

FAME AND ANONYMITY:

Further Lectures in American Biography

The United States of America is history's greatest, most successful exemplar of the power of individualism. Over the past several hundred years, America's fertile cultural soil has nurtured an astonishing array of the talented and unique, the rogues and naves, the infamous and downright eccentric. Although household names in their own day, most have been consigned to the ashcan of anonymity.

These eight standalone lectures explore the lives and 'contributions' of eight such individuals who, once scaling the heights of fleeting fame, lapsed into the chasm of genteel obscurity.

Lectures (eight):

- 1. William d'Alton Mann (1839-1920):** A 'larger-than-life protean scoundrel' and America's first gossip columnist, Mann capped off an unbelievably colorful career by 'robbing the Robber Barons.'
- 2. Joseph Pulitzer (1847-1911):** The true father of "Yellow Journalism," and one of America's most brilliant eccentrics, Pulitzer built a state-of-the-art skyscraper for his New York-based newspaper empire, and only entered it twice.
- 3. Cora Crane (1868-1910):** Raised in a proper Boston family, Cora defied convention by doing whatever she pleased – from becoming a war correspondent to carrying on a public affair with writer Stephen Crane.
- 4. Ignatius Donnelly (1831-1901):** The "Apostle of Protest," Donnelly served in Congress, wrote best-selling novels, and turned the world's attention to the "Lost Continent of Atlantis." Indeed, he was America's answer to Nostrodamus.
- 5. Frances Marion (1888-1973):** Hollywood's most respected and successful screenwriter, Marion wrote starring vehicles for everyone from Mary Pickford and Lillian Gish to Wallace Berry and Spencer Tracy.
- 6. Emma Goldman (1869-1940):** The 'most dangerous woman in America,' "Red Emma" was jailed for conspiracy to assassinate President William McKinley, and then deported to Russia just in time to participate in the revolution.
- 7. Lewis Charles Levin (1808-1860):** The original "Know-Nothing," Levin's fiery political rhetoric caused riots wherever he went. Levin argued in favor of prayer in the public schools and against immigration in the 1840s.
- 8. Samuel Dickstein (1885-1954):** The "Father" of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, Dickstein was, in truth, on the payroll of the KGB. His Soviet handlers nicknamed him "Crook."