**The Atlantic**

(Link : <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1862/06/walking/304674/> )

# Walking

Henry David Thoreau, the naturalist, philosopher, and author of such classics as Walden and "Civil Disobedience," contributed a number of writings to The Atlantic in its early years. The month after his death from tuberculosis, in May 1862, the magazine published "Walking," one of his most famous essays, which extolled the virtues of immersing oneself in nature and lamented the inevitable encroachment of private ownership upon the wilderness.

[Henry David Thoreau](https://www.theatlantic.com/author/henry-david-thoreau/)

[June 1862 Issue](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/toc/1862/06/)

“ I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil—to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society. ***I wish to make an extreme statement***..

.. The West of which I speak is but another name for the Wild; and what I have been preparing to say is, that ***in Wildness is the preservation of the World***. Every tree sends its fibers forth in search of the Wild. The cities import it at any price. Men plow and sail for it. From the forest and wilderness come the tonics and barks which brace mankind. Our ancestors were savages. The story of Romulus and Remus being suckled by a wolf is not a meaningless fable. The founders of every state which has risen to eminence have drawn their nourishment and vigor from a similar wild source. It was because the children of the Empire were not suckled by the wolf that they were conquered and displaced by the children of the northern forests who were.

I believe in the forest, and in the meadow, and in the night in which the corn grows. We require an infusion of hemlock, spruce or arbor vitae in our tea. There is a difference between eating and drinking for strength and from mere gluttony. The Hottentots eagerly devour the marrow of the koodoo and other antelopes raw, as a matter of course. Some of our northern Indians eat raw the marrow of the Arctic reindeer, as well as various other parts, including the summits of the antlers, as long as they are soft. And herein, perchance, they have stolen a march on the cooks of Paris. They get what usually goes to feed the fire. This is probably better than stall-fed beef and slaughterhouse pork to make a man of. Give me a wildness whose glance no civilization can endure—as if we lived on the marrow of koodoos devoured raw.

There are some intervals which border the strain of the wood thrush, to which I would migrate—wild lands where no settler has squatted; to which, methinks, I am already acclimated..”

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