



## The Freedom Manifesto

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## **The Freedom Manifesto** Tom Hodgkinson

The author of *How to Be Idle*, Tom Hodgkinson, now shares his delightfully irreverent musings on what true independence means and what it takes to be free. *The Freedom Manifesto* draws on French existentialists, British punks, beat poets, hippies and yuppies, medieval thinkers, and anarchists to provide a new, simple, joyful blueprint for modern living. From growing your own vegetables to canceling your credit cards to reading Jean-Paul Sartre, here are excellent suggestions for nourishing mind, body, and spirit—witty, provocative, sometimes outrageous, yet eminently sage advice for breaking with convention and living an uncluttered, unfettered, and therefore happier, life.

## **The Freedom Manifesto Details**

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Author : Tom Hodgkinson

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# From Reader Review The Freedom Manifesto for online ebook

## Rebecca says

In this very confident book Tom Hodgkinson tries to set us free from our 'mind-forgd manacles'. He is an anarchist of thoughts, nostalgic for a communal, more caring past. I think it's easier to first point out some of the things I didn't agree with...

-Some of his views were inconsistent or contradicted himself. For example, he criticised 'extreme sports' as a waste of money, and something that wage slaves have to do to feel alive. However, later he says that we should not worry about money but spend it on what we enjoy doing... which would seem to include extreme sports. He also says it is not up to one person to judge what makes another person happy, so he shouldn't really be criticising an activity that so many people clearly enjoy.

Other ideas just don't seem very well thought out. He advises getting solar panels in order to be self sufficient and avoid bills, but he doesn't seem to consider how most people will pay for solar panels - they're so expensive that the new owners will more than likely be paying off the price of them month by month rather than power bills- i.e., still paying bills of sorts.

-At times, he promotes things that I think are irresponsible, like telling people not to vote. His reasoning behind this is that if we don't vote, we have to take responsibility for our problems ourselves, rather than blaming the government. However, I think this is stupid. It is perfectly possible to vote for a party that you believe will be the best possible chance for the country, and still take personal responsibility for your life. I would certainly not like to leave the chance of extreme right or left wing politicians getting in to power, because even if you take personal responsibility for your life, politics will still have \*some\* effect on you & I don't want to be ruled by crackpots.

Another example is telling people to just stop taking medicine for depression! He argues that depression is natural and should be instead called melancholy, like in the medieval period. He says that the illness 'depression' is made up by drug companies to get more money, so we shouldn't take their drugs. I agree to a point: if it is possible to avoid taking pills, then avoid them. However they can at times be very very necessary. It's like telling me to never take my inhaler; I avoid taking it as much as I can because being on steroids all the time is not fun, but at times it is literally a life saver and I would be stupid not to take it. He gives the example of one friend he has who is depressed and doesn't want to get un-depressed, so he doesn't want to take pills, but I don't think that one person wanting to remain depressed can speak for all sufferers.

-He is at times very historically inaccurate. His view of the medieval past is so nostalgic and rose-tinted, you'd think that the nobles were falling over each other in order to make peasants happy, and that guilds were massive happy families that accepted everyone and didn't have monopolies over individual crafts. This is such an inaccurate view, it sounds more like communist propaganda than anything reasoned. For example, he continually compares 'Puritan/Industrial Swindon' with Florence, built by a 'medieval collective', arguing that Florence's beauty shows how much better that political system was. I am sorry, but Florence was NOT some idyllic, perfect republic. The Medici were in charge (most of the time), what they said went. And it wasn't some happy-go-lucky commune, people were continually bankrupting themselves trying to climb the greasy pole to the Medici's inner circle. Florence's decline to "sprezzatura" and studied self-artifice happened for a reason, which would not have happened in the Florence that Hodgkinson dreams of.

So. If I have so many problems with *How to Be Free*, why on earth have I given it 5 stars? Because it is so irrepressibly optimistic! Reading it made me feel happy! I engaged passionately with Hodgkinson's ideas, both in agreement or against them, and I think this is ultimately what the book encourages. It is his personal

idea of freedom, and how to get there, which the reader is invited to interact with and test out for it's truth for each individual. I know that this section on what is good in the book is much shorter than my problems with it, but trust me, it's good. I just think you should read it in order to find out for yourself, and to see how his ideas can make you change your thinking...

And it has changed some of my habits. For pretty much the first time in four years, I am going without my watch for hours at a time. (Que gasps and a vague feeling of discomfort!) It has made me properly think about what i want in life, what will make me happy and free, which is especially important right now as I'm half way through my degree, and considering two pretty different career choices. Thank you, Tom, for really convincing me that it's not all about the money, that you can survive without it, because sometimes the importance placed on money in this bustling city can make it hard to remember that...

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### **Annie Harrison says**

I adore this book. Until reading it, I hadn't appreciated quite how enslaved we all are - to the boredom of our jobs, the supermarkets' toxic tentacles, the hollow promises of our pensions, the rip off of our mortgages and the benign blandness of modern life.

This book is full of obvious observations, but I found myself re-reading certain paragraphs, nodding and even screaming out loud, 'You're right, you're so bloody right!' How can we be so closed to the truth? Tom Hodgkinson is in fact, the Dalai Lama in his philosophy. Tom takes his pallet of colours, humour, music and merriment and paints a way of life each one of us would benefit from following. He shows the way clearly to leading a life with purpose, meaning and vibrancy. I'm not going to become a hippy and go to live in the woods, but I am going to embrace everything in this book in some shape or form.

In a very capitalist kind of way, copies of this book are winging their way to friends and family all over the world this Christmas. Thank you Tom for changing my life.

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### **Elnessa says**

Slibná kniha zkažená neustálým opakováním dvou myšlenek: 1. Rolník ve st?edov?ku se m?l báje?n?. 2. Za všechnu mizérii m?že kapitalismus. A nezapomínejte na démona Tesco!

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### **AmyRuth says**

This is my second read of this terrific little book. His ideas are based on life before the Protestant Reformation when people lived without mortgages, without the weight of individualism, consumerism and "keeping up with the Joneses" - He suggests anarchism in everyday life:

Share a House with friends  
Grow your own food  
Light candles to avoid direct light on the dust & dirt  
Pour yourself another glass of wine, invite friends over  
Turn off the TV,

Lose the "Career"  
Stop Worrying  
Remember that Societal Anxiety produces better consumers  
Make it, don't buy it

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## **Mark says**

Just starting it, but it reminded me how much I liked Hodgkinson's previous book  
How to Be Idle: A Loafer's Manifesto. Alas, I managed to ignore it's lessons completely and now I work too  
much and am unhappy b/c of it. Will try again.

The lessons here though are very simple and are spelled out at the end of each chapter. For example,  
"THROW AWAY YOUR WATCH" and "RIDE A BIKE."

Can't get much simpler than these, but they do make a difference. Just 100 pages in, but I'm going to give it  
the full five stars.

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## **Chris says**

Murray Bookchin once made a distinction between "social anarchism" and "lifestyle anarchism," and if we  
adopt his conceptual scheme this work definitely falls in the latter. It is, after all, catalogued in the self-help  
section rather than the social science section. This is a lively, wide-ranging and anarchic assault on modern  
Western lifestyles and a plea to adopt the wisdom of our medieval forebears, who if Hodgkinson is to be  
believed, enjoyed a level of freedom and leisure that can scarcely be dreamed of by today's office drones.

One of the reasons why I enjoyed this book is that it is so peculiarly English. Hodgkinson makes his case  
largely through extensive references to the heavy hitters in the English canon: Johnson, Lawrence, Russell,  
Wilde, the Shelleys, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake and Godwin just to name a few. Late 1970s and early  
1980s English punk rock, as exemplified by the Sex Pistols and CRASS, are major influences on his  
argument and his brand of backward looking, almost conservative radicalism is in the vein of William  
Cobbett, William Morris and George Orwell (and he quotes all of these chaps extensively as well). While his  
use of his texts is not very deep and indeed rather superficial at times, it's a pleasure to come across so many  
great thinkers and writers in one book, especially when they are encouraging you to quit your job, drink,  
have guilt-free sex, start a vegetable garden and engage in work that actually interests you.

The book does possess some serious shortcomings, however. Hodgkinson's depiction of medieval times is  
rather idealized and almost completely overlooks its more nasty and brutish aspects. His advocacy of  
completely abandoning any attempt to intervene in the political system does not sit well with me because I  
think it is a mistake to hand the state over to the most conservative and reactionary elements of society.  
Unlike the author, I don't think that it is feasible for everyone to completely reject large-scale economic  
organization to become yeoman farmers. Political and economic struggle in order to secure the basics of life  
for all is still more necessary than ever, and in order to secure increased freedom and leisure for all they need  
to be institutionalized in some sort. And there's no reason why the provision of social welfare by the state  
cannot be decentralized in some fashion. But then again that's part of why I think anarchism is far more  
effective as a personal ethic than a political program, and that's why the sections of the book that deal with

ways in which to improve your everyday life are far better than his sections on government and class. It's also kind of strange to hear a man who is perhaps best known for running a magazine (the UK-based Idler) telling his readers not to read magazines, while also telling the reader that they should check out magazines that friends of his have produced.

Still, read this book. It's stimulating and entertaining, and will send you scurrying to pick up obscure Situationist texts while you reference Jean-Paul Sartre to explain why you bought a ukulele.

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## **Len says**

I read this on the heels of Tim Ferris' Four Hour Work Week and thematically they sort of go together. Except where Ferris argues that you should make a ton of money and then stop working (duh!) Hodgkinson argues not to bother with money at all. In fact, his premise seems to be it's better to go through life without anything so you won't be stressed about what you are missing.

I'll give Hodgkinson credit for being creative about his theory, but to me his premise goes too far. He seems to be "living" in some fantasy world where everything was better in the middle ages because people didn't have any money and so therefore didn't have to work hard to earn money to pay for all the crap they wanted. I think he needs to re-read his history a bit and come to terms with the fact that life was shitty back then too.

In one chapter of this book he suggests that all drugs are bullshit, especially anti-depressants. I worry about these anti-drug people who seem to think that all medical progress is bad. Hodgkinson forgets that people died of simple infections because we didn't have antibiotics! Also, as someone who has benefited from anti-depressants I take serious offense to his theory that we all just need to get over our melancholy feelings. I know the anxiety I had manifested itself in me physically and I know the drugs have helped greatly.

On the plus side, I do agree with a lot of Hodgkinson's thoughts on what I call simplicity. But I don't think one has to go to the extreme measures he suggests to find benefits in simplicity. I think we can all find a life balance without running off to the woods to live like hermits.

One great message in the book is about finding happiness by surrounding yourself with friends. I've always found this to be true and the book inspired me to look for more ways to bring my friends together for food, drink and conversation.

Anyway, while the book does suggest some extreme measures, I just took a few nuggets out of it and will apply them to my life. I already agreed with his premise going in that simple is better, so the book reinforced many of my views and gave me some good ideas. Still, I'm not going to stop taking my cholesterol medication and move to a cabin in the woods!

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## **Emily Bibens says**

This book is provocative and uncomfortable for those of us who have grown up in industry-based, anxious, busy, consumerist, work-obsessed Western cultures. There will likely be ideas in this book that rub you the wrong way or that you adamantly disagree with, but it's still very much worth a read for the 1-100 nuggets of wisdom/new perspective/new ideas that might make you feel freer, more energized, excited, or at the very

least more thoughtful about life and the joy that you can find in a simpler way of being that might currently feel impossible or too counter-cultural. I wouldn't define myself as an anarchist, but I found myself thoroughly enjoying a lot of the ideas in this book as well as the humor sprinkled throughout. Give it a try if you're feeling stuck or disenchanted with the norms around you.

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## Tom says

Tom Hodgkinson's admirable intention may have been to write a parody of self-help books but unfortunately ends up falling into similar territory of smuggerly as the genuine articles. It seems to me the underlying reasoning behind authors of self-help guides is steeped in narcissism, i.e. I am great ergo do as I do and you too shall be great. Thus, the cynical reader of 'How To Be Twee' will find it difficult to see beyond the calls to mimic the author's own choice examples of upper-middle class virtuous past times (the not watching telly, the horse riding, the growing your own vegetables, the retreating to the country, etc. – all after a good spell in London of course). Alas, they will be less likely to ponder on, presumably, his more fundamental, thought-provoking musings on the irrationality of most people's struggle with modernity.

Strangely, given this estimable aim of debunking myths about the glories of the bourgeois status quo, he harks back to the irrationality of the Catholic church and feudal regime, and ignores all concepts of social and political struggle since the Reformation, a major flaw if he aims to deconstruct modern society. Omitting the intervening centuries of intellectual discourse sometimes leaves his ideas seeming redundant and contradictory. For example, his advice to rid oneself of job protection: set in a 20th Century context this would be most likely espoused by a fan of the non-turning ferrous female known for snatching milk and spending 20 hours a day awake – not exactly an Idler. By trying to ignore more recent historical and contemporary arguments surrounding industrial relations, he may be attempting to introduce fresh ideas using a more pragmatic approach but to me generally fails and comes across as ignorant, condescending and arrogant.

Rather than aligning to anarchic radicalism, he seems to share a conservative reactionary desire to return to the ideal of “static” medieval feudalism and the guild system. (Tellingly, his anarchist influence of choice seems to be the anarchist Prince, Kropotkin). He fails to justify why he extols a beautifully crafted piece of furniture over, say, a beautifully coded piece of computer programming. I feel his misgivings probably lie within the prevailing neo-liberal economic model but his superficial polemics lead him open to accusations of simple Luddism. His repeated unilateral promotion of a romanticised Medieval era to highlight the flaws of today's world removes his argument, and solutions, further from the reader who is stuck very much in a real modern predicament. Changing one's lifestyle based on a personal revival of a previous age may have its benefits, but it is somewhat impractical unless you are lucky enough to share with the author a fortunate career in freelance journalism, perhaps arising from a similar education at £15,000+ per year Westminster School, and Cambridge University.

He champions Ye Olde Merrie England and wants us to know that before Enclosure things weren't so bad when we stayed in the same village for the whole of our lives, had benevolent Lords (temporal and spiritual) look after us, and that we had a pretty jolly time before we died aged 27 of bad teeth. It is a fair, if hardly original, exercise to look to the past to identify and resurrect beneficial forgotten ideas. He does try to highlight the more pleasant ideals of the chivalric age, leaving out the less enviable infant mortality rates for example (yet he still often callously writes in a sweeping enough manner to not sift out all the less appealing relics of a bygone age – why would anyone outside tabloid journalism keep Prince Charles?). I was hoping he could explain how to fit the good freedom-loving elements of medieval life he identified, such as healthy

food and relaxation, with the freedom-loving elements of modern life he ignored, such as high agricultural productivity that allows us not to toil in grubby fields all our lives and gives us the opportunity to do loads of other stuff. Sadly I feel he doesn't fully explain how his ideas could be accommodated in the present domain. Essentially, by the end of the book I felt left to choose between the overbearing past feudal system and the overbearing current state/capitalist one rather than feeling free at all.

Hodgkinson is clearly intelligent, and as a columnist his articles are always enlightening. I am cruel to overlook and take for granted the many valid points he discusses, the interesting cultural references, and his quirky and eccentric style. He rightly attacks over-competitiveness, loss of community and real democratic involvement, artificial alienation from nature, hyper-consumerism, and the unquestioned virtue of industry. Yet despite offering teasing stabs and forays into his ideas of Utopia, he ultimately fails to lay out a clear workable socio-economic doctrine. I could accuse his book of being naïve but maybe it was my high expectations that were. Maybe he merely wished to dispense personal tips on how to avoid the pitfalls of modern living. Unfortunately, once the readers free themselves from his oft quoted 'mind forg'd manacles' of today, his more solid life changing advice rests upon overly familiar yet anaemically expounded concepts of disengagement, localism and ruralism. I still wish to read a convincing book properly explaining how this irksome retreat from properly confronting injustices and failings of the current "system" at its roots, and instead merely extricating oneself by imitating a 13th century serf, is supposed to bring radically liberating change. Hodgkinson seems to have the adept mind and public school arrogance to produce such a manifesto but sadly it is not to be adequately found within this book. It is because I agree with so many of his points that I was so disappointed with the ultimately unsubstantial nature of his musings. Maybe he just was happier to intermittently nip off and play the ukulele than concentrate on creating a 21st Century version of 'What Is To Be Done?'. It wouldn't be keeping with his style after-all.

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## **Ellen says**

Edged dangerously close to self-help schmutz.

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## **Cissa says**

I sure don't agree with all of his premises, but he does raise some interesting points- and advocates some possibilities that most of us would not really think of otherwise.

Note that i do NOT favor his dicta to stop voting. I think voting is not only important, but a civil obligation. However, voting for what YOU want- not to try to game the system- is vital here. In the next election, I plan to vote green; I know they won't win, but I would hope that my vote, combined with others, might give the Powers That Be pause. I am no longer willing to vote for the "lesser evil".

I think the author is really ignorant about a lot of the history he raves about- like "Athens was great, except for a few slaves". Well, MOST Athenians were not citizens nor had a vote; not just the slaves, but the lower classes and the women.

And favoring the American South over the North because it was more courteous? How "courteously" did they treat the slaves???



I was also not impressed by his "revelation" that when women whinge- they don't want solutions! Since he'd been all along discussing male whingeing without the desire for solutions, the notion that this was a female peculiarity is ridiculous, and casts some doubt on his ability to get outside himself and see others fairly.

So: I think he has some interesting and enticing points, but his arguments from history show a partisan lack of historical knowledge and/or willful ignorance and/or intentional provocation.

However, I also think it's true that we can be more empowered to change our condition than we normally think of ourselves as being- and that's really valuable.

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## **Anna says**

This is either the best or worst book to read when you're finishing a PhD and thinking deep thoughts about what to do next with your life. I'm not sure which yet - ask me in a few years. 'How to be Free' continues in the same vein as *How to Be Idle*, which I greatly enjoyed. The former has a more philosophical and political bent, however. The tendency to skip thither and yon, drawing inspiration from Sartre and Chaucer, reminds me a little of a less obtuse Žižek. Hodgkinson makes no claims to present a coherent political philosophy, which is good because he doesn't. Instead, he critiques many aspects of modern life - or rather, modern life in 2006 when the horrible invasion of smartphones had barely begun. Given his scathing words about blackberries, I don't imagine he approves of them. The book is structured around pieces of mostly practical advice, like replacing your car with a bicycle, growing your own vegetables, and accepting that the only meaning of life is that which we create ourselves.

I am sympathetic to almost all that Hodgkinson says and his so-conservative-it's-radical philosophy is interesting and appealing. He harks back to late Medieval times, which he feels exemplify freedom from centralised authority and local co-operation. It's certainly a valid point that taking inspiration from the past rather than the future is more pragmatic, given that the future is only ever an illusion. Hodgkinson is strongest when dismantling consumerism and presenting the appeal of thrift and self-reliance, but weakest when assuming that everyone else (who isn't a straight white man) enjoys the same things in life as him. Thus, I definitely agree with the pursuit of inexpensive pleasures, but drinking and smoking have no appeal for me. I prefer night-time walks, browsing libraries, and rambling discussions with friends. Also, I don't want to learn the ukulele, I'd rather learn Spanish. Nonetheless, the neo-Medieval anarchism advanced here is not proscriptive. Moreover, it's refreshing to be told not to worry about having a career and the comments on housing are very good. A mortgage is essentially renting a house from the bank, at great cost. If only renting wasn't so appallingly insecure. It's relaxing to read a book in praise of carelessness - what's the point of trying to earn lots of money, to get more than anyone else? We're all going to die anyway. Might as well enjoy life, rather than trying to purchase enjoyment in rare hours not spent working.

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## **David Gross says**

I seem to have a soft spot for eccentrically reactionary radicals. For a while, I was eagerly reading up on the anarcho-primitivists, who thought civilization was a bad idea and that mankind had taken a wrong turn when we started messing around with things like cities, agriculture, and literacy. And you may remember when I reviewed Bill Kauffman's *Look Homeward, America: In Search of Reactionary Radicals and Front-Porch Anarchists*, which had a soft spot for the American isolationist, regionalist, anti-cosmopolitan tendencies of

the early 20th century.

Hodgkinson is an English punk rock radical who finds his model for human society in a romantically-evoked version of medieval Europe that has since been destroyed by the Protestant reformation's war against the assimilated paganism of the Catholic church, by capitalism's assault on guilds and craft, and by the victory of Puritanism over joy and nature.

Hodgkinson is the co-founder and editor of *The Idler*, which hopes to defend the point of view of the Grasshopper who was unfairly maligned in Aesop's ant propaganda.

The book is a series of exhortations intended to inspire the reader to stop being the conforming, clock-watching, urban, employed, worried, lonely, rude, guilty, accumulating consumer, and instead to go back to the land, slack off, indulge simple pleasures, stop worrying about the future, stop feeling guilty, take up the ukulele, and start cashing in on the pleasures of being a roustabout bon vivant.

It's full of quotes on this theme from the likes of William Blake, Guy Debord, E.F. Schumacher, Friedrich Nietzsche, Thomas Aquinas, Pyotr Kropotkin, William Godwin, Leo Tolstoy, Robert Burton, Jean-Paul Sartre, Bertrand Russell, and Penny Rimbaud. You know, Penny Rimbaud of Crass. (To give the kids of today some context, Hodgkinson notes that Tolstoy "was the late-nineteenth-century equivalent of Crass" — Crass being the late-twentieth-century equivalent of, I dunno, Chumbawumba or something.) Obligatory tax resistance pullquote follows:

*It is perfectly possible to create an uncomplicated, job-free life. Artists Penny Rimbaud and Gee Vaucher started Crass, the anarchist punk band of the eighties. Forty years ago they rented a tumbledown house just outside London and renovated it and filled the garden with flowers, fruit, vegetables, sheds and arbours for quiet repose. Thanks to an open-house policy, which has ensured a steady flow of helpful residents and guests, they have been able to develop the house and grounds to a high standard with very little money. People power replaced cash. They keep things simple, they don't need jobs, and that gives them acres and acres of free mind-space to follow their own paths through life, to think, read, write, talk, drink, make art. Their income is virtually nothing, but they do exactly what they want and this, it seems to me, is a tremendous achievement. It proves that money and freedom are by no means synonymous. Gee said to me, "I don't think I've ever paid tax. How much do you need to earn? £5,000 a year? I don't earn anything like that." And a more bill-free and liberated household I have never seen.*

The book didn't do much for me, but I'm already a believer in what I think is the most evident and important message of the book: take responsibility for your life; make an honest and necessarily radical reassessment of your priorities that will certainly involve unlearning the ones you have absorbed from a childhood overdose of public school, media, and commercial propaganda; and start living creatively according to what you uncover in this way. Or, as Hodgkinson puts it:

*Don't bother setting up free republics or moving to a country which offers more liberties. Simply declare yourself to be an independent state. Do not involve and coerce others. This is the only way we will effect a proper revolution. Once each of us recognizes our own freedom and our own responsibility, then the chains that bind us will fall away.*

And that excerpt comes from his chapter on cultivating good manners and avoiding rudeness — perhaps not what you'd expect to find in an anti-puritan punk rocker's book about thumbing your nose at workaday living.

If you can deal with the fact that it's Brit-centric (a mental search-and-replace that swaps "john" for "loo" and "WalMart" for "Tesco's" will probably do the trick) and that it includes a heaping helping of bollocks, and if you're unable to work up the gumption to get you out of your cubicle and back to living, this might be the kick-in-the-pants you need.

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## **Skye says**

This is not a self help book. If anything, it is an examination of modern, western, middle-class (particularly British) society and the 'mind forg'd' manacles it perpetuates. There are a few suggestions in each chapter for various alternative ways of living, but no one lifestyle is suggested over any other.

I found this a brilliant, amusing and liberating read. Not because it proposed any revolutionary concepts, but because it validated and affirmed my own attitudes to life and my own values which are in great contrast to those of my peers. I would like to keep a copy of this on hand to loan to anyone (and everyone) who asks why I don't want a mortgage or a full time job or career.

A lot of reviewers focus on the way Mr Hodgkinson romanticises Medieval life, which surprises me because he makes a point in the first chapter that he is very much aware of the downsides to that era, but that learning about the past can in fact show us what worked and what didn't and we only need keep the good stuff. I believe he uses Medieval systems as an example to show that the modern work-ethic is not endemic in Western-Europe and that you don't have to go to far continents to find examples of how to live more passionately and free.

My only criticisms of this work is that it had a few passages which I found a bit sexist (generalisations of Women and Men.) Although they were not prominent enough to ruin the book for me.

Sadly, I have since followed up Mr Hodgkinson's website and work and find that it is not what was represented in the book. The once active community has been replaced with an expensive subscription only service and it seems the Author is no longer living the life of a smallholder but instead has joined the capitalist race of Retail he so abhorred. Pity.

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## **Ernesto Elias says**

I can't put this book down, It's a fantastic read! It seriously feels like you are having deep conversation with Hodgkinson, his writing style is that of a conversation's.

Hodgkinson is so passionate of a topic I love , that notion that simple is more and if any one was to offer an argument that is similar you'll easily get me on your side. So when Hodgkinson uses those fantastic references from a range of different fields and periods of time it inspires me to go and read those books. (even though i don't know where to get books from the 1700's.)

I don't particularly like this over glorification of medieval england which he refers to regularly in the book. However at times I fall in love with this community base feeling he paints of a medieval village. My point for disliking this over glorification of medieval England is due to the fact that in all periods of time

they had there good points and they had there bad points, and there was never a period of time where everything was perfect. Also, moving backwards isn't such an easy solution to living a simple life in a a forward moving society.. It's like and old person who refuses to learn how to use a computer because he has no desire to move forward into the future.However i like growth.

I am yet to finish this book and so far its a gripping read . However he suggests to get rid of TV and I don't think I am capable of doing that .I will go through withdrawals.

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