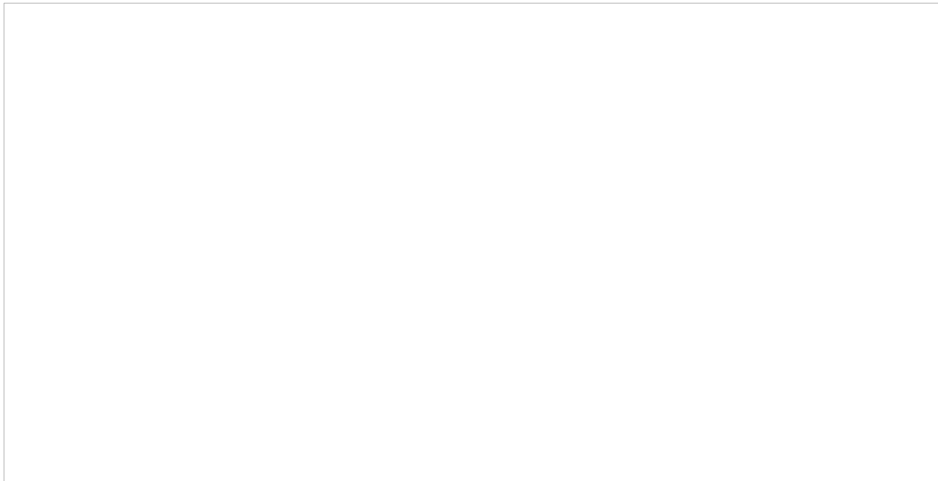


[PDF] Thomas Paine's Common Sense: The Call To Independence

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Description:

"These are the times that try men's souls," begins Thomas Paine's first Crisis paper, the impassioned pamphlet that helped ignite the American Revolution. Published in Philadelphia in January of 1776, *Common Sense* sold 150,000 copies almost immediately. A powerful piece of propaganda, it attacked the idea of a hereditary monarchy, dismissed the chance for reconciliation with England, and outlined the economic benefits of independence while espousing equality of rights among citizens. Paine fanned a flame that was already burning, but many historians argue that his work unified dissenting voices and persuaded patriots that the American Revolution was not only necessary, but an epochal step in world history. --This text refers to an alternate edition.

Review "Edward Larkin's new edition of *Common Sense* will be welcomed by readers. With a lively and detailed introduction, thorough scholarly notes, and a representative selection of the contemporaneous responses it provoked, this should become the

definitive new edition of Paine's classic tract." (Richard Boyd)

"The big problem with Paine is that current readers have trouble seeing why his ideas did not seem so common-sensical to eighteenth-century people. Larkin addresses this problem with supplementary texts that focus on the debate over independence in America; along with his interesting and approachable introduction, the combination makes for the best edition of Paine's Common Sense available." (Daniel Vickers)

"There are many fine editions of this indispensable American text. But this one is richer and more rewarding than the others. It invites readers to encounter Common Sense in the fullness of its historical setting. And as it does, it makes plain how utterly Tom Paine towered above all other Revolutionary writers." (Michael W. Zuckerman)

"Edward Larkin's new edition of Tom Paine's Common Sense will be a boon to teachers and students. It thoughtfully contextualizes Paine's pamphlet while highlighting the singularity of his voice. Most importantly, it will aid students in placing Common Sense in that absolutely central eighteenth-century culture war: the beginning of the unfinished argument over modern democracy." (Michael Meranze) --Michael Meranze -
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His hatred for Paine, who he called the "disastrous meteor" of democracy, clouded his account of the period. It would seem that Maier falls under the same prejudice. Others of the time support Adams' opinion of the importance of Common Sense in producing an about-face in the attitude toward independence. Only the radical call to revolution in Thomas Paine's Common Sense could turn these disputes into a cry for Independence. The obvious explanation for not condemning the monarchial system in the Declaration is that they were not the proper forum. Even Paine, in his outline of the Declaration in Common Sense, leaves no room for an attack on monarchy. That is the political philosophy behind writing the Declaration, but not its content. How did Thomas Paine's pamphlet Common Sense convince reluctant Americans to abandon the goal of reconciliation with Britain and accept that separation from Britain was the only option for preserving their liberty? Understanding. By January 1776, the American colonies were in open rebellion against Britain. Some argue that Common Sense said nothing new, that it simply put the call-to-war in fiery street language that rallied the common people. But this trivializes Paine's accomplishment. He did have a new message in Common Sense: an ultimatum. Give up reconciliation now, or forever lose the chance for independence. If we fail to act, we're self-deceiving cowards condemning our children to tyranny and cheating the world of a beacon of liberty. Thomas Paine published Common Sense in January 1776 support of the Patriot cause. Using clear, plain language, Paine rallied the colonists to support the break from Britain. He explained, "I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so." In arguing for American independence, Paine denounced the monarchy and argued that people are born in to a state of equality. An advocate of natural rights theory, Paine claimed that