

Leviathan and the personal fears of hobbes



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The philosophy of Thomas Hobbes is perhaps the most revolutionary and unique philosophy of the seventeenth century. Hobbes had a unique view of the world in all its components: society, politics, physics, religion, and nature. Unlike his contemporaries, Hobbes was able to fuse these otherwise divergent philosophical sciences into one innovative philosophy. Hobbes is considered one of the greatest philosophers of all times, and rightly so. Many of his political and social theories still apply. While his attempt to explore science essentially failed, his ideas concerning its importance and relevance to other elements of life prevailed. His analysis of Christianity and other religions boldly contested beliefs during his time and influenced the development of religion in the future. Hobbes' most enduring theories concerned problems in political and social order. He explored the easiest path to peaceful coexistence among all humans and how humans could evade civil conflict. Hobbes' conclusions to these arcane questions were rooted in his own personal fears and his belief that fear itself was the most important psychological factor in maintaining civil and social peace. Much of Hobbes personal fear is a result of the times in which he lived. On the day he was born in 1588, the people of England learned that the Spanish Armada was sailing back to England to attack. Upon learning of the ominous day of his birth, Hobbes supposedly said, "fear and I were born twins together." Leviathan was written to some degree out of Hobbes' fear of the unstable political condition in England during the time he was writing. Hobbes wrote Leviathan in the years between the English Civil Wars and it was actually published during the years of the Commonwealth. In the years Hobbes was writing Leviathan it became known that Parliament was soon going to order the execution of Charles I. Since Hobbes was a Royalist and avid personal

advocate of Charles I, and even tutor of his son, future-king, Charles II, Hobbes felt he was in danger of persecution. To escape persecution, Hobbes fled to France where he spent the next eleven years. Hobbes lived in one of the most tumultuous times in British history. The unrest in Britain had many components: political, religious, economic, and militarily fragmented. Parliament was in aggressive conflict with the King, Catholics and Protestants were openly persecuting one another, British citizens protested for more equitable division of wealth, and various geographical regions with conflicting beliefs in each of these categories were challenging each other. Perhaps the universal instability straddling all sectors of life drove Hobbes to create a philosophy that dealt and ultimately synthesized each of these problems into a single set of beliefs. Hence, Hobbes' conception of Hell on Earth in Leviathan as social and political unrest makes sense in the context of the times, as Hobbes had to deal with both on a regular basis. In addition to his volatile surroundings as an inspiration for his most renowned work, other philosophers and philosophies around his time influenced Hobbes. Hobbes reacted vehemently against the scholastic tradition that had emerged during the middle ages and the political ramifications of its widespread acceptance. Hobbes first encountered scholasticism in his Jesuit secondary where students were taught to employ reason only for the goal of strengthening faith in God. Hobbes particularly resented scholastics' insistence upon religious authority in government. As a philosopher many years later, Hobbes completely overturned this philosophy in his frequent assertions that theology should be kept separate from politics, especially in determining authority and political policy. Scholasticism compelled Hobbes to construct a more feasible antithesis. Thus, his emphasis on excluding God

from the process of reason and philosophy emerged. Another of Hobbes's major influences was the newly developing scientific method that favored deductive reasoning rather than Aristotelian inductive reasoning. Hobbes' fascination with geometry and the simultaneous reemergence of it as an important science also shaped his method of reasoning and thinking. Hobbes placed great emphasis on working from basic first principles (established by God) to complex conclusions. Hobbes' mechanistic approach to reasoning is apparent throughout *Leviathan*; for example, the entire text is written like a geometric proof. The first chapter establishes first principles and appropriately examines the very nature of ideas; the ideas become progressively more complex and layered as the book progresses.

Significantly, every principle established in *Leviathan* depends on the foundations established by prior principles. Hobbes builds from human perception based on the law of inertia and a materialistic perception of the universe. He then discusses the "desires" "appetites" and "aversions" linked to these very perceptions as the instigative actions to all of voluntary and involuntary human behavior. From these causes of human behavior he finally moves to the probable relations between humans and their broader societies. *Mechanics of the Mind* In the first portion of the first book of *Leviathan*, Hobbes examines the mechanical processes involved in human thought. He proposes that sensory perception triggers the imagination which then activates a "train of thought." One of the first points Hobbes makes is that humans acquire knowledge of the external world through: The external body, or object, which presseth the organ proper for each sense, either immediately, as in the taste and touch; or mediately, as in seeing hearing and smelling; which pressure, by the mediation of nerves, and other strings

and membranes of the body, continued inwards to the brain and heart, causeth there a resistance, or counter-pressure, or endeavour of the heart to deliver itself, which endeavor, because outward, seemeth to be some matter without. This is to say that the tangible objects of the universe engage the senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste), which initiates a chain reaction of motion until eventually the sensory perception becomes an intangible idea or feeling in the brain or heart. This process centers on Hobbes' borrowed theory that once an object is in motion, it remains in motion until it encounters some sort of hindrance. Once the feeling reaches it's final tangible destination, the brain or heart, it has no other materialistic thing to transfer its motion. This hindrance of physical inertia results in the transfer of motion from the sensory perception into thoughts, or imagination. Hobbes explains this process, "imagination therefore is nothing but decaying sense...the decay of sense in men waking, is not the decay of motion made in sense; but an obscuring of it." He provides an example to clarify his theory. Hobbes suggests that vision or image persists in the mind (distorted in the imagination) even after the "sensory apparatus" (eyes) is blocked. Therefore, the immediate motion of the image coming into contact with the eyes is still in motion as mediate motion traveling through the imagination. Continuing the transfer of motion, over time, this visual figment of the imagination becomes a memory. The imagination resulting from initial sensory perception becomes an understanding. For example, an eye perceives a daisy, the organs of the eye relay this to the frontal lobe of the brain, which evaluates the significance of the image and finally stores it as a memory according to its significance to the perceiver. The feelings, correlations to other understandings, connotations, etc. associated with the

obscured version of the original image are the understanding. Hobbes notes that animals and humans alike have the mental capacity for understanding. “For a dog by custom will understand the call, or rating of his master.” The point of distinction between the mental capacities of animals and humans is the human’s ability to understand his purpose for recalling the vision, as well as the conceptions and thoughts he previously and presently associated with the vision, as well as the sequence of thoughts that led him to recall the image and the sequence of thoughts that followed the recollection. Hobbes calls this sequence of thoughts the “train of thought.” Hobbes defines “train of thought” as “that succession of one thought to another” which he refers to mental discourse. He then goes on to describe the benefits of mental discourse. Remembrance, or “calling to mind” allows man to reconstruct the path to his desired ending point, not just that which he desires. Prudence allows man to avoid repeating the same mistake twice since he is able to recall the cause and consequences of that mistake from a recalled train of thought. Finally, the ability to recall a train of thought defies metaphysics: ideas can become infinite. Hobbes theory on the origin of thought follows a geometrical, deductive thought process. His argument reads like a flow chart; each conclusion depends on the conclusion established prior to it and the validity of each conclusion depends on the validity of each prior conclusion. Essentially, Hobbes suggests that thought comes from imagination, which comes from sensory perception, which comes from some material object in the external world. His entire theory depends on the concept of sustained motion and his assertion that matter cannot move itself. However, there is one major hole in this theory that Hobbes cleverly evades: what is the initial motion and what triggers the initial motion. He

addresses this later in his book he suggests that these “first principles” are set into motion by the hand of God who then leaves all subsequent action up to the transfer of motion by material collisions in the external world. This first section of Leviathan is important as a foundation for the rest of the book. It ingeniously sets up his favored way of thinking and reasoning by providing an example within the philosophy forcing the reader to think deductively. In order to reach the conclusion, the reader must first comprehend the deduced conclusions along the way. Also, Hobbes method of reasoning is significantly centered on the existence and importance of the natural world and human ability to perceive it. After all, without the natural world and humans’ subjective perception of it, there would be no thought process at all. This philosophy of the mechanics of the human mind is an interesting fusion of natural science, biological science, and psychological science, all dependent on one another for the conclusion. Speech and the Foundation of Civil Peace: Unanimous Approval Hobbes’ next section addresses verbal discourse (naturally, a logical transition from the discussion of mental discourse). Hobbes suggests that speech was invented as a continuance of the transfer of motion, to put mental discourse into verbal discourse. He introduces two benefits of this transferred motion: 1) “the registering of the consequences of our thoughts” which may have otherwise been forgotten. The assignment of words to “imaginings,” “understandings,” “memories,” “trains of thought,” and conclusions functions as “markers” for recollection and effective communication. 2) “when many use the same words, to signify, by their connexion and order, one to another, what they conceive, or think of each matter; and also what they desire, fear, or have any other passion for.” In this case, words are called “signs” to represent ideas. Once again, the law

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of inertia applies; trains of thought are transferred into words that are then transferred into verbal dialogue that initiates an entirely separate train of thought in another mind. The most significant idea of this portion of Hobbes' philosophy is the notion that those in communication must understand words by common definitions or else they are rendered ineffective and misdirect the transfer of motion. Next, Hobbes describes four uses of speech and four abuses of speech. The uses of speech are: 1) they allow humans to record knowledge which adds to the acquisition and preservation of arts. 2) Humans are able to communicate this knowledge. 3) Humans are able to communicate intentions or needs and are thus able to educe help. 4) Humans can amuse each other by playing with words. Hobbes next warns about the potential abuses of speech: 1) potential for careless signification; definitions may shift if words are used improperly or out of context. 2) There is danger in using metaphors; when words mean or represent other words it can be used a tool of deceit. 3) It can be used in a lie or trick against other humans. 4) It can be used to hurt other humans psychologically. The nature of speech and how it used, for good or for evil, depends on "names and the connexion of them." Consistency in the definitions of words is extremely important to Hobbes. About the necessity of definitions he says, Seeing that truth consisteth in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeketh precise truth had need to remember what every name he uses stands for, and to place it accordingly, or else he will find himself entangled in words, as a bird in lime twigs, the more he struggles the more belimed. And therefore in geometry, which is the only science that it hath pleased God hitherto to bestow on mankind, men begin at settling the significations of their words; which settling of significations they call definitions, and place

them in the beginning of their reckoning. Hobbes believes this system of using universal definitions as the cornerstone of certainty is justifiable on the basis that geometry, God's most venerated science as apparent in nature, is based on accepted definitions. Because everyone agreed on them, there is no room for conflict or dispute. In this assertion, Hobbes now partially fills the hole he left in his first section on the mechanics of the mind; it becomes clear that precise definitions of words are the foundations of the first principles of every thought process. This section on speech also gives rise to another important premise: truth is a social construction. Since definitions are the first principles of every thought process, and society not only establishes the definitions of words but also approves them as a group; therefore, conclusions are valid because society creates them. Hobbes also sees positive political ramifications in this method of establishing words as the foundation of reason. Because society approves the definitions as a unit, they are making governmental decisions together in a productive, peaceful manner. Thus, the prerequisite for common approval of words as the foundation of reason leads to civil peace and productivity. However, this conclusion leads to another hole in his argument: how to achieve social consent of the definitions. Because Hobbes believes knowledge cannot be found through an exploration of nature due to the fact that nature is perceived subjectively by each individual, Hobbes eventually comes to the conclusion that definitions must be established by an arbitrator who he identifies later in the book. The institution of an all-powerful judge who has complete control over the foundations of reason is an extreme proposition. This notion of power concentrated in a single person or group of people becomes a substantial part of Hobbes' evaluation of society and politics.

Reason Reason, one of man's only abilities superior to animals, becomes another of Hobbes' key investigations. According to Hobbes, " Reason...is nothing but reckoning, that is adding and subtracting, of the consequences of general names agreed upon for the marking and signifying of our thoughts." Science is explored through reason; knowledge is acquired through science; truth is discovered through knowledge. In order to get to truth, one must perfectly engage reason to first obtain knowledge. Thus, the purpose for engaging reason is known: in pursuit of certainty. Reason, like science, is a geometric process. The use and end of reason, is not the finding of the sum and truth of one, or a few consequences, remote from the first definitions, and settled significations of names, but to begin at these, and proceed from one consequence to another. For there can be no certainty of the last conclusion, without a certainty of all those affirmations and negotiations, on which it was grounded and inferred. This process of geometrical reasoning with conclusions that have been deduced through a scientific process beginning at the foundation of reason, definition, and ending with a valid conclusion built on the conclusions established along the way. Hobbes arrives at Science through an intricate deductive, mathematical formula, By this it appears that reason is no, as sense and memory, born with us; nor gotten by experience only, as prudence is; but attained by industry; first in that apt imposing of names; and secondly by getting a good and orderly method in proceeding from the elements, which are names, to assertions made by connexions of one assertion to another, till we come to a knowledge of all the consequences of names appertaining to the subject in hand; and that is it, men call SCIENCE. By arriving at science through reason from firmly established definitions, Hobbes renders his philosophy

incontestable. Since every step of his reasoning depends on the validity of the previous step, each step adds strength to his philosophy. Thus, once again, Hobbes proposes that this method of reasoning can lead only to civil peace since there will be no disputes. Since Hobbes' greatest fear was civil war and political turmoil, this system of reason seemed the perfect remedy for a stable society completely dependent on social consent. However, as each of his arguments has the tendency to do, this argument contains a hole: the notion of an omnipotent judge as the supreme authority on the definitions of words, the foundations for reason and everything constructed upon reason, hints at totalitarianism and takes away from the autocratic, self-imposed government Hobbes previously hinted at. It also detracts from the humanism of all people; they have no control over the foundation of their thought process. As theologians point to God as the cornerstone of reason and knowledge, Hobbes points to this tenuous supreme governing authority.

Nature of Human Behavior

Next, Hobbes explores human nature from a psychological perspective. He evaluates the internal drives of humans, the consequences of these drives, the resulting characteristics of humans from the consequences of these drives, and the implications these characteristics have on society as a whole. Hobbes begins this examination with an evaluation of the origin of motion in living organisms; he starts with a focus on animals. According to Hobbes, there are two types of motion in an animal: vital and voluntary. Vital motion involves uncontrollable biological functions such as blood circulation, gas exchange, digestion, etc. Voluntary motions include deliberate actions that the animal is aware of such as walking, eating, drinking, talking, fighting, etc. Hobbes refers to these conscious but habitual motions as "endeavors." Hobbes' purpose in this section is to

determine the factors that drive these endeavors. “ This endeavor, when it is toward something which causes it, is called Appetite, or Desire; ...And when the endeavor is fromward something, it is generally called Aversion.” As in the argument on Mechanics of the Mind, appetites and aversions are products of material stimuli that come into contact with sensory apparatuses that transfer the motion of that collision into understandings and trains of thought. The train of thought that moves into appetite or aversion is precipitated by material kinetics of the external world when they come into contact with human bodies. Therefore, human nature is directly related to and dependent upon the eternally unremitting motion of the external world. Next in his process of reasoning, Hobbes further breaks down appetites and aversions into two categories: those “ born within men” and those “ proceeding from experience. ” Appetites and aversions born within men come from something “ they feel in their bodies” such as “ appetite of food, appetite of excretion, and exoneration.” Appetites and aversions proceeding from experience are a result of the consequences of the “ trial of their efforts upon themselves or other men.” It is these appetites and aversions proceeding from experience, about which “ we know not all, or believe not to be, we can have no further desire than to taste and try. But aversion we have for things, not only which we know have hurt us, but also that we do not know whether they will hurt us, or not.” Out of these relative unknowns come “ passions.” Hobbes lists an extensive array of various “ passions” such as cruelty, envy, kindness, natural lust, joy, and despair. He summarizes the consequences of these passions when he says, But whatsoever is the object of any man’s appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth good: and the object of his hate and aversion, evil; and of

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his contempt, vile and inconsiderable. Out of these passions, man encounters a conflict: “ when in the mind of a man, appetites, and aversions, hopes, and fears, concerning one and the same thing, arise alternately” man enters into what Hobbes calls “ deliberation.” When a person deliberates on something, he or she enters into a train of thought with the object of judging something as good or evil and determining whether or not to action based on that judgment. The decision to take action or remain idle is called “ will.” When a person delivers a final sentence of his or her judgment in a speech, it has the potential of resulting in science. When the discourse is put into speech, and begins with the definitions of words, and proceeds by connexion of the same into general affirmations, and of these again into syllogisms; the end or last sum is called the conclusion; and the thought of the mind by it signified, is that conditional knowledge, or knowledge of the consequence of words, which is commonly called science. He then warns that if the first principle of the reasoning is not by definitions then the conclusion is called “ opinion” and is not considered scientific. Also, when reasoning begins with a person’s original definitions it is still not science. But if the person truly believes in the first principles it is called “ belief” and “ faith.” Belief is conviction in the person, and faith is in the truth of his message. Through this argument, Hobbes establishes that all knowledge, no matter how truthful in nature, is conditional if the foundations are not established in definitions agreed upon by all or established by the judge. Once again, Hobbes is proving the credibility of his method of reason; he rules out every other type of knowledge and path to truth except for his. His deductive systematic approach to reason is the only infallible way to attain actual knowledge and truth. Power & Fear

Aside from a pursuit of knowledge and

truth, Hobbes concludes that appetite and aversion have other, more significant consequences on human psychology and subsequent behavior. The strongest appetite of man is the appetite for power. Hobbes argues that pursuit of knowledge, pursuit of honor, and pursuit of wealth all collapse into the overpowering appetite for power. Hobbes divides power into two categories: natural and instrumental. Natural power is “ the eminence of faculties of body, or mind: as extraordinary strength, form, prudence, arts, eloquence, liberality, nobility.” Instrumental powers are acquired power either through effective use of natural powers or through inherited fortune. These powers “ are means and instruments to acquire more: as riches, reputation, friends, and the secret working of God, which men call good luck.” Hobbes asserts that the appetite for power through any means necessary is human nature and a practically irrepressible desire. His conclusion on power states, “ So that in the first place, I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.” The competition to accumulate the most power results in extreme means employed by humans. The behavioral consequence of this desperation results in fear. Fear is the antithesis to the appetite for power. Fear is the ultimate aversion. Fear of others’ powers is the only antidote to the appetite for power. Fear of death, and wounds, disposeth to the same: not for the same reason. On the contrary, needy men, and hardy, not contented with their present condition; as also, all men that are ambitious of military command, are inclined to continue the cause of war; and to stir up trouble and sedition: for there is no honour military but by war; nor any such hope to mend an ill game, as by causing a new shuffle. Hobbes concludes that appetite for power is the ultimate cause of civil

disorder and the only solution to the problem is an appropriate implementation of fear. The constant struggle between fear and power causes men to want to escape their current predicament. According to Hobbes because appetites and aversion are part of human nature, they are inescapable, and thus, the people are trapped in a perpetual conflict between competition for power, fear of those in power, fear of those who want to steal your power, and fear of death by power-hungry men unregulated by governmentally instituted consequences to such action. Because appetite and aversion are mechanical components of human nature, and because resources for self-defense and power usurpation are limited, the natural result is violent war. Hobbes final point in this segment is that while people may differ in their natural powers, they each share one absolute power: the power to kill. Nature hath made men so equal, in the faculties of the body, and the mind; as that though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another; yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit, to which another may not pretend, as well as he. For as to the strength of body, the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others, that are in the same danger within himself. The consequence of this equality is diffidence of one another among humans. They become skeptical of each other. Their ultimate endeavor becomes to destroy. Historian M. M. Goldsmith explains this dangerous, unstoppable continuance of motion, The consequence of natural equality is an equal hope in each man to attain his ends. Since desire in any man is in principle unlimited (even though it need not be unlimited in fact)

and since all men have equal hopes to attain their ends, whenever two men happen to desire the same thing that cannot both enjoy, they become enemies. In their competition to satisfy their desires, they endeavor to destroy or subdue each other. Hobbes states that when the only fear a man has is fear of another man's power, he has nothing to lose in his attempt to rob him of that power by whatever means necessary. Diffidence eventually leads to war. And from this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself, so reasonable, as anticipation; that is, by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can, so long, till he see no other power great enough to endanger him: and this is no more than his own conservation requireth, and is generally allowed. This inevitable state of war driven by the conflict between appetite and aversion of power and fear respectively describes what Hobbes calls the " State of Nature. It is important at this point in the treatise to reiterate Hobbes' systematically deductive method of reasoning within his own text. The " State of Nature" or state of perpetual war and competition arises out of insatiable appetite for power and irrepressible aversion from fear of those in power. State of NatureAccording to Hobbes, the " state of nature" is natural condition of humans prior to organized society and government. Hobbes' depiction of humans in this state is a rather pessimistic one; he depicts them as ruthless warriors independent of a cause or affiliation other than their own personal strive for power. During the time, men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in a condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man.... In such a condition, there is no place for industry...no Culture of the Earth; no Navigation... no Commodious Building; no instruments of moving...no Knowledge of the face

of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continual feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short. While Hobbes' "state of Nature" is fictional, there are elements of it in real life. Civil War is a prime example of "State of Nature," as is violent crime, and the imperialistic actions of super-states preying on the vulnerability of weaker states for their resources or other benefits. The only way out of the horrific state of nature is through two passions inherent in every man: fear and reason. Fear of oppression and of the power of others drives men to look for escape out of their hellish reality. Hobbes' method of reason provides the fearful man with the means to find a way to escape. Again, Hobbes' conclusions are open-ended. There always seems to be a loophole out of every definitive conclusion that leads directly into his next argument. Once the fearful man employs reason to escape the "State of Nature," he must then employ reason once again to establish a reasonable foundation for peace. Hobbes' next segment is on how that peace might be established and maintained. Natural Law Hobbes explains the Laws of Nature as a "precept or general rule, found out by reason, by which a man is forbidden to that, which is destructive of his life, or taketh away the means of preserving the same; and to omit that, by which he thinketh it may be best preserved." Laws of Nature are different than laws created and enforced by governments; they needn't be published and distributed. Laws of Nature are inherent in every human because they can be deduced through Hobbes' process of reason. According to Goldsmith, "the laws of nature are a formulation of the best means to the end of each man who desires to preserve himself. They are not categorical imperatives but hypothetical imperatives: if you wish to preserve yourself, do this." Hobbes'

presentation of the Laws of Nature in this way promote his method even further; he has given the fearful man an object, and if the man wants this object he has no other choice but to employ his method of reason. The fundamental Law of Nature comes from the fearful man in the “ State of Nature” and his absolute and solitary desire to obtain and maintain peace. “ Every man, ought to endeavour peace, as farre as he has hope of obtaining it; and when he cannot obtain it, that he may seek, and use, all helps, and advantages of warre.” The fundamental Law of Nature is to seek peace because the search for peace is ultimately the pursuit of self-preservation, our fundamental natural right as a human being. The second Law of Nature suggests that all humans must commit to certain mutual rights in order to escape state of perpetual war. An example of these mutual rights might be “ if you won’t kill me, I won’t kill you.” This abidance of a mutual right is in effect, a contract. The contract serves as the moral basis for the rest of the Laws of Nature. Because the contract is for self-preservation and survival, it will work. The third Law of Nature is that “ men perform their covenants made” because if every aspect of the covenant is not upheld, the covenant is meaningless and the fearful men have no escaped the state of war. The fourth Law is based on gratitude; it proposes that men show gratitude to those that uphold the contract in order to uphold its strength. The fifth Law states that men should be cooperative with one another; they should not squabble over minor issues. The sixth Law asserts that those in accordance with the contract should pardon offenders; if resentment or malice is harbored, men are driven towards deliberation and action on those feeling of ill will, which could easily jeopardize the peace in the community. “ Pardon is giving peace; if we refuse to grant peace to those who want peace (the

repentant) when we are secured (by taking caution), then we must be prolonging a war when this is no longer necessary.” The seventh Law states that criminals should be punished with appropriate punishment that matches the nature of their crime. The eighth Law proposes that no men should outwardly declare hate or ill will on another man. Again, this would weaken peace under the contract under the premise that men would become skeptical of each other. The ninth Law denounces Pride. “ The question of who is the better man, has no place in the condition of mere nature; where, as has been shewn before, all men are equal.” Peace is based on equality and social consent; if a man has an over-inflated perception of himself, he must also secretly desire power on the basis that he feels superior. The tenth Law prohibits arrogance for essentially the same reason the ninth Law prohibits Pride. The eleventh Law promotes equity in judgment of others and demands impartiality in situations in which punishment may be required. The twelfth Law prescribes, “ equal use of things common.” Therefore, one man does not have greater or superior resources than another man and thus, he is not at advantage to usurp power. The thirteenth Law declares that resources that cannot be shared should be awarded through a lottery so no person gets honor or credit for owning those resources. The fourteenth Law prescribes two ways in which lots may be acquired: through natural inheritance or through arbitrary, random determination. The fifteenth Law suggests that any many who promotes peace should be protected. The sixteenth Law declares citizens under the contract are subject to the arbitrement of the judge of definitions elected by social consent. The seventeenth Law states that no man is allowed to be his own judge because matters of discipline and regulation must be impartial in order to maintain

peace. The eighteenth Law states that no man who has any reason or indication of partiality is allowed to judge. Finally, the nineteenth law states that every man has the right to a trial with witnesses and evidence to promote a fair trial with little dispute on the sentencing. The Laws of Nature are designed and implemented to ensure peace within the society. They are fair in nature because they are accessible by reason that everyone has, and in equal amount. The Laws are equally applicable to everyone in society except for the arbitrator who is exempt; however, the members who elect the arbitrator are aware of this and thus, do not object. Goldsmith suggests that Laws of Nature are only effective when, The actor (a) knows the laws of nature, i. e., he is rational and has discovered them, and (b) feels he is secure in following them i. e., he feels bound to follow them in this case. This is such a precarious situation that Hobbes thought it necessary that men create a situation in which no one can reasonably claim to be insecure, and everyone has a will to keep the laws because: (a) they are promulgated to all by their senses—they do not have to reason them out; and (b) private assessment of the situation is limited—a visible source of laws and punishments is established so that the men's wills can be influenced by a visible human power. What is necessary is not that all men should hold the same values and have the same purposes, but that, whatever their values and their purposes, they should all be subject to the same law, a human law known to all (because publicly promulgated), and effective (because publicly enforced by human authority). The next step from here, according to Goldsmith, and the logic of reasoning, is the construction of a social order. Following his explanation of the Laws of Nature, Hobbes does actually create a rather elaborate blueprint for an idea, functioning government in which a

central authority called the “ sovereign” holds nearly all legislative, judicial, and executive power. While his influence on modern political and social philosophy is enormous, it has little to do with the success or practicality of the provisions outlined in Leviathan. Leviathan is clearly written out of fears resulting from the context of the times; the political persecutions and fragmentation, the social upheaval, and the economic instability struck fear in every British citizen’s heart. Hobbes’ heart was apparently much weaker than his cohorts. In the face of potential persecution, he fled to another nation to complete his work. However, Hobbes actions coincide with his political philosophies if applied to real life. Appetite for power and glory fueled the political turmoil between Parliament and King Charles I.

Parliament employed whatever means necessary (execution) to subdue its competition. In the midst of the struggle for power, Hobbes, a fearful individual with no power or strength to combat Parliament, fled the “ State of Nature” apparent in the power struggle of Civil War. Fear drove him to escape, and Reason (or his revolutionary ideas and insightful philosophies) showed him how to escape. He escaped persecution for his beliefs by moving to a country with a monarch at the head of government. Since Hobbes was a Royalist, his loyalties were welcome there, and he would be safe from the turmoil in his homeland. The concept of a “ State of Nature” is fundamentally impractical. Certainly the Laws of Nature are good in intention, as they closely resemble the golden rule and commandments of Christianity and other religions, but the assumption that all men would cooperate under this intangible contract was absurd. If Hobbes meant for his readers to read the “ State of Nature” as a metaphor or allegory, it is more feasible; however, this literary device defies his own laws against the use of speech and rhetoric

regarding metaphors. For example, if his readers examined the political turmoil in Britain as a parallel to the “ State of Nature,” their grasp on the actual desperation of the situation and the immediate danger they were actually in might be slightly exaggerated. Overall, Hobbes’ resolutions for the problems in his society were weak but his rhetorical style, unique approach to studying society and politics, and his unprecedented integration of deductive geometric reasoning to the pursuit of knowledge earned him enough credibility as a philosopher to outweigh his failures. His abstract analysis of human nature, human behavior, and his studies of society and politics from a psychological or sociological perspective were extremely insightful. His mathematical approach to reasoning actually does make quite a bit of sense. He, along with a few of his contemporaries, overturned the previous system of thinking based on Aristotelian inductive reasoning. Hobbes changed the way people think, analyze, search for truth, and address problems. His overly pessimistic view of human kind and anti-humanistic propositions for new government detracted from his overall ability to present meaningful conclusions to his stated problems. However, philosophers in the near future, such as Enlightenment philosophers, learned from his mistakes and altered the perception of human nature so that analysis and solutions to problems would be more practical. Hobbes’ influence on Western Thought is everlasting. I find it somewhat ironic that as I am concluding my own paper, I realize that the origin of my thought processes and deductive method of reasoning can be attributed to the philosopher I am actually trying to apply reason to. Works Cited1. Goldsmith, M. M. Hobbes Science of Politics. 2. Hobbes, Thomas. Leviathan. 3. British Civil Wars <http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/timelines/index.htm>4. <https://assignbuster.com/leviathan-and-the-personal-fears-of-hobbes/>

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