



Written by [Sam Blumenfeld](#) on March 14, 2011

Hillary Rodham: Alinsky's Favorite Radical

Hillary Rodham, born in 1947 and raised in a United Methodist Republican family in middle-class Park Ridge, Illinois, first met radical revolutionary Saul Alinsky as a teenager. She had been introduced to him at a church outing by her liberal youth minister, Don Jones, who greatly admired Alinsky. Jones, 26, a U.S. Navy veteran, would become the most important teacher in Hillary's life before college.



Like many young liberal Methodist youth ministers, he had a passion for justice and social reform. He shepherded the middle-class children of Protestant Park Ridge to black and Hispanic churches in Chicago as part of their exchanges with their youth groups.

In 1965, after graduating high school, where she was a National Merit finalist, Rodham enrolled in Wellesley College in Massachusetts. There she eagerly took part in liberal college activities, and in 1968 left the Republican Party. In all this time she maintained a correspondence with Don Jones, in which she revealed her evolving political views. For her senior honors thesis, she decided to do a study of Saul Alinsky, whose views had intrigued her as a teenager.

Alinsky had developed the idea of the People's Organization, which would effect change by confronting those in power — with protest marches, strikes, sit-ins, and other intimidating practices. In [Reveille for Radicals](#), first published in 1946 and revised in 1969, he wrote:

A People's Organization ... is a deep, hard-driving force, striking and getting at the very roots of all the evils which beset the people. ... It thinks and acts in terms of social surgery and not cosmetic cover-ups. This is one of the reasons why a People's Organization will find that it has to fight its way along every foot of the road toward its destination — a people's world.

What is "a people's world"? Is it a dictatorship of the proletariat? Is it a socialist state? Alinsky never defines "a people's world" for fear of being labeled something or other. What he says he wants is a free and open society:

The middle classes must be organized for action, for claiming their rights and powers of citizenship in a free society. The organization must be committed to the values of a free and open society. The middle classes must begin to participate as citizens for those ideals which give meaning and purpose to life.

All too vague for anyone trying to pin Alinsky down. Rodham had to read Alinsky's [Reveille for Radicals](#) as the first step in her senior project. She was also an admirer of Marxist theoretician Carl Oglesby, whose articles she read in *Motive* magazine, the publication of the Methodist Student Movement. Oglesby denounced America's "ruling class" and considered Ho Chi Minh, Castro, and Mao as



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praiseworthy heroes of the people. In other words, Rodham was being fed a steady diet of radical leftist ideology by the liberals in the Methodist church. As for the goals of Marxist revolution, Rodham had her own ideas of how to reach them. She described herself in a letter to Don Jones as “a progressive, an ethical Christian and a political activist.” By political activism she meant being involved in the anti-Vietnam war movement.

In the fall of 1968, Rodham returned to Wellesley for her senior year, where she was president of the student body. In searching for a topic for her honors thesis, her political science professor, Alan Schechter, suggested she write one on Alinsky, since she already knew him and admired his work. So she interviewed Alinsky in Chicago, in Boston, and again when she invited him to visit Wellesley.

Alinsky was so impressed by Rodham that upon her graduation he invited her to become a community organizer. Obviously, she was a committed radical revolutionary who would be a perfect stealth socialist — otherwise, he would not have begged her to accept his offer. But she turned him down to pursue a career in law. Alinsky told her that she would be wasting her life. But Rodham had her own ideas. Yale Law School would be the red carpet to a career that would eventually lead to elective politics. She understood the need for power if she were ever to implement her radical revolutionary ideas.

All of this took place before Alinsky wrote his second book, [Rules for Radicals](#), published in 1971, in which he may have incorporated some of Rodham’s ideas. It was in that book that Alinsky advocated the creation of organizations led by stealth socialist community organizers who would work within the system to gain political power via the Democratic Party.

Rodham had found Alinsky a man of exceptional charm, and his influence on her life would be long-lasting. In her thesis she wrote approvingly and critically of Alinsky’s ideas. She tried to pin him down on his philosophy, but he simply refused to be labeled. And so, while Alinsky spent much time writing about means — stealth strategies — he was too vague about ends, and that probably is why she decided not to accept his offer of a job as community organizer.

At Yale she met her future husband and future President of the United States, Bill Clinton. In the budding romance, Rodham turned out to be the stronger of the two. She had the more assertive brain power that had made her a leader at Wellesley. She probably introduced Bill to her own radical ideas. And it finally must have dawned on her that as an intelligent Rhodes scholar, he could be her vehicle to high office — which in fact he became, first as Governor of Arkansas and finally as President.

Indeed, their marriage was a perfect political partnership: She brought her Alinsky radicalism to the union, and Bill brought his liberal establishment connections. As a Rhodes scholar, he had roomed with such world-government types as Strobe Talbot, who later would become a writer for *Time*. And as a student in Professor Carroll Quigley’s class at Georgetown, he had learned how the big money powers controlled both political parties. And he must have read a biography of Cecil Rhodes and learned of his plan to create an Anglo-American-headed world government.

It is interesting that when Bill Clinton ran for the presidency, Hillary asked Wellesley to lock up her thesis so that Bill’s opponents would not be able to use it against him or her. She had learned and adopted Alinsky’s stealth strategy very well. Although Alinsky died in 1972, I suspect that he would have been joyously proud of Hillary’s achievement as a stealth radical in the White House.

And, of course, the first thing she did when she became First Lady was to organize a secretive task force to come up with a plan for socialized medicine. But the Republicans shot it down. And then in



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2008 she campaigned to become the Democratic nominee for the presidency. But who should oppose her? An Alinsky alumnus who had mastered the art of community organizing by the name of Barack Hussein Obama. The rest is history.



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