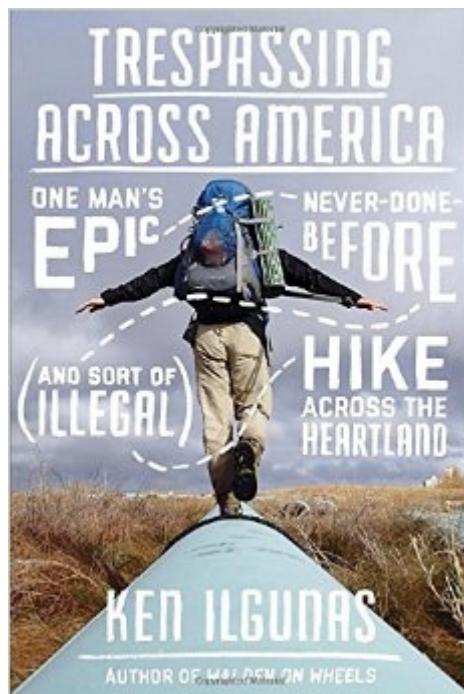


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# Trespassing Across America: One Man's Epic, Never-Done-Before (and Sort Of Illegal) Hike Across The Heartland



## Synopsis

Told with sincerity, humor, and wit, *Trespassing Across America* is both a fascinating account of one man's remarkable journey along the Keystone XL pipeline and a meditation on climate change, the beauty of the natural world, and the extremes to which we can push ourselves "both physically and mentally. It started as a far-fetched idea "to hike the entire length of the proposed route of the Keystone XL pipeline. But in the months that followed, it grew into something more for Ken Ilgunas. It became an irresistible adventure "an opportunity not only to draw attention to global warming but also to explore his personal limits. So in September 2012, he strapped on his backpack, stuck out his thumb on the interstate just north of Denver, and hitchhiked 1,500 miles to the Alberta tar sands. Once there, he turned around and began his 1,700-mile trek to the XL's endpoint on the Gulf Coast of Texas, a journey he would complete entirely on foot, walking almost exclusively across private property. Both a travel memoir and a reflection on climate change, *Trespassing Across America* is filled with colorful characters, harrowing physical trials, and strange encounters with the weather, terrain, and animals of America's plains. A tribute to the Great Plains and the people who live there, Ilgunas' memoir grapples with difficult questions about our place in the world: What is our personal responsibility as stewards of the land? As members of a rapidly warming planet? As mere individuals up against something as powerful as the fossil fuel industry? Ultimately, *Trespassing Across America* is a call to embrace the belief that a life lived not half wild is a life only half lived.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

To publicize the environmental costs of the Keystone XL pipeline, Ken Ilgunas decided to walk the length of its proposed route from the Alberta tar sands to Houston. Think about that for a minute - an environmentalist decided to walk through some of the continent's most politically-conservative regions and argue against a project that would cost some people in those regions their jobs.

We'll come back to that. Ilgunas writes very well, and the book is a pleasure to read. His various adventures move the story along. He's afraid of aggressive cows, and he never really figures out how to defend himself properly. He also has some scary encounters with dogs - especially in Kansas and Oklahoma, for whatever reasons. You'll learn about the landscapes and peoples of the Great Plains, the overlooked heart of the continent. You'll meet kind people, living in communities both charming and falling apart. You'll see some police harass Ilgunas for being different, while others help him on his way. With Ilgunas, you'll wonder what a black man attempting the same journey would experience. It takes too long, but you'll also see Ilgunas slowly realize that he has something to learn from the people of the plains. Remember that he thought he would be teaching them about the environment. He quickly moves away from confronting them on the Keystone XL, and starts to listen to them. Even so, he never considers changing his mind, though he hopes to change theirs. Ilgunas also begins with a distrust of Christians, based on the political positions of conservative evangelicals. While walking through their land, he learns that they are kind to strangers. He also finds that their political landscape includes people who live the social gospel, a stance that resonates well with his own liberal politics. I'd like to see him reflect more on his personal growth here, as he does in *Walden on Wheels*. Still, this American story is well worth reading.

Good read - interesting, informative, entertaining. Chronicles his trek from Alberta to TX, along the Keystone Pipeline. Includes history, environmental discourse, and the many characters he meets along the way.

When writer Ken Ilgunas set out to hike the proposed route of the Keystone XL Pipeline, he didn't have much of an agenda other than a vague sense of unease about the pipeline project, related to a general concept that climate change is probably a bad thing. He knew very little about the politics, environmental policies and agendas, or the science involved. When he finished hiking from the Alberta tar sand fields to the Gulf Coast of Texas, he had learned a little about all of those things, but mostly he had learned some timeless lessons about humanity and about

himself. *TRESPASSING ACROSS AMERICA* is the fascinating account of the people, conditions, obstacles, and joys Ken encountered on his epic cross-continental trek. Facing gun-toting rednecks, overaggressive cops, friendly rural pastors, like-minded hippies, killer cows, killer blisters, snow, rain, growing media attention, and most of all sheer distance, Ken made his way on foot along the entire pipeline path and wrote about his adventures. Sprinkled here and there among the stories of people, places, and scenery are Kenâ™s musings about politics, religion, Big Oil, and global warming. Some of these are thought-provoking and profound; others come across as youthful idealism. Readers who sympathize with the authorâ™s views and appreciate a good solo journey story will love this book. Readers who donâ™t identify with the distinctly liberal viewpoint can just ignore those parts and enjoy the adventure. Either way, *TRESPASSING ACROSS AMERICA* is a grand tale about a stunning accomplishment that is ultimately about the triumph of the human spirit.

Really enjoyed this gentleman's descriptions of his adventures. He gives the opinions of people from many walks of life regarding the pipeline without bias. The issues are complicated and the author takes into consideration just how the pipelines existence or non-existence impacts lives. An entertaining author who makes you think.

Penguin First ARC. This is a very interesting take on environmentalism told with humor and facts thrown in along the way. It reminds me of *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed. This author, Ken Ilgunas, makes plans for and takes some short practice hikes for this endeavor but is really going into the great unknown on a wing and a prayer. Especially, since he's not following a trail but having to figure it out as he goes along. Ken dreams up this hike with a co-worker, who backs out. Then a number of other things occur that delays Ken's departure from fall into winter. Since he is walking from north to south, this causes him other problems related to the weather, not having the right kind of clothes, tent, etc. He meets many people along the way, some helpful and some not. Many of these people don't understand why he is doing this hike but you figure neither does he some of the times. The idea of trespassing on the great outdoors in this country is weird when you think about it. Why can't you walk there? Most countries in the world don't have this restriction and don't understand our reasons for it. And then the questions about climate change and the environment. I was in Berlin, Germany in the mid 1980's, when grocery shopping you had to bring your own bag or you were out of luck. Recycling was everywhere and plastics were not. Overall, a great read. If you like the outdoors and are interested in environmentalism than you'll like this book.

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