INTRODUCTION

Peace as a Political Force

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> *There is no way to peace; there is only peace.*
> — MAHATMA GANDHI

> *If you want to make peace, you don't talk*
> *to your friends. You talk to your enemies.*
> — DESMOND TUTU

> *Peace does not mean an absence of conflicts; differences*
> *will always be there. Peace means solving these differences*
> *through peaceful means; through dialogue, education,*
> *knowledge; and through humane ways.*
> — DALAI LAMA XIV

> *Peace is preferable to war. But it's not an absolute*
> *value, and so we always ask, "What kind of peace?"*
> — NOAM CHOMSKY

> *Peace is a very complicated concept.*
> *When the lion gobbles up the lamb and*
> *wipes his lips, then there's peace.*
> *Well, I ain't for that peace at all.*
> — ABBIE HOFFMAN

> *There can be no real peace without justice.*
> *And without resistance there will be no justice.*
> — ARUNDHATI ROY

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Peace through Opposition, Conflict, and Struggle

This book is about changing the world through peace. By "peace" we do *not* mean standing around in a circle, holding hands, and expressing our affection for one another. That has its time and place. But we understand peace as a political force for social justice and progressive social change. We must actively work to attain that peace, and that involves opposition, conflict, and struggle. These words usually conjure up negative associations, as if "opposition, conflict, and struggle" are antithetical to "peace." But that's not true. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, "Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."[1] In other words, activists and social movements begin with opposition. If there were no opposition, then your desired changes would already exist. That leads to conflict—different people have different views and opinions about what kind of world to live in. You must then struggle to create the world that you envision. That can involve everything from one-on-one conversations to massive demonstrations and protests.

WHAT DO WE WANT? PEACE! WHEN DO WE WANT IT? NOW!

This might make some people doubt themselves. Do I really want to put myself out there like that? Do I want to invite opposition, conflict, and struggle? Do I want to step forward and fight, or would I rather sit back and relax? Such apprehension and doubt are natural. We usually seek the path of least resistance, and for good reason—it makes our lives easier. But that does not get us a better world. Social justice does not happen on its own. There are people, institutions, and systems that are hell-bent on maintaining the status quo. That usually means maintaining—and often expanding—their own power while simultaneously disempowering others. Oppression, marginalization, domination, cruelty, coercion, and individual and systemic violence are real. People, as well as animals and nature, are brutalized on a daily basis. That suffering is neither natural nor inherent. Instead, it is a product of our current world. But the world is up for grabs; it's not on lockdown, and it's not set in stone. Each and every one of us has

the right to fight for the world that we want to live in. The question thus becomes: what kind of world do you want?

The Ills of the World

We all know the world is plagued by problems. But it's sometimes important to face those problems head-on—to consciously acknowledge them so you know what you're dealing with. The brief list below is not intended to depress people. Instead, it is about testing your own sense of injustice. After reading this list, do you want to recoil and turn a blind eye? Or, do you want to do something about it?

Economic Inequality

There are approximately 300 million people in the United States. Approximately 46 million of them live at or below the poverty line—e.g., $11,484 for a one-person household, $14,657 for a two-person household, and $17,959 for a three-person household. That means that more than one out of seven people live in poverty.[2] This number could be drastically higher if the "official" poverty lines better reflected actual living conditions. A more honest poverty line for a three-person household (two caregivers and a child) would be a figure closer to $25,000 rather than $18,000. This would more accurately reflect the number of people struggling economically.

By contrast, the average salary in 2009 for an American CEO was 263 times that of the average American worker. So if the average worker made $50,000, that means the average CEO made $13,150,000—that's more than *13 million dollars*. This ratio is actually lower than in recent years because of the economic recession. In 2007, one year before the Great Recession, a CEO was earning 364 times more than a worker. By contrast, the pay ratio in 1980 was only 40 to 1, and in the mid-1970s, it was 30 to 1.[3] And as of 2007, the

richest one percent of the US population owned 34.3 percent of the nation's private wealth (stocks, bonds, property), while the richest 10 percent owned 71 percent of the wealth. But on the other end, the poorest 40 percent of the population owned only one percent of the wealth. Worldwide, 10 percent of the population owns 85 percent of the global wealth.[4]

This economic inequality must be put into perspective. It's not just about money, but rather what that money allows you to do. Having money allows you to eat *nutritional* food, live in a *safe* house and *safe* neighborhood, attain *reliable* transportation, earn a *good* education, receive *quality* healthcare, and make different and, presumably, *better* choices in life. Money also allows you to influence society. For instance, the 2012 presidential and congressional campaigns cost over four billion dollars.[5] Most of that money came from the wealthiest donors. It's very unlikely that a politician will pass laws that inhibit those wealthy donors from earning a profit, even if those laws would benefit the vast majority of (less wealthy) citizens. If this is true, then economic inequality directly affects our political system. In general, the gap between the rich and poor boils down to *quality of life*, *personal opportunity*, and *political power*.

War and the Military-Industrial Complex

The United States has more than 700 military bases worldwide.[6] Its military budget is close to 700 billion dollars every year, accounting for approximately 40 percent of the *world's* total defense budget.[7] Its current nuclear arsenal contains over 5,000 warheads. While this is a far cry from the peak of 31,000 warheads in 1967, it is still enough to bomb the world many times over.[8] It is the first country to develop nuclear weapons and, at the time of this writing, the only country to use nuclear weapons (during World War II). Although the United States often portrays itself as a country of peace, it is perpetually engaged in military conflict of some sort. Here is an abbreviated list of military engagements of the 20th century: World War I and World War II; the Cold War (late 1940s–early 1990s); the Korean War; the Vietnam War; invasion of Grenada (1983); invasion of Panama

(1989); the Gulf War (1991); air strikes into Bosnia (1994–1995); and air strikes into Kosovo (1999). The 21st century then began with "the war on terror," which involved invasions and occupation of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), Guantanamo Bay, torture of detainees, and unmanned drone strikes in Pakistan.

Nonhuman Animals and the Environment

Twenty-five million animals are used every year for the researching and testing of cosmetic and household products. Such tests are conducted not only on mice, but also on dogs, rabbits, and chimpanzees.[9] Scientists, military personnel, and medical and veterinarian students conduct experiments on goats, sheep, and numerous other animals. Such experiments involve operations on both deceased *and* living animals, the latter of which might receive no pain medication in order to test stress levels.

Ninety thousand cows and calves are killed every 24 hours in the United States for food consumption. Another 14,000 chickens are killed every minute. Overall, approximately 10 billion food animals (not including marine animals) are killed each year in the US.[10] Much of this food production revolves around factory farming, which is both inhumane and unsustainable.[11] Factory farms neglect and abuse animals and force them into undersized cages filled with their own excrement, severely restricting natural and necessary movement. These unsanitary conditions expose humans to increased possibility of disease and illness: e.g., an estimated 89 percent of US beef patties contain traces of E. coli; approximately 650,000 Americans are sickened by Salmonella-tainted eggs each year; and more than 5,000 people contract food poisoning each year, the primary source of which is contaminated chicken flesh.

Factory farms also devastate the environment. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, animal agriculture is responsible for 18 percent of human-induced greenhouse gas emissions. This occurs because the production of eggs, milk, and meat involves the production of grain to feed the animals, the production of fertilizer to maintain the soil, and the use of water,

gas, and electricity to run operations and transport animals and goods.

Ninety percent of US forests have been cleared over the last 400 years. An area of rainforest the size of a football field is cut down every second. And 56,000 square miles of total forest are lost every year. Worldwide, as of 2008, there were 405 "dead zones"—large areas of ocean in which nothing can live due to fertilizer runoff and sewage dumping in coastal areas.[12] Statistically speaking, each person in the United States generates about 4.6 pounds of trash every day, and 80 percent of what Americans throw away is recyclable.[13]

Rape and Sexual Assault

An alleged rape case has grabbed the national spotlight at the time of this writing. In Steubenville, Ohio, two high school football players have been convicted of raping a 16-year-old female while she was passed out from alcohol. The overall story is unbelievably disturbing and unfortunately commonplace. The two boys filmed themselves talking about the girl, essentially laughing about "raping a dead woman." Many of their friends can be seen in the video or heard off-camera laughing along, all of which was used as evidence against the two boys. This is a small but disturbing glimpse into America's rape culture: high school kids are raised in a culture that sees the female body as a sexual *object* void of human agency; women are literally seen as nonhuman, mere playthings for male sexual pleasure; American manhood and masculinity are defined, in part, through the domination and dehumanization of women and femininity. This cultural context increases the possibility of rape and sexual assault.

The Steubenville case may seem like an isolated incident, but it's not. The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, in referencing the US Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey (2006–2010), states that an average of 207,754 victims (age 12 or older) are sexually assaulted each year. That translates into a sexual assault every two minutes. Approximately 44 percent of victims are under the age of 18, and about 80 percent are under the age of 30.

Approximately two-thirds of assaults are committed by someone known to the victim, and about 38 percent of rapists are a friend or acquaintance. Sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes, with about 54 percent of sexual assaults being left unreported to the police.[14]

Sweatshops and Modern-Day Slavery

Most people have heard of sweatshops. But very few realize the prevalence or brutality of sweatshops. It is safe to say that the large majority of products bought in the United States are made in sweatshops somewhere around the world—footwear, clothing, furniture, toys, video games, auto parts, cell phones, computers. International corporations take advantage of the low labor standards that exist in other countries. Companies "outsource" the manufacturing to plants in China, Sri Lanka, or Honduras, for instance, where goods can be produced at a cheaper cost, allowing corporations to reap greater profits. But why shouldn't the labor standards of US workers apply to *all* workers worldwide? In fact, why can't there be agreed-upon global standards that benefit all workers, regardless of country, race, gender, age, or industry? Does a national border diminish one's right to a fair wage and safe work environment? Does it diminish one's humanity? Do workers in poor countries deserve *fewer* rights and *worse* treatment?

Some people might argue that these other countries have lower economic standards and that workers can therefore be paid lower and, presumably, comparable wages. But this is not true. Almost 75 percent of the retail price of a garment is pure profit for the manufacturer and retailer. Sweatshop workers earn as little as 25 to 50 percent of what they need to provide for basic nutrition, shelter, energy, clothing, education, and transportation. In order to meet the basic nutritional needs of their families, sweatshop workers spend from 50 to 75 percent of their income on food, leaving little money for other necessary expenses. Not only are workers paid less than a living wage, they are often subject to verbal and even physical abuse. Most

sweatshop laborers work much longer than eight hours a day, and are given few, if any, breaks, including bathroom breaks. They can even be cheated out of wages altogether.[15]

Slavery is another form of extreme exploitation. We all know of America's horrid history of slavery. But slavery still occurs today, constituting a 32-billion-dollar industry.[16] That figure informs us about the purpose and motivation of slavery: profit. Contemporary slavery can manifest itself in different ways, usually through confinement, servitude, forced labor, and, most commonly, through human trafficking. A typical scenario might involve an individual agreeing to travel to another country on the promise of a job. Once there, the individual is held captive, essentially forced to work for free. The person has no way to contact others, is physically threatened, and can be told that attempting to escape will result in the punishment (and even death) of loved ones back home. All told, approximately 27 million people are held captive in modern-day slavery across the world, thousands of whom are trafficked into US borders annually.[17]

Fighting for Justice: A Social Movement Tradition

The world is filled with grim realities of racism, sexism, classism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia; of climate change, speciesism, and environmental destruction; of war, imperialism, colonialism, and dictatorialism; of job discrimination, worker exploitation, and child labor; and of abuse, neglect, and random violence. But all is not lost, as good people rise every day to fight for social justice. Activists and social movements play integral roles in correcting social ills. Below is a partial list of some of the more significant social movements throughout US history. As you'll see, there is a long tradition of people fighting for social change.

- **Abolitionist movement** (1830s–1870s): Sought to end legalized segregation and slavery in the United States.
- **Women's Suffrage movement** (mid/late 1800s–1920): Suffrage means "the right to vote." This movement is also referred to as first-wave feminism.
- **US Labor movement** (began in early 1800s with formation of the

first unions, matured into full-blown movement by late 1800s/early 1900s): Sought unionization, safer working conditions, the 40-hour work week, an end to child labor, and a minimum wage. This movement was also international in that many workers understood the international aspect of capitalism and the shared experience of workers across the world.

ALL STRUGGLES ARE INTERCONNECTED

- **Civil Rights movement** (early/mid 1950s–mid/late 1960s or early 1970s): Sought equal rights for African Americans, focused on ending legalized segregation and ensuring the right to vote.
- **Black Power movement** (mid/late 1960s–mid-1970s): An extension of the Civil Rights movement. People became frustrated with the slow progression of legislation and decided to take direct action. The movement promoted a positive black identity, an embrace of one's African heritage, and the upliftment of the black community.
- **American Indian movement** (late 1960s–today): Focuses on reclaiming its stolen land, honoring its heritage, and attaining tribal sovereignty. Began with concerns of poverty, high unemployment, inadequate housing, and disintegration of American Indian culture.
- **Era of 1960s Radicalism** (mid-1960s–mid-1970s): Involved many different movements—the Anti-Vietnam War movement, the Student movement, the Free Speech movement, the Psychedelic movement—and cultural revolution (e.g., free love, drug experimentation, rock and roll music, different forms of spirituality, hippies, and Yippies).
- **Women's Liberation movement** (early 1970s–1980s): Sought to liberate women from oppressive male dominance; to discuss and advance women's sexual pleasure; to grant women the right to choose abortion; to give women the freedom to have careers and to enter politics; to make women equal to men in every phase

of life and society; to allow women to live their own lives. Often characterized as second-wave feminism.

- **Gay Liberation movement** (late 1960s–early 1980s): Sought to grant visibility to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people; wanted the right to live out of the closet and to be accepted by society; sought to end discrimination of sexual orientation in all aspects of life and society. Is often marked by the Stonewall Riots of 1969 in New York City.

- **Pro-Choice movement** (late 1960s–present): Developed most poignantly around the 1973 landmark case of Roe v. Wade that legalized abortion in America.

- **Anti-Nuclear Proliferation movement** (began in late 1960s, became an organized movement in 1980s): This was at the height of the Cold War and the threat of nuclear annihilation. Sought to end nuclear proliferation and even the use of nuclear energy (for electricity, for instance).

- **Identity Politics** (began to emerge in 1980s, continued through late 1990s; still in existence, but not as controversial nowadays): Not necessarily a fully organized movement, but includes a confluence of people, groups, organizations, and ideas about the politics of personal and cultural identity. Is related to such issues as multiculturalism, affirmative action, and political correctness. Is still in effect, but has become more of an accepted understanding toward issues of cultural appreciation, diversity, and identity construction.

- **AIDS/HIV Activist movement** (early 1980s–mid-1990s; still in existence, but not as prominent since AIDS/HIV has received more institutional attention): Emerged in the early 1980s when AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) started to become a major pandemic. At the time, the US government was ignoring the disease and the population it was most affecting, gay men.

- **Animal Rights movement** (began in mid-1970s and has gained more traction ever since): Seeks to end the philosophical and even legal distinction between human and nonhuman animals. This may involve greater protection of animals (in nature and in

the home), the promotion of vegetarianism and/or veganism, putting an end to animal testing and animal products like leather and fur, and reforming or abolishing zoos or the use of animals for sport and entertainment.

- **Global Justice movement** (mid-1990s–early/mid-2000s): Also known as the Anti- or Alter-globalization movement. Was a cross-continental movement that involved a plethora of smaller issues and movements. Is rightfully understood as a "movement of movements." At its base, it sought to reform (if not totally end) corporate control of politics and society, global capitalism, and use of sweatshop labor. Also promoted greater respect for the relationships between social systems (such as capitalism) and indigenous populations and the natural environment.

- **The Anti-Iraq War movement** (early/mid-2000s): Was at its peak just before and after the start of the Iraq War (March 2003). Major protests occurred, and there were international days of action. Entire city areas were shut down through coordinated direct action. On February 15, 2003, approximately 30 million people across the world protested the impending war.

- **Contemporary Gay Rights movement** (current): Fights for full acceptance and legal rights of people who identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer (LGBTQ). This might involve same-sex marriage, hospital visitation rights for same-sex couples, healthcare protections for transgender and gender-nonconforming people, the legal right to foster and adopt children, anti-bullying policies in schools, more inclusive curriculum, and the US military's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy (repealed in 2011).

- **Immigrant Rights movement** (throughout the 2000s; still current): Major protests and marches occurred in the mid- to late 2000s, with smaller ones occurring before and after. Generally speaking, this movement seeks to create an easier pathway for people to become US citizens and to provide greater benefits to illegal immigrants. Also fights against the xenophobia of anti-immigration policy.

- **Climate Justice movement** (current): Focuses on climate change and global warming. Often targets corporate pollution and government policies that allow corporations to pollute. It advocates for alternative forms of energy and consumption (e.g., sustainable farming practices, alternative forms of fuel, recycling, use of mass transit). In many ways it is an extension of the Environmental movement, which began in the late 1960s/early 1970s and continues today.
- **Occupy movement** (2011): Occupy formed in September 2011 and centered around two major issues: economic inequality and the lack of political accountability. The peak of Occupy lasted only a few months, but its style of protest (occupation of public space) and its radical approach (immediate reformation of the economic and political system) makes it one of the most significant American social movements of recent times.

After reading this list, it becomes obvious that every right, liberty, and freedom that we hold dear has come by way of a social movement. There is no part of our lives that has not been affected by the collective action of activists and organizers working for change: voting rights, civil rights, immigrant rights, human rights, labor regulations, housing regulations, anti-dumping laws, consumer protections, workplace safety, minimum wage, broader and more inclusive college curriculum, procreation and safe sex, anti-discrimination laws, free speech, environmental awareness and appreciation, the ending of wars and genocide, the curbing of nuclear proliferation, and the fight for everyday equality and respect. There's no doubt about it—social movements are thriving contributors to world history.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS DRIVE THE PROGRESSION OF HISTORY

Overview of Book

This book is written for people who are incensed by injustice and inspired by social movements. It is intended to help beginning activists become *better* activists. To that end, we have collected essays by

seasoned activists working in a variety of fields. We are not claiming that this book can teach you everything, but it will get you started on the right path.

The book is organized into five sections containing 10 chapters. The sections are: "Starting with Me," "Working with Others," "Getting into the Streets," "Social Networks," and "Institutional Change."

Section One: Starting with Me

You have to be clear about your own wants, needs, skills, and abilities before you start reaching out to others. This section helps you do that. In chapter one, "Personal Lifestyle," Larry Albert Butz discusses how you can use your everyday life as a source of activism. The products you buy, the clothes you wear, the stores you shop at, and even the language you use can affect the world. If that is true, then you want to critically reflect on your own life and learn to make choices that manifest the change you want to see. In chapter two, "Communication and Rhetoric," Jason Del Gandio addresses the common critique that activists have "no clear message." Del Gandio provides guidelines for improving your speaking, writing, message construction, and persuasive appeal. It is not just what you say, but also how you say it, that moves people to action.

Section Two: Working with Others

Activism involves working with other people. That may seem easy, but it's actually very challenging. How do you facilitate a meeting? How do you make group decisions without alienating people? How do you negotiate different opinions? How do you act more democratically? How do you work together in a cohesive and productive manner? Joshua Ryan Holst's chapter three, "Participation and Democracy" covers the history of democracy, examples of different forms of democracy, and how to use direct democracy. By the end of the chapter you will know how to democratically participate in everything from electoral processes to street demonstrations. In chapter four, "Transformative Justice aand Conflict Transformation," the authors, Anthony J. Nocella II, Melissa Chiprin, Anniessa Antar

and Alisha Page outline different ways to deal with conflict. Most people think of conflict as something negative and to be avoided. But as the authors demonstrate, conflict is part of human experience. We should thus learn to deal with it in a transformative manner that brings about greater peace for everyone involved.

Section Three: Getting into the Streets

This section provides examples of and strategies for moving people to action. How do you get people involved? What kinds of events and activities should you create? Are some actions better than others? In chapter five, "Organizing Your Community," Drew Robert Winter outlines strategies for organizing isolated individuals into a unified group committed to running a public campaign: designate a problem, contact likely allies, propose a solution, and persuade people to act. Organizing is obviously more difficult than this, but Winter provides concrete steps for getting the job done. Chapter six, "Activist Guidelines and Case Studies" is a collaboration among four authors, with each author outlining a specific case study of an activist project. Jason Del Gandio uses his experience with Occupy Philly's media working group to outline steps for facilitating public organizing meetings. James Generic provides an overview of the Wooden Shoe bookstore, which is an all-volunteer, collectively run, and financially viable store based on anarchist principles. Aaron Zellhoefer discusses how the group Minnesota United for All Families used a strategy of engaged conversation to successfully oppose an amendment outlawing same-sex marriage. And Anthony J. Nocella II discusses his experience with Save the Kids, a grassroots organization that uses hip-hop activism and the principles of transformative justice to keep kids out of incarceration.

Section Four: Social Networks

Broad and diverse networks make social change possible. No one does it alone; it always involves numerous people working toward a common goal. This section focuses on conference-building and virtual connections. In chapter seven, "The Politics of Planning: Conference Organizing as an Act of Resistance," Jenny Grubbs and

Michael Loadenthal provide a step-by-step outline of how to organize an activist conference. As they clearly explain, such events are necessary for building solidarity, sharing ideas, strategizing for long-term change, and simply meeting like-minded people. That last one is more important than you think—you begin to form bonds of friendship through your activism, which helps sustain your drive for social change. Jeanette Russell walks us through the world of wireless connection with chapter eight, "Social Media and Online Organizing." As the title suggests, Russell discusses how the Internet and social media can be used to spread messages and expand activist networks. She covers everything from tools (Facebook, Twitter, and websites) to strategies (crafting Internet-based sound bites).

Section Five: Institutional Change

This last section addresses the importance of working within the system in order to change the system. There are far too many systems and institutions to cover here. We thus focus on two that have broad appeal: law and education. Dara Lovitz addresses the importance of the legal system in chapter nine, "The Laws and Lawyers of Social Change." She explains why lawyers are needed in the battle for social justice, outlines some historical landmark court cases that have changed our world for the better, and discusses different law careers that activists might pursue. And lastly, chapter ten, "The Courage to Teach Critically: Anti-Oppression and Pro-Justice Dialogues in the Classroom," discusses both the problems and promises of the educational system. Critical pedagogue Rita Verma argues that the classroom should be approached as an opportunity for personal growth, political conversation, and anti-oppression work. The classroom is a place to not only think about, but to actually *do*, social change. This is true for both students and teachers.

Closing Remarks

We have gone to great lengths to provide an accessible and inspiring how-to handbook. We have therefore included a list of helpful books, organizations, and websites at the very end. We hope that these various sources cross-pollinate in your pursuit of peace and

justice. As the famous historian Howard Zinn once said, "You can't be neutral on a moving train."[18] The world is already moving, and it is up to you to move it in the right direction. Action does not guarantee success, but inaction guarantees failure. We hope that you can use this book on your journey toward a better world.