Training Function and Efficacy in Civil Resistance Movements
Nadine Bloch, November 2014 for US Institutes of Peace Agency

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**...1
  - Definitions
  - Factors contributing to gap of research in the field
- **Strategic Value of Training**...5
  - List of Functions
  - Note about Limitations
- **Case Studies: table, narrative**
  - Yellow Revolution, Philippines...8
  - Anti-Nuclear Power Movement: *USA & Germany*...11
  - Civil Rights Movement...15
  - Otpor!, Serbia ...19
- **Conclusion; follow up** ...23
- **Additional Resources**...24
- **Short list of case studies for further investigation**...25
- **Consultants/contributors** ...26

Building on research of social movements and nonviolence, this report reviews and evaluates the tactical functions and efficacy of trainings and education in nonviolent movements. Although popular trainings and education are arguably ubiquitous across lasting movements, current scholarship has not fully examined their role. The report seeks to address this gap by synthesizing learnings and practices from a variety of movements across the world.

Amidst dictatorships and violent conflicts across the globe, amazing people power movements have triumphantly harnessed nonviolent strategies against seemingly insurmountable odds. Research has identified some indicators of what creates a successful movement, including a high level of unity, strategic planning and adherence to NV discipline (Ackerman, 2005). However, there is a lack of specific study about the functions of civil resistance training in advancing the effectiveness of these key ingredients of success although in many large and small movements training is an integrated part of organizing, expansion and participatory planning (factors contributing to this gap detailed below).

In order to address this gap and evaluate the tactical role of trainings in civil resistance movements, this report presents four case studies of social movements using trainings and education as a core component of their work. The case studies highlight the outcomes and efficacy of intentional training and education. Further, the report synthesizes the strategic value of trainings and education from across the movements, identifies some limitations to trainings and education, and suggests next steps for this research.

This work draws on background research and interviews with (1) experts in the field of nonviolence and social movements, and (2) trainers from specific movements across the world. The study attempts to find common patterns from across the case studies and from the experience of the experts and practitioners. It should be noted that the study does not seek to address whether trainings are a necessary or sufficient condition, but rather seeks to identify the ways in which trainings were used within the movement.

For this preliminary work, we analyzed four case studies of historical movements which used training in an intentional and sustained way. The study focused on movements that had accessible primary materials or living participants who could be interviewed. Additionally, the following movements were selected based on their varied geographic regions and issue areas:

- Yellow Revolution, Philippines
- Anti-Nuclear Power Movement: Seabrook, USA & Wyhl, Germany
- Civil Rights Movement, United States
- Otpor!, Serbia

Each case study describes the following:
• Purpose and functions of the trainings.
• Methodology description where available.
• Outcomes and conclusions: How valuable were the trainings to the movement? The case studies examine not only the successes, but also the limitations of training as a tactic. These concerns are spelled out in the summary of conclusions, and are fertile ground for future study.
• For each case study, a brief narrative section focuses on a review of a limited number of functions unique or particular to the movement’s strategy, rather than an exhaustive list of served functions.

Definitions

In the context of this research project, the following definitions are used.
• **Training:** the action of teaching (a person) a particular skill or type of behavior. (We can think of training as education with a defined outcome.)
• **Education:** the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction. Education can be formal as in at a school or university, or informal as in a "teach-in" or outdoor education experience, and may or may not have a specific outcome associated with the process.
• **Nonviolence trainings and education** include a wide spectrum of topics (see below for a list) and can range from an hour or less of preparation for a specific event to the equivalent of semesters of a college level course, dependent on campaign goals, organizational needs and availability of resources.
• **Spectrum of topics that are typically included in the field of nonviolence training:** Nonviolence (NV) theory and philosophy; Nonviolent Action(NVA) skills; Media; Medical; Logistics; Outreach; Organizing; Legal; De-escalation; Peacekeeping; PTSD; Mass mobilization platforms; Team building; Leadership; Decision-making/consensus process; Strategic Planning; Creative and cultural tactics; Training of trainers; Anti-oppression; Cultural competency; Facilitation; Third Party Nonviolent Intervention (TPNI); and more.

For the purposes of this research, we are examining trainings and education undertaken with specific addresses to the functional needs of a campaign, often within the framework of a civil resistance movement. In this document training will be used for both education and training in both formal and informal settings.
Four factors contributing to the gap in scholarship on the strategic value of trainings:

1. People within the movements themselves have not consistently identified the benefits of training. In urgent situations, many individuals are reluctant to take time to prepare and train to handle the crisis. As a result, these same individuals are swept along as the problem unfolds. Since training is not prioritized, the documentation of these ad hoc trainings has been minimal. (Of course, there are institutions that promote regular, required trainings which recruits undergo as a way to professionalize the field. A look at other groups that routinely go into the public sphere to offer services-- police, military, public health corps, firefighters-- shows they consistently validate the implications and importance of training/education in preparing their staff to deliver high quality service.)

2. Measurement and evaluation (M&E) of the effectiveness of trainings requires commitment and resources extending beyond offered trainings; since time and money are constantly in short supply, M & E has yet to be prioritized in a sector that is often already short funded.

3. On occasion, nonviolent activists themselves have often been quiet on their training activities. They are as likely to downplay their time spent in preparation and training as they are in pointing it out. As a well-known example, the prevailing story of Rosa Parks simply being ‘tired’ one day was not only told by mainstream pundits, but by the activist herself. Although she was a well-trained and seasoned NAACP member, Parks’ affirmation that her action was spontaneous and not-premeditated served the purpose of the movement not to have her be branded part of an organized conspiracy.

4. Nonviolent action encompasses a broad range of activities that are further made unique by differing goals, cultures, languages, and participants. Trainings have been substantially context-specific which didn’t inspire past organizers to take the time to document for future needs that were likely to be much different. With current digital technologies making documentation easier, accessibility to documentation formats should no longer be an issue.
Strategic Value of Training

This research project examined the strategic use of training/education in the service of historic civil resistance campaigns and movements. After reviewing these cases, the strategic functions of training can be understood in the following categories (expanded below):

1. **Personal preparation**
2. **Organization and group capacity building**
3. **Strategic planning**
4. **Adherence to nonviolent action**
5. **Specific nonviolent action skills**
6. **Rehearsal**

The list is offered as a starting point for parsing the strategic purposes of integrating training into planning rather than as a definitive categorization; it is recommended for more vetting in the civil resistance community as several attempts were made to organize by strategic vs tactical functions, or internal vs external functions, but significant overlap made this cumbersome.

Strategic Value of Training Expanded

1. **Personal preparation**: consciousness raising, empowerment, awareness, support for nonviolent action.
   - meet fellow collaborators
   - increase the number of participants,
   - support individuals in overcoming fear and building courage to take action
   - increase the level of commitment/participation
   - break oppressive behavior patterns and provide opportunity to practice transformative/liberatory cultural norms
   - create and provide support to individuals through incarceration, repression, etc

2. **Organization and group**: cohesion, leadership and capacity building.
   - increase unity of purpose within the group
   - pass on community norms and culture (transparency)
   - support resiliency, flexibility (sustainability) of the community over time,
   - build a base, create a network/coalition or forge alliances for specific scenario with experts, trainers, others outside of usual community
   - build leadership: train in facilitation, anti-oppression techniques, cultural competency, decision-making processes, etc
   - teach organizing strategies and tools
   - provide space/time for practicing leadership, process, alternative system
   - develop affinity groups/working groups
   - distribute power internally, level the playing field
3. **Strategic planning: improved strategies and tactics**
   - collective research, study and analysis of issues and political environment
   - shared development of vision
   - incorporation of effective sequencing
   - improving evaluation and reflection skills & procedures

4. **Increase adherence to nonviolent action**: decrease in violence and increased adherence to defined strategies and tactics.

5. **Increase the capacity to use specific nonviolent action and support skills** and diverse, creative tactics.

6. **Provide time for rehearsal, assessment, refinement & improved execution of plans**
   - rehearse a scenario or nonviolent action
   - practice escalation/de-escalation tactics in confrontation
   - try out peacekeeping tactics (for both internal and external provocations)
   - practice centering skills in confrontation
   - experience leadership under stress/ in confrontation
   - try out decisionmaking under stress/in confrontation
   - practice collaboration

---

**Limitations of training**

Because training can profoundly support success as this report details, it is also worthwhile to mention some of its limitations or weaknesses. Training itself, like anything in isolation, will not guarantee a successful campaign or movement. However, when used as a component of a strategic plan, it can contribute to producing amazing results.

Below is a short list of strategic considerations in relation to utilizing trainings that are linked to findings from this report’s research.

1. Consider the intentions of the training: training for training’s sake can be a diversion from the work of the movement.
2. Identify the intended outcomes: training in a vacuum, without a campaign or a movement, will not deliver functional results.
3. Work with specific goals and objectives in order to deliver expected outcomes and train the appropriate people. Trainings on process themselves will not deliver a structure, for example.
4. Invest in the trainers through training and mentorship, and vet them. Untrained, inexperienced, out-of-context facilitators can teach in inappropriate ways or use tools incorrectly and set a group back.

5. Consider whether outside "professional" trainers will deliver trainings that support your strategy, or if the integration of training within the movement is critical piece of the tactic.

6. Internal development of trainers can lead to development of trainers or facilitators' cliques or creation of an artificial professional class within the movement.

7. Be careful about offering trainings to groups without resources or a situation that prevents implementation of what was offered. eg: It is not ethical or strategic to train consensus process if the group must exist within a hierarchical situation; or offer strategic planning on a scale that will not work and therefore cannot be implemented.

8. In designing trainings, beware of the potential for dishonesty or manipulation of those in the training. Trainers hold leadership positions and ethically this requires transparency in the purposes and intentions of the training, theories of change, and implicit assumptions that underly the workshops.
CASE STUDY: Filipino People Power, aka Yellow Revolution, Philippines, 1983-86.

Training Description

In the early 1980’s two kinds of training were prevalent: 1) Longstanding, localized, dispersed training, supported by radical clergy and laity and focused on local and rural community concerns; and 2) Invitation-only “active nonviolence” trainings were delivered to middle-class elites by the International Fellowship Of Reconciliation (IFOR) after 1983.

Both included some strategic planning, role playing, creative tactics development, history and philosophy of nonviolent action, along with prayer and centering, socio-political analysis and lectures. The IFOR trainings were often three days and included session/topics: ‘Awareness of Violence’, ‘Awareness of Responses’, ‘Humanistic and Biblical bases of nonviolence’, and preparation, analysis, strategy and tactics of active nonviolence.

Later (around the 1986 vote) specialized trainings in election monitoring and fraud were held that included short seminars on Active Nonviolence (ANV) and strategy sessions offered in tent cities in ten different communities along with prayer and fasting around the elections dates.

Intended functions (as noted by trainers and participants)

1. Insure discipline and effective tactics
2. Provide space/time for personal reflection
3. Teach about the history and capacity of nonviolent resistance strategies and techniques;
4. Use the teachings of the Church to move acceptance of nonviolent action;
5. Specific skills in election monitoring(1986);
6. Insure easy access for mass participation in training and education

Outcomes

1. Training mobilized the middle class.
2. Diversity of trainings contributed to the emergence of a widespread nonviolent revolt.
3. Trained organizers and activists maintained nonviolent discipline. Contact with and sympathy for police and military forces encouraged defections.
4. Training guidelines allowed creativity and spontaneous actions to be effective within clear boundaries of nonviolence.
5. Well organized nonviolent activists were able to protect defecting soldiers.

Conclusions

- Growing awareness of the power of nonviolent action through trainings enabled many Filipinos who wanted social change but were wary of armed struggle to become involved activists.
- The appeal of ANV as a strategy united the leftists and the conservatives in their opposition to the Marcos regime.
● The openness of the Filipino society to adopting ANV may have its roots in the country’s widespread acceptance of Christianity and its pacifist traditions
● After knocking Marcos out, some ANV groups redirected their nonviolence work to transforming society, and set up training centers in rural areas to address land reform and farming issues
● Safety of protesters was enhanced because the authorities trusted their adherence to nonviolent discipline.

Idea for follow-up: What is the legacy now of the mass trainings: Are ANV campaigns in place now? Find primary materials. Investigate what circumstances contributed to successful acceptance of outside trainers/intervention in this case.

Background: The People Power or Yellow Revolution that culminated in 1986 with the removal of dictator President Marcos and and the restoration of the Philippine’s democracy was built upon the power of training.

Historically, nonviolent resistance has been used in the Philippines as far back as Spanish Colonial times. This traditional nonviolence was a tool used mostly by poor rural communities, and as such was decentralized and addressed local issues. It was based on affinity group structure— small flexible groups of activists that operated with autonomy, often in concert with other affinity groups working on similar issues. Training in these situations focused on maintaining discipline and executing effective actions; it was usually provided by local radical clergy or affiliated laity. This background formed the foundation for people’s strikes (welgang bayan), boycotts, and other large protests in 1984 and 1985. Opposition leadership formed a left wing alliance of 500 grassroots groups that turned out more than a million people who were trained and maintained nonviolent discipline during a series of general strikes.

It wasn’t until after Democratic opposition leader Benigno Aquino was assassinated in 1983 that the middle class was ready to join in resisting the Marcos dictatorship. A Catholic community of nuns invited trainers from the International Fellowship of Reconciliation to lead nonviolence workshops, and this outside influence had a dramatic effect on mobilizing the middle class, the opposition elites, and the church. A newly-created Philippine chapter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation organized 40 nonviolence trainings in 30 provinces. About 1500 people participated in the three-day workshops that included a wide diversity sessions on active nonviolence, strategy, biblical basis for ANV, and lectures on the socio-political situation called the “situationer” along with opening prayers.

The training team included the French-Austrian husband/wife duo of Jean and Hildegard Goss-Meyer, the Americans Richard Deats and Stefan Merken, and a team of six students from Union Seminary who were part of an activist group, FOJ— Friends of Jesus. For fear of arrest by the Marcos regime, the workshops were by invitation only, held in various community venues and not publically announced. Richard Deats reported, “We did role-plays, where participants would take assigned parts, such as a tenant farmer dealing with an oppressive landlord, or a worker stopped by an armed soldier for questioning. We talked about “the pillars of oppression”, e.g., the army, the government, the upper class. Participants shared their opinions and experiences and began to feel strength that came from verbalizing
and acting out internal struggles that often had been held in silence. Learning of what had happened in India, in the US and other places was a powerful incentive for action."

The training paid off; millions were ready to take to the streets. The protesters had learned from studying historic resistance movements; they set up affinity groups, monitored for infiltrators, and adopted simple and powerful tactics: link your arms, drop down in case of attack, don't run, go in a deliberate manner. When tear gas was thrown, the first line would disperse to be replaced by those in the back.

Four days after Marcos attempted to steal the election in February 1986, he was forced to flee. What the world saw was a remarkable four-day bloodless revolution; in reality, years of training and preparation based on ethical and pragmatic commitments to nonviolent action and mass participation made this possible.

Resources


Zunes, Stephen. Personal Interview with author, phone, November, 2014
**CASE STUDY Anti-Nuclear Power Movement:**
*1973-1982: Seabrook, NH, USA and 1971—1975 Wyhl, Germany*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clamshell Alliance had mandatory 6-8 hr training sessions for all direct action participants; inclusive of role-playing, dialogue, experiential and practice sessions; Affinity group formation and training. Similar trainings in Germany, along with educational classes as part of the activist “University.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended functions (as noted by trainers and participants)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To educate on history, philosophy and principles of nonviolent action and build commitment for using nonviolence;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To prepare and rehearse for specific scenarios (marches, occupations, incarceration, nonviolent responses in confrontation, etc);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To build community of support and trust; to form affinity groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To address oppressive behaviors that cost the community and needed transforming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To train and practice consensus decision-making;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. To create safe space to address personal fears and feelings and reflect on personal motivation, confronting the power structure;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. To learn and practice quick decisions and group process;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. To practice for the media, marshall and peacekeeper roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. To limit influence of outsiders and provocateurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To develop strategies to focus attention on the problem of nuclear power and position the movement as operating with moral authority (rather than let the media focus on violence/property destruction of protests).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Created a solid and committed base of affinity groups who maintained nonviolent discipline;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Developed trainers and trained participants who went on to populate, lead and train other activists across diverse issue campaigns;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Led to victories on local fights that had a national impact on nuclear power policy and plant siting for years to come;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Used adhering to NV guidelines as a negotiating strength when dealing with the state authorities; Preemptively kept violent retaliation low in several instances, including a negotiated occupation of the Seabrook site by 8000 people in 1978;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Clamshell work served as inspiration and model for the formation of the Abalone Alliance in 1977 in CA, as well as other anti-nuclear groups,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Success in Wyhl empowered Clamshell and others to adopt affinity group structure and prioritize training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Trainings were effective at providing experience and preparation for those risking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
arrests and in building working affinity groups that could handle the occupations.
- Safety of protesters was enhanced because the authorities trusted their adherence to nonviolent discipline.

Background: The nuclear power industry was brought to its knees by an effective and determined grassroots movement dedicated to nonviolent resistance in the United States and in Germany in the 1970's and 80's. No new nuclear plants have broken ground since 1974 in the US. In Germany, many proposed plants and storage facilities were stopped, and the country has committed to a complete phase-out of nuclear power by 2020. Key to this success were comprehensive preparatory workshops in nonviolence, consensus decision-making and legal processes.

From the first action, the Clamshell Alliance required all participants planning to risk arrest to undergo training. Workshops included role-playing of court trials and incarceration as well as teaching about topics such as sharing leadership and overcoming oppressive societal behaviors. Training linked participants to the history of civil resistance: The training programs of the anti-nuclear movement in the 70's and 80's were progeny of the seminal nonviolence trainings of the Civil Rights fights, and many of the trainers and participants were veterans of successful actions mounted by Fellowship of Reconciliation, War Resisters League (WRL), Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

As Joanne Sheehan, trainer with the WRL and participant noted, "The Clamshell Alliance did real 6-8 hr training sessions, and that led to a different kind of movement." Clamshell actively engaged their opposition using training as an asset: they were able to parlay training into a tool for de-escalation on site and in advance through public guidelines and commitments to nonviolent discipline. Paul Gunter, an anti-nuclear activist since the 70's now with Beyond Nuclear noted: "Our folks were disciplined, we were not going to destroy property, we had clear guidelines, and we could then establish this trust about why we were really there, and to keep the action on point, on issues about nuclear power not on property destruction, rebellion, but on nukes."

According to Kristie Conrad, "The first nonviolence training was held at the Gustavson farm.. A large part of the training was role-playing... so that you could ... prepare yourself for various scenarios. ... we were using some of the techniques and philosophy of the AFSC, a Quaker organization, the idea of dialogue was really essential, really important in nonviolence. When you come into a confrontational situation you talk with people. Instead of not talking and becoming belligerent ... You talk about why it is that you’re there, what it is that has brought you to that point where you are confronting the power structure, what it is that you’re doing. So we would role-play with half of us being police officers and half of us being demonstrators and switch back and forth so that people could have the opportunity to at least experience it and give some forethought to it so that should we get in that situation we would know what to do..."
Through the trainings, many got their first exposure to feminism, and the costs of divisive oppressions. Paul Gunter: “It was the early Gloria Steinem days, people had not had direct experience (with feminist critique), so in trainings we would have folks observe in various dialogues how many times men said what women had just said, talking not only about active listening but also how sexist it was and how it affected our communication— and having the large training group broken down into the smaller affinity groups really helped make this a growth experience for everyone, and taught empathy skills that we could use, not only internally, but also with those we would confront, public affairs officers, pro-nuke townspeople, police.."

Paul Gunter related the importance of the spectrum of trainings from teaching specific ways to stay safe to making quick decisions, describing how teaching about “how to incorporate what you brought on site with you to defend vs police dogs— put packs on your back and sit in a tight circle to keep dogs from getting a grab on you—and sitting in close circles could help if police used horses— its not likely they would step on you if in a big clump… gave people some confidence to enter into the action, some sense of being prepared. Each AG had rotating responsibilities that included, and were used in quick decision making exercises in training— to isolate hecklers, not get involved w/trouble makers, to deal internally with provocateurs, to have media talking points, have a person with a medical kit.”

The consensus process had been so integrated into the campaign that it was effectively used when 1414 were arrested on May 1, 1977 and held in seven different armories and jails for two weeks, with lawyers carrying information between the groups. “There was even a New Hampshire Guard testimony where they said they were completely taken over at the civil-ness of the opposition they faced.. particularly in New Hampshire, the guards had never come across nonviolent protestors... the trainings knit people together, gave the cohesiveness to carry through the incarceration... by design, training helps to get through the consequences of action.”

In West Germany from 1971-1975, the construction of a proposed nuclear power plant was halted by a series of actions. Following a massive demonstration of 20-30,000 people in February 1975, the site was continuously occupied for ten months and supported by the founding of an onsite university. More than sixty courses were offered, focused on topics of environmental protection, nuclear energy (pro and con), civil democracy, and legal rights of protest. Although the occupation of the site ended in late 1975, when the panel of judges was established to make a final ruling on the proposed nuclear power generator at the site, the final ruling by the judges against the plant did not occur until 1977. The campaign in Wyhl not only rested on trainings for affinity groups in direct action settings as was adopted by the Clamshell Alliance, but also institutionalized the courses in the ‘university’ setting, offering a resource to many other activist groups in Germany, France, and beyond.

Resources:
All Quotes except Paul Gunter, who was interviewed specifically for this report, from:


Gunter, Paul. In-person Interview with author, November, 2014

Sheehan, Joanne. Personal Interview with author, phone, November, 2014

Vinthagen, Stellan. Personal Interview with author, phone, November, 2014
## CASE STUDY: US Civil Rights Movement  American South, 1950s and 60s

### Training Description

Training encompassed: Citizenship school/Literacy and ethics, civil disobedience workshops, history and philosophy of nonviolence and nonviolent action, support workshops, overcoming fear, arrest, court, jail and legal system, consciousness raising.

Methods included: dialogue, role plays/rehearsals, prayer and meditation, communal singing, sermons/lectures, group work, and study.

### Intended functions (as noted by trainers and participants)

1. Build commitment to nonviolence  
2. Educate on nonviolence history & philosophy, civil disobedience techniques  
3. Develop leadership  
4. Build community and group decision-making capacity  
5. Support individuals in overcoming fear  
6. Strategize and prepare for specific actions: lunch counter sit ins, marches, incarceration  
7. Prepare to handle media  
8. Build allies across black and white divisions

### Outcomes

1. Built unity, mobilized masses of people, connected the campaigns across the nation  
2. Supported adherence to nonviolent discipline and reduced overall retaliation violence  
3. Weakened grip of fear and solidified resolve to act  
4. Awakened and motivated new sectors of the population to join the movement  
5. Led to major Legislative Victories and change of the status quo--Civil Rights Act of 1964; and Voting Rights Act of 1965

### Conclusions

Trainings were highly effective at establishing cadre of people committed to, and practiced in, Nonviolent action. Trainees became adept at NVA techniques and maintaining discipline. Trainings became a model for campaigns/movements that followed. There is direct lineage of nonviolence trainers from the Civil Rights Movement to trainers for Vietnam War protests and then the anti-nuclear movement, and beyond.

Background: The Civil Rights Movement in the United States had nonviolence theory and practice as its strategic and philosophical cornerstones. There were two main pillars of support for the commitment to nonviolence, loosely framed as active nonviolence trainings and citizenship schools, the former supported by Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) and The War Resister’s League (WRL), and the latter by the Highlander Center and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).
One pillar of support was deeply rooted in a culture of training that grew out of the work of the Christian-based Fellowship of Reconciliation, formed to focus on nonviolent action following World War I. The War Resisters League formed shortly after and worked along side of FOR supporting trainings from a secular orientation. Both FOR and WRL staff brought depth and experience to the civil rights organizing and training. Staff members James Lawson and Bayard Rustin, among others, helped steer Martin Luther King to embrace Gandhian active nonviolence principles and strategies within a spiritual Christian context.

In 1942, an offshoot of FOR formed the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), dedicated to using nonviolent resistance in support of desegregation. Bayard Rustin was one of the trainers providing workshops to prepare participants for potential violence and incarceration, taking into account lessons learned from earlier segregation challenges that included a Cleveland swimming pool in 1941. In 1947, the Journey of Reconciliation, an early integrated “freedom ride,” was followed up by month-long training workshops in Washington, DC run by CORE for 10 years. Trainings focused on nonviolence theories and action skills, as well as organizing methods.

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) grew out of the Nashville resistance scene. In 1959, James Lawson began weekly participatory workshops that trained youth through role plays, stories, discussions. Joanne Sheehan for WRL reported:

Lawson facilitated a process of empowerment for the young black students living in a segregated society, where they developed a sense of their own value. They learned how to focus on the issue of racist segregation and choose a target. Not believing in hierarchical leadership, Lawson organised a central committee which was open to those taking the trainings. As the students developed a strategy to desegregate stores, they learned to organise, conduct a demonstration, negotiate, and deal with the media. They role played the physical and verbal abuse they would receive when they sat at a segregated lunch counter, learning how to nonviolently resist the impulse to run or fight back. Their three month campaign - which was preceded by six months of trainings - was a success, and the restaurants and stores of Nashville were desegregated. Nashville became a model for campaigns and trainings. Eight of the young black students went on to be key organisers of major campaigns in the civil rights movement and beyond.

A major component of trainings was to help participants deal with fear. Sessions with lawyers to teach about the legal system and arrest process were matched with singing to uplift and build courage. Specific instructions, e.g., how to roll into a fetal position to protect one self in case of a physical attack, also gave activist a sense of preparation. Many of the potential abusive situations were role-played to confront both possibilities and personal limits. Mary King relates that “we SNCC workers always carried a toothbrush in our pocket, as it connoted readiness for being locked up and the acceptance of penalties—which is at the core of
noncooperation and civil disobedience—and since all of us did this it also signified that we were bonded together.”

In 1964, SNCC was instrumental in creating the Mississippi Freedom Schools, with a network of 41 schools open for three months dedicated to linking learning to liberation from segregation, and offering a vision of how to transform the South. The process of preparing the mostly white volunteer teachers from the North included sessions in everything from black history to nonviolent action, and a significant amount of soul-searching. Once in the schools, class pedagogy was rooted in the belief that responses to oppression had to grow out of the experiences of those who were oppressed. Popular education methods were used to empower students to take control of their own learning and thereby create social change. An elicitive and non-hierarchical format was encouraged for the classes; it was reported that teachers often had students sit in a circle rather than traditional rows in a physical manifestation of inclusiveness.

In addition, Septima Clark developed a citizenship program in the 1950’s at the Highlander Folk School designed to teach literacy and civic rights while expanding voter participation among the disenfranchised blacks in the south. The Highlander Center was, and remains today, a critical incubator for activists and trainers committed to nonviolent action and popular education in fighting racism and other oppressions.

By 1958, 37 adults were able to pass the voter registration test as a result of the first session of community schools. When Highlander was shut down in 1961, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) took over the program and expanded its reach. Eventually the citizenship school project trained almost 70,000 teachers who led citizenship schools throughout the South, a huge and impressive Popular Education program. It is reported that by 1969, about 700,000 African-Americans became registered voters, in large part due to the establishment of the citizenship schools and Clark’s vision.

By addressing adult literacy, the classes also served to build individual agency and capacity. Lessons were connected to the current events of the day, focusing on civil rights, voting rights, community leadership and organizing, and events of the nonviolent campaigns taking place. This was a clear effort to involve rural communities with the on-going civil rights movement, and lay foundations for developing leadership and collective process. Miles Horton who founded the Highlander Center in 1932, wrote from his experience with citizenship schools that, “educational work during social movement periods provides the best opportunity for multiplying democratic leadership.” (cited from King Encyclopedia)

SCLC also maintained a full schedule of training and education programs. An explanatory flyer from the 1960’s shows seven programs that were offered:
Voter registration; Political education; Citizenship education; Operation Breadbasket; Direct action; Operation Dialogue; and Nonviolence and leadership training.
As SCLC was affiliated with churches across the South, these sessions were designed to place the civil rights struggle in moral terms to speak directly to the congregants.

The myriad trainings offered within the framework of the civil rights movement continued a long-standing tradition of preparing and empowering communities to take safe and effective nonviolent action. They also innovated, experimented and refined the trainings to deliver a sustained mass mobilization characterized by adherence to nonviolent discipline, unity of diverse participants, and tremendous wins.

Resources


Civil Rights in Mississippi Digital Archive: The Significance of Oxford, Ohio. Retrieved from:
Civil Rights Movement : http://digilib.usm.edu/crmda_ohio.php

Highlander Folk School, Retrieved from :
http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/kingweb/about_king/encyclopedia/highlanderfolkschool.html

King, Mary E. “Anticipating Fear.” 2012. Retrieved from:
http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/anticipating-fear/


King, Mary E. Personal Interview with author, phone, November, 2014

http://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/principal-leadership/documents/PerlsteinTeaching%20Freedom.pdf

Sheehan, J. Nonviolence training during the U.S. civil rights movement, Retrieved from:
http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23268

Sheehan, J. Personal Interview with author, phone, November, 2014
**CASE STUDY: OTPOR! (Resistance!), Anti-dictatorship Movement, Serbia, 1998-2000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshops and training sessions for 'recruits', distribution of training manuals. Small group ‘initiation’ trainings (under 25 participants), leading to action with the cohort immediately following the 5 day, 1.5 + hrs/day workshops.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended functions (as noted by trainers and participants)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. to establish a leadership pipeline through training trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. to eliminate 'newcomer-itis&quot; and create a direct pipeline to actions not meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. to develop geographically dispersed leaders and teams; to institutionalize opposition/Otpor! culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. to do specific skill building: using the media, creative tools, organizing, dealing with repression/police, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. to teach and use Multi-Level Marketing techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. to vet second tier trainers/leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. to brainstorm creative actions and execute one immediately following the training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes and Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Training manual produced to support trainers (and then developed into global training program in new organization, CANVAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exponential growth of participants in movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leadership development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Contribution to activist base in future struggles; became the model for several similar youth movements around the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Proliferation of autonomous cells and creative actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Unintended</strong>: uncontrollable dispersed empowered leadership; ….model scaled up only to certain point then became impossible; growth became exponential and unmanageable, so training system was abandoned toward the end of the mobilization phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Idea for follow-up: CANVAS’s work presents an opportunity to research and analyze their work delivering trainings worldwide; useful to identify and assess training functions, methods and effectiveness in 50+ different settings using similar curriculum. |

Background: Within 2 short years, the civil protest group *Otpor!* developed from a handful of students to a 60,000 person movement that was instrumental in overthrowing Slobodan Milošević’s government and in transitioning Serbia to a democracy.

Training was one of the keys to the explosive growth of *Otpor!* and their effectiveness. Organizers recognized that they could harness the mechanism of training as a way to
establish leaders, build membership and brainstorm tactics. Trainings were facilitated by the main organizers from within *Otpor*! rather than by outsiders, which helped build their credibility. Ivan Marovic, one of the founding student leaders from *Otpor*, noted “In the beginning, the leadership of *Otpor* was doing the training of the new recruits, building a second tier, to establish the visibility and influence that you need as a leader. And, instead of telling people what to do, we gave them skills for what they needed...and then they would get to be leadership when they trained the next batch of recruits. In this way training was incorporated into movement strategy to grow—and, the trainings included a product orientated approach,” according to Marovic. The product was an action at the end of the training with tactics that were developed by the recruits themselves. Having the trainings facilitated by insiders also insured the trainings reflected the *Otpor* movement culture which encouraged creativity, satirical actions, and sharing information on a ‘need to know’ basis, and strongly discouraged bragging or gratuitous chatter about other’s plans.

All new recruits were required to go through an intensive five-day training process. This created rapid growth and retention of recruits who were quickly deployed and made useful in the movement. The slogan Recruit, Train, Act (or A.R.T.) reflected this efficient model and helped the activists to avoid “Newcomer-itis”; early *Otpor* research into how to retain interested people showed that it was a real turn-off to go to a meeting as a novice—so starting with a training that built a cohort that then took action within the first week meant that everyone went to their first meeting with a street action under their belt.

*Otpor* also relied on a “do-gooder” Multi-Level Marketing (MLM) scheme -- whereby each new recruit found others to join and be trained. MLM depends on the personal relationship to sell or in this case, recruit the individual, not the product or campaign selling itself. Marovic credits this adaptation of MLM with allowing *Otpor* to penetrate sectors of society that hadn’t been reached before.

Marovic relayed that he was part of a training team that trained a few hundred people in the initial expansion phase; many of them became trainers themselves and advanced the A.R.T. model within the progressive MLM structure. As the cohort of trainers developed, *Otpor* developed a manual to support trainers because they couldn’t manage the level of mentoring and support demanded by the numbers involved. Growth also meant that it was difficult (eventually impossible) to vet new members; after Milošević was ousted, the training program was ended.

The five-day trainings took place Monday through Friday, minimally one-and-a-half hours each evening with an action following on the weekend. Generally, recruits in groups of 15-20, were clustered geographically by town, neighborhood or university for the series, which followed this schedule.

- **Day One:** Introduction: Marovic says, “On day one when we discuss *Otpor*, and our method, they had to accept it or leave...we needed to hold people accountable -- lots
of local autonomy (once the training was finished) so we had to make sure they were
down with the program...if they don't like the goal, and the method, they were out.”

- **Day Two: Outreach & Networking**
- **Day Three: Media & Public Relations**
- **Day Four: Image & Graphic Design**
- **Day Five: How to Organize an Otpor! street action** in real time, for use over the
  weekend.

Interactive role-plays, planning sessions and exercises made the trainings fun; Marovic noted
people often stayed late for his interactive public relations workshops. At the end of this
process, everyone had a complete set of skills and action experience.

An unintentional outcome of this effective training program was that when *Otpor!* folded, these
well-trained organizers were in high demand and recruited by other groups. On the flip
side, Marovic mentioned that “all these trainings created a group of very self-confident people,
and when Milošević was gone, they felt because they were doing things on their own, they
could do what they wanted-- it was difficult to keep them in line-- it’s one reason *Otpor!*
fell apart after that... of course, not the main reason, that was simply because we, *Otpor!*
didn’t prepare for after-- but having all these self confident, competent, tough folks with completely
divergent ideas, who were not used to waiting for leadership to tell them what to do, didn’t
help.”

*Otpor!* expanded rapidly. According to Marovic, training the first year reached around 1000
people, after 6 months 20,000 people were involved, and within 2 years 80,000 people were
part of the movement. With such exponential growth, in the last couple of months before
Milošević stepped down, about 40,000 new recruits did not get trained. This could have
harmed *Otpor!* if this phase of the struggle had continued much longer. However, since so
many recruits had been trained, these more seasoned activists were critical during the period
of exponential growth in passing on movement knowledge. Before systems could break down,
Milošević was gone, and *Otpor!* was onto the next phase of the campaign.

References

Marovic, I. Personal interview, Skype, November 2014

Popovic, S., Djinovic, S., Milivojevic, A., Merriman, H., Marovic, I. & Centre for Applied Nonviolent
Action and Strategies [CANVAS], “CANVAS Core Curriculum: Guide to Effective Nonviolent

Conclusions

This preliminary survey of the use of intentional training within historical civil resistance movements has overwhelmingly shown that training can be instrumental in successful strategic resistance campaigns. The four case studies included a diversity of approaches to using training as a tactic to address key factors of movement success, including adherence to nonviolent discipline, unity of participants and organizations, and active planning. This report identified six distinct functional categories for consideration during a campaign or movement planning process; it could easily be used as a tool for uncovering missed opportunities in active plans that do, or could benefit from, inclusion of a training program.

Gene Sharp’s 198 methods of nonviolent action are grouped under three main headings: Protest, Noncooperation, and Intervention. It has long been suggested that adding an additional grouping of “Organization building” or “Capacity building” would work to encourage nonviolent activists to put time into this less sexy but critical development work for the long haul. Training programs would no doubt feature boldly in this category.

Specific highlights of unique functional uses of training from the four case studies include:

- Otport’s harnessing of training as the backbone of their Multi-Level Marketing scheme and their clear use of training to establish the leadership of the core group.
- The remarkable effect that outsider led nonviolent trainings had on mobilizing the middle class base in the Filipino People Power movement,
- The incredible breadth of trainings in the Civil Rights movement and early adoption of role plays and Popular Education techniques that transformed ordinary literacy programs into liberatory exercises.
- The significant role training played in establishing a radically egalitarian movement that succeeded in halting the growth of nuclear power, and inspired many other subsequent movements to adopt similar processes, training, and organization.

Trainings in nonviolent civil resistance are part of a long standing tradition of preparing communities to take safe and strategic action. One of the subtexts of the effectiveness of trainings is the experiential nature of much of the process; the incorporation of rehearsal or practice time as an essential and legitimate contribution to successful outcomes. In this way, the implementation of participatory and experiential training can operate as both the theory and the practice of transformative campaigns. Because training is so adaptable in both structure and content, effective and well designed training can enhance all of the key factors of movement success.
Recommendations for follow up

Further investigation could serve to add to valuable insight on the functions that civil resistance training plays in advancing the effectiveness of nonviolent movements. Below are several specific recommendations for further work:

- Develop an infographic or other short form way to deliver the findings from this study beyond USIP to increase strategic support for training.
- Put in place a bona fide monitoring and evaluation (M&E) program for a current campaign or movement that is already using or planning on using training in an intentional way. This would include utilizing standard M&E practices such as intake/outtake questionnaires, surveys; interviews; tracking folks over time; etc.
- Conduct research into, and identification of, best practices for training of trainers, including advancement, support and mentoring. Select and work with an on-going movement to implement findings and evaluate results.
- Continue and expand this research by following up on some of the identified training work in the campaigns and movements in the expanded list included in this report. Contract for significant time and support to allow use of primary sources and multiple live interviews.
- Expand on the four case studies included here, as well as continue to develop, vet and refine the attached functions list.
- Explore the potential to use the Global Nonviolent Action Database to enhance documentation of strategic use of trainings; Is there a way to code for training in the database?
- Secure further support for specific research on the value of participatory education within movements.
- Practice the findings: Develop a participatory training with lessons on how to increase the value of training as a strategic tactic and work with strategic planners who could potentially integrate findings with current movement strategy.
Additional Resources


Short list of additional case studies
to further investigate training functions within civil resistance movements

- Palestine, the role of training in the 1st Intifada — 1987-1993
- Justice for Janitors, SEIU campaign in the USA— 1990
- ACORN, low income family advocacy— 1970-2010
- United Farmworkers: training and strategy /planning in wage strikes— 1965-1966
- Burma Democracy/Self-Determination Movements, Uprising training tactics— 1988
- Viettan pro-democracy movement— founded in 1982.
- Egypt, April 6th Youth Movement movement to Tahir Sq, training— Jan-Feb 2011
- ANTI NUCLEAR weapons MOVEMENT (global) 1945—current
- Solidarity (Polish movement), training for strikes, esp. against Martial Law — 1982-1988
- Suffrage Movement— 1840s-1920
- Abolition movement- riots, Underground Railroad support—late 1700s-1865
- Ferguson protests- training tactics for peaceful protests/media?—August 9, 2014-present
- ACT UP— tactics in media training, blockades, etc. for NYC actions— 1987-present
- Argentina vs Pinochet, 1980s.
- Second-wave feminist movement- trainings and organizing tactics for various protests for gender equality— ~1960-1980 1970’s womens movement, consciousness raising, process…
- Baltics—vs Soviet Union… Singing Revolution, late 1990’s+
- Economic Justice—antiglobalization/IFI campaigns
  - Walmart 2005—current
  - World Bank/IMF 1950—current
  - Seattle, WTO 1999—2000+
- East Timor- Indonesian occupation resistance tactics -1975-1999
- Anti Apartheid South Africa
- Pakistan, 1900+
- HONG Kong , 2014—
List of Interviews/Individuals consulted

- Michael Beer, Nonviolence International
- James Brady, Greenpeace
- Daryn Cambridge, US Institutes of Peace
- Philippe Duhamel, consultant, Quebec
- Lisa Fithian, Alliance of Community Trainers
- Ryan Gerety, Open Technology Institute
- Paul Gunter, Beyond Nuclear/Clamshell Alliance
- Mary King, University of Peace, former SNCC
- George Lakey, Movement for a New Society/Training for Change/Swarthmore
- Ivan Marovic, consultant/Otpor!
- Hardy Merriman, International Center on Nonviolent Conflict
- Joanne Sheehan, War Resisters League,
- Stellan Vinthagen, University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Stephen Zunes, University of San Francisco

This report was prepared and written by Nadine Bloch. Nadine Bloch is a nonviolent practitioner, direct-action trainer, innovative curriculum developer, political organizer, strategic facilitator, and political artist who combines the principles and strategies of nonviolent civil resistance with creative use of culture and arts for more effective campaigns. In her more than 30 years on the front lines and in the trenches of environmental, peace and economic justice activism, she has worked on a broad spectrum of campaigns with diverse organizations, including Greenpeace, Ruckus Society, Nonviolence International, National Domestic Workers Assoc., Occupy, Labor Heritage Foundation, Health GAP, Home Defenders League, United Students Against Sweatshop, and Bread & Puppet Theater. Her work has been featured nationally and locally, in newspapers like The Washington Post and magazines from Ms. to Time. She is a contributor to the books Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution (2012, O/R Press) http://beautifultrouble.org and We Are Many, Reflections on Movement Strategy from Occupation to Liberation (2012, AK Press). Check out her current column on Waging Nonviolence: http://wagingnonviolence.org/column/the-arts-of-protest/

November 2014

Thank you to Maria Stephan and the US Institutes of Peace Academy for support of this project and its work to build and strengthen the skills required for managing conflict in all its phases. Thank you to Michael Beer and Ryan Gerety for guidance, all the individuals listed above who were interviewed for this project, American University intern Rachel Koller for research assistance and Debby Anker for editing support.