



An Essay on the Principle of Population

Thomas Malthus (1766 - 1834)

Read by:	Geoffrey Edwards	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	5 hours 45 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1098
Language:	English	UPC:	852679826784
Style:	Multiple readers	MSLP:	\$9.99
Genre:	Non-Fiction, Political Economy, Science		

An Essay on the Principle of Population, first published in 1798, is considered the most influential work on the subject of population of its time. In it Malthus formulated the Iron Law of Population, which holds that an increase in the supply of labor leads inevitably to lower wages and thus to poverty, famine and disease. He held that population generally increased in times and places of plenty until demand for resources exceeded supply, and that epidemics, famines and wars that stymied growth also masked the fundamental problem. He proposed that the only solution was to limit the birth rate through moral restraint on a wide scale.

The book fueled debate on the size of the British population and helped speed the passage of the Census Act of 1800, which mandated a national census to be conducted every ten years. Malthus revised the work over the course of six editions, incorporating new material and changes in his thinking. The book has been cited as an important influence in the development of the theory of natural selection by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace.

Thomas Robert Malthus (February 13, 1766 – December 23, 1834) was an English cleric and scholar best known for his work on the economics and demographics of population growth. Born the seventh child to a family of independent means in Surrey, he was educated at Cambridge and became a curate in the Church of England and later a Professor of History at the East India Company College. His key perceptions were that populations grew geometrically while food supplies grew arithmetically, so that “the power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man”. He believed this condition was a natural law divinely imposed to encourage and even require virtuous behavior. He was an active member of the intellectual community as a member of the Royal Society, a founding member of the Political Economy Club, one of ten associates of the Royal Society of Literature, and one of the first fellows of the Statistical Society. He married Harriet Eckersall in 1804 and fathered two children. He died in 1804 and is buried in Bath Abbey.