

Presidency University
Department of Sociology
Admission Test 2013

Time 2 hours

Full Marks 100

Instructions:

1. Answer all questions either in English or in Bengali. Only Question No. 4 must be answered in English.
2. Do not write your name or any other details concerning you in your answer script. Mention the requisite information only on the attached slip.
3. Use only black or blue ball point pen.

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1. Write an essay on: Childhood and Society

(Word limit: 250 words)

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2. Comment on the observation: Cinema is a powerful agency of social change.

(Word limit: 200 words)

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3. Write short notes on the following:

(Word limit: 100 words each)

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- (i) Friendship
- (ii) Comic book superheroes
- (iii) Music
- (iv) Consumerism
- (v) Affirmative action

1. Read the following passages and answer the questions in your own words:

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(i) The conviction that secularism will make room for itself increasingly and inevitably in Indian society does not require the belief that religion will disappear from the lives of the Indian people. The question that arises is whether, and to what extent a society can accommodate institutions such as universities, hospitals, banks,

and civil and military bureaucracies that necessarily arrange their affairs without regulation by religious doctrine or authority. It is in this sense – the building of secular institutions and their insulation from the demands of religion – that one speaks of secularization as a worldwide tendency. But the growth of secular institutions is a slow, laborious and painful process whose sources of nourishment still remain largely obscure. Judicious action by the government may smoothen its course, but thoughtless interference may also obstruct it. People often feel about their religion as they do about their family, that it is something sacred, and they resent interference in it by politicians and officials. At the same time, it does not help when free-wheeling intellectuals declare that secularism is a western idea, alien to the Indian spirit, and that we do not need secular institutions but should create our own alternatives to them. It is not at all easy to create an alternative in the modern world.

Why is it difficult to create secular institutions in India?

(ii) Learning to think sociologically means cultivating powers of the imagination. Studying sociology cannot be just routine process of acquiring knowledge. A sociologist is someone who is able to break free from the immediacy of personal circumstances. Sociological work depends on the sociological imagination. It necessitates being able to 'think ourselves away' from the familiar routines of our daily lives in order to look at them anew.

The anthropological dimension of the sociological imagination is vital, because it allows us to see what a kaleidoscope of different forms of human social life exists. In contrasting these with our own, we learn more about the distinctiveness of our specific patterns of behaviour. The historical dimension is equally fundamental: we can grasp the distinctive nature of our world today if we are able to compare it with past. Further, it helps us see some of the 'possible futures' open to us.

What are the uses of sociological imagination?