



# Global Nonviolent Action Database

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## U.S. anti-nuclear activists and community members force closure of Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant, 1976-1989

- Anti-Nuclear Power Movement (1960s-1980s)

1976

to:

1989

**Country:** United States

**Location City/State/Province:** East Shoreham, New York

**Goals:**

Closure of the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant.

### Methods

**Methods in 1st segment:**

- 001. Public speeches
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books

**Methods in 2nd segment:**

- 001. Public speeches
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 036. Performances of plays and music
- 038. Marches › March of estimated 15,000 protesters held near Shoreham construction site on June 3, 1979.
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 168. Nonviolent raids

**Methods in 3rd segment:**

- 001. Public speeches
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books

- 038. Marches

**Methods in 4th segment:**

- 001. Public speeches
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 038. Marches

**Methods in 5th segment:**

- 001. Public speeches
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 010. Newspapers and journals

**Methods in 6th segment:**

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 010. Newspapers and journals

## Classifications

**Classification:**

Change

**Cluster:**

Democracy

Environment

Human Rights

**Group characterization:**

- Environmentalists
- Local mothers and families
- anti-nuclear activists
- students

## Leaders, partners, allies, elites

**Leaders:**

Nora Bredes, S.H.A.D. Alliance, Shoreham Opponents Coalition

**Partners:**

Clamshell Alliance

**External allies:**

Sierra Club, Audubon Society

**Involvement of social elites:**

Governor Cuomo

## Joining/exiting order of social groups

### Groups in 1st Segment:

- Residents
- Shoreham Opponents Coalition

### Groups in 2nd Segment:

- Audubon Society
- S.H.A.D. Alliance
- Sierra Club

### Groups in 3rd Segment:

### Groups in 4th Segment:

- S.H.A.D. Alliance (exit)
- Suffolk County Legislature

### Groups in 5th Segment:

### Groups in 6th Segment:

- Governor Mario Cuomo

**Segment Length:** *Approximately 2 years 3 months*

## Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

### Opponents:

Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO)

### Nonviolent responses of opponent:

Locking gates

### Campaigner violence:

During the June 3rd, 1979 action about 20 protesters destroyed the gate surrounding the Shoreham construction site, and threw debris at LILCO employees. No other violence known

### Repressive Violence:

Not known

## Success Outcome

### Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

6 points out of 6 points

### Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

### Growth:

3 points out of 3 points

### Notes on outcomes:

A perfect score is awarded because the demand to close the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant was met, and the organization and growth of the anti-nuclear movement was increased greatly over this period.

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In 1965 Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) president John J. Tuomy announced the intent to open a nuclear power plant in East Shoreham on Long Island New York at LILCO's annual shareholders' meeting. Construction on the site commenced in 1973.

In 1976 local residents held their first protest against the construction of the Shoreham Plant, but details of this action are difficult to ascertain. About this time however, Nora Bredes and other local mothers began voicing specific concerns about the community's health at local county meetings.

In 1976, following the model of the New England Clamshell Alliance, the Sound-Hudson Against Atomic Development Alliance or the SHAD Alliance, organized some 20 local antinuclear groups in the New York Area and began holding sessions and sending out publications on the dangers of nuclear power.

In the first SHAD congress in 1978 members decided that the Shoreham Reactor would be the focus of the regional campaign.

After the near meltdown of the Three Mile Island Nuclear Reactor in Pennsylvania in March 1979, SHAD membership grew. In June of that year SHAD hosted a rally and march at the construction site of the Shoreham Plant. Organizers planned the event in conjunction with an International Antinuclear Day, and actions were held around the world.

Approximately 15,000 protesters marched at the June 4, 1979 rally. Members of SHAD and dozens of local groups attended. After speeches and music by folk singer and activist Pete Seeger on a nearby beach, activists marched to the construction site. Some 600 protesters climbed the Shoreham fence and were arrested for trespassing. A smaller group of 20 destroyed the hinges on the main gate and threw debris at LILCO employees.

SHAD dismantled in the early 1980s, but local protest of the Shoreham Plant continued. When the SHAD campaign began in 1976 only three county legislators opposed the plant. In 1983, the Suffolk County Legislature passed a resolution 15 to 1 declaring the nuclear disaster evacuation plan inadequate.

In 1981, 43 percent of Long Island residents opposed the Shoreham Nuclear Power Plant. By 1986 74 percent of Long Island residents opposed the plant.

Local residents continued to attend meetings and distribute fliers against the Shoreham Plant. Nora Bredes and the Shoreham Opponents Coalition remained particularly active in disseminating information and demanding political accountability.

On February 28, 1989, New York governor Mario M. Cuomo agreed with the Suffolk County Legislature and announced that the Shoreham Nuclear Plant must close. The governor and LILCO signed an agreement to shutter the plant, increasing taxes on Long Island residents to cover the \$6 billion dollar costs of construction. In 1992, Shoreham was fully dismantled without generating any commercial electricity.

## Research Notes

### Influences:

The S.H.A.D. alliance was influenced by the Clamshell Alliance of New England formed in 1975.(1) The full dismantling of the Shoreham site in 1992 inspired by public action and eventual political resistance, influenced the closure of a number of commercial nuclear power plants in the United States in the 1990s.(2)

### Sources:

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S.H.A.D. Alliance Records, 1978-1983. "Historical Background" Swarthmore Peace Collection. Collection DG 142. <http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/DG100-150/dg142shad.htm>

**Additional Notes:**

For more information on the anti-nuclear movement see Bill Moyer. Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movements. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 2001.

**Name of researcher, and date dd/mm/yyyy:**

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**Source URL (retrieved on 06/18/2019 - 01:08):** <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/us-anti-nuclear-activists-and-community-members-force-closure-shoreham-nuclear-power-plant-1>

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[1] <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/category/wave-campaigns/anti-nuclear-power-movement-1960s-1980s>