

Dissidence

1. **disagreement:** disagreement with authority or with prevailing opinion

A **dissident**, broadly defined, is a person who **actively** challenges an established doctrine, policy, or institution. Activist.

When dissidents unite for a common cause they often effect a **dissident movement**. They are Activist groups.

The noun was first used in the political sense in 1940, with the rise of such totalitarian systems as the Soviet Union.

Eastern bloc dissidents

See also: Soviet dissidents

The term *dissident* was used in the Eastern bloc, particularly in the Soviet Union, in the period following Joseph Stalin's death until the fall of communism.

It was attached to citizens who criticized the practices or the authority of the Communist Party.

The people who used to write and distribute non-censored, non-conformist samizdat literature were criticized in the official newspapers.

Soon, many of those who were dissatisfied with the Soviet Bloc began to self-identify as dissidents.

This "Self Identity" radically changed the meaning of the term: instead of being used in reference to an individual who **opposes society**, it came to refer to an individual whose non-conformism was perceived to be for **the good of a society**.

In other words this is a **positive form of deviance**.

An important element of dissident activity in Soviet Russia was informing society (both inside the Soviet Union and in foreign countries) about violation of laws and human rights: see [Chronicle of Current Events \(samizdat\)](#) and [Moscow Helsinki Group](#).

Republican dissidents in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

See also: [Dissident republican](#)

The term *dissident* has become the primary term to describe [Irish republicans](#) who politically continue to oppose [Good Friday Agreement of 1998](#) and reject the outcome of the [referendums](#) on it.

These political parties also have paramilitary wings which espouse violent methods to achieve a [United Ireland](#).

Irish republican dissident groups include the [Irish Republican Socialist Party](#) (founded in 1974 –

Its currently-inactive paramilitary wing is the [Irish National Liberation Army](#)),

[Republican Sinn Féin](#) (founded in 1986 – its paramilitary wing is the [Continuity IRA](#)),

And the [32 County Sovereignty Movement](#) (founded in 1997 – its paramilitary wing is the [Real IRA](#)).

In 2006 the [Óglaigh na hÉireann](#) emerged, which is a splinter group of the Continuity IRA.

In the **United States** there have been all kinds of Dissident Groups over time.

U.S. dissident groups

Examples:

Civil Rights Protesters

War Protesters

Feminist Protesters

Student Protesters

Black Panthers

Brown Berets

All of these groups were very progressive for their time and context.

Their efforts either insured or granted individuals more rights and liberties than were granted before their efforts for everyone.

At the time though they are considered deviant by the status quo and the political powers that exist, they often force the government to practice at home what it preaches internationally.

Their success has been predicated on large numbers and most often social organization of a coalition of smaller groups.

Grassroots groups have been some of the most powerful politically. These are often rooted in democratic principles and ideals.

They can be seen as "**whistle blowers**" by their opponents.

Dissidents are often disenfranchised groups that are for whatever reasons treated as "**second class**" citizens.

Violence can be seen by these groups as politics by other means.

Non-violent Political Dissidents have been successful as well.

Gandhi's non-violent civil dis-obedience is a classic example of non-violent dissidence.

The cruelty of the British Government was used against them and was made more pronounced by the Indians non-violent protest.

In Gandhi's movement for the independence of India from the British Empire this was an effective tactic.

To counter this kind of dissidence.

The dissident groups are often infiltrated by undercover police officers. These are often informant/agent provocateurs,

These undercover agents can incite violence, perform violent acts, and act as moles against these groups in order to give the appearance that they are not non-violent.

Their efforts are to stain the group's character in order to change public opinion.

Sometimes this works, and sometimes it does not.