

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre

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the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre is one of the most compelling and controversial narratives in the history of the French Revolution. Known as the “Incorruptible,” Robespierre’s journey from a provincial lawyer to the dominant figure in the revolutionary government epitomizes the turbulent and transformative nature of late 18th-century France. His political ideals, leadership style, and eventual downfall provide a rich tapestry for understanding both the promise and peril of revolutionary zeal.

Early Life and Political Beginnings

Before diving into the revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre, it's essential to grasp his background and the formative experiences that shaped his worldview. Born in Arras in 1758, Robespierre was a gifted student who earned a scholarship to the prestigious University of Paris. There, he trained as a lawyer, developing a keen interest in Enlightenment philosophy and the ideas of Rousseau, which championed equality, civic virtue, and moral integrity.

His early political career was marked by his election to the Estates-General in 1789, a pivotal moment as France teetered on the brink of revolution. Robespierre quickly aligned himself with the Jacobins, a radical political club advocating for democratic reforms and an end to the monarchy’s absolute power. His eloquence and steadfast dedication to republican ideals soon made him a prominent voice in the National Assembly.

The Rise of Robespierre: Champion of the People

Robespierre’s ascent during the revolutionary period was fueled by his unwavering commitment to the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he was deeply concerned with social justice and the welfare of the poor, which earned him the nickname “the Incorruptible.” His speeches often emphasized the need for virtue and moral rigor in politics, reflecting his belief that a just society required leaders who were both principled and dedicated.

Key Contributions and Political Influence

- ****Advocacy for Universal Male Suffrage:**** Robespierre pushed for voting rights to extend beyond property owners, seeking to empower the common citizen.
- ****Support for the Abolition of Slavery:**** He was ahead of his time in condemning slavery, an issue that intersected with revolutionary ideas of human rights.
- ****Defense of the Republic:**** As the monarchy’s grip weakened, Robespierre became a vocal opponent of King Louis XVI, arguing for his trial and execution to protect the revolution.

These stances positioned Robespierre as a leader who was not only ideologically driven but also pragmatic in navigating the turbulent political landscape.

The Reign of Terror: A Controversial Chapter

No discussion of the revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre would be complete without addressing the Reign of Terror, a period from 1793 to 1794 when revolutionary fervor turned into ruthless political repression. As a member and later the head of the Committee of Public Safety, Robespierre wielded immense power in defending the revolution from internal and external enemies.

Understanding the Causes and Justifications

Robespierre believed that the revolution was under constant threat from counter-revolutionaries and foreign powers. To safeguard the gains of the revolution, he argued that harsh measures were necessary. The Reign of Terror saw thousands executed by guillotine, including nobles, clergy, and even former allies suspected of disloyalty.

- **The Law of Suspects:** Expanded the criteria for arrest, allowing for widespread imprisonment.
- **Use of Revolutionary Tribunals:** Accelerated trials with limited defense for the accused.
- **Promotion of the Cult of the Supreme Being:** Robespierre's attempt to replace traditional religion with a civic faith emphasizing morality and virtue.

While intended to preserve the revolution, these actions sparked fear and resentment, leading many to view Robespierre as a tyrant rather than a liberator.

Philosophy and Legacy: The Man Behind the Myth

To fully appreciate the revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre, it's important to delve into his philosophical beliefs and how they influenced his actions. He was deeply inspired by Rousseau's notion of the "general will," which prioritized the collective good over individual interests. This moral absolutism shaped his rigid approach to governance but also fostered a vision of a virtuous republic where citizens actively engaged in public life.

The Complex Legacy

Robespierre's legacy is paradoxical. On one hand, he is celebrated for championing democratic ideals, human rights, and the abolition of privileges that had long oppressed the masses. On the other hand, his role in the Terror and his intolerance for dissent have made him a symbol of revolutionary excess and the dangers of ideological rigidity.

- **Advocate for Social Justice:** His policies laid groundwork for modern republicanism.
- **Warning Against Political Extremism:** His downfall illustrates how idealism can morph into authoritarianism.

- ****Inspiration for Future Movements:**** Later political leaders and thinkers have both admired and critiqued his methods.

The Downfall and Final Days

The revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre came to a dramatic and violent end in July 1794, in an event known as the Thermidorian Reaction. As fear of his growing power and the Terror's brutality spread, Robespierre's opponents in the National Convention conspired to arrest him. After a brief period of resistance, he was captured and executed by guillotine, marking the end of the most radical phase of the French Revolution.

This final chapter underscores the volatility of revolutionary politics and the fine line between heroism and tyranny. Robespierre's death ushered in a more moderate phase, but his ideas continued to influence French politics and revolutionary thought for generations.

Lessons from Robespierre's Revolutionary Career

Studying the revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre offers valuable insights into the dynamics of political change and leadership under pressure. His story serves as a reminder that:

- ****Principled leadership requires balance:**** Idealism must be tempered with pragmatism to avoid alienation and conflict.
- ****The pursuit of justice can be double-edged:**** Measures taken to protect liberty can sometimes infringe upon it.
- ****Public trust is fragile:**** Leaders must maintain transparency and accountability to sustain support.

For those interested in history, political science, or leadership studies, Robespierre's life is a rich case study of how revolutionary fervor can inspire profound change yet lead to unintended consequences.

Exploring the revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre reveals not only the complexities of one man's influence on history but also the broader challenges faced by societies undergoing radical transformation. His story continues to fascinate and provoke debate, reminding us that the path to progress is rarely straightforward.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was Maximilien Robespierre and why is he considered revolutionary?

Maximilien Robespierre was a French lawyer and politician who became one of the most influential figures of the French Revolution, known for his radical ideas and leadership during the Reign of Terror.

What role did Robespierre play during the French Revolution?

Robespierre was a leading member of the Jacobin Club and the Committee of Public Safety, where he advocated for democratic reforms, the abolition of the monarchy, and the establishment of a republic.

How did Robespierre's political philosophy influence his revolutionary career?

Robespierre was influenced by Enlightenment ideas, particularly Rousseau's concept of the general will, which led him to promote virtue and terror as means to achieve a just society.

What was the Reign of Terror and what was Robespierre's involvement in it?

The Reign of Terror was a period during the French Revolution characterized by political purges and executions of perceived enemies; Robespierre was a key architect and leader during this time, justifying the use of terror to protect the revolution.

How did Robespierre's career come to an end?

Robespierre's career ended when he was arrested and executed by guillotine in July 1794, after losing support due to his increasingly authoritarian rule and the excesses of the Reign of Terror.

What were Robespierre's contributions to the establishment of the French Republic?

Robespierre contributed to the overthrow of the monarchy, helped draft the 1793 Constitution, and promoted policies aimed at social equality, secularism, and the rights of citizens.

In what ways did Robespierre's leadership style impact the French Revolution?

Robespierre's leadership was marked by uncompromising idealism and authoritarian measures, which helped consolidate revolutionary gains but also led to widespread fear and political repression.

Why is Robespierre a controversial figure in history?

Robespierre is controversial because while he championed democracy and justice, his use of terror and political purges resulted in thousands of deaths, raising debates about the morality and effectiveness of his methods.

Additional Resources

The Revolutionary Career of Maximilien Robespierre: An Analytical Review

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre stands as one of the most complex and

debated chapters in the history of the French Revolution. As a leading figure during one of France's most turbulent eras, Robespierre's trajectory from a provincial lawyer to the infamous architect of the Reign of Terror highlights the volatile interplay of ideology, power, and political survival. This article explores the dimensions of Robespierre's career, examining his rise, political philosophy, and the enduring legacy that continues to provoke both admiration and condemnation.

Origins and Early Influences

Maximilien Robespierre was born in 1758 in Arras, France, into a modest family. His early education and legal training laid the foundation for his later political activism. Influenced heavily by Enlightenment thinkers such as Rousseau, Robespierre developed a keen interest in justice, equality, and republican ideals. Before the revolution, he was known for his eloquence and integrity, which earned him a seat in the Estates-General in 1789.

His early political career was marked by advocacy for the rights of the common people and opposition to the monarchy's authoritarian rule. Robespierre's reputation as "the incorruptible" was solidified during this period, reflecting his commitment to moral rigor and civic virtue.

The Rise to Prominence During the French Revolution

Robespierre's revolutionary career gained momentum as France plunged into chaos following the collapse of the Ancien Régime. As a member of the Jacobin Club, he quickly emerged as a leading voice advocating for radical reforms and the establishment of a republic. His speeches and writings emphasized the necessity of virtue and the general will, concepts derived from Rousseau's philosophy.

The Jacobin Leadership and Political Strategy

Within the Jacobin Club, Robespierre distinguished himself through his uncompromising stance against corruption and his belief in popular sovereignty. His strategy involved mobilizing the sans-culottes—the working-class militants—to exert pressure on more moderate factions. This approach proved effective in consolidating power and pushing forward measures that dismantled traditional hierarchies.

Robespierre's role in the National Convention was pivotal. He was a driving force behind the abolition of the monarchy in 1792 and the declaration of the First French Republic. His influence extended to the drafting of the 1793 Constitution, which, although never fully implemented, embedded principles of universal male suffrage and social justice.

The Reign of Terror: Power and Controversy

Arguably the most defining—and controversial—phase of the revolutionary career of Maximilien

Robespierre was his leadership during the Reign of Terror (1793-1794). As a member of the Committee of Public Safety, Robespierre oversaw a government that used revolutionary tribunals and mass executions to suppress counter-revolutionaries and perceived enemies of the state.

Ideological Justifications and Political Necessity

Robespierre justified the Terror as a necessary means to protect the revolution and preserve the republic. He argued that virtue alone was insufficient without terror to root out corruption and conspiracy. This fusion of moral idealism with ruthless political repression marked a stark departure from earlier revolutionary rhetoric.

The Terror resulted in thousands of executions, including prominent figures such as Queen Marie Antoinette and former revolutionaries like Georges Danton. Robespierre's insistence on ideological purity and his intolerance for dissent alienated many former allies and created an atmosphere of fear and suspicion.

Pros and Cons of Robespierre's Policies

- **Pros:** The Terror arguably stabilized the revolution during internal insurrections and foreign invasions, preserving the republic at a time of existential crisis.
- **Cons:** The mass repression undermined democratic principles and led to widespread human rights abuses, staining Robespierre's legacy.

The Downfall and Legacy

Robespierre's radical policies and growing authoritarianism eventually provoked a backlash. In July 1794, his opponents in the National Convention orchestrated his arrest and execution, ending his reign and the Terror. His death marked a turning point, leading to the Thermidorian Reaction and a more moderate phase of the revolution.

Despite his violent end, the revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre left an indelible mark on French history. His vision of a virtuous republic continues to influence political thought, particularly concerning the balance between ideals and pragmatic governance. Robespierre's life illustrates the dangers and potential of revolutionary zeal, highlighting how the pursuit of political purity can both empower and destroy.

Comparative Perspectives

When compared with other revolutionary leaders such as Julius Caesar or Vladimir Lenin,

Robespierre's career shares common themes: the transformation from idealism to authoritarianism, the use of terror as a political tool, and a legacy marked by both progress and tragedy. However, unlike some predecessors or successors, Robespierre's insistence on moral virtue as a political foundation remains uniquely pronounced.

Conclusion: The Enduring Fascination with Robespierre

The revolutionary career of Maximilien Robespierre encapsulates the paradoxes of revolutionary change. His ascent from a principled lawyer to a figure synonymous with terror demonstrates how historical circumstances shape leaders and ideologies. Modern analyses continue to debate whether Robespierre was a defender of liberty or a tyrant cloaked in the rhetoric of justice.

In the broader context of revolutionary history, Robespierre serves as a cautionary tale about the complexities of wielding power amid social upheaval. His life invites reflection on the ethical limits of political action and the costs of radical transformation. As such, Robespierre remains a pivotal figure whose story is essential to understanding the dynamics of revolution and statecraft.

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the revolutionary career of maximilien robspierre: Revolutionary Career of Maximilien Robespierre David P. Jordan, 2013-10-16 In changing forever the political landscape of the modern world, the French Revolution was driven by a new personality: the confirmed, self-aware revolutionary. Maximilien Robespierre originated the role, inspiring such devoted twentieth-century disciples as Lenin—who deemed Robespierre a Bolshevik avant la lettre. Although he dominated the Committee for Public Safety only during the last year of his life, Robespierre was the Revolution in flesh and blood. He embodies its ideological essence, its unprecedented extremes, its absolutist virtues and vices; he incarnated a new, completely politicized self to lead a new, wholly regenerated society. Yet as historian David P. Jordan observes, Robespierre has remained an enigma. While his revolutionary career embraced the most crucial years of the Revolutions—1789 to 1794—it was little presaged by the unremarkable course of his early life. The Jacobin leader to whom the revolutionary masses clung is thus both as mysterious as his remote provincial past and as awesome as the world-shaking regicide he inspired. Confronted by these extremes, historians have often contented themselves to caricature Robespierre as an antichrist, a bourgeois manipulator of the rabble, or a canny political tactician. Jordan looks to Robespierre's own self-conception for a true understanding of the man and his Revolution. Indeed, Robespierre wrote about himself often, and at length. Influenced by Enlightenment rationalism and the new literary genre of autobiography, he left behind a voluminous body of speeches, newspaper articles, and pamphlets laced with reflections and revelations about his self-created destiny as living martyr and revolutionary Everyman. From these thoughts and words, Jordan attempts to uncover Robespierre, to reveal what made this unlikely

figure—onetime provincial lawyer, small-town académicien, and uninspired versifier—the most important in revolutionary France.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: The Revolutionary Career of Maximilien Robespierre David P. Jordan, 1989

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: Contrasting Ideals and Ends in the American and French Revolutions Miguel A. Faria, Jr., 2024-11-26 This book describes momentous events in the American and French Revolutions. The American revolutionaries were nationalist patriots, who wanted independence from Great Britain and to create a new nation based on the principles of classical liberalism and Natural Rights theory. Their goal was the attainment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, inherent in the God-given or Nature-derived rights of free men. They did not seek to overturn the basic institutions of society as eventually the French revolutionists did—when they destroyed churches, desecrated tombs, and even renamed the months of the year, creating a new revolutionary calendar. The French revolutionists adopted the revolutionary slogan Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, but they did not grasp the fact that the leveling of society was incompatible with liberty. And regarding fraternity, they did not mean the brotherhood of all men because the nobility and common citizens who did not hold the purest aims of Jacobin ideology were exterminated.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: The Revolution to Come Dan Edelstein, 2025-04-15 How an event once considered the greatest of all political dangers came to be seen as a solution to all social problems Political thinkers from Plato to John Adams saw revolutions as a grave threat to society and advocated for a constitution that prevented them by balancing social interests and forms of government. The Revolution to Come traces how evolving conceptions of history ushered in a faith in the power of revolution to create more just and reasonable societies. Taking readers from Greek antiquity to Leninist Russia, Dan Edelstein describes how classical philosophers viewed history as chaotic and directionless, and sought to keep historical change—especially revolutions—at bay. This conception prevailed until the eighteenth century, when Enlightenment thinkers conceived of history as a form of progress and of revolution as its catalyst. These ideas were put to the test during the French Revolution and came to define revolutions well into the twentieth century. Edelstein demonstrates how the coming of the revolution leaves societies divided over its goals, giving rise to new forms of violence in which rivals are targeted as counterrevolutionaries. A panoramic work of intellectual history, The Revolution to Come challenges us to reflect on the aims and consequences of revolution and to balance the value of stability over the hope for change in our own moment of fear and upheaval.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: The Last Revolutionaries Laura Mason, 2022-01-01 The story of a poor man and radical activist who fought to revive the French Revolution, and whose failure heralded the republic's defeat Very much a book for our times. Mason's retelling of the trial of Gracchus Babeuf and the French Revolution shows how democracies end. Historians of revolutions and all those concerned with the arc of social justice movements have much to learn from this remarkable story.--Sophia Rosenfeld, University of Pennsylvania Laura Mason tells a new story about the French Revolution by exploring the trial of Gracchus Babeuf. Named by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels as the first modern communist, Babeuf was a poor man, an autodidact, and an activist accused of conspiring to reignite the Revolution and renew political terror. In one of the lengthiest and most controversial trials of the revolutionary decade, Babeuf and his allies defended political liberty and social equality against a regime they accused of tyranny. Mason refracts national political life through Babeuf's trial to reveal how this explosive event destabilized a fragile republic. Although the French Revolution is celebrated as a founding moment of modern representative government, this book reminds us that the experiment failed in just ten years. Mason explains how an elected government's assault on popular democracy and social justice destroyed the republic, and why that matters now.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: Critical Thinking Using Primary Sources in World History Wendy S. Wilson, Gerald Herman, 2004 Develops critical-thinking and

writing skills Prepares students for document-based assessment Includes options for mock trials and debates

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the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: Imagined Histories Anthony Molho, Gordon S. Wood, 2018-06-05 This collection of essays by twenty-one distinguished American historians reflects on a peculiarly American way of imagining the past. At a time when history-writing has changed dramatically, the authors discuss the birth and evolution of historiography in this country, from its origins in the late nineteenth century through its present, more cosmopolitan character. In the book's first part, concerning recent historiography, are chapters on exceptionalism, gender, economic history, social theory, race, and immigration and multiculturalism. Authors are Daniel Rodgers, Linda Kerber, Naomi Lamoreaux, Dorothy Ross, Thomas Holt, and Philip Gleason. The three American centuries are discussed in the second part, with chapters by Gordon Wood, George Fredrickson, and James Patterson. The third part is a chronological survey of non-American histories, including that of Western civilization, ancient history, the middle ages, early modern and modern Europe, Russia, and Asia. Contributors are Eugen Weber, Richard Saller, Gabrielle Spiegel, Anthony Molho, Philip Benedict, Richard Kagan, Keith Baker, Joseph Zizak, Volker Berghahn, Charles Maier, Martin Malia, and Carol Gluck. Together, these scholars reveal the unique perspective American historians have brought to the past of their own nation as well as that of the world. Formerly writing from a conviction that America had a singular destiny, American historians have gradually come to share viewpoints of historians in other countries about which they write. The result is the virtual disappearance of what was a distinctive American voice. That voice is the subject of this book.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: The Founding of Modern States Richard Franklin Bensel, 2022-11-03 *The Founding of Modern States* is a bold comparative work that examines the rise of the modern state through six case studies of state formation. The book opens with an analysis of three foundings that gave rise to democratic states in Britain, the United States, and France and concludes with an evaluation of three formations that birthed non-democratic states in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Through a comparative analysis of these governments, the book argues that new state formations are defined by a metaphysical conception of a "will of the people" through which the new state is ritually granted sovereignty. The book stresses the paradoxical nature of modern foundings, characterized by "mythological imaginations," or the symbolic acts and rituals upon which a state is enabled to secure political and social order. An extensive study of some of the most important events in modern history, this book offers readers novel interpretations that will disrupt common narratives about modern states and the state of our modern world.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: Choosing Terror Marisa Linton, 2015-06-04 *Choosing Terror: Virtue, Friendship and Authenticity in the French Revolution* examines the leaders of the French Revolution - Robespierre and his fellow Jacobins - and particularly the

gradual process whereby many of them came to 'choose terror'. These men led the Jacobin Club between 1789 and 1794, and were attempting to establish new democratic politics in France. Exploring revolutionary politics through the eyes of these leaders, and against a political backdrop of a series of traumatic events, wars, and betrayals, Marisa Linton portrays the Jacobins as complex human beings who were influenced by emotions and personal loyalties, as well as by their revolutionary ideology. The Jacobin leaders' entire political careers were constrained by their need to be seen by their supporters as 'men of virtue', free from corruption and ambition, and concerned only with the public good. In the early stages of the Revolution, being seen as 'men of virtue' empowered the Jacobin leaders, and aided them in their efforts to forge their political careers. However, with the onset of war, there was a growing conviction that political leaders who feigned virtue were 'the enemy within', secretly conspiring with France's external enemies. By Year Two, the year of the Terror, the Jacobin identity had become a destructive force: in order to demonstrate their own authenticity, they had to be seen to act virtuously, and be prepared, if the public good demanded it, to denounce and destroy their friends, and even to sacrifice their own lives. This desperate thinking resulted in the politicians' terror, one of the most ruthless of all forms of terror during the Revolution. Choosing Terror seeks neither to cast blame, nor to exonerate, but to understand the process whereby such things can happen.

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the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: *Medusa's Head* Rand Mirante, 2014 Minister of Police Joseph Fouché was universally distrusted, feared, and hated in his time, but was nevertheless considered indispensable. In *Medusa's Head*, Rand Mirante recounts the chameleonic and astonishing career of Napoleon's security chief, who created the modern police state and wielded immense power that threatened the other main organs of government. Fouché was one of the most important, fascinating, and controversial figures of the French Revolution, the First Empire, and the Bourbon Restoration, and this biography captures and unravels the highlights of Fouché's life, including his infamous roles as: A priest-in-training who became a radical Jacobin and de-Christianizer A regicide who cast a dramatic swing vote for Louis XVI's immediate execution The grim and remorseless Butcher of Lyon Mastermind of the conspiracy that sent Robespierre to the guillotine The head of Napoleon's police - privy to everyone's secrets, shaping the media, deploying 10,000 informants in Paris alone, and securing funding from the Empire's casinos and brothels Cunning enabler of Napoleon's 1799 coup, and subsequent repeated betrayer of the Emperor Acting president after Waterloo and traitor to France Louis XVIII's Minister of Police, in spite of his

responsibility for the death of the King's brother A wealthy but disgraced exile who met an unusual end in Trieste on the Adriatic Medusa's Head provides fresh insights and perspectives on this enormously influential and fearsome individual.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: A Compendium of World

Sovereigns: Volume III Early Modern Timothy Venning, 2023-06-30 The Compendium of World Sovereigns series contains three volumes: Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern. These volumes provide students with easy-to-access 'who's who' with details on the identities and dates, ages and wives, where known, of heads of government in any given state at any time within the framework of reference. The relevant original and secondary sources are also listed in a comprehensive bibliography. Providing a clear reference guide for students, to who was who and when they ruled in the dynasties and other ruler-lists for the Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern worlds - primarily European and Middle Eastern but including available information on Africa and Asia and the pre-Columbian Americas. The trilogy accesses and interprets the original data plus any modern controversies and disputes over names and dating, reflecting on the shifts and widening of focus in student and academic studies. Each volume contains league tables of rulers' 'records', and an extensive bibliographical guide to the relevant personnel and dynasties, plus any controversies, so readers can consult these for extra details and know exactly where to go for which information. All relevant information is collected and provided as a one-stop-shop for students wishing to check the known information about a world Sovereign. The Early Modern volume begins with Eastern and Western Europe and moves through the Ottoman Empire, South and East Asia, Africa, and ends in Central and South America. Compendium of World Sovereigns: Volume III Early Modern provides students and scholars with the perfect reference guide to support their studies and to fact check dates, people, and places.

the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: The French Legislative Assembly of 1791 C.J. Mitchell, 2023-08-21

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the revolutionary career of maximilien robespierre: Dictionary of World Biography Barry Jones, 2022-11-30 Jones, Barry Owen (1932-). Australian politician, writer and lawyer, born in Geelong. Educated at Melbourne High School and Melbourne University, he was a public servant, high school teacher, television and radio performer, university lecturer and lawyer before serving as a Labor MP in the Victorian Parliament 1972-77 and the Australian House of Representatives 1977-98. He took a leading role in reviving the Australian film industry and abolishing the death penalty in Australia, and was the first politician to raise public awareness of global warming, the 'post-industrial' society, the IT revolution, biotechnology, the rise of 'the Third Age' and the need to preserve Antarctica as a wilderness. In the *Hawke Government, he was Minister for Science 1983-90, Prices and Consumer Affairs 1987, Small Business 1987-90 and Customs 1988-90. He became a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO, Paris 1991-95 and National President of the Australian Labor Party 1992-2000, 2005-06. He was Deputy Chairman of the Constitutional Convention 1998. His books include *Decades of Decision 1860- (1965)*, *Joseph II (1968)* and *Age of Apocalypse (1975)*, and he edited *The Penalty Is Death (1968, revised and expanded 2022)*. *Sleepers, Wake! Technology and the Future of Work* was published by Oxford University Press in 1982, became a bestseller and has been translated into Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Swedish and braille. The fourth edition was published in 1995. *Knowledge Courage Leadership: Insights & Reflections*, a collection of speeches and essays, appeared in 2016. He received a DSc in 1988 for his services to science and a DLitt in 1993 for his work on information theory. Elected FTSE (1992), FAHA (1993), FAA (1996) and FASSA (2003), he is the only person to have become a Fellow of four of Australia's five learned Academies. Awarded an AO in 1993, named as one of Australia's 100 'living national treasures' in 1997, he was elected a Visiting Fellow Commoner of Trinity College, Cambridge in

1999. His autobiography, *A Thinking Reed*, was published in 2006 and *The Shock of Recognition*, about music and literature, in 2016. In 2014 he received an AC for services 'as a leading intellectual in Australian public life'. *What Is to Be Done* was published by Scribe in 2020.

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