

common sense thomas paine

common sense thomas paine remains one of the most influential pamphlets in the history of political thought, shaping public opinion and fueling the drive for American independence. This article explores the origins, content, and enduring legacy of Thomas Paine's "Common Sense," providing a thorough analysis of its impact on colonial America and its relevance today. Readers will discover the historical context that led Paine to write this seminal work, its main arguments, the reactions it provoked, and the ways in which it transformed the political landscape. The article will also discuss Paine's writing style, the pamphlet's distribution, and its place in American and global history. With well-organized sections and detailed insights, this guide is essential for anyone seeking to understand the significance of "Common Sense" by Thomas Paine.

- Historical Context of Common Sense
- Thomas Paine: The Author Behind the Pamphlet
- Key Arguments and Themes in Common Sense
- Reception and Impact on American Independence
- Paine's Writing Style and Rhetorical Techniques
- Distribution and Popularity of Common Sense
- Legacy and Modern Influence of Common Sense

Historical Context of Common Sense

Political Climate in Colonial America

Before the publication of "Common Sense," the American colonies were embroiled in mounting tensions with Great Britain. The aftermath of the French and Indian War left Britain in debt, leading to new taxes and laws imposed on the colonies. Acts such as the Stamp Act and Townshend Acts fueled widespread resentment and debates about rights, representation, and governance. Despite growing unrest, the idea of full independence was not yet mainstream among colonists.

The Need for a Revolutionary Voice

As conflicts escalated, colonial leaders sought persuasive arguments to rally support for independence. Many colonists remained loyal to the Crown or were uncertain about the prospects of self-government. The arrival of Thomas Paine and his compelling pamphlet provided clarity, direction,

and a powerful push toward the revolutionary cause.

- Escalation of British colonial policies
- Increasing frustration among colonists
- Search for strong leadership and vision
- Emergence of radical ideas and literature

Thomas Paine: The Author Behind the Pamphlet

Background and Motivations

Thomas Paine was an English-born political thinker, writer, and activist who arrived in America in 1774. With experience in journalism and advocacy, Paine was deeply influenced by Enlightenment principles and passionate about justice, equality, and liberty. His belief in the transformative power of reason and clear communication made him an ideal figure to articulate the case for American independence.

Paine's Vision for America

Paine envisioned a society built on democratic principles, free from hereditary monarchy and oppression. His perspective was shaped by years of observing social injustices and the potential for positive change through collective action. In "Common Sense," Paine's vision was bold, direct, and accessible, aiming to inspire ordinary people to embrace the revolutionary cause.

Key Arguments and Themes in Common Sense

Critique of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession

One of Paine's central arguments in "Common Sense" is his condemnation of monarchy and hereditary succession. He explains the irrational nature of kingship, its historical abuses, and the incompatibility of such systems with liberty and equality. Paine uses examples from history and philosophy to demonstrate that hereditary rule is unjust and contrary to common sense.

Advocacy for Independence

Paine forcefully argues for the necessity of American independence from Britain. He asserts that the colonies have outgrown the need for British governance and that continued allegiance only brings harm and conflict. Paine emphasizes the economic, social, and moral benefits of forming a new, self-governing nation.

Principles of Government and Society

In "Common Sense," Paine outlines his ideas about government, arguing for a system based on popular sovereignty and equal representation. He proposes a republic as the best form of government, one responsive to the will of the people and protective of their rights.

1. Monarchy is inherently corrupt and unjust
2. Independence is both practical and necessary
3. Republican government as the ideal model
4. Emphasis on natural rights and freedoms

Reception and Impact on American Independence

Public Response to Common Sense

Upon its release in January 1776, "Common Sense" became an instant sensation. The pamphlet was read and discussed widely, reaching audiences across all social strata. Its plain language and direct arguments resonated with farmers, merchants, and intellectuals alike, shifting the debate from reform to revolution.

Influence on Political Leaders and Decisions

The impact of "Common Sense" extended to the Continental Congress and prominent figures such as George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson. Paine's arguments helped solidify support for independence and contributed to the drafting and adoption of the Declaration of Independence later that year.

Paine's Writing Style and Rhetorical Techniques

Accessible Language and Structure

Paine's writing in "Common Sense" is notable for its clarity and accessibility. He avoids complex jargon and writes in a conversational tone, making his ideas understandable to the average reader. Paine's ability to distill complex political concepts into simple, relatable arguments was key to the pamphlet's success.

Use of Persuasion and Emotional Appeal

Paine employs rhetorical techniques such as analogy, repetition, and direct address to persuade readers. He appeals to emotions by highlighting the injustices suffered under British rule and the promise of a better future. Paine's passionate and reasoned case for independence inspired hope and action.

- Clear and direct language
- Logical structure of arguments
- Emotional and moral appeals
- Use of relatable examples

Distribution and Popularity of Common Sense

Printing and Circulation

"Common Sense" was printed in multiple editions and distributed throughout the colonies. Estimates suggest that over 100,000 copies were sold or circulated within the first few months—a remarkable feat for the time. Its widespread availability ensured that Paine's message reached remote towns and major cities alike.

Role of Pamphlets in the Revolution

Pamphlets like "Common Sense" were crucial tools for spreading revolutionary ideas. They allowed political writers to bypass traditional gatekeepers and communicate directly with the public. Paine's

pamphlet, in particular, set a standard for persuasive political writing and mass mobilization.

Legacy and Modern Influence of Common Sense

Enduring Relevance in Political Thought

The principles and arguments outlined in "Common Sense" continue to influence political discourse and democratic movements worldwide. Paine's advocacy for rights, equality, and representative government remains a touchstone for those seeking reform and justice.

Recognition in Education and Culture

"Common Sense" is studied in schools and universities as a foundational text in American history and literature. Its legacy is reflected in debates over authority, citizenship, and the role of government. Paine's pamphlet stands as a testament to the power of clear, passionate argumentation in shaping societies.

- Influenced the Declaration of Independence
- Inspired future generations of reformers
- Set standards for political communication
- Continues to be referenced in modern debates

Questions & Answers about common sense thomas paine

Q: What was the main purpose of "Common Sense" by Thomas Paine?

A: The main purpose of "Common Sense" was to persuade American colonists to support independence from Great Britain by presenting clear, logical, and emotional arguments against monarchy and advocating for a republican form of government.

Q: How did "Common Sense" impact the American Revolution?

A: "Common Sense" played a crucial role in shifting public opinion toward independence, inspiring widespread support for the revolutionary cause, and influencing the decisions of the Continental Congress.

Q: What are the key arguments presented in "Common Sense"?

A: The pamphlet argues against monarchy and hereditary succession, promotes the necessity and practicality of independence, and advocates for the establishment of a representative republic.

Q: Why was Thomas Paine's writing style important to the success of "Common Sense"?

A: Paine's clear, accessible, and direct writing style made complex political ideas understandable for a broad audience, enabling the pamphlet to reach and influence many colonists.

Q: How widely was "Common Sense" distributed in the colonies?

A: "Common Sense" was one of the most widely circulated pamphlets of its time, with over 100,000 copies distributed throughout the American colonies within a few months of publication.

Q: In what ways does "Common Sense" remain relevant today?

A: Its advocacy for democracy, rights, and equality continues to influence political thought and inspire movements for reform and justice in modern society.

Q: Did "Common Sense" directly influence the Declaration of Independence?

A: Yes, the ideas and arguments in "Common Sense" helped shape the discussions and language that were later used in the Declaration of Independence.

Q: What themes are emphasized in "Common Sense"?

A: Major themes include the rejection of monarchy, the promotion of natural rights, the need for independence, and the benefits of republican government.

Q: Who was the intended audience for "Common Sense"?

A: Paine wrote "Common Sense" for all American colonists, aiming to reach ordinary people as well as leaders, regardless of class or education.

Q: What legacy did Thomas Paine leave through "Common Sense"?

A: Paine's legacy includes his role in empowering citizens, shaping democratic principles, and demonstrating the power of persuasive political writing in effecting change.

Common Sense Thomas Paine

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Common Sense: Thomas Paine's Enduring Legacy

Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, a pamphlet published in 1776, wasn't just a piece of political writing; it was a cultural earthquake. This seemingly simple document ignited the flames of the American Revolution, persuading colonists to break away from British rule. But its impact stretches far beyond its historical context. This post delves into the enduring relevance of *Common Sense*, exploring its core arguments, its literary genius, and its lasting influence on political thought. We'll examine why it remains a compelling read even centuries later, and how Paine's simple yet powerful prose continues to resonate with readers today.

The Revolutionary Power of Simple Language

One of the key reasons for *Common Sense*'s success was its accessibility. Paine eschewed complex philosophical jargon, instead employing clear, concise language that resonated with the common person. This deliberate choice was a masterstroke. In a time when literacy wasn't universally widespread, Paine ensured his message could reach a broad audience, sparking a crucial shift in public opinion.

Targeting the Average Colonist: A Strategic Masterclass

Paine understood his audience. He didn't write for the elite; he wrote for the farmer, the shopkeeper, the everyday colonial citizen grappling with the implications of British rule. This focus on the common person was a radical departure from the often-obscure political treatises of the time, making his arguments instantly relatable and powerful.

The Power of Plain-Spoken Rhetoric: Breaking Down Complex Issues

Paine's brilliance lies not only in his accessibility but in his ability to dissect complex political concepts into easily digestible pieces. He masterfully explained the intricate relationship between Britain and the colonies, exposing the inherent flaws and injustices in the existing system. He framed the debate in simple terms, stripping away the veneer of legitimacy that had long shrouded British authority.

Core Arguments of Common Sense: A Blueprint for Independence

Common Sense wasn't just a call to arms; it presented a carefully constructed argument for independence, grounded in both practical and moral considerations.

The Absurdity of Monarchy: Challenging the Divine Right of Kings

Paine systematically dismantled the legitimacy of monarchy, arguing that hereditary rule was inherently flawed and unjust. He presented a compelling case for republicanism, advocating for a government based on the consent of the governed, a radical concept for its time.

The Economic Burden of British Rule: Highlighting the Practical Disadvantages

Paine highlighted the economic burdens imposed on the colonies by British rule, pointing out the unfair taxation and restrictive trade policies. He presented a pragmatic case for independence, arguing that economic self-determination was essential for the colonies' prosperity.

A Moral Imperative for Freedom: Appealing to the Principles of Liberty

Finally, Paine appealed to the colonists' sense of morality and justice. He framed the struggle for independence not merely as a political conflict but as a fight for fundamental human rights and liberties. This moral appeal was crucial in mobilizing widespread support for the cause of independence.

The Lasting Impact of Common Sense

The impact of Common Sense is undeniable. It's credited with playing a crucial role in galvanizing public support for the American Revolution, shifting the colonial mindset from loyal subjects to independent citizens.

A Foundation for American Political Thought: Shaping the Nation's Identity

The pamphlet's emphasis on republicanism, self-governance, and individual liberty became cornerstones of American political thought. It laid the groundwork for the Declaration of Independence and shaped the very foundation of the newly formed nation.

Inspiring Revolutions Worldwide: A Global Influence on Political Change

Beyond the American context, Common Sense's influence reverberated across the globe, inspiring revolutionary movements and shaping political discourse for centuries. Its emphasis on popular sovereignty and individual rights continues to inspire activists and reformers worldwide.

Conclusion

Thomas Paine's Common Sense remains a powerful testament to the enduring power of clear, concise writing and its ability to effect profound social and political change. Its simple yet profound arguments continue to resonate, reminding us of the importance of self-governance, individual

liberty, and the power of the people to shape their own destiny. The pamphlet's accessibility and enduring relevance ensure its place as a landmark achievement in both political and literary history, a document that continues to shape our understanding of freedom and self-determination.

FAQs

1. Was Thomas Paine a radical? Yes, by the standards of his time, Paine was considered a radical. His advocacy for republicanism and his outspoken criticism of monarchy were highly controversial.
2. What was the immediate impact of *Common Sense*? The pamphlet sold incredibly well, reaching a massive audience and significantly swaying public opinion in favor of independence. It's widely considered a catalyst for the American Revolution.
3. Did *Common Sense* influence the Declaration of Independence? There's strong evidence suggesting that the Declaration's authors were heavily influenced by Paine's ideas, particularly his emphasis on natural rights and self-governance.
4. What is the significance of Paine's use of simple language? His accessible style ensured that his message reached a broad audience, transcending class and literacy barriers, making his ideas accessible to the average colonist.
5. Is *Common Sense* still relevant today? Absolutely. Its core themes – self-governance, individual liberty, and the pursuit of justice – remain central to political discourse worldwide, making it a timeless and relevant work.

common sense thomas paine: *Common Sense* Thomas Paine, 1791

common sense thomas paine: *Common Sense* Thomas Paine, 2017-11-01 *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine Fight for Freedom! Thomas Paine's pamphlet was first written and distributed in 1775, and read aloud in meeting places and taverns. Calling the American Colonists to fight for their own representative government, this text made an impassioned plea for independence. *Common Sense* was an immediate sensation in Philadelphia and across the thirteen colonies. With clear and reasoned style, Paine was the first to advocate for war on the behalf of an idea--launching the American project and distinct American political identity. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* maintains its readability and passion for Americans today.

common sense thomas paine: *Common Sense, The Rights of Man and Other Essential Writings of Thomas Paine* Thomas Paine, 2003-07-01 A volume of Thomas Paine's most essential works, showcasing one of American history's most eloquent proponents of democracy. Upon publication, Thomas Paine's modest pamphlet *Common Sense* shocked and spurred the founding American colonies of 1776 to action. It demanded freedom from Britain—when even the most fervent patriots were only advocating tax reform. Paine's daring prose paved the way for the Declaration of Independence and, consequently, the Revolutionary War. For “without the pen of Paine,” as John Adams said, “the sword of Washington would have been wielded in vain.” Later, his impassioned defense of the French Revolution, *Rights of Man*, caused a worldwide sensation. Napoleon, for one, claimed to have slept with a copy under his pillow, recommending that “a statue of gold should be erected to [Paine] in every city in the universe.” Here in one volume, these two complete works are joined with selections from Paine's other major essays, “The Crisis,” “The Age of Reason,” and

"Agrarian Justice." Includes a Foreword by Jack Fruchtman Jr. and an Introduction by Sidney Hook

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense Thomas Paine, 2020-02 Common Sense is the timeless classic that inspired the Thirteen Colonies to fight for and declare their independence from Great Britain in the summer of 1776. Written by famed political theorist Thomas Paine, this pamphlet boldly challenged the authority of the British government and the royal monarchy to rule over the American colonists. By using plain language and a reasoned style, Paine chose to forego the philosophical and Latin references made popular by the Enlightenment era writers. As a result, Paine united average citizens and political leaders behind the central idea of independence and transformed the tenor of the colonists' argument against the British. As the best-selling American title of all time, Common Sense has been eloquently described by historian Gordon S. Wood as the most incendiary and popular pamphlet of the entire revolutionary era. Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was an English-American political activist, philosopher, and revolutionary. As one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, he authored the most influential pamphlets at the start of the American Revolution and inspired the colonists to declare independence from Great Britain in 1776. His ideas reflected Enlightenment-era rhetoric of transnational human rights and the separation of church and state. He has been called a corset-maker by trade, a journalist by profession, and a propagandist by inclination.

common sense thomas paine: *Common Sense* Sophia Rosenfeld, 2011 Common sense has always been a cornerstone of American politics. In 1776, Tom Paine's vital pamphlet with that title sparked the American Revolution. And today, common sense—the wisdom of ordinary people, knowledge so self-evident that it is beyond debate—remains a powerful political ideal, utilized alike by George W. Bush's aw-shucks articulations and Barack Obama's down-to-earth reasonableness. But far from self-evident is where our faith in common sense comes from and how its populist logic has shaped modern democracy. *Common Sense: A Political History* is the first book to explore this essential political phenomenon. The story begins in the aftermath of England's Glorious Revolution, when common sense first became a political ideal worth struggling over. Sophia Rosenfeld's accessible and insightful account then wends its way across two continents and multiple centuries, revealing the remarkable individuals who appropriated the old, seemingly universal idea of common sense and the new strategic uses they made of it. Paine may have boasted that common sense is always on the side of the people and opposed to the rule of kings, but Rosenfeld demonstrates that common sense has been used to foster demagoguery and exclusivity as well as popular sovereignty. She provides a new account of the transatlantic Enlightenment and the Age of Revolutions, and offers a fresh reading on what the eighteenth century bequeathed to the political ferment of our own time. Far from commonsensical, the history of common sense turns out to be rife with paradox and surprise.

common sense thomas paine: The Writings of Thomas Paine Thomas Paine, 1894

common sense thomas paine: *The Elementary Common Sense of Thomas Paine* Mark Wilensky, 2007-12-05 An easy-to-understand adaptation of Paine's revolutionary pamphlet, plus insights on colonial history, life, and culture. The Declaration of Independence may have severed political bonds with England, but it was Thomas Paine's dynamic pamphlet, "Common Sense," that conceptualized the idea of unity and freedom months before Thomas Jefferson put pen to parchment. Paine's publication energized colonists to embark on a long and bloody war that imperiled their livelihoods and dismantled their cultural identity—all in the hope of creating a new nation constructed upon the concepts of liberty and independence. Although many know of Tom Paine and his famous "Common Sense," the historic pamphlet has not been readily accessible or widely read. But it needs to be, because it is one of our nation's most important founding documents. Now, fifth-grade history teacher Mark Wilensky rectifies this oversight with *The Elementary Common Sense of Thomas Paine: An Interactive Adaptation for All Ages*. This remarkable interactive version is adapted for young and old alike and makes Paine's words and the concepts he espoused widely available to everyone. This book offers a rich array of colonial history sprinkled with audio, video, and text graphics linked to a dynamic online website. This adaptation includes the original "Common

Sense," a new adapted version in plain language everyone can understand today, an extensive chronology of important pre-revolutionary events leading up to the publication of Paine's pamphlet, and adapted versions of the Olive Branch Petition, A Proclamation For Suppressing Rebellion And Sedition, and the Boston Port Act. Wilensky also includes a wide variety of insights on colonial coins and mercantilism, and many humorous illustrations designed to convey the important concepts of independence and liberty. Instructors and parents will especially appreciate Wilensky's decision to include supplementary materials such as teaching plans for classroom and home-schooling use. These include a wide variety of activities to engage students, all based on National Curriculum Standards. Colonial America was a continent with multiple cultures and customs spanning vast geographic distances. Tom Paine's amazing persuasive essay "Common Sense" unified these seemingly conflicting characteristics into the most remarkable nation ever founded in the history of mankind. The Elementary Common Sense of Thomas Paine will reignite the ardor of our Founding Fathers for a new generation.

common sense thomas paine: The Daily Thomas Paine Thomas Paine, 2020-03-08 Thomas Paine was the spark that ignited the American Revolution. More than just a founding father, he was a verbal bomb-thrower, a rationalist, and a rebel. In his influential pamphlets *Common Sense* and *The American Crisis*, Paine codified both colonial outrage and the intellectual justification for independence, arguing consistently and convincingly for Enlightenment values and the power of the people. Today, we are living in times that, as Paine famously said, "try men's souls." Whatever your politics, if you're seeking to understand the political world we live in, where better to look than Paine? *The Daily Thomas Paine* offers a year's worth of pithy and provocative quotes from this quintessentially American figure. Editor Edward G. Gray argues that we are living in a moment that Thomas Paine might recognize—or perhaps more precisely, a moment desperate for someone whose rhetoric can ignite a large-scale social and political transformation. Paine was a master of political rhetoric, from the sarcastic insult to the diplomatic aperçu, and this book offers a sleek and approachable sampler of some of the sharpest bits from his oeuvre. As Paine himself says in the entry for January 20: "The present state of America is truly alarming to every man who is capable of reflexion." *The Daily Thomas Paine* should prove equally incendiary and inspirational for contemporary readers with an eye for politics, even those who prefer the tweet to the pamphlet.

common sense thomas paine: The 100 Best Nonfiction Books of All Time Robert McCrum, 2018 Beginning in 1611 with the King James Bible and ending in 2014 with Elizabeth Kolbert's 'The Sixth Extinction', this extraordinary voyage through the written treasures of our culture examines universally-acclaimed classics such as Pepys' 'Diaries', Charles Darwin's 'The Origin of Species', Stephen Hawking's 'A Brief History of Time' and a whole host of additional works --

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense and Selected Works of Thomas Paine Thomas Paine, 2014-05-01 The pen is mightier than the sword, and this pen helped bring about the American Revolution. Thomas Paine is one of history's most renowned thinkers and was indispensable to both the American and French revolutions. The three works included, *Common Sense*, *The Rights of Man*, and *The Age of Reason*, are among his most famous publications. Paine is probably best known for his hugely popular pamphlet, *Common Sense*, which swayed public opinion in favor of American independence from England. *The Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason* further advocated for universal human rights, a republican instead of monarchical government, and truth and reason in politics. The works of this moral visionary, whose ideas are as relevant today as ever, are now available as part of the Word Cloud Classics series, providing a stylish and affordable addition to any library.

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense Christopher Scott, 2018-11-26 *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine is the most compelling case for freedom ever made. It's the most influential book in American History. It's not just a book for Americans but a case for humanity and it's ideas are as relevant today as ever. There's just one problem. Published in 1776 it was written in Old English and it could very well be another language for someone trying to read it today. The original manuscript is nearly impossible to understand. For the first time ever it's been translated into modern English so

that everyone can read and understand it. It's a book that offers nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments and commonsense. Some people won't agree with the principles, but it doesn't make them any less true today than they were when it was originally written.

common sense thomas paine: The Political Philosophy of Thomas Paine Jack Fruchtman Jr., 2009-07-30 This concise, insightful study explores the sources and impact of one of the early republic's most influential minds. An Englishman by birth, an American by choice and necessity, Thomas Paine advocated ideas about rights, equality, democracy, and liberty that were far advanced beyond those of his American compatriots. His seminal works, *Common Sense* and *the Rights of Man*, were rallying cries for the American and French Revolutions. More than any other eighteenth-century political writer and activist, Paine defies easy categorization. A man of contrasts and contradictions, Paine was as much a believer in the power of reason as he was in a benevolent deity. He was at once liberal and conservative, a Quaker who was not a pacifist, and an inherently gifted writer who was convinced he was always right. Jack Fruchtman Jr. analyzes Paine's radical thought both in the context of his time and as a blueprint for the future development of republican government. His systematic approach identifies the themes of signal importance to Paine's political thought, demonstrating especially how crucial religion and God were to the development and expression of his political ideals.

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense, and Plain Truth Thomas Paine, 1776

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense Thomas Paine, 1986 New, Unabridged on 3 CD's; Shrinkwrapped. Narrated by George Vafiadis. The work that George Washington said helped spark the Revolutionary War.

common sense thomas paine: 46 Pages Scott Liell, 2004-03-03 Includes complete text of Thomas Paine's *Common sense*--Cover.

common sense thomas paine: Glenn Beck's Common Sense Glenn Beck, 2009-06-16 Glenn Beck, the New York Times bestselling author of *The Great Reset*, revisits Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. In any era, great Americans inspire us to reach our full potential. They know with conviction what they believe within themselves. They understand that all actions have consequences. And they find commonsense solutions to the nation's problems. One such American, Thomas Paine, was an ordinary man who changed the course of history by penning *Common Sense*, the concise 1776 masterpiece in which, through extraordinarily straightforward and indisputable arguments, he encouraged his fellow citizens to take control of America's future—and, ultimately, her freedom. Nearly two and a half centuries later, those very freedoms once again hang in the balance. And now, Glenn Beck revisits Paine's powerful treatise with one purpose: to galvanize Americans to see past government's easy solutions, two-party monopoly, and illogical methods and take back our great country.

common sense thomas paine: Revolutionary Characters Gordon S. Wood, 2006-05-18 In this brilliantly illuminating group portrait of the men who came to be known as the Founding Fathers, the incomparable Gordon Wood has written a book that seriously asks, What made these men great? and shows us, among many other things, just how much character did in fact matter. The life of each—Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Hamilton, Madison, Paine—is presented individually as well as collectively, but the thread that binds these portraits together is the idea of character as a lived reality. They were members of the first generation in history that was self-consciously self-made men who understood that the arc of lives, as of nations, is one of moral progress.

common sense thomas paine: *Thomas Paine and the Idea of Human Rights* Robert Lamb, 2015-05-28 An introduction to and analytical reconstruction of Thomas Paine's political philosophy and his account of human rights.

common sense thomas paine: *Common Sense* Thomas Paine, 2000-11-17 Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* is one of the most important and often assigned primary documents of the Revolutionary era. This edition of the pamphlet is unique in its inclusion of selections from Paine's other writings from 1775 and 1776 — additional essays that contextualize *Common Sense* and

provide unusual insight on both the writer and the cause for which he wrote. The volume introduction includes coverage of Paine's childhood and early adult years in England, arguing for the significance of personal experience, environment, career, and religion in understanding Paine's influential political writings. The volume also includes a glossary, a chronology, 12 illustrations, a selected bibliography, and questions for consideration.

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense Thomas Paine, 2017-10-06 Common Sense is a pamphlet written by Thomas Paine in 1775-76 advocating independence from Great Britain to people in the Thirteen Colonies. Written in clear and persuasive prose, Paine marshaled moral and political arguments to encourage common people in the Colonies to fight for egalitarian government. It was published anonymously on January 10, 1776, at the beginning of the American Revolution, and became an immediate sensation. It was sold and distributed widely and read aloud at taverns and meeting places. In proportion to the population of the colonies at that time (2.5 million), it had the largest sale and circulation of any book published in American history. As of 2006, it remains the all-time best selling American title.

common sense thomas paine: Thomas Paine Craig Nelson, 2007-09-04 A fresh new look at the Enlightenment intellectual who became the most controversial of America's founding fathers. Despite his being a founder of both the United States and the French Republic, the creator of the phrase United States of America, and the author of Common Sense, Thomas Paine is the least well known of America's founding fathers. This edifying biography by Craig Nelson traces Paine's path from his years as a London mechanic, through his emergence as the voice of revolutionary fervor on two continents, to his final days in the throes of dementia. By acquainting us as never before with this complex and combative genius, Nelson rescues a giant from obscurity-and gives us a fascinating work of history.

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense and Other Writings Thomas Paine, 2005 Thomas Paine was an important leader in the fight for independence from England. His pamphlet Common Sense stirred the populace to join the fight.

common sense thomas paine: Thomas Paine and the Promise of America Harvey J. Kaye, 2007-04-15 This acclaimed biography "provides the most comprehensive assessment yet of [the Founding Father's] controversial reputation" (Joseph J. Ellis, The New York Times Book Review). After leaving London for Philadelphia in 1774, Thomas Paine became one of the most influential political writers of the modern world and the greatest radical of a radical age. Through writings like Common Sense, he not only turned America's colonial rebellion into a revolutionary war but, as Harvey J. Kaye demonstrates, articulated an American identity charged with exceptional purpose and promise. Thomas Paine and the Promise of America fiercely traces the revolutionary spirit that runs through American history—and demonstrates how that spirit is rooted in Paine's legacy. With passion and wit, Kaye shows how Paine turned Americans into radicals—and how we have remained radicals ever since.

common sense thomas paine: Common Sense Thomas Paine, 2021-03-22 A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason. — Thomas Paine, Common Sense Throughout history, some books have changed the world. They have transformed the way we see ourselves-and each other. They have inspired debate, dissent, war and revolution. They have enlightened, outraged, provoked and comforted. They have enriched lives-and destroyed them. Common Sense is a pamphlet written by Thomas Paine in 1775-76 that inspired people in the Thirteen Colonies to declare and fight for independence from Great Britain in the summer of 1776. six months before the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Paine's Common Sense was a radical and impassioned call for America to free itself from British rule and set up an independent republican government. Savagely attacking hereditary kingship and aristocratic institutions, Paine urged a new beginning for his adopted country in which personal freedom and social equality would be upheld and economic and cultural progress encouraged. His pamphlet was the first to speak directly to a mass audience-it went through fifty-six editions within a

year of publication-and its assertive and often caustic style both embodied the democratic spirit he advocated, and converted thousands of citizens to the cause of American independence. All time American History bestseller!

common sense thomas paine: *Common Sense for the 21st Century* Roger Hallam, 2019 What can we do to avert catastrophe and avoid extinction? The political class won't save us. According to Roger Hallam, real change comes from ordinary people breaking the law. In *Common Sense for the 21st Century*, Hallam explains why mass disruption, mass arrests, and mass sacrifice are necessary and details how to carry out acts of civil disobedience effectively, respectfully and non-violently. He bypasses contemporary political theory and takes his inspiration from Thomas Paine, the pragmatic 18th century revolutionary whose pamphlet *Common Sense* sparked the American Revolution.-- Back cover.

common sense thomas paine: The Thomas Paine Reader Thomas Paine, 2013-07-18 This major collection demonstrates the extent to which Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was an inspiration to the Americans in their struggle for independence, a passionate supporter of the French Revolution and perhaps the outstanding English radical writer of his age. It contains all of Paine's major works including *The Rights of Man*, his groundbreaking defence of the revolutionary cause in France, *Common Sense*, which won thousands over to the side of the American rebels, and the first part of *The Age of Reason* (Part One), a ferocious attack on Christianity. The shorter pieces - on capital punishment, social reform and the abolition of slavery - also confirm the great versatility and power of this master of democratic prose.

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common sense thomas paine: Common Sense and Other Writings Thomas Paine, J. M. Opal, 2012 Thomas Paine often declared himself a citizen of the world. This Norton Critical Edition presents Paine and his writing within the transatlantic and global context of the revolutionary ideas and actions of his time. Thomas Paine's loyalties were with universal and self-evident principles rather than with a particular group or nation, and it is this dimension that informed his most important works. This Norton Critical Edition shows how Paine's fury at the British Empire, including its injustices to South Asians and Africans, shaped his first best seller, Common Sense, and how his direct involvement with the French Revolution pushed his ideas toward a unique form of democratic radicalism. Together with his rejection of organized religion, Paine's radicalism resulted in his being one of the most hated men in both monarchical Britain and republican America. This volume includes J. M. Opal's introduction, Thomas Paine and the Revolutionary Enlightenment, 1770s-90s, which provides essential biographical and historical details across three tumultuous decades. Paine's most important works—from Common Sense (1776) through Agrarian Justice (1796)—are reprinted and are accompanied by explanatory annotations. Supporting materials include a wide range of documents from the turbulent years following the publication of both Common Sense and the Declaration of Independence. These include Pennsylvania's gradual emancipation statute of the 1780s, an ex-slave's impassioned call for revolutionary violence against European imperialists and masters, and a British conservative's witty rejoinder to Paine's vision of a brave new world. Four major interpretations of Paine's work are provided by Nathan R. Perl-Rosenthal, Robert A. Ferguson, Gary Kates, and Gregory Claeys. A Selected Bibliography is also included.

common sense thomas paine: *Common Sense by Thomas Paine Illustrated Edition* Thomas Paine, 2021-04-22 Thomas Paine published Common Sense in 1776, a time when America was a hotbed of revolution. The pamphlet, which called for America's political freedom, sold more than 150,000 copies in three months. Paine not only spurred his fellow Americans to action but soon came to symbolize the spirit of the Revolution itself. His persuasive pieces, written so elegantly, spoke to the hearts and minds of all those fighting for freedom from England.

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and tracts condemning the slave trade. In 1775, as hostilities between Britain and the colonies intensified, Paine wrote Common Sense to encourage the colonies to break the British exploitative hold and fight for independence. The little booklet of 50 pages was published January 10, 1776 and sold a half-million copies, approximately equal to 75 million copies today.

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