Abolishing Fossil Fuels

Lessons from Movements That Won

Kevin A. Young

Climate destruction is a problem of political power.

We have the resources for a green transition, but how can we neutralize the influence of Exxon and Shell? Abolishing Fossil Fuels argues that the climate movement has started to turn the tide against fossil fuels, just too gradually. The movement's partial victories show us how the industry can be further undermined and eventually abolished. Activists have been most successful when they've targeted the industry's enablers: the banks, insurers, and big investors that finance its operations, the companies and universities that purchase fossil fuels, and the regulators and judges who make life-and-death rulings about pipelines, power plants, and drilling sites. This approach has jeopardized investor confidence in fossil fuels, leading the industry to lash out in increasingly desperate ways. The fossil fuel industry's financial and legal enablers are also its Achilles heel.

The most powerful movements in US history succeeded in similar ways. The book also includes an in-depth analysis of four classic victories: the abolition of slavery, battles for workers' rights in the 1930s, Black freedom struggles of the 1950s and 1960s, and the fight for clean air. Those movements inflicted costs on economic elites through strikes, boycotts, and other mass disruption. They forced some sectors of the ruling class to confront others, which paved the way for victory. Electing and pressuring politicians was rarely the movements' primary focus. Rather, gains in the electoral and legislative realms were usually the byproducts of great upsurges in the fields, factories, and streets.

Those historic movements show that it's very possible to defeat capitalist sectors that may seem invulnerable. They also show us how it can be done. They offer lessons for building a multiracial, working-class climate movement that can win a global green transition that's both rapid and equitable.

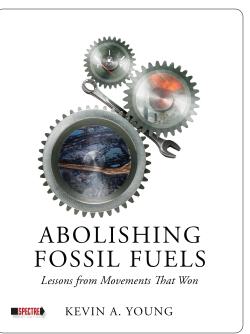
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kevin A. Young teaches history at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He has published several other books, including Levers of Power: How the 1% Rules and What the 99% Can Do About It (with Tarun Banerjee and Michael Schwartz) and the edited volume Making the Revolution: Histories of the Latin American Left.

ACCOLADES

"Of the many present crises facing the future of humanity, climate change and its threat of mass extinction appears to be the most daunting. Kevin Young argues compellingly, however, that electoral strategies to fight climate change are a dead end. Rather, his study of past successful movements suggests that radical upsurges, the building of disruptive mass movements, including demonstrations, civil disobedience, and large strikes, are more compelling alternatives for stemming the tide, while ultimately only the end of capitalism will save us. A tour de force! "

—Michael Goldfield, author of The Southern Key: Class, Race, and Radicalism in the 1930s and 1940s



SUBJECT CATEGORY

Environmental Policy, US History, Environmental Conservation & Protection

PRICE \$22.95

ISBN 9798887440330

> PAGE COUNT 320

> > SIZE 6x9

FORMAT

Paperback

PUBLICATION DATE

04/16/2024

US DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group West 1-866-400-5351 www.pgw.com • ips@ingramcontent.com

CANADA DISTRIBUTION

Publishers Group Canada 1-800-663-5714 customerservice@raincoast.com

EUROPE DISTRIBUTION IPS_International.Orders@ingramcontent.com

UK DISTRIBUTION

Turnaround Publisher Services Ltd 020-8829-3000 • orders@turnaround-uk.com

🔶 PM PRESS 🚸

P.O. Box 23912 • Oakland, CA 94623 www.pmpress.org • info@pmpress.org 510-703-0327



Founded in 2007 by a small group of people with decades of experience in the book trade and organizing, PM Press is a radical independent publisher of books and media whose time has come. We believe that ideas matter, and that publishing has an outsized influence on the possibilities of any moment. Our aim is to deliver bold political ideas and vital stories to arm the dreamers. Join us to create a better world.