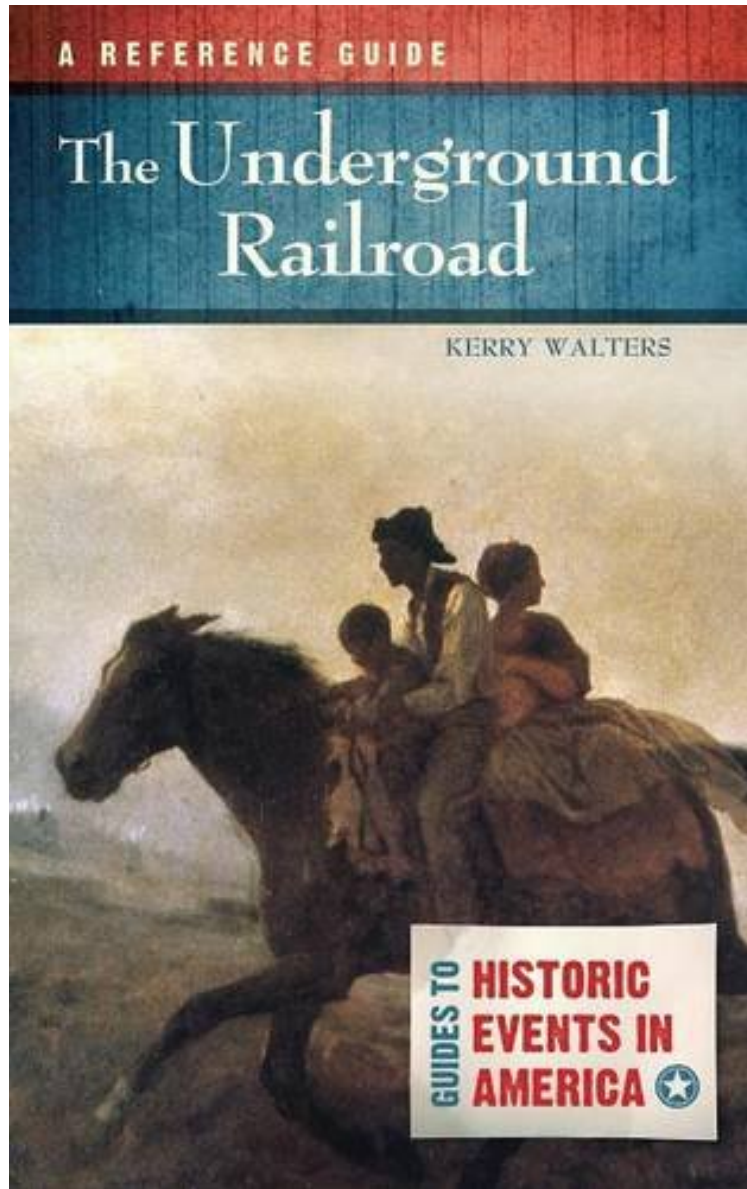


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## The Underground Railroad: A Reference Guide (Guides to Historic Events in America)

*Kerry Walters*

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**Kerry Walters : The Underground Railroad: A Reference Guide (Guides to Historic Events in America)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Underground Railroad: A Reference Guide (Guides to Historic Events in America):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent review, useful appendixes. By lyndonbrecht This is a brief but rather good consideration of the various routes, colluding persons and groups, and legend that falls under the heading of the Underground Railroad. It has an annotated bibliography that some readers may find useful. It includes appendixes of bios of significant actors, some documents (some legislation, some descriptions of former slaves about their escape). Walters estimates that in the several decades before the Civil War, maybe 30,000 slaves escaped, in total. This is an overview, not a detailed history. It is a highly readable book. Given students' allergies to history, I don't know if this book would work in the classroom, but it might, since it's a lively account. There are still a lot of dates, details and places, which might defeat a student.

Full of true stories more dramatic than any fiction, *The Underground Railroad: A Reference Guide* offers a fresh, revealing look at the efforts of hundreds of dedicated persons—white and black, men and women, from all walks of life—to help slave fugitives find freedom in the decades leading up to the Civil War. • Original documents, from key legislation like The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 to first-person narratives of escaping slaves • Biographical sketches of key figures involved in the Underground Railroad, including Levi Coffin, William Lloyd Garrison, Robert Purvis, and Mary Ann Shadd

From School Library Journal Gr 8 Up—A conversational tone makes this an engaging cover-to-cover read as well as a solid work for reference; it features gripping stories of fugitives and abolitionists within a factual overview. The time line ranges from 1619, when the first slaves arrived in Jamestown aboard a Dutch ship, to 1870, when the 15th amendment granted voting privileges to black men and the Underground Railroad was officially shut down. Beginning with a broad survey of slave resistance and revolt, Walters explains how abolitionists, clergy, and others felt that the "higher law" of justice, right, and freedom superseded unjust legislation, and this noble cause fueled support across a broad population. The Underground Railroad is described, not as a highly structured organization but as a functional system of coordinated efforts to move fugitives from one location to another. Primary-source excerpts inform readers that slaves became "packages," volunteers were "agents," and safe houses were referred to as "depots." Specific incidents, such as William "Jerry" Henry's capture in Syracuse, NY, where a mob of blacks and whites tore down the jailhouse door to free him, are fascinating and illustrate failed attempts to enforce the Fugitive Slave Law. Extensive notes, a chronology, an annotated bibliography, and primary-source material balance the narrative, and a general index points students to key people and events. A handful of captioned black-and-white maps and illustrations appears strategically throughout. The primary sources are the perfect length for supporting the use of informational text in Common Core Standards for both ELA and social studies. —Vicki Reutter, Cazenovia Jr. Sr. High School, NY (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. "As an explanatory text that describes the Underground Railroad, Walters does an excellent job, creating a flowing and well-written narrative. In reference aspects, it provides a basis for study." —ARBA "This is a moving and, at times, wrenching account of the trials and tribulations of slaves escaping along the Underground Railroad. . . . This book tells the history of this organization in a highly readable style by weaving personal narratives, contemporary newspaper articles, and various laws enacted to keep people in bondage before the civil war. . . . This book would enhance any American History collection." —Library Media Connection "Owing to the decades' worth of material analyzed here, this historical reference work will make a suitable guide and starting point for students and general readers alike. Secondary and other general collections should consider it for purchase." —Library Journal "This book, part of the Guides to Historic Events in America series, brings into perspective what the Underground Railroad did and how it operated. . . . Recommended for school and public libraries." —Booklist About the Author Kerry Walters is the William Bittinger Professor of Philosophy and professor of peace and justice studies at Gettysburg College, PA. Walters is the author or editor of over 20 books, including *Benjamin Franklin and His Gods*, *Revolutionary Deists: Early America's Rational Infidels*, and a critical edition of Thomas Paine's *The Age of Reason*.