

***ART ALONE WILL MOVE US:***  
**NONVIOLENCE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AUSTRALIAN ECO-PAX**  
**MOVEMENT 1982-2003**

by

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Figure 1: Protester buried up to her neck in midday sun receives a drink. Ocean outfall protest, c1992.



Figure 2: Excavation of Lucinda, protester in Daintree protest c1984.

**DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Emily, who blessed us with her presence for the briefest moment. It is dedicated to the indigenous people of Australia, Borneo and Éire. It is also dedicated to the memory of my grandparents, and the following friends who have locked-on to the Pearly Gates:

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And Cedar, who broke off his press conference to scale a fence into a shipyard and occupy the rainforest timber imported from Borneo,- 'this world was never made for one as beautiful as you<sup>1</sup>.'

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<sup>1</sup> From 'Vincent', by Don McLean, 1971.



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**ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the development of nonviolence in Australia from 1983 to 2003. Using case studies (written from an 'emic' or insider perspective) which describe blockades and direct actions for environmental sustainability, Aboriginal land rights and peace, the work analyses particularly the important development of *active resistance*. This involves modes of action which are more militant than those espoused by *orthodox nonviolence*, and include innovations to make blockading more physically effective. This means not just 'putting bodies on the line', but burying those bodies up to the neck, chaining, cementing or gluing them to objects or into the ground, climbing tripods or trees, establishing other physical barricades, or hiding in forests. Such methods (along with legal action and lobbying) have proven effective in preserving hundreds of thousands of hectares of 'old-growth' forests from logging. Such methods may involve minor property damage, but they entail the nonviolence tenets of *self-suffering* and (an element of) *openness*, and should still be considered nonviolent under a revised concept of nonviolence that is more flexible and is 'owned' by the activists themselves.

The work also examines the use of the arts in nonviolent praxis. It shows how artforms such as music, street-theatre, banners, photography and film-making have been significant and beneficial, inspiring and assisting 'civil disobedience', fortifying its participants, creating solidarity and multiple foci of protest, preventing violence, attracting media attention, and educating audiences on a variety of intellectual, emotional and physical levels. *Artistic activism* has also aided nonviolence training and court-cases, and assisted nonviolence tenets such as *conversion*, *holism*, *inclusivity*, *openness*, creation of a *constructive programme*, and radically-democratic organisational forms.

The work also discusses and suggests solutions to some of the problems encountered within Australian nonviolence praxis, such as racism, machismo, sexism, incidents leading to violence, and schisms relating to group structures, decision-making processes, and strategies.

## Certification

I certify that I am the sole author and that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.



Marty Branagan

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ACF	Australian Conservation Foundation
ALEC	Arid Lands Environment Centre
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ANZ	Australia and New Zealand bank
BP	British Petroleum
BRAG	Brisbane Rainforest Action Group
BJAG	Brisbane Jabiluka Action Group
CANC	Cycle Against the Nuclear Cycle
CANE	Campaign Against Nuclear Energy
CNFA	Coalition for a Nuclear Free Australia
CSNF	Campaign to Save Native Forests
EIS	Environmental Impact Study
ERA	Energy Resources of Australia
FCNSW	Forestry Commission of New South Wales
FoE	Friends of the Earth
GAC	Gundjhemí Aboriginal Corporation
GECO	Goongerah Environment Centre Office
JAG	Jabiluka Action Group
JAILS	Jabiluka Arrestees Information and Legal Support
JASN	Jabiluka Activist Support Network
MAUM	Movement Against Uranium Mining
MRAG	Melbourne Rainforest Action Group
MSM	Mass Social Movement
NAFI	National Association of Forest Industries
NEFA	North East Forest Alliance
NDP	Nuclear Disarmament Party
NFN	Native Forest Network
NSM	New Social Movement
NTEC	Northern Territory Environment Centre
NUS	National Union of Students
NVA	Nonviolent Action
NVDA	Nonviolent Direct Action
NVPA	Nonviolent Political Action
PE	Political Economy
PM	Prime Minister
PRAG	Perth Rainforest Action Group
RAG	Rainforest Action Group
RAN	Rainforest Action Network
RIC	Rainforest Information Centre
RMS	Roxby Management Services

## List of acronyms

SA	South Australian
SRC	Students Representative Council
SRAG	Sydney Rainforest Action Group
SCU	Southern Cross University
SEFA	South East Forest Alliance
SMH	Sydney Morning Herald
SU	Sydney University
TNFAG	Terania Native Forest Action Group
TOs	Traditional Owners
TWS	The Wilderness Society, formerly Tasmanian Wilderness Society
UK	United Kingdom
USA, US	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WCC	Wild Cattle Creek
WMC	Western Mining Corporation

Warning

**WARNING**

Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander people are warned that this document contains photographs and names of people who may now be deceased.

# PART ONE

'The more there is of real revolution the less there is of violence; the more violence,  
the less of revolution.'

Barthelemy de Ligt (quoted in Larson & Micheels-Cyrus 1986:133).





Figure 3: Musicians lead protest over rainforest logging.