

John Locke view on Natural Right

John Locke is a 17th-century English philosopher. He had a significant impact on the political philosophy. Locke is well known for his ideas on Natural Rights, ideas on government, and social contract theory. Locke's famous work "Two Treatises of Government" (1689), laid the foundation for modern democratic governance and individual liberties. He argues that man is born with natural rights, like life, liberty, and property. These rights are essentially for man and can not be taken away from man. The government should focus on the rights of men to protect them. Locke believes that without natural rights, man can't survive and can't enjoy his freedom. In Locke's view, every individual is significant and valuable, requiring a few fundamental rights to be fully free.

Introduction to John Locke and his theory of natural rights

John Locke has played a major role in developing modern political ideology. His theory of natural rights helps us understand the foundation of individual freedom and a just society. He was born in Wrington, Somerset, England in 1632. When he was 14 years old, he faced the English Civil War and this English Civil War deeply influenced John Locke. That era was known for its challenges and things were changing a lot, and leaders who had all the power were facing problems. Popular writings by John Locke include "Two Treatises of Government" and "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, the Rational Foundations of Political and Social Order." John Locke considers life, liberty, and Property to be the fundamental principles of Natural Rights. This natural right is given to every person by birth and this natural right is not given by any government or power, rather it is given equally free by nature to every person.

Understanding the concept of natural rights

When it comes to John Locke's theory, Locke's natural rights remain the main focus. he was the Political Philosopher, who popularised this concept. Natural rights refer to the fundamental rights that every individual possesses by being human. Every person receives natural rights from nature since birth. These natural rights are not obtained from any government or authority. These natural rights are given to nature free of cost, for which a person does not have to pay anything. Natural Rights are based on the logic that, by being human, people are entitled to them. Therefore, they are inherent in human nature. These are not the result of customs, law, State, or any other institution. Later, Thomas Hobbes also spoke about NRs he argued that in the 'State of Nature', people had unlimited freedom and rights, but when people established a State they surrendered all the Natural Rights except one i.e. Right to Life. Further Hobbes argues that in "State of Nature" there was a situation of lawlessness, thus they were not able to enjoy any rights.

John Locke argued that the Right to Life, Liberty, and Property is an integral part of the 'rationality of man'. It lies in the individual personality. It can't be separated from it. For the protection of these Natural Rights, the State and Political institutions are created; It is true that when entering into civil society from the 'State of Nature' then they surrender some of their Natural Rights, but they do not surrender the basic Natural Rights i.e. Right to Life, Liberty, and Property.

- According to Locke, humans only promised that they would not judge their acts. They renounce these natural rights on the condition that the State must protect their basic Natural Rights of Life, Liberty, and Property.
- In this way, the State is like the Trust and responsible for its duties i.e. to protect the Natural Rights of Life, Liberty, and Property. And if the State fails to perform its duties, it should be abolished by the people and a new Government should be established.
- Thus, Locke considers Natural Rights as Sacrosanct and advocates the Right to Revolution against the State.

According to Locke, life, liberty, and property are the three primary natural rights. Let's explore each of these rights in more detail:

Life as a fundamental natural right- Life as a fundamental natural right of Human beings. It has a significant place in the theory of John Locke. According to Locke, every person has a natural right to life simply because they are human. This right comes from just being alive. This theory emphasizes the importance of Human life and it should be protected and respected by each. Locke's concept of life as a natural right goes beyond mere survival. he argues that Human beings have the right to live as well as the right to enjoy their life, and they have the right to pursue goals, aspirations, and happiness. This right to life includes the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of every person. right to life, liberty, and property, all rights are interconnected with each other. Without life, an individual can not enjoy their liberty and without liberty, an individual can not enjoy their life. Therefore, the protection of natural rights is essential for the well-being of Society.

Liberty is a crucial aspect of natural rights- Liberty means doing anything without the control of any authority and without harming others. According to Locke, liberty is a crucial aspect of natural rights. Liberty gives freedom to an individual to do whatever he wants to do, to achieve his goals, aspiration and to enjoy life. Locke mentions that individual has the right to pursue their interest and goals as long as they don't hurt others. liberty includes the expression of thoughts, saying, thinking, believing, and acting without being stopped by anyone. Locke's emphasis on liberty as a fundamental natural right resonates with the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and limited government that underpin modern political systems. His ideas continue to shape and influence the discussion on human rights, political philosophy, and the role of government in society.

John Locke's theory of Property

According to Locke, Man has the natural property right. According to Locke, the earth and its resources Were given by God to men in Common. However, the division of natural resources among men should be determined by the amount of labour each man mixes with these resources. Thus, Locke is the chief exponent of the theory of property as the 'Fruit of Labour. Locke argued that every man's property is his own by nature how? The Labour of his body and the work of his hands are properly his own. whatsoever then he removes out of nature and mixes with his labour becomes his property. Locke is known as a scholar of Possessive Individualism" because of his Justification of the Absolute Right to Property. {Man has Absolute Right Over his properties}

why does man have Absolute rights over property?

Property is the product of one's labour & labour is part of Man's personality. A man should have Absolute Rights! Over the product of his labour and his personality. Out of all rights, property is the most important right. Hence, at times Locke uses the term Right to Property to include Life & Liberty. Locke supports hereditary property.

→ why is the property right most imp.?

Without property, one's life & liberty have no meaning because he will just be a thing, not a man. There is some important reason that shows the importance of property rights.

Foundation of Individual Ownership- John Locke's theory of property is crucial because it establishes the foundation of individual ownership. According to Locke, individuals have the right to own property because individuals work hard to acquire property or use their efforts with the world's resources.

Labor as the Source of Property: Locke said Individuals work on land or resources, it's like mixing your work with them, and that means you can own them. This idea affected how people talk about owning things.

Individual Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness: Locke thought that owning property is super important because it lets people freely chase their goals and be happy. This idea of linking property, freedom, and happiness changed how people think about politics.

Social Contract and Consent: Locke believed that people agree to be part of society to protect their stuff and rights. This idea made folks talk a lot about how individuals and the government should agree on things, highlighting the need for everyone to say "okay" together.

Origin of Property according to Locke

Initially, the property was held in common. But property can never remain in common. Those, who were industrious, and enterprising became owners & those who were 'Lazy, quarrelsome, and daydreamers became poor or remained poor. According to Locke, God has created Apples, meat, milk to eat & drink & not to sacrifice. God has created property, so that man can lead a good life. Thus, Locke is a utilitarian and also a Realistic

Limitations on Right to Property

① **Labour Limitations:** only that property is Justified which is the product of labour, not of force & fraud.

② **No Right to deprive others:** The right to Property belongs to all. None of this is right. no one can deprive the other of this right.

③ **No Right to spoil:** one can not spoil or destroy property. Property is a sacred institution.

Criticism of John Locke's theory of natural rights

Ambiguity in defining natural rights: Critics argue that property rights are not well defined in John Locke's theory of natural rights. Critics say there is a lot of confusion about how Property should be accounted for and how people should use it. This illusion can lead people in the wrong direction.

Limitations of Natural Rights: Critics argue that John Locke's property rights are not properly described and do not cover everything. Critics say that this property right does not cover larger issues, such as how much property people should get, whether everyone will get it or not, whether the property will be given in equal shares, etc. Critics argue that Locke is only talking about those who have property but does not say anything about those who do not.

Excessive emphasis on individualism: According to critics, John Locke gave too much importance to individuals and not enough importance to working together as a community. Critics claim that Locke is focusing more on individual rights but not on the community or society. Locke's focus is not on how to provide proper identity to humans.

Historical and cultural context: Critics have argued that John Locke's ideas about natural rights were shaped by the time and place in which he lived, which was 17th-century England. So this theory may not fit well in any other place or time. Critics argue that Locke's theory reflects the beliefs of the powerful in England rather than universal justice.
