4.3 Feminist Thinkers: Mary Wollstonecraft and Betty Friedan: Test Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short-answer items may use brief sentences. For levels-marked questions, write structured responses with accurate political knowledge, named thinker references and clear evaluation where required. The final question is the 30-mark essay.

1 Define the term 'feminine mystique' as used by Betty Friedan in The Feminine Mystique, 1963, and explain its relevance to the topic of women's roles.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Define Wollstonecraft's claim that women possess 'rational individualism' as used in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 1792.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 State two harms Betty Friedan associated with the domestic confinement of women under the 'feminine mystique' in The Feminine Mystique, 1963.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Explain Betty Friedan's critique of postwar suburban domesticity in The Feminine Mystique, 1963, and how she linked it to the loss of female ambition.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 Explain Mary Wollstonecraft's critique of women's property rights and how she linked property dependence to female subordination in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, 1792.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 4.3 Feminist Thinkers: Mary Wollstonecraft and Betty Friedan: Test Pack

Question 1

a concise definition identifying the 'feminine mystique' as the idealised belief that women's fulfilment comes mainly from domesticity and motherhood **B1**

Answer: The 'feminine mystique' is the idea that women should find complete fulfilment through housework, marriage and motherhood, a cultural ideal Friedan argued trapped many women in unsatisfying lives.

Question 2

identifies that Wollstonecraft argued women are autonomous rational beings with the capacity for independent moral judgement **B1**

links this to her rejection of the idea women are naturally suited only for emotion and domestic roles **B1**

Answer: Wollstonecraft claimed women are autonomous, rational individuals capable of independent moral judgement, rejecting the notion that they are naturally suited only to emotional or domestic roles.

Question 3

one valid harm, e.g. psychological malaise or lack of identity/fulfilment **B1**

a second valid harm, e.g. wasted educational and occupational potential or economic dependence **B1**

Answer: Psychological malaise or lack of personal fulfilment; wasted educational and occupational potential leading to economic dependence.

Question 4

identifies Friedan's description of the suburban, consumer-oriented domestic ideal as constraining and isolating for many middle-class housewives **B1**

explains the 'problem that has no name' as the psychological malaise and sense of unfulfilment experienced by women confined to domestic roles **B1**

explains how Friedan linked this malaise to the suppression of ambition, education and paid work opportunities **B1**

offers a clear consequence, e.g. Friedan argued that social expectations, media and educational guidance channelled women away from careers and higher education, producing wasted talent **B1**

Answer: Friedan criticised the postwar suburban domestic ideal as culturally and psychologically constraining, producing the 'problem that has no name' where many housewives felt a deep sense of unfulfilment. She argued this social model suppressed women's ambitions by encouraging them to prioritise marriage, homemaking and consumer roles over education and careers, thereby wasting talent and reducing autonomy.

Question 5

identifies that Wollstonecraft criticised laws and customs that left married women economically dependent on husbands **B1**

explains that economic dependence undermined women's autonomy and reinforced social expectations of subordination **B1**

links critique to call for legal reform, e.g. property rights and opportunities for economic independence **B1**

gives a consequence or example, e.g. dependence limited women's ability to be full citizens and rational actors **B1**

Answer: Wollstonecraft criticised laws and customs that left women, especially married women, economically dependent on their husbands, arguing that this dependence undermined autonomy and reinforced expectations of subordination. She linked economic dependence to the denial of full citizenship and argued for legal reforms and economic opportunities so women could be independent, rational actors.

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