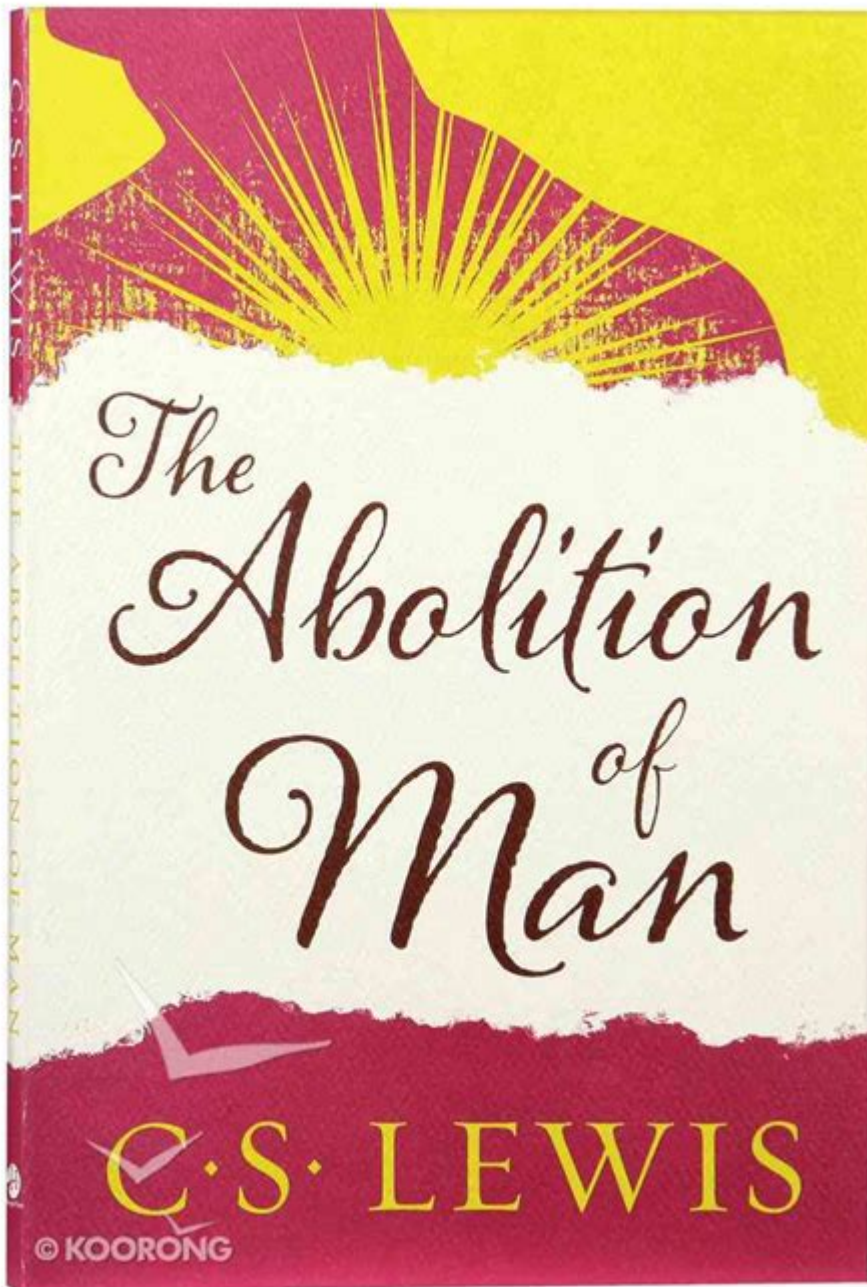


The Abolition Of Man



The Abolition of Man: A Deep Dive into C.S. Lewis's Enduring Critique

Introduction:

C.S. Lewis's *The Abolition of Man* isn't your typical beach read. This deceptively short book, published in 1943, packs a powerful punch, delivering a timeless warning about the dangers of

unchecked scientific materialism and its potential to erode the very foundations of humanity. This post will delve into the core arguments of Lewis's work, exploring its enduring relevance in our increasingly technologically advanced world. We'll unpack his central thesis, examine his critiques of various educational approaches, and consider the lasting implications of his thought-provoking analysis. Prepare to grapple with profound questions about morality, education, and the very nature of what it means to be human.

The Core Argument: The Threat of "The Abolition of Man"

Lewis's central thesis revolves around the concept of "Tao," a term he uses to represent the shared moral intuition present across cultures and throughout history. This Tao, he argues, isn't a specific religious doctrine but rather a set of inherent, objective values that shape human experience and guide ethical behavior. He contends that modern educational trends, particularly those emphasizing subjective relativism and the reduction of human experience to purely materialistic terms, are systematically undermining this Tao. This, he warns, leads to the "abolition of man"—the destruction of the very qualities that make us human, replacing them with a soulless, mechanistic worldview.

Critique of Subjective Morality: The "Men Without Chests"

A significant aspect of Lewis's argument is his critique of subjective morality. He observes a trend in education that dismisses objective moral values, promoting instead a subjective relativism where all moral judgments are deemed equally valid. This, he argues, leaves individuals without the necessary "chest" – the emotional and moral core that provides the impetus for virtuous action. These "men without chests," devoid of a sense of objective good and evil, become susceptible to manipulation and the whims of power. They lack the inner compass to navigate the complexities of ethical decision-making.

The Role of Education in Shaping Moral Character

Lewis directly addresses the role of education in shaping or dismantling moral character. He criticizes educational approaches that prioritize the acquisition of factual knowledge over the cultivation of virtue and the development of moral reasoning. He emphasizes the importance of transmitting the Tao – the shared moral intuition – to future generations, ensuring the continuity of ethical values and preventing the descent into moral chaos. He stresses the need for educators to recognize and respect the inherent dignity and value of human life, grounded in the Tao.

Science and the Limits of Reason:

Lewis wasn't anti-science; he acknowledged its importance and value. However, he cautioned against the uncritical application of scientific methodology to areas outside its proper domain. He argued that science, while capable of explaining how things work, cannot provide answers to questions of ought – questions of morality and value. The attempt to reduce human experience to purely scientific or materialistic terms, ignoring the subjective and spiritual dimensions, represents a dangerous form of reductionism, undermining the very foundations of human meaning and purpose.

The Enduring Relevance of "The Abolition of Man"

In the 21st century, Lewis's warnings resonate perhaps even more strongly than they did in 1943. The rise of technological advancements, artificial intelligence, and the pervasive influence of social media present new and complex challenges to human dignity and moral reasoning. His insights regarding the erosion of objective morality, the dangers of unchecked scientific materialism, and the crucial role of education in shaping human character remain critically relevant in navigating the ethical dilemmas of our time. The potential for technology to dehumanize, to reduce individuals to mere data points, is a very real threat that echoes Lewis's concerns.

Conclusion:

The Abolition of Man isn't merely a historical artifact; it's a timeless warning that demands careful consideration. Lewis's powerful critique challenges us to reflect on the nature of morality, the role of education, and the potential consequences of embracing a purely materialistic worldview. His enduring legacy lies in his call to recognize and cultivate the inherent values that define humanity and to safeguard the "Tao" against the forces that seek to abolish it. By understanding and engaging with Lewis's arguments, we can better equip ourselves to navigate the complex ethical challenges of our modern world and preserve the essence of what it means to be human.

FAQs:

1. Is The Abolition of Man a religious book? While Lewis was a devout Christian, the book's arguments are largely accessible and relevant to individuals of any or no religious background. The "Tao" he describes transcends specific religious doctrines, encompassing a universal moral sense.
2. How does The Abolition of Man relate to modern technology? Lewis's concerns about the dehumanizing potential of scientific materialism are acutely relevant to the ethical dilemmas posed by modern technology, particularly AI and social media's impact on individual autonomy and societal cohesion.
3. What is the significance of the "men without chests" metaphor? This metaphor highlights the crucial role of emotions and moral intuition in ethical decision-making. Without a strong moral compass (the "chest"), individuals are vulnerable to manipulation and lack the inner strength to act virtuously.
4. What are some practical applications of Lewis's ideas in education today? Educators can integrate Lewis's insights by emphasizing the development of moral character alongside factual knowledge,

fostering critical thinking and ethical reasoning, and promoting a deeper understanding of universal moral values.

5. What are some critiques of Lewis's arguments in *The Abolition of Man*? Some critics argue that Lewis's concept of the "Tao" is too vague or that his critique of subjective morality is overly simplistic. Others question the feasibility of transmitting objective moral values in a pluralistic society. However, these critiques don't negate the enduring importance of his central warning.

the abolition of man: *The Abolition of Man* C. S. Lewis, 2001-03-20 C. S. Lewis sets out to persuade his audience of the importance and relevance of universal values such as courage and honor in contemporary society.

the abolition of man: *The Abolition of Man* C. S. Lewis, 2020-05-04

the abolition of man: *After Humanity* Michael Ward, 2021 *After Humanity* is a guide to one of C.S. Lewis's most widely admired but least accessible works, *The Abolition of Man*, which originated as a series of lectures on ethics that he delivered during the Second World War. These lectures tackle the thorny question of whether moral value is objective or not. When we say something is right or wrong, are we recognizing a reality outside ourselves, or merely reporting a subjective sentiment? Lewis addresses the matter from a purely philosophical standpoint, leaving theological matters to one side. He makes a powerful case against subjectivism, issuing an intellectual warning that, in our post-truth twenty-first century, has even more relevance than when he originally presented it. Lewis characterized *The Abolition of Man* as almost my favourite among my books, and his biographer Walter Hooper has called it an all but indispensable introduction to the entire corpus of Lewisiana. In *After Humanity*, Michael Ward sheds much-needed light on this important but difficult work, explaining both its general academic context and the particular circumstances in Lewis's life that helped give rise to it, including his front-line service in the trenches of the First World War. *After Humanity* contains a detailed commentary clarifying the many allusions and quotations scattered throughout Lewis's argument. It shows how this resolutely philosophical thesis fits in with his other, more explicitly Christian works. It also includes a full-color photo gallery, displaying images of people, places, and documents that relate to *The Abolition of Man*, among them Lewis's original blurb for the book, which has never before been published.

the abolition of man: *THE ABOLITION OF MAN* C. S. LEWIS, 1947

the abolition of man: *Science Fiction and The Abolition of Man* Mark J. Boone, Kevin C. Neece, 2016-12-13 *The Abolition of Man*, C. S. Lewis's masterpiece in ethics and the philosophy of science, warns of the danger of combining modern moral skepticism with the technological pursuit of human desires. The end result is the final destruction of human nature. From *Brave New World* to *Star Trek*, from steampunk to starships, science fiction film has considered from nearly every conceivable angle the same nexus of morality, technology, and humanity of which C. S. Lewis wrote. As a result, science fiction film has unintentionally given us stunning depictions of Lewis's terrifying vision of the future. In *Science Fiction Film and the Abolition of Man*, scholars of religion, philosophy, literature, and film explore the connections between sci-fi film and the three parts of Lewis's book: how sci-fi portrays Men without Chests incapable of responding properly to moral good, how it teaches the Tao or The Way, and how it portrays *The Abolition of Man*.

the abolition of man: *Contemporary Perspectives on C.S. Lewis' 'The Abolition of Man'* Timothy M. Mosteller, Gayne John Anacker, 2017-02-23 Beginning with a clear account of the historical setting for *The Abolition of Man* and its place within C.S. Lewis' corpus of writing, *Contemporary Perspectives on C. S. Lewis' The Abolition of Man: History, Philosophy, Education and Science* assesses and appraises Lewis' seminal lectures, providing a thorough analysis of the themes and subjects that are raised. Chapters focus on the major areas of thought including: philosophy, natural law, education, literature, politics, theology, science, biotechnology and the connection between the Ransom Trilogy. Drawing on Lewis' central ideas, they tackle questions such as, is *The*

Abolition of Man hostile to scientific inquiry? Does Lewis provide an adequate rational defense of natural moral law? Do the lectures address the philosophical questions of the 21st century as Lewis sought to provide answers to philosophical questions of the 20th century? Dealing with themes across multiple areas of human inquiry, the authors bring expertise from their respective fields to bear on the core issues raised in Lewis' lectures. The result is an interdisciplinary approach that offers the first comprehensive scholarly treatment of *The Abolition of Man*, one of the most debated of Lewis' works.

the abolition of man: C.S. Lewis C. S. Lewis, 1996-01-05 Known throughout the world as the intellect behind *The Chronicles of Narnia* and as the twentieth century's most influential Christian writer, C. S. Lewis has stirred millions of readers through his probing insights, passionate arguments, and provocative questions about God, love, life, and death. Gathered from the mass of his published works -- including *The Screwtape Letters*, *Mere Christianity*, *The Four Loves*, and *God in the Dock* -- as well as from letters, essays, and less familiar writings, this compendium contains a cross section of Lewis's finest work.

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the abolition of man: C.S. Lewis for the Third Millennium Peter Kreeft, 2011-04-27 Kreeft, one of the foremost students of Lewis' thought, distills Lewis' reflections on the collapse of western civilization and the way to renew it. Few writers have more lucidly grasped the meaning of modern times than Lewis. Kreeft's reflections on Lewis' thought provide explorations into the questions of our times. Kreeft and Lewis together provide light and hope in an age of darkness.

the abolition of man: *The Abolition of Man* Clive Staples Lewis, 1947

the abolition of man: The Complete C.S. Lewis Signature Classics C. S. Lewis, 2002-10-22 For the first time ever, these seven essential volumes by C. S. Lewis are available in a single edition. This remarkable book presents the classic works *Mere Christianity*, *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Great Divorce*, *The Problem of Pain*, *Miracles*, *A Grief Observed*, and Lewis's prophetic examination of universal values, *The Abolition of Man*. Beautiful and timeless, this is a vital collection by one of the greatest literary figures of the twentieth century. Lewis reached a vast audience during his lifetime, and books such as *Mere Christianity* and *The Screwtape Letters* continue to be regarded as among the best spiritual writing of all time. With his uncanny grasp of human nature, Lewis offers a refreshing antidote to the modern world's consumerism and moral relativism. This new edition of his most celebrated books highlights Lewis's compassion for humanity and his relevance for the twenty-first century.

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pictures of the very different paths now set before the Western democracies. Working mostly separately and in ignorance of one another's ideas, the five developed a strikingly consistent argument that the only means by which democratic societies could be prepared for their world-wide economic and political dominance was through a renewal of education that was grounded in a Christian understanding of the power and limitations of human beings. *The Year of Our Lord 1943* is the first book to weave together the ideas of these five intellectuals and shows why, in a time of unprecedented total war, they all thought it vital to restore Christianity to a leading role in the renewal of the Western democracies.

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the abolition of man: The War on Humans Wesley J. Smith, 2014 The environmental movement has helped produce significant improvements in the world around us--from cleaner air to the preservation of natural wonders such as Yellowstone. But in recent years, environmental activists have arisen who regard humans as Public Enemy #1. In this provocative e-book, Wesley J. Smith exposes efforts by radical activists to reduce the human population by up to 90% and to grant legal rights to animals, plants, and Mother Earth. Smith argues that the ultimate victims of this misanthropic crusade will be the poorest and most vulnerable among us, and he urges us to defend both human dignity and the natural environment before it is too late.

the abolition of man: Ain't I A Woman? Sojourner Truth, 2020-09-24 'I am a woman's rights. I have plowed and reaped and husked and chopped and mowed, and can any man do more than that? I am as strong as any man that is now' A former slave and one of the most powerful orators of her time, Sojourner Truth fought for the equal rights of Black women throughout her life. This selection of her impassioned speeches is accompanied by the words of other inspiring African-American female campaigners from the nineteenth century. One of twenty new books in the bestselling Penguin Great Ideas series. This new selection showcases a diverse list of thinkers who have helped shape our world today, from anarchists to stoics, feminists to prophets, satirists to Zen Buddhists.

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have ignited a love for learning and a deep faith in their children. They want to know how the Clarksons launched their children to live such vibrant, flourishing lives as adults. *Awaking Wonder* is Sally's answer to those questions. This book is thirty-six years in the making and provides a deep dive into Sally's most profound legacy: nurturing and guiding her four children into a wonder-filled life. If you are idealistic and hopeful about the process of raising your children to be healthy and vibrant, you will find encouragement through the Clarksons' story. If you are exhausted, confused, ill equipped, or unsupported in your journey as a parent, you will find relief through the countless ideas in this book. *Awaking Wonder* will inspire you, delight you, provide laughter, and bring tears through the heartfelt stories of four lively children and the wondrous life they grew up in together. Journey with Sally toward · cultivating wonder all around you, alongside your children · understanding how to open your children's hearts and minds to the grand design, beauty, and goodness scattered throughout the universe · laying a foundation for spiritual formation and a robust faith in God · nurturing your children to live into their capacity in intellect, faith, and relationships If you long for a holistic, spiritually foundational approach to parenting and education, this is the book you've been waiting for. The companion guide, *The Awaking Wonder Experience*, will help you apply Sally's principles in life-changing ways.

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the abolition of man: The Abolition of Sanity Steve Turley, 2019-03-22 Why does it seem like the world is falling apart? Everywhere we look today, the world is changing, and not for the better. For many of us, such political and cultural changes have been so dramatic that we no longer recognize our societies anymore. So what's going on? This book has the answer! In this masterful work, 'The Abolition of Man,' C.S. Lewis observes how the modern world is in fact changing our conception of what it means to be human by sequestering humanity from the objective values that made us most human. Focusing on modern educational reforms, Lewis noted that instead of virtue formation, modern educational practices perpetuate a mechanistic vision of the world comprised of scientifically inspired control over nature and, as a necessary consequence, humans. HERE'S A PREVIEW OF WHAT YOU'LL LEARN How modernist assumptions about the world differ drastically from classical and Christian ones How modernism is radically reshaping a fundamentally different conception of humanity What role education plays in perpetuating modernist norms about the world How the role of virtue and wisdom formation can become a powerful antidote to these secularizing tendencies And much, much more along with a whole BONUS SECTION of study questions and answers to group discussion!! In this insightful and thought provoking book, you will discover C.S. Lewis' invitation to challenge the modernist assumptions of our age by rediscovering the doctrine of objective values and, in so doing, you will rediscover a hope for truly human flourishing for generations to come. Get your copy today!

the abolition of man: The Literary Legacy of C. S. Lewis Chad Walsh, 2008-12-07 C. S. Lewis has been read and studied as though he were two authors--a writer of Christian apologetics and a writer of science fiction and fantasy. Only in recent years has there been any move to examine his work as the creation of a single, unique mind. This is the first major critical study to undertake

that task. Chad Walsh, who wrote an earlier study of Lewis, Apostle to the Skeptics, reassesses the Oxford don's legacy fifteen years after his death--his poetry, visionary fiction, and space fiction; The Chronicles of Narnia; Till We Have Faces; his criticism; and his religious-philosophical writing. Lewis emerges as an archetypal Christian and the creator of some of the most original books of our century.

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lucidity, and wit, Lewis challenges the rationalists and cynics who are mired in their lack of imagination and provides a poetic and joyous affirmation that miracles really do occur in everyday lives.

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the abolition of man: Planet Narnia Michael Ward, 2008-01-15 For over half a century, scholars have laboured to show that C. S. Lewis's famed but apparently disorganised *Chronicles of Narnia* have an underlying symbolic coherence, pointing to such possible unifying themes as the seven sacraments, the seven deadly sins, and the seven books of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. None of these explanations has won general acceptance and the structure of Narnia's symbolism has remained a mystery. Michael Ward has finally solved the enigma. In *Planet Narnia* he demonstrates that medieval cosmology, a subject which fascinated Lewis throughout his life, provides the imaginative key to the seven novels. Drawing on the whole range of Lewis's writings (including previously unpublished drafts of the *Chronicles*), Ward reveals how the Narnia stories were designed to express the characteristics of the seven medieval planets - - Jupiter, Mars, Sol, Luna, Mercury, Venus, and Saturn - - planets which Lewis described as spiritual symbols of permanent value and especially worthwhile in our own generation. Using these seven symbols, Lewis secretly constructed the *Chronicles* so that in each book the plot-line, the ornamental details, and, most important, the portrayal of the Christ-figure of Aslan, all serve to communicate the governing planetary personality. The cosmological theme of each Chronicle is what Lewis called 'the kappa element in romance', the atmospheric essence of a story, everywhere present but nowhere explicit. The reader inhabits this atmosphere and thus imaginatively gains *connaître* knowledge of the spiritual character which the tale was created to embody. *Planet Narnia* is a ground-breaking study that will provoke a major revaluation not only of the *Chronicles*, but of Lewis's whole literary and theological outlook. Ward uncovers a much subtler writer and thinker than has previously been recognized, whose central interests were hiddenness, immanence, and knowledge by acquaintance.

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the abolition of man: The Efficacy of Prayer Clive Staples Lewis, 1958

The Abolition of Man is a 1943 book by C. S. Lewis. Subtitled "Reflections on education with special reference to the teaching of English in the upper forms of schools", it uses a contemporary text about poetry as a starting point for a defense of objective value and natural law.

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The Abolition of Man - C.S. Lewis Institute

Reflect upon the readings, lectures, and questions addressed in this study of Lewis's The Abolition of Man. Make a list of three primary insights that you've gained.

The Abolition of Man - Encyclopedia Britannica

The Abolition of Man, a book on education and moral values by C.S. Lewis, published in 1943. The book originated as the Riddell Memorial Lectures, three lectures delivered at the University of Durham in February 1943. Many people regard this as Lewis's most important book.

'The Abolition of Man' by C.S. Lewis: A summary - Sam Selikoff

Lewis begins by saying that many today are devoted to man's conquest over nature. While the advance of technology has certainly benefited mankind (e.g. the development of modern medicine), Lewis says that this is not really man controlling nature.

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While C.S. Lewis was a staunch defender of the Christian faith, The Abolition of Man is not explicitly Christian. The book, originally a series of three lectures he gave in 1943, addresses the issue of moral relativism.

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In their second chapter Gaius and Titius quote the well-known story of Coleridge at the waterfall. You remember that there were two tourists present: that one called it 'sublime' and the other 'pretty'; and that Coleridge mentally endorsed the first judgement and rejected the ...

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[Amazon.com: The Abolition of Man eBook : Lewis, C. S.: Kindle ...](#)

Aug 6, 2024 · In this classic *The Abolition of Man*, Lewis, one of the most important Christian writers of last century, sets out to persuade his audience of the importance and relevance of ...

[The Abolition of Man - C.S. Lewis Institute](#)

Reflect upon the readings, lectures, and questions addressed in this study of Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*. Make a list of three primary insights that you've gained.

The Abolition of Man - Encyclopedia Britannica

The Abolition of Man, a book on education and moral values by C.S. Lewis, published in 1943. The book originated as the Riddell Memorial Lectures, three lectures delivered at the ...

'The Abolition of Man' by C.S. Lewis: A summary - Sam Selikoff

Lewis begins by saying that many today are devoted to man's conquest over nature. While the advance of technology has certainly benefited mankind (e.g. the development of modern ...

The Abolition of Man by C.S. Lewis | Goodreads

While C.S. Lewis was a staunch defender of the Christian faith, *The Abolition of Man* is not explicitly Christian. The book, originally a series of three lectures he gave in 1943, addresses ...

THE ABOLITION OF MAN - Internet Archive

In their second chapter Gaius and Titius quote the well-known story of Coleridge at the waterfall. You remember that there were two tourists present: that one called it 'sublime' and the other ...

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