

**The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.
Alice Walker**

Liu, Eric. *You're More Powerful than You Think: A Citizen's Guide to Making Change Happen*. PublicAffairs, 2017.

The Rules of Power



<p>Power concentrates, as does powerlessness.</p>	<p>Power justifies itself. People “invent” stories to justify their power.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Left to themselves, #1 and #2 shows that power tends towards a state of unequal power. It tends towards monopoly and winner-take-all politics. 	<p>Power is infinite. There is no inherent limit on the amount of power people can create.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #3 can save us from #1 and #2. Power can be decentralized and used for the common good.
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All students should show me how they responded to the ideas on this outline. However, the final “product” could be an essay, PowerPoint, poster, letters to _____, a plan for a protest, a bill (a proposed law), an artwork, or many other things.

All students should provide a works cited page and use in-text citations in their project.

In order to create a successful political movement, you must:

1. Change the game:

Capital Punishment in the U.S. is arbitrary, unfair, often punishes the innocent, and doesn't serve as a deterrent. I will attempt the change the game through educating the public and writing my public servants.



a. Adjust the arena.

i. Make the arena the size that best meets your situation and your strengths.

1. Smaller or larger?

I will start small by educating myself about the issue, being a member of *Coloradans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty* and using their website to organize my letters and my

involvement. I will also write letters to the editors of relevant newspapers. The arena will start out small.

2. Federalism...where will the debate take place?

I will work at the state level using the site about to communicate with state legislators and other relevant stakeholders. I will write (or call) the offices of Rep. Barbara McLachlan (D) and Sen. Don Coram (R). I will also research which legislators may be open to this idea. This is a tough sell in rural Colorado, so maybe I will have to focus on legislators from more liberal areas. (I need some research here.)

ii. Will you debate as an insider or outsider?

I will debate as an outsider, writing letters primarily. Later, when I have the opportunity, I will choose to engage in demonstrations and/or direct meetings with state legislators. I will probably still be an outsider.

iii. Shallower or deeper?

1. Will you adjust the institution parameters or change them completely?

The ultimate goal would be to go deep and help in the creation of laws that eliminates or extremely limits the use of the death penalty in Colorado. This could be done through legislative action or a ballot initiative. I will at some point consider pursuing this issue on a national level, although it is unlikely that the death penalty would be found to be unconstitutional (although it briefly was in the 1970's). (I need evidence about the 70's S.C. interpretation.) But the issue is still in play.

b. Re-rig the rules.

i. Agenda-Setting: What is "in-play"?

The agenda is set by public opinion and the state office-holders. Colorado is now a purple state with some evidence that it is becoming a blue state. Working with more progressive legislators may prove fruitful. (I need evidence here.)

Agendas have also been set in the public forum. (I need evidence here.) Letters to the editor could help educate the public about the realities of the death penalty.

ii. Who has the authority to decide?; What gets considered?; How will decisions be reached?

The voters of Colorado (a possible referendum), the state legislature and executive branch, the courts, public opinion....I need to research to find out what may be best.

iii. You need transparency to see rigged rules and change them.

1. How can you work for "sunshine"?

I can focus on the above groups. I could also research how the Co. prison system addresses this issue and what the history of the death penalty says about how information may not have been transparent. I could also research groups that favor the death penalty and see how they may have been emphasizing inaccurate or misleading information.

c. Attack the plan.

i. Paralyze, bypass, and undermine their strategy.

1. Understand the plan of those in power and develop a way to change how to respond...perhaps offer a different plan.

Research: who supports capital punishment and what is their plan to keep it in place.

Colorado is fairly moderate on the issue, but states like Texas and Louisiana, that most commonly use the death penalty, could be good places to research how they keep it as a viable alternative. I can then develop ways to counteract their plans.

2. Change the story.



- a. Describe the alternative allocation of power and an alternative basis for legitimacy.

Persons on death row and those who may be sentenced there in the future should have the right to live. While victims of these crimes deserve to have their experience supported and their pain find a just outlet, the official “murder” of another isn’t the best way to do these things.

- i. Expand the sense of what is possible.

The evidence suggests that the death penalty does not serve as a deterrent, could be racially biased (especially when the victims are white or if the jury was racially biased), actually creates a culture of violence, death, and revenge, and tends to unfairly target poor defendants. It is possible to get citizens and lawmakers to understand and accept these arguments. I would need evidence to support these arguments.

- b. Organize in narratives.

- i. Create a new sense of “us”.

Are we a nation of citizens who seek revenge or justice? Are those in prison less than or the same as the rest of us? Are those who don’t commit crimes really superior to those who do?

- ii. Provide an explanation for who has what and why.

Politicians in states and national politicians (Trump, Harris, Booker and others), have expressed the desire to reform the justice system. Perhaps I could help make capital punishment part of this conversation. I need more research.

In recent months, states, like Florida, have passed legislation to allow those convicted of felonies to vote. Other states have taken similar actions. Maybe, using federalism, I can, with others, work with this changing attitudes towards those in prison. I need more research.

- iii. Awaken the “hero’s spirit in every citizen.

Justice? Social Justice? Reform? Are we responsible for “the least” in our country? Living up to the real essences of the Bill of Rights and its emphasis on the rights of the accused.

- c. Make your fight a fable.

- i. What are the bigger moral and political stakes?

A fable? Are people basically good or evil? Can rehabilitation or redemption occur? Who are we as a country? (I could research how other developed democracies have done away with capital punishment or the history of justice issues in the U.S., especially those movements around capital punishment.) How do American values relate to the use of the death penalty?

- ii. What symbols can you use?

The Declaration of Independence/inalienable rights/life

The concept of a 2nd chance?

iii. Who personifies the issue?

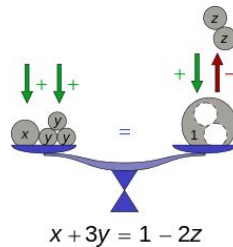
Sister Jean Prejean, prisoners on death row and other heinous crimes who have been recently vindicated by DNA analysis, Ronald Cotton and Jennifer Thompson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uN7mInREkw>

iv. What is the single clear principle?

Justice/Fairness

3. Change the equation.



a. Act exponentially.

i. What network would you work in?

Coloradans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty

b. Act reciprocally.

i. How do you create win-win?

We can work on sentencing guidelines or concepts of punishment and rehabilitation as ways to ensure those who commit heinous crimes receive appropriate punishment for their crimes short of capital punishment.

We could work with victim's groups to ensure they get the support they need.

We could work with schools to discuss the meaning of justice throughout US history and how it relates to this issue.

We can change the story of what it means to be an American that may not only offer a more humane citizenship, but could help in actually creating reform of the justice system or by-products that enhance American culture.

ii. How do you enhance cooperative self-government?

I will use persuasion, relationships with my elected representatives, education of the public, and, possibly, ballot initiatives that will not only be democratic in structure, but could lead to a better and stronger understanding of democracy.

c. Perform power.

i. Act powerfully.

THE THREE I's

Write letters often and well.

Call the offices of representatives

Demonstrate

Broaden tactics and strategies as I learn about what's happening and if these tactics would be fruitful.

The three I's

Integrity: “The effective citizen practices both ethics and power.”	Inclusion: Do more people get to participate?	Interest: Can self-interest be defined as mutual interest?
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Performance Indicators Scoring Criteria (High School) Graduation Standard 5

Performance Indicator	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
a. Ethically engage in a real or simulated civic activity in the classroom, school, or community organization by discussing current issues, advocating for personal rights and the rights of others, practicing personal responsibilities, influencing governmental actions, and other community service learning opportunities.	I can define and give examples of personal rights, the rights of others, personal responsibilities, government actions, and service learning opportunities.	I can explain how the concepts of personal rights, the rights of others, personal responsibilities, government actions, and service learning opportunities are important in order to engage in a real or simulated civic activity in the classroom, school, or community organization.	I can ethically engage in a real or simulated civic activity in the classroom, school, or community organization by discussing current issues, advocating for personal rights and the rights of others, practicing personal responsibilities, influencing governmental actions, and other community service learning.	I can justify and/or critique my experience in engaging in a real or simulated civic activity in the classroom, school, or community organization by discussing current issues, advocating for personal rights and the rights of others, practicing personal responsibilities, influencing governmental actions, and other community service learning.
b. Evaluate strategies citizens can use to most effectively influence public policy.	I can list and describe strategies citizens can use to influence public policy.	I can compare and contrast strategies citizens can use to influence public policy.	I can evaluate strategies citizens can use to most effectively influence public policy.	I can debate or defend the effectiveness of strategies citizens can use to influence public policy.
c. Discuss how people resolve differences while remaining respectful of multiple perspectives.	I can identify and explain strategies of how people can resolve differences while remaining respectful.	I can practice strategies of how people can resolve differences while remaining respectful.	I can discuss how people resolve differences while remaining respectful of multiple perspectives.	I can justify and/or critique how people resolve differences while remaining respectful of multiple perspectives.