

# John locke, thomas hobbes, and baron de montesquieu - their values and beliefs

[Profession](#), [Philosophers](#)



John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and Baron de Montesquieu were all political philosophers, each with their own idea. To understand what they believed in, you first must explore into why they believed it. The reason to that is they all came from different backgrounds, lived in different places, and all had different experiences. John Locke was an English philosopher who lived in the second half of the 17th century. Thomas Hobbes was another English philosopher, who was born in the mid 16th century, and passed away around the same time that Locke was born. Montesquieu was a French lawyer, who lived in the same timeframe as Hobbes. The fact that they all didn't live during the same time frame contributes to their different philosophies, because of the events that were going on around those times.

John Locke compares and contrasts political power to that of a "Magistrate over a subject," parents, owners of slaves, and spouses. He defines it as "A right of making laws with penalties of death, and consequently all less penalties." He then goes on to establish multiple states of a man, including: equality, liberty, war, and different types of laws, such as the law of nature. One of the topics that he explored into the deepest was that of property, how the government should preserve property, and how one earns property. The way to ownership of anything is by adding your own labor to something that is already in existence. When it comes to land, ownership is gained through cultivation and approval of the community. Lastly, Locke argues for the dissolution of government. He states that every time legislators attempt to take away and destroy properties belonging to people, that they then put themselves at a state of war. His definition of state of war is defined as "a state of enmity and destruction." He goes on to say that "one may destroy a

man who makes war upon him.” Locke opposes use of force by the government, saying it is declaring war against the people. Therefore, he believes in a limit of power in the government.

In the Leviathan, Thomas Hobbes writes about the right of nature along with balances and transfers of power. He defines the right of nature as “ the liberty each man hath to use his own power as he will himself for the preservation of his own nature (life).” He defines a law of nature as a rule that is decided through a process and put in place so that a man can’t destroy his life, and take away the preservation of life. Hobbes argues that the right of a man can be transferred or renounced, but it must be done voluntarily. Men can also transfer rights mutually, through what is called a contract. A contract must have a “ common power set over them both,” otherwise it is a void contract. In conclusion, Hobbes established rules and guidelines pertaining to rights in his writings.

Lastly, Baron de Montesquieu discusses the different types of government. He argues the requirements required for governments, such as: republican, monarchy, aristocratic, and despotic. A republican government, according to Montesquieu, should be run by a collective group of people, or a family. It should have a power, like a monarchy, but with the prince in charge. It needs a lot of virtue to succeed and be popular, and “ ambition is pernicious”. Montesquieu says that an aristocratic government is a group of elites, that control everyone, yet cannot control themselves. They are very corrupt in their ways, and like a republic, also requires virtue. A monarchy, according to him, is the simplest of the group, run with very little virtue, yet able to

accomplish a lot. It however does need honor. A despotic government, according to him, does not have honor as a principle, but instead runs on fear, which is used to create obedience.

In conclusion, the arguments I agree with the most belong to John Locke. All of the points he made seemed very reasonable, and made the most sense, in a practical application. I agree that property is gained through inputting your own labor into it, and with his parameters for a state of war. I also think that our government is in a state of war with us, and that we should do what Locke says and follow our natural liberties and fight back.