Spring 2022

SW 312 Grassroots Community Organizing in Detroit for Changing Times

Method Area: Community Organizing

Instructors: Diana WasaAnung’gokwe Seales (810-240-7459), dseales@umich.edu

Schedule: Monday and Wednesday 10 am – 1 pm

Class Location: Field trips and online

ZOOM: 10 am Join Zoom Meeting

https://umich.zoom.us/j/9278398274 (Links to an external site.)

Course Description:

This field and partially online course will focus on emerging work during the COVID-19 epidemic specifically as it relates to Detroit. Metro Detroit hospitals are quickly hitting capacity for COVID-19 patients as the city becomes one of the nation’s “hot spots” for the virus. What does this mean for a major city that was already battling the impacts of poverty, racism, and a lack of healthcare access? In this course we will learn about how different community organizations are responding: some are shutting down operations while others are transforming their organizations completely to meet the needs of the community in innovative and creative ways. Students will have opportunities to join efforts happening in Detroit now and remotely connect with organizations working on the ground. Projects range from helping the efforts to turn the water back on for the 10s of thousands of residents without water to orgs running town halls for mental health and grief and getting families and kids into remote sports activities to keep little league teams (and families) together. Students in this course will have access to a number of online organizer tool kits and class conversations will also cover self-care for yourself as an organizer and providing care for others in the community. Everyone will come out of this class making a meaningful contribution to the current crisis in Detroit, build their own “organizers tool-kit” full of activities to take with them into any community organization scenario, and a number of self care sessions.

This course looks at movements, resistance, resilience, and liberation. Community Organizing is growing as an academic field, especially as it relates to urban studies. A growing body of evidence reveals that people of color and low-income persons have borne greater environmental and health risks than society at large in their neighborhood, workplace, and playgrounds. Over the last decade, grassroots activists have attempted to change the way governments implement environmental and health laws. Grassroots groups have organized, educated, and empowered themselves to
improve the way government regulations and environmental policies are administered.

In a class setting, we will connect history, current events, and real-life experiences to local organizing and movement struggles that build power for our communities. These courses will utilize highly interactive popular education methods where participants share political analysis, learn facilitation and organizing skills, and think together about long-term, transformative strategies to build environmental, racial, and economic justice.

It is critical for organizers, activists, scholars, and community members to come together, connect our work with each other, share our experiences and place our local organizing within a larger historical and political context. We can build deep and strong social movements that act strategically and collectively over the long term.

Course Objectives:

- Students will develop actual tools in popular education, facilitation and workshop organizing that can be applied immediately in the field
- Understand the roots of Environmental Racism/Injustice
- Understand how organizing in grassroots communities is unique
- Understanding and practicing grassroots methods of organizing from the block to block and neighborhood to the neighborhood level
- Understanding the differences between organizing methods: protests, campaigns, community organizing, and movement building

Requirements for Academic Credit:

40% Class Participation: Attendance and participation in all online class sessions are critical for the learning process in this course. For this reason, students are expected to attend all class sessions. Exceptions will only be made for certain circumstances. There will be no make up for missed class sessions. We will meet in the classroom or via zoom every Monday at 10am for 2 hours. Everything else will be done online and at your own pace and in affinity groups (there will be 2 book assignments and with each book assignment there will be a 'book group' discussion with your affinity group (about 3 people). There will be a weekly discussion prompt. Everyone is expected to at least pose one question and respond to two other prompts.

40% Individual Final Project: Everyone will work with a group of your choice remotely (Choices below). Upon completion of your remote project you will create a creative ‘final product’ - This can not be a term paper or report it needs to be something that upon looking at it for a few minutes anyone could get a good idea of the work and lessons gleaned from your work. This product is at your discretion, but this could be a GOOD powerpoint, zine (Links to an external site.), Prezi, comic book. Due last day of class.
20% Reflection Paper: Students must turn in a completed paper by the **last day of class.** To complete the assignment, turn your paper as an MS Word attachment into Canvas, Assignments, Credit Paper.

Write a three-page, double spaced, paper reflecting on what you learned in this class and how you anticipate integrating this learning into your perspectives and practice as a social worker. Incorporate at least three required readings into the reflection, referencing specific quotes, and include a list of sources at the end.

**Please address the following questions in your paper:**

What course content had the most impact on your learning and why?

What that you have learned, if anything, has surprised or inspired you?

Think about the questions you had and assumptions you about grassroots organizing and environmental justice before you came into the course. What has shifted for you over the week?

How do you think your learning in this course will affect your current or future career?

**SAMPLE IN CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

The courses rely on assignments to engage students and assess their comprehension of the course materials. For example:

**ORGANIZING ROLE PLAYS.** Early in the term students will be assigned to a small group of 4-5 persons that take on the identity of a community organizing group (either an actual organizing group from the community/region or a fictional one). From week to week, small groups will be given different scenarios and activities requiring them to implement various skills, analyses, and frameworks addressed in the class. For example, during a week covering grassroots fundraising, small groups could be tasked with creating a grassroots fundraising plan for the organization. Assignments related to campaign planning, issue identification, research, and direct action can be organized on a similar basis.

**ORGANIZATION/ CAMPAIGN CASE STUDY.** Students will be asked to analyze news articles or videos related to a specific organizing campaign, and write a case study about the campaign, such as explaining how the issue was identified, writing out a campaign timeline or strategy chart, or answering other questions designed to assess their understanding of organizing vocabulary and concepts.

---

**SYNCHRONOUS - WEEK 1 May 10: CLASS UNIT ONE: USING CREATIVITY IN GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING**

**SECTION A: Becoming familiar with course tools**

**INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL CHANGE AND POWER.**
These sessions provide students with a basic overview of a definition of community organizing, its main concepts, and introduce some historical and political context to the study of organizing.

**Week 1: COURSE INTRODUCTION & THEORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE**

The first week of the course will introduce students to the course, the instructor, and one another. We will use 1-2 icebreakers during the beginning of class this week. In addition to covering typical course business (syllabus, expectations, etc) we will allocate time for an exercise designed to introduce students to the basic ideas of community organizing, and how it differs from other approaches including transformative, direct service, advocacy, and electoral politics. Basic Environmental Justice timeline, course toolkits and the 12 roles of a successful organizer will be covered.

Films, Articles, chapters, and in-class exercises:

- Introduction & ice-breaker activities. Please bring an object as a way of introducing yourself (this can be something that speaks to how you found your purpose in life, who your people are, where you come from....)

**Required Reading:**

none

__________________________________________

**Week 2 - MAY 9 Asynchronous lesson**

**Required Reading:**

- EJ Principles [https://www.ejnet.org/eg/principles.html](https://www.ejnet.org/eg/principles.html) * (Links to an external site.)
- Joyful Militancy ch. 1: Empire, Militancy and Joy [https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/joyful-militancy-bergman-montgomery](https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/joyful-militancy-bergman-montgomery) * (Links to an external site.)

**BLOG READINGS:**
Adrienne maree brown, PANDOWRIMO: Conversation between the crisis and the virus [http://adriennemareebrown.net](http://adriennemareebrown.net) (Links to an external site.)

Joyful Militancy Blog: [Friendship is a root of Freedom](http://adriennemareebrown.net) (Links to an external site.)

PODCAST:

Hidden Brain: YOU 2.0 (How design thinking can help you find your life’s purpose) [YOU 2.0: Getting Unstuck](http://adriennemareebrown.net) (Links to an external site.)

Hidden Brain: [Why Loneliness Is a Health Issue](http://adriennemareebrown.net) (Links to an external site.)

ACTIVITY: Please write a reflection based on the reading in the discussion section of canvas under “week 2 section 1 REFLECTION”. What did you learn and what did you find helpful from today’s readings, blog posts and podcasts?

**Week 2 Wednesday May 11**

**COMMUNITIES, POWER, AND THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF ORGANIZING (DEVELOPING FACILITATION AND POPULAR EDUCATION SKILLS)**

This week focuses on some contemporary debates within community organizing to help students engage the question, "what is organizing for?" Assigned readings ask students to identify key aspects or elements of different organizing models and consider the relationship between organizers and communities.

There are 3 sections for our asynchronous class this week 1. watch the core concepts videos, 2. respond to the survey, 3. Post on the discussion board. I recommend you do these activities during our class time tomorrow but they may be completed anytime this week as long as it is before our next session Monday. The below information is also on our canvas assignments and announcement page.

**Week 2 Wednesday:** In this class, we will spend time looking inward to discuss what drives our interest in social justice work, to explore our own stories, and how our perspectives are shaped by who we are. We will explore being vulnerable and our understanding about the power and potentially of storytelling as a method of community change work. We will also do an activity that examines how we think about ourselves as social justice leaders and how we need to be aware of why, who, and how we engage in social justice work.

**ASYNCHRONOUS LESSON:**

Our lesson for this week is to start to understand some of the core concepts of social justice.
1. watch short videos that pertain to some social justice core concepts:

POWER AND PRIVILEGE:
Sometimes you're a caterpillar: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=sometimes+you%27re+a+caterpillar
Fear of a brown planet: Aamer Rahman (Fear of a Brown Planet) - Reverse Racism

LEARNING FROM THE COMMUNITY:
Malik Yakini: Food, race and justice | Malik Yankini | TEDxMuskegon
Winonna LaDuke: TEDxTC - Winona LaDuke - Seeds of Our Ancestors, Seeds of Life

UNDERSTANDING POSITIONALITY AND VULNERABILITY
Brene Brown: The power of vulnerability | Brené Brown

1. Once you have completed the videos please take this survey: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1xxA1xn84kmTBHOb33mhPVS2iJjmiZi2Msg8i0WArfBk/edit

This survey will also count as your discussion post. Most of the tabs I've created on canvas are not showing up as visable for students and I'm still working with IT to resolve
the issue. Please also pick 2 - 3 pieces of media (readings, podcasts or videos) to digest.

1. Add to the discussions board (on canvas) one question and two responses to other students from Chapter one of Joyful Militancy.

- Discussion post 1: what stood out to you in chapter 1? Did anything resonate with you in particular? Anything that you found challenging?

- Discussion post 2: Reflecting on our conversation Monday do you have any reflections from our "fist to 5" exercise? What did you learn from your classmate? Did you find the exercise useful?

_____________________________

WEEK 3: May 24th & 26th What is the role of joy and happiness in organizing?

ASYNCHRONOUS - MONDAY May 24th

Zoom agenda:

- Check in: what brings you joy?
- Activity: how can we measure happiness
- Entering, Building and Exiting Communities
- Small group activity: community organizing
- Check in on final projects

WEDNESDAY May26th - Art & Activism workshop with Alejandra

_____________________________

WEEK 4: May 23

week 4 asynchronous lesson

Art and Activism and self-guided tour of Detroit:

Week 4 – This week we will explore the relationship between art and activism.

If you are able – I would like for you to take a day trip to Detroit and follow the provided self guided tour. This is specifically for the Eastern Market Murals – but other locations are suggested as well. If you do not have your own transportation there is an A2 to Detroit shuttle. The times and pick up spots may be found here:

This week we will be exploring art and activism. Monday is asynchronous work and Wednesday is 2 pre-recorded workshops from myself and Alendra Alvarez on Art and Activism in Detroit and Chicago. THIS WEEK OR NEXT WEEK PLAN TO MAKE A DAY TRIP ON YOUR OWN (OR BRING FRIENDS!) TO DETROIT TO SEE ART AND
ACTIVISM IN ACTION). If you are out of the area there are a few videos and weblinks that include many of the sites (but there is nothing like seeing it in person).

As always, I want you to engage critically with the subject at hand. Think of times you have been moved by art. Think of a time you have been repulsed by art (an example is the idea where Pepsi tried to put their logo on the moon - https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/pepsi-space-billboards-logo-satellite-ads-startrocket-a8872356.html (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.): https://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/14/magazine/14Ideas-Section2-C-t-009.html (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)).

Art has launched many movements and art has also been criticized within the activist movement for being appropriative and for infringing on established neighborhoods and ushering in gentrification. The below articles, videos and podcasts looks at this issue from a variety of perspectives – please bring your OWN perspective into the conversation!

Please pick 3 pieces below to engage with for the CANVAS discussion questions.

VIDEOS:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RYQNMAEhDxw (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUoUy7kEGsE (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1eXMcTF-E0 (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

ARTICLES:
https://www.theringer.com/2018/10/18/17989192/mural-economy-street-art-detroit-graffiti (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)
Discussion Question 1: From Chapter 2 of Joyful Militancy the authors ask at the end of the chapter, "What makes people fight for each other, support each other in radical ways, and construct durable, loving bonds?" How would you answer this from your own experience or using Ch.2 for JM or any of this week's materials?

Discussion Question 2: Play NO BURNOUT BINGO! The NO BURNOUT BINGO file is attached to this lesson - please download (If you can not find the attachment for any reason I have also put it in the week 3 folder of Files on CANVAS. Find 4 - 5 things from the Bingo chart that you can commit to doing this week. On the discussion board let us know which bingo items you picked and why.

Discussion Question 3: From the material we covered this week around art and activism, what inspired you the most? what challenged you?

Discussion Question 4: PLEASE share your favorite (or just examples) of arts and activism. Share pics or links etc. These can be music videos, youtube.

WORKSHOP 1: Eastern Market -

Watch my presentation on “Eastern Mural Case study: Is gentrification an expression of settler colonialism?”.

https://youtu.be/-WytCFqli8w (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

Eastern Market discussion question: After watching the presentation please answer the question posed during the presentation discussion: “Think of a time a piece of outside or community art (loosely defined) made you feel welcome or unwelcome. What was it and why did it make you feel this way? It could be a sign, statue, mural, or landscape – you can be creative with this.
Chicago Art discussion question: Please write a few sentences as a reflection of the Chicago art and activism presentation. Also, answer one of the prompts that Alejandra gave you within the presentation.

SELF GUIDED Eastern Mural Tour:

*Murals in the Market Exploration and Journal Activity*

Spend about 30 minutes or so exploring the Murals in the Market website (https://www.muralsinthemarket.com/) or in-person (explore around eastern market 2934 Russell street), particularly the murals themselves, as well as the artist bios for those murals that speak to you. Just let yourself go and enjoy the exploration.

After you’ve spent this initial time with the artwork and artists, select 3 murals that stand out to you the most. Take out your journal and consider the following questions for each of the 3 murals you selected. Just let your writing flow, using the questions as a general guide. There’s no right or wrong here; the idea is to use writing to explore your thoughts about each of the 3 murals and enter it into the MURAL JOURNAL on discussions for this week.

**MURAL REFLECTION:**

- What individual parts can you identify that make up this mural?
- How have these parts been put together to make something larger happen?
- If the mural were an object with moving pieces, what are the key pieces and how have they been fit together to make the thing work?
- Ultimately, what does this thing do? What purpose does it serve?

If you have the ability to explore the city on foot or by bike I would also invite you to check out **the Heidelberg Project** (3600 Heidelberg st) (https://www.heidelberg.org/) and **Dabls** (6559 Grand Blvd Ave) (http://www.mbad.org/) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

**FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL:**

Please write a short proposal on your final project (this only needs to be a few sentences) - this should be based on the issue/organization you chose last week. Please let me know if this will be an individual, pair or group project. There are examples of past projects under “student showcase” in files on canvas.
WEEK 5: May 30th Memorial Day and work catch up & final project proposal week

WEEK 6: June 6th

OPTIONAL zoom check in:

WEEK 6: We are the future: How can we use Sci-fi, Afro & Indigenous Futurism to work with Communities to envision a better future?

Asynchronous LESSON

For this week you may pick from two tracks – the afro-indigenous futurism or indigenous futurism. If you’d like to learn a little bit about both you can do a combination of the two (pick a few videos, podcast etc from each to compare. We are focusing this week on futurism to continue building on the concepts of using narrative and story telling in community organizing. There are also many elements of ‘learning from the community’ in Indigenous and Afro-futurism. Indigenous Futurism and Afrofuturism encapsulate multiple modes of art making from literature to visual arts, fashion and music. Inspired by Afrofuturism, the term was coined by Dr. Grace Dillon (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.), professor in the Indigenous Nations Studies Program at Portland State University. In the anthology, Walking the Clouds: An Anthology of Indigenous Science Fiction, Dillon outlines how science-fiction can aid processes of decolonization (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.).

Please review and choose a few pieces to read, listen to, and watch below to learn more about the Futurism movement as a process for community healing, visioning and organizing. After processing the material please answer the questions for week 8 on the discussion board.

FOR ALL:

Readings: (both readings can be found in the files section of CANVAS in week 8)

- Indigenous Science (Fiction)
Coming to You From An Indigenous Future

Podcast: This American Life *We Are in the Future* (Trigger warning – ACT 2 contains the narrators experience of sexual violence. The Act 1 is about Afro-futurism in Detroit and features a number of community organizers including a past mayoral candidate. I only ask that you listen to Act 1 that is about Detroit – but of course you are welcome to listen to the whole podcast :) (Links to an external site.)

Chapter 4: Joyful Militarism -

**INDIGENOUS FUTURISM TRACK:**

Short Indigenous-Futurism films:

- **A.Lie.Nation:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhlKs_3Srj0&t=9s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhlKs_3Srj0&t=9s) (multi-media piece that features traditional drums, Inuk throat singing, Anishinaabe poet John Trudell and a variety of experimental techniques)

- **Wakening:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbmi2ff3MBk&t=3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbmi2ff3MBk&t=3s) (Links to an external site.)

- **Biimadizowin:**

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWjnYKyiUB8&t=566s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWjnYKyiUB8&t=566s) (Links to an external site.)
• **How to Steal A Canoe** ([Links to an external site.](#))

• **Four Faces of the moon:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWe--sysNkk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWe--sysNkk) ([Links to an external site.](#))

• **Keep Calm and Decolonize: Flood** ([Links to an external site.](#))

**AFRO-FUTURISM TRACK:**

Blog: *“Your mind will tell you lies but your body can’t” – An interview with Zainab Amadhy* ([Links to an external site.](#))

Short videos about Zainab’s Amadhy’s Afro-Futurism book, *Moons of Palmares*:

• **What inspired Moons of Palmares?** ([Links to an external site.](#))

**Dirty Computer[Emotion picture]:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdH2Sy-BINE&t=582s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdH2Sy-BINE&t=582s) ([Links to an external site.](#))
QUESTIONS: (please be sure to answer each question and respond to at least 2 other students)

Question 1: Did you pick one track or complete a combination of tracks? What were some of the main themes from the readings, podcasts and films? Differences? How does (or doesn’t) Indigenous and Afro-futurism differ from more mainstream ‘science fiction’?

Question 2: How does AF and IF use concepts of the past, cultural and ancestry in the Futurist/ sci-fi stories and art?

Question 3: How can AF and IF be used in helping the community vision for the future? What elements of story telling do you think are being used in some of the pieces?

Question 4: There are SO MANY great examples of Afro&Indigenous Futurism from Black Panther, to episodes of Black Mirror, Get Out….the list could go on forever. What are some examples that you can think of that you’d like to share with the rest of the class? Add a link if you can!

Question 5: What social justice issue or organization will you learn more about for your final project? This coming Monday we will discuss the final project requirements but you should have some idea what you would like to do coming into class. This may be an individual, pair, or group project. The last day of class will be our project presentation day.
This week you may choose between two asynchronous lessons:

OPTION 1: Grassroots Coalition Building

OPTION 2: Alternatives to policing (found at the end of option 2)

Both have the same required readings:

Required Readings (in files on canvas):

- Alicia Garza The Herstory of BLM: [https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory](https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory)
- Andrea Smith. “The Three Pillars of Privilege”
- MacIntosh. Invisible Knapsack
- Chapter 5 Joyful Militancy: Undoing Rigid Radicalism, Activating Joy
- Joyful Militancy blog: Breaking down the walls around each other – interview with Kelsey Cham
  C: [https://joyfulmilitancy.com/2018/05/02/breaking-down-the-walls-around-each-other-interview-with-kelsey-cham-c](https://joyfulmilitancy.com/2018/05/02/breaking-down-the-walls-around-each-other-interview-with-kelsey-cham-c)

OPTION 1: Grassroots Coalition Building

Welcome to your very last asynchronous lesson for SW312! We’ll look at coalition-building within community organizations. I’d like for you to reflect on the book Joyful Militancy and how it fits into social justice movements. The second part will look at the People’s Movement Assembly and how that has been implemented successfully into community organizing (specifically in the South and in Detroit). At the end is a preview for our next “in-person” synchronous zoom class. Enjoy!

Question 1 - Book club book report: What was your overall impression of the book Joyful Militancy. What chapter or passage did you like the most of out the book? What would you recommend for future classes to enrich the conversation around this book? How could it feel more like a book club conversation in breakout groups?
Please check out the interview with the co-author of Joyful Militancy Carla Bergman

**Interview 030 | carla bergman, co-author of "Joyful Militancy" (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)**

And this post from the blog

**PMA videos**

**Detroit &MWRO:** Detroit People's Movement Assembly: Marching to June 21st & the US Social Forum (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

**Detroit & EMEAC:** our power video (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

**Southern Movement Assembly & Project South:** Special Report: Self Governance - The Southern Movements & Way (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

Question 2: From the PMA manual what were you were most interested in? How were pieces of the manual implemented into community action (from what you can tell from the 3 videos)

Question 3: What were some of the similarities between the Detroit and Southern Movement assembly actions? What were the differences?

**OPTION 2 Alternatives to policing**
Question 1 - Book club book report:  What was your overall impression of the book Joyful Militancy.  What chapter or passage did you like the most out the book?  What would you recommend for future classes to enrich the conversation around this book?  How could it feel more like a book club conversation in breakout groups?

Please check out the interview with the co-author of Joyful Militancy Carla Bergman

Interview 030 | carla bergman, co-author of "Joyful Militancy" (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

A new vision for community safety:

In fall of 2020 the GEO and RAs went on strike at the University of Michigan. One of the GEO demands that received nationwide coverage was to disarm and change campus policing policy. Two of my favorite pieces on imagining what a world post policing could look like are linked below. One is a 1A podcast featuring Opal Tometi (One of the founding women of the #BLM movement) and the other is a slide show of posters with slogans of new visions of public safety.

https://www.fastcompany.com/90514184/these-posters-help-you-picture-alternatives-to-policing (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)
https://the1a.org/segments/what-we-talk-about-when-we-talk-about-police-reform/ (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

Herstory of #Black Lives Matter. #BLM has become synonymous with police reform but the herstory of the movement is rarely in the forefront of the conversation. Take a look at the below links for a deeper look at the roots of the movement.

https://thefeministwire.com/2014/10/blacklivesmatter-2/ (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

DISCUSSION POST: After reading about new community visions for public safety and the background articles about #BLM what slogans for community safety can you come up with?

DISCUSSION POST: From Monday's conversation and this weeks readings how do you think you understand your own positionality better in a way that could make you a more effective organizer?
LAST DAY OF CLASS June 24th

DUE:

- Evaluation & Reflection
- Reflection Papers
- Final Project

REQUIRED TEXT:

Joyful Militancy: Building Thriving Resistance in Toxic Times (Anarchist Interventions) by Carla Bergman and Nick Montgomery

"Absolutely what we need in these days of spreading gloom. A very well argued case for joyful militancy, and against the dead hand of puritanical revolution. Read it, live it!"—John Holloway, author of Crack Capitalism

Why do radical movements and spaces sometimes feel laden with fear, anxiety, suspicion, self-righteousness, and competition? Montgomery and Bergman call this phenomenon rigid radicalism: congealed and toxic ways of relating that have seeped into social movements, posing as the “correct” way of being radical. In conversation with organizers and intellectuals from a wide variety of political currents, the authors explore how rigid radicalism smuggles itself into radical spaces, and how it is being undone.

Interviewees include Silvia Federici, adrienne maree brown, Marina Sitrin, Gustavo Esteva, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Walidah Imarisha, Margaret Killjoy, Glen Coulthard, Richard Day, and more.

PLEASE PURCHASE BEFORE THE START OF CLASS: May be purchased on Amazon.com for $10 - $13 or online independent booksellers. Kindle version available to circumvent handling

https://www.akpress.org/joyful-militancy.html (Links to an external site.)
https://joyfulmilitancy.com/2017/09/04/intro/ (Links to an external site.)

This is the first time we have used this text in this course. Other books that have been used and are very useful for the topic at hand are adrienne maree brown’s book, Emergent Strategy and Eric Mann’s book, Playbook for Progressive’s.
Possible groups or events to look into for your final project:

POSSIBLE GROUPS:

*BIRWOOD HOUSE*

https://www.detroitjournalism.org/2018/01/31/community-houses-detroit-taking-neighborhoods-new-level/ (Links to an external site.)

*DETROIT POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE*


*DETROIT WATER SHUT OFFS - WE THE PEOPLE*

https://www.wethepeopleofdetroit.com/get-involved (Links to an external site.)

*GENERAL BAKER INSTITUTE*

https://lsa.umich.edu/sid/events-news/all-news/detroiters-speak-debut-at-the-new-general-baker-institute.html (Links to an external site.)

*SID PLUS*

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18mKYOHZ8stMrQQR0OeR4kJT6bnf9wmMPcD78He0R4uY/edit (Links to an external site.)

Increase the University of Michigan’s impact in Detroit by focusing on 3 emerging areas (and anchor groups).

*FORGOTTEN HARVEST*

https://www.forgottenharvest.org/covid19/ (Links to an external site.)

*DETROIT COVID19 RESPONSE*

https://www.facebook.com/groups/2554127328195074/ (Links to an external site.)

CONNECT2COMMUNITY

https://connect2community.umich.edu (Links to an external site.)

Noteworthy workshops and events: (attend one or all as your final project)

*The Wilds Beyond Climate Justice*

A gathering at the end of hope, happening 31 May to 4 June 2021. The Wilds Beyond Climate Justice is a global online event for us to engage each other in activities, actions, and conversations that boldly defy Western logic and sing new possibilities into being. One part ceremony, one part workshop, and one part creative arts project, the Wilds Beyond Climate Justice will feature presentations and workshops from a number of Detroit artists, culture creators, and healers. More information can be found here:
Course Summary: