

# The Paleolithic Social Contract

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That title is a little intimidating. Let's talk about food first. We can segue back into Social Contracts later.

Man has had basically the same diet for about 2 million years running. There is a strong argument regarding the human body's inability to rapidly adapt to new foods; it suggests that we would be better off following the same basic diet of our Paleolithic ancestors. When Man changed from this basic diet around 10 thousand years ago – when he gave up his nomadic Hunter/Gatherer lifestyle for one of farming – it was a shock to his body. Physiologically our bodies are still the same as Paleolithic man's, and haven't yet had the time to adapt to the change in diet. Those 10 thousand years may seem like a long time relative to last week, but it is only 0.005% of the 2 million or so that preceded it. The theory is that the change in diet was traumatic to the human body, leading to many of the diseases man currently suffers.

Now, I do not know if that theory is correct or not. But I find the argument compelling. It makes sense to me that there would be a momentum of body development which would be heavily weighted towards the Paleodiet, as opposed to the Cheez Whiz diet. Which leads me seamlessly back to the Social Contracts in the title.

In the philosophical theories of Locke, Hobbes, and Rousseau, among others, the concept of the *Social Contract* is the genesis of social organization. It is a posited agreement, entered into by individuals, that results in the formation of an organized society – the first seeds of the modern State. It is assumed that it is a contract between otherwise free Individuals and another or others for their protection: "I'll let you boss me around if you promise to protect me." Now of course all this took place a couple of million years ago, so the original contracts are a little smudged and hard to read – but it makes good sense. Somebody in the Hatfield clan had to call the shots, because sure as hell, one of these days the McCoys were going to come storming over the hill and try to kill everybody. If there weren't a good Top-Down Organizational Structure in place, the Hatfields would be no more. So, knowing how the McCoys are, all the Hatfields agreed to do whatever Papa Joe Hatfield told them to do in order to protect themselves. Putting up with Papa Joe may have been a pain, but it was sure better than being knocked on the head and being fed to the McCoys' hogs. Such were the beginnings of Organized Society.

Let us now fast forward to 1550. There was a precocious young Frenchman by the name of Etienne de La Boetie. He wondered why people put up with Governments at all. This is an excellent question that was fielded by, among others, Murray Rothbard, Stanley Milgram, and Jeff Riggenbach. I will quote from Jeff's recent article:

[1550, Etienne de La Boetie via Murray Rothbard] "the central problem of political philosophy: the mystery of civil obedience. Why do people, in all times and places, obey the commands of the government, which always constitutes a small minority of the society?" This, then, becomes for La Boétie the central problem of political theory: *why in the world do people consent to their own enslavement?*

"It would seem," he [Stanley Milgram] wrote, "that the anarchist argument for universal dismantling of political institutions is a powerful solution to the problem of authority. But the problems of anarchism are equally insoluble." For while the existence of authority sometimes leads to the commission of ruthless and immoral acts, the absence of authority renders one a victim to such acts on the part of others who are better organized.

The Milgram Experiment

by Jeff Riggenbach

Mises Daily

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<http://www.campaignforliberty.com/article.php?view=1095>

So, why do otherwise intelligent people put up with the insanities of Government? Why don't they tell the revenuers to just take a hike? Who needs them? [A little rolling of the drums – a little fanfare here would not be out of place – because what comes next is the crux of my argument.] People put up with the insanities of Government because they think they need Government. People who are otherwise free, have had 2 million years and counting of contracting with Papa Hatfield and his ilk to protect themselves from Papa McCoy and his ilk. It is as ingrained in their collective psyches as the Paleodiet is ingrained in the human body. It is the organizational meme du jour (to keep the food references alive here). It has been the meme du jour for over 2 million years – you don't just scratch something like that off the menu without something pretty good as a substitute. Stanley Milgrim above suggested maybe Anarchy was a good substitute, but then he rejected that notion because he recognized that the McCoys would feed those pesky anarchists to the hogs, and be done with them. Well, Stanley was right and he was wrong.

Up until Al Gore invented the Internet (along with Global Warming) Stanley was right that Anarchy wouldn't work. But now that we do have the Internet, Stanley is wrong. WE DON'T NEED GOVERNMENT ANY MORE!!! We don't need to contract with Papa Hatfield to protect us from the McCoys. Anarchists of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but *their* chains! With the Internet, good folks can organize more quickly, and more efficiently than any Top-Down Government ever could.

I know it's considered bad manners to discuss such things, but before WW II got rolling, what if fifty of the leading war hawks worldwide woke up dead one morning? What if any time folks got wind of some monkey organizing to kill a bunch of his fellows – what if that monkey just kind of woke up dead? The armament industry might have to go back to making plowshares, but so what? It is my premise that the vast majority of folks wandering around on this planet are good folks, and that it is only a tiny percent that are Sociopaths. Sociopaths are those folks who can't have fun unless they are lying to, cheating, stealing from, enslaving, or murdering one or more of their fellows on a daily basis. Those guys are really not hard to spot. They are the Criminals in Society. And they are the reason why that Social Contract Protection Racket got started in the first place! Once the Criminals have been sidelined, the good folks can just get back to doing whatever it was they were doing before those criminal warmongers rose to dominance on Planet Earth.

And they all lived happily ever after.... “What's for lunch?”