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Cal State Los Angeles
Social Work 482
Fall 2000

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING: Theory & Technology

Syllabus

Course Description

Community organizing is a form of social work practice to address social problems and for the social development of national states. Community organizers use theories and technologies to help citizens join together to bring *their* values and beliefs into action. The social work goal is that they reach for and realize fully their individual and collective human potential.

The particular methods of community organizing in the social work tradition implicitly or explicitly reflect a belief in the possibility for greater “goodness” to emerge in the world. This goodness can be summed up in a set of social conditions that are serially connected: that without righteousness (i.e., morally justifiable action), there is no truth; that without truth, there is no justice; that without justice, there is no freedom (i.e., opportunities for *directly* participating *in* governance); that without freedom, there is no peace; and that without peace, there is no humanity.

SW 482, Community Organizing, is a methods course aimed at surveying the knowledge and skill base of community organizing practice, to familiarize students with the specifics of the organizer’s role and the dynamics of the arena in which the organizer works.

Professional practice is based on praxis, that is, on the dialectic of organizing experience and systematic reflection (theorizing) on it, leading to conscious strategic and tactical action.

Community organizing, as a practical matter, involves four primary tasks: building community, building organization, building mobilization, and building institutions.

Except in the most superficial way, this course does not include study of religious and political movements or social development of national states.

Required Texts

Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).

Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals* (Vintage Books, 1971).

Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991).

Bibliography

1. Required readings are indicated by ">>".
2. *Within* any section of the syllabus, for readings that are marked ">" it is recommended that you select one of the two entries.
3. Readings marked "[ONLINE]" at the end of their entry are available on-line at <http://www.gatherthepeople.org/Pages/CSULA-CO.htm> as Adobe Acrobat files in pdf format.
4. Other readings marked "[RES]" at the end of their entry are available on a reserve basis at the Kennedy Library.

Assigned Reading

Class One

GETTING STARTED

- A. Introductions
- B. Definitions
- C. Character of Organizing
- D. Organizer Roles
- E. Knowledge Base
- F. Class Structure, Requirements & Goals

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #3, The Organizer's Roles" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Warren C. Haggstrom, "The Argument" (unpublished, n.d.). [ONLINE]

>> Warren C. Haggstrom, "Unhappiness and Formal Education" (unpublished, n.d.). [ONLINE]

Class Two

I. FORERUNNERS & PRECURSORS

A. Related Practitioners

1. Prophets

>> Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Prophets* [excerpts from the book, and explanatory comments] (New York: Harper & Row, 1962). [ONLINE]

2. American revolutionaries
3. Settlement and social work organizers
4. Adult educators

A. Institutional Antecedents

>> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "The Fundamentals of Direct Action Organizing," in *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 6-13. [RES]

1. Labor movement
2. Women's movement
3. Populist movement
4. Civil rights movement
5. Anti-war movement
6. Welfare rights movement
7. Gay rights movement

Class Three

8. Alinsky tradition

>> Saul Alinsky, "Of Means and Ends," in (Fred M. Cox, John L. Erlich, Jack Rothman, and John E. Tropman, eds.) *Strategies of Community Organization* (Itasca, Ill.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1970), pp. 199-208. [RES]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "Faith Into Action—Congregational Organizing in Orange County, California," *Organizing*, 3(3/4):31-38 (Fall/Winter 1992). [ONLINE]

>> Warren C. Haggstrom, "For a Democratic Revolution: The Grassroots Perspective" in (John E. Tropman, John L. Erlich, and Jack Rothman, eds.) *Tactics and Techniques of Community Intervention* (Itasca, Ill.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1995), pp. 134-42. [RES]

> Thomas J. Lenz, "Building a Force for the Common Good: United Power for Action and Justice," *Shelterforce Online*, September/October 1998. [ONLINE at <http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/101/lenz.html>]

Class Four

II. PRACTICE THEORY

A. Values in Organizing

>> Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946). [Later editions (1969 and 1990) available in paperback from Vintage Press.]

>> Warren C. Haggstrom, "Basic Values" (unpublished, June 1985). [ONLINE]

> Abraham Joshua Heschel, "Religion in a Free Society" [excerpts], in *The Insecurity of Freedom* (New York: Schocken Books, 1959, 1960, 1963, 1964, 1966), pp. 1-23. [ONLINE]

> Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," in (Hugo Adam Bedau) *Civil Disobedience: Theory and Practice* (New York: Pegasus, 1969), pp. 72-89. [RES]

>> Richard Korn, "The Moral Career of the Human Service Functionary," *The Private Citizen, the Social Expert, and the Social Problem* (in "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #22, Reforming Organizations"). [ONLINE]

Class Five

B. Field of Social Action

>> Moshe ben Asher, "Part One—Practice Theory," *Social Infrastructure Organizing Technology* (Baltimore: School of Social Work & Community Planning, 1980), pp. 2-5. [ONLINE]

>> Richard J. Johns, "Swimming With Sharks," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* (Summer 1973). [ONLINE]

>> Roland Warren, "The Interorganizational Field as a Focus for Investigation," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 12(3):3966-4100 (December 1967). [RES]

Class Six

C. Unified Theory

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #6, Community Organizing Theory" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "Part One—Practice Theory," *Social Infrastructure Organizing Technology* (Baltimore: School of Social Work & Community Planning, 1980), pp. 1-37. [ONLINE]

1. Learning
2. Exchange
3. Reality-construction
4. Development and social infrastructure

D. Theory-Based Practice Roles

Class Seven

III. PRACTICE KNOWLEDGE

A. Definitions of Community

1. Relationships

>> Mark B. Haefele, "You Got Me, Babe—So Who Needs A Bowling League?" Review of *Bowling Alone* by Robert D. Putnam, *L.A. Weekly* (September 8-14, 2000), p. 45. [ONLINE]

>> David A. Hardcastle, Stanley Wenocur, and Patricia R. Powers, "The Concept of Community in Social Work Practice" in *Community Practice: Theories and Skills for Social Workers* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 97-115. [RES]

2. Power structure theories

> Robert R. Alford, "Health Care Reform and Structural Interests," *Health Care Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 1-21.

B. Organizational Structure

1. Contingencies of learning and exchange
2. Purposes/goals
3. Institutional and legal forms
4. Resource bases
5. Membership types
6. Tax status options
7. Decision-making
 - a. structural
 - b. policy
 - c. management
 - d. supervision
 - e. judicial
 - f. strategic

>> _____, "A to Z of Strategic Planning Process" (source unknown, n.d.). [ONLINE]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #32, Decision-Making" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

> Peter B. Vaill, "Some Criteria for the Evaluation of Strategic Alternatives" (Management Arts, 1980). [ONLINE]

> Peter B. Vaill, "What Makes A Choice or Decision of 'Strategic Importance'" (source unknown, n.d.). [ONLINE]

C. Organizational Culture

1. Ideological realities
2. Objectives
3. Tasks
4. Labor division
5. Transitions
6. Leader roles
7. Member/constituent/client/citizen roles

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #7, Organizational Structure & Culture."

Class Eight

8. Staff and cadre roles

>> Lee Staples, "Role of the Organizer," *Roots to Power* (New York: Praeger, 1984). [RES]

9. Consultant roles

D. Problem-Solving Processes

1. Values development
2. Leadership development

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #13, Leadership Development" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Developing Leadership," in *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 86-93. [RES]

> Si Kahn, "Leaders," in *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (Silver Spring, Md.: National Association of Social Workers, 1991), pp. 21-49. [RES]

3. Decision-making
4. Problem/goal specification

Class Nine

5. Action style

>> Saul D. Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971). [RES]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #33, Conflict and Cooperation" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

6. Issue, strategy, and tactic development

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #5, Issue Development" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Choosing an Issue," "Developing a Strategy," and "A Guide to Tactics," in *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 14-18, 20-33, and 34-41. [RES]

> Lee Staples, "'Analyze and Strategize': Issues and Strategy," *Roots to Power* (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 53-92. [RES]

7. Change barriers

Class Ten

E. Technologies

1. Fundraising

>> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Grassroots Fundraising," in *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 176-83. [RES]

2. Community research and analysis

> Will Collette, "Research for Organizing," in (Lee Staples) *Roots to Power* (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 142-51. [RES]

> Si Kahn, "Research," in *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (Silver Spring, Md.: National Association of Social Workers, 1991), pp. 153-62. [RES]

3. Intelligence
4. Community entry
5. Doorknocking
6. Housemeetings
7. Role-playing ("Rehearsing")

Class Eleven

8. Organizing (founding) meetings
9. Meeting management

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizing Training, Organizing Guide #18, "Meetings" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Planning and Facilitating Meetings," *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 94-103. [RES]

> Si Kahn, "Meetings," in *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (Silver Spring, Md.: National Association of Social Workers, 1991), pp. 113-35. [RES]

Class Twelve

10. Campaigns

>> Moshe ben Asher, "Before and After the Action," in (Lee Staples) *Roots to Power* (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 160-63 [RES] or "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #12, Before and After the Action" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Lee Staples, "'Moving into Action:' Making and Carrying Out Action Plans," in *Roots to Power* (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 93-119. [RES]

11. Mobilization

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #43, Mobilization Nuts & Bolts" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #8, Planning An Action" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

12. Media and publicity

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #26, Media" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Using the Media," in *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 116-23. [RES]

Class Thirteen

13. Negotiations

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #14, Negotiations" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

Class Fourteen

14. Volunteers

>> AFSCME Education Department, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #35, Getting People to Help." [ONLINE]

- 15. Training
- 16. Budgeting
- 17. Evaluation

>> Darwin D. Solomon, "Evaluating Community Programs," in (Fred M. Cox, John L. Erlich, Jack Rothman, and John E. Tropman, eds.) *Tactics and Techniques of Community Practice* (Itasca, Ill.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1977), pp. 326-40. [RES]

18. Administration and management

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #25, Management" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Supervision," *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 202-08. [RES]

Class Fifteen

IV. ORGANIZATION-BUILDING

>> Warren C. Haggstrom, "The Tactics of Organization Building," in (Jack Rothman, John Erlichman, and John Tropman, eds.) *Strategies of community Organization* (5th ed.), (Itasca, Ill.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1995), pp. 341-56. [RES]

>> Lee Staples, "'Can't Ya Hear Me Knocking?': An Organizing Model," *Roots to Power* (New York: Praeger, 1984), pp. 15-52. [RES]

A. Developing or Adopting a Model

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #31, Modeling a New Organization" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

1. Personal agenda
2. Organizational agenda
3. Sponsorship and funding
4. Input and output targets
5. Recruiting strategies

>> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Recruiting," *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 78-85. [RES]

>> Si Kahn, "Members," in *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (Silver Spring, Md.: National Association of Social Workers, 1991), pp. 97-112. [RES]

6. Decision-making structures and processes
7. Action style
8. Pitch
9. Internal and external communications

- B. Organizing Sponsorship
- C. Documentation and Legal Groundwork

Class Sixteen

- D. Getting Started
 1. Targeting a community or constituency
 2. Community analysis

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #2, Casing the Community" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

3. Legitimizers and gatekeepers
4. Entry
5. Organizing drive

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #15, Door-knocking" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #46, One-to-One Congregational Visiting" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #47, One-to-One Guide" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #48, Quick One-to-Ones" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "Neighborhood Organizing Committees" (unpublished, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

- E. Organizing Meeting
 - 1. Timing
 - 2. Groundwork
 - 3. Organizer's role
 - 4. Committee preparation
 - 5. Agenda
 - 6. Chairing
 - 7. Meeting management
 - 8. Follow-up

Class Seventeen

F. Campaigns and Actions

>> Shel Trapp, "Building Power & Victories," in *Dynamics of Organizing* (Chicago: National Training and Information Center, 1976), pp. 16-18. [RES]

- 1. Strategic context
- 2. Action principles

>> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Designing Actions" and "Holding Accountability Sessions," in *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 48-54 and 56-59. [RES]

- 3. Organizational mileage
- 4. Issue criteria and development

>> Si Kahn, "Issues," in *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (Silver Spring, Md.: National Association of Social Workers, 1991), pp. 79-96. [RES]

- 5. Targets
- 6. Coalitions

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #39, Coalitions" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

> Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max, "Building and Joining Coalitions," *Organizing for Social Change, A Manual for Activists in the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991), pp. 70-77. [RES]

> Si Kahn, "Coalitions," in *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (Silver Spring, Md.: National Association of Social Workers, 1991), pp. 238-45. [RES]

- 7. Tactics

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #21, Alinsky on Organizing Tactics" (Gather the People: unpublished, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

>> Si Kahn, "Tactics," in *Organizing, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders* (Silver Spring, Md.: National Association of Social Workers, 1991), pp. 163-78. [RES]

8. Media

Class Eighteen

G. Survival

>> Moshe ben Asher, "Grassroots Organizational Battles," *Social Work* 21(2):151 (March 1976). [RES]

>> Moshe ben Asher, "GTP Organizer Training, Training Guide #24, Organizational Survival" (Gather the People, c. 2000). [ONLINE]

1. External threats
2. Internal threats
3. Succession
4. Termination

H. Pitfalls and Pratfalls

1. Fear and anxiety
2. Over-confidence
3. Under-estimation
4. Insufficient resources
5. Insufficient energy
6. Morale collapse
7. Personal life strains