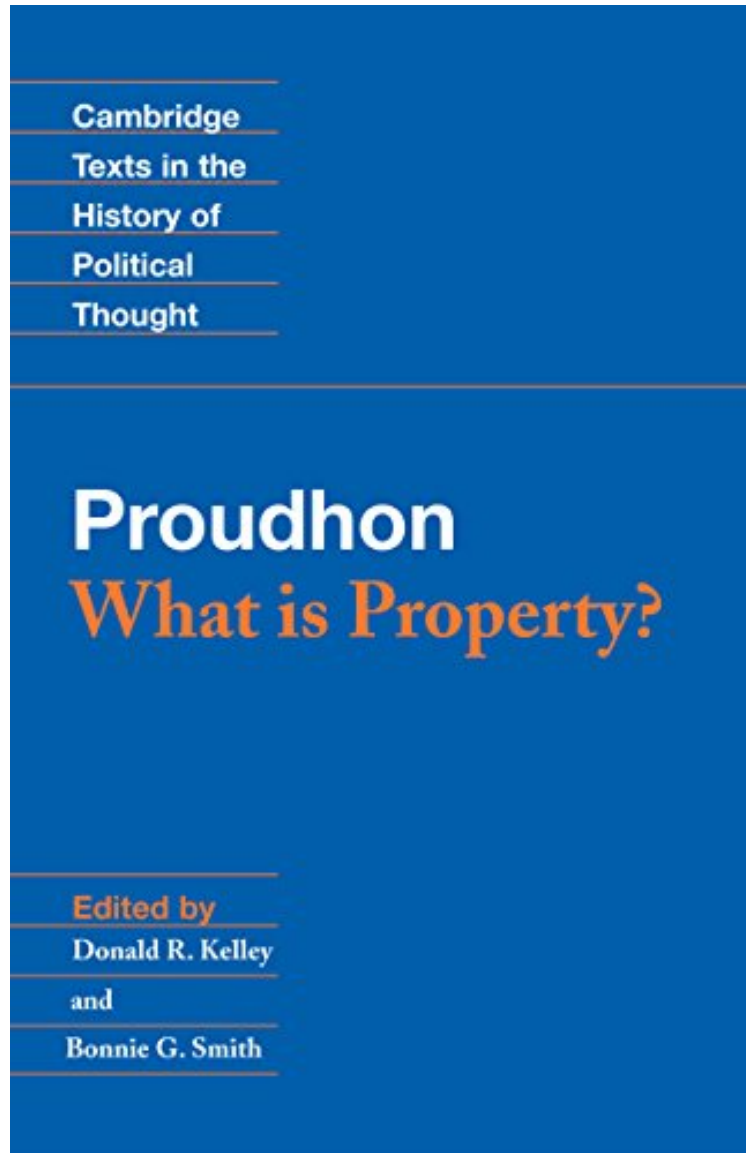


[Ebook pdf] Proudhon: What is Property? (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought)

Proudhon: What is Property? (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought)

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

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Pierre-Joseph Proudhon : Proudhon: What is Property? (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Proudhon: What is Property? (Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought):

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. The classic of Western European anarchist thought By M. A. Krul The title is perhaps one of the most famous rhetorical questions ever, and should be placed historically in the same

range as "Quo usque tandem, Catilina" etc. Proudhon sets himself the task of analyzing the foundations of modern society, and inevitably is drawn towards a critique of the modern political economy, as was popular in the 19th century. Just like Locke, he then "reverse engineers" the economic relations to find their basis in private property, but quite unlike Locke he brilliantly argues why this is in fact an evil thing and not a force for good, as Locke thought. Working from the hypothetical "state of nature", he shows how possession during use is a natural phenomenon, but a permanent property claim over something that was once part of nature is a later invention, and has since caused all strife and misery that competition over scarce goods is wont to do. As a critique of modern society, this work deserves reading by everyone, regardless of whether you approve of current economic structures or not. The only downside to the book is Proudhon's rather messy attempt to offer an additional immanent critique of capitalism, which only leads the reader to conclude economic ignorance. That is a pity, for the question itself is not only worth asking, but of the various historical answers given this is one of the best argued and most radical. Notable is Proudhon's influence on Marx and their subsequent falling out over Proudhon's idealism, as seen in his later work "The Philosophy of Poverty" and Marx's reply "The Poverty of Philosophy".

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Essential Reading
By Zack Campbell
This is one of the greatest books ever written and is absolutely critical reading for anyone hoping to develop and understanding of private property (as opposed to personal property) and its commanding role in contemporary society. I really can't recommend it highly enough.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. AN ANARCHIST "CLASSIC" BY THE INVENTOR OF THE TERM
By Steven H Propp
Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) was a French politician, mutualist philosopher and socialist, as well as the first person to call himself an "anarchist". He stated in the Preface to this book (which was first published in 1840), "I acknowledge that... the mind may legitimately hesitate about abolishing property... it is necessary to show how the new system will satisfy all the moral and political needs which led to the establishment of the first... However, if a single man may not be able to finish this enterprise, one may be enough to begin it." He begins with his famous slogan, "Property is theft!", adding that "This is the battle-cry of '93, the signal for revolutions!" (Pg. 13) Either society must perish, or it must destroy property. (Pg. 43) He asserts, "Who is entitled to the rent of the land? The producer of the land, no doubt. But who made the land? God. Therefore, proprietor, retire." (Pg. 71) The fact of "universal consent" does NOT justify property. (Pg. 74) He argues in favor of the equality of wages (pg. 99), suggesting that "Give men liberty... and you will see the most perfect equality prevailing in their exchanges without consideration for superiority of talent and knowledge." (Pg. 104) By contrast, property, "after having robbed the labourer by usury, murders him slowly by starvation." (Pg. 140) He considers communism to be "the first term of social development." But as such a society develops, communism becomes "the first kind of slavery." (Pg. 195) He describes himself as an "anarchist" (Pg. 205), and Anarchy as "the absence of a master, or a sovereign." (Pg. 209) The goal, or "third form" of society---"the synthesis of communism and property, we shall call LIBERTY." (Pg. 212) Proudhon's works are of definite interest to students of Anarchism, political philosophy, or to modern libertarians.

This is a 1994 translation of one of the classics of the traditions of anarchism and socialism. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was a contemporary of Marx and one of the most acute, influential and subversive critics of modern French and European society. His *What is Property?* (1840) produced the answer 'Property is theft'; the book itself has become a classic of political thought through its wide-ranging and deep-reaching critique of private property as at once the essential institution of Western culture and the root cause of greed, corruption, political tyranny, social division and violation of natural law. A critical and historical introduction situates Proudhon's 'diabolical work' (as he called it) in the context of nineteenth-century social and legal controversy and of the history of political thought in general.

Language Notes
Text: English (translation) Original Language: French
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Quentin Skinner is Barber Beaumont Professor of the Humanities at Queen Mary, University of London. He is a Fellow of the British Academy and the Academia Europaea, and a foreign member of many other learned societies. His scholarship, which is available in more than twenty languages, has won him numerous awards, including the Wolfson Prize for History in 1979 and a Balzan Prize in 2006. His books include *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (2 volumes, 1978), *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (1996), *Liberty Before Liberalism* (1998), *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (2008), *Forensic Shakespeare* (2014) and a three-volume

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