Nonviolent action for social change: its effects on activists.

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NONVIOLENT ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE:
ITS EFFECTS ON ACTIVISTS

A Dissertation Presented

By

Karen Brandow

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Education
NONVIOLENT ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE:
ITS EFFECTS ON ACTIVISTS

A Dissertation Presented
By
Karen Brandow

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Movement for a New Society for teaching me about nonviolence, to the Pioneer Valley War Tax Resistance group and my coworkers in the Sanctuary Movement who have provided me with meaningful nonviolent work while writing this thesis, to my courageous friends in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala who are striving for peace and justice by whatever means they can, and to all those activists who came before me and will come after me, as we are bound together in the history of resistance that will always be.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Don, for encouraging me to hang in there and not turn in my resignation letter from the program.

To Linda, Joanne and Felice, who got me though the many times I said, "What am I doing this for, anyway?"

To Valerie for constantly marvelling at my capacity for production and concentration.

To my mother, who provided my first and best model of making the best of what we have.
ABSTRACT

NONVIOLENT ACTION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE:
ITS EFFECTS ON ACTIVISTS

(February, 1986)

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The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the effects of nonviolent activism on activists in the United States peace and civil rights movements from 1943 to the present. Research addressing the positive and negative effects on activists as opposed to their adversaries or societal institutions is scarce. The areas of particular interest were effects on activists' self image and emotions, their relationships with others, their role in the larger society and their spirituality. Related questions included the influence of social background on the form and meaning of activism, and the dynamics of nonviolence as a creed versus nonviolence as solely a tactic.

Findings were derived from 22 documentary studies and nine interviews conducted with a diverse group of activists. Respondents usually had several years experience with a
variety of nonviolent methods, and most had spent time in jail for these activities. The coding of documents and interviews was guided by the literature on nonviolent theory and practice, the history of the peace and civil rights movements, and others' research on the effects of activism on activists.

One major outcome of the study was that nonviolent theory and practice can include many more approaches than the literature usually indicates, with a broad spectrum of interpretations between nonviolence as a creed or tactic.

The study confirmed previous research regarding a number of positive effects resulting from nonviolent activism, including personal, intragroup and spiritual empowerment. However, there were many more negative effects uncovered than have been previously reported in the literature, such as intragroup conflict, estrangement from family and friends, loss of meaning, and an array of negative emotions.

Finally, it appeared that people for whom nonviolence was a creed experienced more positive and fewer negative effects of activism, while people for whom nonviolence was largely a strategy had very mixed and sometimes negative experiences.

Findings from this study give indications of directions for therapists, educators and current political movements. Also noted are areas for further research.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose and Rationale for the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the positive and negative effects of nonviolent activism for social change on the feelings, behaviors and values of activists involved in the United States peace and civil rights movements from 1943 to the present. Both movements were intensely active during this period, spawning numerous books, studies and articles. The literature on social science and nonviolent action has a number of deficits which this study addressed.

Janis and Katz (1959) note that almost the last areas to be investigated by the social sciences are the constructive forces in human nature which reduce intergroup conflict. Research attention has focused on the destructive tendencies in human conduct, and present-day scientists feel inclined to leave research on positive forces to philosophers and social reformers. The great social conflicts facing us today involve world militarism and oppression, and these problems require constructive action on the part of United States citizens. As Deming (1971) states,

We are all living now in a society so deranged that
it confronts us not only with the fact that we are committing abominable crimes against others - crimes we shouldn't be able to live with; it confronts us also with threats to our own existence that no people in history have ever had to live with before. And confronts every single member of society with these threats - even the most privileged, even those in control of things, or rather out of control of them. Confronts us, in the name of "defense" with the threat of nuclear annihilation. Confronts us in the name of "national profit" with the threat that our environment may be completely destroyed. And yet - we have to face the strange fact that most people are very much less terrified of having things continue as they are than of having people like us [activists] trying to change things radically. (pp.263-264)

There are a number of factors which can contribute to or result from an individual's reluctance to respond to these social problems which surround us.

Duality

Macy (1983) describes the "double life" that can result from focusing on business as usual on the surface while sensing danger underneath. This internal split can produce self-doubt, cut off sources of creativity and contribute to isolation. Instead of questioning society's sanity, we question our own. Freire (1970) describes this duality as it relates to oppression. The oppressed find they cannot exist authentically without freedom, yet they fear it. They are at the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized.
Passivity

As Sharp (1980) points out, most people in our society do not participate to a significant degree in the decisions and actions which shape their lives and institutions, and which determine the direction of society as a whole. Some of this political passivity is steeped in the belief that those in authority must know what they are doing, and must be describing conditions as they really are. In what Jackson (1976) calls the passive acceptance stage, an oppressed person accepts and conforms to the dominant society's standards, giving up personal power and control. Powers outside of the individual define what is good and bad, right and wrong.

Self destruction

Repressed feelings come out in various ways, and they are too often directed against ourselves. Feelings about the current state of the world are connected to the high rates of drug abuse and suicide, particularly among young people. They are enacting the tremendous despair and frustration which exists around them. Self destructiveness is often the result of internalized oppression; members of subordinate groups absorb the untruths about themselves which have been created by dominants, and the self hatred is expressed in destructive patterns of varying intensity, from hair
straightening by blacks to women remaining in battering relationships (Freire, 1970; Miller, 1976).

Denial

Certainly a common defense making it possible to exist in this world is denial; to pretend there is no problem. We try to insulate ourselves from provocative data ("I've stopped reading the paper - it's too upsetting"); we don't let in the data that forces itself upon us (i.e. by continuing to live at Three Mile Island); or we allow in a bit of the truth, but insist on seeing it as an isolated exception ("So maybe we made a mistake in Vietnam...") rather than as part of a pattern of cultural behavior. Jackson (1976) notes that in the stage of passive acceptance, the oppressed don't believe they are oppressed.

Burnout

Even those who tackle social problems head on have trouble acknowledging the despair and frustration they feel, considering it counterproductive or bad for morale. Eventually, carrying the heavy burden of knowledge and consciousness can become too great, with bitterness, cynicism and burnout being the result.

The aforementioned feelings can also lead to an overall sense of futility concerning political activism. Whether it
be by denial, displacement or withdrawal, we end up in a victimized role. Deming (1971) eloquently describes her insights while conversing with workers at Electric Boat (makers of Trident Submarines) at a demonstration there.

The responses of the workers at Electric Boat match almost phrase for phrase - if one censors a few rough words - the responses I have heard from intellectuals. Their source is the same acute suffering; the same infuriating sense of helplessness; of the impossibility any longer of battle that is not self-defeating, of gallant action; and the same deep sense of guilt from which there is, seemingly, no way out - unless perhaps in that almost-wished-for explosion which would be the End of the World. (p. 30)

To address social problems and the barriers impeding the taking of action, there is a need for people to become empowered; to work actively against oppression and for positive changes in human life; and to do this in a way that brings empathy and support from others rather than fear and alienation. Nonviolence offers one way to accomplish these goals.

Nonviolent action has been used historically by groups feeling in many ways powerless, victimized or oppressed. They feel unable to affect, through more traditional channels such as lobbying or voting, conditions concerning their civil rights or issues of life and death. When these people are moved to act, they can begin to feel a sense of control, pride and meaning which may not have existed before. If one is studying the process of personal empowerment, it seems
sensible to examine historical times of great social and personal transformation to see what can be learned.

Dellinger has written,

Histories are written by intellectuals who generally give undue credit to other intellectuals for making history. But history is made by people who commit themselves, their lives, and their energies to the struggle. The best history is made by people who struggle against war, oppression, and hypocrisy and who also struggle to incorporate into their own lives and organizations the values that led them to oppose these evils in the first place. (Cooney and Michalowski, 1979, p. 9)

Therefore, one step towards the reduction of intergroup conflict is to examine the lives of those who have already devoted themselves to addressing the problems of militarism and oppression, such as those who were or are active in the peace and civil rights movements.

Solomon and Fishman (1964) cite the ability to choose and use nonviolent resistance in conflict situations as being of considerable social and psychological significance, particularly in the struggles of oppressed groups. This study contributes to developing a profile of an empowered person, and more specifically how that person acts to promote social change.

In the last paragraph of his most recent book (1980), Sharp asserts

The conception of acceptable change as presented in this volume [through nonviolent direct action] can offer no panaceas, no easy path, no guaranteed safety, no assurances of success in every respect and on every occasion. However, the possibility exists that we can deliberately contribute to the
development of a new stage of human history. We can resolve the acute problems with which we have been confronted for so long. We can be on the verge of a new departure of human capabilities, which we can develop if we wish, in order that people can regain, or perhaps for many achieve for the first time, the capacity to control their own destinies. (p. 37)

Within the literature on nonviolence, there are two major gaps. One is the lack of information on any theory or practice other than traditional, Gandhian nonviolence which serves as a way of life. This definition of nonviolence is rigid and narrow, and is not suited to all situations or people. The interpretations and uses of nonviolence vary quite widely, from the experience of nonviolence as a creed to a tactic only. In an attempt to sharpen these distinctions and to legitimate the different approaches, this study addresses in depth all the ways people have viewed and practiced nonviolence, and the effects resulting from those differing approaches.

Generally, the literature on the effects of nonviolence has only addressed its societal impact or the effects on the activists' "opponents." Sharp (1976, 1980) has done extensive studies on nonviolent action and its effects on societal institutions. He acknowledges that the nonviolent technique of action inevitably has important effects on the nonviolent group itself, and that very little research has been carried out on this subject. He states further investigation is needed to reveal important effects,
and to explore the complexities of these consequences of nonviolent action. The effects of nonviolent direct action on its practitioners are far reaching and may in the long run be the most important. Sharp (1973) notes that if people are strong and know how to resist effectively, it becomes difficult or impossible for anyone to oppress them in the first place.

Therefore, this study focuses on the effects of nonviolent action on the activists themselves. Even within the small amount of research done on this topic, a bias has existed of primarily reporting the positive effects of nonviolent action, such as enhanced self esteem and intragroup cohesion. This study gives equal importance to the negative effects of nonviolent action, which not only contributes to a more accurate and complete picture of nonviolent action, but serves to highlight a number of problem areas to be addressed by nonviolent organizers and groups. The specific areas where the effects are studied include the activists':

1. Relationship with self; the development of self esteem and personal power;

2. Emotions; how activists handle fear, anger, despair, depression and other feelings;

3. Relationships with others; how activists relate to their fellow activists, their adversaries, their families and communities;

4. Relationships to society; the growth of political consciousness, activists and communism, and attitudes about violent social change;
5. Spirituality; Morality, faith, religiosity and changes in lifestyle.

The secondary issues addressed in the study include:

1. The influence of social background (age, race, sex) on the form and meaning of activism;

2. The elements of nonviolence theory and practice most significant to activists;

3. The factors which help to sustain the positive effects of nonviolent action;

4. The dynamics of nonviolence as a creed versus nonviolence as purely a tactic.

**Dissertation Design and Overview**

Janis and Katz outline three phases for the development, refinement and testing of hypotheses about the peaceful resolution of intergroup conflict.

The first phase is essentially the process of this dissertation; to do comparative studies of historical instances of social and political struggle based on documentary evidence, and then to draw primary source data from interview and questionnaire studies focusing on issues within the social movements. These interviews would furnish some preliminary testing of hypotheses, and serve to formulate more precisely the significant variables and their interrelationships.

In this first phase of research, the studies are limited
by the available data. The second phase would consist of field studies of current and developing instances of social and political struggles, specifying in advance the types of data being sought.

The final phase would consist of field and laboratory experiments to control the variables and deal with very specific questions arising from the first two phases.

The background literature for this study was drawn from a wide variety of disciplines, including philosophy, education, psychology, theology, sociology and history. The literature review examines the history of the civil rights and peace movements, research on the social psychology of nonviolent action, and the theory and practice of nonviolence. Understanding the essential norms, values, goals and strategies of nonviolence and of the peace and civil rights movements is critical to any understanding of the effects those movements had on participants. All of this information is reported in Chapter II.

Chapter III describes the study methodology in detail. From the literature review, a coding system was designed for analyzing the experiences of activists. Also, a list was made of activists who had written about their involvement in the peace and civil rights movements in diaries, letters, articles, books or interviews. Of those, 22 authors were selected for the study with an eye towards gathering a
diverse sampling. Respondents usually had several years of experience with a variety of nonviolent methods and most had spent time in jail for their activities. The original coding system was expanded and changed to reflect new information gathered in these documentary studies. Then, nine other past and present activists were interviewed for a more in depth analysis of their experiences in activism, and the interviews were transcribed and coded. All of the data from the 31 participants was combined and examined for themes, patterns and differences. Chapter IV reports on the results of this examination, sharing what participants had to say. That chapter also puts the data in a historical context by relating the activists' experiences to the chronologies of the two movements studied.

Chapter V describes four profiles of typical activists, discusses the ramifications of the study results for therapists, educators and nonviolent movements, and suggests areas for further research. The appendices show demographic data on the study participants as well as the forms and the interview guide used in the course of the study.

Definition of Terms

Oppression exists when a person or group holds negative beliefs and prejudices about another group, and benefits
economically and socially at the expense of that group. The oppressors (or dominants) cooperate in the individual and institutional mistreatment of the oppressed (or subordinates), and these practices are supported by cultural norms.

**Militarism** is the belief in and practice of addressing intergroup conflict through military means. This can include individual or institutional involvement in wars, the draft into armed forces, the development and use of weapons, or the payment of money (i.e. federal taxes or economic aid) for military purposes. It can be considered a form of oppression since it generally involves the oppression of peoples throughout the world as part of its practice.

**Empowerment**, or liberation, is the process by which an individual or group which was previously in an oppressed position moves into a greater realization and utilization of their own human resources and potential.

An activist in this study is someone who is involved in a group or movement for social change who is committed to political/social/economic change as a priority in her/his life for a period of time. Activists are willing to put themselves at some personal risk or danger for their goals of ending oppression or militarism. An activist is someone who doesn't just theorize about change, but takes direct action in the forms listed below.
Nonviolent action is a means of social struggle which goes beyond the usual institutionalized political methods such as voting, lobbying, or signing petitions. It can include such actions as vigils, marches, pickets, boycotts, sit-ins, draft or tax resistance, civil disobedience, or building parallel social institutions such as free medical clinics and food coops. It excludes the options of neutrality, retaliation, flight or physical violence.

Conscientious nonviolence, or nonviolence as a creed refers to nonviolence as a way of life. The values and attitudes are those most often associated with traditional Gandhian nonviolence, such as converting opponents' hearts and minds, self-examination and avoiding doing wrong. It is a philosophical or religious view of nonviolence which involves a lifelong commitment to carrying the values of nonviolence into one's every action. Followers of nonviolence as a way of life may label themselves pacifists.

Pragmatic nonviolence, or nonviolence as a tactic only refers to the use of nonviolence as a strategy in social struggle. It is more concerned with coercing a behavior change by opponents, group action, avoiding being wronged and changing societal conditions. It involves an agreement to follow nonviolent norms in specific actions, but not a philosophical or lifelong commitment to Gandhian ideals.

Spirituality is used to cover a range of topics in this
study. It refers to any set of values or beliefs that guide and sustain an individual's actions. These can be religious or moral in nature, and can include such general concepts as a basic belief in the rightness of pursuing world justice or a faith in the basic goodness of human beings. Someone can not consider him or herself a spiritual person and still be guided by a set of principles which this study defines as spiritual.

Limitations of the Study

1. This study is an exploratory one, based on the first phase of research cited earlier by Janis and Katz (1959). It gathers data to see what emerges as significant. It is not empirical in the classic sense of research methodology, and therefore does not aim to prove or disprove any specific theory.

2. Some variables concerning study subjects are controlled for by drawing data from people of a variety of ages, races, religious and class backgrounds and political movements. However, the study does not control for other factors by comparing those who were affected by nonviolent activism to those who weren't, or short term versus long term effects of participation.

3. The study only examines activism in the United States. Exploring nonviolent activities in Latin America, India or Eastern Europe would require an in-depth understanding of the histories, cultures and economics of those countries which the researcher was not prepared to take on.

4. The study does not consider examples of violent social change and the effects on participants in those movements.

5. Finally, there can be no clear case made for causality between participation in nonviolent actions and the reported effects. There are many possible
predisposing and intervening variables. Therefore, the findings of this study are in no way meant to be conclusive. The author presents observed trends, and welcomes others to investigate further in a more empirical fashion.

Significance of the Study

Findings

This study begins to clarify the effects of nonviolent activism on participants, thereby extending and refining the understanding of the social psychology of nonviolent direct action. This information, especially when followed up by more concrete study, could be useful to several groups in their work of fostering human potential.

Activists and political groups. As stated earlier, most prior research in the area of nonviolent action has focused on its effects on the larger system or on the opponents. This study helps to fill in the gap for interested activists by explaining the effects on the participants themselves. It also offers insights to current nonviolent groups as to problems they need to address in order to increase participation and effectiveness in their efforts.

Therapists. In the early 1970's, the American Psychiatric Association created a research group devoted to the issue of violence and alternatives to violence, recognizing that "unless groups learn to confront one another without resorting to physical force, our nation may not
survive, or indeed the world" (Halleck, 1971). Miller (1976) speaks to the importance of studying personal changes in oppressed groups via the liberation process. "This difference bespeaks a tremendous change. It is a kind of change that therapy cannot make. It precedes therapy, but its impact on therapy is enormous. There are many other implications for therapy which we have not detailed here. That remains to be done" (p. 135).

Halleck (1971) writes more specifically about the role of therapists in fostering social change and leading the fight against oppression.

There is much talk these days (and rather intelligent talk) about the possibility of man's extinction as a species. To the extent that an individual or a professional does nothing to stem the course of certain events, the apocalypse will be that much closer. But if we as therapists commit ourselves to social activism as an integral part of the healing process, we can at least make our own lives meaningful. We can spare ourselves the descent into apathy or despair that afflicts so many. And we might help to improve man's chances for survival. (p. 253)

Educators. Various writers have defined education's role in social change. According to Postman and Weingartner (1969), the basic function of all education, even in the most traditional sense, is to increase the survival prospects of the group. They cite Norbert Weiner's comment that "We have modified our environment so radically that we must now modify ourselves in order to exist in this new environment." They encourage the use of schools for developing in youth the
attributes and skills of social, political and cultural criticism.

Freire (1970) writes extensively of the need for a "liberating pedagogy" based on providing models from the ranks of the oppressed. He outlines a program for problem-posing education based on the premise that all people subjected to domination must fight for their freedom. "The world - no longer something to be described with descriptive words - becomes the object of that transforming action by men which results in their humanization" (p. 74).

Dewey (1940) states that education, as it relates to the direction of social change, is concerned with finding out what democracy means concretely in economic, domestic, international, religious, cultural and political realms. He suggests the study of its application in individual and collective living action. Although a school cannot embody by itself the ideas of democracy, it can "create individuals who understand the concrete meaning of the idea with their minds, who cherish it warmly in their hearts, and who are equipped to battle in its behalf in their actions" (p. 358).

The results of this study could be applied to any of the goals proposed above, as it offers information about developing values, attitudes and skills related to democracy and the struggle for liberation.
CHAPTER II
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The first section of this literature review examines the context of this study; the civil rights and peace movements in the U.S. during this century. The two movements are compared, and then societal, group and individual factors which helped to shape those movements are analyzed. A chronology of significant events and trends in both movements is presented.

The second section briefly defines nonviolence, and is especially useful for readers new to this topic. It explains the methods of nonviolence, steps in a nonviolent action, and the dynamics of nonviolence as a tactic versus nonviolence as a way of life.

Next is a survey of the researched effects of nonviolent action on activists. The data sources are reflections of experienced activists, nonviolent theorists and empirical researchers. Both positive and negative effects are explored.

The last section attempts to inform some of those researched effects by relating them to the religious, philosophical and strategic aspects of nonviolence. The four
areas explored in this final section of the literature review are the activists' self and emotions, relationships with others, self in society and spirituality.

Throughout the literature review and data analysis, there are two recurring themes in addition to those topics already stated. One is the relationship between nonviolence and oppression. Many common ideas emerge in the theory and practice of nonviolence and the theory and practice of liberation from oppression. Since both of the movements being studied fought forms of oppression (racism/militarism), some important connections can be made concerning these ideas.

The other theme concerns the activists' perception of nonviolence as a creed, or way of life, versus nonviolence as a tactic or strategy. This perception can affect how an activist uses nonviolence and what effects s/he experiences. The literature review and the case studies pursue this theme of tactic vs. creed whenever possible.

Movement Histories and Determinants

The focus of this study is the experience of activists in two major United States movements; the civil rights movement and the peace movement. This section briefly explores a chronology of significant events in the two
movements, some similarities and differences of the two movements, and some historical, group and individual factors which encouraged the movements' development.

Civil rights movement chronology, trends and conflicts

The civil rights movement for blacks had its beginnings in the early 1900's. During the 1920's, black leaders who read about Gandhi's direct action campaigns in India began organizing actions here in the United States. However, it wasn't until 1943 and the founding of the Congress of Racial Equality that an organization existed to concentrate primarily on civil rights using nonviolent direct action.

The reasons for including this movement in the study are:

1. It was one of the few nonviolent movements in the United States dominated and led by people of color;
2. It transformed almost every major United States institution in an incredibly short period of time primarily through nonviolent action;
3. It also served to transform individual lives, and clearly illustrates how oppressed people can become empowered through nonviolent direct action.

The material for this chronology was compiled from the writings of Bell (1968), Cooney and Michalowski (1977), Katz (1967), von Eschen (1971) and Wehr (1968).

Legislative period 1909-1941. The NAACP was founded in 1909 to fight segregation, and it remained the primary group acting for black liberation for the next 33 years. NAACP's approach was to work within the governmental system most of
the time, through court cases and legislation. They attempted to achieve the freedoms promised in the reconstruction period a half century earlier. In 1917, two days after the U.S. entered World War I, 8000 blacks marched silently down 5th Avenue in New York City to the beat of muffled drums, carrying signs that said "Make America Safe for Democracy" to protest lynchings and racist violence. This march was sponsored by the NAACP. Problems arose in this legislative period because desired laws would not be proposed or passed in Congress, while laws and court decisions which were passed were often watered down or not enforced at all. During the 30's there were some sporadic direct actions of note; Adam Clayton Powell led a picket at Harlem Hospital to protest the firing of five black doctors who were subsequently reinstated. Powell and A. Philip Randolph led a boycott of white owned stores in Harlem and blacks were hired as a result. In 1941, Randolph threatened a massive march of 100,000 people on Washington D.C. which forced President Roosevelt to sign an executive order banning job discrimination. Perhaps this early period highlighted the fact that concrete changes often came faster through direct action than through legislation. Still, the NAACP remained a meaningful place for more moderate blacks and whites to give their support.

Small and large scale direct action 1942-1965. The
Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) was founded in 1942 by a bi-racial group that had been studying Gandhian nonviolence. Their aim was to apply Gandhi's methods to oppose discrimination in the United States, particularly through direct action, such as sit-ins, wade-ins (at public pools), etc. In 1947 they launched the first Freedom Rides, where bi-racial teams attempted to enforce desegregation on interstate bus travel which the Supreme Court had ordered in 1946.

The period after World War II has been called a "revolution of rising expectations," (Bell 1968) which resulted from the combination of court decisions favorable to blacks, a decrease in Southern violence against blacks, a northern migration of blacks and the model provided by several African nations fighting for independence from their colonizers. Political actions took the form of "creative disorder" (Wehr 1968) to pull the system in line with the legislation which was finally being passed. The movement began to reach a mass scale in 1955, when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white person on a bus, and sparked a 13 month struggle in Montgomery, Alabama over bus desegregation. That effort also pushed to the forefront Dr. Martin Luther King, who founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957. Not coincidentally, that same year Congress passed the first major civil rights
bill since 1875. From 1955-1965 came a continuous series of major marches, sit-ins, and freedom rides mostly aimed at desegregation and causing tremendous changes throughout the country. During this time, conflicts arose among the various political groups. The NAACP felt the demonstrators were stirring up trouble, moving too fast, and upsetting racial relations they had spent years building. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) did a lot of local organizing and resented the national efforts like the SCLC coming in at the end and taking all the credit for their hard work. As the movement grew, the organizers' abilities to selectively choose, train and discipline nonviolent activists weakened. At the same time, the segregationists recovered from their initial shock and got more organized; they started proposing local referendums to bypass those in power, and warmly welcomed demonstrators into their towns to diffuse the confrontational energy. Also, nonviolent activists were encountering police brutality, church bombings, assassinations and a lack of intervention by the federal government, thus testing the true commitment to nonviolent means of struggle.

Community organizing/black power period 1961-1968. With many of the immediate goals of desegregation accomplished, the movement had to find a new direction. What emerged was a push for less tangible goals such as political
and economic power for blacks. Activists turned to voter registration and community organizing as their next focus. In 1964, the Freedom Summer Project brought hundreds of northern (mostly white) students into rural Mississippi to register voters. That same year, Fannie Lou Hamer took the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party delegates to the Democratic National Convention and demanded equal representation on the convention floor. In 1965 came major voter registration marches in Selma, Alabama, and the Voting Rights Act was passed by Congress that same year. Around this time the leadership of the civil rights movement realized they had neglected the urban working class and poor in their civil rights struggles. For a variety of reasons, the urban poor were less invested in nonviolence as a means of change, and from 1965-1968 there were riots in over a dozen major cities in response to the limited progress and broken promises to blacks.

During 1960-1966, Malcolm X was increasing race pride and cohesion among urban blacks through the Black Muslim movement, which opposed nonviolent tactics as too close to the stereotyped behavior required of blacks as part of their oppression. Violence was seen as acceptable in self-defense, and whites were seen as unnecessary or harmful to black liberation. In response to these trends, CORE stopped being an interracial organization in 1965, causing many hard
feelings among some white and black civil rights workers. In 1966, CORE asserted the natural right of self-defense, Stokely Charmichael made his famous "Black Power" speech in which he claimed the time for demanding rights rather than asking for them had arrived, and the Black Panthers became more active. In 1967, SNCC changed its name to the Student National Coordinating Committee, symbolically rejecting nonviolence.

In reality, the Panthers and SNCC tried to prevent ghetto violence, but at this point whites were unable to distinguish the riots from other parts of the civil rights movement, and were feeling quite threatened. The U.S. government, through the FBI and Cointelpro (Counter Intelligence Program) did its best to destroy the more militant wing of the Black liberation movement from 1966 on, through harassment, frame-ups and murders of Black Panther Party members. The SCLC was floundering for a focus, and ran into bureaucratic problems in various urban campaigns. On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King was assassinated, and that event signalled to many the end of the peaceful, organized civil rights movement. Recently there has been a resurgence of the civil rights struggle as evidenced by the formation of the Rainbow Coalition, the presidential campaign of Jesse Jackson and the anti-Apartheid movement in the U.S. The growing coalition of U.S. blacks with people of color
throughout the world could hold interesting developments for the future of that movement in this country.

Peace movement chronology, trends and conflicts.

The other movement included in this study is the peace movement. Since 1650 there has been some kind of documented effort promoting peace in this country. It is only in the 20th century that there has been an organized mass movement for social change. The issues of the peace movement are less tangible than those of the civil rights movement, but they have included resistance to the draft, to specific wars, to nuclear weapons and to taxes for defense spending. This movement is included in the study because:

1. It has drawn a diversity of people as activists;
2. It has a long, rich history which continues today;
3. It represents a variety of issues, all of which center on combatting institutionalized and socially sanctioned violence.

The material for this chronology came from Cooney and Michalowski (1977) and Lynd (1966).

Initial organizing period 1914-1947. From 1914 to 1941, a number of international organizations were founded which represented different strands of the peace movement. Certainly the start of World War I aroused the need for these groups to form, and they included the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) for Christian pacifists, Women's
International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) for women, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) for Quakers, the Catholic Worker for Catholics, the Jewish Peace Fellowship for Jews, and the War Resisters League (WRL) founded specifically to provide a place for non-religious conscientious objectors to the war. In a theme that recurs throughout the peace movement, conflicts arose between peace groups and labor and socialist groups over their reaction to the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the Red Scare that followed. However, there were small efforts in the 1920's with a No More War theme which included leafletting, vigils and demonstrations. There seemed to be some success, as in 1929 the Paris Peace Pact outlawed war as a solution to international problems, and was signed by 62 nations.

Some exciting uses of direct action came at this time for the peace movement, as in the civil rights movement. In the early 1930's the Oxford Pledge Movement urged young men to refuse to fight in war and was endorsed by Albert Einstein. In 1935, 60,000 college students around the nation went on strike against war. Spirits were buoyed by reports of Gandhi's experiences in India, and in 1934 Richard Gregg, a disciple of Gandhi's, published The Power of Nonviolence where he urged U.S. activists to resist war through nonviolent means.

In the meantime, the fascists were growing stronger in
Europe, and in 1937 a split arose among peace activists over the use of violence against fascism in Spain during the Spanish Civil War and then against Germany. A number of anti-war activists in the Communist Party switched their position to be in favor of war once the USSR was attacked by Germany. Other pacifists felt the war against Hitler was a "just war," and was the only way to stop him. This left the ardent pacifists in a more isolated and unpopular position.

Among those who were conscientious objectors (CO's) in World War II, yet another conflict arose over Civilian Public Service Camps, where some CO's were placed and put to work on various manual labor projects for the government. At first, many felt these camps were a welcome improvement over the brutality showed to CO's during World War I. However, the politically oriented CO's came to resent the authoritarian nature of the camp and doing socially useless work for no pay. Because the camps were pacifist financed, some felt they gave legitimacy to the idea of conscription and the government's right to define CO status. Walkouts started at camps all over the country.

Other CO's at this time were placed in prison, and an inspiring action took place in 1943 at Danbury, where 19 CO's led a 135 day work strike to protest racial segregation in the dining hall. The strike ended when the warden agreed to end the segregation, and this action caused similar ones at
other prisons once word got out.

**Growth of direct action movement 1947-1963.** During this period there was an increasing urgency to the work of the peace movement due to the development of the atomic bomb. Besides the draft and amnesty for CO's, the major issues included protests against nuclear testing, civil defense and nuclear weapons. The first public draft card burning took place in 1947. In 1948, a new group called the Peacemakers was founded, dedicated to Gandhian nonviolent direct action and war tax resistance. That same year the Central Committee for Conscientious Objection (CCCO) was founded to set up draft counseling agencies. During this time, many peace activists became more aware of the economic issues behind militarism, and in response, some pacifists set up self-sufficient communities based on simple lifestyles.

Once again, these movement efforts were undermined by the latest Red Scare in the form of Senator Joseph McCarthy, and it was hard to gain popular support because people feared being labeled "Communists."

During 1955-1963, the support for peace efforts slowly built up again in civil defense and ban the bomb projects. In 1956, two ships purposely sailed into nuclear testing waters in the Pacific and the crews were arrested and tried by the U.S. government. In the U.S., civil disobedience actions were held at construction sites of nuclear weapons.
Some of these campaigns were organized by the Committee for Nonviolent Action (CNVA), as was the 1961 San Francisco to Moscow Walk. In that action, a group of peacewalkers walked 6000 miles and ended up in Moscow's Red Square for a peace demonstration.

Though movement support was growing, these actions were taken by a minority of small groups. The peace movement was finally pushed into national attention by the war in Vietnam.

**Mass peace movement 1963-1968.** Opposition to the war grew over the years and allowed a public forum for ideas many peace activists had been pursuing for years. In 1964, 1500 people had an anti-war demonstration in New York, draft card burning was revived and the tax resistance movement grew. People who had been silent about the war issue were now becoming vocal about it, the numbers of people resisting grew, and coalitions started to form where none existed before. The common bond of being anti-war broke down some of the barriers that had previously kept apart peace and civil rights workers, or pacifists and communists. Martin Luther King came out against the war in 1965, and civil rights and peace movement activists were brought together more directly in various demonstrations. In that same year, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was founded, and sponsored a march in which Communists took part, despite the protests of some old-time radical pacifists.
Conflicts arose between the old wave practitioners of small group, disciplined nonviolence and the growing massive, spontaneous demonstrators. The old-time activists had to choose between joining the current surge or going back to their own small actions, and most opted for the former. The Pentagon Papers revealed that the mass resistance movement did affect the government’s plans in Vietnam to some degree.

However, the continuing frustrations in having no direct impact on ending the war led small parts of the movement (such as the Weather Underground) to bombing and other acts of violence. The police brutality evidenced at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago increased the rage of some who turned to violence more readily. For others, it led to a conscious return to the roots of nonviolence. Cooney and Michalowski (1979) write, "In these brief 60 years [1915-1975] radical pacifism has become a political and cultural force in American life. No longer an isolated and individualistic attitude towards war, it has become a way of life that holds the promise of a viable political alternative to the militarism and injustice of the past and the present" (p. 209). Although it is true that some of the values of the peace movement did move into mainstream society and politics, the strength and mass appeal of the peace movement since 1975 could be a subject for debate. The Freeze campaign and the disarmament movement in general have gained a lot of popular
support in recent years. In this movement too, worldwide connections are being made among activists around common concerns.

Two movements compared

The term "movement" is used often, yet there are no common criteria set out for exactly what constitutes a movement. At what point a trend, a growing surge of feeling, a group of organized individuals becomes "a movement" is not quite clear. Sampson (1967) attempts to evoke some key elements common to all movements. He says they:

1. are relatively long lasting;
2. often involve large groups of people;
3. arise spontaneously;
4. have a clear program or purpose;
5. aim at correcting, supplementing, overthrowing or influencing the existing social order;
6. are a collective effort at solving a problem that many people feel they have in common;
7. have some kind of formalized organization.

Though these criteria are vague enough to include everything from tax resisters to the Moonies, they at least begin to circumscribe the historical phenomenon we call "movements," and are relevant to the two being studied here.

Katz (1967) outlines some of the similarities of the two movements. First, there was a high level of participation by
people outside the power structure of society, including students, academics, and the church. However, more blacks and working class people (mostly black) were involved in the civil rights movement, whereas many people in the peace movement were more affluent and more often were white.

Both movements were dedicated to principles of egalitarianism, humanitarianism and democracy. The underlying values of both movements were part of the larger society, at least ostensibly, such as anti-racism, self-determination and an opposition to dictatorships.

Finally, the tactics and often the rhetoric used in the two movements were similar. Katz sees the civil rights movement as more accepting of the existing social system than the peace movement, though this depends on which segment of the movement one examines.

Predetermining factors

Many researchers have grappled with questions of who becomes active for what reasons at what time. As one might expect, there are a number of situational, intrapersonal, cultural, institutional and historical factors which combine to create the spark for a movement to emerge. What follows is a survey of some of those factors which have been uncovered thus far. Of course, there is no consistent formula common to all cases.
**Historical/societal factors.** Using the women's suffrage case as an example, Lakey (1968) tried to extract the conditions facilitating the emergence of nonviolent movements. He suggests the following four.

1. That other means of change (i.e. lobbying, petitioning) have been tried and have failed as concerned with a specific social problem.

2. That there is a powerful example of the use of nonviolent direct action evident and known to people.

3. That there is some interruption of order - some historical releasing event such as a war, or a major court decision.

4. That there is a hypocrisy of words and policy on the part of decision makers or the government.

These conditions emerge as quite important when applied to the civil rights and peace movements.

**Other means of change have been tried and have failed.** Throughout both movements, attempts were constantly made to change things through legislation, the court system and appeals to moral reasoning. Progress was minimal if at all existent. For example, Franklin Delano Roosevelt refused to sign anti-lynch legislation in the 1930's because it would endanger his bills for economic recovery by alienating many congresspeople. Court decisions went unenforced, and moral issues were only met with more hardened resistance on the part of segregationists. Despite the peace petitions, letters to congress, teach-ins and votes for anti-war candidates, the United States foreign policy continued to
move in directions of increased weaponry, war preparations and intervention into foreign lands.

A publicized, powerful example exists of the use of nonviolent direct action. The suffragist movement of the teens, Gandhi’s work in the 20’s and the labor movement struggles of the 1930’s all served as strong models for both the peace and civil rights movements. They showed alternative means of waging social struggle through more confrontational methods, and gave hope for the possibility of achieving major changes in relatively short periods of time. In addition, activists from these older movements brought their experiences directly to the peace and civil rights movements. Some of the suffragettes and labor leaders became active in anti-military work, and some followers of Gandhi came back to the United States anxious to apply nonviolent methods to civil rights struggles in this country. Gandhi said in 1935 that it may be through United States blacks that the unadulterated message of nonviolence would be delivered to the world. Even the four college men who sat in at the Greensboro lunch counter in 1960 had recently viewed a television special about Gandhi’s life and tactics, and felt moved by the example.

Historical releasing events cause some disruption of order. It is difficult to assess why movements arise at some points in history and not others. Sometimes it is because a
charismatic individual comes to the fore and leads people to action. Another factor can be the intervention of history - the acts of one government or another, which spark a movement. Sometimes the combination of events culminating at a specific time creates major change efforts.

In the case of the peace movement, each war the United States entered, the dropping of two atomic bombs, continued nuclear testing and draft legislation sparked reactions from the peace community. Citizens began to see the pattern of U.S. militarism as a consistent foreign policy rather than a set of unrelated incidents. Bell (1968) states that the combination of the 1954 Brown court decision by the Supreme Court, the model of African nations fighting for liberation from colonialism and the northern migration of many blacks served to create a surge in civil rights activism during the 1950's and 60's. These events created a degree of hopefulness and expectation that gave people the impetus to organize for their rights.

A hypocrisy of words and policy by decision makers and government. Each time blacks fought in the United States military to "make the world safe for democracy," they realized they themselves were excluded from that world via segregated troop brigades and a return to lynchings and no job opportunities despite their veteran status after the wars. Bell (1968) states that the ideology of the civil
The rights movement was nothing new - its creed was drawn from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, which were not being enforced. Similarly, peace activists have consistently heard such phrases as "the war to end all wars," "peace through strength" and "we had to destroy the village in order to save it" enough times to recognize the contradiction of creating a peaceful world through military means. No matter what efforts were made by the government, the world continued to become more violent and less secure.

Kenniston (1968) adds the influence of worldwide communications as a factor enhancing the emergence of movements. Besides creating a greater awareness about what people are doing in other countries and states, Kenniston sees a gradual "internationalization" of the individual identity, with the usual boundaries of "my town" or "my country" being expanded to realms of "my planet" or "all people of color" as a focus of concern.

Group factors. Goldenberg (1978) states that the concerns and behaviors for social change differ among the disenfranchised and the affluent. He says the oppressed tend to work in groups on survival issues, while the affluent are more concerned with personal integrity, and act as individuals more often. Consistent with his ideas, the literature on group factors tends to focus on what makes nonviolent direct action appeal to the oppressed, whereas the
research on individual factors is weighted towards questions of why the affluent become activists. Despite that bias, some factors are generalizable to people of any background.

One practical consideration is that oppressed groups may turn to nonviolence because they lack access to political power and weapons, and are therefore limited as to their means of struggle. It may not be the means of preference, but one of the few available.

Bell (1968) and Wehr (1968) refer to the "Southern personality" of blacks which made them apt candidates for nonviolent theory and practice. This "personality" includes proper and law abiding behavior, politeness, avoidance of violence, and the ability to swallow frustration and deny aggression, making people less able to express counter aggression. Although these traits have both positive (survival value) and negative (in terms of self-respect) aspects, the authors simply say that this socialization can make a group more suited to nonviolent tactics. The same analysis has been made of women, and has caused some to criticize nonviolent methods, claiming they keep oppressed people stuck in the same stereotyped behavior patterns.

VanderZanden (1963) states that nonviolent action has a strong appeal to the oppressed because it offers a way to channel all the aggression and suppressed hostility which these groups harbor. King helped to redefine the dynamics by
explaining that accommodation was cooperation with evil, so fighting back in some way was the moral imperative for oppressed people. It was okay to be bitter and angry, but by acting out of love, it gave blacks a new sense of moral superiority over whites. On a less saintlike plane, some blacks just got a kick out of making the whites more mad by refusing to fight back.

**Individual factors.** What makes one person a social activist while another is not? This question alone could be the topic of an entire study, and is one to which many would like an answer. Authors who have contributed to the following analysis include Bell (1968), Kenniston (1968), Wehr (1968), Rosenhan (1970), Frank (1965), and Bolton (1972).

**Family relationships and social background.**

1. Some found that people who come from affluent backgrounds have less to risk of their status or security than the disenfranchised who are struggling to survive, and are therefore more able to feel secure enough to get involved in social struggles. However, an argument can also be made that the poor or marginal people have less to lose if they are active, because they are less invested in the existing system.

2. For both the oppressed and the affluent, a greater level of formal education is positively related to a turn towards activism.

3. Judaism, Quakerism and Unitarianism seem to produce a disproportionate number of social activists.

4. Several factors concern the activists' parents. A positive parent/child relationship helps to produce activists. If parents are liberal, and if they provide models of moral conduct, that can help. In some cases, activist children are acting out their parents' feelings or desires which the parents won't
implement themselves.

Life experience.

1. For some, being a parent is a motivator to action - wanting to create greater opportunities, a more peaceful and just world, and so on. Of course, one need not be a parent oneself to have those same feelings for the next generation. For others, the responsibility of caring for children can limit their ability to participate in nonviolent actions.

2. If one gains access or exposure to nonviolent leaders, that can influence one's path in the direction of nonviolent activism.

3. For some, activism can result from a very personal relationship with a friend - a militant friend, or a friend from an oppressed group who is outspoken and sometimes directs those feelings at the activist-to-be. Similarly, the isolation or hostility that can result from associating with a ________ (black, gay or lesbian, disabled person) can also lead to radicalization.

Relation to society.

1. Often, activists can have a strong identification with oppressed people, whether or not they are part of a particular group. Kenniston (1968) calls this a "capacity for nurturant identification" - for empathy and sympathy with the underdog, the oppressed and the needy. Hopefully, this characteristic emerges from sincerity and not guilt or paternalism.

2. In some cases, that identification is enhanced by the activists' own feelings of alienation and social marginality. A Jewish man active in CORE serves as one example; his marginality and notion of history as a Jew led him to take on others' struggles. Goldenberg (1978) expands on this idea of nurturant identification.

If there is anything natural about the potential social interventionist, it is his inability to avoid becoming acutely aware of and deeply affected by the contradictions of the human condition. Moreover, the social interventionist, almost constitutionally, is incapable of remaining passive in the light of these experiences. Sooner or later he must act, and through these actions he makes clear his own guiding
faith. (p. 30)

3. Finally, there is the issue of "status discrepancy." This means that people who are at low status because of one group membership (i.e. race or sex) but high status in another area (wealth or education) are very ripe for political action, especially compared with those whose status is consistently low or high on all fronts. Perhaps this inconsistency highlights societal hypocrisy as it manifests on a personal level. This notion may not apply to other countries or cultures, where being on consistently low status levels has also brought people to take action.

Nonviolence Defined

Over the centuries, nonviolent methods have been used in many forms within a variety of social systems; by minorities and majorities, to resist regimes and defend them, in local conflicts and national liberation movements, and by religious and secular groups. The use of nonviolence is documented as early as 494 B.C.E. Its use was expanded in the late 18th to early 20th century by at least three groups; 1) nationalists resisting foreign enemy or law (i.e. American colonists) 2) the growth of the trade union and labor movement 3) personal example and theory from Tolstoy, Thoreau and others. Despite this long history of experimentation, Dellinger notes the following:

The theory and practice of active nonviolence are roughly at the stage of development today [1965] as those of electricity in the early days of Marconi and Edison. A new source of power has been discovered and crudely utilized in specialized situations but our experience is so limited and our knowledge so primitive that there is legitimate dispute about its applicability to a wide range of complicated and
critical tasks. (Lynd, 1966, p. 521)

In a general sense, nonviolence is a form of action, a solution to conflict, a force of justice and a lever of conversion. It excludes the options of neutrality, capitulation, violence or flight.

Methods of nonviolence

Gene Sharp (1973, 1980) has researched extensively the historical examples of the use of nonviolent action. He recognizes three categories of methods of nonviolent action and almost 200 specific methods.

1. **Nonviolent protest and persuasion.** These are largely symbolic acts which disapprove of a given act/policy or aim to persuade others to a certain view. These methods include vigils, teach-ins, pickets, marches and lobbies.

2. **Noncooperation.** According to nonviolent theorists, the "power of the people" lies in their ability to withdraw their cooperation from an existing system, law or group. This noncooperation can take three forms.

   **Social.** Boycotting social affairs, student strikes, "Lysistrata" efforts, whereby women refuse to relate sexually to men until a war is stopped.

   **Economic.** Boycotting products, strikes, tax resistance.

   **Political.** Draft resistance, civil disobedience,
boycotting elections.

3. **Nonviolent Intervention.** This is actual direct intervention such as sit-ins, blockades, and the building of parallel institutions.

These methods rely on creating change through conversion, accommodation (a granting of demands with no change in attitude) or nonviolent coercion (granting change against one's will).

**Steps in Nonviolent Campaign**

Using these methods, Gandhi outlined the essential steps involved in creating a nonviolent campaign. In his theory, a group should not move on to later phases of a campaign until all earlier ones have been tried, though things work out more loosely in practice. The steps in a campaign are;

1. Investigate and get information about the issue;
2. Formulate a statement of desired changes;
3. Negotiate with opponents;
4. Sharpen the focus of attack via agitation, demonstrations and delivering ultimatums;
5. Generate "cause consciousness" in the public via public prayer, fasting and other methods;
6. Organize boycotts, pickets and strikes;
7. Turn to methods of noncooperation;
8. Use civil disobedience;
9. Create parallel institutions.

This scenario is an ideal, meant for longer term, strategically planned nonviolent campaigns.
A tactic versus a creed

Within the framework of nonviolence, there is a spectrum of approaches, ranging from nonviolence as a technique only to nonviolence as a complete way of life. These two approaches are similar in their disavowal of violence, their methods and the steps in a campaign. However, they are in many ways completely different perspectives on nonviolence, and certainly have an impact on the experience of a given activist in different ways. Although there are exceptions, the literature indicates that for most rank and file civil rights activists, nonviolence was primarily a strategy, while most peace activists saw nonviolence as a way of living.

Goldenberg (1978) raises some issues about oppression and the use of nonviolence as a creed or a tactic. First, he defines empowerment more precisely.

To be empowered is to be able to exercise specific leverage over events that impinge themselves on one’s existence; to have power is to have access to those resources which can be employed to either reduce one’s feeling of discomfort or increase one’s sense of dominion. Goods and power are, in short, the stuff out of which survival is either transformed into a full-time career or relegated to a part-time activity. (p. 59)

He then makes a distinction between the concerns of the disenfranchised who have no goods and power, and the affluent, who suffer the effects of the goods and power ethos itself.

For the traditionally excluded, social intervention means the wrenching from existing institutional sources of the goods and powers historically denied;
for the more affluent, it means the critical examination of those socially conditioned values which are at the heart of their growing emptiness. (pp. 105-106)

His comments are borne out in the literature; most of the norms of tactical or pragmatic nonviolence concern the self in relation to others and to society, whereas the norms of conscientious nonviolence concern individual and spiritual reflection.

Conscientious nonviolence focuses on self-analysis and individual action. One must live a moral life and be sure not to do wrong to others. Every action in one’s life must come under this scrutiny. Effectiveness of an action is measured by answering the question, "Have I behaved well?"

Thoreau’s classic essay, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" written in 1849 exemplifies this approach.

If it [injustice] is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine. What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn." (p. 229)

Social conflict is seen as a failure of communication between consciences; thus individuals must attune themselves to their own conscience via self-discipline and introspection, making adversaries aware of their own conscience by appeals to reason or emotion. The idea is to change the opponents' hearts and minds through conversion. King describes it this way:

We must meet the forces of hate with the power of
love; we must meet physical force with soul force. Our aim must never be to defeat or humiliate the white man, but to win his friendship and understanding. (Oates, 1982, p. 79)

Often there is an underlying religious or ethical base to conscientious nonviolence. In general, Goldenberg (1978) says the more affluent social actionists are concerned with personal integrity, interpersonal closeness and a sense of completeness. Their goals are less clear but might involve divesting themselves of goods and power taken from the backs of others, or developing alternative lifestyles and institutions which are less oppressive and destructive. Thus, a connection exists between the concerns of affluent and conscientious practitioners of nonviolence.

Strategic nonviolence is more concerned with societal analysis. Within the struggle the activists must put an end to being wronged or being changed by others. Their commitment to nonviolent tactics is often a temporary one, and the important question to measure effectiveness is "Have things changed?"

Conflict is seen as desirable and inevitable, and nonviolent strategists will settle for changing opponents' behaviors and policies through coercion rather than conversion. Farmer (1965), the national director of CORE, describes that organization's transition from conscientious to pragmatic nonviolence.

The original CORE vision was excessively interpersonal and private. There was not men nor
time nor spirit enough to change each lunch-counter-owner’s heart, one by one. As we learned when we finally met them, our people did not wish to wait that long, and out of love for them we did not wish them to. We learned too that before the millenium we could at least alter behavior and conditions which created injustice. (p. 80)

The underlying base of interest in nonviolence comes less from some philosophy and more from seeing nonviolence as expedient, effective or less dangerous than violent methods. It is Dellinger’s bias that "The major advances in nonviolence have not come from people who have approached nonviolence as an end in itself, but from persons who were passionately striving to free themselves from social injustice." (Lynd, 1966, p. 522)

Goldenberg (1978) further clarifies the differentiation by describing poor social actionists the following ways. He says the poor are concerned with community organizing - banding together the previously isolated and vulnerable to form a group to identify and pursue common goals. Those who really only have each other begin to realize that fact and to act upon it to gain control of the basic conditions under which survival takes place. They are interested in bread and butter issues; how best and most quickly to increase their economic, social and political power. The psychological referent for their struggle is increased individual and group self determination. He implies here that pragmatic practitioners of nonviolence may often be the disenfranchised
and poor activists.

A summary of the differences between the two methods is shown in Table 1.

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<th>CONSCIENTIOUS</th>
<th>PRAGMATIC</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FOCUS</strong></td>
<td>Self examination and individual action</td>
<td>Societal examination and group action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MORALITY</strong></td>
<td>Avoid doing wrong</td>
<td>Avoid being wronged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TIME FRAME</strong></td>
<td>Lifelong/every action</td>
<td>Temporary/spontaneous</td>
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<td><strong>CONFLICT</strong></td>
<td>Failure of communication</td>
<td>Inevitable/desirable</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>Conversion</td>
<td>Coercion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EFFECTIVENESS</strong></td>
<td>Have I behaved well?</td>
<td>Have things changed?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MOTIVATION</strong></td>
<td>Religion/Philosophy</td>
<td>Expediency</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GOALS</strong></td>
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<td>Gaining goods and power for the</td>
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<td>institutions as alternatives</td>
<td>disenfranchised/self determination</td>
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Conflicts have arisen in the civil rights and peace movements because of these different approaches to actions. The split in the peace movement in the 30's over fascism was in part a split of these ideologies; the conscientious activists felt that war and violence were never acceptable under any circumstances, while the pragmatic activists felt in this particular circumstance, going to fight was the most
effective means of defeating injustice.

Another example comes from King's experiences when he entered the realm of the urban poor in the mid 60's. In several cities he was heckled and had things thrown at him by frustrated, poor blacks who shouted, "We want jobs, not dreams!" (referring to King's "I Have a Dream" speech at the March on Washington). King's concern with the moral and spiritual elements of the struggle was meaningless to people who were strongly concerned with survival. It's also possible that King's own middle class background made him less able to bond with the working class population of blacks.

There have also been conflicts between the peace and civil rights movements because of their approach to change and their goals. Affluent peace activists have expected the poor to go for voluntary simplicity instead of more goods and power, when such an expectation is unfair. CORE's focus on group identity and self determination for blacks led them to oust white members from their ranks, causing a lot of resentment.

Rather than being seen as conflicting ideologies, these two approaches can work together to enhance each other; conscientious nonviolence offers ethics; pragmatic nonviolence brings common sense, social science and technical knowledge. Farmer (1965) claims that true revolutionary mass movements can emerge out of the fusion of these two factors;
the means oriented idealists for whom nonviolence is a way of
life, and the ends oriented militants who see direct action
as a useful weapon and tactic. Both the anger and idealism
are needed to create a strategy with philosophical and
tactical elements.

In fact, what emerges through the readings is that the
philosophy and practice of strategic nonviolence sometimes
served as a middle ground between the more "saintlike" old
order of nonviolent activists and the growing movement
towards violence and militancy symbolized by the Black
Panthers, or the Weather Underground. The tension of holding
on to nonviolent ideals in the midst of growing frustration
is evident in this final quote from Farmer in 1965, as he
explains the "tradition and impetus CORE brings to the
future."

We have become a mass movement and now we can only
become more of a mass movement. We have an arsenal
of techniques in direct action and must restudy their
applicability. We stand astride fierce and ambiguous
energies, some noble, some not, and will seek to
channel them, but we will not renounce them. We hold
impatience a virtue and will not be quickly
satisfied. We recall our dreams of creative
reconciliation and feel we serve them still, in our
manner. But love is a luxurious tactic and the
realities of militant nonviolence permit us few
luxuries. We are nonviolent because nonviolence is a
weapon tested out and proven effective. Prudence,
tactical good sense, and our ideals demand that we
remain so. (p. 81-82)
The research on the effects of activism on activists comes from three major sources. One is the reflection of experienced activists and people involved in the movements, who over their years of involvement have seen the effects on others and write about these generalizations. They have the benefit of direct personal experience and observation, though they may lack a certain objectivity and scientific method. What follows is a summary of some statistical data concerning these people. The first four are movement leaders, and the last two are therapists who served the civil rights movement by counseling movement activists through difficult times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>SEX/RACE</th>
<th>MOVEMENT</th>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>PLACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Farmer</td>
<td>M/B</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>40's-60's</td>
<td>North/South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. L. King</td>
<td>M/B</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>50's-60's</td>
<td>North/South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Deming</td>
<td>F/W</td>
<td>CR and P</td>
<td>60's-80's</td>
<td>North/South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Baez</td>
<td>F/W</td>
<td>CR and P</td>
<td>60's-70's</td>
<td>North/South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alvin Poussaint</td>
<td>M/B</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>60's</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Coles</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>60's</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A secondary source of data comes from researchers who have studied nonviolent movements and theorize based on that research. However, the views of these authors are somewhat less valuable for this study because not only are they once removed from the actual situations, but they have not
necessarily interacted with activists. Still, the overview they bring is worthwhile, and they are somewhat more objective. This group includes the following people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>SEX/RACE</th>
<th>MOVEMENT OF STUDY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gene Sharp</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR and P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James W. VanderZanden</td>
<td>M/B</td>
<td>CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Janis/D. Katz</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR and P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward E. Sampson</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary M. Watkins</td>
<td>F/W</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The third data source includes the empirical studies done by researchers in the field. This contains the benefits of first hand reports as well as more traditional scientific methodology. However, because of oppression in the institutions of education and publications, most of these studies are written by white men and thus offer a limited perspective. Therefore, it seems important to include the observations of all three of these data bases. A summary of the empirical studies follows on Tables 4 and 5, first giving data about the researcher and study, then about the study subjects when that data was available. Despite the different nature of these data sources, the insights they offer as to the effects of activism on activists support and complement each other. In this presentation, positive and negative effects will be discussed separately. The authors who comment on each effect are listed in parentheses.
# TABLE 4: DATA ON EMPIRICAL STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCHER</th>
<th>SEX/RACE</th>
<th>MOVEMENT</th>
<th>DATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>F/W</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>1961-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank/Nash</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>1950-1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenniston</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakey</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>Women's</td>
<td>1916-1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakhre</td>
<td>M/Asian</td>
<td>India CR</td>
<td>1928-1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon, et.al</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>1960-1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wehr</td>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCHER</th>
<th>GEOGRAPHY</th>
<th>METHODOLOGY</th>
<th>TOPICS OF STUDY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>North/South</td>
<td>Interviews/Observation</td>
<td>Motivations/Experiences/Race Relations/Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank/Nash</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Written questionnaires</td>
<td>Crucial episodes/Sustaining factors/Backrounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenniston</td>
<td>Cambridge, MA</td>
<td>Interv./Observ</td>
<td>Backgrounds/Motivations/Experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakey</td>
<td>Washington DC</td>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>Motivations/meanings/effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakhre</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Background/Why nonviolence/Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>D.C./South</td>
<td>Interv./Observ.</td>
<td>Motivations/Effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>Greensboro, N.C.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Backround/Motivations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon, et.al.</td>
<td>South cities</td>
<td>Stats/Documents</td>
<td>CR activity and crime rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>D.C./South</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Nonviolent behavior and attitudes/pre and post action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wehr</td>
<td>N. Carolina</td>
<td>Written Questionnaires</td>
<td>Motivations/Effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 5: DATA ON EMPIRICAL STUDY SUBJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCHER</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2B/1W</td>
<td>M+F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Working-Upper</td>
<td>College or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank/Nash</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5B/42F</td>
<td>18-55</td>
<td>Middle-upper</td>
<td>84 college or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenniston</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>13M/3F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Middle-upper</td>
<td>In or done college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakey</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Middle-upper</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakhre</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>169M/14F</td>
<td>75% are 25 112 Lower</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9B/11W</td>
<td>M+F</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 yr. college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Working</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon, et.al.</td>
<td>3 cities</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon/Fishman</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>16M/3F</td>
<td>20's</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wehr</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18-22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except for the study done in India, the vast majority of study subjects were students. The Frank/Nash study also included professionals.
Positive effects on self and emotions

Empowerment. (Nakhre, 1982; Sharp, 1973; Lakey, 1968; Farmer, 1965; Deming, 1971; Frank and Nash, 1965; Solomon and Fishman I, 1963) Nonviolent activism can break patterns of helplessness and passivity, giving people a sense that they as individuals can in fact have an impact on their lives, an increased sense of personal power and awareness of their own resources and strengths. Farmer (1965) writes that demonstrations provided millions of blacks with their first taste of self determination and political self expression. He sees demonstrations as a rite of initiation "through which the Black man is mustered into the sacred order of freedom" (p. 36).

The decision to act from one's own moral sense rather than societal standards marks a difference in peace activists which Deming (1971) has seen - a degree of freedom that changes the activist. She says a similar air marks those who have experimented with nonviolence for any length of time, "an extraordinary sense that an individual can act and has weight." (pp. 31-32)

Lakey (1968) describes the process of transfer of power from other to self.

Those who had a taste of begging under the old regime and who abandon it for demanding, know how fine and strong a thing it is to realize that you must take what is yours and not waste your energy proving that you are or will someday be worthy of a gift of power.
from your masters. On that glad day of discovery you have first freed yourself to fight for freedom. (pp. 13-14)

**Increased self esteem and group identity.** (Sharp, 1973; VanderZanden, 1963; Nahkre, 1982; King, 1982; Lakey, 1968; Solomon and Fishman, 1964)

A common theme in the literature is the enhanced self-esteem that comes with activism - a theme related to the self determination described above. This effect is especially present for those who learned to be submissive and compliant as part of their oppression. A participant in the first student sit-in at Greensboro, North Carolina remarked on his feelings after the action.

I felt entirely different about myself. At the end of that first sit-in, I didn't feel nearly as guilty as I had felt prior to it. [M] and I both felt great. He felt just like I did - you know - before the sit-ins, I felt kinda lousy, like I was really useless. I was ashamed at how those young kids in Little Rock were braving it out...at least we felt we had done something, not just talk about things like in those bull sessions. (Solomon and Fishman II, 1964, p. 41)

VanderZanden (1963) expands the idea further by saying the individual gains a new sense of strength and significance by fusing with a social movement of others going through the same experience. The self-esteem of the group as a whole increases in the process. "A social movement helps to answer the question 'Who am I?' for a people whose social role is ambiguous and undergoing change" (p. 359).

Finally, King explains that the effects really extend to
millions of others not necessarily active in the movement because of models provided.

For Negroes all over this nation, to identify with the movement, to have pride in those who were the principals, and to give moral, financial or spiritual support was to restore to them some of the pride and honor which had been stripped from them over the centuries. (Oates, 1982, p. 40)

**Increased fearlessness.** (Nakhre, 1982; Deming, 1971; Sharp, 1973; Solomon and Fishman IV, 1964) Nonviolent activism puts people in many situations of potential psychological and physical harm. Facing the fear inherent in such circumstances is necessary to continue being active. Deming describes the Peacemakers group she observed as "conspicuously hardy - fearless in a very special manner" as a result of their commitment to action. She quotes Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, explaining how he found the courage to persist in the face of provocation and terror, mob action and the bombing of his house. "When you get into it [nonviolent action] you discover things about yourself that you didn't understand before you began." In many of their interviews, Solomon and Fishman found activists referring to a "strange calm" they experienced immediately before especially risky actions. Whether it be because of the training sessions, the strength of commitment or denial of danger, there is agreement that nonviolent activists are able to take more risks within the context of their activism.

**Constructive channeling of anger.** (Deming, 1974; King,
The demand of nonviolence for treating one's opponents with love did not deny the feelings of anger which were present among demonstrators. That anger had to be harnessed and redirected. Solomon and Fishman found in their subjects resentment and hostility built on layers of personal frustration. In their view, this aggression was put into a greatly disguised form through nonviolent action, which they term "passive aggressive;" demonstrators enjoyed frustrating opponents by not reacting in the expected ways of being passive or striking back.

Some workers in King's campaign felt that changes went deeper than the surface. They describe the response to King's call for a nonviolent army, when dozens of volunteers came forward and surrendered weapons to the King staff. The volunteers attended workshops to train them for nonviolent combat, and one black enlisted off the street said King's message and methods controlled a great deal of pent-up rage in the black population.

When he first called for recruits, some Negroes viewed this as "a chance to kill me a cracker." But King's aides would take such men to the mass meetings and get them to singing and clapping and amening to King's oratory, and that would quiet the angriest man in town...because King just 'had that thing about him.' (Oates, 1982, p. 218)

Deming (1974) thinks nonviolent actions allow for the expression of deep feelings of anger; not to act out by
taking revenge, but to act out the truth felt about what the other has done, is doing to them, and to "act out their determination to change this state of things. In this very process, one's hatred of the other can be forgotten, because it is beside the point; the point is to change one's life" (p. 217).

Solomon and Fishman (1964) describe the phenomenon of "pro-social acting out," whereby young people take the path of directing these feelings toward improving society rather than destroying it, or themselves.

**Increased positive emotions.** (Frank and Nash, 1965; Sharp, 1973; Lakey, 1968; Solomon and Fishman, 1963) These positive effects on the activists - defying convention, enacting freedom, discharging anger and taking action on social problems - combine to result in enhanced positive feelings described by various authors as satisfaction, elation, relief, or enthusiasm. This was reported by activists in both the civil rights and the peace movements.

**Positive effects on relations with others**

**Changed relationships to authority.** (Sharp, 1973; Solomon and Fishman, 1963) As part of the positive effects on the self, activists are able to interact with their opponents in new ways. No longer submissive and compliant, these activists are direct, pro-active and challenging. In
the civil rights movement, this led many analysts to use the term the "New Negro," for those who disrupted national stereotypes. A white Southern politician remarked, "These kids seem to be completely new Negroes, the likes of which we've never seen before." This change was one many opponents didn't take too kindly to. A similar experience has been found by women in the peace movement, especially those participating in all women's actions. The strength and determination they exhibit is seen by others as "unfeminine" and "not nice", but they continue anyway. It is likely that this breaking of stereotypical patterns also extended beyond the forum of political actions, and was experimented with in other arenas of an activist's life.

**Increased group unity.** (Nahkre, 1982; Kenniston, 1968; Sharp, 1973; Solomon and Fishman, 1963) As a result of the mutual experience of planning and carrying out an action, risk taking and injury, nonviolent activism may enhance feelings of solidarity, closeness, intimacy and comraderie in a group. Sharp says that due to their often isolated position, activists come to meet each other's needs rather than rely on society, thereby increasing internal cooperation. In some sense, activists working together are living out the concept of the "beloved community" in the present, creating a kind of subculture.
Positive effects on the activist in society

Decreased criminal activity. (Farmer, 1965; Sharp, 1973; Solomon and Fishman, 1965) Because nonviolent actions provide an outlet for frustrations, studies have shown a decrease in crime rates during periods of organized civil rights actions. Farmer (1965) gives a straightforward analysis; "Whenever people are given hope and the technique to get the heel off their necks, crime will decline" (p. 36). Solomon and others did an empirical study of three cities from 1960-1963, gathering statistics from the FBI and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, reading medical records, newspapers and interviewing city residents. They concluded that the emotional expression allowed for in a direct action for civil rights may reduce the need for aggressive outbursts of a violent sort, thus reducing the incidence of crimes. Besides this coincidental occurrence, young civil rights leaders purposefully converted members of "delinquent gangs" into nonviolent workers for civil rights. Other important factors in reducing the crime rate include the increased sense of empowerment and group unity that can come from nonviolent action, or simply the exposure to the theory and practice of nonviolence itself.

Increased political sophistication. (Kenniston, 1968; Sampson, 1967; Solomon and Fishman, 1964) Becoming involved in a nonviolent direct action can be a consciousness raising
experience about more than just one's personal life. The norm of nonviolent action suggesting that activists gain a full understanding of the facts and factors in their given issue can be an educational experience. Teach-ins were often held during the Vietnam War to give students and community people a worldview they might not have gained in history classes. Through the media coverage of various actions, people can become more aware of the political implications of their movement work. Also, participation in direct action may put people in contact with the police, jails and courts in a new way or for the first time, which is also a learning experience. Sampson (1967), a professor at Berkeley, makes this comment:

Participation appears to provide an excellent training ground for the study of the law and the politics of power. I never cease to be amazed by the legal and political sophistication of many of the students who have been active on the Berkeley scene... (p. 32)

Solomon and Fishman make the same observation of their interviewees from the civil rights movement.

Increased concern with social issues. (Nahkre, 1982; Frank and Nash, 1965; Janis and Katz, 1959; Solomon and Fishman, 1963, 1964) This increased political sophistication may lead activists to a clearer understanding of and identification with other social struggles going on throughout the country and the world. Or it may be that once the first step is taken towards action, it is easier to make
more steps into other areas of concern. In any event, research shows that activism in the peace and civil rights movements spreads to other areas. Frank and Nash (1965) found that 86% of the peace activists studied reported their involvement in peace activity led to an increased concern with race relations, poverty, overpopulation and other issues of human welfare. Solomon and Fishman (1964) write,

Young people are now willing to picket and take risks in acting upon a host of political and social questions which in the 1950's had been largely ignored by American undergraduates. Students now report "wanting to do something" personally about not only segregation, but also such issues as the threat of nuclear war, problems of underdeveloped [sic] countries, the condition of hospitalized mental patients, and the fates of various political candidates and programs. (p. 92)

Positive effects on spirituality and morality

Though there is less research in this realm, it seems that activism can enhance one's spiritual and moral sense of well being. This can act as a factor which sustains activism in the face of hard times.

A general optimism about people. (Shuttlesworth in Deming, 1971, Baez in Charny, 1978) Earlier, a quote from Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth referred to unexpected self discovery which occurred through activism. Joan Baez also comments on the fact that she keeps seeing changes in people, including herself, that she didn't think possible. In response to the question of what keeps her going, she
replied, "I've never in my travels met a person who didn't want to live and be loved by other people... that's the force I try to work with" (Charny, 1978, p. 143).

**Being part of a moral vanguard.** (Solomon and Fishman, 1964) In their stronger moments, activists are convinced that nothing can stop their cause. The feeling is partly derived from their certainty of the moral rightness of their cause and partly from their confidence in the moral superiority of their method. This sense both heightens their resolve and undermines that of the opposition. Activists feel they are the conscience of the community, taking on the work the community is reluctant to do. Some of the black sit-in members thought of themselves as more Christian than the white community of the South, and more in accord with the highest principles of United States democracy. This can help offset traditional feelings of racial inferiority.

**Increased sense of meaning and significance.**
(Kenniston, 1968; Solomon and Fishman, 1963) Beyond basic self esteem, activism can bring a deeper richness to one's life - a sense of importance and significance that brings a greater sense of meaning. A lot of gratification is derived from this dedicated work. There are those who feel "driven" or "chosen" for such work with little choice. This is illustrated by Eleanora Patterson (1982) when she says,

Another source I draw upon when I wonder whether to act on behalf of mutual respect is the phrase, "What else is there to be doing?" I have an image of Holly
Near standing tall and speaking this phrase in a warm, exultant voice. She shared this as a response to her question, "Why struggle against such formidable odds?" (p. 173)

Negative effects on self and emotions

*Increased negative emotions.* (Coles, 1964; Kenniston, 1968; Watkins, 1984; Solomon and Fishman 1964) While all the aforementioned positive effects of nonviolent direct action are valid, they do not present the whole picture. Just as important are the costs to activists, which are less frequently researched. Most common among the difficulties are symptoms of depression and weariness, loss of hope for victory, loss of sense of purpose, feelings of inadequacy and social withdrawal, with physical manifestations such as headaches, loss of appetite, allergies, turning to alcohol, etc. One reasonable explanation for these feelings is the continual confrontation of limits and failures in fighting large, complex political problems. One activist says others must learn to tolerate the image of themselves as failures; that despite long work the issues one struggles against are too often still present at one's death. Those who stay in the movement for a significant period of time taste its less than flashy elements - the hard, grinding, daily demands which are not always relieved by spectacular successes. There may emerge a growing concern over personal issues that are being ignored, such as family needs or career directions.
Activists may resign themselves to feelings of powerlessness and drop out of the movement.

Repressed frustration, fear and rage. (Nahkre, 1982; Wehr, 1968; Kenniston, 1968; Poussaint, 1966; Janis and Katz, 1959) Another related effect is one that some researchers find directly results from the demands of nonviolent methods. The pressure to act out of love for the opponent, to not retaliate, can lead to a buildup of anger that is detrimental to the activist. Poussaint, a black psychiatrist treating civil rights workers in the 60's shares this experience.

I remember treating Negro workers after they had been beaten viciously by white toughs or policemen while conducting civil rights demonstrations. I would frequently comment, "You must feel pretty angry getting beaten up like that by those bigots." Often I received a reply such as, "No, I don't hate those white men, I love them because they must really be suffering with all that hatred in their souls. Dr. King says the only way we can win our freedom is through love. Anger and hatred has never solved anything."

I used to sit there and wonder, "Now, what do they really do with their rage?" (Matusow, 1966, p. 149)

Negative effects on relations with others

Intragroup fighting. (Kenniston, 1968; Poussaint, 1966) One answer to the above question is that activists vent their mounting rage against each other. Poussaint again, comments.

While they were talking about being nonviolent and "loving" the sheriff that just hit them over the head, they rampaged around the project houses beating up each other. I frequently had to calm Negro civil rights workers with large doses of tranquilizers for what I can describe clinically only as acute attacks
Kenniston also comments that intragroup tensions and conflicts arise from working together so intensely on social issues. Some of those hostilities get played out along sexual and racial lines. Whites in CORE found themselves mistrusted, provoked and excluded at times; white women in particular experienced a lot of bitterness and hostility. Women in peace groups have often had to battle extreme sexism and sexual harassment within their ranks, and many have chosen to work in all women’s groups, where they encounter a different set of intragroup issues around class, race or sexual identity.

Negative effects on the activist in society

**Increased estrangement from the mainstream.** (Bell, 1968; Kenniston, 1968; Frank and Nash, 1965) It was previously noted that activists often take on the issues and work that others in society are unable or unwilling to do. One consequence is a widening gap that may arise between activists and their families, coworkers or peers, who may be baffled by or critical of their activities. This problem may be dealt with by forming new associations with like-minded others, which is certainly helpful. However, the individual may still experience a feeling of acceptance and "at homeness" only within the group, and be unable to adapt well
to other settings. In more extreme cases, activists have been totally ostracized or disowned by their families for their activities.

A reinforcing of national stereotypes. (Bell, 1968; Wehr, 1968) Most theorists describe nonviolent direct action as a method of strength, requiring more than just retaliating violence with violence. Particularly for oppressed groups, the criticism has been made that nonviolent tactics feed into stereotypical behaviors which contribute to keeping a group in a one-down position. In analyzing the weakness of the nonviolent commitment, Bell (1968) states that nonviolence is of more appeal to those who are ambivalent about equality - that it apologizes for direct action and is used by many who are too weak to use violence. In her view, the Black Panthers more accurately reflected the United States definition of "manhood." Wehr (1968) agrees that what he calls "benevolent nonviolence" is more acceptable to the oppressor, but not good for protestors, because it feeds into the subordinate behaviors of passivity and letting oneself be abused, smiling all the while. Many women in the peace movement have this same concern about nonviolence - that perhaps it is good for men to learn to contain their anger, to be more nurturing of opponents, but women need to unlearn those behaviors.
Turning to violence. (King, 1982; Kenniston, 1968; Bell, 1968; VonEschen, 1971) In the context of nonviolent philosophy, resorting to violence is viewed as an undesirable and negative thing. In a broader context it does not necessarily have such a negative value. The fact is that a number of historical and social researchers find that the accumulated rage, frustration, depression, alienation and reinforcement of stereotyped behaviors can result in those who were previously committed to nonviolence turning towards more violent and disruptive means of social change. These intrapersonal factors do not emerge in a vacuum; King and others place more blame on the oppressive society for encouraging the use of violence. In discussing Stokely Carmichael, King says his turn from philosophical nonviolence was no surprise - Carmichael was affected by the unfulfilled white promises and continued violence by whites. King sees that disappointment breeds despair, leading to bitterness and then blindness. Others would say the activists reach a point where they can no longer continue to ask for concessions - the time comes to just take them.

Table 6 summarizes the effects of nonviolence discussed in this section.
### TABLE 6: RESEARCHED EFFECTS OF NONVIOLENCE ON ACTIVISTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITIVE</th>
<th>NEGATIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SELF AND EMOTIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>SELF AND EMOTIONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased self esteem</td>
<td>Cynicism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased group identity</td>
<td>Weariness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased fearlessness</td>
<td>Despair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructive channeling of anger</td>
<td>Repressed frustration/rage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotions</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>RELATIONS WITH OTHERS</th>
<th>RELATIONS WITH OTHERS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changed relations to authority</td>
<td>Intragroup fighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased intragroup unity</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATIONS IN SOCIETY</th>
<th>RELATIONS IN SOCIETY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less criminal activity</td>
<td>Stereotypical behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater political sophistication</td>
<td>Increased estrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More concern with social issues</td>
<td>Turning to violence</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPIRITUALITY/MORALITY</th>
<th>SPIRITUALITY/MORALITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General optimism about people</td>
<td>Loss of meaning/direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being part of a moral vanguard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of meaning/significance</td>
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**The Philosophy and Strategy of Nonviolence**

**The activists' self and emotions**

Nonviolent action has been used by a number of oppressed groups in the United States in the struggle for their liberation; Blacks, union workers, women and migrant farm workers among others. Many common themes emerge between the
theory and practice of nonviolence and the theory and practice of liberation from oppression.

Most of the positive effects of activism on the self imply that activists may have felt disempowered, fearful, angry or lacking in self respect prior to their activism. One result of oppression is that the oppressed internalize the negative attitudes the oppressors hold about them, and thus contribute to their oppression by doing the oppressors' work for them.

It might be said that nonviolent activism offers a forum for the oppressed to become more empowered and to have their consciousness raised, or at least to express themselves if they are already empowered and conscious. This analysis can hold both for blacks in the racist United States culture, and people who feel helpless to affect the militarism which is so institutionalized here.

Portrait of the oppressed. In simplistic terms, an oppressed person or group lacks power - personal, economic or political. All societal institutions, i.e. education, religion and government work together to reinforce that condition of powerlessness. Memmi (1965) describes the oppressed, or colonized, as "out of the game"; they have forgotten how to participate actively in history and no longer even ask to do so. Memories of freedom are distant; the oppressed hesitate before taking destiny into their own
hands, and no longer feel like citizens. In fact, they are not treated as citizens, so why should they? Goldenberg (1978) notes that the oppressed cannot succeed or fail in life, but can only survive. Any resistance attempted by them is named by the oppressor as a demand for excessive amounts of power. So, they learn not to resist, but to conform and submit to others, and to hate themselves. Gandhi found that the basic obstacle he encountered while trying to mobilize the masses was their feeling of powerlessness, uselessness and insignificance - the lack of personal identity. Memmi describes this condition of the oppressed person, saying "Worse than physical damage, worse than beatings, than professional exclusion, worse even than death is his spiritual ruin, wherein he consents to his own abasement" (p. 20). Muste has also commented on this dynamic as it relates to militarism.

For it becomes daily clearer that political and military leaders pay virtually no attention to protests against current foreign policy and pleas for peace when they know perfectly well that when it comes to a showdown, all but a handful of the millions of protesters will so much as risk their jobs in the cause of "peace"...Why should they think there is any reality, hope or salvation in peace advocates who, when the moment of decision comes, also act on the assumption that they "have no choice" but to conform? (Lynd, 1966, pp. 334-335)

Goldenberg describes oppression as addictive and cumulative in nature, as well as being transferable over time and across generations.
Options of the oppressed. Faced with these restrictive social conditions, a number of life choices are open to the oppressed person. These fall into three basic categories of assimilation, withdrawal or activism.

Assimilation. Based on the rejection of self and love of the other, the oppressed can try to leave their own group and enter the world of the oppressors by becoming more like them. This may take the form of escaping from one's identity by passing, changing one's appearance to seem more like the oppressor (i.e. hair straightening or nose fixing) or opting to work for a defense contractor to make money. It may also involve becoming tokens in the oppressive institutions, and generally disassociating from one's peer group.

Withdrawal. After years of frustration and discouragement, some may give up trying to "make it" in the existing society. Social withdrawal can take the form of addiction to drugs or alcohol, criminal behavior against the oppressor group or against one's own group. The withdrawal might also be psychological, leading to apathy, depression or mental illness. Of course these behaviors are then seen by the oppressors as further evidence of the unfitness and inferiority of the oppressed group members.

Contraversion. Another option available is what Adam (1978) calls contraversion, or actively working to change the existing system. Some theorists claim that violence is the
ultimate path to liberation for the oppressed; others say that nonviolent means are also possible. Memmi (1965) states "Assimilation being abandoned, the colonized's liberation must be carried out through a recovery of self and of autonomous dignity" (p. 128).

The practice of nonviolence is available to everyone. It doesn't depend on the possession or control of certain tools, weapons or specialized knowledge. It is not attached to any particular "ism" or issue, and can be applied to any struggle. Everyone has personal power, even if only to noncooperate with the existing system; empowerment is the process whereby people realize that personal power. Muste emphasizes the power of the individual in changing social systems when he says, "The resister must assert humanity, exercise choice, and understand that this naked human being is the one real thing in the face of the mechanics and the mechanized institutions of our age" (Lynd, 1966 p. 339). Similarly, Thoreau (1849) thinks that governments should be encouraging of and grateful for resisters, who help point out faults and demand improvements. He says, "There will never be a really free and enlightened state, until the state comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly" (p. 240).
The nonviolent path to liberation

Develop a sense of morality. In conscientious nonviolence, it is essential that the activist develop a spiritual or moral sense from which all action springs. Within traditional religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Quakerism there is a concept of obeying a "higher law" or morality (God) that supercedes person made laws. Even if no formal religion is involved, a personal sense of justice, faith, humility, hope and love are the kinds of qualities required for nonviolent action. Then, the task is to be true to yourself in carrying out those principles. As Baez explains, "Obviously you can never be certain of the response to any action you take. All you can do, therefore, is to be consistent with your own beliefs; and if that leads to death or imprisonment, at least you won't have broken faith with yourself" (Charny, 1978, p. 129).

Rustin has formulated a set of questions which he suggests each person ask him or herself prior to participating in any act of civil disobedience.

1. Am I trying to break the law, or to adhere to a higher principle in the hope that the law will change and a new one will emerge based on the higher principle?

2. Have I tried the constitutional means available to me before breaking the law?

3. Have I removed my ego as much as possible to do this? Am I sure I’m not doing it to get my picture in the paper, because I’m mad at society, because my mother doesn’t want me to?
4. Do the people I ask to rebel feel wronged - do I help surface feelings they haven't dared to express?

5. Am I prepared to cheerfully accept the consequences of my acts?

6. Am I trying to bring about a new social order?

7. Would the world be a better place if everyone did this? (And a corollary in Wally Nelson's words- Would I be doing this even if no one else in the world were?) (Freeman, 1965, p. 11)

In philosophical nonviolence, there is a belief that acting from a base of morality or truth automatically results in challenging others who are not acting consistently with that morality. There is a strong belief that societal change can occur through such individual action, and that the existing system needs such individual challenges. As Dante warns, "The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who in a moment of moral crisis seek to maintain their neutrality."

**Self esteem.** In order for the oppressed to take even these first steps they need to begin to develop some self esteem. Stated by King,

> With a spirit straining toward true self esteem, the Negro must boldly throw off the manacles of self-abnegation and say to himself and the world: "I am somebody. I am a person. I am a man with dignity and honor." Psychological freedom, a firm sense of self esteem is the most powerful weapon against the long night of physical slavery. (Naess, 1974, p. 109)

Freire (1970) notes that when the oppressed become involved in the struggle for liberation, they begin to
believe in themselves. Self esteem is therefore both a requirement for and a consequence of taking action. In the strategic approach to nonviolence, the concern is not only to be a moral person, but to act with self respect and dignity to ensure that the activist is not wronged by others. Farmer (1965) makes this case for self determination.

Men must act on their own behalf; they must aim to move the world and sense its movement under their impact. They must speak as well as act and they must speak with their own voice. Is it hoarse sometimes with frustration and anger? That is our voice. Very well. We must love ourselves first. (p. 80)

**Dealing with fear and anger.** According to Jackson's stage theory of black identity development (1976), when the oppressed reach the stage of active resistance, they begin to realize the anger, pain, hurt and rage they feel about their oppression. Nonviolence theory suggests ways of handling the fear and anger that will not result in a withdrawal from activism or in a turn to violent action. Because fear plays an important role in maintaining oppressive regimes, nonviolent participants are encouraged to overcome the fears of acting independently, of suffering, or of physical death which can arise in the course of being active. This is not to say one can't feel fear - just that the fear shouldn't become paralyzing, or get in the way of taking action.

Contrary to what many believe, nonviolent behavior does not require that one never get angry. The essential issue is what one does with that anger. Most eloquent on the subject
is Deming (1974) in her essay "On Anger." She wisely notes that "It is, of course, precisely when some real hope is born at last, when a movement for change begins to gain momentum, that anger pushes up - and has to be contended with" (p. 48). She sees that our task is to transform that anger into a determination to bring about change. She says, "I think, in fact, that one could give that as a definition of revolution" (p. 45). This requires that activists, especially pacifists, begin to face and discover the murderers in themselves, and Deming suggests that we all start with "our own most seemingly personal angers in their raw state" (p. 51).

King also recognized the value of anger that "fueled Negro resistance, anger that helped black people overcome lifetime habits of shame and servility and start fighting for their rights" (Oates, 1982, p. 282). However, he also distinguishes between hateful anger and "disciplined nonviolent anger - creative dissatisfaction."

There is a recognition that anger can be both a powerful destructive and constructive force in action. The work of the activist lies in directing anger towards positive societal change efforts, taking control of the anger. Otherwise, self destruction or violence towards others could result.

In summary, the essential message of nonviolence as it concerns the self is that one must take action in order to
transcend an oppressed position. That can require self reflection, developing a "code of ethics" for action, gaining self respect and harnessing fear and anger. These norms correspond to the researched effects of nonviolence on self esteem, empowerment, fearlessness, positive emotions and constructive chanelling of anger.

The activist and others

The vast majority of the literature on nonviolence focuses on interactions between the activist and his/her opponent. There is surprisingly little commentary on how to develop positive relationships between activists until the mid to late 1970's, when group process became more prominent as a concern. Before that, there was only an occasional reference to the need for intragroup unity among activists, to be accomplished by such means as singing, dance, meditation, prayer and telling stories of other activists. More recent literature has begun to address consensus decision making, coalition building, conflict resolution and so on. This change may reflect the shift in nonviolent practice from individual to group action in this country. However, since this study involves the period 1943-1968, the existing norms are described as they were at that time.

Among both strategic and philosophical nonviolent activists, there seems to be an agreement that in some way
both the oppressed and the oppressors are victims in the existing system; both are entrapped in a set of relationships that violate the submerged better instincts of everyone. However, there is a difference in the view of whose responsibility it is to liberate the oppressor. Although he is not an explicit adherent of nonviolence, Freire (1970) articulates one viewpoint.

Because it is a distortion of being more fully human, sooner or later being less human leads the oppressed to struggle against those who have made them so. In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity, become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather restorers of the humanity of both. This, then, is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed; to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well. (p. 28)

In the mid 60's and 70's, more activists began to feel that it was the historical task of the oppressors to liberate themselves and each other. Whites were pushed to work on white racism, men to deal with sexism in other men. This change is more consistent with strategic activists, concerned with group identity and not being wronged by others. As a byproduct of this change in focus, more intragroup conflict arose in many organizations.

Fight antagonisms, not antagonists. Repeatedly in nonviolence literature the stress is on fighting evil forces, not individual evildoers. Opponents are to be treated with love and respect rather than hatred. King called this "Agape love," a disinterested love for all humankind, which was
unlike romantic or friendly love. This notion is discussed in Jewish and Christian theology as "hating the sin but loving the sinner," or "greeting evil and wicked people and inquiring after their welfare." Tensions do not exist between individuals, but between justice and injustice. King explains the mandate given to nonviolent activists following this ideal.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you. If we fail to do this our protest will end up as a meaningless drama on the stage of history and its memory will be shrouded with the ugly garments of shame. In spite of the mistreatment that we have confronted we must not become bitter, and end up by hating our white brothers. If we protest courageously, and yet with dignity and Christian love, when the history books are written in the future, somebody will have to say "There lived a race of people, of black people, of people who had the moral courage to stand up for their rights. And thereby they injected a new meaning into the veins of history and civilization. (Oates, 1982, p. 71)

Activists are encouraged to seek out the best in their opponents and to evoke those more positive elements.

In the behavioral guidelines for civil disobedience actions, this concept is expressed in terms like approaching opponents with an attitude of openness and respect, initiating contact, trusting, and being willing to learn from them. This behavior can lead to that sense of moral superiority, a sense that the activist is saving humanity and showing others the way. It also led some to be critical of nonviolence because of the ways it looked like stereotypical
subordinate behavior on the part of oppressed people.

**Non-injury.** Conscientious nonviolence puts a priority on avoiding injury to opponents in thought, word and deed. Stated by King, "To meet hate with retaliatory hate would do nothing but intensify the existence of evil in the universe. Hate begets hate, violence begets violence; toughness begets a greater toughness. We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love; we must meet physical force with soul force" (Oates, 1982, p. 79).

One must not cooperate with evil, but do it in such a way that leaves the evildoer a whole person. Deming calls it having two hands on the oppressor; one hand taking from him what is not his due, the other slowly calming him as we do this. This quote from a poem by Cavanaugh exemplifies the approach.

I am a dangerous woman
Because I will say all of this
Lying neither to you nor with you.
I am a dangerous woman because
I won't give up or shut up
Or put up with your version of reality.
You have conspired to sell my life quite cheaply.
And I am especially dangerous
Because I will never forgive nor forget
Or ever conspire
To sell your life in return. (McAllister, 1982, p.4)

Guidelines for civil disobedience actions suggest the following ways of carrying out this idea; no verbal abuse of opponents, no property destruction, and no exploitation of an opponents' weaknesses. Generally this injury includes
physical or emotional injury but allows economic injury caused by boycotts and strikes.

The flip side to this concern for not injuring others is the concern for not being injured, part of the strategic approach. Jackson (1976) says that in the stage of redefinition/redirection, the oppressed are able to react to the oppressor without being compromised or violated; that is of greater concern to some activists. The negative effect of following the non-injury norm is that repressed feelings of frustration and rage may have no means of expression if retaliation is not allowed.

**Undergoing suffering.** Not only must activists refrain from injuring others - in conscientious nonviolence they must be willing to undergo suffering rather than inflict it. Gandhi says, "Rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood" (Oates, p. 79). A common theme is that it is better to suffer death, jail or beatings than to give in to the oppression by obeying an immoral law, being fearful and retreating, or letting the rage go and attacking. This suffering strengthens the moral character and resolve of the activist, but also helps the cause by creating more sympathy. Deming (1974) thinks that the willingness to suffer provokes more and more thoughts on the part of opponents and onlookers, and the actions of those in power appear to them not only less justified, but also less and less in their interest. They begin to withdraw their approval and
their cooperation. As a result, the amount of violence that can be mounted against us diminishes. The assaults, upon us - instead of escalating, as in conventional battle - gradually de-escalate. (p. 12)

Deming is describing one process by which people can be converted to the side of the activist. This suffering can relate to the feeling of being part of a moral vanguard, one of the researched effects on activists. Non-injury and a willingness to undergo suffering provide standards by which conscientious activists can answer the question, "Have I behaved well?" which is their measure of effectiveness.

Nonviolent strategists think that appeals to reason and decency can have little effect without more tangible economic or political pressures. Farmer (1965) notes that "A hundred years of lobbying and legal suits did not achieve what the masses achieved in the streets with their demonstrations" (p. 41). Zinn (1964) speaks to the need for change through coercion rather than conversion.

It has become quite clear that the desegregation of restaurants and other public accommodations usually comes from touching the proprietor's pocketbook, not his conscience. An argument could be made that sit-ins, boycotts, etc. appeal to the conscience of the public, and that this has an effect on the situation. Still, it seems in most cases to be pressure, rather than love that opens a public facility to Negroes. True, this is not violence, but we seem here to be operating in that large middle ground between pure force and pure moral appeal, and this is the real meaning of nonviolent direct action for the Civil Rights movement. (p. 222)

Since effectiveness is measured by answering the question, "Have conditions changed?" this analysis makes more sense in
the strategic framework than in philosophical nonviolence. Some people can only take voluntary suffering for so long. The trend towards a stance of violence in cases of self defense was in some way a reaction against this norm of nonviolence. By 1966, CORE, SNCC and the Black Panthers were saying "We are willing to remain nonviolent, but if you [police, whites] start attacking, we will have to defend ourselves." In their view, it was better to react and maintain pride than to suffer death, jail and beatings at the hands of their oppressors.

Overall, the literature indicates more negative than positive effects resulting from activists trying to conform to nonviolent norms about interactions with their adversaries.

The activist in society

An essential element of conscientious nonviolence is that the means of the struggle should reflect the ends that are being sought. In Gandhi’s words (1961), “The means may be likened to a seed; the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. We reap exactly what we sow” (p. 10). One interpretation of this message is that in order to create a peaceful and just society we must use peaceful and just methods. It also implies creating the
new or desired society while we change the old. Again, there are aspects of Jewish and Christian theology which support this view; beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks, or mirroring Christ’s life by doing community work for the disenfranchised. Basically, one uses nonviolence because it is the right thing to do for moral reasons.

Nonviolent strategists may be using nonviolence for different reasons; because it is less risky and dangerous than violence, because there are fewer casualties with nonviolence, or perhaps it has been seen to make changes. Zinn (1964) warns of having an all embracing view of nonviolence.

We cannot always have both peace and justice. To insist on perfect tranquility with an absolute rejection of violence may mean surrendering the right to change an unjust social order. On the other hand, to seek justice at any cost may result in bloodshed so great that its evil overshadows everything else and splatters the goal beyond recognition. The problem is to weigh carefully the alternatives, so as to achieve the maximum of social progress with a minimum of pain. (p. 223)

This again reflects the different measures of effectiveness, behaving well versus changing existing conditions. Whatever the perspective, the following ways of manifesting nonviolence are common to many nonviolent campaigns.

Know the relevant facts. Gandhi advises all activists in a campaign to have a thorough understanding of the relevant issues in the campaign, both to know why they are
acting and to be able to have discussions with the public.
Freire (1970) says that to no longer be prey to the force of
oppression one must emerge from it and turn upon it by means
of reflection and action. The desire to openly question
individual and institutional oppression in order to better
understand it is a common behavior seen in the stage of
active resistance, according to Jackson (1976). What this
means is the activist may spend time studying or discussing
the factors of the campaign issues in an effort to be better
informed. This can account for some of the increased
political sophistication noted in civil rights and peace
activists by researchers.

Democratic process. Within many activist groups,
working in a non-hierarchical consensual way reflects
nonviolent ideology. According to Bruyn and Rayman (1979),
"The point of radical nonviolence is to create the conditions
that would liberate and free people to exercise their own
independent will and judgement. The aim was to end the
systems of domination and release the deeper energies of
self-governance" (p. 20). Such a process can include
rotating or sharing leadership, consensus decision making and
a division of labor that avoids oppressive stereotypes. For
some this could lead to a sense of empowerment and to greater
feelings of intragroup unity.

Within the civil rights movement, there was tension
between SNCC and SCLC because SNCC believed in more democratic leadership. Ella Baker, the first head of SNCC has this to say about her early experiences in SCLC: "I set up the office of the SCLC in 1958, but you didn’t see me on television, you didn’t see news stories about me. The kind of role that I tried to play was to pick up pieces or put together pieces out of which I hoped organization might come. My theory is strong people don’t need strong leaders" (Cantarow, 1982, p. 53).

**Non-secrecy.** Being totally open about plans for nonviolent actions is a value stressed by Gandhi (1961). He says,

> No secret organization, however big, could do any good. Secrecy aims at building a wall of protection around you. We have to organize for action a vast people that have been crushed under the heel of unspeakable tyranny for centuries. They cannot be organized by any other than open truthful means. I have grown up from youth to 76 years in abhorrence of secrecy. (p. 379-380)

Not only is secrecy seen as bad for the activist, it is seen as undermining public credibility and support. Many campaigns have advertised their plans for legal and illegal actions, and nonviolent organizers have even trained police in nonviolent tactics and how to deal with nonviolent demonstrators at a given action. This could increase the chances of a given action remaining peaceful.

**Constructive work.** Another important element of nonviolence is the necessity of doing some kind of
constructive work in the community as part of a campaign. In addition to being seen as good for the activist, Naess (1974) explains the impact of this work on others.

In the eyes of the opponent, the revolutionary seems mainly to have destruction in view. Gandhi requires methods whereby the constructive intent is made completely clear and trustworthy to the skeptical opponent. One may say that the norm to partake in a constructive program is the supreme anti-antimovement norm in the system; those tendencies which are present in organizations or groups favoring destruction of something are denounced; every action should have a clear positive, a pro-character. (p. 148-149)

As Freire (1970) says, constructive work enables hands which were extended in supplication to be transformed into hands which work to transform the world.

Sometimes the work takes the form of seeking to eliminate other forms of oppression and actively participating in the community. Jackson (1976) cites those behaviors as common to people in the last stage of development about their oppression. The work one does might depend on the goals of the campaign. For example, the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project in 1964 brought northern students to the south to help people register to vote when increased political power was a goal of the movement. Tax resisters often donate money to organizations they would like to see their tax money going to instead of defense spending, such as day care centers or battered women's shelters. In other contexts, this work could include construction of
housing, organizing literacy campaigns, starting community
gardens or putting together an arts festival.

This constructive work might result in activists’
increasing self esteem or becoming concerned with a variety
of social issues. At the same time, it might lead some to
despair and depression, because they would be confronted with
the enormity of their task of large scale social change.
However, as Gandhi (1961) says, “Many reforms would be
effected automatically if we put in a good deal of silent
work among the people” (p. 68).

The activist and spirituality

Nonviolence is not connected to any particular religion,
and has in fact been used by religious leaders all over the
world who found its principles consistent with their own.

Spirituality seems to have a twofold connection to
nonviolence. One is it can be a motivator to action for
people who have strong religious values and want to work for
justice in a just way. The other is that it can be a
sustainer of action in the face of despair or frustration.
Spirituality does not only refer to organized religion here,
but to whatever a given person has created for themselves in
that vein. As Gandhi says, "Believe in some principle and
clothe it with life - say it is your God and you believe in
it - I should think it is enough" (Naess, 1974 p. 23). For
instance, here is Muste's sense of spirituality about civil disobedience.

Non-conformity, Holy Disobedience, becomes a virtue and indeed a necessary and indispensable measure of spiritual self-preservation, in a day when the impulse to conform, to acquiesce, to go along, is the instrument which is used to subject men to totalitarian rule and involve them in permanent war. (Lynd, 1966, p. 334)

Whatever the form, Memmi (1965) sees religion as an important force in the process of liberation, especially for those not using violent means, as a source of strength. "At the thought of the revolt he must undertake, in the face of so powerful an enemy, how otherwise will he not feel spiritually as naked and vulnerable as he is physically, with no weapons in his hands?" (p. 14). He also notes that religion can be a place of group communion and unity during a struggle.

Throughout the previous sections mention was made to theologies in Judaism and Christianity which reinforce the values of nonviolence. Another example comes from the cultural heritage of Judaism, which encourages Jews to work for justice for others. Bell (1968) quotes from her interview with a Jewish member of CORE during the 60's.

If you want to understand the moral sense that comes out of Judaism, you should read the Haggada Service for Passover. It's all there very explicitly in the ritual. It talks about the Jews being freed from slavery in Egypt and that they have an obligation because they have been freed...you naturally derive from it a sense of identity with the persons who were slaves and a feeling of obligation to follow it up because God had set you free. (p. 149)
So, dependent upon the activist's experiences with religion, their activism could be enhanced by spirituality, or their spirituality enhanced by their activism. For others, there may be negative effects, or none at all.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Overview

The purpose of this study was to describe the positive and negative effects of nonviolent activism for social change on activists. Within that context, related questions of interest included the influence of social background (age, race, sex) on the form and meaning of activism, factors which help to sustain activism, and the dynamics of nonviolence as a creed versus nonviolence as a tactic. The civil rights and peace movements in the United States from 1943 to the present provided the data for the study.

The literature review and study questions resulted in the formation of a coding system for analyzing data. Twenty-two documents of activists, including interviews, short articles, books and a biography were coded using this coding system.

Based on the information gathered to that point, an interview guide was designed and nine activists from the Western Massachusetts area were interviewed about their experiences. These interviews were transcribed and coded using the same coding system as with the documents. All the
data was combined in files for each code number or topic in order to be analyzed for patterns and themes.

This chapter explains qualitative design theory, then details the processes of participant selection, data gathering for the documentary and interview studies, coding, and data analysis.

**Design Theory**

As Oakely (1981) states, all research is political in nature, from the interpersonal relationships involved to the university and government departments for whom the research is being done. It is therefore important for the researcher to consider the consequences of all choices concerning the research, including what to study, for whom and in what way.

This study is qualitative rather than quantitative in method. Patton (1980) outlines the differences between the two methods, and describes the qualitative design as evolving, flexible and general. The goals of research are to develop sensitizing concepts around a given topic, to develop understanding and to ground theory in some concrete reality. Descriptive data emerge rather than statistics. As Goode and Hatt state (1952), the application of mathematics to sociology does not ensure rigor of proof any more than the use of insight guarantees the significance of the research.
The important questions, no matter what the method, are how precise are the observations, can others repeat them and does the data actually demonstrate the conclusions. Sellitz (1976) notes that many subjects of great import are not subject to true or quasi-experimentation, i.e. what factors lead to racism, revolution or mental illness. Qualitative research is concerned with process, not just outcomes and products.

Sellitz goes on to describe qualitative methods which help the search for important variables and meaningful hypotheses. These are; a review of the existing literature, a survey of people who have had practical experience with the problem being studied and the analysis of "insight stimulating" examples of the issue under study. The variables are studies as they exist in natural settings, and causal inferences are drawn from this non-experimental data.

Patton (1980) refers to a process called purposeful sampling, used to understand select cases but not necessarily generalizable to all cases. Similar to Sellitz' "insight stimulating" examples of the issue under study, Patton suggests looking at critical cases which can make a point quite dramatically, or are, for some reason, particularly important to the scheme of things. Maximizing variation in site and case selection helps the study to be more representative. The cases in this study were taken from two
major political movements in the United States during this century; the civil rights movement and the peace movement.

Because both movements have long and complex histories, an overview of each was included in the literature review. Within the movements there are several phases, each with its own unique combination of social, economic, historic and political variables. Therefore, activists from different phases may report different experiences. A time limited period from each movement was selected for the documentary study, which was the twenty-five year period from 1943-1968. The people interviewed were active during that time period or since then, up to the present. This made it possible to compare experiences of past and current activists, and to get a longer range perspective from those who had been active 20 years earlier.

Criteria for Selection of Participants

This study sought to understand not only leaders, but the "everyday people" who have made up the majority of the civil rights and peace movements. Beyond participation in at least one of the two movements being studied, the criteria for selection of activists were as follows:

1. They must have participated in some project or campaign for at least three consecutive months within that movement. This helped to ensure a certain degree of familiarity with and exposure to nonviolent theory and practice.
2. They must have had experience in at least three of the many methods of nonviolent direct action, which include: marches, boycotts, pickets, demonstrations, vigils, sit-ins, blockades or noncooperation with laws, i.e. draft or tax resistance. At least one of those experiences should involve confrontation with the law; police, courts or jail. This screened out the peripherally involved people, and required a truer test of nonviolence in action. These cases refer back to Patton’s suggestion of examining critical cases which dramatically illustrate the points of study.

3. The participants must have addressed the topic of this study in their writings, or in the case of interviews, have been willing to address the personal aspects of their experiences with nonviolent action.

The demographic data about study subjects is shown in Appendix A.

**Documentary Studies**

During the literature review, a list was compiled of activists in the peace and civil rights movements who had written about their experiences, or who had been written about in detail by others. Of the available authors, 22 were randomly selected for the documentary study. Some were active in civil rights, some in the peace movement and some in both movements. An effort was made to select as diverse a group as possible along such characteristics as age, sex and race. People were only rejected if they did not address the dissertation topic in their writings. The documentary sources are listed in Table 7.
TABLE 7: SOURCES FOR DOCUMENTARY STUDIES

Interviews by Others


Articles/Books


2. Marion Bromley. "Feminism and Nonviolent Revolution" in


Biography


Ten cases were transcripts of interviews done by others, 11 were from articles or books written by the activists about their experiences and one was a biography based on interviews of the subject’s friends, family and associates. These documents allow the researcher to see more than mere demographics; a picture is drawn of the subjects’ important
memories, feelings and insights which they want presented to the public. These documents aided in suggesting or verifying hypotheses about the two movements, and were coded according to the process detailed later in this chapter.

**Interviews**

Supplemental data came from individuals who were interviewed by the researcher. Again, a list was compiled of people primarily active in the Western Massachusetts area by Patton's (1980) "snowball" method of sampling; the researcher knew a number of possible interviewees, and got names of others from those people. From that list, ten were randomly selected with the same effort at achieving diversity. How people were contacted for interviews was dependent upon the interviewer's relationship with the ten activists. The four who were the most unfamiliar to the researcher were sent a letter (see Appendix B) explaining the research topic and inviting them to participate. This letter was followed up by a phone call within a week, and if they expressed an interest an appointment was set up for an interview. In one case the activist had moved to Florida for the winter, but the other three chose to become involved in the study.

Three people who were somewhat known to the researcher through political work in the past were simply called, and
once the study was explained they agreed to participate. The remaining three were asked to participate while socializing with the researcher, and all three were willing to be interviewed.

Interviews are as useful for research as documents, because people are in a uniquely favorable position to observe their own past and present behavior. The interviews were focused on the topic of research, but were unstructured enough for the interviewer to explore hypotheses and elucidate interviewee responses in a conversational process. The literature suggests that qualitative interviews work best when they are based on empathy and intense contact, emphasizing the subject as friend. Interviews also work well when the interviewer and interviewee are from similar social backgrounds. (Patton, 1980; Oakley, 1981) The fact that the researcher is an activist probably helped to gain the trust and cooperation of the interviewees.

An interview guide was developed based on the literature review and documentary studies. Some questions related to the table of effects on page 70 in order to confirm or contradict others' research on the effects of activism on activists. Since the documentary studies were limited to data offered in the literature, the interviews provided an opportunity for filling in gaps on any critical areas for which the documents offered no data. Because the documentary
studies were done first, recurrent patterns or themes that emerged could be pursued in more depth in the interviews. In this way, a greater breadth of information could be gathered from each interview subject than from any one documentary subject. (See Appendix C, where the interview guide is presented with questions marked as they related to the coding system.)

The first section of the interview guide focused on the interviewees' history of activism, their approach to nonviolence and their general sense of how and why they had changed as a result of their activism. The second section dealt with the specific effects documented in others' research. Rather than ask one question about each effect, related effects were combined into one question, such as asking about both positive and negative strongly felt emotions. The third section raised some of the secondary questions involved in the study and gave participants a chance to mention anything they hadn't been asked. The last section covered demographics, such as age, class background, religion, etc.

The researcher remained totally flexible in covering the questions in the guide. Some people took 45 minutes to answer the first question, and touched on many other questions in the process. Questions were asked in a different order depending upon where the interviewee went.
with his/her flow, and some questions were never asked if they had been sufficiently answered in another response. Finally, participants were allowed to wander quite a bit in order to establish trust, and to allow for the emergence of new ideas. This kind of focused interview has been used effectively in the past to develop ideas about attitude changes as a result of specific experiences, such as in the topic of this study.

Interviewees were apprised of the purpose of this study, and had the opportunity to ask questions. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality was ensured to all interviewees. All interviewees signed a consent form, which is shown in Appendix D. The data was available only to the researcher, and names of subjects were changed. Interviews lasted 1 1/2 to 3 hours, and were tape recorded and transcribed. The researcher transcribed all 9 interviews, and took the liberty of omitting material known to be irrelevant to the study, such as elaborate stories or details of family history. The interviews were then coded in a similar manner as the documents.

The Coding System and Process

The coding process followed the outline proposed by Goode and Hatt (1952). They suggest first clarifying what is
desired from the materials. In this case references were sought to the attitudes and behaviors of nonviolent activists concerning self and emotions, self in society, self and others and spirituality. An initial coding system was set up based on Table 6 (see p. 70) and the related study questions listed on pages 8 and 9 of this dissertation. Since everyone uses different words to describe their experiences, several verbal cues were given for each topic as examples to make the ideas more clear. Examples are included in the coding system on the following pages.

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TABLE 8: CODING SYSTEM

**Effects**

1. EMPOWERMENT: self expression; self-determination; personal power; making a difference

2. SELF-ESTEEM AND GROUP ID: pride; importance; feeling good about myself

3. FEARLESSNESS/FEARFULNESS: risk-taking; less afraid; sense of calm

4. ANGER: rage; frustration; channeling/outlet

5. POSITIVE EMOTIONS: satisfaction; elation; joy; enthusiasm

6. DECREASED SUBMISSIVENESS: not going along; non-cooperation; not giving in

7. INTRAGROUP UNITY: solidarity; intimacy; closeness; cooperation; beloved community

8. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY: crime; violence; stealing

9. POLITICAL SOPHISTICATION: understanding the world/legal/
political system; educational

10. CONCERN WITH SOCIAL ISSUES: all problems related; other people’s problems

11. OPTIMISM ABOUT PEOPLE: people basically good; human nature is positive

12. MORAL VANGUARD: God on our side; we’re right; showing others how to be

13. MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE: reasons for living; being "called" or "chosen" for work

14. NEGATIVE EMOTIONS: depression; cynicism; weariness; despair; hopelessness; failure; powerlessness; physical symptoms; withdrawal

15. REPRESSED RAGE: bottled up anger; not allowed to hate

16. INTRAGROUP FIGHTING: conflicts; tensions; power struggles; Black/White or Male/Female relations

17. ESTRANGEMENT: alienation; not fitting in; losing friends or family

18. NATIONAL STEREOTYPES: compliance; passivity; letting them beat us up

19. TURNING TO VIOLENCE: self-defense; couldn’t take it anymore; all they understand

20. SPIRITUALITY: turning to God; prayer; church; Judaism/Christianity

21. LIFESTYLE CHANGE: giving up privilege, less comfort

22. COMMUNISM: Reds; The Party

Related Questions

A. SOCIAL BACKGROUND: as a black/Jew/lesbian/gay/working class/man/woman, etc.

B. NONVIOLENT IDEAS OF IMPORTANCE: loving enemies; means and ends, etc.

C. SUSTAINERS: kept me going; role models; inspired

D. TACTIC: it works; ok for now; had no choice; societal analysis; coercion
Next, the existing information was studied carefully, and the coding system applied to the data. The articles, books or interview transcripts were read in detail, and each reference to one of the topics was marked with a number or letter which specified that topic. When new topics emerged because they were mentioned several times by activists (i.e. activists' relationship to Communism or lifestyle changes) new classes were added to the coding system. It was important to note which classes weren't referred to much, or just didn't seem to fit the data.

Thus, rather than collecting all the data then analyzing it, the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1967) was used. In this method, the collection, coding and initial analysis of data occur jointly, so the research process is being constantly refined.

In some cases, the coding was clear and the system worked well. For example, this quote from Anne Braden clearly fit into code #17 - estrangement from friends and family.

Then, when I was in my late teens and early twenties, I made up my mind on segregation - and after that, my parents and I could not communicate any more. This question has divided many Southern families, past and present, and it divided ours. At first we tried to discuss it, to argue our opposing views, but this
always resulted in a violent family argument. So we agreed to quit talking about it. When I went home for visits, we talked about other things. But when we agreed on this pact of silence, we closed the vital channels of communication between us.

Another example comes from a published interview with Wally Nelson. He is recounting his Civilian Public Service Camp experience to the interviewer, and touches on a subject that was coded with #6 - changed relations with authorities.

River Valley Voice: They already had you in jail.
Wally: That's right. They already had us in jail. So this began to get me to move a little further. See, when they decided that they had cancelled this conference, they sent out letters to people who had been given furloughs to attend, and cancelled all furloughs. So that was my first time writing back to them and saying, "Uh-oh, I'm goin' to this conference and to heck with you." That was my first time really saying to the government - I mean I said it to them - "This is it. I'm gonna do it, so forget it, I'm goin'."

Other applications of the coding system required more interpretation on the part of the researcher. For instance, the category of lifestyle change (#21) was added after reading the transcripts of interviews. Though no one used these words, the researcher looked for examples of comments concerning the giving up of privilege or old comforts and habits. For instance, one interviewee commented that he could not justify going to the movies with a friend because Nicaragua might collapse tomorrow, and that comment was coded as a lifestyle change. This quote from a black draft resister in jail was coded with #19 - turning to violence - though he never explicitly calls it that.
But here a dude can go off for some small reason—like a guy who's snapping his fingers to music on the radio in the next room. I've seen it happen. The tension. I've never been slugged since I've been here, but I've had to dig myself in to prevent my doing it to someone else. And this isn't me.

The codes that tended to require more interpretation included 20 (spirituality), 21 (lifestyle change), B (nonviolent ideas of importance), C (sustainers), D (tactic), E (creed), and F (other factors). These issues were less tangible, and respondents weren't likely to use these words in their comments.

There were faults in the coding system that could only be discovered in the course of applying it to the data. The distinction between some of the codes was too blurry in a few cases, so the data was lumped together. This was true of codes one and two (empowerment and self esteem), and 12 and 13 (being part of a moral vanguard and a sense of meaning and significance).

Some codes didn't work at all in this study, gathering little or no data. Numbers five and 11 (positive emotions and optimism about people) were probably too general and vague to have much meaning. Also, there was nothing available on codes eight or 18 (decrease in criminal activity and fitting into national stereotypes). The researcher decided this was because it would be unlikely for a person to describe him/herself as an ex-criminal or a stereotypical black/woman/Jew due to the negative connotations of those
terms. Therefore, such observations would be more likely to come from an outside person. In the context of this study these codes weren't useful because no data fit with them. This does not mean that those effects of nonviolent activism don't occur.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

After all the data was gathered and coded, file folders were made for each code. Copies were made of each quote with a given code, so all the comments on spirituality, for example, were filed together. Documentary and interview data were mixed together; although the quantity of data from the two sources was different, (there was more documentary data because there were more subjects) the quality was the same and responses seemed to be consistent regardless of source.

Next, all the comments in a folder, or code number, were read through to search for emergent patterns and themes; what were "typical" comments on the topic, how widely individuals varied and in what way, i.e. did men say one thing and women another. Finally, all the variables were looked at in relation to each other for significant findings. The researcher was especially interested in whether activists in a particular movement or with a particular stance towards nonviolence tended to have similar responses to the coded
categories.

Chapters IV and V present, analyze and interpret the findings of the study.
CHAPTER IV
STUDY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The data presented in this chapter were gathered from 31 people; 22 were part of the documentary study and nine were interviewed by the researcher. The data on the activists' self and emotions is presented, with both positive and negative effects being included. Next is the activists' relationships with others, which includes the issues of relationships to authority, intragroup and intergroup relationships. The section on activists in society addresses political awareness and growth, communism, feelings of estrangement from the mainstream and attitudes towards using violence as a means of social change. In the fourth part, spirituality is combined with morality, significance and lifestyle changes as they relate to the activists' experiences.

The last section addresses the secondary questions of this study; what parts of nonviolence theory and practice are particularly important for activists, the dynamics of nonviolence as a tactic versus nonviolence as a creed, and a look at what factors besides activism contributed to the
effects people experienced.

This data presentation looks at patterns and themes that emerged, the spectrum of responses from activists and the relationship of variables. Quotes are given to illustrate particular points. Because this study covered such a broad range of effects, each issue is given only a few pages of analysis, and it becomes clear that an in-depth study could be done about a number of these areas. It may be a weakness in the study design that such a breadth of issues is addressed, and this contributes to the volume of data. Chapter V suggests further research that would follow up this study.

Since the focus of this study was the effects of nonviolent activism on activists, it is worth noting that several people expressed some difficulty in separating out and analyzing the activist piece of their lives. They explained that political work is not a detached activity they engage in, not something they could be talked out of. "It is more and more and more me...I feel less and less like I have another life, and more and more and more as if that is my life." (Alberta 0.) These activists derive their primary identity from their activism and the integration of values with practice. However, most people were able to speak to the effects of "the movement" on their lives.

Many of the findings of this study are what one would
expect based on others' research. Most activists reported such feelings as enhanced self esteem, strong group intimacy with other activists, heightened political awareness and a great sense of meaning in their work. What came as the greatest surprise was that for every positive influence of nonviolent activism there was a strong negative one as well; the data on negative effects are as numerous as the data on positive ones. The summary to this chapter and the data interpretation in Chapter V address this issue in more detail.

Activists' Self and Emotions

Empowerment and self esteem

The enhancement of self esteem and a feeling of empowerment emerged as recurrent themes among the cases, crossing all age, race, movement and sex lines. Twenty-two of the 31 study participants had something to say about how their sense of self was affected by their activism. The benefits seemed to come from taking action against oppression, being true to one's values and learning new skills. Several activists felt unstoppable in their efforts to create change.

Particularly for the oppressed, there was an importance to setting oneself free from the chains of oppression, taking
some kind of action, even if that meant being put in jail. Dave Dellinger says, "Being ready to go to jail is the only way of remaining free" (p. 96). Rachel West explains in a similar way the impact her participation in the 1965 Selma marches had on her. She says that only free people, not slaves, can vote, and what happened in Selma was more than getting the vote; people had to set themselves free first. "In Selma, the right to vote didn't set us free. No sir. In Selma, we got the right to vote because we had set ourselves free" (p. 144).

Among many activists in the 1960's there was a feeling that people were changing the course of history irrevocably, a feeling which at times bordered on omnipotence. "Everything seemed possible, the world was plastic and you could mold it to your own specifications." (Ralph G.) Franklin McCain, one of the four students who sat in at the Woolworths lunch counter in 1960 in Greensboro laughingly says "By then we had the confidence, my goodness, of a Mack truck. And there was virtually nothing that could move us, there was virtually nothing probably at that point that could really frighten us off..." (p. 77-78). In some cases these feelings were reinforced by having major institutions placed at the activists' disposal for teach-ins and demonstrations, such as the boulevards of the Capitol in D.C. and the Yale University campus.
As Anne Braden states, many people find in a crisis that there are deep wellsprings of strength within them they weren't aware of previously. A sense of power and competence arose for many activists from the recognition of these new skills and strengths, which ranged from preparing group meals to speaking articulately, writing, hustling money, organizing, moving others to action and giving nonviolence trainings. Kitty K. found that learning she could survive without food for eight days while fasting in jail had a big impact on her. "I saw a dramatic difference after I'd fasted. I just knew that I didn't have to panic and that I had that kind of power within myself to control those kinds of physical needs." These strengths emerged not only because of crises, but because nonviolent campaigns put people in new contexts which required things of them that other life contexts hadn't.

Another source of self esteem was taking action that was consistent with internal beliefs and values, regardless of the consequences. To do less than that, to not be oneself, is to end up despising oneself, and as Juanita Nelson says, one cannot have respect for others without self respect.

Tim, a Vietnam War draft resister in jail describes reaching a turning point where there was no turning back, when his pride and self respect were on the line. We were pressed to a point where it would have been humiliating not to have made some response regardless of how small. There is a point where a protest is
demanded and a resistance is required... (p. 142).

To be not afraid to act on one's convictions can be quite freeing. Bernice Reagon says she learned in the Civil Rights movement who she was in the society, and her power as a person to stand and speak and act on any issue. "When you understand that you do have a life, you do have a body, and you can put that on the line, it gives you a sense of power. So I was empowered by the Civil Rights Movement" (p. 29).

All of these sources of enhanced self esteem and empowerment involve going beyond philosophizing, beyond strategizing into action of some kind, which is what being an activist is all about.

**Fear/Fearlessness**

Gregg (1934) noted the necessity for activists to face the possibilities of beatings, imprisonment or physical death. In fact, people in this study have faced National Guardsmen with bayonets, tear gas, mace and charging horses, house bombings, death threats, beatings and the murders of companion activists. Of course, fears are aroused in these situations; John Lewis says when he arrived in Montgomery on the 1961 Freedom Rides, "I thought it was the end. It was like death. Death itself might have been a welcome pleasure" (p.4-5). This fear left 8 and 9 year old Sheyann Webb and Rachel West fantasizing about possible scenarios for their
deaths, about "what it would be like to get shot, how it must
burn you inside" (pp. 45 and 78). These two children made
more references to fear than any other participants. It is
unclear if their age caused them to be more fearful or
perhaps more honest about feeling it than adults who were
concerned with presenting a "strong" self-image.

Alberta O. recalled her most frightening experience when
she was dragged to a pen after a civil disobedience action.

I remember being in one of those little pens and all
of the sudden realizing that I could be here forever
and nobody would ever know...it was the first time I
really had that fear, realizing what it would be like
to be a prisoner...they could have just made me
disappear.

The 20 people who commented on their fears described
different ways of dealing with these fears. One group tended
toward what could be called a form of voluntary repression.
They tried to avoid feeling their fear in order to conquer
it.

It causes a funny short circuiting of your own
feelings, in other words you feel like you want to
leave and you’re scared, but you decide to endure or
stuff it down, accept it and bear it and pay the
price for it. (Jacob S.)

I must not do anything here that will indicate
anxiety. (Merrill Proudfoot)

I would gird myself in the same way I do when a
dentist is about to apply his drill to an open-nerved
tooth. (Jim Peck)

In these cases it is as though the activists sidestep a
direct confrontation with fear - note the words used like
control, short-circuit, stuff it down, gird myself.

Others describe themselves as having conquered or overcome fear by having faced their fears squarely and having won the battle, sometimes guided by a greater force. All of these examples come from people for whom nonviolence is a creed.

I knew that being part of this [civil rights] movement would not be without its moments of fear. I had felt that fear that day; all the people had. But we had stayed together and by doing so had overcome it. (Sheyann Webb)

We were afraid but we felt we had to bear witness. (John Lewis)

"Nigger," he said menacingly, "you're supposed to be scared when you come in here!" "I am fortified by truth, justice and Christ," I said. "There's no need for me to fear." (Bayard Rustin)

I went in just completely terrified, and for a while my voice was shaking, especially when I was up on the stand, my voice was shaking and quivering. Then at some point it kind of eased, and I could speak much more easily and more from my heart and started enjoying myself. (Kitty K.)

Researchers have noted a degree of fearlessness in activists that is probably similar to what others experience when confronting any crisis or tense situation.

Anger/Repression

The dynamics of activists concerning their anger are similar to those described in dealing with fear. The feelings are there, and they can either be denied to some extent or expressed via some kind of action. Perhaps because
nonviolence theory does not have clear guidelines about dealing with anger, only ten people made significant comments about the topic. Of those, women were more willing to admit to angry feelings, whereas the men spoke of denying them or of finding no outlet for them. Also, civil rights activists were more likely to acknowledge their anger, and again this may be because peace activists lack ways to reconcile their anger with their "peace" activities.

People expressed anger over such general things as war, racism and prisons. Others were specifically angry at having been beaten down (literally and figuratively) in a demonstration. Rachel West described what she saw in a Selma church after the first attempt at marching for voting rights.

What I saw there I will always remember - the faces of the people. They were like masks. Some of them were still crying, but they all just sat there staring to the front. I had never seen such looks before. They were hurt, they were angry, they were outraged. The smell of tear gas was everywhere; it was in their clothes, in their hair. It stung my eyes. (p. 102)

Grace K. doesn't even specify the roots- she simply says that she feels an enormous rage, daily, and that rage is her most predominant emotion.

For some, that anger has no outlet, and must be kept in tow. Phil C. says of the student movement in the 60's that there was a lot of anger and frustration at society, but no organized student movement to direct it into, and thus the feelings stayed stuck. Earle Reynolds says,
Every time I think of my ship being boarded, illegally and through force of arms, in a manner which I fail to distinguish from piracy, I begin to boil all over again. It is with difficulty that I keep the appearance of calm. (p. 65)

But keep calm he does, as he states on several occasions. Perhaps most telling is this ambivalent personal account of the way angry feelings clashed with nonviolent philosophy for Victor 0.

I can recall very few occasions where I felt for any sustained period of time anger toward an individual...it's not good for emotional expression and stuff; even when people interpersonally do things that are terrible to you, you find yourself being understanding...and feeling angry and hurt, but not being able to direct it at the individual, which in a way I feel good about...but certainly I've taken more than I've given.

Instead of denial, an answer for other activists lies in using their activism to release the anger. To write a letter, organize a response to an outrageous remark, march in the streets of New York's financial district, to educate people and "be a thorn in people's sides"—these are the outlets for activists. After a protest in prison, Tim says,

As far as an organized action goes, it was ridiculous. It never even approximated a planned or defined political move. It was always purely individual and emotional from the very start, and I must say from that standpoint it felt good. I know it made me feel a lot better. I had been feeling so frustrated and pent up, and for a change I had expressed myself. I'm doing more comfortable time now. (p. 147)

It does seem that anger and rage can be important in making changes. What is important is that the anger not
immobilize an activist, but propel her into doing something. To do something meaningful and maintain dignity within a nonviolent framework can be a challenge. Sheyann Webb continues the story of that night in Selma after the first march.

Our nonviolent approach had been threatened, because so many people were angry and wanted to retaliate against the possemen and the troopers. If that had happened, our efforts to point out the injustice in Alabama might have been lost. If our people had allowed themselves to become common rioters, the sympathy we had gained from the days and days of marching would have been for nothing. (p. 10)

Sheyann says this as a person dedicated to nonviolence, but it is precisely this anger and fear that can lead some activists into an array of negative emotions, as the next section indicates.

Negative emotions

The literature on nonviolence tends to skim over the negative effects of activism if it mentions any at all. This study indicated that there are many emotional obstacles which activists encounter, and the nonviolent literature needs to address them more directly. These negative emotions were equally reported by 17 men and women activists from all parts of the creed/tactic spectrum. However, people in the civil rights movement were more likely to experience negative feelings than peace activists. This may be the result of their meeting more direct repression than members of the
peace movement in their efforts. Though some of the feelings blend together, they are separated here for the purpose of more clearly identifying common trends.

Feelings of hopelessness, discouragement and failure are quite frequent. After the beating marchers took in Selma, people were "glazed and glassy...it seemed we had lost everything we had fought for...they had beaten us like we were slaves" (p. 98). After being in jail for a few months for draft resistance, Tim felt like a failure, because within the prison he could not make some kind of witness against oppression in society. After 18 days in jail, Barbara Deming felt her struggle about to end in defeat. Similarly, Anne Braden felt "that the things we had been working for - a world of understanding and brotherhood - had turned to dust in my hand" (p. 262).

Weariness and frustration were other strong responses to activist work. For Barbara Deming it results from being in a cramped prison cell and fasting for many days. For Jacob S. and Freda S., exhaustion comes from the hectic schedule of nightly meetings and responsibilities in addition to full-time jobs. For Anne Braden, it came gradually through being worn down by weeks of strain; bomb threats, newspaper reporters, grand jury hearings and community hostility were parts of her everyday life because she had sold a house to a black family in an all white neighborhood. She says

It was just that I was tired; I no longer had the
strength required for any emotion - fear or courage. I found that my reactions were reduced to cold calculations as to how we could best lessen the danger. (p. 219)

When Ralph G. went on a civil rights march to engage in civil disobedience, it was a profound event which he has yet to decipher.

In some ways it was a confession of, I don't want to say exhaustion, but of what else can a person do. I've used my voice, I've used my pen, I've used my organizing talent, there's nothing left of me except my body, and if you want that you can have that too, goddamnit!

Some activists start to feel distant from themselves in the course of their activism. Barbara Deming describes leaning her cheek on her hand "and my face didn't feel to my hand like my own face. A sensation of utter desolation startled me. I felt; Am I sure it is I?" (p. 47).

Several others expressed frustration now because they are unable to find a political/emotional support group such as they had in the 60's and early 70's. Phil C. says "I feel like a fish out of water, literally, I can't breathe." For Victor O. the problem is finding a group with his level of political sophistication given his 20 years of activist experience.

Other common feelings include depression, powerlessness and pessimism. In an earlier section it was noted that some activists felt a sense of omnipotence or romanticism about their ability to change the world. Sometimes people crashed
when they came up against the limitations of their efforts. Ralph G. explains the feeling.

By the end of that decade [61-71] there was a much more pessimistic sense of maybe change is possible but the cards are stacked against us, the forces that we're dealing with are really powerful...we tried to elect McCarthy, we got Nixon; we tried to get us out of the war and we got into Cambodia...students at Kent and Jackson State were being gunned down...

Thirteen years later that feeling still exists. Alberta O. can say "After the elections [1984] and all that stuff with the MIG's and running around with our spot planes over Nicaragua, I was feeling so fucking depressed." Phil C. finds himself despairing about nuclear weapons and the shortage of time to take action. What causes despair in Grace K. is her occasional recognition that activists are so few, such a minority. Ralph G. also became aware of "the minute power a single individual had over these great social forces in our society; so much work to produce so little change..."

Of course different people handle depression in different ways. Phil C. turns it on himself in some respect, particularly as concerns his relationship with his children.

I feel a lot of sadness about my kids. I think it's one, that I'm suffering from the parent leaving the nest syndrome, second is I feel I want to protect them and I can't, third is I'm not doing in my life what I should be doing and I'm letting them down...They're in wonderful shape and I'm here feeling isolated, missing community, missing family...

Alberta O., however, suggests using periods of
disempowerment as times for self-examination.

If you get depressed because you feel like you’re not doing anything, sometimes you’re not doing anything because the actions you’re taking aren’t very effective. If you’re trying to take down a brick wall with a plastic spoon, maybe you aren’t going to get very far, you need to go out and get other tools.

Because depressions can raise these questions, she finds them valuable.

Understandably, a number of activists respond to pressures by becoming cynical. However, only those who did not adhere to nonviolence as a way of life reported feeling cynical. One example is Hank, in jail for draft resistance. He explains to his interviewer that he didn’t start off in anti-war activities, but in the civil rights movement "which of course is dead now" [1966]. "Why do you say that?" his interviewer asks. "Civil rights movement - three words - a lot of connotations to them - take one, the concept of non-violence. That’s had it" (p. 88). Later Hank says of his place of confinement, "Same old bullshit. Even the name of the place gets me - ‘Federal Correctional Institution’, right? Have the guts to call it what it is - jail. There’s no correction here" (p. 93).

Merrill Proudfoot describes how civil rights demonstrators became increasingly more cynical when they realized store owners respected economic power more than moral power.

We tended to think less of our Christian witness and more in terms of winning the game by whatever means
Ralph G. came to respect what he calls the realism, toughness and cynicism of black leaders in the civil rights movement. "They said 'we're going to manipulate you, but it's for the cause.'" But to Jacob S. cynicism is a poison - he gets furious at people who are cynical and he wants them to stay out of the movement.

For some activists the negative effects of activism were more serious. Under the pressure of trying to reconcile the campus classroom with what was happening elsewhere in Alabama, 4 students at Tuskegee had nervous breakdowns in the spring of 1965. Sammy Younge, Jr. turned to drinking instead. Eventually he paid for his activism with his life, as he was shot in a gas station in his hometown in 1966.

A friend of Phil C.'s, who was president of the SDS in 1966 at Yale University, died of cancer recently. After the memorial service a group of friends who hadn't seen each other for almost 20 years got together.

One of the things we talked about at the meeting was why Paul started despairing before he died and how psychological stuff had affected his body. We said how hard it is since the late 1960's to be a straight white college educated North American revolutionary coming out of the 1960's.

Finally, there are times when activists decide (or try) to give up being activists. Sammy Younge went through
several attempts at leaving the activist life. He told Stokely Carmichael, "Look man, I'm gonna kick SNCC. I'm quitting, I want out." He'd say at a mass meeting "Man, I'm through, I'm through, I'm through." "But then stuff began getting back into him, and he started right over again (p. 124).

At one point, Phil C. "started smoking dope...and I realized I didn't want to be sitting in an office trying to force myself to go out and organize. I felt very isolated, so I quit."

Having reached a point of being ready to quit her own struggle, and seeing her husband found guilty of sedition and imprisoned, Anne Braden had a greater understanding of those Negroes who decide the wall is not worth fighting, who decide to ignore it and try to build some little personal lives for themselves on their own side of the wall. (p. 272)

This is the tack that Ralph G. and his wife took in 1971 - they quit being so active and moved to a new area when the opportunity arose. They became involved in town government and local athletic activities, but have not engaged in direct action campaigns or national issues for most of the past 14 years. They were a white couple leaving a primarily black area immersed in civil rights issues, and this caused some disappointment among their black colleagues and acquaintances.

However, the majority of activists do not see an option
of stopping their activism - it is part of who they are, part of their life's work and purpose. Knowing what they know now, through their process of politicization, it would be impossible for them to go back to life as it was, or to pretend they didn't have that awareness. So, despite all the negative feelings that arise, most choose to continue with their activism. Though each individual experience will vary, there may be a logical progression or cycle to these emotional effects of activism. As someone enters a movement, it makes sense that her/his first feelings would be ones of empowerment, enhanced self esteem and optimism. As the daily realities start to sink in, s/he may start to feel some of the fear involved in taking risks, and may become more angry at the mistreatment s/he receives from the oppressors in response to confrontation. Over a longer period of time it becomes evident that any struggle is part of a long historical process which may not be resolved in one's lifetime, and that realization can lead to despair, depression or cynicism. This is a critical point in the development of an activist which can lead to a choice point - she either decides to drop out of the struggle, or finds renewed energies and hope in order to begin again. It is likely that many activists go through variations of this cycle a number of times. A crucial question for political movements is how to keep people active, how to prevent them
Activists' Relationships with Others

Traditional nonviolence theory has much to say about how activists should relate to their adversaries, and some to say about relations with one's own moral or spiritual self. There seems to be a lack of guidelines for relating to one's peers; the emphasis is on individuals following their own consciences. Perhaps there is an implicit assumption that if everyone is following nonviolent principles, dynamics between activists will run smoothly. Though there are a lot of positive effects of groups working together, this is far from the only experience, especially when people of different races, classes and sexes are working in coalition. Therefore, modern activist groups are exploring new territory and each successive movement learns from the experience of previous ones.

Reactions to authority

Activists, like other people in this society, grow up having certain attitudes towards people in positions of authority. The authorities most relevant to this study are government and law enforcement officials. Some people view these authorities primarily with respect and with a trust
that if you really call on the system it will respond to you. For others, fear is the main response they feel, so that when they are in a situation of having contact with authority they immediately assume a one down position and obey orders. Still others grew up considering these authorities, for example police, as "pigs," out to harass people unnecessarily. Many activists who started out viewing authorities in these ways experienced a change after participating in actions, exploring more of nonviolent philosophy, or gaining new tools for societal analysis. Different aspects of nonviolent philosophy were emphasized by different activists; for some it was most important to change the hearts and minds of authorities while others see noncooperation with evil as of the greatest value. The following analysis explains these differing views and how they manifest in action. The 20 participants who commented on this topic were equally divided among the following three approaches to authority.

One common perspective is that activists are able to consider government and law enforcement officials as their peers. The uniforms, the official roles, the institutionalized hierarchy no longer seem to hold the power they might have at one time. Even if someone has structural power, activists feel their own needs and opinions to be just as valid. When police, jail guards, judges and mayors are
seen as ordinary people, this attitude can empower activists
to react with less fear and less anger. Kitty K. described
being at a large demonstration in New York City for Soviet
Jews and crawling under police barricades to avoid the crowds
and search for her mother, being very matter of fact about it
when confronted by the police.

A New York policeman at one time would have been an
authority figure who would have scared me off...but
instead he ended up being quite helpful.

Another attitude which was expressed frequently was
seeing people in authority as tools or agents in a larger
oppressive system who may not be held totally responsible for
their actions. Several interviewees said they saw police and
guards in this way, which helped to lessen their fear and
animosity, and allowed for more of a bond between the
activist and the authority figure. Other activists were less
generous.

Jacob S. says

If anyone’s in a position of power I see that they
probably hurt somebody to get there or they don’t
deserve to be there. I analyze it as a Marxist, and
say how did you get that class position, you’re
really nobody, you’re just like me...

Arnold S. adheres to the nonviolent view that each of us
is responsible for our individual actions.

Part of my agenda in talking to them [police] is I
feel they are not absolved of guilt, they do have a
part in it. I won’t say it in such strong words, but
I do hold them responsible...Having them take
responsibility is the start of a new tactic...I don’t
have it thought out, but then I don’t have lots of
energy to strategize around organizing cops...
From these varied views of authorities, as peer, as an involuntary or a willful agent of the oppressive system, come corresponding styles of interacting with these authorities.

Dave Dellinger and Bayard Rustin, two activists who would also define themselves as pacifists, model a style of treating authorities with gentleness, humanity and justness. They remain firm but calm in their stance. Dellinger describes his experience in prison.

We also tried to go out of our way to be sensitive to their human qualities, and the more contact we had with individual guards the more willing they were to overlook our minor transgressions in apparent (if somewhat bewildered) appreciation for being treated, for a change, as fellow human beings. (p. 99)

This approach can be associated with the idea of changing hearts and minds through conversion rather than coercion. Only those for whom nonviolence was a creed related to authorities in this manner. In response to four policemen who are ordering him to the back of the bus in Louisville, Rustin says,

If I sit in the back of the bus I am depriving that child - I pointed to a little white child of five or six - of the knowledge that there is injustice here, which I believe it is his right to know. It is my sincere conviction that the power of love in the world is the greatest power existing. If you have a greater power, my friend, you may move me. (p. 5)

In this instance Rustin is certainly not being submissive, and his efforts are clearly sincere and heartfelt. However, in relating a story of his 30 day experience on a chain gang
in North Carolina, there is a hazier line between approaching adversaries humanly and acting in a one-down position. Throughout the narrative, Rustin asks the Captain's help in doing his work and apologizes for his poor performance, he apologizes for neglecting to call the Captain "Sir" and suggests that if anyone deserves to be beaten in the face it is he (Rustin), and he even goes so far as to write the Captain a letter after his 30 days are up, thanking him for the opportunity to be part of his crew! Rustin is confident that his behavior helped to change the Captain's attitudes and bettered life for other prisoners in the gang - others might see this as an example of how the use of nonviolence encourages existing stereotypes of oppressed people.

Another approach to authorities involves being willing to confront them in a respectful manner, questioning their complicity in the oppression of others. Anne Braden resisted the grand jury's efforts at prying into her personal beliefs out of "indignation that any arm of the government should presume to interrogate me about matters which I had always been so sure were my private business, to challenge the freedoms I had always been so sure were mine " (p. 218). At age 76, Nannie Washburn, a white woman, was put in a mental hospital for 21 days for participating in demonstrations in the south. While there, a Native American doctor gave her a physical exam, and she used the opportunity to shame him
about how he could be a doctor for a place like that when white men had murdered Native Americans, stolen their land and put them in reservations.

An amusing example of confrontation came from Ralph G. who was teaching in Georgia and had been working to desegregate the local YMCA. Town officials were headed to New Orleans to make a case for the city to be included as one of Look Magazine and the National Civic Organization's 10 All American cities. Ralph offered the officials a last chance to do something about the Y, and when they didn't, he sent a packet of information about the struggle to the New Orleans "judges."

The Atlanta representatives were embarrassed if not humiliated with the questioning...they wanted to talk about municipal consolidation and they ended up defending the town's poor civil rights record. For a week my friend and I were featured prominently on the front page of the newspaper.

Further along the spectrum lies the option of total noncooperation with authorities, breaking rules, ignoring warnings and boundaries, making people in power accept total responsibility for their actions. Actions taken by people in this study include having an anti-war demonstration when the Mayor had issued a proclamation outlawing gatherings of more than 12 people, a [white] man bringing a black woman to a freshman dance at Harvard in 1933, refusing to move when ordered by police to do so, walking out of a Civilian Public Service Camp for draft resisters, going on hunger and work
strikes in jail, refusing to answer questions by the IRS, refusing to honor arrest warrants and refusing to walk when arrested. As Barbara Deming says, "We keep reminding them of the difference between their wishes and ours; we refuse to let them forget that they are imposing on us" (p. 69).

Juanita Nelson says more about this.

You will do what you think you should, what you have been ordered to do, but I shall not help you do it, no, not even to the extent of getting dressed so that you may feel more comfortable in your mission. If a law is bad or unjust, is not every phase of its enforcement simply an extension of the law and to be as greatly resisted? (p. 13)

Besides having the effect of challenging authorities, this noncooperation seems to contribute to the activists' self respect. Bernice Reagon says "The civil rights movement gave me the power to challenge any line that limits me" (p. 23). Hank, a jailed draft resister, explains that he got a longer sentence than other resisters.

"How was your hair then?" I asked.

"Afro."

"And what were you wearing?"

"A dashiki."

"Don’t you think that might have affected your sentence?"

"Of course."

"Was it worth a year or two of your life?" I asked.

"That’s all of my life," he said, looking at me with a combination of dismay and confusion. "Man, don’t you know, that’s what it’s all about? Am I free to have my style, am I free to have my hair, am I free
to have my skin?"

"Of course," I said. "You're right."

Later in the interview, Hank says "I'm not ready to subscribe to submitting to anything or anybody. I've done my submitting, I've waited long enough." Hank is one for whom nonviolence is a strategy and his concern for self determination reflects that. Alberta 0., another follower of nonviolence as a tactic, shares Hank's concern.

I have this terrible conflict about working for somebody. I don't want a fucking boss. I know that in part that's a byproduct of political experiences and observations...it's really ridiculous how absurd it gets sometimes...the last time that I had a really heavy duty 9-5 job it was like, ultimately I bombed out of that because I just wasn't going to take that bullshit anymore. I just felt, you've got to confront things.

Clearly there are many ways a nonviolent activist can interact with authority and still not lose one's sense of self. It is probably some combination of individual personality, philosophical perspective and experience which determines what path an activist chooses. Each approach has its own value for the activist and the adversary, but all can be part of a nonviolent framework.

Intragroup unity

As previous studies predicted, half of the activists in this study reported feelings of closeness and a number of positive effects from working in groups. For some, the most
important element of being part of a group is that it contradicts their isolation. Doing political work can be exhausting, lonely, scary and disempowering. Being part of a group that shares values and concerns is vital to fighting those negative effects of activist work.

Another 'high' came from the experience of people of different religions, races and political priorities coming together in solidarity to work in shared concerns. Freda S. says

> When people are willing to work collectively, put aside our differences and take a stand for what we believe in...it is one of the best experiences I can say that I've had.

Jacob S., a gay man who was working in a coalition for the liberation of South Africa remembers when the Gay Pride Celebration and Soweto Day fell on the same date. The two groups exchanged communiques of solidarity, and Jacob says

> In struggling to be gay there [in the Coalition] and for that group to get a message from my community that we knew and we cared about apartheid just made me feel great...it's like a real tonic.

A dynamic that occurs in many groups, not just activist groups, is synergy - where the group energy is greater than the sum of its parts, and people draw strength from each other. Rachel West explains how it felt to her in Selma.

> It was as though each one of us was a candle or a star. By ourselves we were each nameless little souls unknown to the rest of the universe. But together we could be a glow that would light up Selma for the whole world to see. (p. 51)
The most frequently mentioned group experiences involved feelings of community, bonding and intimacy. Some likened these feelings to those soldiers might feel in combat. The words used to describe the experience include togetherness, camaraderie, kinship, a community of believers, closeness, affection. For some it was hard to part with each other. Barbara Deming says "Never go to jail with anyone...because if you do, when you have to leave each other it is as though your own limbs were being torn from you" (p. 177). There was also a sadness in recalling the close feelings because many activists have not felt such closeness since that time, a source of frustration and grief.

For actual families sharing these experiences, like the Bradens and the Reynolds, their family relationships were enhanced. But other activists report a family like bond which grew among strangers as well. Nannie Washburn recalls being treated like a mother by her "sons" who helped her to the bathroom in the dark. Tim could not go back to work after a prison strike without consulting with his fellow prisoners. Similarly, Wally Nelson refused to be released from prison until his friend, another black war resister, was also released. Wally also speaks of informing his pals of his decision to leave the Civilian Public Service camp.

There were six of us who were very close. We had formed a little affinity group...We were really an extended family; we put our money together, we shared. We were really very close. (p. 8)
It seems important that positive feelings not only came from short term shared actions or crises, but also in groups that were together for months, sometimes years. As the next section indicates, however, groups certainly had their share of problems as well.

**Intragroup fighting**

Particularly because we live in such an individualized culture, it is a struggle for members of any group to learn to work well together. The problems that arise in activist groups mentioned by 14 respondents could be found in any group dynamics textbook, but may be exacerbated by the push for working consensually in nonviolent groups, the tensions of risk-taking inherent in nonviolent action, and the lack of outlets for built up frustration in an ongoing nonviolent struggle. Issues around sex, race and privilege were mentioned so frequently that they are discussed separately in their own sections.

Despite times of solidarity, it also happens that political groups end up fighting each other, and "groups that have historical bad blood between them don't even talk." It serves an oppressive system well when the oppressed fight with each other, and this was clearly a problem in the civil rights movement. Conflicts arose between the black middle class, sometimes represented by the NAACP, and black
militants who didn’t fall in line with the establishment. Bernice Reagon describes a painful experience where as secretary of her NAACP chapter, she was attacked for having associated with SNCC, because "these people come in and get you stirred up and leave you in jail and the NAACP has to pay the bills and blah, blah, blah, blah" (p. 15). A vote of loyalty was taken, and although she voted for NAACP, Bernice never attended another meeting. When Sammy Younge started a picket of the A&P, his group was seen by middle class blacks as wild and irresponsible kids threatening to rock the Model Town boat. Of course the more moderate blacks were afraid of losing the gains for which they had struggled so hard.

The NAACP/SNCC split also serves as an example of a common source of group conflict over strategies, logistics and process. Expressed in all its absurdity, Alberta O. tells of the tremendous feeling of solidarity present in a jail cell, "But three weeks later at the evaluation meeting we were fighting like cats and dogs over who was going to pay the $50 for the boxes of crayons that we bought." The problems and frustrations are worsened by the fact that most groups attempt to operate by using a consensual model of decision making. Barbara Deming says "We may continually emphasize individual choice, but the pressure everybody feels not to 'break ranks' is still acute" (p. 140). So what can result are "interminable meetings, because we try to be
absolutely democratic and each person is allowed to voice dissent until satisfied, even if this wears away the hours we have to sleep" (p. 119). When everybody has so many opinions, it leads Arnold S. to say, "This may be a democracy, but shit, I could go for a dictator for a while!"

Alberta 0. has a creative solution to her lack of tolerance for long meetings. In her view there are the mind and process people (the brains) "Who kind of naturally like to sit up all night and talk about whether we should fly the American flag or not" and the people who "like to go out there and do whatever they have to do (the brawn), like put out the mailing, go make a map, whatever." She believes in planning, but has less tolerance for it, so she prefers to be one of the action people.

Beyond (or underneath) struggles about concrete plans and content, there are, of course, power conflicts, personality and ego problems that emerge in group actions. In some cases, individuals who "stick to their egos", who are self serving, who bring their personal baggage to the group can impede group process. Several people explained a need for giving predominance to the group, to the common shared goals and political ends. Having people "of like minds" working together was an ideal, and individuals must learn to submerge their own ideas and needs to some extent for the group to function; "to act as a group, not as a bunch of
individuals in a room." What's needed for that to happen is a degree of trust, which can take time to build.

In contrast to the family and family-like ties which were made from being active together, friendships and marriages have also been in conflict. Kitty K. describes actions as "high points of tension" between friends because "so much is going on and there's so little time to process any of it."

Each one of our needs for something from the other person becomes so dramatic that they can't possibly all get worked out without explosions.

For years she and a close friend could not go off to an action together without having an enormous screaming battle beforehand. She later came to understand the conflict resulted from their different styles of preparing for actions - one through withdrawal and the other through connection.

Married couples have had problems because of differing values and roles. Grace K. is a social worker and her husband is an accountant. She would like to live more of a completely simple nonviolent lifestyle, but his profession makes that difficult, and they have struggled about money and lifestyle choices for years.

As Barbara and Earle Reynolds dealt with the aftermath of having sailed into atomic test waters, they went on separate paths - "he, to establish an Institute of Peace Science and I to rush around the world with the hibakusha"
[survivors of Hiroshima bombings] on peace pilgrimages." In her view, they splintered into too many self important directions and as a result the marriage ended. She faults herself for the breakup, agreeing with a Japanese newspaper's observation that "while she was traveling the world to make peace, the toast was burning in the kitchen," and that "someone has to stay in the kitchen" (p. 134).

Finally, Ralph G. points out the flip side to the incredible intimacy present in groups, and the excitement of challenging societal norms. He says that too many currents got mixed up at once.

Civil rights, anti-war, job, family, the woman question, people's sexual drives, friends jumping into each other's beds and marriages going down the tubes...people didn't know how to handle that kind of intimacy. People who were the survivors took a long time picking up the pieces.

To reiterate, it is a tremendous task to learn the skills of working successfully in a group, how to reap the benefits while minimizing and processing through the inevitable difficulties.

Whites relationships with blacks

The civil rights and peace movements presented unique opportunities for blacks and whites to work in close proximity as peers. The benefits and difficulties that arose in those relationships give some insight into the process of breaking down oppressive barriers and building new
relationships of solidarity. Eight of the ten activists who spoke to this issue were white, probably because it was a unique and growthful experience for whites to be close to blacks, whereas most blacks had contact with whites all their lives.

For some white men there were feelings of competition or overidentification with black men. Phil C. explains the phenomenon.

The Panthers were pretty macho, but there was some reality to them - you start firing, we'll fight back. Us white men running around saying "Where can we get some dynamite?" was totally out of our own needs to be revolutionary.

Phil found it very painful to hear Stokely Carmichael say in 1965, don't trust white people, when whites who had been working with SNCC were told to go away and work with other white people. Phil had to face suddenly that "perhaps we were not really a beloved community." At the same time, white people were understanding the need for black leadership, and turned over their positions as heads of projects to black coworkers.

One source of mistrust was the fact that whites always had the option of retreating into a safer world if they tired of the struggle. Such was the case with Ralph G., who, after four years of being part of the civil rights movement in Georgia, accepted a teaching job in New England. His wife, Betty, ran into an older black man who had become a school
superintendent, and told him she and Ralph were leaving.

He looked at her and said, "You know, I thought that you two were going to see this thing through." We felt about this high [indicating a small size], and in a sense we were; we could go in there and raise hell for four years and leave because we were upper class professionals. That was his community and his life and he was going to stay there.

In some cases, the walls of mistrust began to be broken down. When Anne Braden and her husband Carl bought the house for the Wades (a black couple) it inspired a tentative trust.

Building a friendship was not an easy task for either of us. For Charlotte it meant overcoming the habits of a lifetime in which every white person was an object of dislike and distrust. For me it meant trying to understand a viewpoint with which I had no previous experience. (p. 157)

After Anne and Carl were prosecuted for sedition, many blacks came to trust them more fully. One time Carl started to leave a gathering of black ministers, saying he thought maybe they wanted to discuss some things in private. "Oh, sit down and stay," the minister said, smiling, "you're practically colored anyway" (p. 237). This feeling emerged because though they were white they had been subjected to abuse which "seemed to place us closer to their world." Similarly, when Jonathan Daniels, a New England Episcopal seminarian came to stay with Sheyann Webb to struggle in Selma, she "knew for certain that there were really good white folks in this country, and with them on our side we would win our freedom." She and other people had a similar feeling about Reverend Jim Reeb, who gave his life when a group of white men came out of
a cafe looking for "white niggers," and beat him viciously.

For many whites in these movements, first hand exposure to the oppression of blacks was a moving consciousness raising experience. When Freda S. and Kitty K. were arrested, they were quite aware of being one of few white women in the courtroom and jail. Kitty says

I was only one of four women who was there under choice, and it just really made me think a lot of things about power structures and racism and the underside of life in Washington D.C. that you don't see when you get the official federal tour.

She tended to isolate herself in jail, feeling it was a slap in the face of the other women for her to be there by choice. Some activists have decided to discontinue the practice of noncooperation through a refusal to walk when arrested. To them it feels like an abuse of race or class privilege for activists to noncooperate knowing that there won't be real consequences to pay. As two prostitutes in the jail pointed out, if they weren't walking they would be beaten up and not carried anywhere. Arnold S. says most of the "confrontive activism is pretty mellow in this country, especially for white people."

For Victor O., being in SNCC and CORE in the 1960's was a unique experience that was incredibly valuable.

I had the experience of working in an organization that was directed by people who in the society in which I grew up were not thought to be legitimate directors of anything, much less to direct me whose father was a lawyer and a judge and terrifically connected in the Democratic party...You never really understand your own attitudes towards other
people...unless you put yourself in situations where the dominant group of which you are a part is not in control of that situation. It’s profound in terms of learning.

Similarly, Merrill Proudfoot leaves the restaurant where he has just been sitting in, and is surrounded by many white youths.

Our danger is so real we can almost smell it, like dogs whiffing the wind. My only safety is in my Negro friends. How topsy-turvy my world has become, when I feel apprehensive among white strangers and perfectly safe only when Negroes are around!...It would be good for every white person to have this experience I am having of knowing that my physical safety is completely in the hands of Negro friends. (p. 95)

It does seem these periods of personal contact do as much to move activists forward as it may do for their adversaries, and possibly more.

Privilege

Issues of privilege were mixed in with race and class and sex in the experiences of activists, just as they often are in the larger society. Eight of the ten comments on privilege came from women, though the reason is not clear. Freda S. describes how she has seen privilege affect political work.

Certain groups don’t have the time or energy or priorities that others do. People who are better off have easier access to transportation, maybe time and other things that allow you to do a certain kind of organizing easier than people who have to work three jobs, have to deal with a lot of other issues, and may not have the financial resources if they’re people of color.
From Rachel West's perspective, "We really didn't have much in those days. I mean there wasn't much food, the clothes I had didn't even fit me very well. The movement is all we black folks had" (p. 140). Perhaps the important phrase in Freda's comment is "a certain kind of organizing"—going to nightly planning meetings in public places or traveling to demonstrations in various cities is not necessarily an option for all people. But meeting at churches or neighbors' homes calling for spontaneous local actions is a way of organizing that is more accessible to people of all backgrounds.

Nannie Washburn had learned over her 70 years that the freedom of white people, poor people and black people was intertwined. Arnold S. is feeling frustrated with the men's movement he is part of because they do not have that same analysis.

The last national men's conference was at the Sheraton in D.C. I feel like I don't want any part of that...great, so we could have black waiters and black maids so we could sit in our rooms and get touchy, not to mention how much it would cost to start with...We started at the same source, but the same issues of privilege and classism are back, they haven't gone anywhere, really. I just didn't see them for a while, because there was another focus, a focus on homophobia.

Similar to what occurred around race, the activist experience caused many middle and upper class people to face the privileges they had. Marion Bromley came to awareness
after Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entry into WWII.

I could no longer tolerate my privileged position of earning a good secretarial salary, having a good time in several attractive circles of friends while men were being drafted and people were enduring the horrors of savage concentration camps, displacement, sending or receiving the results of the best death equipment afforded by the technology of the time. (p. 144)

As a social worker, Grace K. had counseled people about a number of powerless situations, so for her it was an important and humbling experience to be in jail, to feel the harassment, the dehumanization and the impotence.

However, Leah Fritz is skeptical about the import of the white middle class having brief exposures to oppression. She sees the police at the Washington D.C. demonstration and thinks of their position.

We [the demonstrators] are the ruling class, whose children go to college, whose mayor loves us, who can claim among us famous names, who will make a mockery of the courts in a few hours by placing ourselves in voluntary jeopardy. It is like voluntary poverty; the poor hate it. (p. 16)

She is even more direct in her comments.

We returned home to a good dinner and a lot of personal satisfaction. And that, roughly, was how things went for most Americans protesting the war. A night in jail, a snootful of teargas, a head slightly bloodied and only a little bowed. All this joyful self-development, so American in style and content, so sincere and generous, occurred over the dead bodies of generations of Vietnamese, burned and tortured by other Americans, many of them equally sincere and generous. (p. 14)

Indeed, the style and content of political actions are critical issues in this country, particularly as they relate
to building solidarity and maintaining meaning among people of different backgrounds.

Men/Women

By studying the civil rights and peace movements from 1943-1968 then interviewing current activists, it was easy to see the tremendous impact the women's movement has had on people's lives. Scarcely a word was mentioned in the documentary sources about relations between the sexes, but all nine interviewees had something to say about the subject with little prompting. The comments from activists highlight many conflicts, giving a picture of sexist dynamics in political groups, how women have dealt with them and how men have responded in turn. However, with one exception, all of these comments came from white people, so the dynamics of sexism as experienced among people of color are not specifically represented here.

First, what are some of the problems women have run into working with men in political groups? Men seem to get caught up in details and specifics in a way that frustrates some women. Another problem is what Marion Bromley calls men's "antler-clanking" performance, where two men in a large group meeting keep going back and forth arguing over a point and not letting anyone else be involved. Kitty K. is driven crazy by men who call themselves feminist and try so hard to
be sensitive that they end up being wimpy, not having any spine, acting needy and looking to women for support or strength. Other concerns were that men are too intellectual, that they do things to promote violent responses from the police, and that they take on the liveliest and most adventurous group projects for themselves.

For some male/female couples, the growing awareness of sexism created new tensions within the relationships. Ralph G. says as women became more aware in his group of friends, "in the midst of everything we were sitting up late at night till 4 or 5 in the morning discussing roles in the family, in each of our families." These discussions were not theoretical ones, but involved the nitty gritty questions of who takes care of the children and who pursues a career. The strains had more serious repercussions for Barbara and Earle Reynolds, who eventually divorced. Barbara describes the disintegration.

During the next two years, while my husband's conviction as a felon was under appeal, we were seemingly as close as ever. But the seeds of disunity had been sown...Without being aware of my feelings, I resented the publicity that focused on my husband and did not recognize that, like my role as cook on board Phoenix, my function as secretary to send out fund appeals, prepare reports of progress, and write letters of thanks to contributors was equally as important as my husband's speaking tours and interviews with the media. Although I faithfully went through the motions, I was no longer a part of the team. (p. 133)

Because of the problems described above, a number of
women responded to struggles with men by deciding to work in all women’s actions and affinity groups in the 1970’s. There they found, according to Marion Bromley, a treasured quality of sharing, of consideration, of caring, and more important, a lack of "dueling," of using the group to demonstrate one’s ability to debate, to overcome an "opponent" (p. 150). However, a number of women who had spent years working with all women’s groups were feeling more ready to work in mixed groups again during this last year, and in fact were seeking that out. This reconciliation may not have been possible without the period of separation. Women who stayed working in mixed groups have continued to battle with men over sexism, or may be resigned to accepting a secondary role. Other women remain committed to working in all women’s groups, though they would certainly like to see men freed from militarism and racism as well.

How have men responded to the growing awareness of sexism? In some cases, especially in the early stages of consciousness raising, women were met with clear opposition by men who could not acknowledge or give up their privileged position. Marion Bromley explains her experience.

When the Black freedom movement began to adopt separatist politics...Peacemakers felt this a denial of nonviolent principles. Similarly, when Peacemaker women began to suggest separate meetings for women, [in the mid-late 1960’s] there was strong opposition to this procedure. Women who endured discussions of the "women question" in a mixed group with Peacemaker men realized with a fresh clarity some of the frustrations Blacks had endured in a CORE chapter or
an "Interracial Fellowship" dominated by whites. (p. 148)

One of those Peacemaker men was Wally Nelson, who 20 years later still expresses how saddening and heartbreaking it is to see the peace movement separating into men's and women's camps. In his view, it is a frightening trend,

which then leads in turn to what happened to Germany or what happened in this country in terms of racism. It's all the same pattern, all cut from the same cloth, in all truth and honesty. (pp. 14-15)

While being confronted on their white racism in the mid 1960's, men like Phil C. were also hearing women say "hey, wait a minute, you're messing with us, too!" The men responded by saying, "No we're not, we're revolutionaries, we're not oppressors, we're revolutionaries! It was really hard." Later Phil says "I think if you checked out white men, there's a lot of pretty unhappy people, although we often cover it up, deep down we're pretty hurtin' folks."

Victor O. felt very supportive of women's moves towards empowerment in the early 70's, partly because he felt identified with them as the oppressed. He talks about having been sexually molested as a child, and doing much of the domestic work at home.

I knew what it was like to be a member of an unappreciated group of people whose work didn't count, whose efforts weren't visible, whose being was violated at some very profound personal level. I was totally sympathetic.

Other times he felt his vulnerability was exploited by women.
When he came to be something of a political symbol, he was pursued by women "who simply wanted to sleep with someone who was such a symbol." He felt used at some level, and wanted women to take more responsibility for their actions.

Jacob S. says he learned about his sexism the hard way, and his is probably a more typical experience for conscious men in the late 1970's and early 1980's. "I got kicked in the ass a lot to start with, and then I got educated after that." But he had to get shot down a lot before getting a hold on what it was about; "Knowing that you have male privilege and trying not to exercise it and getting out of the way so other people can have power." However, Jacob struggles with creating a balance, because he can't avoid trying to be influential in a group. "There's this tension between trying to be influential and knowing that I'm a white male who's trying to be influential and trying to let go of power." This is, perhaps, an experience many conscious men face when working in mixed groups, or any dominant faces working with subordinates in a group. It seems most appropriate for the dominants to play a backround role and give others a chance to develop leadership skills, allowing subordinates to determine the degree of participation they want from dominants. After enough trust is built up, they can begin to operate on more equal ground.

To end on a more positive note, Ralph G. describes the
effects of his having been confronted about sexism.

No class gives up power willingly, but in the long run I found all these skills that I didn't know I had...I am a much more complete human being.

Estrangement

Consistent with others' findings, 13 activists reported feeling alienated from various people in their lives as a result of their political activism.

The most frequently affected relationships were with family members, which seven people mentioned. Sometimes this took the form of being an outcast, or "the weird one," who gets into arguments on holidays. Phil C. says he was the "great white hope" of his family - going to Yale, meant to be a doctor or lawyer. Then he was suddenly immersed in student activism around the civil rights movement. His parents tried to see it as a phase, but when he married a black woman, that was the final straw, and family contact became more superficial. Anne Braden had this same experience around the issue of segregation, which she says has divided many Southern families. Attempts to discuss it resulted in violent arguments, so they just stopped talking about it.

Some black parents had difficulties with their children becoming involved in civil rights as well, either because the parents feared for their children's safety, or because they
had worked hard to give their children an opportunity to "make it" in the white world and here they were getting into trouble instead. Sheyann Webb's father used to just get up and walk out when she started asking her parents to join her in the Selma marches. Though her mother listened, Sheyann says "they still put me off. They'd attend the rallies to listen to me and Rachel sing, but they'd never join the marches" (p. 63).

In some cases, family reactions were more extreme. Victor O.'s father threatened him with death 2 or 3 times for participating in civil rights demonstrations, and Tim's father tried to attack him for becoming a draft resister. Victor and Tim developed a kind of moral response to these family crises which helped them cope with the estrangement. Victor quotes a part of the New Testament where Jesus advises people to abandon their fathers and mothers to follow him. This provided a security that doing right was more important than family ties. Tim felt torn between his peace movement work and family responsibilities. He had taken a vow of poverty and was working with the poor, but felt he should be helping his family.

It doesn't seem right to ignore the needs of your family, but at the same time if the "needs" of the family were to have a car and a summer house and a TV and fancy clothes, did that make sense? (p. 132)

Overall it seemed that men had a harder time with family reactions than women, possibly because there are higher
expectations of male children. Women found reactions of fear and concern, pride, sometimes real support, but at the least a resigned acceptance from their families.

Because activists' friendships tended to focus around their political work, there were only two cases of alienation from friends reported. One was Anne Braden's experience in the mid 1950's when people were afraid of associating with her for fear of being branded as Communists, too. Arnold S. wisely says that if being political means he can't maintain certain friendships, maybe he needs to reexamine his politics as they aren't quite complete if they exclude people based on political persuasion. He did express some frustration with feelings of day to day isolation from other activists, similar to the longings others expressed for family and community.

Besides the estrangement from family and friends that activists shared, many problems seemed to arise between seven activists and their local communities. Most of these cases were from the 50's and 60's, when the activists' activities were especially new and were seen as "weird" by others. Sammy Younge Jr. tried to appeal to the local black leadership and went to their meetings. They couldn't understand the younger black activists, blaming them for the white violence in the town and ostracizing them. Haircuts and dress became symbolic areas of conflict as well.
Anne and Carl Braden became the local scapegoats for their community's racism.

The luncheon clubs continued to pass their resolutions. People wrote letters to the newspapers congratulating the prosecutor. The street talk and the gossip were more expressive than the formal resolutions and the written word. One woman employee in the courthouse stated openly that a trial was too good for us, and that we ought to be tortured and killed. A white minister who was a friend of ours told me in a shocked voice of hearing people at his country club - people he had thought to be "civilized men and women" - saying that they really thought "in a case like this lynching might be a good thing." (p. 242)

Grace K. and her husband finally decided to leave their community because they couldn't bear the isolation of being the only activists in their area. Grace was considered a crazy person, she felt out of place, like no one understood her. Moving to Western Massachusetts was an attempt to break that isolation, which was successful.

A few people mentioned being at odds with their schools and careers. Bernice Reagon was expelled from school in 1961 for "behavior unbecoming a student." Phil C. dropped out of Yale for two years, and Sammy Younge Jr. barely made it through Tuskegee Institute each semester. At her social work job, Grace K. was viewed as the "leftover hippie." She would speak up and others would say "oh, there she goes again." Earle Reynolds felt faced with the loss of his career as a result of his political action.

In other words, if we do this thing, even though we win the legal fight, my formal scientific career is ended. This may sound melodramatic, but I'm just
trying to face the facts of American life. I try not to let this weigh too heavily on my mind, but I can’t help it. I was born poor, worked hard, and have gone a long way farther than I could have expected; I hate to give it up. (p. 36-37)

Perhaps these experiences point up the difficulty of being politically active while continuing to function in mainstream settings.

Anne Braden says on her first day with the grand jury, "this remaining strand of the umbilical cord to my past began to tear apart" (p. 218), and perhaps there is a way that activists need to make such a break to survive the isolation from the majority of people who don’t share the same perspective. Otherwise there is a danger of being caught up in the current of the mainstream. Grace K. warns

It's so easy to get sucked up into the system...I used to think, "Maybe they're right. Maybe I'm being crazy, maybe I'm wrong in advocating for this..." And then I had to step out of that and say, "No, I know I'm right." But when you're alone and you have no support you continually have to do that for yourself. A lot of people lose it and become kind of swept into the system.

This is a tension activists face constantly, and there is a need for more thinking about how to handle such isolation. One of the benefits of working in groups or communities is that it cuts down on the isolation activists can feel. Also, having a strong philosophical or spiritual basis for activism helps one continue on despite the isolation.
The three topics addressed in this section are unrelated except that they all fall under the heading of the activist in society. The first subject concerns the educational value activism has which goes beyond classroom type learning. The second issue is communism - how activists have encountered the myths, the Party and the accusations of communism. The last part explores some of the surprising findings concerning how nonviolent activists view violent social change and their roles in it.

Political growth/expansion

There is a clear educational component of activism that at least 14 activists reported not finding in their formal educational experiences. Dave Dellinger begins his article with this idea.

People generally laugh when I mention I went from Yale to jail and that I got a more vital education from three years in jail than from six years at Yale. The laugh always makes me a little uneasy...because I am afraid it implies that far from being dead serious I am merely indulging in a humorous exaggeration, since one wouldn't really expect to learn more in prison than in a university. A little reflection should convince most persons that one can learn more about the nature of our society by sharing in a small way the life of its victims than by interacting intellectually with its privileged academicians. (pp. 93-94)
For some the learning centered around the practical and factual - learning new information, learning facilitation skills and learning how to think in a more critically analytical fashion. For Victor O. it was a true consciousness raising experience,

to find magazines like the Nation, the New Republic, the Peacemaker. I mean I grew up on Readers Digest, Post Magazine...I never saw any of that other stuff. I didn't know it existed!

Learning also came from being out on the streets. Bernice Reagon says the civil rights movement gave the most graphic kind of civics lesson one could get about the meaning of the Constitution for black people in this country. For Jacob S., the experience at age 19 of seeing U.S. marshalls beat up women at a Pentagon demonstration "took blinders off my eyes...it really shocked me and scared me and told me that there was something awfully wrong here..."

These two anecdotes highlight a difference in the activist experience for different groups. For the oppressed, being beat up, thrown in jail and mistreated by the system was nothing new. As Bernice Reagon says,

The exciting thing about the civil rights movement is the extent to which it gave participants a glaring analysis of who and where they were in society. (p. 35)

But for whites or for the more affluent, critical learning came from interacting with people different from themselves, whose primary concerns and perspectives were
different. Dave Dellinger speaks of having his "complacency jolted and my imagination quickened by this little refresher course in the realities that lie behind the facade in our society" (p. 94). Alberta O. says her trip to Nicaragua gave her insight,

into a lot of real practical things, and seeing struggles on a very practical day to day basis...not only less theoretical, but much more like life and death. You know, you don't have the comfort of sitting around and saying, "When they drop the bomb, we'll go do CD."

Essentially, the privileged can learn to see through the eyes of the oppressed in the course of activism, through hearing about the oppression second hand or experiencing it themselves by putting themselves on the line for their beliefs.

With this new awareness and understanding, activists can gain a broader perspective which allows them to see many issues and groups of people as connected. Hardly anyone in this study was involved in just one struggle; involvement in civil rights or peace issues led to involvement in the Hispanic community, the women's movement, low-income housing, South Africa, anti-nuclear activities, Central America solidarity work and gay/lesbian liberation.

As a final note on the educational value of activism, Arnold S. warns of the tendency for over intellectualizing he sees among some activists with too great a focus on facts.

I don't want to learn anymore about things. I know what's going on in refugee camps in Guatemala. I
don't have to read five books by five boys about it. He prefers Mother Teresa's style of activism - just put yourself somewhere you're needed and take action.

Communism

As the chronology of the movements indicated, there has been a longstanding tension between peace movement activists and communism. The Communist Party had been an important force for social change in the United States since the 1930's, and thus was targeted by the United States government as a group to harass and harness. As a result, activists not only experienced accusations from the right about being communists, but also encountered fear and criticism from the left of being seen as too radical or threatening. To be associated with communism could endanger one's life and career, especially during the Cold War scare of the 1950's. Although no information was specifically solicited about this topic, seven activists made reference to communism in the course of their discussions. All seven were active in the civil rights movement, and six were men.

Activists are often accused of being associated with communism in an effort to discount or undermine what they have to say. Sometimes it is taken lightly - Sammy Younge called the FBI about one of his accusers, saying that she knew so much about communists that she might be one. The FBI
did go to her house to talk to her and she got very mad about it.

On a more serious note, Anne and Carl Braden were accused of being Communists in the courtroom and in their community. These accusations eventually seeped into their relationship with the black family to whom they had sold their house. People from the House UnAmerican Activities Committee came and questioned the black man, Andrew Wade, for hours, insisting that the Bradens were Communists. Later Andrew explained his feelings to Anne.

I did begin to wonder. Just for a little while. I didn't believe you all could have wanted to do me harm - but maybe somehow you thought some good might be accomplished by the house blowing up...Suppose you were Communists - then maybe someone higher up had told you to do it. It seems crazy now - but that's the kind of thing that went through my mind. (p. 265)

In this way, the accusation of Communism served to divide people who had previously been each other's allies. In two cases, activists were actually pursued by the Communist Party. The Party sent representatives to Greensboro after the sit-ins started in 1960, offering money, participation and general assistance. The offer was rejected by the students who wanted to remain independent and in charge. Franklin McCain also says "It was a Christian movement, and Christians and Communists just don't mix" (p. 82). Wally Nelson was pushed to be a Communist Party member "because of my color and because of my connections." He was visited by
an organizer from the Young Communist League in 1940 - her assignment was to get Wally to join. He made it clear to her he could not join any organization that did not accept nonviolence as its bottom line.

Wally also describes an emotional meeting where the pacifists and the Communists were on the same side arguing against U.S. participation in WWII. The next week they met a day or two after the Nazis had invaded Russia.

These same people who were my cohorts in the argument a week earlier, the first thing they said was "All aid to Britain and to the United States for the People's War." And I said, "Wait a minute, what were you saying last Sunday? It was people fighting last Sunday's war, you know? What makes it a People's War now?" Well, of course, they had their rationale...Russia became involved, all of a sudden it was a People's War. (p. 7)

The other mention of Communism was the transformation some people went through who grew up fearing or suspicious of Communism. Their activist experiences sometimes opened up their perceptions to allow a greater understanding and acceptance of Communism. Phil C. went to Cuba with the Venceremos Brigade, and started out asking people there "How does it feel to be in a totalitarian dictatorship?" By the end of his visit, he was finally able to sing the last verse of the song "Bellaciao," which says "Soy comunista toda la vida" (I am a communist for all of my life), feeling a real identification with the ideals and struggles of the Cuban people. Jacob S. had recently joined a Communist Party,
which was a major step for him in his political identification.

It seems that if more activists could rid themselves of their own stereotypes and misinformation about communism, at least the power of the accusation could be lessened.

Violence

The spectrum of 14 activists' attitudes towards violence served to highlight the related spectrum of nonviolence as a tactic or a creed. There was a wide range of feelings about violence, from zealous believers in nonviolence getting physically sick when they saw violence to someone who used nonviolence as solely a strategy reaching such a point of frustration that he ended up throwing bottles and stones at policemen.

For those who believe in nonviolence as a way of life, using violence within their activist work is not only something they would not consider, they don't even have emotional urgings in that direction. Three people recounted stories of being physically attacked or abused in some way, and they felt no desire to retaliate; withdrawal, tears and nausea were their strongest reactions. Jim Peck has a practical outlook.

I have found that the impulse to retaliate with physical violence can be curbed through a complete realization of its futility. Anger is a natural response to the physical pain resulting from assault. But when I am attacked, my reaction has come to be a
sick feeling inside, a sort of overpowering nausea caused by the spectacle of physical violence. During beatings I have attempted to cover my head with my arms as best I could until the hatred of my assailants was expended. After it was all over, the sick feeling remained with me. On some occasions I actually vomited. (p. 28)

At least three of the people with nonviolent leanings were in a position of reexamining their abilities to remain nonviolent and their desires to use violence. On the one hand, they were questioning complete pacifism, wondering if they could respond violently if attacked. They are attracted to direct action and are starting to feel more of their anger. However, they still can't see themselves doing anything violent; they have fears about the addictive nature of violence and questions about its effectiveness.

The next group of about ten people has reached an intellectual acceptance of violence in certain cases, with the common denominator being the theme of self defense. Situations of white violence in the south, contras coming to one's door in Nicaragua, a rape attempt or being trampled by police in a demonstration were mentioned as warranting a possible violent response to stop a greater immediate harm. When the violence was being initiated by others it was important to say you didn't deserve to be treated this way. Even Anne Braden reached this point when her children were verbally threatened by a passing motorist.

I suppose there is a point beyond which most people of pacifist inclination cannot go, although there are some who can take a complete pacifist position. I
don't know how many mothers could hear their child threatened and not take defensive measures. I only know that I could not. That day I called Andrew and asked him to bring me the gun he had been offering to lend me. (p. 132)

A surprising number of activists deal with their internal conflict through an active fantasy and dream life which allows the violence to emerge. None of these people adhere to nonviolence as a creed, though perhaps the people for whom it is a creed would be less likely to admit (to themselves or others) such fantasies. This was such an interesting phenomenon, the range of fantasies is worth noting here.

Part of me would love to shoot down an F-16 flying over the orchard. I can see the paper, 'F-16 crashed in Ashfield today, cause unknown.' You know what I mean, then I just disappear for a while. (Arnold S.)

I had a dream the other night about taking off a cop. The brothers talk about that all the time. In fact, there are brothers here who have. I get a kick out of hearing it. (Hank)

I can remember a period of time in the early 70's...in conversations with good friends we would fantasize about very violent acts and I would argue...that in America where greed and political power are so highly organized that pacifism and nonviolence were pusillanimous... (Ralph G.)

There's certain corporations, times when I've thought I'll just blow up their computers, if they're going to stick all their information on their stupid little computer disks, let's just get rid of them...it would be so much more effective, we could just obliterate this stuff. (Alberta O.)

At times I've had fantasies about the Cabinet - if I had a machine gun, I would blow them away; they're totally vicious, lying, cheating,...like what Reagan says about the Communists, but he's wrong and I'm right - they are a plague. If I could blow them away
I would do it. (Phil C.)

I have fantasies when I see an army caravan on the highway and they stop at HoJo's - I should get out and destroy them...they're on the way to El Salvador and I might save a hundred lives. (Freda S.)

Despite the fantasies, most of these people have never been violent, and some don't think they ever will be. For Alberta O., it may be just a matter of time, since she says the only thing that has stopped her is a lack of technical knowledge about how to use or make violent tools. These fantasies may provide a healthy outlet for angry feelings that one cannot express towards adversaries in a nonviolent action. Most fantasies are about acts of property destruction, and harming people would be another consideration. However, if others performed the violent act it could be acceptable.

I have lots of rage at Catholicism for their anti-abortion, anti-gay stances. If the Pope were shot I wouldn't feel at all bad - it's a terrible thing to say, I know. (Jacob S.)

I know it's short sighted, but when someone tried to kill [Margaret] Thatcher, I really wouldn't have shed a tear if they had killed her; it's like one less fascist in the world to me... (Arnold S.)

Only one person acknowledged having used violence in his activism. Though his feelings at the time were undoubtedly sincere, Phil said at another point that the fascination with violence in his group of white male activists emerged in part from an overidentification with the North Vietnamese, the Cubans and the Panthers; the desire to prove "we were just as
revolutionary as they were." His story provides a good example of someone reaching a breaking point. It was 1970, and Bobby Seale had been arrested and charged with murder. The Black Panthers were promising to remain nonviolent unless something happened to Bobby, and police were harassing the black community constantly. Phil was up at Yale for a three day weekend of workshops for students.

I ran into this guy, Jim Q., a friend of mine from Boston. He was an Irish truck driver...He said to me, look, this nonviolence stuff is bullshit, man, there’s a war! I said, hey, Jim, that’s not right...this is what the Panthers want, you know about that. Then some guy comes up and says 'Did you see that Nixon started bombing Cambodia?’ So I turned to Jim and said, "You’re right." We went out on the New Haven Green, there had been a fire which had drawn some people from the campus and some cops. A lot of people lined up on one side of the Green and the cops were on the other. Jim says come on, grabs a bottle and threw it over the heads of our people and it crashes at the foot of the police, then I threw another bottle, then we had a riot. The cops wouldn’t come down, they just kept throwing tear gas, and I stood in the middle of the Green going bonkers from all this anger and rage, just yelling and throwing stones, the police threw tear gas, it was just like a war...There was this sense that Armageddon was at hand.

There is no doubt that many activists have felt as enraged as Phil did that day; why some opt for the use of violence and others don’t is not clear. More of these people may eventually turn to violence if met with more repression, as the historical development of the civil rights movement indicates. Still, the majority of activists in this study felt they were not going to 'dismantle the master's house
with the master's tools," in the words of Audre Lorde.

The Activist and Spirituality

Though there is no specific connection between nonviolence and spirituality, three areas are explored under this heading. The first has to do with a general sense of morality, faith and meaning which can underlie activism. Factors that sustain activists' spirits are also explored here. The second section briefly examines the role of traditional religion in activist life. The last part describes some of the ways people changed their lifestyles in the course of being part of a movement.

At least 18 people commented on the moral and personal significance of their activist work. This information provides a partial answer to the question of why some people become or remain politically active. The reasons range from a desire to make history, to speaking for those who cannot, taking a stand with dedication and pride and feeling "chosen" for activist work.

Morality, faith and meaning.

While attempting to explain to himself the reasons for continuing his venture into the nuclear testing area of the Pacific, Earle Reynolds says how strongly he was struck by a
quote from Milton Mayer about Nazi Germany, and what was required of a good Aryan during the height of Hitler's power.

What was he required to do? The answer: nothing. Just do nothing - be a good, law abiding citizen. Above all, don't be a troublemaker. (p. 54)

The urge to respond actively to perceived wrongs was shared by many activists. Jacob S. speaks for several people when he says,

I believe that there have to be people who intercede in history to change the course of events...one cannot passively observe social injustice and let the course of history go by without a conscious concerted effort to organize against it and change it.

For Grace K., that means challenging people in her everyday life as well as organizing actions, to be fighting on every front. She feels compelled to speak up.

If I miss this opportunity, they're going to think everybody thinks like them. Even if they argue...maybe I'm just letting them know that there are people who don't agree. Maybe somewhere down the line they'll change.

Activists feel this compulsion to act, to make a difference in history.

Not only does this mean speaking up, but helping others to speak or speaking for others who are unable to do so. Barbara Reynolds became an activist out of her own inner compulsion, but later she had to respond to the expectations of those who sent her money for the trial in the confidence that she and Earle were somehow representing them. Victor O. mentions how important it was for him to plant the seed of
protest in others, to be the contact person who enabled others to take their first steps.

One of the things that enables activists to put themselves out on the limb or keep going in the face of adversity is faith. For Grace K.,

there is a kind of faith and trust that the world can be different...in the beauty of people and people's ability to live a peaceful coexistence...that significant changes can be made. It really gives me a kind of spiritual comfort.

Ralph G., who believes in nonviolence as more of a strategy than Grace, has a more practical way of putting it. Although he does believe that people are basically good and valuable,

I don't expect a messiah in the form of a revolution or an outpouring of the human spirit...but I think one has to continue acting as though it's going to happen because that's the way one feels most comfortable with one's own life.

Activists do find a sense of dedication, satisfaction, purpose and pride in being part of movements. When Victor O. went to prison for draft resistance, he was prepared to die, and felt no regrets.

I felt I had been involved in the two most important social movements of the era in which I had lived. Even if I didn't leave the prison, and it's been a problem beyond prison, I felt that for whatever reason I had lived I had pretty much accomplished the purpose and that I didn't feel there was anything that needed correcting...If they had taken me to the basement and shot me it would not have bothered me.

Again, the theme that emerges here is the moral necessity and personal fulfillment of taking a stand and being true to one's beliefs, even if that means paying a
price. Victor sees it as a matter of human choices which all of us face only a few times in our lives. As a result of these moral choices,

you go from being a passive traveler on your life to entering into history in a way that affects your perception of things for the rest of your life. You become a person...You're making a choice that has something to do as much with yourself as the world. You're making a choice that will influence who you are and the kind of person you are.

Other activists feel there is no real choice. Tim doesn't understand why everyone opposed to the war is not in prison with him. Several activists tried to stop being active and could not - their sense of morality and personal identity wouldn't allow it. Particularly for those who follow nonviolence as a creed, there is a religious sense about their activism; being part of a divinely directed holy crusade, or one of the "chosen people" leading the masses into a better world. Nannie Washburn, who says she was a vanguard, explains that a vanguard is "a detective for the workin' class people" (p. 447). Victor 0. serves as a more serious example when he explains that one of his long term goals was to be a saint, like those he read about as a child. He has fantasies of quoting the Bible in court; he says while living in a Freedom house in the South he went to mass before sunrise, didn't drink and didn't date. "They advertised for civil rights workers and got something close to a monk." He feels family and others had a hard time rejecting him because
what he was doing was "so clear, so untainted by motivational things."

Perhaps not all activists would be so direct about their moral imperatives, but for both followers of nonviolence as a strategy and as a creed, a combination of faith and the need to take a stand seem to guide their actions. They are sustained in their actions by a variety of methods. One of the tangential questions which arose in this study was what things served to keep activists going in the face of adversity from others and all the negative effects activism can bring. These sustaining factors are reported here in order of the frequency with which they were mentioned by the 20 activists who commented on this issue. In a sense these factors represent the ways people manifested their personal versions of spirituality in their lives, though most are not overtly "religious."

By far the most popular vehicle for picking up spirits was song and music. This was particularly true in the civil rights movement, and is something the peace activists may have learned from that movement. Much of the inspiration for this music came from the black church. Sometimes actual songs of the church were used, but in the context of the civil rights movement, "goin' to that freedom land" took on a new meaning. Other times lyrics were changed or new songs were written to reflect the movement experiences. Bernice
Reagon says "The movement released this material, songs and prayers, created by Black people, that made sense used in an everyday practical way and in a position of struggle."

(p. 20). Songs kept people together, cried out for justice, spoke of determination, told of dreams and the sacrifices people made to achieve those dreams. They also helped people overcome hard times. Sheyann Webb describes more about the night of the first Selma march.

When I first went into that church that evening those people sitting there were beaten - I mean their spirit, their will was beaten. But when that singing started, we grew stronger. Each one of us said to ourselves that we could go back out there and face the tear gas, face the horses, face whatever Jim Clark could throw at us. (p. 107)

Similarly, Rachel West says,

White folks probably never understood how important our songs were to us, how they played such a role in binding us, bringing out what courage we had when things looked bleak. (p. 50)

Another major factor that kept people going was the example of others - role models of activists who had put themselves on the line for their beliefs. The most frequently mentioned names were Martin Luther King, Gandhi and Corbett Bishop (a WWII draft resister). Others spoke of Sacco and Vanzetti, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg and Big Bill Haywood. Most of these people were martyrs who had suffered imprisonment and/or death as a result of their political actions. Kitty K. and Alberta O. found inspiration in the "beauty and power" of the Nicaraguan people since the triumph
of the Revolution in 1979. In all cases the general feeling seemed to be "If these people can struggle so persistently and sacrifice so much, I can too."

One unexpected source of assistance was the news media. Editorials and newspaper articles gave support and encouragement to Earle Reynolds and Anne Braden in the 1950's at a time when the stands they took were extremely unpopular. Jim Peck says national publicity helped his group of striking prisoners win their mess hall desegregation battle in 1943. Jacob S. and Victor O. mentioned being in the middle of tense demonstrations, where the media presence was the main thing keeping the police from brutalizing the demonstrators. In the Pentagon demonstration that Jacob spoke of, the violence did start when the television cameras left. It makes sense that publicity can help to strengthen a cause that would otherwise remain isolated or unknown.

Besides support from the media, people were helped by the support and reinforcements that other people gave. Sometimes new activists would join a struggle because they were moved by what the demonstrators were doing. The four black students who sat in in Greensboro were encouraged by expressions of support from white and black bystanders. Arnold S. thinks times of depression and discouragement are part of a common cycle for activists, and what helps him is other activists who aren't at that low point on the cycle.
What continued to motivate some people was a sincere belief in the concept that "none of us is free until all of us are free" - a feeling that the suffering of others is our own, and we have an obligation to act against it.

Seeing the actual growth and change caused by the movement can provide a boost to activists. When Phil C. was heading a national student movement, he was encouraged by requests from other colleges about how to start chapters, and thus finding out what other people across the country were doing for the civil rights movement. Victor O. is most affected by how he has seen individuals change over time.

One of the things that keeps me going, personally, is that you see people change, and because of individual people changing you see situations change, and you know that eventually the world will change. We will never forget ideas, like racism is unacceptable, subjugation is unacceptable... once those ideas are out in the public domain... it's impossible to go back. Once you've seen that you can touch another person, you can't tell yourself somehow that I don't make a difference, I can't have an effect.

Other factors or methods people used to sustain themselves included humor, journal writing and weaving webs of yarn through police barricades during actions. Finally, though it seems redundant, some people are kept going by simply keeping going. They feel a need to try to change things, to not become cynical or bitter. Ella Baker explains this view.

I keep going because I don't see the productive value of being bitter. What else do you do? Do you get so
bitter that you give up, and when young people come and want to talk to me, to hear about the past and learn from it, am I to say, "Oh, forget it, go on about your business, I'm bitter..." So how do you keep on? I can't help it. I don't claim to have any corner on an answer, but I believe that the struggle is eternal. Somebody else carries it on. (pp. 92-93)

Religiosity

As expected, the interaction of religion and activism took a variety of forms for the 16 activists who responded. There were five followers of nonviolence as a creed who felt obliged to obey the higher law of God over human law if necessary when the two were in conflict. Sometimes a background in the black church, Judaism or Quaker ideals had an influence on their adherence to nonviolent activism.

There were seven people who explained that they did not believe in a private God or an organized religion. However, they embraced principles or ethics that were associated with religions, such as a repudiation of violence and killing, the importance of serving others, the brotherhood and sisterhood of human beings, a faith in the ability of people to change and a feeling of connection to the earth. This group included a mix of people from all parts of the nonviolent tactic/creed spectrum.

Most surprising was the strong reaction of four of the people for whom nonviolence was merely a tactic to the question about spirituality. They immediately said such
things as "I'm not a spiritual person," "I'm not at all spiritual," "I would never really use a word like 'spirituality'" and "I don't know if you call dialectical materialism a spirituality." Perhaps it was an issue of semantics, a reaction to the word, but it may relate to their strategic view of nonviolence as well. Their underlying personal commitment and priority may be to liberation and creating social change, so they are so focused on the ends that the means or the motivation are of less importance. However, this does not mean that tactical or violent struggle is always without a spiritual element; just that these people don't define it that way.

**Lifestyle changes**

In the section on morality, it was noted that some activists' lives can have a saintlike appearance. Along those lines, a phenomenon is noted of seven people who take on risks, burdens and sacrifices for "the Movement" beyond what others are willing to do. They may give up a degree of comfort and security that others aren't willing do to without. Bernice Reagon says,

The positive thing I experienced was the numbers of people who risked everything they had to work in that Movement. People of all classes. People who absolutely couldn't afford to take those stands, did. (p. 24)

There is a way that activists feel a sense of
responsibility for others. Hank, the black draft resister, had a chance to leave the country to play music. However, he felt it was not a real choice, because there were other brothers who had no jobs, no money, with court cases pending, or who were just becoming politically aware. He couldn't answer to them if he took off on his own, so he felt compelled to stay and accept the consequences of his own resistance.

In nonviolence theory this could be called "a willingness to undergo suffering." Theorists of oppression/liberation might call it a willingness to reject privileges because those privileges are not available to all people, and those privileges exist because others are oppressed. Dave Dellinger feels U.S. citizens "must set aside their own personal convenience in order to act as counterweights to America's criminal foreign policy" (p. 95). What conveniences activists give up for their beliefs varies a great deal. Alberta O. insists that if she has a baby, it will have to be a traveling baby "born with it's Samsonite" because she would not stop her political activities for a child. Juanita Nelson has written a poem called "Outhouse Blues," which includes the following verse.

Well I went out to the country to live a simple life
Get away from all that concrete and avoid some of that strife
Get off the backs of poor folks, stop supporting Uncle Sam
In all that stuff he's puttin' down, like bombing Vietnam
Oh, but it ain't easy, 'specially on a chilly night
When I beat it to the outhouse with my trusty dim
flashlight
The seat is absolutely frigid, not a BTU of heat
That's when I think the simple life is not for us elite (p. 14)

In a more serious vein, Arnold S. thinks one cannot
really believe in nonviolence as a means of social change and
also worry about a professional career, because the two
concerns come into conflict too often. Others also spoke of
the tension between professional development and activism.
While this is certainly a valid and important consideration,
the concern about abusing privilege sometimes extended into
realms of any kind of pleasure or indulgence. To Arnold S.,
taking a day off a month to meet with his men's group "feels
cushy, feels like being bourgeois." Jacob S. says his
political work comes in to his head and says "Nicaragua might
collapse tomorrow, how can you justify going to the movies
with a friend?" When asked to comment on anything he hadn't
been asked during the interview, Jacob raised the question,

Is it possible to be an organizer and be happy? I
sometimes think it's impossible for me. Sometimes I
think I'm cursed or doomed never to really have a
good relationship and that's the price I'll pay for
doing my political work.

This degree of lifestyle change is another factor that
can make it difficult for activists to fit into the
mainstream of society, and may contribute to feelings of
alienation.
Secondary Questions

Nonviolent ideas of import

In the literature review section, an overview was presented of the theory and practice of nonviolence. In the course of doing this study, ideas were noted which were mentioned as having an influence on or special importance to activists in their work. Almost every major concept of nonviolence was mentioned by at least one of the 21 activists whose comments were relevant.

A common theme that has been mentioned before was the desire to bring one's values into one's everyday life; a search for consistency between belief and action. For example, Arnold S. says "I don't think you can go to Nicaragua and see bomb shelters and then come back and pay your taxes - that's totally incomprehensible to me."

Following through on one's concept of truth despite the consequences was of major import. Anne Braden describes her insights about this process.

Almost every person with social conscience reaches a point in his life when he must decide whether he is willing to make a sacrifice for the things he believes in. When he makes that decision he casts the die as to whether he will be a dilettante, a parlor reformer - or a person of action. I have been thankful since that it never fell to my lot to face such a decision. Events made the decision for me. Sitting there in the jail that morning, I suddenly felt that now that what seemed like the worst had happened, it was too late to be afraid. When the cord that still tied me to security had snapped the night before, I had been set adrift.
But now, I felt that some way - somehow - I would land on my feet. (pp. 220-221)

For some, what stood out about nonviolence was its concepts about relationships between activists. Interpersonally that meant having relationships with people that were honest, sharing and loving - the realization of the beloved community. Five people mentioned the importance of working in a consensual, participatory way within groups. Victor 0. says "one of the profoundly nonviolent things done by religion in the last 300 years was when the Quakers in the 1600's abolished priesthood and said God was in all of us." Victor also raised a unique view of the participatory nature of nonviolence, which allows everyone; children, the elderly the infirm to take part. In his view, violent struggle tends to allow only the younger and healthier people to actively participate.

The majority of activists, at least ten, felt nonviolence spoke to them strongly about the way they would relate to adversaries. Nonviolence assumes that people act out of ignorance and are not truly ill-willed. Barbara Deming says a time in history has arrived when people can no longer afford to think of others as outsiders. Victor 0. says,

The whole thing about hating the sin but loving the sinner is just such a stock phrase but it really is true. The Catholic Worker has a wonderful expression about what kind of world they want to create; a world in which it's easier for people to be good.
From this perspective, those who believe in nonviolence as a creed, such as John Lewis,

knew that probably the most powerful and potent weapon that people have literally no defense for is love, kindness. That is, whip the enemy with something that he doesn’t understand. (p. 79)

Changing people’s hearts and minds was most important.

For those who call nonviolence a strategy only, a change of an adversary’s behavior was also an important part of nonviolence. Freda S. says,

Sometimes you find those people aren’t responding, so you have to organize in other ways - there are power plays that get played out which aren’t just changes of consciousness. Maybe a certain number of people have a change in perspective, but there also are other structures you can fall back on.

Among those structures are legal measures or public pressure.

Only those for whom nonviolence was a creed mentioned the values of non-retaliation and a willingness to undergo suffering. In Anne Braden’s case it is a matter of personal values.

I felt I could not live with myself for the rest of my life feeling that I had killed a person - no matter who it was, and even if he had intended to kill me. I found that one of those things I had always believed in the abstract I still believed in the concrete; that if someone planned to kill me I would rather be killed myself than be the one who killed. (p. 132)

Jim Peck and Bayard Rustin recounted stories of refusing to retaliate while being beaten. Both men felt that response had only positive results. Peck says, "My nonviolence put a
number of the onlookers on my side. Had I fought back, the resulting tussle would have obscured completely the unjustified beating of the Negro" (p. 29). As for Rustin, I left the courthouse believing all the more strongly in the nonviolent approach. I am certain that I was addressed as "Mister" (as no Negro is ever addressed in the South), that I was assisted by those three men, and that the elderly gentleman interested himself in my predicament because I had, without fear, faced the four policemen and said, "There is no need to beat me. I offer you no resistance." (p. 7)

Victor O. is less willing to acknowledge that such behavior actually converts people in power. He says it neutralizes them and "makes them less quick on the trigger if nothing else."

Six activists mentioned complying with the nonviolent norm of informing police and other authorities of their plans for demonstrations and pickets, which reduced suspicions and enhanced trust. Interestingly, an associate of Sammy Younge's says Sammy's group "played the game in 1965 to a degree that militant black youths are no longer willing to accept" by cooperating with authorities in this way. (p. 154)

Also strongly emphasized by six activists was the importance of not cooperating with authorities in order to maintain one's self-respect and dignity. This was especially important for people who were put in jail against their will, who refused to cooperate by fasting, not working, or refusing to wear a prison uniform.
The last nonviolent value that was mentioned by five activists concerned means and ends. There was agreement among the believers in nonviolence as a creed that creating a beloved community and an open and peaceful society had to be done through methods of love, peace, dialogue and adjusting one's lifestyle so it did not require using more of the world's resources than one was entitled to.

**Tactic/Creed**

One of the tasks of this study was to differentiate the voices of those who followed nonviolence as a creed from those for whom nonviolence was primarily a strategy. The differences in conscientious versus pragmatic nonviolence were listed on Table 1. The comments of the 21 activists who spoke to this issue conformed to the breakdown described in that table. Of the 21, seven are classified as followers of nonviolence as a tactic, nine as believers in nonviolence as a creed and five as being in the middle of the spectrum. People were classified by the way their comments fit into Table 1, as the following analysis illustrates. Most people's responses fell into one of the two frameworks fairly clearly.

Those for whom nonviolence was a way of life emphasized self examination and individual action. Anne Braden says of herself and her husband Carl, "we were simply two people who
believed, rightly or wrongly, in certain things and had to act on our beliefs" (p. 242). The question "Have I behaved well?" was the most important measure of the effectiveness of an action.

Those who viewed nonviolence as a tactic were more likely to give a societal analysis of events and the need for change. They were critical of the capitalist system calling it "organized violence" and "the rottenist thing on the earth." Ella Baker warns us not to trust people in power, and she has grave reservations about what can be accomplished by political parties. The measure of an effective action was whether or not conditions had changed. As Merrill Proudfoot said, "We tended to think less of our Christian witness and more in terms of winning the game by whatever means should prove effective" (p. 194).

The SNCC credo adopted in 1960 urged people to "remain loving and forgiving even in the midst of hostility. It matches the capacity of evil to inflict suffering with an even more enduring capacity to absorb evil, all the while persisting in love." In other words, this means avoiding doing wrong. However, Ella Baker, the main organizer for SNCC says,

I frankly could not have sat and let someone put a burning cigarette on the back of my neck as some young people did. Whether this is right or wrong or good or bad, I have already been conditioned, and I have not seen anything in the nonviolent technique that can dissuade me from challenging somebody who wants to step on my neck. If necessary, if they hit
me, I might hit them back. (p. 82)

Her comment not only reflects her personal view, but the organizational shift that SNCC made in the mid 60's concerning the importance of self-defense. The comment illustrates the previously researched idea that in pragmatic nonviolence, not being wronged is often of greater importance than not doing wrong.

For followers of conscientious nonviolence, the commitment is a long term one that can affect every aspect of their lives. Kitty finds the process self perpetuating. "Once you make a decision through a nonviolent philosophy, you get to the next one, and it kind of holds you into it. It's very luring, once you start operating that way. I think that's why people sit in jail for so long." Wally and Juanita Nelson, now in their 70's, have constantly refined what it means in their lives to not use more than their share of the world's resources, which is one way they express their belief in nonviolence.

Phil C. was always suspicious of the people in the peace movement, "because I saw them as namby pamby, old ladies in tennis shoes, liberals, and we were out there in the streets organizing. They would have you sign petitions, that fluffy stuff." This and other comments by those who focus on nonviolence as a strategy spoke to a view of nonviolence as a temporary measure, with the real object being the use of
whatever worked best to create change. Though nonviolence was seen as useful in some situations, its use was questioned over and over again in countries responding to repression and militarism. Alberta O. thinks violence can be a catalyst to longer term nonviolent strategies like education. She sees violence as a necessary kind of evil, because we don’t always have 10,000 years to wait around to change something. We sometimes need to take steps that are more immediate and perhaps more morally and philosophically compromising. It’s not easily defendable or as admirable. That’s the way it goes.

Victor O., as a believer in nonviolence as a creed, feels that every conflict can be solved nonviolently. He says you have to love and see the measure of truth in whatever you’re trying to change. "I think any member of a society who seeks to understand and change it will come to the same conclusion...that there is some nonviolent way to do it." People who have an extraordinary amount of courage, genius, emotional and physical health are the ones Victor feels can perceive the nonviolent possibilities in a situation.

Hank, who clearly sees nonviolence as only a tactic, has a very different view.

Power makes no concessions unless there are demands made. I’ve been reading Frederick Douglass. You can’t win anything unless you have some power behind you, and that does mean violence. Not because you want violence, but because it’s a part of the power. (p. 107)
Though not all those who adhere to nonviolence as a strategy only would agree about the necessity of violence, many would agree that conflict is to be provoked as a means of creating change.

The differing views on conflict result in different methods of dealing with adversaries. The SNCC statement about love mentioned earlier defines the need for an attitude of nonretaliation for conscientious followers of nonviolence. John Lewis says, "The Movement during that period, in my estimation, was the finest example of what you could refer to as Christian love" (p. 3). The idea was to win over opponents through conversion, often through one on one contact. Kitty K. feels that one has a real potential to change the people with whom one has intimate contact - "the people you live with and work with, and you see on the streets every day, who read about you in the newspaper."

However, many others found coercion an equally acceptable means of creating change, and sometimes the only one available. Negotiations and public protests failed to desegregate lunch counters. Merrill Proudfoot says,

It was finally the economic boycott or threat of it which was effective in the key cities. This means that - much as we may prefer the contrary - the issue was not settled on the basis of morality, but on the basis of economics. (p. 194)

Most often there is a religious or philosophical base to the use of nonviolence for those who see it as a way of life.
Tim acknowledges that his position on war is more moral than political, even though it does have political consequences. An important concept for some people was justice. Kitty K. quotes a Hebrew phrase:

Tzedik, Tzedik, tirdof...justice, justice, thou shalt pursue. I feel like that kind of catches most of it for me...most of what guides my respect for nonviolent approaches. If I try to seek justice in everything I do there's no way that I can take any kind of stance that's not nonviolent.

Personal integrity guides Arnold S. through his struggles as a tax resister.

I don't feel someone can talk me out of it...if you're being true to what you believe then you can't pay for it [war]. It's gotten that simple for me. For some people, nonviolence as a lifestyle is that simple and that deep - it's a Truth.

Similarly, Grace K. refers to nonviolence as something she feels rooted in and believes in.

Others are more likely to use nonviolence because it is expedient in their given situation or historical time. Ralph G. says,

I think I was nonviolent more in terms of tactics at a gut level, maybe also through fear...We all like to think of ourselves as noble and acting on principle, but I had not thought deeply enough about Gandhian principles of nonviolence.

A number of people identified themselves as being in the process of questioning pacifism and nonviolence. Jacob S. was involved in nonviolent civil disobedience because it was a way to organize. Although he still respects it as a tactic, and thinks it has its place, he doesn't see it as
appropriate for every setting. Other activists were quite clear that they never saw themselves as pacifists, and Phil C. says if there were some revolutionary military base set up, he would go there. Even Arnold S., who leans towards the nonviolence as a creed side of the spectrum says, "I'll continue in nonviolent tactics here, but I also believe that going out and physically trashing a recruitment center could be covered under nonviolence." Finally, Alberta O. makes it clear towards the end of our time together exactly where she stands. "You know why this interview is so short? Because I'm just not nonviolent!" Although she has never been other than nonviolent, she still sees nonviolence as only a tactic.

These findings further reinforce the distinction between the approaches to nonviolence, and the need for understanding between the followers of each approach.

Other life factors influencing activism

One of the limitations of this study was the inability to screen out other life factors that could influence an activist's experiences and the effects of those experiences. In an effort to explore that topic, a question was included in the interviews about what activists saw as other major factors intervening during the same time period as their activism which may have influenced some of the effects they reported. Only seven study subjects are represented in these
comments.

General life experience and getting older was seen as important to three people. Reading about and observing events was important to Ralph G., as was leaving student life and becoming a teacher. He also mentioned moving to a part of the country where attitudes he took for granted were very much in the minority as an important factor.

Two people mentioned being influenced by their children, who are also activists. The challenges and the dialogues which the children brought to their parents about political strategy and lifestyle choices made a difference. Grace K. and her husband were unusually open to such dialogue, and Grace describes a two or three year period of a family process where "every night we had these intense political discussions...tearing apart everything we did...everything about us was challenged to the very core." She feels good about having been so open, and feels a lot of growth and development resulted which would have been impossible had she been more closed to her daughters' input.

Another influential factor was personal counseling people received. Interestingly, the two therapies mentioned, co-counseling and AA, are community based peer counseling approaches, which may be more suited to an activist perspective than traditional one on one therapy. Co-counseling also has a strong emphasis on societal analysis
and oppression/liberation issues. Though Jacob S. did not find AA to be a radicalizing experience, he would not be an activist without it. "It's just that being able to walk, you can engage in the race," he says, and sobriety has enabled him to be more fully functioning.

The final important turning point for three people was coming out as a gay man or lesbian, which not only gave a more day to day understanding of oppression, but also was an empowering move towards a truer self-identity. Jacob S. says,

> When you're not a person and you're in the closet, you're not who you really are and you're not acting in your own best interests - you can't be an organizer. How can you possibly lead and engage in liberation struggles when you're not really liberated?

To take a more public stand about something as socially unpopular as being lesbian or gay can increase one's ability to take political stands about other things. Actually, the influence goes both ways, as many people have come out after being politically active for a period of time.

> In fact, this brief sampling indicates that no area of life, including political activism, can be looked at in total isolation. It is logical that there is an interaction between the effects of activism and the effects of one's family, work, friends, schooling, therapy or any number of other arenas.
Conclusion

Clearly this study generated a tremendous amount of data about a variety of topics. Although there are patterns common to many activists, it is evident that nonviolent activism is a complex experience, and it affects people in many different ways. However, there is a relationship between the historical context of one's activism and the effects experienced which relates back to the movement chronologies described in Chapter II.

People active in the mid 1940's to early 1960's seem more likely to follow nonviolence as a creed. There are a number of possible explanations for this phenomenon. One is the recent example of Gandhi in his struggle against British imperialism which was brought to civil rights and peace workers in the United States. These people felt hopeful and idealistic; there was a sense of being pioneers, part of a new experiment in social change. For many it was the first time they stood up and said "No!" which was in itself tremendously empowering. At the same time, these activists were in such a minority that their motivation to participate in such strange activities had to come from strong philosophical, religious or moral bases.

The United States government, police and lunch counter owners were unfamiliar with and surprised by nonviolent
methods, were unsure of how to respond, and therefore the early CORE integration efforts often succeeded without incident. For all of these reasons, it seems to be true that activists from this early period not only saw nonviolence as a creed but were also more likely to experience the positive effects of activism described in this research.

People who came to nonviolence from the 1960's on were joining growing mass movements. With nonviolence being more socially acceptable and common, one no longer needed a philosophical justification for engaging in demonstrations or acts of civil disobedience. The motivations could be many - being encouraged by movement leaders to participate, curiosity, peer pressure, frustration and urgency over the Vietnam War, the worsening economy or the obvious forms of racial inequality. Participants only needed to agree to a set of behavioral guidelines for a specific action, like not hitting policemen back or not carrying weapons, without being indoctrinated into a nonviolent way of life. They could be part of a mass without ever belonging to a small group of activists. The United States society was changing rapidly during this period, and raised many hopes. However, United States government officials had clear limitations about how far they would allow things to change, and grew more sophisticated in their response to nonviolence while police grew more repressive. Activists began to face more frequent
beatings, arrests, infiltrations and assassinations. Impatience grew over the slowness of major change. As "the political became personal," racial and sexual conflicts grew within activist groups. Therefore, it is from activists in this period that the researcher began to find many more negative effects of nonviolent action on activists.

From the interviews and the researcher's own experience, it seems that younger activists who came to nonviolence since the late 1970's are less easily categorized. Those who follow nonviolence as a creed tend to be white middle class peace activists. There is a lot of questioning of nonviolent philosophy and strategy going on, partly because of the Third World revolutions occurring in the Mideast, Latin America and Africa. Many people are resigned to using nonviolence because they see no option in this country, but they do not necessarily advocate nonviolence in all situations at all times. No strong mass movement, either civil rights or peace focused, exists in the U.S. today, so the future of nonviolence and its effects remains uncertain.
CHAPTER V
DATA SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RAMIFICATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine the positive and negative effects of nonviolent activism on activists in the United States peace and civil rights movements from 1943 to the present. The areas of particular interest were effects on activists' self-image and emotions, their relationships with others, their role in the larger society and their spirituality. Related questions included the influence of social background on the form and meaning of activism, and the dynamics of nonviolence as a creed versus nonviolence as solely a tactic.

Findings were derived from 22 documentary studies and nine interviews conducted with a diverse group of activists. Respondents usually had several years of experience with a variety of nonviolent methods, and most had spent time in jail for these activities. The coding of documents and interviews was guided by the literature on nonviolent theory and practice, the history of the peace and civil rights movements, and others' research on the effects of activism on activists.

This chapter presents four profiles of typical activists
encountered in the study, summarizes the major study findings, discusses the implications of those findings for political movements, educators and therapists, and suggests topics for further research.

Profiles of Activists

Although individual activists have their own personal histories and experiences, there are enough similarities to begin to form portraits of prototypical activists. Study participants contributed anywhere from four pages to entire books about their activist experiences; the separate pieces of information were put together to form the patterns and themes explored in Chapter IV. Those patterns and themes were then drawn together to form these portraits of activists. Rather than discuss trends in an abstract manner, the conclusions of the study come alive more clearly when presented through people's stories. These stories are collages of the study respondents according to their stance on nonviolence and the time period during which they became active. They are a bit stereotypical in order to draw a sharp contrast, and were embellished by information the researcher had based on her personal experiences with some of the study participants. The use of she and he is varied so as not to imply one sex or another as represented by the
ling time believer in nonviolence as a way of life

This person got involved in the civil rights or peace movement in the late 40's or 50's, and it is likely that s/he was active in both movements to some extent. S/he can be white or black. His/her first exposure to nonviolence came through the teachings and example of Gandhi, and s/he was anxious to apply those ideas to struggles in the United States. S/he is likely to define him/herself as a pacifist. Her actions were extremely daring and dangerous, especially considering that authorities had never been challenged before in this way. If s/he was in the civil rights movement, s/he engaged in sit-ins, bi-racial challenges to segregation on buses, in amusement parks, public swimming pools and clubs. If s/he was in the peace movement, s/he became a draft resister and/or a tax resister, and engaged in acts of civil disobedience at military installations. S/he is likely to have spent from a month to three years in jail for these activities, and s/he used this opportunity in jail to do education and organizing there.

His attraction to nonviolence is based on religious beliefs or on a strong philosophical stance which is consistently applied to every action. Though her actions are highly confrontational, authorities are viewed and treated as
good human beings. In some cases s/he may strongly believe in noncooperation with authorities. From his strong base of belief he remains undaunted, and he has continued his activism for the past 30-40 years. Her belief in nonviolence may have led her to examine all aspects of her personal life more closely, and to have made changes in her work, her close relationships and her use of money that involved some degree of sacrifice of privilege.

The effects of his nonviolent activism have been largely positive. Most importantly, s/he feels good about being true to her/himself and her/his beliefs. Having faced all sorts of provocative situations with authorities, s/he fears very little. S/he has had strong feelings of closeness and community with other activists with whom s/he has stayed connected over the years. His years of experience have taught him that the struggle is more than a lifetime one, so his only desire is to do his part. S/he often serves as an example for others, and may do trainings and workshops for younger activists. S/he is proud to have been part of a vanguard, but continues to learn from others. S/he maintains high levels of optimism about the prospect of changing individuals and the world, though there are passing moments of doubt and weariness.

The most negative effects of her activism have been from being so outside of the mainstream of society. S/he may have
been ostracized by family, friends and neighbors. S/he may have lost jobs or property because of his/her beliefs. There is a sense in which s/he lives "on the edge" quite a bit, always ready for harassment from government or law enforcement officials. If this activist is a woman, she may have had conflicts with her companion activists over sexism and heterosexism as those issues came to the forefront in the late 1960's and 70's. But by and large, this activist tends to de-accentuate the social differences between people, feeling more of a bond with humanity in general and shying away from a focus on divisions by sex or race or class.

Recently active believer in nonviolence as a way of life

This person became active in nonviolence in the 1970's or 80's, most likely through the anti-nuclear or disarmament movements. S/he is likely to be white, college educated, and from a middle or upper middle class background. She was aware of the earlier peace and civil rights movements, and her parents may have taken her to rallies when she was a child. More likely s/he was too young to be involved, or was living a more traditional existence at that time. S/he may have been influenced by contact with older long-time activists. S/he has attended many demonstrations and rallies as part of an affinity group, and s/he may have worked as an organizer. S/he has engaged in acts of civil disobedience a
few times, and has spent a few hours to a couple of weeks in jail. For him, the jail experience was extremely difficult and draining, though partially empowering. S/he believes that one must build a peaceful world through peaceful means, and in recognizing each person's goodness. Her values draw her to nonviolence in theory and practice. S/he tries to communicate with police and judges as peers and likes to use the court system as a means of making political statements. As a woman, she is likely to have participated in both mixed and all women's actions, but her primary political contacts have been with other whites. In some instances, s/he has applied nonviolent principles to her/his life concerning work and money, but in most cases s/he is unwilling to have her/his political activities interfere with a professional career, which s/he considers to be part of his/her political work, whether that is as a therapist, artist, educator or lawyer. His political activism may come in spurts or focus on a particular action, and he takes breaks when he fears getting burned out.

S/he has experienced a number of positive effects from his/her activism. She has increased her confidence, and has learned new organizing skills from her activist work. S/he has also learned to use democratic process in groups, and has learned things about United States culture and history that s/he never learned in school. He has come into contact with
different kinds of people in the course of his political work, and has felt part of an activist community. Her time in court and jail gave her a sense of what it's like for disenfranchised people in this country, and she feels stronger in her dealings with authority figures. His political work brings a greater sense of meaning and significance to his life.

In the course of her activism she has had periods of depression or despair, fearing that there will be a nuclear war before activists can turn the tide or that major institutions will never change. S/he has been part of group conflicts within the activist community, especially around issues of sexism. S/he is bothered by the fact that the peace movement is so white and middle class, but s/he isn't sure what to do about it.

More recently, s/he may have become involved in issues concerning Central America and South Africa. Her parents are not happy about her political involvement, but they are either supportive or quiet about it. Most of his friends are activists, and that helps him feel more accepted. However, she is not going to push her activism beyond a certain point that would put her in jail for a long time, jeopardize her job or her financial security. In essence, he wants to maintain some of his privilege, and believes he can be most effective by reaching more people in the mainstream with his
ideas and values, rather than "living on the edge."

The follower of nonviolence as solely a tactic or strategy

This person came to nonviolent struggles since the mid 1960's, and was primarily involved in oppression/liberation struggles, though s/he may have had some contact with the peace movement as well. S/he is more likely to be from a lower middle or working class background. His exposure to nonviolence came at trainings or preparations for mass actions, where he was taught a bit of nonviolent philosophy and role played how to react to harassment from authorities in a nonviolent manner. S/he heard more about nonviolent ideas in meetings or rallies or though reading. S/he wasn't sure what s/he thought about it, but gave it a try. S/he went to civil disobedience actions and marches and followed the nonviolent guidelines, but sometimes found s/he could not agree with what movement leaders were saying. It seemed to him that people were passively lying down and taking beatings or waiting for police to drag them away to be arrested. His time in jail was frustrating and he wasn't sure what it accomplished.

However, it felt great to him/her to be taking some direct action, and s/he enjoyed the confrontation with authorities. S/he had a lot of energy, and liked working closely with a group of similarly minded people. S/he felt
that activist work was extremely significant in her/his life, and it was much more exciting than a regular job or school to be out in the streets dealing with life and death issues, organizing people, trying to change history.

But, after a while, he began to face a lot of negative effects from his activist work. She would find herself depressed, cynical, tired. S/he had nowhere to direct all the rage s/he was feeling about the slowness of change and the way activists were being mistreated. S/he was worn down by intragroup conflicts over tactics and philosophy and race and sex. S/he grew impatient with and mistrusting of political processes, and of the movement leadership at times. S/he wanted to see more radical change happen, and felt many activists were too limited in their strategies. As s/he heard about violent revolutions in other countries s/he began to challenge the effectiveness of nonviolent tactics in all situations. At this point, s/he went one of three ways.

S/he may have become totally disenchanted with the social change process and dropped out of activism, either to become a marginal member of society or to rejoin the mainstream, rejecting all that had just taken place in his/her life. S/he may have joined a group that did not support nonviolent philosophy and tactics in an effort to create change. Or, s/he may have continued to do organizing from a perspective of seeing nonviolent action as the only
possibility in the United States at this time, while waiting for other opportunities to arise. In this last case, s/he is truly using nonviolent action as a strategy for organizing in the hope that others will become more radical in time.

The half tactic/half creed activist

There are those who are in the middle of the spectrum, unable to be classified as either believers in nonviolence as a way of life or as a tactic only. This person may be active in the peace or civil rights movement, and usually has a good understanding of nonviolence. S/he is more likely to be from a lower middle or working class background. She has several doubts and questions because of her experiences which leave her unable to embrace nonviolence totally, although many of her values lean in that direction. S/he wants to believe that people are basically good, that dramatic social changes can occur through nonviolent means, that individuals can make a difference. S/he would find it personally difficult to engage in any acts of violence towards another person, and s/he doesn’t want to see people killed or injured.

However, there are things that hold him back from being completely comfortable with nonviolence. He may believe that it insults his dignity to allow someone to be violent towards him without retaliating. S/he may have seen social change occur more because of economic or legal pressure than because
of some change of heart on the part of store or nuclear power plant owners. S/he may be discouraged at the fact that so few people seem willing to make the sacrifices and take the risks necessary to make an effective nonviolent mass movement. S/he may be too cynical to believe that people will act out of more than self interest. S/he may have seen what nonviolent revolutions have brought in other countries and may question whether nonviolence is applicable to all groups under all circumstances of repression.

This in between state leads to some mixed effects from political activism. On the one hand, s/he finds it personally empowering, a source of new learning, hopefulness and challenges. S/he is excited about the experiences s/he's had working in groups and s/he feels like s/he is breaking new ground in social change work, doing something significant.

However, s/he is plagued by questions of effectiveness, overwhelmed by the enormity and power of the existing system, at times mad, impatient and feeling the urgency of needed changes, guilty about not doing enough, or feeling somewhat isolated in her/his activism. S/he is not sure what form her/his future activism will take, though s/he is quite sure her/his primary identity will be as an activist. In other cases, the despair or tension of possibly having to become more radical may cause him/her to drop out of activism and
retreat to a more mainstream life.

**Major Findings**

Although this study generated a great deal of data, there are four major outcomes of note which are summarized below.

The first is that nonviolent theory and practice can include many more approaches than the existing literature usually indicates. The spectrum involves seeing nonviolence as a creed or way of life on one end, and seeing nonviolence as only a tactic or strategy on the other end. The literature indicates that the former approach is more likely to appeal to people who are affluent, or active in the peace movement, as in Goldenberg’s (1978) differentiation of the concerns of the affluent from those of the disenfranchised. The norms of Gandhian nonviolence are primarily concerned with self examination, personal integrity, interpersonal closeness, avoiding wrongdoing, converting opponents and building alternative societal institutions. These concerns match those which Goldenberg (1978) associates with affluent social change agents, which indicates that one would find more nonviolent philosophers among the affluent. Similarly, he describes the concerns of the disenfranchised as community organizing, bread and butter issues of survival, quickly
increasing economic and political power and group self determination. Those issues coincide most closely with the pragmatic view of nonviolence and with the concerns of the civil rights movement.

In fact, in this study, the researcher found more adherents of the view of nonviolence as purely a strategy among poor and working class activists and those who primarily worked on liberation movements of oppressed groups. However, the previous chapter explained one factor which changes this hypothesis, and that is the historical time period in which someone became active. Regardless of class background or race or movement, activists who came to nonviolence in the period from 1943-1965 were more likely to adopt nonviolence as a creed, whereas activists since that time are more likely to relate to nonviolence as a strategy, or are in the middle of the spectrum. Therefore, the conventional association of nonviolence as a creed with the affluent and the peace movement and nonviolence as a tactic only with the poor and the civil rights movement needs to be modified according to the time period of the activism.

The study also confirmed previous research which indicated a number of positive effects stemming from involvement in nonviolent action for social change. These positive effects can be categorized under the headings of personal, intragroup or spiritual empowerment. These effects
result from taking direct action towards change, working within an activist group, seeing results from one's efforts contradicting old patterns of helplessness or powerlessness, being part of making history and pushing personal limitations. The crucial element seemed to be taking action, and the nonviolent component was secondary to that in many cases.

The study uncovered many more negative effects to nonviolence than have been previously reported in the literature. These effects could be described as personal, group or spiritual disempowerment. The negative effects resulted from the slowness of change, the repressive responses from authorities, personal or political differences between activists, the pressures of living outside the mainstream, a lack of emotional outlets for activists, and the enormity of the challenge of changing society.

The last major finding of the study concerns the interplay of one's stance on nonviolence and the effects one experiences. People for whom nonviolence is a creed experience more positive and few negative effects of activism, whereas people for whom nonviolence is solely a tactic have a very mixed and sometimes negative experience in activism. One reason for this is that the norms of traditional Gandhian nonviolence can lead to a very clear and consistent set of behaviors when followed as a way of life.
so there is not much of a contradiction between one's activism and the rest of one's life. Also, a religious or philosophical grounding in nonviolence acts as an important sustaining factor through hard times. Followers of nonviolence as purely a strategy are focused on seeking immediate results and are more affected by the frustrations and disappointments. It is also true that people active in liberation struggles have met with greater repression by authorities than most peace movement activists, and thus have more reason to have negative reactions.

Ramifications of the Research for Various Groups

In the section describing the significance of the study (Chapter I) it was noted that the outcomes of this study could be useful to several groups in their work of fostering human potential. The three groups especially noted were therapists, educators and other activists. The following pages make some beginning connections between the study findings and the work of those groups.
Therapists

Over the past 15-20 years, some therapists have learned to incorporate a larger societal analysis into their understanding and treatment of problems that used to be viewed as purely intra or interpersonal. There are at least four ways that these study findings might be useful to those in the helping professions.

In some cases, a nontraditional but not implausible therapeutic approach could include a client becoming involved in political action. Clearly there are many therapeutic benefits to activism, from enhanced self esteem to a greater sense of meaning, and activism could benefit those who are suffering from oppression or who are feeling helpless about the inevitability of nuclear war, for example. The study results indicate that nonviolent activism can have a healing effect on people who have suffered injustices, and since therapy is about healing, therapists should be interested in any activity that brings about that end.

The study results can enhance therapists' understanding of people struggling with issues of oppression or world violence and the difficulties encountered in that work. The most insightful and direct comments about the negative effects of activism came from two therapists who saw many activists during the 60's, Robert Coles (1964) and Alvin Poussaint (1966). Some of these insights can apply not only
to activists, but to any people living in an oppressive and violent society. It can help therapists see, who in turn can help their clients understand, that many of the feelings people have are not due to personal weakness or failings, but are commonly experienced in reaction to an oppressive system.

Within the philosophy of nonviolence there are particular mores concerning such things as developing a sense of personal morality, dealing with fear and anger, separating evil from the evildoer and non-injury of opponents. Each of these mores implies a life stance that can go beyond nonviolent actions into one's everyday life. Therapists could benefit from an examination of nonviolent teachings about intrapersonal and interpersonal behavior, seeing what could be applied within the therapeutic setting. In fact, a number of therapeutic approaches do reflect nonviolent teachings in their methods, though not necessarily intentionally. For example, co-counseling talks about separating the person (i.e. evildoer) from the "pattern" (evil), suggesting that people relate to the best of every human being while being rather relentless with the patterns which interfere with the emergence of that best side. Similarly, a number of therapies suggest going out and doing something risky that one is terrified of doing in order to conquer one's fear, not letting the fear be paralyzing.

Finally, there is probably much more to be learned from
an exploration of what sustains people through difficult times. This is another area that could have applications far beyond the activist world. Whether it be spirituality, music, community or examples of others, it would be worthwhile to further examine the constructive forces that aid people under stress.

Educators

There are three important implications for education which result from the study findings.

Education about nonviolence in any context needs to include a variety of perspectives about nonviolence, including viewpoints from all parts of the tacite/creed spectrum. It is misleading and incomplete to teach only the traditional Gandhian approach to nonviolence. Broadening the teaching allows each person to decide for herself what her values are, and allows for a broader base of people who could participate in nonviolent activities. It also gives a more truthful representation of the reality of the activist experience.

Most of the history examined in this dissertation is not generally included in school curricula. While endless hours are spent memorizing facts and figures about wars, relatively little attention is paid to the individuals and groups who have used nonviolence to make or change history. A
curriculum designed to teach this history could enhance feelings of hopefulness and powerfulness for creating change, create alternative models of conflict resolution, and enhance a student's understanding of "the people's history of the United States." Such a program could include films, music and speakers from nonviolent movements in recent history.

A strong case was made for the educational value of actually participating in nonviolent action. People learned new historical and technical information, organizing skills, how to see the world from others' eyes who were different from themselves, and got a first hand civics lesson in the governmental and justice systems. Movement for a New Society used to end their general training programs by having participants plan and carry out a nonviolent action about a given political issue of the day. Such an experience incorporated into the general educational system could be extremely valuable, and could match the goals of education as cited by Postman and Weingartner (1969), Freire (1970) and Dewey (1940) in the first chapter of this dissertation.

Current political movements

Although there are individual exceptions, the majority of peace activists follow nonviolence as a creed, and the majority of civil rights activists followed nonviolence as purely a strategy. It follows logically that a movement
focused on peace, meaning no wars, no draft and no weapons would develop a natural bond with the ideals of nonviolence. Peace movement activists are essentially seeking methods of conflict resolution that do not involve the use of violence. The actions of the peace movement have focused historically around particular wars, nuclear testings, and military and arms buildups. Its popular peak was reached during the Vietnam War. Nonviolence attempts to address violence at a basic systemic level, suggesting mores for individual behavior and group struggle which do not involve the use of violence. The methods and ideas of the peace movements did not change much during the period of this study, and there was not a serious internal split or crisis within the movement over the use of nonviolence. Those who for whatever reason were unable to continue supporting a nonviolent stance dropped out of peace movement activities, or switched their attention to liberation struggles of oppressed people. The current peace movement as a whole is not concretely challenging existing societal institutions, such as the capitalist system. Even the most conservative government official must acknowledge his/her support for a general goal of "peace." Thus, the demonstrations and civil disobedience actions are tolerated by the United States government. Two exceptions are the draft registration and tax resistance movements, which encourage complete noncooperation with the
government. Members of these movements are being actively pursued and harassed by government authorities, particularly those who are public about their activities, because their example and message pose more of a threat to authorities. However, until these movements expand to include larger numbers of the population, it is unlikely that radical changes will result from peace movement efforts in the United States.

Civil rights organizers truly mobilized a nonviolent army in the 1950's and 60's, whose persistance, widespread popularity and momentum posed a real threat to and put additional pressure on existing institutions. United States policies towards blacks changed somewhat because the costs of maintaining the status quo became too great.

The trends that developed within the civil rights movement parallel the problems encountered by individual activists using nonviolence as a strategy. Internal conflicts plagued the movement from early on, and those philosophical splits mushroomed in the 60's, specifically about the interpretation and use of nonviolence. Many considered the Birmingham church bombing and the assassination of Martin Luther King to be the public's only response to the nonviolent movement. Questions of effectiveness, passivity, self defense and self determination eventually made a unified civil rights movement an
impossibility.

Based on his study of the suffragist movement, Lakey (1968) has some observations about under what conditions an explicitly pacifist ethic, or "nonviolence as a way of life" emerges in a movement's development. He feels that when

a movement's ideological thrust is tied to class-consciousness, race-consciousness, or some other particular group identity...it is unlikely to develop a nonviolent ideology no matter how heroic is its use of nonviolent action. (p. 42)

Therefore, for activists who came to the civil rights movement after 1965, the techniques of nonviolent action had the meaning of release from a constricted social situation within the context of an ideology of anti-racism, rather than pacifism. Lakey is saying a hierarchy of concerns develops, so when liberation from racial oppression is primary, peaceful means become secondary. The only exception he sees is when a movement is linked ideologically to what he calls a "universalistic tradition," i.e. pacifism, and the means are explicitly interpreted in the light of that universalistic tradition. The divisions may not be so stark, as concern for race can grow out of pacifist ideals.

Gandhi and King attempted to make these links in the liberation struggles they led, but could not control the direction their movements took to insure that participants remained adherents to a pacifist ideology in spirit, and not just in action.
In light of these realities, two major concerns arose from this study which the researcher feels organizers and activists in current political movements must address directly if nonviolent movements are to continue to grow in this country.

One is the extraordinary breadth of negative effects experienced by activists involved in political movements. People enter a struggle with some degree of hopefulness, enthusiasm and energy. Somewhere along the line they begin to experience a combination of depression, cynicism, rage, despair, conflict, estrangement or loss of meaning. What can movements do to prevent these problems, or as the literature on group dynamics suggests, are they inevitable? What in their philosophy or organization contributes to these problems arising? What kinds of structures can be set up to resolve these problems once they do arise? These are critical questions if one wants to create and maintain an effective mass movement. Resolving intragroup problems will serve to regain, enhance and sustain the positive effects of activism, keeping people active once they are involved.

An example of a simple suggestion for combatting some of the negative effects is the formation of small affinity groups which meet regularly to thrash out questions of philosophy and strategy, give mutual emotional support and provide a contradiction to feelings of isolation and
estrangement. Evenings to share and celebrate success stories could be helpful. Regular outlets for built up rage and frustration need to be found, as those feelings seem to be inevitable in political struggles. Conflict resolution skills need to be learned to address the problems that arise within activist groups. People who are primarily engaged in movement work must be encouraged to take occasional breaks in order to prevent despair and burnout.

A related but distinct problem for nonviolent movements lies in their definition of nonviolence and expectations of participants. It must be acknowledged that traditional Gandhian nonviolence is not applicable to all people in all situations. The typologies of nonviolent activists in the previous section illustrate the variety of viewpoints that can exist in a room of activists. By expecting individuals to follow a philosophical view of nonviolence, organizers may end up excluding and losing large numbers of people who feel unable or unwilling to make such a commitment.

Similarly, more "radical" groups must acknowledge that nonviolence means more than passively lying down in front of buses waiting to be arrested or passing around petitions. There are numerous possibilities for action that are confrontative and assertive which can still fall under the heading of nonviolence.

Controversies within movements over nonviolence are
sometimes useful but can also create divisiveness, thus diminishing solidarity. What results is a debate of "more nonviolent than thou," which does the oppressors work for them by making it difficult to work together. While writing this dissertation the researcher saw these kinds of conflicts arise in her work with both the Central American Sanctuary movement and the tax resistance movement. Most movements seem to reach this point of internal conflict, often centering around issues of conscientious versus pragmatic nonviolence.

This study has attempted to broaden the traditional definitions around what is nonviolence and what is a nonviolent activist. Such a broadening is necessary if groups are to work together successfully. Instead of searching for the "correct political line," it is time for organizers to realize that such a thing may not exist, and that individuals will vary on their approaches to and uses of nonviolence.

As noted earlier, traditional conscientious nonviolence seems most palatable to white, affluent, college educated peace activists, and tactical nonviolence appeals to working class people, often black, fighting for their survival. If movements want to become genuinely multi-racial and multi-cultural, nonviolent strategists and philosophers must focus on their commonalities and forge new ground. As James
Farmer suggested back in 1965, true revolutionary mass movements can emerge from the fusion of means oriented idealists and ends oriented militants. Based on Dellinger’s (1966) remark about the embryonic stage of development of nonviolent philosophy and strategy, it is clear that we have hardly begun to explore all the possible methods and applications of nonviolence, and much remains to be learned.

**Ramifications for Future Research**

As is true for many research projects, this study raised a number of additional questions while exploring the effects of nonviolent activism on activists. Any one of the topics that follow could be pursued in another dissertation or study.

One issue of importance would be a comparison of the effects on activists of nonviolent versus violent methods of social change. Just as there was not a lot written about the negative effects of nonviolent activism, there is not a lot of literature in the field of counseling or psychology about the positive effects of violent activism. It is likely that many of the positive effects are similar to those experienced in nonviolent social change efforts, and an exploration of the reasons for the positive effects would broaden the understanding of both types of change efforts. Some of the
negative effects would likely be the same as well, but there would be additional ones stemming from the use of violence. Due to the lack of groups in the United States using violent means of social change in recent history, such a study might involve revolutionary groups in other countries.

Though it would take some doing to find study subjects, it would be interesting to talk to people who participated in nonviolent movements who didn't feel particularly affected by the experience, and to find out why they didn't. This "control group" could help to clarify some of the findings of this study.

Similarly, one could focus on the long term effects of nonviolent activism; what happens to people who are active for years and does this differ from the short term effects? It may be possible to develop a stage theory of activist development describing various phases that activists go through over time.

Another study could focus on liberation struggles of oppressed people, examining the different effects experienced by people from dominant and subordinate groups working on the same struggle. Such a study could incorporate information from the identity development theories which exist in the oppression/liberation literature, and could add to an understanding of the similarities and differences of the individual experience.
On a larger scale, one could examine the ways that different oppressed groups have taken Gandhi's original nonviolence theory and made it their own. What have been the special questions, controversies or contributions that blacks, women, migrant workers and Native Americans have added to nonviolent theory and practice in their own struggles? How have they adapted the use of nonviolence to their particular worldview and culture? Such a study could contribute to a more concrete understanding of cultural differences and could broaden even further the boundaries of nonviolence theory and action. Lakey's theory could be incorporated into such a study, so the research would also examine to what extent different oppressed groups using nonviolent tactics actually embraced nonviolence as an ideology.

Finally, assessments of current political movements experiencing internal problems could be designed and carried out, as concerns both the negative effects and the tactic/creed split. Possible intervention strategies could be designed to enhance group cohesion and coalition work. Such a study amounts to doing organization development work for activist groups about their most common problems, and could be a valuable contribution to social change in this country.
Conclusion

On a personal note, the process of writing this dissertation has left a number of changes in and unresolved questions for the researcher about her own activism. She started out two years ago as one who believed in nonviolence as a way of life, and is now in the middle of the tactic/creed spectrum. Some of the change came from this study of the peace and civil rights movements, and some from her political work around Central America and tax resistance. The questions she is struggling with include:

1. Why is there no mass movement in the United States now, especially around race issues?

2. Within that context, what does "effective political action" look like in the 1980's? What could a mobilized and organized nonviolent "army" do in this country? Is a nonviolent (or violent) revolution possible in the United States that will create major institutional change?

3. Can one really change many hearts and minds through nonviolent struggle or are political/economic pressures at the bottom line of most changes? Is there time to wait, anyway?

4. To what degree is nonviolence suited to situations of extreme repression, especially in many Third World countries? Is it a luxurious tactic available to a few, or can one only create a peaceful world through nonviolent means?

These questions are ones many activists struggle with. It will probably be a lifelong process to sort out answers, but at this stage the researcher feels more able to actively
support people from all parts of the spectrum as well as those engaged in armed struggle than she did at the start of writing this paper. Perhaps others who read this dissertation will find their perspectives challenged in similar ways.
APPENDICES
### APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON STUDY PARTICIPANTS

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
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### Notes:

1. The first 22 people listed were part of the documentary study; the last 9 were interviewed.

2. Christian participants who did not specify being Catholic are noted as Protestants.

3. Age figures for the documentary studies represent age at the time of the period of activism about which they wrote or were interviewed. Age figures for interviewees represents age at time of interview.

4. Role indicates primary role each person played in the movement, or the primary role which is described in the documentary study.
Dear

I am a graduate student in the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts and a political activist. I am writing my dissertation about the effects of nonviolent activism on activists, and I am writing to ask if you will participate in this project by spending a couple of hours talking with me about your experiences with nonviolent action for social change.

Most writing about nonviolent activism has addressed its effects on society or on the adversarial group, which are certainly important issues. I am interested in finding out how you were affected, both positively and negatively, by your participation in nonviolent campaigns. Your feelings, values, actions and ideas would be the focus of our talk. What I find out could be both interesting and valuable to educators, counselors, organizers and activists, and could be used to increase the effectiveness of future political actions. It might be useful for you as well to have a chance to reflect on your experiences in this way.

I am asking you because I know of your participation in the movement, and there may be more that I'm not aware of. I want to do an interview of about two hours which I would tape record and transcribe. Although I am using this information for a dissertation, your identity will remain completely confidential and your name will not be used. I will have a consent form for you to sign at the interview. I am speaking to people who have at least several months (in most cases years) of experience in nonviolent action using a variety of nonviolent methods. Usually, people have had some kind of confrontation with the law (police, court or jail) and have been in some way public about their activities.

I will be calling you within a week to find out if you are interested in talking with me, to answer any questions you have and to set up a date with you within the next month. Thank you for considering this.

Sincerely,
APPENDIX C

Interview Guide

(After explaining study focus and purpose, clearing up questions)

Part One: Introductory Questions

I want to start out by asking some general questions about your involvement in nonviolent activism.

1. Tell me about what movement(s) you've been involved in. When did you start being active, and what kinds of activities have you participated in?

2. For some people, nonviolence could be called a way of life that affects everything they do. Others say it's a strategy or tactic they use in actions because it seems to work, or it's less dangerous than violent methods. Where do you see yourself in relation to those two views? (D,E)

3. Tell me about some critical or special incident from your nonviolent career that stands out for you, and why it does.

4. Can you tell me some of your attitudes, values, behaviors or feelings that you think have changed since you became active in nonviolence?

5. Are there any other factors in your life that you think could account for the changes you've experienced while being involved in nonviolence? (F)

Part Two: Effects

I'm going to ask some specific questions about your feelings and ideas that may have been affected by your nonviolent activism. Please tell me about both positive and negative changes, or if you don't think there were any changes.

6. Tell me about any influence your nonviolent activism has had on your sense of self-your self esteem or feelings of personal power.
7. What kinds of strong emotions have you had during or after a nonviolent action. Can you tell me about experiences with fear, anger, facing danger? (3, 4, 5, 15)

8. Has your activism affected how you see or relate to people in power or authority positions? (6, 18)

9. Tell me about your relationships with other activists; what have been the good contacts and the problems? How important is it for you to be part of a group, or do you prefer to do actions more as an individual? (7, 16, D/E)

10. Are there ways your activism has been an educational experience for you? How? (9)

11. (How) have you come to be interested in other social movements since being involved in the peace/civil rights movement? (10)

12. Do you think your activism has affected your sense of spirituality in whatever form that takes for you? How?/Why not? (11, 20)

13. Have you felt some sense of moral mission in your activist work? (12, 13)

14. Some people get discouraged or frustrated at times when they are politically active. Have you? Tell me about that. (14)

15. What kinds of things have picked up your spirits at those times; what helps to keep you going? (C)

16. Some people feel alienated from friends or family when they are nonviolent activists. Has this happened to you? (17)

17. Have you wanted to or have you in fact begun to use violence as a means of social change. What led you to that point/Why haven’t you? (19)

Part Three: Closing Questions (if not answered previously)

18. There are lots of ideas involved in the theory and practice of nonviolence. What particular...
19. Can you tell me how you think your social background i.e. sex, race, class, religion, age have affected your experiences in nonviolence? (7, 16, A)

20. What haven't I asked you that you think it's important to mention about this topic?

Part Four: Demographics

1. Age
2. Religious background
3. Class background
4. Educational level
5. Profession
1. I am participating in this study on a voluntary basis; I have been made fully aware of its purpose and content.

2. I am aware that the interview will be tape recorded and transcribed.

3. I understand that the results of this study will be contained in a public document. It is my choice to discuss activities in which I have engaged which may have violated existing laws, for which I have faced or might face criminal prosecution. Though my identity will remain confidential, I agree that I will not hold the researcher or the University of Massachusetts liable for any consequences of discussing these actions.

4. I further understand that I have the option of withdrawing my participation from this study at any time prior to the submission of a final draft, or approximately May of 1985.

Date: ________________  Signed:____________________

Date: ________________  Signed:____________________

Karen Brandow
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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