

Lecture 11: Non-Violence and Gandhi's Approach

Part I: Gandhi's
Life

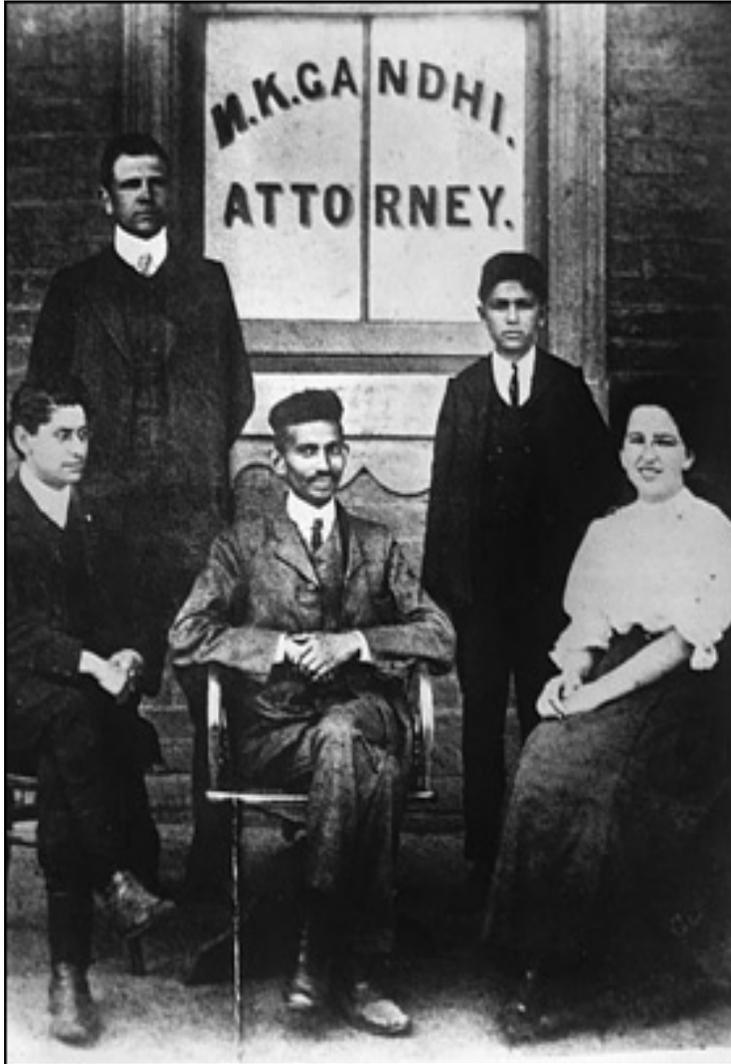
Part II: Gandhi's
Way

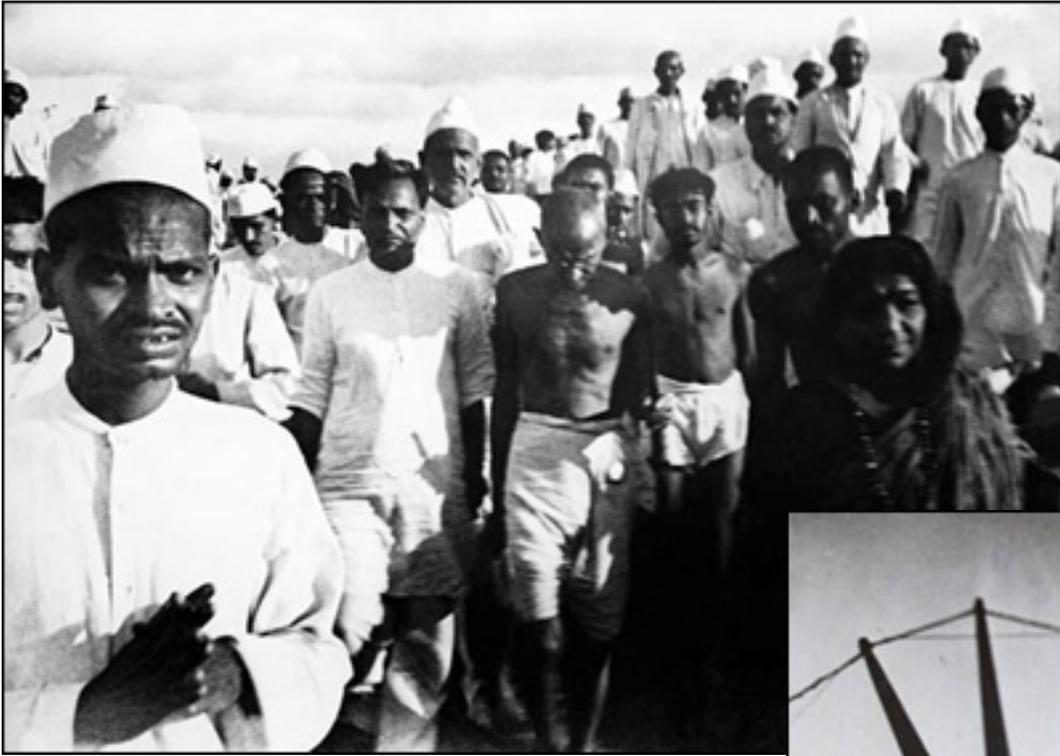
Part III: Cases and
Discussion

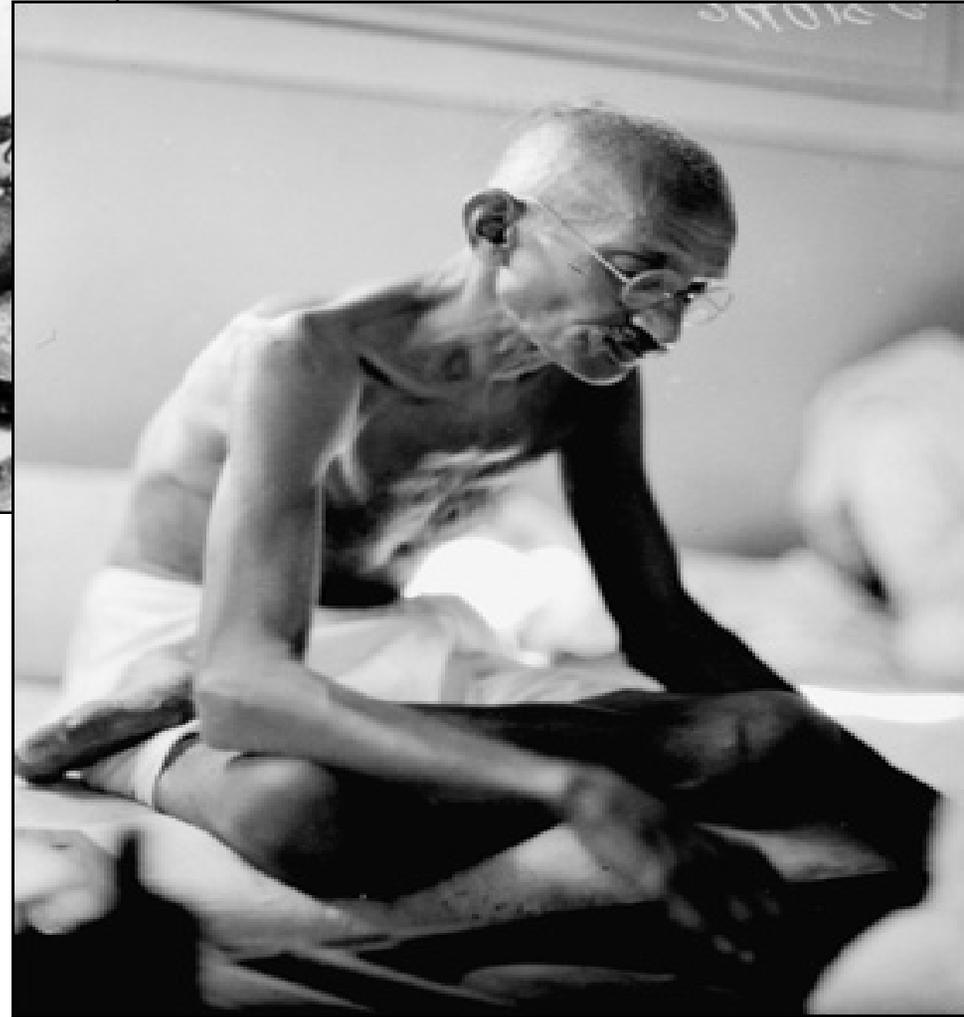


“Is this a private fight or can anyone get in?” *Old Irish saying*

Part I: Gandhi's Life









British Take Control of India

- Interest because of profitable resources
- Arrived around 1600 and had taken control by 1760
- Set up laws and practices that outraged the Indians
 - Outlawed ritual suicide
 - Forced to pay high taxes
 - Promoted Christianity
 - Took land away
 - Religious taboos in the military

Sepoy Rebellion

- Sepoy = Indian troops in the British Army
- Revolt that resulted from the changes made by the British Army
 - Army introduced new type of weapon (Lee-Enfield)
 - Loading involved biting the end of the cartridge, which was thought to be greased with pig and beef fat (in reality it wasn't)
 - Both are forbidden to most Hindus and Muslim

British put down the rebellion and established a colony in India. They introduced more changes. All left a strong sense distrust and resentment.

- Direct Rule
- British Style Education
- New Law System
- British Officers were put in charge of Indian military
- Limited Indian owned Industries
- Took control of farms, mines, and factories
- Indians were forced to buy British goods
- Indians were forced to grow cash crops to get money
- Lack of food led to frequent famines

Indian National Congress

- Founded in 1885
- Established to bring gradual, peaceful change to India
- During WWI Indian Nationalists increased their demands for independence
- British responded by censoring press
- Indians protested and killed 5 British Officials
- Public gathering were banned
- April 13, 1919-Amritsar Massacre
(peaceful protest turned violent—379 Indians died)
- Gandhi took leadership of the INC in 1920 and restores their nonviolent ideals.



Gandhi: the Background

- Born Oct. 2, 1869
- Married in 1883
- Went to England in 1888 to study and became a lawyer
- Went to South Africa in 1893 to practice law
- Discovered racial discrimination first hand
- Developed his ideas about nonviolence resistance and civil disobedience
- Returned to India in 1919 and led a movement for:
 - self government
 - economic and spiritual independence
 - greater tolerance within India
- Developed Satyagraha (“truth force”)—making the wrong doer realize his deeds without striking back

Gandhi: His principles

Became known as Mahatma (Great Soul or Holy One)

- Rejected Western Ways

Refused to work in British Government

Encouraged traditional industries (spun his own cloth)

Rejected British goods (boycott)

Went on hunger strikes and fasts to protest unjust behavior

Stressed duty, morality, and self-discipline

Engaged in civil disobedience (ex. Salt March)

Salt March 1930

- Indians were prohibited from making salt
- Had to purchase it from the British who set a high tax on it.
- Gandhi led thousands on a 200+ mile march to the sea to make salt—he was immediately arrested once he touched the salt crystals.

Penal sections of the Salt Act (dated 1882)

- any person convicted of an offence under section 9, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months
- all contraband salt, and every vessel, animal or conveyance used in carrying contraband salt shall be liable to confiscation
- any salt-revenue officer guilty of cowardice shall on conviction before a magistrate be punished with imprisonment which may extend to three months



“Quit India Campaign”

- During WWII, Gandhi organized a movement to support the British only if they promised independence.
- After WWII, Britain realized it did not have the ability to hold on to India
- In 1947, the Indian Independence Act was established.
- Despite Gandhi’s efforts to keep one unified country, India was split into two countries East and West Pakistan and India
(later split into Bangladesh and Pakistan)

Continuing Conflict

- Independence brought much violence
Muslims living in India were persecuted
Hindus living in Pakistan were persecuted
- Gandhi called for reconciliation between the two groups and promoted unification
- He was shot and killed in Jan. 1948 by a Hindu extremist who believed Gandhi had betrayed the religion.

Part II: Gandhi's Way

- Overview of Gandhi's Way: A Handbook of Conflict Resolution, by Mark Juergensmeyer

Chapter 1: Fighting a Gandhian Fight

- Basic idea is to redirect the focus of conflict from the persons to the principles.
- Satyagraha (sut-*yah*-gruh-huh): “grasping onto principles” “truth force”
- Conflict involves confrontation between two views, each having some truth. **The goal is to expose the truth from each side.**

Examples of Conflict

Lets have class members offer some examples of conflict in their lives or from one of their “hypothetical friends”

We can use these examples to understand Gandhi’s Way.

Fighting a Gandhian Fight

- What are the possible outcomes of this **conflict**?
 - 1.) Forced victory
 - 2.) Accommodation and Compromise
 - 3.) Arbitration and Law
 - 4.) Satyagraha (a new position, more inclusive than the old one; both parties move into it).

Conflict vs. Dispute

- Do you think that Gandhi is more concerned about disputes or conflict?
- How do you think Gandhi would conceptual the difference (if any) between these concepts?

Fighting a Gandhian Fight

- The main goal: satisfy both parties to a conflict that their positions have been honored.
 - 1.) Examine the principles of both sides, and agree which are valid and important to solution
 - 2.) Create a Gandhian alternative
 - 3.) Begin doing the alternative.

Chapter 2: Why Fight at All?

- **“Truth—the source of light—can only emerge in the process of fighting.”**
- Gandhi believed that backing away from a fight was cowardly, and that the search for truth among conflicting parties was almost always an important goal.
- He sought to find the truth and deception of both sides, and cautioned about a sense of **certainty** of one’s position.
- As we will see, making a fight a positive rather than a negative affair requires great skill and effort.

Chapter 3: How Do you Know When you Are Right?

- Like in physical science, Gandhi believed that truth is “out there” and can be described and measured.
- He believed that it is possible to find the “right way to act in any situation.”
- Gandhi believed in “higher morality” (God?), but did not claim to know it. What is right and wrong must constantly be reexamined.

How Do you Know When you Are Right? Steps...

- 1.) Recognize the truthful and untruthful elements in each side
- 2.) put the truthful elements from each side together
- 3.) form a new side and adopt it while struggling with your opponent
- 4.) Revise the new position even as the fight continues
- 5.) End the struggle only when both sides agree to occupy the same side.

Chapter 4: Violence: The Breakdown of a Fight

- “If it involves violence, throw it out”
- To Gandhi, violence was the same thing as “untruth”
- Nonviolence: not using any form of **coercion** (physical, verbal , emotional) in the “fighting” process.
- Coercion will only lead the other party to the same strategy, and ultimately will discredit the truth-searching process.

Chapter 5: What to do with a Recalcitrant Opponent

- Sometimes one party will choose not to fight, or not to fight a Gandhian fight (i.e., the Amritsar massacre).
- Goal is still the search for truth, yet creativity is required to involve the opponent in the process and convince them fight is worth it.
- How does one avoid coercion (force) in their tactics? Are protests always “peaceful”?

Chapter 6: The Weapon: The Goal Itself

- “If we take care of the means, sooner or later we are bound to reach the ends”
- If possible, start carrying out your alternative solution, or “truthful solution” to the conflict.
- The goal becomes the means—Examples are Gandhi’s Salt march and textile boycotts.

Chapter 6: The Weapon: The Goal Itself

- Gandhi believed that if the process of conflict resolution involves violence, the outcome will be violence. He believed that the Soviets ended up with a violent regime because of the violence used to get to their goals.
- Best to do away between “means” and “ends” altogether.

Chapter 7: The Power of Non-cooperation

- Non-cooperation involves a passive form of resistance to implement change without violence.
- Examples: refusing to sit in back of bus, refusing to pay taxes, labor strikes.
- Are these tactics coercive?
- One must look at the facts of each case to evaluate if the first party (e.g., employers) had a equal voice to express their views and negotiate an outcome.
- Non-coercive force only occurs when an opponent has the option to make a choice.

Chapter 8: Fighting a Very Big Fight

- The basic rules apply to small and large fights.
- Powerful parties such as governments or large organizations can be formidable opponents, yet the search for truth in a nonviolent manner is the best way.
- The best way is to be prepared to suffer losses since the opponent may very well use violence against you. (consider Martin Luther King, Jr. and his methods of peaceful protest).
- **ORGANIZE** the movement. Change can likely only occur when large numbers of individuals cooperate

Institutional or Structural Changes

- “Big fights” often involve changes to the institutional rules of a government or to ingrained ideological systems such as racism or sexism.
- As discussed in the lecture on conflict dynamics, we know that people have limits when processing social information, and schema are difficult to change once formed.
- However, this may only mean that change will be slow, and will require a great deal of effort.
- I think it is dangerous to be too pessimistic about human conflict!

Chapter 9: How do you know when you have won?

- Not like ordinary fights with a winner and loser. The fight is only over when both parties feel that they have won.
- Winning requires a transformation of the relationship between the parties involved.
- Some fights could go on forever!

Part III: Cases and Discussion

- Now that we have looked at Gandhi's principles, let's take some examples of conflict from our lives, and think about ways to use Gandhi's Way to resolve the conflict.