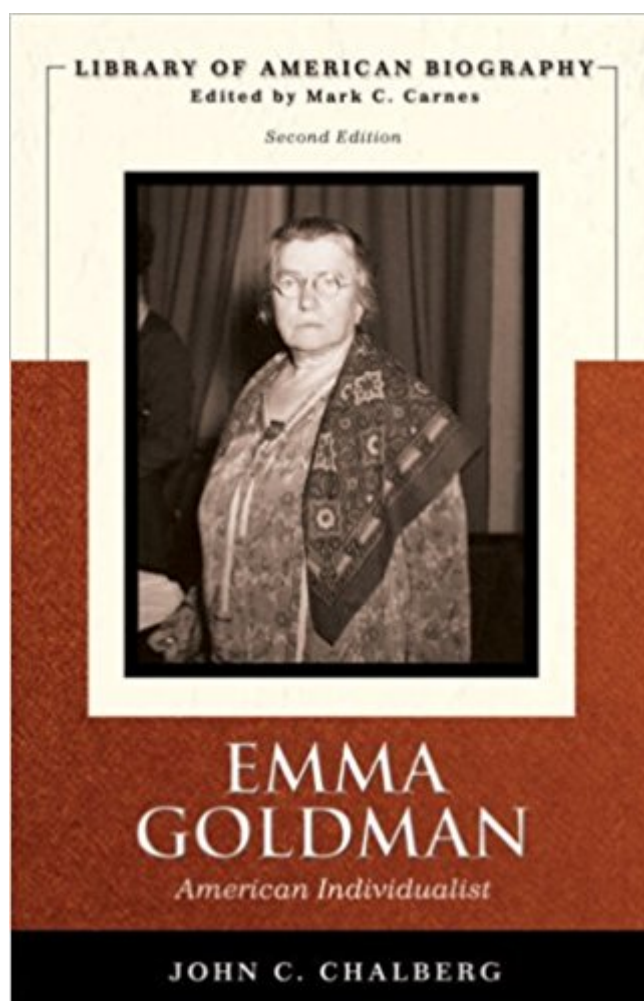


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# Emma Goldman: American Individualist (Library Of American Biography Series) (2nd Edition)



## Synopsis

One of the most colorful, controversial and radical figures in American history, Emma Goldman challenged the legitimacy of religion, government, and private property in the United States. Imprisoned, tried, and later deported for her beliefs, the Goldman story is a window through which students will see a better picture of the history of American radicalism, the history of civil liberties in America, and the history of American foreign policy. The titles in the Library of American Biography Series make ideal supplements for American History Survey courses or other courses in American history where figures in history are explored. Paperback, brief, and inexpensive, each interpretive biography in this series focuses on a figure whose actions and ideas significantly influenced the course of American history and national life. In addition, each biography relates the life of its subject to the broader themes and developments of the times.

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## Customer Reviews

Emma Goldman: American Individualist, Second Edition By John C. Chalberg Edited by Mark C. Carnes Library of American Biography Longman is proud to publish the Library of American Biography series, offering ideal reading for introductory and upper-level courses in American history. These concise biographies focus on individuals whose actions and ideas greatly influenced American history and relate the lives of the subjects to the issues and events of their times. Under new series editor Mark C. Carnes, the Library of American Biography series is being revised and updated with today's students in mind. All volumes are now offered at a lower price, and

each new volume includes Study and Discussion Questions, which encourage readers to reflect on the role of the profiled individual in shaping American history. One of the most colorful, controversial and radical figures in American history, Emma Goldman challenged the legitimacy of religion, government, and private property in the United States. Imprisoned, tried, and later deported for her beliefs, the Goldman story is a window through which students will see a better picture of the history of American radicalism, the history of civil liberties in America, and the history of American foreign policy. New to the second edition: A fresh Author's Preface and new Afterward reflect the most recent research on Emma Goldman's legacy and place Goldman into better historical perspective. An updated A Note on the Sources section highlights the most recent and up-to-date scholarship. Study and Discussion Questions at the end of the book help students check their reading and comprehension. These questions may also be used to facilitate discussions in the classroom or in student study groups. Additional Titles of Interest in the Library of American Biography Series NEW! Melosi, Thomas A. Edison and the Modernization of America, Second Edition Hixson, Charles A. Lindbergh: Lone Eagle, Third Edition Youngs, Eleanor Roosevelt: A Personal and Public Life, Third Edition La Botz, Cesar Chavez and La Causa A full list of the titles in the Library of American Biography series appears on the inside back cover of this book. Visit us at [www.ablongman.com](http://www.ablongman.com)

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This is a liberal handling of one of the most vociferous anarchists of the early twentieth centuries; it's a decent biography but he seems to be reducing her anarchism to an extreme expression of American individualism. There is some discussion on her thought and influences, and some of it is quite possibly speculation... somehow the author doesn't mention Nietzsche's influence on her at all, but Thomas Jefferson, a slave-owning man who served in the US government and wrote some idealistic things figures as a definite influence on her. *Living My Life* or something by Paul Avrich are better choices.

Emma Goldman: American Individualist is a full account of the life of one of America's most notorious anarchists. The author, John Chalberg, takes the reader from her life as a poor, abused, and repressed youngster in Russia to the United States where the blood of the workingman gives her a purpose. But, not only does Chalberg concern the reader with Emma Goldman and anarchism, he also gives a nice account of other radicals of the time, such as socialism and

communism and their most noted leaders. Thus, this book provides an excellent source of American history and politics as it is coming into the age of industry. Furthermore, Chalberg presents Emma Goldman, not as an evil, unruly, unamerican anarchist, but as a dedicated, motherly, sympathetic woman simply dedicated to helping the struggling American. Emma Goldman: American Individualist is insightful, well organized, and well executed.

I was mildly startled to come across this title and a bit taken aback when I saw this book appearing in this series intended for high schoolers. Back when I was a youth fifty years ago, all I remember we had was the rather simplified Landmark series on American history. As a long time student of U.S. political and economic history, especially the period of the oughts and teens of the twentieth century, I have seen several mentions of Emma Goldman in relation to the labor movement, socialism, and the Red revolution in Russia. It is astonishing to me that the right wing book burners and the vociferous "family values" crowd have not made a big fuss; they seem to believe that if persons read about organized labor and socialism, they will become rabble rousers and riot in the streets. This is analogous to the movement to curtail sex education for fear that if one reads about it one will be tempted to try it. Formulaic series such as this written following a template for length by definition cannot be comprehensive. Similarly the Osprey titles on military history and the Ballantine paperbacks "History of the Violent Century" serve a valid social purpose in satisfying a basic curiosity about a topic; the mildly curious would not read a definitive 500 page about Goldman. Provided of course, that if such a work may displease both the radical right and the fringe wild left, proving it is as neutral in sticking to the facts and leaving opinion to other more weighty works which can cover the myriad intricacies of such a controversial person as was Goldman. Other famous and infamous labor movement characters of the times, such as Samuel Gompers and Joe Hill also need a popular work for the mildly curious. One could look her up in Wikipedia but those entries, as written by experts, are often either too superficial or biased. No matter how much one wants to be neutral, that is the nature of the endeavour. But in turn, books written by a committee are often "dumbed down" to the point of uselessness. For some reason, the American folk song movement of the mid twentieth century was mostly left wing oriented. Major practitioners such as Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger were prominent. I knew the latter but not the former. I still remember group singing back in the sixties the Joe Hill song. It is a good song and its singing meant as much politically to most of us as the singing of Amazing Grace and other folk hymns by my Jewish friends meant religiously. Some magnificent songs are no longer sung in public because they are no longer thought to be "politically correct." Just like some the WWII era cartoons, and radio and TV programs of the

so-called "Golden Age" are no longer played. It seems the members of a group can safely address each other by the vilest terms, but lord help those outside who use them in their presence. :0(.So if you have a slight interest in Goldman, this is the book for you, just as others in this series cover other once prominent persons.

This book was quite interesting about the life of Emma Goldman, who she was, and what she went through. Came to me in great shape.

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