

# Health, Development, and Human Rights

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## Justifying and Legitimizing Civil Society

As you read the material for the next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the readings:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently to these issues in the next class meeting.

### Readings

- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 7–9, 11, and 13.

### Questions

1. According to John Locke, how is the state of nature different from civil society? What does a person gain and lose by entering into a civil society with others? What is the purpose or end of civil society? Ultimately, how does this all come together to justify the existence of the state?
2. Even though Locke provides an argument *justifying* the state, this does not necessarily make it *legitimate* for the state to exert its immense power over a person. What else does Locke believe must happen before the exercise of power by the state is legitimate?
3. Voting and majority rule play a large part for making decisions in a Lockean state. Does this mean that minorities will be tyrannized by the majority?
4. Hobbes argues that the sovereign ruler of the state has a significant amount of power. Does Locke's theory agree with this?