

(1.1) Principles of Government

U.S. Government and Politics

Why do we need government?

What is government?

- **Government** are the institutions through which a society makes and enforces its public policies
- **Public policies**: essentially the things government decides to do

Why do we need government?

- **Why do we need a government?** To establish and enforce policies that will protect our “natural rights”.
- **What does government do for its citizens?**
 - maintaining prisons (useful for keeping citizens safe and society civilized)
 - running the military (useful for protecting the country against potential threats)
 - maintaining national parks (useful for preserving our natural resources and giving citizens an opportunity to enjoy them)

Locke Reading from We The People

Please copy chart (use about 1/2 of the back page) and complete with pod after reading.

	Locke	My Opinion
1. Human Nature		
2. Purpose of Govt.		
3. Right to Govern		
4. Reasons to support G		
5. Reasons to resist G		

Basic powers of government

- **Legislative power** - make laws
- **Executive power** - execute, enforce laws
- **Judicial power** - interpret laws

- The ultimate responsibility for these powers may be held by a (Terms 1.2)
 - **dictatorship** = power held by single person or small group
 - **democracy** = supreme authority rests with the people

Definition of a State/Country

State = A body of people, living in a defined territory, with the power to make and enforce laws.

- **Population** - every state is inhabited - large or small
- **Territory** - recognized borders
- **Sovereignty** - state holds absolute power within its territory
- **Government** - every state is politically organized

How states arose - 4 theories

- **Force theory** - ind/group claims control and force others to submit
- **Divine right of kings theory** - God created the state
- **Evolutionary theory** - groups congregate and form over time
- *** Social contract theory *** - people give up power (aka rights) to a government to protect their natural rights

U.S. Government Philosophical Background

Social Contract Theory

- John Locke - enlightenment thinker
- **State of nature** - what life is like without government (Hobbes - "brutish and short")
- **Natural rights** = life, liberty and property
- **Rule of law** = laws of a country are obeyed by everyone. No one is above the law
- **Consent of the governed** = a government's legitimacy is based on people giving it power

U.S. Government Philosophical Background

Social Contract Theory strongly influenced the American political system

- justified the Am. Revolution by arguing England was not protecting life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness / property .
- King George violated the colonists voice in their government, thus reserving the right to rebel

Purpose of Government

- Video: [Purpose of Government according to the citizens](#)
- Video: [Obama and Romney debate the role of government](#) (2012)
- Extension video: [Introduction to Government and Politics](#) (Crash Course)

Key Goals of the U.S. Government

• **Purposes of Government (See Preamble)**

- Form a more perfect union
- Establish justice
- Insure domestic tranquility
- Provide for the common defense
- Promote the general welfare
- Secure the blessings of liberty

(* Patriotism)

* Reference pages 9 - 11 in the class textbook for greater explanation regarding the preamble (What government does)

* Video: [Constitution Preamble](#) (School House Rocks)

Conclusions / Takeaways

- Quick write and report out:
 - Summarize the basic concepts of American democracy
 - Consider our principles of democracy activities