

Hobbes's and Locke's ideas have close parallels in modern life and are accepted by those who have never heard of either philosopher, the state of nature, or the social contract. Modern Hobbesians believe that people are basically evil and must be controlled by a strong government. They will favor harsh treatments for those who break society's rules and fear those who take the law into their own hands. The modern followers of Locke believe that people are basically good, and should be ruled by fair and mild governments. They will oppose harsh punishments, stress the need for reform and change in government and society, and permit a wide amount of protest.

The following statements are in the words of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. They are presented in this way to help you understand how the thinking of these two famous philosophers differs on these important ideas.

Thomas Hobbes

John Locke

The State of Nature

In such condition there is no place for industry because the fruit there-of is uncertain, and continual fear of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

We must consider what state all men are naturally in, and that is a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of their possessions as they think fit. A state also of equality, no one having more than another.

The Social Contract

Without the terror of some kind of power to cause them to be observed, justice, equity, modesty, and mercy are contrary to our natural passions. Covenants without the sword are but words, and of no strength. The only way for men to erect a common power is for men to confer all their strength on one man or one body of men that may reduce their wills to one will.

The great and chief end of man's uniting into commonwealths, and putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property; to which in the state of nature there are many

The Right to Rebel

That they are subject to a King, cannot, without his leave, cast him off and return to the confusion of disunited multitude, nor transfer to another man or assembly of men.

When the legislative transgresses the rule of society, they forfeit the power the people put in them, and it devolves to the people, who resume their original liberty.²³

²³Quoted in A. Castell, *An Introduction to Modern Philosophy*, The MacMillan Company, New York, 1949), pp. 395-9, and in The Staff, Social Science I, *The People Shall Judge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949) pp. 70, 92, 110-11, 174, 177 (language modified and revised)