

ANARCHISM AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY EMMA GOLDMAN

Presented by Egemen :)

06/05/2025 Tessellate Book Club Mainz

LIFE OF EMMA GOLDMAN

- Born June 27, 1869, into an Orthodox Jewish family in Kovno, Lithuania (then part of the Russian Empire).
- Abusive father + harsh authoritarian environment
->lifelong distaste for violent authority.
- Antisemitism, social discrimination, sexism and poverty
->understanding of oppression and injustice.



LIFE OF EMMA GOLDMAN

- Emigrated to the US in 1885, but "America had proved most disappointing."
- Witnessed the 1886 **Haymarket Affair** and execution of anarchists
- Moved to New York City and became part of anarchist circles

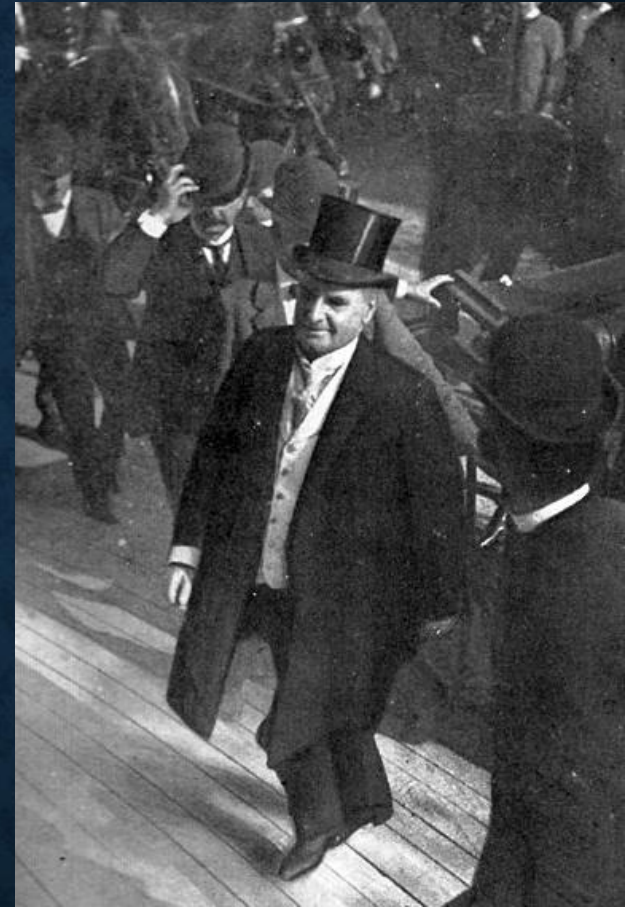


LIFE OF EMMA GOLDMAN

- In 1901 President William McKinley was assassinated by a self-proclaimed anarchist, Leon Czolgosz, who said he was inspired by one of Goldman's lectures.
- Goldman came to his defense: "As an anarchist, I am opposed to violence. But if the people want to do away with assassins, they must do away with the conditions which produce murderers."



Czolgosz in 1899



McKinley shortly before the shots were fired (Wikipedia)

LIFE OF EMMA GOLDMAN

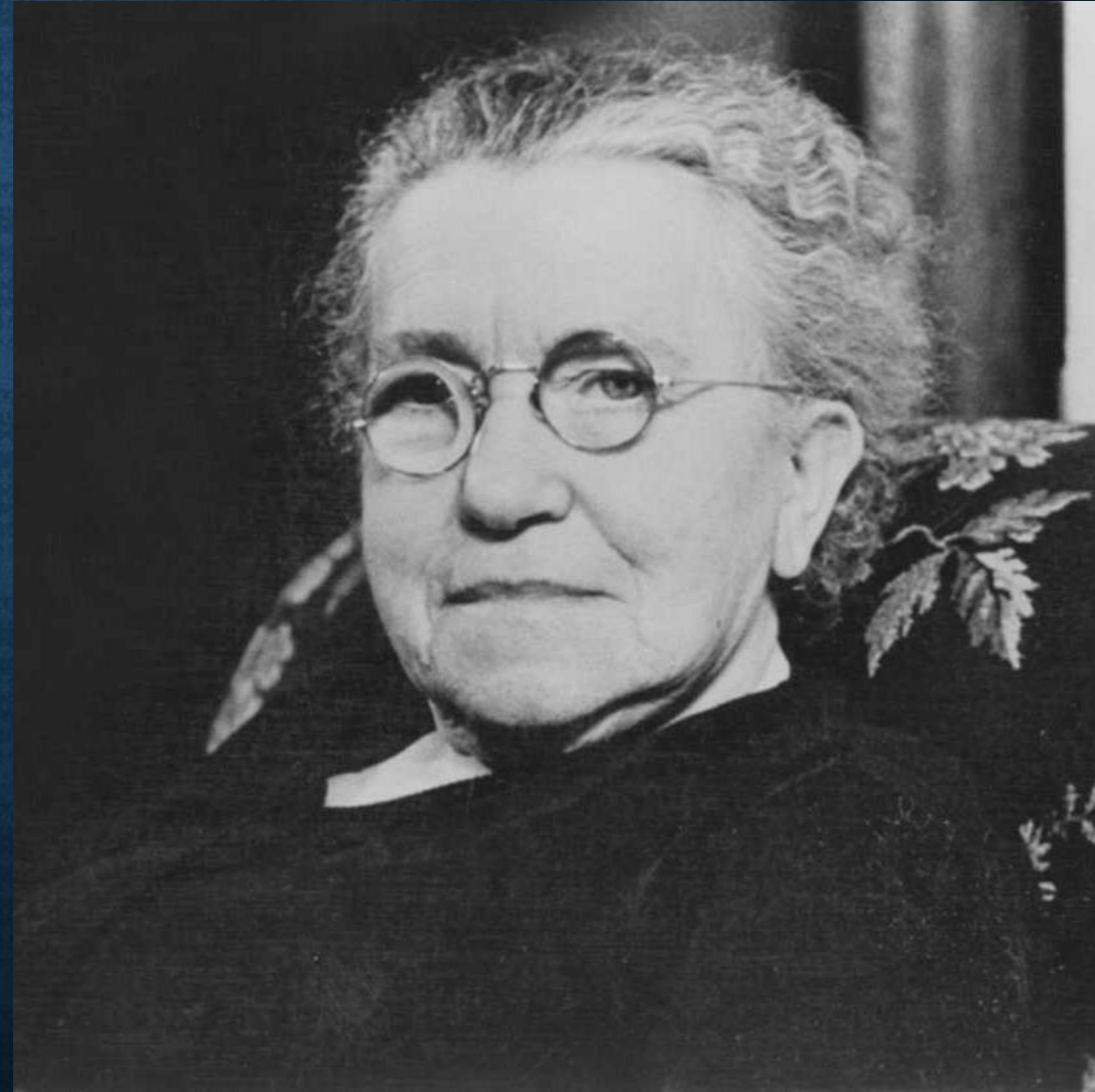
- Goldman embarked on a career of public speaking, quickly rising to national attention through her relentless cross-country lecture tours.
- Goldman was arrested multiple times for for **“inciting to riot”**, distributing birth control info, opposing WWI, etc.



Goldman, standing on a car speaks about birth control at Union Square - 1916

LIFE OF EMMA GOLDMAN

- 1919: Deported to Russia with Berkman during the “Red Scare” in the U.S.
- Disillusioned with the Bolsheviks after witnessing repression in post-revolutionary Russia
- Spent the rest of her life in **exile**, moving between countries (including Canada, England, Spain)
- Died in **1940** in Toronto; buried in Chicago near the Haymarket Martyrs



ANARCHISM: WHAT IT REALLY STANDS FOR

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graph TD; A([Two Objections to Anarchism]) --> B[Anarchism is impractical, though a beautiful idea]; A --> C[Anarchism stands for violence and dangerous];
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Two Objections
to Anarchism

Anarchism is
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ANARCHISM: WHAT IT REALLY STANDS FOR

“Anarchism stands for the liberation of the human mind from the dominion of religion; the liberation of the human body from the dominion of property; liberation from the shackles and restraint of government.”

MINORITIES VERSUS MAJORITIES

- ‘... the majority cannot reason ; it has no judgement. Lacking utterly in originality and moral courage, the majority has always placed its destiny in the hands of other. Incapable of standing responsibilities, it has followed its leaders even unto destruction.’
- ‘(The art protector of our time) is not concerned about the quality fo any great work but in the quantity of dollars his purchase implies.’
- ‘The most unpardonable sin in society is independence of thought.’,
- ‘(Roosevelt), a politican, he knows that the majority cares little for ideas and integrity. What it craves is display’

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

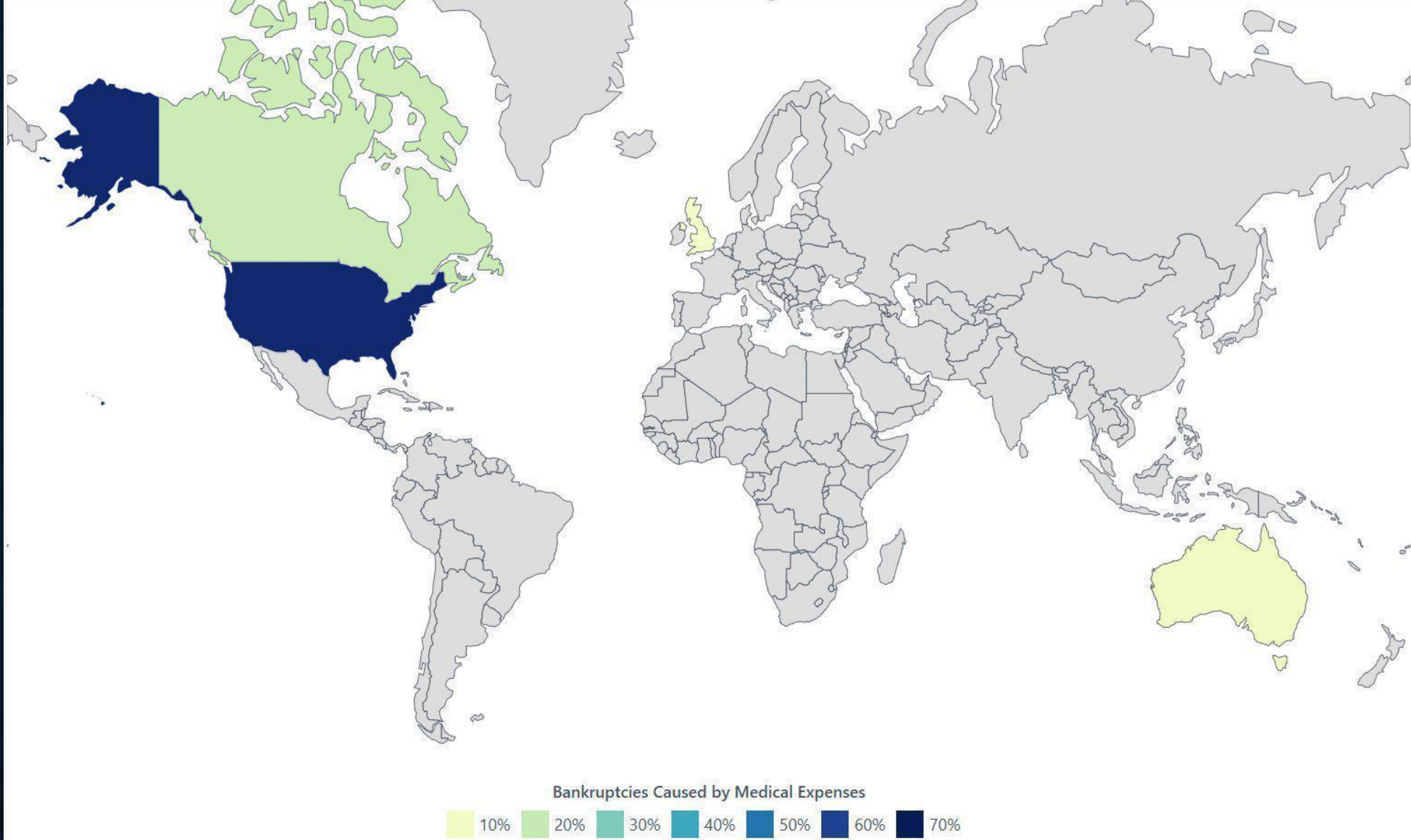
- ‘Yet it is only intelligence and sympathy that can bring us closer to the source of human suffering, and teach us the ultimate way out of it’
- Political violence is a reaction to systemic injustice, not inherent evil.
- ‘Are we to join the ignorant and brutal outcry which stigmatizes such men as monsters [...] running amuck in a harmonious and innocently peaceful society?’
- ‘The guilt of these homicides lies upon every man and woman who, intentionally or by cold indifference, helps to keep up social conditions that drive human beings to despair.’

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

- “Violence is the only weapon that oppression has left to the oppressed.”
- Compared with the wholesale violence of capital and government, political acts of violence are but a drop in the ocean



Luigi Mangione following his arrest on December 9, 2024 who has been identified as the suspect in the killing of Brian Thompson, the CEO of UnitedHealthcare.



worldpopulationreview.com

Medical Bankruptcies by Country 2024

Medical bankruptcies occur when consumers are forced to declare bankruptcy because of the cost of medical treatments. However, there is no single definition of a "medical bankruptcy."

PRISONS: A SOCIAL CRIME AND FAILURE

- Four types of crime

- -> The political
- -> The passional
- -> The insane
- -> The occasional

Cause

- >> Despotic government
- >> Man of honest life, wroughting justice
- >> 'Mentally same as an infant or animal'
- >> 'By far the largest class', driven by social and economic influences

PRISONS: A SOCIAL CRIME AND FAILURE

- ‘[...] (The majesty of law) is steeped in the theologic muddle, which proclaims punishment as a means of purification , or the vicarious atonement of sin.’
- ‘[...] the Gates of prison hells return [...] emaciated, deformed, will-less, ship-wrecked crew of humanity [...] with nothing but hunger and inhumanity to greet them, these victims soon sink back into crime as the only possibility of existence.’



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- ‘Nothing short of a complete reconstruction of society will deliver mankind from the cancer of crime.’

PATRIOTISM: A MENACE TO LIBERTY

- ‘When we have undermined the patriotic lie, we shall have cleared the path for that great structure wherein all nationalities shall be united into a universal brotherhood, --a truly free society.’



Trump supporters riot outside the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021 in Washington, DC. Photo by Brent Stirton/Getty Images



THE HYPOCRISY OF PURITANISM

- Pleasure, especially sexual pleasure is sinful
- People repress their desires -> double lives
- 'Morality' targets the working class, strong emphasis on community and social order

The painting "Desembarco de los Puritanos en America," or "The Arrival of the Pilgrims in America," by Antonio Gisbert shows Puritans landing in America in 1620.

By Antonio Gisbert (1834-1902) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN

- ‘What is really the cause of the trade in women? [...] Exploitation, of course; the merciless Moloch of capitalism that fattens on underpaid labor, thus driving thousands of women and girls into prostitution.’
- We must rise above our foolish notions of "better than thou," and learn to recognize in the prostitute a product of social conditions.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE



Women's suffrage: London demonstrators
Suffragettes holding signs in London, c. 1912.

George Grantham Bain Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (reproduction no. LC-DIG-ggbain-00111)

THE TRAGEDY OF WOMAN'S EMANCIPATION

- Pressure to prove worth by conforming to a male standard is not real liberation.
- “True emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in the courts. It begins in woman’s soul.”

THANKS FOR LISTENING :)