

Hi! You're reading the online version of *Pressure Drop Part II*, the Rainforest Action Network (RAN) organizer guide. It is the counterpart to the *Pressure Drop Primer*. Think of *The Pressure Drop Primer* – as chapters 1-2, and *Pressure Drop Part II* as chapters 3-9. In here, we'll tackle things like anti-oppression, chapter building, advanced chapter building, power and strategy, media, tactics, and resources.

This isn't a rulebook, or a paint-by-numbers guide to saving the world in a few days. It is a growing, reflexive, living breathing resource for organization building. It's something constantly updated and revised. We want this to be a space where you can share your experiences, what works and what doesn't. There are lots of great resources out there, many of which helped us write this. You can find a list of other manuals at the end of this zine. We'd especially like to acknowledge the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) guide as inspiring a lot of our work in this. Please use and distribute the information in here freely – it is “copyleft.” That means as long as you give props and credit, and as long as your use of it is also copyleft, feel free to share as much information as possible.

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Love,
Rainforest Action Network

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Chapter “3”

Anti-Oppression 101

Alliance building, and tips for a

liberatory organization

When we use the term “privilege,” we mean a right, advantage, favor or immunity specially granted to one group or class and withheld from others.

In the United States, we are often taught to think of various people as “disadvantaged,” but we rarely think about how that disadvantage creates a distinct advantage (privilege) to dominant groups. Often, dominant groups in society fail to recognize their privilege and how it comes at the expense of others. This plays itself out in every aspect of life – it can be as simple as going to the store to buy a band-aid. Chances are, white people will find a band-aid that matches their skin tone, while people of color will not. Even though it may seem insignificant, added together, these small examples reinforce whom our society is built for – and for whom it is not. Other examples are not as small: people of color are three times more likely to be pulled over by the police, even though white people are four times more likely to actually possess drugs in their car. Therefore, passing safely by the police is a privilege granted to white people.

Our organizations and movements, unfortunately, are not free of these hierarchies and often deeply struggle with them.

A little story about our divisions

When the United States was beginning to form, there was a hierarchy of oppression that kept everyone subservient to someone above them. The King of England demanded goods from the Jamestown white elite who exploited and controlled the white frontiersman who, in order to appease the elite with money and land, slaughtered Indigenous people and brutalized African slaves. Many whites joined Indigenous and African rebellions. The white elite worked to stop this because they knew such an alliance would become too powerful and would succeed at overthrowing the control that the elite and the King had. So in order to separate the whites from everyone else, they started giving more privileges (land and better treatment) to the white servants. This worked. The working class whites effectively abandoned the movements for change and to this day these groups have problems working together.

- Howard Zinn, 1980.

Today we see it on a global scale, where movements are segregated and compete over funding, resources and attention, leading to the development of “solutions” that harm other people’s communities. Clearly, were we able to overcome these divisions, our movements for change would look very different and be far more powerful.

Working in healthy, diverse alliances in which everyone has a voice and feels respected and included doesn’t just happen because you want it to. **Intentions are not enough.** We

have many divisions to overcome if we want to work in diverse movements for change. We need to know how to be **allies** with each other. Being an ally isn't taught. To the contrary, we are taught to maintain our privilege (often unconsciously) at the expense of others and maintain our distance out of fear. Being an ally must be learned.

Being an ally means a lot of things. It means personally working to challenge and change the behaviors and institutions that make people's lives unjust. Inequalities based on things like race, culture, age, wealth, gender and sexual preference are so integrated into our everyday lives that unless we are purposefully working against these inequalities as allies, we are supporting them. That's what we mean by the word "anti-oppression." It's not possible to just be "non-oppressive." Being a non-something is a non-possibility in a world as crazy as ours. As Howard Zinn puts it, "you can't be neutral on a moving train." Instead of just being against oppression, you can be for social, economic and environmental justice and for human and (non-human) rights. Anti-oppression is a pair of glasses to look at the world through as well as a lifelong process of unlearning and learning; it is looking at our identities and the kinds of power we have or don't have because of them. It also means taking action.

Working for Social Justice in Everything We Do

Confronting privilege or ways you've been duped because of a group you belong to is a complicated, lifelong process, but there are things you can do to confront these issues head on. There is no comprehensive guide for how to be an ally, but here are some things we can all work toward:

- **Become an ally to yourself.** If you can't stand up for yourself, how are you going to stand up for anyone else?
- Work with the perspective that **social, economic and environmental issues are interconnected and interdependent.** People currently have unequal access to clean and healthy food, air, water, homes and land. These are historic inequalities, and they continue to be largely based on race, class, gender and sexuality.
- **Understand and learn about systems of oppression** and challenging the power structures which support those systems and create injustices.
- **Understand that we all have multiple and fluid identities.** There are no pure cultures or identities. One's gender, race, class or other identifier may change over time, or one person may embody multiple races, genders, cultures and ethnicities simultaneously. Don't box people in. It's suffocating.
- Incorporate the principles of **participatory democracy** in our meetings and actions and recognize that all people should have equal access to the decision-making processes that affect them.
- Take responsibility for **equalizing power** and creating a space where all are encouraged to actively engage, listen, speak and act with respect. Don't place the responsibility for fighting oppression or teaching others about their oppression on those who are targeted by it. Interrupt

oppressive behavior while it is happening. If a few white males are dominating an argument, point that out to the group and suggest that others speak up.

- **Learn about the histories and struggles** of impacted communities and other groups as told by them.
- **Work in solidarity** with communities directly impacted by the issue we work on by taking our lead from them and supporting their efforts to determine their own futures.
- **Prioritize and build relationships** with impacted communities and a broad base of constituents across social, economic and political boundaries.
- **Listen to, learn from, and amplify the voices of our allies**, yet don't expect anyone to be a spokesperson for their community.
- **Actively seek feedback and evaluation** of your work in order to be more accountable.
- **Make formal organizational commitments to non-discrimination.** Put it in your charter, your by-laws...anywhere you can. Make it clear in every way possible that your group does not tolerate discrimination in any form and that no actions or speech that will alienate people because of their gender, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, nationality or social or ethnic origin will be considered acceptable in your group.
- **Create a caucus system for our groups.** In a caucus, people first meet separately (people of color caucus/white folks alternative group, gender oppressed caucus/gender privileged alternative group, queer caucus/heterosexual alternative group) according to how they self identify. Each group has a discussion separately (often the caucus will give the alternative group a specific action or issue to discuss) and then meet with the alternative group to tell the caucus what they discussed and what concrete steps they will take to combat racism/sexism/etc. Caucuses don't have to reveal what they discussed unless they decide to.
- **Find effective ways to confront oppressive behavior.** This means not alienating members who are actively working on their issues with racism/sexism/heterosexism, but instead talking with them honestly about it. One-on-one conversations, group discussions and caucuses are all effective methods.
- **Use "I" statements when you speak.** People of privileged groups often universalize their experience, not realizing that other people don't share their feelings or experiences.
- Consider what role privilege or oppression related to your gender, sexual orientation, race and class might play in your **tendency to take/avoid leadership.**
- **Make decisions in meetings with an established process.** This way, even newcomers and people outside of the 'clique' are included and feel ownership of the group and its projects. Explain the process before you start.

- **Make sure social events are inclusive.** Not all activists like punk rock (this seems to be a surprise to most punk rockers). Not all activists smoke weed or drink. If *all* of your social events involve substances, you will alienate people right off the bat.
- **Go easy on the activist-speak!** Ensure that all acronyms, activist jargon and references to past campaigns or group members are explained so that nobody feels stupid or left out.
- **Avoid inside jokes.** As hilarious as they may seem to you, nobody likes an inside joke when they're on the outside.
- **Examine the resources and privileges** we have and utilize them thoughtfully, respectfully, honestly and transparently. Wouldn't it be cool if white people worked to stop racism, adults worked on youth issues, men supported the empowerment of women and girls, and straight people worked for queer inclusiveness? We think so. That's why we do this work. Below are some suggestions for how (*note: this is incredibly insufficient. Missing are issues about class, ethnicity, religion, physical ability, language, citizenship, and so many other experiences and identities.*)

Gender Issues for Men

Just because the guys in your group aren't smacking the girls on the tush and asking them to make coffee during strategy sessions doesn't mean there aren't problems with the gender dynamics in your group. Unfortunately, we have all been raised in a sexist culture, and even when we try to rise above them, we find ourselves playing into gender roles and reinforcing stereotypes. In our society, men are taught to be more aggressive and to take on leadership roles while women are taught to be more passive; just because we're fighting for social justice doesn't mean we're free of all of this cultural baggage. In order to make the most of all that your members have to offer, you need to foster an environment where **everyone** feels comfortable speaking up and taking on leadership roles. Below, we've included a short list of some of the common gender issues facing activist groups and ways you can address them:

Division of Labor. In many groups, work gets divided in a gendered way, with women doing much of the grunt work (photocopying, flyering, etc.) and men taking on leadership roles and representing the organization in meetings and negotiations. A good way to avoid this problem is to make sure that all tasks (the fun ones and the boring ones) are assigned through a process agreed upon by the group. Don't leave anything to be done without knowing exactly who is responsible for the task. This way, it will be easier to notice if the not-so-glamorous jobs are being disproportionately dumped on the women in your group. Also, in order to prevent women from being shut out of leadership roles, a rotation system will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to become comfortable taking on positions of authority in the group.

Airtime. Another major problem is the fact that male members of many groups end up doing most of the talking in meetings. Female members may find themselves either remaining silent, or simply agreeing with one side of a debate between two men. This can be really destructive since these women may have important information or insight. A good way to ensure that everyone's voice is heard is to do frequent 'go-rounds' where everyone has to say what they

are thinking, even if they don't have a fully formulated opinion on the matter. Make it a habit to keep track of how often men and women are speaking during conversations.

Decision-making. If your group lacks a formal process for decision making, choices may be made by 'the group' without the input of your female members. If your group just assumes a decision has been reached when most people seem to agree, it is more likely that women (in general - not all women) will be hesitant to voice objections. A formal process (like those discussed in pages 13-16) will ensure that decisions are truly made by the group and not just by its most vocal (often male) members.

Anti-Racist Organizing for White Folks

The vast majority of university communities are dominated by white faculty, administrators, trustees and students. As with all aspects of our interactions in society, white supremacist ideology is the context in which we operate as activists. Within the system of white supremacy, there are many common tendencies that white people need to proactively and constantly work against.

One such tendency is for white activists to ask themselves "how can we get people of color to join our groups and movement?" Anti-racist organizer Chris Crass warns us that this kind of question is barking up the wrong tree. It assumes that white activists "have the answers and now it just needs to be delivered to people of color- as opposed to, people of color have been organizing for a long time (500+ years) and white activists have a lot to learn so maybe we should find ways to form alliances, relationships, and coalitions to work with folks of color and be prepared to learn as well as share." (Chris Crass, *Movement building and Anti-Racist Organizing*) Here are some ways your group can work towards challenging white supremacy in campus activism:

Avoid tokenism. When you observe racial rifts in your campus activist community, don't assume that the solution is to bring more people of color into predominantly white groups - the fact that your group may be mostly white is merely a symptom, not the problem itself. Instead of trying to recruit people of color to your causes, ask how you can support groups led by people of color. Also, don't assume that it would be beneficial for groups led by people of color to work with you.

Be careful with your definitions of 'radicalism.' Often 'white' activists assume that the only way to be a powerful activist is to be at the barricades shouting at the cops. Be respectful of the fact that people have different relationships with police authority and stay conscious of the different challenges that people of color have in arrest situations.

Think carefully about the issues that you are working on and how they relate to who is attracted to the group. What issues are people of color already organizing around on campus and in the community? Do you ever work on those issues and accept the leadership of groups led by people of color?

Learn about your own whiteness. Most white people have been trained to not see their own race, or even understand racism, and therefore have a kindergarten understanding of these

issues. As a matter of survival, many people of color have to understand with great clarity how white supremacy works and how to deal with it. There are endless resources out there: web sites, books, speakers, workshops, etc. Google white privilege and study up.

Queer Inclusiveness for Straight Folks

As much as our generation might see itself as totally accepting of everyone's sexuality, queers are marginalized both on campus and within activism circles. The marginalization of queers can often be invisible to straight folks since campuses are not safe enough spaces for everyone to feel safe sharing their sexual identity. Here are some tips for making your group a safer space for queer activists:

Don't be a jackass. Bewildering as this may be, there are still people out there (even people who consider themselves to be progressive) who will complain about a movie, or even an activist strategy, by blurting out "that's so gay." DO NOT let this kind of behavior slide. Make sure to have structures in place (like a caucus system, discussed below in "General Strategies for Combating Oppression") for dealing with these issues and a strict anti-discrimination policy (also discussed below).

Don't out people! If you know or suspect that someone in your group is queer, don't take it upon yourself to make sure that everyone else knows too. Both being in the closet and being out entail risks for queer folks, so don't presume that you know what is best for someone.

Don't make assumptions about people's sexuality. A key component of queer oppression is the assumption that everyone is straight until proven otherwise. And if it's really that amazingly crucial to the survival of the world that you know someone's sexuality, they'll let you know.

Understand that you have certain privileges (having your relationships valued by society, being able to kiss your partner in public without fear, etc) that queer folks are denied.

Activist Cliques

It's only natural that a bunch of badass activist kids working together to save the world will end up making friends with each other. This isn't necessarily a bad thing - it makes activism more fun, which means people are more likely to stay involved, and it helps foster good group dynamics. It can be a problem, though, when "activist cliques" emerge. Decisions that should be made through a formal process start being made by clique members chilling in a bar or smoking a joint; meetings can become too social, making it hard to get anything done; and worst of all, potential new members can feel out of the loop when there are too many inside jokes and assumed background knowledge. Here are some tips for keeping your organization functional and open to new people:

Make decisions in meetings with an established process. This way, even newcomers and people outside of the "clique" are included and feel ownership of the group and its projects. Explain the process before you start.

Make sure social events are inclusive. Not all activists like punk rock (this seems to be a surprise to most punk rockers). Not all activists smoke weed or drink. If all of your social events involve substances, you will alienate people off the bat.

Go easy on the activist-speak! Make sure that all acronyms, activist jargon and references to past campaigns or group members are explained so that nobody feels stupid or left out.

Avoid inside jokes. This is especially important at the beginning of the year when you are recruiting new members. As hilarious as they may seem to you, nobody likes an inside joke when they're on the outside. The last thing you want to do is scare off potential new members by giving them the impression that your group is some kind of exclusive social club that they're not a part of.

Take action!

Often, confronting privilege gets stuck in personal relationships – as activists work on “unpacking their shit” personally without integrating these principles into their organizations structurally, without working them into their strategy, and without using them to inform their work and connections to other organizations. Consciousness raising and education – decolonizing our own minds – is essential. But it goes hand-in-hand with action to transform our society and our movements. We need to drastically re-think and re-make our economic and political systems. In order to do that, we need to imagine what is possible. We need to change the cultures that reinforce our belief that the world we have is the best we can do. We need to examine and unravel the false notion of supremacy designated for white people, men, able-bodied, heterosexual and middle and upper class people. We need to unravel whiteness, white culture and all of the behaviors passed down to us from events of genocide, entitlement and acquisition of land and other people's labor on behalf of those who were considered white. We need to unravel subordination and colonization and behaviors passed down to us from ancestors whose land, labor and identity were taken. None of this is simple. There are no pure identities or experiences. We each embody multiple, shifting identities. And that is beautiful.

Working definitions

There are multiple definitions for each of these terms, and who and how they are defined changes constantly. Here are some definitions that we work with. *Unless otherwise noted in italics, definitions were borrowed/revised from Wikipedia or written by RAN staff.*

Adulthood: The interpersonal, cultural and structural oppression of young people by adults. It is based on the belief that adults are better than young people, and therefore entitled to dominate them or represent them without their agreement. Adulthood is characterized by disrespect, negligence or abuse of the intelligence, judgment, emotional life, leadership or physical being of young people. (*Movement Strategy Center*).

Androcentrism: The practice, conscious or otherwise, of placing male human beings or the masculine point of view at the center of one's view of the world and its culture and history. The related adjective is androcentric.

Anthropocentrism: The belief that of all life, humans are the most important and that humanity must judge all things accordingly: Humans must be considered, looked after, and cared for above all other real or imaginary beings

Biocentrism: The belief that all life or the universe taken as a whole has intrinsic value regardless of its perceived value to humans.

Classism: Any form of [prejudice](#) or [oppression](#) against people as a result of their actual or perceived [social class](#) (especially in the form of lower [socioeconomic](#) status) within a class based society.

Colonialism: The extension of a nation's [sovereignty](#) over [territory](#) beyond its borders by the establishment of either [settler colonies](#) or [administrative dependencies](#) in which [indigenous populations](#) are [directly ruled](#) or [displaced](#). Colonizing nations generally dominate the [resources](#), [labor](#) and [markets](#) of the [colonial territory](#), and may also impose socio-cultural, religious and linguistic structures on the conquered population. The term colonialism may also be used to refer to a set of beliefs used to legitimize or promote this system. Colonialism was often based on the [ethnocentric](#) belief that the morals and values of the colonizer were superior to those of the colonized; some observers link such beliefs to [racism](#) and [pseudo-scientific](#) theories dating to the 17th and 18th centuries. In the [Western world](#), this led to a form of proto-[Social Darwinism](#) that placed [Caucasians](#) at the top of the [Animal Kingdom](#), "naturally" in charge of dominating non-[European](#) indigenous populations.

Environmental Justice: The movement led by communities of color against environmental racism and for sustainable, self-determined and just communities (*Movement Strategy Center*).

Environmental Racism: The set of structures, institutions, practices and ideas that produces unhealthy, poisoned environments, concentrated in low-income communities and communities of color worldwide (*Movement Strategy Center*).

Ethnocentrism: Valuing one's own ethnicity above all others.

Gender: Gender denotes a social, cultural or psychological condition, as *opposed* to that of biological sex. Some people do not have a gender identity that corresponds to their biological sex, namely transgender, transsexual, intersexed and genderqueer individuals. **Genderqueer** is a gender identity. A genderqueer person is someone who identifies as a gender other than "man" or "woman."

Haterism: Displaying hate for the next individual's success as a result of one's own shortcomings.

Hegemony: Hegemony refers to unchallenged, unquestioned systems and practices of power that are maintained not only by those who benefit from these practices, but by those who are subordinated by them. Hegemony is a form of social control that coerces people through cultural means and without the use of brute force to act against the interests of their own communities as a result of internalizing the logic and demands of those in power.

Heterosexism: is a predisposition towards heterosexual people, which some see as biased against lesbian, [gay](#), [bisexual](#), [queer](#), [transgender](#) or [intersexed](#) people among others. This bias is not the same as [homophobia](#), but rather is the discrimination toward or against non-heterosexual behavior due to a cultural or sociobiological bias. Heterosexism suggests that the basis for this bias is not found in the individual per se, but rather has a broader cultural or biological basis that results in weighted attitudes towards heterosexuality over other sexual orientations. Heterosexism is a form of [structural violence](#).

Homophobia: The fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against [homosexuality](#) or homosexuals. It can also mean hatred, hostility or disapproval of homosexual people, sexual behavior or cultures.

Hybridity: Hybridity theory offers that there are no pure cultures. Purity is a myth that serves hegemonic notions of a dominant culture whose members are entitled to certain privileges and citizenship and excludes those who are not. The idea of hybridity itself is, as Sabine Mabardi explains, “a threat to colonial and cultural authority; it subverts the concept of pure origin or identity of the dominant authority through the ambivalence created by denial unsettling, repetition, and displacement.”

Imperialism: A policy of exerting effective and continuing control or authority over foreign entities as a means of acquisition and/or maintenance of empires. **Cultural imperialism** is the practice of promoting, distinguishing, separating and artificially injecting the culture or language of one nation onto another. It is usually the case that the former is a large economically or militarily powerful nation and the latter is a smaller, less affluent one. *Cultural imperialism* can take the form of an active, formal policy or a general attitude.

Intersectionality: The idea that the classical models of oppression within a society, such as those based on race/ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality, class, disability and other markers of difference, do not act independent of one another. Instead, these forms of oppression interrelate, based on which markers apply to a given individual.

Oppression: The power and the effects of domination. It refers to the injustices some groups experience as a consequence of institutionalized power and privilege assigned to others. It can also show up as unconscious assumptions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions which are supported by the media and cultural stereotypes as well as by institutions such as schools, governments, companies, organizations, etc. Some define it simply as prejudice plus power.

Patriarchy: A system that favors men over women, and also men over other men as a hegemonic gender order imposed through individual and collective behaviors and institutions. Within it, gender interacts with other attributes such as ethnicity, race, power and social class.

Prejudice: An aversive or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group simply because he belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to that group. Prejudice is seen as having different sources, chief among them being different forms of fear.

Privilege: A right, advantage, favor or immunity specially granted to one, especially a right held by a certain individual, group or class and withheld from certain or all others. While many aspects of our lives we consider common basic rights, when others are denied them they become privileges. For example, people of color are three times more likely to be pulled over by police, even though white people are four times more likely to actually possess drugs in their car. Passing safely by the police becomes a privilege granted only to white people.

Postcolonialism: A term used to describe the wide range of social, cultural and political consequences arising from the decline and fall of European colonialism that took place from the mid 19th century onwards. Postcolonialism essentially focuses on the persistence of colonial forms of power in contemporary world politics, especially how the social construction of racial, gendered and class differences upholds relations of power and subordination. For example, the level of economic and military control of Western interests in the global South is in many ways actually greater now than it was under direct control - a form of 'neo'-colonialism.

Racism: Racial prejudice plus power (*The People's Institute*).

Reverse Racism: A non-term used by white people to deny their privilege. People of color do not have the same institutional power to back up individual or group prejudices that white people have. (*Challenging White Supremacy*)

Sexism: Gender or sex prejudice plus power. May involve imposing a limited or false notion of masculinity on males and a limited or false notion of femininity on females.

Speciesism: Assigning different values or rights to beings on the basis of their species membership.

Race: Race is a specious classification of human beings created by Europeans which assigns human worth and social status using "white" as the model of humanity and the height of human achievement for the purpose of establishing and maintaining privilege and power. – (*The People's Institute*)

White Supremacy: An historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of establishing, maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege (*Challenging White Supremacy*).

Whiteness: A set of locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced and, moreover, are intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of dominance (*R. Frakenburg*). This location, or set of locations, is an identity, a culture, a place people go to in order to hide from a marginalized identity and gain privilege, as well as a place some try to run from out of guilt. A far-reaching danger of whiteness coded as "no culture" is that it leaves in place whiteness as defining a set of normative cultural practices against which all are measured and

into which all are expected to fit. This normativity has underwritten oppression from the beginning of colonial expansion and has had impact in multiple ways.

Chapter “4”

Building your Chapter

*double extra special thanks to SEAC guide for inspiration and (sometimes direct cutting and pasting) pieces this chapter!

If you are about to start or revive a group, you’ve now become an organizer.

Organizing is the building block of all social change. It means getting together with your peers and channeling and focusing your energy. Organizing is about relationships. It’s talking to people, getting them to act in a coordinated and organized way, and collectively pushing your analysis and action further. When you start to think about building a group, think about it through the lens of **relationship building** – with the potential members of your group, with the other organizations on campus, with faculty, administration, and the student body in general.

Speaking of relationships, you have one with RAN! So before you start, drop us a line. We can help you strategize the launch of your chapter if you like.

Before You Start

Organizing is all about context. Before starting a chapter, you’ll want to make sure you learn about the community that you’re going to be active in – in this case, your school. What activist groups already exist? Is there an activist community at your school? What kinds of issues aren’t being addressed at your school? What kinds of issues can be addressed better? What kinds of things are students at your campus interested in? How do other groups organize? Who are the leaders?

Attend meetings of other organizations, get to know them. It’s not at all uncommon or weird to send an email or call up another student leader and say, “Hi, my name is _____ and I’m interested in starting a new campus group – would you be into getting lunch sometime and chatting about the work you do and giving me some advice?” **Your biggest allies in starting a chapter will be the other organizations on campus. Guidance from other student leaders is essential, plus, most active students are members of multiple groups, so you are likely to share members with them as well. On some campuses, groups feel**

adversarial, like they are competing for slices of the activist pie. Starting off with good relationships can go a long way toward making sure that doesn't happen. When approached respectfully, activist groups are usually thrilled and excited to have new allies. The more other groups know you, the better relationships you will build. This may sound a little weird, but getting key people of influence on your campus to be into what you are doing can be the first step to having your group catch fire.

There are some logistical questions you might want to ask, like: How do you register a campus organization? How does funding work for clubs on campus? Are there sympathetic faculty members who would be good allies? Are there places to hold meetings? How do you book them? Usually, you can go to a student government or union and have those questions answered pretty quickly.

Let's Plan!

Do you have a few other people you're planning the chapter with? If not, it would be a good idea to try to touch base with a couple other excited folks so you aren't on your own. Usually, word of mouth is the best way to find those folks. If you don't have interested friends, try asking the leaders of other student groups if they know anyone interested. One thing to watch out for is to not let your planning group become an **activist clique** – this is alienation city. Unless you're some kinda fascist, be as open and transparent as possible, and remember how important democratic decision-making is. You will want to decide some things about your group before you have your first meeting – like who you are and what the purpose of the group is – in order to better communicate what you are doing. But make sure to open up the decision-making process to everyone and not set any policies in stone. People will only be interested in groups they feel they have a voice in!

Get a listserv!

Some groups have two listservs – one for announcements (you want to get as many people as possible on this one and make sure it is well moderated), and one for internal group discussions (this is often best unmoderated and used only by the active members of your group). Either way, you will want to have something set up, so at your first meeting you can pass around a sign-up sheet and add everyone to the list. Remember that keeping a healthy, growing, active listserv is important – pass around signup sheets at all your events. Make sure to get people's full names AND email addresses. If handwriting is difficult to read, you can look up the name on the school directory for the correct email.

Initial Outreach

Before your first meeting, you will want to do a lot of publicity to get people excited about it. There are a lot of things you can do. For example::

- Talk to friends and have them talk to friends. Remember, word of mouth is the most powerful way to spread a message!

- This also means talking up the group in social settings, like parties. The beginning of the semester is a GREAT time for outreach. Go out to parties that have lots of first-year students and get kids amped about the club. Remember that most people become friends with people they DO stuff with, and one thing your group can provide new students with is community. This can activate people for their whole college experience and beyond!
- Put up cool looking flyers and posters around campus.
- Generate some hype and get your school newspaper to write an article.
 - Having the media excited about your club BEFORE your first meeting is a really good sign and a really great way to get your group off and running right out of the gate. (see media section for more tips!)
- Make announcements and presentations in relevant classes
 - This is where your sympathetic faculty contacts come in!
- Ask faculty to make announcements in classes that you are unable to attend, and send out announcements on their class listservs.
- Go to the club meetings of other groups, make announcements and presentations.
- Have a big event (like a movie screening with the director coming to speak - we can help you with this!), and have it be the kickoff event for your group. You can hype up your group at the event and announce your first meeting and get the speaker to talk about it too. Guaranteed big turnout for your first meeting.
- Other outreach tactics include tabling, chalk on blackboards of classrooms, sidewalk chalk everywhere, shout outs on campus radio programs, bathroom graffiti (graffiti conversation in a bathroom stall is fun and a great way to make the discourse on your campus come alive), skits, spoken word, lunchtime street theater yelled loudly over bullhorns, etc.
 - All of these things should have dates and times for your meetings as well as your contact information.

Make a good presentation.

A lot of the above suggestions involve making good presentations – in classes, at other club meetings, etc. Make sure to put a good one together. There are some basic things we can provide you with – video clips, stickers, brochures and more. These should include flyers that include the meeting times of your group. The same flyers should be put up around school – repetition is the key. You want your group to be visible everywhere people look so that after your amazing presentation, people keep thinking of it and are reminded of it. Cool graphics on the flyers are a must. Intersperse the media with talking about the issues your club will be tackling, why they are important, and why your club is the way to go. You should implicitly answer the question “Why should I join this group?” within the first few minutes. Make sure to have a clear and concise mission statement and read it (it might be a good idea to print it at the top of your sign up sheets or flyers too). The most important thing is passion!

Presentations aren't just speaking in front of groups of people. After talking to a few people, you will probably develop a "rap" – a way of talking about your group that is short and engaging. Engage people one-on-one as much as possible.

Never forget that personal interaction is the basis of organizing.

Your First Meeting.

Now that you've built up momentum before your first meeting, back it up with personal phone calls and emails reminding people to come the night before. You don't want to get everyone amped and then have them forget!

Your first meeting should be fun, informative and participatory. It should be long enough to generate interest and energy, but it should NOT drag on forever (as meetings sometimes can). You may want to have a pre-meeting with the organizers you're starting the chapter with to carefully plan out the logistics.

The time you set is very important. It should stay consistent. When organizations try to have weekly meetings but the time keeps changing, it confuses people and that shows in attendance. Keep in mind that students are always busy, and you'll never find the perfect time when EVERYONE can make it. But if you stake your claim to a time early enough (and are thoughtful about when other allied groups are meeting or other time conflicts), people will start to build their schedules around when your group meets. A good idea would be to propose and decide on a regular time at your first meeting. If you just say "when should we meet?" you will be there all night.

Pack the room. How many people do you anticipate coming? Book a room with an appropriate size. As the SEAC manual advises, nothing kills excitement like empty chairs. But having a really full room generates a feeling that y'all got something really amazing going. Smaller rooms are more personal than lecture halls anyway. And imagine saying at the end: "okay, next meeting we will have to change rooms, because we're too big for this one!" Yeah.

Make sure to start on time.

DEFINITELY make sure to end on time.

Begin the meeting with some kind of ice breaker or game. We can suggest a few if you give us a call. You want people to feel as welcome and comfortable as possible. You may also want to go around in the beginning and have everyone "check-in" and describe how they are feeling. And then at the end, have them "check-out" too.

Make sure to pass around your sign-up sheet early on so you know who came and can follow up with them later.

Then give a BRIEF presentation about why you started the group and open up the process. Invite people to shape the group's structure, agenda, goals, etc., and emphasize that this is a participatory process. The key is to make people feel like they have a voice, but not be SO open that people don't know where to start. Nobody wants to be in 16-hour long structured meetings immediately when they join the group.

Make sure to start with a few minutes of quick education about the issues, then some examples of the kinds of things you want to do as a group. Be honest about your intentions – if you think the planet is being fucked over by corporations and that our generation is going to be on the frontlines, say it. Talk about oppression and how we can be agents in changing it. But make sure to end on a positive note – you don't want people leaving in despair, you want them psyched to take action.

You may want to have a short activity that people can do at the first meeting so they can start engaging others right away. That could mean making posters, writing a letter, or something else that is easy. Either way, make sure to have some events for people to plug in to quickly – you want to hit the ground running. Meetings are for coordinating what you DO; they are not the substance of what you do! People want the sense that you are a group that is gonna go out and get things done. Tell them that. Then do it.

One good way to open up the discussion and make it participatory is to have a brainstorm of what people want to accomplish with the group. Go around or break into smaller groups to make sure EVERYONE gets a chance to speak. Get people talking about the issues and drawing their own conclusions – as an organizer, it's your job to get people to draw conclusions for themselves, not just accept them from you. Group decisions are far more powerful and visionary than top-down decisions. If you can come to group decisions about what you are doing at the first meeting (such as what campaign is gonna be the focus of your chapter, if any), people will leave feeling empowered and efficient, and they'll know they have a stake in the group.

You want to inspire people to feel ownership over the group and build it into their own identity on campus.

If not in the first meeting, definitely by the second you'll want to talk about how your group is going to focus. Usually that means choosing a campaign of some kind. We have a whole chapter to help you with this – see Chapter Six: Power and Strategy. Remember, you aren't just trying to win your campaign, you are trying to build a sustainable group in the process. You want your group to exist on campus for long after you graduate. Which goals make sense for building your group?

Mission statement

Early on you will want to decide on a mission statement. This will help guide your work and give people a clear understanding of what you are doing. It should be clear, concise and simple. RAN's mission statement is "Rainforest Action Network (RAN) works to protect the Earth's rainforests and support the rights of their inhabitants through

education, grassroots organizing, and non-violent direct action.” Yours doesn’t need to be modeled after ours or look anything like it. But it should be similar in length and not go on and on. It is best for a couple people to draft a mission statement and then propose it to the rest of the group. Then the group can collectively edit it. It will take forever to try to draft something from scratch with too many people.

Group Name

What do you want to be called? This can be decided tentatively before your first meeting to promote your group, but you may want to decide collectively at your first meeting. See chapter 2 for examples of other RAN chapter names. You may choose to have “RAN” in your title, you may not. Whatever you choose, it should be catchy and non-alienating. Some of the most powerful names have been ones that everyone can relate to, like “Students for a Democratic Society,” or ones that evoke powerful imagery like “The Black Panther Party.”

The end of your meeting!

Whew! You are at the end of your first meeting. Make sure that everyone leaves with something to do. If you don’t have a specific activity you are working on or specific responsibilities that people can volunteer for, see if you can get everyone to agree to spend the week recruiting for the next meeting. Have people write down a commitment on a piece of paper (such as “I will tell 5 people” or “I’ll make an announcement in class”). Everyone can exchange pieces of paper with someone else, and then hold each other to their commitments. **It is important to end every meeting with a list of “Next Steps.”** Have a clear sense of what you need to do next, who is responsible for it, and who will hold people accountable. After the meeting, you will want to hang out for a little while. See if people stay behind and chat with them. Maybe you can get to know them better and build some personal relationships. You also might want to ask what people thought of the meeting and what could be done better next time. Maybe more people are interested in playing a serious role in the group. Invite them in. Invite them to hang out later in the week. Personal bonds are the glue that will hold your group together.

Size doesn’t matter.

If your first meeting isn’t well attended, don’t despair! All groups start out small and grow bigger. Some of the most powerful groups and movements in history started with just a couple determined folks. As you get active and do fun things, your group will be irresistible!

Meetings in general

Facilitation, agendas, note takers

Having a **facilitator** is crucial. The facilitator keeps the discussion moving and relevant so you don't get bogged down debating trivial things. The facilitator is also someone who is always thinking about ways to include everyone in the discussion so people feel empowered to speak and no one is ignored. The facilitator makes sure you stick to the agenda and that meetings are productive. In some large meetings, people raise their hands to be called on by the facilitator to speak. Other times, the facilitator keeps a "stack" – a list of people who want to speak (they signal to the facilitator) so that people don't have to keep their hands up. The facilitator can also sense what the consensus is and formulate people's opinions into concrete proposals to be voted on. It also might be the responsibility of the facilitator to send out a reminder email before the meeting and draft an agenda (based on what the other members submit).

Facilitator tips (some taken directly from SEAC):

- Remember that shy people have good ideas too, even if they aren't voicing them. Every once in a while, say, "let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet," especially if a few people seem to be doing all the talking. If there are new people at the meeting, they might have good independent observations about the meeting.
- Be aware of male domination in your group. This may be difficult to see because we are raised in a society where male domination is the norm and often goes unquestioned. The same is true for domination by members of other "majorities." Do not allow sexism, racism, heterosexism or class oppression to go without notice.
- Sometimes a good point gets raised but gets overlooked. That's why it is good to have someone writing the brainstorming ideas on a large notepad or dry erase board. Also, the facilitator can help bring an idea back into the discussion by restating it or asking the person that came up with the idea to restate it.
- If people bring up good ideas that are worth noting but aren't immediately relevant to the issue at hand, you can set up a "bike rack" – a list of ideas to come back to in the future. These might be good agenda items for the next meeting
- Keep the discussion moving forward. If everyone seems to agree, state a proposal and check for consensus. If the discussion is deadlocked, decide whether the group can come to a decision at a later time or in a different venue.
- If a lot of people have their hands up at once, write down their names in a list and call on them in order (this is called "keeping a stack"). This way, people don't have to keep their hands up trying to get you to call on them, and it reduces the danger that someone who wants to speak will be ignored repeatedly. If the discussion has moved on to something else by the time someone gets called on, they can bring it back up or simply pass.
- If the discussion is contentious and/or people aren't respecting each other, try this: declare who the next three speakers are, and don't let people raise their hands until those three are done. This way everyone concentrates on what's being said instead of sighing, moaning and planning their response.
- The facilitator should be someone who doesn't have a strong opinion to express on the meeting's topics. If you really want to say something, call on yourself, but make sure you don't use your role as facilitator to dominate the discussion. If part

- of the group is much more knowledgeable, then you can pick several representatives and let them have a free-form (non-facilitated) discussion in the middle of the room. This is called a “fish-bowl” and can also be useful for resolving conflict (by picking representatives of the different sides of the issue).
- Probably the hardest thing about facilitating is cutting off your friends when they’re rambling on ad infinitum and keeping a meeting from going too long or getting too boring.
 - You can try telling them when they start speaking how much time they’ll have and give a hand signal when they’re short on time. Facilitating comes with practice and is a valuable skill. In order for everyone to get experience with it, we suggest you give this position to everyone at least once.

Most groups try to **rotate facilitators** every meeting. That way everyone gets a chance to build their skills, and it is more participatory. It is great to rotate roles in conjunction with a note taker.

The role of the **note taker** is pretty self explanatory. Someone takes notes during the meeting. The most important thing about the note taker is that they promptly send out notes. Usually, it’s best if the note taker posts the notes to your listserv the next day. That way, members who missed the meeting can see what happened, and you can have an archive and institutional memory of your group. Promptly sending out notes keeps things running smoothly and helps build a culture of accountability efficacy.

Many groups find that women usually end up as note takers and men facilitate. It’s just another way that patriarchy creeps into our work.

Here is one solution: **choose a note taker and a facilitator a week before your meeting.** During that week, everyone sends agenda items to the facilitator. The facilitator then drafts the agenda for the meeting. At the next meeting, the roles rotate. Choose a new note taker, and the person who last took notes becomes the next facilitator. Keep cycling through, so everyone gets a chance. Don’t forget to choose a new note taker/facilitator at the end of every meeting.

Meeting tips:

Brainstorming:

This is standard democratic technique for figuring out what to do. The issue is raised in a general meeting, and everyone brainstorms for a while. This means tossing ideas into the air (whoosh!!!) without discussing or criticizing them. There are no stupid ideas in a brainstorm, because even a ‘bad’ idea can spur someone else to think of a ‘good’ one. Brainstorming allows people to suggest ideas in an atmosphere of openness, without the

fear of being put down. Sometimes, it's good to have some order to the process to avoid a cacophony of voices and so that each person can speak and be heard. A good method for this is to do a "go-around." Each person articulates their ideas or passes, but does not comment on or criticize the previous speakers. Meanwhile, a scribe writes all the ideas on a board. By saving discussion for later, no one is afraid of having his or her idea rejected. Afterward, have some discussion to find out what the favorites are. Then, if needed, a small group can split off to work out the details. After a set amount of time or at your next meeting, the small group can come back and report to the whole group on what they came up with and make sure it's OK. Then you kick ass and do it.

Commitment:

It sucks when people say they'll do things and then don't. Generally, people do this because they overestimate how much time they really have. In fact, someone who does a small amount of work reliably is more useful to a group than someone who commits to too much and then falls through. So how can you get people to commit reliably?

Be honest and open about how much you are requesting. If you are committing to something, be straightforward about how much time you are willing to give. It helps to break things up into bite-sized chunks. Instead of asking someone to "organize the event," ask a few people to work on logistics, others to work on outreach, etc.; just make sure that someone is responsible for keeping an eye to the bigger picture and assuring that all the smaller tasks are being completed.

Sign people up with their name, phone number and email. **Make sure it is someone's job to remind people of their commitments!** It is often useful to have at the top of the notes a list of "Next Steps" – of who will do what. That way, group notes can serve as a reminder a culture of accountability is created.

Organizers and coordinators should make themselves available and accessible. They should check up on people gently but not nag them. If people feel comfortable enough to say, "Hey, I don't have as much time as I thought I would," you won't get any nasty surprises. Make it easy for them to do whatever they can. When large numbers of people are working independently on something (i.e., doing outreach to schools, approaching small businesses or groups, working on separate projects, etc.), it's nice to have a buddy system in which people pair up with friends or others who live close to them. They can talk to and motivate each other every couple days simply by saying, "So, how's it going?"

Finally, remember that the more specific the task is, the easier it is to get people to do it. If you tell them the bus leaves at six, they'll go. If you tell them there might be a bus but you're not sure yet, and they should call so-and-so if they're interested, a lot of good people won't get around to it. If things are really up in the air, sign people up and get back to them with specific information later.

The Criticism Sandwich (extra thanks to SEAC for this one):

BREAD: Say something positive about what they are doing.

LIVERWURST WITH ONIONS (yucky!) State politely and to the point what your concern is. It definitely helps to take a taste test with this part of the sandwich once or twice ahead of time. Try saying this part aloud to yourself or to a friend, and honestly try to anticipate and evaluate the reaction this statement will have on another group member.

MORE BREAD: Cushion the shock of that not so tasty liverwurst

For example:

“I’m really impressed with what you’ve done to try to stop logging in the Hoosier National Forest.” (BREAD)

“But I’m worried that Eco-Terrorists for the Eradication of all Humans might not be the best group to work with.” (LIVERWURST WITH ONIONS)

“You are very good at building coalitions with other groups. Perhaps you and I could build one with Heartwood instead?” (BREAD)

Should you get offered a criticism sandwich, try not to be defensive. It is difficult not to get defensive when you are feeling attacked. That is why it is so important to frame criticism in positive, unthreatening tones.

Meeting Structure

Here are some typical components you might want to have in a meeting, if they are relevant:

- **START ON TIME!** For some reason, progressives tend to be late for everything. But if you don’t start on time, your meetings will start later and later because people won’t be expected to show up at the scheduled meeting time.
- Write your agenda on butcher paper and let people propose new agenda items. This assumes that you will **HAVE AN AGENDA**. If you don’t, your meeting will go all over the place and you won’t get to the important things you need to discuss.
- Start with brief introductions. Many people have trouble remembering names, and it will build your group’s sense of community for people to regularly introduce themselves and share something significant that happened to them since you last met. This is essential if you have any new members.
- Pass around a sign-in sheet. Essential if you have any new members.
- Set ground rules (like respect all voices) for the meeting and follow them for the rest of the school year.
- Bring in presentations on issues or skills. Experienced group members or guests can give presentations. This helps educate and empower the group. Remember that there are a lot of people coming to your meetings to learn, and that new people bring new perspectives that you can learn from!

- Present appeals from RAN and other partner groups for help, direct action and involvement. This usually goes hand-in-hand with presenting any important mail, phone calls or emails the group has received.
- Announce new projects and enlist interested parties for them.
- Update group members on the progress that has been made on old projects since your last meeting.
- Give quick updates on old projects where not much has happened.
- Discuss recent current events (that are applicable) and give inspiration.
- Split up into small groups to work on each project. This depends on the size of the group. You might be able to do everything in the main meeting, or you might need separate meetings.
- Review your group's most recent event(s). Share news clippings. What went well? What could you do better next time?
- This is an important one: openly discuss the group's dynamics. Every few weeks it's a good idea to air frustrations. Ask people how they feel about the group.
- Towards the end of the meeting, give people a chance to bring up any new concerns that haven't already been addressed.
- Decide who will facilitate the next meeting, take notes, etc.
- Have a list of "next steps" that clearly outline people's responsibilities.
- Remind people to bring a friend along next time, and thank the new folks who have joined your group for the first time.
- Try regularly sharing a meal (like a potluck) before the meeting or at another time during the week. This will help everyone feel more comfortable and build community.
- The main group meeting should probably not be more than an hour.
- FINISH ON TIME! This goes hand in hand with starting on time. Starting and finishing on time reaffirms the fact that people's time is a valuable commodity.

Play with these things to find the right mix. Do what works.

Keep the tone of the meetings positive. Bad meetings completely kill a group, especially for new members. People should not be bored, frustrated or confused. If things get tense, tell a joke! If there seems to be a problem, be open about it and seek people's input about how the meetings could be improved. If you're wondering how the meeting went, ask a new member—they're the best judges.

Communication Problems

The best kind of communication is when people trust each other, both to say what's on their mind, and to listen to others and let them speak. This way, you can say something once, trust that it was heard, and not have to repeat it. Try to communicate in a way that doesn't oppress people. In particular:

- Don't interrupt.
- Pay attention to what the speaker is saying and think about it. Don't just think about what you're going to say next.
- If somebody else already made the point you were going to, just take your hand down or pass.

- Don't repeat yourself. Did we mention that you should not repeat yourself? If you've had your say and the group disagrees, sit back and deal with it. But don't repeat yourself.
- Share your knowledge, experiences, and ideas—don't be shy. Every time a good idea doesn't get heard because you didn't speak up, an acre of rainforest gets chopped and a fairy loses its wings.
- Even if you think what somebody said is completely stupid, treat them with respect.
- Deal with the content of what they're saying rather than just putting it down or labeling it. Don't attack people in your group. Ever.
- Regard discussions as cooperative rather than antagonistic affairs, with the common goal of reaching agreement and taking action.
- BE INCLUSIVE IN YOUR LANGUAGE. If you haven't learned yet to say "woman" instead of "girl," "he" or "she" (or "she" or "he") instead of "he," and "humanity" or something instead of "mankind," please do it now.
- Share the spotlight. Remember that having quick meetings is not our only goal—we also want to build leadership. A good exercise – especially for people who have been involved in the group for awhile – is to sit back and wait to see if someone else makes the point that you were going to make. If all of the important points are made without you ever having to speak, then you are a fabulous organizer. Or a Jedi.

Common ailments of meetings:

Are meetings boring? If so, they probably aren't sufficiently action-oriented. Try holding the next one inside a jail, a moving freight train, or a burning building (just kidding). You may want to have the group make signs for the next protest, though. Make sure new people are being invited to help.

Are your meetings clogged with too much detail? Unless something interests a substantial part of the group, it should be discussed in a small-group meeting instead. This is for the facilitator to judge (though anyone can complain).

Are people feeling left out and stupid because speakers are assuming that people know what they're talking about and using a lot of jargon? Speak plainly. Do more education at meetings. If a speaker uses a word or phrase that a lot of people don't know (what the hell is a perched water table anyway?), stop them and have them explain it.

Are people dominating because they have connections with various bigwigs? Have others go with them to bigwig meetings. Make sure these connections are shared, as they belong to the whole group.

Are people dominating because they know a lot? Have them give presentations and teach the rest of the group. However, make sure this person is really teaching and not just showing off.

Are people dominating because they're more confident than the rest, better speakers, etc.? The facilitator should call on others.

Is one part of the group (men, whites, seniors, etc.) doing all the talking? The facilitator should ask for input from the rest of the group.

Are people turned off because speakers are assuming too much about their ideology? This calls for some simple politeness. If people want to help, they shouldn't feel excluded just because they are more conservative or more radical than the rest of the group. Maybe there could be a meeting to discuss everyone's ideology (with the goal of understanding, not converting!).

Do meetings run overtime? Set time limits, stick to the agenda, and start on time even if not everybody's there. People will be much more willing to come to meetings if they know they can get out by a certain time.

Leadership and Structure

Oh no. This can be complicated. On one hand, coming up with a group structure is boring. New people, especially non-activists, don't want to sit in endless meetings debating a leadership structure. At the same time, you want the creation of your structure to be as open, transparent and participatory as possible. We will share a couple of options with you here. Often, the best idea is to draft a structure and then bring it to your group at the first meeting and see what everyone thinks. Be careful to facilitate a discussion so that people feel empowered to make changes. It's often best to have your first decision on structure be consensus (everyone must accept it), even if you are agreeing that in the future you will vote and have other ways of making decisions.

Regardless of what kind of structure you choose, the best and most sustainable groups are as participatory as possible. All group members should have a say in shaping what the group does.

A good structure is one that:

- Ensures that all students have a voice
- Does not have a division between "decision makers" and general membership
- Accounts for anti-oppression (see chapter three)
- Is efficient and gets things done
- Is fun and welcoming
- Creates opportunities for people to plug in at various levels of commitment and various points of view
- Is flexible and dynamic
- Trains people to walk them up the ladder of leadership so that people can become mature, confident and effective activists.

One of the first things you will need to think about structurally is how you will make decisions.

Decision Making

How do you define when a group agrees on something? The idea of consensus is that you talk about it until you have a solution everyone can live with (even if it's not their first choice). The down side of this is that a few dissenters can paralyze the group, even when the vast majority endorses something. Then again, a simple majority vote has its drawbacks too. How much "agreement" does 51 percent or even 60 percent represent?

One possible model would be to use a majority vote on things that don't matter all THAT much (like what logo to put on a T-shirt), and consensus or near-consensus on things like whether or not to stage a sit-in at your administration building. A 2/3 vote is another possibility, giving a strong mandate but allowing for a significant minority to dissent at the same time.

Remember the importance of respecting a diversity of views. If someone feels crushed by the majority, they'll leave. Good consensus-builders try to synthesize and combine opposing views. Ask dissenters to state their key concerns and see if there's a way to address them. If your group is divided on an issue and you're going to need everyone's help in the future for your group to be effective, it might be best to refrain from taking action rather than risking alienating several of your members. Besides, there's nothing preventing a smaller subset of people from going ahead with their plans independently, as long as they don't portray themselves as acting on behalf of the entire group.

It's a good idea to restate the proposal before voting on it so people know what they're voting on.

Leaders and officers

In almost any group, certain members who know the most, have the most experience, do the most work, or have the most resonant speaking voices, will be perceived as "leaders," and others will look to them for guidance. This is bad if it makes others follow passively; it is good if it makes people feel confident and excited and it encourages them to speak up and take action. This kind of leadership means communicating a sense of excitement and purpose to a group and thereby empowering everyone.

There is a difference between responsibility and power. There are legitimate responsibilities that need to be filled, and your group can designate certain people to fill them and call them "officers" if you like. However, nobody should be getting ordered around. Remember that you're in a voluntary organization. People will do, and do well, only what they want to do. A good leader keeps that dynamic going, not with power over her or his fellow members, but by sharing power with all of them. Good leaders serve the group, not themselves.

Many groups believe that we must embody our vision of the world we want to live in.

That ends don't justify means per se, rather **means must be a living enactment of the envisioned ends.** If your vision of a world is one without top-down corrosive power and hierarchy, your group should mirror that vision. This is an anarchist notion called **prefigurative politics.** It is a struggle within any group to live out its principles and remain efficient. Democracy is not a set-in-stone style of government, it's a perpetual process that we live out and constantly reinvent.

Whatever leadership means to you, it is vital that you practice it in a way that encourages others to become leaders, rather than filling a niche "at the top" and excluding them. This can happen even without an official hierarchy. If you're not careful, even a relatively unstructured group can become dominated by a few unofficial leaders. Frequently, more radical groups decide they want to function without hierarchy. But instead of having a structure that makes sure people can participate democratically, you see the rise of informal, unaccountable leadership. This is often more tyrannical than the official hierarchy the group configured itself to oppose. While you have lots of options in how to configure your group's leadership, accountability and inclusiveness is the key.

You may choose to have co-presidents who are elected every semester. You may choose to have an "organizing committee" of five or six people who have most of the logistical responsibilities. You may choose to be completely nonhierarchical. Regardless, there are

some specific roles that people need to play. It is usually best if **one person** is responsible for each of these things, so it does not get confusing and unaccountable. That one person can rotate every year or every semester or every couple of weeks, but if there isn't someone who is specifically designated for the job, it will fall on the shoulders of "informal leaders." One person can fill more than one of these roles, but usually not the other way around.

Facilitator – (see above!)

Note Taker – (see above!)

Coordinator – You may want to have someone who stays on top of what everyone else's responsibilities are. This person knows everything that is going on and reminds people that they volunteered to take on certain tasks. They will likely regularly forward information to the facilitator for the agenda.

Listserv Moderator – Who is running the listserv? Who enters in the new members when they sign up? This person, that's who.

Spokesperson - As many people as possible should get a chance at publicity. But you also might want to have a designated spokesperson for the group at actions with media.

Treasurer - Being a treasurer isn't just for capitalists! Whether you do independent fundraising or get money from your school, you will need someone to handle money.

Coalition Builders/Liaisons- If you're in contact with other groups on campus and in the

community, there should be someone in your group who gets to know them, works with them to develop joint projects, and attends their meetings. These people can also make sure that different groups are informed of and included in rallies and other events. Try to have low turnover in this position, especially for liaisons to non-student groups, as this will be very useful in building trust.

RAN contact- This should be the coolest person in your group. Just kidding! We need to know who to be in touch with about stuff. That's this person.

Far too often, white straight men dominate the leadership of groups in general and environmental ones in particular. They tend to be leaders in disproportion both to the amount of work they do and their numbers in the general membership. Rotating positions of responsibility helps reduce this problem. Building an anti-oppressive culture (see chapter 3) is crucial to creating a framework so that your group's leadership reflects these values.

Chapter "5"

ADVANCED CHAPTER BUILDING and MEDIA

Congratulations! You started an awesome group!

This chapter goes over the things you'll need to do to build it and begin to make it sustainable.

Sustainability and Involving New People.

People graduate and move on, and you don't want your group to fall apart when they do. It's important to maintain your group's continuity so that it can build its power and experience over the long haul. There are two ways to do this: 1) constantly involve new people, and 2) make sure that skills and connections are possessed by the group as a whole rather than any one individual.

Here are a few suggestions for building your group's long term health:

- Pass your skills and experiences on to the rest of the group. Give presentations at meetings describing the local press, how to write a press release, how to reserve a room, how the administration works, and stories about major past campaigns. Take your skills seriously! These things are learned, and you can teach them to others. Everyone shouldn't have to reinvent the wheel. Run things in a way that is transferable to others. For instance, take good notes on everything you do so others can pick up where you left off. Don't keep things in your head (unless you're donating your brain to the group when you leave).

- Maintain a good archive of the group and its activities so people next year will be able to read about what you did. This could be a newsletter, a scrapbook, folder, annual report or web site. Include all your past posters, newspaper clippings, pictures, meeting minutes and so on. This can give the group a great feeling of accomplishment at the end of the year.
- Write down a list of useful contacts among the faculty, the administration and the community. Call it a “human-resource file.” Don’t let these vital contacts disappear with you.
- Tell stories to communicate the spirit and flavor of past campaigns.
- Give new people opportunities that will help build their confidence. Encourage them to engage in public speaking, coordinate projects, and facilitate meetings as soon as (or before!) they feel ready.
- Empower new people by offering them meaningful tasks early on.

Solidarity, alliance building, and being respectful.

“Solidarity forever!”

– Popular International Workers of the World (IWW) song and slogan.

"Solidarity is horizontal. It respects the other person. I have a lot to learn from other people." - Eduardo Galeano

So you may have noticed that we keep talking about a “movement.” A movement consists of a lot of different groups and people working together. Those groups and people won’t always agree or have the same mission, but that’s okay because we all have our eyes on the prize, and we want to use our energy fighting the real fight, not infighting amongst other activists, right? Yeah!

Solidarity is about respect. Nobody is going to want to be in your organization if they don’t feel respected, valued and appreciated. The same thing is true for groups working together.

Relationships with other campus groups.

“I don’t want solidarity if it means holding hands with you!” – Defiance, Ohio

There is a common virus that infects most college activist groups. Sociologists have been investigating the phenomenon for ages and have still yet to come up with an answer. For

some reason every activist group seems to think they're the only legit group on their campus. They think that their campaigns are more important. They think that they have a better analysis. They think that they are cooler than all the others. This is especially common for self-styled "radical" groups. That means there is often a dynamic in universities across North America where groups battle for a larger piece of a finite activist pie.

So here is how to not be a jerk:

1. Don't be agenda driving.

All too often, activist groups only approach OTHER campus groups when they want something. Don't just talk to another group when you want them to cosponsor your event or support your campaign. It's not all about your group! If you know other activists, talk to them about what they're doing and ask if your group can help (but be realistic about your time commitments).

2. Listservs and their discontents.

We live in a world in which more and more of our communication is depersonalized. I remember walking down the hall of my dorm my first year of college to see person after person sitting inert, staring at a glowing screen. So before you myspace the night away, think about how you are communicating with other people. Internet tools, whether it's Facebook or instant messenger, can be **really** useful. We aren't knocking 'em, but we are regularly amazed at how easily people will fire off an email without taking the effort to make a phone call or approach someone in person. Most colleges have a lot of issue- or club-based listservs. Use them. Sending announcements out over other people's listservs can be an effective way to communicate with people. But **think of listservs and email as supplements to your personal interaction, not substitutes for it.** If you send an announcement out over another club's listserv, do it after you **GO TO THEIR MEETINGS** and make the announcement in person. When people can place a face with an event, they are a lot more likely to go. Other activists should know who you are and vice versa. Personal contact motivates people, flickering text usually doesn't. And while we're on the topic of motivating other people to go to events...

3. Go to other people's events.

Is there a demonstration on your campus? A film screening? Remember that the more students there are building their power and organizing, the better it is for everyone. It's always crucial to show up and support others – even if it's just to say hello. If a lot of people from your group show up to an event someone else organized, maybe you all want to wear your RAN t-shirts so that you have a visible presence.

Working with other RAN chapters

Are there other colleges in your area that have RAN chapters? Find out! Maybe you can coordinate your campaigns and actions. There will often be national days of action that your group can participate in if you want. Using opportunities like that to collaborate off campus often gives your group perspective and puts you in touch with great people. Getting off campus regularly also helps a group mature.

University Administration

Working with or pressuring your administration is complicated and varies quite a bit from school to school. Whether you're playing "good cop" or "bad cop" with your administration, it's always a good idea to identify sympathetic administrators. Even though they are "the man" and all, there are actually a lot of really cool and amazing people in administrative and staff positions in universities. A lot of them were (and are) activists themselves. When you find allies in the administration, make sure to develop those relationships. Keep them in the loop with what you're doing and give them lots of opportunities to support you. Put them on your email listserv.

You can go far by working with your administration. Sometimes you can radically change university policies simply by putting on a suit and meeting with administrators, demonstrating popular student support for your initiative, and making a good argument for it. One great thing about RAN chapters is that different chapters can engage with their universities in different ways. Just as RAN's national office works both inside the boardrooms and outside on the streets, your chapter can too. There are probably people in your group who want to work from the inside and others who want to work from the outside. Usually, with both pieces in place, you can be even more effective.

Sometimes, you simply won't be able to avoid confrontation. In the U.S., most universities function like corporations, and their bottom line is their priority, not your education. Like Fredrick Douglass once said, "**power concedes nothing without struggle.**"

Your strategy for pressuring your university will depend on a lot of specifics. You will want to have a thoughtful strategy session (which RAN trainers can come do workshops on if you like). A good thing to keep in mind with most universities is that enrollment is what keeps the dollars flowing in. If your administration believes you have both the power and the ability to serve them up bad publicity (through exposing a corrupt policy or publicizing their response to your activism), they will often be fearful that it will hurt the university's reputation, which leads to diminishing enrollment numbers.

As we write this zine, in Berkeley, CA., there are students who are defending an oak grove from being bulldozed to make way for a parking lot. They are living in the trees and are ready to do Non-Violent Direct Action (NVDA), blockades and more if necessary. If the university chancellor wanted to, he could simply have all the students arrested. If he thinks he can get away with it, he may try. But if the students are well trained in NVDA, they have popular support, and the cameras are rolling, the situation is

different. Does the Berkeley chancellor really want to make the newspaper's front page for running a college that arrests its own students and defies the wishes of the community?

In general, Universities are terrified of bad media. The above example is just one instance of finding where you have leverage, and exerting your power on that spot. That's what we mean when we talk about strategy.

The student body in general

Remember, if you are doing campus based activism, your power lies with the support of other students. Alienating them will only hurt you. Be careful how you present yourselves and talk about your issues. One of the biggest mistakes a lot of college activists make is unintentionally cultivating exclusionary activist communities or cliques that are difficult for other students to relate to. The less that "normal" students can relate to you, the more difficult your job will be as an organizer.

On being relevant...

A RAN organizer recently came back from Ohio University in Athens where he was working with the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) chapter, doing strategy and sustainable organization-building workshops. The SDS chapter was waging a free speech campaign on their campus, and they realized early on that their real issue was with how undemocratic and authoritarian their administration was. It turns out their administration was fucking over other students too, including the spontaneous cuts of three varsity sports. The SDS chapter wanted to be relevant, so they broadened their campaign to include those issues. At the demonstration a couple days later, 90 percent of the attendance was from people who had never thought of themselves as "activists." Most were "normal" students, athletes and frat boys.

SDS was careful to include and work on issues that related to large cross sections of the campus. As a result, the demonstration showed a lot of students that they were powerful. Their victory was contagious. **Nothing builds a movement like winning!** Students realized that when they got together and got organized, they could make change; their cynicism was shattered. At the end of the demonstration, they invited all participants to come to a strategy session so that everyone could play a role in shaping their campaign. As a result, many new people felt deeply committed to the campaign and are now some of the most active members in the group.

Having a mechanism to include people after every event is crucial. The Ohio University SDS chapter is now rocking all over campus.

Deepening commitment

Use your larger list of contacts to recruit new members through personal contact. Call people or organize a short visit with students who showed interest in your organization at

club day, from tabling, or at an event or rally. Learn what their interests and skills are and find an easy and productive way for them to help with your group's work.

Every year or semester, you will want to re-assess your group. A retreat or a full-day meeting can be a fabulous bonding experience for newer members. You can spend a day or even a weekend discussing the group's vision and creating a strategic plan for the year. Set aside a large chunk of time. Choose issues, assign responsibility for tasks, and create a timeline. By being strategic and building internal community, your organization will achieve far more than most other clubs. See the strategy chapter for more info on this! Getting arrested together, sitting in an administrative building, or going on long road trips to RAN action camps can also be great for bonding!

At different times during the year, you might want to organize training sessions to increase the skill level of your members. You can do that internally, or invite RAN (or other) trainers to come help you. You can have skillshares internally on things like writing press releases, speaking in front of crowds, handling your administrative bureaucracy, facilitating meetings, making sense of the group's campaign, etc. You can have external trainings on everything from anti-racism and anti-oppression to campaign strategy.

Don't be afraid of mentorship. Everyone should both have a mentor and "mentee." When a new member comes to group meetings, it might be useful for someone who has been in the group longer to be their "buddy" in order to make them feel comfortable in the group and also to transfer leadership skills.

Institutional memory

The turnover rate at universities is crazy. All too often, the group's history graduates with each set of leaders. Make sure to keep good records (press clippings, pictures, minutes, etc.) for the sake of future activists. By keeping archives, you can develop a history of student activism at your university that will be useful in detecting patterns in administration behavior (e.g., the administration almost agreed to pay 15 percent extra to buy recycled paper in 1995 because the faculty senate voted to support it). You can also use your archives to justify your application for a larger organizational budget.

Media!

The best way to grow is by running a compelling campaign that draws people into your group. Large numbers of students will learn about your group and write their names on your sign-up sheets if you hold rallies, teach-ins, sponsor speakers, petition, and regularly table (promoting your organization and your campaigns). Whenever your group organizes a notable activity, issue a press release to campus and off-campus media. With a little work, your organization will receive substantial media coverage, especially in smaller papers that are always looking for stories. Media coverage builds your organization's credibility and helps you recruit. Getting good media will not only

enhance your event and campaign, but build your members' confidence and increase your organization's credibility.

Movement Media

There are lots of different ways to approach the media. The first one is to simply become the media.

- RAN RADIO! Many schools have radio stations and you can get shows on them. Why not start a radio show? You can have fun, be entertaining, and talk about important issues.
- Get a weekly opinion column in your school newspaper and have different members write it each week. This allows you to promote your group and its campaigns to thousands of students for free.
- Work with existing alternative media or start your own newsletter.
- The internet.
 - Any student knows the power of facebook. I'm sure there is nothing we can write here that you don't already know.
 - The same goes for myspace.
 - Set up a profile/page on community.ran.org!

Every time you do something really interesting, a press release should at least go out to the local papers, Associated Press (AP) bureau, radio and TV. Also try alternative media such as Indymedia (www.indymedia.org), Pacifica (see www.pacifica.org), *Left Turn Magazine*, and *Z Magazine*. Often with leftist or movement media, you will be the one writing articles and submitting them.

Mainstream Media

Whether we like it or not, the mainstream media has a massive influence on public opinion and politics in the United States. There is no question that we need to democratize our media, but as we do that, we must also work with the mainstream media to broadcast the messages and values that are important to us as progressive activists. A fantastically well-organized rally attended by 100 committed citizens is a beautiful thing, but if the media covers it, your message will reach ten times that number. If you want to communicate with people who don't already know about your issue and bring new people into the struggle for social justice and human rights, media coverage is a must.

Telling a story or communicating a point of view to reporters and editors from mainstream publications and media outlets is a special art. You have to be clear and brief, and at the same time deeply thoughtful. You have to know certain tricks of the trade that

will help your issue stand out from the hundreds of other interesting things happening in the world.

Utilizing the media (this section is adapted from *Citizen Works: Tools for Organizing*)

Your group should create a plan for using the media to make announcements, educate the public, and recruit new volunteers that is tailored to your group and your campaigns. Whether your campaign is community- or campus-centered, you should always contact both your community and campus media outlets with all news.

- Gather contact information for your campus and community newspapers, radio and TV stations, and keep it in a database for easy reference. Try to get the name of the specific reporter or staff person who covers your “beat” and is likely to be the most interested in your issues. Keep notes about contacts with reporters and the coverage you get from different outlets.

- Respond to events or negative articles and pro-actively promote your group and its campaigns by writing letters to the editor, op-eds, and guest columnist pieces. To get printed, these pieces should be timely, locally focused, and carefully written and edited. All arguments should be supported with details and hard evidence, and all pieces should contain your group's contact information.

- Contact your newspaper's editors and your radio/TV station's producers at least one week in advance of an event and ask them to assign someone to write or produce a story about it.

- Many media outlets provide free announcements listings. Find out what you have to do to get all of your events listed and do it!

- If you are not planning any events that can be covered in a traditional story, make sure that your campus newspaper editors know that a new organization is thriving at your school. They may want to run a feature on the group.

- If your campaign gets little or no coverage, use this to your advantage. Raise awareness among students about your biased campus media.

- Everyone that talks to the media should be well versed on the issues involved with your campaign. If a member of your group is asked a question that she/he cannot answer, she/he should simply say "I don't know."

- Develop short statements with quotable lines that plug your group. Don't let your speeches degenerate into sound bites, but be aware of the kind of statements that reporters are seeking.

- Prepare events to suit photographing and videotaping. Have signs and banners with your group name and/or the name of your campaign or event prominently displayed. Let editors/producers know beforehand that there will be photo opportunities so that they can have a photographer present. Contact RAN at least two weeks before your events, and we may be able to send you banners, posters or other visuals.

- A press liaison should be present at all of your events to seek out the reporters, make statements, and direct them to other spokespeople in your organization. You don't want to let a reporter get away without a pocket full of good quotes!

- If TV or radio interviews you, mention your web site and/or contact information several times throughout the interview. If you are interviewed by print media, ask the

reporter if your contact information can be listed at the end of the article. They may say "no," but it doesn't hurt to ask.

WHAT IS NEWS?

Components of a newsworthy story:

1. **New**—To get their attention, your story should be current, timely and fresh. It is a late-breaking development, something happening right now, a steaming hot chocolate treat, not reheated leftovers.
2. **Local**—It should tie into what is going on in that particular community. Even if you are often campaigning on a national or international campaign, find a local angle, such as the potential impact on the local community. And definitely hold your event at the local branch of the international corporation you're targeting.
3. **Human Interest Angle**—Try to put a human face on your story, such as a local child who suffers asthma attacks on bad smog days, a former Ford employee, etc.
4. **Conflict**—A story with a hard-fought conflict makes news. Identify the good guys and bad guys for reporters. For example, our campaign to support the Grassy Narrows First Nation community's struggle to stop industrial logging was covered as *Weyerhaeuser v. Native Community*.
5. **Controversy**—Anything controversial is more likely to get news coverage. Civil disobedience pretty much always gets media.
6. **Strange Bedfellows**—We can often garner increased news coverage by building a coalition of strange bedfellows, a coalition that contradicts most reporters' assumptions of who supports environmental campaigns. For example, we partnered with Iraq vets who want auto companies to stop driving a war for oil.
7. **Visuals/colorful quotes and images.**
 - **Dramatic images**—a fake oil spill on a beach, a huge STOP sign that says "STOP Weyerhaeuser," Blown-up photos of the place that is being put at risk.
 - **Creative and fun images**—we've had a ton of traction for wearing white "hazmat" suits and looking for "Investments of Mass Destruction" at JP Morgan Chase's headquarters. Our campaign against Boise Cascade famously featured a gigantic blow-up dinosaur with a t-shirt that said "I (HEART) Destroying Old Growth."
 - **Event visuals:** Dozens of people marching backwards to protest a "backwards" policy; big banner hangs on the side of buildings.
 - **Some visuals are already there,** like shots of the beautiful natural areas we want to protect, but often times we need to create a big visual for it to be enticing to TV audiences.

8. Timely—Can your story be linked to an upcoming holiday or season? Examples include using Independence Day to talk about how America needs to declare independence from oil or using April Fools Day to talk about “Fossil Fools.”

Also, the media love superlatives! Is something in your story the “biggest,” “first,” or “most”? Don’t forget to make that part of your pitch.

Press Releases

First, make a list of local, alternative and national media outlets. You’ll want to target metro and education beat reporters. For important events, fax and email a news advisory to the appropriate reporters a week or so before the event; send it again three or four days before (accompanied by a phone call to confirm they got it); and then send it a final time the day before the event. Issue your press release the morning of the event and follow up with another phone call pitching the story. On the day (or night) of an event, call to see if they are covering it. If they forgot about it, send them another copy of your press release.

Many computers come with fax modems, which allow you to program your computer to automatically send your word-processed news advisory and release to all of your media contacts. Fax modems are cheap and very useful.

The news advisory should clearly include the reasons for the event, your demands, when, where the event will be, who will attend, and the contact info of someone in your group. The news release should be written as if you were the reporter writing the story you want them to write.

For example:

Sample Press Release:



RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK

221 Pine Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94104
415.398.4404 | 415.398.2732 fax
www.ran.org

news release

For Immediate Release
April 13, 2007

Contacts: Sam Haswell, 415.659.0519
Brianna Cayo Cotter, 415.305.1943

RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK “STEPS IT UP” TO STOP BANKS FROM FUNDING CLIMATE CHANGE

Protests in 15 U.S. Cities Target Banks behind Nation’s Dirtiest Energy Projects

SAN FRANCISCO – Rainforest Action Network (RAN) organized protests in 15 U.S. cities today targeting several of the world’s biggest financial institutions for their contributions to global warming by providing financial support to new coal development. The series of actions

was part of *Step It Up 2007!*, the largest national day of action to stop global warming in U.S. history.

RAN activists engaged in a range of creative protests to raise awareness about the financial institutions' role in promoting and profiting from climate-changing technologies. Actions included dressing as "Billionaires for Coal" and delivering bags of coal to the banks; performing "Cough-Ins;" congratulating banks for placing profits ahead of human health and the environment; staging a "Coffin for Coal" procession through downtown Washington, D.C.; and performing theatrical demonstrations featuring coal miners showing the dirty consequences of coal investment.

"From the shores of California to the heart of New York's financial district, citizens are sending the message that new, dirty coal plants have no place in our modern economy," said RAN's Executive Director Michael Brune. "We are proud to take part in this historic day of action on climate change, which our society's political and corporate leaders will be hard-pressed to ignore."

RAN's demonstrations in New York City, Washington, D.C., Boston and elsewhere coincided with thousands of other events planned for today and tomorrow as part of *Step It Up!*. The banks targeted by RAN – which included Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, JPMorgan Chase, Credit Suisse and Lehman Brothers – are among the leading financiers of new, polluting coal-fired power plants and the coal companies that supply them.

More than 150 new coal-fired power plants are currently being proposed throughout the U.S. at a projected cost of \$125 billion. The antiquated technology used by the plants will emit millions of tons of carbon dioxide – and other dangerous toxins such as mercury – into the atmosphere annually. In addition, the coal needed to fuel them is extracted at enormous social and environmental cost. RAN is urging banks to follow the recommendations of NASA's chief climate scientist, Dr. James Hansen, who has called for a moratorium on all new coal-fired power plants. A United Nations scientific panel that spent two years studying the issue also recommended against further development and construction of conventional coal-fired power plants.

Today's protests took place in Washington, D.C.; New York, N.Y.; Boston, Mass.; San Francisco, Calif.; Houston, Texas; Fort Worth, Texas; Austin, Texas; Detroit, Mich.; Portland, Ore.; Providence, R.I.; Columbus, Ohio; Athens, Ohio.; Berkeley, Calif.; Santa Cruz, Calif.; Madison, N.J.; and Sarasota, Fla. More than 1,300 other climate-related demonstrations will take place tomorrow throughout the nation.

For more information, visit www.RAN.org.

For more information on Step It Up's National Day of Climate Action, visit www.stepitup2007.org.

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Sample Advisory:



RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK

221 Pine Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94104
415.398.4404 | 415.398.2732 fax
www.ran.org

media advisory

For Immediate Release

Contacts: Jeremy Wells, 917.991.5450
April 13, 2007

Brianna Cayo Cotter, 415.305.1943

-- MEDIA ADVISORY FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 13 --

NEW YORK'S "BILLIONAIRES FOR COAL" TO CELEBRATE WALL STREET SEVEN FOR INVESTING IN GLOBAL WARMING

WHAT: On Friday, April 13, the "Billionaires for Coal" will deliver bags of coal to the Manhattan offices of Goldman Sachs, Credit Suisse, JP Morgan Chase, Morgan Stanley and Lehman Brothers and applaud the banks for putting coal and profits before human health and climate change.

The theatrical demonstration will be one of more than a thousand events planned across the country as part of *Step It Up*, the largest national day of action addressing global warming in United States history. Rainforest Action Network activists will be at banks in several U.S. cities demanding that Wall Street's leading financial institutions get tough on climate change and stop funding new polluting coal plants.

WHEN: Friday, April 13 at 9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Goldman Sachs office, located at 85 Broad Street in downtown Manhattan

WHO: "Billionaires for Coal," Rainforest Action Network and local groups

VISUALS: Well-dressed billionaires with bags of coal and signs supporting the banks' investment in dirty coal plants will make offerings of coal as thanks for putting profits first!

WHY: The "Billionaires for Coal" are among a select few that support funding of the U.S.'s dirty coal power expansion plan. More than 150 new coal-fired power plants are currently being proposed throughout the country at a projected cost of \$125 billion. Merrill Lynch, JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Citigroup, Morgan Stanley, Credit Suisse and Lehman Brothers are lead funders of new coal-fired power plants in the United States.

Coal-fired power plants are the world's largest source of destabilizing greenhouse gas emissions, and the push to build them is inconsistent with what needs to happen to address global climate change. RAN is urging banks to follow the recommendations of NASA's chief climate scientist, Dr. James Hansen, who made headlines recently with his call for a moratorium on all new coal-fired power plants. In addition, a United Nations scientific panel that spent two years studying the issue recommended an immediate halt to the development and construction of conventional coal-fired power plants.

For more information on Rainforest Action Network, visit www.RAN.org.

For more information on Step It Up's National Day of Climate Action, visit www.StepItUp2007.org.

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When talking to the press, remember a couple of things:

- If you want good coverage, be nice to the reporters, even when they screw up.
- Don't be too professional, they like students. Be honest and personable.
- Feel free to stop, pause, edit or rephrase. Relax—you're in control. This is your chance to say whatever you want. If you come up with a particularly good quote, say "Oh, that's a good way of putting it! I'd like it if you used that." Tell them what's important.
- Often you'll groan when you see the article because they emphasized the wrong thing and completely missed the point. Spell it out for them.
- Feel free to ignore a question—don't get put on the defensive. If they don't ask the right question, ask it yourself and answer it. Besides, a lot of reporters will have next to no idea what's going on, and they're probably racking their brains about what to ask you. Give them a break and ask it yourself.

Have a press table at your event (official group spokespersons could wear armbands) and have press packets on hand to provide background for their article. They'll love you for doing their research for them – and this will mean that they'll have enough information to do a longer article!

If reporters don't attend your event, write a summary and send it to them anyway. They might have had a time conflict and still want to cover it.

Finally, you can also do Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for upcoming events on local radio—usually the station will want a :30 message on a 3x5 card. Local celebrities, bands, etc., might even want to record the announcement for you for the publicity.

Quick press tips for rallies:

Set the context – find them, don't wait to be found. Control the media instead of letting them control you. If you are asked questions, always bring them back to your message – getting a good soundbyte to sink in is better than fully answering their questions. Be short and sweet – do NOT go on a long winded speech. All the good parts will get edited out and you'll sound stupid, for real. Have press packets/releases to hand out to people. Make sure to organize the rally so you have good photo ops with big banners behind lots of people. If you see a good photo-op, tell the media about it; they like that. If folks at your rally are wearing the same t-shirts, it's a great photo op. Sell t-shirts before the rally! It will help fundraise and get the word out at the same time!

Chapter “6”

– Campaigning! Strategy and Tactics

Most RAN chapters organize on a variety of issues but have one single campaign focus which provides clarity, vision and consistency. If you want your chapter to be able to assert your people power and have actions that build on each other, it’s important to plan way in advance. One tragedy of student activism is that a lot of groups seem to put on an endless series of disconnected events or rallies. Like a **STORY**, campaigns have a beginning, middle and end – setting goals, applying a sequence of actions or tactics, and eventually winning. Also like a story, campaigns are much more about **showing** than **telling**. For a campaign to succeed, there must be set goals, an analysis of their impact upon your community and on your organization, an understanding of your allies and constituents, knowledge of your opponents, tactics, targets, allies, and timelines. This and more makes up your strategy. Having a common strategic framework allows for your campaign to be decentralized: people understand and work with the strategy instead of waiting for some charismatic leader to tell them what to do. Whatever strategy you develop should have a clear what and why logic; be widely publicized; and involve training around the common strategy.

You should set aside a weekend (maybe even have a retreat!) and flesh out the details of your strategy. It will save you a LOT of time in the long run. Often, RAN trainers will be happy to come help you strategize a campaign. Hopefully, this chapter will help your organization figure some of this out.

Deciding what to work on

When you are forming your chapter, different RAN campaigners will be happy to explain their campaigns to you and how they might be more or less relevant to your specific situation and location.

When thinking about your campaign, remember that band-aids (e.g., cleanups) are good, but you should also think about what person or institution is causing the problems (like corporations who pollute) in the first place.

There is an old parable about a village that finds babies drowning in a river. They mobilize all their resources to save the babies, scooping them out of the water one by one and taking care of them. They keep doing this until someone finally thinks to go upstream and find the dude who is throwing all the babies in the water.

Find the dude. Launch your campaign around him (the use of gendered language is cuz we are taking down “the man,” right?).

There is a delicate balance between tackling big issues and taking on a campaign you feel confident you can win. You can’t start a revolution from nothing. But the more wins you have under your belt, the more you can take on tougher targets. Remember, RAN campaigns can have big, sweeping international victories, and you can plug into them at local levels to build your group, which is much more manageable. **For an active group, it’s probably best to mix local and more easily achievable campaigns (where you can clearly see your impact) with regional/national /international ones where you’ll learn a lot by networking with other people and have a chance of being the tipping point for a major campaign.**

If you do choose your own smaller campaign, remember to shoot for **structural change**. The example that the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) Organizer Guide gives is that instead of creating a volunteer recycling program that you will have to spend all your time staffing, you should get your school to institutionalize one. Then your group will have the energy to tackle the next issue.

That’s why many RAN chapters take on one big international campaign, while others work on smaller local issues. The big RAN campaign will usually be localized, and campus victories can help the campaign and build your group, but you can also show solidarity with other projects in your community at the same time.

Actions are louder than words. Having a post-issue vision or talking about solidarity in your group is great, but **that needs to be backed up by the content of your work.** No matter what you **say** about yourselves, people will define you based on what you **do**. Any campaign you work on determines who is actually interested in joining you.

Think about whom your work is relevant to. For example, is recycling the most pressing issue for everyone in your community? What kinds of issues *are* pressing and touch people’s daily lives? Can your work connect to that? The post-issue “connections” are there in all of the major RAN campaigns – but how you work on them is important. If you envision your group engaging in forest protection by practicing solidarity with the

indigenous community of Grassy Narrows, then you may want to also get involved in indigenous or immigration issues in your community and solidify those connections. Make links between forest destruction and poverty in the Global South. If you are engaging in a Global Finance campaign and are talking about economics, try networking with campus workers and support unionization campaigns or campaigns that seek to help workers off campus (i.e., justice for farm workers, living wage). Tackle cases of environmental racism and classism (where corporations are disproportionately dumping toxins on people of color and the poor). If you take on a local campaign such as a school-wide recycling program, find out where your university's waste goes – it's probably getting dumped in low income communities and/or communities of color. If you take on a campaign without as many concrete connections, support struggles that are concerned with and which are led by people of color, queer people, women, or poor and working class people.

When strategizing, there are some things ya gotta remember....

Power.

“What kind of power we got?” – Public Enemy

“Fight War, Not Wars, Destroy Power, Not People” – Crass

Good campaign strategies require a deep understanding of power: what it is, how to build it, and how to use it. There are some folks on the Left who are scared of the word (see the Crass quote above); it's easy to look around at society and see vertically structured power that is misused and abused and pinpoint that as the basis of oppression. But **there are lots of different kinds of power**, not just the kind that comes with authority and hierarchy. When Public Enemy says “**fight the power,**” they are talking about THE power – a specific kind of power that we are trying to challenge (like RAN's slogan “**challenge corporate power**”), but then they follow it up in another song saying, “What kinda power we got? Soul power!”...So power isn't always “bad.”

What is power really? Isn't it powerful when normal people join together and assert control over their own lives collectively and horizontally? “Power over” someone is different than “power with” your people. At RAN, we're trying to take power out of the boardrooms and give it to people negatively impacted by boardroom decisions.

When we talk about power, think about the context. On your campus, you are probably trying to democratize your school by **building student power** – making your school administration accountable to YOU as students. When we look at movements like the Black Power movement, we see an oppressed group struggling for their own self determination. But when we look at the White Power movement, we see a powerful group looking to maintain its dominance over other groups through hatred. **White Power and Black Power mean very different things.** Power is tricky, because asserting it means something different for someone at the top of a hierarchy than for someone on the bottom.

Organizing is about redistributing power. **That’s what democracy is all about.** As activists, we are trying to reorient the use of power in society.

As students, we have what’s usually called “**people power,**” while most of our targets have the formal power that comes with positions of authority or money. A people-power analysis understands that power is not something that those in power hold. Rather, it is a fragile relationship between those in power and the rest of us. Our compliance forms the pillars on which their power depends. When we withhold our cooperation and organize determined movements to intervene, we can assert our power and force changes – or even remove those who refuse to make them. It's not just a theory. It's a well-developed method that's been toppling authoritarian governments and winning major improvements in people’s lives for decades.

Usually, the institutions we are trying to change are undemocratically controlled by people we can target, and applying pressure strategically often means going outside their means of control. **RAN’s insider/outsider strategy works both inside and outside the system simultaneously.** The balance between cooperation and adversarial action is going to be up to you to decide. The good cop/bad cop approach can be part of your campus strategy as well in the sense that good relationships within the system can help institutionalize a policy (i.e., having allies in the administration is essential), but the pressure usually comes from the outside. Remember **Fredrick Douglass**, who said, “**Power concedes nothing without struggle.**” It is very rare that any institution will adopt social justice out of the kindness of its heart. It often isn’t until push comes to shove that institutions really reveal their true colors, and we can clearly see their undemocratic nature. Asserting power is essential. This chapter focuses mainly on exerting that power from the outside, as it will usually be the bulk of your energy.

By working from the outside, you are changing the rules – the system is no longer dictating the terms of your negotiation and engagement. **Your strategy should consist of looking at the kind of power your members and allies have, comparing it to your opponents’ power, and then**

picking an area outside the experience of your opponents to assert your power and win your campaign.

Story

A key ingredient in a successful strategy is our ability to frame our own struggles and tell our story. If we are acting defensively within the framework or stories of the Bush administration and its "war on terror" story, we will always be on the defensive. If we allow them to define reality, we will always lose. For example, if we limit ourselves to defensively arguing that there are no nuclear weapons in Iraq without challenging the legitimacy and cost of the U.S. empire, then we are operating in a Bush-defined reality. We have to be able to understand, fight and win the "battle of the story." (David Solnit, *Shelter Under the Anti-War Umbrella*)

Setting Goals.

This is different from your mission statement. Your group's vision may be of a very different world, but your goals are specific and concrete outcomes you want your campaign to achieve. How do you define victory? That's your goal. Your goals are the first thing you should set, since they are what will allow you to quantify your success. You should set short-term, midrange, and long-term goals.

For instance:

Your group's mission: Challenge corporate power and protect the environment by confronting the intersection between environmental activism, race, class and gender.

Campaign vision: Challenge corporate capitalism by making the banking industry more sustainable.

Long-term goal: Get Wells Fargo to draft a policy to stop funding Mountain Top Removal and other projects involving environmental devastation.

Mediu-term goal: Kick Wells Fargo off our campus and get 500 students to send letters to the bank.

Short-term goal: Kick the Wells Fargo "recruiters" (the people who try to get new students to sign up for bank accounts) off campus when the semester starts in the fall.

Your goals should build your group too.

Sometimes it is possible to win very easily, but the mark of a good campaign is one which builds your organization and builds a movement, and achieves strategic objectives that go beyond your immediate goals. The SEAC manual suggests the following three things to shoot for:

- 1) Concrete improvements
- 2) Empowerment of people
- 3) A change in society's power relationships

For example, it may be possible that one student with a good relationship to a high-level administrator (or a student in a position of formal power like a student government president) could make a significant change on campus, such as “greening a fleet” (see “tactics” below to find out what a Green Fleet is). **However, negotiations that occur behind closed doors don’t give campaign participants any sense that they were able to make a difference, nor do they increase the level of student input in the way things work.** It does not change the relationship of power between the administration and the students. A high-profile campaign, on the other hand, one that mobilizes many students to take part in shaping their world and challenges the formal institutions of power, helps build democracy on your campus and in society.

The point is that when you set your goals, you must ask how achieving those goals will fulfill the three criteria above. When laying out your strategy to accomplish those three larger objectives, think about how you can simultaneously achieve them and empower yourselves and your community so that you can win more victories in the future. **Think long term!** The campaign should also build your organization and the movement. Good questions to ask are:

- Does this campaign develop the skills of our members?
- Does it involve a wide range of commitment levels and engagement styles? (i.e., do you have tasks for people who don’t have much time as well as for people who are ready to dedicate themselves deeply? Is there room for both the shy person who wants to stay in the background and talk to the administration AND the confrontational person who wants to yell into the bullhorn?)
- Can this campaign bring in new members?
- How can this campaign create new leaders?
- How can it strengthen the ones we have?

One of the fundamental questions you should ask is, “How many people can your campaign involve?” Think about what roles there are to fill and who will fill them. **At your introductory meeting, you should have activities that everyone can participate in immediately.** Nobody is going to stay in a group if they don’t feel useful or needed. Be thoughtful about the responsibilities you ask people to shoulder; don’t let anyone burn out, but **DO** allow opportunities for people’s level of commitment to increase over time.

Resources

Your power is often related to your resources. Make a physical list of them. **Be specific with the quantities.** What skills do your members have? Do you have

access to materials, to funding? What kind of facilities can the groups use? What is your reputation? What kinds of connections do your members have?

The answer to many of these questions is going to be “a lot.” (quantified in specific concrete amounts of course!) **One of the advantages of being a RAN chapter is having access to tons of resources – from trainings to campaign-specific materials.** Take this into account.

This exercise can also be great for fleshing out any potential problems in your group as far as **internal democracy** is concerned. For example, you may discover that a few people control most of the resources due to their connections, related knowledge, etc. Even though your group may be officially structured to give people equal power, unequal access to resources translates to an unequal distribution of internal power. Acknowledge it and deal with it. A great way to help you account for informal power is to read the different writing on Parecon by **Michael Albert**. If you go to our online zine, you can learn about his ideas of **Balanced Job Complexes**...

Constituency

When thinking about taking action on an issue, ask:

Whose problem is it? Who can help you? What groups are your potential allies involved in? How would they benefit from helping you? What would they have to risk? How can they help? What kind of power do they have? Which communities are affected by the problem? Which communities are going to be affected by your activism?

Anyone connected to the issue in any way is a potential ally. The more allies you have, the more powerful you will be. But always remember that groups join for their own reasons, and these reasons may be different from yours. Understand their motives and needs and **respect** them.

Targets

When we look for weak spots in the system, what we are really searching for are ways to leverage our power against the system in order to pressure the power holders. Those power holders are our **primary targets**.

Ask yourself:

How can we pressure and influence our target? What kind of power do we have?

Then ask:

Who else can we pressure or influence to pressure our target?

Those people are your **secondary targets**. Think of as many secondary targets as you can – the more people you can “encircle” your target with the better.

So, for example, if your target is the chancellor, think of whom the chancellor has to answer to: the board of directors, the media, parents, students, faculty, other administrators, etc. In a corporation, a CEO usually has to answer to the stockholders, the government, consumers, etc.

[Image- Spectrum of Allies]

One way of dealing this with your group is by drawing up a Spectrum of Allies Chart (from Training for Change).

We often think of our target as being someone who is opposed to us, and the only way we can win is by getting them to come over to our side. Actually, it’s easier than that. To win a campaign, your target does not have to see eye to eye with you. There are a number of groups that fall somewhere within the spectrum of opinion or values that separate you and your target. Often, all you need to do to win is to get one of these secondary targets to move closer to your position and so on down the line. It makes sense. *You* may not be the best equipped to talk to groups on the far right, but you can talk to other groups who are.

Your Timeline

Make sure to have a clear sense of what you want to do and when. You want a concrete way to quantify your progress and to **keep your folks amped** about your campaign. The simplest way to do that is to make a schedule of when you expect to get things done and stick to it. Every time you meet your goal on time, you can cross it off and feel a sense of accomplishment. This will also help to foster **accountability** on the part of your group members, who will know they have real due dates for tasks and assignments by certain meetings or events. It is especially useful to keep track of hard dates like rallies and talks. Include as much information as possible and keep your calendar posted in a visible space. For example, if your group has its own meeting place like an activist resource center, keep it on the wall! That way other groups can also see it and might get interested in your stuff! (Just make sure that the Man doesn’t see it!)

If you don’t have a meeting place, maybe keeping your timeline somewhere online will be useful, or you can fold it up, store it somewhere, and bust it out at every meeting and put it on the wall.

When putting your timeline together, have a student calendar on hand. Be conscious of holidays, vacations, weather, sporting events, etc. Don’t conflict with other student

groups' meetings or exams. Remember to be sensitive to religious holidays, even if you don't get the day off from school. Islamic and Jewish holidays, for example, are often unobserved institutionally in American universities. Don't alienate members or potential members by being insensitive. And **remember the student energy cycle!** Folks have the most energy in the beginning of the semester, especially the second semester (or third quarter depending on your school's schedule), and energy tends to wane by exam time.

Now that you have your timeline, you can start to pencil in tactics. Campaigns usually go through a few phases:

1. **Politeness:** You try asking nicely and meeting with the people who can make the change you want. Either the meeting doesn't give the results you want, you don't get the meeting, you're ignored, stalled, or whatever. Even if you don't think you will be heard, it's important to go through this step for legitimacy, and you can say, "Well, we tried meetings and asking nicely, but none of it worked!"

2. **Action & Education:** These go together like grits and cornbread or like Bill O'Reilly and anger management classes. You need to educate people about the problem, gain their support, and then activate them. There is no "choir" that you're preaching to – even if people are taking action and getting active, you constantly gotta go back and do things to maintain that consciousness. The actions themselves should educate people. The education itself should have an action follow-up component. It builds and builds until...

3. **Negotiations:** After you've shown your strength, your target(s) should be willing to negotiate. Awesome. This is a win, but they will probably stall.

4. **Either you have a victory, or....**you'll need to intensify the campaign. Experiment with different tactics and turn on or turn up the fire. See the end of the next chapter on tactics for a longer "What if it didn't work?" section.

Okay, so there are a lot of things to think about when developing your strategy. To make things a little easier, here is a worksheet that you can fill out with your whole group to get this process going.

Action worksheet

1. Identify Key Pillars

What are the different groups, people or institutions that are propping up your target? Pillars should be clear, effective and impactable.

Pillars: _____

2. What Pillar is most compelling to your group?

Removing or weakening this pillar is a good long term goal.

3. What is your group's long-term goal?

4. Medium-term goals (achievable by the end of the semester or year)?

5. Short -term goals (measurable, achievable and celebratable)?

6. How does your target portray the situation? What is the story that your target is telling? How are they telling the story? Whom do they say the conflict is between? What characters and symbols are they using to tell it? How does your target portray the situation? What is your story? How do you tell the story?

Your story:

Conflict

Characters

Symbols

How does the story show that the problem is systemic?

7. Direct Action

How will you tell your story? What tactics will you use to get your message across?

8. Research

What topics will your group need to research, so that you can understand the extent and nature of the problem? How does the problem impact us, other communities, and the environment? Who has the power to change this situation? What information do we need to know?

9. Education

Whom do you want to educate?

What tactics will you use to educate your community or the public?

10. Negotiation

How will you negotiate and with whom? What are your bottom-line, uncompromising demands? Where can you give a little?

11. Protracted Struggle

If you are in for a long struggle, how will you keep people engaged in the campaign? What's the big picture? Where do you go after the next victory? What about the victory after that? How will you escalate your actions over time?

Chapter "7"

Tactics Toolbox!

Too often groups pick the tactics they like first, and then develop a strategy based around them. This is backwards. But now that you have a strategy it's time to think of which tactics you wanna use. In this section we will have a list of specific tactics and actions you can take on RAN campaigns, and then a "toolbox" of potential tactics you could use in any situation – RAN or not.

When choosing your tactics, remember that they should...

- Fit together into your strategy! Be consistent!
- Make sense to your members and supporters. If your members are only comfortable with negotiating with the administration it might not be a good idea to try to stage a sit in right off the bat. Alienating people is the worst thing you can do.
- Be creative and flexible! As the great community organizer **Saul Alinsky** always said, make sure your tactics are **WITHIN** the experience of your members, but **OUTSIDE** of the experience of your

target. If a tactic is totally foreign to your target it will be that much more powerful.

- Have a follow up built into them. Each step should set you up for the next one.

Ask yourself...

- Who are we trying to influence and what are we trying to change with this tactic?
- How will it influence them / change it?
- What kind of power are we bringing to this situation? How are we applying it?
- What kind of power does our target have in this situation?
- How are we following through? What are the next steps?

Who is going to be affected by your tactic? Is your rally going to influence the public, or the administration? How will the media respond? Why do you want media attention?

What are you hoping it will achieve? **Why should the president care about 100 students on her front lawn anyway?**

What does your tactic lead to? Are you issuing a demand? You should be. Think about what you will do if your target does nothing in response. What kind of response are you looking for? Demand a response!

Tactics Toolbox:

We begin with specific suggestions of actions you can take on our campaigns.

Then we go on to list more tactics that could be employed in a whole lot of contexts. Ready? Go!

Freedom from Oil

“I got the right temperature fi shelta you from di storm” – Sean Paul

Hold an Oil Addicts Anonymous (OAA) Meeting: OAA has one primary purpose: to help ourselves, our corporations, and our governments end oil addiction. Oil Addiction is a disease that strikes all of us because our society is set up to feed the addiction. Breaking that addiction will require a system-wide change. OAA provides a place to start. We aim to have OAA meetings in every community on the continent. Though our society's oil addiction is old, OAA is new, and we **need your help** to fulfill its mission of ending America's addiction to oil. Sign up now and find out if there's an OAA chapter in your community. If not, create your own!

- Take the online quiz that asks, “Are You Addicted to Oil?” at www.jumpstartford.com.
- Visit www.jumpstartford.com to download an OAA toolkit.

- Call your friends and family members and invite them to share their experiences with oil addiction at your first meeting.

Adopt a Dealer: The public face of Ford Motor Company is its dealers. There are over 13,000 dealerships worldwide for Ford and its subsidiary brands, Lincoln, Mercury, Volvo, Jaguar and Land Rover. Most dealers are independent businesses, and are currently facing closure due to Ford's downward economic spiral. Many of them agree that it's time to help Ford out of the hole with a plan that saves both the company and the environment. The easiest way to join the campaign for a sustainable, petroleum-free future is to find a Ford dealer near you, ask for a meeting, and launch your own intervention to stop Ford from driving America's oil addiction.

- Schedule a meeting with the owner of a dealership in your area.
- Talk with the owner about the kinds of vehicles that your community would like to see made available on their lots (i.e. plug-in hybrids or all-electric vehicles).
- Ask the dealership to send a letter to Ford headquarters, asking the company to increase its fleet-wide fuel efficiency and manufacture cleaner vehicles.
- Keep the pressure on them by following-up and demanding action!
- Download the Adopt a Dealer toolkit at www.jumpstartford.com for detailed steps you can take to enlist dealers in the effort to break our oil addiction.

Greenfleets Resolution: We can show the automakers that demand for green vehicles exists by getting our communities and our campuses to commit to purchasing and leasing only the most fuel economic cars and trucks available. If we got every city, college, and university in North America to agree to green their fleets, we could send a signal to the automobile market that there is a desire for vehicles that don't contribute to global warming and war. That would help jumpstart new production of fuel-efficient cars and trucks. By greening the vehicle fleet of your community or campus, you can make a major contribution toward halting climate destabilization and wars for oil.

- Visit www.jumpstartford.com to download a Greenfleets packet for a complete how-to on starting a campus campaign.
- Research the purchasing procedures of your university.
- Set up a meeting with the fleet purchaser or manager to learn more.
- Request that the school makes a commitment to purchasing clean vehicles and changes purchasing policies to reduce oil consumption.
- Recruit others and build your campus movement!

Book a Speaker or Training: Would you like to know more about America's Oil Addiction, the Zero Emissions campaign, or corporate campaigning? Would you like to gain more skills in organizing a demonstration, working with the media, or negotiating with your local dealer? We love to work with local activists to build your knowledge and skills, so please sign up at www.jumpstartford.com to request a speaker or training in your community or on your campus.

Organize a Demonstration at Your Local Dealership:

- Recruit local environmental groups, bike clubs, and peace organizations to convene at your local Ford dealership.
- Use **banners and picket signs** to let the Ford customers know that Ford is fueling our oil addiction. We can supply eye-catching pre-stenciled banners.
- Hand out **flyers and postcards** to customers and urge them to tell the dealer that they want cleaner, more efficient cars. We can send you some postcards to distribute.
- Bring **noisemakers and bullhorns** to your event.
- Chalk and poster your message on the grounds of the dealership the night before.

Ticket the Gas-Guzzlers:

- Put mock parking tickets on all the Ford SUVs in the dealership lots. The tickets read, “Violation—Gas Guzzling Fuels Global Warming and War.”
- Tickets are available by writing to: suvtickets@globalexchange.org.

Ask the automakers to manufacture plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs):

- Research plug-in hybrids and their potential to transition America away from a reliance on gasoline vehicles.
- Go to www.pluginpartners.org to learn more about the campaign to promote plug-in hybrids.
- Sign the Plug-In Partners petition to tell automakers you want them to make PHEVs commercially available.
- Start your own Plug-In group to encourage local municipalities and businesses to join the campaign and place “soft” fleet orders for PHEVs.
- For more information and materials, email jodie@ran.org.

Write a letter or send an email to the CEOs of the Big Six Automakers – Ford, GM, Daimler Chrysler, Toyota, Honda and Nissan – challenging each of them to make their company the industry leader in fuel economy and to reduce their vehicles’ emissions.

Global Finance Campaign.

“Ya gotta follow the money.” – Greg Palast

The bank targets of the Global Finance campaign are constantly shifting. Here are some tactics that can be used against any of them!

1. Culture jamming

- Stamp the words “Dirty Money” with the global finance website www.dirtymoney.org on dollar bills!
- Wheat pasting
- Stickers
- Stencils

2. Low level

- Petitioning
- Letter to school/local paper
- Letter to bank branch manager
- Advocate student government for Massey/Wells divestment, removal of Wells banking services from campus
- Teach-in on Mountaintop Removal, Coal, Oil and Gas.
- Film screening
- Flyering
- Letters of Opposition to banks doing business on campus (individuals, student groups, faculty)
- Sponsor Mountain Top Removal speaker/film

3. Mid-level

- Protests
- Confronting corporate recruiters at campus job fair
- Confronting on-campus bank solicitors (credit cards, bank accounts)
- Street theater

4. High level

- Coal dumping
- Disruption
- Occupation of bank branch, administration office

5. Ongoing

- Adopt a Branch
- Advocate removal of bank services through administration
- Credit card/Bank Account Boycott

OLD GROWTH.

“I repeat, cried the Lorax, I speak for the trees!” – Dr. Seuss.

- Visit www.freegrassy.org, sign the petition in support of Grassy Narrows and register to receive email updates from RAN.
- Host a movie night! Contact annie@ran.org and request a copy of *As Long as the Rivers Flow: The Grassy Narrows Blockade Story*.
 - Get a group together to view the movie and learn about Canadian Indigenous struggles to stop destructive logging in their traditional territory.
- Target Weyerhaeuser’s home-building subsidiaries.
 - Weyerhaeuser operates five home-building subsidiaries around the United States that construct new homes using wood clear-cut from Indigenous territory in Canada. The subsidiaries by name:
 - Quadrant Homes in the Puget Sound Region of Washington State

- Pardee Homes in Southern California and Nevada
 - Maracay Homes in Phoenix, Arizona
 - Trendmaker Homes in Houston, Texas
 - Winchester Homes in Maryland and Virginia
- If you live in or near any of the above regions, contact annie@ran.org to get involved with RAN's organizing campaign to target these home-builders.
- Target Weyerhaeuser's U.S. based lumber retailers
 - Weyerhaeuser sells a product, called Timberstrand or Trus Joist that is made from wood taken from the Grassy Narrows First Nation traditional territory in northwestern Ontario.
 - Tell local lumber retailers to stop selling these products and to tell Weyerhaeuser to stop taking wood from Grassy Narrows territory without the communities' consent.
 - Contact annie@ran.org and we will find the closest Timberstrand or Trus Joist retailer to you.
- Join the Smart Paper Project
 - Eliminate the use of endangered forest products at your school or in your community by passing an endangered forest policy. Urge your school to adopt a Smart Paper policy and to cancel their contract with destructive companies, such as Sierra Pacific and Weyerhaeuser.
 - Visit http://ran.org/what_we_do/old_growth/smartpaper/ to learn more about this project, or contact annie@ran.org and we'll send you information.

GENERAL TACTICS TOOLBOX.

This list is incomplete. If you think of a great tactic, or have advice for anyone trying to use a tactic below, check out our online zine and participate in shaping this toolbox! Again, props to SEAC for inspiration with a lot of these!

Some of the tactics we will describe here are a little more confrontational. We don't describe them here because we value confrontation over other tactics, but because if you are going to take on one of those tactics it's important to know what you're doing, whereas "using facebook" is probably a tactic you don't need our help with.

We will cover things like:

Canvassing, Posters, Leaflets, Dorm Education, Orientation Rocking, Teach-ins, Banner Drops, Bird-Doggin', Tabling,

Speakers, Polls and Referendums, Strikes, Street Theater, Sit-ins, Rallies, Petitions, Fasts or Hunger-Strikes, Disruption, Electronic Civil Disobedience

But there are lots of other tactics you should think about using, like:

Meetings with the Administration; Public speeches; Signed public declarations; Slogans, caricatures, memes, and symbols; Postcards; Leaflets; Giant Puppets; Articles and op-eds in the school paper (or other local papers!); Make your own underground paper; Talk on the radio (see the media section!); Music over the school sound system; Flash movies; Myspace.com, Facebook.com, Mybloc.net, etc; Give your profs lesson plans; Chalking; Letter Writing; Phone Calling; Proposals; Public Hearings; Socially Responsible Investing; Divestment from bad companies; Poetry and music events; Parties; Meet-ups; Panels and Speakers; Conferences, big meetings; Movie Nights; Radical clowning or cheerleading, Poetry and spoken word shows; Concerts; Boycotts...

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING!

(educational tactics)

Canvassin'

Knock on people's doors. This is the backbone of organizing. If you want to build your organization, you should canvass on campus. Knocking on dorms is usually easy because you have more in common with other students than with strangers in the community. If you have a campus-focused campaign you don't have too much of a reason to canvass off campus. But if you want to build community ties or raise money, get outta yer ivory tower. To canvass, you need a **Rap**. Canvassin' is a lost element of hip-hop you know...kidding! Actually a rap is a structured, yet flexible and open (you can freestyle if you know your stuff), "speech" you give to the people you talk to (like: "Hi, I'm Emma G, and this is Alexander B. We're from **People Against Everything**. We're organizing a street insurrection on Monday to protest a landfill, the lack of recycling, our administration, yo mamma, the existence of television, and ..."). Every rap at every door is different, but they all include the basic same elements. These should probably include:

☞ Who you are

- ☞ What your group is
- ☞ Legitimization of your group (why should they care?)
- ☞ Discussion of an issue, or ask them what they're concerned about
 - Ask them for their input on what you are doing. Take it seriously and get back to them.
 - Your "ask" (i.e. the thing you want to get from them and the reason you are canvassing. Examples are to vote for a measure on campus, sign a letter, donate money, sign a petition, etc).

Hott Tipz (mostly for canvassing off campus):

- Don't look like a hippy, thug, or punk. F'real, you want to appeal to everybody. You aren't a sellout if you dress nicely. Most people don't relate to circled (A)'s or facial piercings. That said, if you're on campus you probably don't have to sweat it.
- For some reason **clipboards** make you seem much more professional. Plus you have something to write on and it gives you something to put in your hands so you aren't all awkward. If you are on campus, write **graffiti** or **stencil** something creative on your clipboard. **People will think you're really cool.**
- Bring professional-looking background material on whatever issue you're working on.
- **Role play!** Train for this with a friend. Take turns being canvasser and person-at-home. Practice different situations from your canvasee being nice, being bored, being skeptical, being crazy, or being outright mean and jerky.
- When you do finally go out, pair up. Two people feel more confident and can get each other's backs. Apparently a "woman" and "man" get the best response. Also, new people should go out with more experienced people (something you should do with most tactics for leadership development in your group!), and should discuss what happened after each door.
- Give out candy. Just kidding, that's creepy.
- Keep good records. People should be able to pick up where you left off and know who you talked to, what they said, where you still need to go, etc.

Dorm Education

You can do more than knocking on doors in the dorms! Often RAs (or your school's equivalent) have to have programming (especially for first year students), and you can come and make a brief presentation at a floor meeting or event. Look into the way things work at your school.

Leaflets

Make like a tree and leaf(let)! Leaflets might include any of the following: information on an issue, arguments for your position, suggestions for action, sources, references for further reading, announcement of a rally or event (especially emergency rallies) or information on when and where your group meets. Leafletting gets at folks who would

not stop at your information table. You want your leaflet to look slick and have a big beautiful graphic (for laying out leaflets see “posters” for more tips too).

Leaflet tips:

- At a busy time, one person can hand out several hundred per hour. A lot will be thrown away immediately—you might be able to retrieve these and reuse them. You can have a box nearby with a sign for discards. Recycled paper helps avoid cynical comments.
- For mass distribution of a simple message, you could use smaller flyers, for instance 1/4 or 1/6 size.
- Be friendly but B.E. aggressive—step forward and hand it to people, saying “here, can I give you one of these?” “important information,” “stop environmental destruction!” etc. Always smile and look people in the eyes as you’re handing them things.
- Have several people there, to catch people moving in all directions. Besides, single leafletters look lonely and insecure, and probably feel that way too.
- Don’t spend too much time debating people who have strong opposite opinions. It’s generally a waste of time, though it can alleviate the monotony of leafleting. If you do argue, make sure to gesticulate wildly and jump around a lot. This will draw attention to you and you can tell the crowd that forms around you to take leaflets from the pile*. (* denotes joke).

Posters

Have an attractive, clear graphic. Text should be clear and concise. Use a contrast of fonts and typestyles (bold, italics, etc.) to draw the eye, but don’t make it corny. You need free space (white or black) so don’t crowd it too much. **Keep it simple.** Show it to someone clueless and see if they get it. If they don’t, make it simpler. Less is more.

Poster Tips:

- The lettering needs to be solid enough to be readable from 10-20 feet away. You might want to black it in with a marker by hand—hand-done posters can be catchier and more personal.
- Make a poster that can be used throughout the semester to advertise your weekly meetings.
- Be creative about where you post—insides of bathroom stalls, garbage cans, along stairwells etc. You can usually hang banner-sized posters from prominent places on campus without trouble.
- Just handing posters out at a meeting and asking people to put them up doesn’t work very well. Assign people to specific buildings or areas of campus or town, and tell them when it needs to go up. As usual, the more specific the task, the more likely it will get done. Check in with people afterwards so they know they’re accountable.
- People should carry extras to replace those torn down. If your posters are always torn down you might want to **wheatpaste** them.
 - o Wheatpaste mix: wall paper glue, flour, and water. Apply it with a brush. This is pseudo-permanent, and it is illegal so check yourself.

- It is especially important for posters to be up the day of the event (especially for things like rallies), so you might consider doing a second round beforehand.
- Be sure to advertise your group as well as your event.
- ALWAYS have someone else proofread it.
- If you give facts, cite your sources.

Disorientation

This is more timeline advice than a tactic. This is your best chance to reach large numbers of students when they first arrive, and when they're especially receptive. Later we will talk more about orientation outreach – go to parties and talk up your organization. But also you can distribute information on your campaign or club at activities fairs and other orientation events. Some groups distribute “Disorientation Guides” that explain what campaigns are going on, some history of student action on campus, what progressive groups exist, cool things going on in the local community, and other information that a school administration won't include in their orientation.

Polls and Referendums

If you need to demonstrate how much support you have for a campaign, you can do a poll or a referendum. Develop a simple unbiased question (ex. Should the university spend \$20,000 to ensure its vehicles are environmentally friendly?). Like a referendum, usually schools will let you include a poll on a student government election ballot. If you can't have your university issue a poll, you can do it yourself. DIY or die, baby! Choose random people from the telephone directory (ex.: ask every 20th person). Polling 200 people will give you an accurate result. You should release the poll's results in a press release. A referendum basically means that your student body has officially voted on a particular issue and you then have a definitive statement about what they want or don't want. Referendums have more power and credibility than polls, but they're more difficult to get passed.

Speakers

Get a well-known professor or an outside speaker to give a talk. Hype it up! Only the audience will be directly affected, but the press you'll get and the fact the talk occurred gives your group and the issue visibility and prestige, as well as a new contact in the activist world. Plus if you do good promotion you should be able to get a couple hundred people out to your event. Make sure to give a spiel about your group when you introduce the speaker and send around a sign up sheet for your email listserv (or petitions) through the crowd. Make sure that the speaker is on a topic that builds your group's campaigns. Lots of student groups bring speakers to “raise consciousness” on campus, but they are often disconnected and arbitrary. Don't do that. Use the event to hype up your next event, or get people excited to take action (an action that happens really soon afterwards = great idea.). You can also fundraise by charging or asking for donations. Hold a group meeting afterwards and invite people to come to it. Plan the next meeting with the expectation that there will be new people there.

Tabling

Set up a table in a central location, sit at it or stand by it, and entice people to come check

it out. You can hand out information, stickers and posters, or have people sign things like petitions. You can tell people about your group, sell t-shirts or other things, etc. Ideally you can get people to join your group (or at least come check out a meeting) this way. The cooler your table looks the more people are gonna be into it. Banners are great. Put a table cloth on the table. If you need to fill space, spread out cool books.

Tips:

- Don't just sit there! Do something cool! Talk to people, spit slam poetry, juggle, spin or breathe fire, sing, etc. At least have a boombox and play some revolutionary beats.
- Brownies (or other candy, pastries etc) always help. **People will come for the brownies and stay for the rebellion.** Actually brownies can help almost any tactic in this toolbox.
- If you're signing people up for something, put a name or two at the top. Nobody likes to be the first (Gradeschool wisdom reminds us that the first is, in fact, "the worst" make sure you leave the third spot open, its usually hotly contested).
- Ask provocative questions like **"Should your tuition money go to investments in corporations that kill indigenous people?"**
- Always have a sign up sheet for your listserv. Always.
- Have a rap down – what are you gonna say to people when they engage with you? How will you be short and sweet, but also informational and engaging? Practice with a friend. Or in front of a mirror, whatever.
- Tabling is a good way to build your group identity. It's a good way to get the word out about your group and have a visible presence on campus, and it's a good way to build links within your group. Pair up people to table who wouldn't otherwise hang out. Pair up a first-year student with a senior.
- Like with leafleting, don't waste your time talking to crazy people, staunch republicans, or the "converted". There are too many people that will be receptive and new to waste your time arguing with people or talking to folks who are already on your team.
- As with canvassing, for some reason clipboards make you seem more trustworthy and official. Use them for collecting signatures and workin tha crowd.

Teach-ins

Teach-ins are great for consciousness-raising and generating awareness. You can either have a single speaker, or have an afternoon or day long program. In the 60's, sometimes teach-ins rotated speakers and lasted for days and students popped in and out as they pleased. It's usually very empowering to have the students themselves do the in-teaching. This tactic is best used in an immediate response to an event, like a racist incident on campus or when we declare war on Iraq for the 840th time. Teach-ins can build a lot of momentum around your campaign, position you as a dedicated activist group, and build visibility and credibility. Pick an issue that people have heard a lot about but want to learn more about. A possible format is to break up your time into 30 minute segments, giving each speaker fifteen minutes to talk and fifteen minutes to take questions and for

the audience to debate (both the speaker and amongst itself). Have drinks and brownies or other snacks to encourage people to stay and talk. Alcoholic drinks make your teach-in crunk, and make for much more interesting debate. Juice is probably less alienating though.

Take Action! (Action Tactics)

Banner Drops

Drop a big banner from a high spot. Get the media out. Take lots of photos. This is usually easy to do on campus without much hassle. If you want to drop gigantic banners from skyscrapers like RAN does you should call us first, we'll tell you how to do it. Depending on the context, this can be illegal, so be smart about it. Dropping banners off bridges across the highway is a great way to have hundreds of people see your message quickly, and is often legal (depending on the state).

Infiltration!

Remember our story in **Pressure Drop Primer**, about when we hi-jacked the LA Auto Show? **We were infiltrating tha system.** This is the art of **hijacking a media event** that your target organized with the intention of using it for your own purposes. **This is a great media stunt because often the event will be covered by the press anyway – and if you are successful all the articles will include you.** That is infinitely easier than trying to create your own media event. Our action in LA got over 700 media outlets because there were already hundreds of articles going to be written about the event anyway – we just made it more exciting to write about. One or two activists should leaflet the crowd explaining why you protested, and handle the questions from the cut advantage. You can sneak on stage and impersonate staff, or you can simply hold up a banner. Be creative. **The Yes Men** are an inspiring example of thoughtful mischief makers who engage in this kind of action. Check them out at <http://theyesmen.org/> for a good laugh. You don't always need to impersonate people though. Here's an example we might do at RAN: A Ford Motors executive just got called out in a scandal. He flies once per week in a private jet at the cost of a million dollars per trip. Meanwhile the company laid off (or bought out) over 40% of its workforce. We're going to one of his speeches, and in the middle of it, flying a remote control toy plane around his head, with a banner attached and our message about climate change and Ford. It hits on a lot of different levels. Stuff like this is infinitely more fun than just holding up signs at a speech – though that works too. One of the things that tipped our Boise campaign over the edge was when students at Cornell University held up signs and asked tough questions to the Boise CEO when he spoke on campus.

Disruption

This means shutting down the normal operations of something. It is not necessarily illegal—it might just be clever. The SEAC guide cites an example from Student

Association of the State University of New York (SASU)'s *Organizing on the Campus*, by Bruce Conin: You can also try the "Zap Fax"—20 pages of form letters signed by people opposing the corporation's practice taped together to tie up their fax line. Faxing pages of black paper tied in a circle has been known to burn out the ink in the target's fax machine. Or a "phone-in" - Have 100 people call all the numbers in the Administration building, over and over, in shifts.

Electronic Civil Disobedience

The following tactics could antagonize your supporters and should be used carefully (if at all): you could hack a target's webpage, replacing it with your own information (U.S. government pages are often targeted), hold a web sit-in (people from all over the world set their browser so that you access the page every second or so, this causes other people to be unable to visit it) – this is sometimes called an "e-blockade" and was recently done on websites of the Mexican Government to protest the repression in Oaxaca. Flood (a.k.a. 'spam') their email account with junk, or plain hack into their computer system (or voice mail) to find information that can be leaked to the press. Do everything anonymously. Note that hacking is illegal, risky, and requires special skillz.

Fasts or Hunger-Strikes

While not-eating does not directly exert power over a target, hunger strikes can be useful by demonstrating your commitment and will cause inactive people to join in on your side. It can also be an effective way of getting media coverage. It might cause your target to grant your demand, rather than see people suffer (and risk their health) because she or he is refusing to give in. Most people can go without (any) food for several days without major consequences other than fatigue, however for longer periods you'll want to consult a doctor. If you are going on an unlimited hunger strike, have some leaders not join, so that they will have enough energy to organize support behind your struggle. Be sure to drink lots of water. Be aware that there are many people who deprive themselves of food because they have eating disorders and be very cautious that you are not promoting that. Fasting is a traditional non-violent tactic that has been used by women suffragists, Gandhi, Dorothy Day, political prisoners like Angela Davis, and others. If you are going on a prolonged hunger strike (more than 1-3 days), read up on it first, so you know what you're doing.

Petitions

RAN usually has at least one petition for each of our campaigns. Petitions have a few different potential purposes: they can demonstrate public support or disapproval of something, they can be a way to gather email addresses for your outreach, and they can be a tool for introducing people to the issue (and an excuse to talk to someone about the issue). Your petition should be short and to the point, but not leave out important parts. You shouldn't go longer than a paragraph or two, in large print. Rather than assigning a few people to sit at a table and collect signatures, it's more efficient for everyone in the group to get in on the act, and collect 20 or so signatures per week (or more if you can) from friends, people in their dorms, etc. But that means that someone (ONE person) in your group has gotta keep track of the petitions so they don't get lost. If you're a masochist, or do a lot of petitions and rallies, you might want to add everyone who signs

up to your rarely used BIG mailing list. Don't forget to ask petition signers to come to your next meeting—and remember to get lots of press for your hard work! Bring your petitions to all your events.

Rallies and marches

Rallies can demonstrate the amount of enthusiasm for your campaign, intimidate your target, excite your supporters, attract media attention, and bring new folks into your campaign. They help shatter the isolation and alienation that a lot of folks feel when they think they are all alone in their progressive thinking. Rallies can include spoken word, drumming, marching, speakers, chanting, signs, singing, banners, music, poetry, puppets, street theater, presenting petitions, issuing demands, spinning fire or carrying torches if it's night time, or anything else. Promote your rally **using the educational tactics listed above**, and make sure to **read the media section of this zine**.

Quick press tips for rallies: set the context – find them, don't wait to be found. Control the media instead of letting them control you. If you are asked questions, always bring them back to your message – getting a good soundbyte to sink in is better than fully answering their questions. Be short and sweet – do NOT go on a long winded speech. All the good parts will get edited out and you'll sound stupid, for real. Have press packets/releases to hand out to people. Make sure to organize the rally so you have good photo ops with big banners behind lots of people. If you see a good photo-op tell the media about it, they like that. If folks at your rally are wearing the same t-shirts it's a great photo op. Sell t-shirts before the rally! And it will help fundraise and get the word out too! What!

Don't forget to put up more creative signs on the day of the rally – folks in your group should wake up early and hand small flyers to people all day on campus until it happens. Having an emcee for your rally usually helps the flow and gives it coherency. Your emcee should keep your speakers on strict time limits. Drop the name of your group a lot; hype yourselves up at the rally. Speakers should be giving you props. Put a rain location on the posters if you are planning on having it outside. Make sure your speakers reflect the diversity of opinion, ideas, and identities that are present in your issue. You want speakers that people can relate to – if it's all white men (for example), you've got a problem. Don't forget to have some people who are press liaisons and have practiced their soundbytes and messaging. These people are especially important if wackos and nutjobs come to your rally with larger banners – you will want to make it clear to the press what your message is, and not get drowned out by the crazies.

Sit-Ins

Sit-ins have a long tradition in the United States. Popularized by the labor movement in the 1930's, again in the civil rights movement of the 1960's, and now once again today especially in the student anti-sweatshop movement. Occupying (or sitting-in) a building is one of the strongest non-violent forms of action that a group can take. It's a great example of direct action – directly interfering in the day-to-day process of the institution you are confronting. When you sit in the president's office, he can't get anything done

until he deals with the situation. There is a lot of power there. There are risks – even potentially arrest (this may or may not be a real possibility where you are – there are many universities who would never arrest their own students). But the media coverage generated (especially coverage of an arrests) could greatly up the ante, your threat and your eventual success.

Street Theater

RAN uses street theater a lot. Check out www.oilenforcementagency.com for a quick video example of one of our street theater pieces – a fake “vigilante group” called the Oil Enforcement Agency (OEA). Street or “guerilla” theater is a short play performed for people, or when people take on characters and interact with people. Your message should be clear, funny, and depending on the context, mostly visual: people watching will frequently not be able to hear, and the media often emphasizes the visual aspects of the event. Good costumes, props, signs and other components are vitally important. A good example of funny street theater is the Billionaires for Bush – a bunch of folks dressing up like billionaires with banners saying things like “corporations are people too!,” “four more wars!,” and “widen the income gap!” This is also an example of a “meme” – a soundbyte of culture that travels rapidly and “virally” through a society. Check out www.billionairesforbush.com to see what we mean. Other examples are having a Pimp my Green Ride Car Show; Performing a marriage ceremony between a person representing your school and a person representing the military-industrial complex; hosting Global Warming Jeopardy, having a fake ‘clear-cut’ on campus, sponsored by Weyerhaeuser; auctioning your school off to corporations (“And I hear \$15 million from Monsanto for the bioengineering department...”).

Strikes

Ultimately the most powerful tactic (especially against your administration) is for students to not attend class. This removes all legitimacy from the administrative bureaucracy and places it in the hands of the students who can now use their time to organize your campaign. During the strike you should organize rallies, street theater, a teach-in and other activities to mobilize people. A student strike requires a very high level of support, as you want the majority of students to walk out. This is possible, but hard. In response to the (most recent) war in Iraq, students across the country walked out of classes the day after the bombs started to fall in a movement called “Books Not Bombs.” One of the authors of this zine was a part of organizing a large one at Brandeis University in 2003. This is not without a rich history and tradition – the SEAC guide tells us that several times in the mid-thirties 100,000 to 500,000 students held a one hour strike, walking out of classes to show their opposition to war. In May 1970, over two million students went on an extended strike after the National Guard killed five Kent State students and the U.S. announced its invasion of Cambodia.

So...

As you can see, there are lots of different tactics you can use. We barely scratched the tip of the iceberg of fun that we’re gonna use to sink the titanic of imperialism. Look back at our full list of tactics, or improvise your own. The sky’s the limit with actions you could

do. If you're greening a fleet on your campus put fake tickets on the campus vehicles (we can give you some!). Make public art and statues out of trash that your school wastes. Students upset about the lack of racial diversity at Rutgers took out a truckload of books from the library (on Western Civilization) to show how they felt not having their culture respected. Let your actions speak for themselves. The important thing is that old tactics get boring, and we can come up with new ones. Be visible, unconventional, funny, and on message. Anything creative you do will get put on our site and shared with the RAN network!

After your tactic/event/action...WHAT IF IT DIDN'T WORK!!

What if a tactic doesn't work? Well the first thing you should do is pat yourself on the back for being organized enough to know when a tactic works or doesn't work. That's half the battle! So now you have some options. You might want to escalate your tactics so as to put enough pressure on your target for them to give in.

Or you could broaden your issue and thus build a stronger coalition on your side. Or maybe you have your target mis-chosen and want to change the main or secondary target. Did you bite off more than you could chew? Jeez, you radicals and your unrealistic goals! Just kidding. Maybe you wanna scale back and start with an easier goal that can be a stepping stone to your original one. The most important thing is to not be discouraged if you lose. It doesn't make you a loser! Making mistakes is an important part of learning and growing as an organization. It will happen. Besides, remember everything we said about how your campaign and tactics should also focus on organization building? Well by mobilizing all those people and getting them engaged, you have only built more power within your group and campus. You are in a better place than you were before. We know people whose lives were changed by their involvement in campaigns that ended up losing. There is power in that. The example that SEAC gives is that in the case of a war, you might not be able to stop it but by demonstrating and educating hundreds of people about US foreign policy, you will build opposition and decrease the likelihood of future wars for sure.

Chapter "8"

RESOURCES

<http://www.seac.org/resources/antioppression>

MAGAZINES AND NEWS:

Altnet: <http://altnet.org/>

As Soon As Possible Magazine: <http://www.asapmag.org>
Common Dreams News Center: <http://www.commondreams.org/>
Earth First! Journal: <http://www.earthfirstjournal.org/>
Grist Environmental News and Humor: <http://grist.org/>
Independent Media Center: <http://www.indymedia.org/en/index.shtml>
It's Getting Hot in Here Blog: <http://itsgettinghotinhere.org/>
Left Turn Magazine: <http://www.leftturn.org/>
New Standard News: <http://newstandardnews.net/>
Next Left Notes: <http://www.antiauthoritarian.net/nln>
Radical Blogs: <http://www.radicalblogs.org>
Wiretap Magazine: <http://www.wiretapmag.org/>
Z Magazine: <http://www.zmag.org/>

OTHER GREAT PROJECTS:

AK Press Distribution: <http://www.akpress.org>
Colours of Resistance: <http://www.colours.mahost.org>
Labor/Community Strategy Center: <http://www.thestrategycenter.org>
Riseup: <http://www.riseup.net/>
South End Press: <http://southendpress.org>

ORGANIZATIONS:

Beehive Collective: <http://www.beehivecollective.org/>
Corp Watch: <http://www.corpwatch.org/>
Energy Action: <http://www.energyaction.net/>
Global Exchange: <http://www.globalexchange.org/>
Greenpeace: <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/>
Mountain Justice Summer: <http://www.mountainjusticesummer.org/>
Midnight Special Law Collective: <http://www.midnightspecial.net/>
Rainforest Action Network: <http://www.ran.org/grassroots>
Rising Tide North America: <http://risingtidenorthamerica.org/>
Ruckus Society: <http://ruckus.org/>
Students for a Democratic Society (SDS):
<http://www.studentsforademicsociety.org/>
Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC): <http://www.seac.org/>

TRAINING RESROUCES:

Catalyst Project: <http://collectiveliberation.org/>
Movement Strategy Center: <http://www.movementstrategy.org>
Highlander Center: <http://www.highlandercenter.org>
Paul Kivel: <http://www.paulkivel.com>
People's Institute for Survival and Beyond: <http://www.pisab.org>
Project South: <http://www.projectsouth.org>
Rant Trainers Collective: <http://www.rantcollective.net/>

SEAC's Anti-Oppression resources: <http://www.seac.org/resources/antioppression>
School for Unity and Liberation: <http://www.youthec.org/soul/>
Smartmeme: <http://smartmeme.org/>
The Ruckus Society: <http://ruckus.org/>
Tools for Change: <http://toolsforchange.org/>
Youth Media Council: <http://www.youthmediacouncil.org>

BOOKS:

Activism:

The Activist Handbook: A Primer – Randy Shaw
Globalize Liberation -- David Solnit
Ideas for Action: Relevant Theory for Radical Change – Cynthia Kaufman
Igniting a Revolution: Voices in Defense of the Earth – Steven Best & Anthonye Nochella
Letters From Young Activists: Today's Rebels Speak Out – Dan Berger, Chesa Boudin, and Kenyon Farrow
No More Prisons – Billy Wimsatt
Revolution in the Air – Max Elbaum
Reflections on Student Activism – Abbie Hoffman
Rules for Radicals – Saul Alinsky
Stand & Deliver: Political Activism, Leadership, And Hip Hop Culture – Yvonne Bynoe
We Are Everywhere – Notes from Nowhere Collective
Zapatistas!: Making Another World Possible, Chronicles Of Resistance 2000-2006 – John Ross

Democracy & Corporate Power:

The Conquest Of America: How The Indian Nations Lost Their Continent – Hans Koning.
Democracy's Edge – Francis Moore Lappe.
Earth Democracy – Vandana Shiva.
Earth for Sale: Reclaiming Ecology in the Age of Corporate Greenwash – Brian Tokar.
Let Me Speak!: Testimony Of Domitila, A Woman Of The Bolivian Mines – Domitila Barrios De Chungara.
No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies – Naomi Klein.
A Post-Corporate World, Life After Capitalism – David Korten.
How Can One Sell The Air? – Chief Seattle.

Forests:

Breakfast of Biodiversity – John Vandermeer and Ivette Perfecto.
Strangely Like War: The Global Assault on Forests – Derrick Jensen and George Draffan.

Climate Change and Oil:

Boiling Point: How Politicians, Big Oil and Coal, Journalists and Activists Are Fueling the Climate Crisis--And What We Can Do to Avert Disaster – Ross Gelbspan
<http://www.heatisonline.org>.
Eating Fossil Fuels: Oil, Food and the Coming Crisis In Agriculture – Dale Allen Pfeiffer.
Feeling the Heat: Dispatches from The Frontlines Of Climate Change – Jim Motavalli.
Fossil Fuels: Oil, Food and the Coming Crisis In Agriculture – Dale Allen Pfeiffer.
The No-Nonsense Guide to Climate Change – Dinyar Godrej

The Party's Over: Oil, War and the Fate of Industrial Societies – Richard Heinberg.
Where Vultures Feast: Shell, Human Rights & Oil – Ike Okonta and Oronto Douglas.