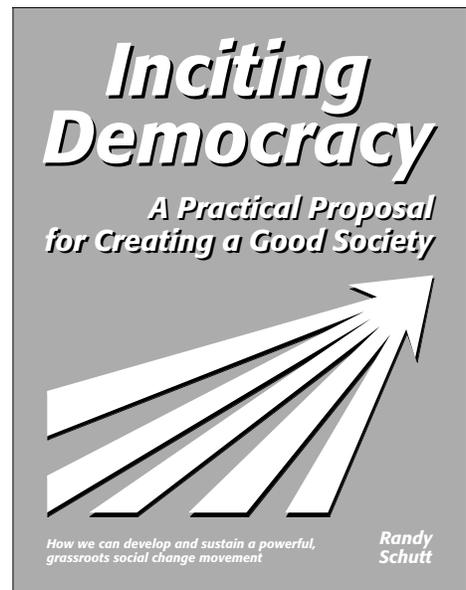


Summary of *Inciting Democracy* A Practical Proposal for Creating a Good Society

*How we can develop and sustain
a powerful, grassroots social change movement*

by Randy Schutt



Inciting Democracy describes a practical, eighty-year strategy for creating a good society. It offers a proposal for increasing the skill, strength, and knowledge of hundreds of thousands of goodhearted people so they can democratically and nonviolently transform society. It also provides a long-term vision of success that can encourage people of goodwill, thus making success more likely.

*We have it in our
power to begin the
world over again.*
— Thomas Paine

The book first defines the term “good society” as one in which no one is oppressed and in which people treat each other the way they would like to be treated — a safe, fair, just, democratic, humane, compassionate, tolerant, and environmentally sustainable society. The

book then identifies the five primary obstacles to creating such a good society:

- An adverse power structure that entices and coerces us all to support inhumane institutions
- Cultural conditioning that makes us accept destructive social norms (such as individualism, materialism, militarism, racism, sexism, classism, homophobia)
- Dysfunctional emotional conditioning that makes it hard for us to work together (due to depression, low self-esteem, irrationality, rigidity, addictions, phobias, etc.)
- Widespread ignorance of positive alternatives and social change methods
- A scarcity of resources (information, money, and emotional support) among people of goodwill working for change

The book next skeptically evaluates a variety of social change strategies and processes — exploring what has worked and what has not. This analysis suggests that we can create a truly good society only by using democratic and nonviolent methods that prefigure a good society — in particular, through an extensive education process and through broadly based social change movements that are

massive in size — with at least a million progressive activists and advocates working for fundamental change for decades.

The book then details a practical strategy for transformation in which goodhearted people would take several steps:

- Form supportive communities with other people of goodwill.
- Educate themselves and others to overcome their ignorance, hopelessness, and personal limitations.
- Learn to work together and practice change skills.
- Teach these skills to others and support and inspire others to work for positive change.
- Build powerful, grassroots social change organizations.
- Challenge the domination of the power elite and destructive cultural norms in all realms of society.
- Create alternative institutions that can meet everyone’s true needs.

To implement this strategy, the book outlines a project consisting of an education and support system that could, over time, generate a force of about a million skilled and dedicated people working simultaneously for progressive change in communities all across the United States. The last section details a plan for implementing this project — the Vernal Education Project — beginning with a decentralized education program for dedicated activists.

The problem of democracy is not the problem of getting rid of kings. It is the problem of clothing the whole people with the elements of kingship. To make kings and queens out of a hundred million people! That is the problem of American democracy.

— F. C. Morehouse

— Published by SpringForward Press in September 2001
<<http://www.springforwardpress.com>>. For more information on the book and the Vernal Education Project, see <<http://www.vernalproject.org>>.