

Handout 1: The Political Impact

Florida, known for its historically soft gun policies, passed a bill March 9 that bans bump stocks, imposes a waiting period, raises the minimum age to buy a weapon and allows cops to take guns from mentally disturbed people. Sixty-seven NRA-endorsed Republicans voted for the bill, and the gun-friendly GOP Governor Scott signed it. (<http://time.com/longform/never-again-movement/>)

Even though the kids are disappointed in the Florida bill (“It’s like they tried to take a big step forward and then tripped,” [MSD student David] Hogg says), it’s still the first significant piece of gun legislation to come out of the Florida legislature in at least 20 years. (<http://time.com/longform/never-again-movement/>)

The omnibus funding bill President Trump signed on Friday [March 23, 2018] includes a clarification stating that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can conduct research on gun violence — language that Democrats have touted as a win. “This is a huge victory for our country, our communities, and our children, and our efforts to stop gun violence must and will continue,” Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-Fla.) said in a statement. (<http://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/380026-funding-bill-wont-prompt-new-cdc-gun-research-experts-say>)

On Friday [March 23, 2018], Trump signed a \$1.3-trillion spending bill including modest improvements to background checks for gun sales and grants to help schools prevent gun violence. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-elections-pennsylvania/republican-pennsylvania-congressman-bows-out-of-re-election-bid-boosting-democrat-hopes-of-more-wins-idUSKBN1H20B3>)

With mid-term Congressional elections eight months away, the activists flocked to some 800 marches across the country [on March 24, 2018] to enroll young voters likely to back ... candidates who tend to favor tougher firearms laws. (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-guns-voters/vote-them-out-thousands-register-to-vote-at-u-s-gun-control-marches-idUSKBN1H00RY>)

Discuss:

- What are your thoughts and feelings about the “political impact” young people have had in building their movement against gun violence?

Handout 2: The Power in Numbers

The March 14 [2018] school walkouts ... surpassed the 750,000 protesters who flooded the Washington Mall for the Million Mom March in 2000 in what was then the largest gun-safety protest in U.S. history. (<http://time.com/longform/never-again-movement/>)

Thousands of students from about 2,800 schools marked National Walkout Day [on March 14, 2018], many by leaving their classrooms at 10 a.m. to show solidarity for the 17 killed in the attack Feb. 14 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/03/14/thousands-students-across-u-s-walk-out-class-today-protest-gun-violence/420731002/>)

Hundreds of thousands of energized protesters descended on Washington, D.C., on Saturday afternoon in a bid to end gun violence more than a month after the Valentine's Day school rampage in Parkland, Florida But beyond the nation's capital, solidarity was shown in all 50 United States, where toddlers to grannies to nuns joined Parkland students to echo their call of "enough is enough." (<http://abcnews.go.com/US/50-us-states-participated-march-lives/story?id=53993353>)

In the 39 days since the shooting in Parkland, Florida, Gonzalez and her fellow student survivors have galvanized a nationwide movement for gun reform. On Saturday [March 24, 2018], hundreds of thousands of students gathered in the nation's capital and at sister marches across the country and around the world to deliver a powerful, unified message: Enough is enough. ... In total, organizers estimated there were approximately 800 marches organized on Friday and Saturday — even one in Antarctica. (<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/march-our-lives-draws-hundreds-thousands-washington-around-nation-n859716>)

Discuss:

- What are your thoughts and feelings about the number of people students have mobilized and brought together in building their movement against gun violence?

Handout 3: The Power of Youth

The teens are uniquely positioned to make the case for laws to address gun violence, social-media savvy and old enough to express themselves eloquently, but still children who should not have to face the horror of gun violence at school. (<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2018/02/activists-aim-to-keep-gun-safety-movement-student-led.html>)

Even after a year of near continuous protesting — for women, for the environment, for immigrants and more — the emergence of people not even old enough to drive as a political force has been particularly arresting, unsettling a gun control debate that had seemed impervious to other factors. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/14/us/school-walkout.html>)

The first major coordinated action of the student-led movement for gun control marshaled the same elements that had defined it ever since the Parkland shooting: eloquent young voices, equipped with symbolism and social media savvy, riding a resolve as yet untouched by cynicism. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/14/us/school-walkout.html>)

Regardless of its long-term effects, the March for Our Lives is the first major statement by Americans born after 1999, who have presented a new template for protest. The March for Our Lives was a massive outcry against extreme violence delivered with a mix of pop sentiment, corporate cooperation, and an awareness of the socioeconomic privilege that allows certain voices to be heard louder than others. (<https://www.newyorker.com/news/dispatch/the-march-for-our-lives-presents-a-radical-new-model-for-youth-protest>)

Discuss:

- What are your thoughts and feelings about the power of youth in mobilizing this recent movement against gun violence?

Handout 4: The Impact of Communication

The kids are social-media natives who have used Twitter to stir up the same kind of fervor Trump does. If the President can mock his enemies, they reason, then why can't high school students? "People always say, 'Get off your phones,' but social media is our weapon," says Corin. "Without it, the movement wouldn't have spread this fast."

(<http://time.com/longform/never-again-movement/>)

After venting their feelings on social media, the teens received invitations to discuss gun violence in the national media. Realizing that people were responding, Cameron Kasky invited friends over to discuss how to turn the energy into a movement. Within days they had connected with other classmates hoping to make political change, and in appearances on the Sunday talk shows they announced they would hold a rally in D.C. next month.

(<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2018/02/activists-aim-to-keep-gun-safety-movement-student-led.html>)

MSD students' campaign started percolating on social media almost immediately after the massacre, in which 17 of their classmates and educators were murdered and many others injured. Persistent and plucky from the get-go, the teens urged President Trump to justify and rectify his inaction on gun control

(<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/02/the-parkland-students-arent-going-away/554159/>)

"The tactic the Parkland students are using right now, they are unapologetically sharing their stories," Sarah Clements says. Clements was a sophomore at the nearby Newtown High when the Sandy Hook massacre happened in 2012. Her mother taught second grade at Sandy Hook." "That is what people need to hear, because that is what mass shootings are. That is what trauma means. I think there's a feeling among survivors that people don't actually know what they're like." (https://m.cnn.com/en/article/h_91ee58aaccd2a1e0bd33dd986650d927)

It quickly became clear that these survivors were poised to spearhead a political movement whose message is so loud, and so raw, it's continued to dominate mainstream news coverage and radio shows and even late-night comedy ... —an unusual phenomenon in today's real-time news environment. They've written haunting op-eds and delivered viral speeches; they've instigated rallies and prompted nationwide walkouts by students and teachers.

(<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/02/the-parkland-students-arent-going-away/554159/>)

Discuss:

- What are your thoughts and feelings about the communication young people have used to build their movement against gun violence?

Handout 5: Inclusiveness and Movement-Building

"We came from an affluent area, and we're mostly white, and we have to use that privilege," says [Parkland organizer Delaney] Tarr. The kids say they are trying to correct the imbalance. A letter from the Dream Defenders, a racial-justice group formed after the killing of Trayvon Martin, is hanging on the office wall. And in early March, the teens invited young activists from the Peace Warriors, a Chicago anti-violence group, to Parkland to discuss coordinating their efforts. "We're fighting for the same thing," says Arieyanna Williams, a high school senior from Chicago who has been working with the Peace Warriors since sophomore year. "We found our voice in Parkland. We didn't really have it here." (<http://time.com/longform/never-again-movement/>)

[T]he march's organizers have taken steps to ensure that a diversity of voices are heard, and that the [March 24, 2018] march's goals are unifying, not exclusionary. They've handed the megaphone to speakers and performers of color, as well as LGBTQ+ folks and those from communities who deal with other types of gun violence. Activist (and MSD student) David Hogg criticized the media for centering the stories of white gun control activists.

(<https://www.refinery29.com/2018/03/194622/march-gun-control-diversity>)

There's something to learn in both movements. I think that we should invite the people in the #NeverAgain movement to Black Lives Matter things, and I think we should show up for them, [says Thandiwe Abdullah, co-founder of Black Lives Matter-Los Angeles Youth Vanguard].... I want to say [to Parkland students] I really support you guys and I'm so proud of you. I really hope that we can work together and we can talk about where our two stories intersect, and how we can be allies for each other to get what we want." (<https://www.bustle.com/p/what-this-black-lives-matter-teen-activist-thinks-never-again-msd-misses-about-the-gun-debate-8587893>)

"We recognize that Parkland received more attention because of its affluence," Jaclyn Corin, a survivor of the Parkland shooting, said during her speech. "But we share this stage today and forever with those communities who have always stared down the barrel of a gun."

(<https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/24/politics/march-for-our-lives-students-checking-privilege-trnd/index.html>)

"It's likely that the diversity of the march will build solidarity with the movement going forward—not just because its speeches made clear the stakes different communities have in curbing gun violence, but also because they made clear to all the true scale of the issue. A problem large enough to touch those in communities vastly different and distant from each other makes greater demands on the individual conscience than a problem more narrowly conceived and defined."(<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/03/the-march-for-our-lives-was-a-master-class-in-identity-politics.html>)

Discuss:

- What are your thoughts and feelings about the inclusiveness and movement-building that young people have used to build their movement against gun violence?