

## ESSAYS

BRENT RANALLI

Henry Thoreau, Thomas Paine, and Maldistribution of Land and Wealth

In the opening chapter of *Walden*, Thoreau hints at a root cause of economic injustice and inequity. A half century earlier, in a pamphlet titled *Agrarian Justice*, Thomas Paine carried the same train of thought through to its natural conclusion and devised a remedy. Others have sought to implement the remedy over the years. The applicable principle is that land, natural resources, and other assets that can be considered *common wealth*, when they are monetized, should accrue financial benefits to all persons, not just the private parties that own or hold them. The principle can be found in action in Georgist tax policies, in Alaska's Permanent Fund Dividend, and in carbon dividends.

KATE CULKIN

Blazing Bosoms: Louisa May Alcott and Ellen Tucker Emerson on Suffrage and the Concord Centennial

On April 19, 1875, twenty-thousand people, including President Ulysses Grant, poured into Concord to commemorate the centennial of the Battle of Concord. The next month, Louisa May Alcott protested the limited role for, and the treatment of, women in *Woman's Journal*. Ellen Tucker Emerson, the other hand, praised the event in private letters, including the labor that Concord's "womankind" put into preparing the town. This article examines how pro-suffrage Alcott's and anti-suffrage Emerson's responses form part of their larger advocacy for or against votes for women, examines how both invoked the Concord's revolutionary history to make their case, and discusses their shared interest in memorializing women despite their political differences.

ALBENA BAKRATCHEVA

Thoreau's "Peaceable Revolution" and the Eastern European "Velvet Revolutions" of the Late Twentieth Century

The single most famous fact of Thoreau's life had once been perceived as his going off to Walden Pond in order to drive life into a corner. In the 1960s this event was superseded by Thoreau's night spent in jail in defiance of the government. This essay explores Thoreau's political impact in both the United States and Europe in 1968, in order to focus on the late 1980s and early 1990s when "civil disobedience" became the slogan of the velvet revolutions in Eastern Europe. It also tries to imagine some possible ways of practicing Thoreauvian dissent politics in the present.

PETER WIRZBICKI

Tools of their Tools: Thoreau on Technology, Abolitionism, and Disobedience

This essay examines Henry David Thoreau's attitude towards technology, industrialization, and abolitionism. By examining Thoreau's use of the term *tool* to describe both everyday Americans' existential despair, as well as the remarkable complicity of some Northerners with slavery, we can see

how Thoreau's civil disobedience was tied to his attitudes about technological development and instrumental reason.

ERIC D. LEHMAN

*Walden: A Game* and the Adaptation of Wisdom

This essay examines *Walden: A Game*, Tracy Fullerton's interactive adaptation of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, as a cultural object that reimagines philosophical ideas through digital media. Drawing on Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation, it explores how the game transposes Thoreau's text into an immersive environment that emphasizes reflection, choice, and balance rather than conventional gaming goals. By modifying standard mechanics and incorporating historical detail, the creators have tried to gamify wisdom. Ultimately, *Walden: A Game* demonstrates how adaptation can preserve and transform meaning, offering new avenues for engaging with Thoreau's philosophy in the twenty-first century.

DAVID H. GORDON

A Walking Revolution—Thoreau's Mountain Excursions

Anyone acquainted with Thoreau's writings knows that he was a perennial walker. Not only did he walk everywhere, but he is famous for eulogizing the virtues of walking. Thoreau's insistence on walking may be seen as a friction against the fast-paced speed of modern industrial life, allowing for a more genuine encounter with the natural world. While Thoreau is mostly known for walking the woods of Walden, he also made numerous excursions to the mountains of Western Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. This essay explores where Thoreau walked, how he walked, and how retracing the steps of Thoreau is essential to a fuller understanding of Thoreau's writings. It also considers why reviving the practice of walking could be regarded as a revolutionary act.

LOIS BROWN

White Hot Rage: Henry David Thoreau, John Brown, and Revelatory Resistance

The capture and execution of John Brown in 1859 galvanized Henry David Thoreau in unprecedented ways. These tumultuous events quickly became a powerful catalyst for Thoreau and shaped his emergence as an unapologetic and outspoken advocate for justice. What was it about the John Brown case, though, that so moved and outraged Thoreau? Thoreau's responses in Concord and in Boston shed light on his perspectives on race, heroism and the politics of democracy in his nineteenth-century world. This essay explores Thoreau's deliberate responses to racialized injustice and considers how his understanding of necessary revolutions evolved.

RICHARD HIGGINS

Thoreau's Inner Revolutions

As the United States celebrates the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Declaration of Independence, it is well to remember Thoreau's sustained critique of a freedom that was only civil or political in nature. That was how he reacted to Concord's patriotic commemorations of the American Revolution in his lifetime.

While his neighbors loudly toasted their political liberty, Thoreau decried what he saw as their moral, social and material servitude. The problem, as he saw it, was that the revolt that threw off British rule didn't lead his neighbors to an inner *revolving* or turn in their character and values—away from materialism, racism and a purely utilitarian view of nature. For Thoreau, political freedom was always a means to moral and spiritual freedom. America may have inaugurated a new political system in 1776, but it did not bring about a fuller freedom commensurate with the dignity of the human person.

JOHN J. KUCICH

Thoreau and the Revolutionary Indigenous Landscape

One of Thoreau's under-acknowledged revolutionary ideas was local conservation. His plea in "Huckleberries," that every town set aside land for the benefit of all, inspired efforts that continue to shape the American landscape. This essay explores how Thoreau's proposal intersects with Indigenous communities, including the local Musketquid and Nashobah whose legacy shaped Thoreau's own home ground, and the broader Indigenous relationship to land that Thoreau sought to bring to nineteenth-century America. This legacy informs current land conservation efforts and the Land Back movement central to Native revitalization efforts.

ALICE DE GALZAIN

Revolutionary Women: Harriot Kezia Hunt and Caroline Healey Dall on Self-Culture and Women's Health

In this essay, I examine the efforts of Harriot Kezia Hunt and Caroline Healey Dall to challenge the exclusion of women from medical education and the broader medical profession in the first half of the 1850s. I argue that Margaret Fuller's philosophy of self-culture and her advocacy for women's rights significantly influenced both women's approaches to health: while Hunt advanced a holistic and profeminist model of medical practice, Dall championed the transformative power of education for women's well-being—an idea she actively promoted through her writings and editorial work with *The Una*.

JAKE MCGINNIS

Excursions in the Anthropocene: Henry David Thoreau, Greta Thunberg, and the Revolutionary Potential of Travel Writing

This essay considers Thoreau's legacy for contemporary revolutions, specifically the twenty-first-century climate movement and the work of Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg. Thunberg's work clearly draws inspiration from "Resistance to Civil Government," which provides a crucial model for direct action. By framing her "sabbatical year" as a journey, however, Thunberg also highlights the revolutionary potential of lived experience and deliberate, unsettling storytelling. Similarly, the ways that Thoreau wrote about travel in *Walden*, *Cape Cod*, *The Maine Woods*, the *Journal*, and elsewhere are grounded in the radical potential of lived experience to unsettle one's sense of the world. For Thunberg, as for Thoreau, travel and travel narrative offer a site of experimentation with planetary stakes, a means by which lived experience and deliberate storytelling could shift our understanding of life back home—and our collective fate on an imperiled planet. Ultimately, this essay argues that the narratives that Thoreau and his editors called "excursions," experimental travel essays grounded in

home, shaped by a sense of a world in motion, and characterized by unsettling, even disturbing realizations, remain a vital source for activist literature today.

***PLUS***

**POETRY**

CATHERINE STAPLES

Spring Turnover

ALEXANDER LEVERING KERN

Non-retaliation

Walden's Trees

**CREATIVE NONFICTION**

ALIREZA TAGHDARREH

Evolutions for Revolutions

RICHARD PICCARRETO

"It lives too fast." Henry Thoreau and the Revolution of the Railroad

**ARTWORK**

ERIN KAHN

More Days to Dawn

MICHAEL MAZENKO

Write the Power, No.1—Thoreau

SUZANNE REVY

Greenough Wetlands

JOHN ROMAN

Henry Thoreau, August 1847