

# **Inciting Democracy**



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**A Practical Proposal for  
Creating a Good Society**

**Randy Schutt**

**SpringForward Press**

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## **Inciting Democracy: A Practical Proposal for Creating a Good Society**

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## About the Author

Randy Schutt is a long-time progressive change activist, researcher, writer, and teacher. He first worked for social change in 1977 with the Stanford Committee for a Responsible Investment Policy (SCRIP) which worked to sever Stanford University’s connection to South African apartheid. He then worked for eight years with Citizens for Alternatives to Nuclear Energy (CANE), which was a member-group of the Abalone Alliance and Livermore Action Group (LAG). During this time, he co-authored two books for the Center for Economic Conversion (CEC) and researched military industry for CEC and the Pacific Studies Center (PSC). He also helped to teach two classes at Stanford: one on cooperative decision-making, the other on housing cooperatives.

More recently, he has worked with the Peninsula Peace and Justice Center and served on the board of trustees of Agape Foundation. Since 1980, he has facilitated over fifty workshops for a variety of groups on several topics: cooperative decision-making, nonviolent direct action, nonviolent national defense, strategic planning, and personal transformation.

Randy holds B.S. and M.S. degrees in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University. He earned a living for several years by working part-time as a solar research engineer. Later, he worked part-time for fifteen years at Stanford as a computer support technician. Randy grew up in Tyler, Texas. He lived for seventeen years in various cooperative households, mostly in the Palo Alto, California, area. He has recently moved to Cleveland, Ohio, to be with his partner, Sue.

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*Wise people seek out those who know more than they do... and steal their ideas.*

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*If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.*  
— Isaac Newton

*If I have seen further, it is by standing on the backs of the down-trodden masses.* — Activist wit

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— Randy Schutt

# Summary

This book 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 non-violently 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:

- Adverse power structure, especially the opposition from the power elite
- Destructive cultural norms
- Dysfunctional emotional conditioning
- Widespread ignorance, especially about positive alternatives
- Lack of progressive resources

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, 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