CHARTING DEMOCRACY
NAVIGATIONAL AIDS FOR SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZING

Grassroots User-Friendly Functions (GUFF):

The GUFF Organizing Model - When the going gets tough, the GUFF gets you going

> *"Well-behaved women rarely make history."* - Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

By Ed Democracy

Saul Alinsky became famous for giving guff. As he said, "it becomes a contest of power: those who have money and those who have people. We have nothing but people." Real power is real power. Either you have it or you don't. In "Of the First Principles of Government," David Hume wrote that we, the people, have massively superior numbers, and, therefore, superior power, and need not submit to anything. One might submit a subtle yet powerful distinction: that the key is potential power versus actualized power. That is to say that all the potential power in the world is, in effect, useless, unless it can be actualized. While it is important to have a measure of potential power, actualized power has the most highly-valued currency. Real power is actualized power and vice versa.

The key to actualizing potential power is sustainable organizing. The World Book Encyclopedia lists three forms of power: numbers, organization, and resources. By using one's numbers efficiently and sustainably, one maximizes one's resources. A small group of well organized people will probably do better than a large group of poorly organized people. So obviously this means we should all enroll in the nearest MBA program e can find, join the corporate wanna-be club, and start building our personal empires like Donald Trump, right? Obviously, this is very wrong! We, the people, have superior numbers, and the superior organizational model is small and decentralized - NOT big and centralized.

People want to make a difference in their community and their world, but not at the expense of all of their increasingly

precious time. People want to give an hour here and two hours there and that is more than enough to change the world, especially with GUFF - the Grassroots User-Friendly Functions - organizing model. **We do not need to re-invent the wheel every time we need to start a new organization or a new project.** There is a basic set of organizational functions which is common to almost every organizing endeavor:

Grassroots User-Friendly Functions (GUFF)

ADMINISTRATION
--MAINTENANCE of:
    files, records, lists, correspondence, documents, & publications
--project & team coordination
--logistics, events & planning

COMMUNICATION
--DEVELOPMENT of:
    contacts, relations, message, lists, phone trees, documents, & publications
--emails, website, newsletter, newspaper, etc.
--community & media relations
--promotions, marketing, & networking
--organizational development

RESOURCE
--ACQUISITION of:
    research & information, contacts: people, organizations, businesses, finance, fundraising, grants, in-kind, volunteers, materials, equipment, donations, venues, etc.

This is a scalable model. It facilitates delegation and decentralization. It can start with one person performing all three basic organizational functions while the operation is small. Then, with 3 people, each one could take one area. As new people become available, they can take a new piece that best fits their level of skill, interest, and time. The "cost"of the benefit of scalability is the need for coordination. However, the benefit is many times greater than the cost of coordination. This model is designed for efficient coordination & communication.

Please share your thoughts on sustainable organizing, links, or column ideas by calling Ed Democracy at (207) 615-3744 or by going to our website: **www.can-so.org/chartingdemocracy**

> *"In former days, men sold themselves to the Devil to acquire magical powers. Nowadays they acquire those powers from science, and find themselves compelled to become devils. There is no hope for the world unless power can be tamed, and brought into the service, not of this or that group of fanatical tyrants, but of the whole human race...for science has made it inevitable that all must live or all must die."*
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> **POWER:**
> A New Social Analysis
> by Bertrand Russell
> (1938)

HELPFUL LINKS:

Grassroots User-Friendly Functions (GUFF)
www.can-so.org/guff

POWER: A New Social Analysis (1938)
by Bertrand Russell
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Power:_A_New_Social_Analysis

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Power_(sociology)

http://sociologyindex.com/books_on_social_power.htm

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www.munjoyhill.org/ communityvision

> *"The love of power is a part of human nature, but power-philosophies are, in a certain precise sense, insane. The existence of the external world...can only be denied by a madman.... Certified lunatics are shut up because of the proneness to violence when their pretensions are questioned; the uncertified variety are given control of powerful armies, and can inflict death and disaster upon all sane men within their reach."*
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> **POWER:**
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> by Bertrand Russell
> (1938)

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☐ Individual $ 5.00	☐ Web Development
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MHNO, 92 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101   **Thank you!**