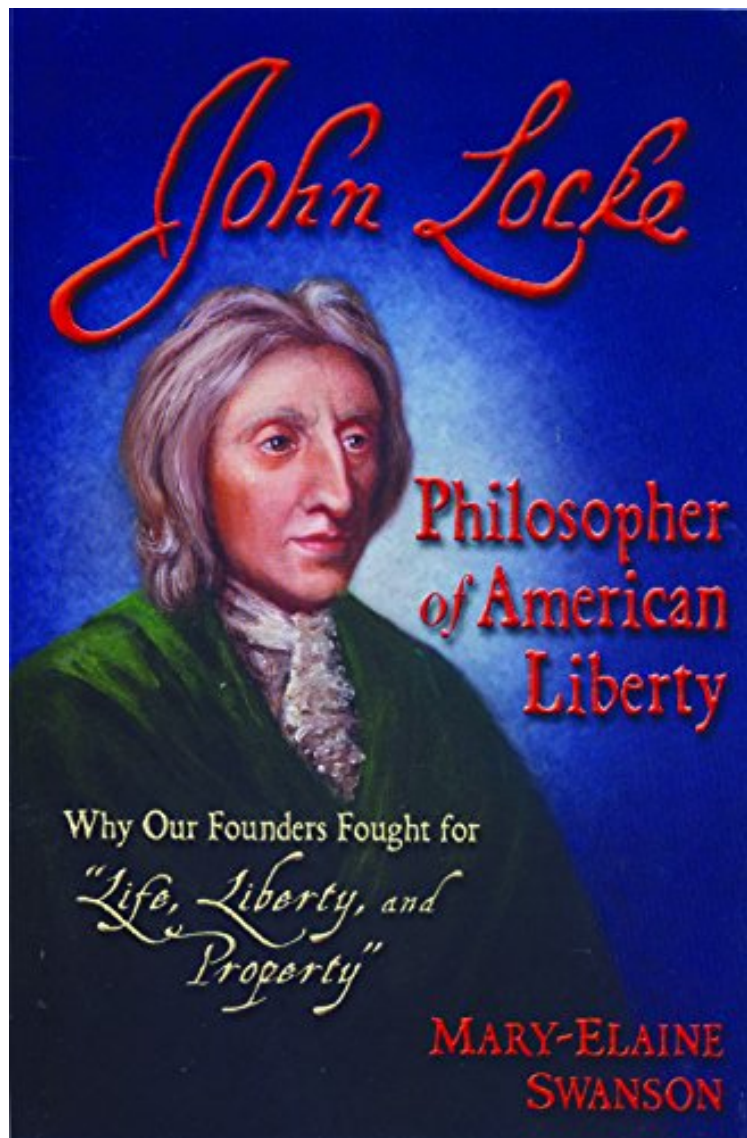


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## John Locke - Philosopher of American Liberty: Why Our Founders Fought for "Life, Liberty, and Property"

Mary-Elaine Swanson

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Mary-Elaine Swanson : John Locke - Philosopher of American Liberty: Why Our Founders Fought for "Life, Liberty, and Property" before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Locke - Philosopher of American Liberty: Why Our Founders Fought for "Life, Liberty, and Property":

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you are a history buff you will enjoy this bookBy PJJJohn Locke

was one of the greats our founding fathers looked to when writing our founding documents. If you are a history buff you will enjoy this book. I use an 1828 dictionary when reading some of the older works because the meaning of words are different in some instances from our founding time than they are today. Makes it easier to understand at times. Locke was a great thinker. Once you read his works you will see why the founders turned to him. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Timely and Revealing By Cheryl C. Malandrinos John Locke: Philosopher of American Liberty is a timely book that is so important today because it shows clearly that Locke believed life, liberty, and property were inalienable rights from God and legitimate government has no authority to take them away. Government is actually bonded to protect and preserve liberty. Though Locke's views have been manipulated over time, Swanson proves through multiple cited examples that American liberty's roots are Biblically based. Swanson believed it is important for every American to know the ideas behind the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The late author has done a great service in correcting the modern notion that our Founding Fathers were deists. The proof is in the writings of the man who greatly influenced how these men framed our form of government, as much as it is in their own writings. But more than that, Swanson's book shows how far away the branches of our government have come from what was originally intended, and offers possible solutions on how to return to our roots. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An Excellent Historical Study By GJK This book is not light reading. It is a scholarly work about the life and influence of the 17th century philosopher. It's not for everybody. But for those of us whom it is for, it is wonderful. Swanson begins by telling about Locke's life, mostly through the words of his companions. Then she shows how Locke's thoughts and writings were instrumental in the Glorious Revolution in England in the late 1600s. Next comes a great comparison of the American and French Revolutions in terms of the philosophies behind them: the American Revolution being based directly on Locke's ideas . . . and its French counterpart using a perverted twisting of them. She closes the book with an analysis of how America currently seems to be headed away from our Revolutionary roots and toward the path of the failed French philosophy. This is a historical work, meant for historical study. One doesn't read this book to get a general idea of the ideas and thoughts behind these great movements of world history. One reads this book to understand what influenced these ideas in their formation, how they were communicated person to person, how they were adopted and rejected by various people in positions of influence, and how they have been misinterpreted and misappropriated over the years. Swanson is trying to get at the original Locke and his original thoughts, defending him from the accusation that his political philosophy was rooted in godless rationalism. If you are concerned about the direction of our country today, and you have the time and inclination to examine the philosophical basis of it, this is a great book to get you started. (Note: I received this book free from the publisher through BookCrash in exchange for an honest, not necessarily positive, review.)

Mary-Elaine Swanson has done an invaluable service for this and subsequent generations by resurrecting awareness and presenting an accurate knowledge of John Locke and his reasoning through an uncensored view of his life, writings, and incalculable influence on America. This book will help Americans understand the importance of Locke's thinking for American constitutionalism today. You will learn the real meaning of the law of nature as it was embraced in Colonial America, and the separation of church and state embraced in the Constitution. The Founding Fathers looked to Locke as the source of many of their ideas. Thomas Jefferson considered Locke as one of the three greatest men that ever lived. Locke's contributions to American Liberty can clearly be seen interwoven in our colonial Declarations of Rights, paraphrased in our Declaration of Independence, and incorporated into our Constitution and Bill of Rights. The Declaration is born of the extensively studied and widely taught Treatises On Civil Government by John Locke. There Locke reasoned the very purpose of forming civil government is the protection of property, and that life, liberty, and property (pursuit of happiness) are not three separate rights but intrinsically one great and inalienable right he called property which begins with the life of the individual, then his liberty which is essential to his productivity, followed by the right to enjoy the fruits of his labors without fear that the government will confiscate his property. These inalienable rights are from God and legitimate government has no authority to take them away but is chartered in fact to preserve and protect liberty.

Mrs. Mary-Elaine Swanson, author of numerous biographical sketches found in the appendix of *The Christian History of the Constitution of the United States of America*, was encouraged by Misses Verna Hall and Rosalie Slater of The Foundation for American Christian Education to pursue her interest in John Locke. The three of them knew that Locke had suffered many things at the hands of modern scholars, who in general selectively quoted Locke to support various ideas and philosophies alien to his thinking. In addition to her many other scholarly endeavors, Mrs. Swanson spent years researching Locke and interacting with modern Lockean scholarship in order to prepare her subject. The reviewer remembers seeing evidence of this work in 1983 at a Pilgrim Institute conference held in Michigan, and at that time she had already been engaged in it for years. The author writes as an historian to successfully defend Locke against charges of deism and atheism and to show that he was an orthodox Christian, a philosopher of free government, a theologian, a physician, a diplomat, an educator, a founder of the Bank of England, and a monetary reformer. *John Locke* is written in a clear, concise, accessible style that maintains a good balance between the informal

and the scholarly with extensive documentation. The biography of Locke shows how thoroughly he influenced the England of his day. Lockes ideas came to be adapted by England in its Glorious Revolution, as it moved from an absolute to a limited monarchy in which the king ruled with the Parliament. Owing to the wide circulation and study of Lockes two Treatises on Civil Government in America, the Founding Fathers adopted his philosophy and embodied it, not only in the U. S. Constitution, but in local and state/colonial governments. Mr. Darold Booton, (PilgrimInstitute.org)In John Locke: Philosopher of American Liberty, the late Mary-Elaine Swanson has done such a thorough job of proving how the Christian political philosophy of John Locke so completely permeated the thinking of American colonists in the pre-Revolutionary War period, that for anyone to assert otherwise would expose to the world either his ignorance of history or a deliberate intent to defame one of the greatest thinkers of all time. Mike Gray, (The American Culture Blog)About the AuthorMary-Elaine Swanson (19272011), a historical researcher, educator, and speaker, wrote over 80 short biographies from original research in primary sources, in addition to her award-winning major biography, The Education of James Madison: A Model for Today. As Resident Scholar for American Colonial Studies she co-authored The American Covenant: The Untold Story book and film with Rev. Marshall Foster of The Mayflower Institute, now World History Institute; then as vice-president of the American Christian History Institute she developed a Study Guide to The Christian History of the United States of America, Vol. 2: Self-Government with Union, by Verna M. Hall. Her many presentations and articles included James Madison and the Presbyterian Idea of Man and Government, published in Religion and Political Culture in Jeffersons Virginia, The Monroe Doctrine and the Hemisphere of Liberty, and The Law of Nature in John Lockes Writings: A Break with Classic Natural Law.