

Breaking The Chains Study Guide

Objectives:

- Raise awareness of the latest issue of the magazine
- Allow participants to make personal connections to the magazine material
- Draw inspiration and lessons from historical examples
- Build political line around women in labor with study participants

Materials Needed:

- Printouts of “From The Editor,” “Women’s Triple Load,” and “Struggle Reveals Revolutionary Potential”
- [Slides](#), projector, speakers, internet connection
- Pens, post-its, chart paper
- Suggested Length: 1.5 hours

Opening

WhipAround Question

- Facilitator asks: “What is one type of work you do or have done? Do you think you were compensated fairly for it? Why or why not?”

Image Study

- **Option 1:** [SF Mural Arts | Juana Alicia | Las Lechugueras](#)
- **Option 2:** Summer 2022 BTC Cover by Gammy Alvarez
- Facilitator can choose one of the images above and show it to participants. Facilitator should ask, “What is one detail you notice from this image? Why do you think that detail stands out to you?”
 - Key points for either image:
 - themes of unity & collaboration
 - connection between labor and reproduction/childcare


Read Aloud: From The Editor

- Participants should read aloud the “From The Editor” piece. Volunteers should each read 1 paragraph. After reading, the facilitator asks, “What is one point you either agree with, disagree with, or have a question about?”
 - Key points:
 - unions have tangible benefits for women workers
 - unions have contradictions like any aspect of capitalistic society
 - there is revolutionary potential in union work

Article 1 Study

View: **Salt of the Earth (movie) video clip**

- Facilitator asks, “The movie Salt of the Earth is about a long, difficult strike by Mexican-American miners against the Empire Zinc Company in Bayard (near Silver City), New Mexico in 1950-1951. What do you think is the purpose of this domestic scene?”

	<p><u>Read Aloud: “Women’s Triple Load”</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● According to the article, why is much of care work underpaid or unpaid? ● What are some progressive alternatives to providing care work that the article suggests? ● How does this article connect to your own experiences and ideas? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Key points: ○ carework can be paid (e.g. home health aide) or unpaid and dictated by gendered expectations (e.g. household maintenance) ○ often is performed by marginalized groups (gender, race, immigration status) ○ US gvt lack of pandemic response intensified the pressure and amount of carework expected ○ Socialist/progressive countries or organizations responded differently
<p>Article 2 Study</p>	<p><u>View:</u>  Atlanta Washerwomen Strike of 1881</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitator asks, “What lessons can we learn from the Atlanta Washerwoman Strike of 1881?” <p><u>Read Aloud: “Struggle Reveals Revolutionary Potential”</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● According to this article, how much has COVID impacted the American workforce? ● The article refers to the “stirrings of a labor resurgence.” What are some examples of this resurgence? Have you encountered this in your workplace? ● Either in the article or in your own experience, why are women important to labor organizing efforts? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Key points: ○ While the pandemic increased hardships for labor, it really just exacerbated a decades-long trend of union decline, low wages, and continued sexism/racism etc. ○ Many workers are leaving their fields ○ An important trend is the resurgence of union activity ○ Women often play a key role in union organizing ○ We should harness the revolutionary potential of unions!
<p>Closing</p>	<p>Reflection Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitator asks: “What is one idea from today’s study group that you want to bring to your own workplace, organizing, or life?” ● Participants write answers on post-it notes ● Participants are invited to read aloud answers and add to chart paper