

OLLSCOIL NA hÉIREANN, GAILLIMH
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY
SUMMER EXAMINATIONS 1998

SOCIOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL STUDIES

3RD YEAR

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SP406 PRINCIPLES OF POLITICAL THEORY

Time allowed: 3 hours

Students should answer **THREE** Questions

1. Can rich nations justly hold on to their wealth?
2. What conclusions about distributive justice, if any, follow from adopting utilitarianism?
3. What is Nozick's account of distributive justice in *Anarchy, State and Utopia*? What is the *strongest* and what is the *weakest* aspect of his account?
4. "It is conceptually easier, especially in a materialist world, to conceive of property as an object, but to do so is philosophically crude, legally incorrect, and historically atypical." What then *is* property, and what consequences follow from adopting a better approach to conceptualizing property?
5. Outline the basics of John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* and give an assessment of his arguments.
6. EITHER
(a) What is the *strongest* argument for equality? Why do you consider it to be strong?
OR
(b) When, if at all, might a policy of positive discrimination in favour of members of a hitherto-discriminated-against group be justified? How would you justify your position to an (intelligent and informed) opponent?
7. What, in your view, are the *best* arguments for the proposition that the state should seek to meet people's welfare? State briefly *why* these arguments are the best, and sketch any interesting consequences that follow from accepting these arguments.
8. Is caring more important than justice?