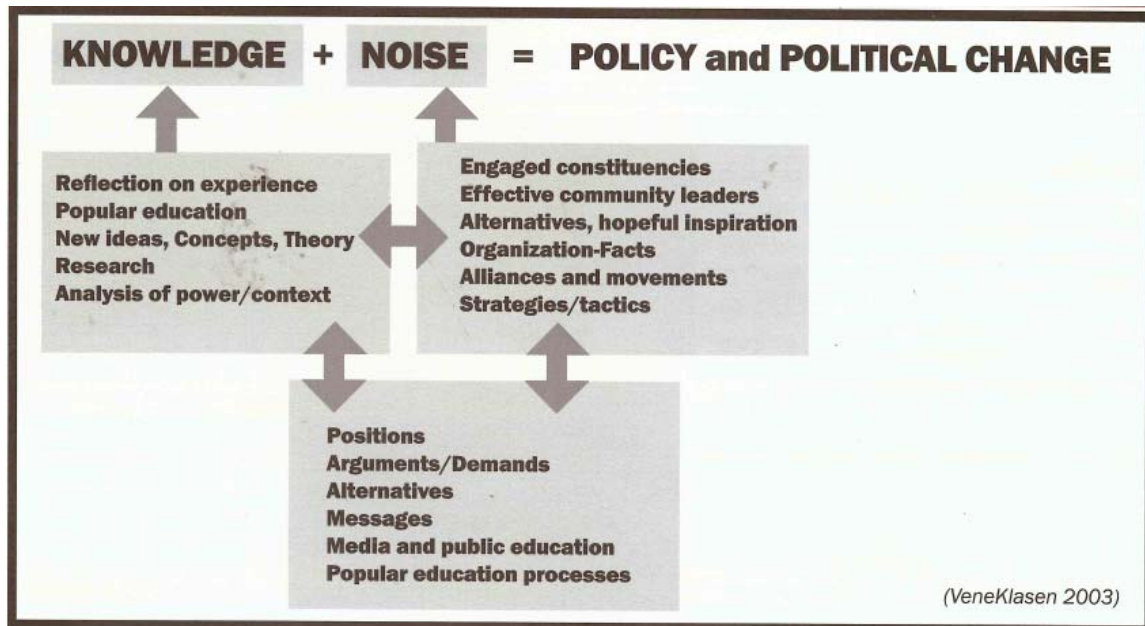


# Knowledge + Noise



Knowledge, facts and information are important tools for creating pressure, but insufficient for holding powerful interests accountable or shifting the policy agenda to accommodate new issues and alternatives. Those in power can be masterful at spin and use or invalidate demands if there isn't a larger political force of organization and legitimacy countering them. For most marginalized groups, the only way to create meaningful pressure is by building broad-based organized alliances and movements capable of mobilizing informed, active people combined with strategic public media attention to create "noise." Creating "noise" is a matter of building people power through popular education, leadership and organization to carry out a range of strategies that push (with numbers, persistence, credibility, creativity and media) from the outside and engage strategically on the inside (with legitimate connection to the "outside"). For all of these strategies and more, all kinds of NGOs, grassroots organizations and social movements use and generate facts and analysis to strategize, build alliances and develop their positions, demands and alternatives.

Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are people who want crops without ploughing the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning, they want the ocean without the roar of its many waters ... Power concedes nothing without a demand, it never has and it never will.

*Frederick Douglass*

Miller, Valerie, Lisa VeneKlasen, Molly Reilly, and Cindy Clark (2006), "Concepts for Revisioning Power for Justice, Equality and Peace," in *Making Change Happen 3: Power*, 13, Just Associates (JASS).