

Ideologies

Facts and Values

A group of people can be given identical information and still arrive at different conclusions.

Fact: an actual occurrence, or a piece of information, presented as having reality.

Value: a subjective standard, such as a philosophy or principle, that is deemed valuable or desirable

Beliefs

Since it is impossible not to make value judgements, it is important to know and understand your own values and to ensure that your conclusions are grounded on a solid base of information.

Belief: a conviction that something is true without certain proof

Beliefs

Critical thinking: the ability to subject ideas and situations to a sound estimate of the problems involved.

Tolerance: permitting, although not necessarily condoning, particular actions or beliefs that differ from or conflict with one's own standards.

Ideologies

An ideology is a systematic set of beliefs that provides a fairly thorough picture of the world that a group of people accepts as true.

- A set of basic assumptions about human nature and society;
- An interpretation of the past;
- An explanation of the present;
- A vision of the future;
- A goal for which to strive, and a strategy to achieve this goal;
- Heroes, rituals, and sacred religious documents, or political declarations
- A strong emotional appeal that is designed to win converts and encourage action;
- A simple, easily understood picture of the world, which is claimed to be the truth.

Government

Why do we need governments, and upon what grounds can government be justified?

Types of Government

Anarchists believe that all governments should be abolished because they restrict individual freedom. Moral human beings do not need laws, they state, because human goodness will create order.

Types of Government

Some people believe that the possession of power is all the justification that government needs. Leaders can compel others to do their bidding by their strength and intelligence alone.

Types of Government

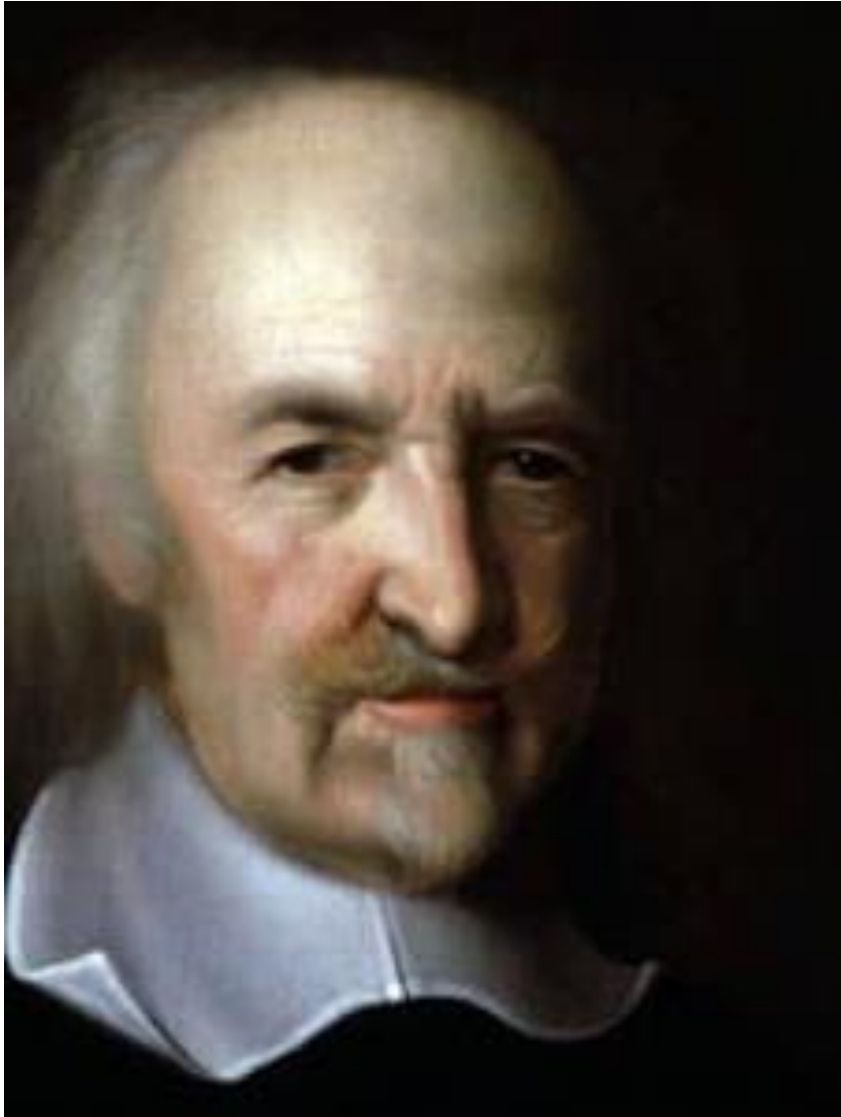
Other people justify government on the grounds that it is ordained or sanctioned by God.

Types of Government

Others believe that government is justified because it is established by an agreement among the people to surrender their rights to the government in return for security and order. This is the idea of the “social contract.”

Types of Government

Some individuals approve of government as long as it works for the general good.



Prominent Political Philosophers

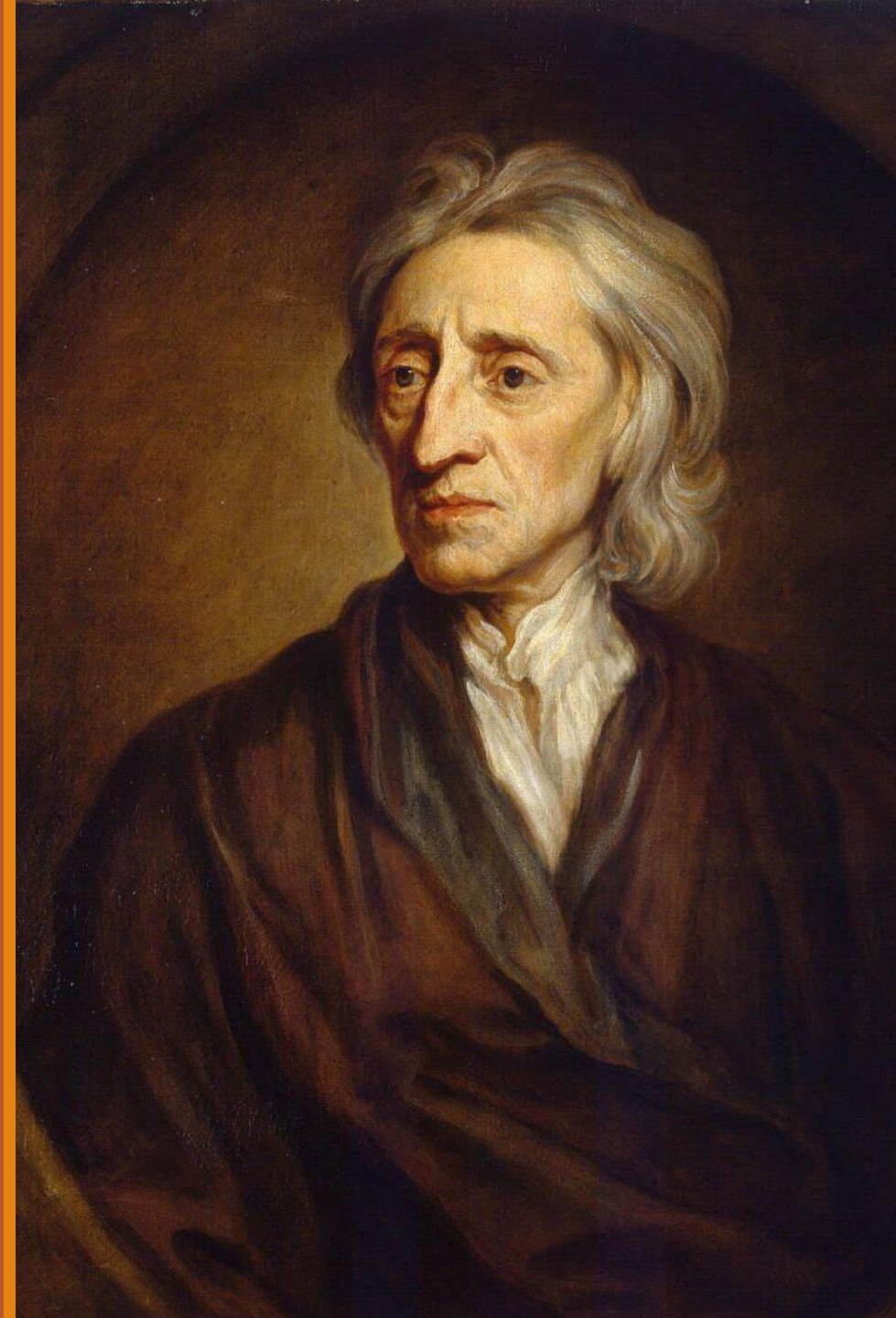
Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679):

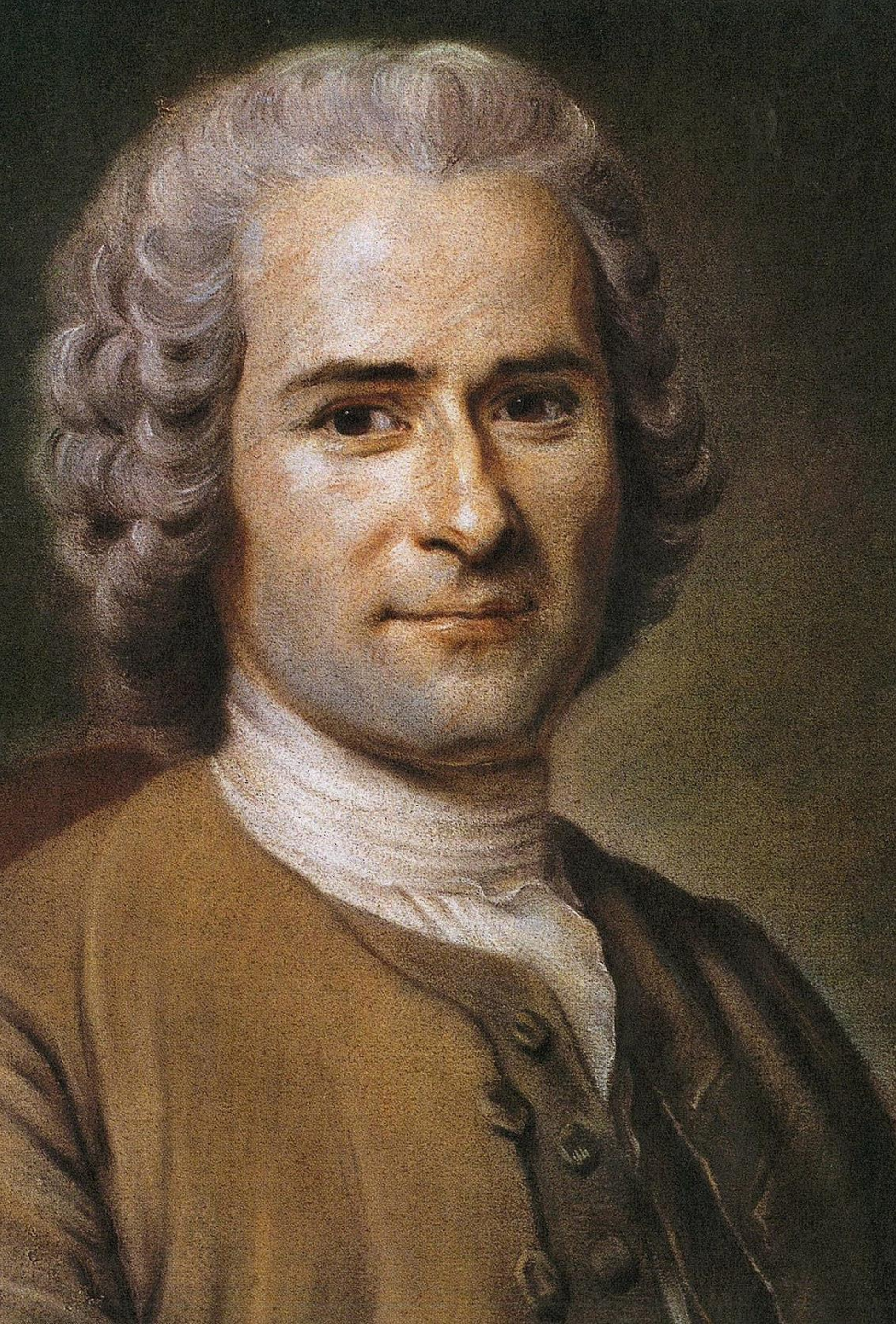
The establishment of a government commences when every person agrees to relinquish his right to govern himself and gives all power to a man who will legislate peace and common defense. The people must promise complete obedience in return for order and security.

Prominent Political Philosophers

John Locke (1632-1704)

Political society and government must rest on the consent of the people. Because man is by nature free and independent, no one can rule him without his own consent. The purpose of government is to protect and foster the individual's rights and liberties. This means they should interfere as little as possible in man's activities. People are most free when they are governed least.





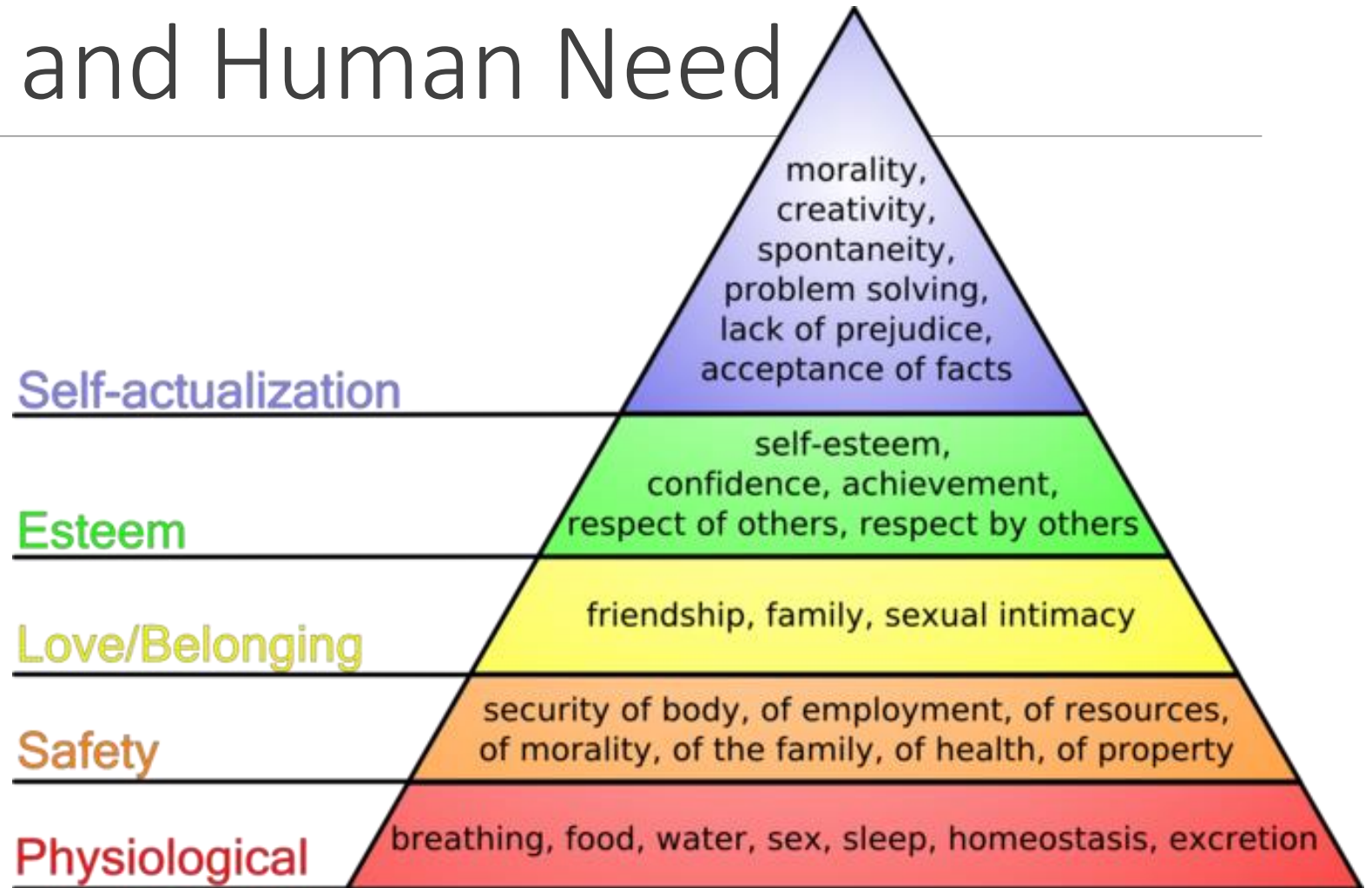
Prominent Political Philosophers

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

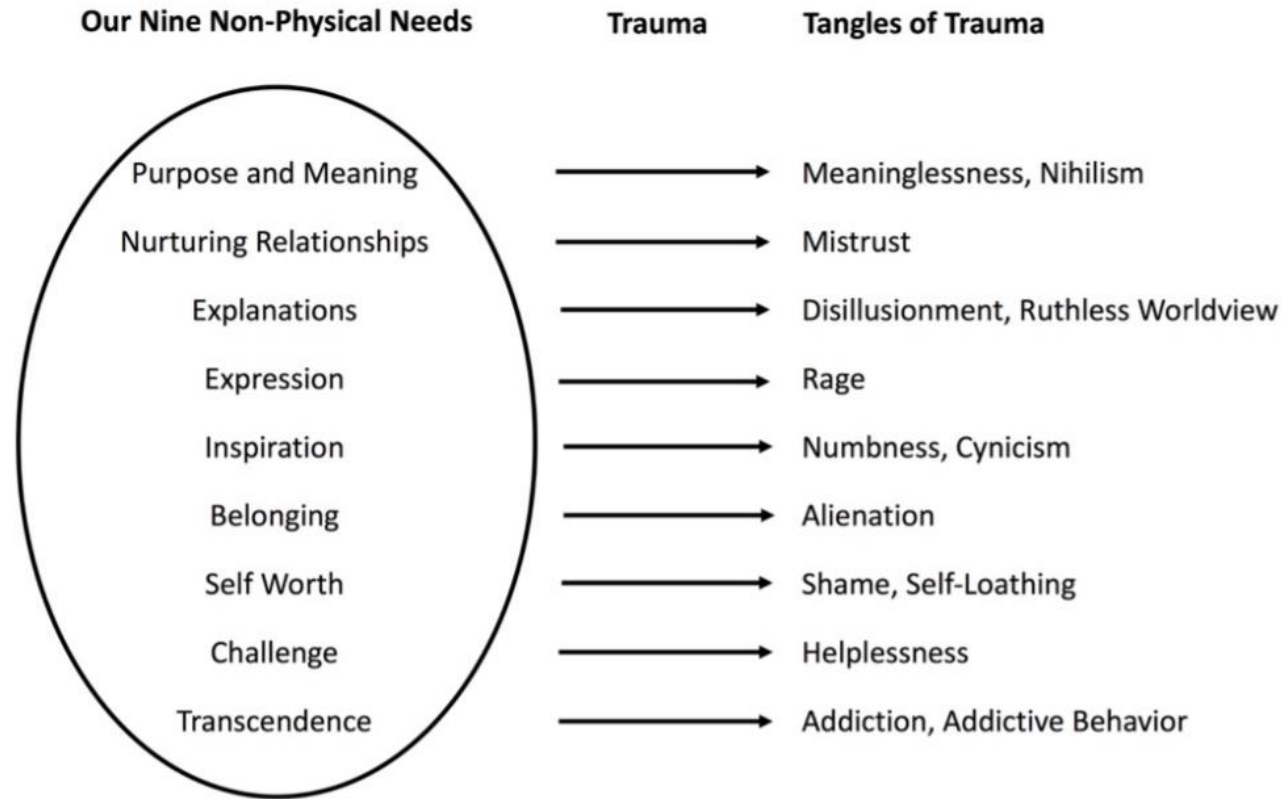
The problem is to establish a society that will protect everyone, and in which every man will remain as free as he was before. The solution is for all men to conclude a social contract and agree to place themselves under the direction of the general will. The general will is always right because it functions in the best interests of the entire group – it stands for the universal good.

Government and Human Need

Some people argue that government is justified only if it meets the people's needs.



Paul Chappell – Peace Literacy



Adapted from Paul K. Chappell's pamphlet *A New Peace Paradigm: Our Human Needs and the Tangles of Trauma*, available for download at Peaceliteracy.org

Political Spectrum

The designation political beliefs on a continuum (line) from radical to reactionary.

Comes from the French Revolution

Dependent on country

