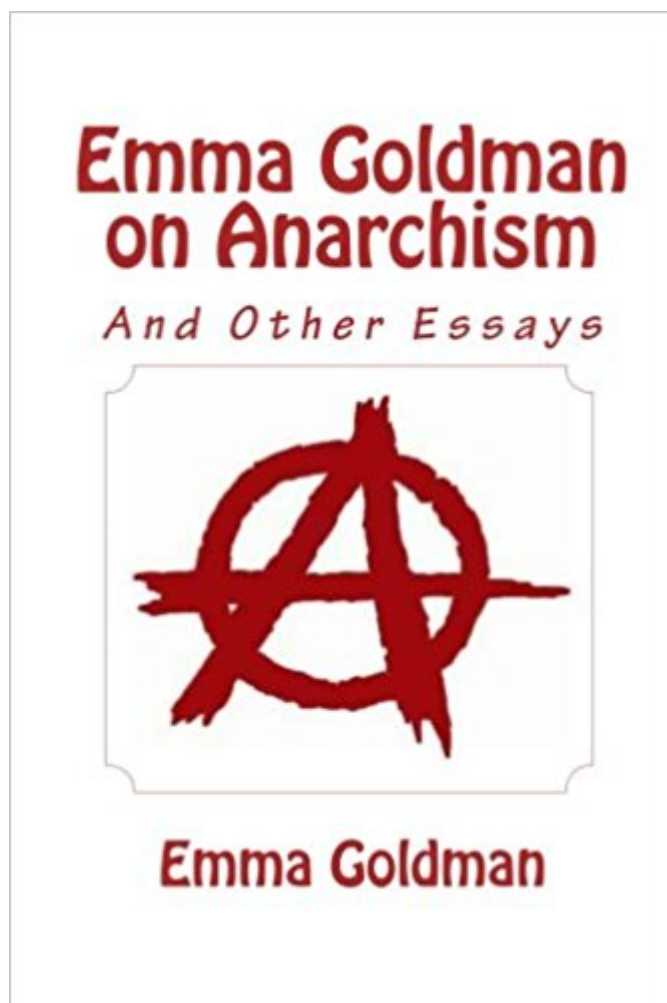


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Emma Goldman On Anarchism (and Other Essays)



Synopsis

Being historically one the more important yet obscure figures in American history, Emma Goldman's anarchist thought is as relevant today as it was when she wrote "Anarchism, and Other Essays". In an age where political apathy, intellectual ignorance and spiritual corruption are the failings of modern civilization, Emma Goldman's Enlightenment thought is illuminating in its message of the power of direct action as she so lucidly illustrates: "Anarchism urges man to think, to investigate, to analyze every proposition... (Anarchism is the) philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary." And, "the new social order rests, of course, on the materialistic basis of life; but while all Anarchists agree that the main evil today is an economic one, they maintain that the solution of that evil can be brought about only through the consideration of every phase of life,--individual, as well as the collective; the internal, as well as the external phases." One more quote from Goldman reads "a thorough perusal of the history of human development will disclose two elements in bitter conflict with each other; elements that are only now beginning to be understood, not as foreign to each other, but as closely related and truly harmonious, if only placed in proper environment: the individual and social instincts. The individual and society have waged a relentless and bloody battle for ages, each striving for supremacy, because each was blind to the value and importance of the other. The individual and social instincts,--the one a most potent factor for individual endeavor, for growth, aspiration, self-realization; the other an equally potent factor for mutual helpfulness and social well-being." From just that little excerpt it is easy to understand why any and all authority was terrified of Emma Goldman and why her important contributions to society have been muzzled from histories - down the "memory hole" to use an Orwellian expression. "Anarchism, and Other Essays" is as relevant today as it was in Emma Goldman's day and necessary material for anyone truly interested or involved in altruistic direct action.

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Customer Reviews

One of the towering figures in global radicalism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, EMMA GOLDMAN (1869–1940) was an anarchist, a feminist, a pacifist, a communist, a unionist, and a proponent of birth control and free love. Her extreme notions made her as much an object of outrage as one of reverence in the tumultuous years of the Gilded Age, World War I, and the Roaring Twenties, and her name remains, to this day, synonymous with ideas of sweeping cultural revolution. Here, in her two-volume memories, first published in 1931, she tells her life story. From her arrival in New York as a 20-year-old seamstress, when she immediately launched into a life of activism and public agitation, she recalls her childhood in Lithuania, her immigration to the U.S. as a teenager, and her wild adventures as an independent and intelligent woman: baptizing babies on a beer barrel, supporting workingmen's strikes, traveling in Europe | An important and influential figure in such far-flung geopolitical events as the Russian Revolution and the Spanish Civil War, Goldman is one of the most storied people of the 20th century. And her story, in her own inimitable words, is one of the great biographies, and one of the great personal histories of a turbulent era.

This particular book is a great introduction into Emma Goldman's world. It's definitely not an Anarchism 101 but the novice will be able to grasp Goldman's version of Anarcha-Feminism. Two things I should mention: 1.) It's cheap price is appealing and the reason for is printed on demand through Create Space. 2.) Because it's independently created its poorly proofread. Honestly not even sure the person the typed this actually read through his final product. A lot of typos. But if this doesn't bother you, then the cost savings is worth the loss.

Just needed it for a research paper I was writing so it gave me some info.

What I've gleaned from this book, as far as I have gotten, is that we, as a civilization, have not progressed very much. Emma's disappointment with the citizenry of her age, that she describes, could and does apply to the citizenry of today. She sees what's swept under the rug, and it's what we've been seeing these days. History repeating itself.

Just because it's old, doesn't devalue it. Emma wrote in readable English. By that, I mean she didn't have the annoying and iconic high diction of many authors of her time (compare to Ambrose Bierce). You aren't supposed to just agree with the whole book and all the ideas because anarchism is always changing, adapting, and new threats are added all the time. Emma probably could never have conceived of what the modern State has become - so don't use this as a handbook, and FFS, don't use this and become an armchair politician, or worse, an armchair insurrectionist. Please. There's enough. Just use Emma's work to open your mind to some new yet old ideas during the golden age of Anarchist theory.

It doesn't have the last essay that is in every single other edition I have checked, and is supposed to be in it according to Wikipedia, "The Drama: A Powerful Disseminator of Radical Thought."

The essays are excellent in themselves but someone needs to put them in a historical perspective. When were they written? This edition doesn't tell us. If you have never read anything by Emma Goldman, begin with vol. 1 of her autobiography "Living my Life." It's such a great read; you'll be ordering vol.2 before you finish it.

I always wanted to learn more about anarchism, I just never knew where to even begin. I didn't want to begin with the 19th Century stuff, so I went with this book. Honestly, it was great. It gets you thinking, the vocabulary isn't too difficult either. Everything is pretty much relevant to our times. The only thing that is a bit outdated is the last essay. I don't know anyone that goes to plays, but I suppose you can relate it to movies or something.

Emma Goldman's writings are relevant 100 years later. A critical analysis of how things were during the early to mid 1900's, some things have changed for the better since but hard to argue not much...

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