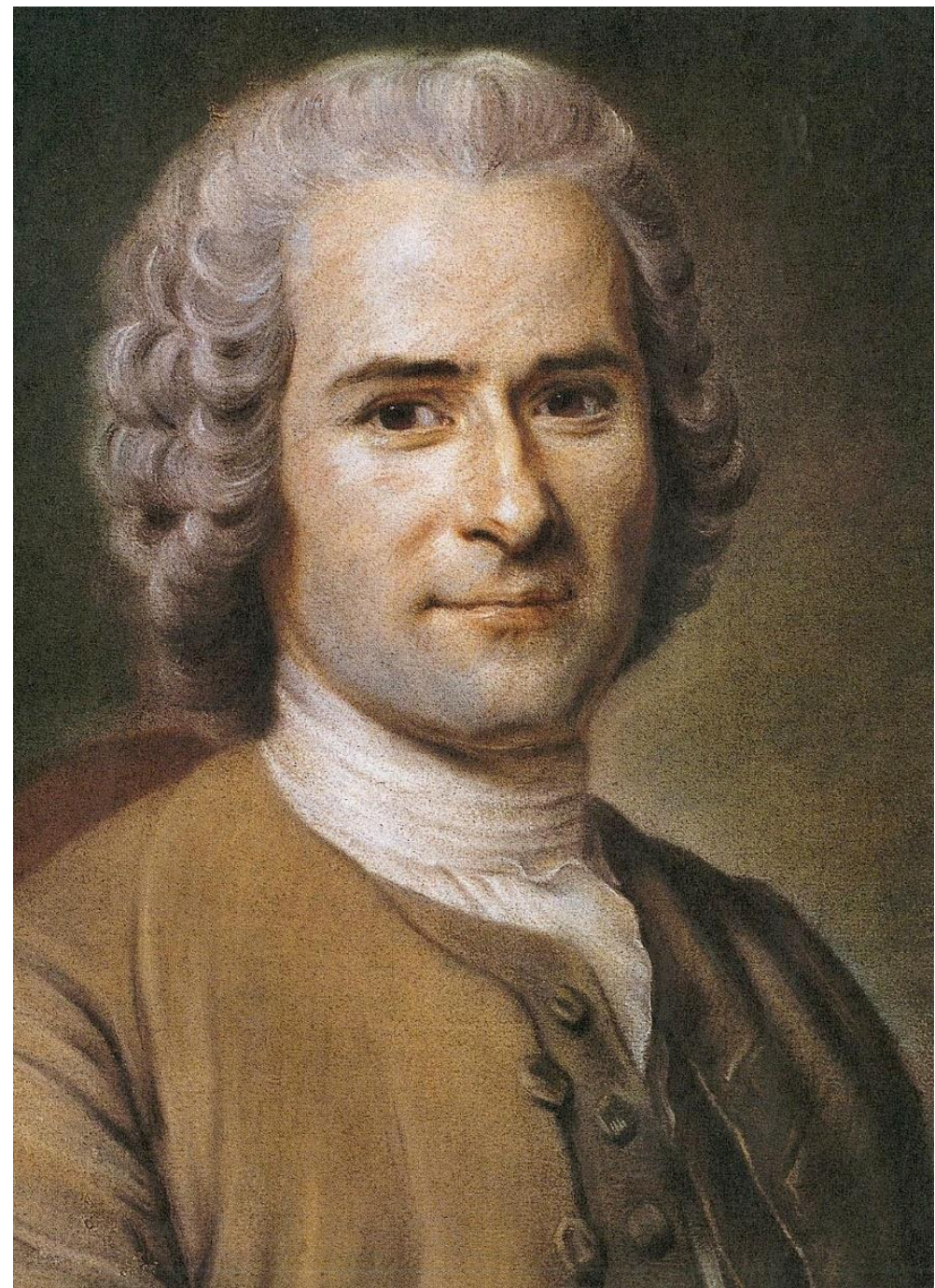


# JEAN-JACQUES ROSSEAU

- “People who know little are usually great talkers, while men who know much say little.”
- “I prefer liberty with danger than peace with slavery.”
- “Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.”

## Biography

- Born 1712 in Switzerland
- Dad was a watchmaker; Mom died 9 days after his birth
- In his 20s, he was a hypochondriac (fear of impending illness)
- Age 30, moved to Paris
- In Paris, has at least one illegitimate child, who he encouraged the mom to give up for adoption. (Why? The mom’s family was ill-educated and “ill-brought up”)
  - ↳ Ten years later he tries to locate them., but to no avail
- Died 1778 in France of a stroke



## Philosophy (major ideas)

Argued against the idea that monarchs were divinely empowered to legislate. Rousseau asserts that only the people, who are sovereign, have that all-powerful right.

While society corrupts human nature, it also represents the possibility of its perfection in society

Virtue is “engraved on the heart” of every person

Man is by nature good; society is the cause of corruption and vice

His theory of education emphasized the importance of expression to produce a well-balanced, freethinking child. He believed that if children are allowed to develop naturally without constraints imposed on them by society they will develop towards their fullest potential, both educationally and morally

A just society replaces the individual's natural freedom of will with the general will; such a society is based on a social contract by which each individual alienates all of his/her natural rights to create a new corporate person, the sovereign, the repository of general will

Human interaction requires the transformation of natural freedom into moral freedom; this transformation is based on reason and provides the foundation for a theory of political right.