

Request to post a call for contributions - Oxford Handbook of Henry David Thoreau

The editors of the proposed Oxford Handbook of Henry David Thoreau seek proposals for essays on any aspect of Thoreau's works, life, or reception that significantly reframe an aspect of his scholarly, political, or popular legacy. For more than a century, the dominant image of Thoreau was that of a solitary figure who happily turned his back on social ties and political matters to head off into the woods. In both public and scholarly writing, Thoreau was held up as an exemplar of a certain type of white, able-bodied masculinity: one where wilderness was preferable to domestic and social spaces, and where independence and communion with the self in nature superseded other forms of relationality, community, and solidarity. In recent years, scholarly work on Thoreau, including a major biography and several bicentennial volumes, has challenged these long-held critical perceptions with consideration of his work in relation to gender and sexuality, abolition, indigeneity, race, environmental justice, and other issues.

We aim to collect and expand these new directions in Thoreau studies in a comprehensive volume designed to inform the next generation of Thoreau scholarship. We seek contributions from disciplines, traditions, and perspectives that have been previously excluded from or that have been marginalized within Thoreau studies. We are particularly interested in writings that engage with a range of traditions, including anti-racist work and prison abolition; disability justice, LGBTQ+ activism; climate justice; radical politics; as well as experimental or innovative approaches to Thoreau's life, writings, and legacies.

Please send abstracts of 300 words or fewer to kristen.case@maine.edu and james.finley@tamusa.edu by November 1, 2022. In addition, we welcome queries and would be happy to discuss ideas prior to the deadline.