

**a resource
for corporate campaigners**



Defending Journalism

Cover image - *Homme de Chevre*, Flickr

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www.democracyctr.org

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thanks

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foreword *jim shultz*

For two decades the work of the Democracy Center, across the globe, has been to help people understand and impact the decisions and institutions that affect their lives. Most people, when they think of advocacy, think of action aimed at governments. But governments are not the only institutions that impact our lives. Today global corporations often wield a heavier influence over us than the institutions we elect. Corporations impact our health and safety, our economic security, and the very existence of life on the planet as we know it.

To be sure, there are plenty of good people who work for corporations and there are also corporations who don't make it their business to trample over our well-being. But there are numerous corporations and numerous corporate leaders who eagerly do great harm to the rest of us in the name of maximizing profits.

The science fiction writer Isaac Asimov wrote a long series of novels that explored the question: What if in the future humankind is able to produce a race of robots so physically and intellectually powerful that they could dominate humans? His answer was to program each robot at conception with a set of three cardinal rules that had to be followed in precise order:

You may not harm a human being.

You may not, by inaction, allow a human being to be harmed.

Preserve and protect your own existence.

Modern corporations are the actual robots of our age, imbued with more power than any human and often more than most governments. Yet the rules under which they operate are frequently the direct opposite of those planted by the science fiction writer. Profits come first – the cigarette makers who denied deadly health effects long after they had been proven; the car company that sold vehicles which exploded; the fossil fuel barons who are still pumping climate poison into our atmosphere.

Citizen action aimed at corporations has never been more urgent, and there are amazing examples from all over the world of people banding together to take on the Goliaths of their time and, sometimes with little more than a sling, taking them down.

Here in *Beating Goliath* the Democracy Center offers activists a set of resources that we hope will help fuel even more effective campaigns against corporate abuse and to advance changes in the rules that grant corporations their power. We put a spotlight on campaigns that have been victorious and what lessons we can learn from them. We look at the particular skills that are important to effective campaigning – from research to direct action. And lastly we look at one of the most crucial areas of anti-corporate campaigning right now – the battle for real action on the crisis of global climate change. We hope you find this resource useful and we look forward to hearing from you with stories of your own battles and victories.

Jim Shultz
Executive Director, The Democracy Center
Cochabamba, Bolivia

introduction

All across the world people are engaged in urgent battles: on worker rights, protection of the environment, trade, health, and a range of other issues that shape our lives and our futures. In many of these struggles we face a powerful adversary – the corporation. National laws and international trade agreements are drafted under the influence of corporate power. Corporate interests form the donor base of major political parties, and often have bigger balance sheets than the countries they operate in. Waves of deregulation and privatization have eroded limits to corporate accumulation of profit and power. In this hostile environment, groups have had to become more and more sophisticated in how they confront companies in their workplaces and communities.

Struggles to win concessions from corporate power are not new. As the influence and reach of the corporation has grown, so has resistance to it. From early worker struggles for better wages and conditions, to the late 1990s campaign that targeted Shell's bright yellow logo to stop it sinking an old drilling platform in the North Sea, confronting corporate interests has long been part of the struggle for social and environmental justice.

Groups confronting corporations have a range of politics and use a range of tactics. They include Christian shareholder groups that talk about increasing 'corporate responsibility', direct action campaigners that see capitalism itself as the root cause of climate change, well-funded NGOs and confederations of neighbourhood organizations. The Democracy Center designed this resource to be useful for both newcomers to this kind of campaigning and old hands, no matter where they lie on the political or tactical spectrum.

This resource opens with some background on corporate campaigning, and why we think it's important to take on corporate power through individual campaigns. We then look at a series of wins from corporate targets, with a focus on what we can learn from them as we put together new campaigns. This is followed by introductions to tools and more detailed resources for campaigners fighting corporations – including organizing, research, strategy, communications, coalition building, direct action, shareholder and financier strategies, legal strategies, and consumer strategies. Finally, we've included six profiles of climate justice campaigns against corporations that are happening right now, with brief outlines of what they're campaigning for and how they're going about it.

first, a little history

The campaign that is often described as the first 'corporate campaign' was the 1976-1980 struggle waged by the ACTWU, a textile union, to organize workers at J.P. Stevens, a textile company in the US South. The union used many different strategies to pressure the company, including a widely publicized retail boycott of J.P. Stevens products. What made the business community sit up and pay attention, however, was that the union put pressure on the company's board and financial networks. From 1977, shareholder activism in companies operating in

South Africa became a key part of the international anti-apartheid movement. In an era of transnational companies and huge international markets, the Nestlé boycott (also beginning in 1977) was emblematic of the shift to 'global' boycotts. Campaigners encouraged consumers worldwide not to buy Nestlé products, to pressure the company to stop marketing baby formula in the global South in ways that endangered children's health.

Over the last decade or so, what became known as the anti-globalization movement (among several other monikers) propelled another surge in anti-corporate action. Popular mobilization in Bolivia forced a multinational to abandon its exploitative water privatisation scheme. Activists in the North focused on companies like Nike, Shell and McDonalds, targeting their high profile and slick brand images on issues from sweatshops to Amazon rainforest destruction.

During this same period, organizations and social movements have developed new ways of engaging with corporate power. Some unions have changed the way they approach campaigning, intensifying their focus on corporate networks and public images. Environmentalist groups like the Rainforest Action Network and Greenpeace have become emblematic of a media-savvy, brand-focused approach to corporate confrontation. Networks of campaigners like the Business Ethics Network have sprung up, and organizations like 'Corporate Watch' in the UK and the US are dedicated entirely to researching and monitoring corporations. Some in social and environmental justice movements are critical of what can be read as the 'professionalization' of corporate campaigning. However non-professional, community-based activism that targets corporations is also alive and well. A new wave of global climate justice organizing, not always dependent on non-profit funding or large organizational backing, has seen community groups directly confronting climate-related corporate misbehavior.

Unsurprisingly, corporations are also learning how to fight back. Companies now respond to, and often anticipate, public action with a series of increasingly sophisticated and aggressive tactics. These include lawsuits against activists that criticize the companies' operations; 'Corporate Social Responsibility' reports highlighting their donations to charity and tree planting programs; public relations campaigns plastered across television screens, buses and magazines, and high-priced consultants to devise strategies for combating worker and community organizing.

the coming battles

Campaigns focused on individual corporations are certainly not the only way to effect change. There are real reasons not to do intense campaigning focused on one corporation. It's hard, it's time consuming, and it can lead to backlash – from workers, from a company's expensive lawyers, from the police. It can become technical and specialized (by limiting campaigning to a small group that understands financial statements, for example.) Neil Tangri from GAIA (Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives) makes a useful observation about his experience with the waste industry:

'Our experience with corporate campaigns is that they are like a game of whack-a-mole. You can defeat a company, but then another one pops up to take its place. We have literally chased some companies around the world, from country to country, as they sell their snake oil in one community after another. That's because

the waste industry is not as consolidated as some other sectors, like petroleum or big agriculture; the market structure leaves room for a lot of fly-by-night operators. So we find it more effective to go after policy-making bodies.

Sometimes we find that the most strategic way to act against corporations is to cut off their subsidy flow. The CDM [Clean Development Mechanism, a mechanism under the Kyoto protocol that allows companies to buy and sell 'emissions reductions' from projects - see 'Plantar', page 52] is fairly small potatoes so far, but there is real danger of the carbon markets becoming huge -- and once that happens, big business will have far too much invested in them to ever let us shut them down. But the campaign targets there are policymakers who create the carbon markets, not the corporations that participate in them.'

While we have to pick our battles, it is also clear in the context of global financial crisis and giant bailouts that corporate power is not going anywhere without a fight - and movements for social and environmental justice needs people ready and equipped to take that fight on. Corporate campaigns are one of a set of tools that can be useful and powerful. The final section of this resource is a snapshot of some campaigns that are targeting corporations right now, in one of the most important battles of all - stopping the planet's climate being destroyed by fossil fuel pollution. As we go to print, a new convergence is camped around the corner from New York's financial center, the heart of corporate power in the US. We look forward to continuing the conversation, and working together to win battles like these, from La Paz to Wall St.

**campaigns that won,
and what we can
learn from them**

the second water war: bechtel vs. the people of bolivia

During the campaign there were faces put on the company...(before that) the company Bechtel was talked about, but we didn't know exactly what it was, but then we saw that it was a family, the Bechtel family that was involved...When we talk about corporations generally we think of logos, and they are anonymous, and we don't realise that behind corporations there are people like us, right? People of flesh and bone like us, so to me it seems important to put faces on them and say to the people 'look, these are the people who are stealing our water, he is the one who is doing this.'... there are people behind the scenes, people who are responsible, they aren't just machines, tubes, computers, logos, advertisements.

Marcela Olivera, water rights activist

the story

In 1997 the World Bank informed Bolivia that it was making additional aid for water infrastructure conditional on the government privatizing the public water systems of two of its largest urban centers: El Alto/La Paz and the city of Cochabamba. In September 1999, in a secret process with just one bidder, Bolivia's government turned over Cochabamba's water to a company controlled by the California engineering giant, Bechtel.

Within a few weeks, Bechtel's company raised water rates by an average of more than 50%, sparking a citywide rebellion that has come to be known as the Cochabamba Water Revolt. In April 2000, following a declaration of martial law by the President, the army killing of a seventeen-year-old boy (Victor Hugo Daza), and more than a hundred wounded, the citizens of Cochabamba refused to back down and Bechtel was forced to leave Bolivia.

Eighteen months later Bechtel and its co-investor, Abengoa of Spain, filed a \$50 million legal demand against Bolivia before a closed-door trade court operated by the World Bank, the

International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID.) For four years afterwards Bechtel and Abengoa found their companies and corporate leaders dogged by protest, damaging press, and public demands from five continents that they drop the case.

On January 19, 2006 Bechtel and Abengoa representatives traveled to Bolivia to sign an agreement in which they abandoned the ICSID case for a token payment of 2 Bolivianos (about 30 US cents.)

strategy

The immediate objective of the campaign was simple: make sure Bolivian water consumers weren't forced to pay a multi-million dollar settlement to Bechtel. But it came with very important wider objectives, like supporting the Coordinadora de Defensa del Agua y de la Vida (The Coalition in Defense of Water and Life, the main organizing body in the mobilizations against Bechtel and for just access to water in Cochabamba) in their strategies, and drawing attention to the injustice of World Bank policies and investment treaties that allowed the Bechtel-Bolivia lawsuit to happen in the first place.

Early on, it was decided that placing all hope in winning the case in front of the World Bank tribunal was not going to be enough. According to Jim Shultz of the Democracy Center, 'We made a strategic decision to change the venue, to the court of public opinion. That is where we, as NGOs and social movements, had more power than Bechtel. Our goal was to convince Bechtel to cave in. That was not only a more likely way to win but also a better way to win. It sends an important signal to other companies: even if you think you can win at ICSID, be prepared to have a whole other battle on your hands.' Instead of the tribunal, where the rules are written for companies like Bechtel, the campaign tried to push the company into a space where it would have less control over the outcome.

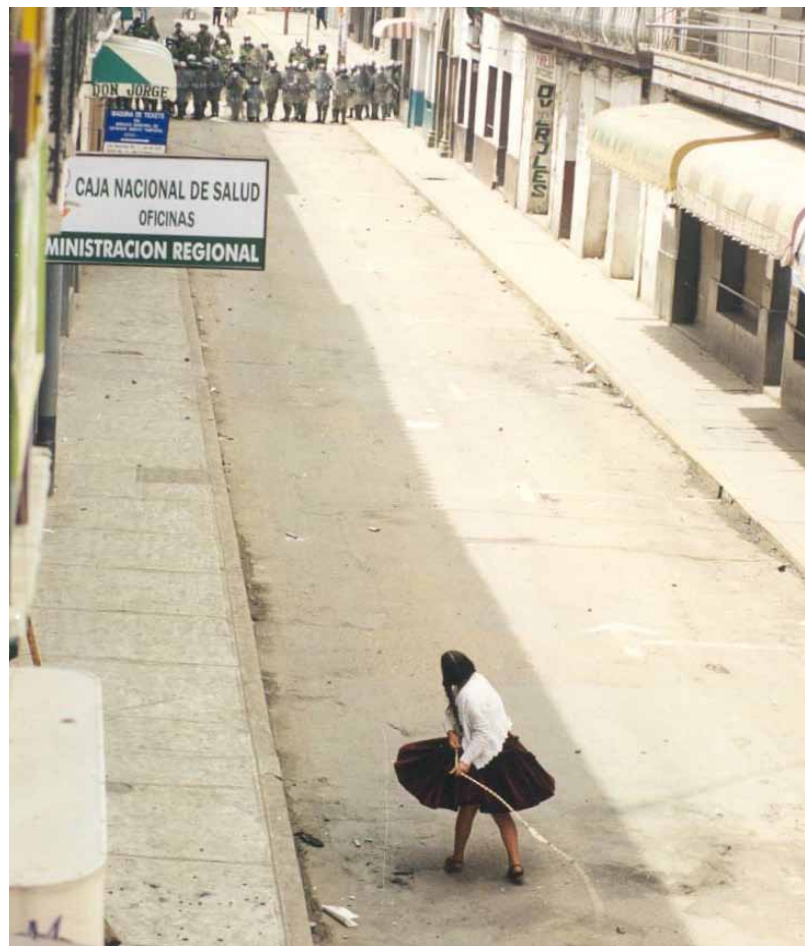
The next step was to identify decision-makers in the company who would make the call on whether to continue the case or to drop it. Bechtel Enterprises was unlike Nestle, Nike or General Electric - it made no consumer products to boycott. As a privately held company it had no investors to pressure. So the campaign focused on Riley Bechtel, the CEO and great-grandson of the company's founder. Campaigners used tactics such as email blasts to his personal address, and profiling him as an individual in magazine pieces. Jim Shultz says they discovered later how effective this strategy was: 'When Bechtel settled the case for thirty cents the Bolivian negotiator told us that Riley Bechtel had personally intervened to make the case go away.'



An image from the campaign

messaging and framing

The story told in the campaign against Bechtel was often framed in moral terms. The ‘David and Goliath’ theme of the water revolt was made iconic through powerful images such as a lone woman facing down a line of riot police armed with only a slingshot. This messaging continued in the work that followed, pitting a wealthy multinational corporation against the Bolivian people. Using lines like ‘What Bechtel is demanding from Bolivia is what it earns before lunch on any given day, but in Bolivia would add 1,200 new rural teachers,’ campaigners told the story in a direct and compelling way. (This also is an example of “advocacy math” - juxtaposing sets of numbers for maximum impact, and translating abstract figures into something that people can immediately identify and relate to.)



A Bolivian woman faces down a line of riot police during the Cochabamba water revolt - Tom Kruse

coordination/decision-making process

The Bechtel campaign was not conducted through a formal coalition, and tools like list serves and telephone conferences were not used. The connections between Bolivian organizers and activists in the rest of the world were made through a network of individuals (both Bolivians and foreigners) who lived in Bolivia, working to connect their personal and organizational contacts to the campaign. Decision-making in the campaign was mostly ad-hoc, with the Bolivia-based network communicating by email and phone with allies in the rest of the world on an as-needs basis. That said, strategic decisions, such as which organizations would be named in the petition to ICSID, were always put before and decided by the Coordinadora.

The campaign was not centrally planned from any one headquarters. The network based in Bolivia did initiate specific projects, such as the email blasts to Riley Bechtel, and reached out to other organizations to do work like the civil society petition to ICSID. However, there was also a kind of ‘viral’ pickup of the campaign, as a result of the huge amount of international attention that the first water war had attracted. Groups approached contacts in Bolivia with ideas from all over the world – this is how the actions in Amsterdam and San Francisco were

initiated. Not all ideas were generated or directed from Cochabamba - but information about the company, the case, and what was happening in the campaign as a whole was provided to allies in the rest of the world to facilitate actions they were proposing.

tactics

- **direct action**

Activists in San Francisco occupied and shut down Bechtel's headquarters. Across the world in Amsterdam, activists climbed the wall of Bechtel's fake Dutch headquarters (which it had used to take advantage of the investment treaty between the Netherlands and Bolivia) and renamed the street after the 17-year-old killed in the Water Revolt.

- **legal action**

Allies at Earthjustice helped file a legal petition with the tribunal to demand the right to file an amicus brief on the case. The petition was denied (at least for the jurisdiction phase) but it served as a useful organizing tool. As a companion to that legal petition, the lead groups fighting the case organized a Citizens Petition to the World Bank, demanding public participation in the process. More than 300 groups from 41 countries signed on. In response, Bechtel's lawyers filed briefs in reply that totaled nearly 100 pages.

- **public officials**

Public Citizen in California pushed for and won a resolution from the San Francisco Board of Supervisors calling on Bechtel (a San Francisco company with pending city contracts) to drop the case.

- **media**

The Democracy Center, the Institute for Policy Studies and others helped arrange many articles on the case in the US and Bolivian press.

challenges

The campaign faced a number of challenges along the three-year road to a solid win. Among the toughest was keeping the campaign alive and active – the ICSID process is long, slow moving and difficult to make visible to a public audience. Keeping strategy formation a genuine and open decision-making process was also a challenge. Different parts of the campaign had different backgrounds, understandings and priorities. It was important to talk through in detail the possible strategic implications of each decision collectively, so that the solidarity campaign was not just going to the Coordinadora with decisions to 'rubber stamp.' Honest explanations and open debates were key to making sure decisions weren't rushed through. Legal threats from the company never materialized, but Jim Shultz now considers that campaigners could have sought more legal advice about their own exposure throughout the process.

making it personal

Focusing on Riley Bechtel hit home - the campaign wasn't directed at the company in general, but at a decision-maker who had the power to drop the case.

playing to your strengths

The fight against Bechtel combined very different tactics and organizing cultures. The courage, sophistication and power of the Bolivian grassroots organizing that turned the city of Cochabamba out onto the streets forced Bechtel to leave the country. When the company tried a second time to extract money from Bolivians, an international network of activists and organizations applied pressure to the company using different strengths to force Bechtel to back down once again.

choosing the battleground

Campaigners knew that the World Bank's trade court was not the best space to fight a multinational corporation. The tribunal was where the company was strong, and campaigners were weak - so they decided to move the battleground to a space where the company was weak.

messing with their math

Corporations overwhelmingly make decisions according to one logic - the logic of their bottom line. The campaign was able to influence that economic calculus - ratcheting up legal fees, and forcing the company to account for damage to its public reputation that could cost it contracts in the future.

seizing the moment

The second water war was part of a global upsurge in anti-globalization and anti-corporate activism, and benefited from the huge amount of attention that was paid to the water war specifically, as well as the larger political shifts in Latin America. Campaigners were able to convert this attention from media and activists into one of the campaign's important strengths.

switching off e.on: fighting new coal in the uk

the story

In 2006 E.On (a German energy company) announced plans to replace Kingsnorth, a coal-fired power station in Southeast England, with yet another brand new coal-fired power station. The plan was to start building in 2012 and finish by 2015. The company's timing was not good - a grassroots climate movement was growing fast in the country, and giant new facilities for burning coal were not what they had in mind for the UK's energy future. According to the Guardian, 'Kingsnorth became emblematic of the campaign against coal-fired power stations.'

A two-year campaign was waged by grassroots groups and NGOs to stop the company carrying out its plans. Campaigners took actions ranging from online pledges, to mass civil disobedience and, in one memorable event, completely shut down the power station. Towards



the end of 2009, E.On announced that they were shelving the plans for the Kingsnorth power station. Meanwhile, the UK government had announced that they would not approve the development of new coal-fired stations without 'Carbon Capture and Storage' (a promised future technology that has not been successfully implemented in any working power plant.)

Greenpeace sailboat outside of Kingsnorth - Kristian Buus/Greenpeace.

strategy

Stopping the expansion of the Kingsnorth power station was the central, immediate goal of the campaign. In the context of a rapidly growing climate movement and public concern over climate change, the Kingsnorth campaign also served to highlight profits being made for companies like E.On at the expense of the climate. The campaign mobilized public action directly against the company, but the UK government was also a secondary target: the campaign was part of a larger effort to shift the UK's reliance on fossil fuels like coal and oil. There were several other coal-fired power stations on the drawing board, that the climate movement also wanted to stop - so the campaign was not only about preventing Kingsnorth being built, but changing the policy environment that would allow any such projects to go forward. In addition to setting national energy policy, the government had the power to approve or deny E.On's plans - and it was also in charge of a multi-million dollar competition to fund an energy company to build 'Carbon Capture and Storage' facilities in the UK, which E.On had entered.



March on Kingsnorth at climate camp 2008 - treborgolan

The campaign was centered around building and demonstrating public opposition to E.On's plans. As the Camp for Climate Action put it at the time, 'We need to stop Kingsnorth being built and we need to stop new coal in the UK. This means stopping E.On - targeting their brand, disrupting their operations and targeting their supply chain - we need to be face to face with E.On wherever they operate.' In addition to proactively creating confrontations with the company, activists were able to use existing opportunities, like E.On's sponsorship of the FA Cup (a major English football tournament), E.On's efforts to recruit students in universities, and E.On's sponsorship of a Guardian newspaper climate conference to draw public attention to the Kingsnorth plans.

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messaging and framing

Messaging in the campaign was as varied as the groups involved. The Camp for Climate Action and Rising Tide UK took an uncompromising approach to the company, using language like 'E.On be warned.' Groups like the World Development Movement focused on the devastating impact climate change would have in the global South, coming up with dramatic figures, like 'the new power station would have emitted more CO₂ than Tanzania, and could have caused 20,000 people to become homeless and meant that 100,000 more people lost their dry season water supply.'



*Lego campaigners scale E.On's power station at Legoland -
Lego Activist*

The campaign also made heavy use of satire and savage humor. In three days of action against E.On in 2008, many of the actions were satirical - from 'cleaners' scrubbing coal clean outside an E.On office, to games of 'Carbon Capture and Storage British Bulldog', to a posse of Santas invading E.On's offices, delivering coal and telling the employees that they had been very naughty. Perhaps the funniest was the 'occupation' of the Kingsnorth replica at Legoland (sponsored by E.On) by one-inch tall climate change campaigners. According to an Indymedia report from the day, 'The six campaigners appeared at the top of the construction at around 11am in the morning, before unveiling a banner saying STOP CLIMATE

CHANGE down the length of the tower. Lego police are in attendance at the foot of the tower, along with a Lego police helicopter...Neither the campaigners nor the police would comment, because they're made of Lego and therefore can't talk.'

coordination/decision-making process

The structure of the coalition campaigning on Kingsnorth varied between formal and informal links. According to Jim Footner from Greenpeace, 'The core group were campaigners from the key environment and development NGOs that met either in person or on the phone every week. Second to that was the formal Stop Climate Chaos coalition, under whose umbrella various organizations without a mandate to work on domestic UK coal and climate change were able to take part...In terms of funding, large organizations paid for their own contributions, and smaller orgs secured funding from groups like the European Climate Foundation, that funds climate change work in Europe. The final component was the grass roots, mainly in the form of Climate Camp. Whilst there was encouragement from the larger NGOs, they got involved entirely off their own back and brought with them a set of tactics only they could deliver. Taken together, it was a formidable coalition.'

According to Jim Footner, shared strategy was mostly put together by the core group of organizations and then proposed to the wider network: 'The campaign went in phases (it started in 2006) so each phase required new plans, and we had to react to the company and the politics. On the whole, the core group would formulate the strategy and take it to the wider group for agreement, and discussion over a menu of options for their engagement. If a group fundamentally disagreed, then obviously there was no compulsion to take part. Groups like Climate Camp worked to their own strategy, to which individuals with particular knowledge would contribute, but was still their own process. The establishment groups did what they liked, but the direction of travel for each party was clearly in support of the overall objective.'

tactics

- **direct action**

E.On's offices were invaded and occupied throughout the campaign. In August 2008, 4,000 people camped at Kingsnorth with the intention to - nonviolently - stop the station from running. Greenpeace targeted Kingsnorth with high profile actions, including painting the Prime Minister's name on one of the smokestacks, and attempting to stop a coal ship docking at the station. In the most notorious action of the campaign, a lone activist got past Kingsnorth security and shut off the whole power station without being caught, leaving a banner saying 'No New Coal.' These efforts were met with a heavy police response, including undercover infiltration and the pre-emptive mass arrest of activists allegedly planning the peaceful shutdown of another E.On power station.

- **public protests**

NGOs mobilized 1,000 people to form a human chain around the power station, and 1,200 people at another protest at the company's headquarters in Coventry.

- **online organizing**

Some of the groups working on Kingsnorth launched 'E.On F.off', a website coordinating and amplifying direct actions against the company. Greenpeace launched 'The Big If', where people pledged online what they would do if new coal development went ahead in the UK - these ranged from not voting for given politicians to sending their dirty underwear to the minister for climate change.

- **targeting the government**

When the UK Secretary for energy and climate change Ed Miliband said he wanted to be known as 'the guy who sorted out coal', he showed the impact that the UK climate movement was having. Actions that targeted the government directly, including the delivery of written messages and vigils at government departments, helped to push the government to declare that no new coal power stations would be built in the UK without Carbon Capture and Storage. According to the Guardian, '[b]ecause the technology is unproven and needs government subsidy, it in effect amounted to a ban on new coal plants.'

- **trials of activists**

Trials related to the campaign against E.On became tools, increasing public and media attention toward climate issues and campaigners. The first trial was of the six Greenpeace activists that had painted the Kingsnorth chimney - they mounted a legal defense of 'necessity', arguing that the threat to the climate made their actions defensible. During the trial, the defense called high profile witnesses such as NASA climate scientist James Hansen. Filmmaker Nick Broomfield produced a short documentary about the case, and the trial gained widespread coverage for climate change issues. The jury eventually declared the activists not guilty. The second round of trials were of activists accused of planning the nonviolent occupation of another E.On power plant. While a number were found guilty of conspiracy, the trials exposed infiltration of the climate movement by undercover police and private security agents, putting these convictions in jeopardy and throwing other charges out.

challenges

Unsurprisingly, the diversity of the coalition was challenging. Keeping the message 'coherent' and organizing logistics between so many different groups, across such a broad political spectrum, were major challenges according to Jim Footner. The policy complexity around coal-fired power in the UK was also a challenge: 'Carbon Capture and Storage' was being promised as a solution by the coal and power industries, making the message 'burning coal = dangerous climate change' harder to communicate in a direct way.

making the specific emblematic

The Kingsnorth campaign both used and helped to create a huge upswing in concern about climate change in the UK. This general concern was made into a concrete question - would Kingsnorth be built or not? As Jim Footner puts it, the campaign 'positioned a plan for a new power station into [one of the] key tests of the UK's record on climate change,' making the stakes of the campaign far higher than the fate of one specific power station.

working across difference

One of the great strengths of the Kingsnorth campaign was the range of groups involved - from establishment environment groups with inside political connections to anti-capitalist climate justice groups. Building alliances across this kind of political difference clearly had its challenges - but also enabled campaigners to use a huge range of tactics to pressure the company from different angles.

speaking satire to power

Messaging in the Kingsnorth campaign wasn't always about the laughs, but it is notable for its eye catching, creative and biting funny actions.

planning ahead without being locked in

Kingsnorth campaigners took time and care to plan strategy, but were also flexible enough to take opportunities when they arose - as Jim Footner notes, the campaign 'evolved as much through luck as design, but the need to take a modular, phased approach with such a long timeline is crucial. You just don't know how things will unfold...'

what can we learn?

rankGanvany's

in defense of the u'wa: occidental petroleum backs down in colombia

'We would rather die, protecting everything that we hold sacred, than lose everything that makes us U'wa.'

Benito Kuwaru'wa, president of the Traditional U'wa Authority

the story

In the early 1990s Occidental Petroleum (Oxy), in collaboration with Royal Dutch Shell and the Colombian government, sought to develop what were considered some of the most expansive oil fields in the country. Located in northeastern Colombia - in a cloud forest rich in biodiversity - the anticipated wells were also home to the indigenous U'wa. The estimated 1.5 billion barrels of oil lying beneath U'wa territory generated considerable interest from international investors and in 1995, after three years of exploration, Oxy was granted an environmental license to proceed with drilling.

U'wa opposition to the consortium's oil exploration was rooted in their cosmology and belief system. For the U'wa, oil is the blood of mother earth and its extraction is equivalent to matricide. In addition, oil infrastructure is a magnet for violence in a country that has been plagued by armed conflict for almost half a century - it is a strategic target for FARC rebels seeking to destabilize the Colombian government. Oxy's Caño Limón pipeline has been bombed hundreds of times since it became operational in 1986, pouring approximately 2.5 million barrels of oil onto the surrounding land. Apart from the environmental degradation caused by

these recurrent oil spills, the increased militarization of oil-producing regions is inevitable as private companies and the government seek to protect their investments, in addition to the increased presence of paramilitaries seeking out FARC and 'FARC sympathizers.'

In response to these threats to their culture, land and people, the U'wa mounted a multifaceted campaign alongside international allies. Their position was an uncompromising rejection of oil exploitation: in fact, the U'wa threatened to commit collective suicide if the project went ahead. Through a powerful mix of direct action, legal contestation, citizen petitions and shareholder resolutions, the U'wa and their allies were able to isolate Oxy and their financial backers. As the public relations campaign intensified Fidelity, one of the principle investors in Oxy withdrew almost \$400 million dollars of investment when it was the target of 75 protests in just 6 months.



Despite having invested millions of dollars in exploratory drilling over the previous decade, Occidental formally announced their intention to relinquish control of their Gibraltar 1 site to Ecopetrol, the state-owned Colombian oil company, after failing to find the projected oil deposits. Oxy never formally acknowledged the international or domestic campaigns as factors in its decision to abandon their investment. Nevertheless, their departure from standard industry practice – which would have been to drill other test wells in the area – indicates that these campaigns were indeed influential.

Benito Kuwaru'wa at a protest in Los Angeles - Rainforest Action Network

strategy

The objectives of the U'wa were broader than simply forcing Occidental off their territory. Rather they sought to stop all resource extraction – including that directed by the Colombian government. In 1873, the government had claimed the right to all sub-surface minerals. Thus in addition to targeting Oxy, the U'wa people followed a legal strategy to establish land rights and legal titling to secure permanent protection for their land against resource extraction.

After getting little movement from Oxy early in the campaign, organizers recognized Oxy's low public profile meant an alternative strategy would have to be devised. As Kevin Koenig of Amazon Watch noted, 'personally going after the leadership of the company was not yielding the results that we had hoped, and we realized that we needed a third way. We needed a different approach that would concern not only the management, but the rest of the company's shareholders and potentially affect the company's bottom line.' That 'third way' resulted in a

strategy that focused on Occidental investors, more specifically Fidelity Investments that held over 18 million Oxy shares.

The divestment campaign that followed drew public attention to those funding Oxy's attempted exploitation of U'wa land. The decision to go after the investors mobilized an expansive network of activists in North America - in the words of Kevin Koenig, it was a means of 'bringing this oil project in the middle of a Colombian cloud forest – bringing it home and putting it in the face of their local Fidelity branch.'

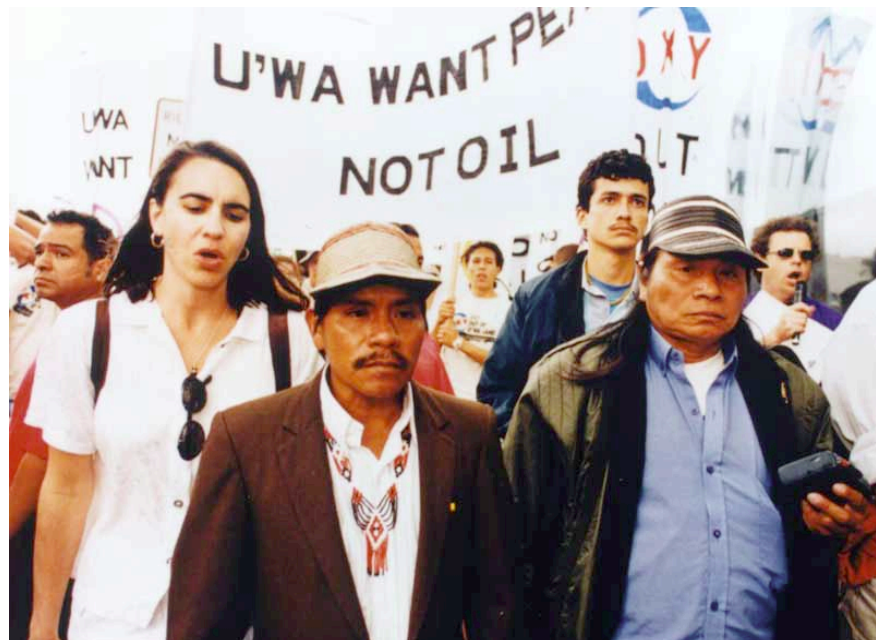
messaging and framing

The campaign's message was tailored to each of the audiences it hoped to galvanize. As the U'wa struggle against Oxy was reaching its apex, as in the campaign against Bechtel, opposition to corporate-led globalization was mushrooming across the globe. The U'wa were able link to this sentiment, becoming one of the faces of resistance to a world dominated by multinational corporations and international financial institutions. This frame was successful in generating support from social justice activists in North America and Europe.

For investors such as Fidelity and the Sanford C. Bernstein investment firm, messaging was framed in terms of an economic calculus – investing in Occidental was presented as a poor business decision. Colombia was mired in political instability and violence that Oxy was presented as ill-equipped to handle. As that message started getting into the financial and business press, investors became skeptical about Oxy's ability to deal with the opposition it faced both domestically and internationally.

coordination/ decision-making process

U'wa solidarity campaigners established a formalized coalition, with weekly calls and central coordination of actions. The U'wa Defense Working Group consisted of Northern NGOs such as Amazon Watch, Action for Communities and Ecology in the Rainforest of Central America (ACERCA), Center for Justice and International Law, Colombian Human Rights Commission (DC), Earth Justice Legal Defense Fund, Earth Trust Foundation, Native Forest Network, Sol Communications, Rainforest Action Network (RAN), Project Underground, and the U'wa Defense



U'wa Traditional Authority - Rainforest Action Network

Project. Each of these organizations brought particular skills and resources to the table that the entire campaign could draw on. For instance, RAN already maintained a grassroots network of activists familiar with the kind of direct actions that would prove crucial when the campaign began to target Fidelity branches around the US.

A strict protocol was adhered to in communication with the U'wa to prevent the solidarity campaign becoming a burden on the tribe. The U'wa Defense Project served as the main conduit, giving reports from the ground on topics such as direct actions being carried out in Colombia, or analysis on the socio-political developments in the country. Sometimes U'wa representatives were connected to the solidarity group conference calls to give direct updates from the ground.

tactics

- **direct action**

Activists in 20 cities around the US demonstrated at their local Fidelity branch to pressure the firm to divest from Oxy. In the Boston headquarters attempts to 'lock down' inside the office were thwarted, but activists successful chained a "talking briefcase" to the door of the office, telling the story of the U'wa and Fidelity's connection to the project. In London, a small group of activists distributed leaflets to Fidelity workers and dropped two banners, one reading '5000 U'wa lives at stake/Fatality Investments.'

- **legal action**

The U'wa attempted to go through the Colombian court system to establish an injunction on development, citing historic claims to their land. In 2000, they presented archival evidence of colonial titles from 1661 to establish their historic claim to territory Oxy intended to develop. On an international level, the U'wa sought recourse through the Organization of American States (OAS.) Together with the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia, the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund, and the Coalition for Amazonian Peoples and their Environment, the U'wa presented their case to the regional body. The OAS responded with a report calling for the 'immediate and indefinite suspension of the project' and recognition of the U'wa's claim to their territory.

- **media**

According to Kevin Koenig, the U'wa's story was inherently powerful, poignant and compelling. As such, solidarity organizers simply had to create spaces that would facilitate that story being heard. Coalition organizers arranged dozens of speaking events at college campuses and other public forums, generating media and public attention.

- **shareholder resolutions**

With the assistance of the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters, who held Oxy shares, the U'wa were able to voice their opposition to the project directly to shareholders and directors of the company. A resolution that proposed to hire analysts to study the effects of the U'wa's threatened collective suicide on Oxy stock prices won approval from an unprecedented 13% of shareholders.

challenges

The U'wa campaign was fraught with challenges, but the most serious was underscored when three international indigenous rights activists were murdered leaving U'wa territory in 1999. Terrence Freitas, Ingrid Washinawatok and Lahe'ane'e Gay were abducted and slain by FARC rebels, their bodies found along the Aruca River in Venezuela days later. Terrence worked closely with the U'wa community and was the founder of the U'wa Defense Project. Ingrid and Lahe'ane'e were assisting in the establishment of an educational program in the area to preserve traditional culture. Their deaths threw into relief one of the most pressing questions for campaigners – how to organize a solidarity campaign in a context of extreme violence. This had implications beyond the risks of directly visiting the U'wa. Campaigners had to be extremely careful about producing campaign materials and soundbites, to avoid representing the U'wa - who are against all violence and purposely took no sides in civil conflict - in any way that could be construed as sympathetic to the ELN or FARC, which would in turn make them more of a target for paramilitaries, or vice versa.



Luis Caballero of the U'wa stands in front of Occidental Petroleum's Caño Limón Pipeline in Colombia - Rainforest Action Network

The campaign against Oxy was further complicated by the position of the Colombian government, which strongly supported the oil extraction. Military personnel and government officials displayed disdain for the U'wa, attempting to characterize them as a small tribe selfishly delaying a project that was for the betterment of Colombia. The government made the struggle of the 5,000 strong tribe much harder by not only supporting oil extraction, but actively trying to invalidate U'wa claims by portraying them as guerilla sympathizers.

Following OXY's departure, rights to the Sirirí and Catleya oil concessions, overlapping U'wa territory, were transferred in full to Ecopetrol, Colombia's national oil company. Underwritten by the US Export Import Bank, Ecopetrol intends to expand onto indigenous territory against reiterated U'wa opposition.

For more information, see:

<http://amazonwatch.org/work/defend-uwa-life-and-territory>

a strong foundation

For Kevin Koenig, the most important element of the success of the campaign against Oxy was the unity and determination of the U'wa. As he describes it, 'international solidarity campaigns are built from the bottom up and that bottom and that base is the communities...if that base has cracks in it, [the campaign] is not going to work.'

flexibility

The campaign against Oxy shows how important flexible strategy making can be. Unlike the case of Bechtel, direct pressure on the Oxy CEO was having little effect - recognizing this, campaigners changed course, discovering that pressure on major shareholders was far more effective.

staying safe

Time and again, communities have been caught in bitter conflicts fuelled by corporate money. The U'wa and the activists who stood with them faced real danger in Colombia, that sometimes had deadly and tragic outcomes. Campaigners in the US and Colombia courageously confronted this danger - while always trying to work in a way that did not expose people on the ground to further risk.

FLOC brings mount olive to the table

'Mt. Olive was using the same arguments used by Campbell's. They said that the company was not the employer of these migrants, the growers were, and that they had no responsibility on their wellbeing. Our experience of struggle in Ohio told us that if we continue putting pressure on the company and their financial partners they would eventually negotiate with us. Our best strategy? We just don't give up!'

Maria Garcia, migrant worker for 30 years, current FLOC Vice-President.

the story

The Southern United States has long been a difficult place to organize for worker and union rights. In this context, as well as that of punitive migration laws and enforcement, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee has waged a long campaign to organize an overwhelmingly migrant farm workforce in the region.

Farmworkers face a challenging industry structure: while farmworkers work directly for food growers, it is the big food processing companies that are more powerful. Companies like Campbell's do not directly manage the growing of the food that they sell - they 'outsource' this part of the production process to growers, much as companies like Nike and Reebok outsource the production of their shoes to nameless contractors in Indonesia. This industry structure has given rise to what have been called 'sweatshops without walls' - with growers driving conditions and wages ever lower in an attempt to attract the big food processing companies with cheaper prices.

Baldemar Velásquez, the founder of FLOC, described the situation as follows: 'I started to understand that it's the food processors and not the farmers who have economic control of the industry. The farmer contracts to grow a crop for a big company like the Campbell's Soup Company or Heinz and it's the company that sets the price. Out of whatever the company pays, the farmer has to cover his overhead and pay his labor. So, we were negotiating with a party that didn't actually determine the price.'



FLOC leaders and members after the signing of the agreement with Mt. Olive and the NC Growers Association in 2004 - FLOC

FLOC pioneered its approach to this problem in the late 70s and early 80s, with a campaign targeting Campbell's Soup that resulted in a three-way agreement between the soup company, the growers and farmworkers on union contracts, fair wages and conditions. Similar agreements with Heinz USA, Vlasic and Dean Foods followed. In 1997, the union approached the Mt Olive pickle company with a proposal to make the same kind of agreement with their

growers in North Carolina. When the company refused, FLOC began a six year campaign that would end in a similar agreement to the one signed with Campbell's.

strategy

The fundamental strategic choice made by the campaign was to go after Mt Olive, rather than its individual suppliers. The company was a good target for two reasons. Firstly, it had the purchasing power - that is, it was in a position of strength in relation to its suppliers, and could both make demands on them and offer to pay prices covering higher wages and better working conditions. The second was that Mt Olive produced a consumer product, and therefore its public reputation was important to company management. The growers would not be easy to influence through public pressure - but a consumer boycott and negative publicity could certainly affect Mt Olive.

The goal of the campaign was to achieve organizing rights for farmworkers - and for the company and its growers to recognize FLOC as a legitimate representative for workers at the sites that supplied Mt Olive Pickles. The campaign presupposed that the right to organize together and be represented by a union would strengthen the workers' position in their fight for better conditions and wages.

The backbone of the campaign's strategy was organizing - the steady work of growing support for the campaign among workers, strengthening their connections to each other and building their skills, not only to negotiate at their own worksites, but also to participate in the broader campaign. Developing committed activists in the fields of North Carolina was crucial to the campaign's success - without it, FLOC would have had little legitimacy with which to negotiate on behalf of workers, and would have been unable to organize actions like mass marches. It was also an end in itself - the process of developing communities of farmworkers who could take action together also produced structures, activists and skills that would continue to be important after concessions from Mt Olive and the growers were won.

Making Mt Olive a public target meant involving other groups in the campaign - not campaigning only with workers, but building alliances with churches and students. As Dave Dalton from Oxfam notes in his study of the campaign, 'The Chief Executive of Mt. Olive, Bill Bryan, was a respected United Methodist Church (UMC) member who promoted his company as a 'Christian business with local, small town values.' The combination of the local, national, and international campaigns made a powerful impact on the devout leader of the company and on its image. In the words of a FLOC organizer, "The UMC was a key battle site.'" The campaign did extensive outreach to various church communities, inviting church members to farms to see conditions first hand, and distributing DIY 'Pickle Picket Packets' with the tools for church activists to organize in support of the boycott.

messaging and framing

The messaging of the campaign used fairly straightforward social justice framing, exposing the exploitative conditions that many farmworkers live with. It is an industry with an appalling track record - Data Center described 'overcrowded and substandard housing, a lack of portable toilets or hand-washing facilities in the workplace, and wages far below the poverty line.' Having workers testify directly about their experiences (for example, to church congregations) put names and faces to statistics about injuries, grindingly low incomes and insecure work. According to Dave Dalton, 'The union presented its case to Mt. Olive, NCGA, the media, churches, and other allies in the same way: health, safety, money, working conditions, and other concerns were framed as "family issues."'

The image of 'community' was also an important part of the campaign's framing. Dave Dalton notes that 'FLOC press conferences seized the imagination of journalists by being organized around the pool table in La Palmita, the grocery-store headquarters of its campaign. This served to back up the message that the campaign was rooted in, and supported by, the local community.'



Church allies march - FLOC

tactics

- **worker organizing and mobilization**

The central plank of the campaign was behind-the-scenes organizing, meetings, and communication amongst the workers through tools like a campaign newsletter (circulated in places such as laundromats that workers were likely to frequent), but also public mobilizations like big marches on the town of Mt Olive.

- **reports from third parties**

'Like Machines in the Fields' by Oxfam America, for example, documented in detail the conditions of farmworkers' lives, and reached audiences beyond those that FLOC alone had access to.

- **targeting mt olive through retail outlets**

Church activists supported the boycott not only by passing resolutions and through personal shopping decisions - according to a National Council of Churches communiqué from the time: 'Many local congregations organize[d] activities such as picketing, leaflet distribution and lobbying of retailers to remove Mt. Olive products from their shelves.' Student groups did similar work - activists at Duke University, working with FLOC, managed to pressure the university to support the boycott and withdraw Mt Olive products from campus stores and cafeterias, although Duke later backed down in exchange for some compromises from the company. Nonetheless at the outset, as a student journalist noted, 'The symbolic significance of Duke's support far overshadowed the \$3,000 worth of Duke business Mt. Olive would lose annually.' As a result of such pressure, chains such as Trader Joe's stopped stocking Mt Olive. A specific retail campaign was developed in the Midwest, where Mt. Olive was beginning to expand its brand. FLOC Ohio and Michigan got supermarkets such as Kroger, Meijer, Farmer Jack and even a local Wal-Mart store to stop carrying Mt. Olive products.

- **media**

FLOC cultivated strong relationships with journalists covering the campaign, in addition to immediate interactions around media events, which according to Dave Dalton included "'know your rights" information, denunciations of specific practices in labor camps, reports of deaths and injuries among workers, and other issues.'

- **legal actions**

FLOC brought a class action lawsuit for violations of state and federal wage laws against the North Carolina Growers' Association (NCGA - the main association of growers that Mt Olive deals with in North Carolina.) This lawsuit resulted in a \$12 million judgment - according to Dave Dalton, 'FLOC agreed to lower its damages award in exchange for an agreement by the NCGA to give preference in hiring to union employees and to pay the transportation and H2A visa fees for employees.'

coordination/decision-making process

Though non-farmworker allies and ally organizations were important in the campaign, FLOC took a clear leadership role. As distinct from other campaigns profiled here which were more network-based, decision-making in the Mt Olive campaign was concentrated in the hands of the union. Although FLOC reserved the right to make final decisions, the union responded to initiatives by other organizations, and there was discussion on strategies and ultimately consensus on the path to follow with closest allies. Beatriz Maya, Secretary Treasurer of FLOC, describes the decision-making process as follows: 'Our closest allies know that the decision-making power should be in the hands of the workers, and the workers are represented by FLOC. But in the end the process was pretty consensual. Our allies in the faith community suggested the path to follow by them and we evaluated, suggested changes and approved. At the same time, we might had suggestions on specific tactics they could use and they would tell us whether or not this was a good approach for them. The same with labor and other allies.'

challenges

FLOC faced a number of major challenges in conducting the campaign against Mt Olive. First, and perhaps most importantly, North Carolina is a so-called 'right to work' state - that is, if a particular work site is covered by a union-negotiated agreement, workers at that site can benefit from that agreement without being members of the union. This means that FLOC, like every union operating in right to work states, must constantly fight to build and retain their membership. This was not the only barrier to organizing - the largely migrant nature of the workforce meant that, in the cases where workers had legal immigration status, they were out of the country for several months of the year, making it difficult to maintain momentum and communication. In cases where workers did not have legal immigration status, they were extremely vulnerable to threats of deportation. Finally, farm workers were also geographically



Press conference announcing the signing of the agreement - FLOC

isolated, living and working in remote locations with their means of transport often controlled by employers.

A challenge for FLOC's communication strategy was the high turnover of journalists working on the story. According to Dave Dalton, 'FLOC staff stated that, in some cases, media professionals believed they would be punished or negatively impacted by "getting too close" to the Mt. Olive campaign.' The campaigners responded by trying to cultivate several contacts at the same media outlet, in order to both ensure continuity if journalists were moved and minimize the risk of any one journalist being singled out.

Both Mt Olive and the growers put up a bitter fight against the campaign. This continued even after it looked like the campaign had been won - when the growers' association agreed to a union contract, an anti-union employers' association formed to oppose the NCGA and fight unionization in agriculture, and started recruiting former NCGA members.

Organizing on the ground

The campaign could not have won recognition from Mt Olive without a network of engaged farmworker activists to build power in the fields, articulate their stories and mobilize for public actions. Just as significant was what this made possible after winning recognition - a successful union membership drive, and an activist structure to hold Mt Olive to the agreements that it had made with FLOC.

Pulling back the outsourcing curtain

FLOC's success was a remarkable victory in making a company responsible for their chain of production. That this is possible is an incredibly important lesson in an era where companies are increasingly using outsourcing to lower costs and avoid responsibility for their impact (think office building owners outsourcing their cleaning to the lowest bidding contractor, or BP partially outsourcing their Deepwater Horizon drilling rig to Transocean.)

Taking the moral high ground

In a state hostile to union organizing, it was crucial for the campaign to use compelling ethical framing. The campaign consistently repeated the message that farmworkers deserved decent treatment, conditions and wages in their workplace. Allies in the religious community helped to reiterate this justice framing to a broad audience, to the point where the United Methodist Church - of which the company's CEO was a prominent member - passed a resolution in support of the boycott.

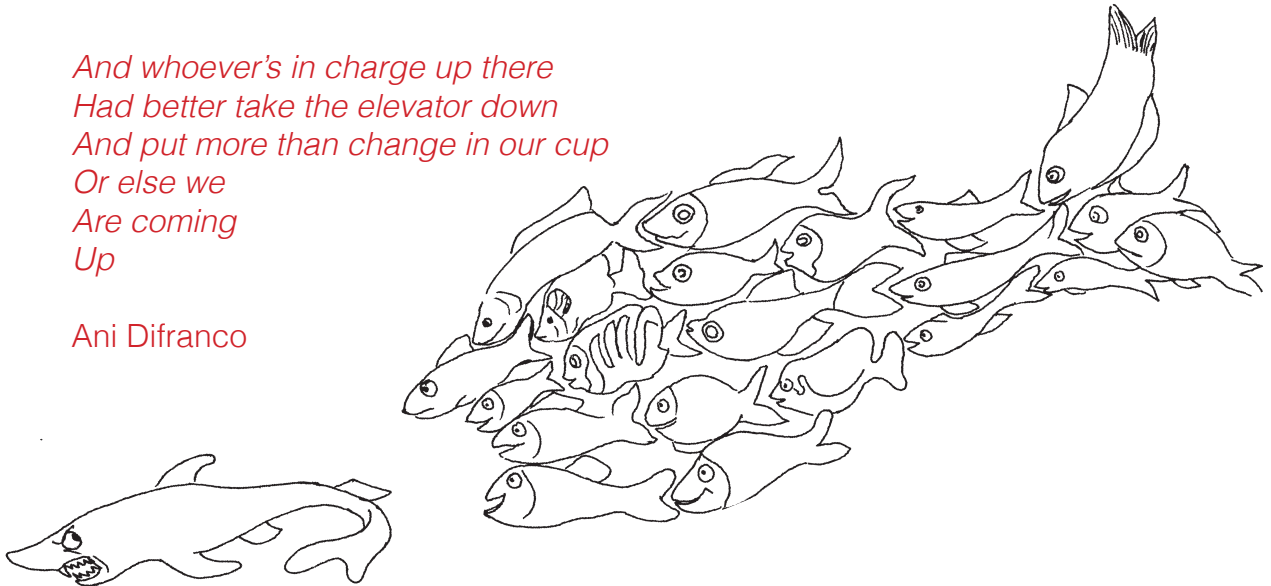
ranked
anyways
what can we learn?

**skilling up
for corporate
campaigning:
resources to get
started**

organizing

*And whoever's in charge up there
Had better take the elevator down
And put more than change in our cup
Or else we
Are coming
Up*

Ani Difranco



Fred Ross once said 'A good organizer is a social arsonist, who goes around setting people on fire.' More prosaic definitions of what counts as 'organizing' and who counts as an 'organizer' aren't always agreed. One thing is certain: organizing often involves the least glamorous parts of social change work - door knocking, facilitating meetings, booking event spaces, calling people one by one to get them to turn up to public actions.

The skills organizers use are myriad, but usually include the following:

- Involving people (sometimes people call this 'outreach', or 'recruitment') - building the communities of action that you need to win.
- Facilitating - this means meetings - planning agendas, keeping things moving, looking for consensus - but also managing and negotiating conflict and relationships outside meeting spaces.
- Skillsharing (sometimes conceptualized as training, or 'leadership development') - organizers are not granted the skills to organize by divine intervention; people learn through more or less formal processes with more experienced activists.
- Coordination - writing up calendars, watching for deadlines, making sure people are doing what they said they'd do. (The part that makes organizers so popular at parties!)

Organizing is not integral to every corporate campaign - organizations like Greenpeace often pressure corporations very effectively without doing much grassroots organizing. On the other hand, building the power of communities to act and win together - whether they are communities of colleagues in a workplace, communities of neighbors, or collectives formed around an issue like climate justice - can be an important part of fighting a corporation.

resources

Training for Change, ‘Organizing tools’

Exercises focused on some of the essentials of organizing - choosing tactics, public speaking, creating task menus.

The Midwest Academy, ‘Direct Action Organizing: Organizing for Social Change’

An introductory handout that summarizes many of the key principles of the Midwest Academy’s approach to organizing.

The Change Agency, ‘Mobilising for Change’

Extensive resource from a community organizing workshop that they run.

Shel Trapp, ‘Basics Of Organizing: You Can’t Build A Machine Without Nuts And Bolts’

A simple, easy to use guide with lots of detailed ‘how-tos.’

Comm-Org, the online conference on community organizing, ‘CO Training and Technical Assistance’

A list of how-to and training resources.

research

The earth is not dying, it is being killed, and those who are killing it have names and addresses.

Utah Phillips

Research means understanding as much as we can of how a company operates, who makes decisions, and where the best pressure points are for public action. It's true that research on big companies can mean drowning in a sea of information - but it's also true that 'knowing your enemy' can help you try to anticipate what is most likely to work. According to Phil Mattera of the Corporate Research Project, 'the best way to start researching a corporation is to find a ready-made profile, especially one written from a critical perspective' (see the text box below for his suggestions on where to find these.)



sources for ready-made profiles

Crocodyl (<http://www.crocodyl.org/>) – a collection of critical profiles of large transnational corporations.

Global Corp Wiki (http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Portal:Global_Corporations) – a section of the Sourcewatch wiki.

SOMO/Center for Research on Multinational Corporations (<http://somo.nl/dossiers-en/companies>) – dossiers on major corporations.

Transnationale (<http://www.transnationale.org/>) – briefer profiles with corporate accountability ratings.

The International Directory of Company Histories - a more comprehensive collection of historical company profiles from a neutral perspective, in print form in larger libraries and in electronic form as part of the Business & Company Resource Center, which is part of the database offerings of some academic and public library systems.

If you can't find one for your company, or if these profiles are missing important information, here are some basic questions that could help you design your search:*

Who, what, where

- Where does the company have headquarters, offices, factories, other facilities? What are its address, phone number and logo?

* *Partially adapted from the Data Center (see 'Resources' section) and Tom Juravitch, 'Beating Global Capital: A Framework and Method for Union Strategic Corporate Research and Campaigns. Strategic Corporate Research and Campaigns' a chapter in the book **Global Unions**.*

- Who are the executives and board of directors? How much do they get paid? How much stock do they own in the company? What other organizations and companies are they connected to?

Money matters

- How much money is the company making, or losing? How much debt is it in? How big is it? Where does it stand in relation to the rest of the companies in the industry?
- How many workers does the company have? What is its relationship with them? Is there a union?
- Is it publically owned by shareholders (if so, who are the largest?) Or is it privately owned by an individual or family? Does it have subsidiaries with different names?
- What is the company's major business? What are its key products, brands, clients?

Possible points of exposure

- Does it have public brands, or high profile consumer products?
- Are there any potential allies among its shareholders or workers?
- Does it make political donations, and/or receive government subsidies or contracts?
- How does the company present itself in public (e.g. green, socially responsible, innovative, etc?) Is there any evidence that contradicts this presentation (e.g. environmental disasters, labor disputes, lawsuits, other community pressure campaigns?)

resources

Corporate Research Project, 'How to Do Corporate Research Online'

Thorough guide that includes many links to online sources for more information.

CorpWatch US, 'Research Guide'

Brief guide from 2001, that gives a skeleton of how to go about research with helpful links to online resources. Includes a template for planning research.

Corporate Watch UK, 'DIY guide: How to Research Companies'

Detailed guide from 2002, with a focus on UK sources and companies.

Data Center, 'Researching a Corporation'

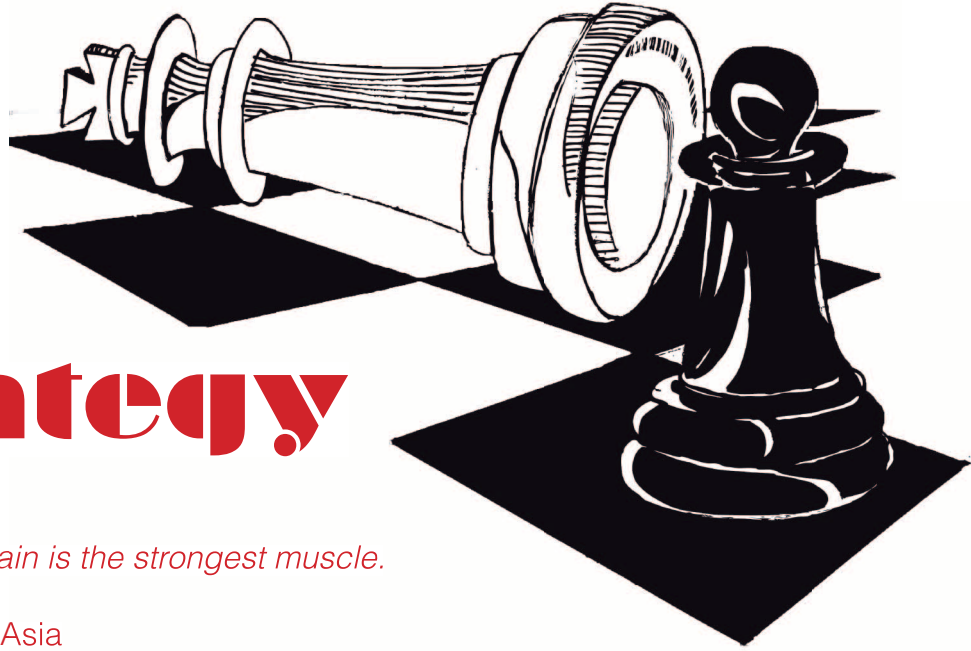
Guide and resources from 2002 on how to research corporations, with very useful questions.

Co-op America, 'Guide to Researching Corporations'

Detailed guide to researching corporations.

Corporate Accountability Project, 'Researching Corporations'

A list of links, resources and databases, with some mapping of how to proceed in researching a corporation.



strategy

The brain is the strongest muscle.

Planet Asia

Strategy is an overall map that guides the use of tactics - specific actions, like circulating petitions, writing letters, staging a protest - toward clear goals.

Despite the plethora of campaign planning tools, books and consultants available, campaign strategy is not a science. There is no magic formula that will guarantee a win. Nonetheless, planning and strategic thinking about what is most likely to be effective can make a huge difference, and help to avoid groups wasting precious time, energy and money.

Here are nine key questions to ask in the process of developing strategy, from Jim Shultz of the Democracy Center:

1. Objectives: What do you want?
2. Audience: Who can give it to you?
3. Message: What do they need to hear?
4. Messengers: Who do they need to hear it from?
5. Delivery: How can we get them to hear it?
6. Resources: What have we got?
7. Gaps: What do we need to develop?
8. First efforts: How do we begin?
9. Evaluation: How do we tell if it's working?

resources

The Democracy Center, ‘Developing a Strategy’

An introductory one pager. For a detailed version, see ‘Developing a Strategy: Advocacy’s Road Map’, chapter in *The Democracy Owner’s Manual*.

The Change Agency, ‘Strategy’

A comprehensive set of tools and resources for strategy development, including the extensive guide ‘How to plan a campaign’ by Christine Laurence.

Lisa Fithian, ‘Strategy tools’

A useful set of strategy tools.

Dave Dalton, ‘Developing a strategy’ chapter in *Building National Campaigns*.

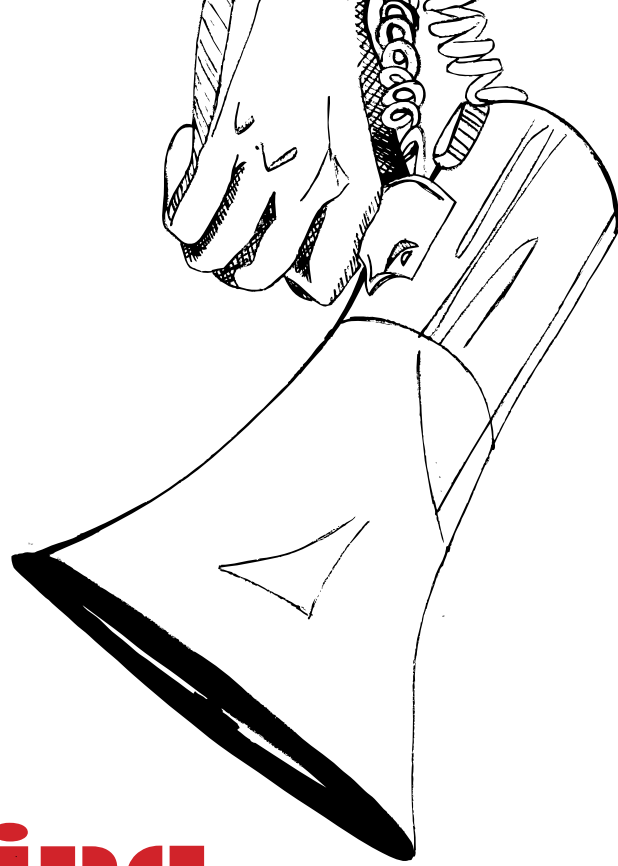
Uses detailed case studies to discuss the process of strategy formation.

Training for Change, ‘Strategy’

A set of group exercises to guide strategy development.

Chris Rose, *Campaign Strategy*

Chris Rose’s website on planning and implementing successful campaign strategy. For more, see his book *How to Win Campaigns*.



messaging and communications

*How's about telling a story
That's really about somebody
What they saw and what they did
How they died and how they lived*

Devendra Banhart

Communications strategies used to be about how campaigners wrote press releases: now, the term is used to talk about how the campaign 'frames' its public messages, and how it uses independent media, social media, websites, self-produced television and radio.

Focusing on a professionalized idea of 'communications' can be problematic - activists are often rightly suspicious of using the same techniques and ideas that are used by the marketing and advertising industries. Social change work loses its power to make significant change if its engagement with people is superficial and manipulative. But since the corporate campaigns we are talking about here are fought largely in the court of public opinion, it is hard to overestimate the importance of how a campaign communicates.

Here are some pointers for developing a communications strategy from the Democracy Center:

- Be clear on what you are trying to achieve - raising public awareness of the health risks of coal mining? Pressuring a lawmaker? Going after a CEO? The way you use the media will be different for each one.
- Tailor your message - is your audience shareholders, or other activists? What do they need to hear, and who do they need to hear it from? You will 'frame' your messages differently for each of these groups, although you will always be working to put your position in the best light and your opponents in the worst.
- Make your story newsworthy - when dealing with the media, you will be competing for coverage with dozens of events happening on the same day. You can make your story more attractive to the media if you focus on making it new, making it human, creating a conflict, generating a visually interesting action, linking it to something else big that is already in the news – or even better, all of these at once. Building solid relationships with reporters helps, as does communicating your message in short 'sound bites' that reporters can use.
- Think about which medium will be most effective for what you're trying to do - a sparkly facebook page and daily updates on Twitter might be fun to design, but if you're trying to reach out to the 50-something factory workforce of the company you're targeting, will it be any use?

resources

The Democracy Center, 'Media Advocacy'

An introductory one pager. For an extended discussion, see 'Media and Messaging: Democracy's Megaphones', a chapter in *The Democracy Owners' Manual*.

The Spin Project, 'Resources'

Offers resources including tutorials on how to build a strategic communications plan, develop media skills, and identifying a target audience.

Smartmeme, 'Re:Imagining Change'

A book-length resource on 'story-based' strategy development, with tools and case studies.

Witness, 'Video for Change: A Guide for Advocacy and Activism'

An extended manual on producing activist video, with insights relevant to other media forms.

Spitfire Strategies, 'Smartchart 3.0'

A step by step tool for developing a communications strategy (heavily focused on non-profit audiences.)

finding allies

*We need a foundation
Long lasting and strong like a lion*

Freddie McGregor

Building coalitions and alliances has been an important part of many corporate campaigns. The least formal coalitions are really networks - groups that don't meet together but do share information (through listservs etc.) More formal are coalitions in which one organization may take the lead, but with no formal membership or structure - as coalitions get more formal they may create membership criteria, begin holding regular meetings, develop a shared budget etc.

Coalitions definitely have their pitfalls, including slower decision-making, conflict and compromise. But companies are usually bigger and scarier than the groups trying to put pressure on them - and increasing the number of groups involved is one way to build power that can challenge that of the corporation. Coalitions can help campaigns develop a stronger public image, bring together diverse resources and ideas, and avoid duplication of effort. They can link together groups working locally, statewide or nationally on an issue and give your opponents a way to negotiate with you. They also create exchanges between newer activists and more experienced ones, and provide moral support when things get tough.

There are some key questions to ask at the outset of setting up a coalition - What goals will it set for itself? Who will it seek to include and who won't it include? What kind of structure will it create to facilitate its work? How the coalition answers these questions at the start will determine most of what will come later.



resources

The Democracy Center, ‘Building and Maintaining Advocacy Coalitions’

An introductory one pager. For an extended discussion, see ‘Advocacy Coalitions,’ a chapter in *The Democracy Owners’ Manual*.

Lisa Fithian, ‘Resources for Ally & Coalition Building’

Resources for coalition building, including detailed guides.

Tom Wolff, ‘Help, I’m trapped in a coalition and can’t get out!’

An introduction to some common barriers to healthy coalitions and how to avoid them.

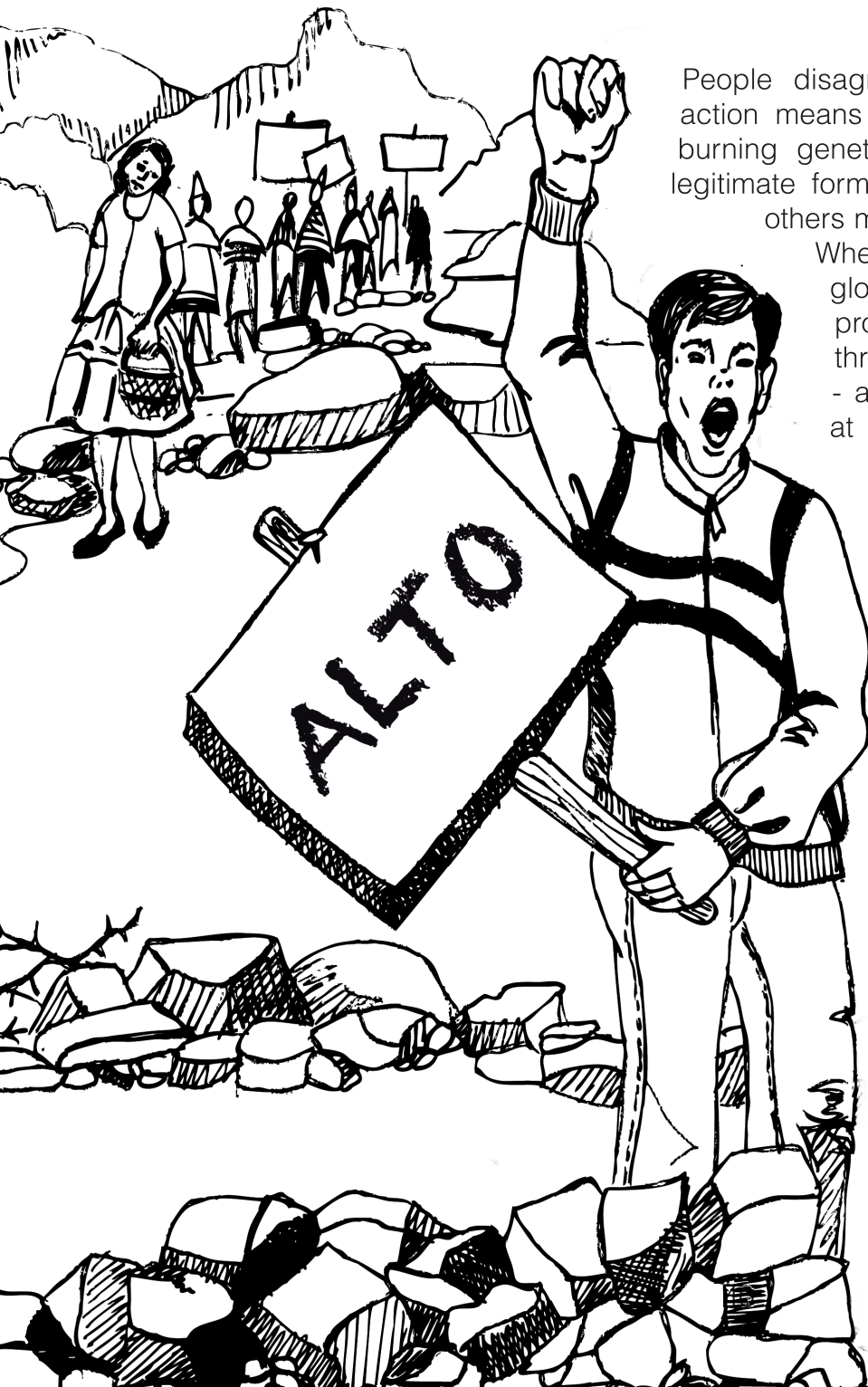
Dave Dalton, ‘Building an alliance,’ chapter in *Building National Campaigns*.

Uses detailed case studies to discuss the process of alliance building.

direct action

There is an unfortunate notion that direct action is something that ‘those people do.’ You do not need to be a superhero, or have years of training to engage in direct action... All you need is your body and the courage to stand up to those destroying our planet.

Rising Tide North America



People disagree about what non-violent direct action means - some consider farmers in India burning genetically modified Monsanto crops a legitimate form of non-violent direct action, while others may draw the line at road blockades.

When people say ‘direct action’ in the global North, they often mean high profile ‘stunts’ to pressure a company through public and media attention - actions like locking on to machinery at power stations to stop it running, occupying company headquarters, or dropping a banner off the side of a building at an industry expo. On a different model, climate camps around the world have utilized mass civil disobedience.

Direct action carries risks - sometimes legal, sometimes physical. But it can also be effective and powerful where other tactics come up short. As Martin Luther King put it in his ‘Letter from a Birmingham Jail’, ‘Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue.’

resources

The Ruckus Society, 'Action Planning Manual'

A manual for planning direct actions.

Rant Collective, 'Direct Action/Civil Disobedience'

A list of resources for preparing direct actions.

Lisa Fithian, 'Action resources'

Another list of resources for planning direct actions.

'Blockading for Beginners'

A step by step guide to blockading from the UK.

shareholder and financier strategies



Money changes everything.

Cyndi Lauper

Strategies to target a company's investors or financiers can be made up of a huge range of tactics: blockading bank branches, writing letters to their CEOs, commissioning reports on the financial risks of the project that the campaign is opposing.

Banks and shareholders are not always easy targets - sometimes they are much bigger and harder to influence than the company itself. But at the end of the day, corporations are mostly making decisions based on financial calculations. If a campaign can get into a company's spreadsheets by making it difficult for a company to attract loans from banks, or by getting some of its major shareholders to divest, it will be impossible for company decision-makers to ignore campaigners. Sometimes investors or financiers have more public exposure than the target company - such as Bank of America's investment in mountain top removal mining, where retail outlets have been repeatedly targeted by direct action.

Targeting investors or financiers might involve learning to speak a whole new language - whether learning to message around financial 'risk' (as campaigners did in the Oxy campaign) or learning the labyrinthine processes of putting up a shareholder resolution. But the basic principles are the same as any other part of a corporate campaign - looking for your target's points of vulnerability, and trying to put pressure on them.

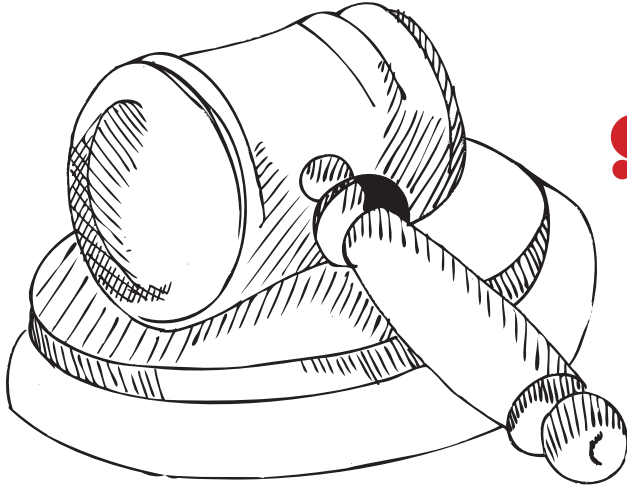
resources

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, 'Proxy Voting Guide'

A step by step guide to filing a shareholder resolution from the organization that supports many activist groups (only available for purchase.)

Nicholas Hildyard and Mark Mansley, 'The campaigners' guide to financial markets'

An incredibly detailed and useful resource for approaching the financial sector written by campaigners - with case studies, analysis and 'how-tos.'



Legal strategies

*Get yourself a suit and tie
Get your hair cut way up high
Get yourself a lawyer son
Better get a real good one*

The Cruel Sea

Activists can end up in court for two reasons - because they are going after a corporation, or because a corporation is going after them. Sometimes, a legal action against a company forms the centerpiece of a campaign, as it does in the campaign against Chevron. In other instances, legal activity involves defending activists from charges related to their actions in a campaign, as it did in the case of campaigners against E.On.

Relying on legal strategies can occupy large chunks of a campaign's time, energy and money, and shift the main site of action to an arena well out of most campaigners' expertise and influence, disempowering the base of a campaign (for a great discussion of this dilemma from an organizer with legal training, see Randy Shaw's chapter 'Lawyers: Allies or Obstacles to Social Change?' in *The Activist's Handbook*.) The legal terrain can be one where large corporate bank accounts and the lawyers they can pay for are likely to win. Nonetheless, having some lawyers on your side, and thinking through legal strategies, can be a really useful thing for a campaign to do. Even if you are likely to lose a case, pursuing it can help you get press coverage, build allies, and cost the company serious money.

It's not easy to enter into legal territory without legal training - while asking help from your lawyer friends is one way to go, if legal strategies are going to be an ongoing and important part of your campaign it makes sense to enlist groups that are familiar with this kind of work. This could mean a law firm, an environmental law NGO, or legal support collectives.

regulatory strategies

Regulatory strategies in corporate campaigns sometimes rely on similar kinds of support from legal groups as court strategies, and sometimes they use traditional 'lobbying' tactics. Putting pressure on companies through elected officials and regulatory agencies can take many forms - petitioning government agencies, getting a local council to pass a resolution (as was done in the Bechtel campaign) or drafting a law to regulate corporate behavior.

Sometimes the ability of corporations to purchase political influence and expensive lawyers means that the direct impact from regulatory or legislative strategies is minimal. But as with legal strategies, using regulatory or legislative tactics can help you achieve other outcomes in the campaign, such as media attention.

resources

When you're going after a corporation:

Earthjustice

US non-profit law firm with an environmental focus.

The Center for International Environmental Law

An organization of lawyers engaged in casework and policy on environmental protection.

InterAmerican Association for Environmental Defense

A non-profit environmental law organization

Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund

Organization that supports communities drafting local ordinances and legal measures to defend themselves from corporate attacks.

When a corporation (or the police) is coming after you:

California Anti-SLAPP Project

Provides legal assistance and representation to individuals and organizations being SLAPped in California courts. (A 'SLAPP' is a 'Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation', or when an individual or a corporation sues activists that are campaigning against them.)

Midnight Special

Resources from the now disbanded legal collective, for activists working in the US - particularly useful for when you might be at risk of being arrested.

Activists Legal Project

Legal resources for activists in the UK.

Activist Rights

Legal resources for Australian activists.

Activist Security

Extensive resources on security - how to minimize legal risks when you're doing organizing that's likely to lead to arrests or surveillance (UK based, but useful internationally.)

The National Lawyers Guild

A US association of lawyers committed to social change work, including pro bono support and advice for activists.

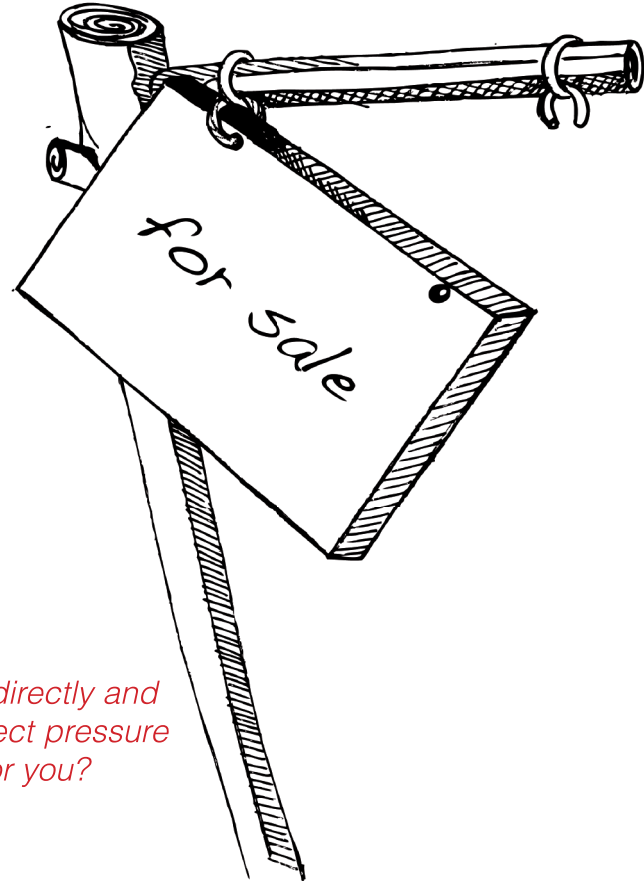
The Environmental Defender Law Center

Recruits lawyers from top end law firms to work pro bono on behalf of environmental activists.

CONSUMER strategies = the vote in your pocket

We say why go to the politicians? Why not go directly and vote in the marketplace where you can put direct pressure on those corporations who can find solutions for you?

Cesar Chavez, United Farm Workers



Retail strategies mean going after the consumer dollars that many companies survive on. The idea of a boycott, the best-known kind of consumer pressure, is to organize a mass rejection of a given brand or company by consumers in order to pressure the company to take a particular action. Contemporary consumer boycotts have included Coca-Cola, fur manufacturers and companies that profited from sweatshop labor, such as Nike and Gap.

Boycotts are often hard to organize: sometimes retail visibility of a brand is minimal, and consumers are often very diffuse. Boycotts can have real issues with backlash from unintended casualties (for example, if boycotts start to hurt a company's workers.) Consumer strategies are also criticized for reducing active engagement with a campaign to a purchasing decision. However, if a company can see that its actions are costing it dollars in sales as the result of an effective boycott, they may be more likely to change them - and a well-organized consumer campaign can be a powerful tool, as we see in the case of FLOC's campaign against Mt Olive pickles.

In addition to the 'stick' of boycotts, some campaigners have offered corporations the 'carrot' of expanding their customer base. There are many 'ethical' labels that involve partnerships between corporations and NGOs to promote products - these range from labeling schemes designed to promote a set of standards across a whole industry (like the Forest Stewardship Council certification for timber products) to individual product endorsements (like the Sierra Club's 'green' label on Clorox bleach products.)

resources

Ethical Consumer, 'Boycotts: Your Quick-Start Guide'

A short guide to organizing boycotts, including an archive of current and past successful boycotts.

Co-Op America, 'Boycott Organizer's Guide'

Introduction to boycotts, including 'how-tos' and lists of successful boycotts.

Anwar Fahzal and Radha Holla, 'The Boycott Book'

A draft book on the Nestlé boycott, which includes lessons and links for boycott organizers.

Conscientious Consuming, 'Keys to a Successful Organized Boycott'

A short piece with ideas on what makes a boycott successful.

How to organize a carrot mob

A guide to organizing a 'carrot mob', where consumers organize to reward businesses they perceive to be doing the 'right thing.'

climate justice campaigns taking on corporate power here and now

The impacts of dangerous climate change are already here, and are set to cause catastrophic social and environmental damage if we don't stop fossil fuel pollution being pumped into the air. At the Democracy Center we see this as one of the great justice issues of our time, and we are making it the key focus of our work in the coming years.

Corporations are key players in the climate crisis in three major ways. First, and most importantly, they are polluters. Climate poison spewing out of refineries, factories, land-clearing fires and power plants are overwhelmingly the result of the corporate hunger for profits. Secondly, they dominate public policy, shaping legislation and climate negotiations directly and through their lobby groups. Finally, they wage an aggressive public relations war to influence how people understand and think about the climate crisis; for instance by funding climate science denial, or by convincing people that only 'market friendly' solutions to climate change are worth considering.

Campaigns to confront the corporations that are driving dangerous climate change can be effective and powerful elements of climate justice campaigning. Perhaps most importantly, a strong corporate campaign can strip back layers of 'greenwash' and confusing policy language, and show who is really responsible for impending climate chaos. Showing the relentless pursuit of earnings that lies behind the green BP sunflower is crucial, if we are to communicate the real causes of the climate crisis. Having a figure like Shell to organize around, with very concrete goals like 'stopping oil drilling on Ogoni land in Nigeria', rather than an abstract concept like 'climate action from the government,' can be a useful way to build people's involvement. Powerful campaigns around individual cases or companies do not have to replace legislative campaigning – they can in fact build momentum for policy change, as in the case of the Kingsnorth power plant in the UK. Finally, highlighting the bad behavior of one company makes it clear to other companies that their actions are being watched. Campaigners often try to send a message to an entire industry by targeting one company - 'change your behaviour, or you will be next.'

Increasing disillusionment with the UN process, alongside frustration with inaction from governments and legislative processes seemingly captive to corporate interests, might mean that more groups are interested in doing this kind of work. The following pages introduce some ongoing campaigns in the movement, which we can learn from and support.



Image from the 'True cost of Chevron' campaign

Between 1964 and 1990 Texaco, in partnership with the state-owned PetroEcuador, pumped an estimated 1.7 billion barrels of oil out of the Ecuadorian Amazon. Over those 26 years, Texaco spilled 17 million gallons of oil, leaving 917 unlined crude pits, and pouring 18 billion gallons of toxic wastewater into the region's rivers. This pollution of local water supplies has produced long-term health affects for the indigenous people that inhabit these rainforests, including a sizeable increase in cancer rates, miscarriages, and birth defects.

In 1993, a team of legal activists brought suit to seek cleanup fees and damages. Chevron, the parent company of Texaco since 2001, is still fighting a legal battle against over 30,000 indigenous plaintiffs. In February of 2011, an Ecuadorian court ordered Chevron to pay \$9.5 billion in damages to affected communities. The case continues, however as both sides have filed appeals to the decision.

The campaign against the oil giant has attracted strong international support from environmental and human rights groups such as Amazon Watch and Rainforest Action Network. These organizations have worked closely with the Frente de la Defensa de la Amazonia (Amazon Defense Coalition), which has built alliances with Ecuadorian groups such as Asamblea Permanente de Derechos Humanos del Ecuador (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights of

Ecuador) and Acción Ecológica (Ecological Action.) They have drawn on a bevy of tactics to pressure Chevron, from direct actions (such as a banner drop off the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge in California reading, 'Chevron Guilty: Clean Up Amazon' timed for the 2011 Chevron AGM) and shareholder resolutions to letter writing campaigns and citizen petitions. Over the past three years The True Cost of Chevron Network has produced an alternative annual report, detailing the social and environmental impacts of Chevron for communities all over the world. In March 2010, Emergildo Criollo, a leader of the Cofan tribe, attempted to deliver a petition signed by 325,000 people directly to the home of new Chevron CEO John Watson urging the executive to clean up the toxins his company left behind.

www.chevrontoxico.com

www.changechevron.org

www.truecostofchevron.com

the canadian tar sands

The development of the Canadian Tar Sands has been called 'the most destructive project on earth.' Under Alberta's pristine boreal forests lie some of the world's largest oil deposits in the form of 'tar sands' - a combination of sand, clay, water and bitumen. The process of converting this mixture into crude oil uses gas to heat the material with water, making it liquid and pumping it to the surface, where it can be refined. Some estimate that this process produces three times more carbon pollution than that the process of exploiting conventional oil fields.

Apart from the implications for the fight against global warming, local indigenous communities are forced to deal with a series of local environmental problems from the extraction process. Of the massive amounts of water being utilized, very little is clean enough to return to the watershed. The water and chemical mixture left behind creates toxic 'tailing ponds' that pollute water supplies. A recent study showed that downstream carcinogenic chemicals increased 41 percent between 1999 and 2010, as tar sands mining began to boom. Clearcutting forest in order to mine also means destroying various animal habitats.



Tar sands protest in Vancouver, 2010 - Anita Sarkeesian

The organizations working on the campaign range from international groups like Greenpeace and the Indigenous Environment Network to local communities. The campaign has targeted both the regional and national government in Canada. They have used tactics including petitions to the federal and Alberta governments and legal challenges by the First Nations indigenous communities demanding injunctions against new tar sands development. At the same time, campaigners have focused on the major players in the oil industry like Shell and BP, and the financial institutions that fund their operations (Royal Bank of Scotland, Royal Bank of Canada, CITI, Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase.) Campaigners have targeted these companies with direct action, including the recent BP AGM where activists tried to spell out 'No Tar Sands' with their t-shirts. The campaign has organized public speaking events, panel discussions, rallies and extensive media work. A major focus has been the Enbridge pipeline, which would expand capacity to export tar sands oil from the West coast of Canada.

The campaign has also gone international, with activists in Europe and the UK bringing First Nations representatives out for speaking tours, and groups like climate camp targeting UK banks financing tar sands development. North American allies have focused on the proposed Keystone XL pipeline to transport tar sands crude through the US, with efforts to stop it culminating in 1,253 people being arrested for civil disobedience at the White House (a solidarity action in Canada led to 117 arrests.) International days of action have seen supporters around the world call attention to the issue, drenching themselves in oil outside Canadian diplomatic buildings, and targeting the banana companies Dole and Chiquita (which use tar sands oil to fuel their shipping fleets.)

www.tarsandswatch.org

www.ienearth.org/tarsands.html

www.oilsandstruth.org

www.dirtyoilsands.org

www.greenpeace.org/international/en/.../climate.../stop-the-tar-sands

www.no-tar-sands.org

mountain top removal financing

Mountain top removal mining is exactly what it sounds like - blasting off the tops of mountains to get at the coal underneath. This fiercely contested process destroys entire ecosystems, poisons neighboring communities, and produces vast amounts of climate-changing coal. Organizations such as Rainforest Action Network, Coal River Mountain Watch, Mountain Justice, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and Appalachian Voices have been working to hit the companies carrying out mountaintop removal where it hurts - by targeting the banks that fund them.

The campaign singles out banks that fund companies that practice mountain top removal



mining or that own coal fired power plants. Organizations have used a range of tactics including non-violent direct actions and popular education. A long campaign of direct actions such as 'die-ins' in local branches has been waged against banks like JP Morgan Chase and Bank of America. Rainforest Action Network and the Sierra Club release annual reports ranking ten of the world's largest banks on their financing and lending policies towards mountaintop removal projects. Beginning in 2010, these report cards offer the banks an

Campaign image playing on the Chase Manhattan bank logo - Jon Starbuck

opportunity to respond to the evaluations - for example, Morgan Stanley released a public mountaintop removal policy stating that they would not lend to coal mining companies whose primary method of extraction was mountain top removal (their grade was revised upwards to a 'C' from the previous failing grade.)

While targeting financiers has been important in the campaign against mountain top removal, it is part of what Scott Parkin from RAN called 'swarming'; the use of multiple tactics directed at all stages of the coal production line in the Southeast of the US. Local community members have testified before EPA hearings - sometimes achieving the denial of permits for new coal mines - and activists have shut down mountaintop removal operations by physically occupying areas that make continued mining impossible. In February 2011, acclaimed writer Wendell Berry and 13 other protesters occupied the governor's office in Kentucky for four days to demonstrate their opposition to mountaintop removal practices. In June 2011, a week long 'march on Blair Mountain' was called to protect the mountain, a site of a historic five-day trek by miners in 1921 to demand workers rights. Over 300 people participated, culminating in a rally to demand an end to mountaintop removal, strengthening of labor rights, and increased investment in green technology in Appalachia.

www.mountainjustice.org

www.crmw.net/crmw/index.php

www.ran.org/category/issue/coal

www.appvoices.org/end-mountaintop-removal

www.ilovemountains.org

plantar

The Brazilian company Plantar SA has become a global symbol of the environmental and social devastation involved in carbon trading. In the south of Minas Gerais, Plantar manufactures a product called 'pig iron,' a metal alloy which is used to make steel for car parts. Plantar burns eucalyptus trees in charcoal ovens to create vegetable charcoal, the carbon component used to make the pig iron. Plantar has managed eucalyptus plantations largely for this purpose since it was given access to large swathes of land under the 1960s military dictatorship. Burning trees to make car parts may seem like a dubious contribution to the fight against climate change – but according to the logic of carbon markets, projects like this can be considered exactly that. Climate justice groups often point to Plantar's project as an example of an 'offset' project in the global South that has negative impacts for both local communities and the climate.



Plantar workers making charcoal - Tamra Gilbertson, Carbon Trade Watch

Under the Kyoto Protocol's 'Clean Development Mechanism' (CDM), projects that 'save' carbon dioxide in the global South can generate 'carbon credits' that can be bought by businesses and governments in the global North, allowing them to offset their emissions. Plantar, with the World Bank and other investors, put together a project to generate carbon credits. The partners claim that (among other things) burning eucalyptus instead of coal in producing

the pig iron is a carbon emissions 'saving.' Despite a strong international campaign that has highlighted its disastrous social and environmental impacts, the project was awarded credits by the CDM panel (the decision-making body that approves such projects within the UN Kyoto Protocol framework.)

The campaign was conducted by a number of groups. It is grounded in Brazilian networks and organisations that are organising around the impacts of industrial monoculture plantations, such as the Alert Against the Green Desert Network and FASE. International groups focussed on justice issues with both plantations and carbon trading are also involved, including FERN, the World Rainforest Movement and Carbon Trade Watch.

The coalition has cast Plantar not only as an important public face of Brazil's destructive tree plantation industry, but also as the poster child for the problems with carbon offsets. The campaign has used a range of tactics, starting with a letter to the CDM panel from a large group of Brazilian organisations (an exercise which was repeated each time Plantar reapplied for CDM certification.) Groups based in the global North have worked hard to spread information about the Plantar project's impact, producing reports and chapters in publications that document the drying up of water supplies, contamination through pesticides, work practices that endanger employees and threats received by anti-plantation activists. Northern organizations have also used tactics like photo exhibitions to raise the Plantar project's profile. In one prominent example, Carbon Trade Watch produced a documentary that exchanged video diaries from communities affected by one of the plantations in Brazil and communities affected by a BP oil refinery in Scotland, linking the stories through BP's investment in the CDM-linked World Bank Prototype Carbon Fund that financed the Plantar project.

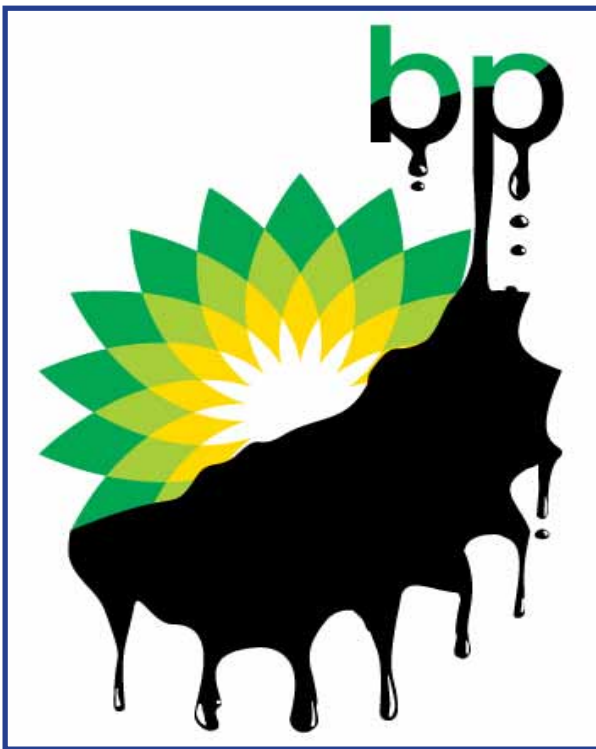
The coalition brought the two ends of the struggle together physically in 2003 when Plantar workers went to the climate negotiations in Milan to tell the story of the company's negative environmental and social effects, and in 2004, when peasant and trade union representatives traveled to the Cologne Carbon Expo trade fair to encourage European investors not to finance the Plantar project.

Groups in Brazil continue to organize both specifically against Plantar and generally against monoculture eucalyptus plantations, using tactics that range from calling marches, to occupying tracts of land and resettling them with small scale farming families, to setting fire to plantation trees.

www.carbontradewatch.org



BP used to be aggressive in promoting its image as an environmental leader: several years ago it changed its logo to resemble a green sunflower and proclaimed itself to be going 'beyond petroleum.' Activists have long contested this sparkling green image, for instance by drawing attention to the devastating impact of BP's investment in biofuels on food security. More recently, a campaign has grown against BP's involvement in tar sands development in Canada, with activists targeting BP in a 'fortnight of shame' which saw petrol stations shut down and the BP AGM visited by a delegation of First Nations representatives from Canada for the second year in a row. Originally targeted at stopping BP's investment in the tar sands, this campaign is now focussed on reversing BP's decision before actual extraction starts.



'Redesigned' BP logo submitted to Greenpeace competition

The group Liberate Tate has been campaigning tirelessly to get the UK's Tate Galleries to stop taking BP sponsorship money, with creative actions such as filling the Tate Modern's main exhibition space with black balloons, oil-covered birds and dead fish. Another intervention featured an oil-covered swan in a 'guerilla ballet' protesting BP's arts sponsorship.

The company's huge oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico provoked massive public outrage: Greenpeace's competition to 'redesign' BP's green logo exploded. In November 2010 a group of prominent international environmentalists from all over the world (including Friends of the Earth chairperson Nnimmo Bassey from Nigeria, and Vandana Shiva from India) sued BP over the oil spill in Ecuador, where the 'rights of the mother earth' are constitutionally mandated. As a corporate partner of the London Olympics, BP will face renewed pressure from UK activists.

www.liberatetate.wordpress.com

www.artnotoil.org.uk

www.bpwhiteswan.org

www.no-tar-sands.org

bhp billiton

From its origins in provincial Australia, BHP-Billiton has become one of the world's biggest multinational miners. The company's operations are being resisted by communities across the world - in Colombia, campaigners dispute the process of forced relocation of communities next to Cerrejón, the world's largest open-cast coal mine, and highlight the health problems being suffered by community members and Cerrejón workers. In Mozambique, groups are objecting to a proposal that would allow BHP-Billiton to release fumes from its aluminium smelter without treating them for six months.



Wongutha kids with Elder Geoffrey Stokes holding portraits from the Inhabited Exhibition and saying 'No Uranium Mining on our Lands.' Wongutha Cultural Day, Kalgoorlie, October 2009. Inhabited portraits by Jessie Boylan. Photo by Nat Lowrey.

Since 2009 an international network of activists has been highlighting these campaigns, along with others against the company across the world, producing 'Alternative Annual Reports' and a website called BHP-Billiton Watch. Actions timed for BHP-Billiton's 2010 Annual General Meeting took place outside the meeting in Perth and BHP's offices in two other Australian cities, with union representatives from Colombia and indigenous elders from Australia asking questions inside the meeting.

www.protestbhpb.wordpress.com

www.bhpbillitonwatch.net

the
democracycenter