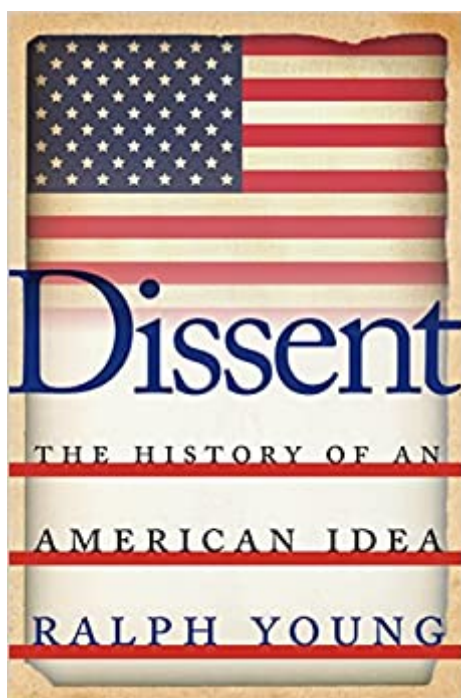


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Dissent: The History Of An American Idea



Synopsis

Finalist, 2016 Ralph Waldo Emerson Award & One of Bustle's Books For Your Civil Disobedience Reading List & Dissent: The History of an American Idea examines the key role dissent has played in shaping the United States. It focuses on those who, from colonial days to the present, dissented against the ruling paradigm of their time: from the Puritan Anne Hutchinson and Native American chief Powhatan in the seventeenth century, to the Occupy and Tea Party movements in the twenty-first century. The emphasis is on the way Americans, celebrated figures and anonymous ordinary citizens, responded to what they saw as the injustices that prevented them from fully experiencing their vision of America. At its founding the United States committed itself to lofty ideals. When the promise of those ideals was not fully realized by all Americans, many protested and demanded that the United States live up to its promise. Women fought for equal rights; abolitionists sought to destroy slavery; workers organized unions; Indians resisted white encroachment on their land; radicals angrily demanded an end to the dominance of the moneyed interests; civil rights protestors marched to end segregation; antiwar activists took to the streets to protest the nation's wars; and reactionaries, conservatives, and traditionalists in each decade struggled to turn back the clock to a simpler, more secure time. Some dissenters are celebrated heroes of American history, while others are ordinary people: frequently overlooked, but whose stories show that change is often accomplished through grassroots activism. The United States is a nation founded on the promise and power of dissent. In this stunningly comprehensive volume, Ralph Young shows us its history.

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Customer Reviews

"A sweeping, panoramic narrative that is ambitious in nature, and broad and deep in scope. It provides an alternative history of the United States—indeed of 'America.' It is a history—not from the vantage point of the forgotten or the 'losers,' per se—but from dissenters: those who fought valiantly, nobly, with great foresight and insight, and often against overwhelming, even impossible, odds and at great cost to themselves—in order to push, pull, shift, and shape the American world around them."—Glenn Feldman, University of Alabama at Birmingham

"A must-read for anyone interested in how dissent, protest, and other acts of civil disobedience have shaped the United States, Ralph Young's *Dissent: The History of an American Idea* is a well-researched, 600-plus page tome that covers both the liberal and conservative movements that changed American history." —Bustle.com

"In deeply conservative times it bears remembering that our nation also has a long and rich history of dissent-- one that always pushes our nation to become more just and humane. Ralph Young's sweeping and powerful account of this history, his rescuing of myriad moments and movements that made our nation fairer and more equal, is a must read for any citizen interested in making a stronger democracy and a better future for our children."—Heather Ann Thompson, Pulitzer-Prize-winning author of *Blood in the Water*

"A broad-ranging, evenhanded view of a tradition honed into an art form in America: the use of dissent as 'a critique of governance'...Young has a knack for finding obscure but thoroughly revealing moments of history to illustrate his points; learning about Fries' Rebellion and the Quasi-War with France is worth the price of admission alone, though his narrative offers much more besides...Refreshingly democratic—solid supplemental reading to the likes of Terkel and Alinsky, insistent on upholding the rights of political minorities even when they're wrong."—Kirkus Reviews

"Ralph Young takes us on a journey from the distant Puritan past to the cultural divisions of the contemporary age, showing that at every step along the way the nation's most powerful and productive force has been its rich tradition of dissent, the willingness of its citizens to cut against the grain of conformity to help build a fairer, more representative democracy. Marked by fast-paced and engaging prose, and filled with important insights and observations, *Dissent* may be the most important revisionist history

of the nation since Howard Zinn's *A People's History*."-David M. Wrobel, Merrick Chair in Western American History, University of Oklahoma

"The Temple University historian Ralph Young's *Dissent*, a beautifully written, always-interesting, and analytically smart synthesis of American history, contends that dissent has shaped our world from the Puritans to the Barack Obama presidency...Here is wishing Young's big book a shelf life as long as the works of Hofstadter, Williams, and Zinn."-*Journal of American History*

"A wonderfully erudite and lucid introduction to another 'American dream' that inspired millions around the world. A wise and topical invitation to reappraise global image of American culture today, when we are facing renewed struggle for hearts and minds."-Vladislav Zubok, London School of Economics and Politics

"[Young] presents a narrative history of the role of dissent in shaping the United States, foregrounding those who dissented and how Americans have responded to injustices that prevented them from fully experiencing their vision of America."-*Journal of Economic Literature*

"[An] expansive and...impressive account...[Young] excels in story-telling mode."-*Popmatters*

"Young takes his readers on a scenic, energetic, nonlinear walk from the seventeenth-century American Colonies to the present United States, suggesting all along the way that American history is, by definition, a history of dissent" | The breadth of the historical account and the level of detail Young offers his readers are inspiring, particularly in an age of what he sees as apathetic, social media-driven slacktivism and clicktivism."-*American Political Thought*

"One of the great merits of Young's book in his nuanced perspective on events and people that are too often reduced to clichés in our collective memory."-*Political Science Quarterly*

"Temple University historian Young (*Dissent in America*) delivers a doorstopper that few readers will ever want to misuse in such a manner; his clear and elegant style and a keen eye for good stories make it a page-turner...Young convincingly demonstrates that the history of the United States is inextricably linked to dissent and shows how 'protest is one of the consummate expressions of Americanness.'" -*STARRED Publishers Weekly*

"French historian Alexis de Tocqueville warned about 'the tyranny of the majority' in American democracy. This work deals with that important topic from colonial times to the present. Young brings experience and knowledge to this subject...This history will satisfy fans of Howard Zinn, Pete Seeger, and Allen Ginsberg."-*Library Journal*

"A beautifully written and impressively comprehensive survey of the history of dissent in America."-Thaddeus Russell, author of *A Renegade History of the United States*

Ralph Young is Professor of History at Temple University. He is the author of *Dissent in America*:

The Voices That Shaped a Nation, a compilation of primary documents of 400 years of American dissenters.~ ~

"Dissent" is an innovative way to tell the story of America. The book is written like a story; it keeps your interest from beginning to end. It is about Americans and the American spirit of standing up for one's self, regardless of the odds. It is our story. As I was reading "Dissent" I kept thinking that this book is so full of information, I will enjoy reading it again. The writers of academic history books could follow Ralph Young's lead and make history books far more interesting than they are now. I highly recommend this book to all who enjoy reading for enjoyment as well as knowledge.

This is an elegantly written, intellectually stimulating, and captivating book about American dissenters from colonial times through the present day. The author, Professor Ralph Young (Temple Univ.), is so familiar with the primary sources and secondary literature that he is able to offer both a great narrative and convincing analysis. Some will compare this to Howard Zinn's work, but Young offers a more sophisticated and less ideological history than Zinn. Young clearly is sympathetic to dissenters on the left, but his treatment of dissenters on the right is balanced. Read this book.

A very approachable entrance into the topic. Plenty of resources available to help you drill into details if that is your wish. Recommended reading for everyone in high school/college

A pleasure to read; absolutely compelling, didn't want to put it down. Prof. Young's knowledge of his topic and use of original sources makes for a great read; I felt part of the "story." The author's writing is seemingly effortless and draws the reader in. A must read for everyone!

A very unique account of how dissent in all of its forms has shaped and continue to shape this country, the latest examples being the protest for minimum wage movement and the " Black Lives Matter" movement. Very interesting and well written and organized.

Young presents the ebb and flow of that American continuum-action/protest/reaction- in an insightful, straightforward style that makes for compelling reading. Recommended.

Incisive, an historical detailed treasure trove. Incredibly well written. Pure gold!

The story of America that isn't taught in school.

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