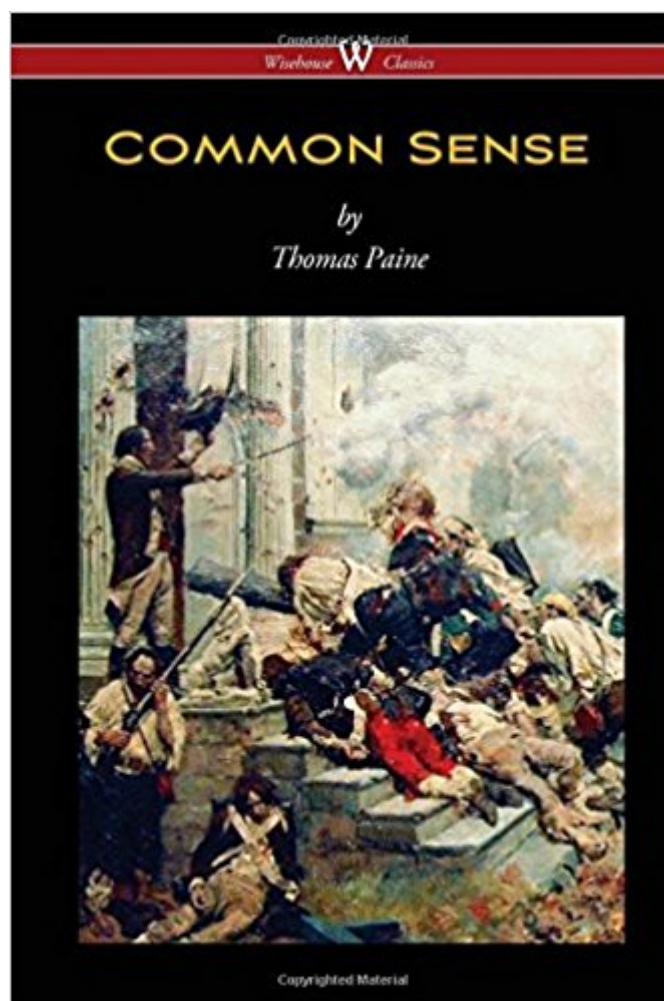


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Common Sense (Wisehouse Classics Edition)



Synopsis

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. The pamphlet explained the advantages of and the need for immediate independence in clear, simple language. 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. Washington had it read to all his troops, which at the time had surrounded the British army in Boston. 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 presented the American colonists with an argument for freedom from British rule at a time when the question of whether or not to seek independence was the central issue of the day. Paine wrote and reasoned in a style that common people understood. Forgoing the philosophical and Latin references used by Enlightenment era writers, he structured COMMON SENSE as if it were a sermon, and relied on Biblical references to make his case to the people. He connected independence with common dissenting Protestant beliefs as a means to present a distinctly American political identity. Historian Gordon S. Wood described COMMON SENSE as "the most incendiary and popular pamphlet of the entire revolutionary era".

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Customer Reviews

"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 Paperback edition.

Paine is one of those who proved the pen is mightier than the sword. Included here are several of the writings that forged the spirit of our nation, including Common Sense, The Crisis, The Rights of Man, The Age of Reason, and Other Pamphlets, Articles, and Letters. Note that two new Paine biographies have been recently published (LJ 11/15/94 and LJ 1/95). Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

This is obligatory reading if you want to understand the events that lead to the independence of the United States. Thomas Paine in clear language advocates for separation between America and the English crown with clear justification for the pros and well-thought arguments against the cons. Beyond the historical context, which is already remarkable by itself, this can be seen as a masterpiece of political discourse (the King of England would probably had called it "propaganda"). It doesn't take long to read this book and it's worth every minute of doing it.

I am a student of Revolutionary history and with it being election time, I figured it would be a good time to read this. I found it enjoyable to see how he makes his points considering the time period in which they lived. A pleasant enlightening read. I think this work should be on all Presidential candidates must read list to qualify.

This book is absolutely tremendous, and it's relevancy is shocking. In today's day and age, "Common Sense" should be a mandated read for every government official/employee/etc. across all levels, as Washington lacks any trace of it and has lost sight of our Founding Fathers' vision for America. I don't want to get into detail on any specifics, because 1) Thomas Paine's archaic writing techniques possesses some sort of sanctity that begs no adulteration by way of paraphrase or

summary under concern of misstatement/misrepresentation; and 2) the reader needs to experience the fullness of the text themselves so as to fully grasp Thomas Paine's - well... - pain. Please, at only \$2.70, buy a copy and gain a firsthand look at what sorts of basic but timeless principles this country was founded upon and why this matters. I'm sure if the imperialistic incumbent could, he would have every single copy of this text burned at once. Get your hands on it while you can.

Fantastic for learning about ideas behind the formation of our country. Also very inspiring given our current political tumult.

This volume of Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" is an important primary document and had proven itself invaluable to understanding the feelings of the colonist at that time. Paine's writes with a veracity and vivacity that is awe inspiring. Poignant, simple, yet deceptively elegant, Thomas Paine lays out the argument --both fiscal and militaristic -- for declaring independence. Now, more than ever, is this book needed: to be read, to be studied, to be understood. I cannot recommend this book highly enough.

Common Sense is one of the greatest articles of argumentation ever written. Paine was the finest pamphleteer of his age and was able to turn the discontents of the colonists and, especially, the intellectual leaders of the revolutionary movement into arguments that were easily understood by ordinary colonials and which inspired them to rally to the cause of independence. I first read Common Sense more than fifty years ago and remember well being impressed with Paine's ability to carry arguments and to anticipate those of his opponents before his tract even hit the street. Over the course of my lifetime, I was inspired by the author and became a pamphleteer of sorts myself. I always told my colleagues that I wanted to become a poor man's Tom Paine. But after reading the piece once again, I realize that almost all who aspire to follow in his footsteps, if not fill his shoes, are doomed to become but very poor copies of the original. Other reviewers have noted the fluidity of his writing; it reads as simply, directly and forcefully today as it must have nearly a quarter of a millennium ago. Obviously, one did not have to be a great reader to be swayed by the force of Paine's words or to be inspired to the side of those wishing to throw off the English yoke. I was struck by echoes of Paine in many great American speeches that were running through my mind as I read. A number of quotes from Robert F. Kennedy seemed to have been directly inspired by Common Sense, and I hastily looked them up and offer these two for your consideration: "It is not enough to understand, or to see clearly. The future will be shaped in the arena of human activity, by

those willing to commit their minds and their bodies to the task." "All of us might wish at times that we lived in a more tranquil world, but we don't. And if our times are difficult and perplexing, so are they challenging and filled with opportunity." The Declaration of Independence itself is a direct offspring of this great tract. Jefferson and the others charged with developing the document were well aware of Paine and had the opportunity to evaluate his words and to use his methods in creating our declaration, and this takes nothing away from their genius. This is a document that can be read in short order, and it is free at the Kindle Store. How can you say no to giving it a try?

He keeps pounding away with logic about how kings are worthless and how England shouldn't rule the colonies and how they have to insist upon independence and right away. He outlines the new kind of government. His expressions and wording brought me a few laughs actually. He has to make some ridiculous arguments that address belief in God. For example, he asks why any religious person could argue that a creator put America and England so far apart and made them different sizes so the smaller could rule over the larger. Such contemplation is unintelligent to my mind, and I think Paine knew this but he had to talk in such silly terms back then. He seems to be teasing Christians at the end. Finally, he is emphatic about the absolute necessity of having a total separation of church and state for the benefit of everyone.

good arguments to support separating from England. Uses very high English; it was a challenge to stay with his line of thought. I kept thinking that he surely must have talked over the heads of the average reader at that time. But certainly logical and systematic progress to explain why it's a superior idea to leave British rule. I teach citizenship classes, and it gave me a little more insight to how the process all happened, and how difficult a decision it was

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