

## Saul Alinsky

**Saul Alinsky**, in full Saul David Alinsky (born January 30, 1909, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.—died June 12, 1972, Carmel, California), American social organizer who stimulated the creation of numerous activist citizen and community groups.

After college training in archaeology and criminology, Alinsky worked as a criminologist in Illinois for eight years. In 1938, he undertook his first community organizing campaign in a working-class area of Chicago; the result was the Back of the Yards Council, which became a prototype for a generation of community organizations. In 1940, Alinsky founded the Industrial Areas Foundation and trained cadres of organizers in his techniques. Following wartime service in several federal agencies, Alinsky and his IAF team carried their techniques to communities throughout the country; the Community Service Organization in California provided early training for Cesar Chavez, who went on to found the United Farm Workers of America.

In his home town of Chicago, Alinsky accomplished one of his most notable successes with The Woodlawn Organization, one of the first successful efforts in the country to organize black inner-city residents.

Alinsky wrote the first of his three books, *Reveille for Radicals* (1946), while serving a term in jail; his other books were *Rules for Radicals* (1971) and a biography of John L. Lewis (1949). He continued his organizing activities up to the time of his death.

"Saul Alinsky". *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online.* Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2017. Web. 27 Feb. 2017  
<<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saul-Alinsky>>.