

Thoreau's Nature: Ethics, Politics, and the Wild (Modernity and Political Thought)

Jane Bennett

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Thoreau's Nature: Ethics, Politics, and the Wild (Modernity and Political Thought) Jane Bennett Thoreau's Nature: Ethics, Politics, and the Wild explores how Thoreau crafted a life open to 'the Wild,' a term that marks the startling element of foreignness in every object of experience, however familiar. Thoreau's encounters with nature, Bennett argues, allowed him to resist his all-too-human tendency toward intellectual laziness, social conformity, and political complacency. Bennett pursues this theme by constructing a series of dialogues between Thoreau and our contemporaries: Foucault on identity and power, Haraway on the nature/culture of division, Hollywood celebrities on the Walden Woods Project, the National Endowment for the Humanities on politics and art, and Kafka on the question of political idealism. The pertinence to the late 20th century of Thoreau's pursuit of independent judgment, ecological foresight, and moral nobility becomes apparent through these engagements.



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