

## Words to change the world

Antoni Gutiérrez-Rubí  
[www.gutierrez-rubi.es](http://www.gutierrez-rubi.es)

[James Baldwin](#), an African-American writer and one of the most well-known pioneers of the civil rights movement, said: “You write in order to change the world ... The world changes according to how people see it and if you alter, even by a millimetre, the way people look at reality, then you can change it.” I’m going to do my best to accomplish that alteration by humbly sharing my reflections in English and Spanish with the entire community of readers of the [Personal Democracy Forum](#).

Writing as a first, basic and nonnegotiable step. Writing to think from the perspective of identity and individuality. Writing to be more, to be the voice of many, to bring together intentions, mend identities. Writing to be read, talked about, linked, distributed. Reading to transform the individual to the collective, the personal to the communal, to rebuild a collective story. Reading, because – as [Harold Bloom](#) writes – “only attentive and constant reading provides and fully develops an independent personality.”

Democracy needs voters but, more than that, readers. Reading can wage war against the submission to power, to the establishment, to injustice. Reading is at the front line for freedom. Reading the forbidden, the censored, the omitted. We need to build an alliance of readers for social change. Technology 2.0 allows us to bring back the power of words, discourse and debate because they are the raw material of networks and “conversation”. People made real in digital life in the form of twitters, feeds, posts, comments, links, text messages. People who are words. Words that are networks.

Life is not dependent on reading. But life without reading is darkness and isolation. The world needs words of hope, words to change the reality of millions of people, which are expressed in political policies of democratic and sustainable governability. Reading is the first, fundamental change.

In fewer than two years, we will see the memory capacity of our storage, processing and distribution systems double. An economy and a society built with the raw material of knowledge – sustainable, boundless...A world of words, data, information and numbers. [Online citizens](#), reader citizens, must transform this overwhelming volume into ideas. This accelerating buzz must make way for meticulous, deliberate reading of proposals for change.

Let's make the Web, the blogosphere the voice of those without a voice, the voice of citizens, of the people. Mobilisation on the Web is basically the mobilisation of readers, to not get bogged down or absorbed by the incessant influx of information that stuns and paralyzes us. Or worse, that we ignore.

Maybe the time has come to write with moderation, offering meaning to silence or pauses. Writing only the essential. Developing what is written to give consistency to our ideas and proposals. Writing what is vital to embrace reading quickly and urgently.

Thank you for inviting me to participate in shared reading, allowing me to write from time to time in what is, undoubtedly, the pre-eminent collective political blog for many readers. I hope to contribute, and above all, to learn.