



198 Methods of Nonviolent Action by Gene Sharp

By Gene Sharp

Contents



Introduction

The Methods of Nonviolent Protest and Persuasion

The Methods of Social Noncooperation

The Methods of Economic Noncooperation: Economic Boycotts

The Methods of Economic Noncooperation: The Strike

The Methods of Political Noncooperation

The Methods of Nonviolent Intervention

Access Resource

Training Resource

Examples of the 198 Methods

Other Languages

Explore Further

Share Resource

Introduction

Far too often people struggling for democratic rights and justice are not aware of the full range of methods of nonviolent action.

“

Wise strategy, attention to the dynamics of nonviolent struggle, and careful selection of methods can increase a group's chance of success.

”

Gene Sharp researched and catalogued these 198 methods and provided a rich selection of historical examples in his seminal work, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (3 Vols.) Boston: Peter Sargent, 1973. These “nonviolent weapons” are classified into three broad categories: nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation (social, economic, and political), and nonviolent intervention.

Without doubt, a large number of additional methods have already been used but have not been classified, and a multitude of additional methods will be invented in the future that have the characteristics of the three classes of methods: nonviolent protest and persuasion, noncooperation and nonviolent intervention.

“

It must be clearly understood that the greatest effectiveness is possible when individual methods to be used are selected to implement the previously adopted strategy. It is necessary to know what kind of pressures are to be used before one chooses the precise forms of action that will best apply those pressures.

”

The Methods of Nonviolent Protest and Persuasion

Formal Statements

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

Communications with a Wider Audience

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

Group Representations

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

Symbolic Public Acts

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

Pressures on Individuals

31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials

33. Fraternization

34. Vigils

Drama and Music

35. Humorous skits and pranks

36. Performances of plays and music

37. Singing

Processions

38. Marches

39. Parades

40. Religious processions

41. Pilgrimages

42. Motorcades

Honoring the Dead

43. Political mourning

44. Mock funerals

45. Demonstrative funerals

46. Homage at burial places

Public Assemblies

47. Assemblies of protest or support

48. Protest meetings

49. Camouflaged meetings of protest

50. Teach-ins

Withdrawal and Renunciation

51. Walk-outs

52. Silence

53. Renouncing honors

54. Turning one's back

The Methods of Social Noncooperation

Ostracism of Persons

55. Social boycott

56. Selective social boycott

57. Lysistratic nonaction

58. Excommunication

59. Interdict

Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

60. Suspension of social and sports activities

61. Boycott of social affairs

62. Student strike

63. Social disobedience

64. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the Social System

65. Stay-at-home

66. Total personal noncooperation

67. "Flight" of workers

68. Sanctuary

69. Collective disappearance

70. Protest emigration (hijrat)

The Methods of Economic Noncooperation: Economic Boycotts

Actions by Consumers

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

Action by Workers and Producers

- 78. Workmen's boycott
- 79. Producers' boycott

Action by Middlemen

- 80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

Action by Owners and Management

- 81. Traders' boycott
- 82. Refusal to let or sell property
- 83. Lockout
- 84. Refusal of industrial assistance
- 85. Merchants' "general strike"

Action by Holders of Financial Resources

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

Action by Governments

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

The Methods of Economic Noncooperation: The Strike

Symbolic Strikes

- 97. Protest strike
- 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

Agricultural Strikes

- 99. Peasant strike
- 100. Farm Workers' strike

Strikes by Special Groups

- 101. Refusal of impressed labor
- 102. Prisoners' strike
- 103. Craft strike
- 104. Professional strike

Ordinary Industrial Strikes

- 105. Establishment strike
- 106. Industry strike
- 107. Sympathetic strike

Restricted Strikes

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

Multi-Industry Strikes

- 116. Generalized strike
- 117. General strike

Combination of Strikes and Economic Closures

- 118. Hartal
- 119. Economic shutdown

The Methods of Political Noncooperation

Rejection of Authority

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

Citizens' Noncooperation with Government

- 123. Boycott of legislative bodies
- 124. Boycott of elections
- 125. Boycott of government employment and positions
- 126. Boycott of government depts., agencies, and other bodies

- 127. Withdrawal from government educational institutions
- 128. Boycott of government-supported organizations
- 129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
- 130. Removal of own signs and placemarks
- 131. Refusal to accept appointed officials
- 132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience

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

Action by Government Personnel

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

Domestic Governmental Action

- 149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays
- 150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

International Governmental Action

- 151. Changes in diplomatic and other representations
- 152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
- 153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition
- 154. Severance of diplomatic relations
- 155. Withdrawal from international organizations
- 156. Refusal of membership in international bodies
- 157. Expulsion from international organizations

The Methods of Nonviolent Intervention

Psychological Intervention

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

Physical Intervention

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

173. Nonviolent occupation

Social Intervention

174. Establishing new social patterns

175. Overloading of facilities

176. Stall-in

177. Speak-in

178. Guerrilla theater

179. Alternative social institutions

180. Alternative communication system

Economic Intervention

181. Reverse strike

182. Stay-in strike

183. Nonviolent land seizure

184. Defiance of blockades

185. Politically motivated counterfeiting

186. Preclusive purchasing

187. Seizure of assets

188. Dumping

189. Selective patronage

190. Alternative markets

191. Alternative transportation systems

192. Alternative economic institutions

Political Intervention

193. Overloading of administrative systems

194. Disclosing identities of secret agents

195. Seeking imprisonment

196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws

197. Work-on without collaboration

198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

Access Resource

- [198 Methods of Nonviolent Action, Albert Einstein Institute \(Online\)](#)
- [198 Methods of Nonviolent Action, Albert Einstein Institute \(PDF\)](#)
- [A teach in reading of 198 Methods of Nonviolent Action, Albert Einstein Institute by Learn as Protest in the Trump Tower, New York \(Video – 18:03 mins\)](#)

Training Resource

- [198 Methods of Nonviolent Action \(Handout\), K Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence and Albert Einstein Institute \(PDF – 66 pgs\)](#)
Inspired by Gene Sharp's 198 Methods of Nonviolent Action, this dynamic resource provides the framework for facilitators, educators, and community members to lead an experiential activity that helps participants get to know one another, learn about different nonviolent strategies, and connect nonviolence theory to real world examples.
Duration: 20-120 minutes Group Size: 2-200

Examples of the 198 Methods

- [Global Nonviolent Action Database, Swarthmore College](#)
- [198 Methods of Nonviolent Action \(Handout\), K Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence and Albert Einstein Institute \(PDF – 66 pgs\)](#)

Other Languages

- [Mongolian – Монгол – ЖИНЬ ШАРПЫН ХУЧИРХИЙЛЛИЙН БУС ТЭМЦЭЛ, УХУУЛГЫН 198 АРГА](#)
- [Russian – Русский – 198 Методов Ненасильственных Действий](#)
- [Thai – ภาษาไทย – 198 วิธีเพื่อการต่อสู้โดยไม่ใช้ความรุนแรง](#)

Explore Further

- [The Politics of Nonviolent Action by Gene Sharp, 1973 \(Book\)](#)
- [Civil Resistance Tactics in the 21st Century](#)
- [Civil Resistance 2.0: 198 Nonviolent Methods Upgraded](#)
- [The Tactic Star](#)
- [Tactics Resources in the Commons Library](#)
- [Protests: Start Here](#)

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Tags:

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CAMPAIGNING - STRATEGY CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

CIVIL RESISTANCE DIRECT ACTION - NON VIOLENT NVDA

STUNTS TACTICS

Format:

ARTICLES BOOKS, JOURNALS AND EXCERPTS

Language:

MONGOLIAN - МОНГОЛ RUSSIAN - РУССКИЙ THAI - ภาษาไทย

Author: [Gene Sharp](#)

Reference: The Politics of Nonviolent Action (3 Vols.) Boston: Peter Sargent, 1973.

Organisation: Albert Einstein Institution

Release Date: 1973

Website: <https://www.aeinstein.org/>

Resource: [GeneSharp_198Tactics.pdf](#)

File Size: 52 KB



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