2-1-2005

Review of Encyclopedia of American Social Movements, ed. by Immanuel Ness

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The first major reference work that seeks to examine social movements in all their complexity, power, and significance, this set expands history by giving voice to the struggles of ordinary people. Striving for comprehensiveness, authority, and balance, the section editors examine each movement in its entirety. The set's introduction is particularly useful in defining social movements--their aims, goals, and successes, and their ability to spawn offshoots. Sixteen sections, edited by experts, cover major social movements in American history. Sections begin with an introductions to movements (e.g., Antislavery Movement, Native American Movement) and supply entries that cover each movement's critical themes and key leaders. Excerpts from primary documents (Frederick Douglass's "The Rights of Women") flesh out entries and provide easy access for readers. Entries are arranged by a rough chronology in each section, are written by scholars, and analyze a movement's goals, tactics, membership, and outcomes. Since many movements overlap, entries explore the interrelationship between the groups. Intending to provide a broad, engaging overview of American history, the set is not confined to movements of the Left but includes conservative, progressive, and antivice movements.

Summing Up: Recommended. Academic libraries.

Reviewer: R. Tolley-Stokes, East Tennessee State University
Recommendation: Recommended
Readership Level: Lower-division Undergraduates, Upper-division Undergraduates, Graduate Students, Researchers/Faculty, Two-Year Technical Program Students
Interdisciplinary Subjects:
Subject: Reference - Social & Behavioral Sciences
Choice Issue: feb 2005 vol. 42 no. 6
Choice Review #: 42-3165
Review DOI: 10.5860/CHOICE.42-3165