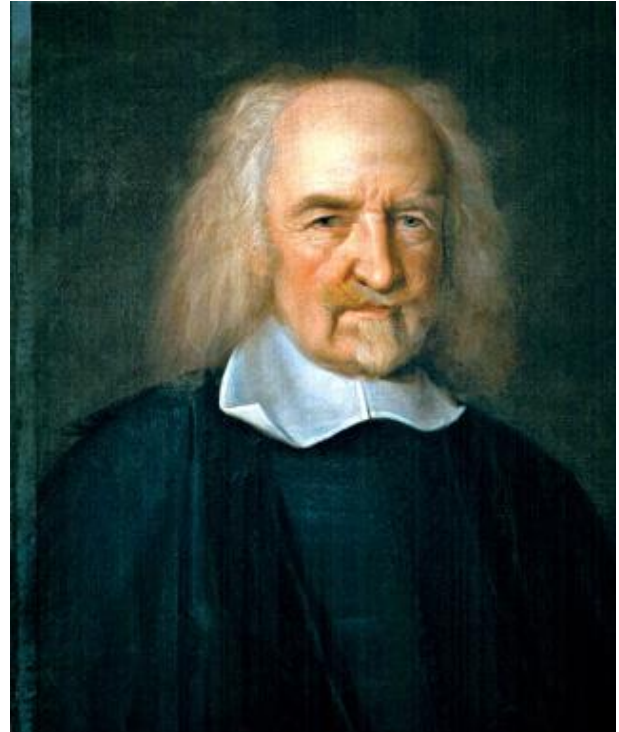


# Thomas Hobbes

## Introduction -

Hobbes argued that peace and social unity are most likely if people make a contract with their government.

Hobbes's ideal country is ruled someone responsible for protecting the security of the country and given absolute power to ensure the common defense. He thinks this type of government will preserve peace and prevent civil war.



Hobbes says the natural condition of mankind--known as the state of nature—is violent and fearful. The state of nature is the "war of every man against every man," in which people constantly seek to destroy one another. This state is so horrible that human beings naturally seek peace, and the best way to achieve peace is to construct the Leviathan through social contract.

Hobbes also outlines the rights of leaders and common people, and imagines the legislative and civil mechanics of countries. He thinks that people agree to give up power to a leader because they want to make sure they live in a powerful country, not in the state of nature.

## Hobbes Intro Questions:

⇒ Answer on your paper

## **Excerpts:**

*Excerpts from Thomas Hobbes' book Leviathan (1651).*

### **On the natural condition of the world:**

“During the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that conditions called war--

and such a war is every man, against every man...

[in this type of world] nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place. **Where there is no common power, there is no law, no injustice.**”

### **On people:**

“Men [have] ambition, greed, anger, and other passions...”

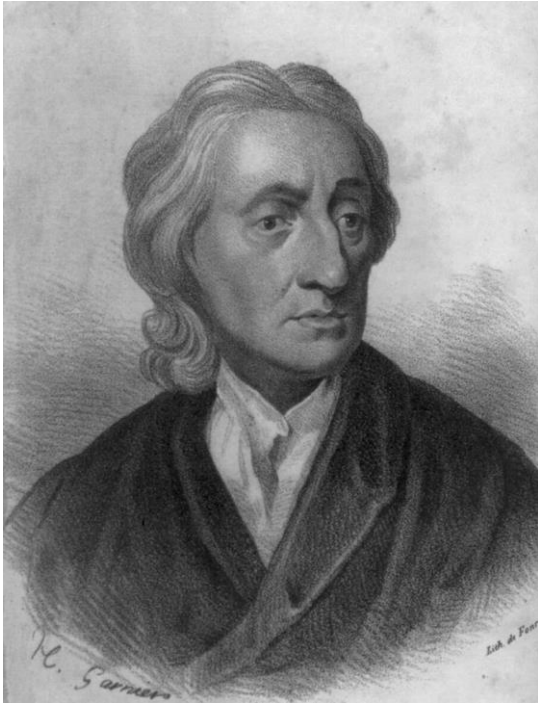
### **On peoples' lives:**

“People live with continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”

## **Hobbes Excerpt Questions**

⇒ Answer on your paper

# John Locke



## Introduction –

John Locke's book "Second Treatise of Government" says people control the government.

Locke's argument is that people are equal. He thinks people have natural rights in a state of nature in which they live free from outside rule.

In the state of nature, everybody takes responsibility for stopping people who try to limit their rights. People take what they need from the earth, but hoard just enough

to cover their needs. Eventually, people begin to trade their excess goods with each other, until they develop a common currency for barter, or money. Money eliminates limits on the amount of property they can obtain (unlike food, money does not spoil), and they begin to gather estates around themselves and their families.

People then exchange some of their natural rights to enter into society with other people, and be protected by common laws and a common executive power to enforce the laws. People need executive power to protect their property and defend their liberty. The government is controlled by the people, and has power over the people only as long as it helps them. People have the right to dissolve their government, if that government ceases to work solely in their best interest. The government has no sovereignty of its own--it exists to serve the people.

## Locke Intro Questions

⇒ Answer on your paper

## **Locke Excerpts -**

*Excerpts from John Locke's Two Treatises of Government, 1689.*

### **On the natural condition of the world:**

“The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which treats everyone equally...Being equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health or possessions.”

### **On government:**

“Whenever...the [government has] absolute power over the lives, liberties, and estates of the people, government forfeits [gives up] the power of the people...who have a right to resume [take back] their original liberty, and by the establishment of the new [government] provide for their own safety and security.”

### **On contracts with the government:**

“Though in the state of nature [people have] rights, [people are] constantly exposed to the invasion of others. This makes him willing to quit a condition, which, however free, is full of fears and continual dangers:”

## **Locke Questions**

⇒ Answer on your paper

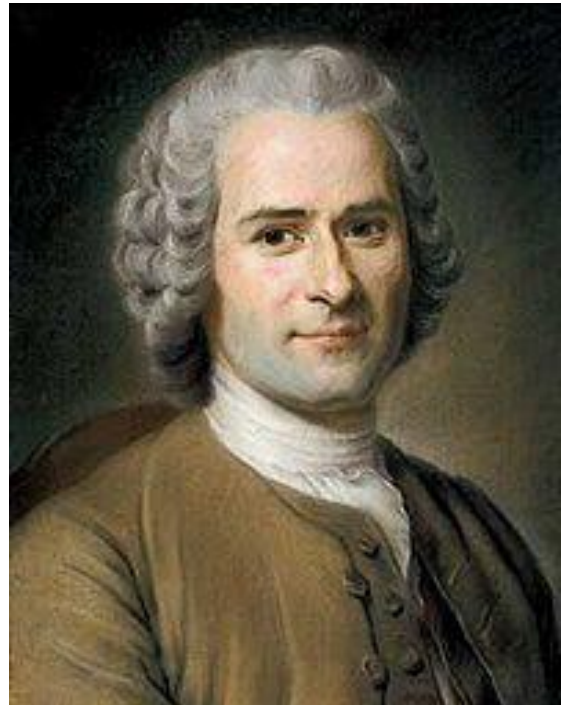
# Jean Jacques Rousseau

## Introduction -

Rousseau said that many of the ideas we take for granted, such as property, law, and moral inequality, actually have no basis in nature. Rousseau thinks modern society is not as good as the “state of nature.”

According to Rousseau, all the inequalities in modern society are because of different classes or the domination and exploitation of some people by others. Rousseau calls these kinds of inequalities moral inequalities, and he devotes much of his political philosophy to identifying the ways in which a just/fair government can seek to overturn them.

As Rousseau explains, the general will is the will of the all the people together, that aims at the common good—what is best for the people as a whole. He thinks that people may be focused on what’s best for them, but under a good government, people should value what’s best for everyone (the general will) rather than just what’s best for themselves.



## Rousseau Intro Questions

⇒ Answer on your paper

## **Rousseau Excerpts -**

*Excerpts from Jean Jacques Rousseau's The Social Contract, 1762.*

### **On people:**

“Man was born free, but everywhere he is in chains. This man believes that he is the master of others, and still he is more of a slave than they are.”

### **On people's goals:**

“People always desire what is good, but they do not always see what is good. You can never corrupt the people, but you can often fool them, and that is the only time that the people appear to will something bad.”

### **On government:**

“The government's power is only the public power vested in it...government consists of the general will, and a will is not represented. The deputies of the people thus are not and cannot be its representatives. Any law that the people have not ratified [voted for] in person is void, it is not a law at all.”

## **Rousseau Questions**

⇒ Answer on your paper