



# HEROES

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A Look at People, Organizations, and  
Ideas for Social Change

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# INTRODUCTION

This is a booklet on social change and the people, organizations and ideas that were, and are, instrumental in generating forward movement. Our class chose the topics, some of which were well known, while other information was new to us. Besides providing an account of key people and historical movements, this booklet served as a typography assignment in which we learned to work with style sheets and Parent pages while creating grid-based layouts using consistent typography, color, and design elements.

## IT WAS NOT EASY!

The design training for this booklet included many critiques: we asked questions, offered feedback, and worked hard on improving our work. We hope you enjoy the results.

This should be small:

Graphic design by Dayana Guevara

# PEOPLE

# Ruth Bader Ginsburg

**R**UTH BADER GINSBURG was the second female justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Born in 1933 in Brooklyn, Bader grew up in a working class neighborhood. She graduated from Cornell University in 1954, finishing first in her class. Ginsburg learned to balance life as a mother and a law student. She encountered a male-dominated, hostile environment, with only eight females in her class of 500. Despite her outstanding academic record, Ginsburg continued to encounter gender discrimination while seeking employment after graduation.

During the 1970s, she was director of the Women's Rights Project of the ACLU, for which she argued six landmark cases on gender equality before the Supreme Court. She believed that all groups were entitled to equal rights. One of the cases she won involved a portion of the Social Security Act that favored women over men because it granted benefits to widows but not widowers.

She was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1993 by President Bill Clinton. Despite her reputation for restrained writing, she gathered considerable attention for her dissenting opinion in the case of *Bush v. Gore*, which decided the 2000 presidential election. Objecting to the court's majority opinion favoring Bush, Ginsburg deliberately concluded her decision with, "I dissent" a significant departure from the tradition of including the adverb "respectfully."



In 1996, Ginsburg wrote the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *United States v. Virginia*, which held that the state-supported Virginia Military Institute could not refuse to admit women. In 1999, she won the American Bar Association's Thurgood Marshall Award for her contributions to gender equality and civil rights.

# Angela Davis

**A**NGELA DAVIS, BORN IN BIRMINGHAM, AL in 1944, is an American Marxist and feminist political activist, philosopher, academic, and author; she is a professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She writes extensively on class, gender, race, and the U.S. prison system.

Studying philosophy in Germany, Davis became engaged in far-left politics, and earned a doctorate at the University of Berlin. Back in the United States, she was involved in numerous causes, including the second-wave feminist movement and the campaign against the Vietnam War. In 1969, she became an assistant professor of philosophy at UCLA and was later fired for her membership in the Communist party; after a court ruled the firing illegal, the university fired her for the use of inflammatory language.

In 1970, guns belonging to Davis were used in an armed takeover of a court-

room in Marin County, CA, in which four people were killed. Prosecuted for three capital felonies—including conspiracy to murder—she was held in jail for over a year before being acquitted of all charges. During the 1980s, she was professor of ethnic studies at San Francisco State University. In 1997, she co-founded Critical Resistance to abolish the prison-industrial complex. In 1991, she became department director of feminist studies at University of California, Santa Cruz, retiring in 2008. She has continued to write, and has remained active in movements such as Occupy and the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign.

Davis opposed the 1995 Million Man March, arguing that the exclusion of women from this event promoted male chauvinism. She said that Louis Farrakhan appeared to prefer that women take subordinate roles in society. She joined with colleagues to form the African American Agenda 2000, an alliance of black feminists.





**G**LORIA STEINEM is an American feminist, political activist, and editor who was an articulate advocate of the women's liberation movement during the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

After graduating from Smith College in 1956, Steinem went to India on a scholarship, participating in nonviolent protests against government policy. In 1960 she began working as a writer and journalist in New York City, gaining attention with her article "I Was a Playboy Bunny," which recounted her experience as a waitress at the Playboy Club. Her involvement in feminism intensified in 1968 when she attended a meeting of a radical feminist group, the

Redstockings. Proud of her feminist roots—her paternal grandmother was president of the Ohio Women's Suffrage Association—Steinem founded the National Women's Political Caucus with Betty Friedan, Bella Abzug, and Shirley Chisholm. That same year she explored the possibility of a new magazine for

women, one that treated contemporary issues from a feminist perspective. The result was Ms. magazine.

Steinem today continues to be a strong advocate for the women's liberation movement.

"The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn."

# Gloria Steinem

# ORGANIZATIONS

# Habitat for Humanity

**H**ABITAT FOR HUMANITY is a partnership, not a giveaway program. Habitat's homeowner families buy the houses that Habitat builds and renovates, and invest hundreds of hours of their own labor working alongside volunteers. As a result, Habitat for Humanity houses are affordable to low-income families around the world. Habitat homeowners pay an affordable mortgage, achieving the strength, stability and independence to build a better life for themselves and for their families.

The idea that became Habitat for Humanity first grew from a community

farm outside of Americus, Georgia. Habitat's founders Millard and Linda Fuller developed the concept of "partnership housing," centering on those in need of shelter working with volunteers to build decent, affordable houses. The houses would be built at no profit. New homeowners' house payments would be combined with no-interest loans; money paid would then be used to build more homes. The concept next moved to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where, after three years of hard work, supporters discussed the future of their dream: Habitat for Humanity International, founded in 1976. Thanks to the personal involvement of U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn, Habitat now works in all 50 states in the U.S. and in more than 70 countries, and has helped more than 39 million people achieve strength, stability and independence through safe, decent and affordable shelter.



# Team Seas

**T**eamSeas is one of the most impactful cleanup projects of all time. Here's how it works:

## Beaches

TeamSeas works with Ocean Conservancy and partners to remove millions of pounds of trash from beaches around the world. Professional crews clean up some of the most iconic, vulnerable ocean spaces. We use the best available science and work with local partners to identify places where cleanups will have the greatest impact. TeamSeas partners with volunteers like you to remove millions of pounds of trash and weigh the total collected at the end of each cleanup. We work with local authorities to make sure collected trash is properly disposed of and recycled when possible.



## Rivers

Rivers are a major source of ocean plastic pollution. We use technologies for river pollution called Interceptors, which have removed over 2 million pounds to date. The Interceptor™ is solar-powered and can collect trash autonomously. Every river is unique, so we first conduct research to determine the most efficient solution to clean that specific river. We then set up local partnerships to intercept trash. Collected trash is brought to shore to be properly disposed of by local waste management. Even though the Interceptors aren't a permanent solution, they provide a safety net until waste management improves and we're able to stop plastic from polluting our rivers.

## Oceans

Lost, abandoned and discarded fishing gear—or ghost gear—is some of the deadliest ocean trash. Experts with Ocean Conservancy's Global Ghost Gear Initiative remove ghost gear from waters all around the world. We work with members and partners to identify ghost gear graveyards globally. Trained experts float gear to the surface, where the gear is hooked onto boat cranes and lifted out of the ocean. TeamSeas works with local authorities to make sure any labeled, working gear is returned to local fishers. Remaining gear is recycled when possible, and the rest is properly disposed of.

## 3D-printed homes: new trend or lasting solution?

With new 3D-printed homes hitting the market from Virginia to India, journalist Miriam Axel-Lute and experts from the housing sector explore the advancements and challenges of 3D-printing technology as part of Habitat's ongoing +You series. Watch on YouTube: [youtube.com/watch?v=ecNXDHEOV3k](https://youtube.com/watch?v=ecNXDHEOV3k)



# Greenpeace

Greenpeace exists because this fragile Earth deserves a voice. It needs solutions. It needs change. It needs action. In 1971, our founders set sail to an island in the Arctic. Their mission? To stop a nuclear bomb. It was a journey that would spark a movement and make history. Greenpeace uses non-violent action to pave the way towards a greener, more peaceful world, and to confront the systems that threaten our environment.

For over 50 years, Greenpeace has been sailing the world's oceans fighting for environmental justice. From obstructing nuclear tests in the Pacific, to documenting plastics in our oceans; from conducting research into the effects of climate change in the Arctic, to stopping shiploads of illegal timber leaving the Amazon;

from bringing humanitarian relief to communities devastated by extreme weather to collaborating with local authorities to arrest illegal fishing operations in West Africa – our ships are fundamental to Greenpeace campaigns.

Our goal is to ensure the ability of the earth to nurture life in all its diversity. That means:

- protecting biodiversity in all its forms
- preventing pollution and abuse of the earth's ocean, land, air and fresh water
- ending all nuclear threats
- promoting peace, global disarmament and non-violence

## Support Restaurants That Choose to Reuse

Many of our favorite restaurants are overrun with single-use plastics: plastic straws, plastic cutlery, and plastic leftover boxes (and the boxes are put into plastic bags!). We can change this and prioritize the health of people and the planet. Take the reusable container challenge and join the movement that is changing the way we eat. Let's make reusable the new normal!



# IDEAS

# Women's Suffrage

The women's suffrage movement was a decades-long fight to win the right to vote for women in the United States. It took activists nearly 100 years to win that right, and the campaign was not easy: disagreements over strategy threatened to cripple the movement more than once. The campaign began before the Civil War during the 1820s and 30s, most states had extended the franchise to all white men, regardless of how much money or property they had. In 1848, a group of abolitionist activists gathered in Seneca Falls, NY to discuss women's rights. The delegates to the Seneca Falls Convention agreed: American women were autonomous individuals who deserved their own political identities.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident," proclaimed the Declaration of Sentiments that the delegates produced, "that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." What this meant was that women should have the right to vote. Finally, on August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, enfranchising all American women and declaring for the first time that they deserve all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. On November 2 of that year, more than 8 million women across the United States voted in elections for the first time.



In 1923, the National Woman's Party proposed an amendment to the Constitution that prohibited all discrimination on the basis of sex. The so-called Equal Rights Amendment has never been ratified.

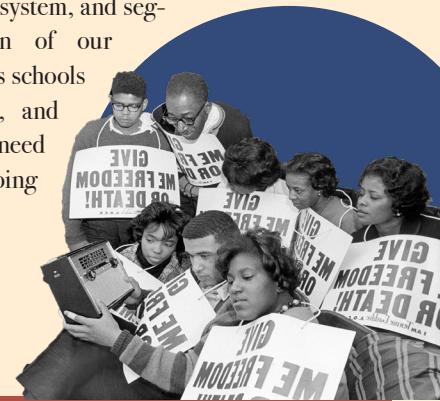
# The Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and '60s came about out of desire for equality and freedom for African Americans and other people of color. Nearly 100 years after slavery was abolished there was widespread segregation, discrimination, disenfranchisement and racially motivated violence permeating all aspects of life for Black people. "Jim Crow" laws barred Blacks from classrooms and bathrooms, from theaters and train cars, from juries and legislatures.

Activists used non-violent protest and civil disobedience, such as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Greensboro Woolworth Sit-Ins to bring about change. Much of this activism took place in the South; however, people from all over the country joined in to proclaim support and commitment to freedom and equality. In August 1963, 250,000 Americans participated in the March on Washington for Jobs

and Freedom. They came to have their voices heard and to listen to civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr., who delivered what would become one of the most influential speeches in history.

Between 1954 and 1968, civil rights legislation was passed. Fundamental and lasting change was made, and its impact can be seen in our society today. However, issues such as immigration, racial disparities in the criminal justice system, and segregation of our nation's schools remain, and are in need of ongoing work.



1954: Brown v. Board of Education, ruled that schools could no longer be segregated.

1964: The Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination in public places, provided for the integration of schools and made employment discrimination illegal based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin.

1965: The Voting Rights Act pro-

tected minority voting rights, and required state and local governments with a history of voting discrimination to get approval from the federal government before making changes to their voting laws.

1968: The "Fair Housing Act," provided equal housing opportunities regardless of race, creed or national origin.

# LGBTQ+ Rights

In the U.S., LGBTQ+ rights are among the most socially, culturally, and legally permissive and advanced in the world. In 1962, all 50 states criminalized same-sex sexual activity, but by 2003 all such remaining laws were invalidated. In 2004, Massachusetts LGBT Americans won the right to marry, and all 50 states joined in by 2015. In many states, LGBT Americans are explicitly protected from discrimination in employment, housing, and access to public accommodations. Many LGBT rights have been established by the U.S. Supreme Court, which has struck down sodomy laws nationwide plus the Defense of Marriage Act, and it made same-sex marriage legal nationwide.

American public opinion is overwhelmingly supportive of same-sex marriage, with 74% of Americans believing same-sex marriage should be a guaranteed right. The Equality Act proposed in 2022, would outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity nationwide. Family law varies by state; adoption of children by same-sex married couples is legal nationwide since June 2015, but some states allow adoption by all couples, while others ban all unmarried couples from adoption. Hate crimes based on sexual orientation or gender identity are punishable by federal law, but many states lack state-level hate crime laws that cover sexual orientation and/or gender identity. LGBTQ people of color face the highest rates of discrimination and hate crimes, especially trans women of color.



**A the Center in NYC, we fight for LGBTQ+ equality by:**

1. Ensuring Access to health and safety
2. Promoting legal protections
3. Championing economic empowerment
4. Building community support
5. Providing free legal aid

## Citations

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