

# Identifying and Planning Advocacy



*Untitled*, Grecia Carey Ortega, 2018

**Grade levels:** 9–12

**Duration:** One 45-minute classroom period

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## Learning Objectives

### Who Can Help with Advocacy Goals?

#### Message to Educators

Creating and pursuing a vision for change is a tall order. Broken down into smaller steps, though, the task can feel more attainable. Changemakers of all ages can find themselves feeling in one moment the urgency to personally do something (anything!) now, and in the next moment, the conviction that collective action over time is the best approach. This lesson asks advocates to put aside urgency briefly and take deliberate, tangible steps forward with the tool of photography.

In tackling this lesson, you and your students will first pin down the communities or causes you wish to support and affect. Next, ask them to consider their resources: Are there people, skills, and organizations that can help with goals, guidance, or an example forward? How can photography play a role in inspiring others to join a positive effort? Identifying helpers and asking for help is not only critical to advocacy, it's important for personal growth and stability. With resources identified, a feasible advocacy plan begins to come into focus. And with that plan, students can begin to see where photography enables the vision. This lesson plan includes photography examples to spark discussion, a list of materials, and cues to help you foster a safe space and lead confidently, as students begin to shape their advocacy plans and photographic vision.

You do not need to be practiced at facilitating discussions using photography to effectively lead this lesson. Getty is committed to supporting meaningful dialogue through photography, and the lesson plan was created with educators to carefully walk you through the steps.

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### Lesson Six: Identifying and Planning Advocacy

This lesson focuses on the tactics and execution of advocacy. In addition to this lesson, we invite you to explore previous lessons, where students investigate themselves and their backgrounds, explore their communities, and consider case studies of artists as social justice advocates. In lessons four

and five, students explore types of service and identify community strengths as well as opportunities for partnership.

In this lesson, we will ask students to put together the need, or cause, with a plan of action. To begin, the group considers two photographs that speak to both finding and making opportunities for advocacy. Then, individually or in small groups, students pair community issues with advocacy opportunities. First, they craft a statement of purpose, then identify community partners, and finally, draft a general plan of advocacy. As a practice, students use photography to spotlight a possible community partner. The final reflection asks them to seek a strategy to work with the community partner, in preparation for taking action. Then, the following lesson will ask them to translate the plan of advocacy into a detailed plan of action.

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## Associated Standards

- Getty SJA LO (Getty Social Justice and Advocacy Learning Objective): Identify an opportunity or cause for advocacy.
- Getty SJA LO: Identify community partners who can help with goals.
- Getty SJA LO: Consider feasibility, assets available, and sustainability in choice of actions to take.
- CCSS (California Curriculum State Standard).ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C: Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5: Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence, and to add interest.

## Materials

- Projector
  - Photographs from Getty Unshuttered community
  - Photograph from Getty Museum collection
  - Statement of Purpose and Inventory of Assets graphic organizer
  - Plan of Advocacy graphic organizer
  - A digital camera or smartphone
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## Vocabulary

### **Advocate, Advocacy**

Someone who publicly supports and speaks up for an idea, a cause, or members of an identity group. Efforts to make positive change for individuals or communities that deserve support.

### **Agency**

Denotes an individual's power to think independently and act freely in a social context, in ways that determine their experiences and life trajectories. Can also take collective forms.

### **Community**

A network or group of people, sometimes living in a particular place, who share interests, values, characteristics, responsibilities, or physical spaces.

### **Discrimination**

Actions stemming from conscious or unconscious prejudice, which favor and empower one group over others based on differences of race, gender, economic class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, language, age, national identity, and other categories.

### **Disenfranchised**

Deprived of access to rights, opportunities, and services.

### **Equity**

When all people or groups gain access to the resources needed to realize equal results. Differs from equality, which focuses on the equal distribution of resources rather than equal results.

**Gentrification**

A demographic shift, in which upper- or middle-class or racially privileged individuals and businesses move into historically working-class or racially oppressed neighborhoods. Typically an urban phenomenon.

**Social Justice**

The practice of advocacy and taking action to promote equality, equity, respect, and the assurance of rights to fair treatment and resources, both within and between communities and social groups.

**Sustainable, Sustainability**

The idea that both human and material resources are finite, and therefore should be used with attention to long-term consequences. Also refers to practices that support the long-term viability of the community, humanity, and the environment.

**Upstander**

A person who chooses to take positive action in the face of injustice. Can refer to individual incidents or broader societal situations. The opposite of a bystander.

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## Instructional Plan

**Introduction**

Social justice advocacy requires planning as well as passion. But remember, you're not in it alone! We've taken a look at the types of service to community and others, and inventoried your community's assets. Now, let's harness that information to identify opportunities for advocacy and begin to plan.

The questions for inquiry at the center of this lesson include: What are the opportunities for advocacy in my community? Who can help with my goals? How do I create a plan for advocacy that is doable and has a reasonable chance of success? How can my photography add to the effort of advocacy? And, as always, where do my identity and my work as a photographer fit into the plan?

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## Set the Stage

Project the image shown below. Discussion can begin by simply asking students what they notice about the photograph.



*Untitled*, Grecia Carey Ortega, 2018

### Questions for discussion:

- What do you notice first about this image? (It seems to be a community board and includes a number of posters and other works of art.)
  - Boyle Heights is a neighborhood in Los Angeles with a deep history. If you are not familiar with the neighborhood, what are your impressions of it from this photo? (Perhaps the influence of Mexican and Chicano culture is apparent; ethnically, it is approximately 95% Hispanic and Latinx; it has a rich history of

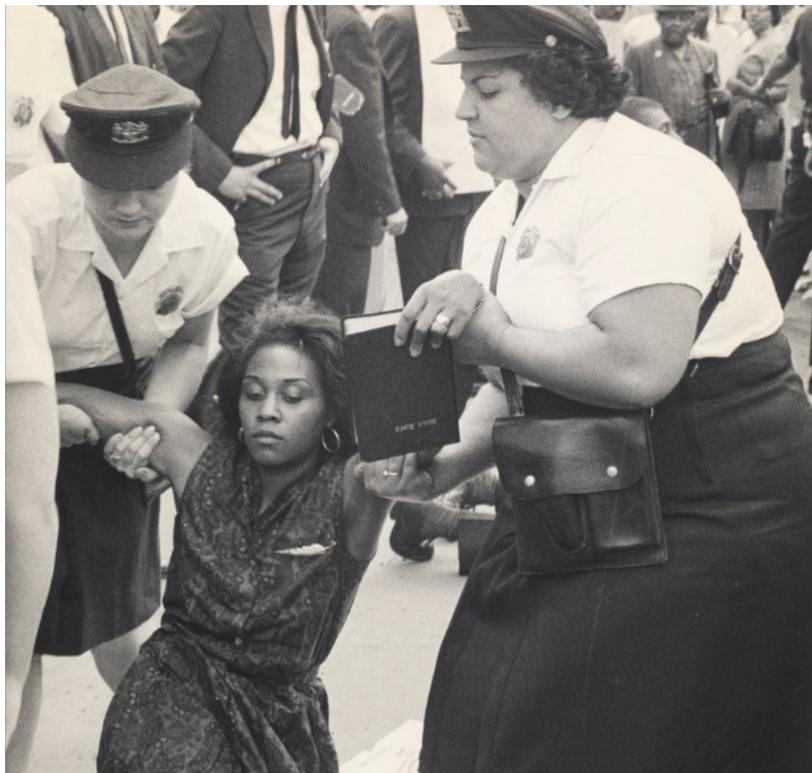
- political and social activism; gentrification has become a significant issue recently.)
- What do you notice about the artwork shown? (The bright art in the foreground is *papel picado*, a traditional paper-cutting art technique from Mexico; the posters on the wall are in both English and Spanish, except for the Justice for Trayvon Martin poster.)
  - What do you know about Trayvon Martin? (In 2012, in Florida, George Zimmerman fatally shot Trayvon Martin, a seventeen-year-old African American student. Zimmerman shot the unarmed Martin. He was charged with murder and acquitted at trial by claiming self-defense. After the acquittal, rallies nationwide protested racial profiling, Stand Your Ground laws, and the lack of civil rights charges against Zimmerman. These rallies grew, in part, into the Black Lives Matter movement.)
  - What does it mean to you that the photo shows both a Justice for Trayvon Martin poster and other objects that seem to situate the scene in the Los Angeles Latinx community?
  - What compositional and photographic elements do you notice, and why?
    - How is the photo framed? (The image uses a landscape aspect ratio and includes no people, only ephemera and the wall.)
    - What other compositional elements did the photographer use? (A steep upward angle and strong leading lines draw the eye into the distance and imply that the posters and other ephemera continue well beyond the frame.)
    - Are there any other artistic traditions that this photograph brings to mind? (This photograph might evoke *murales*, a long and storied Latin American tradition of colorful and highly graphic outdoor painted murals, created as a way to make issues of justice, equality, and advocacy public and visible.)
  - Do you think the photographer has a message with this photograph? (Perhaps something to do with common cause among advocates for social justice, despite different backgrounds and diverse identities.)
  - Do you get the sense that the photographer came upon this scene or staged it in some way? Would you consider the photo as a collaboration in some way?
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## Photographer and Subject

Grecia Carey Ortega began taking photos in middle school with her dad's camera and credits her time in Getty Unshuttered as an opportunity to learn more of the technical skills. "I tend to focus on telling stories, whether it's my own or others', about love, trust, forgiveness, and other themes. I use a lot of symbolism or the materials I have around me that have influenced me or reflect what I want to showcase in my photos."

## Discuss: Pairing Community Issues with Opportunities for Advocacy

Project the image below. Share the caption to situate the photograph in time and place.



*New York City, 1963, Leonard Freed, gelatin silver print. The J. Paul Getty Museum. © Leonard Freed/Magnum Photos*

Download the image:

<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/245076/leonard-freed-new-york-city-american-1963/>

Now that we've looked at how a student photographer used their photograph to both document their community and call for advocacy, let's look at an example from the Getty collection. How do professional photographers find and create opportunities for advocacy?

### Questions for discussion:

Discussion can begin by simply asking students what they notice about the photograph.

- What do you notice first about this image? (The seemingly calm, composed face of the woman in the center of the photo, and in the center of chaos.)
- What do you notice about the setting, background, and foreground? (Beyond the three main figures of the foreground, there are a number of people in the background. However, none of them are seen in their entirety. They are either obscured by other bodies or people, or cut off by the edges of the photo, with few faces visible. This jumble of people seems to reflect what must have been the chaos, and perhaps violence, of this moment.)
- What compositional and photographic elements do you notice, and why?
  - How is the photo framed? (Unusually; rather than a rectangular horizontal orientation, it is almost square. The woman is flanked by two women in uniform, presumably police officers. They are clearly in the process of moving her, and they create a frame around the woman. Because of the way she is being held, and the angle of the photo, the Bible she holds in her hand is directly next to her face, making it very prominent.)
  - What other artistic choices did the photographer make? (The eye-level perspective, natural light, black-and-white technique, and loose composition add a sense of immediacy and perhaps urgency.)
  - What does the use of black-and-white do?
- Do you think the woman's action is a successful example of advocacy in the form of protest?
- What do you feel are some of the messages of this photograph?
- Do you think the photographer was undertaking advocacy with this work? (Leonard Freed was a leading photographer of the US civil rights

movement, traveling with Martin Luther King, Jr. and documenting dozens of protests, marches, and rallies).

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## Leonard Freed

Born in New York to working-class Jewish parents, Leonard Freed (1926-2006) focused his photography on discrimination. In the 1950s he depicted a range of communities: Jewish settlers in Amsterdam, Holland, African Americans in the US, and Asian immigrants in England. His coverage of the civil rights movement gave him the opportunity to travel with Martin Luther King, Jr., and he produced the book *Black in White America* in 1968. Freed has often been quoted for this observation: "Ultimately photography is about who you are," he once said. "It's the seeking of truth in relation to yourself. And seeking truth becomes a habit."<sup>1</sup>

View Leonard Freed photographs in the collection:

<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/artists/20876/leonard-freed-american-1929-2006/>

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## Exercise: Generating a Statement of Purpose and Plan of Advocacy

For the following exercise, you will need to have a societal cause or issue that is important to you in mind. It can be an issue that you have done extensive research on and are already engaged with, or something you have always been curious about. In this exercise, you will take the big step of creating a plan of advocacy.

Share out the first graphic organizer linked to this lesson, Statement of Purpose and Inventory of Assets. [See Resources section].

This exercise asks students to take a step-by-step approach to planning their advocacy, setting up the critical step of identifying and photographing a community partner. Students will probably work on this organizer individually, though small teams can work as well. First, they will write a statement of purpose for their advocacy around their chosen issue. Next, they inventory

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<sup>1</sup> "Leonard Freed," Magnum Photos, 2014.

[https://pro.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=CMS3&VF=MAGO31\\_g\\_VForm&ERID=24KL535UHJ](https://pro.magnumphotos.com/C.aspx?VP3=CMS3&VF=MAGO31_g_VForm&ERID=24KL535UHJ)

the available resources around the advocacy opportunity. Students may want to jump into creating their advocacy plans right away. However, pausing to consider their assets and using photography to solidify their community partnership are important steps. These steps strengthen their advocacy plans and remind students that they're not alone in the work. Use the inventories to help students identify and approach those who can support their advocacy efforts. The practice exercise is closely linked to this list.

Project and pass out the second graphic organizer linked to this lesson, Plan of Advocacy. [See Resources section]. Here, students set out their goals for advocacy. These goals are not a detailed plan of action, but a chance to identify what is doable. The organizer follows the SMART framework, which is a useful planning tool used in many settings, including business, the arts, nonprofits, and academia. In this context, "SMART" is an acronym that stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based. It is meant to offer structure for setting objectives. (See the graphic organizer for details on the framework.)

If time allows, an individual discussion with each student about their resource inventory and plan of advocacy may be most effective. Students will have diverse strengths in their plans, and most will need some help sharpening their ideas. Alternatively, students may come back together as a class to share their ideas and questions and consider each other's plans. Focus particularly on people and organizations identified as community agents of change. What opportunities for partnership exist? How can students help to further mutual goals? How will they start conversations about potential partnerships with individuals or organizations?

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## **Practice: Highlighting Community Partners through Photography**

Students take a portrait (broadly defined) of a person or organization in the community who is a possible partner. Remind them of their resource inventories in choosing who or what to showcase, and remind them to explain why they think their subjects would be good partners.

This is the moment to focus on additional photography and narrative skills for students. In the earlier photography discussion, we mentioned elements such as framing, perspective or angle, foreground and background, and presence or absence of a subject, as well as the subject's position and pose. The related photography skills videos listed under Other Resources can also

serve as quick skills refreshers. Ask students how they will apply these skills and strategies in their own practice.

Encourage students to continue their practice at their homes and in their neighborhoods. Assigning the spotlight exercise as homework, if possible, affords students time to work on the assignment, and the opportunity to reach out to potential community partners.

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## Reflect

Reflection can take place in the group setting or individually. Ideally, have students share one to three photographs with their peers. They can each choose to speak about their experiences taking the photographs, or not. Having the viewers provide positive feedback is key to the exercise. However, sharing can be a vulnerable moment for students. Use your best judgment about whether a group reflection is appropriate, and enlist the support of your students to create a safe space.

### Questions for discussion:

- What is the first thing you notice about the photograph?
- What works artistically in the photograph?
- What story is the photographer telling about the community partner?
- What do you think is the photographer's point of view on the community partner? Is the photographer documenting or advocating?
- Where do you see yourself in relationship to your community partner?
- What part are you most proud of, and why?
- What would you do differently next time?

Alternatively, individual reflection can be useful, using the same framework of questions.

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## Assessment

- Observe the group's discussion of the lesson. Assess contributions to the discussion. Did students pose thoughtful questions? Did they respond to questions with reasons and evidence? Did they listen to different points of view? Did they clarify and challenge ideas and conclusions when appropriate? Did they synthesize evidence and ideas? Did they apply photography in a meaningful way?

- Make copies of the completed graphic organizers. Check for understanding of the SMART framework (it stands for specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based). Conduct a thorough inventory of resources. Assess students' statements of purpose for clear communication and well-supported ideas.
  - In the Reflection, assess student feedback for clarity and thoughtfulness.
  - Encourage students to share photographs of service on the Unshuttered platform, and consider sharing the work in either a digital gallery or folder for the class, or in a gallery exhibition.
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### Thank You...

...for your commitment to using photography to inspire youth creating social change in their communities. Please adapt and improve upon this lesson plan to meet the needs and age range of your group. Now is the time! We are grateful for educators like you who listen, learn alongside their students, and inspire action.

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## Resources

Statement of Purpose and Inventory of Assets Graphic Organizer [See pages 14 and 15]

Plan of Advocacy Graphic Organizer [See following pages]

Related photography skills videos:

Environmental Portrait: <https://youtu.be/7G35Tl8Wjyl>

High Level Perspective: <https://youtu.be/DghJZy8NyVM>

Composition: Background: <https://youtu.be/iJOlygDLhxc>

**Unshuttered: Statement of Purpose and Inventory of Assets**

**Statement of Purpose: The community or cause where I hope to have a positive impact:**

Inventory of Resources and Assets	
Community Agents of Change (people and organizations)	
Media Access and Amplifiers (Are there people or organizations that could help amplify and share the need for advocacy?)	
Facilities and Equipment	
Information and Research	
Resources Needed (Consider time, travel, and any other items needed for the project.)	

### Plan of Advocacy

Check your goals against the SMART checklist:

S	Specific
M	Measurable
A	Achievable/Attainable
R	Relevant
T	Time-bounded

Goals Planning	
1	
2	
3	