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STANFORD—

Nearly all the 294 persons arrested at Stanford last May 9-10 for opposing University investments in South Africa say moral convictions and political beliefs were major factors in their decision to sit-in, a new survey shows.

In sharp contrast to media images of apathetic college students, nearly four out of five of those arrested had worked in previous campaigns or had previous political experience.

While a clear majority thought it was unlikely the University Trustees would accept their demands or that international pressure would force ruling South African whites to turn over power peacefully, they also felt their demonstration would lead to other protests against apartheid in the U.S. That expectation was fulfilled.

These findings highlight a telephone survey conducted for Stanford News Service by students in a communication class taught by Assistant Prof. Diana Tillinghast.

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## Overview

What drove these students to break the pattern of the uninvolved college student of the mid-1970s and hold Stanford up to criticism that gained nationwide attention?

When asked what factors were important in their decision to sit in, 99% mentioned moral convictions, 86% political beliefs, 25% religious beliefs, and 6% approval of their parents.

The protesters viewed themselves as much more liberal than the average Stanford student. Surprisingly, they viewed their parents as slightly more liberal than the average Stanford students.

When asked where they would place themselves on a "very conservative" to "very liberal" scale which ranged from zero to 1,000 if Barry Goldwater were placed at 300, their answers averaged 812. Mothers were placed at 579, fathers at 532, and the average Stanford student trailed at 521.

Fifteen of those arrested preferred to think of themselves as "radical" rather than "very liberal" and placed themselves off the scale.

Stanford President Richard W. Lyman was rated at 420 on the scale. The Stanford Trustees as a group were rated just above Goldwater at 324 and the government in control of South Africa in May was rated at 107 on the zero to 1,000 scale. Five protesters felt the South African government was below zero.

The telephone interview survey was conducted by a graduate journalism class in January, eight months after the sit-in took place. A systematic sample of 156 names was drawn from the list of protesters arrested or cited. Eighty-five people, or 54% of the sample, responded to the questionnaire.

The sampling error was plus or minus 9%, meaning that the true sentiment among those arrested could vary this much either way.

A majority of protesters surveyed came from suburban families with annual incomes over \$20,000, were white males between the ages of 18 and 21 at the time of the sit-in, and were in the freshman or junior class. They identified their political party preferences as Democrat, 46%; Independent, 32%; "other," 22%; and Republican, 1%.

Four out of five said their fathers were educators, engineers, or other professionals. Two out of five said their mothers were in similar categories, while a third said their mothers were housewives.

Although several students said they felt no animosity toward Stanford students who did not want to get involved in the protest, some criticized the lack of student concern over the issue.

James Lutz said he felt sorry for the students who were not involved in the sit-in: "In a sense they couldn't break out of classes and studying to find out what was going on. They couldn't think of things beyond their own lives."

Four out of five students interviewed said readings had been useful in deciding whether to participate in the sit-in. Newspapers, position papers by the Stanford Committee for a Responsible Investment Policy (SCRIP), and a SWOPSI course list were mentioned most often.

Protesters who felt they were still involved in trying to influence Stanford's stand on the South African question numbered 71%. Half of those said they continued to be involved with SCRIP.

Although few students criticized the actions of police or the arrest procedures during the sit-in, 60% of the students said they were not satisfied with how their cases were handled in court. Penalties included \$65 fines, 50 hours of community service, and six months probation, depending on individual involvement.—Jill Stewart

### Comparison with 1960s

Many of those arrested felt they had a lot in common with civil rights protesters, but view themselves as decidedly different from the Vietnam war demonstrators.

"It didn't differ that much from the civil rights movement—they were peaceful," Craig Linder said. "But it did differ from the antiwar protests because they were generally violent and much larger."

About three out of four of those interviewed felt the earlier protests were successful in achieving their goals.

The South Africa protesters had a lot in common with their predecessors, Kenneth Farbstein said.

"With the civil rights demonstrators, they had to make more of a commitment. They had the same kind of zeal. They were also ideologues.

"Ours was a movement that was a little more conservative. The average student was more conservative than the average student in the civil rights demonstrations. Obviously, ours was much less violent than the Vietnam protests."

Farbstein said he was surprised at the democratic process that took place during the sit-in: "they voted on everything." He admitted, however, that the constant voting "got on my nerves."

"Everyone wanted to hear everyone," Farbstein said. "They didn't want to do anything that made it appear that the sit-in was run by a few zealots."

He said the purpose of the sit-in was "to politicize a very apathetic student body."

Philip Rice said the Stanford sit-in afforded an opportunity for individuals to try to create a situation similar to the demonstrations of the '60s.

"The people I talked to said it reminded them of the '60s but to a scaled-down degree," Rice said.

Elaine McEnteggart agreed. But she said Stanford students were not as committed to the cause as earlier protesters.

"It was springtime and friends were doing it," McEnteggart said. "People were saying, 'Hey this is the '60s again.'"

Steven Vettel described the Stanford sit-in as being "safer" than earlier protests.

"No one at our sit-in was personally in danger of being subjected to apartheid whereas in the antiwar movement, people stood in direct danger of being drafted," Vettel explained.

Despite these perceived differences, most of the respondents said they believed both the successes and the failures of the earlier protest movements influenced them in the Stanford sit-in.

One sit-in participant said there was "a conscious effort to avoid the mistakes" made in earlier demonstrations.

Peter Salovey said the Stanford protesters would never have condoned the use of violence.

"Violence didn't work," Salovey explained. "The public looked on it negatively. We didn't take out frustrations on the police. We were reasonable people with reasonable demands."

Salovey said he was influenced by the antiwar protests because they "pointed out politics in this country." The earlier protests showed "the connection between big business and politics," he said.

Linder also said the previous protests influenced him to some extent.

"Looking at the history of student demonstrations at Stanford they have had some very good effects, like keeping the Chicano students' part of the University open and running," Linder said. "They kept SWOPSI alive."

"I have faith in what they can do but it depends on the number of people who support it. If people don't support it, it's not going to have much effect because the University is an undemocratic institution."—Jim Fallon

## Parents' reactions

Those surveyed gave their parents fairly high marks for ultimately accepting their decision to participate in the sit-in.

However, seven students said their mothers don't know about their arrest and nine students said their fathers don't know.

About two-thirds rated their mothers as approving or "neither approving nor disapproving" of their arrest, while a slight majority rated their fathers that way.

Some parents who disapproved still had respect for their son's or daughter's motives.

"They didn't like the arrest," one student said. "But they reacted favorably to my explanation of why I attended the rally."

James Bateson said his mother was "pretty right out of her head" when she learned he had been arrested.

"But my sister and I talked to her about it—wrote her letters," Bateson said. "She was scared we'd lose our scholarships—that it would harm our future. Later on when she found out it wouldn't, she approved."

Parental concern over the potential effects of an arrest record on career prospects was a common theme.

"I wrote them a letter and they were upset," one student said. "They were afraid that it would be very bad for my career. They felt it would be really destructive. . . .

"My father also has some problems with accepting civil disobedience. We talked about it for a long while and their distress was definitely alleviated. They became not condoning but tolerant."

Theodore Zayner said his parents were "pretty surprised and worried, but not angry or upset.

"My mom was pretty admiring of what I had done," he said. "My dad was, too, but he didn't think I should have gone about it the way I did."

Not all parents reacted so favorably.

"They were extremely upset," one student said. "We argued a lot; I cried a lot. My parents threatened to withdraw my aid."

Michael Jennings said that his parents were very upset and tried to make him quit participation in such movements.

Other parents had the opposite reaction. "My mother called as soon as she heard the news," one student said. "She figured I'd be in it. She said it was about time I did something."—David Holley

## Demonstration goals

Although nearly two thirds of those interviewed thought that the protest would not affect the Trustees or the rulers of South Africa, an almost equal proportion believed that the sit-in would lead to other demonstrations against apartheid around the U.S.

"I felt that the rally was a big step," one student said. "It went smoothly and the fact that it touched off a lot of things around the nation was good."

The extensive media coverage was mentioned by many students, including Jose Juarez.

"I didn't think Stanford would be stupid enough to give us that kind of publicity," Juarez said.

Seven out of 10 said they have become better friends with the others who were arrested with them. Mark Hallam said the experience was instrumental in making one friendship "a lot tighter.

"We both felt we had gone through a pretty important experience."

Jeffrey Kimball agreed. "I made new friends and developed much closer relationships with old friends," he said. "There was a very strong community feeling—probably one of the strongest community feelings I've felt at Stanford."

Some students, such as James Orenstein, felt Stanford students who did not participate were too concerned about their studies.

"Some Stanford students are not interested in anything outside their chosen careers," Orenstein said. "I guess I feel those who are not interested in politics are missing something. And, they're the type of person who is common at Stanford."

Although the students did not expect to change the Trustees, some, like Steven Hansch, said they would do the same thing over again.

"What I expected and hoped to accomplish was publicity," Hansch said, "and in that we exceeded our wildest dreams."—Sue Ackerman