



The Soul of the Marionette: A Short Inquiry into Human Freedom

John Gray

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Compared with that of humans, the life of the marionette looks more like an enviable state of freedom

In his brilliantly enjoyable and freewheeling new book, John Gray draws together the religious, philosophic, and fantastical traditions that question the very idea of human freedom. We flatter ourselves about the nature of free will and yet the most enormous forces—logical, physical, metaphysical—constrain our every action. Many writers and intellectuals have always understood this, but instead of embracing our condition we battle against it, with everyone from world conquerors to modern scientists dreaming of a "human dominion" almost comically at odds with our true state.

Filled with wonderful examples and drawing on the widest possible reading (from the Gnostics to Philip K. Dick), *The Soul of the Marionette* is a stimulating and engaging meditation on everything from cybernetics to the fairground marionettes of the title.

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