

## THOREAU AT TWO HUNDRED

Henry David Thoreau's thinking about a number of issues – including the relationship between humans and other species, just responses to state violence, the threat posed to human freedom by industrial capitalism, and the essential relation between scientific “facts” and poetic “truths” – speaks to our historical moment as clearly as it did to the “restless, nervous, bustling, trivial Nineteenth Century” into which he was born. This volume, marking the two-hundredth anniversary of Thoreau's birth, gathers the threads of the contemporary, interdisciplinary conversation around this key figure in literary, political, philosophical, and environmental thought, uniting new essays by scholars who have shaped the field with chapters by emerging scholars investigating previously underexplored aspects of Thoreau's life, writings, and activities. Both a dispatch from the front lines of Thoreau scholarship and a vivid demonstration of Thoreau's relevance for twenty-first century life and thought, *Thoreau at Two Hundred* will be of interest for both Thoreau scholars and general readers.

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THOREAU AT TWO  
HUNDRED

*Essays and Reassessments*

EDITED BY  
KRISTEN CASE  
and  
K. P. VAN ANGLLEN



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## *Foreword*

*Michael Schleifer*  
*President, the Thoreau Society, Inc.*

In 2016, the Thoreau Society celebrates seventy-five years of existence. Founded in 1941 by a mixed group of academics and enthusiasts, the Society is the oldest and largest single-author society in the United States. Members can be found in more than fifty countries. Since its founding, members have gathered annually (in recent years, on the weekend closest to Thoreau's birthday), with many traveling several thousands of miles to attend. Activities at the annual event includes the presentation of academic papers and panel discussions about all things Thoreau in addition to nature walks, river trips, and other outdoor activities.

The breadth of Thoreau's reach never ceases to amaze his devoted readers. In the charged political atmosphere of 2015, acts of civil disobedience could be seen from Charleston, South Carolina to Washington, DC, among other less highly publicized instances. His influence continues to resonate in our collective conversations about social justice, the environment, economics, and what constitutes a good and meaningful life. In the fall 2015 issue of *Yes! Magazine*, a short essay appears under the title "Thoreau Was My Financial Advisor," expounding on Thoreau's description of a thing's cost to the "amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it."

With its support of this volume, the Society continues its stated mission: to stimulate interest in and foster education about Thoreau's life, works, legacy, and his place in his world and ours, challenging all to live a deliberate, considered life.

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Joshua David Bellin thanks Sandra Petrulionis, Laura Walls, and Joel Myerson for their support of his work on Transcendentalism and the American Indians. He’d also like to thank the editors of this volume for their helpful feedback on an early draft of “Red Walden: Thoreau and Native America.”

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Susan E. Gallagher thanks Bob Gross and James Finley for their insightful comments on earlier drafts of her chapter, as well as Elaine Sanders for her inspiration and support.

Len Gougeon thanks the many friends and colleagues who have encouraged and supported the larger project from which his chapter derives, especially Joel Myerson, Robert Richardson, Laura Dassow Walls, Robert Gross, Albert von Frank, and Wesley Mott. He would also like to thank the diligent cadre of able research assistants who, over a period of years, have aided him in searching, sifting, and transcribing a veritable mountain of primary materials relating to cultural conflict and the Civil War.

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Sandra Harbert Petrulionis thanks Leslie Wilson at the Concord Free Public Library for her assistance in making archival materials available at a moment’s notice. She also thanks Noelle A. Baker for her reading of and insightful comments on an initial draft of this chapter.

Robert Richardson thanks Mike Frederick for the invitation to address the Thoreau Society in July 2013, and Kristen Case for editorial help beyond the call, graciously offered.

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## *Abbreviations*

This volume cites the ongoing Princeton University Press edition of *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau* for Thoreau's works, correspondence, and journal entries currently published in that series. For writings, letters, and parts of his journal not yet available in the Princeton Edition, we have cited the 1906 Houghton-Mifflin edition. General references to the Princeton Edition are abbreviated as PE; general references to the 1906 edition are abbreviated as HM. The following abbreviations for individual volumes are also used:

- COR* *Correspondence*, Volumes 1–2. Edited by Robert N. Hudspeth. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013–.
- EEM* *Early Essays and Miscellanies*. Edited by Joseph J. Moldenhauer and Edwin Moser with Alexander C. Kern. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975.
- EX* *Excursions*. Edited by Joseph J. Moldenhauer. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007.
- J* *The Journal of Henry David Thoreau*. Edited by Bradford Torrey. 14 vols. Ed. Bradford Torrey and Francis Allen. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1906.
- MW* *The Maine Woods*. Edited by Joseph J. Moldenhauer. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972.
- PJ* *Journal*, Volumes 1–8. Edited by John C. Broderick, Robert Sattelmeyer, et al. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981–.
- RP* *Reform Papers*. Edited by Wendell Glick. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973.

- W* *Walden*. Edited by J. Lyndon Shanley. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Week* *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. Edited by Carl F. Hovde. In *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.

## *A Note on Citations from the Princeton Edition*

The essays in *Thoreau at Two Hundred* follow the Princeton Edition of *The Writings of Henry D. Thoreau* in not regularizing “inconsistencies in punctuation, word-divison, or spelling” (*W* 382), especially where such accidental features represent Thoreau’s choices between American and British spellings (“fibre/fiber,” “plough/plow”) or his opting to follow local forms (“Shakespere” not “Shakespeare”) – all of which were common in early nineteenth-century New England. Likewise, “mistakes, anomalies, and inconsistencies in the manuscript” of Thoreau’s Journal “have been allowed to stand unless sense is seriously threatened” (*PJ* 1: 590).