



All Things Dickinson [2 volumes]: An Encyclopedia of Emily Dickinson's World

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An exciting new reference work that illuminates the beliefs, customs, events, material culture, and institutions that made up Emily Dickinson's world, giving users a glance at both Dickinson's life and times and the social history of America in the 19th century.

- Provides more than 200 alphabetically arranged entries, covering such subjects as architecture; dress; education and intellectual life; newspapers; marriage; family (including Dickinson's own); food and drink; friends; plants and animals; religious practices; philosophies; war; some of the symbols and themes found in Dickinson's poetry; and other aspects of Dickinson's era
- Presents a chronology from 1801 to 1945 listing milestones in Emily Dickinson's life, her publications, as well as significant events of the 19th century
- Offers listings of recommended books, online resources, and videos
- Supplies illustrations and photos that add to the understanding of Dickinson's experiences and the world around her

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Emily Dickinson may have spent most of her life in her family home in Amherst, Massachusetts, but she was deeply affected by the wider world and what was going on around her. This two-volume encyclopedia of nineteenth-century historical, literary, scientific, and social events illustrates this point. Editor Martin has put together a compendium of events that happened during Dickinson's lifetime and explores the impact these events may have had on her. The encyclopedia opens with a short biography of Dickinson and descriptions of her written work, which includes letters she wrote to friends and family as well as her poems. Each encyclopedic entry contains a brief discussion of persons, topics, or events linked with Dickinson's writings to show how her life was shaped by the culture around her. While this encyclopedia is inclusive and rich in detail, there seems to be an overreaching quality to the breadth of topics included here. Some entries, such as those on the Civil War or women's roles, make sense to include as these were broad historical and social episodes that stretched into nearly everyone's lives at the time. Others that are harder to make a connection to include animals such as insects and tigers, as well as natural phenomena like volcanoes. The exoticism of both cases seems to make any connection to Dickinson's life a bit strained. A more constrained collection of items that focused more on social and historical events may have served the work's purpose better. Despite this, the entries are well written, and the connections between Dickinson's writings and the world around her are shown with a particular richness. The encyclopedia ends with an appendix containing the first line of all of her poems, indexed by encyclopedia topic. Overall, a very good overview of Dickinson's life and times. This is suitable for high-school and college students and for general readers who are interested in American literature and poetry. --Sylvia Ashwell

Review

"[T]he entries are well written and the connections between Dickinson's writings and the world around her are shown with a particular richness. . . . Overall, a very good overview of Dickinson's life and times. This is suitable for high school and college students and for general readers who are interested in American literature and poetry." - **Booklist**

"The breadth of coverage in these volumes is outstanding as are some special features. . . . [T]his will make an excellent addition to college and large public library collections." - **ARBA**

"This two-volume set represents the poet as a point encircled within the greater context of US history, but also represents US history from the perspective of Dickinson and her poetry. . . . With this work, readers will be reminded of the wide world in which Dickinson lived. . . . *All Things Dickinson* is more a social history than a literary study; as such it enriches readers' knowledge of the poet and of American history. Summing Up: Recommended. Lower-level undergraduates through researchers/faculty." - **Choice**

"This volume is appropriate for newer scholars, generalists and enthusiasts of Emily Dickinson's life and works." - **Reference Reviews**

About the Author

Wendy Martin is professor of American literature and American studies and the director of the Tufts Poetry Awards Program at Claremont Graduate University (CGU).

Users Review

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