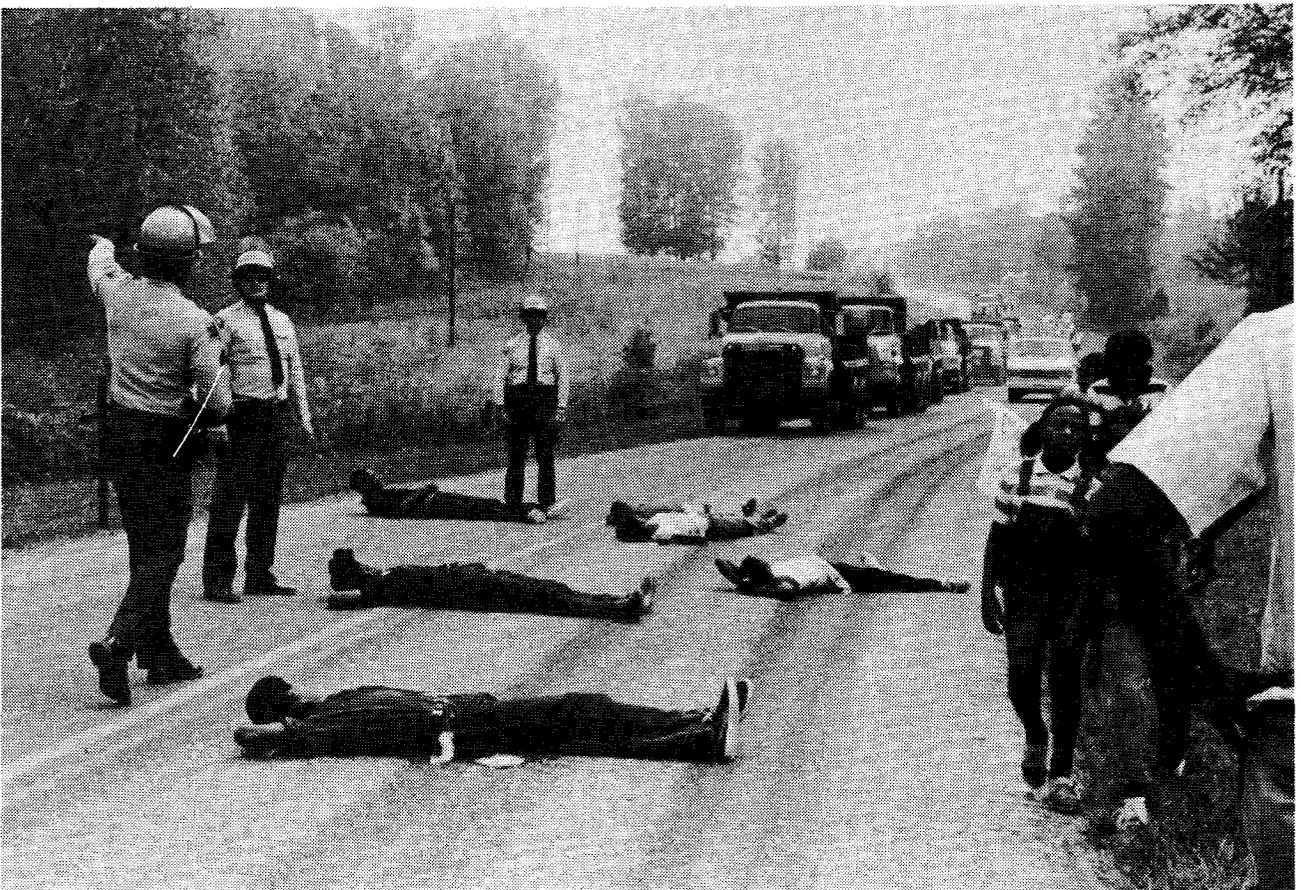


HANDBOOK FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION



*Considering how dangerous everything is,
nothing is really very frightening.*

— Gertrude Stein

Introduction

This handbook comes out of a long tradition of nonviolent direct action handbooks. It pays tribute to the progressive and social change movements that have brought us to where we are today. For years many of us have lamented the fact that we didn't have one handbook we could use in an ongoing way for training sessions, and as a primer for people who want to know more about nonviolent action. We have often been faced with trying to locate outdated handbooks from previous actions, or having no prepared resource available. This handbook is an attempt to fill that need. We laughingly refer to this as our "generic handbook" which we hope people will use, adding supplements as needed for specific actions. We hope this will be useful to both people and organizations wishing to promote or learn more about nonviolent action.

In 1978 the Clamshell Alliance produced a handbook for a civil disobedience action at the yet unbuilt Seabrook nuclear power plant in New Hampshire. In the following years most major civil disobedience actions produced their own handbooks following the format of the first Clamshell one. It has been exciting to watch as each new handbook is produced. Many of the same articles have been used over and over, but each handbook committee made a few important changes to classic

pieces. Political struggles within groups about certain subject areas were often accepted as mandatory pieces in future handbooks. There were many landmark handbooks that broke new ground in expanding areas covered. "June 14, 1982, Blockade the Bombmakers" created for the civil disobedience action for the Second Session for Disarmament at the United Nations, organized by the War Resisters League, has contributed greatly to this handbook. Another which broke new ground and is also used extensively here is the "International Day of Nuclear Disarmament Handbook" produced by the Livermore Action Group in Berkeley, California in 1983. The handbook for the Supreme Court Action, "Out and Outraged: For Love, Life and Liberation" from October 13, 1987, for the National March for Lesbian and Gay Rights, is another example furthering the boundaries of information covered. Often this new work expanded the oppression and nonviolence sections of the handbooks so that we could understand the obstacles and promise that our movement faces.

We have not been able to give credit to original authors in all cases. Many early handbooks were a collective project which did not single out specific authors, and some pieces have been so altered over the years that even the original authors

may not recognize them anymore. In an attempt to give credit to all the volunteers who have labored over handbooks we are listing below the handbook committees of three of the handbooks listed above. We want to thank everyone who has contributed to the others, especially those artists and photographers whose work still inspires.

Throughout this handbook are photographs representing a wide range of nonviolent actions within the United States. Their diversity shows the scope of nonviolent resistance — from individual to mass actions, addressing many progressive issues. Most of the photos are from the 1980's, dispelling the myth that civil disobedience and direct actions are something from the past. They serve as an inspiration for those contemplating action.

To facilitate nonviolence training, the War Resisters League has a directory listing nonviolence trainers from across the U.S. If you'd like more information about nonviolence trainers or would like to join the network, please contact War Resisters League.

Kate Donnelly for the handbook committee.

"Blockade the Bombmakers" Handbook

People who worked on "Blockade the Bombmakers" handbook:

Peg and Belle Averill, Steve Banks, Margaret Bergamini, Riley Bostrum, Julia Cochrane, Kate Donnelly, Ed Hedemann, Holly Hodge, Thaddeus Jurczynski, Sharon Kleinbaum, Lauri Lowell, John Miller, Esther Pank, Susan Pines, Murray Rosenblith and John Seward.

"International Day of Nuclear Disarmament" Handbook Collective: Donna Canali, Patrick Diehl, Arleen Feng, Jim Hildreth, John Lavine and Karen Rachels.

"Out and Outraged: For Love, Life and Liberation" handbook Committee:

Nancy Alach, Karen Beetle, Laura Booth, Katherine Diaz, Eileen Hansen and Jessica Shubow.

Prices

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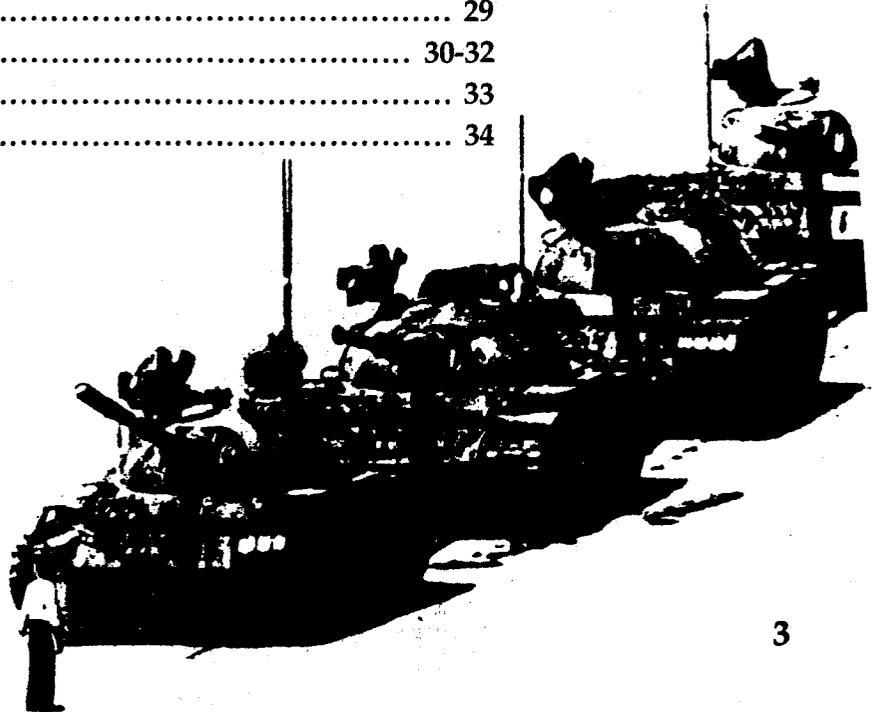
Edited and Designed by Kate Donnelly.

Cover photo: Demonstrators protested every day for six weeks, lying in the road to stop trucks containing PCB-laced soil to dump in Warren County, North Carolina, in 1982.

Photo by Jenny Labalme. From "A Road To Walk — A Struggle For Environmental Justice," 1987. Available from Regulator Bookshop, 720 Ninth Street, Durham, NC 27705.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
History of Mass Nonviolent Action	4
Nonviolent Response to Personal Violence	5
Practicing Nonviolence	6
Nonviolence Training	7
Affinity Groups.....	8-9
Consensus Decision Making.....	10
Working Together for Change	11
Legal Issues/Risking Arrest	12
Representing Yourself	14
Noncooperation	15
Jail Solidarity	16
Serving Time in Jail	17
We're All in the Same Boat.....	18
Oppression	19
Racism	20
Racism Guidelines	21
Anti-Semitism	22
Sexism	23
Confronting Classism	24
Agism.....	25
Homophobia	26
Disability Awareness	27
Peacekeepers	28
We Make a Difference	29
Campaigns.....	30-32
Bibliography	33
Periodicals	34



History of Mass Nonviolent Action

The use of nonviolence runs throughout history. There have been numerous instances of people courageously and nonviolently refusing cooperation with injustice. However, the fusion of organized mass struggle and nonviolence is relatively new. It originated largely with Mohandas Gandhi in 1906 at the onset of the South African campaign for Indian rights. Later, the Indian struggle for complete independence from the British Empire included a number of spectacular nonviolent campaigns. Perhaps the most notable was the year-long Salt campaign in which 100,000 Indians were jailed for deliberately violating the Salt Laws.

The refusal to counter the violence of the repressive social system with more violence is a tactic that has also been used by other movements. The militant campaign for women's suffrage in Britain included a variety of nonviolent tactics such as boycotts, noncooperation, limited property destruction, civil disobedience, mass marches and demonstrations, filling the jails, and disruption of public ceremonies.

The Salvadoran people have used nonviolence as one powerful and necessary element of their struggle. Particularly during the 1960s and 70s, Christian based communities, labor unions, campesino organizations, and student groups held occupations and sit-ins at universities, government offices, and places of work such as factories and haciendas.

There is rich tradition of nonviolent protest in this country as well, including Harriet Tubman's underground railroad during the civil war and Henry David Thoreau's refusal to pay war taxes. Nonviolent civil disobedience was a critical factor in gaining women the right to vote in the United States, as well.

The U.S. labor movement has also used nonviolence with striking effectiveness in a number of instances, such as the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) free speech confrontations, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) sit-down strikes from 1935-1937 in auto plants, and the UFW grape and lettuce boycotts.

Using mass nonviolent action, the

civil rights movement changed the face of the South. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) initiated modern nonviolent action for civil rights with sit-ins and a freedom ride in the 1940s. The successful Montgomery bus boycott electrified the nation. Then, the early 1960s exploded with nonviolent actions: sit-ins at lunch counters and other facilities, organized by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); Freedom Rides to the South organized by CORE; the nonviolent battles against segregation in Birmingham, Alabama, by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); and the 1963 March on Washington, which drew 250,000 participants.

Opponents of the Vietnam War employed the use of draft card burnings, draft file destruction, mass demonstrations (such as the 500,000 who turned out in 1969 in Washington, D.C.), sit-ins, blocking induction centers, draft and tax resistance, and the historic 1971 May Day traffic blocking in Washington, D.C. in which 13,000 people were arrested.

Since the mid-70s, we have seen increasing nonviolent activity against the nuclear arms race and nuclear power industry. Nonviolent civil disobedience actions have taken place at dozens of nuclear weapons research installations, storage areas, missile silos, test sites, military bases, corporate and government offices and nuclear power plants. In the late 1970s mass civil disobedience actions took place at nuclear power plants from Seabrook, New Hampshire to the Diablo Canyon reactor in California and most states in between in this country and in other countries around the world. In 1982, 1750 people were arrested at the U.N. missions of the five major nuclear powers. Mass actions took place at the Livermore Laboratories in California and SAC bases in the midwest. In the late 80s a series of actions took place at the Nevada test site. International disarmament actions changed world opinion about nuclear weapons.

In 1980 women who were concerned with the destruction of the Earth and who were interested in exploring the connections between

feminism and nonviolence were coming together. In November of 1980 and 1981 the Women's Pentagon Actions, where hundreds of women came together to challenge patriarchy and militarism, took place. A movement grew that found ways to use direct action to put pressure on the military establishment and to show positive examples of life-affirming ways to live together. This movement spawned women's peace camps at military bases around the world from Greenham Common, England to Puget Sound Peace Camp in Washington state, with camps in Japan and Italy among others.

The anti-apartheid movement in the 80s has built upon the powerful and empowering use of civil disobedience by the civil rights movement in the 60s. In November of 1984, a campaign began that involved daily civil disobedience in front of the South African Embassy. People, including members of Congress, national labor and religious leaders, celebrities, students, community leaders, teachers, and others, risked arrest every weekday for over a year. In the end over 3,100 people were arrested protesting apartheid and U.S. corporate and government support. At the same time, support actions for this campaign were held in 26 major cities, resulting in an additional 5,000 arrests.

We also saw civil disobedience being incorporated as a key tactic in the movement against intervention in Central America. Beginning in 1983, national actions at the White House and State Department as well as local actions began to spread. In November 1984, the Pledge of Resistance was formed. Since then, over 5,000 people have been arrested at military installations, congressional offices, federal buildings, and CIA offices. Many people have also broken the law by providing sanctuary for Central American refugees and through the Lenten Witness, major denomination representatives have participated in weekly nonviolent civil disobedience actions at the Capitol.

Student activists have incorporated civil disobedience in both their anti-apartheid and Central America

work. Divestment became the campus slogan of the 80s. Students built shantytowns and staged sit-ins at Administrator's offices. Hundreds have been arrested resulting in the divestment of over 130 campuses and the subsequent withdrawal of over \$4 billion from the South African economy. Central America student activists have carried out campaigns to protest CIA recruitment on campuses. Again, hundreds of students across the country have been arrested in this effort.

Nonviolent direct action has been an integral part of the renewed activism in the lesbian and gay community since 1987, when ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) was formed. ACT UP and other groups have organized hundreds of civil disobedience actions across the country, focusing not only on AIDS but on the increasing climate of homophobia and attacks on lesbians and gay men. On October 13, 1987, the Supreme Court was the site of the first national lesbian and gay civil disobedience action, where nearly 600 people were arrested protesting the decision in *Hardwick vs. Bowers*, which upheld sodomy laws. This was the largest mass arrest in D.C. since 1971.

Political Analysis

Power itself is not derived through violence, though in governmental form it is usually violent in nature. Governmental power is often maintained through oppression and the tacit compliance of the majority of the governed. Any significant withdrawal of that compliance will restrict or dissolve governmental control. Apathy in the face of injustice is a form of violence. Struggle and conflict are often necessary to correct injustice.

Our struggle is not easy, and we must not think of nonviolence as a "safe" way to fight oppression. The strength of nonviolence comes from our willingness to take personal risk without threatening other people.

It is essential that we separate the individual from the role she/he plays. The "enemy" is the system that casts people in oppressive roles.

Nonviolent Response to Personal Violence

Nonviolence focuses on communication:

1. Your objectives must be reasonable. You must believe you are fair and you must be able to communicate this to your opponent.
2. Maintain as much eye contact as possible.
3. Make no abrupt gestures. Move slowly. When practical, tell your opponent what you are going to do before you do it. Don't say anything threatening, critical, or hostile.
4. Don't be afraid of stating the obvious; say simply, "You're shouting at me," or "You're hurting my arm."
5. Someone in the process of committing an act of violence has strong expectations as to how his/her victim will behave. If you manage to behave differently —

in a nonthreatening manner — you can interrupt the flow of events that would have culminated in an act of violence. You must create a scenario new to your opponent.

6. Seek to befriend your opponent's better nature; even the most brutal and brutalized among us have some spark of decency which the nonviolent defender can reach.
7. Don't shut down in response to physical violence; you have to play it by ear. The best rule is to resist as firmly as you can without escalating the anger or the violence. Try varying approaches and keep trying to alter your opponent's picture of the situation.
8. Get your opponent talking and listen to what s/he says. Encourage him/her to talk about what s/he believes, wishes, fears. Don't argue but at the same time don't give the impression you agree with assertions that are cruel or immoral. The listening is more important than what you say — keep the talk going and keep it calm.

— Adapted from an article by Markley Morris



Demonstrators block the gate at Fort Lewis, Tacoma, WA. April 1988. Photo by Barbara Fogel, © 1988.

Practicing Nonviolence

"Without a direct action expression of it, nonviolence, to my mind, is meaningless."

— M.K. Gandhi

Practice is a key word in understanding nonviolence. A nonviolent approach assumes that people take active roles, making choices and commitments and building on their experience. It also presents a constant challenge: to weave together the diversity of individual experiences into an ever-changing vision. There is no fixed, static "definition" of nonviolence.

Nonviolence is active. Although to some the word nonviolence implies passivity, nonviolence is actually an active form of resistance. It analyzes the sources of institutional violence and intervenes on a philosophical and political level through direct and persistent actions.

Gandhi's vision of nonviolence is translated as "clinging to truth" or sometimes "truth force", which includes both determination to speak out even when one's truth is unpopular, and willingness to hear the truth of other people's experience. He also defined two other components of nonviolence: the refusal to harm others and willingness to suffer for one's beliefs. Many activists who adopt nonviolent tactics are reluctant to accept these aspects philosophically, or to prescribe them to others. For example, Third World people in the U.S. and other countries are often pressed to use violent action to defend their lives. Some feminists point out that since our society pressures women to be self-sacrificing, the decision to accept suffering is often reinforcement of women's oppression rather than a free choice.

Jo Vellacott, in her essay "Women, Peace and Power", speaks of violence as "resourcelessness" — seeing few options, feeling like one's self or small group is alone against a hostile or at best indifferent universe. Many societal institutions and conventions, despite their original intention to benefit at least some people, perpetuate this violence by depriving people of their lives, health, self-respect or hope. Non-

violence then becomes resourcefulness — seeing the possibilities for change in oneself and in others, and having the power to act on those possibilities. Much of the task of becoming effectively nonviolent lies in removing the preconceptions that keep us from seeing those resources. Undoing the violence within us involves challenging myths that we are not good enough, not smart enough or not skilled enough to act. The best way to do this is to try it, working with friends or in small groups at first, and starting with roleplays or less intimidating activities like leafletting. As confidence in our own resourcefulness grows, we become more able to support each other in maintaining our nonviolent actions.

Anger and emotional violence

Getting rid of the patterns of violence that societal conditioning has placed in us is not always a polite process; it involves releasing despair, anger, and other emotions that haven't been allowed to surface before. The myth that emotions are destructive and unreliable prevents us from trusting our own experience and forces us to rely on rigid formulas and people we perceive as authorities for guidance. Most of us have been taught that expressing anger especially provokes disapproval, invalidation and physical attack, or else will hurt others and make us suffer guilt. This conditioning serves to make us both repress our own anger and also respond repressively to each other's anger.

Anger is a sign of life. It arises with recognition that injustice exists and contains the hope that things can be different. It is often hard to see this clearly because, as Barbara Deming says,

"... our anger is in great part hidden — from others and even from ourselves — and when it is finally allowed to emerge into the open — this pride — it is shaking, unsure of itself, and so quick to be violent. For now it believes and yet it doesn't quite dare to believe that it can claim its rights at last."

To make room for a healthy expression of and response to this an-

I DON'T HAVE OH, YES, SOR-
ALL DAY. YOU RY. I'LL BE
WANT TO BE PASSIVELY
ARRESTED OR RESISTING.

! NOT?

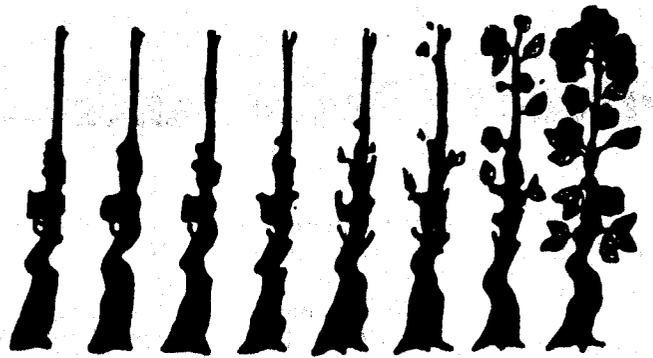


ger, it helps to create a general attitude of respect and support. Verbal violence — snide or vicious tones, interrupting, shouting down or misrepresenting what people say — is the antithesis of respect and communication. When people sense this happening, they should pause and consider their feelings and objectives. Clearing the air is especially important when people are feeling defensive or threatened; developing a sense of safety and acceptance of our anger with each other helps us concentrate all our emotional energies towards constructive, effective action.

"Non-violence is the constant awareness of the dignity and humanity of oneself and others; it seeks truth and justice; it renounces violence both in method and in attitude; it is a courageous acceptance of active love and goodwill as the instrument with which to overcome evil and transform both oneself and others. It is the willingness to undergo suffering rather than inflict it. It excludes retaliation and flight."

— Wally Nelson,
conscientious objector,
civil rights activist, and tax resister

Nonviolence Training



Historically, nonviolence training was used extensively during the civil rights movement, in Gandhi's campaigns in India against the British, and in recent years in the struggles against nuclear technology, against U.S. policy in Central America and Southern Africa and for the rights of farm workers, women and people with AIDS, to name a few.

The purpose of training is for participants to form a common understanding of the use of nonviolence. It gives a forum to share ideas about nonviolence, oppression, fears and feelings. It allows people to meet and build solidarity with each other and provides an opportunity to form affinity groups. It is often used as preparation for action and gives people a chance to learn about an action, its tone, and legal ramifications. It helps people to decide whether or not they will participate in an action. Through role playing, people learn what to expect from police, officials, other people in the action and themselves.

Nonviolence training can range from several hours to several months. Most typical in the United States are sessions that run up to eight hours and have 10-25 people with two trainers leading the discussion and roleplays. Areas covered in a session include:

- History and philosophy of nonviolence, including role plays on the use of nonviolence and nonviolent responses to violence.
- Roleplays and exercises in consensus decision making, conflict resolution, and quick decision making.
- A presentation of legal ramifications of civil disobedience and discussion on noncooperation and bail solidarity.
- Exercises and discussion of the role of oppression in our society and the progressive movement.
- What is an affinity group and what are the roles within the group.
- A sharing of fears and feelings related to nonviolence and nonviolent action.

A Creative Combination

This is the heart of my argument: We can put more pressure on the antagonist for whom we show human concern. It is precisely solicitude for his person in combination with a stubborn interference with his actions that can give us a very special degree of control (precisely in our acting both with love, if you will — in the sense that we respect his human rights — and truthfulness, in the sense that we act out fully our objections to his violating our rights). We put upon him two pressures — the pressure of our defiance of him and the pressure of our respect for his life — and it happens that in combination these two pressures are uniquely effective.

The Two Hands

They have as it were two hands upon him — the one calming him, making him ask questions, as the other makes him move.

— Barbara Deming,
"On Revolution and Equilibrium"

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote that the philosophy and practice of nonviolence has six basic elements. First, nonviolence is resistance to evil and oppression. It is a human way to fight. Second, it does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his/her friendship and understanding. Third, the nonviolent method is an attack on the forces of evil rather than against persons doing the evil. It seeks to defeat the evil and not the persons doing the evil and injustice. Fourth, it is the willingness to accept suffering without retaliation. Fifth, a nonviolent resister avoids both external physical and internal spiritual violence — not only refuses to shoot, but also to hate, an opponent. The ethic of real love is at the center of nonviolence. Sixth, the believer in nonviolence has a deep faith in the future and the forces in the universe are seen to be on the side of justice.

(Stride Toward Freedom
Perennial Library,
Harper & Row, PP.83-88)



Demonstrators at Big Mountain Survival Camp, Arizona, protest forced relocation of Native Americans. Photo by Brenton Kelly © 1986. Guardian Photos.

Affinity Groups

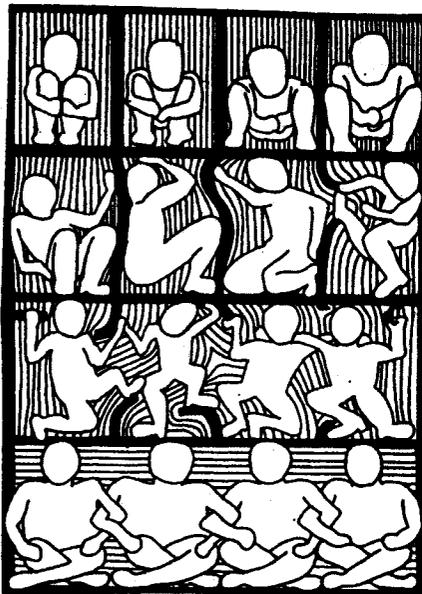
Affinity groups are self-sufficient support systems of about 5 to 15 people. A number of affinity groups may work together toward a common goal in a large action, or one affinity group might conceive of and carry out an action on its own. Sometimes, affinity groups remain together over a long period of time, existing as political support and/or study groups, and only occasionally participating in actions.

If you are planning to do civil disobedience, it is a good idea to either form an affinity group or join an already existing one. Affinity groups serve as a source of support and solidarity for their members. Feelings of being isolated or alienated from the movement, the crowd, or the world in general can be alleviated through the familiarity and trust which develops when an affinity group works and acts together. By generating this familiarity, the affinity group structure reduces the possibility of infiltration by outside provocateurs. However, participants in an action should be prepared to be separated from their affinity group.

Affinity groups form the basic decision-making bodies of mass actions. As long as they remain within the nonviolence guidelines, affinity groups are generally encouraged to develop any form of participation they choose.

Every affinity group must decide for itself how it will make decisions and what it wants to do. This process starts when an affinity group forms. If a new person asks to join an affinity group, she/he should find out what the group believes in and what they plan to do, and decide if she/he can share it. Some groups ask that all members share a commitment to feminism, for example, or to nonviolence as a way of life. Others, which have specifically formed to do a particular action, might have less sweeping agreements.

A group cannot hope to reach consensus decisions without having some base of agreement. Once a base is agreed upon, working out the details of specific issues and actions is not as difficult as one might expect, providing that there is a wil-



LNS/cdf

lingness to go along with a good idea, even if it is someone else's. If you find that you cannot work effectively with your group, it might be better to try to find another one.

Affinity groups for mass actions are often formed during nonviolence training sessions. It is a good idea to meet with your affinity group a few times before an action to get to know them if you are not already friends, and to discuss issues such as noncooperation and relationship to the legal system, the role your group will play (in a large action), etc. After an action, it is also helpful to meet with your group to evaluate and share experiences.

Roles Within the Affinity Group

These roles can be rotated:

- Facilitator(s), vibes-watchers.
- Spokesperson to convey affinity group (A.G.) decisions to core support and other A.G.'s in a mass action.
- Support person(s) once you take on this responsibility, you should see it through.

Support

The role of support in a civil disobedience action is crucial. Support people accept the responsibility of being a visible, involved contact to the outside once a member of the affinity group is arrested. They are the personal extension of the care and concern an affinity group shares among its members, an extension of the need all the participants have to see that individuals who participate in nonviolent direct action are not isolated, neglected, and overburdened because of their political statement.

It can be hard for you to decide whether to do civil disobedience or support. It is strongly encouraged that those considering doing support go through nonviolence training. In making the decision, you could consider how each role would affect your family, job, and other commitments, as well as your legal status (i.e. being on probation, not being a U.S. citizen, etc.). During and after a mass action, be sure to stay in touch with support people from other affinity groups, for information sharing and emotional support.

Before an Action:

Help the affinity group decide upon and initiate their action, provide physical and moral support, and share in the excitement and sense of determination.

- Know the people in your affinity group by name and description.
- Know where people who are arrested are likely to be taken.
- Make a confidential list with the following information:
 - Name of arrestee
 - Name used for arrest
 - Whether or not individual wants to bail out, and when.
 - Who arrestee would like contacted and under what circumstances.
 - Special medical information or other special needs info.
 - Whether the individual plans to cooperate, and in what ways.
 - Whether the person is a minor.
 - Whether the person wants/needs a lawyer.

For a mass action:

- Know who the support coordinators are.
- Know the phone number of the action office.
- Be sure the group fills out an affinity group check-in sheet.
- Be sure your name, phone number, where you can be reached, and how long you will be available to do support work are written on your affinity group's list.

During an Action:

- Know the boundaries of arrest and non-arrest areas, if applicable.
- In a mass action, give emergency info about yourself to another support person.
- Bring paper and pen, and lots of food for yourself and people doing civil disobedience (CDers).
- Hold ID, money, keys and any other belongings for CDers.
- Keep in touch with CDers for as long as possible, noting any changes in arrest strategies, etc.
- Once arrests begin, write down each individual's name, and the time and nature of the arrest, the activity of the person arrested, the treatment of the arresting officer (get the badge number, if possible), and who is noncooperating.

• At least one support person from your affinity group should stay at the place of arrest until all members of your group are arrested, and at least one should go to where those arrested are being taken as soon as the first member of your group is arrested.

At the Courthouse: (if that's where CDers are taken)

Be present during arraignments, and try to keep track of the following info for each person in your group. During a mass action, call this info into the office.

- Name of judge or magistrate.
- Name of CDer (Doe # if applicable).
- Charge
- Plea (Not Guilty, Nolo Contendere, Creative Plea, Guilty, etc.).
- If found guilty, sentence imposed.
- If not guilty:
 - Amount of bail, if applicable.
 - Whether the person pays bail or not.
- Date, time and place of trial.
- If there's a lawyer in the courtroom ask her/his name.
- Any other info that seems relevant.

After the Action:

- Call whoever needs to be in-

formed about each person who was arrested.

- Go to trials or any other appearances of CDers; help with rides.
- Help gather information for prose defendants.
- In a mass action, be sure to let the office and/or support coordinators know when/if you have to leave town and give them all relevant info about the people you've been supporting.

If CDers are in jail, it is important for someone to be near a phone so that call from jail may be received. You will probably be the go-between for your A.G. members who are not jailed together, as well.

- Contact the office (in a mass arrest) about people in jail and where they are being held.
- Be prepared to bring medication to the jail site for who ever needs it, and follow up on whether or not it has been administered.
- Visit your group members in jail, and pass on any messages.
- Take care of plants, pets, cars, etc., for CDers.
- Write letters to the people in jail; organize a support vigil in front of the jail.
- Be there to pick CDers up when they are released from jail.
- Support other support people — working together will ease the load.

— Nancy Alach



AIDS activists risk arrest at the FDA headquarters in Rockville, MD. October 1988. Photo by Marilyn Humphries, © 1988, Guardian Photos.

Consensus Decision-Making

What is consensus?

Consensus is a process for group decision-making. It is a method by which an entire group of people can come to an agreement. The input and ideas of all participants are gathered and synthesized to arrive at a final decision acceptable to all. Through consensus, we are not only working to achieve better solutions, but also to promote the growth of community and trust.

Consensus vs. voting

Voting is a means by which we choose one alternative from several. Consensus, on the other hand, is a process of synthesizing many diverse elements together.

Voting is a win or lose model, in which people are more often concerned with the numbers it takes to "win" than with the issue itself. Voting does not take into account individual feelings or needs. In essence, it is a quantitative, rather than qualitative, method of decision-making.

With consensus people can and should work through differences and reach a mutually satisfactory position. It is possible for one person's insights or strongly held beliefs to sway the whole group. No ideas are lost, each member's input is valued as part of the solution.

A group committed to consensus may utilize other forms of decision-making (individual, compromise, majority rules) when appropriate; however, a group that has adopted a consensus model will use that process for any item that brings up a lot of emotions, is something that concerns people's ethics, politics, morals or other areas where there is much investment.

What does consensus mean?

Consensus does not mean that everyone thinks that the decision made is necessarily the best one possible, or even that they are sure it will work. What it does mean is that in coming to that decision, no one felt that her/his position on the matter was misunderstood or that it wasn't given a proper hearing. Hopefully, everyone will think it is the best decision; this often happens because, when it works, collective intelligence does come up with better solutions than could individuals.

Consensus takes more time and member skill, but uses lots of resources before a decision is made, creates commitment to the decision and often facilitates creative decision. It

gives everyone some experience with new processes of interaction and conflict resolution, which is basic but important skill-building. For consensus to be a positive experience, it is best if the group has 1) common values, 2) some skill in group process and conflict resolution, or a commitment to let these be facilitated, 3) commitment and responsibility to the group by its members and 4) sufficient time for everyone to participate in the process.

Forming the consensus proposals

During discussion a proposal for resolution is put forward. It is amended and modified through more discussion, or withdrawn if it seems to be a dead end. During this discussion period it is important to articulate differences clearly. It is the responsibility of those who are having trouble with a proposal to put forth alternative suggestions.

The fundamental right of consensus is for all people to be able to express themselves in their own words and of their own will. The fundamental responsibility of consensus is to assure others of their right to speak and be heard. Coercion and trade-offs are replaced with creative alternatives, and compromise with synthesis.

When a proposal seems to be well understood by everyone, and there are no new changes asked for, the facilitator(s) can ask if there are any objections or reservations to it. If there are no objections, there can be a call for consensus. If there are still no objections, then after a moment of silence you have your decision. Once consensus does appear to have been reached, it really helps to have someone repeat the decision to the group so everyone is clear on what has been decided.

Difficulties in reaching consensus

If a decision has been reached, or is on the verge of being reached that you cannot support, there are several ways to express your objections:

Non-support ("I don't see the need for this, but I'll go along.")

Reservations ("I think this may be a mistake but I can live with it.")

Standing aside ("I personally can't do this, but I won't stop others from doing it.")

Blocking ("I cannot support this or allow the group to support this. It is immoral." If a final decision violates someone's fundamental moral values they are obligated to block consensus.)

Withdrawing from the group.

Obviously, if many people express

non-support or reservations or stand aside or leave the group, it may not be a viable decision even if no one directly blocks it. This is what is known as "lukewarm" consensus and it is just as desirable as a lukewarm beer or a lukewarm bath.

If consensus is blocked and no new consensus can be reached, the group stays with whatever the previous decision was on the subject, or does nothing if that is applicable. Major philosophical or moral questions that will come up with each affinity group will have to be worked through as soon as the group forms.

Roles in a consensus meeting

There are several roles which, if filled, can help consensus decision-making run smoothly. The facilitator(s) aids the group in defining decisions that need to be made, helps them through the stages of reaching an agreement, keeps the meeting moving, focuses discussion to the point at hand; makes sure everyone has the opportunity to participate, and formulates and tests to see if consensus has been reached. Facilitators help to direct the process of the meeting, not its content. They never make decisions for the group. If a facilitator feels too emotionally involved in an issue of discussion and cannot remain neutral in behavior, if not in attitude, then s/he should ask someone to take over the task of facilitation for that agenda item.

A vibes-watcher is someone besides the facilitator who watches and comments on individual and group feelings and patterns of participation. Vibes-watchers need to be especially tuned in to the sexism of group dynamics.

A recorder can take notes on the meeting, especially of decisions made and means of implementation and a time-keeper keeps things going on schedule so that each agenda item can be covered in the time allotted for it (if discussion runs over the time for an item, the group may or may not decide to contract for more time to finish up).

Even though individuals take on these roles, all participants in a meeting should be aware of and involved in the issues, process, and feelings of the group, and should share their individual expertise in helping the group run smoothly and reach a decision. This is especially true when it comes to finding compromise agreements to seemingly contradictory positions.

Legal Issues / Risking Arrest

The decisions that we make are political, not legal. The reaction of the government to what we are doing, to what we stand for, will also be political. We can have quite an impact on what happens to us in jail, in court and during processing, if we are prepared. It can be as important a part of our nonviolent opposition as anything that comes before the arrest.

In a large demonstration, the police may separate us from each other, breaking up affinity groups and possibly isolating individuals. In order to maintain our spirits and effectiveness, we must develop an ability to deal with the legal system, while trusting in the solidarity of other demonstrators. Solidarity is, in reality, more a state of mind that unites us through a long struggle than a specific course of action that everyone follows. Solidarity does not demand that everyone make the same choice in every situation. It is an internal force within each of us and among us as a group. It is our commitment to one another and to our common cause; it is our dedication to support one another and to pursue our common goals at all times, in every situation, to the best of our ability. Solidarity cannot be broken by courts, jails or other external forces. If we hold fast to it, it is ours.

Our approach to the legal system is up to us. We retain as much power as we refuse to relinquish to the government — city, state or federal.

The criminal "justice" system functions to alienate and isolate the accused individual, to destroy one's power and purposefulness and to weave a web of confusion and mystification around any legal proceedings. If we are well prepared for our contact with this system, we can limit the effect it has upon us, both personally and politically. It is extremely important that we be firmly rooted in our own spirit and purposes, our commitment to one another and history and tradition of social struggle of which we are a part. We should try to maintain our nonviolent attitude of honesty and directness while dealing with law enforcement officers and the courts.

Legal System Flowchart

STEPS	DESCRIPTION OF WHAT HAPPENS	CHOICES
Warning or Command	Officer may give warning to leave or command to stop doing something.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay or leave • Don't do or stop doing actions.
Arrest	Officer physically grabs you, takes you to police wagon or squad car. May say you are under arrest. Pat search, sometimes handcuffs. Taken to holding area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Go limp • Flee (if left unguarded)
Processing and Booking	Police question arrestees concerning information for arrest reports (name/address/occupation/social security number/financial); may try to get additional information for intelligence. Possible photographing/fingerprinting/property and clothes may be taken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide what, if any, information to give police; e.g. false, correct or no name. • Refuse to post bond • Demand no cash bonds or equal bonds for all (bail & jail solidarity)
Charging	Prosecutor decides what charges to pursue	
First Court Date	Appear in court alone, or most likely with other arrestees. Attempt to dispose of case by plea or trial, or continue case for bench or jury trial or plea negotiations later. Prosecutor not always ready for trial.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawyers or Pro Se - Plea - Bench Trial - Demand Jury trial in future
Trial	Trials can vary from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — a few minute bench trial with or without a lawyer — to a full jury trial with expert witnesses lasting a week or more, — or any place in between. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defense based on noncommission of acts and/or necessity of actions • Small or large resources of time and money
Verdict	Judge or Jury decides <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Acquittal (not guilty) — Guilty 	
Sentencing	Hearing on appropriate sentence	



• Can testify why actions were justified, necessary, etc., and your background. Sentencing statement is powerful opportunity to bring out political and moral issues, show non-recalcitrance. Remain silent

Nonviolent action draws its strength from open confrontation and non-cooperation, not from evasion or subterfuge. Bail solidarity, noncooperation and other forms of resistance can be used to reaffirm our position that we are not criminals and that we are taking positive steps towards freeing the world from oppression.

Discuss the issues raised in this legal section with your affinity group — particularly noncooperation and your attitude toward trials. Think out various hypothetical situations and try to understand how you will respond to these situations.

Some demonstrators refuse to cooperate partially or wholly with court procedures; they refuse to enter a plea, to retain or accept a lawyer, to stand up in court, to speak to the judge as a symbol of court authority (but rather speak to him or her as a fellow human being), to take the stand or question witnesses. They may make a speech to those assembled in the courtroom or simply lie or sit on the floor if they are carried in, or attempt to leave if not forcibly restrained. The penalties for such noncooperation can be severe, because many judges take such action to be a personal affront as well as an insult to the court. Some judges, on the other hand, overlook such conduct, or attempt to communicate with the demonstrators.

Physical noncooperation may be sustained through the booking process and through court appearances; it may continue through the entire time of one's detention. This might involve a refusal to walk, to eat, to clean oneself and one's surroundings. It may even lead prison officials to force-feed and diaper the inmate.

Another form of noncooperation is fasting — taking no food and no liquid except water, or perhaps fruit juice. While abstaining from food can be uncomfortable and eventually risky, abstaining from all food and liquid can be extremely dangerous almost immediately. Five or six days is probably the longest a human can go without liquid before incurring brain damage and serious dehydration. Usually authorities watch persons who are "water fasting" closely

and take steps to hospitalize them before serious consequences occur, but no demonstrator can ever count on such attention and should therefore be prepared to give up the fast or perhaps be allowed to die, as did several Irish freedom fighters during the H-Block hunger strike in 1981.

There are other forms noncooperation may take and other reasons for it to occur. The refusal to give one's name undoubtedly springs from a desire to resist and confound a system that assigns criminal records to people, that categorizes and spies upon them and that punishes organizers and repeat offenders more strenuously. It relays a mes-

sage that none of us should be singled out: we'll be doing this again and again.

Many nonviolent activists, however, acting with the openness and confidence that characterizes and strengthens nonviolent action, do not choose to hide their identities. They may still noncooperate, however, by refusing to reveal an address, or by refusing to promise to return for trial, increasing the burden on the courts to quickly deal with the demonstrators and enhancing their solidarity and strength as people working together, filling the jails.



Women's Pentagon Action, November 1981 — Women weave a web to close down an entrance to the building. Photo by Nancy Wasserman, © 1981.

Representing Yourself

"When arrested while making a statement through an act of civil disobedience, I prefer to go pro se (represent myself) because of the control it gives me in the courtroom. It means that I am a woman in charge of my life and responsible for my decisions and behavior, and that I am prepared for the results of my actions. Using a lawyer means that I must sit quietly and humbly through specious legal arrangements over my behavior and the proper punishment for it. It means that I am like a child with parents arguing about my naughtiness and what to do about it so that I will "learn a lesson" or "will have learned a lesson." I should add, however, that having a lawyer around to advise and explain potentially complicated issues is helpful."

—Catherine de Laubenfels,
arrested at
Women's Pentagon Action
1980, 1981

The Constitution gives you the right to represent yourself. The right is founded in the understanding that someone else may not say quite what you want said in your behalf, or may not say it in the way you want it said. You therefore cannot be forced to let someone speak for you.

Trials and hearings resulting from civil disobedience are particularly suited to unearthing the reasons behind, and the possibilities for, self-representation. Perhaps the CDR can better explain his or her own motivation. Why water down a

deeply political and personal act of civil disobedience with a lot of legalistic jargon? Why let the application of the energizing ideas contained in the philosophy of non-violent civil disobedience stop with the arrests? If you choose to participate in action, it will be a result of much thought and consideration. Why not continue to involve yourself fully all the way through the trial? A lawyer must adhere to the legal restrictions of the courtroom and translate everything into the proper categories. You as a *pro se* litigant have much greater leeway. If you don't understand something don't hesitate to ask questions about what is happening during the trial.

Representation by an attorney may be the best route, if you desire an acquittal at any cost. In a group trial, the option of having some but not all defendants represented by counsel is often available. You should speak to people who have represented themselves. The most important thing is to remember that you have choices. The system teaches us to think that there is only one way of doing anything, but because we question that we choose to do civil disobedience in the first place.

In November of 1980, as part of the first Women's Pentagon Action, one woman chose to sing her "defense." She sang Malvina Reynolds' "It Isn't Nice to Block the Doorway." She was found guilty.

It Isn't Nice

—by Malvina Reynolds

It isn't nice to block the doorway,
It isn't nice to go to jail.
There are nicer ways to do it,
But the nice ways always fail.

Chorus 1

It isn't nice, it isn't nice
You told us once, you told us
twice

But if that is freedom's price
We don't mind

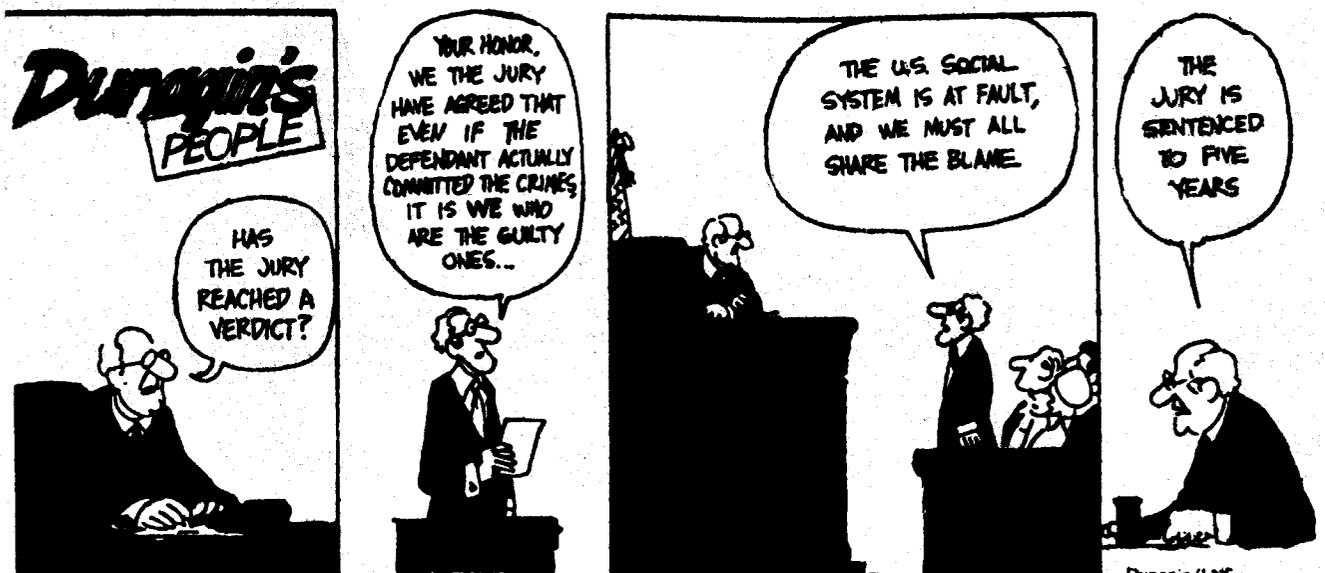
It isn't nice to carry banners
or to sleep in on the floor.
Or to shout or cry of freedom
At the hotel and the store.

Chorus 1

Well we tried negotiations
And the token picket line.
The government didn't see us,
They might as well be blind.

Chorus 2

Now our new ways aren't nice
When we deal with men of ice
But if that is freedom's price
We don't mind.



Noncooperation

A refusal to cooperate with the imprisonment of oneself or others is sensible and natural to many of us. The deliberate and punitive denial of freedom that jail consists of is abhorrent to all of us. Many of us oppose prisons altogether, viewing the inequalities and injustices of our society as its culprits, not the victims who end up rotting in its jails.

For many who join in civil disobedience actions, noncooperation with the criminal justice system is important because it impedes their removal and prolongs their ability to accomplish their goals of stopping the violent business-as-usual of their targets. By becoming great burdens to the courts and jails they demonstrate how difficult and costly it is for these institutions to protect the "status quo" and hope to convince others that this price is too high.

One way of refusing to participate in arrest and detention is by going limp. A decision to go limp is a decision to approach the arrest situation with peaceful resistance and may involve discomfort and strained communication between the demonstrator and arresting officer, largely because one of the two people is being dragged along the ground, and one is struggling to carry the other. Although very common, even going limp is not an easy way to noncooperate: we are forcing the police to either join us or carry us away. We frequently find ourselves being carried or dragged by an angry police officer, unsympathetic to our claims that we are acting as much on her or his behalf as on our own. This is an uncomfortable dilemma which runs throughout every act of noncooperation and which can only be eased, if at all, by one's ability to explain one's actions with sensitivity and sincerity.

"By our refusal to cooperate, we keep reminding them of our dissent, refusing to allow them the godlike sense that their will alone exists." — Barbara Deming

Many activists also choose to resist the codification of people by social security numbers. The questions that are asked about background and employment are means to facili-

tate both the system's processing of individuals and its preparation of files about them. The very fact that demonstrators may be privileged enough to have jobs and perhaps be ushered in and out of jails more politely and efficiently than other "criminals" is something that some are unwilling to take advantage of.

Noncooperation is difficult. It is rewarding, powerful and inspiring, but it can be frustrating, time consuming, and even painful. Noncooperators must be careful not to pressure others into joining them. Anyone who tries to noncooperate must feel flexible enough to give it up if it becomes too much to handle.

It might be best to try out various levels and different approaches to noncooperation, as they feel appropriate. Noncooperation can be very powerful as a response to unjust demands by guards. If feels par-

ticularly natural and effective at such times.

It is likely that noncooperators will be subjected to intimidation and threats. For this reason, it is important that demonstrators prepare themselves for this ahead of time, rather than planning to change their minds about noncooperation under duress. Successful intimidation from the guards will only encourage them to treat the remaining noncooperators more harshly.

On the other hand, cooperation with the indignity and injustice of jail is no easier. The paths we choose may vary. The decision to cooperate or noncooperate with part or all of the arrest procedure is a personal and political one. For some of us noncooperation is one way we will continue the struggle inside prison walls.



Greenpeace crew member sprays a harp seal with harmless green dye to render its fur worthless to the fur trade. March 1982. Photo © 1982, Greenpeace Media.

Jail Solidarity

Jail solidarity may be defined as complete unity of purpose of those incarcerated or imprisoned. The ultimate objective of that unity is for everyone committing the same act to be treated equally and fairly in jail and in sentencing. Refusing citations, bail, fines, community service or probation keeps us together as a community with the potential for collective bargaining to meet that objective.

For jail solidarity to be most effective, the issues surrounding it must be addressed and resolved to the greatest extent possible before reaching jail. Jail authorities are not going to patiently wait for us to reach consensus on solidarity agreements before they start employing "divide and conquer" tactics to weaken our bargaining power.

One divisive tactic used by the prison/legal system is different treatment for certain individuals or groups. These people risking harsher treatment usually include non-cooperators, repeat offenders, known organizers, people of color, lesbians and gay men. Discussions of solidarity should always include the issue of how to give these people the extra protection they need.

Coming to agreements about solidarity goals and tactics is a powerful but difficult process. To reach true solidarity with the greatest number of participants, people must have enough information and time to make wise decisions. Solidarity tactics that are employed successfully are empowering. Ill-considered, unfocused uses of solidarity tactics are less successful and drain our energies.

Some of the issues that cause the most controversy around solidarity include interpretation of the nonviolence guidelines, and under what circumstances, if any, we will keep solidarity with those who have previous records, are on probation or have not followed the nonviolence guidelines for that action.

People's motivations for participating in CD will affect their attitudes toward the police and jail guards. Some people are motivated to CD as a protest against the multiple structures in society which work together to create a weapons indus-



try. The prison/judicial system is seen as one of these structures.

The effect of this political viewpoint on behavior in jail can be very dramatic. Often people refuse to cooperate with the authorities at all. Some ways they do this are by going limp during arrest, not abiding by prison regulations, and refusing to participate in arraignment. Some of these acts serve personal moral goals; others are initiated as levers to make the legal system mete out equal and fair sentences to all.

Another group may reflect a different set of motivations and approaches. For some people for example, their fundamental reason for CD stems from an awareness of the destructive power of nuclear weaponry. Their fear and outrage over these weapons may be their only motivation to do civil disobedience. Often these people will stress more of the need to communicate with the human beings behind the helmets, uniforms and roles. They will talk to the police, perhaps befriend the prison guards, and try to use persuasion and dialogue to raise questions about these roles.

The differences between these two approaches will frequently lead to conflict. The stress of the jail experience tends to intensify conflict but by discussing differences beforehand their effect on jail solidarity can be minimized. Conflicts that arise in

jail must be acknowledged and dealt with at the time or they may become divisive. Conflict is an expression of opposing viewpoints and should not be confused with violence.

Often it is not possible for everyone to agree to stay in jail for solidarity purposes. Sometimes there are people who question the need to struggle inside the jails when the action's primary goal is something else. Some people, because of outside responsibilities, cannot afford the time jail solidarity may demand. Others find jail conditions physically or emotionally intolerable. And still others take the political stand that we're more effective back on the streets encouraging other people to take a stand. Whatever the reasons for not participating in jail solidarity, individuals should make this information known beforehand since it may affect decisions of the group.

Those who must leave jail are not betraying the group — there are many ways they can continue supporting those inside: by speaking to the media, to the movement and to the public about conditions inside, by fulfilling responsibilities for those inside, by carrying messages to family, friends, and employers.

Jail solidarity must never become coercive. In jail, solidarity is our strength and the strength of our solidarity comes from the free agreement of all who take part in it.

Serving Time in Jail

Any act of civil disobedience implies the willingness to risk jail for one's convictions. For those who land there as a consequence of conscious decisions, jail can present an opportunity for testing and strengthening spiritual and political convictions. Though it should not be courted imprudently, it is something that must be faced and can certainly be endured. Those arrested as a result of civil disobedience have the advantage over most prisoners of knowing that they are there having made a conscious choice. That knowledge can make the difference between what is otherwise a thoroughly miserable situation and a larger possibility for reflection and education. What is more, it can provide you, when the time comes, with a reserve of strength of which you were previously unaware.

Being in jail can give a rounded picture of the militaristic, oppressive society against which we struggle in our nonviolent resistance. It is an education in the underside of justice. In state prisons throughout the country most of the people who are locked up are people of color. The vast majority are poor, in jail for poverty-related crimes or awaiting (and waiting and waiting) trial, because they cannot afford bail.

Jail is a lonely place. It aims to weaken solidarity, to try to isolate people from one another and reduce one's concentration to dealing with the demands of authority and of one's survival. However, no one in jail for affirming her or his conscience is ever alone. Remember that and you should have no trouble getting by.

What exactly can you expect? Jails differ as to particular conditions, regulations and privileges allowed. Yet, jails are enough alike that it is possible to make some rough generalizations. Entering prison is like going into another culture — new behavior norms, language, symbols, new reality. Go slow, and use common sense. To quote someone who served a year in Rhode Island's Adult Correctional Institute, "It took me six months to figure out what was really going on in prison. And I am not such a slow learner. So, be humble and be quiet, and listen and learn."

You can expect overcrowding, which means frustrating and irritating levels of noise and distraction, little personal space or privacy, and scant regard for cleanliness. You must exercise patience, consideration and discipline to preserve peace and sanity. It will be difficult to sleep, there will be blaring radios and TV's, slamming bars, and loud arguments, which may make you irritable and short-tempered. Learn to watch for this in others and try to respect their need for space. Time will be distorted: Days will slip by but each hour will seem like an eternity. Food will be starchy and dull (don't expect vegetarian menus). You will learn to wait, for a phone call, a shower, a meal, the answer to a question, the time of day.

You may be issued a uniform. In that case, your clothes will be confiscated along with all your other belongings. You can expect a complete strip search, possibly including rectal and vaginal examination for contraband, which will be the first of many other casual assaults on your dignity.

The guards have a great deal of power and they are aware of this. And because they are human beings, this knowledge tends to have a bad effect on them. Long exposure to jail, whether as a prisoner or a guard, tends to have a corrosive effect on one's confidence in human nature and goodness, and the guards are victims of this as well. They expect the worst out of people, and, not surprisingly, they are not often disappointed. Their principal concern is to preserve order, which demands an atmosphere of unquestioning respect (fear) for authority. This is their contribution to the process of "rehabilitation," supplanting personal responsibility with thoughtless obedience and submission. You should try not to indulge them in their exalted self-image. Keep expecting that they should act with respect and compassion and you may be surprised by the results. Perhaps you will surprise them into remembering that they and the prisoners in their charge share a common humanity. At least you may establish a basis for dialogue. But at the same time that you recall the

humanity of your guards don't forget that, in the end, you and they have different jobs to perform. Let them be responsible for keeping order. You are responsible for keeping your conscience.

Just because your body is detained doesn't mean you've got to turn in your conscience and convictions along with your other belongings. Whether in jail or on the "outside," the freedom we enjoy is always the freedom we claim for ourselves. Being under lock and key does not deprive you of your essential freedom as long as you continue to insist on your power to say "yes" or "no" within the limits of whatever situation you find yourself. It was your commitment to make decisions for yourself about what you should and shouldn't do that landed you in jail in the first place, and it remains a good principle to live by, even in jail.

The following is a list of observations and suggestions from people who have served time:

- Pay attention to how the other women/men are doing. Don't feed into others' bad vibes.

- You'll make good friends but do set limits. Know what your needs are.

- Keep your mouth shut and listen. Things are not often what they appear.

- Keep a realistic viewpoint. Pay attention to your needs, but remember that you are there for a short time and most of the others are there much longer.

- Don't proselytize. Be clear and be proud but don't hit people over the head with your story and beliefs.

- Don't talk more than you have to with the guards; the other inmates will not trust you. If you are in prison for a long time you'll be able to figure out which guards you can trust.

- Bring in some cigarettes to share with others even if you don't smoke. Bring a few books, pens, paper, envelopes and stamps. The worst that can happen is you won't get them or they'll get lost.

- Be patient; hurry up and wait is often the prison time frame for no apparent reason.

- It is alright to be afraid, lonely, unhappy. It is also alright to feel wonderful, happy and proud.

We're All In The Same Boat

April, 1980

This society this incredible way of living divides us by class by color It says we are individual and alone and don't you forget it It says the only way out of our doom of our sex our class our race is some individual gift and character and hard work and then all we get all we ever get is to change class or color or sex to rise to bleach to masculinize an enormous game of musical chairs and that's only at its fairy tale Horatio Alger best that's only at its best

From all directions we get all the beliefs to go with these divisions we believe all kinds of things about: what real men really are what women must want what black people feel and smell like what white people do and deserve how rich people earn their comforts and cadillacs how poor people get what's coming to them

O we are all racist we are all sexist some of us only some of us are the targets of racism of sexism of homophobia of class denigration but we all all breath in racism with the dust in the streets with the words we read and we struggle those of us who struggle we struggle endlessly, endlessly to think and be and act differently from all that

Listen you and listen hard I carry within me a vicious anti-semitic voice that says jew him down that says dirty jew that says things that stop me dead in the street and make the blood leave my face I have fought that voice for 45 years all the years that I lived with and among jews who are almost me whose rhythms of speech and ways of laughing are close beside me are dear to me whose sorrows reach deep inside me that voice has tried to tell me that that love and identification are unreal fake cannot be and I refuse it I refuse its message

I carry a shell a white and crisp voiced shell to hide my brown golden soft spanish voiced inner self to pass to hide my puertoricanness

I carry a pole 18 inches long to hold me at the correct distance from black-skinned people

I carry hard metal armor with spikes with shooting weapons in every joint with fire breathing from every hole to protect me to prepare me to assault any man from 13 to 89

I am a whole circus by myself a whole dance company with stance and posture for being in middle class homes in upper class buildings for talking to men for speaking with blacks for carefully angling and directing for choreographing my way thru the maze of classes of people and places thru the little boxes of sex race class nationality sexual orientation intellectual standing political preference the automatic contortions the exhausting camouflage with which I go thru this social space called CAPITALIST PATRIARCHY a daunting but oh so nicely covering name this is no way to live

Listen listen with care class and color and sex do not define people do not define politics a class society defines people by class a racist society defines



radicals define people by their struggles against the racism sexism classism that they harbor that surrounds them

So stop saying that she acts that way because she's middle class that that's all you can expect from that group because it's white that they're just men, quit it!

We know different things some very much more unpleasant things if we've been women poor black or lesbian or all of those we know different things depending on what sex what color what lives we live where we grew up What schooling what beatings with or without shoes steak or beans but what politics each of us is going to be and do is anybody's guess

Being female doesn't stop us from being sexist we've had to choose early or late at 7 14 27 56 to think different dress different act different to struggle to organize to picket to argue to change other women's mind to change our own minds to change our feelings ours yours and mine constantly to change and change and change to fight the onslaught on our minds and bodies and feelings

I'm saying that the basis of our unity is that in the most important way we are all in the same boat all subjected to the violent pernicious ideas we have learned to hate that we must all struggle against them and exchange ways and means hints and how tos that only some of us are victims of sexism only some of us are victims of racism of the directed arrows of oppression but all of us are sexist racist all of us

— by Rosario Morales

— excerpted with permission from *This Bridge Called My Back*

Oppression

To fight for peace and social justice is not only to struggle against the brutality of our foreign and domestic policies, but also to challenge the insidious institution of oppression in our daily lives.

In our various struggles against bombs, U.S. intervention, for housing, sexual freedom, etc. it is important to struggle against other forms of violence that confront us. Specifically, other violence comes in two forms that affect our lives:

1. daily physical and/or psychic violence against all people, such as rape or murder, and specifically against oppressed people;

2. psychic and attitudinal violence within our movement reflected in ways we treat each other and ourselves.

These two forms of violence are strongly interconnected with gov-

ernmental policies from the making of bombs to lack of health care. It is the same system that is responsible: a system based on domination, on the belief that some people have more value than others. The same system that creates a bomb designed to destroy humans and retain property intact also deprives elderly people and disabled people of life resources and encourages individuals to compete with each other and treat each other disrespectfully.

Because we believe it is the system and all of its forms of violence that we are fighting, we must make a commitment to fight the violence that occurs around us and between us. The Oppression Section of the handbook specifically addresses these concerns, both within a societal context and within the context of interpersonal relationships.

Confronting the violence between us can be painful. Speaking of oppression or using the words such as sexism or racism can often result in people feeling guilty, or hurt or reacting defensively. Most of us benefit from some form of privilege; many of us suffer from discrimination from one or more sources. Because oppression distorts the power dynamics between us and, as a result, divides us, it is harmful to everyone.

None of us alone has the power to end the institutions of discrimination. It is both the individual and collective challenge to these forms of discrimination that will lead to the social and political changes that will benefit us all.

— thanks to the *International Day of Nuclear Disarmament Handbook*

“Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.” Martin Luther King, Jr.



Harlem residents protest shortage of affordable housing. July 1988. Photo by Jack Weber, © 1988, Guardian Photos.

Racism

Racism, the systematic mistreatment experienced by people of color, is a result of institutionalized inequalities in the social structure. Racism is one consequence of a self-perpetuating imbalance in economic, political and social power. This imbalance consistently favors members of some ethnic and cultural groups at the expense of other groups. The consequences of this imbalance pervade all aspects of the social system and affect all facets of people's lives.

Racism operates as a strategy to divide and conquer. It helps perpetuate a social system in which some people consistently are "haves" and others are "have nots." While the "haves" receive certain material benefits from this situation, the long-range effects of racism short change everyone. Racism sets groups of people against each other and makes it difficult for us to perceive our common interests as human beings. Racism makes us forget that we all need and are entitled to good health care, stimulating education, and challenging work. Racism limits our horizons to what presently exists; it makes us suppose that current injustices are "natural" or at best inevitable. "Someone has to be unemployed; someone has to go hungry." Most importantly, racism distorts our perceptions of the possibilities for change; it makes us abandon our visions of solidarity; it robs us of our dreams of community.

No human being is born with racist attitudes and beliefs. Physical and cultural differences between human beings are not the cause of racism; these are used to justify racism. Racist attitudes and beliefs are a mixture of misinformation and ignorance which has to be imposed upon young people through a painful process of social conditioning. "You have to be taught to hate and fear." Having racist attitudes and beliefs is like having a clamp on one's mind. It distorts one's perception of reality. Two examples: the notion that there is something called "flesh color;" the use of the term "minorities" to describe the majority of the

world's people.

Racism continues in large part because an economic system which perpetuates and capitalizes on differences (whether of color, culture, creed, or sex) remains in place. That system, and those who profit from it determine the parameters and values of the educational system which continues to teach our children to "hate and fear;" of the media, which perpetuates racism in a deliberate fashion, and which denies people access to their history. "A people that does not know its history is doomed to repeat it."

There are times we have failed to act, and times when we did not achieve as much as we wanted to in the struggle against racism. Unlearning racism also involves understanding the difficulties we have had and learning how to overcome them, without blaming ourselves for having had those difficulties. The situation is not hopeless. People can grow and change; we are not condemned to repeat the past. Racist conditioning need not be a permanent state of affairs. It can be examined, analyzed and unlearned.

All people come from traditions which have a history of resistance to injustice, and every person has their own individual history of resistance to racist conditioning. This history needs to be recalled and celebrated. When people act from a sense of informed pride in themselves and their own traditions, they will be more effective in all struggles for justice.

(Adapted from a piece by Ricky Sherover-Marcuse, *Unlearning Racism Workshops*, 638 Dana St. Oakland, CA 94609).

Dealing with Racism in the Movement

It should be clear that the following points are directed at the white members of the movement. This is because we feel it essential that we remember that it is in white communities — which more often have the resources and access to vehicles

for change in our society than that of color — that racism continues to run rampant. As white activists must develop programs that consistently challenge the racism in communities, understanding that it is there, at home, that there is most work to be done.

- Understand that many peace, social justice and anti-nuclear issues affect Third World communities in special ways.
- Learn and act upon issues of special concern to Third World communities.
- Integrate the concerns of the communities in your approach to progressive issues.
- Develop working relationships with all groups involved with social change, including people of color.
- Don't force your agenda on other organizations.
- In planning for events, form committees early, which include as many groups as possible, including even one in the decision-making.

Dealing with Racism and Classism During an Action Arrest and Jail

- Be aware of how police are dealing with Third World, gay, lesbian, and known movement people during arrest situations. Be prepared to come to the aid of anyone who has been singled out by the police and may be receiving harsher treatment than others.
- Realize that during the booking process questions that are being asked to determine whether or not people can be released on their own recognizance, are particularly discriminatory. The questions concentrate on your economic, social, sexual and prior arrest standing.
- Realize that bail is the most blatant example of classism. Those who have money get out of jail — those who don't stay in.



Racism Guidelines

Some guidelines for white people in dealing with racism:

1. If you're in a situation that a Person of Color is identifying as racist, and it doesn't appear that way to you, assess the situation again. Like many other forms of discrimination, racism occurs on a variety of subtle levels not always apparent to someone not directly experiencing the discrimination.
2. If you want to work against racism, you must put yourself in a place where it's happening. Real change of racist attitudes and beliefs does not happen in a vacuum.
3. When relating to a Person of Color, don't focus on or be obsessed with racial differences. One goal of ending discrimination is for all persons to be seen as individuals. On the other hand, pretending that color does not exist obscures one very important aspect of that individual's experience.
4. Identify for yourself ways that racism hurts you and examine ways that you have internalized misinformation about your ethnicity and cultural heritage.

— Thanks to International Day for Nuclear Disarmament Handbook

For the white person who wants to know how to be my friend.

by Pat Parker

The first thing you do is to forget that i'm Black. Second, you must never forget that i'm Black.

You should be able to dig Aretha, but don't play her every time i come over. And if you decide to play Beethoven — don't tell me his life story. They made us take music appreciation too.

Eat soul food if you like it, but don't expect me to locate your restaurants or cook it for you.

And if some Black person insults you, mugs you, rapes your sister rapes you, rips your house or is just being an ass — please do not apologize to me for wanting to do them bodily harm. It makes me wonder if you're foolish.

And even if you really believe Blacks are better lovers than whites — don't tell me. i start thinking of charging stud fees.

In other words — if you really want to be my friend —
don't
make a labor of it. i'm lazy. Remember.

— from *Movement in Black*, Crossing Press, Freedom, CA, 1984



Unlock Apartheid's Jails: Activists dump keys at South African Consulate in NYC. October 1987. Photo by George Cohen, © 1987, Guardian Photos.

Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism can best be understood through a historical analysis. Persecution of Jewish people has a long history dating back about 3,000 years. Understanding how this oppression has persisted in different forms and seeing the cyclical pattern of anti-Semitism can help us recognize its continued existence and methods of functioning in today's world.

The oppression of Jews is characterized by alternating periods of apparent tolerance and assimilation, followed by periods of violent anti-Jewish attacks. During the calm periods, Jews are allowed to assimilate into society and often into a visible "middle" position where they function as agents and buffers to the real power elite. Underneath this surface of relative security exist many anti-Jewish attitudes and stereotypes and it often takes only a small stimulus to evoke them. When there is economic and political crises, Jews are targeted as the problem and used as a scapegoat for socio-economic problems. The ruling class, aided by these pre-existing anti-Jewish beliefs, encourages other oppressed groups to direct their anger against the Jews rather than their real oppressors.

One way anti-Semitism is maintained is through stereotypes — assigning certain specific characteristics to Jews as a group. Jews are believed to be aggressive, stingy, clanish, or pushy while Gentiles may take initiative, be thrifty, loyal, or assertive. On a personal level some people who would immediately interrupt racist jokes think telling JAP (Jewish American Princess) jokes is harmless fun.

In general, Jews know more about Christians than Christians know about Jews. In fact Christian religious holidays are national holidays, while Jewish and other religious holidays often go unacknowledged. Wishing everyone "Happy Holidays" in late December is an unintentional form of anti-Semitism. The major Jewish holidays, Rosh Hashannah (New Year) and Yom Kippur are in the fall and Passover is in the spring. Channukah, which is the Jewish holiday closest to Christmas, is a much more minor holiday. Significant meetings and demonstrations are regularly scheduled on important Jewish holidays while no one would think of doing the same on Christmas or Easter.

Anti-Semitism is deeply embedded in our culture as well through lan-

guage, standards of beauty, communication norms, and time itself. For example, in interpersonal communication the polite, restrained, middle-class, WASP pattern is viewed as normal, as right. The communication norm for other groups, whether working class, Black, Italian, Puerto Rican or Jewish is "other" and put down. Jewish syntax, "accents," and delicious Yiddish expressions disappear just as surely as does Black English in the attempt to fit in, to "make it," and to survive.

It is difficult for any dominant group to cope with the desire of "oppressed groups" to be both equal and distinctive. This is true for Gentiles who get angry because Jews want to maintain their uniqueness without being penalized for it. Jews pursuing assimilation and invisibility as coping strategies become fearful and discounting, as well, when other Jews act "too Jewish."

One of the subtle ways Jewish oppression is manifested in the movement is through denial. People have a hard time relating to Jews as an oppressed group; rather Jews are often regarded as having all the power and money, and often being on the "oppressor's side" in any struggle. The oppression of Jews is not currently economic oppression, (although there are far more poor and working-class Jews than most people acknowledge) it is cultural, religious, and political. The issue of anti-Semitism is consistently left off the laundry list of oppressions (on leaflets, workshop offerings, and speakers). When people speak of doing outreach to different groups it's often labor, women, student, third world, and church groups, rather than religious groups.

For many, anti-Semitism has become synonymous with the Holocaust. Since the situation is clearly not that bad now, Jewish oppression is viewed as a thing of the past. Jews who raise concerns about the rise of oppression against Jews or about anti-Semitism within the movement are often perceived as raising side issues, diverting attention away from more important problems, over-reacting, bringing on the oppression by making such a big deal, or simply being paranoid. Such defensive and victim-blaming reactions become part of the problem as well.

While the people of Nicaragua easily differentiate between the murderous, imperialistic policies of the U.S. gov-

ernment and the people of the U.S. State, most U.S. progressives can manage to make the same distinction for the state of Israel. It is possible to be critical of Israeli national policy while supporting Israel's right to exist. It is possible to grant Jewish people, historically and currently oppressed, the right to a homeland, as we support oppressed peoples the world over in their struggle for national liberation. It is possible to support the liberation of the Palestinian people while supporting Israel's right to exist. It is possible to see that Israel's role in the global geo-political situation is similar to the "buffer" role Jews traditionally have been manipulated into: Israel does the United States' "dirty work," (while receiving some privileges) and comes the target of the just anger of other oppressed people, rather than the U.S., which is the real ruler.

On the right, overt anti-Semitism is like violence against other oppressed groups (e.g. bombing, vandalism, and swastika-painting) on the rise. Books are distributed claiming that the Holocaust, though only 40 years ago, never happened. Neo-Nazi and White Power groups build arsenals and establish training bases in the hills. Jews are targeted the very same people that target every other oppressed group today, including people of color, lesbians & gay people, women, working-class and poor people, disabled people, and old people.

All of us, whether Gentile or Jew, have learned anti-semitism. It is now our responsibility to rid ourselves of these attitudes and change institutional practices and cultural patterns that intentionally or unintentionally maintain anti-Semitism. We can start with ourselves, our friends and families, the groups we work with, and the institutions to which we relate.

**The term Anti-Semitism was developed to refer to oppression of Jews; however, it is important to remember that Arabs are also Semitic people who have been oppressed.*

— by Felice Ye

Sexism

The split which in our society divides women and men is one of the most basic ways in which human beings are devalued. Similar to how gay people, people of color, and Jews are viewed, women become the *other* in a society that establishes maleness as a primary reference point. As a result, women are relegated to limited roles and valued primarily for their sexual and reproductive functions, while men are seen as the central makers of culture, the primary actors in history. Such demeaning of women is reflected in language, the images in American textbooks, and on TV. Economically, women are clustered in the lowest paying, lowest status jobs. Women of color bear the burden of double discrimination. For every dollar earned by men, women only make 62 cents, a fact that remains true despite years of publicity and struggle.

Further, women live in constant fear of rape or battering, and with good reason: a woman in the U.S. is battered once every eighteen seconds (FBI). As a result of such pervasive violence against women, many women stay penned in their homes at night. In fact, the attitude that women are the property of and under the control of men is apparent in magazines and movies which portray women as objects to be violated, and in the common war custom that allows the victors to rape the women of the people they've conquered.

Women have been challenging blatant and subtle sexism and the presumption of patriarchal ("rule of the fathers") power for a long time. Feminism, the philosophy and political force that has given expression to women's voices against sexism and for a vision of a cooperative, human-valuing society, started early in the 19th century with demands and principles that matched the conditions of that time: education and voting rights for women. The current second wave has also emerged out of the historical conditions of its time: women active in social change movements of the 60s began questioning why we were always fighting other people's issues and never even identifying our own.

As a result, the feminist movement grew up in the late 60s, giving support and validation to women to achieve power over our lives, challenging sex role stereotypes and limitations, addressing economic disparities and violence towards women in its many forms, and providing a basic understanding that personal issues are rooted in political realities.

In the peace movement, feminism's contribution is immeasurable. Because patriarchy supports and thrives on war, a feminist analysis is crucial to effectively challenge militarism. The view of women as the *other* parallels the view of our enemies as non-human available targets for any means of destruction or cruelty. In fact, U.S. foreign policy often seems like the playing out of rigid sex roles by men trying to achieve and maintain power through male toughness. How can a cooperative, humane public policy be developed by people who have been socialized to repress emotions,

to not cry, to ignore their own needs to nurture children and others?

Although the major changes in women's lives are a result of the work that women have done for ourselves, coalitioning with men to fight sexism is an important ingredient of massive and enduring change. Some men have joined women in this struggle, and from this has emerged a small men's pro-feminist movement that challenges the social order which depends on sexism to control both men and women. Such a movement is helping men become conscious of their own pains and needs, recognize how they dominate others, and give support to each other. As with women struggling to overcome limitations that are conditioned, men can overcome the barriers which prevent them from being full human beings as well.

—expanded from an article by Starhawk.

Thanks to International Days
for Nuclear Disarmament Handbook



Pro-choice demonstrators blockade the founding offices of Operation Rescue in Binghamton, NY. March 1989.
Photo by Michael J. Okoniewski, © 1989.

Confronting Classism

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, but the greatest percentage of that wealth is in the hands of a tiny percentage of the population. It is environmentally and technically possible for everyone to enjoy a good standard of living if wealth were redistributed, exploitation ceased and the arms race abandoned. The inequitable distribution of wealth prevents the whole society from enjoying the full benefits of people's labor, intelligence and creativity and causes great misery for working class and poor people.

Classism is the systematic oppression of poor people and people who work for wages by those who have access to control of the necessary resources by which other people make their living. Classism is also held in place by a system of beliefs which ranks people according to economic status, "breeding," job and level of education. Classism says that upper class people are smarter and more articulate than working class and poor people. It is a way of keeping people down, it means upper-middle class and wealthy people define for everyone else what "normal" or "acceptable" is. Many of us have come to accept this standard as the norm and many of us have bought the myth that most of the country is middle class.

Criteria for determining class identity is subject to debate, being variously defined by origins, workforce status, income and/or outlook. For example, some consider all who derive their income from wages members of the working class;

others exclude that percentage of the workforce which constitutes the professionals and managers whose incomes are high enough to provide a stake in the capitalist system. Depending on the breadth of one's definition, 70-85% of the population can be considered working class. This is true despite the fact that the individuals themselves might identify as or with the middle class. These individuals, however, are not beneficiaries of middle class privileges.

Class affects people not only on an economic level, but also on an emotional level. Classist attitudes have caused great pain by dividing people from one another and keeping individuals from personal fulfillment or the means to survive. Consequently, the process of rejecting such attitudes and their accompanying misinformation is an emotional one. Since people tend to hurt each other because they themselves have been hurt, and since most forms of oppression are accompanied by economic discrimination, class overlaps with many other social issues, all of which move as we unravel how we've been hurt.

The stereotype is that poor and working class people are unintelligent, inarticulate and "overly emotional." A good ally (a non-workingclass committed supporter) will contradict these messages by soliciting the knowledge and histories of poor working class people, being a thoughtful listener, trying to understand what is being said, and not criticizing how the message is being presented or responding with automatic defensiveness. Distrust, despair and anger are common consequences of oppression; it is the test of a true ally to remain undeterred when these flare up and to refrain from withdrawing support at such points. When targets of oppression believe the lies about ourselves, we are "internalizing our oppression." To begin to undo the damage caused by classism, it is useful for everyone to examine our own feelings about money, education, privilege, power, relationships, culture and ethnicity. This advice applies to organizations as well.

For general discussion:

As a movement, who are we and who are we trying to reach in terms of class? How? To whom do our literature and events appeal? How are poor people's needs being met in our organizing? What steps are being taken to change people's attitudes about classism? Are poor and Third World people invited to participate in organization planning? What is being done to reach and involve organized and unorganized workers? What are we doing to support poor, workingclass and people of color in *their* struggles?

The situation for poor and working-class people in our movement and organization:

Is classism evident in who does what work in the organization? Are poor and workingclass people facilitators, spokespeople and/or media contacts and leaders, and not just relegated to cleanup crews and collating mailings? Are organizing expenses paid upfront, or promptly reimbursed?

Meetings and events:

Make meetings and events known and accessible to poor and workingclass people. Be aware of how the length, time and frequency of meetings affects full-time workers, especially those who parent. Arrange for transportation.

Routinely provide childcare and sliding scales. Ask people what they need to be able to attend meetings and events. How does income-level and class composition affect the development of resources, the dates of demonstrations, the levels of commitment and power working people can have, the events sponsored? What are the cultural offerings? Who are the speakers and entertainers?

Process:

Make sure that process isn't actually being used to tell poor and workingclass people how to behave by "proper" etiquette.

Is consensus being used so that decisions favor those who can stay the longest, or who are used to getting their own way and will block to do so?



Watch that group hugs and rituals are not imposed — allow people to interact with each other in whatever ways feel comfortable to them.

Civil disobedience (CD):

Does class determine who is able and who is unable to commit civil disobedience? How can we make it economically possible for those who want to commit CD to do so? How do we keep CD from being a movement privilege, with activists who can afford to tally arrest counts granted subsequently more political prestige? How do those who are arrested relate to the regular prison population, (taking into account how class figures in their treatment).

Be aware of how police are dealing with people of color, gay, lesbian, and known movement people during arrest situations. Be prepared to come to the aid of anyone who has been singled out by the police and may be receiving harsher treatment than others.

Realize that during the booking process questions that are being asked to determine whether or not people can be released on their own recognizance, are particularly discriminatory. These questions concentrate on your economic, social, sexual and prior arrest standing.

Realize that bail is the most blatant example of classism. Those who have money get out of jail—those who don't stay in.

— from articles by Donna Warnock and Laura Briggs

Agism*

Agism is action based on the belief that one age group is inferior to another. The action becomes oppressive when it is backed with power and resources (e.g. money and media). Agist beliefs are legitimized by theories (often "scientific") and myths, and serve to keep target ages out of competition for jobs and other resources.

We all experience agism in this age-segregated society. We learn to believe that people who are very young and very old are physically and mentally inferior to those who are in the "prime" of life and that young adults have the greatest strength, particularly men. This belief, a pay-off for exploitation of their labor and their bodies, also reflects our throw-away mentality, which puts top value on the new (*young*) adult, and the useful (able to find employment). Young women are defined at the height of their "beauty" as sex objects. Agism is so powerful for girls that many believe they will never grow up or grow old.

Agism intensifies all of the other "isms." During the long period of childhood (itself a relatively modern phenomenon), we keep our young dependent, helpless, and almost totally devoid of rights while we socialize (brainwash) them into rigid patterns of behavior according to class, sex and race. In school, which they *must* attend, they are tracked into career lines at an early age with little account of individuals' speed of learning or lack of opportunities. This oppression of the young denies them access to their own dreams, visions, creativity, spirituality: their own reality.

For women, agism intensifies all of the atrocities of sexism, racism and class oppression. Old women (as defined by census, 62 and older) are the poorest sector of the population, with ever-diminishing expectations. Yet every year the population of poor old women increases.

Older women are expected to provide a background for the activities of younger women and men, but rarely play lead roles. They are often discounted, and are virtually invisible, leading to the painful, common and incorrect assumption that older women are not doing anything, or have not been active at anything effective. Yet a great deal of the work of the anti-war movement has been carried by older women. If not totally invisible, older women are depicted as destructive witches (another distortion of peoples' history), or they are patronized.

A lot of agism stems from the resentment that younger people feel toward the entrenched power of older people. Agism provides a way to avoid principled struggle over valid questions of class, power and leadership.

Every generation wants to believe that they hold the key to the "revolution," yet the ignorance of history and our inability to talk to each other across generations means that each generation starts out repeating the same mistakes. The expectations that older men will be powerful and older women nurturing makes it difficult for some older people to share and to learn. Agism keeps us divided, ignorant and ineffective.

*This particular spelling is preferred by author.

— from two articles by Marjory Nelson
— Thanks to International Day of Nuclear Disarmament Handbook



Hormel meat packer's picket line — Minnesota. January 1986. Photo by Paula Williamson, © 1986, Guardian Photos.

Homophobia

Homophobia: fear of homosexuality

Historically, lesbians and gay men have been forced to live separately out of fear of psychological or physical attack or reprisals. This invisibility hurts us all: it perpetuates stereotypes about gays; it divides us; and it serves to minimize the accomplishments and contributions of gay people. The fear of being considered gay limits and distorts everyone's life choices and relationships. Men are often afraid to get close to their male friends because it might imply gayness — and might even reveal a half-suspected gay dimension of themselves. An essential prop for sexism, in keeping people within their accustomed sex roles, is this fear of homosexuality, or homophobia. Because of this, women's liberation and men's liberation depends partly on gay liberation.

In movements which encompass people from a wide variety of political and religious backgrounds, prejudices that lead to negative attitudes towards lesbians and gay men remain unchallenged as long as we remain invisible.

These unexamined prejudices result from historical condemnation of homosexuality. Gays have been attacked on all fronts: by psychiatry (which only ten years ago ceased identifying homosexuality as a mental illness); organized religion (which identified gayness as a "sin and abomination"); the Right (the Moral Majority has targeted gays); and the Left (which viewed gayness in Marxist terms as evidence of capitalist decadence). The list is extensive and horrifying, yet repression towards gays is often trivialized and our concerns dismissed as inconsequential.

The stereotype of lesbians as man-haters originated from men feeling threatened by women choosing women as lovers over men, feelings that reflect a cornerstone tenet of a sexist society: Women are the property of men and under their control. In recent years, the advent of the lesbian rights movement has allowed for the emergence of a lesbian separatist philosophy, held by a small part of the lesbian population. For many lesbian separatists, the basic premise of this philosophy is

the building of a culture, institutions, and relationships with women independent of men, rather than in opposition to men. This philosophy is based on the desire to not have to expend energy constantly dealing with sexism and general societal hatred of women. This concept of separateness is not unique to lesbians and has, in fact, had parallel voices in almost every major liberation movement. Misunderstanding of this philosophy, however, has resulted in the broadening of the man-hating stereotype so that, frequently, it is used to discount women's criticism of sexism or the desire of women to meet separately from men. It is crucial that this stereotype be confronted and not used as a cover for dismissing strong women.

Another common stereotype surrounds the relationship of lesbians and gay men to children. This stereotype covers a wide range of ideas, from right-wing moralistic fears that gays are child molesters and recruiters, to a common heterosexual assumption that gays can't have children or don't care for children. Some states have adopted policies preventing lesbians and gay men from being foster parents. Many thousands of lesbians and gay men have made the decision to have children or became parents during previous heterosexual relationships. Many more have ongoing personal relationships with children or have

jobs involving children such as teaching, health care, or child care.

The treatment of lesbians and gay men by the police and jail authorities is another concern. Gay people are often verbally or physically abused by police and as a result feel especially vulnerable to police and jail.

In jail, those who are affectionate or who participate in homosexual acts are frequently maligned by other prisoners or cited for "excessive physical contact", which may result in harassment and forced isolation. Punishment and the threat of punishment for homosexual behavior is a major tool used to separate prisoners from each other. By preying on existing anti-gay sentiment, the prison authorities can succeed in creating a climate of fear, and provoking verbal and physical harassment, thereby squelching prisoner organizing. In actions involving civil disobedience, visible lesbians and gay men are often subject to specific violence by police. It is important that all CDers join together to guarantee safety during arrest and/or placement in the general jail population. Our unity can prevent the prison authorities from using homophobia as a "divide and conquer" tool.

— by *Non-Nuclear Family*
— Thanks to *International Day of Nuclear Disarmament Hand book*



Lesbian and Gay activists risk arrest by protesting on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court. October 1987. Photo by Marilyn Humphries, © 1987.

Disability Awareness

People with disabilities breathe, eat, learn, teach, work, loaf, get parking tickets and go on vacation. And yes, people with disabilities make love, raise families, come out, organize, get arrested for civil disobedience, laugh, cry, pay taxes, and resist taxes. There is perhaps one important difference between people with disabilities and people who are (temporarily) able-bodied. If the environment were designed by and for people with disabilities, the disabilities would be comparatively less important. Underlying the barriers in architecture and communication are powerfully restrictive attitudes that permeate our society.

Steve Hoffmann participated in the June 21, 1982, blockade of Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in Livermore, California. He is an individual who uses a wheelchair due to a severe disability. As a disabled individual in a situation involving mostly able-bodied people, he has the following unique impressions to offer of his experience:

How did you decide to participate in civil disobedience?

Civil disobedience has always been one of my attachments to reality. If I didn't have that it would be a lot more difficult for me to function as an individual with a sense of humor. In New York City, by law, in order to ride the subway:

1. I needed a special permit.
2. I needed an able-bodied escort.
3. I wasn't allowed to ever change cars on the train. That law, obviously, conflicted not only with my morality, my mobility, and my right as a taxpayer, it was also not a just law. And the reality of riding the subway, worrying about being stopped at any moment by a transit cop kind of taught me to distinguish between right and wrong and the law, which are two different things.

"I could almost believe that there isn't anyone too severely disabled that s/he couldn't participate in jail solidarity. And that's good. Because when the authorities deal with people with severe disabilities, it taxes the whole system more. But making that right to civil disobedience a reality is another matter. Because, for

the disabled individual, it means risking control over your daily routine and not knowing if your needs will be cared for. I think able-bodied people need to be more conscious of what those needs are — to be more readily available to help but without being solicitous and over-protective. And I think that kind of consciousness comes with having ongoing relationships with disabled individuals."

Accessibility

Meetings

1. To include individuals with physical disabilities, hold meetings in ramped buildings (sloping 12 to 14 feet for every 1 foot rise), with entrances and bathroom stalls at least 32" wide. There should be grab bars on the sides and/or in back of the toilet.

2. Set up the room with wide aisles and leave spaces for wheelchairs among the other chairs. Make sure there are sturdy wide chairs for large people.

3. For visually disabled people, make available any written or visual materials on tape (or in Braille) or minimally, be prepared to have any written materials read aloud. This accommodation will also be useful for people who can't read or have difficulty reading.

4. Arrange for a sign language interpreter to be present.

5. Plan and facilitate meetings with an effort to avoid draining people's bodies and spirits by providing food, adhering to time limits, and taking breaks.

Marches

1. When planning the march route, bear in mind accessible transportation. If accessible public transportation is not available, make arrangements (including financial compensation) with agencies or individual owners of vans with lifts. This accessible vehicle can be used as a shuttle from march start to demonstration site.

2. For those who do not wish or are not able to walk the whole route, places along the route should be designated where they can join.

3. Plan routes that are flat or gently sloped and solid (not muddy, rocky).

4. Research accessible public restrooms along the route and point them out on a map.

Demonstrations

1. Make sure the stage is accessible by renting a set of portable ramps (to ramp a few steps only) or a truck with a lift.

2. Designate a specific space in front of the stage for people with disabilities and their friends/affinity groups to guarantee the best visibility for deaf and hearing-impaired people, people with visual impairments, and people who use wheelchairs.

3. Provide sign language interpretation and publicize this fact on your publicity. A program longer than two hours requires at least two interpreters.

4. Remember to maintain wide aisles where possible and to provide tapes of any written materials (e.g. programs).

5. Provide accessible portable toilets.

General Communication

To facilitate communication between hearing people and people with hearing disabilities where there is no sign language interpreter, have only one person speak at a time. Further, hearing people should face the person with a hearing impairment, and move their lips naturally, and remember not to shout. Even though lipreading is only about 30% effective, it is better than nothing. If you don't know sign language, you can still use gesture and facial expressions to emphasize your meaning. Also, have paper and pencil available in case you get stuck.

People who cannot speak clearly need their listeners to slow down and pay close attention. Ask the person to repeat or spell what he or she said rather than pretending you understood.

People with visual disabilities need verbal descriptions to provide missing information.

People who learn slowly or differently need concepts to be organized and simple — summarize frequently. This will help clarify issues for everyone.

continued on page 28

Peacekeepers

In numerous demonstrations of the past it has been found that the effectiveness and nonviolence of the action has been greatly enhanced by the participation of people with special skills. These specialized participants, or peacekeepers, perform specific facilitating roles for the action. Even if you have not decided to specialize in the role of peacekeeper, however, you may find yourself in a conflict situation in which peacekeeper skills will be useful. In a nonviolent action everyone is, to some extent, a peacekeeper.

Peacekeepers:

1. Set the tone for the action. They establish a positive and affirmative atmosphere by being warm and helpful to participants, by leading

continued from 27

Arrest and Jail Concerns

Jail is an especially stressful situation where everyone, including people with disabilities, has no control over her/his daily routine. Each person should assess whether going to jail is the most appropriate role for her/him and, if so, what s/he can do in the jail situation to minimize the stress.

Both prior to, and once in jail, each person should assess all available options, including the option to post bail. If the jail situation becomes too stressful and a person chooses to "cite out," that decision should be understood and accepted by those choosing to remain in jail.

Affinity groups should strategize ways to remain together when the jail authorities try to separate out the disabled people and ways to handle inaccessible jail buses and jail living quarters.

Individuals with hidden disabilities should have special dietary and/or medical needs put into prescription form by a medical doctor. Plan with affinity group supporters a means to guarantee that these prescriptions will be delivered in jail.

— by Myke Johnson, with Bruce Rose
Thanks to C.D. Handbook
National Lesbian and Gay
March on Washington

songs and chants, and by providing needed information to the group as a whole.

2. Act as a communication network. They act as an important face-to-face communication link between the coordinators of the action and the participants as well as the internal communication system for the coordinators themselves.

3. Provide emergency medical and legal aid. Peacekeepers are frequently the first people on the spot when a medical or legal emergency arises. They can play an important supportive role for the person who needs assistance.

4. Maintain the internal self-discipline of the action. Peacekeepers facilitate the movement and action of large groups of people by directing traffic, encouraging people to walk and not run and providing information to the group. Peacekeepers are also prepared to handle conflicts among demonstrators.

5. Act as mediators between authorities and demonstrators. It may be important to have people as buffers between law enforcement officials, workers, and demonstrators. Peacekeepers help to maintain the nonviolent self-discipline of the demonstration and act as mediators in confrontations between authorities and protestors. Peacekeepers have primary responsibility to the participants in the action, but they should be prepared to protect legal authorities, workers, and non-participants from demonstrators if necessary.

Some Guidelines to Help Peacekeepers Do Their Jobs:

1. Be warm, friendly, and helpful. The tone of the demonstration depends on how you respond to your fellow demonstrators, police, the media, and workers. Our attitude should be one of openness, friendliness and respect toward all officials and participants. Peacekeepers are not junior police, and this is no place for authority trips.

2. Be creative. Nonviolence does not mean being aloof or failing to act. You must be creative in your attempt to intervene and resolve a conflict.

3. Be firm, but not rigid. If you have agreed to be a peacekeeper you must have agreed to uphold the nonviolent principles of the demonstration. This occasionally means pushing people to do things they do not want to do. Stick to your commitment to nonviolence and strongly encourage others to do the same.

4. Be forthright. Deal fairly and honestly with people engaged in conflict, no matter what they have done. If you don't know the answer to something, say so.

5. Be calm. It is a rare person who does not become angry or afraid under stress. Don't think that you are weak if you have fears. The important thing in being a peacekeeper is learning how to control your feelings by remembering the overall goal of the action. Try to deal with fears and angers before the demonstration rather than during it.

6. Be forgiving. Give up resentment over the wrong you are trying to set right. Gandhi said, "Hate sin, and love the sinner." This applies to conflicts between demonstrators as well as to conflicts with police, workers, onlookers,....

7. Work as a team. You don't have to do everything yourself. Use and rely on the support you can get from other peacekeepers and from your fellow demonstrators.

8. Do your job. If you feel you cannot perform a specific task due to either physical, emotional, or moral reasons, inform a peacekeeper coordinator so that a person can be found to replace you. It is not a disgrace to say "no, I can't do it." If you feel you cannot handle yourself nonviolently in a situation, notify another peacekeeper and step away from the conflict. It is better to step out than to risk an escalation of the conflict.

9. Peacekeepers will avoid other responsibilities during the time they "on duty" as peacekeepers. This includes caring for children, carrying signs or banners, working at a concession or table, distributing literature for other organizations, etc.

— Adapted from Rocky Flats
Action Group nonviolence manual

We Make A Difference



At times the political work that we do is exciting. Everyone we know is involved; our campaign is the focus of local and national attention; change seems imminent. Other times, all this work seems less rewarding — friends aren't that interested in being involved, everyone's moved on to another issue. Nobody even thinks about, say, draft registration, anymore. Sometimes, we even achieve success, and that takes the wind out of our sails; or suddenly it's not so clear what direction to take.

Movements have stages. They peak in energy and excitement, and then seem to fade away. But in reality it's these quiet times when very important research and networking and grassroots organizing takes place. Seeing our work as part of this larger cycle is one of the ways we get through what could otherwise be a permanent slump. We are building, during these times, the campaigns to come.

Another important part of strengthening and empowering our movement is recognizing and celebrating our victories. The abolition of slavery, the attainment of the eight hour work day, suffrage for women and blacks were all only dreams to people like us who believed that change was possible. Recently Reagan and Bush have publicly taken credit for the "negotiating climate" that allowed for a reduction of Euromissiles and other arms reduction agreements with the Soviets. Are these agreements a credit to their negotiation — or hours and hours of demonstrating, lobbying, marching, dying-in, and leafletting on both sides of the Atlantic? Think about daycare for children. It changed from a frivolous issue to a presidential platform plank all by itself? Not likely.

The fact that "date rape" and "rape inside marriage" are issues at all is testimony to the years of organizing and consciousness-raising by women about the reality of violence in our lives. Think about nuclear power and the shift from "safe power that is too cheap to meter" to "cost effective, independent energy with acceptable levels of public risk" to recent news stories of New York's governor offering to buy Shoreham so that it would never open.

Those of us working on U.S. policy in Central America should remember the words of Daniel Ellsberg, speaking more than a decade ago after learning that the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong was delayed nearly three years because of pressure from the American peace movement:

"Those who demonstrated against the war saved hundreds of thousands of lives, and we are in their debt for having avoided a probable

nuclear war . . . none of the letters to Congress, none of the draft board raids, none of the draft resisters, none of the acts of resistance by soldiers, none of the demonstrations and rallies and visits to Congress; none of it was too soon, none of it was too much, none of it was less than essential, none of it was wasted. NONE OF IT WAS LESS THAN ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY FOR THE ENDING OF THIS WAR."

No one who wields greater power in the political mainstream is likely to voluntarily acknowledge our impact as activists on the important issues of our time. In many ways, that just leaves us the victories to claim. Our efforts, combined with those of the millions of people who have worked for peace and justice throughout history, have made and will make a tremendous difference.



Students from Gallaudet College protest on West Steps of the U.S. Capitol, demanding that a deaf president be appointed. March 1988. Photo by Rick Reinhard, © 1988, Impact Visuals.

Campaigns

Most movement programs revolve around organizing single, unrelated events—demonstrations, forums, whatever. Were these activities strung together in an integrated fashion — building on one another — the impact and potential for success would be magnified dramatically. Such is the advantage of campaign organizing.

The campaign provides an escalating series of actions over a period of time focused on a target in order to achieve specific goals. Persistence and a systematic approach are key ingredients of a campaign.

All this is not to say demonstrations should not be organized on individual dates like Hiroshima Day (August 6), International Women's Day (March 8), Martin Luther King Day, and so forth. But, when possible, actions which are part of campaigns can make a stronger statement.

Planning a Campaign

While a demonstration takes a good deal of careful planning, a campaign requires considerably more attention.

The first step is to do the basic groundwork of self-education on the issues and problems to be combated. This can be accomplished through research, study groups, workshops, and conferences.

The next step is to decide *where* to focus our initial efforts. What you need to find are weak points in the opponent's "armor," which will provide levers or handles to focus criticism and action.

During one phase of the Indian campaign for independence from

Britain, Gandhi selected the British monopoly on salt as the focus for a campaign. At first this appeared to be an insignificant issue to worry about, compared with independence itself. But because salt affected everyone on this rather hot subcontinent, because its cost was a hardship on the masses, and because it was relatively easy to manufacture (and thereby violated the salt laws), it became an ideal symbol of why independence was being sought. The British viewed the Salt Campaign as "nothing less than to cause a complete paralysis of the administrative machinery." In retrospect, the year-long campaign was the most spectacular effort in the 28-year struggle for independence.

The United Farm Workers grape boycott is another example of a well chosen campaign in the struggle to win union recognition and better conditions for farm workers.

One of the most important steps in a campaign, after determining the target or focus, is to choose the *short range goals*. Long range goals are easy, e.g., world peace or an end to sexism. But sometimes if short range goals are not clearly defined, then the campaign could be stalled. Short range goals should be *winnable* within the near future (providing a boost and the encouragement needed to keep your group moving toward the longer range goals), *measurable* (you ought to be able to tell when you have accomplished them), set on a *timetable* to allow for periods of evaluation, be a *significant* step towards the long range goal(s).

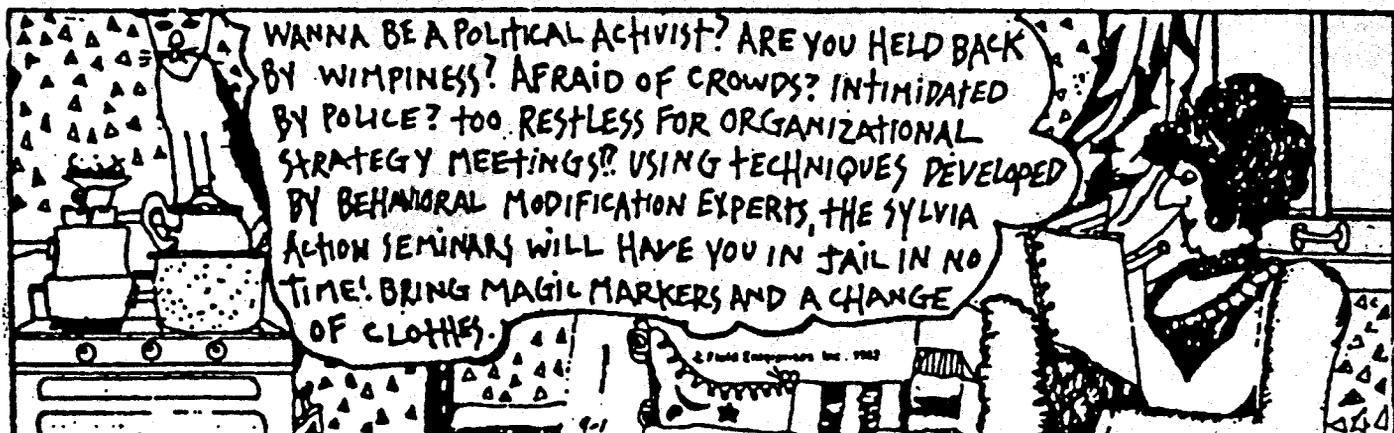
For example, in opposing the establishment of a Junior ROTC unit in a local high school, your *medium* (or short) range goal might be to prevent the unit from setting up. A short range goal could be getting the local paper (or student body) to come out against the unit. An example of something which is *not* a short range goal would be the holding of a forum or having a picket. These represent vehicles toward your goals, rather than goals themselves. Saying that a short range goal is "to educate the student body" has little value as a goal unless it is measurable (e.g., a poll or vote).

In setting goals, you might consider establishing a *bottom line* on what is acceptable, to guard against being coopted into ending the campaign without making any fundamental change.

Analysis

After the goals have been set, an analysis should be made to see who the participants in the campaign are and how they can aid the campaign. Who do you need to participate if the campaign is likely to succeed? Who is on your side now? How are those people reached? Write, call, or visit the community groups which are likely to be sympathetic: cooperatives, clinics, *some* veterans groups, women's groups, Third World groups, student groups, religious organizations, women's groups, and so forth.

Who are the opponents? How can they or their supporters be won over or neutralized. In the example above, the opponents might be the school board or principal. The sup-



porters of the opponents might be the community, PTA, local paper, or clergy.

After this analysis, a plan of action set on a timetable is needed. This plan of action should be in a step-by-step escalation. Escalation is necessary if the pressure on opponents needs to be increased. This does not necessarily mean the previous level of activity is abandoned, but simply that an escalated stage of activity is added to the previous stages. For example, education should be a constant and complementary component of every campaign — never being abandoned. In the campaign above, the first level of action is to approach the school board and ask them to turn down the JROTC application. Should that fail, set up study commissions to analyze the value of a JROTC unit; solicit outside opinions; hold public forums; write letters to the editor; etc.

Should an escalation be necessary, picketing, leafleting, or boycotts might be next. Beyond that, demonstrations, marches, and rallies could be organized. Then, perhaps, a student strike, and maybe carefully chosen civil disobedience actions.

Organizers should not lightly go from one level of a campaign to the next. Each stage should be evaluated and considered seriously. Remember, shifting to the next stage does not mean activities at earlier levels should always be forgotten (e.g., going from picketing to a sit-in does not necessarily mean picketing should be discontinued).

Step by Step Escalation in a Nonviolent Campaign

Investigation and research

Checking facts and allegations; building an airtight case against opponents and preparing for countercharges

Negotiation and arbitration

Meeting with opponents to settle conflict before going public; ultimatum issued before moving to next level

Public forums, letters to editor, etc.

Basic public education on issues

Picketing, leafleting, etc

Public contact with opponents

Demonstrations, rallies, marches

Show of strength by maximizing numbers

Limited strike

Involving those immediately affected

Boycott

Against company or product in question, if appropriate

Limited noncooperation

By those most immediately affected

Massive illegal actions

Noncooperation, civil disobedience, direct action

General strike

Establishing a parallel government

Analyzing a Campaign

This outline is an expansion of an outline used by Joan Bondurant in her analysis of Gandhian campaigns. It can be used either in evaluation of a campaign or in preparation for a campaign.

1. Dates of the Campaign

2. Goals

Long range

What were the ultimate goals being sought?

Short range

What goals were set?

Were they achievable?

Were they measurable? Can you tell if they've been accomplished?

Would reaching them have brought the campaign measurably closer to the long range goals?

Timetable

Was a timetable set to allow for periodic measurement of progress of the campaign? What was it?

Bottom line

Were there any minimum acceptable goals set in advance, so as to avoid being compromised or coopted?

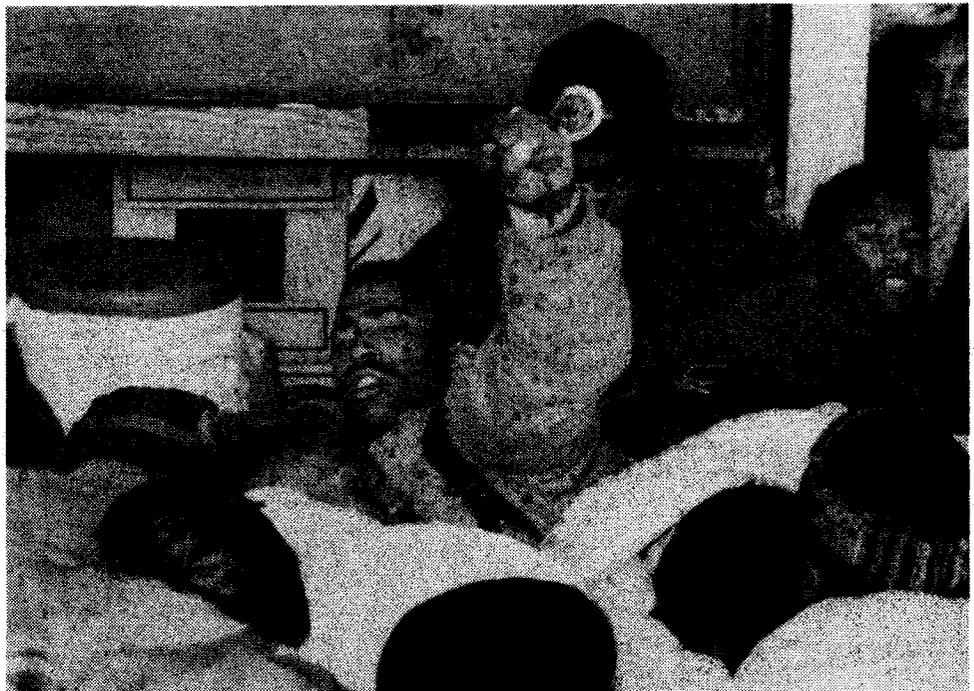
3. Participants

Who was on "our side" at the beginning?

Who was needed if the campaign was likely to succeed?

How could those people we needed have been reached?

Was there a core of people organized and prepared to stay with a sustained campaign so as to provide continuity?



Students at Howard University protest Lee Atwater's appointment as trustee by forming a "human blanket" to block the main entrance to the administration building. March 1989. Photo by Rick Reinhard, © 1989, Impact Visuals.

4. Opponents

Who were the opponents?

Who was calling the shots in opposition to the campaign?

Was it necessary to win over or neutralize supporters of the opponents in order for the campaign to succeed?

How were supporters of the opposition won over or neutralized?

5. Organization and Constructive Work

What was the organizational structure to carry out the campaign?

How were decisions made?

How was the campaign funded?

Were there parallel institutions to replace those being opposed or any constructive work done during the campaign?

6. Preparation for Action

What research and investigation was done?

Education? Public forums? Mass media?

Training for the main actions?

Was there adequate preparation for anticipated repression (jail, levies, violence)?

7. Preliminary Action

Were approaches made to opponents? Negotiation and arbitration?

Petitions or letters?

Was an ultimatum issued? If so, what was the response?

8. Action

What forms of action were used: picketing, leafleting, marches, etc.?

Was it necessary to escalate to a higher level of struggle?

Why and when? Were there strikes, boycotts, or limited noncooperation?

Did the campaign escalate to civil disobedience, mass noncooperation or some form of mass direct action?

Why?

Why did the action end when and where it did?

9. Reaction of opponents

Were participants jailed? Beaten? Repressed?

Property seized?

Lies spread? Media blackout?

Intimidation? Ridicule?

Concessions or coopting attempted?

Was campaign basically ignored?

10. Results

Were the short range goals achieved?

Any progress made towards the long range goals?

What happened to jailed or injured people?

Was property returned? Amnesty?

Did any of the opponents lose support?

Any property destruction by participants?



11. Analysis

Were appropriate tactics used at appropriate times?

Was the best target chosen?

Was the timetable realistic?

Did the campaign meet the timetable? If not, why not?

Was consciousness raised among the general public?

Did the actions clearly communicate the myths, secrets, and realities of the issues and society?

If short range goals were not achieved, why not?

How could the campaign have been improved?

If there was property destruction, did it help or hinder the campaign?

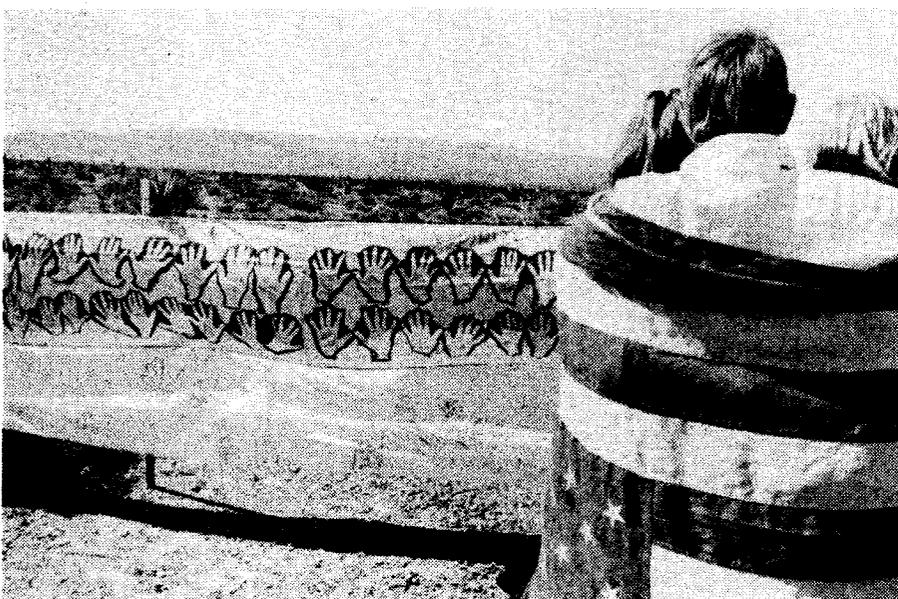
Was the organizational structure adequate to conduct the campaign?

Was the decision making responsive to participants?

Were there problems in making decisions or lack of decisiveness?

Who had the initiative during the campaign?

Were there any surprises which hurt or helped the campaign?



Nevada Peace Test civil disobedience action, March 1988. Photo by Harriet Hirshorn, © 1988, Impact Visuals.

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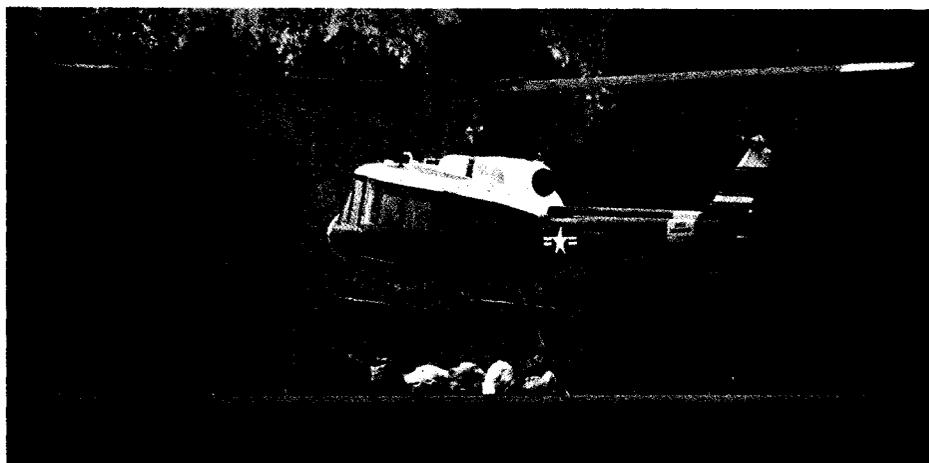
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Syracuse Women's Affinity Group blockades the airstrip at the Seneca Army Depot. October 1983. Photo by Burr Lewis, © 1983.

Periodicals

In addition to The Nonviolent Activist, 339 Lafayette St. NY, NY 10012, the following make a significant contribution to peace and independent thought:

Across Frontiers

P.O. Box 2382
Berkeley, Ca 94702

The Animals' Agenda

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Westport, CT 06881

Akwesasne Notes

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Roosevelt town, NY 13683

Black/Out

The Magazine of the National
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LINKS, National Central

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M: Gentle Men For Gender Justice,

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WRI Women

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Zeta Magazine

116 St. Botolph St.
Boston, MA 02115



Activists chain themselves to the gates of a teargas plant in Saltsburg, PA., to protest shipments of C.S. gas to Israel for use against Palestinians. April 1988. Photo by Barry Lavery, © 1988, Impact Visuals.

**Believing war to be a crime
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