



# Selected Speeches and Writings of Theodore Roosevelt

*By Theodore Roosevelt*

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## Selected Speeches and Writings of Theodore Roosevelt By Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919) was America's most published president with an incredible output of writing including forty books, over a thousand articles, and countless speeches and letters.

Collected here in one volume are examples of Roosevelt's voluminous writings over a dazzling array of topics. Organized by general categories, readers can sample writings on subjects as varied as the environment, the danger of professional sports; the famous charge of San Juan Hill, and Roosevelt's passion for literary criticism. From addresses and presidential messages on public policy and national ideals, to biography, to travel writing, to ecological concerns, to writings on hunting, to international politics and history, Roosevelt's talents and achievements as a writer went far beyond what we now expect of our public leaders.

Roosevelt's legacy as one of the first progressive American politicians, his concerns about environmentalism, his internationalism, and his unflinching belief in the American character and destiny uncannily speak to the issues of our own day and can be found in the pages of this representative and judicious anthology of his work.

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### Editorial Review

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Viewing Theodore Roosevelt as author rather than as president, editor Hutner showcases the topical breadth of TR's published works and declamations. In a collection of 24-plus items, readers can range from Roosevelt's advice on raising boys, opinion about professional sports, and accounts of hunting bears to his invocations of political principles for the public issues of his time. In addition to TR's varied interests, Hutner primes readers with insightful introductions to Roosevelt's prose style, which was as muscular and direct as was his advocacy of, as one of his best-known speeches is titled, "The Strenuous Life." Contemptuous of "a life of slothful ease," Roosevelt made his personal energy and indomitability infuse much of his writing, which is why it remains historically fascinating a century after his presidency. If his books are not to today's tastes, they nevertheless capture TR's aim for accuracy and objectivity. In addition to excerpts from his histories, including *The Winning of the West*, "among his greatest achievements as a writer," according to Hutner, this varied volume includes a TR speech on historiography. A judicious anthology well suited to the TR shelf. --Gilbert Taylor

### Review

"They don't make them like TR anymore. This is just as well; one was plenty. But such a one he was! Even today he leaps off the page, grabs the reader by the shoulders and makes him want to mount a horse, climb a peak, or battle the enemies of the public weal. Bully indeed!" —H. W. Brands, author of *The Man Who Saved the Union: Ulysses Grant in War and Peace*

"An eclectic collection from the highly literate and scholarly president of the United States. Editor Hutner had a difficult task: selecting representative samples from among the mountains of Roosevelt's publications. Some selections are unsurprising . . . but there are also some welcome surprises. . . . Intriguing pieces, unobtrusively and skillfully edited, that form both a time and a timeless capsule." —*Kirkus Review*

"Although Theodore Roosevelt is most often remembered as a man of action—whether in the White House, on the African savannah or through the Amazon rainforest—what he was first and foremost, and throughout his life, was a man of letters. Roosevelt was not only astonishingly prolific, he was thoughtful, thorough and incredibly eloquent. For this book, Gordon Hutner has carefully chosen not just Roosevelt's best known work, but his most powerful and stirring writings. It is a striking glimpse into an extraordinary mind, and an absolutely fascinating, endlessly entertaining read." —Candice Millard, author of *The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey*

"See Theodore Roosevelt afresh by reading this fascinating collection of newly uncovered essays combined with his historic political and literary preachments. TR defends the reason why nationalism stands behind his brand of conservation of nature and his defense of the welfare state, and he breathes literary fire against the Fourteen Points as well as political reactionaries. A bully read!" —Kathleen Dalton, author of *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life*

"Drawing on his expertise in the politics and culture of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era and his legendary editorial skills, Gordon Hutner has managed to capture the complexity, creativity, contrariness and combativeness of Theodore Roosevelt, one of our nation's most important politicians and men of letters." —Glenn Altschuler, Thomas and Dorothy Litwin Professor of American Studies, Cornell University

“TR is back and timely. Many of his early twentieth century issues are, in new dress, those of our own early twenty-first century. This collection captures the intellectually omnivorous Roosevelt’s always readable major public writings, making them available to students and the general public.” —Thomas Bender, University Professor of the Humanities and Professor of History, New York University

“Headstrong and articulate, Theodore Roosevelt rarely wandered into the gray areas of indecision and self-doubt, let alone pacifism. His own uncle said TR would rather bang his head against a stone wall than change direction. TR’s prose, in these aptly-selected passages, reflects the man: blunt despite a Harvard vocabulary, and brimful of a broadly inclusive vision of American optimism despite growing up so wealthy. Throughout his life, Roosevelt carried a soapbox in his back pocket.” —Richard Zacks, author of *Island of Vice: Theodore Roosevelt Doomed Quest to Clean Up Sin-Loving New York*

#### About the Author

**Theodore Roosevelt** was born on October 27, 1858, and became the twenty-sixth president of the United States. He was a naturalist, writer, historian, and soldier. He died in 1919.

Gordon Hutner, editor, is professor of English at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He founded in 1989 and is the editor of the journal *American Literary History*, and is considered “one of the most influential editors of his generation.” He is the author of *What America Read: Taste, Class, and the Novel, 1920–1960*. He also edited the volume *Immigrant Voices: Twenty-Four Narratives on Becoming an American and American Literature, American Culture*.

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