

# Moral Injury and Nonviolent Resistance

## Breaking the Cycle of Violence in the Military and Behind Bars

**Alice & Staughton Lynd**

When ordinary people have done, seen, or failed to prevent something that betrays their deeply held sense of right and wrong, it may shake their moral foundation. They may feel that what they did was unforgivable. In this thoughtful book culled from a wide range of experiences, Alice and Staughton Lynd introduce readers to what modern clinicians, philosophers, and theologians have attempted to describe as "moral injury."

Moral injury, if not overcome, can lead to an individual giving up, turning to drugs, alcohol, or suicide. But moral injury can also demand that one turn one's life around. It offers hope because it indicates resistance to the use of violence that offends a sense of decency. Within the military and in prisons—institutions created to use force and violence against perceived enemies—there have arisen new forms of saying "No" to violence. From combat veterans of America's foreign wars to Israeli refuseniks, and from "hardened" criminals in supermax confinement in Ohio to hunger strikers in California's Pelican Bay prison, the Lynds give us the voices of those breaking the cycle of violence with courageous acts of nonviolent resistance.

As we become more awake to the horrors that we as a society have done or failed to prevent, and when we become aware of what conscience demands of us in the face of recognizable violations of fundamental human rights, we may take heart from the exemplary actions by individuals and groups of individuals described in this book.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

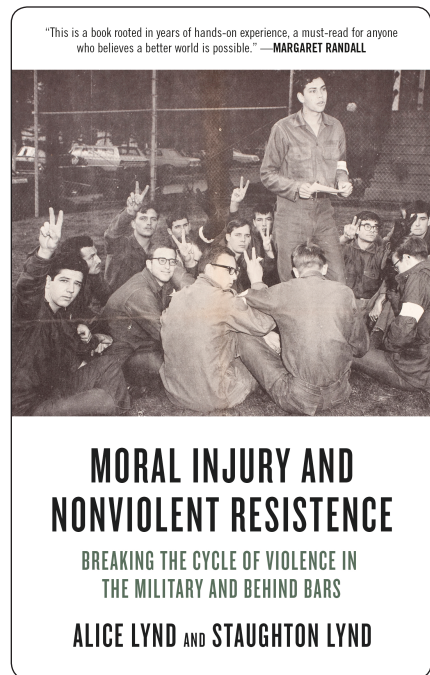
**Alice Lynd** was a draft counselor and trainer of draft counselors during the Vietnam War. In 1968, she published *We Won't Go: Personal Accounts of War Objectors*. She later became first a paralegal and then a lawyer. After retirement from practicing labor law in the wake of plant shutdowns, she became an advocate for prisoners sentenced to death and/or held for years in solitary confinement at Ohio's supermaximum security prison.

**Staughton Lynd** is a historian, lawyer, activist, and author of many books and articles. Howard Zinn hired him to teach at Spelman College, a college for black women, during the early 1960s. He was coordinator of the Freedom Schools in Mississippi during the summer of 1964. As an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War, he came to be unemployable as a university professor and became a lawyer. In Youngstown, Ohio, he fought for and lost the fight against plant shutdowns and for worker/community ownership of the mills. When Ohio built its supermaximum security prison in Youngstown, Staughton and his wife Alice, spearheaded a class action that went to the Supreme Court of the United States, establishing due process rights of supermaximum security prisoners.

### ACCOLADES

"The concept of 'moral injury,' so powerfully outlined and then enriched through elegant choreography of data, personal anecdotes, and medical definitions, brings us all some solace."

—Doug Rawlings, cofounder of Veterans for Peace, Vietnam veteran



### SUBJECT CATEGORY

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