

John lockes philosophy



of Lecturer 23 June John Locke's philosophy The influence of the British philosopher, John Locke greatly influenced the principles behind the American Revolution. It is pertinent to note that the American colonists saw themselves as Englishmen and this is the main reason they were influenced by English philosophies as there was an intellectual bond between England and America at that time. The migration of the Englishmen into the New World made it possible for them to introduce the philosophies of John Locke into America and the extent at which Locke's philosophy influenced the ideologies behind the American Revolution shall be examined in this short paper. John Locke's philosophy was primarily based on the sovereignty of the people and the responsibility of the individual in the society. It was based on this principle, that the Americans deemed it fit to defend their sovereignty as a nation and stage a revolution. Locke's philosophy was based on upholding the right of the individual as his premise was based on the fact that sovereignty lies in the hands of the individuals rather than the state and it was on this basis that the citizens of America fought for what was rightfully theirs. Locke believed that every individual had the right to start a revolution if they feel they are being oppressed by their leaders. The Americans made use of Locke's principle in the oppression that they faced at the hands of their British colonial masters (Axtell 98). John Locke's ideas were also the bedrock of Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. Just like John Locke, Thomas Jefferson was also aware of the fundamental rights and responsibility of an individual in the society and it was on this basis that he drafted the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson used the ideas of John Locke for the foundation of the Declaration of Independence as he asserted that people should be given sovereignty in the manner at which they

observe the written laws of the constitution. Thus, it was based on Jefferson's belief in the sovereignty of the individual that it could be argued that he made use of the ideas of John Locke in the foundation of the Declaration of Independence. Thus, it could then be said that the philosophy of John Locke played a great part in the American Revolution and it also influenced the drafting of the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson. Work Cited Axtell, James. (ed.) Educational Writings of John Locke. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968. Print