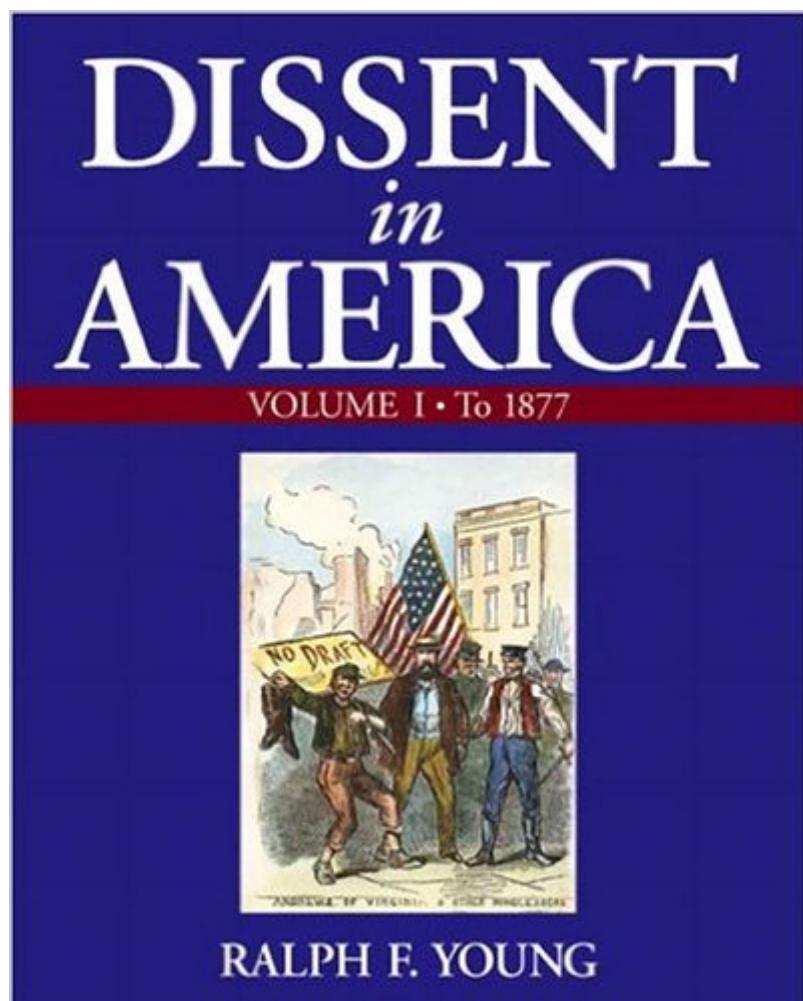


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# Dissent In America, Volume 1



## **Synopsis**

This collection of primary sources presents the story of US History as told by dissenters who, throughout the course of American history, have fought to gain rights they believed were denied to them or others, or who disagree with the government or majority opinion. Each document is introduced by placing it in its historical context, and thought-provoking questions are provided to focus the student when s/he reads the text. Instructors are at liberty to choose the documents that best highlight a theme they wish to emphasize.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Professor Ralph Young's book *Dissent in America* is a remarkable journey through American History using dissent as the theme, which, as the author points out, "has played a central role in the American experience". The book is much more than a compendium of writings on dissent. The author's clear and concise introduction to each reading creates the thread that ties that reading to what was happening in the country. There is a wealth of information in this volume. One can read Abigail Adams' letters to her husband, off writing the Constitution, asking that women be remembered in the document (he condescendingly brushes her off). Every major dissenter from Roger Williams to Cindy Sheehan is represented in this book. Of course, for this writer the best part of *Dissent in America* is the 1960s (mostly because he lived through them). Be sure to read all of "Mobilization: Vietnam and the Counterculture, 1964-1975". This is an excellent resume of the protests and songs and manifestos that were so much a part of that period. Not so surprisingly a lot

of what is included in that section remains contemporary (you might want to look up Pete Seeger's "Waist Deep in the Big Muddy" on YouTube). Don't assume that this book deals only with leftist and liberal dissent and critiques of American Society. Dr. Young also presents articles from the Michigan Militia, Theodore Kaczynski, and Father Coughlin (who happens to be included in the book, just before Emma Goldman and Woody Guthrie). Dissent in America is a complete discourse which should appeal to anyone interested in American History. It is not only invaluable for students of the history of the United States, but also the general public who might want to understand all the forces which made America a great country.

This excellent, exhaustive anthology includes the great essays and documents written by dissenters from before the founding of the colonies to the present time. The author has done a fine job of providing a narrative history of the United States through the ideas and ideals of famous and little known Americans who exercised their cherished right to express themselves about the state of the country. Included are all the important themes--abolition, civil rights, women's rights, anti-war, taxation, etc.--that define America. A good feature is that it includes dissent from the Right and the left. This hefty collection is ideal for discussion groups and college courses or for keeping on a nightstand to be read at leisure. At a time when our rights as citizens are being questioned and tested, this is an inspiring and comforting work, which emphasizes that dissent is older than the United States and a privilege and obligation of its citizens.

I've always been fond of books that dealt with hidden and little-known history. This is a good example of such. Essentially, you have documents from American history going all the way back the 1600s that involve people who went against the status quo. In one book, you have antislavery Quakers and abolitionists, early feminists, American Indians speaking out against their oppression, American Loyalists during the American Revolution and Union loyalists from the South during the civil war, populists, Black Panthers, socialists, racists, archconservatives, anarchists, and anti war activists from just about every war including the current one. All speak in their own voice. Of course no one will agree with everything said here, but it's good to bring these people's words to light to put the struggles of our own time in their proper context.

For a basic understanding of how this country has fought against the forces of big money and political power from the very beginning, I haven't found a better anthology than this one. You'll be amazed at the things you didn't know, or had forgotten, about American history.

This is a fantastic, phenomenal collection of primary-source documents spanning all throughout American history. I highly recommend it for anyone interesting in brushing up on American history, as well as anyone genuinely interested in the various reasons, methodologies, and practices behind "dissent."

Dissent in America is a book, that once you read, underline, dog ear and highlight you will want to carry around under your arm for the rest of your life as a portable library. For anyone passionate about a cause, no matter what it may be, this anthology provides words of inspiration from a mosaic of American voices that cut against the drone of traditional society. Though you may not agree with the beliefs or methods of every dissenter (for this book does not shy away from representing an honest cross-section of dissenters- radical and fundamentalists from both sides of the spectrum) you can take something away from their words. I found that by seeing how different people have approached dissent and advocated for their cause, I could decide what kind of techniques were successful could weigh my own morals against methods verging on violence. In this way I could decide where I would draw the line as an activist myself. I read this book in a class I took at Temple University with the author, Dr. Ralph Young. It was undoubtedly my favorite class. This book was our textbook. Although as a student it is often difficult to keep up with a full load of reading-intensive classes, I devoured every single page of the hearty 700+-page text. Our class discussions were my favorite part of the "Dissent in America experience," however Ralph Young's rich base of knowledge and perspective is shown through introductions to each document. It is ALMOST as good as sitting in one of his lectures. This provides the reader with insight when approaching the document, yet the words of the dissent themselves go unfiltered. I highly recommend this book to anyone who cares passionately about a cause. You will read it and approach the world with more fire.

A full anthology of protest writing. Fantastic for both learning on one's own or when researching or using for academic query. It is great having such a selection in one book.

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