

Can you show how
jefferson's theory of
revolution follows
from john locke's
theor...

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Can you show how Jefferson's theory of revolution (found in its shortest form in the Declaration of Independence) follows from John Locke's theory of government? Could it follow from Hobbes's theory of government? Under what circumstances? Thomas Jefferson's theory of revolution seems to follow specific criteria from Thomas Hobbes original foundation, which was further expanded upon by John Locke and ultimately fine tuned by Thomas Jefferson. To get an understanding how these three philosophies follow one another, we must begin at the documented source; Thomas Hobbes. Thomas Hobbes lived during revolutionary times, beginning with the overthrow and demise of the English King, Charles 1, in 1641 (Newton, 2004). Hobbes writings of 1651 are documented with an influence from these events, while being credited with transition from medieval to modern thinking in Britain. Although Hobbes post-revolutionary treatise ultimately depended on accepting an absolute monarch, which contradicts present day philosophy, still, Hobbes is credited with the notion of a person's natural rights.

Hobbes theory depicts the right of self-preservation, by stating a person may do whatever needs to be done to save their life and to procure the means to live (Newton, 2004). Hobbes' rather straightforward approach suggests that every man is an enemy of every man (Newton, 2004) and the worst that can happen to anyone is a violent death at the hands of others. Citing natural rights, Hobbes therefore indicates we have the right to prevent a violent death from taking place through self preservation, by taking action against those who may or may not harm us. Hobbes theory of mankind illustrates a violent, short, and solitary life, which arises perhaps his most powerful work.

Hobbes identifies just how little humankind rarely uses good judgment. These ideals of natural rights, human judgment, and society set in motion a foundation, which would be expanded upon by John Locke. John Locke seemed to take Thomas Hobbes ideals of a person's natural rights, and further define assumptions about human nature, suggesting we need civil society primarily for the safety of lands and industry (Newton, 2004). Locke seems to build upon Hobbes' ideals describing within the law of Nature, all men are equal and are in a state of perfect freedom to order their own actions. However, it seems Locke clearly understands mans desire for more and temptation to violate human rights of others for personal gain and therefore, inevitable disputes in which life, liberty, and property are in question, laws are established to protect and uphold ones rights. Locke divulges further by stating the law of nature confirms every one has a right to punish transgressors of law to such a degree in which it may hinder violations, preserve the innocent and restrain offenders (Newton, 2004). This is where Locke separates himself from Hobbes theories.

Locke concedes punishment only to a degree whereas will hinder a transgressor and only restrain an offender. This should not be confused with Hobbes philosophy of an individual having the right to pass judgement and decide a transgressors fate, once a perceived threat has been subdued. Locke's philosophy seems to indicate a vital importance to exhibit reason and tolerance; a law of morals, unlike Thomas Hobbes philosophical view of do as you please because it is your natural right. John Locke's law of morals set forth Thomas Jefferson's theory of revolution. Thomas Jefferson,

eloquently wrote; all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness (Newton, 2004). Thomas Jefferson's ideals seem to mirror his philosophical predecessor John Locke and similarly suggest all people have a natural or God given right to their freedoms, which are to be secured by law or government. Both philosophers share the same view that all individuals should be free to make choices about how to conduct their own lives as long as they do not interfere with the liberty of others. The freedom of choice and to demonstrate good judgement, an ideal first established with Thomas Hobbes, further conceived by John Locke and ultimately reaffirmed by Thomas Jefferson.

Furthermore, Locke originally proposed the governments purpose was to secure and protect God given rights of the people (Newton, 2004). However, if the government persecutes its people over an extended period, the people have the right to resist that government, alter or create a new political system. Jefferson adopted this same approach from Locke by declaring that the people have the right to overthrow their government when it abused their fundamental natural rights over a long period of time as well. The similarities shared among the different philosophers reaffirms the evolution of ideals regarding revolution, and human rights.