

Compare and
contrast the ideas of
government between
thomas hobbes and
john locke...

[Philosophy](#)



Both Thomas Hobbes and John Locke were great political theorists of the seventeenth century. Both having many different ideas as well as many similar ideas about government. Their ideas differed, especially when it came to the state of nature as well as their governmental views. They also had very similar views in certain aspects of how the government and society should operate, Hobbes and Locke were passionate towards politics, they also believed in the state and laws of nature.

Thomas Hobbes was an English philosopher, he is considered one of the founders of modern political philosophy, known best for his book on the social contract (1651). John Locke was also an English philosopher who was viewed as one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers, known as the “Father of Liberalism”. They sound very much alike, yet their ideas were very different.

Regarding the state of nature, Hobbes believed people put their needs and wants before anything else. They would do whatever it took to help themselves. Thomas Hobbes thought that people are always competing with one another. Whether it's over who has the best house, best clothes, most money, etc.,.

Hobbes also believed that the only way to protect and control people is by having a complete and absolute power that is intimidating. His main understanding is that people live in a state of war, without guidance a man will use what they have to defend their life or possessions, it's their nature to fight, which is why Hobbes supported the idea of a ruler, in which would act

like a dictator. The people are free but need to be controlled because of how free and reckless they are.

John Locke's perspective on state of nature differed as he thought humans were naturally nice and knew we had limits for what to do and what not to do. Locke's main point was that humans know they shouldn't live in a war with each other, so they were just naturally peaceful. He believed that in the state of nature all men are equal and have power of the natural laws.

Furthermore he thought that it's everyone's right to protect their property that people govern using reason and they don't need any ' ruler' or absolute power they only need reason. Locke didn't fully disagree with the state of war, but he agreed that if people are forcing and causing an issue that people do have the right to engage in war.

As proven above, Hobbes was a firm believer that the human state of nature was war without reason and thinking of themselves first, as well as needing an absolute power to act appropriately. Where as Locke believed you need a reason to execute anything including harm on others or yourself, in addition to all having equal rights and independence.

Moving on to government, Locke and Hobbes had completely different ideas. Hobbes believed there should be a monarch and Locke supported parliament. As mentioned Hobbes was a supporter of there being an absolute power of authority. Without it there would be total chaos.

Relating to governmental views, this " sovereign" should have complete command and jurisdiction over everything. People should just let whoever is

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in charge make the decisions without any outside opinion, and the government owned property. Hobbes also believes that people should relinquish all their rights to the sovereign because they know what's best.

On the other hand, Locke supported the idea of people having a say in what is being decided in government. To add on, another idea of his was that there should just be one "dictator" that controls everything, including property. If you worked and invested your time and labor into building something that you own it, it is your property.

There was one idea that they both agreed on, that being based on politics. Both Hobbes and Locke agreed on promoting common good. They believed in the state of nature besides their different views on it. Both agreed on people being equal and free, and that there should be a sort of government or sovereign but they disagreed on how it should be organized. However they did agree on the fact that said government should protect the people.

To conclude, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke were two of the most influential philosophers of their time. They had opposing ideas on just about everything; who should be in charge as the center of government, how they should govern, the rights of people on whether they should have a say or not on governmental issues, as well as if people are in a state of war or a state of peace.