

John Locke Two Treatises of Government, 1690 Additional slides for Lecture II



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The state of nature
Property
Civil society
Lawful Resistance
Social Glue

By Herman Verelst, 1689

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Why do children not share in the full state of
Equality (Bk. II, Ch. VI, §55, 57, 58, p. 304 ff.)?

Children are not yet competent to share in political society.

Infant means not “pre-toddler” but “minor.” Parents are responsible for minors.

Locke emphasizes that parents’ power is owing to the responsibility they have for children in their youth.

The son’s freedom is like the father’s on principle, not because he inherits it from his father.

Given that they have joint parental power, what accounts for the inequality of husband and wife? (See Bk. II, Ch. VII, §82, p. 321).

The “Rule” has to be “placed somewhere,” so “it naturally falls to the Man’s share.”

What’s the difference between usurped power and tyrannical power (XVIII, §199, p. 398 ff.).

Usurped power is exercised by . . .

But tyranny “*is the exercise of Power beyond Right.*”

It is a power beyond law . . .

Under what conditions may a prince be opposed?
(XVIII, §202-3 ff., p. 400 ff.).

“Where-ever Law ends, Tyranny begins” (402): When a prince exercises a power beyond law, he may be opposed.

Note also that he compares the King to a father. Does this mean he is reinstating the family-state analogy?

How does Locke defend himself from the charge that his “hypothesis” in Ch. XIX “lays a *ferment* for frequent *Rebellion*” (§224, pp. 414-14)?

- 1) No more, Locke says, than any other hypothesis. Hypotheses do not cause rebellion; conditions on the ground do. If people are ill treated by arbitrary power, they will resist.
- 2) People don’t rebel over small things. It takes a “long train” of abuses of power to create rebellion. And, declares Locke, power located in the people “is the best fence against Rebellion.”

What is the social compact?

What is its relation to the state of nature and to civil society?

“ . . . ‘tis not every Compact that puts an end to the state of Nature. . . .” (§14, pp. 276-77).

“And thus every man, by consenting with others to make one body politic under one government . . .” (§. 97, p. 332).

“Whosoever, therefore, out of a state of Nature unite into a community, must be understood to . . .” (§, 99, p. 333).

A question for further thinking: What is “social cement” in *The Two Treatises*?

What holds people together?