



Of the Social Contract and Other Political Writings

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

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A lively new translation of Rousseau's best-known work, accompanied by additional political writings

"Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains" are the famous opening words of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract*, a work of political philosophy that has stirred vigorous debate ever since its publication in 1762. Rejecting the view that anyone has a natural right to sovereignty, Rousseau argues instead for a pact—a "social contract"—that should exist among all the citizens of a state and that should be the source of governing power. From this premise, he goes on to consider issues of liberty and justice, arriving at a view of society that has seemed to some a blueprint for totalitarianism, to others a declaration of democratic principles.

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