

The chart below breaks down their differing views on a number of different political issues.

	Hobbes (1588-1679) England	Locke (1632-1704) England	Rousseau (1712-1778) France
Human Nature	People are inherently evil and need to be protected from themselves with a government	People are inherently good but corrupted by society	Life is purest in nature and civilized man is corrupted and unequal
Basic Human Rights	Natural rights go only so far as is necessary for survival	All people are born equal and have the right to basic natural laws of life, liberty, and property	In nature, individual needs are met by the group and thus noble and perfect; civilization corrupts natural law
Social Contract	People give up some of their rights for government protection of order	Government offers services and protection but the people have the right to change it if government does not serve the people	Social contract is between people, not the government and give up their rights to the General Will
Role of State	The state prevents chaos	The state protects a person's natural rights	The state serves the General Will
Religion	Nation can only have one unified	Religious toleration	Against organized religion but not God
Best type of Govt	Monarchy	Representative government: republic, democracy, constitutional monarchy	Dictatorship reflecting the General Will

John Locke – (1632-1704)

Considered the Father of Liberalism and one of the earliest empiricists, Locke was the first to suggest that the nature of the social contract between people and government is such that people have the right to overthrow a despotic government.

Believed that people are born good but then corrupted by society.

Thomas Hobbes – (1588-1679)

Unlike Locke, he believed that people are born inherently evil and need the presence of government to protect us from each other.

Instead of equating natural rights with natural law, Hobbes' natural law focused on survival and the necessary role of government in preventing people from harming each other.

Rousseau – (1712-1778)

An enlightened philosopher and founder of the Romantic Movement; he believed that life in a state of nature was purer than that of civilization.

Notably, his *On The Social Contract* was a significant text that contributed to the idea of the benefits of empowered democracy and government by the General Will of the people. This is not to be confused with the social contract between man and government developed by Locke.

“Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chain,” represents his negative opinions of the benefits of private property

He was a strong critic of rigid educational system and had a general distrust of civilization. He argued that children needed to be treated as individuals and needed proper nurture to grow.