

# Leviathan by thomas hobbes

Philosophy



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The paper "Leviathan by Thomas Hobbes" is an excellent example of a book review on philosophy. In the previous chapters, Hobbes laid out how humans come to live in society out of fear. Hobbes directs his attention to human nature and discusses how humans go from this state of nature to society. People are constantly moved by appetites and aversions and have certain motives in mind which they strive to attain. Since more than one man may desire the same end, they are in a constant state of conflict and competition with one another (when in a state of nature). Though it may be expected that a natural equilibrium would be reached in such a state of nature with the strong triumphing over the weak, it is noted that this can never be so due to the peculiar nature of power; a state of equality exists in nature where even the weak can kill the strong, and combined with a finite amount of resources and distrust of other men, there arises a perpetual state of conflict. Hobbes has a rather pessimistic view of human nature here, but the reasons that you lock your doors when you are away from home and carry arms to defend yourself when you are traveling. That reveals that humans are distrustful of one another. Hobbes stance on the state of nature is descriptive rather than normative, that is, he does not find anything necessarily wrong with the passions and desires that drive us to war with one another. In fact, in a state of nature where there is no common power, Hobbes believed that peace was agreed upon due to a general fear of death. Therefore, the basic terms of peace that men come into agreement upon – solely dictated and governed by reason – are called the Laws of Nature. Through simple logical reasoning about the state of nature, one discovers that the first fundamental law of nature is that man should seek peace. The second fundamental law of nature derives from this first one and <https://assignbuster.com/leviathan-by-thomas-hobbes/>

states that one must restrain himself from pursuing ends by any means necessary. From these first two laws of nature, the third law of nature is deduced- that it is in our interest to obey our covenants since the rewards for doing so outweighs the risk of breaking them. From this law of nature comes the concept of justice (so that to obey a covenant is justice, and to break it is an injustice). Hobbes then goes on to offer a total of nineteen laws that are derived from these initial three. In going from the state of nature to society, a set of natural persons agree to a contract, whereby a common power is established as an artificial person (the government) to enforce the terms agreed upon. With regard to this artificial person, the 'actor' is the person that performs any given act, whereas the 'author' is the person whose actions these are. This artificial person then serves as the representative or actor of all those who have agreed to the social contract. Thus, all participants of the contract are the authors of any and all actions performed by the artificial person.