Inventing Satyagraha: Gandhi and his Circle of Supporters in South Africa
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During his crucial years in South Africa from 1893-1914, M.K. Gandhi developed a nonviolent method of opposing the racial laws and attitudes towards Indians in South Africa, pointing the way to the movement to free India from British control. To bring his vision into reality Gandhi needed supporters,and he found them or they found him. They were an unusual assortment of people, and the most important ones will be discussed.

Gandhi was complex, charismatic, and paradoxical. He made superhuman demands on himself, and his followers. He, and they, experienced psychological and personal consequences. He had troubled relations with his wife and children and some of his trusted allies.

Gandhi is one of the most influential people in modern history. He perfected the use on the world stage of a nonviolent method in seeking freedom from oppression. He urged religious toleration at a time of great intolerance. He supported the poor and dispossessed. He and his followers wrestled satyagraha into being.

George Hendrick is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He also served as Associate Dean of the Graduate College and Curator of Manuscripts in the Rare Book and Special Collections Library. His doctoral dissertation was "Thoreau and Gandhi: The Development of 'Civil Disobedience' and Satyagraha" (U. Texas at Austin, 1954). He has published introductions to Wilkins' 1785 English translation of the Bhagvat-Geeta (1959) and Kapoor's Bhagavad-Gita: An International Bibliography of 1785-1979 Imprints (1983), and articles on Gandhi with Willene Hendrick, M.K. Gandhi's First Nonviolent Campaign: A Study of Racism in South Africa and the United States (2013). He has also published widely on American literature and culture.

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