Rules Just for Radicals?

Does this Apply to Your Organization?
March 22, 2018
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Class Rules
1. We are viewing Alinsky's work "Rules for Radicals" through his eyes as an organizer. What are his famous rules...what sets them up?
2. We'll guide you through this with an eye to helping your organization.
   Organizations can be "Have-Not's, and can prosper from Alinsky's tactics or rules." (His rules don't just apply to the left—some local stories will be discussed—many of Alinsky's rules apply to life)
3. If we have time we'll apply a few of these rules to Conservatives and talk about the book Rules for Conservatives by Michael Master.
4. Questions...Let's try to keep to a few throughout the presentation. If you have a comment raise your hand we'll try to take it. But if we are running long we'll have to wait to the end. We have a lot of material to get through tonight.

Saul Alinsky Very Much in the News...

In a 1972 Playboy Interview Alinsky said:

ALINSKY: ...if there is an afterlife, and I have anything to say about it, I will unreservedly choose to go to hell.

PLAYBOY: Why?

ALINSKY: Hell would be heaven for me. All my life I've been with the have-nots. Over here, if you're a have-not, you're short of dough. If you're a have-not in hell, you're short of virtue. Once I get into hell, I'll start organizing the have-nots over there.

PLAYBOY: Why them?

ALINSKY: They're my kind of people

"This book is dedicated to the first radical known to man, Lucifer, who rebelled against the establishment and did it so effectively that he at least won his own kingdom."

--Saul Alinsky

Page 3 Rules for Radicals

The thesis for tonight

"It's too much to argue that American democracy is being altered by Alinsky's ideas."

--Conservative author William F. Buckley in 1966

(Was Buckley right or have things changed? Yes? No?)
Saul Alinsky discusses Rules for Radicals

“In Rules for Radicals we are concerned with how to create mass organizations to seize power and give it to the people; to realize the democratic dream of equality, justice, peace, co-operation, equal and full opportunities for education, full and useful employment, health, and the creation of those circumstances in which man can have the chance to live by values that give meaning to life.”

--continued

Saul Alinsky goes on to say...

“My aim here is to suggest how to organize for power, how to get it and how to use it. Radicals must have a degree of control over the flow of events. Rules for Radicals is written specifically for the Have-Nots on how to take power away from the Haves to gain social, political, legal and economic power.”

Who is Saul Alinsky (1909-1972)?

1. A community organizer and writer.
2. Attended high school in Chicago with a strict Jewish American upbringing. Attended University of Chicago. In 1930’s he talked his way into Al Capone gang’s confidence and learned his methods of persuasion...
3. For his profession he was a writer, an activist and a community organizer.
4. He started out organizing in the Back of the Yards neighborhood in Chicago (made famous by Upton Sinclair’s 1906 novel The Jungle which described the horrific working conditions).
5. Wrote “Rules for Radicals” in 1971, near the end of his life—drawing upon his entire career.
6. Alinsky was not a joiner—did not join political parties or any of the organizations he organized.
7. His organizing skills were based on organizing the long conditions of poor communities.
8. His ideas were adapted in the 1960’s by many U.S. College students.
9. Alinsky was not a joiner—did not join political parties or any of the organizations he organized.
10. One of his fun threats was to threaten a “piss in” at Chicago O’Hare Airport. Alinsky planned to arrange for large numbers of well-dressed African Americans to occupy the urinals and toilets at O’Hare for as long as it took to bring the city to the bargaining table.
11. Well known for fighting the Eastman Kodak company in Rochester, NY.
12. Alinsky died at age 63 from a heart attack near his home in Carmel, California.

Let’s learn a little more with the John Bunzel interview from 1966...

“Everything Starts with the Ideology of Change

1. The prerequisite for an ideology is possession of a basic truth (usually something wrong).
2. To be a real critic, one must have a personal commitment (not just something done to one by others). One must also have the power to act, in the form of a mass movement.
3. The basic requirement for the understanding of the politics of change is to recognize the world as a battle.
4. We must work within it on our terms if we are to change it to be the kind of world we want it to be.
5. We must learn that life is not a world of peace and beauty and dispassionate rationality but as Henry James once wrote, “Life is a fact, a battle.” Life Politics is always a battle.

We must see the world as all political realities have to be—what men do and not what they ought to do, as Machiavelli and others have put it.

“Change is hard work, dirty work, never easy”

Let’s start with discussing the book...

“Change is hard work, dirty work, never easy”

John Bunzel 1966 Interview

“There is No Nice Way of Getting Things Changed!”

(change is hard work, dirty work, never easy)
Alinsky’s Trinity—Class Distinctions

Mankind is divided into three parts or classes—the Haves, the Have-Nots, and the Have-a-Little, Want Mores.

Haves—Have power, money, food, security, luxury. Want to keep things as they are.

Have-a-Little, Want Mores are the Middle Class. Torn between upholding the status quo to protect the little they have, yet wanting change so they can get more. Out of this class have come, with few exceptions, the great world leaders of change of the past centuries. These are people that want to join the Haves and think they can, maybe they should be a have. (Reagan/Margaret Thatcher)

Have-Nots—The lowest class, nowhere to go but up. An organizer’s job is to foment the flames (stir things up). Chained together by the common misery of poverty, rotten housing, disease, ignorance, and despair. Most are employed in jobs where they are deprived in all areas basic to human growth. The Haves want to keep, the Have-Nots want more, and The Have-a-Little, Want Mores fall in between.

About “Haves” / “Have-Nots”

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PLAYBOY: Why?

ALINSKY: Hell would be heaven for me. All my life I’ve been with the have-nots. Over here, if you’re a have-not, you’re short of dough. If you’re a have-not in hell, you’re short of action. If I get into hell, I’ll start organizing the have-nots over there.

PLAYBOY: Why there?

ALINSKY: They’re my kind of people

For the Organizer...

The pursuit of happiness is never ending; happiness lies in the pursuit. As we climb up a mountain we see a top, but when we finally reach it, the overcast rises and we find ourselves merely on a bluff.

(This is an activist—are you one?)

Alinsky Talks a Lot About Means and Ends

1. The real and only question regarding the ethics of means and ends is, “does this particular and justify this particular means?”

2. The organizer of action views the issue of means and ends in pragmatic and strategic terms. He thinks only of his actual resources and the possibilities of various choices of action.

3. He asks of means only whether they are achievable and worth the cost; of ends, only whether they will work.

4. You do what you can with what you have and clothe it with moral arguments.

“The means-and-end moralists or non-doers always wind up on their ends without any means. The most unethical of all means is the non-use of any means.” —Alinsky

Means and Ends must be judged in the context of the times in which the action occurred.

1. For instance our alliance with the Soviet Union against Germany & Japan in 1942

2. Lincoln’s suspension of habeas corpus and he defied a directive of the Chief Justice of the United States in 1861 (felt like he had to do it)

3. For instance Gandhi and his use of passive resistance in India. It worked because Gandhi is viewed by the world as the epitome of the highest moral behavior. Gandhi said “Look, you are all sitting there anyway—so instead of sitting there, why don’t you all get up and say ‘independence now’”

4. All great leaders—Churchill, Gandhi, Lincoln & Jefferson always invoked Means to an End principles even to cover naked self-interest.

To Alinsky, “Ethics is doing what is best for the Most.”

Alinsky uses Means and Ends to justify his taking from the Haves. Alinsky thinks you are going to have to get dirty in the process.

According to Alinsky: All mass political action must be boiled down to “We are right, and they are wrong.”
Words Matter
Alinsky argues these words that are distasteful but essential for the organizer to understand. Here are a few key words:

1. Power—Alinsky says “Use the correct words.” By using combinations of words such as “harnessing the energy” instead of the singular word “power,” we begin to distance ourselves from the negative connotations of this. (There is nothing wrong with Power—example of this in James Hamilton's study of the Commission they've got the passes you can see that with—alinsky says same thing)
2. Self-confidence—self-confidence plus a prime moving force in social behavior. It is simply a given
3. Impressiveness—impressiveness—must be in your behavior. It is a prime tenet of Alinsky's, the man with self-esteem, we decided that the defense of Russia would be disastrous to our interests suddenly, they became our best friends working with different groups—issue (2)
4. Conviction—conviction that starts and sustains the organizer
5. Power—Alinsky says “Use the correct words.” By using combinations of words such as “people persons” but conflict is inevitable.

Acceptance as an Organizer
1. Acceptance as an organizer is obtaining key people—and many others—until that you are on their side and accepted that you have ideas.
2. They must believe in your capacity. Establishing one's credentials of competence is important
3. When people attack you it helps your notoriety and acceptance. (University of Chicago's attacks on Alinsky—he must be right!
4. Conflict—A bad word in a general opinion. But, it is an essential core of a free and open society.

Humor
1. Essential to a successful tactician. The most potent weapon know to mankind are satire and ridicule.

Imagination
2. The dynamism that starts and sustains the organizer

Imagination
1. The dynamism that starts and sustains the organizer

Unrestricted ego—confidence in one's ability to do what must be done.

To Be A Good Organizer the Following Skills are Key
1. Curiosity—Must be willing to ask people “why
2. Imagination—Must be creative, be yourself, you must be willing to stir unrest.
3. Communication—must be able to understand what you are trying to get across to them.
4. Power—Essential to a successful tactic. The most potent weapon know to mankind are satire and ridicule.
5. Self-confidence—Must be in your behavior. It is simply a given
6. Against a person—Must be quick to react. (ends and means...)

Communication—Above all else, without good communication nothing will be done.
1. One can lack qualities of an organizer—but can overcome a few qualities. The exception to that is the art of communication.
2. People must be able to understand what you are trying to get across to them.
3. Communication is the key to success. An organizer's job is to promote goodness.
4. When trying to organize it is important that you do not go outside of the experience of the people that you are trying to organize—they must get themselves (people organizing) experience.

For Effective communication it is key that people have to make their own decisions. But, you can help with loaded questions (ends and means...)

An example of using the Socratic method to gain acceptance
Organizer: Do you live here in that century building?
Answer: No. What century?
Organizer: What is the date in this century building?
Answer: What is the date when you are going to leave?
Organizer: What do you mean? Where are you going to go from there?
Answer: Yes, you can try to get that bond if you're anything, about it.
Answer: If you think you can do anything, we'll just say, “If you don't like it, get out.”
Organizer: What if I don't pay my rent?
Answer: They'll throw us out in 10 minutes.
Organizer: Hmm. You can do the bond if you're anything, about it.

Communication—Above all else, without good communication nothing will be done.
First Steps...
1. The first step in community organization is community disorganization.
   - There can be no such thing as a non-controversial issue. An organizer must stir up dissatisfaction and discord, provide a channel into which the people can angrily pour their frustrations.
2. Agitation is the point of conflict. An organizer must create the issues.
3. An organizer must create issues. The issues created will give the people the power, the ability, the strength and the hope to be able to do something about these problems.
4. An organizer must create a situation where multiple issues would draw in many potential members essential to the building your organization (Estate Tax—Sinful Tax, Farms, Businesses, Retention of Citizens).
5. Organizing is a "community of interests," not a physical community.
   - Respecting the dignity of their "community" is a core fundamental of organizing.

William Buckley talks about Community Organizing...

FROM: Firing Line with William F Buckley Jr.

Tactics: (General about Tactics)

TACTICS mean doing what you can with what you have. Tactics is the art of how to take and how to give. Anybody says all tactics are legal.

General Rules to Start With:
1) If you have organized a vast, mass-based people's organization, parade it visibly. (If it is BIG show it off).
2) If your organization is small in numbers, then do what Gideon did: conceal the members in the dark but raise a clamor that will make the listener believe your organization's numbers have more than it does.

With the 13 Rules....

“We will either find a way or make one.”

-Hannibal—One of the greatest military commanders in history.

Alinksky's Thirteen Rules for Radicals:

1. Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.
2. Power has always been derived from two main sources, money and people. (Lacking money, the Have-Nots must build power from their own flesh and blood.)
3. Illustration with Money—George Soros—Funds protests—people are being bused to the protests. Streets. Looks like the group has power with all the buss and at the streets. Picture sure looks powerful (even if they are all being paid).
Alinksky's Thirteen Rules for Radicals:

#2: Never go outside the experience of the people. When an action or tactic is outside the experience of the people, the result is confusion, fear, and retreat. Illustration: Protestors when Trump was elected not having any idea what they were protesting. Can't answer questions, struggling to come up with any reason.

#3: Wherever possible go outside of the experience of the enemy. Try to cause confusion, fear, and retreat. Illustration: When General Sherman, a General of the Union Army in the Civil War, cut loose on his famous March to the Sea he had no front or rear lines of supplies. The South, confronted with this new form of military invasion, reacted with confusion, panic, terror, and collapse.

#4: Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules. You can kill them with this. Illustration: If a group says "we always answer every letter" then your group writes 30,000 letters to make them reply to every one to swamp their resources and put their credibility on the line.

#5: Ridicule is a man's most potent weapon. It is almost impossible to counterattack ridicule. Also it infuriates the opposition, who then react to your advantage. Illustration: This is the current tactic du jour. Trump and his surrogates he is a womanizer, racist, homophobe. He needs to be Impeached—He is mentally ill. Illustration: Issue 27—Ridicule David Pepper. (Is this your style…??)

#6: A good tactic is one that your people enjoy. If your people are not having a ball doing it, there is something wrong with the tactic. Illustration: Petitioning. (Many people get a real joy out of taking Government into their own hands)

#7: A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag. Man can sustain militant interest in any issue for only a limited time, after which it becomes a commitment. Plus new issues and crises will always develop. Illustration: Never steam-heat but last intensity. Revolt, battle, movement. Become still—people get bored.

#8: Keep the pressure on with different tactics and actions, and utilize all events of the period for your purpose. Illustration: Coast Issue 27—Jail Tax A New Person (supporter) was released a every day—each writing a column.

#9: The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself. Illustration: Trump is going to start a nuclear war. Use threats—use them wisely—many people won’t remember what actually happened. Illustration: Mitt Romney didn’t pay any taxes. (Harry Reid)

#10: Maintain a constant pressure upon the opposition. Never let up. It is this unceasing pressure that results in the reactions from the opposition that are essential for the success of the campaign. Illustration: Music Hall campaign. Introduction of a Second Plan. Confused them—reaction brought parts of Second Plan into play. After brought up the media picked up, discussed at meetings…everywhere.

#11: If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counterman. People you are making the negative against will make a mistake. Anybody know who this guy is?
A. Thirteen Rules for Radicals:

**#12** The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative. You cannot risk being trapped by the enemy in his sudden agreement with your demand and saying "You're right—we don't know what to do about this issue. Now you tell us." Illustration: Estate Tax Only certain parts of the population (farmers) will be exempted from the tax. Townships have to be included.

**#13** Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it and polarize it. (One problem is a big government sometimes it is hard to tell exactly who is responsible—pick one area). Don't let an organization shift responsibility and diffuse and distribute it to a number of areas, or attach numerous ramifications. The target cannot be something general or abstract like City Hall. It is not possible to develop the necessary hostility against, say, City Hall which is an inanimate structure with no soul or identity. Illustration: John L. Lewis, the leader of the C.I.O. labor organization never attacked General Motors, but always attacked the President of GM. Always pick a focal point.

Let's Examine the Baked Bean Tactic...

The threat is often more effective than the tactic itself, but only if you are so organized that the establishment know not only that you have the power to execute the tactic but that you definitely will. You can't bluff much.

Example

--At a Protestant College the administration wouldn't allow the students to have any fun.
--They couldn't dance, or smoke, or have a beer.
--When a student was asked "What do they permit you to do?" He responded "practically nothing", except you can chew gum.
--To Alinsky gum becomes the weapon. You get two or three hundred students to get two packs of gum each, which is quite a wad. Then you have them drop it on the campus walks creating chaos. "The student reported the threat worked, now we can do just about anything.

One Key Thing

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Let's Examine the Baked Bean Tactic...

Of the concepts mentioned above... First, the disturbance would be utterly outside the experience of the establishment, which was expecting the usual stuff of mass meetings, street demonstrations, confrontations and parades. Not in their wildest fears would they expect an attack on their pride culture (what), their famed symphony orchestra. Second, the action would ridicule and make a farce of the law for there is no law, and probably never will be, leaving natural physical functions. Nothing the police or law could do about it. People finding out about it would laugh, making the symphony look ridiculous.

Another example (a bit dated)

A department store had restrictive employment policies for Blacks who were hired for only menial jobs.

The Tactic:

--A busy Saturday shopping was selected.
--3000 Blacks dressed up in their churchgoing suits and dresses.
--The idea was they would all be placed on the main floor—all arriving about the same time. (This is a legal tactic)
--They would stay there until an hour before closing, not buying anything.
--A threat was delivered to the authorities through a legitimate and "trustworthy" channel that this would happen—through a trusted stool pigeon (must have access).
--The next day a call was received from the department store who feared a day of no sales. The store was eager to discuss new personnel policies which drastically changed overnight.

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Time in Tactics

- Critical, and can be the difference between success and failure.
- It is important that the conflict not be carried on for too long of time.
- If a conflict drags on too long, it becomes a drag.
- Human beings can sustain an interest in a particular subject only over a limited period of time.
- The way to keep the action going and preventing it from becoming a drag, is to constantly add new issues as the action continues, so that by the time emotions have been escalated, a new issue comes on the scene.

In many prolonged issues, the final negotiations don't even involve the original conflict.

Once a specific tactic is used, it ceases to be outside the experience of the enemy. Before long, the enemy will design countermeasures around a previously effective tactic.

The Way Forward—According to Alinsky

Organization for action will now and in the many decades ahead center upon America's white middle class. This is where the power is. (This is Now)

If all low-income parts of our population are organized—all the blacks, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and poor whites would be powerful enough to get significant, fast, needed changes.

The job of the organizer is to search out leaders from PTA's to consumer groups, churches and clubs. Find common areas of agreement, and excite their imagination with tactics that can introduce drama and adventure into the tedium of middle-class life.

Bring in the Have-a-Little-Want-Mores.

Alinsky's Conclusion

1. Know Yourself—Can you do this?
2. Know Your Enemy—Be One Step Ahead.
3. Perception is Everything (How will Have-Nots be Perceived by Haves and the Have-A Little-Want Mores. Important that Have-A Little-Want Mores will support Have-Nots in their organization—work on them—messaging.
4. Make enemies live up to their ideas.
5. It's always fun to mock—mocking is hard to counterattack.
6. Polarization—Make the issue imminent. Be concise—Have a slogan, make people pick your side.
7. Anyone wanting to change the status quo should read Alinsky.

How Does This Help Your Organization

1. Your organization could be a Have-Not...It may be a Have-Not (No $$$, No Power, No Recognition)
2. It can try to Grab for Power by Organizing.
3. It can use the Tactics (13 Rules) to be successful.
4. It can learn to Communicate more Successfully.
5. It can turn the Have-A Little-Want Mores into the Have-Nots—Have-Nots, Have-Nots, Have-Nots—Wants More.
6. Or it can use the Tactics to turn around an advantage or disadvantage.
7. Tactics transfer well to social media—with commentary and clicks and posts.
8. Choose the tactics and parts that are aligned with your beliefs.
9. Your organization can use Alinsky to help with its success!

Rules for Conservatives—Michael Charles Master

1. Liberal community organizers create mass organization to fight conservatives. Conservatives rely on the individual to fight back. (Big difference)
2. Alinsky relies on the act that most conservatives see themselves as individuals. As such, conservatives are essentially helpless against large organizations.
3. Alinsky states that most people, many conservatives don't like conflict. So to win concessions, he deliberately used conflict as a method of pain to get the opposition to negotiate or capitulate.
4. Liberals are at war with conservatives. "The Democrats need to punish the enemy"—Obama in Nov 2010—"Are conservatives at war against Liberals?"
Five Rules for Conservatives

1. Save—How many conservatives view their mission as to save America?—as our Founding Father’s pledged in the Declaration?
2. Challenge—Conservatives are afraid of being called racist, or offending others, or seeming like they’re not compassionate, and of being accused of causing conflict.
   Government growth, taxes, power of liberal leaders through parts of government school system, and judiciary which has grown.
3. Talk the Talk—Liberals are pushing dependence on Government. They are “pushers”. We need to just say “no” and explain it.
4. Walk the Walk—Conservatives need to build relationships one at a time. Can’t just be the silent majority. Conservatives need to display their conservative colors just the same as displaying their college colors, or their home team football colors, or their children’s school colors.
5. Compromise Selfishly—Often conservatives give up positions. Conservatives cannot ever compromise in one area to get what they want in another area (Different than Alinsky). It is too hard to reverse a compromise. (Bush 9/11 for spending increase he had to agree to let the deficit rise $400B).

Classrooms & Courtrooms

1. Classrooms and many Courtrooms are battlefields that are owned by the liberals. Colleges, high schools, and grade schools are mostly taught by liberals. Public educators are basically government employees.
2. 80% of lawyers vote democrat. Most judges were lawyers before they were judges. So, of course most liberals want as many battles fought at court as possible.
3. Conservatives must change these two battlefields.

What is Alinsky’s Impact on the World?

In the world of Polarized, Power Politics and Ridicule…

Bob Andersen on Saul Alinsky

Alinsky –Then vs. Today:
1. Much has changed in today’s level of organization
2. There is a real difference between Baked Bean, Koo-Ins, Gum Throwdowns, Retail Store Shakedowns, and what is going on today with the Pure Hate and Radical and questionably Legal behavior of Gunman like Gouzy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, Antifa.
3. It is almost like that today’s battles have become Alinsky on Steroids—Alinsky Squared
4. Would you say Alinsky has been a success? Yes?

My Conclusion
1. He is a Community Organizer who wrote a book—He’s got a lot of tough truths—nothing new.
2. His book is used as a common sense rules book.
3. For whatever reason the Democrats have used them more than the Republicans.
4. You should use these rules to help you in whatever—whatever fighting the School Board, your Condo Association, Increased Taxes or too much Government.
5. Use the rules on a sliding scale to coincide with your personal style.
6. Many people have been using Alinsky for a long time.

Thesis for Tonight
“It’s too much to argue that American democracy is being altered by Alinsky’s ideas.”
—Conservative author William F. Buckley in 1966

Was Buckley right or is the state of today’s world change changed? Yes? No?
Are you an Activist? Yes? No?
Questions – Your Thoughts?

A video recording of this presentation will be available on 03-23-18 at www.EmpowerOhio.org