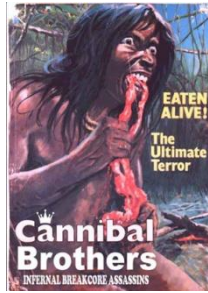
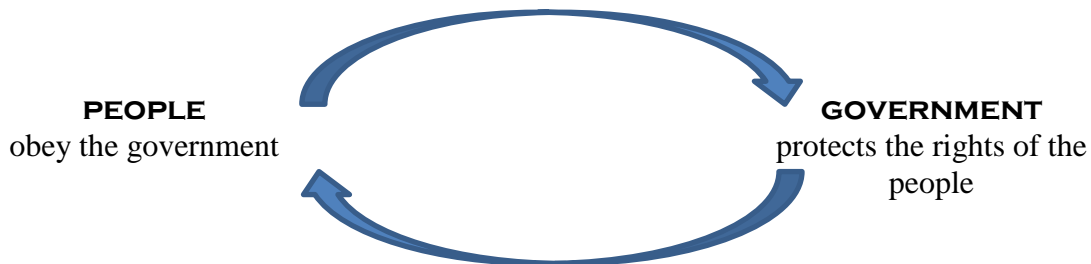


John Locke's Social Contract Theory

1. **Natural rights** of man—life, liberty, and property
 - a. They are called natural because all men are born with them
 - b. These natural rights are not rights that are created by government or society; we all enjoy them, before any considerations of government are made
2. **State of nature**—nobody's rights are respected—anarchy



3. The people decide to contract with a government, to protect everyone's rights. This contract is a two-way relationship, as both sides have obligations to the other.



4. If the government does not protect the people's rights, the people are no longer bound to obey that government, and have every right to set up a new Government (that will protect their rights).

Historical background:

- Locke published his two treatises in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, when England overthrew James II and invited William III and Mary (James' daughter) to rule England
- This theory provided a foundation which entirely did away with divine right of kings, or any justification for an absolutist or tyrannical state.
- Calvinist Protestants first argued for the right to rebel from a government that oppressed the people (see John Ponet and the anonymous *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*, both in the later 1500s), over a century before Locke's treatises.