

Henry ‘that
government is best
which governs least” ,

Government



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Henry David Thoreau is a famous writer who was born on July 12, 1817 in Concord, Massachusetts.

He studied Greek, Latin and German at Harvard University. After studying he opened a school with his brother John but had to close it because of an illness. Thoreau then went into working in a pencil factory which his father owned. Soon after, he was brought to live in the home of his mentor, Emerson, working as a handyman. During Thoreau's stay with him, he started wanting to become a writer.

Emerson even helped him get some papers into journals. At the time life in his parent's home wasn't going very well so he ended up building a little home on land that Emerson owned to have time for himself. He spent two years in living there, experimenting with working as little as possible. (Henry David Thoreau) and during that time he went to jail for a night because he refused to pay a poll tax. After that ordeal he wrote a book titled "Civil Disobedience". Civil Disobedience is an essay written by Henry David Thoreau.

Civil Disobedience exposes the mind to the idea of prioritizing laws. Refusing to obey the laws and demands of the government. It heavily criticizes the American institution of government at the time and is also defined as a text to live by.

It is also influenced Romanticism, the idea of individualism. Henry David Thoreau In his essay "Civil Disobedience," Henry David Thoreau opens by saying, "I heartily accept the motto, 'That government is best which governs least'", and then clarifies that his true belief is "'That government is

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best which governs not at all" . In Civil Disobedience, Thoreau states that government is nothing but imaginary/abstract idea that people choose to live by. Yet this abstract thing we call government is so easy to wield and manipulate, that one individual can easily bid the government to do their will. While we believe that government is made to serve the people in which it governs, it is mainly used as a source to gain power. Thoreau encourages civil disobedience because it is the ability to have a sense of rightness and moral conscience.

The Main Idea Thoreau's political essays, including " Civil Disobedience" profoundly influenced a young lawyer in South Africa who was protesting that government's treatment of immigrant workers from India. The lawyer was Mohandas K. Gandhi. Gandhi found in Thoreau the techniques he would use in the subsequent struggle for Indian independence. Years later, he thanked the American people for Thoreau, saying,