4.7 Anarchist Thinkers: William Godwin and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon: 10-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Spend approximately 10 minutes on this pack.

1 Define, in the context of William Godwin's political thought, what is meant by 'private judgement' as used in Enquiry Concerning Political Justice.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 State one central claim Pierre-Joseph Proudhon makes in What is Property? (1840) about ownership.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Explain, with one brief reason, why Godwin opposed the notion of a permanent, coercive state in Enquiry Concerning Political Justice.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 Give two short reasons, each with one sentence, why Godwin expected change to occur gradually rather than by sudden revolution, referring to Enquiry Concerning Political Justice (1793).

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Explain two ways in which Proudhon's idea 'property is theft' differs from a simple call for redistribution, referring to What is Property? (1840).

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 4.7 Anarchist Thinkers: William Godwin and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

a concise definition identifying private judgement as individuals using their own reason and conscience to form moral and political views, independent of state or religious authority **B1**

Answer: Private judgement: the capacity and right of individuals to use their own reason and conscience to form moral and political views independently of state or religious authority, as advocated by Godwin in Enquiry Concerning Political Justice.

Question 2

identifies the claim 'property is theft' or an equivalent phrasing attributing unjust social relations to private property **B1**

Answer: Proudhon's central claim: 'Property is theft', meaning private ownership of the means of production creates unjust social relations and exploitation.

Question 3

identifies that Godwin believed a coercive state corrupts moral judgment and reliance on force undermines individual moral development **B1**

briefly develops the point, linking state coercion to the suppression of private judgement and moral progress **B1**

Answer: Godwin opposed a permanent coercive state because he argued that reliance on force and legal compulsion corrupts moral judgment and prevents people from developing their private judgement and moral capacities.

Question 4

one correct reason in one sentence, e.g. Godwin believed individuals need time to develop private judgement through education and moral persuasion **B1**

a second correct reason in one sentence, e.g. Godwin argued sudden revolution relied on passion and force that would produce further injustice rather than lasting moral improvement **B1**

Answer: Any two succinct reasons such as: Godwin believed moral improvement comes through gradual cultivation of private judgement via education and persuasion, not through sudden acts; he also argued revolution depends on coercion and passion which would not produce genuine moral progress and could lead to greater injustice.

Question 5

identifies one way, e.g. Proudhon distinguishes possession based on use from property as absolute, hereditary right **B1**

develops this with an explanation, e.g. he defends possession for workers while attacking absentee ownership that yields rent **B1**

identifies a second way, e.g. Proudhon's critique is normative and structural, attacking the legal foundations and social relations produced by property rather than only advocating income redistribution **B1**

develops this with an explanation, e.g. he proposes institutional change like mutual credit and federations rather than only taxing the rich **B1**

Answer: Proudhon distinguishes useful possession, the right of a person to use what they work on, from absolute private property that allows owners to extract rent; he defends possession for producers while attacking absentee ownership. He therefore frames 'property is theft' as a structural and legal critique of ownership and its social relations, proposing mutualist institutions like mutual credit and federations instead of merely calling for redistribution of income.

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