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## December 2013 Organizers Edge Newsletter



**Organizer's Edge** ►

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December 18, 2013

**From: Michael Jacoby Brown**

***Telling Your Story: Your Meaning and Purpose***  
**Video for Training Community Organizers**

How can we use video in training community organizers? Ever since I was a kid, I loved with the movies. The sound, the sights the music all got to me. Video on the Internet has some of that power. How much, I don't know. I do know I am more attracted to videos than text on the Internet. When done well, videos communicate powerfully. How lasting is the impact? I do think that quality matters.



Training Community Organizers Telling Your Story and Finding Your Purpose

I am experimenting with video-taping some of the training I do. I recently added an 8 minute clip on YouTube:

**Community Organizing Training: Telling your story to uncover your purpose and meaning.** A longer (28 minute) version is on Vimeo,

and hopefully, public, educational or government video channels (PEG Media) might play longer version.

**Anyone know of anyone working in this area? I would love to learn more,**

**and would appreciate your feedback on this one..**

**Please follow my YouTube Channel**

<http://www.youtube.com/user/MJacobyBrown>

## A Personal Story from Miriam Gomes

I've just completed a course which utilized your book, [Building Powerful Community Organizations](#), and I wanted to take the time and submit my story.

I live in an area of poverty in need of resources and community programs to address the social problems which exist in my community. I look around and realize that the vast majority of us here in this area are complacent with the multiple ailments which affect our community. We lack the hope and knowledge to go about inciting change. It is a vicious cycle with no end in sight. So, I sit here and ask myself why? [Read on...](#)

### Book Review:

[The Activists Handbook](#),

*Winning Social Change in the 21st Century*, Second Edition, Revised, by Randy Shaw

I recently sent my copy of Randy Shaw's recently revised *The Activist's Handbook* to a young organizer now attending law school. I did so because Shaw's chapter on how lawyers and activists should relate to each other and to campaigns is very good. It develops the idea that I heard back in the 1970's from Vermont Legal Aid attorneys that lawyers should be **"on tap not on top."**

Most of the book describes various activist campaigns, with Shaw often the main character. He goes into great detail on political strategy, primarily dealing with elected officials and developing coalitions for specific electoral campaigns. The book centers on Shaw's work in the Tenderloin District of San Francisco where Shaw has worked for many years, leading an activist housing organization.

The title is only partly accurate. It *is* about activists not organizers. But it is more memoir and history than a "handbook." There is much about specific campaigns, but little or no how to direction on how to deal with one's own situation. We can learn from history and I am glad Shaw has written about these campaigns. There is little guidance on how to be an "activist" other than what one can learn from Shaw's history. If you are looking for guidance on what specifically to do to be an "activist," what immediate steps you can take, you will likely have to keep looking.

We want to hear from you, your reactions, ideas, what is at the edge YOUR "envelope." Just go to...

<http://michaeljacobybrown.com/contact/>

## Who else you will hear from.....

We are just starting, but so far you can expect to hear what the following people are thinking:

George Luse of the Mass Teachers Assn,

Scott Reed with the PICO Network, ,

Cathy Howell, in Oregon and El Salvador, formerly with the AFL-CIO,

Cesar McDowell of the Interaction Institute for Social Justice,

Diana Bell of Community and Labor United,

David Hernandez of the California Education Assn,

Linda Honold, of Wisconsin Voices

Attica Scott, now an elected official in Louisville, KY, formerly with Jobs with Justice,

Quinn Rallings in Alabama with the PICO Network,

Bob Van Meter with the Local Initiative Support Corporation in Boston,

Walter Davis, in Tennessee, of the National Organizers Alliance,

Deb Askenase, of Community Organizing 2.0,

Cherie Andes, of the Industrial Areas Foundation,

Avi Green, with MassVote,

Deb Fastino, of the Coalition for Social Justice in New Bedford, MA,

Rebecca Gutman, with SEIU-1199,

Tim Dean, of SEIU-1199,

Claudia Horwitz, of Stone Circles in North Carolina,

Mary Ochs, long time organizer in Los Angeles

and others, hopefully, including YOU

## Other Useful Links

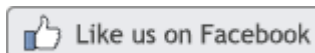
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[National Organizers Alliance](#)

[Road Map Consulting](#)

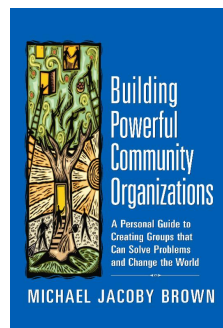
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