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Michael Jacoby Brown
training & coaching

*Helping organizations achieve their goals
through recruiting and motivating others*

Organizer's Edge ►

Is the "Movie Conversation" Still Relevant in Electoral Politics?

In January 1981 Ronald Reagan de-funded Mass Fair Share, where I was working, and many other community organizations. This led us to re-visit our dis-interest in electoral politics. So we invited in an old style political operative, Paul Tully, (of blessed memory) for a training on electoral politics. He looked the part of the classic Boston Irish politico: beefy with a beer belly. I thought we would get an earful about polls, attack ads, slick marketing moves and money. Was I mistaken! Tully said, "What you want is the movie conversation."



"How do you choose what movies to go to?" he asked us. "We listen to a trusted friend," I answered, not sure where he was going with this.

"Well," Tully explained, "that is what you want for your candidate."

I have never forgotten it -- especially since it came as such a surprise and from a veteran politico.

Today, we hear a lot about money in politics. Many assume that money is the main (if not the only) thing that counts in elections. Money can buy ads, social media experts, polls, and campaign staff. Campaigns need money for food, hall rentals, software, office space, etc. But can it buy a "movie conversation?"

Is the movie conversation, a recommendation from someone you trust, still the goal of campaigns, as Tully schooled us many years ago? Are we even asking the question?

Or are we assuming that money is the main mover and we only have to overturn Citizens United and get money out of politics to get fair elections? If we think that the movie conversation is so important- as Tully taught us - what stops us from going out and getting to know people well enough so they trust us for a recommendation about their vote? In this age of social media overload, TV attack ads, 24 hour news cycles, and ubiquitous video from smart phones is it possible that the "movie conversation" holds the key, or is at least an important element, in elections? (Even with NetFlix people still go the movies)

And even if we think that money is key *and also* think the movie conversation is important, how would that change the way we organize electoral campaigns and our political parties?

What do you think? Love your reflections on this.

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

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Michael Jacoby Brown Story

Who else you will hear from.....

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

Jessica Tang: Boston Teachers Union, AFT

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,

Caesar 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,

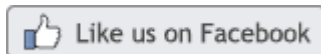
Walter Davis, in Tennessee, of the National Organizers Alliance,

Deb Askenase, of Community Organizing 2.0,
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

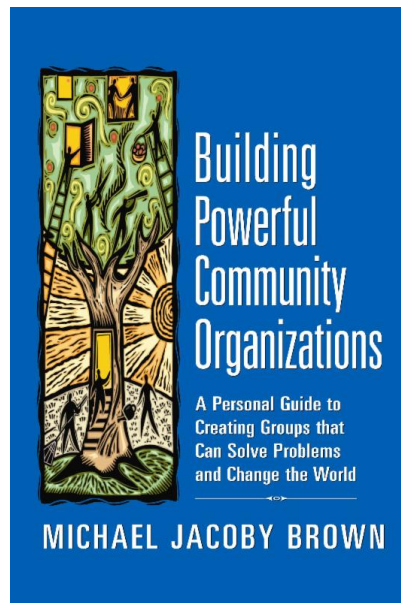
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