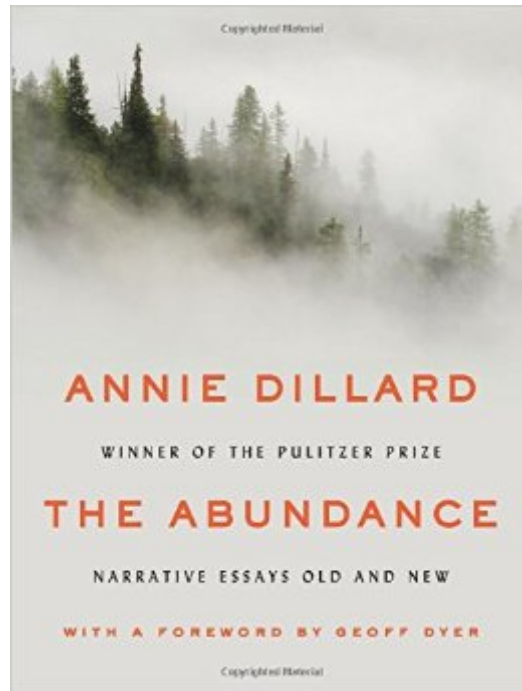


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The Abundance: Narrative Essays Old And New



Synopsis

In recognition of the Pulitzer Prize-winning author's long and lauded career as a master essayist, a landmark collection, including her most beloved pieces and some rarely seen work, rigorously curated by the author herself. "A writer who never seems tired, who has never plodded her way through a page or sentence, Dillard can only be enjoyed by a wide-awake reader," warns Geoff Dyer in his introduction to this stellar collection. Carefully culled from her past work, *The Abundance* is quintessential Annie Dillard, delivered in her fierce and undeniably singular voice, filled with fascinating detail and metaphysical fact. The pieces within will exhilarate both admiring fans and a new generation of readers, having been re-framed and re-hung with fresh editing and reordering by the author, to situate these now seminal works within her larger canon. *The Abundance* reminds us that Dillard's brand of "novelized nonfiction" pioneered the form long before it came to be widely appreciated. Intense, vivid, and fearless, her work endows the true and seemingly ordinary aspects of life "a commuter chases snowball-throwing children through neighborhood streets, a teenager memorizes Rimbaud's poetry" with beauty and irony, inviting readers onto sweeping landscapes, to join her in exploring the complexities of time and death, with a sense of humor: on one page, an eagle falls from the sky with a weasel attached to its throat; on another, a man walks into a bar. Reminding us of the indelible contributions of this formative figure in contemporary nonfiction, *The Abundance* exquisitely showcases Annie Dillard's enigmatic, enduring genius, as Dillard herself wishes it to be marked.

Book Information

Hardcover: 304 pages

Publisher: Ecco (March 15, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062432974

ISBN-13: 978-0062432971

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 7.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (28 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #72,879 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #122 in [Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Nature Writing & Essays](#) #283 in [Books > Travel > Travel Writing](#) #323 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Essays & Correspondence > Essays](#)

Customer Reviews

The following is a review of *The Abundance* that I wrote for the Washington Free Beacon: [...] One comes to Annie Dillard's *The Abundance: Narrative Essays New and Old* as to a trove of prehistoric flint knives: "Each of these delicate, absurd objects takes hundreds of separate blows to make. At each stroke and at each pressure flake, the brittle chert might—and, by the record, very often did—snap. | To any human on earth, the sight of one of them means: Someone thought of making, and made, this difficult, impossible, beautiful thing." • Dillard's essays are uncanny objects, incisive as the flint knife a modern surgeon found "smoother | than his best steel scalpels," yet unsuitable for the day-to-day work of living due to their perfection. Dillard has long been revered among American nature writers for *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, which received the Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction in 1975 and announced Dillard as a latter-day Thoreau (she wrote her master's thesis on Walden). Like Thoreau, she is a wondrous documenter of the natural world, rendering its beauty and horror often in the same passage, whether describing a weasel "He was ten inches long, thin as a curve, a muscled ribbon, brown as fruitwood, soft-furred, alert. His face was fierce, small and pointed as a lizard's; he would have made a good arrowhead—or the wave of shadow that immediately precedes a total eclipse—elt rolled across the land at 1,800 miles an hour, hauling darkness behind it like plague. Seeing it, and knowing it was coming straight for you, was like feeling a slug of anesthetic shoot up your arm. | You can feel the appalling, inhuman speed of your own blood." • Like Thoreau, Dillard carves sentences that pierce one's memory: "You do not have to sit outside in the dark."

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