



The Portable Enlightenment Reader (Portable Library)

By Isaac Kramnick

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The Age of Enlightenment of the 18th century, also called the Age of Reason, was so named for an intellectual movement that shook the foundations of Western civilization. In championing radical ideas such as individual liberty and an empirical appraisal of the universe through rational inquiry and natural experience, Enlightenment philosophers in Europe and America planted the seeds for modern liberalism, cultural humanism, science and technology, and laissez-faire Capitalism. This volume brings together works from this era, with more than 100 selections from a range of sources. It includes examples by Kant, Diderot, Voltaire, Newton, Rousseau, Locke, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, and Paine that demonstrate the pervasive impact of Enlightenment views on philosophy and epistemology as well as on political, social, and economic institutions.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

The Age of Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, also called the Age of Reason, was so named for an exultant intellectual movement that shook the foundations of Western civilization. In championing radical ideas such as individual liberty and an empirical appraisal of the universe through rational inquiry and natural experience, Enlightenment philosophers in Europe and America planted the seeds for modern liberalism, cultural humanism, science and technology, and laissez-faire capitalism. This volume brings together the era's classic works, with more than a hundred selections from a broad range of sources - including works by Kant, Diderot, Voltaire, Newton, Rousseau, Locke, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, and Paine - that demonstrate the pervasive impact of Enlightenment views on philosophy and epistemology as well as on political, social, and economic institutions. Included are seminal discourses on science and religion, on the social contract, on the equality (and inequality) of the sexes and the races, and on economics and markets, as well as homages to nature and sexual pleasure, and poetry and opera librettos that embody the movement's social ideals.

About the Author

Isaac Kramnick was born in 1938 and educated at Harvard University, where he received a B.A. degree in 1959 and a Ph.D. in 1965, and at Peterhouse, Cambridge. He has taught at Harvard, Brandeis, Yale and Cornell, where he is now Professor of Government. He is married to Miriam Brody Kramnick and lives in Ithaca, New York. Among his publications are **Bolingbroke and His Circle**, **The Rage of Edmund Burke** and numerous articles on eighteenth century topics. He has edited William Godwin's **Enquiry Concerning Political Justice**, **The Federalist Papers** by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay and, with Michael Foot, **The Thomas Paine Reader** for the Penguin Classics. Most recently he is the author, with Barry Sheerman, MP, of **Laski: A Lift on the Left**.

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