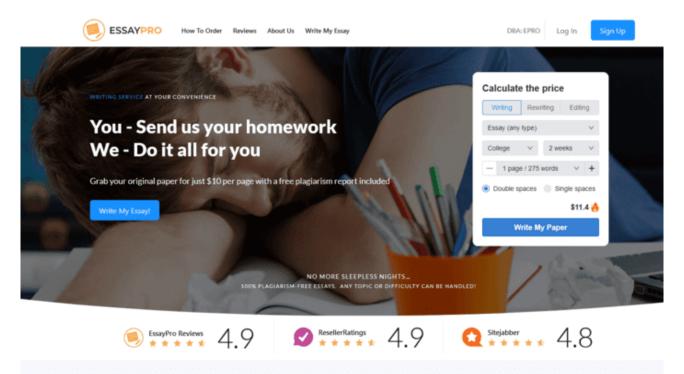
## The Abolition of Man by C.S. Lewis



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The Abolition of Man by C.S. Lewis

The Abolition of Man is perhaps the best defense of natural law to be published in the twentieth century. The book is outstanding not because its ideas are original, but because it presents so clearly the common sense of the subject, brilliantly encapsulating the Western natural law tradition in all its Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian glory. Interestingly, Lewis' defense of objective morality here resonates not only with ideas from the giants of Western thought (including Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas), but also draws on the wisdom of the East, including Confucius and the sages of Hinduism.

In "The Abolition of Man" C.S. Lewis developed three lectures entitled "Men without Chests", "The Way", and "The Abolition of Man". In them he set out to attack and confute what he saw as the errors of his age. He started by quoting some fashionable lunacy from an educationalists' textbook, from which he developed a general attack on moral subjectivism. In his second lecture he argued against various contemporary isms, which purported to replace traditional objective morality. His final lecture, "The Abolition of Man", which also provided the title of the book published the following year, was a sustained attack on hard-line scientific anti-humanism.

The first essay, "Men without Chests," indicted the modern attempt to debunk objective virtues and <u>sentiments</u>. According to Lewis, traditional moral theorists believed that virtues such as ...

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the dictates of conscience and by the constituted order of things in nature. That is why, all that being so, "we have cause to be uneasy", because faced with this Law (Tao) of God, with Absolute Goodness, and demands therein, we see we that we have "all sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

When we take some time to ponder the meanings of The Abolition of Man and its writings, we see that Lewis' essays were not new ideas at all. In the contrary, they were reminders of what man has intrinsically known since

the beginning of time. As Samuel Johnson once said, 'Man is in need more frequently of being reminded than informed.'

Works Cited:

Lewis, C. S. The Abolition of Man. Ontario: The MacMillan Company, 1947.

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