

# Applying political theories to us politics



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1. Tocqueville argued that Puritanism was almost as much a political theory as a religious doctrine. Puritans were influenced by Christianity and deeply applied that to their life style. Their main beliefs were based on the justice and perseverance of God. Since the Puritans believed in God's grace and salvation, they were also led to self-government. The main element of their life style was based on the approach of the covenant where all relationships within the Puritans were established under the terms of a covenant. A political theory values justice and power and the Puritans justice and power were based on God. This is why Tocqueville claims that Puritan politics and their religious beliefs intertwine.
2. Tocqueville and Locke suggest that there is an important distinction between liberty and license. Liberty is having freedom within the laws of nature but also recognizes consequences. License is the freedom to do as you please. This is where the distinction between liberty and license is argued. This is because one doesn't have the right to kill oneself or another. Therefore, one must preserve themselves and mankind. However, the contradiction mostly lies in where the boundaries lie of having the right to enforce natural law against those who violate their rights, and the punishments of their violators. Locke expresses that the State of Nature is not a State of License. Overall, law provides freedom to do as what one wants. However, one's freedom lies within the boundaries of that law.

3. Tocqueville argues that America was able to combine the spirit of two things thought to be in perpetual tension. These two things are religion and liberty. Tocqueville expresses that religion is responsible for human capability while liberty perceives religion and most importantly the security of laws. These work together because liberty pertains to the freedom of one and their choice of beliefs. This results in every individual to have their own distinctive beliefs without violating law and secures their equality.
4. Locke's definition of political power is: The right to make laws for protection and regulation of property. In my understanding, Locke feels as if laws only work because they are accepted by people and have a positive effect on the public.
5. In the State of nature, an individual claims his private property that was something that was originally held common when that individual uses his or her own labor to come into possession of something. Locke states that one can only accommodate as many things that are in reasonable use. Land has become scarce because nature offers necessities and the more mankind can make use of it, less land will be available. Locke believes that war is caused when one human's action makes a menace attempt towards another human.
6. In the State of Nature, there are certain inconveniences. The State of Nature grants the right to punish any violator. To solve inconveniences within the State of Nature, Locke answers by anticipating a right of revolution. This grants the people the right to change or over throw government if the government fails to protect natural rights of the

people. The majority of the people decide whether the government is protecting the rights of the people.

7. Rights are unalienable when they cannot be taken away. All humans possess unalienable rights at birth. These rights cannot be given to another being, or surrendered with the exception of the holder of those rights.
8. According to John Adams, tyrants sought to discourage the people from learning. They did by ordering the people to do simply do as they say because the tyrants oppressed the people. In my opinion, general enlightenment is crucial to free government because each individual should have knowledge of their government and what laws they are to abide by.
9. According to Hamilton, morality is sown into human nature. He expresses that their maker, gives them reason to acquire the natural rights that are built into their nature. Hamilton explains his difference of the State of Nature with Thomas Hobbes' State of Nature is that humans are born with rights, whereas Hobbes argues that humans are given rights until they are born within a formed government. Hobbes states that morality bonds with politics and that our moral actions are only performed for our survival knowing that a government can punish us for violating such laws.
10. James Otis claims that sovereignty is ultimately derived from the people. His statement of " the government is founded on the necessity of our natures," means that our government was formed to allow humans to freely think, feel, or act naturally and independently. This

also means that the government is to protect natural rights in order to maintain equality amongst the people.

11. According to the Declaration of Independence, the statement “all men are created equal,” means that human beings are all born and will remain equal in the eyes of law. Governments are instituted among men to secure natural rights and whenever government does not secure the people's natural rights, the people have the right to alter government and develop a new government.

#### Essay A. 625 words

Traditional American politics suggest that man is endowed at birth with inalienable rights. The origin of inalienable rights influenced America's founding fathers who sought to protect people from conflict by providing law and order. These rights are incapable of being taken away or given up. The government of the United States was founded on the principle of that all human beings are naturally and equally endowed with inalienable rights. Inalienable rights have impacted several aspects of America's government which originated from several enlightenment thinkers.

John Locke, an English philosopher, argued that rights are given to man that cannot be taken or given away. These rights are known as natural rights. The formulations of these rights are life, liberty, and property. In his book *Two Treatise of Government*, Locke intertwines the idea of natural law, equality, and the state of nature. Natural law holds humans subject to morality. Morality is essentially human's duty to abide to natural laws. Mankind's right is basically moral fact leading to the sole purpose of government. That is to safeguard the rights of mankind. Locke highlights the state of nature,

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claiming that men are free, equal, and at liberty to do what they want.

However, mankind's actions must be done within the boundaries of the law of nature. This supports that natural equality of inalienable rights serve as the moral and theoretical basis of government by consent of the governed. Since humanity acquires natural and unalienable rights at birth, humankind must enter a society that accepts those rights, and protects them. Before government is formed, man lives in a state of nature. In this state of nature, man is guided by God's intentions of the laws of nature. Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* highlights the importance of equality in which forms from the state of nature. Man is free and equal according to the state of nature. Locke feels that man will be assured that he is free and equal when he enters a society making equality the driving force of Locke's political argument. Equality is key to the establishment of government as long as government holds responsibility of maintaining a safe and stable society that protects natural rights. Man is born free but gives up some freedom in order to establish government to maintain social order. Thomas Jefferson stated that unalienable rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Locke highly influenced Jefferson as Jefferson used Locke's concepts of how rulers only rule through the consent of the governed. This mirrors Locke's political documents. Locke's works however, had some inconveniences. If the government violates the people's rights of life, liberty and property, then then people have the right to alter or abolish their government and create a new one that suits their needs. For example, a government may grow tyrannical and no longer represents the people taking away their freedom and rights. In solution, Locke claims that the people have the right to dissent against government. Natural equality and inalienable rights also serve as the

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basis of limited government. Limited government is based on consent where the people's rights may not be violated. Locke thought that this proper role of government would allow humanity to blossom because of their God given ability of reason.

Overall, government solely exists for the people's well being. If a government fails to protect rights, then the people have the right to overthrow and replace. Governments are only factors that contribute to humanities morality. Because of humankind's morality, human beings are naturally and equality endowed with inalienable rights that have influenced America's way of government. John Locke and Thomas Jefferson were two men who sought to create leadership that worked with the people, not an individual who had total control of the people.

#### Essay B. 279

Puritanism is felt across American because the Puritans were the first settlers who spread their ideas and values throughout the land. Alex de Tocqueville considered the Puritans as America's founders. This is because of their influence on America's character. John Adams also supports that the Puritans had great contribution to the development of America.

The Puritans settled in American and where English protestants who became unhappy with the church of England. They felt as if too much power rested with priests, bishops, and cardinals who were the highest officials in the church. The Puritans stressed Bible readings and wanted religious community members to be directly involved with church. According to Tocqueville and Adams, the Puritan value affected American society in a <https://assignbuster.com/applying-political-theories-to-us-politics/>

positive way. They developed the concept of limited government as they believed that no single person or group of people should be trusted to run the government. They had a highly emphasized education which led to American school systems and we have also adopted their ethics of honesty, and work. I agree with Tocqueville and Adams who state that the Puritans were the stepping stones of American democracy. The fact that the Puritans believed that government should be limited and not run by a single individual reflects in several enlightenment thinkers whose works have highly influenced our government. For example, Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence using John Locke's philosophy. Without the Puritans, American Democracy could be altered in several ways.

The Puritans are important in the development of American democracy because they have instilled many features upon our government. Culturally they have influenced self-reliance and a strong emphasis on education.