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WEAVING

a Revolution in Education

rahula today

Weaving

a revolution in education

Weaving is a question. In a society premised on the dominant ideologies of capitalism, patriarchy and white supremacy, how can we work within the framework of American public schools to achieve revolutionary goals? The simple answer is: we cannot. Radical educators have long argued that it will be impossible to create widespread social change through a system shaped by the oppressor. We have confused education with compulsory schooling and lost the drive to engage learning as a permanent life experience. What we have in place is actually a sophisticated neo-colonial model, designed to manipulate the populace and lock the student firmly in the context of class and ethnicity. In a climate of metal detectors and police occupation, you could say we go to prep schools, too—and come out ready for penitentiary. Moving toward community autonomy and self-sufficiency, we need to consider popular education, or education for the people, as an essential revolutionary tactic.

Weaving is a conversation. The tiny part of the population we describe as the radical left is paralyzed by ideological debate, while the rest of Americans have somehow been polarized by what appears to be a one-party system. We are desperately in need of conversation, but the entire vocabulary we have in which to hold revolutionary discourse is dusty and inaccurate. Further, the savage inequalities of public schooling are mirrored by the unequal distribution of wealth and privilege, carefully crafted by those in power to reproduce the status quo in following generations. So, if history has shown that no existing politic has yet been successful on the large scale, then no sustainable revolutionary solution will be available until the entire population is prepared to come together and work out the conditions of our autonomy—building the society that will most uplift and empower each individual. Our goal is not to teach the answer—we *do not have it*—but to facilitate asking the question.

Weaving means we need a revolution, but let's call it education. If we are to achieve radical social change through education we need to develop a new approach to teaching and learning. Between the patriarchal structure of the nuclear family and the arbitrary power division in our schools, American youth enter adulthood ready to be consumed by the rat race. We can largely isolate the development of the authoritarian character structure to these two institutions—the family and the school. Using popular education as a tool for the development of identity and critical consciousness, we can shake the system at its foundations while we build our own society. By accepting the authority of the teacher over our knowledge, we are preparing ourselves for a lifetime of oppression by bosses, cops and presidents. The key to popular education is to make each individual a subject of the learning process, actively engaging and directing, not an object, into which knowledge is placed without question by an authority figure. By removing that authority we enable a circular flow of knowledge, offering the learner both the respect and responsibility of taking control of their learning. Imagine a room full of students and no one giving orders, no coercion or domination. It seems chaotic at first, but you realize that given no teachers, everyone becomes a teacher. This method, particularly using art and dialogue for the development of culturally relevant curricula and non-authoritarian leadership skills, can be applied to everything from literacy to action planning. We can take learning to a new level where by understanding the causes and conditions of our oppression, we can begin to solve our own problems.

Weaving is unity amidst diversity. By developing alternative learning methods and institutions, not subject to the will of the power structure, we can create revolution in the now by engaging communities in dialogue about collectively addressing our individual problems. The blanket of revolution will never keep us warm if we cannot weave our individual visions into a new society based on equality and mutual aid.

Weaving

a blueprint for revolution

In an effort to challenge the impending death of Book as a viable medium for mass communication, Weaving seeks to reinvigorate the form by crossing over many genres and visual styles, as well as breaking the traditional ideologue-pedestal relationship between the author and audience. This book will be merciless and subjective; it may offend the oppressor. It may have blank pages with pencils attached. Prolonged exposure may induce intense self-reflection. Part poem, part rant, then dialogues, trialogues, recipes for tactical dialogue, detailed pedagogical survey and synthesis, some graphic novel, some Free School blueprints, some graffiti - these are the ingredients of the rebirth of Book. Book that can truly access those most in need of the knowledge contained within it.

Foreword: Leonard Peltier

Chapters:

- Looking South: the Other politic
- Walking we ask
- The need for revolutionary discourse
- Learned deficiency
- Addressing our ethos / programming
- Race & economics in the CLASSroom
- The synthesis: A Free School Model
- Things we should talk about:
 - Alternatives to capitalism
 - Sustainable lifestyles
 - Self-determination

Dialogues include:

- ✚ Yuri Kochiyama
- ✚ Ashanti Alston
- ✚ Vicente “Panama” Alba
- ✚ Esperanza Martell
- ✚ William “Upski” Wimsatt
- ✚ Rosa Clemente
- ✚ Christopher Banks
- ✚ bell hooks
- ✚ Subcomandante Marcos

Graphic novel:

Weaving A Vision of Revolution

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Afterword: Mumia Abu Jamal