



Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat

By James Martel

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat

By James Martel

In *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes's landmark work on political philosophy, James Martel argues that although Hobbes pays lip service to the superior interpretive authority of the sovereign, he consistently subverts this authority throughout the book by returning it to the reader.

Martel demonstrates that Hobbes's radical method of reading not only undermines his own authority in the text, but, by extension, the authority of the sovereign as well. To make his point, Martel looks closely at Hobbes's understanding of religious and rhetorical representation. In *Leviathan*, idolatry is not just a matter of worshipping images but also a consequence of bad reading. Hobbes speaks of the "error of separated essences," in which a sign takes precedence over the idea or object it represents, and warns that when the sign is given such agency, it becomes a disembodied fantasy leading to a "kingdom of darkness."

To combat such idolatry, Hobbes offers a method of reading in which one resists the rhetorical manipulation of figures and tropes and recognizes the codes and structures of language for what they are—the only way to convey a fundamental inability to ever know "the thing itself." Making the leap to politics, Martel suggests that following Hobbes's argument, the sovereign can also be seen as idolatrous—a separated essence—a figure who supplants the people it purportedly represents, and that learning to be better readers enables us to challenge, if not defeat, the authority of the sovereign.

 [Download Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes ...pdf](#)

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat

By James Martel

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel

In *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes's landmark work on political philosophy, James Martel argues that although Hobbes pays lip service to the superior interpretive authority of the sovereign, he consistently subverts this authority throughout the book by returning it to the reader.

Martel demonstrates that Hobbes's radical method of reading not only undermines his own authority in the text, but, by extension, the authority of the sovereign as well. To make his point, Martel looks closely at Hobbes's understanding of religious and rhetorical representation. In *Leviathan*, idolatry is not just a matter of worshipping images but also a consequence of bad reading. Hobbes speaks of the "error of separated essences," in which a sign takes precedence over the idea or object it represents, and warns that when the sign is given such agency, it becomes a disembodied fantasy leading to a "kingdom of darkness."

To combat such idolatry, Hobbes offers a method of reading in which one resists the rhetorical manipulation of figures and tropes and recognizes the codes and structures of language for what they are—the only way to convey a fundamental inability to ever know "the thing itself." Making the leap to politics, Martel suggests that following Hobbes's argument, the sovereign can also be seen as idolatrous—a separated essence—a figure who supplants the people it purportedly represents, and that learning to be better readers enables us to challenge, if not defeat, the authority of the sovereign.

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel

Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #3362399 in Books
- Published on: 2007-10-12
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.40" h x 1.01" w x 5.91" l, 1.07 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 240 pages



[Download Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as ...pdf](#)



[Read Online Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online *Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat* By James Martel

Editorial Review

Review

Compelling... [An] excellent book... Highly recommended.

(*CHOICE*)

Subverting the Leviathan is a fascinating study.

(*Theory & Event*)

Review

James Martel offers a powerful, fresh, and compelling interpretation of Hobbes's major work.

(Victoria Kahn, University of California, Berkeley)

Subverting the Leviathan offers a highly intelligent and innovative interpretation of Thomas Hobbes, one that will provoke much thoughtful discussion. In my judgment, James Martel's scholarship on Hobbes is of very high quality. Martel clearly knows the field. He brings to his analysis a deep knowledge of classical rhetoric—his discussions of how Hobbes is simultaneously invoking, criticizing, and stretching rhetorical devices known since Aristotle are excellent.

(Jane Bennett, Johns Hopkins University)

About the Author

James Martel is associate professor of political theory at San Francisco State University. He has also taught at the department of rhetoric at the University of California, Berkeley, and at Amherst College and Wellesley College. He is the author of *Love Is a Sweet Chain: Desire, Friendship, and Autonomy in Liberal Political Theory*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jean Young:

Book is written, printed, or created for everything. You can realize everything you want by a e-book. Book has a different type. As you may know that book is important point to bring us around the world. Adjacent to that you can your reading skill was fluently. A reserve *Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat* will make you to possibly be smarter. You can feel more confidence if you can know about every little thing. But some of you think this open or reading the book make you bored. It isn't make you fun. Why they might be thought like that? Have you looking for best book or suitable book with you?

Sarah Maddocks:

Would you one of the book lovers? If yes, do you ever feeling doubt when you are in the book store? Try and pick one book that you just dont know the inside because don't determine book by its deal with may doesn't work here is difficult job because you are scared that the inside maybe not since fantastic as in the outside appear likes. Maybe you answer is usually Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat why because the great cover that make you consider in regards to the content will not disappoint a person. The inside or content is definitely fantastic as the outside or maybe cover. Your reading 6th sense will directly guide you to pick up this book.

Fred Swett:

Don't be worry if you are afraid that this book can filled the space in your house, you will get it in e-book approach, more simple and reachable. This kind of Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat can give you a lot of friends because by you considering this one book you have matter that they don't and make an individual more like an interesting person. This particular book can be one of a step for you to get success. This reserve offer you information that maybe your friend doesn't recognize, by knowing more than various other make you to be great men and women. So , why hesitate? We need to have Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat.

Ophelia Ellis:

Guide is one of source of know-how. We can add our knowledge from it. Not only for students but also native or citizen will need book to know the update information of year to year. As we know those textbooks have many advantages. Beside many of us add our knowledge, can bring us to around the world. With the book Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat we can take more advantage. Don't that you be creative people? Being creative person must like to read a book. Merely choose the best book that suited with your aim. Don't end up being doubt to change your life at this book Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat. You can more inviting than now.

**Download and Read Online Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel
#SVYHJFBUDAR**

Read Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel for online ebook

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel books to read online.

Online Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel ebook PDF download

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel Doc

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel MobiPocket

Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel EPub

SVYHJFBUDAR: Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat By James Martel