

The Polls of Our Future

By Phoebe Dolan

Since I was eighteen and yelling at richer white eighteen year olds to care that earth was on fire,
I've had a mantra

"I am too privileged to be pessimistic."

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I don't have the option to say it's all going to hell and hangout in clear air with fresh well water
while millions are parched.

The Progressives I know say they are done choosing between the lesser of two evils at the
polls, their ideal candidate's name is not on the ballot, muting the radio, taking vacation.

I'm not.

Let us choose our opponents,
plan our strategy.

A Black Miami woman spoke to me last month,
wishing, demanding that voters choose the better option for the sake of working people, that
they don't tune out, that they consider the material conditions.

The privilege that forces me towards optimism,
powers itself from proud
women standing strong in the blistering heat of Florida.

Pessimism bores holes in the limestone bedrock of Miami,
builds roads for fracking trucks drilling in the Heartland,
covers mangroves in concrete jetties.

Strategic optimism grows community gardens through asphalt cracks,
renovates mansions into homes for arriving families,
builds soils where persimmons, chestnuts and watermelons fruit.

Joy and rigor

We are at the polls of our future

Choose boldly.