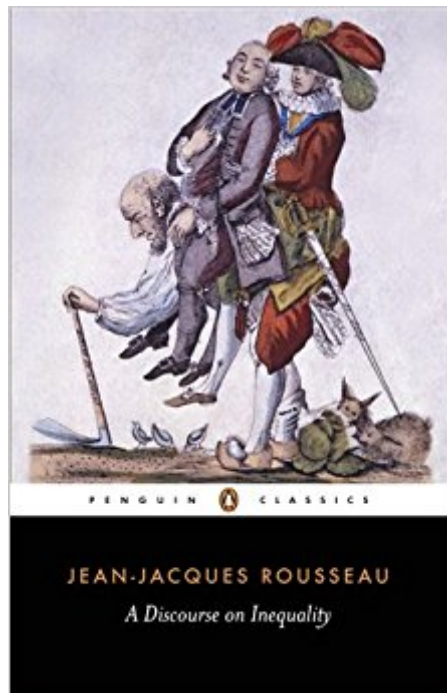


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A Discourse On Inequality (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

In *A Discourse on Inequality*, Rousseau sets out to demonstrate how the growth of civilization corrupts man's natural happiness and freedom by creating artificial inequalities of wealth, power and social privilege. Contending that primitive man was equal to his fellows, Rousseau believed that as societies become more sophisticated, the strongest and most intelligent members of the community gain an unnatural advantage over their weaker brethren, and that constitutions set up to rectify these imbalances through peace and justice in fact do nothing but perpetuate them. Rousseau's political and social arguments in the *Discourse* were a hugely influential denunciation of the social conditions of his time and one of the most revolutionary documents of the eighteenth-century. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, French (translation)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) is the author of numerous political and philosophical texts as well as entries on music for Diderot's *Encyclopédie* and the novels *La nouvelle*

HÃfÂ©loÃfÂ se and ÃfÂ mile.

This, the "Second Discourse" of Rousseau, is a must read for anyone interested in Western philosophy, politics or sociology. Rousseau explores the basis of inequality, and divides it into two fundamental elements: Natural Inequality - those components that are God-given, such as size, speed, health, latent intelligence. Societal Inequality - those components that are driven by the drive for more material goods, more control, and leisure. Rousseau notes the general happiness that simplicity brings, and that the evolution of civilization has exacerbated the inequalities of man. Rousseau also presages the writings of Darwin by touching in a scientific way on elements of evolution, social behaviors, and comparison of humanity and various wild species. Fascinating and thought provoking read.

A classic expose of how concentrated wealth oppresses human rights, how property rights led to inequality. It also advances the critical distinction between human nature (self-love and compassion) and a corrupt society's perversion of that nature (egoism). Some parts are not easy reading.

For the record.

A classic treatise on the emerging social, economic and political inequalities in 18th century France, which would ultimately lead to the French Revolution, the Fall of the French Monarchy and the Emergence of the French Republic.

Petty good book, read for my political theory class. Kindle edition was a better deal, plus I like the convenience of having it with me.

Item delivered on time, was as described

Great addition to my library.

Excellent product, fast delivery.

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