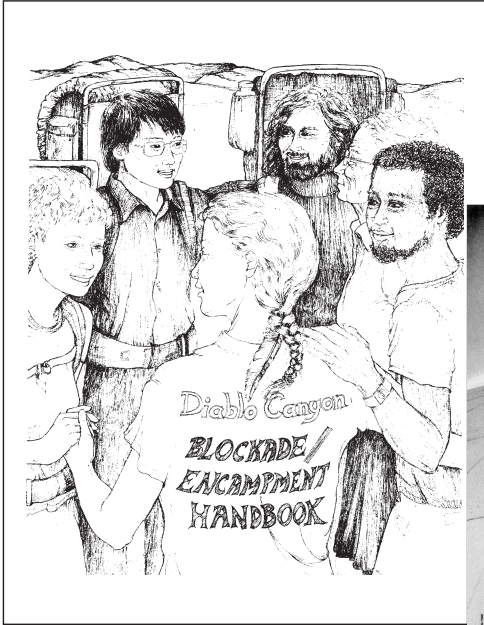


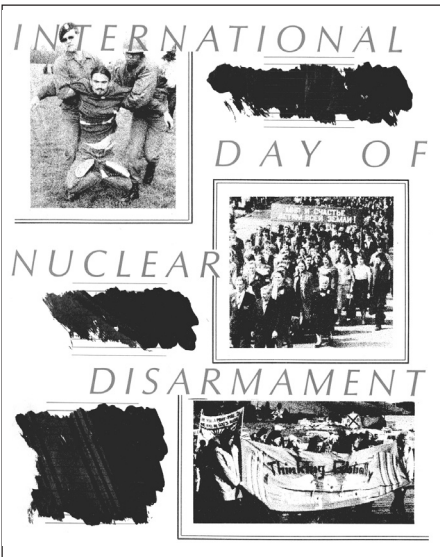
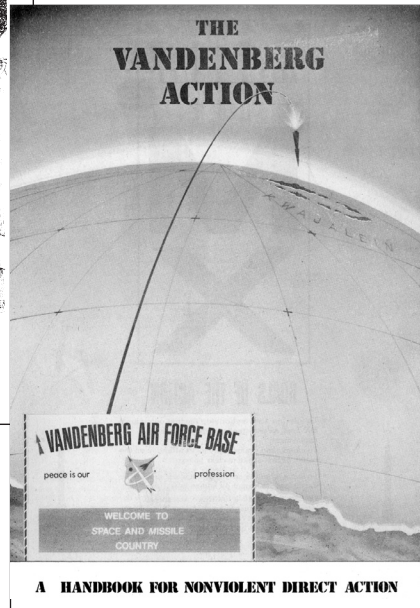
Direct Action Handbook (2025)

This handbook is excerpted from Luke Hauser's *Direct Action: An Historical Novel*. Available online, or download free PDF of the book at DirectAction.org

What follows is a much-condensed version of activism handbooks dating back to



the 1970s. Handbooks have been produced for many actions and convergences over the years, each adapting and updating prior editions.



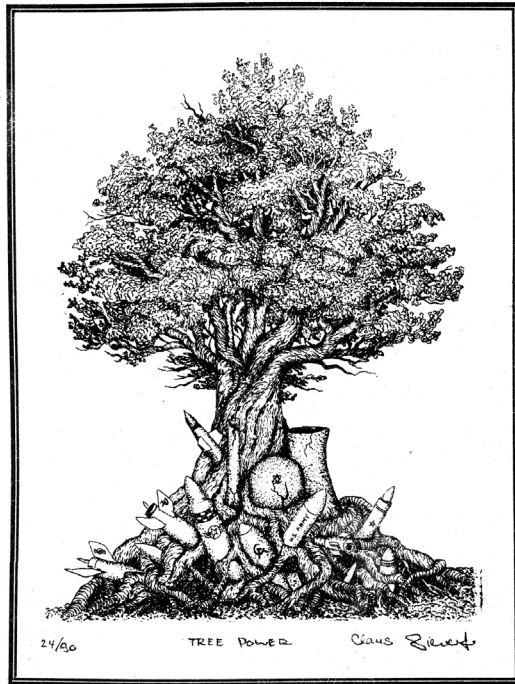
Sections on nonviolence, process, and oppression are rewritten for the 2025 edition of *Direct Action*.

Action- and site-specific material in this version come mainly from the 1982 Livermore handbook. Graphics are mostly from the 1970s or earlier.

Vintage handbooks online:

DirectAction.org/handbooks/

LIVERMORE WEAPONS LAB BLOCKADE/DEMONSTRATION HANDBOOK



NONVIOLENT PROTEST & CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

\$1⁰⁰

Cover of the 64-page newsprint handbook for the 1982 Livermore protest – one in a long series of organizing manuals dating back to at least the 1970s and continuing today. 1980s handbooks included sections connecting racism, homophobia, and discrimination against women with the arms race and imperialism.

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This handbook – re-edited in 2025 – is the youngest descendent in a long line of partial plagiarism of thoughts and graphics dating back to a mythical, primordial 1970s handbook. Wherefore and whereas we offer and authorize anyone to use anything herein!

The following sections offer various tools and tactics for direct activism.

Some of these may be familiar from everyday life, others not so much. Each may or may not have practical value for you. Yet what we offer is more than a grab-bag.



Discrimination & Diversity	18
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Taken together, nonviolence, consensus, solidarity, and fighting oppression comprise not just a toolkit, but a new perspective on political engagement – a new way of life.

Must these approaches be used in toto, or can we pick and choose?

Smorgasbord? Or Gestalt?

Taken alone, collectivity is good idea, as is nonviolence or consensus or nonhierarchy. But notice how they fit together like puzzle pieces.

If a group (or corporation or state) is built hierarchically, how “collective” is it really going to be?

And if I “act differently,” how nonviolent will my state/corporation/grassroots group turn out to be?

If our goal is a cohesive community where each person is empowered to take action without waiting for orders,

won't it be more effective to organize collectively and nonhierarchically?

One Step At A Time?

One of the conundrums of organizing is where to start, and how to accomplish one task (such as disarmament or social justice) without addressing dozens of others (eg, economics, environmentalism, racism...).

As our revolutionary forebears discovered, simply writing new constitutions and dictating new economic structures doesn't produce a world that most people really want to live in.

It seems like we need to overhaul our entire social structure, economic system, and personal relations at the same time.

It doesn't matter how fantastic the new political structures are if people are treated like cogs in the machines.

Part of creating a better world is treating each other better – working as if each person matters and has a valuable contribution.

In a word, collectivity.

Getting From Here to There

We can't simply will the new world into being and immediately implement total collectivity – for one, we'd be going to so many meetings that nothing would ever get done.

So where to start? One place is in our community organizing. Maybe I can't immediately collectivize my job or rental apartment. But I and a few comrades can form an activist cell (an "affinity group," some say) that organizes in a new way.

No one is in charge. Decisions are made by consensus (with room for autonomous action).

The AG allows time for look-

ing at its internal processes, including issues like sexism, racism, etc.

What About Nonviolence?

Will your group be nonviolent at all times? (This may include property destruction and/or angry language.)

That's up to you to decide. If you cannot reach consensus, consider breaking into two or more groups. Ask this:

- is the group for a single action, or a longterm commitment?
- is it possible/effective to use violent (or angry) tactics against others while avoiding them within your group?
- can your group remain nonhierarchical while engaging in acts such as property destruction?
- tactically – is the entire group committed to accepting the consequences of the acts you plan? Remember – once one person is arrested, the rest of you may quickly be discovered.

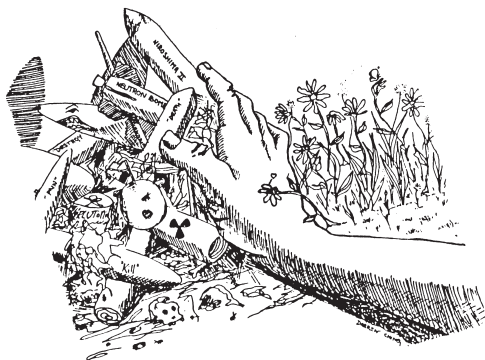
Below we'll discuss nonviolent activism in more detail.

The Value of Advance Planning

You don't have to figure it all out at once. We aren't going to solve racism or homophobia in a few meetings.

But try to plan ahead for anything that might come up in an action.

Good luck!



GOALS OF THE ACTION

Livermore Action Group's goal is (1) nuclear disarmament, (2) demilitarization of American society, and (3) redirection of economic priorities to provide for equitable distribution of wealth and resources at home and abroad.

The following pages make the connections between the lab, the nuclear arms race, and its threat to peace. These include:

1. Focus attention on the role of the lab in the arms race and militarism.
2. Stress the importance of conversion of the lab to productive, peaceful use.
3. Disrupt "business as usual" at the Lab, to slow down the development of first-strike and other nuclear weapons.
4. Urge employees to reconsider their role in nuclear proliferation.
5. Assert the right and capability of ordinary citizens to protest foreign policy and the threat of nuclear war.
6. Solidarity with world peace and disarmament movements.
7. Call attention to vested interests which pour money into nuclear weapons instead of social welfare programs.



LAG proposes conversion of our nation's two nuclear weapons design laboratories to productive, peaceful use, as a first step towards nuclear disarmament.

The most formidable obstacle to global arms control is America's thrust to develop a "first-strike" capability.

Warheads for highly-accurate first-strike nuclear weapons such as the Trident, Cruise and the MX missiles are in development at Livermore Lab. The lab is also developing the first-use neutron bomb, which because it destroys living beings while leaving property intact greatly increases the possibility of "limited use" of nuclear weapons. *[Specifics are from 1980s – the role of the Lab continues to this day.]*

Conversion would constitute a first step toward disarmament without jeopardizing the ability of the United States to defend itself.

LAG supports a nuclear weapons "Freeze." However, we are convinced that a more radical approach is necessary. We hope that massive nonviolent demonstrations will encourage people from all walks of life to become active, and that together we will bring pressure on the American government to reverse its nuclear acceleration.

We do not expect to stop work at Livermore Lab for more than a few hours. However, we will focus attention and make it clear that we will not stand idly by while the government prepares for global destruction.

Stop the bomb where it starts!



Introduction

This section is intended to provide an introduction to our reasons for attempting to convert Livermore Lab to peaceful use. We have put together several articles on aspects of the subject prepared by the LAG Education workgroup. These articles were written by individuals and not consensed to by LAG. We encourage further study of and action against this monster in our midst. If you are interested in more information, please contact the Livermore Action Group Education Collective.

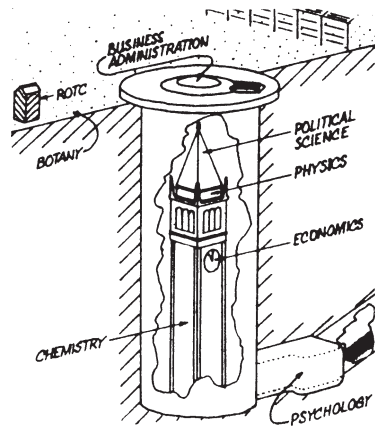
LIVERMORE LAB

The Ivory Tower is a Bomb

The UC Connection

The University of California's name is on every nuclear warhead developed by the United States. Officially, UC operates the weapons labs under contracts with the Department of Energy. But the University exercises no control or influence over the work on the labs. Rather, it provides an academic cover, a cloak of legitimacy, for nuclear weapons research.

The benefits from the University connection are prestige, in that the UC name helps in recruitment and retention of scientific personnel, and independence, in that the lab staff enjoys a much greater degree of freedom in its interactions with government officials than would be the case if they were under government or industrial management. It is this independence that enables lab officials to exercise powerful influence on weapons policies.



Livermore Lab: lobbyist for WAR

The weapons labs are the most powerful lobbyists in the country against arms control treaties and for new weapons systems. They were instrumental in defeating the negotiations for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in the early 1960s, and again in the late 1970s.

Livermore Lab has lobbied against and undermined any attempt to “freeze” nuclear weapons development, claiming this would create an unstable situation and might actually lead to nuclear war. We need time, the lab says, to develop the new generation of (first-strike) weapons. Then we can consider arms reductions.

This self-serving argument merely justifies continued weapons work by the labs. In fact, weapons under development now represent a destabilizing development that simply encourages other countries to try to keep pace.

Western States Legal Foundation is a public interest organization founded in 1982 which monitors and analyzes U.S. nuclear weapons policy.

Contact wslfweb.org

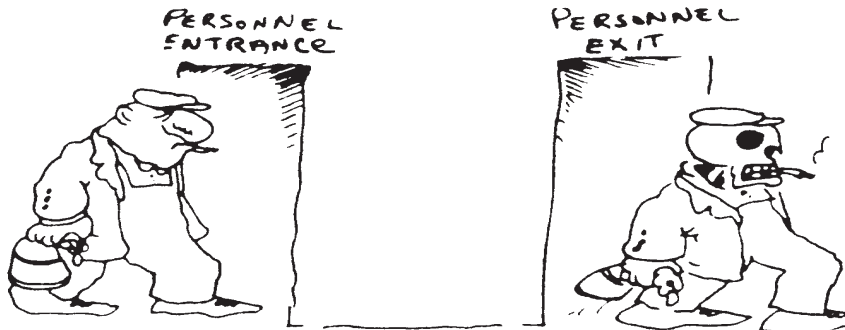
Health and Safety at the Labs

Contrary to official proclamations, Livermore Lab is extremely unsafe, a hazard to all in and around the facilities. The lab is run by people who are aware of the dangers and have withheld critical information from the DOE and from the public in general.

An Environmental Impact Statement prepared in 1978 admitted to “routine and unavoidable emissions” of radioactive substances, including plutonium, curium, uranium and tritium. This report has since been buried.

Health and safety problems at the lab reveal the colossal irresponsibility on the part of management. They risk the lives of employees, the community, and over four million people in the Bay Area with contamination of air, soil, water and vegetation.

No one really knows the outcome of these dangers; will we be faced with higher cancer rates and unknown threats against succeeding generations? The spin-off from the labs’ design of first-strike weapons is a first strike against the environment.

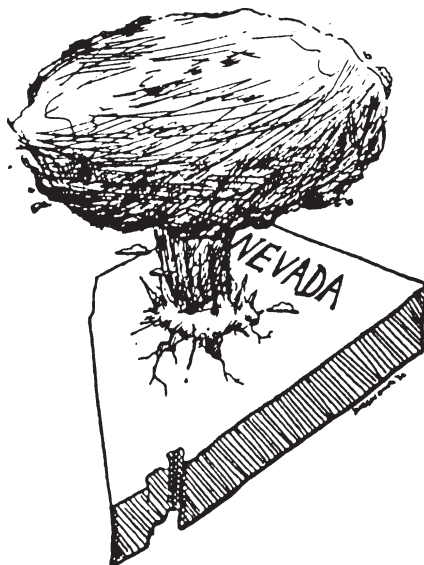


Why are we bombing Nevada?

The nuclear weapons labs and the University of California also need to be held accountable for the ongoing health, safety and environmental risks involved in nuclear weapons testing at Nevada Test Site (NTS). As of June 30, 1979, 537 announced tests had taken place at NTS. President Reagan plans to double the annual number of tests.

Throughout the history of testing in Nevada, the weapons labs and government have knowingly doused thousands of Americans with radioactive fallout. At least 41 of 441 so-called “safe” underground tests leaked large amounts of hazardous radiation into the atmosphere, some equivalent to the amount of radiation release in the Hiroshima bomb.

The labs, the Department of Energy, and other government officials have repeatedly ignored and even falsified the health and safety risks for the test site workers and the surrounding



communities. This “invisible violence” against our own citizens reflects the willingness of this government to stop at nothing to achieve its ends.

Guns versus Butter

- 25% of the world's research money goes into military research
- The money the world spends on military purposes in 12 hours could probably eradicate malaria from the earth
- 5% of the world's military expenditure could provide school places for 100 million children who do not currently attend school
- The world spends \$22 on military purposes for every \$1 it spends on development aid to poor countries
- “The money required to provide adequate food, water, education, health and housing for everyone in the world has been estimated at about \$18.5 billion per year. It's a huge sum of money... about as much as the world spends on arms every two weeks.” — U.N. Center for Disarmament

source: Oxfam America

U.S. Militarism

The War at Home and Abroad

The U.S. is at war. It has been in a state of war or war preparedness uninterrupted for decades. Military spending rivals the peak of the Vietnam War.

What is the cause of this massive expansion, which began in the late Carter years? Primarily, this military build-up is due to the loss of the overwhelming political and economic world dominance of the U.S. government and corporations, which characterized the 1950s through the early 1970s.

This abrupt change in U.S. policy parallels exactly the successful upsurge in third world struggles for self-determination.

Since 1975, over a dozen third world nations have seen successful liberation struggles in which elites subservient to U.S. corporate interests were replaced by more popular governments. To maintain their profits, U.S. multinationals have become increasingly dependent on cheap labor and natural resources controlled by repressive governments in South Africa, Taiwan, the Philippines, Central America, South Korea, Malaysia, and other "democratic" allies. U.S. corporations and the local elites they support depend on U.S. power to maintain their privileged positions.

At the same time, the nuclear build-up in Western Europe is an attempt to reassert U.S. political domi-

nance over its allies.

At home, America is faced with serious tasks. With an economy already weakened by competition from Japan and Europe (whose economies are not drained by excessive military spending), a way must be found to subsidize military programs without totally destroying the U.S. economic base. This means opening a "second front" in Reagan's war: against workers and the unemployed, against women, Blacks, Hispanics, against the people of America.



A massive transfer of wealth is underway from poor and working people to the military-industrial complex. Corporate taxes have been drastically reduced, while basic social programs are slashed if

not eliminated. These actions are all designed to redirect funds to corporate profits and to the military build-up needed to sustain them.

We need unified resistance to confront this growing militarism. This is why Livermore Action Group sees the necessity of being part of a broad anti-militarist movement which includes trade unions, civil rights, feminist, and third world groups, churches and community organizations, and anti-intervention movements.



The

BOMB

What It Would Be Like

What is the purpose of calculating the consequences of a nuclear war? To ignore the reality of holocaust is to surrender to psychic numbing, which produces disabling cynicism and despair. By having a clear understanding of nuclear annihilation, we stop absurd suggestions of the survivability of nuclear war, including discussions of civil defense. And by knowing the future that nuclear war would bring, we are compelled to act.

The circles of destruction emanating from a nuclear holocaust continue



to expand as more is understood. The overkill capacity of nuclear arsenals ensure that much of the land area of any conflict area would be subject to primary effects of the weapons.

After the immediate and local effects, there would be three significant worldwide effects of a nuclear war. First, radioactive material blown into the stratosphere during the explosions would circulate throughout the globe and gradually fall back to earth. This would cause genetic mutations and cancers in organisms on both land and sea, lasting for many generations.

Second, the particulate material blown into the stratosphere would deflect some solar heat from the earth's surface. Cooled by just a few degrees, the climate would change, and global vegetation, including agriculture, would be drastically altered.

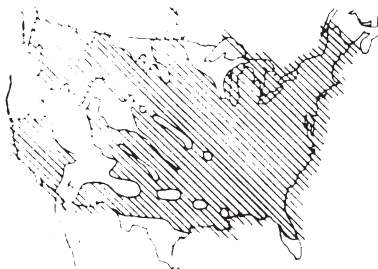
Finally, the layer of ozone in the upper atmosphere, which protects life from harmful ultraviolet radiation, would be reduced. It is increasingly evident that only some types of organisms could tolerate this environment; the others would become extinct.

IN A NUCLEAR WAR . . .



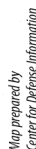
THESE TARGETS ARE LIKELY TO BE HIT

FALLOUT WOULD ENGULF . . .



THE SHADED AREAS

(most still active, all still toxic)



non-VIOLENCE

Guidelines for Nonviolence

These guidelines, adapted from American Friends Service Committee, are basic agreements, rather than philosophical/political requirements. They act as a basis of trust among participants who come together for a specific action. The guidelines are under constant discussion and are a current working understanding, not as statements etched in stone.

1. Our attitude will be one of openness, friendliness, and respect toward all people we encounter.
2. We will use no violence, verbal or physical, toward any person.
3. We will not damage any property.
4. We will not bring or use drugs or alcohol other than for medical purposes.
5. We will not run.
6. We will carry no weapons.

People often speak of honoring all life. When that life is a friend, a flower, or a dolphin, honoring their spirit is easy.

But when it's an angry right-winger, an impatient cop, or a frustrated teacher, it can be a lot harder.

Not everyone who takes part in direct action protests is a committed pacifist. But somehow we have to find ways to work together.

Agreeing to nonviolence in an action is one way people find common ground in an intense situation.

In civil disobedience actions, participants often reach basic understandings around nonviolence. This helps build unity and trust, knowing that others in the streets – including folks who have never met – have agreed to the same guidelines.

These guidelines and the accompanying discussions come from 2000s globalization and Occupy protests, passed along by 1980s anti-nuclear activists, who learned from Quaker organizers educated by the US civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, who brought lessons from 1930s labor struggles...

The guidelines continue to be used – and adapted – to this day.

Nonviolence Resources

Resource Center for Nonviolence:
rcnv.org

Movement for a New Society:
movementforanewociety.org

Center for Applied Nonviolence:
nonviolencetoolkit.com

the Politics of NonViolence

What Does Nonviolence Mean?

Nonviolent action demonstrates a different model of human nature – people taking a humane and principled stand for the world and for all life.

Nonviolence strives to be an alternative way to initiate change. It attempts to minimize bitterness and isolation in people affected by our actions, and tries to break the cycle of violence breeding more violence.

Nonviolence in extended campaigns has led to notable successes, such as ending racial segregation on buses in Montgomery, Alabama, as a result of a 1956 boycott. More recently, sections of Headwaters Forest in Northern California were saved from logging by peaceful occupations and tree-sits.

Over the years, much of the US direct action movement has incorporated nonviolence into the heart of its strategy.

Why Choose Nonviolence?

The following assumptions and goals help explain the rationale for practicing nonviolence:

- Respect all life.
- Transform opposition rather than destroy it.
- The means must be consistent with the ends.

- Use creativity, humor, and love.
- Aim for fundamental change.
- Nonviolence is active.
- We can withhold cooperation from those who abuse power.

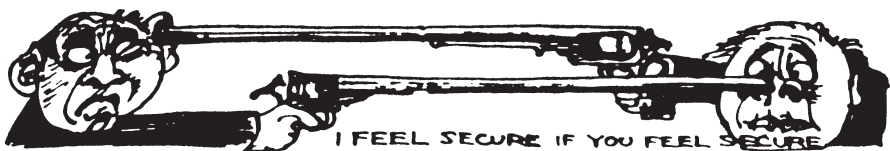


A Video History of Nonviolent Direct Action with Luke Hauser

Join author Luke Hauser for a video journey through the history of nonviolent direct action in the United States (with a side trip to Europe).

Ranging from the American Revolution, abolitionism, and the suffrage movement, through Civil Rights and anti-war organizing, anti-nuclear and peace movements of the later twentieth century, culminating with Black Lives Matter, Extinction Rebellion, and other direct action movements of the twenty-first century.

Video: [DirectAction.org/youtube](https://www.directaction.org/youtube)



Dynamics of NonViolence

Dynamics of Nonviolence

The conventional view sees government and corporations as having power over society, with the rest of us dependent on the good will and caprice of “power-holding” institutions such as military, police, courts, and bureaucracy.

The theory of nonviolence proposes a different analysis: that political power often depends on the cooperation of ordinary people. Withdrawal of cooperation can restrict and sometimes even dissolve power.

Power often depends on continued obedience. When people refuse to obey their “rulers,” their power may begin to crumble.

Nonviolence in a Violent Society

Our nonviolence is no guarantee of how others will behave. Police, employees, or right-wingers may behave differently.

When we interfere with the smooth operation of the machine, even nonviolently, we may be met with aggression by police and others. How do we remain nonviolent in such situations?

The first thing is maintaining human contact with the perceived “opponent.” Body language is important – especially remaining calm and making eye contact. Listening rather than talking may help prevent conflicts from escalating.

At some point a person or an affinity group may withdraw or disengage from a conflict (assuming the police let you go).

Planning Ahead

It is crucial that affinity groups meet ahead of time to discuss and role-play responses to potentially violent situations. For instance, an affinity group may decide (in advance?) to physically surround someone being assaulted, while distracting or calming the attacker.

Responses such as this vividly demonstrate the goals of nonviolent direct action. We intervene so that corporations and governments can’t do more harm and abuse, even as we model the world we vision.



CONSENSUS

What Is Consensus?

Consensus is a process in which no decision is finalized until everyone in the group can accept (“accept,” not necessarily enthusiastically embrace!) the decision and is willing to implement it without resentment. Ideally, consensus synthesizes the ideas of the entire group into a unifying decision.

Unlike voting, consensus is not an adversarial, win/lose method. With consensus, we do not have to choose between two alternatives. Those who hold different views do not become opponents.

Instead, diverse views are seen as giving fresh and valuable perspectives. As we work to meet everyone’s concerns, our decisions are strengthened.

Consensus is not the same as a unanimous vote. It does not necessarily mean total agreement.

Rather, it means reaching a decision which takes into account all of the people and views in the group and attempts to synthesize them into effective action.

How Do We Do It?

Coming to genuine consensus is a real and difficult skill. It involves patience, willingness to listen, and an openness to new ideas.

People must be committed to expressing their own ideas and feelings and also encouraging others with different views to express theirs as well.

Because the ideal of consensus is to reach a decision that is not only acceptable to everyone, but is actually

best for the whole group, there must be a “bottom line” of shared beliefs about what is best for all concerned.

These are the “principles of unity.”

These basic agreements will not encompass all the beliefs of each individual in the group, but rather help define the working relationships of the members.

For activist groups these principles might include whether or not there are commitments to nonviolence, to mediating disputes among members, to working against racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.

You may also discuss whether you are forming for a single action or project, or as an ongoing group.

Without such basic principles of unity and a willingness to work within them, consensus won’t succeed.

Roles in a Consensus Meeting

Facilitator: This is a shared and rotated role, and is valuable even in small circles. Facilitators should remain neutral on topics being discussed. When an issue arises about which a facilitator feels strongly, they should step aside and let someone else facilitate.

Facilitators help move the group through decision making. They take suggestions for the agenda, make sure roles are filled, call on people to speak in turn, etc. By calling on quiet people, soliciting opinions from those who hang back, and limiting those who tend to dominate, facilitators help each person have a chance to participate.

How Consensus Works

Facilitators help the group resolve conflicts and make decisions by summarizing, repeating, or rephrasing proposals as necessary. See below for more ideas.

Vibeswatcher: Pays attention to the group's process. Stays aware of the feelings people are not expressing. Reminds the group to relax and take

paper that can be seen by all.

When everyone has spoken, the facilitator or someone else attempts to synthesize the ideas into a proposal – a suggestion for what the group will do.

“I propose we join the September environmental protests.”

The facilitator then calls for clarifying questions: “Do you mean

blockading, or public education, or what?”

When the proposal is clearly understood, additions may be offered: “I propose we concentrate on street theater, leafletting, and provide support for those who want to be part of the civil disobedience action.”

The facilitator then asks for concerns and objections. The proposal is modified as

concerns are expressed. For example, a group member might say, “I’m concerned that doing street theater and leafletting is too much – I prefer to focus on theater.”

After discussion, perhaps with another go-round on the subject, the proposal may be modified. In its final form, it might be something like this: “Our group will do street theater early in the day, then join the support march during the civil disobedience action.” Allow time for any discussion and concerns.

If there are no further objections,

continued on next page



breaks as needed. This role is especially important in large meetings.

Other Roles: Child care, notetaker, timekeeper.

Consensus Nuts and Bolts

(See these processes in action in *Direct Action: An Historical Novel!*)

An issue comes up for discussion, and a facilitator is chosen (see above).

For example, an affinity group (AG) is trying to decide what its first action will be. After general discussion, the facilitator suggests a go-round during which each member has two minutes to speak. One person takes notes on a large sheet of butcher

Consensus

continued from preceding page

the facilitator can ask for consensus. If there are still no objections, you have your decision.

If consensus can't be reached, the group stays with the previous decision on the subject, or does nothing if that is applicable. (If a group decides to do nothing, members may decide to leave and join other groups.)

Blocking: Any individual in the group may "block consensus," but a block should be used very cautiously.

A block is not just a "no" vote, or an expression of disfavor. A block says, "I believe what the group wants to do goes against our 'principles of unity'. I cannot allow the group to do it – and I am willing to delay or obstruct the group over this."

A block implies that a decision would be unethical and/or violates the group's principles of unity. When used for lesser reasons, blocking frustrates the process and can destroy a group.

Consensus and Action: The goal of consensus process is not just to make a decision, but to carry out the plan of action. Often a person's commitment to a decision is in proportion to their sense of participation in that decision. Consensus attempts to involve all members of a group, not just the "leaders."

People sometimes complain that consensus is too time-consuming. Especially when a group is learning to use the process, it may seem cumbersome. But discussion time is compensated by the increased

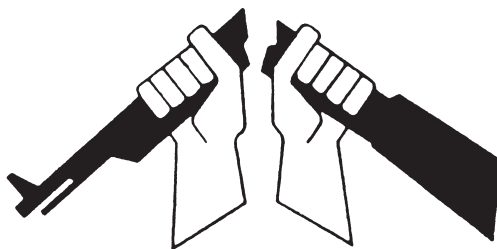
energy and enthusiasm with which people carry out a decision. There is no dissatisfied minority to undermine a decision. Because group members feel part of the decision-making process, they often take on responsibility in new areas.

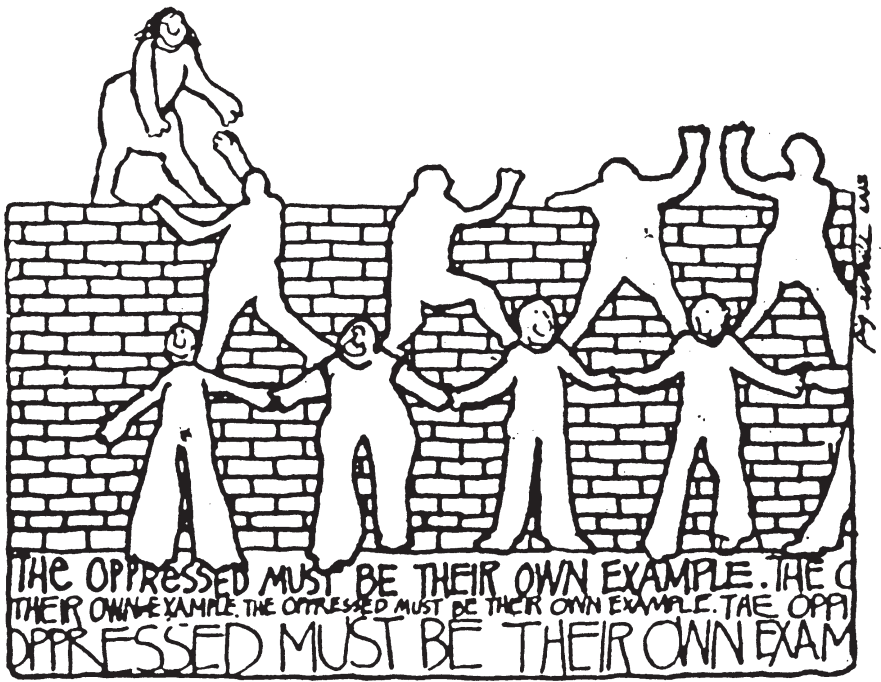
Spokescouncils: In larger groups and coalitions, each affinity group, work group, or other subgroup selects one or two people to act as their spokespersons. Reclaiming uses this model for its international BIRCH Council, and it is sometimes used by activist coalitions.

These "spokes" carry their groups' opinions and proposals to spokescouncils. Spokes try to consolidate, synthesize, and iron out differences between proposals so as to create proposals agreeable to all.

The new proposals are then relayed back to the affinity groups by their spokes, the issues at hand reconsidered by each subgroup, and a new position (or perhaps the old one) is reached.

The new positions are brought back to the next spokes-council. If consensus can be reached, great. If not, the process may be repeated, or the group may decide to return to the previous decision. The role of spoke should rotate so that power remains decentralized.





Process Guidelines

A major contribution of feminism to social change movements is an awareness that effective group process and meaningful personal interactions are crucial to developing a successful movement.

Nonviolence and consensus begin at home, in the ways people treat each other. The personal is political.

Relationships within the group cannot be separated from the accomplishment of political goals. Effective group process, in fact, means valuing co-operation over competition, recognizing the contributions of each individual, and decentralizing power through a non-hierarchical organizational structures.

1. Use go-rounds. Equalize participation by going around the circle speaking for a specified time.

2. Value feelings. Include time for expressing emotions and for personal interactions.

3. Meet separately. Allow time for subgroups such as women, LGBTQ folks, BIPOC people, etc to meet separately in order to strengthen people's participation.

4. Meet in small groups. Allow time for meeting in small groups during larger meetings so that people who feel more comfortable there can speak more freely. Small groups give each person more speaking time. A spoke from each small group can report back to the larger group, particularly if proposals have been discussed.

5. Share skills, rotate responsibilities.

Affinity Groups

Picture yourself at a giant peace convergence, or a Pride march, or maybe a Black Lives Matter protest. Hundreds, even thousands of people are striding down the street, chanting and singing. It feels great!

There's power in numbers, in being part of a large and vibrant group.

It's also easy to feel a bit lost. Even if I'm with a friend or two, we don't really have a plan. People drift away, and we don't always leave with the people we came with. Afterward, despite the power of the action, we might feel agitated and alienated.

That's why someone invented affinity groups (AGs).

What Are Affinity Groups?

Affinity groups are small groups that gather for political or cultural action.

The concept of affinity groups is not a new one. Affinity groups are an ancient form of organization by people seeking to make a better world. What makes more sense than small groups of friends and neighbors who share an

"affinity" working together?

Work groups (sometimes called Weavers) are one type of AG. A street theatre group is another. Magical circles can be considered affinity groups, and magical skills help build connections and trust among members.

In direct action protests, small action groups – some ongoing, some just for the one action – are often called affinity groups.

Action Affinity Groups

Action AGs are typically comprised of five to fifteen people. Some groups focus around a specific interest, issue, or philosophy, such as opposing sexism or racism, being medics, LGBTQ+, Dead Heads, or single mothers.

Affinity groups serve as basic planning and decision-making bodies for an action, including preparations and followup. Each affinity group provides for its own physical needs and makes its own decisions using consensus process. Spokespeople representing AGs meet in spokescouncils

to communicate, co-ordinate, and consolidate the different groups' decisions, then relay information back to their AG.

By generating trust and decentralizing decisions, the AG structure also reduces the risk of infiltration.



Pre-Action Planning

Affinity groups should try to meet several times before the action to build trust, work on group process, and plan for the action. Sharing food helps make a planning meeting more enjoyable. Group names and identification such as T-shirts or armbands can bring a group together.

Prior to a protest, a nonviolence prep and at least one followup meeting should be devoted to legal and jail preparation, in which everyone's questions, fears, reactions, emotions, and attitudes can be shared in depth.

After the action, debrief and share inspirations and new ideas. If the group is going to end, consider honoring it with a special gathering.

Affinity Group Support People

Support people are members of the AG who take non-arrest roles. They may attend an action, or remain at home and be available for home support. Among the things they can do are:

- collect a list of people that members want contacted in case of injury or arrest and take care of arrestees' cars, belongings, IDs, etc.
- support on home front: plants, animals, kids, jobs, etc.
- answer media or legal calls.
- keep in touch with folks from your AG on the streets and/or in jail, and greet them when they return.

The Long Run – Keep Trying!

Some affinity groups continue as political/support groups. Others come and go. What to do? Try again! Activist convergences, meetings, and organizing projects are good places to meet others looking for an affinity group.



Work Groups

Work groups (or cells) are a different type of affinity group. They come together to take care of particular tasks and functions for a group, event, or action. WitchCamp organizing teams are work groups.

Work groups focus on things like logistics (how to get things done), communications, publicity, legal and admin support, food and hearth needs, medics and first aid, music, and event planning. And every project needs a clean-up crew!

For small projects, one work group might tackle all of these tasks.

Coordinating & Spokes Councils

Communication among work groups and affinity groups is important. Representatives of work groups might meet as a coordinating council.

For some events and actions, planners may host one or more meetings of affinity group reps known as a spokes-council (the reps are spokespeople for their AG, or "spokes").

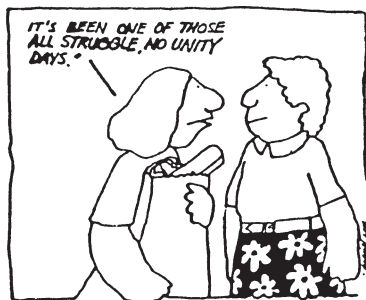


Discrimination & Diversity

In the disarmament movement, it is important not only to struggle against bombs and missiles, but also to work against other forms of violence that confront us. Specifically, other violence comes in two forms:

1. Physical and/or psychic violence against all people, such as rape or murder, and specifically against oppressed people.
2. Psychic and attitudinal violence within our movement reflected in ways we treat each other and ourselves.

These two forms of violence are connected with the creation of weapons of destruction. It is the same system that is responsible – a system based on domination, on the belief that some people have more value than others, and therefore have the right to control others. Because we believe it is the system and all of its forms of violence that we are fighting, we must make a commitment to fight the violence that occurs around us and between us. The Diversity Section of this handbook specifically addresses these concerns, both within a societal context and within the context of interpersonal relationships.



Challenging Racism

Racism, the systematic mistreatment of people of color, is a result of institutionalized inequities in the social structure as well as learned attitudes.

Racism stems from a self-perpetuating imbalance in economic, political and social power. The consequences of this imbalance pervade all aspects of the social system and affect all facets of people's lives.

Racism sets groups of people against each other. It distorts perceptions of possibilities for change; it makes us abandon visions of solidarity; it robs us of our dreams of community.

No human being is born with racist attitudes. Racist attitudes are a result of misinformation which is imposed upon young people.

Racism continues in part because people feel powerless to do anything about it. But the situation is not hopeless. People can grow and change. Racism can be examined and challenged.

Acknowledging the First People of the Land

We can begin each circle, action, convergence, etc by acknowledging the First People of the land we are gathering on.

Learn the names of the tribes who lived here before 1492, and the history of dispossession and displacement.

Name these Peoples at the beginning of each gathering.

Learn about current organizing projects and what sorts of support you might offer.

Working Against Racism

A Self-Facilitated Workshop

WeaveAndSpin.org/less-racist

This is an open-hearted invitation to grassroots activists to tackle the big issues of race, racism, anti-racism, and decolonization.

The resources in this PDF outline a participatory workshop created by Reclaiming, a pagan-activist tradition involved in social change since the 1980s, with readings, videos, and discussion questions throughout. Hopefully everyone will find something valuable to spark discussion here.

If you are facilitating this workshop, please read through the entire document first, then feel free to pick and choose which items your group will focus on, based on the group's composition, interests, level of understanding, and time.

Depending on the nature of the group, you might wish to use techniques such as icebreakers, creating a circle, go-rounds, or small-group activities to build relationships and trust between community members and thus create a reflective space for listening within and without, a safe(r) space for speaking truth, a brave space for taking risks and daring to make mistakes.

Anti-racist work can be tricky and may require strong facilitation skills. Facilitators might want to work in pairs or teams or rotate leadership.

Facilitators, be aware of who's in the room. Are there BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) in a majority-white group? Frame your conversations to not leave out BIPOC and mixed-race people. Don't assume

that the default perspective is a white perspective. Ask BIPOC directly what they need to feel supported. BIPOC might want to create their own group and do their own focused work separate from white folks. BIPOC should never be expected to do the labor of educating white people.

These resources focus mostly on the so-called United States, although the concepts and ideas can often be applied to other lands. We encourage you to do place-specific research on the land you call home. Thank you for taking action and doing the tough, necessary work of unlearning racism and working towards a more just society.

Contents Include:

- Community Agreements
- What is Racism?
- BIPOC vs. POC Terminology
- Anti-Blackness
- Intersectionality
- Impact vs. Intention
- Microaggressions
- Cultural Appropriation
- Land Acknowledgments
- Decolonization
- Racial Healing
- White Fragility / Hostility

This document was created by members of DARC: Decolonizing Actions in Reclaiming Communities.

Free download:

WeaveAndSpin.org/less-racist

How to Be Less Racist at Grassroots Events

by Rachel Yuriko Yukimura

- When first meeting someone, **don't** immediately ask them about their race or ethnicity. Those kinds of conversations often require the trust of an established relationship.

When Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) create groups or events that exclude white people, **do** remember that we need separate spaces in order to feel safe, often because we feel marginalized in majority-white spaces.

If a BIPOC opens up to you about their background, **do** remember that they are an individual human being, and don't make generalizations or assumptions about them or their identities.

Do not sexualize or fetishize BIPOC or their identities (eg. "Asian women are subservient").

Do not expect BIPOC to educate you about racism. If you have a question about race or racism at camp, do ask a fellow white person who has done work in these areas, attend an optional offering, and ask questions of BIPOC who have explicitly offered their knowledge and perspective.

Do remember that "reverse-racism" does not exist. Prejudice can occur in any direction, but racism is institutional, and we live in a country founded on white supremacy.

Do address racism when you see it. If someone does or says something racist, you might pull them aside and have a conversation about it. Even if they respond defensively, you have planted a seed of awareness that will hopefully lead to more respectful behavior in the future.

If you are told your behavior had a negative impact, **do** take a deep breath and apologize without making excuses. Even if you had good intentions, it is important to acknowledge your impact.

Do remember that being anti-racist is a life-long process. We were all raised in a racist overculture and must overcome deeply ingrained conditioning. Do not expect yourself to be perfect, and remember that the work and learning are never done!

Ishtarlah/ Rachel Yuriko Yukimura (she/her) has been involved in the Reclaiming tradition since 2011, and has been a teacher and organizer in the California Witchcamp, Teen Earth Magic, and Pleasures of Beltane communities. She is a proud sex worker, Surrogate Partner Therapy practitioner, and Somatic Sex Educator, and brings her Leftist, queer, and anti-Zionist politics into everything she does. Rachel works with ancestral deities from both of her lineages, primarily Inanna-Ishtar on her Jewish side and Inari-O-Kami on her Japanese side. She lives on Lisjan Ohlone land in Oakland, California with one of her partners, their two dogs, and her boa constrictor familiar.

Support for LGBTQ+ People

As shown repeatedly throughout the novel *Direct Action*, participation of LGBTQ+ folks is a great part of the strength of an activist group. LGBTQ+ people often have a personal history of creating alternatives, finding allies, and resisting oppression that can bring lessons to an entire community.

Activist networks support this participation by taking an explicit stand for LGBTQ+ rights and educating ourselves about current issues and needs.

Within a larger group or network, constituency subgroups may want to have their own circles. For instance, LGBTQ+ or BIPOC people may want to have their own meeting before consenting to a wider action. Young people may want to circle separately as a support group, or women may want to have a listening circle, etc.

Sometimes people who are not in said groups – particularly organizers who have worked to bring folks together in the first place – can feel excluded, or ask, “Why can’t we all just be one group?”

Experience has taught that when “minority” groups have their own space to meet, it encourages participation and can strengthen the entire group. Maybe an allies group can meet at the same time? For instance,

if straight folks feel excluded when LGBTQ+ people gather separately, perhaps it’s a chance for straights to circle and ask, “How can we be better allies?”

Participation in such constituency groups is voluntary, and each person decides for themselves whether they

are part of the constituency. Typically someone might announce, “an LGBTQ+ circle is meeting during lunch,” or whenever.

Those who are part of said group are welcome to attend.

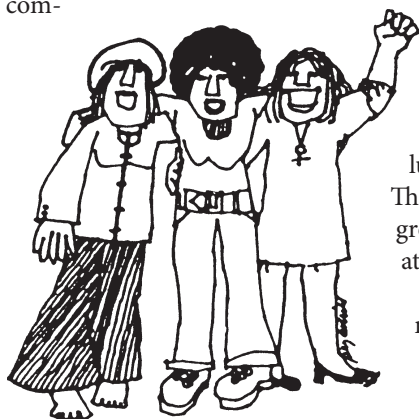
These circles are not a place for others to attend and say, “I just want to hear what LGBTQ+ folks (or whoever) are saying.” You’ll hear when the time is right!

Solidarity with LGBTQ+ People

All participants in protests and actions should be aware that LGBTQ+ people are often targeted by police and jail guards. This may include isolation, physical attacks, and other harassment. Trans people may be “assigned” a gender and placed in custody with other prisoners.

It is essential that affinity groups discuss and role play situations ahead of time. When the moment arises, there will not be time to circle up and reach consensus.

First – ask people in potential target groups (LGBTQ+, BIPOC, youth...) what support they want.



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Feminism

It is important to include a discussion of feminism in an activist handbook for several reasons. We can't change our society simply by opposing those in power. We must also oppose traditional notions of power.

Feminism has evolved from women's experiences as part of an oppressive society, as victims of violence and oppression, and as spiritual and emotional beings.

(In recent times, some feminist groups have been criticized for excluding trans women. TERFS, or Trans-

envisions a society based on support and cooperation, not on fear, intimidation and violence.

The recognition that these societal goals and priorities also exist in grassroots group processes makes feminist analysis an integral part of contemporary activism. We recognize that our means will influence our ends. We are attempting to *live* our goals instead of just working toward them.

Patriarchy

Under patriarchy, which means "rule of the fathers," men hold power over women. Women are relegated to limited roles and valued primarily for their sexual and reproductive functions, while men are seen as the makers of culture, the primary actors in history. Feminism attempts to change this deep-rooted pattern, to assure equality of

women under the law, to challenge on every level of society the limitations that deny women – and all people – the chance to live our fully-human possibilities.

Patriarchy is reinforced by the language we use, by the images we see, by the fairy tales we hear as children, and the popular songs we sing. It is enforced economically: women are clustered in low-paying, low status jobs.

Patriarchy is also reinforced by



Exclusionary Radical Feminists, do not represent the forward-looking tendencies of feminism examined here.)

Feminism and Power

Feminism offers an alternative concept of power.

Feminism recognizes the need not only to redistribute power, but to redefine it – power as inner strength, a sense of self not dependent on control or domination of another. Feminism

violence. A large number of women are battered at some time in their lives. Fear of rape keeps most women penned in their homes at night and makes hiking trails and lonely beaches places of terror for many women. Magazines and movies portray women as objects to be violated. In war, the victors often rape the women of the conquered people.

The feminist movement has actively struggled against patriarchy and for women's self-determination in many areas – economic equality, access to jobs and education, control over our bodies and our sexuality, the right to control our own reproduction.

Feminism and Militarism

A feminist analysis is crucial to challenging militarism. Patriarchy supports and thrives on war. The split which turns women, or any oppressed group, into "the other" is the same split which allows us to see our enemies as non-human, as fair game for any means of destruction or cruelty.

Our country often seems directed by people trying to live out stereotypes of male toughness. Emotions, tender feelings, care for the living and those to come are not seen as appropriate concerns of public policy.

Feminism sees that the system which enforces male domination harms both women and men. It is part of the system which perpetuates racism, classism, heterosexism, and all forms of oppression.

In its broadest sense, feminism seeks not only to shake the world, but to remake it.



Feminist Process

Feminist experiences have much to teach other groups. Women offered critiques of old-style, top-down organizing, emphasizing awareness of the contributions of each person to the group and to society as a whole.

Feminism also critiques the ways that each of us is "indoctrinated" into structures of hierarchy and domination.

We learn these gender-inflected patterns at such an early age and in such intimate surroundings – our own families – that the attitudes they foster are often unconscious. To help each other confront this conditioning, women in the late 60s and early 70s met together in small groups called consciousness-raising groups. As stories and experiences were shared, women began to discover that what we thought were personal frustrations or failures often stemmed from our common situation in society. The personal,

continued on next page

Feminism

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we found, is political.

The process that developed in these small groups has influenced activist process: in fact, we call our process feminist. Feminist process does not mean that women dominate or exclude men. On the contrary, it challenges all systems of domination, matriarchy as well as patriarchy. The term recognizes the historical importance of the feminist movement in insisting that nonviolence begins at home – in the ways we treat each other.

When we say that we use feminist process, we mean that the relationships within our groups cannot be separated from the accomplishment of our goals. We mean that we value synthesis and cooperation rather than competition, that we value each individual's contributions to the group and encourage the active participation of everyone involved. We mean that our organizations are non-hierarchical; that power flows from the united will of the group, not from the authority of any individuals. Nevertheless, our groups are not leaderless – each one of us is a leader.

Men's Issues

Although major changes in women's lives are a result of the work that women have done for ourselves, coalitioning with men to fight sexism is an important ingredient of enduring change. Some men have joined in this struggle, and from this has emerged a small men's anti-sexist movement challenging the social order that depends on sexism to control both men and women. Such a movement is helping men become conscious of their own pains and needs, recognize how they dominate others, and give support to each other.

As with women struggling to overcome limitations that are conditioned, men can overcome the barriers which prevent them from being full human beings as well.



Homophobia

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Before an entire group resists police or guards, make sure the people you are protecting actually want this.

First attempts to resist may fail – now what? For instance, what will your AG do if someone is removed/isolated by guards? Will you continue resisting? Find a way to contact lawyers? Refuse

to go to arraignment until the person is returned?

Our strength is when we are together. Beware trusting guards' promises that you will be reunited later, that you will all get a hearing, etc. Ask your attorneys to verify such promises – guards have been known to prevaricate. Our strongest hand is to refuse any cooperation until we are all together and in contact with attorneys.

Overcoming Masculine Oppression in Mixed Groups

This guide is addressed to men, to how we can overcome our oppressive behavior in mixed groups. More often than not, men are the ones dominating group activity. Our goals are to rid the society—and our own groups—of these forms of domination.

- **Hogging the**

show: talking too much, too long, too loud.

- **Problem solver:**

continually giving the answer or solution before others have had much chance to contribute.



- **Restating:** saying in another way what someone else, especially a woman, has just said.

- **Putdowns and one-upsmanship:** “I used to believe that, but now...” or “How can you possibly say that?”

- **Self-listening:** formulating a response after the first few sentences, not listening to anything from that point on, and leaping in at the first pause.

- **Avoiding feelings:** intellectualizing, withdrawing into passivity, or making jokes when it’s time to share personal feelings.

- **Seeking attention and support from women while competing with men.**

- **Speaking for others:** “What so and so really meant was...”

The full wealth of knowledge and skills available to the group is severely limited by such behavior. Women and men who feel less assertive than others or who don’t feel comfortable partici-

pating in a competitive atmosphere are cut off from the interchange of experience and ideas.

As men, we can be responsible to others and ourselves in groups by taking only our fair share of talking time, listening attentively and not interrupting other speakers, giving our ideas in an equal rather than an arrogant manner, minimizing our critical tendencies, and interrupting the oppressive behavior of other men.

If sexism isn’t ended within social change groups, there can’t be a movement for real social change. Any change of society which does not include freeing women and men from oppressive sex role conditioning, from subtle as well as blatant forms of male supremacy, is incomplete.

(adapted from an article by Bill Moyer)

BLOCKADE

scenario

We plan to disrupt business as usual at the labs for as long as possible. Blockaders will attempt to cut off access gates and roads to the lab by engaging in a nonviolent blockade. Blockaders should plan on being arrested.

All blockaders must take nonviolence training and form affinity groups. AGs are encouraged to develop creative nonviolent tactics which prolong the blockade and dramatize opposition to nuclear weapons. Theatre, props and other nonviolent tactics will maximize the effectiveness of the blockade.

To coordinate participation for the blockade, there will be regular spokes-council meetings, consisting of a spoke from each AG. Spokes may express concerns of the AG, exchange information, and discuss proposals for the action. Spokes will then go back to their AGs to discuss proposals in depth, and return to the next council with their AG's concerns and decisions.

The blockade scenario collective is developing the framework for the blockade. This collective will provide for communication, transportation, medics, and other requirements.

AGs will be autonomous as possible, within the action guidelines.

Site Description

Livermore Weapons Lab is located 33 miles southeast of Oakland. The lab

is about one mile east of the town of Livermore. It is a large (several square miles) complex of buildings and open fields surrounded by a chain link fence. There are four main vehicle gates, and several pedestrian gates.

Going Limp

An important decision you will have to make is whether or not you will cooperate with police at the time of your arrest. If you decide to "go limp," be aware that there is a greater chance of being hurt. Here is some advice from people who have done it before:

- Try to make eye contact and communicate with the person arresting you.
- Try and situate yourself in a way that if you are dragged, you are dragged on your back and heels, instead of on your stomach and knees.
- While linking arms with AG members feels good to you, police have a tendency to view this as defiance, and are more likely to respond with force.

Mace, Dogs and Teargas

We don't expect authorities to use any of these, all of which are dispersal tactics to disrupt the blockade without arrests. However, they are a possibility.

Mace: Mace is an aerosol designed for use against an individual. It causes a burning sensation, particularly to the eyes. Mace victims should wash skin and eyes with a 5% Boric Acid solution, if possible.

Tear Gas: Tear gas is dispensed by helicopter, grenades, cannisters, or pistols. It causes intense tearing and irritation to the eyes. Effects usually disappear a few minutes after an individual is removed from the area. Treatment includes exposure to clean air, washing with plain water, or with mild salt water. Tear gas will affect a whole area, so authorities won't want to expose lab workers. Therefore, blockaders should be sure they are blockading workers.

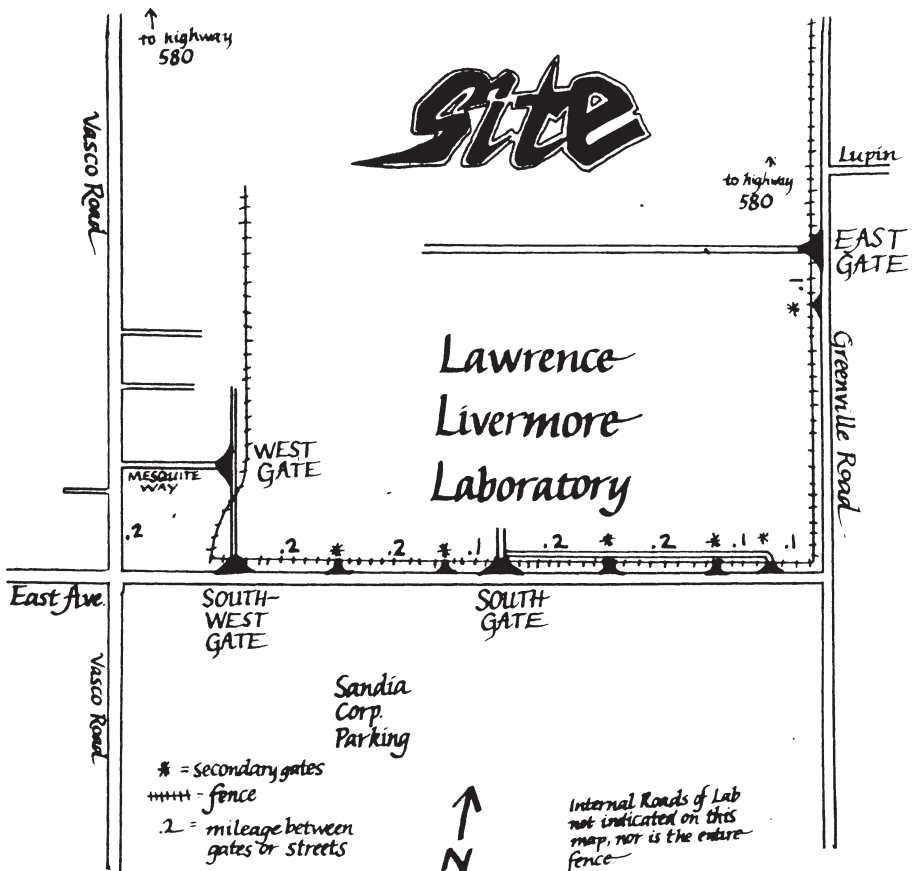
Dogs: Extreme caution must be used. Remain calm and do not move. Dogs are trained to respond to motion.

Make verbal contact with the officer commanding the dog.

The Livermore Community

The Livermore Liaison Collective formed because of our desire to communicate our purpose, concerns and goals to a community supported largely by Livermore Lab salaries. After much discussion with several members of the local community involved in the Nuclear Freeze, we did have supporters from Livermore at our February 1st blockade.

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Kids

Juveniles: Join Us

We as juveniles have grown up under the threat of nuclear war. We have a right to a nuclear-free future. Through blockading the lab, we can show people in power that what they are doing is not all right with us, and that we will not sit passively and let them ruin our world.

The major difference for juveniles are legalities. People under 18 will need a printed permission slip, signed by parent or guardian. This assures authorities you are not runaways, and authorizes someone to pick you up at juvenile hall. Forms can be obtained from the LAG office.

In past actions, punishment of



minors has been light. At the February 1st blockade, the eight juveniles were immediately released to a designated adult.

By Life Squad, an all-kids affinity

Blockade Scenario

continued from preceding page

Unfortunately, those in the valley who support our strategy are not numerous. They are working in a community that thrives because of the lab, and therefore feels threatened by our activities.

Constructive dialogue with the

community and with lab employees is a critical component of nonviolent civil disobedience. We must convey that we don't wish to destroy the lab and rob employees of jobs. Rather, we want the lab to pursue peaceful projects.

We encourage others to join us in opening the barriers and fears that the lab has created against us.

LEGAL

Our approach to the legal system is up to us. We retain as much power as we refuse to relinquish to the government.

The criminal “justice” system functions to alienate and isolate the accused individual, to destroy one’s power and purposefulness, and to weave a web of confusion and mystification around any legal proceedings.



Jail solidarity, non-cooperation, and other forms of resistance can be used to reaffirm our position that we are not criminals and that we are taking positive steps toward freeing the world of nuclear terror.

The police may separate us from each other, breaking up affinity groups and possibly isolating individuals. We must develop an ability to deal with the legal system, while trusting in the solidarity of other demonstrators.

Possible Charges

647 — Blocking a public right-of-way. Misdemeanor punishable by up to 6 months in jails and/or \$500 fine.

602 K & L — Trespass. Peaceable

but wrongful entry on land of another, a misdemeanor punishable by up to 6 months in jail and/or \$500 fine.

626.6 — Entry by non-student or non-employee on facility controlled by the U.C. Board of Regents which appears likely to interfere with activities carried on by the facility. First offense, up to 6 months in jail and/or \$500 fine. Subsequent offenses carry mandatory jail sentences with no probation.

148 — Resisting arrest. Persons who “go limp” may risk this additional charge. Misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail and/or \$1000 fine.

182 — Conspiracy to commit a misdemeanor. Felony punishable by up to five years in jail.

243 — Battery. Any physical contact with an officer. Felony punishable by 2-5 years in jail.

Infractions (traffic tickets) may also be used against blockaders.

In addition, the court may choose to impose harsher sentences on repeat offenders. However, it is unusual for anyone to receive the maximum sentence.

The Legal Process

Police are not required to read you your rights unless you are being questioned. You have the right to remain silent. You are also entitled to confer with a lawyer before you say anything or agree to anything. LAG is organizing a volunteer legal collective for the

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Legal

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blockade. Don't be afraid to ask for someone from the legal team if you are confused or need clarification.

Booking: You will probably go through booking procedure. How much information you give is up to you. Some activists carry no ID and refuse to answer questions. Refusal to comply slows the process down considerably, which may or may not be desirable for the group as a whole.

Citing Out: Authorities may offer to let you sign a citation release form promising that you will appear in court for arraignment. This is called being release O.R. ("Own Recognizance"). Failure to appear will result in a bench warrant being issued against you. Because citing out tends to split up group solidarity, the individual decision to cite out should be carefully considered. Further, protesters who cite out may have their arraignments separate from those who remain in jail.

Arraignment: This is an appearance before a judge in which your charges

will be read to you, and you will be asked to enter a plea. You need not be alone. Other protesters may be there with you, and lawyers for the action will be present. You are entitled to legal counsel before you plead. If protesters as a group disagree with the way the court wants to arraign you, there are ways of noncooperation (for example, muteness, refusal to enter a plea, to stand, or to speak to the judge). You have the right to be arraigned within 48 hours of arrest, not counting weekends or holidays. However, in an "emergency," this right can be ignored.

Pleas: Defendants have the option of pleading not-guilty, guilty, or nolo contendere (no-contest). A not-guilty plea to a misdemeanor or felony can lead to a jury trial (juries are not used for infractions).

Never plead guilty. A no-contest plea is the same as a guilty plea as far as sentencing. However, this plea cannot be used as proof of guilt in case of a civil suit against blockaders, while a guilty plea can.

After a guilty or no-contest plea, you will be sentenced, either immediately or at a subsequent hearing. Immediate

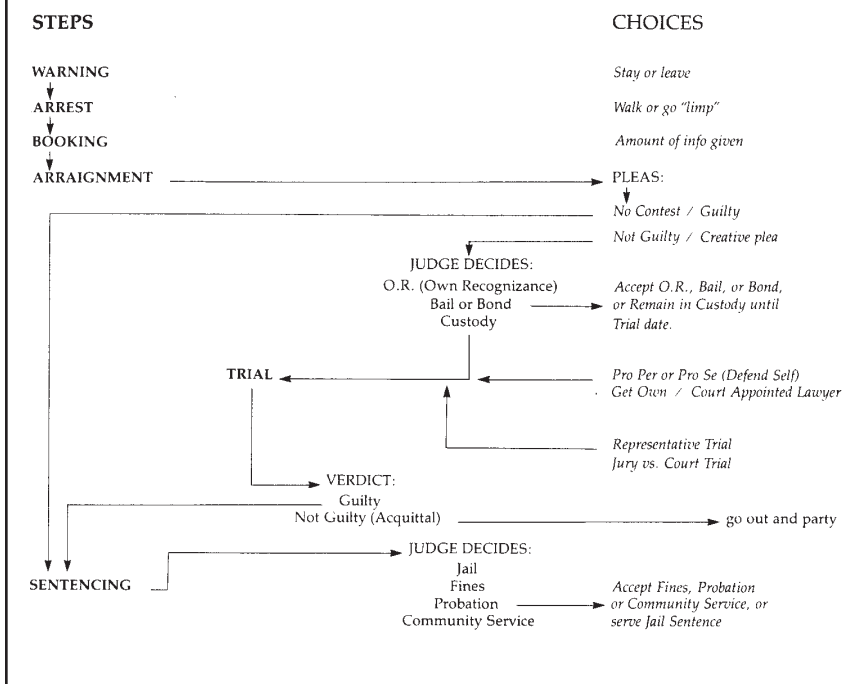
sentencing helps avoid unequal treatment.

Bail: At arraignment or before, the judge will either set bail or offer to release you on your own recognizance (O.R.). Bail guarantees your later appearance in court.

If you decline to



Legal Flowchart



post required bail, you will be returned to jail to await your next court date. Refusal of bail has been a general commitment of Livermore blockaders. Bail solidarity is a way of ensuring equal treatment to everyone, and ensuring that those who cannot pay are not left in jail.

Trials: The decision to follow through with a not guilty plea is a political one. A trial involves a major commitment of your time, energy and money. It could tie you up for months. For those who wish to plead not guilty, LAG legal workers will offer workshops. Some lawyers may be interested in representing groups of defendants in

such cases.

Sentencing: Sentencing is discretionary with the judge, up to the statutory maximum. In lieu of jail or fines, the judge may offer probation, suspended sentence, or community service. LAG blockaders have refused to accept fines, probation or suspended sentences. Opposition to fines arises out of recognition that low-income defendants have no choice but to serve time in jail. Probation and suspended sentences are usually rejected for tactical reasons: they carry a condition that you not be arrested again during the prescribed period, or you risk a much more severe sentence.

JAIL

Jail is a lonely place. It aims to weaken solidarity, to try to isolate people from each other and reduce one's concentration to dealing with the demands of authority and of one's survival.

You can expect overcrowding, which means frustrating and irritating levels of noise and distraction, little personal space or privacy, and scant regard for cleanliness.

Food will be starchy and dull (don't expect vegetarian menus).

You can expect a complete strip search, possibly including rectal and vaginal examination, which will be the first of many casual assaults on your dignity.

You will be jerked around.

You will finally appreciate the play "Waiting for Godot."

Conflict Among Blockaders

People's motivations for participating in CD will affect their attitudes toward police and guards. Some people blockade as a protest against the multiple structures in society which work together to create a weapons industry. The prison/judicial system is one of these structures. Such people may refuse to cooperate with the authorities. Some of these acts serve as personal moral goals; others are initiated as levers to make the legal system mete out equal and fair sentences to all.

For others, blockading stems from fear and outrage over nuclear weapons. Often these people will stress the need



to communicate with the human beings behind the helmets, uniforms and roles. They will talk to police, perhaps befriend the prison guards, and try to use dialogue and persuasion to raise questions about these roles.

The differences between these two approaches can lead to conflicts among blockaders. The stress of the jail situation tends to intensify conflict. Conflicts must be acknowledged and dealt with at the time, or they may become divisive. Conflict is an expression of opposing viewpoints and should not be confused with violence.

Guards

Guards have a great deal of power, and they are aware of this. Because they are human beings, this knowledge tends to have a bad effect on them. They expect the worst out of people. Their principle concern is to preserve order, which demands an atmosphere of unquestioning respect (fear) for au-

thority, supplanting personal responsibility with obedience and submission.

Don't indulge this exalted self-image. Expect that guards should act with respect and compassion and you may be surprised by the results. But don't forget, in the end, you and they have different jobs to perform. Let them be responsible for keeping order. You are responsible for keeping your conscience. Your commitment to make decisions for yourself landed you in jail in the first place, and it remains a good principle to live by, even in jail.

In Jail

- If you want something to happen, make it happen. Don't wait for someone else to think of it.
 - Remain aware of how others are being treated, especially those who are "different" or assertive.
 - Never point out someone to the guards.
 - At all times, know the whereabouts of your AG members.
 - Jail fosters dependence. Rely on your own and the group's thinking, and avoid automatically turning to the guards for help, permission, or information.
 - Guards often create false crises. Don't be panicked. Take the time you need to meet and reach consensus.

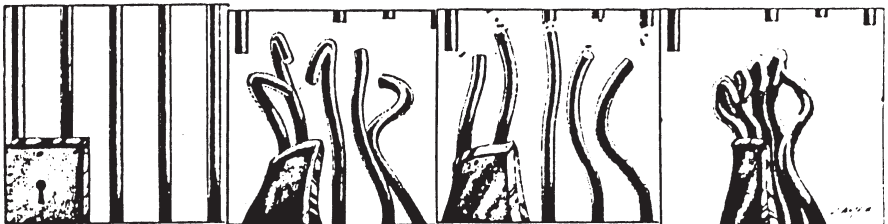


General Population

Some blockaders have spent time in the general jail population and have witnessed the poor conditions under which most inmates live. One primary goal of CD is to make incarceration of blockaders stressful for the government. However, we need to hamper the system as much as possible without negatively affecting the other inmates.

Some ways to minimize our effects on other inmates are:

- Respect that other inmates did not "choose" jail. This may mean avoiding playing around, and recognizing that other inmates don't have the same legal and political support that protesters have.
- Talk with other inmates as much as possible. Communication may increase their support for CD as well as our support for reform of jail conditions.
- Limit our phone calls, and agree to forego personal visits.



SOLIDARITY

Solidarity is as old as humanity. It especially comes to us from the labor movement. As early capitalism drove workers from farms and workshops into factories and sweatshops, people realized that unless they banded together they would be crushed.

In activist circles, solidarity means that we make plans and stick to them. Before I act, I check in with others in my group – are we good?

In civil disobedience, we often make advance solidarity agreements about dealing with arrests and jail.

Our legal system operates by divide-and-conquer – it's you versus the entire system. Our power comes by sticking together, by refusing to cooperate until we are guaranteed that all will be treated fairly, we disrupt the repressive power of the legal system.

Solidarity is also a way of life – to live in connection and mutual support with other living beings.

Jail Solidarity In Direct Actions

The power of jail solidarity lies in two facts. (1) In a mass arrest situation, the authorities need cooperation to process large numbers of people. (2) It is expensive to keep us in jail. This gives us collective bargaining power.

Protesters often agree in advance to insist on mass arraignment (so no one is left behind), equal sentencing for equal actions, no fines (unequal

impacts on different people), and no probation (prevents future activism).

Tactics can include not responding when names are called; sitting or lying down; milling about; chanting. We can calmly surround a threatened brother or sister, physically protecting them from being taken away. In more extreme cases we can refuse food, or refuse to get dressed.

A powerful tactic is to communicate to the judge and prosecutor that if our demands are not met, we will all plead not guilty, ask for indi-

vidual jury trials, and not waive our right to a speedy trial. We can resist being taken to arraignment until we are guaranteed fair treatment.

Jail solidarity should not be coercive. If someone must get out of jail to keep a job or to take care of their family, they are not breaking solidarity. However, if you cite out ahead of others you are not assured that your sentence will be the same as those who exercise collective bargaining.

Don't abuse solidarity. Save it for when it really matters.

Advance Agreements Are Key

For solidarity to be effective, plans must be made before reaching jail. Authorities won't (usually) wait for us to reach consensus on solidarity before employing divide and conquer tactics.





fter It's Over

CD demonstration is a very powerful emotional experience.

Being part of civil disobedience or other direct action protests can be a powerful emotional experience. We are likely to be excited, tense, bored and exhausted at the same time.

After the 1981 Diablo demonstration, many of us returned home elated. But we were also very tired and lost. Although we felt very different, our friends, housemates and co-workers seemed to go on as if nothing had changed. We wanted to start work on new actions, but we were mentally and physically exhausted.

Things that may be useful in relieving post-action burnout:

- Plan your response to burnout with your AG before the action. Set a specific date to get together afterward.
- Get your AG together just to talk about the action. The story may need to be told numerous times— like oral history or ancient rituals.
- Make sure everyone gets emo-

tional support, including non-block-aders who worked on support tasks without reaping much of the glory.

- Give everyone the benefit of the doubt. Bickering and irrational behavior may just be temporary.

- After a few weeks or so, plan to work together on a small, easily accomplished task so people will feel useful, but not overwhelmed.

It may take as long to come down from an action as it took to prepare for it!



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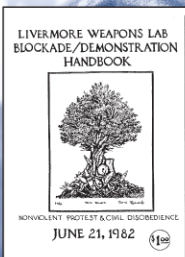
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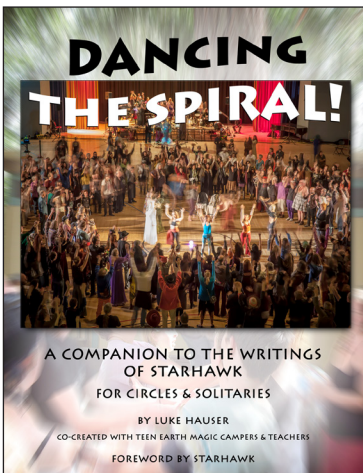
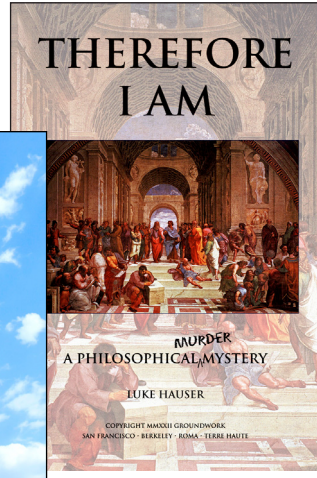
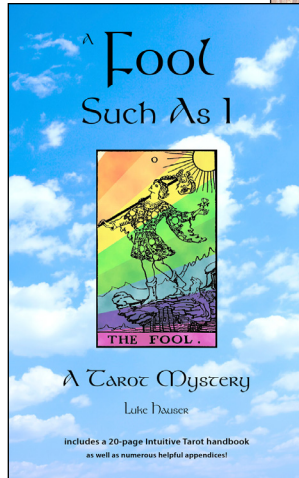
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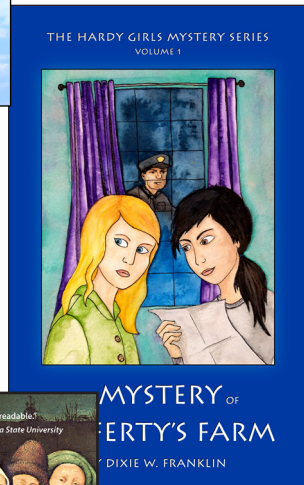
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