

# WHEN WE FIGHT WE WIN!

**Twenty-First-Century Social Movements and the  
Activists That Are Transforming Our World**

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## **TEACHING GUIDE**

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# STARTING POINTS/ STARTING ACTIVITIES

This is a book for “all those who yearn for big changes.” **TAKE** a few moments before you start reading the book to **ASK** yourself **WHAT** sort of change do you want to see in the world? **MAKE** a list of things you wish would change and issues you feel passionate about.

**ASK** yourself **WHY** you feel passionate about these issues.

Now **ASK** yourself **HOW** you believe change is made in the world.

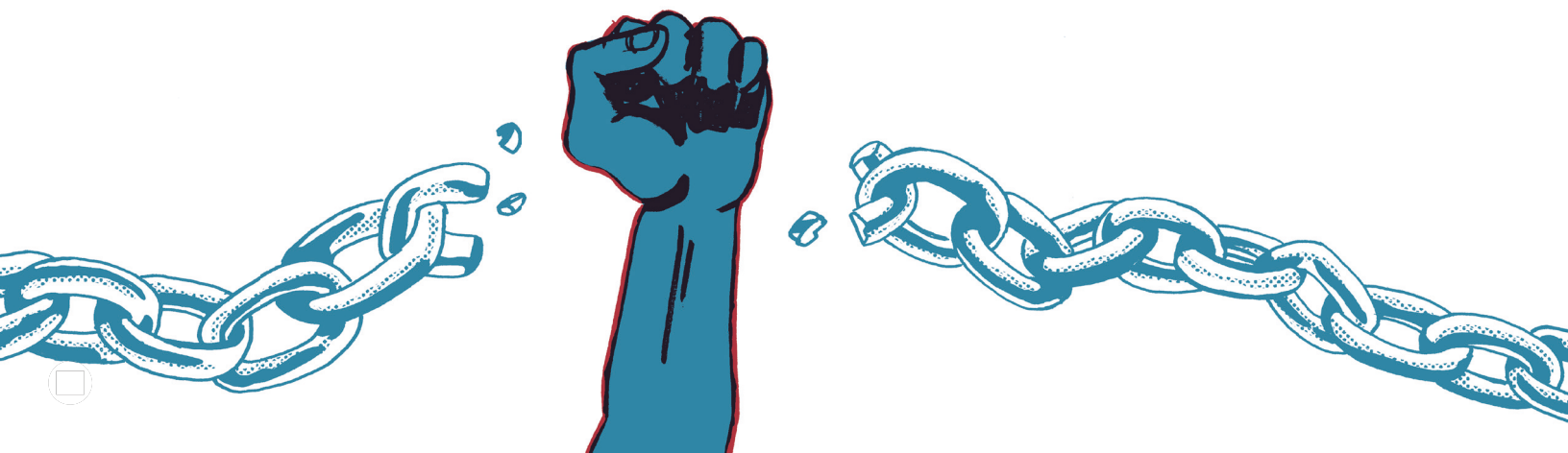
**LIST** the ways that change happens that inspire you, that you have been a part of, that you have seen happen around you. **WHAT** questions do you have about social change?

**WHAT** assumptions do you have about it?

**REFER** back to your answers to these questions as you read the book.

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## NOTES:







**1 RECLAIMING WHOLENESS:  
THE LGBTQ MOVEMENT**

**2 GROUNDED IN COMMUNITY:  
THE FIGHT FOR THE SOUL OF  
PUBLIC EDUCATION**

**3 TRANSFORMING VISIONS:  
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**4 THE POWER OF STORIES:  
THE DREAMERS AND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS**

**5 “WHEN WE FIGHT, WE WIN!”:  
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# 1

# RECLAIMING WHOLE- NESS: THE LGBTQ MOVEMENT

## MARRIAGE EQUALITY

In 2015 the Supreme Court ruled that state-level bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional-  
thereby legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide.

**HOW** has this amazing win been the result of decades of activism and struggle in the LGBTQ community?

**HOW** are the activists featured here trying to “look beyond” marriage equality? **WHY** is this integral to their politics and the projects they are involved in? **HOW** has the LGBTQ movement changed in the past 50 years? In the past decade?

## WHOLENESS

The sub-title of the chapter is “Reclaiming Wholeness.”

**WHAT** does this mean?

**HOW** are the different activists featured here all “reclaiming wholeness” in different ways?

**WHY** is this an important starting point for the activism that they do?

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### NOTES:



## LINKING ISSUES

**WHAT** issues are linked in this chapter in ways that were different from what you expected, imagined or are used to? **HOW** does a focus on linking issues change the way you understood them? **HOW** can we organize around linked issues and **WHY** does this matter?



## Gender and Queerness

**HOW** does the art in this chapter represent gender and queerness?

**HOW** does it highlight the issues and expand the conversation around these issues in creative ways?



# GROUNDING IN COMMUNITY: THE FIGHT FOR THE SOUL OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

## CHARTER SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC SCHOOL REFORM

**HOW** is public education in the United States, under the guise of “reform” changing and what values does this reflect?

**WHAT** different set of values, ideals and goals do the community members and activists in this chapter articulate?



# PRIVATIZATION OF EDUCATION

**WHAT** is a neo-liberal model of education? **WHAT** do you think of this model? **HAVE** you seen or experienced these shifts in education in your community? **WHAT** has been the impact? **HOW** do you imagine a just education system looking?

## Strike

**HOW** did the Chicago Teachers Union build support around education issues for their strike?

**WHY** was it important for teachers and parents to join together to take on these issues?

# GROUNDED IN COMMUNITY

**WHAT** lessons about activism and organizing can you take from the Chicago Teachers Union strike? **WHY** was this an important show of power that differs from other types of activism? **WHAT** lessons does Karen Lewis articulate about organizing and activism? Imagine **HOW** you could work with communities and groups to build power for an issue that you believe is important taking these lessons into account.

**WHAT** does it mean to be “grounded in the community” and **WHY** is this powerful and important? Give other examples you’ve seen of this principle for organizing.

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## NOTES:



# TRANSFORMING VISIONS: ENDING MASS INCARCERATION

## PRISON ECONOMY AND RACE

**WHAT** is the prison industrial complex and who does it target? **HOW** does racism and capitalism combine to create this system? If we understand prisons as both racist and violent **HOW** does this change the way we think of their function in society? In the chapter **WHAT** are some of the ways that prisons can be understood as racist institutions?

## BEYOND PRISONS

People often say that we as a society “need” prisons. **HOW** can we challenge this taken-for-granted logic? Write a short few sentences that you can use in conversations to challenge this viewpoint.

If you imagine a world without prisons **WHAT** do you imagine? **WHAT** different way of seeing the world do we need in order to imagine a world without prisons?

## TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

In taking on and attempting to transform “root causes” transformative justice differs from prisons as a response to societal problems. **WHAT** are some “root causes”? **HOW** they can be tackled without prisons? **WHAT** are some of the ways that people are working towards abolition? **WHAT** does abolition mean to you?

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### NOTES:

# Connections Inside and Outside Prisons

Validah Imarisha says “Its really important that we recognize that prisons disproportionality affect many more people than those sitting in a prison cell” (pg. 68).

**WHAT** does she mean by this?

**HOW** does Kevin “Rashid” Johnson connect to people outside of prison?

**WHY** are these connections so vital to building a movement beyond prisons?

**HOW** can you help to foster these connections through letter writing or otherwise connecting people in prisons to the world outside of prisons?



# 4

# THE POWER OF STORIES: THE DREAMERS AND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

## STORYTELLING

An integral part of the Dreamers strategy has been to use their personal stories to organize and push for social change.

**WHY** is this an important strategy both for the movement and for them personally? **CAN YOU** think of times that the power of storytelling has changed your mind about something?

Think of a story you could tell to change people's minds about an issue that matters to you.

## VISIBILITY

Juan Rodriguez, Felipe Matos, Gaby Pacheco and Carlos Roa walked from Miami Washington D.C. to make the plight of undocumented youth visible.

**WHY** is this visibility important? **WHAT** sort of political tactics, alongside this walk, have worked to push for political change around issues if immigrant rights? **HOW** does art make these issues more visible?





# The Great Migration

**WERE YOU** surprised at the reasons why people leave their homes to come to the United States?

**HOW** do the reasons presented here contrast with mainstream media accounts of why people come to the United States?



## HUMANITY

Undocumented immigrants are often harshly punished for the crime of being in this country. Parents are deported leaving their children in foster care. People die crossing the border.

**HOW** can we fight the dehumanization of undocumented people that leads to this violence? Strategize everyday ways to do this.

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### NOTES:

# 5

## “WHEN WE FIGHT, WE WIN!”: THE STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC POWER

### ECONOMIC POWER

**HOW** is the struggle for economic power tied to a variety of other movements? **HOW** is it tied to struggles for democracy? **WHAT** root causes do we have to look to in the struggle for economic justice and economic power? **WHAT** is class warfare and **WHERE** can we see it happening? **WHAT** are the structural issues at the heart of economic inequality?

### OCCUPY

**WHAT** do you think of the tactic of occupying space in order to achieve political goals? **WHAT** are some of the critiques of the Occupy movement in relation to race and inequality?

**HOW** did the Occupy movement change the discussion about inequality in the country? **DID** it? **WHY** does this matter? **WHAT** sort of activism was inspired by the Occupy movement? **HOW** do social movements live on in a variety of ways?



# PERSONAL, POLITICAL AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE

City Life/ Vida Urbana is devoted to having strategies to help individuals while challenging systems of economic inequality.

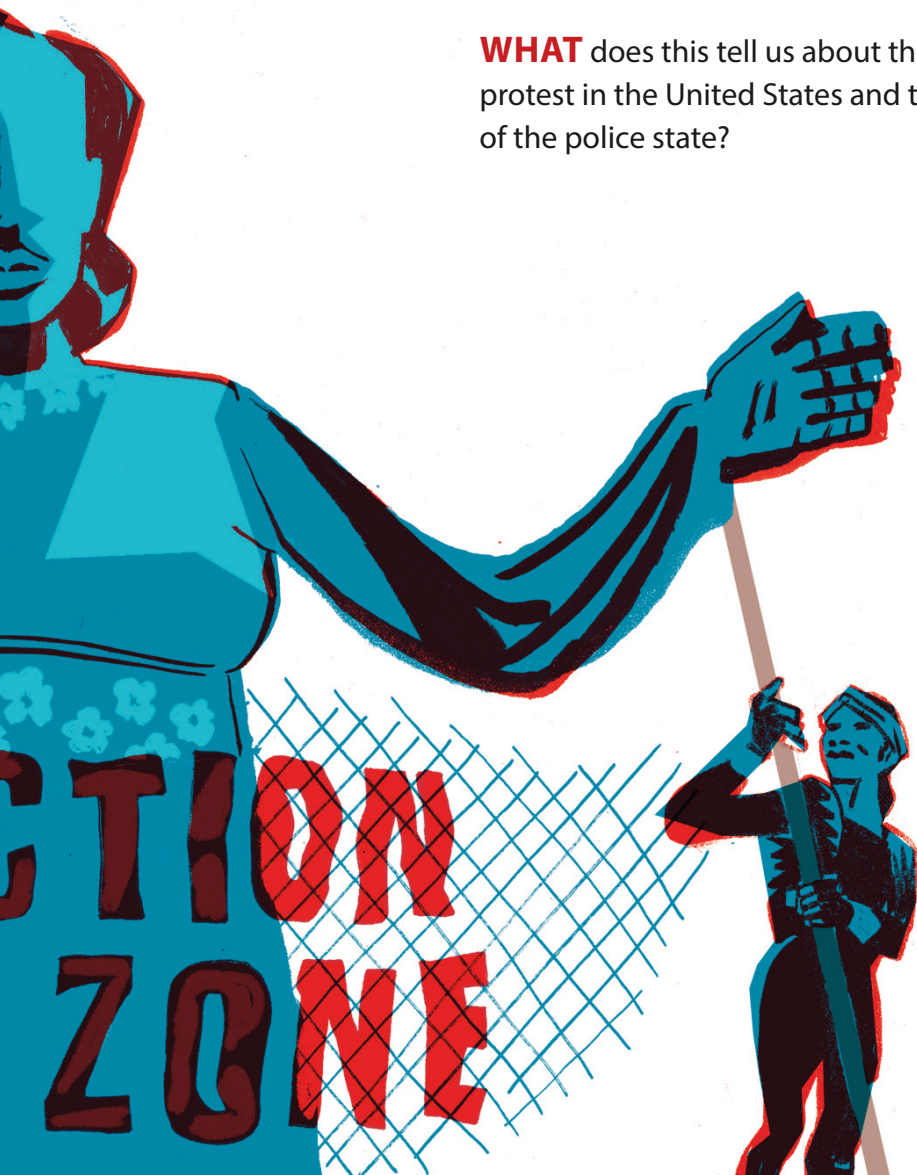
**HOW** can individual problems and issues, like Aloysius Nwankwo refusing to leave his home quietly lead to political issues? Put another way, **HOW** can the personal transform into the political? List some strategies for doing this or some “personal” issues that are actually political.

**WHY** is working towards structural change important to Jayaraman of ROC? **WHAT** does “When We Fight, We Win” mean to you?

## Repression

The Occupy movement was violently repressed by the police and city governments around the country.

**WHAT** does this tell us about the right to protest in the United States and the power of the police state?





# 6

# ENVIRONMENTAL WARRIORS: GOING TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

## GOING TO THE SOURCE

A rallying cry at climate change protests is “we need system change not climate change”: **WHAT** is this referring to? And **HOW** does it reflect the viewpoint of climate change activists who are trying to get the “root of the problem”? **WHAT** do they describe as this “root”? **HOW** does the way we think about climate change differ when we think of its root problems?

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## INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

The climate change movement is increasingly led by indigenous activists and communities such as Clayton Thomas- Müller.

**HOW** are indigenous sovereignty, climate change and colonialism connected? **WHY** is it vital that indigenous communities are in front and center in this struggle?



# Environmental Justice

**HOW** is climate change connected to issues such as poverty, racism, gender and class? Professor Antwi Akom says that climate change can be thought of as eco apartheid.

**WHAT** does this term reference?

**HOW** must we think about climate change differently if we do so within the context of environmental justice?

## ART AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Look at the art in this chapter, in particular the flow chart by Rachel Schragis on pgs. 140-141 and the Beehive Design Collective's piece on pgs. 134-135. These pieces depict complex relationships and tell the complicated story of environmental degradation and climate change.

**WHAT** can you learn differently through these images? Try to make a flow chart or to use images to connect complicated issues that you are interested in. **WHAT** happens when we think of art as central to building change and movements?

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### NOTES:

# WRAP- UP/ DE-BRIEFING

Go back to the questions that you answered at the beginning of the book. **WOULD** you change any of your answers to these questions now that you have read this book? **WHY?** Or **WHY NOT?**

The core questions of the book are:

1. **HOW** do we create real and enduring change?
2. **WHAT** have successful organizers done that works and what doesn't work?
3. **HOW** can anyone get involved and make a difference?

**HOW** would you answer these questions?

**WHAT** challenged you about what you read about here? **WHAT** did you agree with? Disagree with? **WHOSE** story or **WHAT** movement did you feel inspired by? **HOW** can you translate this inspiration into social action?

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**NOTES:**

