



Jean-Jacques Rousseau

The Will of the People  
France, 1762

**Childhood:**

Rousseau’s mom died when he was born. When Rousseau was 10 years old, his dad left Jean-Jacques. His uncle tried to raise him, but at age 15, Jean-Jacques ran away from home.

He soon found a rich widow to take care of him. (He was 15 and she was 28.) He stayed with her for thirteen years and then left her. (He was 28; she was 41.)



Rousseau wanted to be a serious musician. Instead, over the next 20 years, he worked odd jobs – servant, tutor, music teacher.

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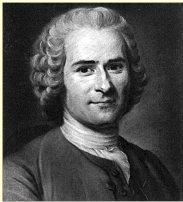
**Life in Paris:**

Rousseau went to Paris to seek fame and fortune. There, he met French philosophers who discussed the social order. Rousseau discovered two things about himself:



Les Charmettes, the house where Rousseau lived with Mme de Warens in 1735-6, now a museum dedicated to Rousseau.

- 1) He hated the social order of things.
- 2) He loved to say things for their **shock value**.



He entered an essay contest. His essay attacked the arts and sciences for “corrupting” humanity. This was shocking. Ever since ancient Greece, philosophers had argued that the arts and sciences had civilized humanity.

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But...Paris loved it! He won the essay prize and went on to fame and fortune as an author.

In every book he wrote, Rousseau attacked French society and all its institutions. He was forever criticizing French laws, French government, education, business and religion. This reminds me of someone we have talked about before...??

**The End of Reason:**

Enlightenment philosophers used reason. Rousseau threw reason out the window. He relied on emotions and passions. He believed in the “Will of the People!” Whatever the people wanted, they should get.

**PREDICT:**

During the French Revolution, what did the people want?  
Hint: It’s a machine.

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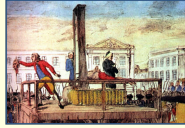
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The Guillotine!

The French Revolution was bloody. The Paris crowd used the guillotine. They beheaded their political enemies – usually the nobility.




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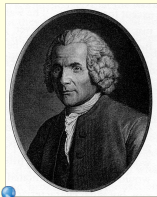
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Quotations of Rousseau  
1-10



Locke and Rousseau: State of Nature  
and the Social Compact  
6-15

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