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Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution

Edited by Andrew Boyd
An invaluable trove of resources for organizers, exploring the tactics, principles, and theories of change that can help movements win

Direct Action: Protest and the Reinvention of American Radicalism

By L.A. Kauffman
How progressive movements of the last 40 years have used nonviolent direct action to win real victories in times of crisis and backlash

Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds

By adrienne maree brown
A poetic and upbeat work that weaves spirituality, speculative fiction, and political analysis into a vision of personal and collective transformation

Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities

By Rebecca Solnit
A beautiful and inspiring exploration of how much movements and activism can achieve in even the most difficult times

How We Win: A Guide to Nonviolent Direct Action Campaigning

By George Lakey
One of the country's most seasoned nonviolent strategists offers a wealth of insights on how to organize most effectively for justice, peace, and a sustainable economy

Indivisible on Offense: A Practical Guide to the New, Democratic House

By Indivisible Project
A clear and pragmatic roadmap to the new political openings available to progressives in 2019 now that Democrats control the House, and how to leverage grassroots power to have the maximum impact on Congress

The Marginalized Majority: Claiming Our Power in a Post-Truth America

By Onnesha Roychoudhuri
An inspiring call to recognize the power of our plural identities and leverage our majority status for progressive change

Resistance Guide: How to Sustain the Movement to Win

By Paul Engler and Sophie Lasoff
An insightful handbook, filled with practical advice, for visionary movement organizing in the Trump era

This Is an Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt Is Shaping the Twenty-First Century

By Mark Engler and Paul Engler
The core principles that have enabled protest movements around the world to reframe public debate and force progressive change

Unapologetic: A Black, Queer, and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements

By Charlene A. Carruthers
A powerful guide to effective organizing for collective liberation rooted in feminism, LGBTQ activism, and the Black radical tradition

War Resisters League Organizer's Manual

Edited by Ed Hedemann
A classic organizing resource, dating from 1981, with much wisdom and practical advice to offer contemporary activists

Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict

By Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan
An illuminating scholarly exploration of how, why, and when nonviolent resistance movements have managed to topple authoritarian regimes around the globe

BYE-BYE 45 ACTION GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

by L.A. Kauffman

We have the power to bring Trump down.

You might not feel this in your bones, but the resistance to Trump has already accomplished an extraordinary amount. More people have taken part in protests since Trump took office than at any other period in U.S. history, even the height of the Vietnam antiwar movement. Between 14 and 22 million Americans marched in the streets in the year and a half after the inauguration, and millions more have risen up in other ways: speaking out, flooding their representatives with phone calls and postcards, mobilizing voters, and much more.

During Trump's two years in office, all of this protest and organizing provided a formidable counterweight to the administration's actions: defeating some key initiatives like Obamacare repeal, slowing the rollout of further repressive measures, and creating crucial noise and friction around those fights, like Kavanaugh, that we could not win. It energized bold progressive leaders to stand up, and helped mobilize huge numbers of volunteers to flip the House and many other races.

But we know that's not enough; the stakes are too high. Two years into Trump's presidency, with Democrats now controlling the House thanks to extraordinary hustle from the grassroots, how do we not just resist Trump and Trumpism but actually defeat them, building the future we want? How do we bring Trump down?

Bringing him down can of course mean many things. Most modestly, it can mean blunting his policy initiatives, tying his hands, obstructing his policies. More ambitiously, it can mean forcing him from office — whether that takes the form of resignation under pressure, impeachment and conviction, removal under the 25th Amendment, or defeat at the ballot box in 2020.

These paths to removing Trump complement each other: pushing for impeachment, say, can undermine the aura of legitimacy that enables Trump to move his policies through Congress, even if

we're unlikely to muster the two-thirds Senate vote that would be required to convict. We can't know now which mechanism will best undermine this authoritarian presidency, and we don't need to: For the grassroots resistance, the key task is to keep building the pressure that makes all of these scenarios more likely — and to do so in the most targeted and strategic ways possible.

Fortunately, there is a powerful body of collective wisdom we can turn to for guidance. Movements of the past offer concrete lessons and inspiration for moments like this one. Time and again, against long odds, popular movements around the world have dislodged dictators, overturned authoritarian policies, and advanced progressive goals. The people most affected by injustice have created powerful roadmaps to action. This action guide highlights a range of key insights gained from these movements and, where relevant, updates them.

The lessons are powerful but straightforward. Target institutions and leaders who support Trump — not Trump himself. Turn the political heat way up on leaders who say they oppose Trump but who in fact collude in treating him as a normal, legitimate president. Take leadership from those who are most affected by the injustices we're fighting. Put forward a bold vision of what we want, not just what we oppose. Mobilize our side, and bring more people over to it, rather than trying to persuade Trump's most diehard base. Look for ways to withdraw consent and cooperation, or to pressure those in power to withhold theirs.

Use all the tools in the activist toolbox. Be creative. Find joy and humor in the fight — we're most powerful when we build movements that sustain rather than deplete us. Hold on to a sense of our collective might, and remember what we've accomplished so far, but don't rest on any laurels: Now is the time to dream big — and act boldly.

TO WEAKEN TRUMP, TARGET HIS ENABLERS

by L.A. Kauffman

Here's a paradox: The best way to bring down Trump may be to not focus political energy on him.

Imagine the Trump presidency as a temple — say, in the style of the Greek Parthenon but with the tackiness of Ancient Rome at its most vulgar and corrupt. If you want to bring it down, you don't go pounding at the roof, just as you don't hammer on a tabletop to collapse a table. Instead, you weaken or remove the pillars that support it and hold it up.

All governments rely on the consent of the governed. They also rely on a huge array of people and institutions to confer legitimacy upon them and cooperate with them in ways large and small. When the leader or the government is corrupt, unfit, or came to power through questionable and undemocratic means, this everyday cooperation takes on the sinister character of collusion.

That is the most striking fact about Trump: From the time he first hit the campaign trail, his rise to power has been possible only because of enablers who treat him as a legitimate public figure or otherwise cooperate with his presidency. Nearly every member of the Republican Party has been complicit in Trump's reign — but so have a great many

Democrats, either tacitly or openly, as when Senator Chuck Schumer cooperated in fast-tracking Trump's judicial nominees. Twitter has allowed Trump to continue to use their platform despite repeatedly violating their terms of service; over and over again, major news media have repeated his lies without naming them as such and given outsized airtime to Trump's every utterance.

Scholars of authoritarianism, like Harvard political scientists Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, authors of the book *How Democracies Die*, underscore the crucial role of gatekeepers in either advancing or resisting autocratic rulers and rule. But the scholars have little to say about how to respond when gatekeepers abdicate that role, and when the normal checks and balances of our political system no longer function as they should.

That's of course where grassroots movements and nonviolent civil resistance come in: We have the potential to be the crucial check on a system that's dangerously out of balance.

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ACT LIKE THE MAJORITY WE ALREADY ARE

by Onnesha Roychoudhuri

Ever since the 2016 presidential elections, we've been served a million versions of what amounts to the same tired story. Whether it's woven through the pages of the New York Times or written in all-caps on the Facebook page of your self-appointed-pundit uncle, it's usually goes something like this: We've never been more divided. We need to reach across the aisle, "look past" our identities or differences — even if it's to hold hands with avowed bigots — if we're ever going to move forward.

Another story that's always on tap? That we're screwed. We can protest all we want, but our system is so corrupt that there's really no point.

At their core, these narratives are both pretty dang cynical. Also? They don't make a whole lot of sense. (Before we go on, a quick reminder that the majority of Americans did not vote for Donald Trump.) In reality, Americans are shifting left on issues such as equal pay, gay marriage, single-payer health insurance, and affordable (or free) access to education. In other words, we're far more aligned on issues that affect our daily lives than the daily news cycle may lead us to believe.

But what about the white working class? We've been told we can't win unless we reach out to this monolithic entity and stop "playing identity politics." Well, it turns out that the majority of the working class are actually people of color. (Also, can we stop talking about the white working class as though they're a single movement of pitchfork-wielding, MAGA-hat-wearing bigots? It just ain't true.)

There's some basic math we need to reckon with here. The percentage of Americans who are straight white men — the historical flavor of choice for those who wield power in this country — amounts to fewer than 30 percent of Americans. That means the marginalized Americans among us — the queer folk, the black and brown, the immigrants, the women — are indisputably the majority. Throw in our white male progressive allies and we're talking about a supermajority. If we want to win, we don't need to "reach across the aisle" so much as reach out to our prospective allies to ensure they recognize our shared interests, and the power we have as a movement.

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It's not a bad thing to protest Trump himself — it's useful to counter his lies and to have high-visibility displays of opposition to his abuses. But if we fail to pull away the sources of his support, we could protest Trump until we're blue in the face without ever bringing him down.

Targeting Trump's enablers entails putting pressure on Democrats as much as — or in some cases more than — Republicans. Democrats are generally more susceptible to progressive pressure than Republicans, because progressives are a part of their voting base. And Democrats have considerably more power to impede Trump's actions than they've been willing to employ. Now that Democrats control the House, they have the power to hold hearings and conduct investigations that shine a spotlight on Trump's corruption and duplicity. They also can pursue impeachment. While Democrats don't have a majority in the Senate, they have a variety of means they could use there to slow or thwart Trump's agenda — they could withdraw cooperation by, say, refusing to show up and

thus denying a quorum, by filibustering, or by using other procedural maneuvers to gum up the works. This strategy also means looking outside government to the institutions and entities that are helping Trump stay in power. Twitter, for instance — just imagine how much weaker Trump would be if he were banned from the platform for violating their terms of service, as he's done many, many times. What about a sustained campaign to make that happen? Twitter has offices in Atlanta, Boston, Boulder, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle — all excellent targets for protest and pressure.

Many groups and individuals in the resistance have already been following some version of this strategy, and doing so with persistence and skill. To dream big and push for what we really want — Trump out of office, and robust progressive alternatives — we'll need not only to continue this work but to escalate the pressure: creatively, nonviolently, and in the words of the direct-action group Rise and Resist, "with all the joy we can muster."

FOCUS ON THE PILLARS OF SUPPORT

by Otpor!

The strategy of focusing on the pillars of support that hold up an authoritarian regime was first fully articulated by Otpor!, a grassroots civic association whose skillful organizing drove Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic from office in 2000. This excerpt from the group's action guide outlines the analysis and vision that shaped their organizing and helped them win.

Define pillars of support

By themselves, rulers cannot collect taxes, enforce repressive laws and regulations, keep trains running on time, prepare national budgets, direct traffic, manage ports, print money, repair roads, train the police and army, issue postage stamps or even milk a cow. People provide these services to the ruler through a variety of organizations and institutions. If people stop providing these skills and services, the ruler cannot rule.

Once we understand that this is the nature of political power in society, we must understand how power is exercised. The people are the main holders of power in society, but they are much more effective at exercising that power when they work together in the form of organizations or institutions, such as the police, civil servants, labor groups, business groups, etc. Some of these organizations may support your opponent and others may support your movement.

We call these supporting organizations pillars of support because they support the power structure in society. At the beginning of a nonviolent struggle, it is likely that many of these organizations provide support to your opponent. If these organizations and institutions begin to withdraw their support from your opponent (and some may even start actively supporting your movement), your opponent will no longer be able to maintain control.

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POLARIZE THROUGH PROTEST

By Paul Engler and Sophie Lasoff

Protesting often creates political polarization — and that's a good thing, say Paul Engler and Sophie Lasoff, the authors of Resistance Guide: How to Sustain the Movement to Win, a 2017 action manual they produced in collaboration with Momentum, a training institute and movement incubator. Movements are often criticized as being too divisive or too impolite, but forcing people to take a side is typically how they win.

For social movements, protest is the most effective means of polarizing an issue. Research shows that perceptions of protest as violent or destructive of property tend to discourage participation and make a movement less effective. Confrontation, however, is not the same as violence. Confrontational tactics can draw people to a cause, even when the protesters are criticized as too abrasive.

You wouldn't always know it. The message that protest doesn't work is deeply ingrained in our political and popular culture. Anyone who tries to join a demonstration will hear the same refrain: No one is listening to you. No one cares. You're just preaching to the choir. You're too disruptive. You're too angry. You're making a lot of noise and accomplishing nothing.

This message is wrong. Dangerously wrong. In recent decades, scholars have pushed back against the monolithic myth with numerous accounts of how protests changed public opinion, shaped policy, and altered the course of history. There's even quantitative evidence: A study by Daniel Gillion at the University of Pennsylvania analyzed civil rights legislation from the 1960s through the 1990s and found that every 10 protests in a representative's district made that representative one percent more likely to vote in favor of civil rights issues—a minor but nonetheless demonstrable effect on legislative progress.

Our society is adept at shutting out the voices of ordinary people. Corporations spend millions on advertising. Celebrities dominate airtime. Wealthy constituents have the attention of elected officials. In a democracy, protest is the most effective way to seize the microphone in the absence of either money or fame.

Protests capture the attention of the media and the broader public. They shine a spotlight on issues that those in power would otherwise ignore. And after heightening awareness, protests force people to take a position. Protest asks, "Which side are you on?"

Even though confrontational tactics may cause discomfort, they force people to make a choice, to view an issue in terms of right and wrong.

Martin Luther King Jr. presented a powerful explanation of this process in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail." Responding to criticism of disruptive protests that had culminated in violence, King wrote, "We who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out into the open, where it can be seen and dealt with."

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WIN THROUGH CAMPAIGNS, NOT ACTIONS

By L.A. Kauffman

Movements almost never win what they're seeking through individual protests. When they win, they do so through sustained campaigns of targeted pressure, made of many different actions.

It's easy to lose this perspective when your movement is on the defensive and responding to events as they arise, which was how many of us staggered through the early part of Trump's presidency. When bad things happen at a fast and furious pace, mobilizing a crisis response is a worthy thing to do, and sometimes the best that you can. You register opposition to the horrors, in the hope that doing so will hold off some of the damage.

But we now have new political openings. Thanks to the extraordinary grassroots hustle that swayed so many races in the midterm elections, we can think bigger. Now is a perfect time to step back and consider how our movements can go beyond pop-up protests that simply voice disagreement into sustained campaigns of pressure designed to isolate, weaken, and ultimately defeat the Trump administration.

Campaigns of direct action and civil resistance have a logic different from that of electoral campaigns. As Dr. Martin Luther King famously put it in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," nonviolent direct action seeks to create a crisis for those in power, placing them in a position where they are forced to negotiate or concede.

A single protest, no matter how large, almost never has that kind of effect. To create a crisis for an obstinate opponent, you have to impart a sense of mounting pressure. You do that through sustained action and planned escalation.

Show up outside Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer's office once with a crowd of several hundred demonstrators to demand that he stop cooperating with Trump, and he'll notice, but he can shrug it off. Organize a series of protests, and he'll find them less easy to dismiss or downplay. Design them to get larger and larger, and you'll start really getting his attention. Add in stronger tactics of nonviolent direct action — maybe a small blockade of his office door one week, followed by a larger blockade the following week, followed by a small office sit-in, followed by a larger office sit-in — and you become a problem he can't ignore.

Thinking through a campaign plan will change how you design each action. If you're planning a protest as a one-off event, you'll almost certainly be trying to make it as big and as strong as possible. You'll throw everything into it and call in all your supporters, hoping for a big turnout and a huge splash.

If instead you're thinking about each action as a step in a sustained pressure campaign, you'll approach things differently. You might purposely start with something small, so that you can

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PUT FORWARD A TRANSFORMATIVE VISION

by George Lakey

George Lakey has been active in direct action campaigns for six decades and co-authored the most influential movement strategy guide of the civil rights era. In this excerpt from his 2018 book, *How We Win: A Guide to Nonviolent Direct Action Campaigning*, he explains why it's so important for movements to have a bold and inspiring vision for transformation, even -- or especially -- as they fight to respond to current injustice.

Come and go with me to that land,
Come and go with me to that land,
Come and go with me to that land, where I'm bound.

This is the chorus of one of the great old black spirituals expressing a deep need of human beings: to move toward the light, rather than simply flee the darkness. We won't get mass movements that can sustain the struggle for major change in the United States until we align ourselves with the human need to know where we're going.

The feminist activist and author Grace Lee Boggs put it this way:

People are aware that they cannot continue in the same old way but are immobilized because they cannot imagine an alternative. We need a vision that recognizes that we are at one of the great turning points in human history when the survival of the planet and the restoration of our humanity require a great sea change in our ecological, economic, political, and spiritual values.

U.S. political culture has become vision-averse in recent decades, a trend that accompanied the decline of the left since the 1980s. The decline of vision on the left was one reason most movements had trouble retaining the mass support they'd earned previously.

Activists said, "Come and go with us because we are protesting this or that injustice."

If a bystander asked, "But where are you going?" the bystander would have gotten no answer. Movements lost sight of the land to which they were bound. Activists thought if they simply described vividly enough how terrible climate change is, or how unjust racism or sexism or

poverty is, masses of people would reorder their priorities and join them. That's not the way it works.

Join me in a thought experiment: if we were walking along on the sidewalk and a vanload of strangers stopped on the road alongside us and rolled down the windows, and someone inside asked if we'd like a ride, we might be interested. Chances are, though, we'd ask, "Where are you going?"

Most of us would decline the offer. A random van might be going anywhere. Most of us do like to choose our destinations.

A vision is not the same as a blueprint. It's a model that evolves as more people join and offer creative input, although the principles are clear.

The fully developed vision includes rigorous backup for the policy wonks in the room, but it is presented in its most common sense version so people can see and feel what it will be like to have, for example, an economy that puts them first instead of profits.

Vision builds credibility. This is a cynical, fearful, and despairing age. People know it's easy to praise some values, then rush on to condemn this or that — politicians use that formula all the time.

In 2016 Pennsylvania went, barely, for Donald Trump after a poll found that 72 percent of voters believe "old ways don't work and it's time for radical change." An independent movement can go farther and offer much more credibility than a real-estate billionaire. Are we willing to envision what the radical change that 72 percent of voters wanted would look like?

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This is the response to offer those who say that protest is too disruptive. Protest polarizes, and successful polarization moves people from neutral to taking a stand.

Not Everyone Has to Like Us

We don't need to change the minds of angry Trump supporters to win. We don't need everyone to like our movement or approve of our tactics. A large majority of the public opposed the Tea Party, yet they captured the agenda of the Republican Party. The civil rights movement achieved huge legislative victories because the public came to support the need for concerted action on civil rights even as they disapproved of the movement's tactics.

Research shows that even tactics the public dislikes can increase support for an issue. Even a movement that is seen as unpopular can continue winning people to its cause. Public opinion never gave wide support to the Occupy movement — approval of the Occupy encampments often polled lower than it did for the Tea Party. Yet through Occupy, public concern over inequality grew.

Of course, this does not mean that we should be purposefully alienating. There is a fine line between protests to move people towards our side and alienating potential supporters. Protests that are disruptive or dramatize an issue should still appeal to common sense values.

SHIFT THE SPECTRUM OF ALLIES

by Joshua Kahn Russell

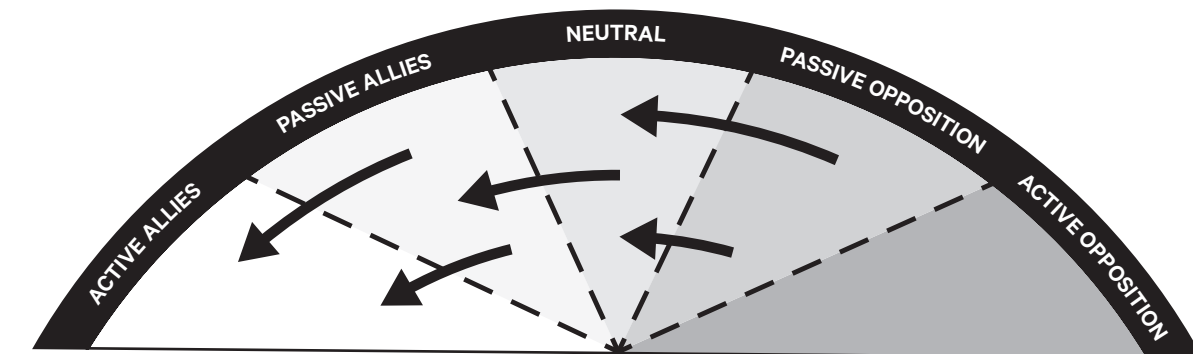
After the 2016 elections, media rushed to figure out why working-class white people voted for Trump. The implication, stated or unstated, was that progressives and Democrats should focus on trying to understand and convert these Trump stalwarts. If we want Trump out of office, how do we shrink his base, and build ours?

According to many savvy strategists, the way to do that is not by trying to convert Trump voters. It's by building on the support we already have — and shifting people who are neutral closer to our side. There may be some Trump voters who can be reached through dialogue, and there's certainly value in those exchanges for those who are willing to engage in them. But from a strategic point of view, that's not a good use of progressive energy.

This excerpt from the 2012 action guide, *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution*, assembled by Andrew Boyd, advocates a very different organizing and mobilizing strategy. In it, Joshua Kahn Russell urges us to analyze who our real bases of potential

support are, and design our organizing to draw them closer to us. Activating the large pool of passive allies, and persuading those who are neutral or undecided to stand with us, is a far more effective way to focus our work than arguing with the MAGA crowd.

This is the strategy that progressives used to such powerful effect in mobilizing for the 2018 midterm elections, but it applies to contexts beyond electoral work. An emphasis on rallying and expanding our base can help movements and organizers break out of a defensive posture. It calls on us to lead with strong vision rather than watering down our ideals to meet some mythical middle.



Spectrum of Allies

Excerpted from *Beautiful Trouble*:

Activists are often good at analyzing system social problems, but less good at thinking systematically about organizing.

Activism is about using your power and voice to make change. Organizing is about that, too, but it's also about activating and empowering others. It helps to think in terms of groups. Successful movement-building hinges on being able to see a society in terms of specific blocs or networks, some of which are institutions (unions, churches, schools), others of which are less visible or cohesive, like youth subcultures or demographic groupings.

Analyzing your spectrum of allies can help you to identify and mobilize the networks around you. A spectrum-of-allies analysis can be used to map out a campaign or to strategize for a whole social movement.

Here's how a spectrum-of-allies analysis works. In each wedge you can place different individuals (be specific: name them!), groups, or institutions. Moving from left to right, identify your active allies: people who agree with you and are fighting alongside you; your passive allies: folks who agree with you but aren't doing anything about it; neutrals: fence-sitters, the unengaged; passive opposition: people who disagree with you but aren't trying to stop you; and finally your active opposition.

Some activist groups only speak or work with those in the first wedge (active allies), building insular, self-referential, marginal subcultures that are incomprehensible to everyone else. Others behave as if everyone is in the last wedge (active opposition), playing out the "story of the righteous few," acting as if the whole world is against them. Both of these approaches virtually guarantee failure. Movements win not by overpowering their active opposition, but by shifting the support out from under them.

**REMEMEMBER
THE FUTURE**

Artwork courtesy of We Will Not Be Silent

PSA: LISTEN TO & FOLLOW THOSE MOST AFFECTED BY INJUSTICE

by Onnesha Roychoudhuri

The good news is that everyone and their great aunt Sally has been flooding the streets, occupying Congressional offices, getting out the vote, and generally throwing their hats into the ring since an unnaturally hued reality TV show host took office.

The ranks of the resistance have swelled with many who are new to taking political action. Welcome aboard! And while we're all glad you're here, we need to touch base about something vital: In order to build a sustainable and unstoppable movement for true justice and equity, WE MUST LISTEN TO AND FOLLOW THOSE MOST AFFECTED BY INJUSTICE.

What does that mean? Well, if seeing immigrants being rounded up and caged — children torn from their families — makes your blood boil, you're not alone. Immigrants were facing unjust detentions and deportations well before Trump took office, and people have been fighting to defend their rights. A number of badass immigration rights groups have been on those front lines for years — from DREAMers and RAICES to the ACLU — and you'll want to draw on their expertise and follow their leadership when joining the fight.

Or maybe the increasing visibility of police violence against black Americans has you wanting to take action? Black Lives Matter, the NAACP, Black Youth Project 100, and more have been raising awareness, protesting, and changing the conversation for many years. They have well-developed strategies for moving forward.

All this is to say: There's no need to reinvent the wheel. Before you charge ahead with good intentions, just take a minute (or 10) to do your research. Most of the core issues we've seen echoing throughout headlines these past few years — disenfranchisement, misogyny, racism, corruption — are institutional. You're not the first person to get righteously pissed off about them. That's good news, because smart, energetic people are already doing their best to fight these battles. And they need more of us on board.

This isn't to say that those already fighting the good fight have all the answers or that there isn't room for new initiatives, leadership, and vision. But what it does mean is that if you're going to act in solidarity, you first need to learn from them and get up to speed. This organizing rule of thumb holds no matter who you are: Even if you're directly affected by some forms of injustice, there are areas where you may not have the firsthand knowledge and experience that comes with, say, being queer in a heterosexist society, or disabled in a world filled with barriers to access. We all have a different array of privileges that affect what it's like to move through the world and what opportunities are (or aren't) available to us. Many of us aren't even aware of our privileges. We need to be ready to learn.

Our job as allies is to act, but first, and most importantly of all, it's to listen. We need to ensure we're putting those most affected at the center—those who have been in the trenches, those who understand the stakes. They know what needs to be done and how to do it. When you step up, bring your righteous fury and your open ears.

Win Through Campaigns, Not Actions | continued from p5

begin to create a sense of surge with the support you already have. Maybe you design your first protest so it's only 50 people instead of the several hundred you know you can mobilize; that way you can easily organize a larger follow-up action and convey a sense of growing impatience around your demands. Maybe you choose a very mild tactic at the beginning, like a silent vigil (or a series of ever-larger silent vigils), and only then follow up with something a little stronger like a picket line. If there are 50 people in your group who are willing to risk arrest in a nonviolent direct action, maybe you only deploy 15 of them for the first blockade, and save 35 for the next one.

When you're thinking about ways to plan escalation, be creative. Sometimes you can do it through increasing your numbers; other times, it's by switching tactics or tone. A picket line with a brass band in the mix, for instance, will be more forceful than one that's just a group of protesters. And sometimes you can build pressure through sheer endurance, by relentlessly using the same tactic over and over again.

You will want to think, at every step of your campaign, about how to involve more people. In this era of digital organizing, groups often forget the power of paper: It's important to have something to hand out at every action that tells bystanders who you are and how they can join the effort. Give them clear information on how to connect with your group, as well as a concrete action step they can take right away, like making a phone call to the target of your protest to voice their support. If one or more of your actions generates a lot of attention, consider following up by organizing a well-publicized special meeting for new recruits and plugging them into your group's work.

Thinking in terms of sustained campaigns rather than isolated actions will also help you avoid a common activist pitfall: building your movement's identity around a tactic (like occupying), or seeing a tactic as a principle rather than a tool. Some groups will completely reject mild tactics like letter-writing or phone calls to the Congressional representatives because they see them as intrinsically weak, rather than considering where they might fit in to an unfolding series of actions. Nonviolent civil disobedience tactics can be extremely powerful, but don't use them prematurely or to the exclusion of other tactics just because they seem badass. Think carefully about when and where they'll have the greatest strategic impact, and help generate the crisis that can enable you to win.

FIND YOUR PLACE IN THE MOVEMENT

by L.A. Kauffman

What's the best way to get involved in the movement to resist — and, ideally, dislodge — the rogue administration in the White House? The answer is really up to you.

For starters, it helps to recognize that this movement isn't really a single movement at all. It's a complex network of many different movements, organizations, small groups, and individuals. Some focus on specific issues, like immigrant rights, racial justice, or gun control; others define their work through a strategic approach, like direct action or Congressional advocacy; others have a broad agenda defined by the needs of their local community.

While it might seem simpler or more straightforward if there were a single organization or set of leaders at the helm of the resistance, the sprawling character of our movements is actually a serious strength: It allows for many forms of leadership, gives political space for many perspectives, and provides an incredible array of possibilities for action.

It also translates into many points of entry — opportunities to get involved and make an impact — if you know how to find them.

First and most importantly, decide how involved you want to be and what kind of activism fits your interests, skills, and available time. Are you most motivated to work on a particular issue or issue area, like reproductive rights or climate change, or are you most interested in connecting with people in your community? Do you want to volunteer to take on specific tasks, like phone-banking, or are you interested in playing a bigger role in planning and executing actions or ongoing campaigns?

If you're not sure, that's okay — just keep that question in mind as you move on to the crucial second step: research. Set aside some dedicated time for this step. You'll likely get more clarity on how you want to contribute as you delve more deeply into different options.

You'll probably want to start with internet research, digging around to see what groups already exist in your community or the issue area you want to focus on.

Are there local affiliates of national progressive networks like Indivisible, the ACLU's People Power Network, 350.org, Swing Left, NARAL, Sister District, or the Democratic Socialists of America? Are other groups in your community taking up resistance work? What kind of work do they do? Do they have regular meetings that

are open to the public? Do they have upcoming actions or events you might attend, to check out their work?

One easy way to find a way into one of these groups is to "like" them on Facebook, and then see which of your friends does, too. Talk to your friend, and see if they'll go to a meeting with you.

Going to a group's meeting is the best way to get a feel for who they are, how they work, and whether they might be a good fit for you. If you live in a small town, there might only be one or two options to explore; in a big city, there will be many. If you're new to activism, checking out a few different groups will give you an appreciation for the range of organizing approaches that exist in your community and a better idea of how you fit in.

If you can't find a good fit, why not start your own group? Part of the power of grassroots organizing is you don't have to wait for anyone's permission or invitation to start taking action — you can find a few friends or associates and get something going on your own. A group doesn't need to be big to make a difference. A small collective that meets around a kitchen table can have real impact if it takes focused and strategic action over time.

There are likely to be seasoned organizers in your community who can teach you about how to mobilize pressure, build connections, and win. Seek them out and learn from them. You may find ways to collaborate and coordinate, and you'll want to be sure you're complementing rather than duplicating or impeding work they're already doing. If they are more directly impacted by the issue at hand than you and your group are — say, they're a longstanding immigrant rights group, and your new group is looking for ways to be allies — listen hard to their perspective and ask rather than assume what you can do to be most helpful.

Whether you join an already existing group or start something on your own, there are lots of resources available to help you plan and execute an action strategy. This guide lists a number of books and action guides that can get you started, and with a little research and asking around you should be able to find experienced trainers who can help you and your group learn the nuts and bolts of strategic planning, nonviolent direct action, or whatever it is you want to learn.

Act Like The Majority We Already Are | continued from p2

Preaching to the choir gets a bad rap. But reaching out to potential and likely allies to encourage them to take political action, whether at the ballot box or in the streets? That changes everything — making a more cohesive movement out of the marginalized majority that we are.

Case in point: Remember Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's primary win? The press called it an upset, a surprising win. *Just look at what the poll numbers were!* When asked about it, Ocasio-Cortez responded that the win wasn't so surprising at all. Polls, she has rightly pointed out, usually measure voters who are "likely" to turn out. Her approach? To reach out to voters who don't normally turn out.

The notion that identity politics divides us is a bunch of malarkey: If you look at history, some of the most profound wins for American equality hinged on identity — from the Civil Rights movement to women's suffrage. And it's the most marginalized among us — particularly queer brown women — who have done much of the heavy lifting for social justice throughout America's history.

We're seeing that now, yet again. For the past two years, unprecedented numbers of marginalized Americans have been making their voices heard through protest and escalating direct action. In fact, since the 2017 Women's March, decentralized protests have taken place in a record number of communities across the United

It's time to for us to recognize our power and act like the majority we already are.

States. The media generally suck at covering any kind of resistance to the status quo — especially when it comes to protest and direct action. They underestimate the number of people who came out; they assume that a group of people who don't have a single, easily achievable demand are wasting their time. And because of that, media have a major blind spot around identifying what protest movements have succeeded in accomplishing.

From Occupy Wall Street to Black Lives Matter to the Women's March to the Fight for 15 to the DREAMers to climate justice, the grassroots movements of our time have worked individually and in tandem to radically alter the conversations we're having, raising our expectations of what is possible and necessary. And we're seeing a powerful sea-change: In November, record numbers of women and minorities ran for office and unseated the GOP majority in the House. They won in large part thanks to college-educated female voters and the formidable grassroots hustle that got out the vote.

The next time someone tries to tell you it's hopeless or that we need to "reach across the aisle," because we've never been more divided, tell them they're right. We've never been more divided: Over decades, the Democratic and Republican platforms have become increasingly out of touch. The real divide in America is between what the majority of us want and need, and what a tiny minority — a handful of extremists in power — have been offering.

Focus On The Pillars Of Support | continued from p4

Understand the importance of pulling out from, rather than pushing into, different pillars of support

It is critical for a nonviolent movement to find ways to influence the behavior of the people within various pillars of support, by:

- 1 eroding their loyalty to your opponent(s)**
- 2 persuading them to deny their skills and knowledge, material resources, and time to your opponent(s)**

When a nonviolent movement is successful at influencing a particular pillar, members of that pillar will find ways to withdraw their support from your opponent and his/her supporters, by openly or subtly disobeying orders, by ignoring orders altogether, or by carrying orders out slowly, inefficiently and/or incompletely. Members of some pillars may also begin to openly or subtly support your movement as well.

If the people do not obey, the ruler cannot rule. Strategies for nonviolent struggle are based upon this insight.

PRINCIPLES OF EMERGENT STRATEGY

By adrienne maree brown

*In grassroots organizing, it matters not just what we build, but how we build. When faced with the urgent need to respond to an unfolding calamity like the Trump presidency, it can be tempting to take shortcuts, to rush into responding in emergency mode. This short excerpt from adrienne maree brown's important 2017 book, **Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds**, invites us to reflect deeply on the consequences of the ways we organize, and the power of principled connection and action.*

The crisis is everywhere, massive massive massive.

And we are small.

But emergence notices the way small actions and connections create complex systems, patterns that become ecosystems and societies. Emergence is our inheritance as a part of this universe; it is how we change. Emergent strategy is how we intentionally change in ways that grow our capacity to embody the just and liberated worlds we long for.

In the study and practice of emergent strategy, there are core principles that have emerged and that guide me in learning and using this idea and method in the world. I gather them here with the expectation that they will grow.

Small is good, small is all. (The large is a reflection of the small.)

Change is constant. (Be like water.)

There is always enough time for the right work.

There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it.

Never a failure, always a lesson.

Trust the People. (If you trust the people, they become trustworthy.)

Move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass — build the resilience by building the relationships.

Less prep, more presence.

What you pay attention to grows.

METHODS OF NONVIOLENT PROTEST AND PERSUASION

By Gene Sharp

Looking for ideas to keep your actions lively, engaging, and full of impact? Gene Sharp, an influential and highly regarded scholar of collective action and popular movements, drafted a famous list of 198 methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion back in 1973. This selection highlights some of the most relevant options for this moment — use it to spark your imagination as you organize.

Formal Statements

- 1. Public speeches
- 2. Letters of opposition or support
- 3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 4. Signed public statements
- 5. Group or mass petitions

Communications with a Wider Audience

- 6. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 7. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 8. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 9. Newspapers and journals
- 10. Records, radio, and television
- 11. Skywriting and earthwriting

Group Representations

- 12. Deputations
- 13. Mock awards
- 14. Group lobbying
- 15. Picketing

Symbolic Public Acts

- 16. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 17. Wearing of symbols
- 18. Prayer and worship
- 19. Delivering symbolic objects
- 20. Protest disrobings
- 21. Destruction of own property
- 22. Symbolic lights
- 23. Paint as protest

Pressures on Individuals

- 24. "Haunting" officials
- 25. Taunting officials
- 26. Vigils

Drama and Music

- 27. Humorous skits and pranks
- 28. Performances of plays and music
- 29. Singing

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QUESTIONS TO ASK AS YOU PLAN AN ACTION

by Lisa Fithian

In the first two years of Donald Trump's presidency, grassroots organizers held a staggering 25,000 protests — some huge, some small — all around the country. It's never a bad idea to display dissent against terrible governance and terrible policies, but protests should be more than a way to vent outrage; they should fit into a larger strategic plan.

Few organizers have planned as many different kinds of actions and campaigns as longtime movement trainer and strategist Lisa Fithian. A well-executed protest action should not only communicate a strong message and place pressure on a target. It should be designed as part of a longer-term strategy to win — whatever winning means in context — and to build the power and scope of a movement. This list of questions, compiled by Fithian, are designed to help you think through not only how to plan a protest, but how to think of each action as a step in a larger plan to achieve your goals.

Many elements go into making your action successful. Take the time at the front end to be clear, really clear, about what you are trying to do and why. It can make all the difference.

If your plans are good, if you have a realistic assessment of your numbers and your resources, and if the people working on it are accountable, the only thing to be worried about is the weather. And this is no small matter. Sitting on a street in January in Michigan is not going to quickly move people to stronger actions. So be smart about what you are asking people to do.

Start with the basics

- What is the problem, and what are you trying to accomplish?
- Who is your target — the person or institution who has the power to decide?
- What is your message? Can it be summed up in a slogan or soundbite?
- Do the message and target fit together in a way that is easily understandable?
- How does your action site relate to your target? Is it one and the same? If you are considering multiple action sites, which one best communicates your message and will best accommodate your action? (Some things to consider in choosing an action site are size, visibility, access, proximity to roads, cell service, fences, security, sidewalks.)
- Does the action scenario communicate your message without words? A picture tells the story!
- Is the action symbolic or disruptive? Is it public or secret?
- How many people do you need for the action? Where will they come from?
- How will you change the plan if you don't have enough people?

- What time are you planning the action? Are you planning arrests? If so, is the action early, to minimize the possibility of people staying in jail overnight?
- Do you have all the legal information you need? Are lawyers on call?
- Who are the stakeholders in the fight, and who are your allies?
- What is your strategy for attracting media attention?

Refine the strategy

Campaign Goals

What is your intention? What is your vision for the future? How do you define "winning"?

What stage is your campaign in? Do you need to escalate, draw attention, educate the media? What story are you trying to tell?

What is your strategy to win? Are other groups or organizations using different strategies? How do you or your group fit into or complement them?

Action Goals (Public)

What are you trying to achieve by taking action at this point? To gain leverage for negotiation? Sound the general alarm? Prevent greater harm from occurring? Does this action fit into a larger campaign or more long-term strategy?

Action Goals (Private)

Possibilities include: Build the movement. Inspire others by showing them that individuals can make a difference. Empower yourself and your friends. Boost morale.

Political Leverage

Who are the decision-makers as well as secondary or tertiary targets — the people who can influence the primary decision-maker? Who is the target of the action? What do you want them to do?

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Questions To Ask As You Plan An Action | continued from p14

Demands

What are your short-term demands? What are your long-term demands? How can you escalate if they're not met?

Timing and Political Climate

How soon do you need to take action? Why now? Is there a more strategic date? What makes that day special? Is it special only to you, your organization or movement? Is it a culturally important date? What is the political climate? What has happened recently? How is your campaign relevant to people in your community/state/country? How is it compelling and timely? Have you considered a calendar of actions to roll out that escalate to create a sense of crisis for your target?

Audience

Who is your audience? Who are you trying to affect and move? If you have more than one, are your messages tailored to their interests?

Outreach/Mobilization

How can you enlist non-traditional communities for this action? Will your action build or foster new relationships and community support for your campaign? Will the tactic you've chosen alienate or interest the general public?

Resources

What resources do you have in terms of people, time, money, equipment, skills?

Creativity/Theater

What could you try that has never been tried before? What could you do differently? How could you involve artists or musicians in this action?

What does the problem/solution look like? Can you translate that into words, picture or movements? What compelling image(s) will accompany your action and reach your audience? What image would you like to see in the newspaper?

What symbols can you use to simplify and streamline your message to the audience? Could you exploit your opponent's symbols or slogans against them?

Media

What is the angle? What makes it newsworthy? What is new about the action? What makes this significant?

198 Methods Of Nonviolent Protest And Persuasion | continued from p13

Processions

30. Marches
31. Parades
32. Religious processions
33. Motorcades

Honoring the Dead

34. Political mourning
35. Mock funerals
36. Demonstrative funerals
37. Homage at burial places

Public Assemblies

38. Assemblies of protest or support
39. Protest meetings
40. Teach-ins

Withdrawal and Renunciation

41. Walk-outs
42. Silence
43. Renouncing honors
44. Turning one's back

THE METHODS OF SOCIAL NONCOOPERATION

Ostracism of Persons

45. Social boycott
46. Lysistratic nonaction
47. Excommunication

Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

48. Suspension of social and sports activities
49. Student strike
50. Social disobedience

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: ECONOMIC BOYCOTTS

Actions by Consumers

51. Consumers' boycott
52. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
53. Rent withholding

Action by Holders of Financial Resources

54. Withdrawal of bank deposits
55. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments

56. Refusal to pay debts or interest
57. Severance of funds and credit

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: THE STRIKE

Symbolic Strikes

58. Protest strike
59. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

Restricted Strikes

60. Slowdown strike
61. Working-to-rule strike
62. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
63. Strike by resignation
64. General strike

THE METHODS OF POLITICAL NONCOOPERATION

Rejection of Authority

65. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
66. Refusal of public support
67. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

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