

# DOWNLOAD PDF JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU THE BASIC POLITICAL WRITINGS

## Chapter 1 : Basic Political Writings - PDF Free Download

*Description and explanation of the major themes of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (). This accessible literary criticism is perfect for anyone faced with Jean-Jacques Rousseau () essays, papers, tests, exams, or for anyone who needs to create a Jean-Jacques Rousseau () lesson plan.*

Youth[ edit ] Rousseau was born in Geneva , which was at the time a city-state and a Protestant associate of the Swiss Confederacy. Since , Geneva had been a Huguenot republic and the seat of Calvinism. Five generations before Rousseau, his ancestor Didier, a bookseller who may have published Protestant tracts, had escaped persecution from French Catholics by fleeing to Geneva in , where he became a wine merchant. Rousseau was proud that his family, of the moyen order or middle-class , had voting rights in the city. The citizens were a minority of the population when compared to the immigrants, referred to as "inhabitants", whose descendants were called "natives" and continued to lack suffrage. In fact, rather than being run by vote of the "citizens", the city was ruled by a small number of wealthy families that made up the "Council of Two Hundred"; these delegated their power to a twenty-five member executive group from among them called the "Little Council". There was much political debate within Geneva, extending down to the tradespeople. Much discussion was over the idea of the sovereignty of the people, of which the ruling class oligarchy was making a mockery. In , a democratic reformer named Pierre Fatio protested this situation, saying "a sovereign that never performs an act of sovereignty is an imaginary being". Isaac followed his grandfather, father and brothers into the business, except for a short stint teaching dance as a dance master. After local officials stepped in, it was Isaac who was punished, as Geneva was concerned with maintaining its ties to foreign powers. She was raised by her uncle Samuel Bernard, a Calvinist preacher. He cared for Suzanne after her father Jacques who had run into trouble with the legal and religious authorities for fornication and having a mistress died in his early thirties. Vincent Sarrasin, whom she fancied despite his continuing marriage. After a hearing, she was ordered by the Genevan Consistory to never interact with him again. The child died at birth. Later, the young Rousseau was told a romantic fairy-tale about the situation by the adults in his familyâ€™ a tale where young love was denied by a disapproving patriarch but that prevailed by sibling loyalty that, in the story, resulted in love conquering all and two marriages uniting the families on the same day. Rousseau never learnt the truth. While the idea was that his sons would inherit the principal when grown up and he would live off the interest in the meantime, in the end the father took most of the substantial proceeds. Sometimes, in the morning, on hearing the swallows at our window, my father, quite ashamed of this weakness, would cry, "Come, come, let us go to bed; I am more a child than thou art. Throughout his life, he would recall one scene where, after the volunteer militia had finished its manoeuvres, they began to dance around a fountain and most of the people from neighboring buildings came out to join them, including him and his father. Rousseau would always see militias as the embodiment of popular spirit in opposition to the armies of the rulers, whom he saw as disgraceful mercenaries. He remarried, and from that point Jean-Jacques saw little of him. Here, the boys picked up the elements of mathematics and drawing. Rousseau, who was always deeply moved by religious services, for a time even dreamed of becoming a Protestant minister. At age 13, Rousseau was apprenticed first to a notary and then to an engraver who beat him. At 15, he ran away from Geneva on 14 March after returning to the city and finding the city gates locked due to the curfew. She was a noblewoman of Protestant background who was separated from her husband. As professional lay proselytizer, she was paid by the King of Piedmont to help bring Protestants to Catholicism. They sent the boy to Turin , the capital of Savoy which included Piedmont, in what is now Italy , to complete his conversion. This resulted in his having to give up his Genevan citizenship, although he would later revert to Calvinism in order to regain it. Finding himself on his own, since his father and uncle had more or less disowned him, the teenage Rousseau supported himself for a time as a servant, secretary, and tutor, wandering in Italy Piedmont and Savoy and France. During this time, he lived on and off with De Warens, whom he idolized and called his "maman". Flattered by his devotion, De

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Warens tried to get him started in a profession, and arranged formal music lessons for him. At one point, he briefly attended a seminary with the idea of becoming a priest. Early adulthood[ edit ] When Rousseau reached 20, De Warens took him as her lover, while intimate also with the steward of her house. A rather profligate spender, she had a large library and loved to entertain and listen to music. She and her circle, comprising educated members of the Catholic clergy, introduced Rousseau to the world of letters and ideas. Rousseau had been an indifferent student, but during his 20s, which were marked by long bouts of hypochondria , he applied himself in earnest to the study of philosophy, mathematics, and music. At 25, he came into a small inheritance from his mother and used a portion of it to repay De Warens for her financial support of him. At 27, he took a job as a tutor in Lyon. His system, intended to be compatible with typography , is based on a single line, displaying numbers representing intervals between notes and dots and commas indicating rhythmic values. Believing the system was impractical, the Academy rejected it, though they praised his mastery of the subject, and urged him to try again. He befriended Denis Diderot that year, connecting over the discussion of literary endeavors. This awoke in him a lifelong love for Italian music, particularly opera: I had brought with me from Paris the prejudice of that city against Italian music; but I had also received from nature a sensibility and niceness of distinction which prejudice cannot withstand. I soon contracted that passion for Italian music with which it inspires all those who are capable of feeling its excellence. In listening to barcaroles, I found I had not yet known what singing was The risk of the education of the foundling hospital was much less". Ten years later, Rousseau made inquiries about the fate of his son, but no record could be found. When Rousseau subsequently became celebrated as a theorist of education and child-rearing, his abandonment of his children was used by his critics, including Voltaire and Edmund Burke , as the basis for ad hominem attacks. In , Rousseau was paying daily visits to Diderot, who had been thrown into the fortress of Vincennes under a lettre de cachet for opinions in his " Lettre sur les aveugles ", that hinted at materialism , a belief in atoms , and natural selection. According to science historian Conway Zirkle , Rousseau saw the concept of natural selection "as an agent for improving the human species. He wrote that while walking to Vincennes about three miles from Paris , he had a revelation that the arts and sciences were responsible for the moral degeneration of mankind, who were basically good by nature. Rousseau continued his interest in music. The king was so pleased by the work that he offered Rousseau a lifelong pension. He also turned down several other advantageous offers, sometimes with a brusqueness bordering on truculence that gave offense and caused him problems. Rousseau as noted above, was an enthusiastic supporter of the Italians against Jean-Philippe Rameau and others, making an important contribution with his Letter on French Music. Return to Geneva[ edit ] On returning to Geneva in , Rousseau reconverted to Calvinism and regained his official Genevan citizenship. In , Rousseau completed his second major work, the Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men the Discourse on Inequality , which elaborated on the arguments of the Discourse on the Arts and Sciences. He resented being at Mme. Diderot later described Rousseau as being "false, vain as Satan, ungrateful, cruel, hypocritical, and wicked He sucked ideas from me, used them himself, and then affected to despise me". His mansion was Le Palais du Peyrou. These men truly liked Rousseau and enjoyed his ability to converse on any subject, but they also used him as a way of getting back at Louis XV and the political faction surrounding his mistress, Madame de Pompadour. Even with them, however, Rousseau went too far, courting rejection when he criticized the practice of tax farming , in which some of them engaged. Even his friend Antoine-Jacques Roustan felt impelled to write a polite rebuttal of the chapter on Civil Religion in the Social Contract, which implied that the concept of a Christian republic was paradoxical since Christianity taught submission rather than participation in public affairs. Rousseau helped Roustan find a publisher for the rebuttal. A famous section of Emile, "The Profession of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar", was intended to be a defense of religious belief. Because it rejected original sin and divine revelation , both Protestant and Catholic authorities took offense. This religious indifferentism caused Rousseau and his books to be banned from France and Geneva. He was condemned from the pulpit by the Archbishop of Paris, his books were burned and warrants were issued for his arrest. Rousseau, he wrote, "has not had the precaution

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to throw any veil over his sentiments; and, as he scorns to dissemble his contempt for established opinions, he could not wonder that all the zealots were in arms against him. The liberty of the press is not so secured in any country. Subsequently, when the Swiss authorities also proved unsympathetic to him—condemning both *Emile*, and also *The Social Contract*—Voltaire issued an invitation to Rousseau to come and reside with him, commenting that: Let him come here [to Ferney]! I shall receive him with open arms. He shall be master here more than I. I shall treat him like my own son. He also mentioned that he had criticized Frederick in the past and would continue to be critical of Frederick in the future, stating however: We must succor this poor unfortunate. His only offense is to have strange opinions which he thinks are good ones. I will send a hundred crowns, from which you will be kind enough to give him as much as he needs. I think he will accept them in kind more readily than in cash. If we were not at war, if we were not ruined, I would build him a hermitage with a garden, where he could live as I believe our first fathers did. I think poor Rousseau has missed his vocation; he was obviously born to be a famous anchorite, a desert father, celebrated for his austerities and flagellations. I conclude that the morals of your savage are as pure as his mind is illogical. Frederick made no known reply, but commented to Keith that Rousseau had given him a "scolding". In the meantime, the local ministers had become aware of the apostasies in some of his writings, and resolved not to let him stay in the vicinity. He wrote back asking to be excused due to his inability to sit for a long time due to his ailment. Around midnight of 6<sup>th</sup> 7 September, stones were thrown at the house Rousseau was staying in, and some glass windows were shattered. Although it was within the Canton of Bern, from where he had been expelled two years previously, he was informally assured that he could move into this island house without fear of arrest, and he did so 10 September. However, on 17 October, the Senate of Bern ordered Rousseau to leave the island and all Bernese territory within fifteen days. He replied, requesting permission to extend his stay, and offered to be incarcerated in any place within their jurisdiction with only a few books in his possession and permission to walk occasionally in a garden while living at his own expense. On 29 October he left the Ile de St. Here he met Hume, and also numerous friends, and well wishers, and became a very conspicuous figure in the city. No person ever so much enjoyed their attention. Voltaire and everybody else are quite eclipsed. Diderot wanted to reconcile and make amends with Rousseau.

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### Chapter 2 : Download [PDF] The Basic Political Writings Second Edition Free Online | New Books in Politic

*Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1, followers Jean-Jacques Rousseau remains an important figure in the history of philosophy, both because of his contributions to political philosophy and moral psychology and because of his influence on later thinkers.*

His Political Philosophy , particularly his formulation of social contract theory or Contractarianism , strongly influenced the French Revolution and the development of Liberal , Conservative and Socialist theory. A brilliant, undisciplined and unconventional thinker throughout his colorful life, his views on Philosophy of Education and on religion were equally controversial but nevertheless influential. He also made important contributions to music, both as a theorist and as a composer. Life Rousseau was born on 28 June in Geneva, Switzerland although he spent most of his life in France, he always described himself as a citizen of Geneva. His mother, Suzanne Bernard, died just nine days after his birth from birth complications. His father, Isaac Rousseau, a failed watchmaker, abandoned him in when he was just 10 years old to avoid imprisonment, after which time Rousseau was cared for by an uncle who sent him to study in the village of Bovey. His only sibling, an older brother, ran away from home when Rousseau was still a child. For several years as a youth, he was apprenticed to a notary and then to an engraver. She later became his lover, but she also provided him with the education of a nobleman by sending him to a good Catholic school, where Rousseau became familiar with Latin and the dramatic arts, in addition to studying Aristotle. During this time he earned money through secretarial, teaching and musical jobs. In , he moved to Paris with the intention of becoming a musician and composer. He was secretary to the French ambassador in Venice for 11 months from to , although he was forced to flee to Paris to avoid prosecution by the Venetian Senate he often referred to the republican government of Venice in his later political work. However, the friendship soon became strained and Diderot later described Rousseau as being "deceitful, vain as Satan, ungrateful, cruel, hypocritical and full of malice". His "Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts" "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences" won him first prize in an essay competition on whether or not the development of the arts and sciences had been morally beneficial, to which Rousseau had answered in the negative and gained him significant fame. He was outspoken in his defense of Italian music against the music of popular French composers such as Jean-Philippe Rameau - In , he returned to Geneva where he re-converted to Calvinism and regained his official Genevan citizenship. The books criticized religion and were banned in France and Geneva, and Rousseau was forced to flee. He returned to the southeast of France, incognito and under a false name, in One of the conditions of his return was that he was not allowed to publish any books, but after completing his "Confessions", Rousseau began private readings in He was ordered to stop by the police, and the "Confessions" was only partially published in , four years after his death all his subsequent works were only to appear posthumously. Rousseau died on 2 July of a hemorrhage while taking a morning walk on the estate of the Marquis de Girardin at Ermenonville, near Paris.

Work Back to Top Rousseau saw a fundamental divide between society and human nature and believed that man was good when in the state of nature the state of all other animals, and the condition humankind was in before the creation of civilization , but has been corrupted by the artificiality of society and the growth of social interdependence. This idea of the natural goodness of humanity has often led to the attribution the idea of the "noble savage" to Rousseau, although he never used the expression himself and it does not adequately render his idea. In "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences" Rousseau argued that the arts and sciences had not been beneficial to humankind because they were not human needs, but rather a result of pride and vanity. Moreover, the opportunities they created for idleness and luxury contributed to the corruption of man, undermined the possibility of true friendship by replacing it with jealousy, fear and suspicion , and made governments more powerful at the expense of individual liberty. His subsequent "Discourse on Inequality" expanded on this theme and tracked the progress and degeneration of mankind from a primitive state of nature to modern society in more detail, starting from the earliest humans solitary beings, differentiated from animals

by their capacity for free will and their perfectibility, and possessed of a basic drive to care for themselves and a natural disposition to compassion or pity. Forced to associate together more closely by the pressure of population growth, man underwent a psychological transformation and came to value the good opinion of others as an essential component of their own well-being, which led to a golden age of human flourishing with the development of agriculture, metallurgy, private property and the division of labor but which also led to inequality. Rousseau concluded from his analysis of inequality that the first state was invented as a kind of social contract, but a flawed one made at the suggestion of the rich and powerful to trick the general population and institute inequality as a fundamental feature of human society. In "The Social Contract" of his most important work and one of the most influential works of Political Philosophy in the Western tradition, he offered his own alternative conception of the social contract. Opening with the dramatic lines, "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains. One man thinks himself the master of others, but remains more of a slave than they", Rousseau claimed contrary to his earlier work that the state of nature was a primitive and brutish condition, without law or morality, which humans deliberately left for the benefits and necessity of cooperation. He argued that, by joining together into civil society through the social contract and abandoning their claims of natural right, individuals can both preserve themselves and yet remain free, because submission to the authority of the general will of the people as a whole guarantees individuals against being subordinated to the wills of others, and also ensures that they themselves obey because they are collectively the authors of the law. It should be noted that Rousseau was bitterly opposed to the idea that the people should exercise sovereignty via a representative assembly; rather, he held that they should make the laws directly, which would effectively prevent the ideal state from becoming a large society, such as France was at the time. His view that man is good by nature conflicted with the doctrine of original sin, and his theology of nature as well as the claims he made in "The Social Contract" that true followers of Jesus would not make good citizens led to the condemnation and banning of his books in both Calvinist Geneva and Catholic Paris. Rousseau was one of the first modern writers to seriously attack the institution of private property, and therefore is considered to some extent a forebear of modern Socialism, Marxism and Anarchism. He also questioned the assumption that the will of the majority is always correct, arguing that the goal of government should be to secure freedom, equality and justice for all within the state, regardless of the will of the majority. The aim of education, he argued, is to learn how to live righteously, and this should be accomplished by following a guardian preferably in the countryside, away from the bad habits of the city who can guide his pupil through various contrived learning experiences. He took the subordination of women as read, however, and envisaged a very different educational process for women, who were to be educated to be governed rather than to govern.

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## Chapter 3 : Rousseau: The Basic Political Writings (ebook) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau |

*Basic Political Writings by Jean-Jacques Rousseau* This substantially revised new edition of *Rousseau: The Basic Political Writings* features a brilliant new Introduction by David Wootton, a revision by Donald A. Cress of his own translation of Rousseau's most important political writings, and the addition of Cress' new translation of

Project de Constitution pour la Corse; Vol. Jugement sur la Polysynodie; Vol. Avant-propos du Projet pour la Corse; Vol. Fragment on Saint-Pierre; Vol. Letter to Mirabeau; Vol. Letter to Voltaire; Vol. Rough copy of the same. Correspondence with Buttafuoco; Vol. Other quotations from this MS. Rey, Amsterdam, 8vo, Subsequent publications of Texts: Rousseau Projet pour la Corse and Fragments: Streckeisen-Moultou, Rousseau, ses amis et ses ennemis Correspondence: Rousseau in Philosophie de Politique, 2 vols. Prairial 19 and 21, An vi. Anecdotes of the last twelve years of the life of J. Rousseau, London, 12mo, Rousseau, Paris, 8vo, Musset-Pathay, Histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de J. Lord Morley, Rousseau, 2 vols. Rousseau og hans Filosofi, Copenhagen, 8vo, Bosanquet, The philosophical theory of the State, London, 8vo, Rousseau, Geneva, 8vo, sqq. The text, however, is far from correct. To the phrases marked as wanting in Ed. Neither these phrases, nor any of the other variants from Ed. It may therefore be reasonably concluded that Ed. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that Ed. To this statement there are three trifling exceptions: It must also be recorded that the Notes on p. I have unfortunately been unable to find any copy of the original Edition. The title of the Contrat social is familiar. But to most men it suggests an extreme form of individualism. It stands, that is, for ideas which are either expressly repudiated by the author, or saluted hurriedly from afar. What the real argument of the book may be, or what its place in the history of political theory, few have troubled themselves to enquire. Strike out a few more chapters of the Contrat social, and his results, if not his methods, will be seen to be not abstract, but concrete. Even when sweeping principles are laid down, the widest possible latitude is left for their application. They are not imposed as a law. Rather they are held up as an ideal, the acceptance of which may quicken the sense of justice in the more favoured communities, but which even the most favoured community can never hope fully to attain. That Rousseau himself is partly responsible for this misunderstanding, may readily be allowed. But it remains true that his readers have been singularly blind. Within the last five and twenty years light has doubtless begun to break in upon the darkness. It has so in this country; it has so, perhaps more generally, in Switzerland and France. But it may be doubted whether even professed students of the subject have yet grasped either the vast range of thought which Rousseau opened up, or the goal to which it pointed. And it is the object of these volumes to remove the obstacles which have hitherto lain in the way of such a study. Here—as I believe, for the first time—the whole body of his work as political philosopher is collected and arranged in order of time: Three points at least will be made clear by a study of this collection. The first is that Rousseau, so far from supporting the individualist theory, is its most powerful assailant. The second, that he concerns himself with action no less than with theory; that he is at least as much a practical reformer as a political philosopher. The second, from the treatises upon the affairs of Geneva, Corsica and Poland; it might indeed be suspected by the reader of the Contrat social itself. The third is writ large on the later pages of the Contrat social; and the subsequent treatises are one long application of the principles there laid down. A doctrinaire, who deliberately shuts his eyes to circumstances and rides rough-shod over consequences—that is still apparently the Rousseau of popular belief. He began as the pupil of Locke. In the crucial years of his growth he was the whole-hearted disciple of Plato. And towards the close—the first stages of the process may be plainly traced even in the Contrat social—he passed, and was indeed the first great thinker to pass, beneath the spell of Montesquieu. And in at least one cardinal point, the doctrine of Sovereignty, it was reinforced, strangely enough, by reluctant respect for the masterful genius of Hobbes. But, either late or early, the other two influences also told strongly upon his work. The voice of Locke is heard plainly, and with results disastrous to the general tenor of the argument, in the opening chapters of the Contrat social. After that, though it is doubtful whether the pupil ever recognised how far he had drifted

from his master 1 it silently drops out. Far more fruitful is the influence of Montesquieu; and, unlike that of Locke, it was strengthened, not weakened, by time. In the *Contrat social* it is not yet fully assimilated. It breathes through every page of the practical treatises which followed. It is not always easy to reconcile with the influence of Plato. It runs directly counter to the more abstract strain inherited from Locke. The influence of Montesquieu was, from the nature of the case, first and foremost an influence upon method. That of the other two thinkers was in the first instance an influence of ideas. The ideas, in this case, may be summed up in one word—Right. That was the chief object of the search of Plato. In another and far narrower sense, it was the goal also of Locke. There is no sense in which the same could be said of Montesquieu. And, with all respect for present modes of thought, that is the one thing wanting to his achievement. He was content to treat of the positive rights recognised by existing Governments. And no two studies in the world could be more different. The historical method, invaluable as a servant, is an ill guide when taken for master. It gives inestimable aid in the application of first principles. But it is powerless to discover them. In and by itself, it can never rise above considerations of circumstance and expediency. But beyond and above these lies Edition: And it is the lasting service of Rousseau that, with all the weight he allows to considerations of the former character, he never ceases to give the first place to the latter. The realisation of Right, in anything approaching to the full sense of the term, may, he holds, under given circumstances, be impossible. But he never falters in the faith that, wherever possible, it is and ought to be the ideal. That is the conviction which underlies the *Contrat social*. With a yet fuller allowance for circumstances, it is the faith also of his writings on Geneva, Corsica and Poland. The first question, therefore, which Rousseau sets himself to answer is: What is the nature, and what the source, of Right? It is only when this is disposed of that he goes on to ask: Under what circumstances, with what limitations, is it to be realised in the given case? It is with the former question, and with that alone, that we are concerned at the present moment. And to this question the earlier writings of Rousseau—“it must be remembered that this means no more than the two Discourses”—suggest, though they do not explicitly give, a very different answer from the later. The earlier have commonly, and with some show of reason, been taken to plead for an extreme form of individualism. The former find the ultimate base of Right in the will of the individual; the latter, in that of the community in which the individual is merged. The fact is that two lines of thought meet and cross in the *Politics* of Rousseau. He is the champion of individual liberty. He is the champion also of the sovereignty of the State. He is the heir of Locke. He is the disciple also of Plato and, in this point though in no other, of Hobbes. That, in truth, is his historical significance. Standing at the parting of the ways, he embodies the results of the past; he prepares the ground for the wholly different ideals of the future. He sums up the instincts of revolt which had already shattered the medieval Church and were soon to lay the axe to the root of the still semi-feudal State.

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### Chapter 4 : The Political Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau, vol. 1 - Online Library of Liberty

*Jean Jacques Rousseau was a Swiss philosopher and political theorist who lived much of his life in France. Many reference books describe him as French, but he generally added "Citizen of Geneva" whenever he signed his name.*

His mother died only a few days later on July 7, and his only sibling, an older brother, ran away from home when Rousseau was still a child. Rousseau was therefore brought up mainly by his father, a clockmaker, with whom at an early age he read ancient Greek and Roman literature such as the Lives of Plutarch. His father got into a quarrel with a French captain, and at the risk of imprisonment, left Geneva for the rest of his life. Rousseau stayed behind and was cared for by an uncle who sent him along with his cousin to study in the village of Bovey. In 1722, Rousseau was apprenticed to an engraver and began to learn the trade. Although he did not detest the work, he thought his master to be violent and tyrannical. He therefore left Geneva in 1728, and fled to Annecy. Here he met Louise de Warens, who was instrumental in his conversion to Catholicism, which forced him to forfeit his Genevan citizenship in he would make a return to Geneva and publicly convert back to Calvinism. During this time he earned money through secretarial, teaching, and musical jobs. In 1733, Rousseau went to Paris to become a musician and composer. After two years spent serving a post at the French Embassy in Venice, he returned in 1735 and met a linen-maid named Therese Levasseur, who would become his lifelong companion they eventually married in 1735. They had five children together, all of whom were left at the Paris orphanage. It was also during this time that Rousseau became friendly with the philosophers Condillac and Diderot. The work was widely read and was controversial. But Rousseau attempted to live a modest life despite his fame, and after the success of his opera, he promptly gave up composing music. In the autumn of 1750, Rousseau submitted an entry to another essay contest announced by the Academy of Dijon. Rousseau himself thought this work to be superior to the First Discourse because the Second Discourse was significantly longer and more philosophically daring. The judges were irritated by its length as well its bold and unorthodox philosophical claims; they never finished reading it. However, Rousseau had already arranged to have it published elsewhere and like the First Discourse, it also was also widely read and discussed. In 1755, a year after the publication of the Second Discourse, Rousseau and Therese Levasseur left Paris after being invited to a house in the country by Mme. In 1756, after repeated quarrels with Mme. It was during this time that Rousseau wrote some of his most important works. In 1759 he published a novel, Julie or the New Heloise, which was one of the best selling of the century. Then, just a year later in 1762, he published two major philosophical treatises: Paris authorities condemned both of these books, primarily for claims Rousseau made in them about religion, which forced him to flee France. He settled in Switzerland and in 1765 he began writing his autobiography, his Confessions. A year later, after encountering difficulties with Swiss authorities, he spent time in Berlin and Paris, and eventually moved to England at the invitation of David Hume. However, due to quarrels with Hume, his stay in England lasted only a year, and in 1769 he returned to the southeast of France incognito. After spending three years in the southeast, Rousseau returned to Paris in 1770 and copied music for a living. It was during this time that he wrote Rousseau: Judge of Jean-Jacques and the Reveries of the Solitary Walker, which would turn out to be his final works. He died on July 3, 1778. His Confessions were published several years after his death; and his later political writings, in the nineteenth century. Rousseau wrote the Confessions late in his career, and it was not published until after his death. What is particularly striking about the Confessions is the almost apologetic tone that Rousseau takes at certain points to explain the various public as well as private events in his life, many of which caused great controversy. It is clear from this book that Rousseau saw the Confessions as an opportunity to justify himself against what he perceived as unfair attacks on his character and misunderstandings of his philosophical thought. His life was filled with conflict, first when he was apprenticed, later in academic circles with other Enlightenment thinkers like Diderot and Voltaire, with Parisian and Swiss authorities and even with David Hume. Although Rousseau discusses these conflicts, and tries to explain his perspective on them, it is not his exclusive goal to justify all of his actions. He chastises

himself and takes responsibility for many of these events, such as his extra-marital affairs. At other times, however, his paranoia is clearly evident as he discusses his intense feuds with friends and contemporaries. And herein lays the fundamental tension in the Confessions. Rousseau is at the same time trying both to justify his actions to the public so that he might gain its approval, but also to affirm his own uniqueness as a critic of that same public. As such, it is appropriate to consider Rousseau, at least chronologically, as an Enlightenment thinker. Descartes was very skeptical about the possibility of discovering final causes, or purposes, in nature. Yet this teleological understanding of the world was the very cornerstone of Aristotelian metaphysics, which was the established philosophy of the time. In the Meditations, Descartes claims that the material world is made up of extension in space, and this extension is governed by mechanical laws that can be understood in terms of pure mathematics. The State of Nature as a Foundation for Ethics and Political Philosophy The scope of modern philosophy was not limited only to issues concerning science and metaphysics. Philosophers of this period also attempted to apply the same type of reasoning to ethics and politics. In doing so, they hoped to uncover certain characteristics of human nature that were universal and unchanging. If this could be done, one could then determine the most effective and legitimate forms of government. Hobbes contends that human beings are motivated purely by self-interest, and that the state of nature, which is the state of human beings without civil society, is the war of every person against every other. Hobbes does say that while the state of nature may not have existed all over the world at one particular time, it is the condition in which humans would be if there were no sovereign. These obligations are articulated in terms of natural rights, including rights to life, liberty and property. Rousseau was also influenced by the modern natural law tradition, which attempted to answer the challenge of skepticism through a systematic approach to human nature that, like Hobbes, emphasized self-interest. Rousseau would give his own account of the state of nature in the Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men, which will be examined below. Also influential were the ideals of classical republicanism, which Rousseau took to be illustrative of virtues. These virtues allow people to escape vanity and an emphasis on superficial values that he thought to be so prevalent in modern society. This is a major theme of the Discourse on the Sciences and Arts. Discourse on the Sciences and Arts This is the work that originally won Rousseau fame and recognition. For the Enlightenment project was based on the idea that progress in fields like the arts and sciences do indeed contribute to the purification of morals on individual, social, and political levels. The First Discourse begins with a brief introduction addressing the academy to which the work was submitted. In addition to this introduction, the First Discourse is comprised of two main parts. The first part is largely an historical survey. Using specific examples, Rousseau shows how societies in which the arts and sciences flourished more often than not saw the decline of morality and virtue. He notes that it was after philosophy and the arts flourished that ancient Egypt fell. Similarly, ancient Greece was once founded on notions of heroic virtue, but after the arts and sciences progressed, it became a society based on luxury and leisure. The one exception to this, according to Rousseau, was Sparta, which he praises for pushing the artists and scientists from its walls. Sparta is in stark contrast to Athens, which was the heart of good taste, elegance, and philosophy. Interestingly, Rousseau here discusses Socrates, as one of the few wise Athenians who recognized the corruption that the arts and sciences were bringing about. In his address to the court, Socrates says that the artists and philosophers of his day claim to have knowledge of piety, goodness, and virtue, yet they do not really understand anything. The second part of the First Discourse is an examination of the arts and sciences themselves, and the dangers they bring. First, Rousseau claims that the arts and sciences are born from our vices: The attack on sciences continues as Rousseau articulates how they fail to contribute anything positive to morality. They take time from the activities that are truly important, such as love of country, friends, and the unfortunate. Philosophical and scientific knowledge of subjects such as the relationship of the mind to the body, the orbit of the planets, and physical laws that govern particles fail to genuinely provide any guidance for making people more virtuous citizens. Rather, Rousseau argues that they create a false sense of need for luxury, so that science becomes simply a means for making our lives easier and more pleasurable, but not morally better. The arts are the

subject of similar attacks in the second part of the First Discourse. Artists, Rousseau says, wish first and foremost to be applauded. Their work comes from a sense of wanting to be praised as superior to others. Society begins to emphasize specialized talents rather than virtues such as courage, generosity, and temperance. This leads to yet another danger: And yet, after all of these attacks, the First Discourse ends with the praise of some very wise thinkers, among them, Bacon, Descartes, and Newton. These men were carried by their vast genius and were able to avoid corruption. However, Rousseau says, they are exceptions; and the great majority of people ought to focus their energies on improving their characters, rather than advancing the ideals of the Enlightenment in the arts and sciences. Discourse on the Origin of Inequality The Second Discourse, like the first, was a response to a question put forth by the academy of Dijon: It exceeded the desired length, it was four times the length of the first, and made very bold philosophical claims; unlike the First Discourse, it did not win the prize. However, as Rousseau was now a well-known and respected author, he was able to have it published independently. This is primarily because Rousseau, like Hobbes, attacks the classical notion of human beings as naturally social. In the Confessions, Rousseau writes that he himself sees the Second Discourse as far superior to the first. The Discourse on the Origin of Inequality is divided into four main parts: Like them, Rousseau understands society to be an invention, and he attempts to explain the nature of human beings by stripping them of all of the accidental qualities brought about by socialization. Thus, understanding human nature amounts to understanding what humans are like in a pure state of nature. This is in stark contrast to the classical view, most notably that of Aristotle, which claims that the state of civil society is the natural human state. Like Hobbes and Locke, however, it is doubtful that Rousseau meant his readers to understand the pure state of nature that he describes in the Second Discourse as a literal historical account. In its opening, he says that it must be denied that men were ever in the pure state of nature, citing revelation as a source which tells us that God directly endowed the first man with understanding a capacity that he will later say is completely undeveloped in natural man. However, it seems in other parts of the Second Discourse that Rousseau is positing an actual historical account. Some of the stages in the progression from nature to civil society, Rousseau will argue, are empirically observable in so-called primitive tribes. Hobbes describes each human in the state of nature as being in a constant state of war against all others; hence life in the state of nature is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. Instead, they have taken civilized human beings and simply removed laws, government, and technology.

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## Chapter 5 : Jean-Jacques Rousseau - Wikipedia

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A comment is in order regarding my translation of "moeurs. Rather than translate "moeurs" by means of a confusing variety of everchanging English words or with a long tendentious phrase, I have elected simply to translate "moeurs" as "mores" throughout this volume. All will agree that it is a necessary classic. Yet here agreement ends. The book has been called an encomium to democracy and a blueprint for totalitarianismâ€”or, in an attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable, the design of totalitarian democracy. All these readings cannot be correct at once. There are interpretations of historic texts that vary because they are complementaryâ€”they throw light on different aspects or sources of the work. In grasping for larger meanings, such readings can be reconciled in a higher synthesis. How is such a scandal to be explained? It is far from rare in the history of ideas but still startling every time it occurs. Rousseau, to be sure, explicitly and emphatically disclaimed this perception of his total thought. Whether Rousseau was the prophet of untrammelled reason or untamed irrationality, of anarchic disorder or collective despotism, his claim to the status of a thinker long seemed worse than pretentious. Recalling one phrase or one sentence, readers projected their own wishes or anxieties into the text before them and found in it what they had placed there. But one must concede that Rousseau, at least to some measure, connived at his fate. He wrote too well for his own good. Coining memorable viii Introduction epigrams, he practically invited his readers to recall his felicitous terse sayings and to neglect the context in which they were embedded and which was essential to their interpretation. No wonder that most of his readers believedâ€”and there are those who still doâ€”that Rousseau championed the "noble savage," even though this notorious phrase does not appear in his writings, and even though the most "primitivist" of his early work, the Discourse on the Arts and Sciences, is far from being a defense of savagery, noble or otherwise. The Social Contract is strewn with such happy-unhappy epigrams: And that phrase about forcing men to be free has generated more controversy, more stinging attacks and elaborate apologies, than the rest of the treatise together. Paradoxically, Rousseau would have been less controverted, and less misunderstood, if he had been a little less felicitous and a little more ponderous. The greatest obstacle to a full comprehension of the Social Contract is, however, a failure of method. All too often its students have analyzed it in isolation both from the rest of his writings and from his life. Of these two related failures, the second is obvious, and understandable. The historian of ideas has a justified dread of reducing his texts to mere precipitates of biographical detail. As malicious critics did not fail to notice in his time, and have noticed since, his life contradicts, point for point, his lofty postures. The temptation is therefore great to take his work as a smokescreen behind which Rousseau the apostle of independence could sponge off the rich, and Rousseau the advocate of family intimacy could hand his children over to an orphanage. The other isolation, that of the Social Contract from his "unpolitical" texts, is rather more subtle and even more consequential. Monographs and specialized collections such as C. And such isolated efforts lead to a fragmentary and distorted reading. While, as Rousseau put it, he could not say everything at the same time, everything he wrote still impinged on everything else; the "one principle" that he insisted he always followed informed all his work. And the same holds true of his life: Introduction ix As so often, Rousseau proves the best guide to his own meaning. II Jean-Jacques Rousseau was born in Geneva on June 28, , the son of a footloose, irresponsible, and tearful watchmaker. They describe the perimeters of his self-confidence and his self-torment. His father, Isaac Rousseau or so the son recalled the matter many years later liked to sit down and reminisce with his son about his late wife: While Jean-Jacques Rousseau later chose to remember his childhood as happy and protected, his actual experience, lost in the shadows of time and uncertain family traditions, seems to have been one of affectionate care by his aunts and sentimental but damagingly intermittent attention by his father. At thirteen,

he was both unusually learned and unusually ignorant. There followed years of apprenticeship, both literal and figurative. Rousseau briefly worked for an engraver, but deserted from what he later described as his intolerable bmtalization. At nearly seventeen, he was sent, by an assiduous priest sensing a possible recruit to the Faith, into the house and arms of a recent convert to Roman Catholicism, the Baronne de Warens, at Annecy. It was a fateful encounter. Madame de Warens made an adventurous, somewhat precarious living in a variety of Introduction ways, including serving her new Church by smoothing the path of promising new adherents. But his Catholic phase remained, though a long episode, anything but a profound experience. Living in her house, he soon called her "Maman," while he was "petit" to her. Rarely has so emotional an engagement had so calculating a prelude. Rousseau had his doubts and his fears. Green has written in his sensitive treatment of the episode, "Rousseau knew that for some years she had been sexually intimate with her amanuensis, Claude Anet, a serious, taciturn young man six years older than Jean-Jacques, who liked and admired him greatly. For some months, therefore, Jean-Jacques was a reluctant partner in a minage d trois. The Social Contract is part of a lifelong campaign for justification, a pursuit of lost innocence. For some years, Rousseau studied, wrote, took casual posts that intermittently separated him from Madame de Warens, and wrestled with his conscience. By , he was in Paris, and a new career began for him. He was no longer in his first youth, but he made up for it. He found interesting and influential connections, and one patron led to another. He met a number of prominent philosophers, including Voltaire and Diderot, and read the others; he invented a system of musical notation, wrote poetry and an opera, and piled up both flattering and humiliating experiences with the nobility. His breakthrough to fame came in , as he had felt impelled to enter an essay contest of the Academy of Dijon. The academy posed a question characteristic of such eighteenth-century intellectual lotteries: Walking to Vincennes to visit Diderot, then incarcerated in the fortress there, he read as he walked, came upon the prize question and was so overcome that, in some- Introduction xi thing of a trance, he sat down under a tree. At least that is how he chose to recall the genesis of his first important work. But it was his boldness in choosing that side, quite as much as his argumentation, that won him the prize. Difficult, embattled, something of an eccentric, Rousseau proved hard to classify, but the defenders of the reigning religious and political establishment found a name for him: It was an identification accurate in many ways, but one that he increasingly resented as the years passed. For Rousseau himself, this second discourse measurably helped him to complicate his ideas about society and politics. He was on his way to his masterpieces of social thought, the *Emile* and the *Social Contract*. In , definitively estranged from Catholicism, Rousseau, once more the proud "citizen of Geneva," dedicated his second discourse to his native city-state. And a few years later, as he meditated on the political treatise that was to become the *Social Contract*, it was Genevan society, Genevan scenes, Genevan political controversies, as he recalled and reshaped them in the urgency of intellectual creation, that dominated his mind. His celebrated assault on representation in the *Social Contract* is a striking instance of how much Geneva was on his mind as he laid down principles he proclaimed to be universally valid. It was with the pride of a Genevan that he loaded the English political system with contumely: It is greatly mistaken; it is free only during the election of the members of Parliament. Once they are elected, the populace is enslaved; it is nothing. Voltaire, then resident there and passionately meddling in local politics, took it to be a blatant intervention in the domestic constitutional struggles then at a feverish pitch. But in placing the governing fantasies of the work he was perceptive and largely right. Plutarch, he was to say years later, "was the first reading of my childhood; it will be the last reading of my old age. To him, the best of good societies would always be a republic unfettered by a hereditary aristocracy. But his ultimate preference was for a Geneva purified, the Geneva in his fertile mind. And "Geneva" also implied a powerful incentive toward a certain religious style. He was never an orthodox believer; never a good Calvinist, never a good Catholic. As a mature thinker, he adopted the deism current among the philosophes of his time: That classical philosophical doctrinesâ€”especially Stoicism, which had some significant affinities with this Calvinist postureâ€”also appealed to Rousseau, only wove Calvinist earnestness all the more inextricably into the texture of his thought. The as his heated prose shows, hit Rousseau at a sensitive spot: Its hero, Saint-Preux, a striving,

intelligent bourgeois, finds that the beautiful aristocratic Julie, whose tutor he is, has fallen in love with him; this bold though eminently virtuous girl first seduces and then dismisses him, and eventually chooses to marry an elderly, unemotional but highly eligible atheist, Wolmar. Even though her marriage is happy, blessed with children, money, local good works, and endless opportunities for self-examination and self-expression, Julie never forgets her first lover. But, though Saint-Preux returns and reawakens old temptations, she does not succumb to his charm but dies, in her accustomed self-sacrificing way, after saving one of her children from drowning. This allows her survivors to worship her as a secular saint. In portraying the idyllic little community that Julie and Wolmar govern with a light hand, superintending honest toil and decent festivals, and in permitting Julie to probe her moral and erotic condition in interminable exchanges with an understanding correspondent, Rousseau celebrates the virtues of candor, maturity, simplicity, self-restraint, good health, reason warmed by love and love ennobled by reason. Emile gives this ideal its theoretical underpinning. So it is, but its severely chronological structure, its coherent argument, and its polemical drive, make it the most radical educational treatise possible—radical in the original sense of the term: Modern society, as Rousseau had already insisted at length in his discourses, is so corrupt and so unnatural that only a fundamental upheaval in the formation of human beings can make man truly human. While Emile is substantial, its governing idea is simple. It is not just kindness to the young: It is kindness with a purpose. Rousseau, the amateur of ancient philosophy, wanted children educated in obedience to the Stoical doctrine that man must live in accord with nature. The consequences of applying this maxim to the training of the young are far-reaching: Others, to be sure, had claimed to know this; Locke had said as much in his book on education. But nobody had seriously pursued the implications of this saying. Rousseau now spelled out in detail precisely what it meant in practice. Rote learning and forced reading are nonsensical: Even reasoning with the young, though superficially kind, is at best futile and in effect cruel. For reason is the last capacity of the human animal to awaken; it should therefore be the last to be brought into action. It is absurd to make the child learn geography from books or maps; make him ramble across rivers and meadows, teach him to keep his eyes open as he walks; set him adrift on purpose to teach him how to find his way:

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## Chapter 6 : Rousseau, Jean-Jacques | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

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Rousseau begins by discussing man in his state of nature. For Rousseau, man in his state of nature is essentially an animal like any other, driven by two key motivating principles: In the state of nature, which is more a hypothetical idea than an actual historical epoch, man exists without reason or the concept of good and evil, has few needs, and is essentially happy. The only thing that separates him from the beasts is some sense of unrealized perfectability. This notion of perfectability is what allows human beings to change with time, and according to Rousseau it becomes important the moment an isolated human being is forced to adapt to his environment and allows himself to be shaped by it. When natural disasters force people to move from one place to another, make contact with other people, and form small groups or elementary societies, new needs are created, and men begin to move out of the state of nature toward something very different. Rousseau writes that as individuals have more contact with one another and small groupings begin to form, the human mind develops language, which in turn contributes to the development of reason. Life in the collective state also precipitates the development of a new, negative motivating principle for human actions. Rousseau calls this principle amour propre, and it drives men to compare themselves to others. This drive toward comparison to others is not rooted only in the desire to preserve the self and pity others. Rather, comparison drives men to seek domination over their fellow human beings as a way of augmenting their own happiness. Rousseau states that with the development of amour propre and more complex human societies, private property is invented, and the labor necessary for human survival is divided among different individuals to provide for the whole. This division of labor and the beginning of private property allow the property owners and nonlaborers to dominate and exploit the poor. Rousseau observes that this state of affairs is resented by the poor, who will naturally seek war against the rich to end their unfair domination. Instead of granting equality, however, it sanctifies their oppression and makes an unnatural moral inequality a permanent feature of civil society. As Rousseau explains, however, in modern societies the creation of laws and property have corrupted natural men and created new forms of inequality that are not in accordance with natural law. Rousseau calls these unjustifiable, unacceptable forms of inequality moral inequality, and he concludes by making clear that this sort of inequality must be contested. Analysis Although Rousseau would later develop many of the Discourse main points more expansively, it is significant as the first work to contain all the central elements of his philosophy. In the moral and political realm, the fundamental concept here is moral inequality, or unnatural forms of inequality that are created by human beings. Rousseau is clear that all such forms of inequality are morally wrong and as such must be done away with. The means by which moral inequality is to be banished is not a topic Rousseau broaches here, though this is a question that was hotly debated during the French Revolution and subsequent revolutions in the centuries since. Whereas Hobbes described the state of nature as a state of constant war populated by violent, self-interested brutes, Rousseau holds that the state of nature is generally a peaceful, happy place made up of free, independent men. To Rousseau, the sort of war Hobbes describes is not reached until man leaves the state of nature and enters civil society, when property and law create a conflict between rich and poor.

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## Chapter 7 : Jean-Jacques Rousseau > By Individual Philosopher > Philosophy

*Jean-Jacques Rousseau ( - ) was a French philosopher and writer of the Age of Enlightenment.. His Political Philosophy, particularly his formulation of social contract theory (or Contractarianism), strongly influenced the French Revolution and the development of Liberal, Conservative and Socialist theory.*

Themes, Arguments, and Ideas  
**The Necessity of Freedom** In his work, Rousseau addresses freedom more than any other problem of political philosophy and aims to explain how man in the state of nature is blessed with an enviable total freedom. This freedom is total for two reasons. First, natural man is physically free because he is not constrained by a repressive state apparatus or dominated by his fellow men. Second, he is psychologically and spiritually free because he is not enslaved to any of the artificial needs that characterize modern society. Rousseau believed that good government must have the freedom of all its citizens as its most fundamental objective. Rousseau acknowledged that as long as property and laws exist, people can never be as entirely free in modern society as they are in the state of nature, a point later echoed by Marx and many other Communist and anarchist social philosophers. Nonetheless, Rousseau strongly believed in the existence of certain principles of government that, if enacted, can afford the members of society a level of freedom that at least approximates the freedom enjoyed in the state of nature. In *The Social Contract* and his other works of political philosophy, Rousseau is devoted to outlining these principles and how they may be given expression in a functional modern state. Rousseau strips away all the ideas that centuries of development have imposed on the true nature of man and concludes that many of the ideas we take for granted, such as property, law, and moral inequality, actually have no basis in nature. The most important characteristic of the state of nature is that people have complete physical freedom and are at liberty to do essentially as they wish. That said, the state of nature also carries the drawback that human beings have not yet discovered rationality or morality. In different works, Rousseau alternately emphasizes the benefits and shortfalls of the state of nature, but by and large he reveres it for the physical freedom it grants people, allowing them to be unencumbered by the coercive influence of the state and society. **The Danger of Need** Rousseau includes an analysis of human need as one element in his comparison of modern society and the state of nature. In the state of nature, human needs are strictly limited to those things that ensure survival and reproduction, including food, sleep, and sex. By contrast, as cooperation and division of labor develop in modern society, the needs of men multiply to include many nonessential things, such as friends, entertainment, and luxury goods. As time goes by and these sorts of needs increasingly become a part of everyday life, they become necessities. Although many of these needs are initially pleasurable and even good for human beings, men in modern society eventually become slaves to these superfluous needs, and the whole of society is bound together and shaped by their pursuit. By authentic, Rousseau essentially means how closely the life of modern man reflects the positive attributes of his natural self. Not surprisingly, Rousseau feels that people in modern society generally live quite inauthentic lives. In the state of nature, man is free to simply attend to his own natural needs and has few occasions to interact with other people. The entire system of artificial needs that governs the life of civil society makes authenticity or truth in the dealings of people with one another almost impossible. Even more damningly, the fact that modern people organize their lives around artificial needs means that they are inauthentic and untrue to themselves as well. Given this fact, the modern society that has sprung forth from this act can be nothing but inauthentic to the core. **The Unnaturalness of Inequality** For Rousseau, the questions of why and how human beings are naturally equal and unequal, if they are unequal at all, are fundamental to his larger philosophical enquiry. His conclusions and larger line of reasoning in this argument are laid out in the *Discourse on Inequality*, but the basic thrust of his argument is that human inequality as we know it does not exist in the state of nature. In fact, the only kind of natural inequality, according to Rousseau, is the physical inequality that exists among men in the state of nature who may be more or less able to provide for themselves according to their physical attributes. Accordingly, all the inequalities we recognize in modern society are characterized by the existence

of different classes or the domination and exploitation of some people by others. Rousseau terms these kinds of inequalities moral inequalities, and he devotes much of his political philosophy to identifying the ways in which a just government can seek to overturn them. As Rousseau explains, the general will is the will of the sovereign, or all the people together, that aims at the common good—what is best for the state as a whole. In a state where the vulgarities of private interest prevail over the common interests of the collective, the will of all can be something quite different from the general will. The most concrete manifestation of the general will in a healthy state comes in the form of law. To Rousseau, laws should always record what the people collectively desire the general will and should always be universally applicable to all members of the state. The first is, how can we know that the will of all is really equivalent with the common good? The second is, assuming that the general will is existent and can be expressed in laws, what are the institutions that can accurately gauge and codify the general will at any given time? Most often, the sovereign took the form of an authoritative monarch who possessed absolute dominion over his or her subjects. The people, as a sovereign entity, express their sovereignty through their general will and must never have their sovereignty abrogated by anyone or anything outside their collective self. In this regard, sovereignty is not identified with the government but is instead opposed against it.

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Context[ edit ] The text was written in response to a prize competition of the Academy of Dijon answering the prompt: What is the origin of inequality among people, and is it authorized by natural law? Rousseau published the text in 1755. Also, there is an appendix that elaborates primarily on eighteenth century anthropological research throughout the text. Rousseau is not concerned with this type of inequality because he claims it is not the root of the inequality found in civil society. Instead, he argues moral inequality is unique to civil society and is evinced in differences in "wealth, nobility or rank, power and personal merit. Rousseau appears to take a cynical view of civil society, where man has strayed from his "natural state" of individual independence and freedom to satisfy his individual needs and desires. Natural man acts only for his own sake and avoids conflicts with other animals and humans. He is a loner and self-sufficient. Any battle or skirmish was only to protect himself. The natural man was in prime condition, fast, and strong, capable of caring for himself. He killed only for his own self-preservation. The former, although translated as "perfectibility," has nothing to do with a drive for perfection or excellence, which might confuse it with virtue ethics. Instead, perfectibility describes how humans can learn by observing others. Since human being lacks reason, this is not a discursive reasoning, but more akin to the neurological account of mirror neurons. Human freedom does not mean the capacity to choose, which would require reason, but instead the ability to refrain from instinct. Only with such a capacity can humans acquire new habits and practices. He thinks that Hobbes conflates human being in the state of nature with human being in civil society. The process by which natural man becomes civilized is uncertain in the Discourse, but it could have had two or three different causes. The most likely causes are environmental, such that humans came into closer proximity and began cohabitation, which in turn facilitated the development of reason and language. Equally, human "perfectibility" could explain this change in the nature of the human being. The beginning of part two dramatically imagines some lone errant soul planting the stakes that first establish private property: For Rousseau, even the concept of private property required a series of other concepts in order to be formed. On the face of the dedication, he praises Geneva as a good, if not perfect, republic. The qualities he picks out for praise include the stability of its laws and institutions, the community spirit of its inhabitants, and its good relations with neighboring states, neither threatening them nor threatened by them, and the well-behaved women of Geneva. However, this is not how Geneva truly was. This is the type of regime Rousseau wished for. The epistle dedicatory is a highly ironic and idealized version of the Geneva Rousseau really wanted. Also, his description is in great contrast with Paris, where he had spent many years previous to writing this discourse, and which he had left bitterly. Thus, his description of Geneva is in part a statement against Paris. Discourse on the origin of inequality. Discourse on the Origin of Inequality.

## Chapter 9 : Discourse on Inequality - Wikipedia

*Jean-Jacques Rousseau ; translated and edited by Donald A. Cress ; introduction and new annotation by David Wootton*  
*This collection of Rousseau's six major writings in political science includes critical textual annotations, a chronology, and an extended introduction. "This substantially revised new.*