Revisit Thoreau's essay (Civil Disobedience)

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Thoreau's basic premise is that obedience of an individual is demanded by civil law. Government and Human law are subordinate to civil law. When two laws are in conflict consciousness of individual must be followed and if it seems necessary we should ignore human law. According to Thoreau majority rules the decision because the government is formed by the majority not because the legitimate viewpoint is held by the government. According to him, people should follow their viewpoint that is legitimate and not dictated by the majority viewpoint. So Thoreau's perception of individual moralistic approach and not dictated by any Government and institution is at fault because scattered people only make chaos. As per Thoreau’s belief if consciousness is to be of an individual based than due to the difference in human beings, every person perception of what is right and wrong may be different led to chaos.

However, Thoreau’s supports some of the foundational ideals by the government of America and its social support arguments made by Thoreau's. Thoreau is not the advocate of denying unjust law existence and said that every person actions have a consequence which has to pay by that same person[[1]](#footnote-1). This act will give the decision to society either it is able to put its fair citizens in jail. Due to this thing society is forced to decide whether it is ready to put all of its just citizens in jail. Thoreau's is not advocating that people should stand against the government but stand against unjust laws, as unjust laws are undemocratic themselves. Unjust laws have some unjust consequence on some of the population who are taking the burden of an unfair process. Basically, democracy is stuck into the paradox that when the majority makes an unjust law, then it is in violation of principles of democracy[[2]](#footnote-2).

Writing in his work "Slavery in Massachusetts", Thoreau says to the Massachusetts government to refrain from the use of the military to resist a cause. In his plea for "Captain John Brown", which was delivered on 30th October 1859, in Concord, which was followed by John Brown arrest which happened because Brown attack federal at Harper's Ferry arsenal is also based on Civil Disobedience ideology which advocates that government needs to stop injustice.

# End Notes

1. Locke, Joseph L., and Ben Wright, eds. *The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open US History Textbook, Vol. 1: To 1877*. Stanford University Press, 2019.
2. Thoreau, Henry David. *Civil disobedience*. Broadview Press, 2016.

1. Thoreau, Henry David. *Civil disobedience*. Broadview Press, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Locke, Joseph L., and Ben Wright, eds. *The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open US History Textbook, Vol. 1: To 1877*. Stanford University Press, 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)