

John locke core belief



John Locke values the idea of natural right, which he divulged in his book *Two Treatises of Government*. As shown in Sophocles' play *Antigone* the character Creon idealized the opposite philosophy. The idea of natural right, as developed by John Locke is that all people have the right to life, meaning, having a basis of equality within a society.

the liberty of basic freedoms, and the right to property. On the other hand, Creon, the king of Thebes leads with an iron fist, and in his own foolishness gets everyone he cares about killed. Transition. The character of Creon in Sophocles' play *Antigone* illustrates the importance of John Locke's core belief in natural right of life, liberty, and property.

John Locke grew up in the 1630s and 40s in Wrington, Somerset, England with his father and brother and was raised as a Puritan (John Locke Biography). Unlike many children of his time, Locke received an outstanding education because his father served as a captain in the British Civil War (John Locke). He graduated Westminster School in 1648, earning the rank of being king scholar. Afterward Locke attended Christ Church, Oxford in 1658. While there he studied medicine and natural science under the wing of Robert Boyle, founder of the royal society. Later in 1666 Locke became a member of this society. In 1674 Locke graduated with a degree in medicine, and began working as a personal physician to Lord Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury. Over time, the two became great friends and Locke became more like Lord Ashley's political adviser. Locke also went with him to some political affairs in France. Even in 1683 when Lord Ashley was exiled and fled to Holland, Locke joined him. Later in 1689 after the downfall of King

James in 1688 Locke returned to England and finally began to document his ideas and core beliefs (John Locke Biography).

In the year 1690 John Locke published his first book *Two Treatises of Government*. This was a collection of over twenty years of intellectual work and self reflection, aimed to “ inquire into the origin, certainty, and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds of belief, opinion, and assent” (John Locke Biography). In it, Locke recounts his stance on the overthrowing of King James the previous year. He said it is the duty of the government to protect its citizens natural rights, these include, the right to life, liberty and property. He believed in the formation of a government these rights were protected. Locke also stood by the notion that the government is decided by the people, not through divine right (Littell, 25). Locke’s natural rights of life, liberty and property in the form of a democratic government is most important for society today. He said it is the duty of the government to protect its citizens natural rights, not feed off them due to divine right. We can see that here in the United State’s government because Locke inspired founding fathers like Thomas Jefferson to write the constitution.

Some may argue that Locke’s Opinion are too anti monarchy but it needs to be considered how he was raised and how the government of his time treated him and those around him. Locke grew up during the british civil war, so he experienced how the war affected even those not on the front line. His father was a captain so his family was given many privileges including an education beyond the average citizen. This gave him time in his developing years to ponder philosophy. Over time he grew fond of the idea of natural rights given by the government to ensure the safety of its people. He also

felt it was important to have a system in which the people can overthrow the government when the king is not doing his job to represent and protect the people. The core belief of John Locke is that all people under a government have a natural right proves essential when compared to how Creon the new king of Thebes in Antigone rules.

As soon as Creon takes rule of the city of Thebes after the death of Polynices and Eteocles, he has strict policies and refuses to take others opinion into consideration. despite several omens sent from the gods he keeps his foot down and refuses to see any way other than his own. This comes back to bite him when everyone he had loved dies a gory death. While fighting with Antigone about performing the burial ritual on Polynices, he remains stubborn and unwilling to see reason stating, You will see! The toughest is first to break and decides to also punish Antigone's sister Ismene, for the crime as well her sister will not now escape the utmost penalty (Sophocles 211). From this point forward Creon is enraged and abuses his power against Antigone by not listening or respecting her morals. On the other hand John Locke thinks it is the duty of the ruler to serve the people it is impossible that the rulers now on earth should make any benefit (Locke 105). Locke firmly stands by the notion if a ruler or king does not uphold the duty of protecting his people's right to life, liberty and property the people may overthrow him. The reason Creon did what he wanted and hardly even listened to the council is because as king whatever he said goes. But he comes to regret it later, therefore by providing the country with the authority to speak out, Creon could have avoided much hardship. Earlier in the play Antigone, after Creon had just heard the news of Polyneices burial he attacks

Sentry, the man only responsible for bringing the information to him Either you find the man who did this burial or Hades itself will be too good for you (Sophocles 203).

This tyrant behavior that Creon is exposing about himself only shows that he cares less about what happened and more about making an example of someone who disobeyed him. This directly violates John Locke's social contract in which makes the community, and brings men out of the loose state of Nature into one politic society (Locke 197). How Creon treated the people of Thebes shows why John Locke's ideas of natural right are so important to society. The tyranny of Creon's rule and the fact that no one could stand in his way goes to show that instead of watching a ruler or king have their way unt