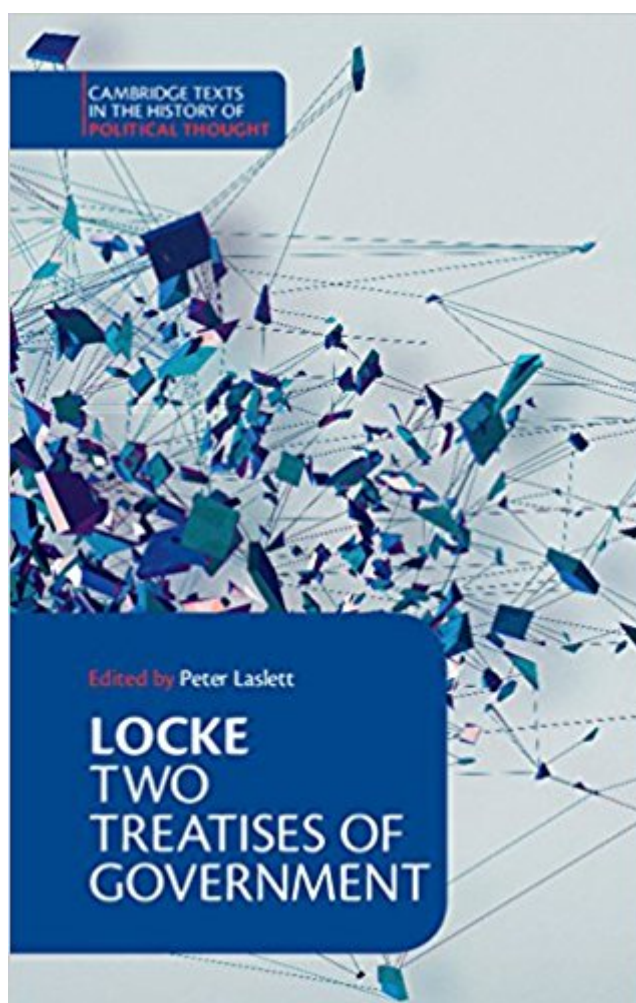


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Locke: Two Treatises Of Government (Cambridge Texts In The History Of Political Thought)



Synopsis

This is a new revised version of Dr. Laslett's standard edition of Two Treatises. First published in 1960, and based on an analysis of the whole body of Locke's publications, writings, and papers. The Introduction and text have been revised to incorporate references to recent scholarship since the second edition and the bibliography has been updated.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Originally published in 1960, this analysis of all of Locke's publications quickly became established as the standard edition of the Treatises as well as a work of political theory in its own right.

John Locke laid the groundwork of modern liberalism. He argued that political societies exist to defend the lives, liberties, and properties of their citizens, and that no government has any authority except by the consent of the people. When rulers become tyrants and act against the common good, then the people have a right of revolution against them. Writing against the backdrop of Charles II's savage purge of the Whig movement, Locke set out to attack monarchical absolutism and demolished the intellectual fabric of the divine right of rulers.

Great product. (This is a review of the recording by Knowledge Products, in its Giants of Political Thought series, part of its Audio Classics series, of John Locke's Two Treatises of Government.) This product explains in a very interesting manner the political context of 17th century Britain, in

which Locke's two treatises were written. They were not written purely as a theoretical tract. They were actually written during revolutionary plots in which Locke was participating. He was no armchair political theorist. He was knee deep in revolutionary intrigue. This product also discusses the FIRST treatise of government -- on ecclesiastical government, which is rarely read or discussed. It's fascinating. George H. Smith did a great job in writing the script of this work on Locke and his two treatises. This product is recorded professionally by professional voice actors, with a full cast of actors. This makes it more interesting to listen to. I have listened to it probably a dozen times. Each time, I find something interesting.

It is well known, of course, that John Locke was a major inspiration behind the Founding Fathers. With this book, it is easy to understand why. In the "First Essay On Government", Locke takes the argument of the "divine right" of kings--and uses a brilliant, clever, and effective combination of Biblical theology and logical argument to completely obliterate that concept. With that out of the way, Locke turned to write his "Second Essay On Civil Government", where the question is asked: Now that we have disproved any "entitlement" to royalty...where do we go from here? What is the basis for governing a civil society? The major highlight of this treatise is Chapter 2, in which Locke formally establishes the doctrine of Natural Rights. He starts with the natural state of Man, leading up to the necessary elements of Man's existence--the philosophical necessities, of course, being "rights". There is an interesting moment where Locke questions whether a citizen of one society should ever be punished for breaking the laws of another society, even if said citizen is IN that other society. It's worth noting that Locke was quick to note that it is a QUESTION, not a statement of belief. Perhaps it's his idea of a "modest proposal". Contrary to popular belief, Locke is not a "Poor Man's Hobbes" or a "Confused Man's Hobbes". Locke's views on rights and Liberty have quite a few differences from Hobbes's: while often subtle, they are very important, indeed. It becomes clear while reading Locke's prescriptions for government--including the people's rights to alter or abolish it--that Locke would not have recommended an authoritarian government of the likes of the Leviathan! Finally, there is "A Letter Concerning Toleration". Here, Locke tackles the issue of "separation of church and state". He discusses what it truly means...and how it does NOT mean the weakening of religion that secular progressives of the Left desire it to mean. To the contrary, abolishing a state religion, Locke argues, actually should STRENGTHEN the religious element of a free society. John Locke was, in short, a man years ahead of his time. It is a tragedy that few, if any, in government have seemed willing to listen to him.

To be honest, the only reason why I gave this so many stars was because it was a product that spurred wide spread enlightenment thinking. He has society challenging ideas on how a master ought to treat a servant, that women and men ought to divorce if they so choose after their children reach the age of reason, as well as the idea of the corruption of absolute/arbitrary power. On the other side, there is A LOT of repetition as well as a silly notion that only those who consented to unjust war are at risk of slavery/death, deciding who was consensual and who wasn't would require some mind reading.

Wow! Where has this book been hiding? Why isn't the 2nd Treatise required reading in every High School? As I read this book I kept running into familiar phrases and ideas from America's founding era. It completely destroys the credibility of a king (or any politician, even if elected) who claims authority to rule over other people. I especially liked Chapter 2 of the 2nd treatise, only 9 pages, which explains the concept of equality and natural law. We are all born into a state of nature, no one wants to submit his life to another's will, therefore no one should want to impose his will on another, because we are all of the same human nature. It really solidifies the "why" of respect and tolerance for our fellow man. It's a slow, hard read (for me), but well worth it to understand how America, using some simple truths, changed the course of human history. I was patriotic before, but now I know WHY I'm so lucky to be American, I can explain it. I see these ideas in the first 4 sentences of the Declaration of Independence. Please read Chapter 2 (9 pages) of the 2nd Treatise at a library, even if you don't read the whole book.

This is John Locke in the raw, without the mass of commentary, description and interpretation provided in many other copies.

Two Treatises of Government by John Locke Published Everyman Library... Best books ever written at lowest possible price that everyone should read. When Monarchs ruled the world they wanted God's approval and used the likes of Sir Robert Filmer to twisted the Bible and justify tyranny. Two Treatises demolished the divine right of rulers. It is an exhaustive analysis that silences every possible argument by the Bible. The book shows we are designed by God to be free..... Topics: property rights, rights of women & children, the need for economic prosperity for society, need for separation of powers. America is free in part because of John Locke's courage. He was an inspiration for The Declaration of Independence, and other founding documents. John Locke shows the importance of not letting our freedom erode away bit by bit. Freedom is not free, it has to be

safeguarded and defended. Reading this book to exercising your mind. He is brilliant. Everyone needs this knowledge to defend our God given freedom.

Good read

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