Social Contract Theory - The idea that people willingly give up their own power and rights in order to maintain social order.

- Two philosophers argued two different aspects of the social contract theory. [Thomas Hobbes and John Locke]
WHAT HOBBES BELIEVED....

• Hobbes felt people gave up their rights and power to the government because people were dangerous and without government nothing would be safe.

• In order to stay alive people form a contract with the government, who then becomes the authority
Locke agreed with the social contract theory but argued that there should be separation of government powers and individuals should have protected rights.

Locke argued that people (citizens) should be allowed to impeach or overthrow the government if is harmful or doesn’t meet their needs.
INFLUENCE ON AMERICA

- **Thomas Jefferson:** primary author of the Declaration of Independence used ideas of Locke’s Social Contract Theory to argue independence!

- **Purpose of Declaration of Independence:** to state and explain reasons for separation from the British King.
The document’s ideas can be traced to several philosophies:

John Locke:
1. Natural Rights
   -believed people were born with certain natural rights (life, liberty and property)

2. Social Contract Theory:
   -that the people and the government have a “contract”
   -people had the right to overthrow a government if it did not uphold its end of the contract