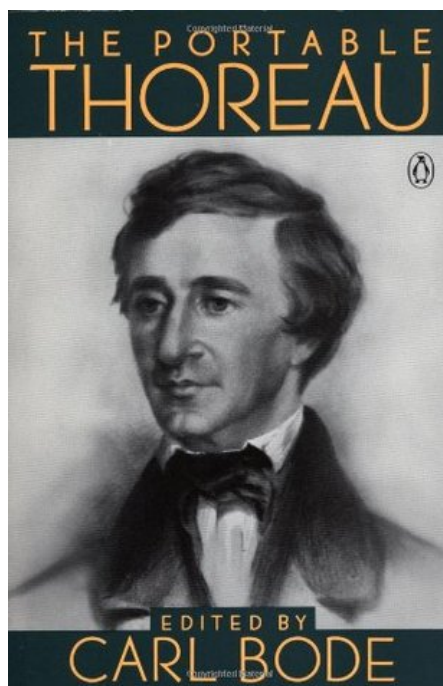




The Portable Thoreau

Henry David Thoreau , Carl Bode (Editor, Introduction by)

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

The Portable Thoreau

Henry David Thoreau , Carl Bode (Editor, Introduction by)

The Portable Thoreau Henry David Thoreau , Carl Bode (Editor, Introduction by)

Henry David Thoreau dedicated his life to preserving his freedom as a man and an artist. Nature was the fountainhead of his inspiration and his refuge from what he considered the follies of society. Heedless of his friends' advice to live in a more orthodox manner, he determinedly pursued his own inner bent, which was that of a poet-philosopher, in prose and verse. Carl Bode brings together the best of Thoreau's works in **The Portable Thoreau**, a comprehensive collection of the writings of a unique and profoundly influential American thinker.

The Portable Thoreau Details

Date : Published January 27th 1977 by Penguin Books (first published March 1947)

ISBN : 9780140150315

Author : Henry David Thoreau , Carl Bode (Editor, Introduction by)

Format : Paperback 698 pages

Genre : Philosophy, Classics, Nonfiction, Writing, Essays, Poetry

 [Download The Portable Thoreau ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Portable Thoreau ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Portable Thoreau Henry David Thoreau , Carl Bode (Editor, Introduction by)

From Reader Review The Portable Thoreau for online ebook

Kate says

I was first inspired to read this after seeing "Into the wild" The Chris McCandless story. I was intimidated by this at first due its its vast concept and articulateness however, it fulfilled my expectation. Not only did I understand why Chris would have read it for those reasons but also because it gives you a great sense of connection to the concept. I found a great deal of relation to the literature and I learnt alot form it. Great read for anyone who want to challenge their mind :)

Barrett Brassfield says

Have to agree with E.B. White (author of Charlotte's Web, among other things) who once said that every high school senior should be given a copy of Walden upon graduation. Many of course will choose not to read it but for those who do, and make it through the slog that is the first chapter, Thoreau's timeless classic offers much wisdom on thoughtful living. Why thoughtful living? Because Walden is full of what of what buddhists refer to as the fire of attention. Each chapter, even the dreadful first, Economy, is full of an intense attention to detail both philosophical and practical. Walden may have been written by a 19th century New Englander but it's implications travel far beyond that limited scope of time and space. At the very least, readers of Walden in any age will be encouraged to forgo the way of the lemming and instead give a little thought to each step taken in life, as opposed to just mindlessly stumbling off the proverbial cliff of life.

Margaret says

I finally started reading *The Portable Thoreau* a year after my first (and only so far) trip to Walden Pond. I'd gotten plenty of warnings to be careful of ticks (there are not ticks really where I live or grew up, and that one episode of "House, MD" has put me off ticks for the rest of my life), and a couple of other interns and I walked from the Concord train station all the way to Walden Pond. On our way there we saw people out in their gardens, a couple cars going by, and realizing that Thoreau really did not go out into too much wilderness when he was living at Walden Pond. However, reading Thoreau as a modern philosopher of self reliance makes me forgive him somewhat for his lack of going into serious wilderness (I think this is a strongly West Coast view of things).

Reading Thoreau for more than just "Civil Disobedience" and "Walden" reveals a certain amount of nature writing that appears to have invented the genre for Americans. This account of climbing to the top of Mount Katahdin, the highest mountain in Maine, seemed to me to have all the elements of modern nature and outdoors writing, from the physical challenge of being outdoorsy to the consideration of nature and the natural world being witnessed. I found Thoreau's journals to be particularly interesting, giving a slightly less formal insight into Thoreau's thinking.

Overall, a very literary souvenir of a literary trip in the middle of July, experiencing early work of modern American naturalism.

Nick says

Brilliant. Favorite sections include "Sounds" "Solitude" and Brute Neighbors (all from Walden. The conclusion is great too), as well as Civil Disobedience, and A Winter Walk

Anarchist, Naturalist, Individualist. A gem.

Barbara M says

This was a book I studied when I first went back to school as an adult. We did Walden Pond. There was just too much that I didn't agree with Thoreau about. It is easy to live in the woods when you borrow the right to live on someone else's land (I think it was Hawthorne's) and then you borrow your tools from your neighbors! I developed a dislike for Mr. Thoreau through that essay.

May says

Reading Thoreau has been on my Bucket List for a very long time. My daughter gave me this copy that includes several key pieces of his work which at times soothe the soul and at other points stir the soul.

Christy Burnett says

I gave the book three stars, because I found myself getting angry at him through the course of the book, but while I may not share all of his views, this book was very well written, and is very interesting to read. You will view our society much differently after this....

Emily says

I think rereading Thoreau as an adult was certainly worth it, as I found so much more meaning in it and connected to it on a completely different level. I would definitely recommend people revisit his texts.

Christopher says

This was a very difficult book for me to read as there was too much going on. Thoreau had a wandering mind as well as body, and that comes out quite well in this collection of his works. Unfortunately, I don't like that sort of writing. It always felt like he was rambling and would never stick to one topic. While this is an admirable quality it is also frustrating. There were some interesting parts in this book. I particularly liked aspects of "Civil Disobedience," the chapter in Walden on reading was riveting, and his "Life Without Principles," had some interesting thoughts. And, too be fair, I read through this rather quickly. But, this is a book only for philosophers and Thoreau/Transcendentalist scholars. Average readers should stick with "Civil Disobedience" and Walden.

Amy says

Oh my gosh, I finished it. Finally. Definitely not the kind of book that you can't put down, but a good one all the same. I love Thoreau's imagery and descriptions, all the naturalism is wonderfully soothing and relaxing at night (which is when I read this). I skipped 'Civil Disobedience' because it was so political and I couldn't stand it, but I loved most everything else, Natural History of Massachusetts and Walden especially.

Chris brown says

Civil Disobedience

I just finished reading this wonderful work of American political thought and history. Like all these old works that helped shape this country and laid the foundation of what it should be, these few pages are far beyond epic. He makes his contempt for the clearly hypocritical institutions of slavery, the Mexican American war and the eventual annexing of Texas, political corruption, taxation, revolution, as well as some political ideology that was and still is staining the fabric American society and culture well known.

"But , to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves non-government men, I ask for not at once no government but at once a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step towards obtaining it."

This speaks far beyond going out and voting, but actually getting involved in the system that says that it holds your best interests at its core and holding that system accountable to this statute. Letting officials know that the state and government is in place to work for the citizen not the citizen is in place to support the state. This was something that Thoreau foresaw and I believe as we are now, in one of the times in history where the common American thought as well as the common American politician believes their work is far beyond the capacity of the average citizen to understand, and would never acknowledge that the common American citizen is their work.

Early on he recognized and pointed out the corruption that was, and still, in the hearts of some elected officials, and the morality of and in revolution which this country was founded on,

"All men recognize the right of revolution; that is, the right to refuse allegiance to, and to resist, the government when its tyranny or its inefficiency are great and unendurable."

If you're looking for a book that was foundational in its day and still as revolutionary a hundred and seventy something years later, pick this up and give it a read. If you are a Thoreau reader this is somewhat a divergence away from the birds and the trees but wonderful nonetheless.

My Review of Walden by Henry David Thoreau

Every so often, I come across a book that not only causes me to examine my most steadfast beliefs but also resonates with them, as if the book was a tuning fork struck against my soul. Walden by Henry David Thoreau is one such book. Calling it a mere book I feel, is doing it an injustice. What these letters, these syllables, and words form in their entirety is, to me, one of the great literary works of art. Walden by Henry David Thoreau is a work of the greatest, deepest philosophical proportions that any lover of wisdom would be doing him or herself a disservice by passing the opportunity to take the trip to the pond by. Walden by Henry David Thoreau, unlike other works of this magnitude, is also not written so as that it confounds

understanding to those whom would read this as template to their own love ode of nature.

On the dust jacket or back of the book you might find something equivalent to saying that Walden is the two year, two month, two day, (and knowing Thoreau two hour) chronicles of a man that built a home and lived by a pond that gives title to the book. It might also express his declaration of discontent of what was then modern man; his society that he felt lacked its right to claim civility, and his technology. This is all very much true but like Thoreau, there was more, much more than those opening words and simplified thoughts laying on the surface can explain.

What resides in these pages are, what was then, a new philosophical view that respected nature. It explained that nature was more than something to be tamed and or bent to the will of man and called for recognition of its sovereignty. In Walden Thoreau also asserted that to call one's self a man, a civilized man, one must not behave as the beasts of nature.

"The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. What is called resignation is confirmed desperation. From the desperate city, you go into the desperate country, and have to console yourself with the bravery of minks and muskrats. A stereotyped but unconscious despair is concealed even under what are called the games and amusements of mankind. There is no play in them, for this comes after work. But it is a characteristic of wisdom not to do desperate things."

Henry David Thoreau
Walden

The first chapter, Economy, the longest single piece of work in the book, outlines why he embarked on this mission. From early on, it reads as if a semi-edited stream of consciousness that expresses a yearning to simplify one's life and rid oneself of the rigors that social life and a proper standing in high society of New England demanded.

"Most of the luxuries, and many of the so-called comforts of life, are not only indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind."

Henry David Thoreau
Walden

He expresses his contempt for the high esteeming attitude, which still prevails today, people had and have for fashion, homes, and miss appropriated civic pride and calls all that read to come to an epiphany of what is true and what actually is necessary in life. He also does not shy away from telling and expressing his faith. He also does not hold a close mind in that believing he can only learn from faith solely but expresses how all of nature is part of creation and there by his learning is only heighten, not hindered by experiencing and being a part of nature. This being a part of nature he also felt and expressed that civilized man was again retreating from too rabidly.

"Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry."

Henry David Thoreau
Walden

I pause here to say that the chapter entitled Reading will forever hold a special place in my heart because of this quote here,

"A written word is the choicest of relics. It is something as once more intimate with us and more universal

that any other work of art. It is the work of art nearest to life itself. It may be actually breathed from all human lips; not be represented on canvas or in marble only, but be carved out of the breath of life itself.”

Henry David Thoreau
Walden

If you read Walden for nothing else, I say read enough to get to this point. Read until you have arrived to this statement so you can fully appreciate the profoundness and beauty of what had been written, what your eyes just had the privilege to have read. Anyone that writes, anyone that sings, anyone that appreciates literature, poetry, and song for the art that it is understands the wonder that was expressed by such an uncomplicated and deeply insightful statement. One other statement that truly reveals how this man born in 1817 and this work written in 1854 was far ahead of its time, reaching into our own some one hundred and fifty four years later, but also shows how far we have not gone in the those one hundred and fifty four years.

“Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any new value for each other. We meet at meals three times a day, and give each other a new taste of that old musty cheese that we are. We have had to agree on a certain set of rules, called etiquette and politeness, to make this frequent meeting tolerable and that we need not come to open war. We meet at the post office, and at the sociable, and about the fireside every night; we live thick and are in each other’s way, and stumble over one another, and I think that we thus lose some respect for one another. Certainly less frequency would suffice for all important and hearty communications.”

Henry David Thoreau
Walden

Clearly Thoreau touched on points that we still speak about today, if not it is probably worse today. We do not sit down with friends or family today for even one meal yet we hold strict contempt for strangers that disobey the rules of etiquette and politeness. I once saw a woman curse another woman out because she did not hold the door open for her as they were walking in the store, but the woman that walked in the store in front of the other woman did not even see or know another person was behind her so why would she hold the door open. If we change the post office to starbucks or some fast-food place for lunch and the fire side to tv or computer and we have relevant commentary about today.

This is where my love affair with Walden ends. If you are reading this work for its philosophical merit alone then I will say upon approaching the chapter The bean field skip to the conclusion. The remainder of the book is just details and true odes to birds, fishing, the pond, and other natural aspects that have worth but reading all of them becomes very monotonous. Read this book for its philosophical worth. Read this book for its historical value and being one of the early roots of environmentalism and naturalism in America. Read this book and ponder.

“Shall we always study to obtain more of these of these things, and not sometimes to be content with less?

Henry David Thoreau
Walden

Jenna Los says

I had never read anything by Thoreau before this book. I had, of course, heard of him, but I never had the desire to read what I perceived would be a long, dull book about the woods. I love nature, but I love being in nature not (or so I thought) reading about it. That said, Thoreau pleasantly surprised me; I actually really enjoyed reading these selections. Walden isn't merely hundreds of pages describing a flower or stream; Thoreau places a lot of philosophy in his work. He stresses individuality and discovering oneself by leaving the trappings of civilization and its material desires behind. I think he might even agree with me that you can't be transformed by merely reading about Nature, but you have to actually go out and experience it for yourself.

One of my favorite pieces was "Walking". His idea of a walk is no doubt a far cry from what we think of walking as today: "If you are ready to leave father and mother, and brother and sister, and wife and child and friends, and never see them again – if you have paid your debts, and made your will, and settled all your affairs, and are a free man – then you are ready for a walk. (593)" Thoreau would not approve of walking while talking on cell phones or listening to iPods; this detracts from truly engaging in the world around you. Of course, many of us are too anxiety-ridden to relax enough for a stroll; we use the mp3 players to drown out our own thoughts on purpose since allowing them to take hold tends to be overwhelming. And I think this fear of free thinking is what Thoreau was afraid would happen to a materialistic society? That we would become so preoccupied with working and making money to earn the things we think we need that nothing is ever enough and work is never done, that our workday follows us home and fogs our thoughts that we no longer see any of the world clearly.

Do yourself a favor and read Thoreau.

Tyler Thompson says

Anyone who's spoken to me in the past two and a half years is likely to know this one thing about me: I am OBSESSED with Transcendentalism. And while this fascination has its original roots in Emerson's essays and Whitman's poetry, it was upon reading Thoreau that I really began to feel I found a kindred spirit.

Thoreau was one of the greatest thinkers to ever live, and as such it's not really possible to do a goodreads-style review of his work, so that's not something I'll attempt. What can be reviewed, however, is the quality of this particular collection, and boy howdy is it good. At over 600 pages, I don't think "portable" is the most apt descriptor, and yet I also don't think this book could've been any shorter. Not only does it contain the full version of Walden and Resistance to Civil Government, but also some of Thoreau's other landmark essays (Walking, Life Without Principle), and snippets of some of his less famous books. And all of this precluded by a beautiful introduction. The complete package makes for a work of art ready to initiate the uninitiated into this wonderful mind, and perhaps motivate those already familiar with Thoreau to dive a little deeper into his lesser-known works.

Rebekah Byson says

5 stars for the writings of Thoreau; 1 star for the Carl Bode 1947 edition. I've owned this book for several

years and have read bits of Thoreau, but decided I would make an effort to read his writings fully and attentively. I started with Walden last fall, and picked this up again to work through the rest of his books and essays. Reading Thoreau is like mining for gold, which ironically was an occupation he had little respect for. A modern reader has to sift through the 19th century, pre-Civil War, sentiments that no longer ring true to a 21st century mind, and pull out the nuggets that are timeless. It is worth the effort. I will find myself reading and re-reading his words for the rest of my life. But first, I need to purchase a better collection. Carl Bode is one of those out-dated amateur psychoanalysts who find Freudian sexual syndromes everywhere he looks. His commentary about Thoreau's biography and writings seem off the mark. As soon as someone says "Freud" and "Oedipus" I immediately feel everything they say after that is wrong.

Karen says

Just found out from my uncle (who lurks on my Goodreads page, which I always forget; I get all startled when he brings up something that I'm reading) that a girl on Girls is reading Thoreau and trying to write a book of essays. Trying to convince her mom to give her money: I think I might be the voice of a generation! ... well A voice of a generation... too close to home. Plus reading him and Kierkegaard at once is waaaay too much stern lonely man philosophy for a lonely girl really hoping all the stern stuff is B.S.
