

jacob riis definition us history

jacob riis definition us history is an essential concept for anyone seeking to understand the transformative era of American society during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Jacob Riis was a pioneering journalist, social reformer, and photographer whose work exposed the harsh realities of urban life, particularly in New York City's tenements. This article provides a comprehensive analysis of Jacob Riis's definition in US history, exploring his background, contributions, and lasting impact. Readers will discover how Riis's innovative use of photography and investigative reporting helped launch the Progressive Era's reforms, shaped public opinion, and contributed to changes in housing laws and social welfare. From his landmark book "How the Other Half Lives" to his influence on urban policy and social movements, this article covers all critical aspects of Riis's legacy. Whether you're a student, educator, historian, or simply interested in American history, this in-depth resource will clarify the meaning and significance of Jacob Riis in US history, making it easy to grasp his enduring relevance.

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Jacob Riis Definition in US History

The term “Jacob Riis definition US history” refers to the pivotal role Jacob Riis played as a social reformer, investigative journalist, and photographer in exposing the living conditions of the urban poor during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Jacob Riis’s work is defined by his commitment to documenting the struggles of impoverished immigrants in New York City and advocating for reforms to improve housing, sanitation, and public health. In US history, Riis is recognized as a catalyst for change, whose innovative use of photojournalism and storytelling raised public awareness and influenced policy. His legacy is closely tied to the rise of the Progressive Movement, which sought to address social inequalities and promote urban reform. Understanding the “Jacob Riis definition” in the context of US history means appreciating his impact on social change, journalism, and the way Americans perceive urban poverty.

Background and Early Life of Jacob Riis

Early Years in Denmark

Jacob Riis was born on May 3, 1849, in Ribe, Denmark. He grew up in a modest family, experiencing hardship and witnessing poverty from a young age. These early experiences shaped his empathy and later fueled his passion for social justice.

Immigration to the United States

Riis immigrated to America in 1870, settling in New York City. Like many immigrants, he struggled to find work and lived in poverty, gaining firsthand experience of the harsh conditions faced by the city’s poor. These formative years influenced his later career as a journalist and reformer.

Path to Journalism

Jacob Riis began his career as a police reporter for the New York Tribune. His exposure to crime, tenement life, and urban squalor deepened his commitment to advocating for change. Riis's background and personal struggles helped him connect with the subjects of his reporting, adding authenticity and urgency to his work.

Major Works and Contributions

“How the Other Half Lives”

One of Jacob Riis's most significant contributions to US history was his groundbreaking book, “How the Other Half Lives,” published in 1890. This influential work combined narrative journalism with powerful photography to document the living conditions in New York City's tenements. Riis's vivid descriptions and compelling images brought national attention to urban poverty and inspired widespread calls for reform.

Innovations in Photojournalism

Jacob Riis pioneered the use of flash photography to capture the dimly lit interiors of tenement buildings. His photographs were among the first to visually expose the realities of slum life, making abstract statistics and descriptions tangible for a broader audience. Riis's innovative techniques set new standards for investigative journalism and photo documentation.

Advocacy and Public Lectures

Beyond his writing and photography, Riis was a tireless advocate for social reform. He delivered public lectures, collaborated with influential leaders, and campaigned for improved housing and sanitation.

His efforts contributed to legislative changes and inspired a generation of reformers.

- Published “How the Other Half Lives” in 1890
- Introduced flash photography to investigative journalism
- Lectured extensively on urban poverty and reform
- Collaborated with reform-minded officials
- Authored additional books such as “Children of the Poor”

Impact on Urban Reform and Public Awareness

Raising Awareness of Tenement Conditions

Jacob Riis’s work brought unprecedented attention to the plight of the urban poor. His photographs and reports shocked middle- and upper-class Americans, who were often unaware of the severity of tenement conditions. Riis’s storytelling made the issue personal and urgent, prompting public outrage and demands for change.

Influence on Housing Legislation

Riis’s advocacy played a direct role in influencing housing policies in New York City. His documentation and campaigning led to the passage of the Tenement House Act of 1901 and other reforms that improved building codes, ventilation, sanitation, and safety standards. These changes laid the groundwork for modern urban planning and public health initiatives.

Mobilizing Social Reform Movements

Riis's efforts energized social reformers and organizations, encouraging philanthropic investment and government action. His work was instrumental in the rise of settlement houses, playgrounds, and other community-based programs aimed at improving the quality of life for city dwellers.

Influence on Progressive Era Policies

Collaboration with Influential Leaders

Jacob Riis's influence extended to prominent figures such as Theodore Roosevelt, who served as New York City's Police Commissioner before becoming President. Riis's reports on police corruption and urban conditions inspired Roosevelt to champion reforms, demonstrating the connection between investigative journalism and policy change.

Role in the Progressive Movement

The Progressive Era was defined by efforts to address social and political challenges through reform. Riis's work embodied the spirit of this movement, advocating for improved living conditions, public health, and government accountability. His contributions helped shape the priorities and methods of Progressive reformers nationwide.

Enduring Impact on Social Policy

Jacob Riis's legacy continues to influence social policy, particularly in areas related to housing, urban development, and community health. His emphasis on visual storytelling and public engagement remains a model for advocacy and reform in the United States.

Legacy of Jacob Riis in Modern America

Recognition as a Pioneering Photojournalist

Jacob Riis is widely recognized as one of America's first photojournalists. His combination of photography and investigative reporting set a precedent for future generations of journalists and reformers. Today, Riis's work is celebrated in museums, academic curricula, and public commemorations.

Continuing Relevance in Urban Studies

Riis's documentation of urban poverty remains relevant to contemporary discussions on housing, inequality, and social justice. His approach to exposing hidden social problems through accessible media continues to inspire activists, policymakers, and educators.

Commemoration and Honors

Jacob Riis has been honored through various memorials, including parks, schools, and historical sites named after him. His contributions are remembered as foundational to America's ongoing pursuit of social equity and urban reform.

- Jacob Riis Houses in New York City
- Jacob Riis Park in Queens, New York
- Jacob Riis's works studied in academic programs
- Permanent exhibits in museums and libraries

- Recognition by historical societies and organizations

Frequently Asked Questions about Jacob Riis Definition US History

Q: Who was Jacob Riis in US history?

A: Jacob Riis was a Danish-American journalist, photographer, and social reformer who exposed the living conditions of the urban poor during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, influencing social and housing reforms.

Q: What is the significance of “How the Other Half Lives”?

A: “How the Other Half Lives” is Jacob Riis’s groundbreaking book that combined photography and investigative journalism to reveal the realities of tenement life, sparking public outrage and legislative change.

Q: How did Jacob Riis impact urban reform?

A: Jacob Riis’s work helped raise awareness of tenement conditions, influenced the passage of housing laws, and mobilized social reform movements, contributing to improved living standards in American cities.

Q: What role did Jacob Riis play in the Progressive Era?

A: Riis’s advocacy and documentation supported the goals of the Progressive Movement, driving

reforms in housing, sanitation, and public health, and inspiring leaders like Theodore Roosevelt to take action.

Q: How did Jacob Riis use photography in his work?

A: Jacob Riis pioneered flash photography to capture the interior conditions of tenements, making the realities of poverty visible and compelling for the public and policymakers.

Q: What lasting legacy did Jacob Riis leave in US history?

A: Riis's legacy includes advancements in photojournalism, urban reform, and social welfare policies, as well as continued recognition of his contributions to improving the lives of the urban poor.

Q: What reforms resulted from Jacob Riis's activism?

A: Reforms influenced by Riis's work included the Tenement House Act of 1901, improved housing regulations, and the establishment of playgrounds, settlement houses, and other welfare programs.

Q: Why is Jacob Riis studied in schools and universities?

A: Jacob Riis is studied for his role in exposing social problems, pioneering journalism techniques, and influencing major reforms during the Progressive Era, offering valuable lessons in civic engagement and advocacy.

Q: What challenges did Jacob Riis face in his early life?

A: Riis faced poverty and hardship both in Denmark and as an immigrant in the United States, experiences that shaped his empathy and commitment to social justice.

Q: How is Jacob Riis commemorated today?

A: Jacob Riis is commemorated through parks, housing developments, historical sites, museum exhibits, and academic study, reflecting his enduring importance in US history.

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Jacob Riis: Definition, Impact, and Legacy in US History

Introduction:

Stepping into the grimy alleys and dimly lit tenements of late 19th-century New York City might seem like a journey to a distant, forgotten world. However, the stark realities captured by Jacob Riis, a Danish-American journalist and social reformer, continue to resonate powerfully in our understanding of US history. This post delves into the definition of Jacob Riis's significance, exploring his life, his groundbreaking work, and his enduring legacy in shaping social reform and influencing how we perceive poverty and urban life. We'll unpack his methods, his impact, and his ongoing relevance in contemporary discussions about social justice.

Who Was Jacob Riis? A Definition in the Context of US History:

Jacob Riis (1849-1914) was more than just a photographer; he was a pioneering photojournalist and social reformer who used his camera and pen to expose the harsh realities of poverty and squalor in the overcrowded tenements of New York City. His work is critical to understanding the Gilded Age, a period characterized by immense wealth alongside widespread poverty and social inequality. Unlike many of his contemporaries who focused on the opulent lives of the wealthy, Riis dedicated himself to documenting the plight of the poor, immigrants, and marginalized communities, becoming a powerful voice advocating for social change. His definition in US history rests firmly on his role as a catalyst for progressive reform, bringing the unseen suffering of the urban poor into the public consciousness.

Riis's Photographic Approach and "How the Other Half Lives"

Riis didn't just take pictures; he strategically used flash photography, a relatively new technology at the time, to illuminate the dark corners of tenement buildings, revealing the cramped, unsanitary conditions in which impoverished families lived. His book, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890), became a sensation, shocking the nation with its graphic depictions of poverty. The book wasn't simply a collection of photographs; Riis accompanied the images with compelling narratives, providing context and highlighting the human cost of unchecked industrialization and urban growth. This combination of powerful imagery and empathetic storytelling proved incredibly effective in mobilizing public opinion and galvanizing support for social reform.

The Impact of Riis's Work on Social Reform

The impact of *How the Other Half Lives* was profound. The book directly influenced legislation aimed at improving housing conditions, sanitation, and public health. It spurred the creation of tenement house laws, although their full impact took time to realize. Riis's work helped to expose the systemic inequalities that contributed to poverty, leading to increased public awareness and advocacy for progressive causes such as improved sanitation, better schools, and public parks. His legacy extended beyond specific legislation; he helped shift the national conversation around poverty, shifting it away from simplistic notions of individual responsibility toward a more nuanced understanding of the systemic factors involved.

Riis's Advocacy Beyond Photography: A Multifaceted Approach

Riis's influence extended beyond his photography and writing. He actively worked with social reformers, politicians, and philanthropists to implement practical solutions to the problems he documented. He wasn't content merely to expose the issues; he actively sought to bring about change. His dedication to advocacy and collaboration played a crucial role in fostering a sense of collective responsibility for addressing social problems. This proactive approach solidified his place as a leading figure in the progressive era.

Riis's Lasting Legacy: A Continuing Conversation

Jacob Riis's work remains highly relevant today. His legacy serves as a stark reminder of the persistent challenges of poverty, inequality, and social injustice. His images and writings continue to be studied and analyzed, providing valuable insights into the social conditions of the late 19th century and offering a lens through which to examine contemporary issues. The power of his approach—combining visual storytelling with compelling narratives—is a testament to the enduring effectiveness of photojournalism as a tool for social change. His story demonstrates the potential of a single individual to inspire widespread reform and leave a lasting mark on history. His commitment to social justice serves as an inspiration for activists and reformers working to address similar challenges today.

Conclusion:

Jacob Riis's definition within US history transcends simple categorization. He was a photojournalist,

a social reformer, and a powerful advocate for the marginalized. His work fundamentally shifted public perception of poverty and urban life, influencing policy changes and inspiring generations of social activists. His enduring legacy lies not just in his documentation of the past, but in the continued relevance of his message: the fight for social justice is an ongoing process that demands our continued attention and action.

FAQs:

1. What specific legislation did Jacob Riis directly influence? While Riis didn't write legislation himself, his work directly influenced the passage of several tenement house laws in New York City, aiming to improve living conditions and sanitation in overcrowded buildings.
2. How did Riis's background influence his work? His experiences as a Danish immigrant, initially struggling with poverty himself, deeply informed his empathy for the impoverished and fueled his dedication to social reform.
3. What are some criticisms of Riis's work? Some critics argue that Riis's focus on poverty sometimes overlooked the agency and resilience of the people he photographed, potentially perpetuating stereotypes.
4. What other photographers influenced or were influenced by Jacob Riis? Riis's work influenced later generations of documentary photographers, but he was also influenced by contemporary photographers and the emerging field of photojournalism.
5. Where can I find more of Jacob Riis's photographs and writings? Many of Riis's photographs and writings are available online through various archives and libraries, including the Library of Congress and the Museum of the City of New York.

jacob riis definition us history: How the Other Half Lives Jacob Riis, 2011

jacob riis definition us history: The Making of an American Jacob A. Riis, 2023-09-14
Reproduction of the original. The publishing house Megali specialises in reproducing historical works in large print to make reading easier for people with impaired vision.

jacob riis definition us history: A Fierce Discontent Michael McGerr, 2010-05-11 The Progressive Era, a few brief decades around the turn of the last century, still burns in American memory for its outsized personalities: Theodore Roosevelt, whose energy glinted through his pince-nez; Carry Nation, who smashed saloons with her axe and helped stop an entire nation from drinking; women suffragists, who marched in the streets until they finally achieved the vote; Andrew Carnegie and the super-rich, who spent unheard-of sums of money and became the wealthiest class of Americans since the Revolution. Yet the full story of those decades is far more than the sum of its characters. In Michael McGerr's *A Fierce Discontent* America's great political upheaval is brilliantly explored as the root cause of our modern political malaise. The Progressive Era witnessed the nation's most convulsive upheaval, a time of radicalism far beyond the Revolution or anything since. In response to the birth of modern America, with its first large-scale businesses, newly dominant cities, and an explosion of wealth, one small group of middle-class Americans seized control of the nation and attempted to remake society from bottom to top. Everything was open to question -- family life, sex roles, race relations, morals, leisure pursuits, and politics. For a time, it seemed as if the middle-class utopians would cause a revolution. They accomplished an astonishing range of triumphs. From the 1890s to the 1910s, as American soldiers fought a war to make the world safe for democracy, reformers managed to outlaw alcohol, close down vice districts, win the right to vote

for women, launch the income tax, take over the railroads, and raise feverish hopes of making new men and women for a new century. Yet the progressive movement collapsed even more spectacularly as the war came to an end amid race riots, strikes, high inflation, and a frenzied Red scare. It is an astonishing and moving story. McGerr argues convincingly that the expectations raised by the progressives' utopian hopes have nagged at us ever since. Our current, less-than-epic politics must inevitably disappoint a nation that once thought in epic terms. The New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, the Great Society, and now the war on terrorism have each entailed ambitious plans for America; and each has had dramatic impacts on policy and society. But the failure of the progressive movement set boundaries around the aspirations of all of these efforts. None of them was as ambitious, as openly determined to transform people and create utopia, as the progressive movement. We have been forced to think modestly ever since that age of bold reform. For all of us, right, center, and left, the age of fierce discontent is long over.

jacob riis definition us history: The Children of the Poor Jacob August Riis, 1892 Jacob Riis was a Danish-born photojournalist who used his camera to draw attention to the plight of the poor.

jacob riis definition us history: Rediscovering Jacob Riis Bonnie Yochelson, Daniel Czitrom, 2014-08-18 Jacob Riis (1849-1914) was the author of *How the Other Half Lives* (1890). This study of his life and work includes excerpts from Riis's diary, chronicling romance, poverty, temptation, and, after many false starts, employment as a writer and reformer. In the second half, Yochelson describes how Riis used photography to shock and influence his readers. The authors describe Riis's intellectual education and discuss the influence of *How the Other Half Lives* on urban history. It shows that Riis argued for charity rather than social justice; but the fact that he understood what it was to be homeless did humanize Riis's work, and that work has continued to inspire reformers. Yochelson focuses on how Riis came to obtain his now famous images, how they were manipulated for publication, and their influence on the young field of photography.

jacob riis definition us history: U.S. History P. Scott Corbett, Volker Janssen, John M. Lund, Todd Pfannestiel, Sylvie Waskiewicz, Paul Vickery, 2024-09-10 U.S. History is designed to meet the scope and sequence requirements of most introductory courses. The text provides a balanced approach to U.S. history, considering the people, events, and ideas that have shaped the United States from both the top down (politics, economics, diplomacy) and bottom up (eyewitness accounts, lived experience). U.S. History covers key forces that form the American experience, with particular attention to issues of race, class, and gender.

jacob riis definition us history: The Gilded Age Mark Twain, Charles Dudley Warner, 1904

jacob riis definition us history: The Battle with the Slum Jacob A. Riis, 2013-03-05 Classic work of reportage documents life of the urban poor at the turn of the century. Real-life tales and rare photographs celebrate efforts to demolish breeding grounds of crime and improve conditions in schools and tenements.

jacob riis definition us history: Permanent Supportive Housing National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Health and Medicine Division, Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice, Policy and Global Affairs, Science and Technology for Sustainability Program, Committee on an Evaluation of Permanent Supportive Housing Programs for Homeless Individuals, 2018-08-11 Chronic homelessness is a highly complex social problem of national importance. The problem has elicited a variety of societal and public policy responses over the years, concomitant with fluctuations in the economy and changes in the demographics of and attitudes toward poor and disenfranchised citizens. In recent decades, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the philanthropic community have worked hard to develop and implement programs to solve the challenges of homelessness, and progress has been made. However, much more remains to be done. Importantly, the results of various efforts, and especially the efforts to reduce homelessness among veterans in recent years, have shown that the problem of homelessness can be successfully addressed. Although a number of programs have been developed to meet the needs of persons experiencing homelessness, this report focuses on one particular type of intervention: permanent supportive housing (PSH). Permanent Supportive Housing focuses on the

impact of PSH on health care outcomes and its cost-effectiveness. The report also addresses policy and program barriers that affect the ability to bring the PSH and other housing models to scale to address housing and health care needs.

jacob riis definition us history: A Ten Years' War: An Account of the Battle with the Slum in New York Jacob A. Riis, 2022-05-29 A Ten Years' War: An Account of the Battle with the Slum in New York is a book by Jacob A. Riis. It takes a look at slums, gangs and criminal behavior and their causes in early 20th century NYC.

jacob riis definition us history: The History of the Standard Oil Company Ida Minerva Tarbell, 1904

jacob riis definition us history: Jacob A. Riis Bonnie Yochelson, 2015 Danish-born Jacob A. Riis (1849-1914) found success in America as a reporter for the New York Tribune, first documenting crime and later turning his eye to housing reform. As tenement living conditions became unbearable in the wake of massive immigration, Riis and his camera captured some of the earliest, most powerful images of American urban poverty--Jacket.

jacob riis definition us history: The Bitter Cry of the Children John Spargo, 1906

jacob riis definition us history: The Jungle Upton Sinclair, 1920

jacob riis definition us history: McClure's Magazine , 1924

jacob riis definition us history: Wealth Against Commonwealth Henry Demarest Lloyd, 1894

jacob riis definition us history: The Significance of the Frontier in American History Frederick Jackson Turner, 2014-02-13 2014 Reprint of 1894 Edition. Full facsimile of the original edition. The Frontier Thesis or Turner Thesis, is the argument advanced by historian Frederick Jackson Turner in 1894 that American democracy was formed by the American Frontier. He stressed the process-the moving frontier line-and the impact it had on pioneers going through the process. He also stressed consequences of a ostensibly limitless frontier and that American democracy and egalitarianism were the principle results. In Turner's thesis the American frontier established liberty by releasing Americans from European mindsets and eroding old, dysfunctional customs. The frontier had no need for standing armies, established churches, aristocrats or nobles, nor for landed gentry who controlled most of the land and charged heavy rents. Frontier land was free for the taking. Turner first announced his thesis in a paper entitled The Significance of the Frontier in American History, delivered to the American Historical Association in 1893 in Chicago. He won very wide acclaim among historians and intellectuals. Turner's emphasis on the importance of the frontier in shaping American character influenced the interpretation found in thousands of scholarly histories. By the time Turner died in 1932, 60% of the leading history departments in the U.S. were teaching courses in frontier history along Turnerian lines.

jacob riis definition us history: The American Yawp Joseph L. Locke, Ben Wright, 2019-01-22 I too am not a bit tamed—I too am untranslatable / I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.—Walt Whitman, Song of Myself, Leaves of Grass The American Yawp is a free, online, collaboratively built American history textbook. Over 300 historians joined together to create the book they wanted for their own students—an accessible, synthetic narrative that reflects the best of recent historical scholarship and provides a jumping-off point for discussions in the U.S. history classroom and beyond. Long before Whitman and long after, Americans have sung something collectively amid the deafening roar of their many individual voices. The Yawp highlights the dynamism and conflict inherent in the history of the United States, while also looking for the common threads that help us make sense of the past. Without losing sight of politics and power, The American Yawp incorporates transnational perspectives, integrates diverse voices, recovers narratives of resistance, and explores the complex process of cultural creation. It looks for America in crowded slave cabins, bustling markets, congested tenements, and marbled halls. It navigates between maternity wards, prisons, streets, bars, and boardrooms. The fully peer-reviewed edition of The American Yawp will be available in two print volumes designed for the U.S. history survey. Volume I begins with the indigenous people who called the Americas home before chronicling the

collision of Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans. The American Yawp traces the development of colonial society in the context of the larger Atlantic World and investigates the origins and ruptures of slavery, the American Revolution, and the new nation's development and rebirth through the Civil War and Reconstruction. Rather than asserting a fixed narrative of American progress, The American Yawp gives students a starting point for asking their own questions about how the past informs the problems and opportunities that we confront today.

jacob riis definition us history: *Following the Color Line* Ray Stannard Baker, 1908

jacob riis definition us history: After the Fact James West Davidson, Mark H. Lytle, 1982 Under the historians eye, the puzzles of the past turn and reveal themselves. Here are good stories well told, displaying the essential fascination of scholarship in action and what it can accomplish.

jacob riis definition us history: *Children of the Tenements (Musaicum Christmas Specials)* Jacob A. Riis, 2020-12-17 Musaicum Books presents the Musaicum Christmas Specials. We have selected the greatest Christmas novels, short stories and fairy tales for this joyful and charming holiday season, for all those who want to keep the spirit of Christmas alive with a heartwarming tale. Children of the Tenements is a collection of stories and tales about orphans and poor children living in the slums of New York City. It provides an interesting insight into city life at the turn of the century and shows how the spirit of Christmas can make an impact even on the most unfortunate ones.

jacob riis definition us history: *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* Irvine Garland Penn, 1891

jacob riis definition us history: *Five Points* Tyler Anbinder, 2012-06-05 The very letters of the two words seem, as they are written, to redden with the blood-stains of unavenged crime. There is Murder in every syllable, and Want, Misery and Pestilence take startling form and crowd upon the imagination as the pen traces the words. So wrote a reporter about Five Points, the most infamous neighborhood in nineteenth-century America, the place where slumming was invented. All but forgotten today, Five Points was once renowned the world over. Its handful of streets in lower Manhattan featured America's most wretched poverty, shared by Irish, Jewish, German, Italian, Chinese, and African Americans. It was the scene of more riots, scams, saloons, brothels, and drunkenness than any other neighborhood in the new world. Yet it was also a font of creative energy, crammed full of cheap theaters and dance halls, prizefighters and machine politicians, and meeting halls for the political clubs that would come to dominate not just the city but an entire era in American politics. From Jacob Riis to Abraham Lincoln, Davy Crockett to Charles Dickens, Five Points both horrified and inspired everyone who saw it. The story that Anbinder tells is the classic tale of America's immigrant past, as successive waves of new arrivals fought for survival in a land that was as exciting as it was dangerous, as riotous as it was culturally rich. Tyler Anbinder offers the first-ever history of this now forgotten neighborhood, drawing on a wealth of research among letters and diaries, newspapers and bank records, police reports and archaeological digs. Beginning with the Irish potato-famine influx in the 1840s, and ending with the rise of Chinatown in the early twentieth century, he weaves unforgettable individual stories into a tapestry of tenements, work crews, leisure pursuits both licit and otherwise, and riots and political brawls that never seemed to let up. Although the intimate stories that fill Anbinder's narrative are heart-wrenching, they are perhaps not so shocking as they first appear. Almost all of us trace our roots to once humble stock. Five Points is, in short, a microcosm of America.

jacob riis definition us history: *The Decorated Tenement* Zachary J. Violette, 2019-04-30 Winner of the International Society of Place, Landscape, and Culture Fred B. Kniffen Award A reexamination of working-class architecture in late nineteenth-century urban America As the multifamily building type that often symbolized urban squalor, tenements are familiar but poorly understood, frequently recognized only in terms of the housing reform movement embraced by the American-born elite in the late nineteenth century. This book reexamines urban America's tenement buildings of this period, centering on the immigrant neighborhoods of New York and Boston. Zachary J. Violette focuses on what he calls the "decorated tenement," a wave of new buildings

constructed by immigrant builders and architects who remade the slum landscapes of the Lower East Side of Manhattan and the North and West Ends of Boston in the late nineteenth century. These buildings' highly ornamental facades became the target of predominantly upper-class and Anglo-Saxon housing reformers, who viewed the facades as garish wrappings that often hid what they assumed were exploitative and brutal living conditions. Drawing on research and fieldwork of more than three thousand extant tenement buildings, Violette uses ornament as an entry point to reconsider the role of tenement architects and builders (many of whom had deep roots in immigrant communities) in improving housing for the working poor. Utilizing specially commissioned contemporary photography, and many never-before-published historical images, *The Decorated Tenement* complicates monolithic notions of architectural taste and housing standards while broadening our understanding of the diversity of cultural and economic positions of those responsible for shaping American architecture and urban landscapes. Winner of the International Society of Place, Landscape, and Culture Fred B. Kniffen Award

jacob riis definition us history: *Creative Composites* Lauren Kroiz, 2012-09-06 "Creative Composites provides an intelligent, rigorous account of several under-examined figures who gathered around the photographer Alfred Stieglitz and played important roles in the first American avant-garde. Drawing on rich archival sources, Lauren Kroiz revisits the cultural debates of the period and constructs an intricate and convincing comparative analysis of the role that gender, race and ethnicity, and cultural nationalism played in the construction of American modernism. This important historical and interpretive text represents a much-needed contribution not only to the history of American art but also to American social and cultural history."—Marcia Brennan, author of *Curating Consciousness: Mysticism and the Modern Museum* "Describing the associations between immigrant critics and artists enmeshed in the New York art world in the early twentieth century, Kroiz skillfully demonstrates that American modernism reached beyond its European influences and was a deeply hybrid enterprise with multiple, global, and overlapping roots. Kroiz is sure-footed when seriously addressing works of art and marvelous at working through the issues around the ethnic identities of many of the key figures. Illuminating a crucial and oft-overlooked aspect of the history of American modernism—this peripatetic and shifting multiculturalism—*Creative Composites* is a timely, deeply researched text that highlights the wealth of mixed ancestry in our cultural heritage."—Jessica May, author of *American Modern: Documentary Photography by Abbott, Evans, and Bourke-White*

jacob riis definition us history: American Rebels Jack Newfield, 2004-01-05 *American Rebels* is an anthology of specially commissioned essays by leading American writers that attempt to reconcile authentic patriotism with original artistic creation, unpopular opinion, and real moral principles that don't change with the winds. It includes rebels in politics, education, journalism, religion, literature, film, sports, music, law, popular culture, and social struggle. These are real rebels against conformity, commercialism, racism, oligarchy, the bogus conventional wisdom, stacked decks, and sacred cows. The Americans celebrated don't fit under any one ideology or party. They are too free-spirited to be categorized, belonging to a continuum of conviction and creation in our tangled national history. Some, like Walt Whitman, Bob Dylan, Marlon Brando, and Frank Sinatra, are famous. Others are less well known but have earned a broad appreciation; among them are Sam Fuller, Paul O'Dwyer, and Mike Harrington. Still others like Edward Abbey, Benjamin Mays, and Bill Hicks are almost cult figures—revered by a small, intense following. Others have faded from memory, like Margaret Sanger and Clarence Darrow, and deserve a new shaft of sunlight. This groundbreaking collection includes original essays by Pete Hamill, Stanley Crouch, Budd Schulberg, Danny Goldberg, J. Hoberman, Patricia Bosworth, Tom Hayden, Steve Earle, and others.

jacob riis definition us history: Theodore Roosevelt: The Citizen Jacob August Riis, 2019-02-22 This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work was reproduced from the original artifact, and remains as true to the original work as possible. Therefore, you will see the original copyright references, library stamps (as most of these works have been housed in our most important libraries

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jacob riis definition us history: No Easy Walk Helen M. Stummer, 1994 A short drive from Newark's white suburbia is the desolation of the Central Ward. Drawn there initially to photograph the complexity she saw in the faces on the neighborhood children, Helen M. Stummer continued her work in the Central Ward for over a decade, focusing on one of the neighborhood's residents, Carol, and her family and neighbors. Following Carol's day-to-day life, Stummer documents with vivid photographs and compelling narrative the abysmal deterioration of this innercity neighborhood, its run-down buildings slated for demolition, the empty lots where children play amidst old tires, garbage, and broken glass. But *No Easy Walk* also celebrates Carol's hopes and struggles for a better life and her spirit of generosity and compassion. Carol, a single mother with little income and resources, is a critical link in her neighborhood's social network of survival, giving food to those who have none, passing along massages to neighbors without phone service, giving children clothes so that they can attend school. Though we see her getting worn down, we also see her return to school to earn her high school diploma (with honors), get engaged to be married, help her children with their homework, and care for her parents. Stummer was not only an observer but a pupil of the Central Ward, forced to learn the ways of survival during her visits. In stark contrast to the comfort and safety of her own suburban community, terror lurks in the Central Ward's dark and dilapidated hallways and in the foreboding presence of drug dealers, child molesters, and burglars. It is a neighborhood where residents battle against police harassment, the catch-22 of welfare restrictions, unsympathetic health care and school systems, and absentee landlords, where people desperate for housing must look at the nearby construction of malls and middle-class homes and realize it is clearly not meant for them. Author note: Helen M. Stummer is a New Jersey-based photographer whose work is included in the collections of the Museum of the City of New York, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Newark Museum. She is also an Adjunct Associate Professor of Photography and Photojournalism at the County College of Morris and a photography instructor at the New Jersey Center for the Visual Arts.

jacob riis definition us history: Defiant Images Darren Newbury, 2009 Photography is often believed to witness history or reflect society, but such perspectives fail to account for the complex ways in which photographs get made and seen, and the variety of motivations and social and political factors that shape the vision of the world that photographs provide. This book develops a critical historical method for engaging with photographers to try and understand how they viewed the work they were doing, and examines the place of photography in a post-apartheid era. Based on interviews with photographers, editors and curators, and through the analysis of photographs held in collections and displayed in museums, this research addresses the significance of photography in South Africa during the second half of the twentieth century--Cover

jacob riis definition us history: Muckraking Ellen F. Fitzpatrick, 1994-04-15 Printed together for the first time since their original publication in 1903, Ray Stannard Baker's piece on the coal strike, *The Right to Work*; Lincoln Steffens' exposé of political corruption, *The Shame of Minneapolis*; and Ida Tarbell's story of corporate villainy, *The Oil War of 1872*; along with an editorial from S. S. McClure and the narrative of Ellen Fitzpatrick, invite students to explore and understand muckraking.

jacob riis definition us history: The Essence of Jane Addams's Twenty Years at Hull House Hunter Lewis, 2012 *Axios's Essence of...* Series takes the greatest works of practical philosophy and pares them down to their essence. Selected passages flow together to create a

seamless work that will capture your interest from page one. Jane Addams was arguably the most influential woman in American history. Her mission as a public intellectual, social activist and reformer shines forth brightly in her inspiring and easy-to-read autobiography. In her time, she was as famous as a president.

jacob riis definition us history: *The Unconcerned Photographer* Charles Harbutt, 2020-07-31 Charles Harbutt (1935-2015) was a master photographer and educator. His clear, pointed words from a 1970 lecture- published here in its entirety for the first time-will resonate with and challenge audiences considering the medium today: Photography is not art. It is something totally new in human experience, something humans have not been able to do until the last century or so. Like flying. Or blowing up the whole world (I hope we survive our inventive little minds). The basic impulse of the photographer is diametrically opposed to the basic impulse of the artist, no matter what the artist's medium. The artist is trying to bring into existence something (even if only a concept) that never existed before. The photographer is trying to preserve, with the lens and especially the shutter, something in reality that will cease to exist in just that way in the next moment, or hour, or day.-Charles Harbutt

jacob riis definition us history: *Dignity* Chris Arnade, 2019-06-04 NATIONAL BESTSELLER A profound book.... It will break your heart but also leave you with hope. —J.D. Vance, author of *Hillbilly Elegy* [A] deeply empathetic book. —The Economist With stark photo essays and unforgettable true stories, Chris Arnade cuts through expert pontification on inequality, addiction, and poverty to allow those who have been left behind to define themselves on their own terms. After abandoning his Wall Street career, Chris Arnade decided to document poverty and addiction in the Bronx. He began interviewing, photographing, and becoming close friends with homeless addicts, and spent hours in drug dens and McDonald's. Then he started driving across America to see how the rest of the country compared. He found the same types of stories everywhere, across lines of race, ethnicity, religion, and geography. The people he got to know, from Alabama and California to Maine and Nevada, gave Arnade a new respect for the dignity and resilience of what he calls America's Back Row--those who lack the credentials and advantages of the so-called meritocratic upper class. The strivers in the Front Row, with their advanced degrees and upward mobility, see the Back Row's values as worthless. They scorn anyone who stays in a dying town or city as foolish, and mock anyone who clings to religion or tradition as naïve. As Takeesha, a woman in the Bronx, told Arnade, she wants to be seen she sees herself: a prostitute, a mother of six, and a child of God. This book is his attempt to help the rest of us truly see, hear, and respect millions of people who've been left behind.

jacob riis definition us history: *The Winning of the West* Theodore Roosevelt, 1896

jacob riis definition us history: *Bystander* Colin Westerbeck, Joel Meyerowitz, 2017-11-07 In this book, the authors explore and discuss the development of one of the most interesting and dynamic of photographic genres. Hailed as a landmark work when it was first published in 1994, *Bystander* is widely regarded by street photographers as the bible of street photography. It covers an incredible array of talent, from the unknowns of the late 19th century to the acknowledged masters of the 20th, such as Atget, Stieglitz, Strand, Cartier-Bresson, Brassai, Kertesz, Frank, Arbus, Winogrand, and Levitt to name just a few. In this new and fully revised edition, the story of street photography is brought up to date with a re-evaluation of some historical material, the inclusion of more contemporary photographers, and a discussion of the ongoing rise of digital photography.

jacob riis definition us history: *The Shame of the Cities* Lincoln Steffens, 1957-01-01

jacob riis definition us history: *AP U.S. History* Larry Krieger, 2009 AP U.S. History Crash Course Achieve a Higher AP Score in Less Time REA's Crash Course is perfect for the time-crunched student, last-minute studier, or anyone who wants a refresher on the subject! Are you crunched for time? Have you started studying for your AP U.S. History exam yet? How will you memorize all that history before the test? Do you wish there was a fast and easy way to study for the exam AND boost your score? If this sounds like you, don't panic. REA's AP U.S. History Crash Course is just what you need. Our Crash Course gives you: Targeted, Focused Review - Study Only What You Need to Know

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jacob riis definition us history: Books that Changed History Michael Collins, 2017-09-07 Featuring a foreword by James Naughtie. Turn the pages of the most famous books of all time and marvel at the stories behind them. Over 75 of the world's most celebrated, controversial, rare, and seminal books are examined and explained in this stunning treasury. Books That Changed History is a unique encyclopedia spanning the history of the written word, from 3000 BCE to the modern day. Chronological chapters show the evolution of human knowledge and the changing ways in which books are made. Discover incredible coverage of history's most influential books including the Mahabharata, Shakespeare's First Folio, The Diary of Anne Frank, and Penguin's first ever paperbacks. From Darwin's groundbreaking *On the Origin of Species* to Louis Braille's conception of the Braille system that we still use today, these are world famous books that have had the biggest impact on history, whether for good or bad. Every book is presented with breathtaking photography and fascinating biographies of those who created them. Books That Changed History gathers dictionaries, diaries, plays, poems, treaties, and religious texts into one stunning celebration of the undisputed power of books.

jacob riis definition us history: Street Life in London Adolphe Smith, John Thomson, 2014-11-01 *Street Life in London (1877-78)*, by journalist Adolphe Smith and photographer John Thomson, aimed to reveal by the innovative use of photography and essays the conditions of a life of poverty in London. Now regarded as a pioneering photo-text and a foundational work of socially conscious photography - one of the most significant and far-reaching photobooks in the medium's history (*The Photobook: A History*) - *Street Life in London* failed to achieve commercial success in its own time. In this groundbreaking book, we see the start, but not the conclusion, of a conversation between text and image in the service of education, reportage and social justice. This newly designed and typeset edition contains the full text and makes available to a contemporary audience Thomson's powerful images in their original size and rich colour.

jacob riis definition us history: 12 Million Black Voices Richard Wright, 2019-05-31 From dusty rural villages to northern ghettos, *12 Million Black Voices* is an unflinching portrayal of the lives that many black Americans lived in the 1930s. It is a testament to the strength of black communities throughout America.

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