

Politics and Society – Essay Marking – “Reverse Engineering” the Marking Scheme

Question 3(b)

(100 marks)

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Where does the right to a peaceful protest begin and end in a democratic society?

[Your answer should include contemporary examples and evidence from a local and/or global context to support your argument. You should also refer to the ideas of at least two theorists, one of whom must be named on your course.]

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Section C – Answer to Question 3b

Optional space to help you prepare your answer.

Where does the right for peaceful protest begin + end in demo

Thomas Hobbes

- ↳ only if there is a threat of death or family honour at stake
- ↳ State of nature?

Identifies KT's

KT's Key Concept

John Locke

↳ more lenient – allows for it, possibly ~~homicide~~ regicide

↳ if gov gives power to another gov over citizens

↳ 18 rights of life liberty property challenged.

Identifies Key Rights.

Not much in the way of suggested structure here, but this rough work does at least touch on a few of the Key Ideas that will be needed for this essay.

Answer "The right to a peaceful protest ends at the tip of my nose" - This is a quote from my Politics and Society teacher which I believe to be very accurate. The theorist John Locke argues for three rights that are unalienable: life, liberty and property. He believes that under certain circumstances it may be necessary to a 'revolt'. I will explore his concepts of ~~the~~ the roles of government and ~~then~~ as well as the ideas of Thomas Hobbes, who has much more passion for a totalitarian government. I will also examine ~~the~~ the 'mob mentality' and how it can cause a protest to become violent. ✓ → Good layout of the overall argument here. I know by the end of this intro where the essay is going to go...

John Locke believes that the government has a role to protect and provide for its people, once they fail to do this however, is when he deems it acceptable to protest. ✓ This T.S. relates directly to the terms of the question asked.

Locke sees the government having certain unacceptable stages to which protest is then ~~only~~ permissable. ✓ One such stage would be the handing of power over to a foreign nation, removing the sovereign power of the nation. ✓ Lots of good content here - it's clear from reading it that he "get" the big ideas.

Locke sees this as an unacceptable occurrence and believes that the people have the right to revolt. ✓

I feel famous here!

doesn't get the term quite right!

Authoritarianism would have been a better choice of word here.

argument here. I know by the end of this intro where the essay is going to go...

This T.S. relates directly to the terms of the question asked.

Lots of good content here - it's clear from reading it that he "get" the big ideas.

This feels like a solid intro + the 1st main paragraph shows a clear personal engagement with the big ideas

To improve: "Name drop" → "In Locke's Second Treatise on Government he argues that..."

* The big gap here is that this all remains completely theoretical who's the supporting contemporary evidence? What different forms might a modern 'protest' take? Civil disobedience, general strike, protest marches, Hunger Strikes etc.

So long as it does not take away unalienable rights. This then allows for peaceful protests to occur as no one's life, liberty or property may be taken away except for in extreme circumstances. ~~In modern society we see similar beliefs, you may protest so long as you do not take from others.~~ This relates back to my teacher's quote, you can protest but your rights end at the tip of my nose, meaning you have no right to become violent. *Good structure here - The student returns his focus to the key terms of the question.*

good to see that the examiner reads the crossed out section. It WAS relevant after all !!!

In modern democratic societies we see organised, peaceful protests for issues such as climate change (Ireland and the youth protests). It is the right of a person to protest if they feel wrong, unfortunately this right is not always upheld. Donald Trump's recent visit to the UK sparked controversy as many people wished to protest his visit. The London police refused to allow it, regardless of the near 5,000 votes the Change.org petition received. ~~This leads to~~ This can lead to a build up of tension between the government and its people, sometimes released in violent riots like in London. It can be the mentality

Finally getting to the contemporary context

This was "low hanging fruit" but why not pick it and use an obvious example

Wouldn't you have loved to see a brief mention of the inflatable Trump-baby-in-a-nappy Balloon here! It would be an effective + evocative image.

To improve: A bit of a missed opportunity to broaden out the "Anti-Trump" protests - The Women's March, Protests against the "Muslim Ban" etc...

of the mob that causes such riots as people feel safer in large groups, leading to dangerous riots that cause huge public damage. This is something Locke would argue against. ✓

There would be a great opportunity to frame this in Human Rights terms - in particular a discussion of Qualified Rights would fit in perfectly here.

The work of Thomas Hobbes can be seen as the counter-argument against any form of protest. ✓ It goes against the democratic idea of a government 'of the people, for the people, by the people' as said by Abraham Lincoln. Hobbes argues for a social contract in which people give up a little of their liberty for the safety of the government. ✓ ~~He~~ Hobbes ~~see~~ saw the government as sovereign and divine, something we no longer see in modern society. Following Hobbes' logic there is no right for the people to protest unless the government puts their lives at risk. This feels a little bit under-developed, doesn't it.

An overt 'Alternative/Comparative perspective' He ties it up very well for the examiner

Good dropping in of key terms + useful quote.

Again no contemporary context here.

The rights of the people in a democratic society include the right to protest. While we see elements of Lockean and Hobbesian theory in our Irish society we do not share their beliefs on protest. The rights to protest in a modern society ✓

H.R. framing again.

To improve - The Hobbes section here feels very slim. Why not drop in the Leviathan or some historical context -

"Should the right to protest be limited if one of the potential outcomes is that the King (Charles I) gets his head chopped off???"

A missed opportunity to link to the ways in which authoritarian states suppress protest in a very violent way. Even a brief reference to Putin (Pussy Riot) Saudi Arabia (Jamal Khashoggi murder) - or even state control of media that stops people finding out about those protests R.T.

That said, this final line is very effective + does show some insight.

→ Maybe I'm just mean. This was only the 2nd year of the exam and I hadn't made my "Civil Disobedience" + "Use of Violence against Non-Dem Governments" yet !!!