



# Howard Zinn Speaks: Collected Speeches 1963-2009

*Howard Zinn , Anthony Arnove (Editor)*

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Howard Zinn has illuminated our history like no other US historian. This collection of his speeches on protest movements, racism, war, and US history, many never before published, covers more than four decades of his active engagement with the audiences he inspired with his humor, insight, and clarity.

“Reading Howard’s spoken words, I feel that I am almost hearing his voice again—his stunning pitch-perfect ability to capture the moment and the concerns and needs of the audience, whoever they may be, always enlightening, often stirring, an amalgam of insight, critical history, wit, blended with charm and appeal.”  
—NOAM CHOMSKY

“With ferocious moral clarity and mischievous humor, Howard turned routine antiwar rallies into profound explorations of state violence and staid academic conferences into revival meetings for social change. Collected here for the first time, Howard’s speeches—spanning an extraordinary life of passion and principle—come to us at the moment when we need them most: just as a global network of popular uprisings searches for what comes next. We could ask for no wiser a guide than Howard Zinn.”  
—NAOMI KLEIN

“To hear [Howard] speak was like listening to music that you loved—lyrical, uplifting, honest. . . . I know he would love it for each of you to find your voice and to be heard. This book will provide you with some inspiration.”  
—MICHAEL MOORE

“To read this book is to hear Howard Zinn speak again, inspiring us for the struggles from below that are our only hope for any future at all.”  
—FRANCES FOX PIVEN

**Howard Zinn** wrote the classic *A People's History of the United States*. The book, which has sold more than two million copies, has been featured in the film *Good Will Hunting*, and has appeared multiple times on *The New York Times* best-seller list.

**Anthony Arnove** wrote, directed, and produced *The People Speak* with Howard Zinn, Chris Moore, Josh Brolin, and Matt Damon, and co-edited, with Howard Zinn, *Voices of a People's History of the United States*.

### Howard Zinn Speaks: Collected Speeches 1963-2009 Details

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Anthony Arnove (Editor)**

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## From Reader Review Howard Zinn Speaks: Collected Speeches 1963-2009 for online ebook

### D says

Great collective. Instructive read.

Zinn was an early and outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War. His autobiography: *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train*

Zinn frequently visited Colorado, where he gave talks to colleges and regularly spoke at benefits supporting the work of David Barsamian's invaluable Alternative Radio program radio station KGNU.

One of the things that I got out of reading history was to begin to be disabused of this notion that that's what democracy is all about. The more history I read, the more it seemed very clear to me that whatever progress has been made in this country on various issues, whatever things have been done for people, whatever human rights have been gained, have not been gained through the calm deliberations of Congress or the wisdom of presidents or the ingenious decisions of the Supreme Court. Whatever progress has been made in this country has come because of the actions of ordinary people, or citizens, of social movements. Not from the Constitution. You think of whatever progress has been made in this country for economic justice. Obviously, not enough progress has been made for economic justice, looking around at this country. You have to look around. You have to walk through a whole city. If you walk through half a city you'll be mistaken. You have to walk through a whole city and you see the class structure in the United States, the hidden story of American prosperity. So obviously we haven't made a lot of progress, but we've made some progress. We did get it down to an eight-hour day... Whatever was gained in that way for working people was gained through an enormously rich, complex history of labor struggles in the country. This has been mostly ignored in the history books that have been written.

I am not a total pacifist. The ideal of being absolutist in anything does not strike a chord with me.

We are citizens. We must not put ourselves in the position of looking at the world from their eyes and say, "Well, we have to compromise, we have to do this for political reasons." We have to speak our minds.

Where progress has been made, wherever any kind of injustice has been overturned, it's been because people acted as citizens and not as politicians. They didn't just moan. They worked, they acted, they organized, they rioted, if necessary.

War is inevitably -- inevitably -- the indiscriminate, massive killing of huge numbers of people. And children are a good part of those people. Every war is a war against children.

So, yes, people have the power. If they begin to organize. If they protest. If they create a strong enough movement, they can change things.

That's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

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### Mark Hiser says

A collection of speeches by one of the great dissenters of the late 20th century.

## Michael Duane Robbins says

Very early on there was a section in the first speech presented that really struck me, in part because this observation was made in April, 1963, but also because of its relevance: “Forty million people, under \$2,000 a year...Look at the concentration of wealth, on the other hand. One percent of the population, 700,000 families, own 25 percent of all the money, stocks, bonds, real estate, all the tangible assets, in the country. And furthermore, this hasn’t changed much over the years. “

This should be required reading; we should bind every nativist ignoramus in this country to a chair and force-feed them these speeches. Again & again over the year, Zinn reminds us that change never comes from the top down, never at the pleasure of our Congress. It has to happen when a mass movement of people become too large a body to ignore; when the people say, ‘Enough, we’re done waiting for you to change’. These are the words of a man who fought for his country, who found reason to question our rationales of war, and found them wanting. Words that’ll remind us that we can love your country while remaining critical of our government. Not that his reasoning is always perfect; in his frequent nods to the passage of the 13th,14th & 15th Amendments to the Constitution, Zinn forgets to mention that without the Confederate states to block them, passage of those Amendments became a surer deal; in fact, those Southern states were not allowed back into the Union until they ratified them. Finally, we should take to heart his reminder that all governments rely on the obedience of their people; that once the people withdraw that obedience,, once they start defying bad laws like the Fugitive Slave Law, once soldiers refuse to fight in unjust wars, that government stands on very shaky ground.

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## David Melbie says

Unapologetic and concise, Howard Zinn was an important voice of the people and, though he is greatly missed, I take comfort in the fact that his published works are available. Every American should read everything he wrote.

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## Ollie says

Howard Zinn's death is one of the greatest losses in our lifetime for no other reason than one could always count on him to give consistently lucid and truthful perspective in times of uncertainty. And there are really not that many writers I can say that about. If that were not enough, he has the great advantage of being able to deliver these perspectives in very direct and plain language. While that’s a great testament to Zinn’s abilities, this book Howard Zinn Speaks Collected Speeches 1963-2009 is also a great example of how long Zinn had been an advocate for the powerless.

Howard Zinn Speaks collects speeches made on a wide variety of topics such as Southern Influence in National Politics, the Vietnam War, Emma Goldman, the case of Sacco and Vanzetti, the importance of civil disobedience in the US’s history, and the importance of studying history. As I said, Zinn’s brilliance lies in his ability to speak plainly without jargon about the most important topics, and this definitely reflects in these speeches. Each speech is excellently crafted and a delight to read. With Arno’s editing, one also picks up Zinn’s attempt also to engage his audience, asking them questions, and gauging their temperature as he delivers these speeches which is a fantastic touch for those of us who will never hear him speak. In addition, it’s interesting to note how Zinn often uses his favorite examples when making a point in his speeches (such

as Emma Goldman being radicalized by the Haymarket Affair and General Knox writing to Washington influencing the creation of an authoritarian Constitution).

As with any good book, one comes away from reading Howard Zinn Speaks feeling more enlightened and knowledgeable about the world around us, and also sad that we have lost such a great man.

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