



# Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development

By Richard Tuck



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This book shows how political argument in terms of rights and natural rights began in medieval Europe, and how the theory of natural rights was developed in the seventeenth century after a period of neglect in the Renaissance. Dr Tuck provides a new understanding of the importance of Jean Gerson in the formation of the theories, and of Hugo Grotius in their development; he also restores the Englishman John Selden's ideas to the prominence they once enjoyed, and shows how Thomas Hobbes's political theory can best be understood against this background. In general, the book enables us to understand more fully the characteristics of the natural rights theories available to the men of the Enlightenment, and thereby to appreciate the complexity and equivocal nature of modern right theories.

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## **Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development** By Richard Tuck Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #536843 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Cambridge University Press
- Published on: 1982-01-29
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.98" h x .43" w x 5.98" l, .66 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 196 pages



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#### Review

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'In historical range and intellectual suppleness, this is an enormously gifted book.' John Dunn, *The London Review of Books*

'A book which gives important new information and at the same time stimulates philosophical reflections is clearly a valuable contribution to intellectual history.' D. D. Raphael, *The Times Literary Supplement*

#### About the Author

Richard Tuck is Professor of Government at Harvard University. He is the author of *Natural Rights Theories* (1979) and *Philosophy and Government 1572-1651* (1993), and has produced editions of Hobbes's *Leviathan* and (with Michael Silverthorne) *De Cive*.

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