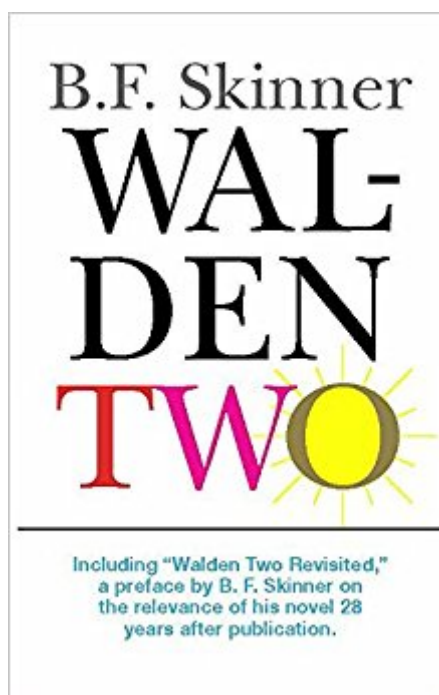


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Walden Two (Hackett Classics)



Synopsis

A reprint of the 1976 Macmillan edition. This fictional outline of a modern utopia has been a center of controversy ever since its publication in 1948. Set in the United States, it pictures a society in which human problems are solved by a scientific technology of human conduct.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

With environmental and social problems becoming serious issues in today's society, the search for solutions is evident. B.F. Skinner's book presents a fictional outline of a modern utopia in which human problems are solved by a scientific technology of human conduct. This book serves as a possible example of how our knowledge of human behavior can be used to create a productive social environment while preserving the chances of future generations to do the same. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Burrhus Frederic Skinner (1904-1990), regarded by many as the most important and influential psychologist since Freud, earned his doctorate in psychology at Harvard University in 1931. Following appointments at the University of Minnesota and Indiana University, he returned to Harvard in 1948. He remained there for the rest of his career, retiring in 1974 as Edgar Pierce Professor of Psychology.

This book is mostly exposition with not a lot of story. Skinner explains what he believes will

constitute the ideal society through one of the characters, the founder of Walden 2, named Frazier, as several other characters are given a tour of the commune over several days. Maybe Skinner's ideas might be successful, but I don't know of anyone who has tried to put them into practice. The main idea appears to be that the individual becomes responsible for the success of the commune, and whatever is good for the welfare of the commune is good for the individual. Contrast this 'novel' with 'The Blithedale Romance', by Nathaniel Hawthorne, another novel about life in a commune, but told from the perspective of a character that becomes a member of the commune and not just an observer.

Very didactic. Contrived. Interesting ideas, but a struggle to plow through with a sudden change of heart of the narrator that has no real explanation.

Skinner had to agree to write a textbook for the publishers in order to get them to publish this. He should have stuck to nonfiction.

This was Skinner's only fictional work, after turning psychology upside-down with behavioral modification techniques used by animal trainers world-wide. I loved it. In fact, it was influential enough to inspire several communes, one of which, Twin Oaks in Virginia, is still functioning (though without much in common with the novel). Perhaps a larger, more skilled base was needed. For that, we may have to wait until Elon Musk begins seeking colonists for Mars.

B.F. Skinner's view of his Utopian society. A must read for critical thinkers.

Great book!

Very thought provoking book. Great conditions, like new as described. Clean and no smells.

A friend referred this book to me. I'm glad he did, really insightful. Makes me wonder what's stopping us from making this happen.

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