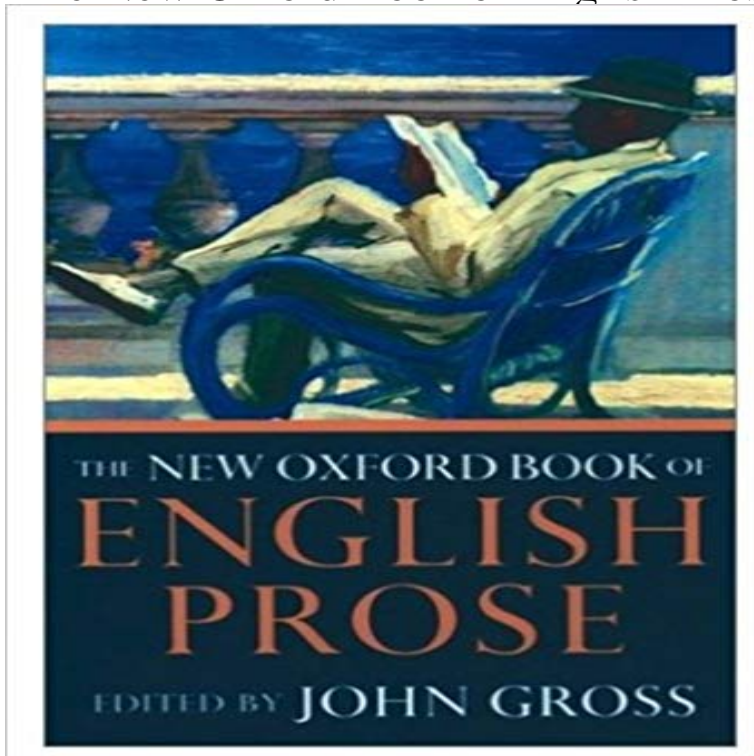


## The New Oxford Book of English Prose



Prose, strictly defined, is the ordinary form of spoken or written language. Examples of solid prose are not difficult to come by: a well argued legal judgment, a lucid scientific paper, or a readily grasped set of technical instructions. Inspired prose, however, is a much rarer thing. In *The New Oxford Book of English Prose*, John Gross has gathered together those rare jewels of the English language that take plain prose to artistic heights. The pared-down style of Hemingway didn't happen overnight. Beginning with Sir Thomas Malory and ending with Kazuo Ishiguro, this anthology chronologically traces the evolution of prose, which gained confidence and extended its range in the late seventeenth century. It wasn't until the eighteenth century, however, that the ornate style of literary giants like Milton and Donne gave way to prose that was recognizably modern. The material included in this anthology is literary, but literary, as the editor states in the introduction, is not the narrow term that it is often made to be; it embraces an enormous range of experience and response. *The New Oxford Book of English Prose* pays tribute to literature's vibrant diversity by offering glimpses of master craftsmanship from around the globe. Included here are excerpts from writers of such varied backgrounds as Salman Rushdie, Margaret Atwood, Vladimir Nabokov, and Mulk Raj Anand. From the eloquent political treatises of Burke to the bold narrative strokes of Herman Melville, readers will find that the selections contained within this volume superbly illustrate the expressive powers of prose.

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