

# John Locke: Empiricism and Influencing Government

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The English philosopher and physician John Locke was an immensely important and influential figure during the enlightenment period. Perhaps his most important and revolutionary work was *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*; written in 4 separate books; each pertaining to a section of his explanation. Its purpose was to “to enquire into the original, certainty and extant of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion and assent.” However, [John Locke](#) influenced more than just the philosophy of human understanding; he also greatly influenced the way we think of government and religious toleration. He influenced others during the enlightenment with his other works like: *the Two Treatises of Government*, *the Letters Concerning Toleration*, *The Reasonableness of Christianity* and *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*. His works contained a variety of ideas, many of which have influenced us today.

John Locke was considered as the first British empiricist. Empiricism is defined by Google Dictionary as, “The theory that all knowledge is derived from sense-experience.” You see; in John Locke’s 2nd book of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* he explains how we as humans acquire the materials of our knowledge. Locke believed that we are born with a *tabula rasa* or “blank slate.” This means that we are born with no ideas or thoughts until they are created through experience and sensation. Those thoughts are to

be the foundation for the complex ideas and knowledge to be later constructed. Although Locke believes we are all born with “blank slates” he states that we are all born with different ways to bring simple ideas together. One way was to combine the ideas into a complex idea. As in combine an idea of substa...

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...ect of John Locke was that he was a pioneer in ideas that would allow for the foundation of others to build upon. He influenced not only one thing but three things. He didn't stop contributing to society, even after he had done more than enough.

In conclusion I would like to say that John Locke was one of the most important and influential persons of the Enlightenment period. And that he would later be an important figure to our founding fathers when making our constitution and the Bill of Rights. John Locke was a pioneer in ideas and philosophy allowing for thinkers after him to build upon his ideas. He contributed many things and we see his influences today. As man of great thought and ideology John Locke will forever remain in our history books as the inspiration of our government, the advocate of religious toleration and the thinker of human understanding.

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