CHAPTER 7

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

> If one wishes to accomplish something, the chances of achieving that goal will be greatest if one uses one's available resources and leverage to maximum effectiveness. That means having a strategic plan which is designed to move from the present (in which the goal is not achieved) to the future (in which it is achieved). Strategy pertains to charting the course of action which makes it most likely to get from the present to a desired situation in the future. (Sharp 1993)

> Strategy is how we turn what we have into what we need. (Ganz 2000)

It might seem obvious that developing a sound strategy increases a social movement's effectiveness. But social movement participants often act without a clear, long-range strategy–whether due to impatience, or lingering doubt that their goals are achievable, or belief in the value of simply acting on principle no matter the effects, or simply lack of foresight. For example, the nuclear freeze movement of the 1980s, which sought to halt the construction of any new nuclear weapons, failed to develop an effective strategy (Joseph 1993). The movement focused its efforts on Congress: it pressed the House of Representatives to pass a resolution endorsing a freeze on nuclear weapons, which it did in 1983, and raising money for pro-freeze candidates for Congress. But the Congressional vote had virtually no impact on actual government policy, and the freeze movement influenced only a few congressional races in 1984. Core activists became disillusioned and concluded that they needed to escalate their tactics and turned to direct action. Joseph (1993) argues that activists needed to see that their electoral efforts were important, but only within a longer-range strategy of building a popular movement against nuclear weapons.

Activists holding a sign promoting a "nuclear freeze" (a freeze on the development and deployment of nuclear weapons) during the 1970s. (Photo by Ellen Shub. Source http://www.zcommunications.org/social-movements-between-woodstock-and-the-web-by-zoltan-grossman

> The expectation that Congress would stop the arms race that year was unrealistic. What the organizational culture of the movement could not do was develop a strategy outlining what was immediately possible and what could be achieved over five years and more, and present those expectations to its constituency and to the press and media in a way

> that illuminated both near- and long-term progress toward the goal of ending the arms race (Joseph 1993).

Ganz (2000) likens social movements to games like poker: both chance and skill influence the outcome, but the actor who is able to use her or his skills to take advantage of chance opportunities–who strategizes most effectively–has the best chance of winning.

Strategy is the plan for achieving the group's goals. It specifies one's objectives and draws the basic outlines of how to get there from here. It involves assessing the relative strength and sources of power of the target and of the movement. More specifically, it involves *targeting* (choosing what to do, and to whom), *timing* (when to do it), and *tactics* (how to do it) (Ganz 2000). Strategy entails deciding how to allocate valued resources and use important skills. It requires thinking through the possible consequences of particular courses of action. Leaders of the SCLC's (Southern Christian Leadership Campaign's) effort to desegregate public facilities in Birmingham, Alabama in1963 knew that local black residents lacked political power, as they were still largely excluded from voting or running for public office. Hence, it made little sense to try to pressure local political officials directly. But residents had economic power: as customers, they supported local businesses. So the SCLC adopted a strategy centered on an economic boycott of white businesses in downtown Birmingham. They reasoned that business owners would, if faced with enough financial loss, press local political leaders to change the city's segregationist policies (Morris 1993). They also had the power to disrupt social order, which could both attract national media attention and force the federal government to intervene on their behalf, and so the leadership initiated sit-ins at lunch counters and mass marches.

With regard to timing, SCLC leaders made the tactical decision to begin the boycott just before Easter, which not only had religious significance for the black community, but was the second-biggest shopping season of the year. Then, when Birmingham city officials obtained a court injunction barring all demonstrations, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ralph Abernathy chose to defy the injunction–and to get arrested--on Good Friday, knowing that this would stir community support (Morris 1993).

Tactics are the means used to implement the strategy. They are shorter-term and more concrete than strategy. In the above example, how would the economic boycott be carried out? One tactic was to picket in front of retail stores to persuade people not to shop.

Say, for example, that you form a group to stop a hazardous waste dump from being built in your community. Your strategy might be to pressure the town council to cancel the plan for construction and, if that fails, to use nonviolent direct action to force a halt to the actual construction. You realize that your greatest source of power is the town's residents: because they elect the town council, their opinions matter to council members. Hence your strategy involves educating residents about the potential health hazards and mobilizing them to voice their opinions publicly. (Should direct action become necessary, a strategic plan will be created for carrying it out.) Your tactics for educating and mobilizing residents include door-to-door canvassing to speak with them and distribute information; an informational session at the public library; letters to the town newspaper opposing the waste dump; and setting up meeting for groups of residents to speak with town council members.

HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

Ultimately, a social movement succeeds by getting someone to change what they do (or, sometimes, what they think). Even for movements that strive to change social institutions, ultimately that change depends on some person or persons changing. There are two fundamental ways that a social movement–or anyone, for that matter–can gets someone to do what it wants: through persuasion or through sanctions (Kriesberg 2003). **Persuasion** involves using argument or information or pleading (symbolic communication) to convince a person to meet the movement's demands. With **positive sanctions** (rewards), the target is promised something they desire in exchange for meeting the movement's demands. A **negative sanction** (punishment) involves threatening to inflict some harm if demands are not met. Of course, the threatened punishment need not be physical or even an emotional harm–for example, it might be the threat to oppose a political official's reelection, or to nonviolently occupy someone's office. (Sometimes the use of positive sanctions to elicit a change is called **bargaining**, and the use of negative sanctions is called **coercion** (Turner 1970).).

When persuasion and sanctions are successful, they can produce results through four different mechanisms of change (Lakey 1968; Sharp 1993).

conversion: The target is persuaded to meet the challengers' demands. The change may be an intellectual one, based on new information or reasoning, or it may be an emotional one, involving beliefs or attitudes. In practice, conversion of individuals in positions of authority is extremely rare; instead, when a movement succeeds in creating institutional change, it usually does so through one of the other three processes described below. However, when a movement's goal is a sociocultural one–a change in public beliefs, for example–conversion may be the primary mechanism of change.

accommodation: The target is not persuaded, and is not negatively coerced, but decides that meeting the movement's demands is the best course of action. In other words, he or she decides that the costs of not meeting those demands outweigh the benefits. This may result from bargaining with movement activists, who either promise to provide positive sanctions or to remove negative sanctions in exchange for a desired result. For example, the Birmingham campaign to desegregate buses and other public facilities was ultimately successful because the mass boycott began hurting local business owners, who then pressed the city government for a resolution (Morris 1993).

coercion: The target feels they have no choice but to change their course of action to avoid some cost or punishment. Social movements that are committed to using nonviolence refrain from using physical harm or the threat of physical harm to coerce the target, but they may make other kinds of threats–typically, they threaten to disrupt the social order in some way through mass protests, strikes, and the like.

disintegration: The target is rendered powerless, literally unable to continue their course of action. This may be because he or she has lost the resources essential to continuing (e.g. the support of others) or it may be because he or she or the social institution which they command has become irrelevant, being replaced by other actors and organizations. In an example of the former, President Marcos of the Philippines was overthrown when large numbers of the armed forces deserted, and when the U.S. government made clear that it would no longer defend his rule. During the Vietnam antiwar movement, one way activists tried to stop the war was by blocking army induction centers where young draftees were brought to be processed, so that the U.S. government would be unable to continue the war. An example of creating organizations to replace current ones is Gandhi's "constructive programme" that sought to build self-reliance among Indian villagers during the campaign for independence from Great Britain. Gandhi encouraged Indians to spin cloth and make their own salt, rather than buy them from the British. Similarly, one nonviolent tactic is building alternative institutions–for example, in the 1970s women created women's health centers because they felt that doctors and hospitals were not meeting the needs of women.

The Role of Third Parties

In a social movement's struggle to influence some target, the support of other people and groups–third parties–is often a crucial part of the equation. As shown in Figure 1, a **direct effect** occurs when a social movement, by itself, is able to create some policy change. However, most social

Filipino demonstrators greet a soldier with flowers during the nonviolent revolution in 1986. The refusal of soldiers to harm protesters was a key in the revolution's success. (Source: http://theblacktwig.wordpress.com/2011/02/26/people-power-revolution-25-years-after/

movements do not have the resources to bring about change by themselves and must instead rely on the support of third parties. (Note that models of the effects of social movements whose targets are sociocultural instead of institutional might be different.) **Mediated effects** occur when a third party intervenes between the movement and the policymaking process to facilitate success. In some cases, this third party is public opinion: the movement influences public opinion, which in turn influences institutional policy. If your objective is to get elected officials to pass some new law, then your strategy is likely to center on persuading the voting public to support your objectives, since legislators are dependent on them for reelection. In other cases, the third party is powerful allies, such as sympathetic public officials, who can use their power to promote movement demands. If you are a group of students trying to influence college policy, then winning support from faculty members or alumni, who can influence administrators, might be crucial. Finally, the **joint-effect** model posits that movements plus one or both third parties influence policy.

Each of these models represents a different strategy. Following the direct effect model, social movements can try to induce change themselves--by making appeals directly to the target, by staging protests that display to the target the group's strength, or by using disruptive tactics to coerce the target. For example, research on the effect of protests against the war in Vietnam reveal that during the Johnson and Nixon administrations, "All methods of protest [mass demonstrations, letters, petitions] attracted the attention of important officials at some time during the period" and led to the "overall official perception of growing dissatisfaction with administration programs" (Small 1987: 196). As shown in Figure 2, these tactics served to "arouse doubts and conflicts within the opponent's camp." But the fewer resources a movement has, the more its success depends on expanding the scope of the conflict to include third parties (Gamson 2004). Activists can engage in **consensus mobilization**: try to bring the public over to their side, through educational efforts or, again, by showing their strength through protests. In Figure 2, this is labeled "win over or at least neutralize uncommitted third parties." In the United States, most public officials are elected by citizens, and so social movements often seek to influence public opinion as a way to persuade public officials to change policies.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Choosing a Goal and Identifying the Target

Sometimes the goal of a social movement is self-evident: stopping a particular war, for example. When the goal of a movement is more general, however–ending racism, promoting Christianity–then activists typically must choose a more limited goal on which to focus their efforts. When the effort to achieve a goal is limited both in time and space, it is called a **campaign**. For example, the goal of the peace movement is, most generally, to prevent or stop wars and war preparations (military recruiting, the development of nuclear weapons, etc.). Peace movement activists form sub-movements, like the movement to end the Vietnam war or the movement against nuclear weapons. Within the latter, an example of a campaign was the effort during the mid-1980s to halt the funding and development of the Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars"), a scientifically unsound proposal to build an air defense

Figure 1. Models of Social Movement Effects (adapted from Giugni and Passy 1998)

Direct-effect model

social movement ➔ institutional change

Mediated-effect model

social movement ➔ public opinion ➔ institutional change

social movement ➔ powerful allies ➔ institutional change

Joint-effect model

social movement + public opinion ➔ institutional changes

social movement + powerful allies ➔ institutional change

system against nuclear weapons.

Often activists can choose among various possible campaigns, and they make the choice based on strategic considerations.

> In 1976, several years before a discernible animal rights movement emerged, several activists who had taken a course on animal liberation taught by philosopher Peter Singer learned of an experiment on the sexual behavior of cats at the American Museum of Natural History. Underway since 1959, this research involved mutilating cats–castrating them, removing parts of the brain, destroying the sense of smell–to observe the effects on their sexual preferences and abilities. The activists had been searching for a target in New York (for better access and media attention) that involved dubious and easily parodied research. Experiments on feline sexual practices seemed ideal. (Jasper and Poulsen 1993).

There are pros and cons to choosing either limited goals or wider goals. On the one hand, limited goals are more easily achieved. It may be possible for animal rights activists to stop the practice of animal testing in one laboratory, but to eliminate all animal testing would be much more difficult. On the other hand, there are dangers in limiting one's goals. Activists in the nuclear freeze movement of the 1980s disagreed on whether to remain a single-issue movement or link nuclear weapons to U.S. foreign policy and domestic spending (Joseph 1993) The former option, some argued, maximized the freeze's appeal to a broad base and its chances of gaining support from legislators who could change policy. On the other hand, the latter option would tap in to the interests of women, minority, and working-class

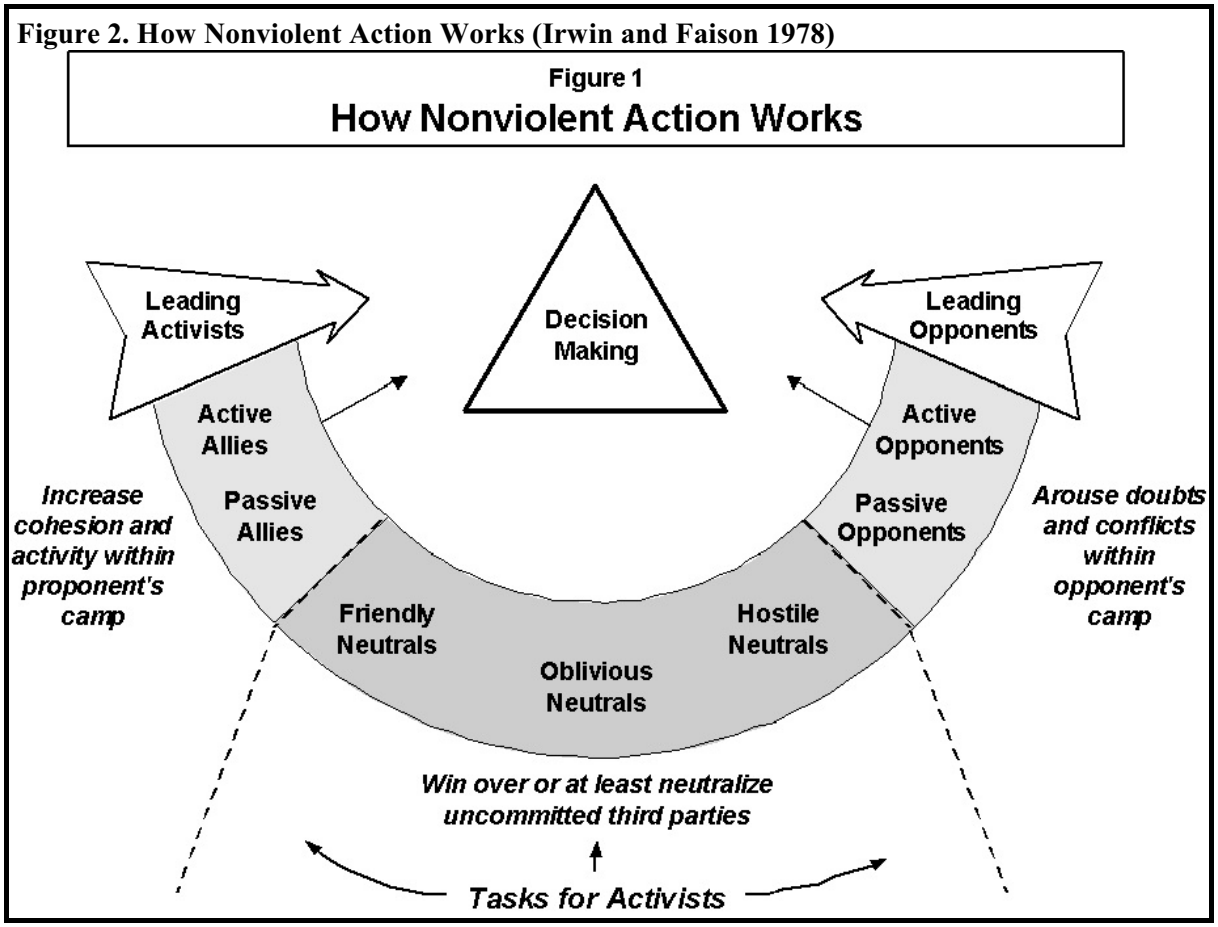
Americans, who suffer the most when spending is diverted from social programs to weapons. The single-issue proponents won out, and activists put their energy into getting a freeze resolution passed in Congress in 1983. However, while they succeeded, the vote did not change policy.

> Many in the movement who thought it would be possible to halt the arms race by working through Congress felt betrayed when the resolution that was eventually passed contained relatively weak language, and when many congressmen voted for both the resolution and for major weapons systems. (Joseph 1993: 161).

Furthermore, discussions in Congress centered on technical issues, such as whether or not a freeze could be verified, whereas the peace movement's strength had been to look at a broader picture. Finally, in part because of its single-issue focus, the freeze movement failed to develop a broad coalition with racial-ethnic groups, labor organizations, environmental groups, and the like that would have both strengthened the movement itself and facilitated a longer-range effort to end the nuclear arms race (Joseph 1993).

Good strategy also requires identifying one's **target**: toward what person or group is the strategy ultimately directed? In other words, what person or group–usually in a position of institutional or

Figure 2. How Nonviolent Action Works (Irwin and Faison 1978)



sociocultural authority–has the power to make the change that activists seek? This is not always obvious. For example, if you want increased funding for schools in your community, who can make that happen? The local school board? State officials? National officials?

Assessing Strengths and Vulnerabilities

The fundamental question for social movement activists that guides strategy is, What is the source of our power? Effective strategy means using your strengths and attacking the opponent's weak points.

Resources

One source of power is resources, which the movement can use to further its cause. Most social movements arise in the first place among groups with relatively few material resources, notably money. But there usually are other resources that activists control or could potentially mobilize. Recall from chapter 2 that resources can be categorized as follows:

moral resources: expressions of approval and support–legitimacy, sympathy, and the like--that come from outside the movement. Celebrity endorsements of a movement's cause are an example.

cultural resources: widely shared beliefs and practices. In the contemporary U.S., the high value placed on justice and equality are often used by movement activists to justify their cause.

social-organizational resources: existing groups and social networks that can provide access to additional resources. For example, movement activists often tap into church communities to recruit participants and disseminate information.

human resources: individuals' skills, expertise, and experience. If movement participants decide to engage in civil disobedience, for example, it is useful to recruit sympathetic lawyers who can navigate the judicial system should activists be arrested or jailed.

material resources: physical objects, like computers, equipment, and an office, as well as money.

Most social movements rely heavily on human resources (in particular, the time and commitment of participants) and moral and cultural resources (such as the perceived justness of their cause). Movements often try to recruit influential allies who will lend credibility to their cause and/or intervene on their behalf. The famed liberal leaning of the Hollywood elite means that peace, environmental, and feminist movements can often call on celebrities to endorse a movement campaign, speak at rallies, or

make fund-raising appeals. A group called Musicians United to Win Without War, which opposed the U.S. going to war against Iraq in 2003, bought a full-page ad in the New York Times expressing their opposition to Bush's policies (www.moveon.org/musiciansunited/Musicians.pdf). The tactics was intended to use their fame to persuade others. At the pro-choice movement's March for Women's Lives, held in Washington, D.C. in 2004, actors that spoke included Whoopi Goldberg, Susan Sarandon, and Kathleen Turner.

Typically, social movements use some combination of these strategies, depending on the resources and opportunities available to them and on the target's resources and vulnerabilities. Note that the resources to which social movement activists have access will depend heavily on their position within a society (Edwards and McCarthy 2004). The main point of Piven and Cloward's book *Poor People's Movements* (1977) was that the poor in the U.S. have very few resources with which to realize social movement goals, and so must resort to disrupting the normal functioning of society in order to be heard.

Dependent Relations

When the target is dependent on the constituency's actions in some way–a landlord who depends on tenants paying their rent, a business owner who depends on employees to produce goods to sell–then the constituents can impose negative sanctions on the target by withholding or threatening to withhold their cooperation. Alternatively, a movement may be able to entice the target with positive sanctions, such as using their power as voters to promise to endorse a candidate for political office. Now, often opponents can also sanction social movement activists. When someone is in a position of institutional power–the head of a government, the principal of a school, the owner of a business–then they will usually have the authority (the right) to inflict some punishment (negative sanctions) on others. The chief of police can call for people to be arrested. The principal of a school may have the authority to expel a student. The owner of a business can fire someone. The effects of such repression on social movements are discussed further in this chapter.

The Political Environment

Another source of power is any opportunities or threats that may be present in the external environment. Recall that political opportunity theory, described in chapter 2, posits that such opportunities–including the openness of target institutions, as well as their vulnerability; the presence of influential allies; the absence of repression; and cultural receptiveness--influence whether and when social movements emerge in the first place. They also influence the strategies and tactics that movements choose. For example, laws that protect free speech in the United States provide an opportunity for social movement participants to engage in a great variety of symbolic acts. Federal law protects the right of workers to form a union with which the employer must bargain, so the strategy of unionizing is often employed by workers in the labor movement.

On the other hand, threats limit a movement's choice of strategy and tactics. A common threat is the government's authority to use force, which significantly narrows the strategic options for social

movements. For example, it is seldom feasible for disgruntled workers to simply take over a company to run it themselves, as they would be arrested and possibly imprisoned. Finally, opportunities and threats can change and so must be continually assessed. If your target is an elected official, then a new opportunity may arise for your movement when she or he faces reelection.

Allies and Opponents

Good strategy requires identifying one's current allies, potential allies, current opponents, potential opponents, and bystanders who are unlikely to become either allies or opponents (Turner 1970; Geschwender 1983). An **opponent** is a person or group that opposes the movement's goals. Sometimes the target and opponent are the same–for example, if your goal is to get company management to change how it treats employees. But other times target and opponent may be different. The target of much pro-choice movement activity is government officials who make laws and policies, who may or may not oppose abortion. The certain opponents are pro-life organizations.

Identifying allies and opponents is useful because these groups have different places in movement strategy (see Figure 2). Generally, movements strive to maintain the support of current allies and cultivate support from potential allies. They want to neutralize the influence of opponents and prevent potential opponents from mobilizing. Depending on the movement, it may also be important to insure the tacit support, or at least noninvolvement, of bystanders. A movement's tactics will differ depending on which of these groups it is dealing with.

Basic Strategic Principles

There are some common strategic principles that apply to social movement campaigns.

✓*use your strengths*. As noted above, strategic planning involves assessing one's own and one's target's strengths and weaknesses. If a social movement has little money but lots of popular support, then it makes more sense to stage a mass protest than to try to pay for ads in newspapers.

✓ *target the opponent's weak points*. If the opponent is a business whose profits depend in part on a positive public image, then publicizing a negative image may pressure the business to cooperate.

✓*build support for your cause*. Third parties typically play an important role in struggles between social movements and their targets, so soliciting their support is an important strategic principle.

✓ *maintain solidarity within the movement*. At the same time that a social movement is engaging with targets, allies, and opponents, it needs to insure that its members remain committed to the movement and its goals. Recall from the chapter on organization that SMO's often hold events, like mass marches, that are intended not only to influence third parties but to energize movement volunteers.

✓*escalate tactics*. In general, social movements will gain the most support by using less confrontational tactics first, then moving to more confrontational ones as needed. For example, a group of students that occupies the college president's office to demand that the school pay a living wage

to its staff will generate more sympathy if the students had previously tried to verbally persuade the college president to institute a living wage.

Strategic Decisions

Social movement activists must make a number of decisions related to strategy. Among them are:

✓*whether to focus on building a mass organization or on protesting*. Piven and Cloward (1977) argued that at least for movements of the poor (workers' agitation in the 1930s; the civil rights movement; and others), building an organization detracts from the main strength that the poor have, which is to disrupt society.

✓*whether to use primarily moral witness (persuasion) or mass action* to achieve the movement's goal. "Moral witness"–symbolic tactics like candlelight vigils, burning one's draft card,refusing to pay one's taxes that go to the military–seek primarily to persuade, while mass action exerts pressure on opponents.

✓*what type of organizational structure to build–* centralized vs. decentralized, a national organizations vs. building local groups, etc.

✓*how much effort to put into gaining media attention*. For some social movement organizations, like Greenpeace, the central strategy is to use media attention to publicly embarrass the opponent.

✓*which resources to mobilize*: will it be most effective to recruit participants at the grassroots? To gain endorsements from influential people? To raise money from philanthropic foundations?

Tactical Choices

Finally, out of strategy grows tactics–the specific actions that will be taken to implement the movement's strategy. In choosing among possible tactics, activists must make five fundamental decisions (McAdam and Tarrow 2000; Marx and McAdam 1994). They must choose between:

✓*institutional vs. extra-institutional tactics* (or "outsider" vs. "insider" tactics). Recall that by definition social movements use tactics that are outside of normal institutional channels. However, they frequently also use institutional tactics like endorsing candidates for political office or filing court cases.

✓*nonviolent vs. violent tactics*. Judgments differ about what is and is not violent. One definition is that violent tactics are those that physically harm or threaten to physically harm someone, while nonviolent ones do not. However, differences of opinion exist: is property destruction violent? Is name-calling, which might cause emotional harm, nonviolent?

✓*legal vs. illegal tactics*. In general, violent tactics are illegal (only the state–i.e. armed forces and police forces–can legally use violence to achieve its ends. Though, again, this depends on how you define violence.) But nonviolent tactics may be legal or illegal (see Table 2)–for example, the sit-in is a well-known nonviolent tactic, but it is usually illegal to the extent that it involves

trespassing or blocking a public space.

✓*overt vs. covert tactics*. Finally, when a movement uses illegal tactics, they are sometimes planned and carried out covertly (secretly). For example, the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), a very decentralized group of environmental activists, engages in illegal actions covertly, such as rescuing animals from being used in scientific testing in laboratories, burning down houses under construction in housing developments that impede on wilderness land, and destroying SUV's at dealerships. To protect activists from prosecution, ELF has no membership rolls. Anyone that wishes to can carry out an action as part of ELF.

✓*less vs. more confrontational tactics.* Nonviolent tactics can vary in their confrontativeness–in the extent that it involves expressing one's opposition directly, through actions that demand rather than invite the target's attention. The point is to make the target uncomfortable. For example, carrying a sign is relatively nonconfrontational, especially if it says something fairly benign like "Make love, not war." On the other hand, a sit-in is highly confrontational, as is throwing a pie in the face of an opponent. Here is one example of a confrontational tactics: "Former deputy press secretary Tom Johnson describes Lyndon Johnson, sitting up in his living quarters, the windows shut, the shades drawn, still able to hear the raucous chants from protesters across the street, "Hey, Hey, LBJ, How Many Kids Did You Kill Today?' And it pained him" (Small 1987).

✓*less vs. more dramaturgical tactics*. Dramaturgy refers to the use of drama, or emotional appeals. Some more dramaturgical tactics include performing skits, displaying photographs, and staging a die-in. On the other end of the spectrum are tactics that rely on scientific or rational argument, like presenting facts.

Within a social movement, activists typically use a variety of tactics. Different SMO's within a movement may have different strategies and use different tactics, but even within a single SMO, activists typically engage in a variety of tactics. For example, Table 1 shows the kinds of tactics employed by a sample of environmental groups.

Internal Influences on Strategy and Tactics

A social movement draws its strategies and tactics from "repertoires of collective action" (Tilly 1979), or a range of strategies and tactics. In other words, strategic and tactic choices are typically constrained by a number of factors: what participants feel comfortable doing, what will be effective in a particular time and place, and the like. I vividly recall the different tactics used by two groups in my then-hometown of Boulder, Colorado to protest against the Gulf War in 1991. One well-established peace group consisted of mostly middle-aged and older people. Most of them had come to antiwar work through their religious beliefs and had a principled commitment to nonviolence. Many were Quakers who attended the local Quaker meetings, and many had worked with the Rocky Mountain Peace Center, a local peace organization. This group chose to protest the war by holding weekly candlelight vigils in front of the city courthouse. They would light their candles and stand silently in a semi-circle for about an hour. A second group of protesters in Boulder was comprised mostly of students from the local

university and other younger people, few of whom had a religious commitment to nonviolence. Some were relatively new to peace work, and others had been part of environmental groups and protests against U.S. government policy whose main tactic was direct action. This group chose to protest the war by holding a mass march through downtown Boulder, during which participants yelled, chanted, carried signs, and walked in the streets blocking traffic. What accounted for these differences?

Ideology. A social movement's dominant belief system will rule out and rule in various tactics. Most peace movement organizations are committed to nonviolence on principle, and so would not use violent tactics. But a group that was doubtful of the effectiveness of symbolic actions like lighting candles would be more likely to march through the streets.

Collective identity. Much like ideology, movement activists' sense of who they are as a group can influence their strategy and tactics. Most of the older activists in Boulder identified with a religious tradition of nonviolence to which persuasive tactics, like a vigil, were more suited.

Familiarity. Candlelight vigils were no doubt a tactic that the older peace activists had used many times before. They knew how to do it and felt comfortable doing it.

NONVIOLENCE

In twentieth century America, nearly all social movements have eschewed violent tactics. The most obvious reason is the strength of the state: it would be virtually impossible for a social movement to generate enough military strength to challenge the U.S. armed forces and police. Another crucial reason is the legitimacy of the state. Because the U.S. political system is democratic in form (though some would question the extent to which it operates democratically in reality), it enjoys a high degree of legitimacy among the population, and any social movement that challenged it with violence would gain little popular support. Indeed, those few SMO's that have used or advocated the use of violence–in the 1960s, the Black Panther Party and the Weather Underground, for example–have received little support from the public.

Even social movements that use violent tactics nearly always use nonviolent ones as well. But

Table 2. Two Dimensions of Tactics: Legality and Violence

	legal	**illegal**
nonviolent	carrying a sign	civil disobedience
violent	verbal abuse (?)	homicide

social movements worldwide have more and more often explicitly chosen to wage their struggles nonviolently, ever since Gandhi's leadership of the Indian movement for independence from Great Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. **Nonviolent tactics** are punishments and pressures which do not kill or threaten physical harm but which, nonetheless, thwart an opponent's objectives and cause them to alter their behavior. For some individuals and groups, nonviolence is not simply a method of political struggle, but is a philosophy of life, as it was for Gandhi. Seen this way, nonviolence involves a particular moral stance, as outlined in Table 3. This kind of nonviolence is sometimes called **principled nonviolence**, as compared with **pragmatic nonviolence**, which uses nonviolent tactics but presupposes no particular belief system.

Types of Nonviolence

The most well-known analyst of pragmatic nonviolence is Gene Sharp. Historically nonviolence has been associated with religious groups and spiritual leaders like Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr, and so many people see it as something that only a few saintly people can do. Sharp's lifelong quest is to teach people that nonviolence is a tool can be used by anyone, regardless of their beliefs. He drew up a list of "The Methods of Nonviolent Action" (included at the end of this chapter) to show people the great variety of nonviolent tactics that have been used throughout history. Sharp divides the list into three categories:

> **Protest and persuasion** encompasses the use of symbols (including words) to publicly express one's opposition to or support for something. Some examples: hanging a banner on a freeway overpass; marching in a mass demonstration; wearing a button or t-shirt that expresses your views.
>
> **Noncooperation** is the refusal to cooperate with policies or procedures that one would normally follow. It involves withdrawing one's cooperation from social institutions and social relationships. Some examples are refusing to pay that part of one's incomes taxes that fund the military; refusing to shop in a store that hires only white people; or refusing to work (going on strike). The parable "The King Who Ruled Nothing," included at the end of this chapter, relates how noncooperation can, ultimately, prevent even a dictator from getting his way.
>
> **Nonviolent intervention** means actively inserting oneself into a situation, physically or emotionally. Some examples: a blockade of an abortion clinic; a sit-in at your senator's office to protest U.S. involvement in a war; or creating an alternative school.

Two other terms that one often hears in discussions of nonviolent action are direct action and civil disobedience. **Direct action** is nonviolent action that directly addresses a problem, rather than appealing to others to do so (it falls into the categories of nonviolent intervention or sometimes

noncooperation). **Civil disobedience** means breaking a law in order to protest some injustice.

Direct Action in the Contemporary United States

Starting in the mid-1970s, there arose in the United States what Epstein (1993) calls the "direct action movement." Its core activists were former antiwar and feminist activists, and its identifying feature was the use of nonviolent direct action to address a number of issues, such as nuclear power, nuclear weapons, environmental degradation, and U.S. intervention in third world countries. In a sense, the direct action movement was made up of the more radical groups from a number of different movements, with considerable overlap in membership. The core activists were self-consciously egalitarian, nonviolent, feminist, and typically anarchist. (Anarchism is an ideology that advocates voluntary relationships between people in all areas of life and rejects the use of force.)

The first major event of the direct action movement was the occupation of a nuclear power plant under construction in Seabrook, New Hampshire in 1977. Inspired by an action in Wyhl, Germany in which 28,000 people occupied the site of a proposed nuclear power plant for over a year, some 2,000 people marched in to the Seabrook plant. The governor ordered them to leave, but 1,401 protesters stayed, were arrested, and spent two weeks together in jail, during which time they created a sort of alternative community. What was unique about this action was how it was organized (and this form of organization is still used by nearly all U.S. groups that participate in nonviolent direct action). Protesters took part in the occupation as members of small **affinity groups** of 5-10 people that made decisions by consensus and, within guidelines that committed everyone to nonviolence, enjoyed autonomy in deciding where to go, what to say, and what to do. (For a fuller description, see the box at the end of this chapter, "How We Really Shut Down the WTO.") Affinity groups add immense creativity to mass protests; at meetings before a protest in Quebec against the Free Trade Area of the Americas Treaty, for instance, "one group announced they would form a marching band, another planned to wrap a security fence in toilet paper, another planned to throw hundreds of paper air planes through the chain link, another–a group of Harvard graduate students–planned to read Foucault to the police (Klein 2002).

Affinity groups, in turn, are often grouped into **clusters**. When decisions need to be made affecting all the protesters, either a cluster or each affinity group sends a **spokes** (spokesperson) to represent it in a **spokescouncil**. The spokes do not make decisions themselves, but rather relay information and ideas back and forth between their own groups and the spokescouncil. The role is rotated to prevent the development of an elite decision making group.

When I participated in a nonviolent blockade of the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia to protest against U.S. government covert intervention in Central America, we utilized the spokescouncil model. Some affinity groups were blockading the main entrance to the building, while others (mine included) were to blockade a side entrance used for deliveries. However, when we arrived at our site, the gate was closed temporarily due to construction. To decide what to do next, each affinity group–there were about fifteen present--sent a spokes to the spokescouncil. They formed a circle and discussed the available options. Then each spokes returned to their affinity group, outlined the options, and the group decided which they preferred. The spokes then reconvened in the spokescouncil and reported what their

groups had decided. In this case, all the groups decided to walk to the main entrance and join the blockade there.

Reasons for Using Nonviolence

Ethical Reasons

For some social movements and participants, the decision to use nonviolence is an ethical one, based on the belief that hurting people is morally wrong. For many of them, violence is inconsistent with the religious teachings that they follow. The three historic peace churches in the U.S.–the Brethren, the Mennonites, and the Quakers–have histories of opposing wars. Many members of these churches have been **conscientious objectors** who have refused to join the armed services when a draft was in place, often serving time in jail as a result.

Pragmatic Reasons

Gandhi's genius was to insist that nonviolence is not only more ethical than violence, but it is also can be just as, if not more, effective. There are a number of arguments here that are made by proponents of nonviolence; but it is important to note that, in large part, they have not been verified empirically. (This is not to say that they are inaccurate, only that insufficient research has been done on actual cases to state them as fact.)

1. *Violence is unlikely to be successful when opponent is better armed or more numerous* (as in the U.S., both when the opponent is the government itself, and when it is certain that the government would intervene if violence was used against a nongovernmental opponent).

2. *Nonviolence results in fewer casualties in the long run.* The logic here is that the use of violence invites violent retaliation by opponents–so violence escalates. Opponents may use violence against nonviolent protesters, but if the protesters retaliate in kind, then the opponent feels justified in continuing their violence. If protesters refuse to use violence, but also refuse to stop protesting, then the opponent will eventually realize that violent retaliation will not work, or their conscience will get to them, and they will eventually stop using it. One school of thought is that initially, nonviolent activists may incur more casualties than if they used violence, but that in the long run the casualties will be fewer.

3. *More people are willing and able to participate in nonviolent actions* (Zunes 2000). The use of violence tends to centralize power, as those who wield the weapons have the most power and those without weapons, the least. But nonviolence is as "weapon" that is available to everybody–it is "people power." As such, it may also facilitate democracy within social movements that use it.

4. *Nonviolence is more likely to gain the sympathy and support of opponents and of third parties to the conflict*. Nonviolence may be more likely to create divisions within the opponent's camp, as individuals disagree on how to respond to it (Zunes 2000). It is more likely to engender the support of third parties--the public, news reporters, international observers–which is important when opponents are sensitive to their public image. During the civil rights movement, television broadcasts of unarmed protesters in Alabama and elsewhere being beaten by police and sprayed with fire hoses galvanized support for the movement among northern whites. When activists do not use violence, then opponents have much harder time justifying their repression.

5. *Nonviolence prevents conflict from resurfacing*. If a social movement wins using violence, then it has sown the seeds of retaliation: people on the losing side who have been hurt, and seen their families and friends hurt, will be angry and seek revenge. Hence, the conflict will eventually return. This is less likely when a movement wins through nonviolence. In addition, social movements that succeed through violence may then continue to rely on violence as the central method of solving problems.

6. *Nonviolence creates positive changes in those who use it.* It empowers the individual by instilling confidence, a sense of control over one's life, and dignity. Rather than passively submitting to some injustice, nonviolence is a way for people to stand up for what they believe in–while at the same time refusing to harm other people.

DIVERSITY OF STRATEGY AND TACTICS WITHIN A MOVEMENT

Since strategic choices stem from what resources are available to a group as well as its ideology and culture, it makes sense that within a social movement one would find SMO's whose strategies and tactics differ. Within the pro-life movement, there are groups that endorse direct action (such as blockading abortion clinics) and groups that do not (Maxwell 2002). In the environmental movement, there are also groups that engage in direct action like tree-sitting, and there are groups that focus primarily on lobbying the federal government for stronger environmental protection laws. Sometimes diverse SMO's oppose each other, but often they simply use different but complementary strategies in pursuit of their goals. Indeed, there is evidence that the effectiveness of a social movement is increased when it contains more radical groups alongside more moderate ones. The **radical flank effect** (Haines 1984) refers to the effect that the presence of more radical groups has on the movement's success. Haines found that in the civil rights movement, the rise of the more militant Black Power groups led to increased funding for more moderate civil rights organizations, as wealthy donors and foundations suddenly saw these as the more attractive alternative.

Disagreements over Tactics: The Question of Property Destruction

Within social movements in the United States, disagreements have regularly arisen over whether

Table 3. The Difference Between Violence and (Principled) Nonviolence
(adapted from Bergel 2001)

	violence	***nonviolence***
goal	defeat the opponent	cooperate with the opponent
characteristic attitude toward opponent	hatred, fear, negativity	friendliness, love, caring
attitude regarding harm to others	inflict it	avoid it
who suffers	avoid your suffering; inflict it on others	accept yours; prevent others's suffering
how is victory defined	top priority; any means acceptable	only achieved if justice is present
characteristic attitude toward the truth	force acceptance of your version; distort facts if necessary	truth is sacred; everyone has a piece of it; top priority is serving the truth
kind of training used	how to use arms; courage	conflict resolution; courage
what constitutes discipline	submit to authority	submit to group's needs
how justice is sought	pursue justice for yourself	seek justice for all
what resources are most important	mostly physical	mostly mental and moral

activists should destroy property–not private property, but property owned by the government or large corporations, such as like fences around military installations, police cars, and retail stores. A debate over property destruction arose within the Clamshell Alliance, the group that occupied the site of the Seabrook nuclear power plant (Epstein 1991). After the 1977 occupation, the group decided to plan another one but knew that this time the gates to the plant would be locked. Within the Boston local Clamshell group, two factions arose. One faction, called "hard clams," argued that activists should cut down the fence and enter the plant. They argued that destroying property this way was not equivalent to violence against people. They believed that if the group was serious about stopping the plant from operating, then it needed to actually try to do so rather than use symbolic gestures like holding a sit-in at the gates. In addition, they argued that fence-cutting would draw in working-class participants by demonstrating the movement's willingness to confront the police. Another faction, the "soft clams," argued that destroying

the fence would cause problems for the movement. It was likely to provoke violence by the police, which would end up hurting the group's public image. The possibility of violence would keep away many potential protesters and alienate supporters in the local community. Already many local residents who had provided places to stay for Clamshell protesters in the past were refusing to do so again.

Finally, the state of New Hampshire offered to allow Clamshell to hold a weekend occupation of the plant, and then leave. A spokescouncil of representatives from Clamshell groups in the region met at its headquarters in New Hampshire and decided to accept the offer, though some of those present later claimed their were pressured into doing so. Over 20,000 people participated in the legal occupation. The "hard clams" broke off and formed their own organization. Ironically, several months later when several hundred of them cut through the fence and were confronted by waiting police, they did not try to occupy the plant but instead circled the outside of the fence and then left. Clamshell activists turned toward electoral politics instead of direct action. They were instrumental in defeating a ballot initiative that would have passed on the cost of constructing the plant to consumers, and largely because of this the plant's construction was postponed indefinitely (Epstein 1991).

A similar debate arose in the global justice (or anti-globalization) movement after the Seattle protest in November 1999. At that demonstration, a small number of protesters smashed the windows of stores like Starbucks and Nike to protest against global capitalism. Some other protesters objected to this, and after the protests a lively debate over "trashing" ensued among global justice activists. The black bloc in the Seattle protests issued a statement explaining their actions. ("Black bloc" is a name adopted by groups of protesters, usually dressed in black, who use more militant tactics at protests, like constructing blockades in the streets and destroying property. They sometimes "unarrest" people who are in police custody and usually cover their faces with masks). They argued that destroying corporate property is not violent, as such property is inherently violent itself as it results from the economic exploitation of others, and that their actions served to inspire participants and the public by destroying "the thin veneer of legitimacy that surrounds private property rights." They criticized the nonviolent protesters who tried to physically stop them from "trashing" during the Seattle protest.

Seattle police officers stand guard outside a Starbucks coffee shop after its windows were broken by protesters.

Other participants objected to the black bloc's actions, as attested by the attempt to stop them. Many believed

that engaging in property destruction turns potential supporters away and does not help long-term to build a progressive movement (Albert 1999). Opponents argued that the black bloc was simply using the protest for their own purposes, and that their actions endangered other protesters by providing the police with a pretext for using violence. The news media focused much of its reporting on the black bloc, which distracted from the real issues surrounding the WTO and globalization.

THE RESPONSES OF OPPONENTS

Some social movements can be characterized as **consensus movements**, which face no real opposition (Schwartz and Shuva 1992). For example, MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) spearheaded a movement to reduce drunk driving. They used educational and legislative tactics, but faced little opposition. Most social movements, however, pursue goals that meet objection from some groups and individuals. Such opponents have a number of ways of resisting social movements. Their counter-strategies and tactics include:

• ***nonviolent and/or institutional resistance***. One example is white residents resisting the racial desegregation of schools by establishing private all-white schools.

• ***violent resistance***. Governments can direct police or soldiers to stop protests with force or jail the protesters, for example. During the civil rights movement, white segregationists used violence–beatings, lynchings, and assassinations–to try to stop activists. In the earlier years of the labor movement, government officials often sent in armed troops to break up strikes.

• ***counter-framing***. Sometimes opponents choose to engage in a sort of public relations battle with social movements. For example, when animal rights activists began holding annual protests at New York University against the use of Macaque monkeys in animal experiments, the university public relations office responded by holding a press

The bed where Black Panther leader Fred Hampton was shot by Chicago police, showing blood and bullet holes in the walls.

conference before each protest. There, university officials and scientists countered the movement's frame that depicted them as heartless abusers of animals by telling the press of the importance of animal research for finding cures for human ailments. At one press conference, the university presented a mother and her son, who had an illness that might not have been cured without experimentation on animals. They spoke of their gratitude for the research that made the cure possible (Jasper and Poulsen 1993).

• ***legal measures***. Many opponents use, when possible, the legal system to try to stop movement activists. SLAPP suits (SLAPP stands for strategic litigation against public participation) are an attempt to stop activists by suing them for defamation, nuisance, emotional distress, and other things. Though SLAPP suits are usually not successful in court, they may serve to frighten activists enough to stop their actions and to tie up their time, money, and energy in mounting a legal defense. (See the California Anti-SLAPP Project, http://www.casp.net/.)

• ***counter movements***. Opponents may create their own social movements, particular in response to the success of movements they oppose. Many analysts have argued that the conservative Christian movement that began in the 1980s was a direct result of the movements of the sixties, which scared and dismayed many mainstream Americans. In addition to grassroots counter movements, opponents may create "astroturf" organizations–essentially fake grassroots movements (that are actually run by a small group and have no mass membership).

Government Repression

As the government enjoys a monopoly on the legitimate use of force (army, police), its response to a social movement, whether favorable or not, is particularly important. Sometimes government officials facilitate a social movement: for example, a judge in Missouri several times refused to prosecute pro-life activist who conducted sit-ins at abortion clinics because he felt their actions were legally and morally justified (Maxwell 2002). More frequently, though, government officials side with powerful individuals and groups against less powerful ones. In the history of labor union organizing, government troops were frequently sent in by political officials to break up strikes.

One of the most famous example of government efforts to exert social control over social movement activists was COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence Program) (Marx 1979). (**Social control** refers to efforts of opponents to contain, alter, or repress a social movement.) The FBI created the program in the 1950s, and starting in 1986 it took on the explicit purpose of eliminating left-wing groups in the United States. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover wrote that program would be used "to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize the activities of various New Left organizations, their leadership, and adherents"–without regard to whether they were doing anything illegal or not. (The New Left was the name given to the various left-leaning movements of the sixties, including the civil rights and antiwar movements.)

With the cooperation of local police, COINTELPRO used various tactics to harass members of the civil rights movement, the American Indian Movement, the Black Panthers, and the antiwar

movement. FBI agents tried to use the news media to create unfavorable images of SMO leaders (for example, they tried to get journalists to write about Martin Luther King, Jr.'s alleged sexual liaisons); they infiltrated groups to gather information; they broke into SMO offices; they spread false rumors to turn SMO leaders against each other; they told printers not to print New Left literature and pamphlets; they had people arrested on false charges; and they killed people, including many Black Panther activists. In one of the most well-known incidents, Chicago police officers, working with the FBI, raided the apartment of Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark on December 4, 1969 in Chicago and shot them while they slept in their beds. The officers claimed that they were shooting in self-defense, but ballistics experts concluded that the Panthers had in fact fired no shots. An FBI informant had provided the police with a floor plan to the apartment, including where people would be sleeping. He had also drugged Hampton's drink that evening so that he would not wake up when police entered.

Saul Alinsky's Rules for Radicals

Saul Alinsky (1909-1972) was a famous community organizer and author of the widely read book Rules for Radicals. In pursuing the goal of helping people in poor communities improve their living conditions, Alinsky advocated using creative and confrontational methods to take power from the "haves." He once threatened to stage a "fart in" at the symphony in Rochester, New York to pressure the local white establishment to support the local black community.

Rule 1. "Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have."

Rule 2. "Never go outside the experience of your people."

Rule 3. "Whenever possible go outside the experience of the enemy."

Rule 4. "Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules."

Rule 5. "Ridicule is man's most potent weapon."

Rule 6. "A good tactic is one that your people enjoy."

Rule 7. "A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag."

Rule 8. "Keep the pressure on."

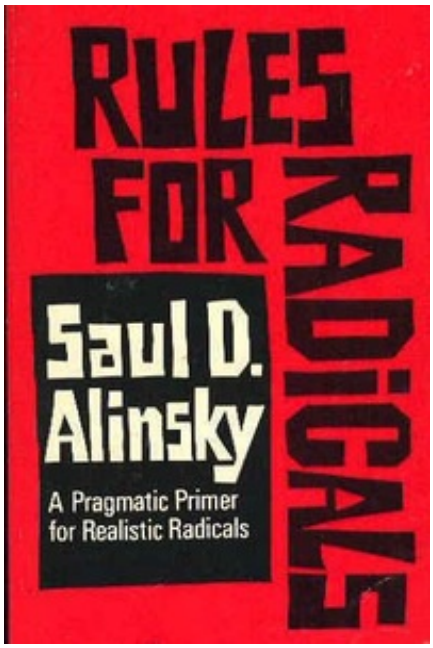
Rule 9. "The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself."

Rule 10. "The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a consistent pressure upon the opposition."

Rule 11. "If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counterside."

Rule 11. "The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative."

Rule 12. "Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it."



THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

(Sharp 1973)

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT PROTEST AND PERSUASION

FORMAL STATEMENTS
1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public declarations
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

COMMUNICATIONS WITH A WIDER AUDIENCE
7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earthwriting

GROUP REPRESENTATIONS
13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

SYMBOLIC PUBLIC ACTS
18. Displays of flags and symbolic colours
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobings
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits
26. Paint as protest
27. New signs and names
28. Symbolic sounds
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

PRESSURES ON INDIVIDUALS
31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternization
34. Vigils

DRAMA AND MUSIC
35. Humourous skits and pranks
36. Performances of plays and music
37. Singing

PROCESSIONS
38. Marches
39. Parades
40. Religious processions
41. Pilgrimages
42. Motorcades

HONOURING THE DEAD
43. Political mourning
44. Mock funerals
45. Demonstrative funerals
46. Homage at burial places

PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES
47. Assemblies of protest or support
48. Protest meetings
49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
50. Teach-ins

WITHDRAWAL AND RENUNCIATION
51. Walk-outs
52. Silence

53. Renouncing honours
54. Turning one's back

THE METHODS OF SOCIAL NONCOOPERATION

OSTRACISM OF PERSONS
55. Social boycott
56. Selective social boycott
57. Lysistratic nonaction
58. Excommunication
59. Interdict

NONCOOPERATION WITH SOCIAL EVENTS, CUSTOMS, AND INSTITUTIONS
60. Suspension of social and sports activities
61. Boycott of social affairs
62. Student strike
63. Social disobedience
64. Withdrawal from social institutions

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SOCIAL SYSTEM
65. Stay-at-home
66. Total personal noncooperation
67. "Flight" of workers
68. Sanctuary
69. Collective disappearance
70. Protest emigration (hijrat)

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOPERATION: ECONOMIC BOYCOTTS

ACTION BY CONSUMERS
71. Consumers' boycott
72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
73. Policy of austerity
74. Rent withholding
75. Refusal to rent
76. National consumers' boycott
77. International consumers' boycott

ACTION BY WORKERS AND PRODUCERS
78. Workers' boycott
79. Producers' boycott

ACTION BY MIDDLEMEN
80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

ACTION BY OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT
81. Traders' boycott
82. Refusal to let or sell property
83. Lockout
84. Refusal of industrial assistance
85. Merchants' "general strike"

ACTION BY HOLDERS OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES
86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
89. Severance of funds and credit
90. Revenue refusal
91. Refusal of a government's money

ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS
92. Domestic embargo
93. Blacklisting of traders
94. International sellers' embargo
95. International buyers' embargo
96. International trade embargo

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC NONCOOOPERATION: THE STRIKE

SYMBOLIC STRIKES
97. Protest strike
98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

AGRICULTURAL STRIKES
99. Peasant strike
100. Farm workers' strike

STRIKES BY SPECIAL GROUPS
101. Refusal of impressed labour
102. Prisoners' strike
103. Craft strike
104. Professional strike

ORDINARY INDUSTRIAL STRIKES
105. Establishment strike
106. Industry strike
107. Sympathy strike

RESTRICTED STRIKES
108. Detailed strike
109. Bumper strike
110. Slowdown strike
111. Working-to-rule strike
112. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
113. Strike by resignation
114. Limited strike
115. Selective strike

MULTI-INDUSTRY STRIKES
116. Generalised strike
117. General strike

COMBINATION OF STRIKES AND ECONOMIC CLOSURES
118. Hartal
119. Economic shutdown

THE METHODS OF POLITICAL NONCOOPERATION

REJECTION OF AUTHORITY
120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
121. Refusal of public support
122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

CITIZENS' NONCOOPERATION WITH GOVERNMENT
123. Boycott of legislative bodies
124. Boycott of elections
125. Boycott of government employment and positions
126. Boycott of government departments, agencies, and other bodies
127. Withdrawal from governmental educational institutions
128. Boycott of government-supported institutions
129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
130. Removal of own signs and placemarks
131. Refusal to accept appointed officials
132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

CITIZENS' ALTERNATIVES TO OBEDIENCE
133. Reluctant and slow compliance
134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision
135. Popular nonobedience
136. Disguised disobedience
137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
138. Sitdown
139. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation
140. Hiding, escape, and false identities
141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

ACTION BY GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL
142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
143. Blocking of lines of command and information
144. Stalling and obstruction
145. General administrative noncooperation
146. Judicial noncooperation
147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
148. Mutiny

DOMESTIC GOVERNMENTAL ACTION
149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays

150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ACTION
151. Changes in diplomatic and other representation
152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition
154. Severance of diplomatic relations
155. Withdrawal from international organisations
156. Refusal of membership in international bodies
157. Expulsion from international organisations

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION
158. Self-exposure to the elements
159. The fast
a) Fast of moral pressure
b) Hunger strike
c) Satyagrahic fast
160. Reverse trial
161. Nonviolent harassment

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION
162. Sit-in
163. Stand-in
164. Ride-in
165. Wade-in
166. Mill-in
167. Pray-in
168. Nonviolent raids
169. Nonviolent air raids
170. Nonviolent invasion
171. Nonviolent interjection
172. Nonviolent obstruction
173. Nonviolent occupation

SOCIAL INTERVENTION
174. Establishing new social patterns
175. Overloading of facilities
176. Stall-in
177. Speak-in
178. Guerrilla theatre
179. Alternative social institutions
180. Alternative communication system

ECONOMIC INTERVENTION
181. Reverse strike
182. Stay-in strike
183. Nonviolent land seizure
184. Defiance of blockades
185. Politically motivated counterfeiting
186. Preclusive purchasing
187. Seizure of assets
188. Dumping
189. Selective patronage
190. Alternative markets
191. Alternative transportation systems
192. Alternative economic institutions

POLITICAL INTERVENTION
193. Overloading of administrative systems
194. Disclosing identities of secret agents
195. Seeking imprisonment
196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
197. Work-on without collaboration
198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

Affinity Groups and Clusters

http://www.actagainstwar.org/article.php?id=14

An affinity group is a small group of 5 to 20 people who work together autonomously on direct action or other projects. You can form an affinity group with your friends, people from your community, workplace, or organization.

Affinity groups challenge top-down decision-making and organizing, and empower those involved to take creative direct action. Affinity groups allow people to "be" the action they want to see by giving complete freedom and decision-making power to the affinity group. Affinity groups by nature are decentralized and non-hierarchical, two important principles of anarchist organizing and action.

The affinity group model was first used by anarchists in Spain in the late 19th and early 20th century, and was re-introduced to radical direct action by anti-nuclear activists during the 1970s, who used decentralized non-violent direct action to blockade roads, occupy spaces and disrupt "business as usual" for the nuclear and war makers of the US. Affinity groups have a long and interesting past, owing much to the anarchists and workers of Spain and the anarchists and radicals today who use affinity groups, non-hierarchical structures, and consensus decision making in direct action and organizing.

Affinity Group Roles

There are many roles that one could possibly fill. These roles include:

Medical - An affinity group may want to have someone who is a trained street medic who can deal with any medical or health issues during the action.

Legal observer- If there are not already legal observers for an action, it may be important to have people not involved in the action taking notes on police conduct and possible violations of activists rights.

Media - If you are doing an action which plans to draw media, a person in the affinity group could be empowered to talk to the media and act as a spokesperson.

Action Elf/Vibes-watcher - This is someone who would help out with the general wellness of the group: water, massages, and encouragement through starting a song or cheer. This is not a role is necessary, but may be particularly helpful in day long actions where people might get tired or irritable as the day wears on.

Traffic - If it is a moving affinity group, it may be necessary to have people who are empowered to stop cars at intersections and in general watch out for the safety of people on the streets from cars and other vehicles.

Arrest-able members - This depends on what kind of direct action you are doing. Some actions may require a certain number of people willing to get arrested, or some parts of an action may need a minimum number of arrest-ables. Either way, it is important to know who is doing the action and plans on getting arrested.

Jail Support - Again, this is only if you have an affinity group who has people getting arrested. This person has all the arrestees contact information and will go to the jail, talk to and work with lawyers, keep track of who got arrested etc.

Legal Flow Chart

ActUp Civil Disobedience Training

http://www.actupny.org/documents/CDdocuments/Legalflow.html

The Legal Process

The legal system's terms and mystique create an impression of complexity and unapproachability. But, with a little study and thought, the legal process can become manageable and less intimidating.

Throughout the legal process, we have the right of choice. This is very important. When we understand the steps, the choice, and the effects of those choices, then we are in a position to make decisions as to what we want to get involved in, and what we want to avoid. there are many levels of commitment possible; we must individually choose our involvement according to our own situation.

The material below shows the legal process schematically. As mentioned above, there are certain steps involved, and choices that can be made at each of these steps. let us now go through the steps and briefly talk about the choices.

1. **Warning**. Usually, but not always, immediately prior to arrest a warning will be given by the police to demonstrators, They will saw which law(s) is (are) being broken and will say that anyone remaining will be arrested. The charges may include: disorderly conduct, trespass, resisting arrest, and obstruction of government property.

> ***Choices.*** To stay and be arrested or to leave.

2. **Arrest.** You will be taken to transportation vehicles (may be handcuffed, frisked, walked with escort, carried on a stretcher, dragged/carried)

> ***Choices.*** To cooperate and walk or to non-cooperate and go limp so that you have to be carried. Or to flee if left unguarded and unidentified

3. **Processing and Booking**. Placed in a holding area (don't expect meals, phone calls, bathrooms). Sometimes cells have pay phone, so you may want to bring quarters. Photographed. Fingerprinted. Pockets emptied. Strip searched (unlikely but a possibility). Asked for information. You are only required to give name, address, and ID. You don't have to give Social Security number, but many people do anyway since it's easy for this to be found out. You may be given a summons, Desk appearance Ticket (DAT) that gives you the charges and court date and then released. Or you may be held till you are arraigned be a judge

> ***Choices.*** To be willingly fingerprinted, etc. How much personal information you give. ACT UP usually tries to decide this collectively in advance, particularly so that no one is singled out for being too queer, HIV positive, etc.

4. **Arraignment.** Appear before a judge and answer to charges (guilty, not guilty, nolo contendere, mute). You can request that charges be dropped. If you plead guilty it might be for a fine of an

Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal (ACD) where there's little or no punishment so long as you don't get busted in a certain time period. Or, schedule another court date/trial.

> ***Choices***. To answer charges, respect authority, or to get through the process as quickly as possible.

5. **Trial.** same as above

Note: You don't need a lawyer for this, but it is always helpful to have a legal aid or sympathetic lawyer to guide you through the process. For major actions, plan in advance to have legal aid on site of action and with you through the arrest, etc.

Step-by-Step Escalation in a Nonviolent Campaign

(Hedemann, No Date)

1. **Investigation and research**
Checking facts and allegations; building an airtight case against opponents and preparing for countercharges

2. **Negotiation and arbitration**

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

3. **Public forums, letters to the editor, etc.**
Basic public education on issues

4. **Picketing, leafleting, etc.**
Public contact with opponents

5. **Demonstrations, rallies, marches**
Show of strength by maximizing numbers

6. **Limited strike**
Involving those immediately affected

7. **Boycott**
Against company of product in question, if appropriate

8. **Limited noncooperation**
By those immediately affected

9. **Massive illegal actions**
Noncooperation, civil disobedience, direct action

10. **General strike**

11. **Establishing a parallel government**

How We Really Shut Down the WTO

(Starhawk 1999)

It's been two weeks now since the morning when I awoke before dawn to join the blockade that shut down the opening meeting of the WTO. Since getting out of jail, I've been reading the media coverage and trying to make sense out of the divergence between what I know happened and what has been reported.

For once in a political protest, when we chanted "The whole world is watching!" we were telling the truth. I've never seen so much media attention on a political action. However, most of what has been written is so inaccurate that I can't decide if the reporters in question should be charged with conspiracy or simply incompetence. The reports have pontificated endlessly about a few broken windows, and mostly ignored the Direct Action Network, the group that successfully organized the nonviolent direct action that ultimately involved thousands of people. The true story of what made the action a success is not being told.

The police, in defending their brutal and stupid mishandling of the situation, have said they were "not prepared for the violence." In reality, they were unprepared for the nonviolence and the numbers and commitment of the nonviolent activists-- even though the blockade was organized in open, public meetings and there was nothing secret about our strategy. My suspicion is that our model of organization and decision making was so foreign to their picture of what constitutes leadership that they literally could not see what was going on in front of them. When authoritarians think about leadership, the picture in their minds is of one person, usually a guy, or a small group standing up and telling other people what to do. Power is centralized and requires obedience.

In contrast, our model of power was decentralized, and leadership was invested in the group as a whole. People were empowered to make their own decisions, and the centralized structures were for co-ordination, not control. As a result, we had great flexibility and resilience, and many people were inspired to acts of courage they could never have been ordered to do.

Here are some of the key aspects of our model of organizing:

Training and Preparation

In the weeks and days before the blockade, thousands of people were given nonviolence training-- a three hour course that combined the history and philosophy of nonviolence with real life practice through role plays in staying calm in tense situations, using nonviolent tactics, responding to brutality, and making decisions together. Thousands also went through a second-level training in jail preparation, solidarity strategies and tactics and legal aspects. As well, there were first aid trainings, trainings in blockade tactics, street theater, meeting facilitation, and other skills. While many more thousands of people took part in the blockade who had not attended any of these trainings, a nucleus of groups existed who were prepared to face police brutality and who could provide a core of resistance and strength. And in jail, I saw many situations that played out just like the role plays. Activists were able to protect

members of their group from being singled out or removed by using tactics introduced in the trainings. The solidarity tactics we had prepared became a real block to the functioning of the system.

Common Agreements

Each participant in the action was asked to agree to the nonviolence guidelines: To refrain from violence, physical or verbal; not to carry weapons, not to bring or use illegal drugs or alcohol, and not to destroy property. We were asked to agree only for the purpose of the 11/30 action--not to sign on to any of these as a life philosophy, and the group acknowledged that there is much diversity of opinion around some of these guidelines.

Affinity Groups, Clusters and Spokescouncils

The participants in the action were organized into small groups called Affinity Groups. Each group was empowered to make its own decisions around how it would participate in the blockade. There were groups doing street theater, others preparing to lock themselves to structures, groups with banners and giant puppets, others simply prepared to link arms and nonviolently block delegates. Within each group, there were generally some people prepared to risk arrest and others who would be their support people in jail, as well as a first aid person.

Affinity groups were organized into clusters. The area around the Convention Center was broken down into thirteen sections, and affinity groups and clusters committed to hold particular sections. As well, some groups were 'flying groups'-- free to move to wherever they were most needed. All of this was co-ordinated at Spokescouncil meetings, where Affinity Groups each sent a representative who was empowered to speak for the group.

In practice, this form of organization meant that groups could move and react with great flexibility during the blockade. If a call went out for more people at a certain location, an affinity group could assess the numbers holding the line where they were and choose whether or not to move. When faced with tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets and horses, groups and individuals could assess their own ability to withstand the brutality. As a result, blockade lines held in the face of incredible police violence. When one group of people was finally swept away by gas and clubs, another would move in to take their place. Yet there was also room for those of us in the middle-aged, bad lungs/bad backs affinity group to hold lines in areas that were relatively peaceful, to interact and dialogue with the delegates we turned back, and to support the labor march that brought tens of thousands through the area at midday. No centralized leader could have co-ordinated the scene in the midst of the chaos, and none was needed-- the organic, autonomous organization we had proved far more powerful and effective. No authoritarian figure could have compelled people to hold a blockade line while being tear gassed--but empowered people free to make their own decisions did choose to do that.

Consensus Decision Making

The affinity groups, clusters, spokescouncils and working groups involved with DAN made decisions by consensus-- a process that allows every voice to be heard and that stresses respect for minority opinions.

Consensus was part of the nonviolence and jail trainings and we made a small attempt to also offer some special training in meeting facilitation. We did not interpret consensus to mean unanimity. The only mandatory agreement was to act within the nonviolent guidelines. Beyond that, the DAN organizers set a tone that valued autonomy and freedom over conformity, and stressed co-ordination rather than pressure to conform. So, for example, our jail solidarity strategy involved staying in jail where we could use the pressure of our numbers to protect individuals from being singled out for heavier charges or more brutal treatment. But no one was pressured to stay in jail, or made to feel guilty for bailing out before the others. We recognized that each person has their own needs and life situation, and that what was important was to have taken action at whatever level we each could. Had we pressured people to stay in jail, many would have resisted and felt resentful and misused. Because we didn't, because people felt empowered, not manipulated, the vast majority decided for themselves to remain in, and many people pushed themselves far beyond the boundaries of what they had expected to do.

Vision and Spirit

The action included art, dance, celebration, song, ritual and magic. It was more than a protest; it was an uprising of a vision of true abundance, a celebration of life and creativity and connection, that remained joyful in the face of brutality and brought alive the creative forces that can truly counter those of injustice and control. Many people brought the strength of their personal spiritual practice to the action. I saw Buddhists turn away angry delegates with loving kindness. We Witches led rituals before the action and in jail, and called on the elements of nature to sustain us. I was given Reiki when sick and we celebrated Hanukkah with no candles, but only the blessings and the story of the struggle for religious freedom. We found the spirit to sing in our cells, to dance a spiral dance in the holding cell, to laugh at the hundred petty humiliations the jail inflicts, to comfort each other and listen to each other in tense moments, to use our time together to continue teaching and organizing and envisioning the flourishing of this movement. For me, it was one of the most profound spiritual experiences of my life.

I'm writing this for two reasons. First, I want to give credit to the DAN organizers who did a brilliant and difficult job, who learned and applied the lessons of the last twenty years of nonviolent direct action, and who created a powerful, successful and life-changing action in the face of enormous odds, an action that has changed the global political landscape and radicalized a new generation. And secondly, because the true story of how this action was organized provides a powerful model that activists can learn from. Seattle was only a beginning. We have before us the task of building a global movement to overthrow corporate control and create a new economy based on fairness and justice, on a sound ecology and a healthy environment, one that protects human rights and serves freedom. We have many campaigns ahead of us, and we deserve to learn the true lessons of our successes.