Bowles and Gintis (1976) argued that the school's real work is done not by its lessons but by its *form*: the **correspondence principle** — the hierarchy, discipline, timetable, competition and extrinsic reward of the school *correspond* to the hierarchy of the capitalist workplace, teaching obedience, punctuality and

acceptance of one's place; this is the **hidden curriculum**; and the *myth of meritocracy* legitimates inequality by blaming the failed for failing.⁶ Althusser (1970): the school is the dominant **ideological state apparatus**, reproducing the relations of production. Pierre Bourdieu (1977): the school rewards **cultural capital** — the language, tastes and knowledge of the dominant class — and so converts class privilege into educational "merit," a *symbolic violence* that makes exclusion look like fairness.⁷ Paul Willis (1977), studying twelve working-class "lads" in an English school, found that they *saw through* the school's promises and rejected it — and thereby walked into the factory jobs the system needed filled: resistance that reproduced the structure.⁸ *Caribbean application*: the plantation's refusal to educate the enslaved; the post-emancipation elementary school designed to produce a docile labour force; the two-tier system — elite secondary schools for the few, "all-age" or "community" schools for the many; the "prestige school" and the Standard-English bar. Eric Williams's *Education in the British West Indies* (1950) was the first conflict analysis by a Caribbean scholar of a system built to serve empire.⁹ *Critique*: it is too deterministic — schools have also been the road *up* for large numbers; pupils are not passive; and it underplays the school's genuinely shared functions.

Interactionist. What happens *inside* the classroom? Howard Becker (1952) found teachers judging pupils against an **ideal pupil** modelled on the middle class; Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) told teachers that certain (randomly chosen) pupils were about to "bloom," and those pupils' scores rose — the **self-fulfilling prophecy**; David Hargreaves (1967) showed streaming producing pro- and anti-school **subcultures**; labelling theory explains how "hard-ears," "dunce" and "bright" become destinies.¹⁰ *Application*: the Common Entrance/NGSA sorting at eleven into "top schools" and the rest is labelling by the state on a national scale. *Critique*: it cannot say why some labels stick and others do not, or where the teacher's ideal pupil came from.

Feminist. Dale Spender (1982) found boys receiving more teacher attention; Michelle Stanworth (1983) found teachers holding lower expectations of girls; the curriculum, textbooks and subject choices channelled girls away from science and toward the "caring" and clerical.¹¹ *Caribbean twist*: girls now outperform boys at every level in the English-speaking Caribbean and outnumber them at UWI and UG, so the

feminist question here is double — why are girls' achievements not matched by their position in the labour market and the boardroom, and what is happening to the boys?

2. The development of education in the Caribbean — Content 3(b)–(c)

Slavery. Almost none: education of the enslaved was prohibited or discouraged; the planters' children were sent "home" to Britain or taught by tutors; missionaries taught catechism and, sometimes, letters.

Post-emancipation (1834–1900s). The Imperial Parliament's **Negro Education Grant** (1835–45) funded church-run elementary schools for the freed, and the *Mico Charity* opened teacher-training colleges (Mico, Jamaica, 1836); the aim was moral order and a settled labour force, not advancement. In British Guiana the Compulsory Education Ordinance of 1876 made elementary schooling nominally compulsory, and the church schools remained the backbone of the system until the 1970s.¹² *Secondary* education was for the few — Queen's College (1844) and, later, the Bishops' High School (1870) in Georgetown; Harrison College (1733) and Queen's College in Barbados; Queen's Royal College (1859) in Trinidad — fee-paying, exam-driven, modelled on the English grammar school, with a handful of scholarships to British universities as the summit.¹³ The indentured Indians were largely outside the system, and Christian schools were slow to admit them; Indo-Guyanese enrolment lagged for generations.

Post-World War II, decolonisation and independence (1940s–1980s). The Moyne Commission had condemned the schools; the University College of the West Indies opened in 1948; Caribbean governments took over the expansion of secondary education (Common Entrance examinations from the late 1950s and 1960s to allocate the new places), built teacher-training colleges, and, at independence, made schooling an instrument of *nation-building*. Guyana went furthest: the University of Guyana opened in 1963; in 1976 the government took over the church schools and declared education free "from nursery to university," a policy financed until the economic crisis of the 1980s.¹⁴ **Regionalism:** the **Caribbean Examinations Council** was established in 1972 and sat its first examinations in 1979, replacing the Cambridge and London GCE with a Caribbean-made certificate — the

CSEC — and in 1998 the CAPE that you are sitting: the decolonisation of the examination itself.¹⁵

The twenty-first century — Content 3(d). Universal secondary education became the regional target; the *Common Entrance* was replaced by national assessments (Guyana's NGSA); the UWI Open Campus (2008) and online delivery made distance learning ordinary; technology — laptops, tablets, smart classrooms, and after 2020 the whole system on WhatsApp and Zoom during the pandemic — changed the classroom and exposed the digital divide between coast and hinterland, town and village. Guyana's GOAL scholarship programme (from 2021) put tens of thousands into online degree study; the *Because We Care* cash grant to schoolchildren's families addressed cost.¹⁶ These are the "present-day policies" the 2025 examiners asked for.

3. Issues in Caribbean education — Content 3(e)

Inequality. By *class* (Bourdieu's cultural capital; the cost of "free" schooling — uniforms, books, transport, lessons); by *region* (Guyana's hinterland regions lag the coast in every measure — teacher qualifications, facilities, results; the Amerindian child who must board away from home for secondary school); by *ethnicity* (historic Indo-Caribbean exclusion; today's differences by region and class as much as ethnicity); by *school type* (the "top school" and the rest). **Underachievement** — the region's most argued issue is *male* underachievement: Errol Miller's *Marginalization of the Black Male* (1986; 2nd ed. 1991) argued that Caribbean boys were being pushed out of a school system feminised in staffing and culture;¹⁷ Odette Parry's Jamaican classroom studies found teachers accepting boys' disengagement as "natural";¹⁸ and Mark Figueroa (2004) answered Miller with the "**male privileging**" thesis — boys underachieve not because they are marginalised but because a *privileged* socialisation excuses them from the discipline girls are held to.¹⁹ **Delinquency and dropouts** — connected to the male question, to poverty, to labelling and streaming (Hargreaves), and to the gang (Unit 2). **Globalisation** — the curriculum and the examination are now regional, but the *brain drain* is global: a World Bank study using 2000 data found Guyana with the highest rate of tertiary-educated emigration in the world, close to nine in ten of its graduates living abroad — the school as an export industry.²⁰

Add the pull of foreign universities, the migration of teachers and nurses, and the entry of foreign online providers.

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (the 2025 Module 2 question, restated): *Outline how formal education contributes to social and economic development in a named Caribbean society. In your discussion, using examples, explore measures that Caribbean governments can adopt to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for all. (25 marks)*

Step 1 — Decode. Two parts (contribution; measures). *Outline the first, explore with examples the second.* The examiners punished scripts that did only one half.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define formal education, social development and economic development. State the functionalist account (Durkheim's moral integration, Parsons's bridge, Davis and Moore's allocation — human capital) and, for balance, the conflict caution (Bowles and Gintis, Bourdieu).

Step 3 — Application (10). Guyana. *Contribution:* post-independence nation-building through a common curriculum and CXC; UG (1963) producing the professional class; literacy, health knowledge and women's education driving falling fertility (Unit 2); the 1976 free-education policy; today's oil economy demanding skills. *Historical context:* from the Negro Education Grant's elementary schools to the two-tier colonial system to universal secondary education. *Measures in place:* NGSA, free textbooks, the school-feeding and uniform programmes, the *Because We Care* grant, GOAL scholarships, hinterland dormitories and the extension of secondary schools to interior regions. *Measures to adopt:* close the coast–hinterland gap (teacher incentives, connectivity), de-stream at eleven, invest in early childhood, target boys' engagement without penalising girls, make "free" education actually free of hidden costs.

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Weigh: education contributes strongly to development *where access is equal*; where it is not, Bourdieu's warning applies and the school reproduces the coast/hinterland and class gap. Conclude with the measure you judge most important and why.

Step 5 — Opening line: *"In Guyana, formal education has been the main road from plantation to nation — but a road is only development for those who can reach it, and this essay argues that equal access, not more schooling, is the policy that matters now."*

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **The examiners wrote the recipe.** Outstanding 2025 scripts had: definitions; historical context pre- and post-independence; theory (mainstream *and* Caribbean); Caribbean data; government policies. Five ingredients — put all five in every education essay.
- **Name a policy or two, dated.** Free education 1976; CXC 1972/1979; UG 1963; GOAL 2021. A dated policy is Application; "the government should improve education" is not.
- **Miller and Figueroa.** The male-underachievement debate has two sides with two names. Give both; the examiner has read both.
- **Bourdieu is your evaluation weapon.** Whenever a functionalist claim about meritocracy appears, cultural capital is the reply — and the coast/hinterland gap is its Guyanese proof.
- **The trap:** "outline" does not mean "list." Outline the contribution *through the theory* — Durkheim's integration, Parsons's bridge — and then let the conflict theorists complicate it.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Assess the contribution of the Marxist perspective on education to an understanding of the function of educational systems in Caribbean society. (25 marks — *the syllabus's specimen question*)

Essay 2. "Caribbean boys are not marginalised; they are privileged." Evaluate this claim with reference to explanations of male underachievement in a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 3. Examine the ways in which education in the Caribbean has been transformed from the post-emancipation period to the twenty-first century. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. The *correspondence principle* is associated with (A) Durkheim (B) Bowles and Gintis (C) Parsons (D) Rosenthal and Jacobson.
2. *Cultural capital* is a concept of (A) Bourdieu (B) Willis (C) Miller (D) Davis and Moore.
3. The Caribbean Examinations Council was established in (A) 1948 (B) 1963 (C) 1972 (D) 1998.
4. The *self-fulfilling prophecy* in the classroom was demonstrated by (A) Becker (B) Rosenthal and Jacobson (C) Bowles and Gintis (D) Spender.
5. The *male marginalisation* thesis was advanced by (A) Mark Figueroa (B) Errol Miller (C) Eric Williams (D) Paul Willis.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Two (the school as agent of socialisation) · Chapter Three (perspectives) · Chapter Seven (the family and male marginality) · Chapter Twelve (education and social mobility) · Unit 2, Module 1 (education as an indicator of development) · Unit 2, Module 2 (delinquency and the school).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER NINE

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 2, Specific Objectives 7–9; Content 3(a)–(e), p. 8.
2. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, pp. 5–6.
3. Émile Durkheim, *Moral Education* (lectures 1902–03; published Paris, 1925; English trans., New York: Free Press, 1961); Durkheim, *Education and Sociology* (1922).
4. Talcott Parsons, "The School Class as a Social System: Some of Its Functions in American Society," *Harvard Educational Review* 29, no. 4 (1959): 297–318.
5. Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification," *American Sociological Review* 10, no. 2 (1945): 242–249.
6. Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1976).

7. Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (1970; English trans., London: Sage, 1977).
8. Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (Farnborough: Saxon House, 1977).
9. Eric Williams, *Education in the British West Indies* (Port of Spain: Guardian Commercial Printery, 1950).
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11. Dale Spender, *Invisible Women: The Schooling Scandal* (London: Writers and Readers, 1982); Michelle Stanworth, *Gender and Schooling: A Study of Sexual Divisions in the Classroom* (London: Hutchinson, 1983).
12. Shirley C. Gordon, *A Century of West Indian Education: A Source Book* (London: Longmans, 1963), on the Negro Education Grant and the Mico Charity; on British Guiana, M. K. Bacchus, *Education for Development or Underdevelopment? Guyana's Educational System and Its Implications for the Third World* (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980).
13. Queen's College, Georgetown, founded 1844; The Bishops' High School, 1870; Queen's Royal College, Port of Spain, 1859; Harrison College, Bridgetown, 1733.
14. Bacchus, *Education for Development or Underdevelopment?* (1980), on the 1976 policy; the University of Guyana was established by the University of Guyana Ordinance 1963 and opened in October 1963.
15. The Caribbean Examinations Council was established by agreement in 1972 and conducted its first CSEC examinations in 1979; CAPE was first examined in 1998.
16. Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL), launched 2021; the *Because We Care* cash grant to the parents of schoolchildren, introduced 2014 and reintroduced from 2021. Amounts and coverage

should be quoted from the Ministry of Education's current figures.

17. Errol Miller, *Marginalization of the Black Male: Insights from the Development of the Teaching Profession* (Kingston: ISER, 1986; 2nd ed., Canoe Press, 1991); Miller, *Men at Risk* (Kingston: Jamaica Publishing House, 1991).
18. Odette Parry, *Male Underachievement in High School Education in Jamaica, Barbados, and St Vincent and the Grenadines* (Kingston: Canoe Press, 2000).
19. Mark Figueroa, "Male Privileging and Male 'Academic Underperformance' in Jamaica," in Rhoda Reddock (ed.), *Interrogating Caribbean Masculinities* (Kingston: UWI Press, 2004).
20. Frédéric Docquier and Abdeslam Marfouk, "International Migration by Education Attainment, 1990–2000," in Çağlar Özden and Maurice Schiff (eds.), *International Migration, Remittances and the Brain Drain* (Washington, DC: World Bank and Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) — Guyana's tertiary-educated emigration rate is reported there at approximately 89 per cent for 2000. Verify the figure against the published table before quoting it in an examination.

Module 2 — Revision Checklist



- Define family and household; list the seven family types with a Caribbean example each; define *matrifocal* in Smith's sense.
- State the four perspectives on the family with a theorist each (Murdock/Parsons; Engels/Zaretsky; Berger and Kellner, Chevannes; Oakley, Delphy and Leonard, Senior) and a Caribbean application each.
- Give the four origin theses (Herskovits; Frazier/Patterson; Clarke and Smith; M. G. Smith) plus Rodman's value stretch, and explain the Indo-Caribbean joint family through indenture.
- List six changing kinship patterns and six issues, with one law (Domestic Violence Act 1996) and one study each.
- Define animism, naturism, polytheism, monotheism, totemism; church, sect, denomination, cult (Troeltsch, Niebuhr, Wallis, Stark and Bainbridge).
- Quote Durkheim's definition of religion and Marx's "opium" sentence; explain Malinowski's fishing, Weber's Protestant ethic, Berger's canopy and the feminist critique.
- Narrate the emergence, character and dynamics of Christianity in the Caribbean, Rastafari and the Spiritual Baptists (with dates: 1917, 1930, 1940, 1951, 1963, 1966, 1996).
- Define secularisation (Wilson) and give the evidence for and against it in the Caribbean.
- State Durkheim, Parsons and Davis–Moore on education; Bowles and Gintis, Althusser, Bourdieu and Willis; Becker, Rosenthal and Jacobson, Hargreaves; Spender and Stanworth.
- Tell the history of Caribbean education in four periods with dates (1835, 1844, 1876, 1948, 1963, 1972/1979, 1976, 1998, 2008, 2021).

- Give both sides of the male-underachievement debate (Miller; Figueroa) and four other issues with evidence.

PART THREE — MODULE 3: SOCIAL STRATIFICATION



Chapter Ten — The Ladder and the Wall: Concepts of Stratification



SYLLABUS MAP — This chapter covers Module 3, Specific Objectives 1–2: explain the concepts associated with stratification and identify types of stratification systems — Content 1(a)–(h) class, colour, race, ethnicity, caste, gender, status (ascribed and achieved), mobility (horizontal, vertical, intergenerational, intragenerational) and Content 2 types of stratification systems: open and closed.¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

In the old sugar estates of Berbice the housing told you everything. The manager's house stood on the highest ground with the widest verandah; the overseers' quarters were smaller and nearer the factory; the "logies" — the barrack ranges that housed first the enslaved and then the indentured — sat lowest, nearest the trench. A visitor from another planet could have drawn the society's ladder from the roofline alone: who was white and who was not, who gave orders and who took them, who would leave the estate and who would die on it. That ladder was not a metaphor. It was built, with a surveyor's chain, and people were placed on its rungs by the colour of their skin and the ship that brought them.

Every society ranks its members. Sociology's name for the ranking is **social stratification** — the layering of society into groups with unequal shares of wealth, power and prestige — and the Caribbean has a special claim on the subject, because for three centuries its stratification was the most rigid on earth, and in the sixty years since independence it has changed faster than almost anywhere. The 2025 examiners' Module 3 question asked candidates to analyse "the changing nature of social

stratification and social mobility from 1960 to the present" in one Caribbean society, and recommended that candidates become "more familiar with the jargon and concepts ... such as social mobility, colonialism, slavery, social stratification pyramid, meritocracy, mobility, and inequality."² This chapter is that vocabulary; the next three chapters put it to work.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. Stratification and its dimensions

Social stratification is a system by which a society ranks categories of people in a hierarchy, so that the ranking (a) is a *characteristic of society* rather than a reflection of individual differences, (b) *persists across generations*, (c) is *universal but variable* in its basis, and (d) is *supported by beliefs* that justify it. Every stratification system has three dimensions, which Weber separated and which the examiner expects you to keep separate.³

- **Class** — economic position. For Marx, one's relation to the means of production (owner or worker); for Weber, one's **market situation** — the skills, property and credentials one brings to the market, which produce shared **life chances**: the probability of good health, long life, education, a house, a pension.
- **Status** — social honour or prestige, expressed in a *style of life* and in who will eat with whom, marry whom, live where. Status may run against class: the impoverished old family and the rich newcomer.
- **Party (power)** — the capacity to influence collective decisions through organisation: political parties, unions, professional bodies.

2. The syllabus's eight concepts — Content 1(a)–(h)

(a) Class. See above; in the Caribbean, class emerged fully only when free labour, land ownership and the professions opened after emancipation. Erik Olin Wright's neo-Marxist model of "contradictory class locations" (managers who both control and are controlled) and Goldthorpe's occupational class scheme are the modern schemes; the examiner accepts a simple upper/middle/working/under-class scheme *if* you define each by occupation, income and ownership.

(b) Colour. The ranking of people by *shade* — the peculiar Caribbean inheritance of a society in which whiteness was the summit and every degree of lightness a step toward it. Fernando Henriques's *Family and Colour in Jamaica* (1953) described a "colour-class" system in which shade, hair and features were currency; Lloyd Braithwaite (1953) showed how in Trinidad the whole society was ranked by an ascriptive **colour-class** scale; the word **pigmentocracy** names the arrangement.⁴ Colour is not race: two siblings of the same race may be ranked differently by shade.

(c) Race. A category of people believed to share biologically inherited physical traits that a society treats as significant. Sociologically, race is a **social construction**: the traits are real but their *meaning* is assigned — and the Caribbean assigned it with law (who could be enslaved, who could vote, who could marry whom).

(d) Ethnicity. A shared *cultural* heritage — ancestry, language, religion, customs, a sense of common origin — that a group and others recognise. In Guyana and Trinidad ethnicity (African-descended, Indian-descended, Indigenous, Portuguese, Chinese, Mixed, and so on) rather than colour became the main line of stratification and politics after indenture; Guyana's 2012 census recorded a population roughly two-fifths Indo-Guyanese, three-tenths Afro-Guyanese, one-fifth Mixed, one-tenth Amerindian, and small Portuguese, Chinese and other groups.⁵

(e) Caste. A *closed* system of ranked, hereditary, endogamous groups, each tied to traditional occupations and ideas of purity and pollution — classically the *varna* and *jati* of Hindu India. Indenture carried caste to the Caribbean and the estates broke it: recruits of all castes ate, worked and slept in the same barracks and ships, women were scarce, and the *jajmani* economy of the village had no counterpart on the estate. Chandra Jayawardena (1963) found that among Indo-Guyanese estate workers caste survived as a matter of *prestige* in marriage and the priesthood but not as a system of occupation or exclusion.⁶ The Caribbean is thus the sociologist's natural experiment in the collapse of caste.

(f) Gender. The ranking of men and women — the dimension the founders missed and feminism restored (Chapter Three). Gender cuts across every other dimension: the enslaved woman was ranked below the enslaved man; the indentured woman below the indentured man; and

today Caribbean women, who outperform men in education, remain under-represented at the top of income, ownership and power (the "glass ceiling") and over-represented in poverty (Unit 2). Eudine Barriteau's *Confronting Power, Theorizing Gender* (2003) — on your syllabus list — theorises the Caribbean **gender system** as a structure with material and ideological dimensions.⁷

(g) Status: ascribed and achieved. From Chapter Two: **ascribed** status is fixed at birth (colour, race, sex, ethnicity, birth into a caste or an estate family); **achieved** status is earned (a degree, a profession, a business, an elected office). A stratification system is defined by which kind of status *predominates* — and the whole Caribbean story in Chapter Twelve is the slow shift from ascription to achievement.

(h) Mobility. Social mobility is movement between positions in the stratification system. **Vertical** mobility is movement up or down (the cane-cutter's daughter who becomes a magistrate; the merchant who goes bankrupt); **horizontal** mobility is movement between positions of the same rank (a teacher who becomes a civil servant). **Intergenerational** mobility compares a person's position with the parents' (the classic measure of an open society); **intragenerational** mobility is movement within one person's own career. Sociologists distinguish **absolute** mobility (how many people moved — high in the post-war Caribbean because the whole occupational structure shifted upward) from **relative** mobility (the *chances* of the working-class child compared with the middle-class child — which changed far less). **Structural** mobility is caused by changes in the number of positions (a new oil economy creating jobs that did not exist), **exchange** mobility by people swapping places. Pitirim Sorokin (1927) founded the field; Derek Gordon's *Class, Status and Social Mobility in Jamaica* (1987) is the Caribbean study the examiners name.⁸

3. Types of stratification system — Content 2

A **closed** system allocates position by ascription; boundaries between strata are rigid; mobility is minimal; marriage is *endogamous* (within the stratum); and the system is justified by religion or "nature." Caste and **slavery** — the ownership of persons as property — are the pure types; the plantation Caribbean was a closed system with **estate-like** legal categories (free white, free coloured, enslaved) written into law.

An **open** system allocates position mainly by achievement; boundaries are permeable; mobility is possible and expected; marriage crosses strata; and the system is justified by **meritocracy** — the belief (Michael Young coined the word, as satire, in 1958) that position reflects ability plus effort.⁹ **Class** systems are the open type — in principle. The sociologist's task is to measure how open a nominally open system actually is: the Caribbean after independence declares itself meritocratic, and Chapter Twelve asks how far the declaration is true.

Between the two lie **estate** systems (feudal Europe: lord, clergy, commoner, ranked by law but with a little movement) and, the syllabus's own Caribbean sequence, a *transition* — closed (plantation) » very limited mobility (post-emancipation) » beginnings of achieved status (post-war) » open (post-independence).

4. Measuring stratification

The examiners want data. The tools: **occupation** (the standard proxy for class — the census occupational tables), **income** distribution (the **Gini coefficient**, 0 for perfect equality to 1 for one person holding everything; Caribbean Ginis typically sit in the 0.40s, among the world's more unequal), **wealth** (land and business ownership — harder to measure and more unequal than income), **education**, and **subjective class** (what people call themselves). The syllabus's own teaching suggestion is to use census reports "to derive information on education, occupation, income and gender."¹⁰ Guyana's Bureau of Statistics census compendia and labour-force surveys, and the Caribbean Development Bank's country poverty assessments, are the Guyanese candidate's sources.

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — a Paper 01 drill, item by item

Module 3 concepts are the multiple-choice examiner's favourite terrain. Practise the sorting until it is automatic.

Statement	Concept
A rice farmer's son becomes a surgeon	Vertical, intergenerational, upward mobility
A police constable transfers to the fire service at the same rank	Horizontal mobility

Statement	Concept
A clerk rises to permanent secretary over a career	Intragenerational (career) mobility
A society ranks people by shade of skin	Colour stratification (pigmentocracy)
Enslaved persons cannot change their position by any effort	Closed system; ascribed status
A hereditary, endogamous occupational group with purity rules	Caste
A group defined by shared ancestry, language and religion	Ethnicity
Position based on skills brought to the market (Weber)	Class as market situation
Belief that rewards follow ability and effort	Meritocracy
Discovery of oil creates thousands of new professional posts	Structural mobility

A Paper 02 opening paragraph, worked. *Question: Explain the concepts of class, colour and ethnicity and show how each has shaped stratification in a named Caribbean society. Open thus: "Class, colour and ethnicity are three different rulers laid against the same population — one measures market position, one measures shade, one measures ancestry and culture — and Guyana's history has been the story of the second ruler yielding to the third, with the first only now beginning to compete."* Then define each with its theorist (Weber; Henriques and Braithwaite; the census categories), apply each to Guyana (the colonial pigmentocracy; the ethnic politics after 1955; the new class of professionals and business owners), and evaluate which ruler now measures most.

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Keep the three dimensions apart.** Class is economic, status is honour, party is power (Weber). A candidate who writes "class" for all three is marked down for imprecision in a Module built on precision.
- **Colour is not race, ethnicity is not race.** The Caribbean makes the distinctions vivid: siblings ranked by shade (colour); Indo- and Afro-Guyanese as *ethnic* not racial categories in the sociological sense; "Mixed" as a census category that confounds both.

- **Four mobilities, every time.** Vertical/horizontal; intergenerational/intragenerational — and, for the top band, absolute/relative and structural/exchange.
- **Meritocracy is a *claim*, not a fact.** Young invented the word to mock it. Use it as the thing to be tested, and Bourdieu (Chapter Nine) as the test.
- **The trap:** treating "open" as "equal." An open system may be deeply unequal — it merely allows movement. Say so.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Distinguish between open and closed systems of stratification, and discuss the extent to which a named Caribbean society may be described as an open system today. (25 marks)

Essay 2. Examine the view that colour, rather than class, has been the most important basis of stratification in the Commonwealth Caribbean. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. Weber's three dimensions of stratification are (A) base, superstructure, ideology (B) class, status, party (C) caste, class, estate (D) race, colour, ethnicity.
2. Movement from a lower to a higher position across generations is (A) horizontal mobility (B) intragenerational mobility (C) vertical intergenerational mobility (D) structural stability.
3. A stratification system based on hereditary, endogamous groups with ideas of purity is (A) class (B) caste (C) estate (D) meritocracy.
4. The term *pigmentocracy* refers to stratification by (A) wealth (B) skin shade (C) religion (D) occupation.
5. The word *meritocracy* was coined by (A) Weber (B) Davis and Moore (C) Michael Young (D) Marx.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Two (status and role) · Chapter Three (Weber; feminism) · Chapter Eleven (theories) · Chapter Twelve (the evolution from closed to open) · Unit 2, Module 3 (poverty and inequality).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER TEN

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 3, Specific Objectives 1–2; Content 1(a)–(h) and 2(a)–(b), pp. 11–12.
2. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 7.
3. Max Weber, "Class, Status, Party," in *Economy and Society* (1922), Part II, ch. 9, §6; also in H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946).
4. Fernando Henriques, *Family and Colour in Jamaica* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1953); Braithwaite, "Social Stratification in Trinidad" (1953).
5. Bureau of Statistics, Guyana, *2012 Population and Housing Census*, Compendium 2 (population by ethnic/nationality group). Quote the Bureau's exact percentages.
6. Jayawardena, *Conflict and Solidarity in a Guianese Plantation* (1963), ch. 2; see also Barton M. Schwartz (ed.), *Caste in Overseas Indian Communities* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1967).
7. Barriteau, *Confronting Power, Theorizing Gender* (2003), listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 3 Resources, p. 13.
8. Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Social Mobility* (New York: Harper, 1927); Derek Gordon, *Class, Status and Social Mobility in Jamaica* (Kingston: ISER, 1987).
9. Michael Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy, 1870–2033* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1958).
10. CXC A27/U2/13, Module 3, Suggested Teaching and Learning Activities, item 6, p. 13.

Chapter Eleven — Why the Ladder Exists: Theories of Stratification



SYLLABUS MAP — This chapter covers Module 3, Specific Objective 3: assess theoretical perspectives on stratification in the Caribbean — Content 3(a) Consensus/Functionalism; (b) Conflict/Marxist; (c) Interactionist; (d) Feminist; (e) Caribbean theorists: M. G. Smith, George Beckford, Edward Brathwaite.¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Ask a Guyanese why the doctor earns more than the porter and you will get, in one afternoon, every theory of stratification in the syllabus. "Because he study long" — that is Davis and Moore. "Because them who got, got, and them who ain't got, ain't got" — that is Marx. "Because is who you know and how you talk" — that is Weber's status and Bourdieu's capital. "Because he is a man and she is a woman doing the same work" — that is the feminist. And an old head on the same verandah will add the Caribbean's own theory: "This whole country is one big estate — the manager house just move to town." That is George Beckford, and the examiner will reward you for knowing that it is.

The 2025 examiners were blunt: candidates "should be more familiar with Caribbean theorists and studies, for example M. G. Smith, Lloyd Brathwaite, Edward Kamau Brathwaite, George Beckford, Selwyn Ryan, Derek Gordon, Carl Stone, and Rhoda Reddock."² Half of this chapter is those names, with their arguments.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. Consensus/functionalist — Content 3(a)

Davis and Moore (1945) gave the functionalist theory its classic form: stratification is *universal* because it is *necessary*. Every society must place people in positions and motivate them to perform; some positions are *functionally more important* and require *scarce talent* and *long training*; to attract the able into them, society attaches greater rewards — income, prestige, leisure — to those positions; the resulting inequality is therefore both inevitable and beneficial, a device by which "societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons."³ Parsons added that stratification reflects the *value consensus*: those who best embody society's values (achievement in the United States, birth in feudal Europe) are ranked highest.

Melvin Tumin (1953) wrote the critique every candidate must know: *who decides* which positions are functionally important (the nurse or the footballer)? Stratification *prevents* the discovery of talent by denying the lower strata training; rewards may reflect *power*, not importance; inequality of reward is not the only motivator (duty, honour, intrinsic interest); and stratification is *dysfunctional* — it breeds hostility, suspicion and the sense of exclusion.⁴ *Caribbean application*: the professional class as the meritocratic elite of the post-independence state — and Tumin's objection made flesh in the plantation, which ranked the *least* functionally necessary (the absentee owner) at the top and the *most* (the labourer who produced everything) at the bottom.

2. Conflict/Marxist — Content 3(b)

Marx: stratification is *class*, class is *relation to the means of production*, and the two great classes of capitalism stand in a relation of exploitation that will end in revolution (Chapter Three). The class that owns also rules — the state, the law, the schools and the churches reproduce its dominance; class *in itself* (an objective position) becomes class *for itself* when workers develop **class consciousness**. Neo-Marxists (Wright) added the middle layers; Gramsci added hegemony. *Caribbean application*: the plantation as the purest class structure ever built — owners abroad, managers on the hill, labour in the logie; the post-emancipation struggle over land (the villagers who bought estates; the planters who taxed and flooded them out — Rodney's *History of the Guyanese Working People*); the trade-union movement (the British

Guiana Labour Union under Hubert Critchlow, 1919) as class-for-itself; and the persistence of foreign ownership in sugar, bauxite and now oil. *Critique*: Marx's two-class model cannot handle the Caribbean's colour and ethnic lines — Braithwaite (1953) showed that in Trinidad status by colour overrode class; and the *middle class* of professionals and civil servants, not the proletariat, made the region's revolutions.

3. Interactionist — Content 3(c)

Interactionists study stratification as it is *lived and displayed*: Weber's status groups and styles of life; Goffman's **status symbols** and impression management; Bourdieu's **habitus** and the *distinction* by which taste marks class; the everyday **labelling** of the "ghetto youth" and the "big shot"; the "front" the aspiring maintain. *Caribbean application*: Peter Wilson's *Crab Antics* (1973) found two competing value systems — **respectability** (the colonial, church, middle-class ladder) and **reputation** (the yard's honour, won through wit, generosity and performance) — through which Caribbean people rank one another daily; the shade vocabulary ("clear," "red," "brown," "black") as interactional currency.⁵ *Critique*: it describes the ranking but not its economic base or its history.

4. Feminist — Content 3(d)

Gender is a dimension of stratification, not a footnote to class: Walby's six structures of patriarchy (paid work, household production, culture, sexuality, violence, the state); the **dual labour market** and **occupational segregation** (women crowded into lower-paid "female" jobs); the **gender pay gap**; the **double burden**; the **feminisation of poverty** (Unit 2).⁶ *Caribbean application*: Reddock (1994) on women's labour under indenture and in the colonial economy; Barriteau (2003) on the Caribbean gender system; the paradox of women's educational lead beside their under-representation in ownership, Parliament and the boardroom; the female-headed household as the poorest household type. *Critique*: gender interacts with class and race — a black-feminist point the Caribbean made its own (bell hooks; Caribbean feminists on the different positions of the estate woman and the planter's wife).

5. The Caribbean theorists — Content 3(e)

M. G. Smith — the plural society as stratification. Smith's cultural sections (Chapter Four) are *ranked*: in the colonial West Indies the white section held political power and the highest status, the brown section the middle, the black section the bottom; each section practised distinct institutions; and the ranking was maintained by domination, not consensus. Stratification, for Smith, is therefore *cultural and political* before it is economic — the objection to both Davis-Moore (no consensus) and Marx (not only class).⁷

George Beckford — the plantation society. In *Persistent Poverty* (1972) the plantation is a **total institution** (Beckford borrowed Goffman's term) that structured the whole society: a rigid stratification by race and colour with ownership abroad; a *dependency* on export crops and foreign capital; land, labour and capital organised for the metropole; and a culture, family and value system shaped to the estate's needs. The plantation persisted after emancipation and independence as **plantation society** — which is why, Beckford argued, Caribbean poverty is *persistent*: the structure that produces it was never dismantled.⁸ Lloyd Best's "pure plantation economy" (1968) is the economic model beside it.

Edward Kamau Brathwaite — the creole society as stratification. Creolisation happened *within a hierarchy* whose top was European and whose bottom was African — the **white bias** of creole society — so that the cultural continuum was also a status ladder: the nearer to European language, religion, colour and manners, the higher the rank.⁹ Brathwaite explains what Smith cannot — the mixing — and what Beckford underplays — culture as a ranking device in its own right.

The examiners' further names. Lloyd Braithwaite (1953): Trinidad's stratification was an *ascriptive* colour-class system inherited from slavery, in which colour set the upper limit of achievement.¹⁰ **Derek Gordon** (1987): using survey data, showed Jamaica's post-war mobility was largely *structural* — the expansion of white-collar jobs lifted many — while *relative* chances stayed unequal.¹¹ **Carl Stone** (1973): class and race interlocked in Jamaican political behaviour.¹² **Selwyn Ryan** (1972): race and nationalism in Trinidad's decolonisation.¹³ **Rhoda Reddock** (1994): gender as the neglected dimension.

6. Assessing them together — the shape of a Level-2 answer

Theory	Explains best	Explains worst	Caribbean test case
Davis and Moore	why rewards attach to trained positions in a meritocratic economy	the plantation (importance inverted); inherited advantage	the post-independence professional class
Marx	the plantation as class exploitation; foreign ownership; class struggle	colour and ethnicity as independent lines	sugar, bauxite, the unions
Interactionist	how rank is lived and displayed daily	the origins and economics of the ranking	reputation and respectability (Wilson)
Feminist	gender as a structure crossing class and race	men's disadvantages; variation among women	women's education versus women's power
M. G. Smith	order by domination; the colour-section pyramid	mixing; class within sections	colonial Jamaica; ethnic Guyana
Beckford	persistence of poverty; dependency; the estate's legacy	culture and agency; post-plantation sectors	Guyana's sugar belt
Brathwaite	culture as ranking; white bias; interculturalism	societies with more than two founding groups	Jamaica; and its limits in Guyana

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): *With reference to a named Caribbean society, discuss Karl Marx's perspective on class and class relationships.* (The syllabus's own specimen question.)

Step 1 — Decode. *Discuss* = define, explore, argue for and against with examples. The perspective is Marx's; the society is named; and the mark scheme for this very question expects application to "powerful families who have over generations controlled the means of production," "multinational corporations," and "the lack of/limited access of the working class to conventional avenues for achieving success," with a reference to Beckford's plantation society.¹⁴

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Marx's model: means of production; bourgeoisie and proletariat (and, the scheme notes, the

lumpenproletariat); surplus value and exploitation; base and superstructure; ideology and false consciousness; class consciousness and revolution; the role of "other agencies ... such as the media and political parties" in maintaining the status quo.

Step 3 — Application (10). Guyana: the plantation's two classes and the state that served the planters; post-emancipation land struggles (Rodney); the unions (Critchlow, 1919; the sugar workers' strikes); foreign ownership — Bookers in sugar (nationalised 1976), Demba and Reynolds in bauxite (nationalised 1971 and 1975), and today the multinational consortium in oil; Beckford's plantation society as Marx in Caribbean dress; the working class's limited avenues — education as the one ladder (Chapter Nine).

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Where Marx fails in Guyana: the class line was crossed by colour and then by *ethnicity* — the sugar workers and the bauxite workers, both proletarian, voted for different ethnic parties (Despres, Premdas); the revolution came as nationalist decolonisation led by the middle class, not proletarian rising; nationalisation did not end dependency. Conclude, as the scheme invites, on "the extent to which the Marxist perspective has failed to address emergent complexities regionally and internationally."

Step 5 — Opening line: *"Guyana was built as a class society before it was a society at all — a plantation with owners in London and labour in the logie — and Marx's perspective explains that foundation better than any other; what it cannot explain is why the Guyanese working class has so rarely acted as one."*

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Davis-Moore + Tumin is one unit.** Never present the functionalist theory without its critic; the critique is the Evaluation mark.
- **The three Caribbean theorists, each with a keyword.** Smith — *domination*. Beckford — *persistence*. Braithwaite — *white bias*. Plus a sentence on what each cannot see.
- **The examiners' longer list is your reserve.** Braithwaite 1953, Gordon 1987, Stone 1973, Ryan 1972, Reddock 1994 — one of these in an essay marks you as a candidate who read the report.

- **Guyana's nationalisations are Application gold.** Bauxite 1971 and 1975, sugar 1976 — a Marxist story with a Caribbean ending (dependency survived ownership).
- **The trap:** the mark scheme rewards naming the "lumpenproletariat" and the "other agencies" — read the specimen scheme; it tells you the shape of the ideal answer.

BEAT 5 · TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Assess the usefulness of the functionalist theory of stratification for understanding inequality in a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 2. Evaluate the contribution of any TWO of M. G. Smith, George Beckford and Edward Kamau Brathwaite to an understanding of stratification in the Caribbean. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. Davis and Moore argued that stratification exists because (A) the ruling class imposes it (B) it ensures the most important positions are filled by the most qualified (C) of colour prejudice (D) of patriarchy.
2. Tumin's critique of Davis and Moore includes the point that (A) inequality is natural (B) stratification prevents the discovery of talent in the lower strata (C) all positions are equally important (D) society has no values.
3. Beckford described the plantation as a (A) sect (B) total institution (C) status group (D) reference group.
4. According to M. G. Smith, the plural society's cultural sections are (A) equal (B) unranked (C) ranked and held by the political domination of one section (D) united by value consensus.
5. Peter Wilson's *Crab Antics* contrasted (A) class and caste (B) reputation and respectability (C) base and superstructure (D) manifest and latent functions.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Three (the perspectives) · Chapter Four (Smith, Brathwaite, Beckford on culture) · Chapter Twelve (the theories against the historical record) · Unit 2, Module 1 (dependency and plantation theories of

development).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 3, Specific Objective 3; Content 3(a)–(e), p. 12.
2. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 7.
3. Davis and Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification" (1945), p. 243.
4. Melvin M. Tumin, "Some Principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis," *American Sociological Review* 18, no. 4 (1953): 387–394.
5. Wilson, *Crab Antics* (1973), chs. 4–5.
6. Walby, *Theorizing Patriarchy* (1990), ch. 1.
7. M. G. Smith, *The Plural Society in the British West Indies* (1965); M. G. Smith, *Culture, Race and Class in the Commonwealth Caribbean* (Mona: Department of Extra-Mural Studies, UWI, 1984), listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 3 Resources, p. 13.
8. Beckford, *Persistent Poverty* (1972), listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 3 Resources, p. 13.
9. Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (1971), ch. 20.
10. Braithwaite, "Social Stratification in Trinidad" (1953).
11. Gordon, *Class, Status and Social Mobility in Jamaica* (1987).
12. Stone, *Class, Race and Political Behaviour in Urban Jamaica* (1973).
13. Selwyn D. Ryan, *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago: A Study of Decolonization in a Multiracial Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).
14. CXC A27/U2/13, specimen Paper 02 mark scheme, Unit 1, Question 6.

Chapter Twelve — From the Logie to the Ministry: The Evolution of Caribbean Stratification



SYLLABUS MAP — *This chapter covers Module 3, Specific Objective 4: discuss the evolution of Caribbean social stratification from slavery to present day — Content 4(a) Plantation Society (ascribed status, closed system); (b) Post-Emancipation (very limited mobility); (c) Post-World War II (beginning of achieved status); (d) Post-Independence (achieved status, open system).*¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Consider four generations of one Berbice family — a composite, but every line of it is true of thousands. The great-great-grandmother was born on an estate in the 1850s to parents who had been enslaved on it; she could not read, and the highest position anyone of her colour held in the colony was headman of a gang. Her son, born in the 1880s, was a village farmer who bought a house-lot with money pooled by the church; his position was better than his mother's, but the planters' Combined Court set the taxes and the drainage, and he could not vote. His daughter, born in 1920, became one of the first women in the district to train as a teacher at the new government college; she voted for the first time in 1953, when the colony got universal adult suffrage, and she watched the flag come down in 1966. Her granddaughter, born after independence, sat CAPE, went to the University of Guyana, and sits today in an office in a ministry that did not exist when her great-great-grandmother was born.

That is the whole syllabus content head in one family: a **closed** system of **ascribed** status; then **very limited mobility**; then the **beginning of achieved status**; then an **open** system — in principle. The 2025 question asked candidates to analyse the change "from 1960 to the present time," with examples. This chapter gives you the four periods, the mechanisms of change in each, and the honest question at the end: how open is open?

BEAT 2 · THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. Plantation society: ascribed status, closed system — Content 4(a)

The slave society of the Caribbean was the most closed stratification system in modern history, and it was closed by *law*. At the top, a tiny **white** minority — planters, attorneys, merchants, officials — itself ranked (the absentee owner in London above the resident planter above the overseer above the poor white); in the middle, the **free coloured** and **free black** population, growing through manumission and the recognition of some planters' mixed-race children, permitted trade and some property but barred from office, the vote and full civil rights; at the bottom, the **enslaved** — the vast majority — who were property, could be bought, sold, mortgaged and punished at the owner's will, whose children inherited their status, and among whom the estate created its own gradations (domestic above field; skilled above unskilled; Creole-born above African-born; lighter above darker).²

Position was **ascribed** by race and birth; **colour** graded everything; **mobility** was nearly nil (manumission was the narrow gate); marriage across the lines was forbidden or unrecognised; and the whole was justified by the ideology of racial hierarchy and the planter's Christianity. In M. G. Smith's terms, three cultural sections held by domination; in Beckford's, the plantation as total institution. In the Dutch and then British colonies of Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo the pattern was the same, with the added rank of the Indigenous peoples, treated as allies and slave-catchers by the Dutch and pushed to the margins by the British. The Berbice Rising of 1763 and the Demerara Rising of 1823 were the closed system's own verdict on itself.

2. Post-emancipation: very limited mobility — Content 4(b)

Emancipation (1 August 1834; full freedom after the apprenticeship, 1838) *opened the gate an inch*. The freed could move, marry, own land and worship as they chose; the **village movement** — in Guyana, the purchase of Northbrook (Victoria) by 83 freed people in 1839, then Buxton, Friendship, Beterverwagting and dozens more, with money pooled from wages — created a peasantry and a free-village society with its own church, school and leadership.³ But the planters, who still ruled the Combined Court, fought back with taxes on land, the neglect and deliberate breaching of drainage, licence laws and, above all, **indentured immigration** — Portuguese from 1835, Indians from 1838, Chinese from 1853 — to drive down wages and break the villagers' bargaining position.⁴

The result was a stratification system that was still **ascriptive** but no longer *legally* closed: the white planter-merchant elite; a growing **coloured middle class** of clerks, teachers, small professionals and shopkeepers (with the Portuguese rising fast in retail and, in Guyana, a Chinese merchant class); a black village peasantry and estate labour force; a new Indian estate population held on the plantations by contract and then by the land and rice economy of the "logie" villages; and, at the margins, the Indigenous peoples. Mobility was **very limited**: education was the one ladder (Chapter Nine), the vote was tied to property, the top jobs in the civil service and the professions were white or near-white, and colour set a ceiling — Braithwaite's colour-class system was built in these decades. Walter Rodney's *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881–1905* (1981) is the standard account of how the planter class held the line.⁵

3. Post-World War II: the beginning of achieved status — Content 4(c)

Three forces cracked the ceiling between 1938 and independence.

- **Labour and politics.** The riots and strikes of 1934–38, the Moyne Commission, and the trade unions (Critchlow's British Guiana Labour Union, 1919, the region's first; the Manpower Citizens' Association among sugar workers, 1937) turned labour into a political force; **universal adult suffrage** followed — Jamaica 1944, Trinidad 1946, Barbados 1951, British Guiana 1953 — and mass

parties led by a new, largely non-white, educated elite (the PPP in Guyana, founded 1950).⁶

- **Education.** The expansion of secondary schooling and the opening of the University College of the West Indies (1948) produced a professional class recruited by *achievement* — the doctors, lawyers, teachers and civil servants who would staff the independent states.
- **The economy.** Bauxite, oil, tourism and government employment created white-collar and skilled positions that had not existed — **structural mobility** — while emigration to Britain (the *Windrush* generation from 1948) and later North America opened a ladder abroad.

The stratification system now had a genuine **middle; achieved status** — the degree, the post, the elected office — began to compete with ascribed colour; and, crucially for Guyana and Trinidad, **ethnicity** emerged as the organising line of mass politics once the vote existed — the split of the PPP in 1955 into Indo- and Afro-Guyanese-led parties fixed a pattern that Despres (1967) and Premdas (1995) analysed and that shaped every election since.⁷

4. Post-independence: achieved status, open system — Content 4(d)

Independence (Jamaica and Trinidad 1962; Guyana 26 May 1966; Barbados 1966; the rest through the 1970s and 1980s) formally completed the transition: the constitution guaranteed equality, the civil service and the professions were opened to all, the state expanded (Guyana's nationalisations of bauxite, 1971 and 1975, and sugar, 1976, made the government the largest employer), and free education — in Guyana from nursery to university after 1976 — made **achievement** the official currency. A new elite of politicians, senior civil servants, professionals and local business owners replaced the colonial whites at the top; **intergenerational mobility** on a scale never seen before carried the children of cane-cutters and rice farmers into offices and courts; women entered the professions in numbers.

How open is open? This is the evaluation the examiner wants, and the evidence points both ways.

Open: achievement now predominates; there is no legal bar of colour or ethnicity; the top of every ladder — Head of State, Chief Justice,

university chancellor — has been occupied by people of every colour; women lead in education.

Not so open: **class** has reasserted itself — the new elite transmits advantage through private schooling, cultural capital and inheritance (Bourdieu; Gordon's finding that relative mobility changed little); **colour** still shadows status in Jamaica and Barbados (the "browning" of the elite); **ethnicity** organises politics and, through politics, public employment and contracts in Guyana and Trinidad — Premdas's "ethnic security dilemma"; **gender** caps women's economic power; the **hinterland** and its Indigenous peoples remain at the bottom of every indicator; **poverty** is persistent (Beckford's title) and the Gini coefficient stubborn; and **foreign ownership** has returned in new sectors — oil in Guyana since 2015 — so that Beckford's plantation critique has a twenty-first-century application. A balanced conclusion: the system is *formally open and substantively stratified* — open to achievement, but with the starting line still drawn by class, region, ethnicity and gender.

5. Guyana since 1960 — a worked timeline for the 2025 question

Period	Stratification and mobility
1960–66	Colony under internal self-government; ethnic party split entrenched; colonial elite still at the top of the service; education the ladder
1966–1980s	Independence; Republic 1970; nationalisations (1971, 1975, 1976); the state as employer and the party as gatekeeper; free education 1976; mass emigration begins as the economy contracts
1980s–1992	Economic crisis; the "ration" years; emigration becomes the main route of mobility — the brain drain; the informal economy grows
1992–2015	Return to competitive elections; structural adjustment and recovery; expansion of the private sector, banking, mining and rice; a new business class; women's educational lead established
2015–present	Oil discovered (2015) and produced (from December 2019); the fastest-growing economy in the world by GDP; new professional and technical positions — structural mobility on a large scale — beside persistent poverty and a widening gap between coast and hinterland; the "plantation" question returns as a question about who owns the oil

BEAT 3 • WORKED RECEIPTS — *an exam answer, step by step*

Question (the 2025 Module 3 question, restated): *With reference to any one Caribbean society, analyse the changing nature of social stratification and social mobility from 1960 to the present time. Use examples to support your analysis. (25 marks)*

Step 1 — Decode. *Analyse* = examine methodically, in detail, and draw a conclusion. Two concepts (stratification *and* mobility), one society, one period (1960»now), examples required.

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define stratification and mobility (the four types); open and closed systems; ascribed and achieved status. State the theories you will use: Davis-Moore/meritocracy, Marx/Beckford, M. G. Smith/Premdas on ethnicity, feminism on gender, Bourdieu and Gordon on relative mobility.

Step 3 — Application (10). Walk the timeline above, period by period, with an example of stratification *and* an example of mobility in each: the 1953 franchise and the 1955 split; the 1966 elite transition; the nationalisations and the state as employer; 1976 free education and the first-generation professionals; the 1980s emigration as mobility abroad; the 1992 opening and the business class; the oil economy's structural mobility. Data: census ethnic composition; women's tertiary enrolment; poverty rates; the Gini.

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Draw the conclusion: from an ascriptive colour-class system to a formally open achievement system, *but* with mobility largely structural (Gordon), advantage transmitted through class (Bourdieu), and ethnicity and region still stratifying (Premdas). The "changing nature" is real; the "open society" is unfinished.

Step 5 — Opening line: *"In 1960 a Guyanese child's place in society could be read from her colour and her father's occupation; in 2026 it can be read from her examination results — and, this essay argues, still from her postcode, her parents' schooling, and the ethnic arithmetic of the ministry that employs her."*

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Four periods, four labels.** Plantation — ascribed, closed. Post-emancipation — very limited mobility. Post-war — beginning of

achieved status. Post-independence — achieved, open. The syllabus's own words are the marking scheme's own headings.

- **Dates are examples.** 1763, 1823, 1834/38, 1839 (Victoria), 1919, 1938, 1948, 1953, 1955, 1966, 1971/75/76, 1992, 2015. A dated event is an "example to support your analysis"; an undated generality is not.
- **The 2025 examiners named the missing jargon.** Social stratification pyramid, colonialism, slavery, meritocracy, mobility, inequality. Use each, correctly, at least once.
- **End on "how open is open."** The measured conclusion — formally open, substantively stratified — is the difference between describing history and *analysing* stratification.
- **The trap:** stopping at independence. The question runs "to the present time"; the last twenty years — women's educational lead, emigration, the oil economy, the hinterland gap — are where the freshest Application marks are.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. "Emancipation changed the law of stratification but not its practice." Discuss this statement with reference to the post-emancipation period in a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 2. Assess the extent to which a named Caribbean society has moved from a closed to an open system of stratification since independence. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. In plantation society, the status of the enslaved was (A) achieved (B) ascribed (C) open (D) negotiated.
2. The purchase of estates by freed people in British Guiana after 1838 is known as the (A) indenture system (B) village movement (C) Moyne settlement (D) apprenticeship.
3. Universal adult suffrage was introduced in British Guiana in (A) 1938 (B) 1944 (C) 1953 (D) 1966.
4. Mobility caused by the creation of new positions in the economy is called (A) exchange mobility (B) structural mobility (C) horizontal

mobility (D) closed mobility.

5. The Caribbean theorist who argued that plantation structures persisted after emancipation and produced persistent poverty is (A) Brathwaite (B) Beckford (C) Nettleford (D) Gordon.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Four (plural, creole, plantation) · Chapter Nine (education as the ladder) · Chapter Eleven (the theories) · Chapter Thirteen (the impact of the system) · Unit 2, Module 1 (migration and development) · Unit 2, Module 3 (poverty).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER TWELVE

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 3, Specific Objective 4; Content 4(a)–(d), p. 12.
2. Elsa V. Goveia, *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965); Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery* (1967); Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (1971), Part II.
3. Alan H. Adamson, *Sugar without Slaves: The Political Economy of British Guiana, 1838–1904* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), ch. 3, on the village movement; Northbrook (renamed Victoria) was purchased in November 1839.
4. Adamson, *Sugar without Slaves* (1972), chs. 4–6, on the planters' response and immigration.
5. Rodney, *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881–1905* (1981).
6. The British Guiana Labour Union was founded by Hubert Nathaniel Critchlow in 1919; universal adult suffrage was introduced under the 1953 constitution and first exercised in the general election of April 1953.
7. Despres, *Cultural Pluralism and Nationalist Politics in British Guiana* (1967); Premdas, *Ethnic Conflict and Development* (1995).

Chapter Thirteen — What the Ladder Does: The Impact of Stratification on Caribbean Societies



SYLLABUS MAP — This chapter covers Module 3, Specific Objective 5: analyse the impact of stratification systems on Caribbean societies — Content 5(a) social (marginalisation of the lower class; crime; gender); (b) economic (ethnicity; class; gender); (c) political (ethnicity; class).¹

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

A stratification system is not a photograph of a society; it is a machine that *does things* to people. It decides who is stopped by the police and who is waved through; who gets the contract and who gets the excuse; which village gets the road paved before the election and which gets the promise; who sits in Parliament and who sits outside it; whose child sits CAPE in a school with a library and whose child walks two miles to a school without a science lab. The syllabus asks you to trace those consequences under three headings — social, economic and political — and the examiner rewards the candidate who can show the machine working in a named society, with evidence.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the core content, plainly*

1. Social impact — Content 5(a)

Marginalisation of the lower class. To be at the bottom of a stratification system is to be pushed to the *margins* of the society's

institutions: worse schools, worse housing (the squatting area, the depressed village, the "back street"), worse health, less legal protection, and the daily experience of disrespect. Sociologically, marginalisation is *structural* (the economy has fewer and worse positions for the unskilled — Beckford), *cultural* (Oscar Lewis's contested **culture of poverty**, and Rodman's kinder **value stretch**, discussed in Unit 2), and *interactional* (labelling: the "ghetto youth," the "backdam people," the "squatter"). In the Caribbean the marginalised are disproportionately the descendants of the plantation's bottom — and, in Guyana, the Indigenous peoples of the hinterland, marginal in the oldest sense of the word: geographically far from every institution.

Crime. The link between stratification and crime is the central theme of Unit 2, Module 2; here the point is *impact*: Merton's strain (a society that preaches success and blocks the legitimate means to it manufactures innovators — the drug trade as the poor man's entrepreneurship); the **garrison communities** of Kingston, where stratification, party politics and the gun combined (Figueroa and Sives, 2002); Ken Pryce's "endless pressure"; and the reverse impact — crime *reinforces* stratification, as the fearful middle class withdraws behind walls and the poor are policed as suspects. The UNDP's *Caribbean Human Development Report 2012* linked the region's violence to inequality and youth exclusion.²

Gender. Stratification by gender produces the **double burden**, occupational segregation, domestic violence as an expression of male power under economic stress, the feminisation of poverty, and, on the other side of the same coin, the debate about **male marginalisation** — Miller's thesis that men are being pushed out of school and the respectable economy, and Figueroa's reply that they are privileged into failure (Chapter Nine). Impact runs in both directions: gender stratification harms women's life chances *and* shapes a masculinity that harms men (Chevannes, *Learning to Be a Man*).

2. Economic impact — Content 5(b)

Ethnicity. The plantation and indenture produced an *ethnic division of labour* that outlived both: in Guyana, sugar and rice largely Indo-Guyanese, bauxite, the police, the army and the civil service largely Afro-Guyanese, retail historically Portuguese and Chinese, and the hinterland economy Indigenous. The pattern, mapped by R. T. Smith

(1962) and Despres (1967), has softened but not vanished, and because the state became the largest employer after independence, *access to public employment and contracts* became an ethnic-political question — the economic face of Premdas's dilemma.³ Similar patterns exist in Trinidad (Ryan; Yelvington's *Trinidad Ethnicity*, on your syllabus list⁴) and, by colour rather than ethnicity, in Jamaica and Barbados, where a light-skinned and a foreign business elite long dominated ownership.

Class. The economic impact of class is *life chances* (Weber): the child of the professional inherits capital, connections and cultural capital; the child of the estate worker inherits the estate — and, when the estate closes (Guyana's sugar-estate closures of 2017 threw thousands into unemployment in Berbice and Demerara), inherits nothing.⁵ Income and wealth inequality (the Gini coefficient), poverty rates, the informal economy and the persistence of Beckford's structure — foreign ownership of the commanding heights, now including oil — are the measures.

Gender. The **gender pay gap**; women's concentration in lower-paid, less secure and unpaid work; the fact that the poorest household type across the region is the female-headed household; women's limited access to credit and land; and, in the reverse direction, women's remittances and micro-enterprise as engines of family survival. Reddock (1994) and Senior (1991) supply the history and the evidence; Barriteau supplies the theory.

3. Political impact — Content 5(c)

Ethnicity. Where the stratification system's sections coincide with ethnic groups, politics becomes ethnic arithmetic. Guyana is the textbook case: since the 1955 split the two major parties have drawn their core support from the two largest ethnic groups; elections have been ethnic censuses; the disturbances of 1962–64 and the disputes of 1997–98 and 2020 were ethnic-political crises; and the *distribution* of the state's goods — jobs, contracts, house lots, roads — is read by every voter through an ethnic lens. Premdas (1995) called the result an **ethnic security dilemma**: each group fears domination by the other and votes for protection rather than policy.⁶ Trinidad shows a milder version; Jamaica and Barbados, with more homogeneous populations, show class and colour politics instead (Stone).

Class. The colonial stratification system created a politics of class — the labour movement, the mass parties of the 1940s–50s, the nationalisations — and post-independence stratification has created a politics of *the middle class* (the professional and managerial elite that runs both parties and the state) with the working class and the poor as a *clientele*: the garrison, the patronage network, the constituency "contact." The **political impact of class** is also the *absence* of class politics where ethnicity dominates: Guyanese sugar and bauxite workers, structurally identical, politically opposed.

4. Responses — the policy layer the examiner rewards

Every Caribbean state has tried to soften the impact: **affirmative** or **equal-opportunity** measures (the specimen mark scheme mentions "adapting/employing variations of affirmative action"⁷); **free and expanded education; land distribution** and house-lot programmes (Guyana's Central Housing and Planning Authority allocations); **social protection** — old-age pensions, public assistance, the *Because We Care* grant, school feeding; **labour law** and minimum wages; **domestic-violence and sexual-offences legislation; Indigenous land titling** under Guyana's Amerindian Act 2006; and **ethnic-relations machinery** — Guyana's Ethnic Relations Commission, established under the 2001 constitutional reforms.⁸ In an "impact" essay, the measures are the Application mark's second half: impact, then response, then evaluation of the response.

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — an exam answer, step by step

Question (Paper 02 style, 25 marks): "*Colour, ethnicity and gender are MAJOR factors which have influenced patterns of social mobility and the stratification system in Caribbean society.*" Examine this statement with reference to TWO of the major factors as they relate to either patterns of social mobility or the stratification system in a named Caribbean society. (The syllabus's own specimen question.)

Step 1 — Decode. *Examine* = define, state what is, explore. Choose *two* factors (for Guyana: ethnicity and gender) and *one* target (stratification system, say). The mark scheme expects application to plantation society, the changes since, and the "social, economic and

political reforms which have led to other factors being prominent ... for example, class."⁹

Step 2 — Knowledge (8). Define stratification, mobility, ethnicity, gender, ascribed/achieved, open/closed. Theories: M. G. Smith and Premdas on ethnicity; Walby, Barriteau and Reddock on gender; Weber's dimensions as the frame.

Step 3 — Application (10). *Ethnicity in Guyana's stratification:* indenture's ethnic division of labour; the plural-society ranking; the ethnic party system since 1955; public employment and contracts as ethnic questions; the Indigenous peoples at the base. *Gender:* women below men within every stratum from slavery to indenture to the present; women's educational lead beside their economic and political under-representation; the female-headed household as the poorest. Then the reforms: suffrage, free education, the Ethnic Relations Commission, domestic-violence law, women's political quotas debate.

Step 4 — Evaluation (7). Conclude, as the scheme invites, whether the two factors "may or may not exert great influence ... in contemporary society vis-à-vis plantation society": ethnicity has *shifted* from a stratification factor to a *political* one; gender has shifted from an *ascriptive ceiling* to a *substantive gap*; and class has risen as the factor beneath both.

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Three headings, nine sub-points.** Social (marginalisation, crime, gender); economic (ethnicity, class, gender); political (ethnicity, class). Plan an "impact" essay on that grid and you cannot miss content.
- **Impact needs a mechanism.** Do not write "stratification causes crime." Write "Merton's strain: the society preaches success and blocks the means — the innovator sells drugs." Mechanism is Analysis.
- **Response, then evaluate the response.** The Ethnic Relations Commission, the Amerindian Act, free education, the Domestic Violence Act — name them, date them, and say whether they worked. That is the top of the Application band.

- **Two societies beat one.** Guyana (ethnicity) beside Jamaica (colour and class) shows that the *same* stratification theory produces *different* politics — a comparison the examiner reads as sophistication.
- **The trap:** partisanship. Ethnic politics is an examinable *sociological fact*; which party is right is not. Write as an analyst, name no villains, and let Premdas and Despres carry the argument.

BEAT 5 · TRY IT YUHELSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Essay 1. Analyse the social and political impact of ethnic stratification in a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Essay 2. Assess the extent to which gender remains a major factor in the stratification system of a named Caribbean society. (25 marks)

Quick checks.

1. The *ethnic security dilemma* in Guyanese politics is associated with (A) Ralph Premdas (B) Carl Stone (C) Derek Gordon (D) Lloyd Braithwaite.
2. The *feminisation of poverty* refers to (A) women's exclusion from education (B) the growing share of the poor who are women, especially female household heads (C) male marginalisation (D) the gender pay gap only.
3. Kingston's *garrison communities* illustrate the link between stratification, crime and (A) religion (B) party politics (C) tourism (D) caste.
4. Guyana's Ethnic Relations Commission was established under constitutional reforms of (A) 1966 (B) 1980 (C) 2001 (D) 2015.
5. Merton's explanation of crime among the lower class emphasises (A) biology (B) the gap between cultural goals and legitimate means (C) labelling by teachers (D) religious decline.

CROSS-REFERENCES

Chapter Nine (education and inequality) · Chapter Twelve (the evolution that produced the impact) · Unit 2, Module 2 (crime, strain and social control) · Unit 2, Module 3 (poverty, its categories and measures).

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. CXC A27/U2/13, Unit 1, Module 3, Specific Objective 5; Content 5(a)–(c), p. 12.
2. Anthony Harriott (lead author), *Caribbean Human Development Report 2012: Human Development and the Shift to Better Citizen Security* (New York: UNDP, 2012); Mark Figueroa and Amanda Sives, "Homogenous Voting, Electoral Manipulation and the 'Garrison' Process in Post-Independence Jamaica," *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 40, no. 1 (2002): 81–108; Pryce, *Endless Pressure* (1979).
3. Raymond T. Smith, *British Guiana* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962); Despres, *Cultural Pluralism and Nationalist Politics in British Guiana* (1967).
4. Kevin A. Yelvington (ed.), *Trinidad Ethnicity* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993), listed in CXC A27/U2/13, Module 3 Resources, p. 13.
5. The Guyana Sugar Corporation closed the Wales estate at the end of 2016 and the Skeldon, Rose Hall and Enmore estates at the end of 2017, with several thousand workers made redundant. Quote the figures from the Guyana Sugar Corporation or the Commission of Inquiry reports when precision is needed.
6. Premdas, *Ethnic Conflict and Development* (1995).
7. CXC A27/U2/13, specimen Paper 02 mark scheme, Unit 1, Question 5 (Interpretation and Application).
8. Amerindian Act 2006, Cap. 29:01, Laws of Guyana; the Ethnic Relations Commission was established under Article 212A of the Constitution of Guyana, inserted by the Constitution (Amendment) (No. 2) Act 2000 and constituted in 2002.
9. CXC A27/U2/13, specimen Paper 02 mark scheme, Unit 1, Question 5 (Analysis and Evaluation).

Module 3 — Revision Checklist



- Define stratification and give its four characteristics; state Weber's class, status and party.
- Define all eight syllabus concepts with a Caribbean example each, and the four (plus absolute/relative, structural/exchange) kinds of mobility.
- Distinguish open and closed systems, and explain why meritocracy is a claim to be tested (Young; Bourdieu).
- State Davis and Moore *and* Tumin; Marx and the Caribbean conflict school; the interactionists (Wilson's reputation and respectability); the feminists (Walby; Reddock; Barriteau); and M. G. Smith, Beckford and Brathwaite with one keyword each.
- Narrate the four periods of Caribbean stratification with a dated example and a mechanism of change in each, and the Guyana-since-1960 timeline.
- Argue "how open is open" with evidence on both sides.
- Fill the impact grid — social (marginalisation, crime, gender), economic (ethnicity, class, gender), political (ethnicity, class) — with a mechanism and a Caribbean example for each cell, and name a policy response for each.

PART FOUR — THE EXAMINATION ROOM



Chapter Fourteen — The Private Candidate's War Room: Paper 03/2, and the Three Papers Together



SYLLABUS MAP — *This chapter covers the Regulations for Private Candidates and the structure of Paper 03/2, together with the Outline of Assessment for Papers 01 and 02 and the Glossary of Behavioural Verbs.¹ It is written for the private candidate — the one studying at a kitchen table after work — but every school candidate should read section 3, because it is the whole examination in one plan.*

BEAT 1 • THE STORY — *why this matters in Guyanese and Caribbean life*

Every year, in every territory, there are candidates who register for CAPE without a school: the young woman who left Form 6 to work and is finishing on her own; the police officer who needs the Unit for promotion; the mother whose children have finally started school themselves. They sit the same Paper 01 and Paper 02 as everyone else, and in place of the SBA they sit **Paper 03/2** — a written paper that tests, in ninety minutes, the research skills the school candidate had a year to demonstrate. The syllabus gives them one page. This chapter gives them a plan.

BEAT 2 • THE LAW OF THE TOPIC — *the regulations, plainly*

1. Paper 03/2 — *the alternative to the SBA*

Private candidates write Papers 01, 02 and 03/2. Paper 03/2 is a written examination at the end of the academic year, **1 hour 30 minutes**, worth **20 per cent** of the Unit, consisting of **three compulsory questions of 20 marks each** (60 marks), testing all three Modules and three skills: (1) understanding of basic concepts and theories in Sociology; (2) familiarity with Caribbean social institutions; (3) the design of a research project, including sample selection or other selection of subjects, data collection and analysis of data.² Answers are "in the form of short paragraphs or extended essays." Thirty minutes a question, then.

What to expect, question by question. The syllabus's three skills map neatly onto three question types. A *concepts and theories* question — define and apply: "Define social stratification and, with reference to a named Caribbean society, explain two ways in which it affects life chances." A *Caribbean institutions* question — the family, religion or education in a named society, with a perspective. A *research design* question — the SBA in miniature: "You have been asked to investigate [an issue] in your community. Outline the research design you would use, including your sampling method, your data-collection instrument and how you would analyse the data." Twenty marks in thirty minutes means: define the terms (four or five marks' worth), apply to the Caribbean with named studies (the middle), and conclude or justify (the rest). Numbered sub-headings are welcome in this paper; it is not marked for literary flow.

The research-design answer, ready-made. Because the third question is almost always a design question, prepare one *reusable design* and adapt it on the day. The template from Chapter Six: (1) the problem, narrowed to a named community and group; (2) aims and objectives — two or three; (3) the sociological perspective and why (interactionist for meanings, functionalist for institutions, feminist for gender); (4) the method — usually mixed: a short questionnaire for the pattern plus interviews for the meaning — with the justification in the three words (reliability, validity, representativeness); (5) the sample — population, sampling frame, method (stratified if you have a frame; snowball if the group is hidden), size and why; (6) the instrument — five example questions, closed and open; (7) ethics — consent, anonymity, harm, withdrawal; (8) analysis — tables and percentages for the questionnaire, themes for the interviews, findings tested against the literature. Write that out in thirty minutes twice before the examination and it will be

there on the day.

2. Papers 01 and 02 — the plan for everyone

Paper 01 (90 minutes, 45 items, 30 per cent). Two minutes an item. The items test "concepts, principles and theories," may use tables and graphs, and are weighted to 90 marks.³ Answer every item — there is no penalty for a wrong answer. Do the Module you know best first; mark and move on from any item that takes more than two minutes; return with the time you saved. In 2025 the regional mean was 59.98 out of 90 — two-thirds; the best candidates scored 88.⁴ The gap is in the *pairs* — ascribed/achieved, primary/secondary, manifest/latent, church/sect, positivist/interpretivist, open/closed, vertical/horizontal, absolute/relative — and in the *names* — who said what. The Quick Checks in this book are written to that pattern.

Paper 02 (150 minutes, three essays of 25 marks, 50 per cent). Fifty minutes an essay — five to plan, forty to write, five to read. Choose your three questions in the first three minutes and *do not change your mind*. The plan is six lines: the position; three application points, each with a named study or dated example; two evaluation points (a rival perspective; a limit of the evidence); the conclusion. The mark scheme's weights — 8 Knowledge, 10 Application, 7 Evaluation — set the proportions: roughly a third of the essay defining and stating, half applying to a named Caribbean society with studies and data, and the last fifth weighing and concluding.⁵ The level descriptors reward a script that is "coherent, clear and conclusive, consistently supported by sociological references" — *references* means names, studies, dates, figures; *conclusive* means you said what you think and why.

3. The verbs, one more time

Assess — give reasons for the importance of the structures, relationships or approaches, and weigh them. *Assess the extent to which* — a measured verdict. *Discuss* — define, explore, argue both sides with examples; conclusion optional. *Evaluate* — weigh the evidence and judge; both sides; reasons over verdict. *Examine* — define and explore. *Analyse* — take apart methodically, then conclude. *Compare and contrast* — similarities and differences. *Outline* — main points without detail (but in a 25-mark essay, "outline" still needs sociology). *Explain* — what, how

and why. *Distinguish* — the differences that define. *Justify* — the reasons for your choice.⁶

BEAT 3 · WORKED RECEIPTS — a Paper 03/2 question, step by step

Question (20 marks): *You have been asked to investigate why attendance at a named church in your community has declined among young people. (a) State ONE sociological perspective you would use and explain why. (b) Describe your sampling method. (c) Describe ONE data-collection instrument you would use and give THREE questions from it. (d) Explain how you would analyse the data.*

(a) — 4 marks. Interactionist, because the question is about *meanings* — what young people understand church to be and to offer — and because Berger's *sacred canopy* predicts that where many faiths and secular attractions compete, each loses plausibility; a functionalist alternative (Durkheim: what integrative function has the church stopped performing?) would be noted as the rival.

(b) — 5 marks. Population: young people aged 15–25 who were baptised or confirmed at the church in the last ten years (the church register is the sampling frame — an unusually good one). Method: stratified random sample by sex and by current attendance (regular / lapsed), twenty in all, so that the lapsed are not under-represented; plus a purposive sample of the youth leader and two parents.

(c) — 6 marks. A semi-structured interview guide, because depth and meaning are the object. Three questions: "What did going to church mean to you at fourteen, and what does it mean now?"; "What do you do on a Sunday morning instead, and what does that give you?"; "Is there anything the church could change that would bring you back — and is there anything it should *not* change?"

(d) — 5 marks. Transcribe; code the answers into themes (competing activities; the service's form; conflict with church teaching; migration of friends; work); count how many interviewees raise each theme and present the counts in a table; compare regular and lapsed attenders; test the findings against Berger's plausibility argument and Wilson's secularisation thesis; report anomalies (the regular attenders who nearly left) honestly; conclude with the two or three meanings that

best explain the decline.

BEAT 4 • COUNSEL SAYS — *the strategy box*

- **Paper 03/2 is the SBA in ninety minutes.** Everything in Chapter Six applies; prepare one design and adapt it.
- **Three questions, three Modules, thirty minutes each.** Do not spend forty-five minutes on the concepts question because you know it best. The design question is where private candidates lose marks — and where prepared ones gain them.
- **Use headings and numbers in 03/2.** It is marked for content and skill, not prose.
- **In Paper 02, the plan is the mark.** Six lines, written before the first sentence. Every examiner's report says the same thing in different words: candidates who planned answered all parts; candidates who did not answered the part they liked.
- **The trap** for the private candidate: studying alone and never writing under time. Sit at least three full timed Paper 02 sessions and two timed Paper 03/2 sessions before May. The books in this series exist so that you are not, in fact, alone.

BEAT 5 • TRY IT YUHSELF — *practice, with answer plans in Appendix I*

Paper 03/2 practice (20 marks each).

1. Define *socialisation* and, with reference to a named Caribbean society, explain how any TWO agents of socialisation transmit culture. (Use short paragraphs.)
2. With reference to the functionalist and conflict perspectives, explain TWO functions of education in a named Caribbean society.
3. You have been asked to investigate teenage pregnancy in a named community. Outline your research design: perspective, sample, instrument (with three questions) and method of analysis, including THREE ethical considerations.

ENDNOTES — CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. CXC A27/U2/13, "Regulations for Private Candidates," p. 37; "Outline of Assessment," pp. 26–28; "Glossary of Behavioural Verbs," pp. 39–40.
2. CXC A27/U2/13, p. 37.
3. CXC A27/U2/13, "Paper 01," p. 27.
4. CXC, *Subject Report, Sociology Unit 1, May–June 2025*, p. 2.
5. CXC A27/U2/13, "Holistic Mark Scheme, Paper 02 Essay Questions."
6. CXC A27/U2/13, pp. 39–40.

APPENDICES



Appendix I — Answer Plans for Try It Yourself



These are plans, not model essays. Each gives the position, the knowledge to state, the application points with the studies to name, and the evaluation that earns the last seven marks. Write the essays yourself, under time, from these bones.

Chapter One

Essay 1 — Two classical sociologists. *Position:* Durkheim gave sociology its object (social facts) and its method (comparative statistics); Marx gave it its engine (class conflict) and its politics. *Knowledge:* social facts, solidarity, *Suicide*; means of production, exploitation, base and superstructure. *Application:* Durkheim » functionalism » Parsons; the Caribbean objection (M. G. Smith: no consensus). Marx » conflict » Beckford, Best, Rodney; the Caribbean objection (Braithwaite: colour over class). *Evaluation:* each founded a perspective and each was corrected by Caribbean experience; Weber, the third founder, bridged them.

Essay 2 — Theories from Caribbean history. *Position:* largely true of the founding generation, with a qualification. *Application:* Smith's pluralism from the colonial sections; Braithwaite's creolisation from the Jamaican archive; Beckford's plantation from the sugar economy; R. T. Smith's matrifocality from Guyanese villages. *Evaluation:* methods were imported (British social anthropology; Furnivall's concept); Craig's 1980s critique; the feminists' later charge that the founders studied men. Conclude: home-grown theory, borrowed tools.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 B · 3 C · 4 A · 5 B.

Chapter Two

Essay 1 — Family as the most important agent. *Position:* still the most important for *primary* socialisation; no longer the most powerful for the *secondary* layer. *Application:* primary socialisation of language, self (Cooley, Mead) and gender roles in Guyanese households; the school's national identity; peers and media transmitting foreign norms (Forbes, 2010); migration weakening the family's hold (barrel children — Crawford-Brown). *Evaluation:* "most important" depends on which layer of culture; the agents conflict in a plural society; conclude to a large extent for the self, a diminishing extent for the wider culture.

Essay 2 — Norms and sanctions as invisible police. *Position:* true, and functionalists and interactionists explain how. *Knowledge:* values, norms, folkways/mores (Sumner), sanctions formal/informal, positive/negative. *Application:* the road greeting; the steups; village gossip as control; the church's discipline; the law as formalised mores (Domestic Violence Act). *Evaluation:* conflict theorists — whose norms? (the plantation's norms policed the enslaved); interactionists — labelling; the "invisible police" can be unjust. Conclude with Unit 2's social control in view.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 B · 3 A · 4 B · 5 C.

Chapter Three

Essay 1 — Shared values. *Position:* partly. *Application:* functionalist evidence (national holidays, the school, law) versus conflict evidence (the plantation held by force; ethnic division; class). Guyana as the test. *Evaluation:* M. G. Smith's domination versus Parsons's consensus; Gramsci's hegemony as the middle — values are shared *because* the powerful shape them. Conclude: values hold a society together where power has first arranged the values.

Essay 2 — Interactionism versus structure. *Position:* better for everyday life, worse for its causes. *Application:* Goffman's dramaturgy in the yard and the courtroom; Becker's labels in school and police station; Wilson's reputation and respectability. *Evaluation:* it cannot say why the teacher labels or who wrote the rule; structure is needed for the plantation and the plural society. Conclude: complementary levels.

Essay 3 — Feminist contribution. *Position:* transformed the field by making women visible. *Application:* Reddock on women's labour; Senior's *Working Miracles*; Barriteau's gender system; the matrifocal household re-read; domestic violence and the double burden as research fields. *Evaluation:* black-feminist critique of homogenising women; Miller's male-marginalisation counter-claim and Figueroa's reply; conclude that Caribbean feminism's distinctive contribution is theorising women's power and burden together.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 B · 3 C · 4 B · 5 B.

Chapter Four

Essay 1 — Creole society and two elements of culture. *Elements:* language (Creolese/Jamaican Creole) and religion (Revival/Comfa). *Application:* acculturation (English, Christianity imposed); interculturalisation (the planters' children's Creole; syncretic religion); white bias in the ranking of both. *Evaluation:* the syllabus's own criticism — the theory handles a dichotomy, not diversity; the Indo-Caribbean and Indigenous elements of Guyana's culture; Bolland's dialectic. Conclude: highly relevant for the Afro-European strand, partial for the whole.

Essay 2 — One form of popular culture. *Mashramani:* background (1970, Republic, 23 February and 1763); social significance (state-built national culture; cross-ethnic participation; commercial and tourist growth; critique — an Afro-Guyanese-coded festival in a plural society?); *or* chutney: creolisation within a section, generational conflict, gender and respectability.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 C · 3 B · 4 B · 5 B.

Chapter Five

Essay 1 — The research process with ethics (the 2025 question).

Topic: boys' drop-out at a named school (or your SBA). *Steps:* problem » aims » literature and perspective » design » sample » instrument » collection » presentation » analysis » conclusion — each step *about the topic*. *Ethics:* consent (parental for minors), anonymity (pseudonyms for school and boys), harm (no questions exposing a boy to discipline). *Evaluation:* why this method fits (meanings » interviews; pattern » questionnaire); positivism versus interpretivism applied, not recited;

Durkheim's *Suicide* for the science point.

Essay 2 — *Suicide as evidence.* *Position:* useful as a demonstration of social causation; limited by its data. *Application:* integration and regulation; the four types; the comparative method. *Evaluation:* Atkinson's coroners; Douglas's meanings; realism's reply that unobservables are studied through effects. Conclude: sociology is a science in the realist sense; *Suicide* is the first proof and the first warning.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 B · 3 B · 4 C · 5 C.

Chapter Six

Essay 1 — Longitudinal study of HIV/AIDS or teenage pregnancy. *Position:* very useful for cause and consequence; hard to run. *Application:* a cohort of teenage mothers followed ten years shows education, income and family outcomes; attrition through migration; ethics of following vulnerable young women; cost; changing definitions. *Evaluation:* the mark scheme's own conclusion — benefits may outweigh costs; triangulate with cross-sectional surveys.

Essay 2 — Participant observation of a group. *Group:* a Rastafari house, a minibus park, a church youth group. *Application:* validity, depth, meanings (Whyte; Pryce; Smith; Wilson); costs — reliability, representativeness, going native, ethics if covert, the observer effect. *Evaluation:* fits interpretivist aims; conclude "highly useful for meaning, useless for measurement" and triangulate.

Essay 3 — Official statistics as facts. *Position:* facts about the recording of society. *Application:* the census and its uses; crime statistics and the dark figure; Atkinson on suicide; Scott's four tests. *Evaluation:* positivist defence (large, longitudinal, cheap); interpretivist critique (socially constructed categories). Conclude: indispensable and never innocent.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 A · 3 B · 4 B · 5 C.

Chapter Seven

Essay 1 — Slavery versus retention versus economics. *Position:* economics explains the *persistence*, slavery the *origin*, retention the *form*. *Application:* Frazier/Patterson; Herskovits; Clarke's three communities and Smith's villages; Rodman's value stretch; the

Indo-Caribbean contrast (M. G. Smith). *Evaluation*: no single-cause theory survives the Guyana comparison; conclude on a layered explanation.

Essay 2 — Migration and kinship. *Application*: transnational families; barrel children (Crawford-Brown); grandmother households; remittance economies; returnees; the Guyanese diaspora's scale. *Perspectives*: functionalist (adaptation), conflict (economic push), feminist (women as migrants and as those left holding the household). *Evaluation*: migration both strains and *sustains* families; conclude on transformation, not breakdown.

Essay 3 — Functionalism and the joint family. *Application*: Murdock's functions performed; Parsons's fit with agrarian economy; the joint family's economic and socialising roles among Indo-Guyanese (Smith and Jayawardena). *Evaluation*: the dark side (women's subordination — feminist); the loosening with house-lot ownership and wage work (conflict/economic); conclude "useful for what the joint family does, silent on whom it costs."

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 B · 3 B · 4 C · 5 A.

Chapter Eight

Essay 1 — Religion unites and divides. *Application*: Durkheim's solidarity — the wake, the nine-night, national holidays; Marx and Gramsci — the planters' Christianity versus the Native Baptists; Guyana's road — five faiths, integration within each, boundary between them; Rastafari as unity for the dispossessed and division from Babylon. *Evaluation*: both perspectives are true of different levels; conclude with Berger's canopy.

Essay 2 — Secularisation. *Knowledge*: Wilson's definition; measures. *Application*: decline of historic churches; growth of Pentecostalism, Hinduism and Islam; census "no religion"; religion in public life; state takeover of schools and marriage. *Evaluation*: Berger's reversal; conclude "institutional secularisation, religious vitality."

Essay 3 — Two Afro-Caribbean religions. Rastafari and the Spiritual Baptists, each with emergence (dates), character (beliefs and practice) and dynamics (persecution » recognition), and a closing comparison of what each did for its people.

Quick checks: 1 C · 2 C · 3 B · 4 B · 5 C.

Chapter Nine

Essay 1 — Marxist perspective on education (specimen).

Knowledge: Bowles and Gintis, Althusser, Bourdieu, Willis. *Application:* the hidden curriculum in Caribbean schools; the two-tier colonial system; the prestige school; Standard English as cultural capital; Eric Williams's critique. *Evaluation:* the ladder is real for many (functionalist reply); pupils resist (Willis) and succeed; conclude on contribution "large for the structure, small for the classroom."

Essay 2 — Marginalised or privileged boys. *Application:* Miller's thesis and evidence; Figueroa's male privileging; Parry's classrooms; Chevannes on masculinity; Guyanese data on enrolment by sex. *Evaluation:* the two theses may both be true at different levels; conclude on which policy follows.

Essay 3 — Transformation of education. The four periods with dates; the mechanisms (church, state, region, technology); the constants (the examination; inequality by region and class).

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 A · 3 C · 4 B · 5 B.

Chapter Ten

Essay 1 — Open and closed. *Knowledge:* definitions; ascribed/achieved; mobility. *Application:* plantation (closed) versus post-independence Guyana (formally open): free education, the professions, women's education; but relative mobility (Gordon), cultural capital (Bourdieu), ethnicity and region. *Evaluation:* "formally open, substantively stratified."

Essay 2 — Colour versus class. *Application:* Braithwaite 1953, Henriques 1953 (colour-class); the plantation pyramid; post-independence class reassertion; Guyana's ethnicity as a third factor. *Evaluation:* colour *was* the most important; class is *becoming* so; ethnicity complicates both.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 C · 3 B · 4 B · 5 C.

Chapter Eleven

Essay 1 — Functionalist theory and Caribbean inequality.

Davis-Moore applied to the professional elite; Tumin's critique applied to the plantation and to inherited advantage; Beckford as the alternative; conclude "useful for the post-independence meritocratic claim, useless for its history."

Essay 2 — Two Caribbean theorists. Smith (domination; sections) and Beckford (persistence; plantation): what each explains, what each misses, and how Brathwaite fills the gap; test both on Guyana.

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 B · 3 B · 4 C · 5 B.

Chapter Twelve

Essay 1 — Emancipation changed law not practice. *Application:* the freed's legal gains; the planters' counter-measures (taxes, drainage, immigration — Adamson; Rodney); the colour ceiling; the village movement as real but limited mobility. *Evaluation:* the statement is true for a generation and increasingly false thereafter (education, the professions, the unions); conclude with dates.

Essay 2 — Closed to open since independence. The Guyana timeline; the evidence on both sides; "how open is open."

Quick checks: 1 B · 2 B · 3 C · 4 B · 5 B.

Chapter Thirteen

Essay 1 — Ethnic stratification's social and political impact. Social: marginalisation of the hinterland; ethnic residential and occupational patterns; the interactional labels. Political: the ethnic party system; Premdas's dilemma; the crises; the responses (ERC, constitutional reform). Evaluate whether ethnicity's *stratifying* power has declined while its *political* power persists.

Essay 2 — Gender as a major factor. Women's educational lead versus economic and political under-representation; the double burden; the feminisation of poverty; domestic violence; the male-marginalisation debate; the responses (law, quotas debate). Conclude "a major factor still, but of a different kind than in 1960."

Quick checks: 1 A · 2 B · 3 B · 4 C · 5 B.

Chapter Fourteen — Paper 03/2 practice

1. Define socialisation (primary/secondary); the family transmitting language and gender roles (Smith's villages; the joint family); the school transmitting national identity and the hidden curriculum; three short paragraphs with one Caribbean example each.
2. Functionalist: moral integration (Durkheim) and role allocation (Davis-Moore) — CXC and the scholarship system; conflict: reproduction (Bowles and Gintis) and legitimation of inequality (Bourdieu) — the two-tier system; a closing sentence on which fits the named society better.
3. Follow the Chapter Six template: interactionist perspective (meanings) with a feminist lens; a purposive and snowball sample of young mothers through the health centre; a semi-structured interview guide with three questions; thematic analysis against Clarke and Rodman; ethics — consent (and guardian consent for minors), anonymity, avoidance of harm and the right to withdraw.

Appendix II — Glossary of Terms for Unit 1



Acculturation — a group's adoption of elements of another, usually dominant, culture. **Achieved status** — a position earned by effort or choice. **Alienation** — Marx's term for the worker's estrangement from product, process, fellows and self. **Anomie** — Durkheim's normlessness; Merton's gap between goals and means. **Ascribed status** — a position assigned at birth or without choice. **Assimilation** — absorption of a minority into the dominant culture. **Bourgeoisie / proletariat** — Marx's owning and working classes. **Caste** — a closed, hereditary, endogamous stratification system. **Class** — economic position (Marx: relation to the means of production; Weber: market situation). **Collective conscience** — Durkheim's shared beliefs and sentiments of a society. **Colour-class** — Braithwaite's and Henriques's term for the fusion of shade and rank. **Correspondence principle** — Bowles and Gintis: the school's form mirrors the workplace. **Creole society** — Braithwaite: a new culture forged from the meeting of peoples within a hierarchy. **Cultural capital** — Bourdieu: the dominant class's language, taste and knowledge, rewarded as merit. **Culture** — Tylor's "complex whole" of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and habit. **Culture of poverty** — Oscar Lewis's contested claim that the poor transmit a self-perpetuating culture. **Denomination** — Niebuhr: a respectable, tolerant former sect. **Dysfunction** — Merton: a consequence harmful to the system. **Ethnicity** — shared cultural heritage and sense of common origin. **False consciousness** — Marx: the subordinate class's acceptance of the ideas that hide its exploitation. **Folkways / mores** — Sumner's customary and morally weighted norms. **Function** — the contribution of a part to the whole. **Hegemony** — Gramsci: rule by cultural and moral leadership. **Hidden curriculum** — what the school teaches by its form rather than its lessons. **Ideological state apparatus** — Althusser: family, church, school, media reproducing the

relations of production. **In-group / out-group** — Sumner's "we" and "they." **Interculturation** — Brathwaite's two-way cultural exchange. **Interpretivism** — the view that sociology must understand meanings. **Labelling** — Becker: deviance and identity as consequences of others' definitions. **Latent / manifest function** — Merton's unintended and intended functions. **Life chances** — Weber: the probabilities of health, wealth and opportunity attached to class. **Looking-glass self** — Cooley's self built from imagined judgements of others. **Matrifocal** — R. T. Smith: mother-centred household. **Meritocracy** — Young's term for (and satire of) a system rewarding ability and effort. **Mobility** — movement between positions (vertical/horizontal; inter-/intragenerational; absolute/relative; structural/exchange). **Norms / values / sanctions** — rules, ideals and their enforcement. **Organic analogy** — Spencer: society as a body. **Patriarchy** — Walby: structures through which men dominate women. **Pigmentocracy** — stratification by shade. **Plantation society** — Beckford: society structured by the plantation as a total institution. **Plural society** — Furnivall, M. G. Smith: separate cultural sections held by domination. **Positivism** — Comte, Durkheim: the natural-science model for sociology. **Primary / secondary group** — Cooley. **Primary / secondary socialisation** — early family learning; later institutional learning. **Reliability / validity / representativeness** — repeatability; truth to the object; generalisability. **Role / role set / role conflict** — expected behaviour of a status and its strains. **Sect / church / cult** — Troeltsch, Wallis. **Secularisation** — Wilson: religion's loss of social significance. **Self-fulfilling prophecy** — Rosenthal and Jacobson. **Social fact** — Durkheim: an external, constraining way of acting or thinking. **Social structure** — the enduring framework of institutions and positions. **Syncretism** — blending of religious traditions. **Total institution** — Goffman; Beckford's plantation. **Triangulation** — Denzin: combining methods. **Value consensus** — Parsons: shared values as the basis of order. **Value stretch** — Rodman: the lower class's flexible standards. **Verstehen** — Weber: interpretive understanding. **White bias** — Brathwaite: the European end of the creole continuum carrying prestige.

Appendix III — Bibliography

Primary syllabus and examination documents

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