



MAHATMA GANDHI



Cornell Notes 6-3-2

Essential Question

- **If nonviolence is essential, how can the resisters prevail? What type of force do they use?**



Focus Questions

- In your opinion why is it important to know that Gandhi was part of the second highest class in India?
- What is civil disobedience? What are some strategies that are used?
- What are the three core characteristics of civil disobedience needed in order for it to work.



Social Position

- Gandhi was born into the second highest caste in Hindu society – the Ruler-Warrior Caste.
- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869.
- Gandhi traveled to London, England, to study law at University College London and to train as a barrister.



Resistance



- In 1918 tens of thousands of landless serfs, indentured laborers and poor farmers were forced to grow indigo and other cash crops instead of the food crops necessary for their survival.
- Gandhi proposed a- non-violent, mass civil disobedience. While it was strictly non-violent, Gandhi was proposing real action, a real revolt that the oppressed peoples of India were dying to undertake.
- His main assault came as he was arrested by police on the charge of creating unrest and was ordered to leave the province. Hundreds of thousands of people protested and rallied outside the jail, police stations and courts demanding his release, which the court unwillingly did.



India

- Gandhi
 - Led India's struggle for independence against the British from 1915 to his death in 1948.
 - Advocated non-violent direct action which he called *Satyagraha*, meaning "clinging to the truth."
 - Non-violence a core attribute, not just a tactic
 - Courage, discipline & strength essential
 - Recognizes the unity of all living things



Civil Disobedience

- Refusal to obey a law on the grounds that it is immoral or unjust in itself, or furthers injustice. Disobedience within a framework of obedience to law.
- Appeals to the majority's sense of justice, in order to get them to reconsider and change public policy.



• Goal: to put the issue on the public's agenda, to call attention to an unjust law. Disobedience must be open and public.

Roots of the Idea

- Henry David Thoreau
 - Jailed in the 1840s for refusing to pay a poll tax. The tax supported the war with Mexico and the extension of slavery, which he strongly opposed. Thoreau did pay his other taxes.
 - Coined the term “civil disobedience” in the title of his essay arguing in favor of non-violent opposition to slavery.



Thoreau's civil disobedience

Key Arguments:

- Unjust laws require our action in order to work. He advocated resistance: "I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn."
- Normal legal channels to overturn those laws either do not exist or take too long.
- Civil disobedience effective: if abolitionists withdrew their support of government, then slavery would end in a peaceful revolution.



Examples of racist laws

- In 1955, a black woman named Rosa Parks was arrested for the crime of refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man. This incident sparked the civil rights movement.
- Until 1967, it was a felony – punishable with 5 years in prison – for an interracial couple to marry. The Lovings married in 1958 and spent 9 years as fugitives. When they were arrested, they successfully challenged the law, which finally was overturned by the Supreme Court.



Nonviolent Resistance

Strategies

- Sit-ins at segregated businesses (esp. restaurants)
- Boycotts of segregated buses & businesses
- Marches
- Lawsuits
- Voter registration drives
- Newspaper ads and articles

Protesters faced, beatings, bombs, house & church fires, and even murder.

