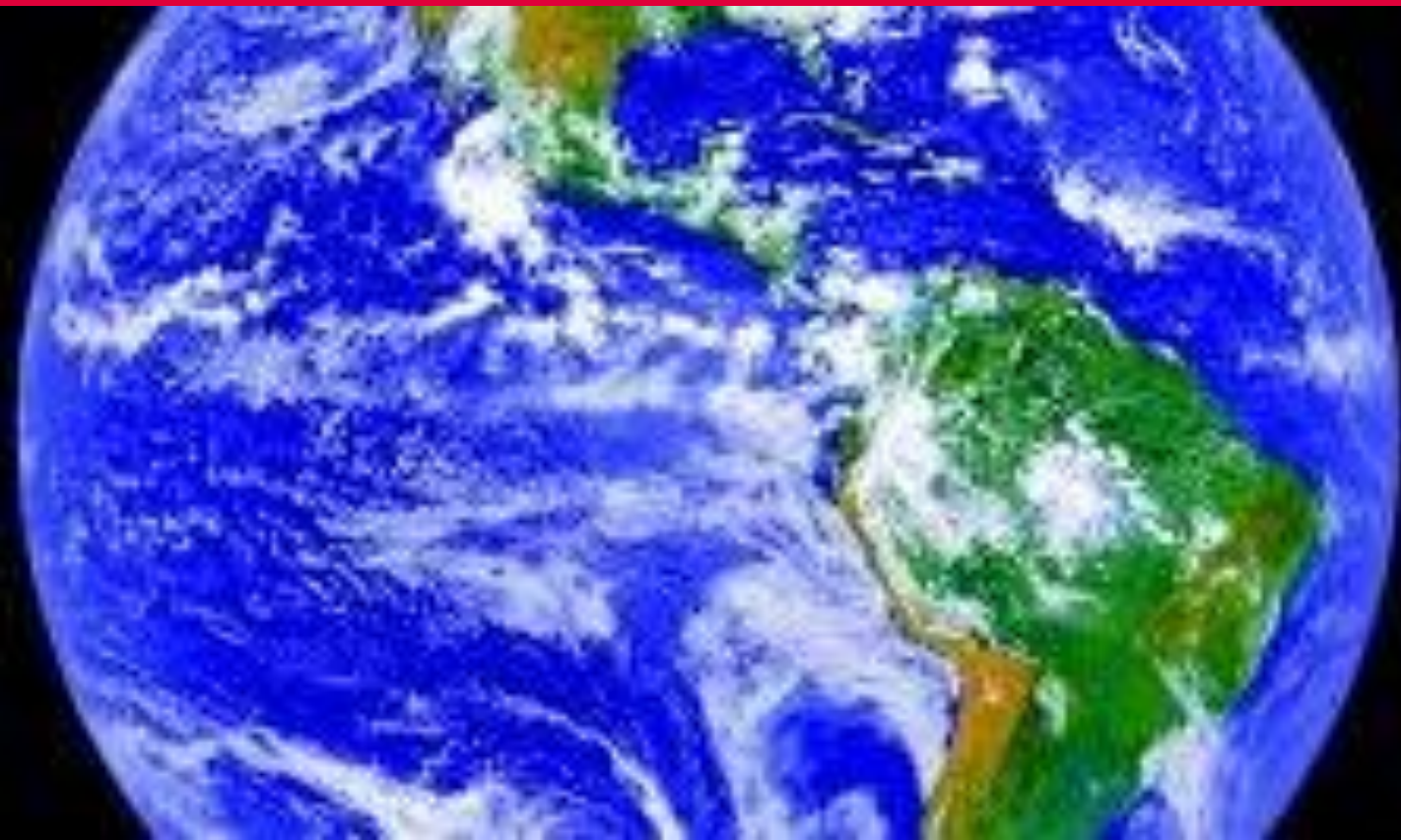


# *Lift Every Voice*

How can we lift our voices to advocate for a more compassionate, just, and democratic country and world?

Book 4: Social and Ecological Awareness:



## Overview



***Voices Institute***

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To Voice Institute



”

We stand now where two roads diverge . . . The other fork of the road—the one less traveled by— offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assumes the preservation of the earth.

— *From Silent Spring*  
by Rachel Carson

# Lift Every Voice

How can we lift our voices to advocate for a more compassionate, just, and democratic country and world?



1. Human Diversity



2. Income Inequality and Poverty



7. Social Trust



Book 4:  
**Social & Ecological  
Awareness**



3. Social, Economic, and Political Power



6. Ecological Awareness



5. Risk and Protective Factors



4. Individual and Institutional Discrimination



**Voices Institute**



We stand now where two roads diverge . . .  
The road we have long been traveling is  
deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on  
which progress with great speed. But at its  
end lies disaster. The other fork of the road—  
the one less traveled by—offers our last, our  
only chance to reach a destination that  
assumes the preservation of the earth.

—*From Silent Spring by Rachel Carson*

"Rachel Louise Carson (May 27, 1907 – April 14, 1964) was an American marine biologist, author, and conservationist whose book *Silent Spring* and other writings are credited with advancing the global environmental movement."

—*Wikipedia*



## The Road Not Taken

BY ROBERT FROST

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,  
And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

## Book 4: Social and Ecological Awareness Overview

### Introduction to *Lift Every Voice*



”

We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the **better angels of our nature.**

—*Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address*



”

I've long talked about the battle for the soul of America. We must restore the soul of America. Our nation is shaped by the constant battle between our better angels and our darkest impulses. It is time for our better angels to prevail.

—*Election Eve Speech by President-Elect Joe Biden (Nov. 7, 2020)*

The United States today is very divided and polarized. *Lift Every Voice* seeks to help overcome this division by providing a resource center of democratic competencies (democratic values, skills, and knowledge) that can help heal and unite our country, that can help restore the soul of our country, and that can help guide our country in the future.



The better angels of our nature are the democratic values that we can embrace, and which can unite and guide us as a country!

# Overview of Five Democratic Competencies

**Lift Every Voice** promotes and teaches five Democratic Competencies. These competencies include the values, skills, and knowledge we need to create a more democratic society and country. Each of the five books in Lift Every Voice presents one of these competencies.

**Book 1: Democratic Values** includes the democratic values that can guide the growth of democracy in our country. We argue that two of the most important values are love and freedom.

**Book 2: Social and Emotional Skills** includes the skills that can help bring more love and freedom into our society such as social perspective taking and social problem solving.

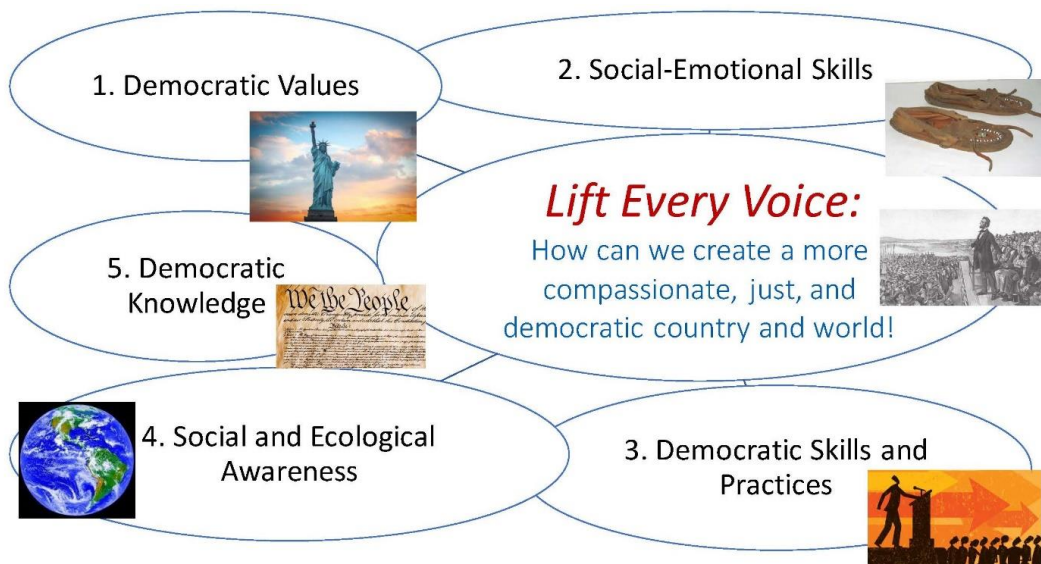
**Book 3: Democratic Skills and Practices** includes the skills we need to participate in the civic life of our communities and our society such as learning to advocate, discuss, and debate ways to solve major social and ecological problems.

**Book 4: Social and Ecological Awareness** helps us to explore the social, economic, and political features of our country so that we can more effectively advocate ways to improve it.

And in **Book 5: Democratic Knowledge**, we explore in depth the major features of our democratic government: U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, Constitutional Principles, the Amendments, the Branches of Government, major court cases, and the responsibility of state and local governments.

With these Democratic Competencies, we will be able to use them to advocate ways to solve major social and ecological problems in our country, such as how to prevent gun violence, how to stop the pandemic, how to stop police violence, and how to stop global warming.

# Book 4: Social and Ecological Awareness Overview



## Overview of Social and Ecological Awareness

In this Democratic Competency, we are going to review some of the most important social and ecological issues that are confronting our country today. To effectively advocate proposals to solve major social problems in our country, we need to be aware of the social and ecological context within in which we are seeking to improve things.

We have chosen seven broad areas to briefly review.

**1. Human Diversity.** First, we are emphasizing the importance of recognizing and understanding the value of human diversity. We believe that appreciating, respecting, and utilizing human diversity will make it much more possible to solve our common problems.

**2. Income Inequality and Poverty.** Second, we live in a country and world with increasing income inequality and poverty. If we fail to take this into account, it is likely to undermine our reform proposals.

**3. Distribution of Social, Economic, and Political Power.** Third, to be effective any proposals have to take into account the power structure surrounding that issue and how your/our proposals will affect that power structure--who benefits or gains from the existing power structure and from the ways in which our proposals will change that structure.



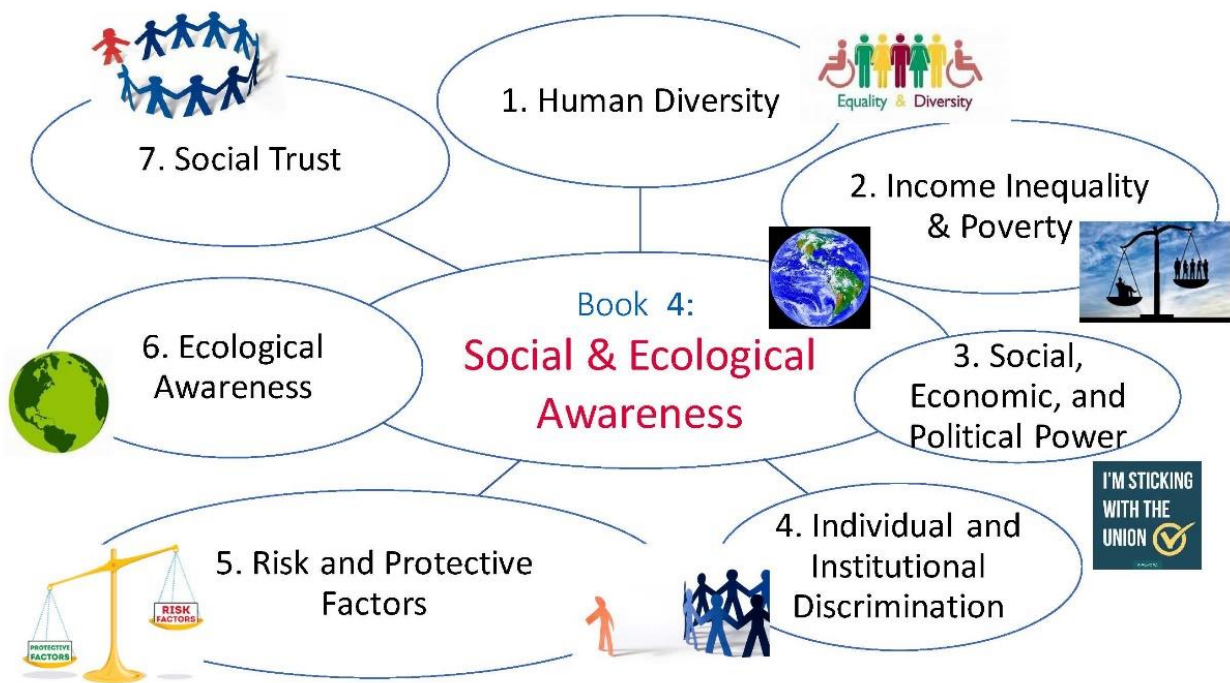
# Book 4: Social and Ecological Awareness Overview

**4. Individual and Institutional Discrimination.** Fourth, to be effective, we need to be united--which means being aware of and working collaboratively to overcome the various types of discrimination in our society.

**5. Risk and Protective Factors.** Fifth, we also have to be aware of the protective and risk factors affecting those people who are involved in the social or ecological problem being addressed. What are the protective factors we can strengthen and build on? What are the risk factors we need to eliminate or reduce?

**6. Ecological Awareness.** Sixth, some of the most important global problems we face are the ecological threats to our planet. How do we address these threats to our environment at the same time that we seek to address these critical social issues?

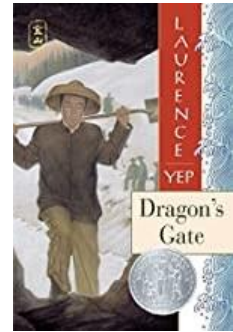
**7. Social Trust.** Finally, we live in a country and a world where the social fabric is being torn apart by these issues and by political leaders who are building support by manipulating these issues and pitting people on different sides of these issues against one another--rather than uniting them/us to work together to solve these ominous threats to our country, humanity, and our planet.



## Book 4: Social and Ecological Awareness Overview

Here is a brief summary of the seven types of social and ecological awareness advocated for in *Lift Every Voice*.

### 1. Human Diversity: Diversity Is Our Strength!



”

You can learn to change the world or go on being changed by it.

—*Lawrence Yep*

### 2. Income Inequality and Poverty: Inequality and Poverty Are Inhumane



”

We need a Moral Movement across the nation. An indigenously homegrown, state-based, state government-focused, deeply moral, deeply constitutional, anti-racist, anti-poverty, pro-justice, pro-labor, transformative, Fusion Movement. A Movement that is about the moral fabric of our society guided by a deeply moral and constitutional vision of what is possible.

— *William J. Barber II, Forward Together: A Moral Message for the Nation*

## Book 4: Social and Ecological Awareness Overview

### 3. The Distribution of Social, Economic, and Political Power: Lift Our Voices, Use Our Power!



”

There is nothing stronger than the American labor movement. United, we cannot and we will not be turned aside. We'll work for it, sisters and brothers. We'll stand for it. Together. Each of us. To bring out the best in America. To bring out the best in ourselves, and each other.

—*Richard Trumpka, Former President of the AFL-CIO*

### 4. Individual and Institutional Discrimination: Together, we can overcome all kinds of discrimination!



”

In almost every professional field, in business and in the arts and sciences, women are still treated as second-class citizens. It would be a great service to tell girls who plan to work in society to expect this subtle, uncomfortable discrimination--tell them not to be quiet, and hope it will go away, but fight it. A girl should not expect special privileges because of her sex, but neither should she "adjust" to prejudice and discrimination

— *Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique*

### 5. Risk and Protective Factors: Praise the Bridges That Carry Us Over!



”

Never to forget where we came from and always praise the bridges that carried us over.

—*Fanny Lou Hammer*

### 6. Ecological Awareness: ...the house is on fire...



”

Adults keep saying we owe it to the young people, to give them hope, but I don't want your hope. I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is.

—*Greta Thunberg*

### 7. Social Trust: Building Trust in Our Communities, Our Country, and Our World



”

I believe I have a personal responsibility to make a positive impact on society. I've tried to accomplish this goal by choosing a life of public service.... have never, ever held back telling exactly what is going on from a public health standpoint. Thank you.

—*Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases*

**We need to be socially and ecologically aware if we are to effectively lift our voices to create a better world and to sustain our planet.**



”

Many young people are aware that they will be very much impacted by what we are doing now and that their future will be destroyed," she said. "We know what is at stake in a way that many older people maybe don't.

—*Greta Thunberg*