

# Stanford SOCIAL INNOVATION<sup>Review</sup>

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## *Books*

### **Winning Hearts and Minds**

By Karina Kloos

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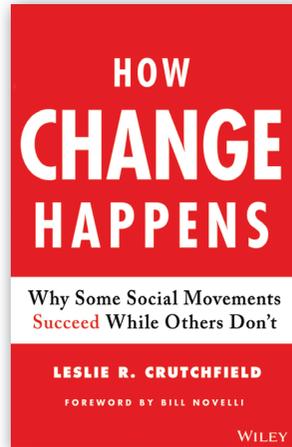
# Winning Hearts and Minds

REVIEW BY KARINA KLOOS

**W**ouldn't every nonprofit leader want the blueprints for how to launch her campaign or cause successfully? Social change cannot be reduced to a formula, but there may be patterns across effective efforts that can illuminate the way for others. This is what Leslie Crutchfield (coauthor of *Forces for Good*) and her research team set out to identify in *How Change Happens*.

Reviewing US civil society since the 1980s, the team identifies six causes—though it largely focuses on the first four—that have achieved success: anti-tobacco, anti-drunk driving, gun rights, LGBT marriage equality, curtailing of acid rain, and polio eradication (globally). Their analysis of these “winning” causes generates a six-point framework:

1. *Turn Grassroots Gold*: Locally led efforts by empowered, passionate individuals with strong and coordinated connections enable people to “collectively fight for their cause.”
2. *Sharpen Your 10/10/10/20 = 50 Vision*: Starting with local reforms is essential to building broad-based support and generating momentum that can lead to more sweeping federal reform.
3. *Change Hearts and Policy*: Policy reform depends on changing social norms, particularly when people’s lived experience is put at the center of the debate and campaign messaging.
4. *Reckon with Adversarial Allies*: Social change is contentious and emotional; successful movements arise when leaders are able to put aside their differences and mobilize around common goals.
5. *Break from Business as Usual*: While traditionally the targets of social movements, business can be a powerful ally for advancing a cause, using company policies as precedent and leveraging market reach.



**HOW CHANGE HAPPENS:  
Why Some Social Movements Succeed  
While Others Don't**  
By Leslie Crutchfield  
240 pages, Wiley, 2018

6. *Be Leaderfull*: In contrast to “leaderless” and “leader-led,” “leader-full” campaigns have strong central leaders and, to the first point, diffuse and localized leadership.

While some of the points are fairly obvious and even verge on tautological, Crutchfield captures some key insights for nonprofit leaders. Most striking is the transformative effect of creating a sense of belonging and empowerment, the success of the National Rifle Association and gun rights being the most poignant illustration. Some five million strong, members mobilize at town hall meetings and get decision makers to heed their minority views on weaker gun regulations. Why do so many people show up? The formal NRA Grassroots Division maintains a visible and constant presence while at the same time empowering their “Frontline Activist Leaders,” volunteers who reach out to other gun owners in their own communities, building support for political action. Most effective, still, may be their regular NRA barbecues, shooting competitions, and other family gatherings.

Examples throughout showcase the importance of personal connection and human emotion, perhaps a reflection on why

the left—often focusing instead on abstract reasoning around justice and equality—has largely failed to mobilize in recent decades. By contrast, the anti-drunk driving campaign, as portrayed by Crutchfield, derived its momentum from the families of victims, spotlighting individuals with lived experience. Similarly, the marriage equality movement, as captured in an interview with the director of the Freedom to Marry national campaign, became successful when it pivoted from being about rights and legal protections to people and love.

Yet people and love do not always win the day. The NRA’s emphasis on *rights* has also been a potent mobilizing force. The question of whether the lived experiences of schoolchildren, parents, and community members across the country outweigh the gun rights of Americans is now being waged. And we have yet to see whether a focus on black lives will fundamentally alter race relations in this country.

Indeed, few of the tactics in the author’s framework are without counter-examples. In other words, these tactics may be neither *sufficient* nor *necessary* for success. The anti-tobacco movement, for example, was successful despite rancorous internecine fighting. Crutchfield frequently acknowledges that “what works for one movement or cause doesn’t always neatly translate to other issues,” a reminder that campaigns and movements are indeed messy business, not architected on blueprints.

The book is framed as a response to the shortcomings in the social movement literature. While Crutchfield is right to note that predominant theory still hinges on movements of the 1960s and 1970s, much of the current literature does not. While that literature is often inaccessible to the broader public (movement scholars take note!), it *does* exist—beyond the very thin citation of scholarship therein.

Given that the main target audience is nonprofits, however, the book resonates with others of its kind, such as *Forces for Good* and *Good to Great*, providing valuable perspective for civil society leaders aiming to catalyze social change. ■