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| **Philosopher** | **View on Human Nature** |
| Socrates | <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/Philosophers/Socrates/socrates03.html>No one does evil intentionally. |
| Plato | <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/Philosophers/Plato/plato02_objective_values.html>Good, justice, and virtue are objective realities. Evil is ignorance. |
| Aristotle | <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-ethics/>We must also acquire, through practice, those deliberative, emotional, and social skills that enable us to put our general understanding of well-being into practice in ways that are suitable to each occasion. |
| Thomas Hobbes | <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/Philosophers/Hobbes/hobbes_human_nature.html>The account of human nature emphasizes our animal nature, leaving each of us to live independently of everyone else, acting only in his or her own self-interest, without regard for others. This produces what he called the "state of war," a way of life that is certain to prove "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” |
| John Locke | <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/>We are blank slates, filled in by experience. As equals, we all have rights to life, liberty, health and property. These are natural rights, that is they are rights that we have in a state of nature before the introduction of civil government, and all people have these rights equally. |
| Jean-Jacques Rousseau | <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rousseau/#ConHisMorPsy>Human beings are good by nature but are rendered corrupt only by society. |
| Niccolo Machiavelli | <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/machiavelli/>There is no moral basis on which to judge the difference between legitimate and illegitimate uses of power. Rather, authority and power are essentially coequal: whoever has power has the right to command; but goodness does not ensure power and the good person has no more authority by virtue of being good. Thus, in direct opposition to a moralistic theory of politics, Machiavelli says that the only real concern of the political ruler is the acquisition and maintenance of power. The ends justify the means. |
| Fredrich Nietzsche\* | <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nietzsche/>Living things aim to discharge their strength and express their “will to power” — a pouring-out of expansive energy as if one were like a perpetually-shining sun that, quite naturally, can entail danger, pain, lies, deception and masks. Here, “will” is not an inner emptiness, lack, feeling of deficiency, or constant drive for satisfaction, but is a fountain of constantly-swelling energy, or power.\*Important note on this philosopher: At first, poets, artists, and writers used Nietzsche’s “will to power” to interpret and express themselves in art. Later, Hitler interpreted Nietzsche’s philosophies for his own justifications. |
| Karl Marx | <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/marx/>Believed in a Communist society in which each person should contribute according to their ability and receive according to their need. There is not need for morality or religion. According to Marks, Communism simply transcends the need for justice. |
| Martin Luther King, Jr. | <http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/kingweb/additional_resources/articles/gospel.htm>The moral decay that King identified in modern culture could be recovered only by ethical living. The thing that we need in the world today, he argued, is a group of men and women who will stand up for right and be opposed to wrong, wherever it is. Most famously, he wrote, “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.” |