

Reader's Guide

The history of social reform movements in America has been driven by the colorful, sometimes controversial, but always enthusiastically committed activists who devoted their lives to their causes. Although such movements need a number of factors in order to succeed fully in their goals, they usually had at least one common element—a leader. In many cases, these reformers often put their personal safety and lives on the line for their principles. Many factors drove these leaders to take up their causes. Some were inspired by their religion, others came from families with a long history of social activism, and others simply stepped forward to address issues that they believed needed attention.

For example, many reformers in the nineteenth century were raised in the Quaker (Society of Friends) faith, which taught them that every human being was equal in the eyes of God. The Quakers were considered radical during that era because they did not differentiate between men, women, blacks, or whites. All were treated as equals, both in religious services and in their daily lives. The Quakers believed that slavery was morally wrong, and they took an active

role in the abolition movement. Many of them, in turn, went on to work for women's rights, in efforts to end unfair and cruel labor practices, or to end wars. Among the Quakers profiled in this volume are Abigail Hopper Gibbons (1801–1893), a schoolteacher who was active in the abolition movement and went on to become an influential figure in the prison reform movement; suffragists Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906) and Alice Paul (1885–1977), who worked to secure voting rights for women; and settlement house founder Jane Addams (1860–1935), who worked with the poor.

In other cases, the social reformers profiled in this volume carried on in the spirit of their parents. Civil rights activist Malcolm X (1925–1965) was the son of a minister who preached black nationalism. The father of Roman Catholic priests and antiwar activists Daniel J. Berrigan (1921–) and Philip Berrigan (1923–2002) was a union organizer who instilled a belief in socialist ideals in his children. The grandmother of women's rights activist Gloria Steinem (1934–) was involved in women's suffrage and played a role in local politics. In addition, a few of the reformers

made daring breaks with family, their culture, or their professional colleagues to speak out for their cause. Urvashi Vaid (1958–) shocked her middle-class parents, who had immigrated to the United States from India, when she told them she was a lesbian and began working for gay rights. Joseph Stiglitz (1943–) was one of the world's most respected economists and a leading executive at the World Bank when he began questioning and criticizing the power that his influential institution wielded over developing nations.

Protest movements are almost as old as democracy itself. They are at least as old as the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and in the shift from a rural to an urban-centered economy that began taking place at the end of the eighteenth century. The diversity of America's citizens, and their inevitable disagreements, ensure that social reform movements will come and go as long as the U.S. Constitution remains in place, which allows democratic principles to flourish. To some, it seems the era of genuine activism has ended. Fewer activists seem willing to take an unpopular stand, and in some cases retribution has been swift for those who speak out against the established order. However, in the twenty-first century, debate over U.S. foreign policy, immigration laws, environmental issues, job security, and health care continues as passionately as it has in decades past. This time, new technology, such as the Internet and wireless messaging, serves as an important new medium to bring activists together. New reformers continue to emerge, inspired by the stories, like those contained in this volume, of leaders whose courage

and commitment have influenced significant change in America.

American Social Reform Movements: Biographies presents the life stories of twenty-five notable activists who have worked for a variety of causes since the mid-1800s in the United States. Included are well-known figures such as environmental reformer Rachel Carson, labor organizers Eugene V. Debs and Samuel Gompers, women's rights leader Betty Friedan, and legendary civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr. The volume also provides biographical information on lesser-known but nonetheless important and fascinating reformers including environmental writer and professor Jared Diamond, poverty reformer Barbara Ehrenreich, and education activist Jonathan Kozol.

Coverage and Features

American Social Reform Movements: Biographies contains sidebars that highlight people and events of special interest. Within the entries, boldfaced cross-references direct readers to other individuals profiled in the volume. In addition, each biographical profile offers a list of sources that students can consult for more information. Nearly sixty black-and-white photographs help illustrate the material. The volume begins with a timeline of important events in the history of social reform in the United States and a "Words to Know" section that introduces students to difficult or unfamiliar terms. The volume concludes with a general bibliography and subject index so students can easily find the people, places, and events discussed throughout *American Social Reform Movements: Biographies*.

American Social Reform Movements Reference Library

American Social Reform Movements: Biographies is only one component of the three-part U•X•L American Social Reform Movements Reference Library. The other titles in the set are:

- ***American Social Reform Movements: Almanac*** (two volumes) presents an overview of various social reform movements that have helped shape the United States. The *Almanac* is divided into thirteen chapters, each representing a different movement. These chapters are arranged alphabetically and include: antiglobalization, antiwar, civil rights, education, environment, gay rights, labor reform, poverty reform, prison reform, slavery and abolition, temperance and Prohibition, women's rights, and women's suffrage. The *Almanac* also contains nearly 130 black-and-white photographs and maps as well as chapter glossary boxes and sidebars. In addition, the volume features a comprehensive timeline, overall "Words to Know" section, research and activity ideas, and an index.
- ***American Social Reform Movements: Primary Sources*** (one volume) tells the story of social reform movements from American history in the words of the people who lived and shaped those movements. Excerpted and full-text documents provide a wide range of perspectives on reform movements. Included are excerpts from protest literature, eyewitness accounts of significant events, memoirs and other influential books, political speeches, and manifestos. Among these items are excerpts from Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*; César

Chávez's "An Open Letter to the Grape Industry"; Fannie Lou Hamer's "Testimony Before the Credentials Committee, Democratic National Convention"; Yolanda Huet-Vaughn's "Statement Refusing to Serve in the 1991 Gulf War"; Jonathan Kozol's "Still Separate, Still Unequal: America's Educational Apartheid"; Roni Krouzman's "WTO: The Battle in Seattle: An Eyewitness Account"; and Randy Shilts's *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*.

- A cumulative index of all three titles in the U•X•L American Social Reform Movements Reference Library is also available.

Special Thanks

Special thanks are due to U•X•L's American Social Reform Movement Reference Library advisers:

- Maria Barlotti, Librarian, Conestoga High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania.
- Elaine Ezell, Library Media Specialist, Bowling Green Junior High School, Bowling Green, Ohio.
- Ann West LaPrise, Junior High/Elementary Librarian, Huron School District, Monroe, Michigan.

Comments and Suggestions

We welcome your comments on *American Social Reform Movements: Biographies* and suggestions for other topics to consider. Please write: Editors, *American Social Reform Movements: Biographies*, U•X•L, 27500 Drake Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535; call toll free: 1-800-877-4253; fax to (248) 699-8097; or send e-mail via <http://www.gale.com>.

Words to Know

A

abolition: The act of abolishing, or getting rid of, slavery by making it illegal.

abolitionist: A person who works to make slavery illegal.

abstinence: Refraining from participation in or indulgence of certain vices or activities; in terms of the temperance movement, the avoidance of all alcoholic beverages.

activist: A person who campaigns vigorously for or against a political, social, or economic issue.

AIDS: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome; a disease related to a severely compromised immune system, leaving the body unable to defend against infection.

anarchist: An individual who advocates the use of force to overthrow all government.

antiglobalization: Opposition to the methods and practices of globalization, particularly the perceived emphasis on corporate profits over human benefits.

antitrust laws: Laws opposing or regulating trusts or similar business monopolies.

antiwar: Opposition to a specific war, to one side of a war, or to all war.

apprentice: Someone who is bound to work for someone else for a specific term in order to learn a trade.

armistice: A temporary agreement among warring nations to stop fighting and draft a formal peace agreement.

B

biodiversity: The diversity of plant and animal species within an ecosystem; also refers to diversity within a species or diversity among a number of different species.

bisexual: A person who is romantically and physically attracted to both men and women.

black nationalism: An ideology held among militant groups of American blacks that called for the formation of self-governing black communities that were separate from those of whites.

blacklist: A list of employees involved in union activity that was sent to employers to warn them against hiring those people, effectively preventing those workers fired for unionism from getting another job.

blind pig/blind tiger: An establishment where alcohol is illegally sold.

bootlegger: A person who makes, sells, or transports alcohol illegally.

boycott: A refusal to do business with a certain company as a form of protest; often takes the form of employees refusing to work or encouraging consumers to stop buying their employers' products.

C

capital: Assets, including money or property, used to create further wealth through investment or the production of goods and services.

capitalism: An economic system in which the companies that produce goods or provide services are owned privately by individuals or groups of people. Owners have invested funds, or capital, in a business and earn profits when the business succeeds.

civil disobedience: The purposeful and usually peaceful violation of laws or rules that are considered unfair or morally wrong.

civil rights: Personal rights guaranteed by law to all citizens.

civil union: A legally recognized marriage-like relationship, often between two people of the same sex, that offers many of the same legal rights and benefits of marriage.

civil war: A war fought by different groups within a country rather than among many countries; the American Civil War (1861–65) was fought between the northern (Union) and southern (Confederate) states.

collective bargaining: The process of negotiating a contract between an employer and the union that represents the employees.

coming out: The act of revealing to others one's previously hidden sexual orientation.

common school: A public school, free and available to all children; term used during the nineteenth century.

communism: A political system in which most aspects of social and economic life are dictated by the government. Under communism, all property is owned by the government and, theoretically, wealth is distributed evenly throughout society.

conscientious objector: A person refusing to serve in the military because it violates his or her conscience; term often used to describe those whose religious beliefs prevent any endorsement of war.

conservation: The protection and managed use of natural resources and wilderness areas.

conservatism: A political ideology based on the concept of a limited federal government, one that protects individual's freedoms by maintaining domestic order, providing for national defense, and administering justice. This ideology is generally opposed to the use of federal powers for the protection or preservation of civil rights.

convict: A person convicted, or found guilty, of a crime; term usually reserved for those serving time in prison.

cross-dresser: A person who wears clothing typical of the opposite sex; also described as "transvestite."

currency: Any form of money, generally either coins or paper bills, issued by a government or a bank and used in legal exchanges.

D

dame schools: Schools conducted by women in their homes during the American colonial era; also known as "petty schools."

depression: A severe economic downturn usually characterized by high unemployment.

desegregation: The act of eliminating laws or provisions that force segregation, which is the legal separation of people of different races or ethnic groups.

determinate sentence: A prison sentence given for an exact time period as opposed to a range of months or years.

direct assistance: Cash payments made to welfare recipients; other types of welfare include subsidized housing, paid for in part by the government, or vouchers to be used to buy food or pay for rent.

discrimination: Unfair treatment of a group of people based on prejudice, a negative opinion formed without justification.

disenfranchise: To deprive a group or person of the right to vote.

domestic: Within the borders of one's own country, as opposed to "foreign."

dove: A person who favors diplomacy and negotiation and generally objects to war as a method of resolving conflict between nations.

draft (selective service): A system by which persons are chosen for mandatory service in a nation's military.

draft dodgers: Persons who hide in or flee from a country in order to avoid mandatory military service.

E

ecology: The study of the relationship between an organism and the entirety of its surroundings.

ecosystem: A community of plants and animals that live in balance with one another.

Emancipation Proclamation: An order of President Abraham Lincoln freeing the slaves in the southern states that had not remained loyal to the Union and that were not under Union control.

environment: The surroundings of a living being that affect that being's health and survival.

ERA: The Equal Rights Amendment; a proposed constitutional amendment that would have mandated equal treatment under the law regardless of gender.

executive order: A statement written and issued by the president that uses some part of an existing law or the U.S. Constitution to enforce an action.

export: Goods or services sent out of one country for trade or sale in another country.

extinction: The state of a species that has died out.

F

felony: A serious crime, including armed robbery, arson, or murder; usually punishable by a sentence of a year or more in prison.

feminism: The theory that women should have economic, political, and social rights equal to those of men.

food chain: Sequence in which one organism is the food source for the next organism, which is the food source for the next organism in the chain; for example, grass-rabbit-fox.

foreign: Relating to another country, as opposed to “domestic.”

fossil fuels: Energy sources that were formed hundreds of millions of years ago from the fossilized remains of plants and animals.

franchise: The right to vote.

free blacks: African Americans who had never been slaves, or who had escaped from slavery by fleeing to the North.

free-market economy: An economic system in which goods and services are privately owned and sold to anyone wishing to buy them at whatever price can be obtained. Prices are set by the principle of supply and demand and are affected by competition.

free trade: The international exchange of goods and services without any barriers, such as tariffs or trade quotas.

Freedmen’s Bureau: An organization formed by the U.S. Congress to aid former slaves after the American Civil War.

furlough: A temporary leave from prison granted to model inmates as a tool for helping them re-enter free society.

G

gay: A man who is romantically and physically attracted to other men; term also sometimes refers to the broader gay community, including lesbians and bisexuals.

gender: Either the male or female sex; term also implies a set of traits typically associated with that sex.

general strike: A work stoppage by all organized workers—working in various industries—in a city, region, or entire country; usually a form of protest designed to halt or greatly disrupt the normal functioning of the area in question.

global warming: Theory that an increase of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, resulting from pollution, has begun to cause a warming of Earth's climate.

globalization: The exchange of goods, services, and capital across national borders.

grassroots organization: A group or network of local citizens; term suggests a rejection of a hierarchical structure with a centralized leadership.

H

habitat: The natural environment of an animal or a plant.

halfway house: A transitional place where inmates can live after leaving prison but before living on their own; offers counseling and supervision.

hawk: A person who supports aggressive foreign policies, including declarations of war.

heterosexual: A person who is romantically and physically attracted to people of the opposite sex.

hierarchy: The classification of people into ranks indicating authority, with the leader at the top.

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus; the virus that causes AIDS.

homosexual: A person who is romantically and physically attracted to people of the same sex.

I

imperialism: The practice of one nation taking control of another's government or economy through invasion or other means.

import: Goods or services brought from one country into another for sale.

incarceration: Imprisonment.

indeterminate sentence: A sentence covering a range of time, such as fifteen years to life; prisoners can be granted parole after the minimum sentence has been met.

industrial union: A union that represents all workers, skilled and unskilled, in a particular workplace.

industrialism: The social system that results from an economy based on large-scale industries.

industrialists: People who engage in profit-making enterprises that manufacture a certain product, such as textiles or steel.

industrialization: The development of industry.

Industrial Revolution: A period of rapid industrial growth causing a shift in focus from agriculture to industry beginning in the late eighteenth century and continuing through the nineteenth century. During this time, new manufacturing technologies and improved transportation gave rise to the modern factory system and a massive movement of the population from the countryside to the cities.

injunction: A court order that either prohibits an action (such as a strike) or forces action to be taken (such as striking workers returning to work).

inmate: A person serving a sentence in a jail or prison.

integration: The mixing together of racial, cultural, or religious groups that had formerly been separated; integration implies that the groups will be on equal social footing.

J

jail: An institution where people are confined for short sentences or while awaiting sentencing; term is sometimes used interchangeably with “prison.”

Jim Crow: A set of laws, customs, and regulations in the American South that separated blacks from whites to ensure that blacks were kept on a lower social footing; “Jim Crow” also describes the time period during which such laws were common, from the Reconstruction era until the mid-1960s.

just war doctrine: The principle, with a basis in New Testament teachings, that outlines the conditions under which a just, or fair, war might be fought, as when a nation has been attacked and all non-violent attempts to resolve the conflict have failed.

K

Ku Klux Klan (KKK): The most prominent of several white supremacist groups that used violence—in the form of beatings, whippings, murder, rape, and arson—to control blacks and their sympathizers through fear and intimidation.

L

labor union: An organization of workers formed to protect and further their mutual interests by bargaining as a group with their employers over wages, working conditions, and benefits.

leftist: A person promoting radical or socialistic politics in the form of liberal reform or revolutionary change.

lesbian: A woman who is romantically and physically attracted to other women.

liberalism: A political ideology based on the concept of a federal government that protects an individual's freedoms by maintaining domestic order, providing for national defense, and administering justice, but also protects and preserves the civil rights of citizens by maintaining programs to aid certain social groups.

loom: A frame or machine used to weave thread or yarn into cloth.

lynching: The murder of an individual, most commonly a black American, by a mob of white Americans, with no legal authority, usually by hanging.

M

male chauvinism: The expression or attitude of a man indicating a belief in the superiority of men over women.

Middle Passage: The trip across the Atlantic made by slaves captured in Africa; the Middle Passage came between the slaves' forcible removal from their homes and their being sold as property to slave owners in the United States.

migrant workers: Laborers who travel from place to place to harvest crops for various farmers as the crops mature through the seasons.

minimum wage: The lowest rate of pay that an employer is allowed to pay employees, as decided either by law or by a negotiated contract.

misdemeanor: A minor crime, such as petty theft, punishable by a fine or a prison term of less than one year.

monopoly: The exclusive possession or right to produce a particular good or service.

moonshine: Illegally distilled alcohol, usually whiskey.

muckrakers: Journalists who search for and expose corruption in public affairs.

N

naturalist: A person who studies nature or natural history.

New Deal: A set of legislative programs and policies for economic recovery and social reform initiated in the 1930s during the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

nonviolence: The deliberate avoidance of violence during demonstrations or protests designed to change a law or custom.

O

oppression: The act of using power in an unjust and cruel way; also the state of being weighed down by an unjust authority.

organized crime: A specialized form of crime carried out by loosely or rigidly structured networks of gangs with certain territorial boundaries.

ozone: A form of oxygen; forms a layer in the stratosphere that filters out harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun.

P

pacifism: An opposition to war or violence; the pursuit of peaceful resolution to all conflicts.

parochial school: A privately funded religious school.

parole: A release from prison allowing the inmate to serve the remainder of the sentence outside the prison, living according to the prison's rules and restrictions.

patriarchy: A society or organization in which men possess most of the control and authority.

penitentiary: A prison, generally reserved for serious offenders; originally referred to an institution where inmates would seek to show penitence, or regret, for their crimes. In the U.S. federal prison system, a penitentiary is a maximum-security facility.

pension: A fixed sum paid regularly, usually as a retirement benefit.

picket line: A group of striking workers marching at the entrance of their workplace to inform fellow employees and the general public of a labor dispute and to influence others not to enter the workplace.

poverty: The condition of one who lacks money, resources, and material goods.

prejudice: A negative opinion or attitude about a person, race, or group of people that is not based on fact or one's experiences with such people or groups. Instead, such opinions are based on unfounded ideas about how that person, race, or group might be or act.

preservation: Safeguarding an area of the natural world from undue human interference.

prison: A correctional institution designed to confine those convicted of a serious crime; term sometimes used interchangeably with "jail."

private school: A school controlled by private agencies and funded through private means, including student tuition and donations, rather than by the government.

probation: An alternative to a prison sentence whereby the convicted person remains free but has to abide by a set of restrictions and submit to supervision for a period of time.

Prohibition: The period from 1920 to 1933 when the government outlawed the manufacture, sale, and transport of alcoholic beverages.

protectionism: Policies designed to erect trade barriers, such as tariffs, to protect domestic companies from foreign competition.

protest: An organized public demonstration of discontent with the governance of or social circumstances within a society.

public school: A school supported by taxes, free and available to all students, and run by an elected school board.

Q

Quaker: A member of the Religious Society of Friends, a religion that supports equality between the sexes and promotes peace and tolerance in its teachings.

quota: A limit placed on the quantity of certain goods to be imported from a particular country.

R

racist: A person who discriminates or is prejudiced against a group based on that group's race; racism is based on the notion that one race is naturally superior to another because of genetic makeup.

radical: Someone who supports an extreme political cause.

recidivism: The repetition of criminal behavior; term usually refers to an ex-convict committing additional crimes after being released from prison.

Reconstruction: The period from the end of the American Civil War in 1865 until 1877, when newly freed slaves were given protections under the law including the right to citizenship, the right to vote, and the right to hold political office.

rumrunner: A person who illegally smuggles liquor across a waterway or a land border.

S

secondary school: A school attended between elementary school and college.

secular: Not religious.

sedition: Actions that encourage resistance of or rebellion against a governing body.

segregation: The separation and isolation of a racial or ethnic group in schools or other facilities.

settlement houses: Places established and run by educated, and often wealthy, reformers to provide social and educational services to the residents of poor urban immigrant communities.

sex: Gender classification, either male or female.

sexism: Discrimination based on sex; usually refers to discrimination against women.

sexual harassment: Sexually suggestive speech or physical contact directed at a person, usually by a figure of authority—for example, an employer or teacher.

sharecropper: A tenant farmer who works the land for an agreed share of the value of the crop, minus the deductions taken out of his share for his rent, supplies, and living costs.

sit-down strike: A refusal to work conducted by laborers who stay at their workstations and block employers from replacing them with other workers.

sit-in: A nonviolent form of protest popular during the civil rights movement that involved black and sometimes white activists occupying seats in a segregated establishment, like a restaurant, and refusing to leave until all were served.

slavery: A system in which a human being is considered the property of another and is forced to work for the “owner” without pay and often under brutal conditions.

social services: A range of services, often provided by the government, that promote the well-being of disadvantaged or disabled citizens; can include health clinics, counseling, job training, and the like.

social welfare: Private or government efforts to help disadvantaged or disabled individuals.

socialism: An economic system in which the means of producing goods and providing services are owned by the community rather than by private individuals or corporations; all members of the community share in the work and wealth is distributed equally.

speakeasy: An establishment where alcohol is illegally sold.

species: Related organisms that are capable of breeding with one another.

straight: An informal term for a person who is heterosexual, or attracted to members of the opposite sex.

stock market: A system for trade in companies, ventures, and other investments through the buying and selling of stocks, bonds, mutual funds, limited partnerships, and other securities.

strike: A refusal by employees to work, in an attempt to gain concessions from their employer, including increased wages, safer working conditions, better job security, and the recognition of the employees' union.

strikebreakers: Workers hired to replace striking employees; strikebreakers allow business to be continued without interruption, thereby defeating the purpose of the strike. Also referred to as replacement workers or, in a derogatory sense, as scabs.

suffrage: The right to vote.

suffragette: A woman who supports the right of women to vote; the term was often used in a negative, belittling way by opponents of women's suffrage.

suffragist: A person who promotes the right to vote; the term is used particularly in regard to a person supporting the right of women to vote.

sweatshop: A factory in which workers labor for long hours in poor conditions for very low wages.

T

tariff: A tax placed on goods imported from another country; tariffs raise the prices of imported goods, making it more difficult for such items to compete with domestically produced goods.

teetotaler: A person who abstains from all alcoholic beverages.

temperance: Moderation in the drinking of alcoholic beverages; in the context of the temperance movement, it usually refers to the complete avoidance of alcohol.

tenant farmer: Someone who farms land owned by someone else and pays rent or a share of the crop for the use of the land.

tenement: Urban dwellings rented by impoverished families that barely meet or fail to meet the minimum standards of safety, sanitation, and comfort.

trade agreement: An agreement among two or more nations that establishes terms for exchanging goods and services in a manner beneficial to all parties.

transgendered individuals: A range of people, including transsexuals and cross-dressers, who express their gender in ways that differ from conventional expectations.

transsexual: A person who has changed his or her biological gender through sex reassignment surgery and/or hormone treatment.

transvestite: A person who wears the clothing and, often, adopts the manner of the opposite sex.

treaty: A formal agreement between nations.

trusts: A group of companies, joined for the purpose of reducing competition and controlling prices.

U

Underground Railroad: A network of people in the mid-1800s secretly helping slaves to escape to the northern United States or Canada and assisting them in establishing new lives there.

union: An organization of workers designed to negotiate with employers for workers' rights and to secure improvements in such areas as wages, working hours, benefits, and workplace safety.

W

Wall Street: Financial district and home of the nation's major stock exchanges in New York City.

War on Poverty: The central program of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society." This effort tried to end poverty by providing poor Americans with education, job training, food, housing, and money.

welfare: Government-funded help for the needy, in the form of money, supplies, and services.

work release: A program allowing certain convicts the option of working outside the prison during the day and returning to their cells at night.

workhouse: A facility, often run by a church, designed to provide jobs for the poor and unemployed; term also describes a prison housing minor criminals.