

**ST. JOSEPH’S UNIVERSITY BANGALORE- 27**

**II MA ENGLISH – IV SEMESTER**

**END SEMESTER EXAMINATION APRIL/MAY2024**

**EN: 0318 ENGLISH STUDIES – IV- CULTURAL STUDIES**

**Time: 2 hours** **Max. Marks: 50**

**This question paper contains 4 Parts and 2 printed pages.**

**Part A (I)**

1. **I.A. Answer any ONE of the following in 250 words (1x15=15)** Explore in detail the practice of cultural studies with regard to its birth, development and current popularity in the fields of literature, the arts and the humanities. Comment also on its value and meaning to contemporary thought in general
2. Some people assume that Cultural studies as a critical practice is a “hold-all” system wherein anything goes irrespective of the differing contours and formations cultural artefacts are situated in. Do you agree with the above articulated proposition concerning cultural Studies? Or do you have an alternative point of view? Argue your point of view appropriately.

**Part B (II)**

**II.A Answer the following questions in 150 words each: (2x10=20)**

1. Explore the ideas and arguments that Stuart Hall’s essay propounds with regard to Cultural studies as a field and as practice. Comment on the significance of his ideas and arguments, particularly regarding questions of gender and race and their impact on Cultural Studies

1. Explain in detail Walter Benjamin’s perspective of “aura”, “cult” and “exhibition” with regard to Cinema and moving pictures. Comment on how “aura” and “cult” are antithetical to the “exhibition” experience of Cinema

**Part C (III)**

**III. A. Answer any ONE of the following in 50 words only (1x5=5)**

1. So what then is “ideology”? Explain briefly using your reading.
2. How do you understand Bourdieu’s concept of “habitus”. What aspect of the current experience does it explain?

**Part D (VI)**

**IV. Read the following extract from an online journal concerning Popular Culture. The article is titled** *Popular Culture: An Overview* (2007) **and is written by Tom Delaney.**

The term ‘popular culture’ holds different meanings depending on who’s defining it and the context of use. It is generally recognized as the *vernacular* or *people’s* culture that predominates in a society at a point in time. As Brummett explains in *Rhetorical Dimensions of Popular Culture*, pop culture involves the aspects of social life most actively involved in by the public. As the ‘culture of the people’, popular culture is determined by the interactions between people in their everyday activities: styles of dress, the use of slang, greeting rituals and the foods that people eat are all examples of popular culture. Popular culture is also informed by the mass media.

There are a number of generally agreed elements comprising popular culture. For example, popular culture encompasses the most immediate and contemporary aspects of our lives. These aspects are often subject to rapid change, especially in a highly technological world in which people are brought closer and closer by omnipresent media. Certain standards and commonly held beliefs are reflected in pop culture. Because of its commonality, pop culture both reflects and influences people’s everyday life (see eg Petracca and Sorapure, *Common Culture*). Furthermore, brands can attain pop iconic status (eg the Nike swoosh or McDonald’s golden arches). However, iconic brands, as other aspects of popular culture, may rise and fall.

**Now answer the following in not more than 150 words (1x10=10)**

1. Do you consider the above an adequate description/representation of popular culture? Comment on what has been foregrounded and what has been left out if any in the statements above. Provide suitable arguments whenever necessary for your perspective