

Knowledge & Politics

Scope; Power & Authority; Perspectives
TOK L18



Where does political authority come from?

Social Contract Theory.....Rule by Consent of the People

Do we have a duty to the state, and to our fellow citizens,
or is it just in our best interests to obey the laws?

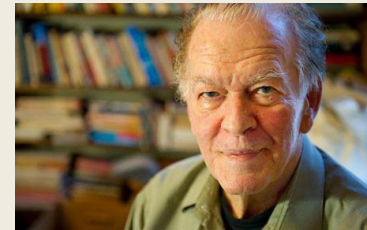
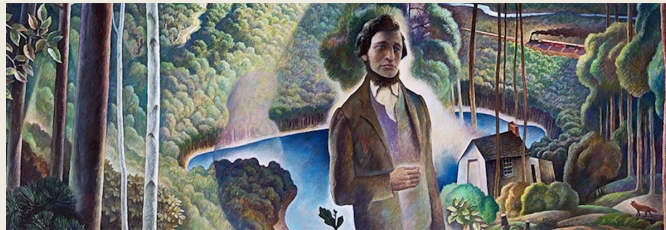
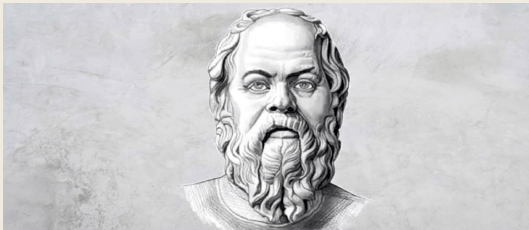


Power over: territories, people, organizations
Power to: rights of individuals & groups
Power of: moral significance of rights

Key Terms

- **Theocracy:** government by religious authorities (2019: 7 countries)
- **Autocracy:** a single person with absolute power (2019: 30-40 countries considered autocracies or totalitarian states)
- **Totalitarian State:** ruling authorities have total political, social, and cultural control over the people
- **Dissent:** the idea that disagreement or nonconformity holds authorities accountable for their use of power.

For discussion: *To what extent do we judge whether laws are just or unjust? Are there occasions when we have a moral duty to disobey the law?*



Socrates
Thoreau
Gene Sharp

- **Q1:** Investigate an act of civil disobedience in history and present it to the class. (Examples include Ghandi's salt march; the suffragette movement; the US Civil Rights movement; the Purple Rain protest in South Africa, etc.)
- **Q2:** What was the underlying issue? What did the protesters do? What were the short- and long-term outcomes?

CLASSWORK AND PRESENTATIONS

Civil Disobedience

Modern methods:

What is *Hactivism*?

What is *Whistleblowing*?

Give examples.



FOR FURTHER THOUGHT:

Paul-Michel Foucault (1926-84)

- What did he have to teach about the relationship of knowledge and power?