

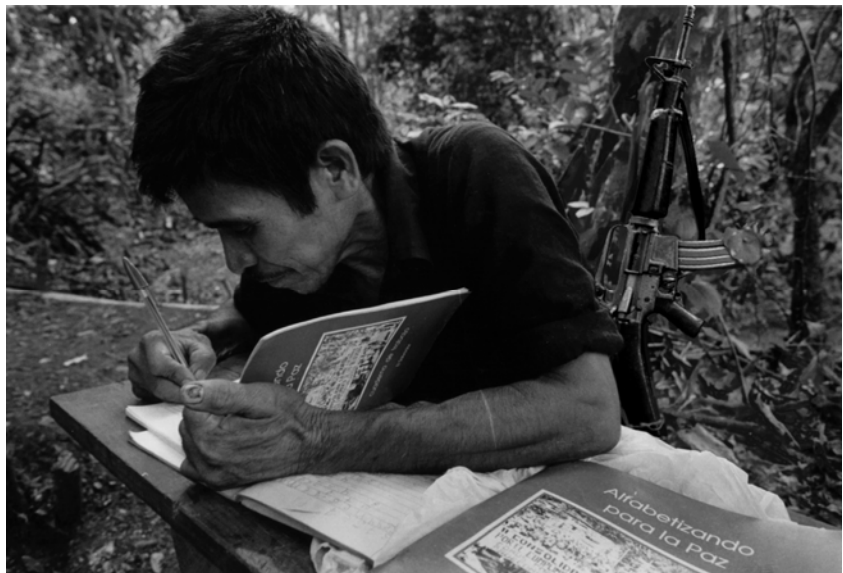
FIGHTING TO LEARN

Popular Education and Guerrilla War in El Salvador

John L. Hammond

Popular education played a vital role in the twelve-year guerrilla war against the Salvadoran government. **Fighting to Learn** is a study of its pedagogy and politics. Inspired by Paulo Freire's literacy work in Brazil in the 1950s, popular education brought literacy to poor rural communities abandoned by the official education system and to peasant combatants in the guerrilla army. Those who had little education taught those who had none. Popular education taught people skills, raised the morale that sustained them in unequal combat, and stimulated the creation of an organizational network to hold them together.

Hammond interviewed more than 100 Salvadoran students and teachers. He recounts their experiences in their own words, vividly conveying how they coped with the hardships of war and organized civilian communities politically to support a guerrilla insurgency. *Fighting to Learn* tells how poorly educated peasants overcame their sense of inferiority to discover that they could teach each other and work together in a common struggle. It offers both a detailed account of a historical moment and a broad theoretical discussion of the relationship between education, community organizing, and the political process.



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"John Hammond has provided a poignantly rendered and authoritative account of the role of popular education in effecting radical change in El Salvador between 1980 and 1992. *Fighting to Learn* is must reading for those interested in the potential and limitations of education to liberate individuals and transform societies." -Robert F. Arnove, Indiana University, Bloomington

"In this revealing look at education under war conditions in El Salvador, Hammond expresses his admiration for popular educators, and yet offers a critical perspective on them and on his own classroom teaching." -Phillip Berryman, author of *Stubborn Hope: Religion, Politics, and Revolution in Central America*

John L. Hammond is the author of *Building Popular Power: Workers' and Neighborhood Movements in the Portuguese Revolution*. He teaches sociology at Hunter College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York. Jhammond@hunter.cuny.edu

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