

**SOLIDARITY IS**

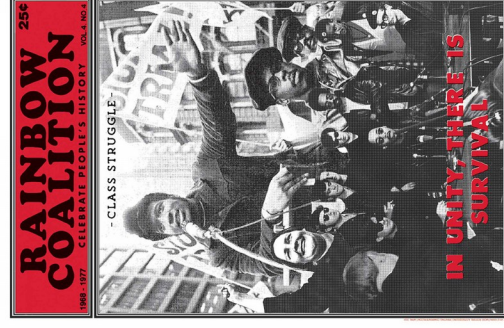
**Showing up for each other:** Showing up consistently is one of the most important forms of solidarity. It means understanding where you are most needed and taking initiative.



**Building relationships:** The number one strength of any social justice movement is not individual activists but the strength and quality of the relationships within it. Often, long after a campaign has concluded, the relationships forged during a period of activism will remain. Grassroots groups come and go; relationships endure.

**SOLIDARITY IS**

**Building solidarity and working in coalition is not easy. However, we have many historical examples we can learn from.**



Unfold this zine for historical examples and solidarity quotes!



**Listening and learning:** Listening is perhaps one of the most overlooked organizing skills. Listening is the first critical step to “meeting people where they are”. This means you are not aiming for perfect ideological alignment. You are building trust and agreeing on goals. This can be a major shift for new activists.

Listening first means being open to others, even when you disagree strongly. You’ll need to learn to draw different boundaries from those in your regular social life - without compromising your values. Never underestimate the potential and power when someone knows you have heard and understood them.

**Solidarity springs from a shared understanding that the struggles of different classes for liberation are connected. It is a force that unifies people across their differences.**



Art by asia bordowa

**A coalition is a group of different groups and types of groups such as unions, charities, grassroots groups, all working together toward shared goals or a political campaign.**

**A safe space:** Most people need somewhere to belong, be understood, and be safe. A coalition is not made to meet these needs. You are not preaching to the choir anymore - you are trying to broaden your base for support. That requires interacting with people you do not agree with or actively dislike.

**Keeping score:** Solidarity is not a transaction. You cannot show up for others and demand they do the same for you. You do not split up the benefits of solidarity after an accounting of who contributed the most. You do not keep lists of those absent/silent to punish them later.

**SOLIDARITY IS NOT**

**“Wait your turn”:** Many movements have a history of prioritizing the interests and needs of members with greater proximity to power in order to advance. This can result in deprioritizing certain issues with the promise that they will be addressed later, or suppressing less “respectable” groups. Genuine solidarity commits to leaving no one behind.

**A compromise:** Working with individuals whose politics do not always align with yours is not a compromise. Working in ways that allow a movement to be absorbed, co-opted and neutralized by oppressive systems is.



Art by Roger Peet



**If you want to learn about building solidarity and political coalitions this zine is for you <3**

**Mobilizine Series**

- Series One: Preparation
- 01: Getting Started by Getting Involved
- 02: Activism Culture Shock
- 03: Building Solidarity
- 04: Empowerment

Series Two: Case Studies  
TBA

Series Three: Group Profiles  
TBA

Download, print & distribute more zines here: [mzines.neocities.org](http://mzines.neocities.org)

“What is realistic is the goal to build a coalition between our many strong communities in order to form a movement capable of defending all our lives.” - Leslie Feinberg

## SOLIDARITY IN THE MAKING!

### American Interracial Class Solidarity: Fred Hampton's Rainbow Coalition (1969)

The Rainbow Coalition saw the Chicago Black Panther Party, led by Fred Hampton, building alliances with other groups in the city, notably José Cha Cha Jiménez's Young Lords (Puerto Rican/Latinx), and William Fesperman's Young Patriots (white working class). The coalition worked on shared concerns such as housing and police brutality. Fred Hampton was murdered by Chicago Police and the FBI in December, 1969. “You can kill a revolutionary but you can never kill the revolution.”

### Fighting Thatcher's England: Lesbians & Gays Support the Miners (1984-1985)

During Britain's longest strike by miners in South Wales, LGSM donated more money to strikers than any other fundraiser. LGSM's group lead, Mark Ashton said of the unlikely alliance, “One community should give solidarity to another. It is really illogical to say, 'I'm gay and I'm into defending the gay community but I don't care about anything else...’.” In the years following, the National Union of Mineworkers voted to support legislation for LGBT rights.

### Hong Kong Pro-Democracy Movement: Umbrella Revolution (2014)

The Umbrella Movement saw multiple groups – the Hong Kong Federation of students, Occupy Central, and Scholarism (a pro-democracy student group) come together to organize a 79-day occupation that unfolded over different sites in the former city state in protest against the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China's decision to pre-screen candidates for Hong Kong's elections. This movement, symbolized by yellow umbrellas as shields against pepper spray and tear gas, prefigured a more protracted struggle in 2019-2020.

“... solidarity can't exist if it's predicated on a model of allyship that requires passing an impossible moral litmus test with zero margin for error.” - Diana Chan McNally

“The forces that oppress us may compete and make war with one another, but when it comes to maintaining the order of capitalism and the hierarchy of white supremacy, they collaborate and work together... Oppressed people, on the other hand, often demand ideological alignment or even affinity when seeking to interrupt or upend structural violence. This tendency lends an advantage to the powerful that is not easily overcome.” - Kelly Hayes & Mariame Kaba

“Like all collectives, while they may start as a shiny theoretical proposition, when they hit the oxidizing air of practice, both the work and the rewards tend to be unevenly distributed.” - Sara Greavu

## WHEN SOLIDARITY BREAKS DOWN :(

### American/Anglo Feminism & the Sex Wars (1970-1980s)

The second wave of the American feminist movement saw solidarity (mainly built up by white, middle-class women) break down in large part due to a series of protracted conflicts over lesbians, sexuality and pornography with polarized “sex-positive” and “anti-porn” camps. The 1990s saw the feminist movement largely dominated by sex positivity and liberalism with many of the more radical demands for female liberation made by both sides eventually being neutralized in mainstream society. The rifts caused by the sex wars still resonate in the feminist movement today.

### Ontario Labour Movement & the Days of Action (1995-1998)

Solidarity against then-Premier Mike Harris' austerity measures led to rolling strikes throughout the province that almost led to a general strike. Although rolling strikes managed to push back on Harris' most extreme policies, ultimately the unions, largely divided by private and public sector workers, could not agree on strategy. Despite this, old alliances would be called upon, most recently in 2023 when public and private sector unions threatened a general strike after Premier Doug Ford put forward legislation that would remove the right to strike. This bill was quickly withdrawn.

“True, meaningful, and useful solidarity, I think, rejects the need to frame struggles through only their similarities... Generous interpretation and translation is the nucleus of solidarity.” - Zoé Samudzi