

# The Most Important Essays in History

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## THE 20 MOST IMPORTANT ESSAYS IN HISTORY:

- 1 "On the Jewish Question" –Karl Marx
- 2 "An Answer To The Question: 'What Is Enlightenment?'" –Immanuel Kant
- 3 "Where I Lived & What I Lived For" –H.D. Thoreau (from *Walden*)
- 4 "The Age of Reason" –Thomas Paine
- 5 "Common Sense" –Thomas Paine
- 6 "The Declaration of Independence" –Thomas Jefferson (w/ Ben Franklin)
- 7 "Introduction: War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning" –Chris Hedges
- 8 "The Paranoid Style In American Politics" –Richard Hofstadter
- 9 "The Responsibility of Intellectuals" –Noam Chomsky
- 10 "Epilogue: Concilience" –E.O. Wilson
- 11 "Civil Disobedience" –Ralph Waldo Emerson
- 12 "Thank Goodness" –Daniel Dennett
- 13 "Wage Labor & Capital" –Karl Marx
- 14 "Rights of Man" –Thomas Paine
- 15 "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" –Mary Elizabeth Wollstonecraft
- 16 "The Culture Industry" –Theodore Adorno (*The Dialectic of Enlightenment*)
- 17 "Politics & The English Language" –George Orwell
- 18 "Conspicuous Consumption" –Thorstein Veblen
- 19 "A Letter Concerning Toleration" –John Locke
- 20 The 1855 Letter from Chief Seattle to President Pierce

## 36 Notable Mentions:

- "Meditations" –Rene Descartes
- "Theory & Practice" –Immanuel Kant (*Political Essays*)
- "African Slavery In America" –Thomas Paine
- "Dissertations On The First Principles of Government" –Thomas Paine
- "Agrarian Justice" –Thomas Paine
- "Recapitulation & Conclusion" –Charles Darwin
- "Estranged Labor" –Karl Marx (from 1844 manuscripts)

“Why Socialism?” –Albert Einstein, *Monthly Review* (May, 1949)

“Science & Culture” –T.H. Huxley

“Evolution & Ethics and Science & Morals” –T.H. Huxley

“Agnosticism & Christianity” –T.H. Huxley

“Politics” –R.W. Emerson

“The Transcendentalist” –R.W. Emerson

“Self-Reliance” –R.W. Emerson

“Life Without Principle” –H.D. Thoreau

“Walking” –H.D. Thoreau

John Galt’s speech –Ayn Rand (from *Atlas Shrugged*)

“Computing Machinery & Intelligence” –Alan Turing

“Why I Am Not A Christian” –Bertrand Russell

“The Experience Machine” –Robert Nozick (from *Anarchy, State & Utopia*)

“Language & Freedom” –Noam Chomsky

“Reflections On 9-11” –Noam Chomsky

“The Case Against B.F. Skinner” –Noam Chomsky

“The Conscience of a Hacker” –The Mentor (*Phrack*, 1986)

“The Cathedral & The Bazaar” (a.k.a. CatB) –Eric S. Raymond

“On Religion” –Arthur Schopenhauer

“Non Serviam” –Stanislaw Lem

“The Humanist Manifesto” I, II, III

95 Theses –Martin Luther

The 1863 Memorial Address at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania –Abraham Lincoln

Letter From A Birmingham Jail –Martin Luther King Jr.

“Notes Of A Native Son” –James Baldwin

“The Fixation of Belief” –C.S. Peirce

“How To Make Our Ideas Clear” –C.S. Peirce

“What Pragmatism Is” –C.S. Peirce

“Definition & Function of a University” –C.S. Peirce