

VOICES

of a People's History of the United States





I start from the supposition that the world is topsy-turvy, that things are all wrong, that the wrong people are in jail and the wrong people are out of jail, that the wrong people are in power and the wrong people are out of power.

—Howard Zinn

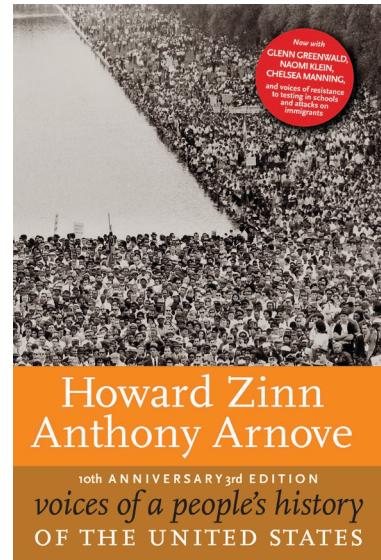
Our Story

Voices is a nonprofit arts, education, and social justice organization founded in 2007 by historian Howard Zinn (1922–2010) and Anthony Arnove, who together edited the book *Voices of a People's History of the United States*.

Voices of a People's History of the United States brings to life the extraordinary history of ordinary people who built the movements ending slavery and Jim Crow, protesting war and the genocide of Native Americans, creating unions and the eight-hour work day, and advancing women's rights and LGBTQ liberation.

Voices came together as a result of enthusiastic audience response to occasional readings from the book *Voices*, held across the country starting in 2003, and to ongoing requests for educational material and more performances. This work also inspired the acclaimed documentary *The People Speak*, featuring Kerry Washington, Marisa Tomei, Danny Glover, Viggo Mortensen, Matt Damon, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, John Legend, and other artists.

By giving public expression to rebels, dissenters, and visionaries from our past — and present — *Voices of a People's History of the United States* seeks to educate and inspire a new generation working for social justice.



Howard Zinn
Anthony Arnove
10th ANNIVERSARY 3rd EDITION
*voices of a people's history
OF THE UNITED STATES*



Performing Arts Program

Voices' Performing Arts Program organizes readings wherever there is interest and provides organizing tools to those who want to stage their own performance — schools, community theaters, unions, cultural and human rights groups.

Performances bring to life actual words from U.S. history: speeches of abolitionist Frederick Douglass, the defiant call to arms of Shawnee leader Tecumseh, testimony of nineteenth-century factory girls on strike in the Lowell mills, and others from the book *Voices of a People's History of the United States*, as well as from the present day.

Voices works to remind people of the eloquence of ordinary people, as well as extraordinary and well-known figures from our history. Since 2003, we have helped organize more than 200 *Voices* performances across the United States. In addition, we have staged productions in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Australia. Whether in a classroom with an audience of thirty-five or at the Brooklyn Academy of Music before two thousand people, each *Voices* performance reminds the audience of the importance of people coming together to make their voices heard.



If there is no struggle there is no progress. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.

—Frederick Douglass

PAST PERFORMERS



Mos Def



Frances McDormand



Sandra Oh



Kurt Vonnegut



Rhiannon Giddens



Mark Ruffalo



Robert Redford



Patti Smith



Darryl "DMC" McDaniels



Laura Gómez



Kerry Washington



Rosario Dawson



Education and Literary Arts Program

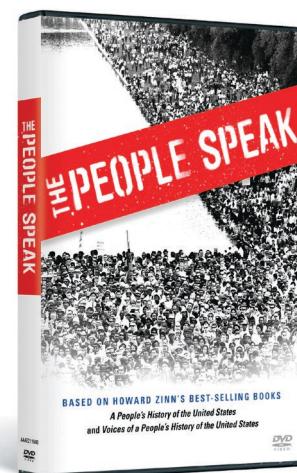
Voices aims to change the way U.S. history is taught and understood, in the classroom and beyond.

Voices has developed comprehensive print and online educational materials using the rich array of existing multimedia content from past performance recordings, the book *Voices of a People's History*, the work of Howard Zinn and other people's historians, and the documentary film *The People Speak*.

Together with *Voices* performances, the Education and Literary Arts Program engages cast members and organizers at all levels of the dramatic and educational process, from selecting texts, to interpreting them, to adding new voices to the readings.

The People Speak

Using dramatic and musical performances of letters, diaries, songs, and speeches, the documentary feature film *The People Speak* gives voice to those who spoke up for social change throughout U.S. history, forging a nation from the bottom up with their insistence on equality and justice. Narrated by acclaimed historian Howard Zinn and based on his best-selling books *A People's History of the United States* and, with Anthony Arnove, *Voices of a People's History*, *The People Speak* illustrates the relevance of these passionate historical moments to our society today and reminds us never to take liberty for granted.





The People Speak is produced by Matt Damon, Josh Brolin, Chris Moore, Anthony Arnove, and Howard Zinn, co-directed by Moore, Arnove and Zinn, and features dramatic and musical performances by Allison Moorer, Benjamin Bratt, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Chris Robinson, Christina Kirk, Danny Glover, Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, David Strathairn, Don Cheadle, Eddie Vedder, Harris Yulin, Jasmine Guy, John Legend, Josh Brolin, Kathleen Chalfant, Kerry Washington, Lupe Fiasco, Marisa Tomei, Martín Espada, Matt Damon, Michael Ealy, Mike O'Malley, Morgan Freeman, P!nk, Q'orianka Kilcher, Reg E. Cathey, Rich Robinson, Rosario Dawson, Sandra Oh, Sean Penn, Staceyann Chin, and Viggo Mortensen.





Upcoming and Proposed Projects

Additional funding would allow *Voices* to expand our programs to respond to the increasing demand for performances, educational programming, and partnerships from social justice, culture and educational organizations.

Since the most recent presidential election, our activities have increased substantially and our events have drawn our largest audiences to date, receiving coverage from a range of media outlets, including *The New Yorker*. This has positioned *Voices* in an ideal place to reach new audiences, and continue to expand its performance and educational programs.

Building on the success of *The People Speak*, *Voices* is producing a new documentary, *The Women Speak*, focused on women's and gender nonconforming voices in people's history.

Women have been a vital part of social movements throughout our nation's rich history of dissent, but their voices have been routinely ignored and excluded. They have been part of movements both for women's rights directly — as in the long fight to win full voting rights, a century ago — and for countless other causes that they understood to be important to winning rights for all — as in the abolitionist movement. The many stories of everyday women in US history, told in their own words by today's leading female and trans singers, actors, and artists, will show the continued importance of this history to understanding women's and gender nonconforming people's contributions to our history and their inspiring legacy for those who want to continue the struggle today for full equality.

Women have been some of our most eloquent dissidents. Consider Susan B. Anthony, who was put on trial in 1872 for "knowingly voting without having a lawful right to vote," and who defied a judge to denounce "forms of law all made



**There is nothing to be
feared from those who
would stop our mouths,
but they themselves
should fear and tremble.
The current is even now
setting fast against them.**

—Angelina Grimke

by men, interpreted by men, administered by men, in favor of men and against women.” Or Sojourner Truth boldly asking her fierce rhetorical question, “Ain’t I a woman?”

In contrast to histories and movement that would have confined them to the home, women have long been part of the U.S. labor force, and as such have made important contributions to the struggle for working people’s rights. We will look at the “mill girls,” who sometimes died in as teenagers because of the harsh working conditions they encountered — and spoke out against — during the Industrial Revolution. We will also explore the stories of women who were pioneers in various industries, overcoming tremendous prejudice to achieve their rightful place, even though full equal pay and respect for equal work remains a goal that has not yet been won.

And we will explore how women also challenge the definitions of what it is to be a woman or how women can love and be loved, telling the moving stories Lucy Stone and Henry B. Blackwell, who on May 1, 1855, insisted on a marriage ceremony that would recognize Stone’s right to keep her own name, insisting that their bond “implies no sanction of, nor promise of voluntary obedience to such of the present laws of marriage, as refuse to recognize the wife as an independent, rational being, while they confer upon the husband an injurious and unnatural superiority, investing him with legal powers which no honorable man would exercise, and which no man should possess.”

We are seeking \$150,000 in general operating support for 2020, beyond our current funding and commissioned performance revenue base, and seeing another \$500,000 to support the creation and impact of *The Women Speak*. ●