

Locke Versus Hobbes

	Hobbes	Locke
Human Nature	Man is not by nature a social animal, society could not exist except by the power of the state. People act solely from self-interest.	Man is by nature a social animal.
State of Nature	No society, and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."	In the state of nature men mostly kept their promises and honored their obligations, and, though insecure, it was mostly pleasant, good, and pleasant.
Knowledge of Natural Law	Our knowledge of objective, true answers about natural law is so feeble and imperfect as to be mostly worthless in resolving practical disputes. In a state of nature, people cannot know what is theirs. Property exists solely by the will of the state.	Humans know what is right and wrong, and are capable of knowing what is lawful and unlawful, well enough to resolve conflicts. Most importantly, they are capable of telling the difference between what is theirs and someone else's. Regrettably, they don't always act in accordance with this knowledge.
Conflict	Men cannot know good and evil, which are mere words, and in consequence can only live in peace together under the subjection of the absolute power of a monarch. There can be no true peace between kings. Peace between states is merely war by other means.	Peace is the norm. We can and should live together in peace by refraining from molesting each other's property and persons, and for the most part we do.

	Hobbes	Locke
Terms of the Social Contract	If you shut up and do as you are told, you have the right not to be killed	We give up the right to ourselves exact retribution for crimes in return for impartial justice backed by overwhelming force. We retain the right of life and liberty, and gain the right to just, impartial protection of our property.
Violations of the Social Contract	No right to rebel. The ruler's will defines good and evil for his subjects. The King can do no wrong because lawful and unlawful are merely the will of the ruler.	If a ruler seeks absolute power, if he acts both as judge and participant in disputes, he puts himself in a state of war with his subjects. We have the right and duty to kill such rulers and their servants
Civil Society	Civil society is the application of force by the state to uphold contracts and such. Civil society is the creation of the state.	Civil society precedes the state, both morally and historically. Society creates order and grants the state legitimacy.
Rights	You conceded your rights to the government in return for your life.	Men have inalienable rights by nature.
Role of the State	Whatever the state does is just by definition.	The only important role of the state is to ensure that justice is seen to be done.