

Counter arguments to egosim



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Thomas Hobbes was an English political philosopher in the early 1600's who believed that morality and politics evolve out of a social contract. This concept came to be known as Hobbes " social contract theory". In this theory Hobbes introduces the idea of a hypothetical natural state of men or what he calls " the state of nature". According to Thomas Hobbes, in the state of nature all people are more or less equal to one another both physically and mentally. For example, even the strongest man can be killed while he sleeps.

In the state of nature resources are limited and there are no guidelines to force people to cooperate with one another. Given these conditions, Hobbes concludes that in the state of nature every human being acts in a way to maximize their satisfaction over the long term. Since no one has any sort of moral obligation to anything else except to maximize their own satisfaction, they have no regard for the self-interest of others. The never-ending threat of war or someone plotting against you to get what they want leaves little time to build, cultivate, and enjoy life. This is where the idea of a social contract comes into play.

According to Hobbes men are naturally self-interested, yet they are rational, they will give up the freedom they would have in the state of nature in return for the protection that a sovereign ruler can provide. This social contract requires men agree to live under common laws, meaning everyone must renounce their claims on one another, and create an enforcement mechanism for the social contract and the laws that constitute it. Hobbes states the second law of nature is that people should seek personal satisfaction by treating others as he or she would want that person treat them.

Which brings Hobbes to the conclusion that the second law of nature would allow mankind to get more satisfaction over time. Hobbes believes that if followed the overall satisfaction of life will increase, supporting the idea of ethical egoism, which is the idea that every individual should always do what will maximize their satisfaction over time. From this Hobbes derives that if you follow the basic principle of egoism you will at the same time be following the Golden Rule. The Golden Rule states that you should do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Hobbes theorizes that if you do to others as you would have them do to you then you are more likely to have people do those good things for you in return, maximizing your satisfaction and supporting the idea of ethical egoism. Hobbes theory definitely has its flaws. From Hobbes point of view we should avoid harming others so they don't harm us. But Hobbes doesn't take into account that sometimes a person may benefit from harming another person. If a person finds a way to maximize their satisfaction while at the same time harming another human being than Hobbes theory is in trouble. For example, Yoe are the sole beneficiary to