

OXFORD CAMBRIDGE AND RSA EXAMINATIONS
A2 GCE

F504/01/RB
CRITICAL THINKING

Critical Reasoning

RESOURCE BOOKLET

To be issued with the Question Paper

MONDAY 18 JUNE 2012: Afternoon

DURATION: 1 hour 30 minutes
plus your additional time allowance

MODIFIED ENLARGED

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- **Read and use Documents 1 and 2 to answer the questions.**

INSTRUCTION TO EXAMS OFFICER/INVIGILATOR

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DOCUMENT 1

RIGHT TO BARE ARMS

We think that in a democratic society we have the right to wear what we want. Yet clothes are so bound up with our identity, culture, religion, social status and gender that any decision about what to wear can spark a row – in the family, in the national press and even in the international arena.

1

Who hasn't been told, "You're not wearing that!" by an angry or worried parent? Who hasn't hated wearing school uniform? But what if the row goes deeper? What if society doesn't approve of your clothes? What if you face real prejudice and discrimination about your choice of clothes?

2

In January 2010 Tesco sparked a debate about whether it was acceptable to wear pyjamas in public when one store in Cardiff refused to serve customers who were wearing pyjamas or nightgowns. One head teacher asked parents not to collect their children from school in pyjamas because it was rude. The discussion hit the national news.

3

We asked what you thought on our website:

4

DO WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO WEAR WHAT WE WANT?
grumpy_old_man

These people who go out in their pyjamas should show some respect! We shouldn't challenge Tesco's right to stop people in their pyjamas entering the store – of course Tesco has the right, and is right to insist!

5

fashion_queen

You are what you wear, so if you wear sleepwear during the day, you'll be lazy and unproductive because you're wearing clothing focused on sleep and comfort. We see this on Fridays in offices where people don't have to wear formal business wear, and their productivity goes down. So no, we don't have the right to wear what we want. Dress codes have a purpose and we should stick to them.

6

vampire_nemesis

I think we do have the right to wear what we want because we should be free to do whatever we want in a democracy so long as it doesn't hurt others. People who choose to wear pyjamas to the shops are not harming anyone, so they have the right to dress like that.

7

I think it's more interesting to ask whether we have the right to judge them because of what they wear. I wear lots of black, and I have a lot of piercings. I get a lot of negative reactions to this because people are making judgements about me without even getting to know me. They decide how they think I'll act and what they think I believe in because of my looks, and they are judging me as 'Other', which means they can see me as less human and less civilised. We are doing similar things with people who wear pyjamas in public – categorising them as less than human, as less good than us on the basis of something that isn't very important. Clothes are just what is on the outside. Of course, we wouldn't want the thought police to stop us thinking and judging at all – but we should make our judgements on something more important than clothes.

8

polar_opposite

Clothes have two functions. To keep us warm, and to identify social groups. People who wear pyjamas in public generally belong to low-status social groups who are rebelling against other people's standards. They have the right to do this and the rest of us have the right to judge them as idle layabouts.

9

john_flower

Clothing isn't just about social groups. On the one hand it's a really important way of expressing individuality and on the other it can be a barrier to stop the world seeing and judging the vulnerable person inside. Social prejudices about clothing can stop us being who we are by stopping us wearing what we want. For example, women used to have to fight to wear trousers, men now have to fight to wear skirts, some women have to fight against men who make them wear the burqa, others have to fight to be allowed to wear it. We don't have a right until we can exercise it. So we need to fight against these prejudices to really gain the right to wear what we choose.

10

DOCUMENT 2

SOME EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS PLAN TO BAN THE FACE-COVERING NIQAB OR BURQA*

Europeans' hostility to the burqa is understandable. It doesn't just deprive them of the beauty of women's faces; it offends the secularism** that goes deep in European – and especially French – culture. Its spread goes hand in hand with the growth of a fundamentalist version of Islam, some of whose supporters have attacked the secular societies they live in; and at a time when those societies feel under threat, the burqa makes it harder for police to identify security risks.

1

For people raised outside Afghanistan or the Gulf, dealing with somebody whose facial expressions are hidden is uncomfortable. Unlike the headscarf, the burqa appears, in itself, to be a restraint on female freedom, and also symbolises what many Europeans see as the repression that women can suffer in Islam. And although many, probably most, Muslim women wear the headscarf out of choice, some tell the police that they were forced to wear the burqa against their will.

2

Nor do democracies give absolute rights to citizens to wear what they like. The general agreement about what is tolerated and what deemed offensive or dangerous varies. People cannot, in most countries, walk the streets naked.

3

TOLERATE THE BURQA WITH PRIDE

Europeans feel their values are threatened by the burqa. Yet, precisely these values demand that they oppose a ban. Liberal societies should let people wear what they want unless there is a strong argument otherwise. And in this case, the three arguments for a ban – security, sexual equality and secularism – do not stand up to scrutiny. On security, women can be required to lift their veils if necessary. On sexual equality, women would be better protected by the enforcement of existing laws against domestic violence than by the enactment of new laws forcing them to dress in a way that may be against their will. On secularism, even if Europeans would prefer not to have others' religious commitments paraded on the streets, the tolerance that Westerners claim to value requires them to put up with it.

4

European governments are entitled to limit women's right to wear the burqa. In schools, for instance, pupils should be able to see teachers' faces, as should judges and juries in court. But Europeans should accept that, however much they dislike the burqa, banning it altogether would be an infringement of the individual rights which their culture normally struggles to protect. The French, of all people, should know that. As Voltaire*** might have said, 'I disapprove of your dress, but I will defend to the death your right to wear it.'

5

Source: The Economist

FOOTNOTES

* Niqab and burqa

Niqab

Burqa



**** Secularism – the belief that religion and religious considerations should not be part of the everyday running of a state or nation.**

***** Voltaire was a French philosopher who believed in individual freedoms. He is thought to have said, ‘I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.’**

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