

ADVANCED GCE

F504

CRITICAL THINKING

Unit 4: Critical Reasoning

RESOURCE BOOKLET



INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Read the article 'Street Policy' and use it to answer the questions.

This resource material consists of **4** printed pages.

Background

Libby Purves is a writer and broadcaster. She presents topical programmes on radio and regularly contributes to The Times.

Vigilante

Someone who feels that the police are failing in their duty and undertakes law enforcement, perhaps using violence.

Laissez-faire

Laissez-faire comes from the French meaning 'leave to do', or 'leave alone'. It refers to a policy of minimal government involvement in economic or social affairs.

Singapore

Singapore is a city-state in South-east Asia which is extremely prosperous. It enjoys one of the world's highest standards of living and has strict social controls, including a system of punishments for offences such as not flushing a public lavatory.

Street Policy

Libby Purves

Have the good news first: total recorded crime (in 2005) fell by 1% and car theft and domestic burglary continued a downward trend. Good: domestic burglary is a horrible violation and car crime deeply annoying. Homicide and serious wounding were also down by 10% which can't be bad. Smug officials now parrot that crime is falling and that the "real" problem is people's fear of crime. **1**



But now the bad news. The crimes that rose by 10% in three months were "less serious" assaults on the person, with injury. There is a still bigger rise in street robberies, not necessarily involving injury. In other words, statistically speaking, we are now safer than before in our houses and cars – largely because of sophisticated new alarm technologies that we pay for ourselves – and less safe out on the street, which it is the police's job to make safe. The Metropolitan Police **2**

reportedly says the "main factor" in muggings is the increasing number of high-tech goods we carry. If we insist on owning things, the least we can do is buy an expensive car with an alarm and a house in a gated community, and lock ourselves in. The medieval ambition to build a country where a maiden could walk the length of the kingdom unmolested carrying a bag of gold has clearly been scrapped.

It is the shape of these crime figures that bothers me. The streets must be seen to be safe, whatever it costs and however many sensitivities are bruised to make them so. The alternative is too horrible to contemplate. **3**

Apart from anything else, it is a matter of social justice. For who are the victims, in a world where safety depends on the self-financed insulation of the car or the fortress home? They are the poorest, the youngest and the oldest. Note that street robberies from children under 16 are not recorded: children are not interviewed for government surveys and many of them do not report the moment when their mobile or gadget is taken, with menaces and insult and bruises. When the Home Office did a separate survey, in 2003, it found that more than a third of 10-15 year olds had been victims of a "personal" crime of this sort; one in five had been hit. **4**

The 16 to 25 year old figure was similar, and a fifth higher than for older adults. Some argue that a lot of this is "part of growing up", but a lot of it isn't. It's nasty, it's frightening. It saps trust, social cohesion, confidence and patriotism. Crime against the old is appalling, but right now on our streets it is the young, and especially the poorest of the young, who suffer most. That lad in the hood who scares us may be even more scared himself: another survey demonstrated that child offenders are likely to have been victims themselves. There is nothing for police and government to be smug about. **5**

[Turn over

