



A Theory of Nonviolent Action: How Civil Resistance Works

Stellan Vinthagen

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In this ground-breaking and much-needed book, Stellan Vinthagen provides the first major systematic attempt to develop a theory of nonviolent action since Gene Sharp's seminal *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* in 1973.

Employing a rich collection of historical and contemporary social movements from various parts of the world as examples—from the civil rights movement in America to anti-Apartheid protestors in South Africa to Gandhi and his followers in India—and addressing core theoretical issues concerning nonviolent action in an innovative, penetrating way, Vinthagen argues for a repertoire of nonviolence that combines resistance and construction. Contrary to earlier research, this repertoire—consisting of dialogue facilitation, normative regulation, power breaking and utopian enactment—is shown to be both multidimensional and contradictory, creating difficult contradictions within nonviolence, while simultaneously providing its creative and transformative force.

An important contribution to the field, *A Theory of Nonviolent Action* is essential for anyone involved with nonviolent action who wants to think about what they are doing.

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