



Locke, Hobbes, and the Federalist Papers: An Essay on the Genesis of the American Political Heritage

George Mace Ph.D.

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The common theory among political scientists is that John Locke, proponent and celebrant of democracy, is the great ancestor of our Constitution and Declaration of Independence, but in this new and enlightening investigation into our political roots Dr. Mace argues that our real political sire was a man often hated and scorned as an antidemocratic monarchist—Thomas Hobbes.

Mace's exposition of political philosophy shows that Locke supported democracy but that, in Locke's view, democracy does not automatically support liberty and freedom for all. Hence, Lockean democracy would provide for the protection of life, liberty, and property—not happiness. The monarchist Hobbes, on the other hand, believed a sovereign's duty lay in the protection of life, liberty, and happiness for all. For Hobbes, sovereignty exists only when monarch and subject are mutually obliged; when the sovereign fails to provide security, or when he forces upon his subjects a life that is wearisome, the subject has the right to rebel. Ultimately, his is much closer to the philosophy of Publius—Hamilton, Madison, and Jay, the men whose collected essays were published as *The Federalist*. Publius goes one step further, however; he proposes a federalist system that will eliminate the need for the sword as final arbiter.

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