INTRODUCTION

What do all these protests mean?
Well my friend, Time Magazine
Explains they're vaguely reminiscent of the sixties.
They're anachronistic fossils, atavistic apostles,
They can't hustle, they're still twisting with the sixties.

I hear people singing songs,
About what's right and what is wrong,
Their song is painfully reminiscent of the sixties.
How the hell can they play music,
When their guitars are acoustic?
I can't use it, I had to lose it in the sixties.

As the curly-headed, turban-topped king of rolling thunder,
I build my castle on the hill, to evangelize in wonder
At the peasants of the eighties, in the valleys, going under.
And as I watched them go, amazed they do not know,
They could learn so much from Barry Manilow.
But they're so vaguely reminiscent of the sixties.[1]

Folk singer Charlie King's song "Vaguely Reminiscent of the Sixties" is part satire, part serious.[2] His introduction, spoken at a concert and recorded for release on his 1982 album *Vaguely Reminiscent*, speaks to the disappointment that many on the left felt about how their actions in the 1970s and 1980s had been represented and re-imagined in American politics and culture in the period since the 1960s. For those involved in activist movements, countercultural endeavors, or some other iteration of alternative political or cultural expression, such representations of activism (or "metaphors" as Charlie King called them) were not only slightly insulting, they misread alternative politics and culture in the post-sixties era, identifying the New Left, the counterculture, and the anti-Vietnam War movement as singular entities confined to a specific context – the 1960s – and a unique time of change and challenge in American life. Whilst King's ideas are firstly a condemnation of how popular media reported oppositional culture in the early 1980s,

[1] Charlie King, *Vaguely Reminiscent* (Greenfield, MA: Rainbow Snake Records, 1982).
[2] To accentuate the connection between activists of the early 1980s and the popular memory of the 1960s, King sung much of the song in a mock Bob Dylan voice.

they also shed important light on how the memories of the 1960s are inextricably linked to the actions of the left in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the wake of "the sixties" and the oppositional and countercultural movements on the left that form so much of this problematic periodization and popular memory, activists on the left attempted to apply themselves and their progressive politics to new issues.[3] Movements emerged around such issues as animal rights, environmentalism, gay rights, hunger and poverty, abortion, as well as issues tied to U.S. foreign policy, such as intervention in Central America, and the system of apartheid in South Africa.[4] Whilst such efforts were often unique to their historical and political contexts, their roots often lay in the oppositional social movement culture of the 1960s, and as Charlie King suggested, the popular image of social activism in the late 1970s and early 1980s was of activists clinging to their past. Such a culture, according to many historians, owes much to the New Left, whose role in the political and cultural landscape of 1960s social movements is significant.[5] How and why these movements emerged in this style has much to do with the 1960s, and this thesis argues that *negotiation* of the legacy of the 1960s is the best lens through which to view social movement activism in the 1970s and 1980s.

This thesis charts a variety of forms of anti-nuclear activity in the United States between the years 1976 and 1987. It begins with the rise of visible acts of protest against the

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[3] In this thesis I use the phrase "the sixties" sparingly, to refer to the popular idea of the era rather than its timeframe. On the periodization and definition of "the sixties," Andrew Hunt has commented that ""the sixties" has become synonymous with "the movement," a vague yet frequently used expression used to describe a cluster of mass protests, on local and national levels, typically originating from Civil Rights or Black Power struggles, the antiwar movement, the New Left, student power groups, feminism, and other political, cultural or minority activists." Andrew Hunt, "'When Did the Sixties Happen?' Searching for New Directions," *Journal of Social History* 33, no. 1 (1999), p. 147. A classic example of this conflagration of "movement" and "sixties" is Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[4] An illuminating edited volume examining a variety of such movements, and their nature as social movements in the wake of the 1960s, is Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson, eds., *Waves of Protest: Social Movements since the Sixties* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999).

[5] Whilst some scholars have equated the New Left with its flagship organization, the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), others have examined it as a more fluid assemblage of actors and interests. Debate amongst historians as to the constitution and meaning of the New Left also contributes to its somewhat messy status in the historiography of the 1960s. The three most famous examples of such traditional interpretations as they emerged in the late 1980s are, Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer: The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); James Miller, *Democracy Is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987); and Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987). For an excellent historiographical critique, see Winifred Breines, "Whose New Left?," *Journal of American History* 75, no. 2 (1988), pp. 528-545.

nuclear arms race, and the building of nationwide coalitions organized against all forms of nuclear dangers in 1976. The thesis then charts the development of different models of anti-nuclear activism over the following 11 years, emphasizing that differing types of protest, their ideas, strategies, and tactics maintained an ambivalent relationship with the legacies of the 1960s. This diversity of protest activity is central to this thesis, and as such, national membership-based organizations will be examined alongside decentralized protest collectives and other smaller communities of resistance. It is through an examination of these very different forms of protest that a clearer picture of the scope of anti-nuclear sentiment and activity can be gleaned, and one that sheds additional light on the legacies of the 1960s and their impact on the left in the 1970s and 1980s.

Although the organization of this thesis might seem to place an emphasis on the decentralized nature of anti-nuclear protest in the 1970s and 1980s, and the fact that it appeared as a "movement of movements," its intention is not so.[6] I seek to evaluate the extent to which activists in this era envisaged a national movement, and how activity in their individual contexts – local, regional, institutional, electoral, legislative, gendered, or religious – comprised a movement of disparate voices. How these voices interacted, how they perceived their role as activists, and how they operated in the context of the wider movement against nuclear dangers, tells a different story to existing accounts of the anti-nuclear movement as it has hitherto been examined by scholars. Of course, neither major campaigns such as the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, nor mass mobilizations, such as the massive rally in New York City on 12 June 1982 that drew over 750,000 demonstrators, can tell us the whole story of the anti-nuclear movement. What helps us better understand the movement, and how it existed in the context of a post-1960s mobilization of activism on the left, are the diverse and decentralized strands of anti-nuclear activity around the nation.

This assemblage of social movements, countercultural communities, and radical and liberal activists that existed in the 1970s and 1980s can be described in similar ways to their 1960s antecedents. Whilst some scholars have looked at the explosion in diversity of social movement activism in the 1970s, on both left and right, this variety owes much

[6] On a "movement of movements," see Van Gosse, "A Movement of Movements: The Definition and Periodization of the New Left," in *A Companion to Post-1945 America*, ed. Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 277-302. I return to this idea below.

to the proliferation of social movement mobilization that occurred during the 1960s.[7] Long-lasting organizations committed to peace, social justice, women's rights, and a host of other concerns had even longer histories, and drew from a rich twentieth-century heritage of organization and mobilization.[8] In the 1970s and 1980s, moves toward local political mobilizations in neighborhood organizing, the promise of self-sufficiency and alternative living in the back-to-the-land movement, and the multiplicity of movements based on identity politics all demonstrated the success of what Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson call the "legitimization of dissent." This enabled Americans to respond collectively to perceived problems in public life, whether on small, communal scales, on local and regional scales, or nationally, in coalitional mobilizations of networked citizens.[9]

These developments in social organizing show us that there is more to the story of activism in the 1970s and 1980s than the popular narrative of "leftovers" from the movements of the 1960s. They also give us insight into how social movements and their participants on the left navigated the wake of the 1960s, and more specifically how they dealt with their prospects for success in the midst of the conservative revival that began in earnest in the 1970s.[10] Against a political climate that increasingly rejected the liberal

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[7] Notable examples include Freeman and Johnson, eds., *Waves of Protest*; Robert Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam: The Politics of Protest in Massachusetts, 1974-1990* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009); and Bradford Martin, *The Other Eighties: A Secret History of America in the Age of Reagan* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2011).

[8] Examples include the Fellowship of Reconciliation, War Resisters League, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and other organizations with their roots in the early twentieth century. For a comprehensive history of pacifism – a common organizing philosophy amongst many of these organizations – that traces back to the eighteenth century, see Charles F. Howlett and Robbie Lieberman, *A History of the American Peace Movement: From Colonial Times to the Present* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2008).

[9] Freeman and Johnson, eds., *Waves of Protest*, p. xi. On neighborhood organizing, see Robert Fisher, *Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America, Social Movements Past and Present* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984), and, more recently, Suleiman Osman, "The Decade of the Neighborhood," in *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, ed. Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 106-127. On the back-to-the-land movement, see Dona Brown, *Back to the Land: The Enduring Dream of Self-Sufficiency in Modern America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011); and the classic David E. Shi, *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[10] This "revival" has been described as an "ascendancy" or, more simply, as part of a "right turn" in American politics in the wake of, and as a reaction to, the liberal reforms of the 1960s. Although a massive literature exists here, two noteworthy studies are William C. Berman, *America's Right Turn: From Nixon to Clinton*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); and Donald T. Critchlow, *The Conservative Ascendancy: How the GOP Right Made Political History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007). Since the 1990s, however, studies by cultural historians have shed additional light on the massive mobilization of conservative grassroots movements, their reception by the American public, and the conservative nature of cultural politics in the 1970s and 1980s. See, for example, Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*

advances of the 1960s, activists on the left struggled to find the most effective means of maintaining their own philosophies of dissent, whilst at the same time striving to find success by appealing to the American public.[11] These tensions between what Wini Breines calls "strategic" and "prefigurative" politics were not new to the 1970s or 1980s, but they did take on new meaning in this particular political and cultural era in American public life.[12]

ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY

The operation of these tensions between different modes of activism, and their significance in the political and cultural landscape of social movement organizing from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s, played out in fascinating ways within the anti-nuclear movement.[13] Emerging from a loose coalition of environmentalists, feminists and pacifists in the mid 1970s, campaigns against nuclear power plants, nuclear weapons facilities, nuclear missile bases and other such iterations of perceived nuclear dangers, the movement took on a new significance with the onset of the Reagan presidency in 1981. Ronald Reagan's rhetorical belligerence toward the Soviet Union, dramatically bloated defense budgets, and the emergence of increasingly destructive nuclear weapons

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(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Jean V. Hardisty, *Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999); and Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[11] Some contemporary scholarship has maintained that radical activism on the left maintained a critical role in extending the radical promise of the 1960s into these challenging years of conservatism. See Van Gosse and Richard Moser, eds., *The World the Sixties Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003); and, more recently, Dan Berger, ed., *The Hidden 1970s: Histories of Radicalism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010).

[12] As Wini Breines summarizes, "the crux of prefigurative politics imposed substantial tasks, the central one being to create and sustain within the live practice of the movement, relationships and political forms that "prefigured" and embodied the desired society." In the context of the peace movement, prefigurative politics eschews strategy and organization in favor living as closely as one can to a peaceful and just world, by enacting its essence in one's personal and communal life. Wini Breines, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968: The Great Refusal* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p. 6. See also Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 196-197.

[13] For the purposes of this thesis, I shall refer to the assemblage of actors engaged in various types of activism against nuclear power, nuclear weapons, and other related threats as "the anti-nuclear movement." Although one could describe these grouping of actions as arbitrary, and more accurately explain anti-nuclear activism as one comprising many "movements," it is how these seemingly diverse movements operated as a whole that is the focus of this thesis. Although I detail individual "movements" within the "anti-nuclear movement," the existence of substantial cross-pollination amongst movement organizations and coalitions indicates that a more appropriate term, especially in the context of the central argument of the thesis, is the singular.

systems led to widespread public fears of the possibility of a nuclear war. Movements opposed to the nuclear arms race between the superpowers, and its potential consequences, gained new strength in the early 1980s, not just in the United States, but elsewhere in the western world.[14] As nuclear fears became more prominent, so did the anti-nuclear movement, and this led to large changes in its composition.[15] Formerly the province of more radical activists practicing some form of prefigurative politics in opposition to specific nuclear power or weapons facilities, the movement soon became a conglomerate of interests, ranging from mainstream organizers interested in political solutions to the arms race, and radical communities of activists intent on maintaining their own sense of identity through continuing their various expressions of anti-nuclear dissent and resistance.[16]

The abundance of different identities in anti-nuclear activism in the 1970s and 1980s was nothing particularly new. Since the earliest protests against the atomic bomb in the 1940s, there existed a plethora of different activists, groups, and organizations involved in opposing this new weapon of mass destruction. Pacifists, scientists, world federalists, disgruntled New Dealers, socialists, communists and religious bodies each aired alternative arguments in favor of nuclear disarmament in the early Cold War.[17] Atomic testing in the 1950s prompted a diverse ban-the-bomb movement. Traditional long-standing pacifist organizations, religious bodies, scientists' groups, and women's groups operated alongside the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), a new national,

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[14] The global dimension of this anti-nuclear movement since the early 1970s has been explored in exemplary fashion in Lawrence S. Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1971 to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

[15] Paul Boyer has described currents of fear and concern about nuclear weapons as cyclical in nature. The early 1980s marked a return to a cycle of fear and activism, following a period of "nuclear apathy." See Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); and Paul Boyer, "From Activism to Apathy: The American People and Nuclear Weapons, 1963-1980," *Journal of American History* 70, no. 4 (1984), pp. 821-844.

[16] On the "mainstream" movement, insider accounts give us plenty of insight into the political motivations of these activists and how they defined the anti-nuclear movement and their part in it. See, for example, Pam Solo, *From Protest to Policy: Beyond the Freeze to Common Security* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1988), and Douglas C. Waller, *Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An inside Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987). Additional accounts portray this side of the movement in ways that conform to the style of classic organizational histories of sixties groups. See Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb: A History of Sane, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 1957-1985* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986); and Robert Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace: Neutrality, the Test Ban, and the Freeze* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993).

[17] See Lawrence S. Wittner, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement through 1953* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), Chapter 4. On communist opposition to the arms race in the United States, see pp. 202-209.

membership-based organization that attracted substantial public support. By mid 1958, SANE had 130 chapters and 25,000 members, making it the largest anti-nuclear organization in the country, and would lead mainstream peace movement thinking on nuclear disarmament for the next thirty years.[18] With this increase in public support, however, came the dilemma of compromise. As Lawrence Wittner has commented, "Ban-the-Bomb organizations clearly mobilized broader sections of society than could those with a more deeply rooted critique of international violence. But greater popularity came at the price of muting more thoroughgoing alternatives."[19] The challenge of compromise would beset the anti-nuclear movement in later years as it struggled to find a balance between strategies. On the one hand, building a mass movement required attracting mass public support; on the other, activists needed to maintain the purity of their own pursuits of comprehensive political and social change.

The signing of the Test Ban Treaty in 1963, ending above-ground atomic testing, diminished the appeal of the anti-nuclear movement, as did the onset of the Vietnam War. Most activists and organizations on the left turned their attention to Indochina; many had also been involved with the struggle for African American civil rights, developing a range of organizing strategies and tactics that would assist the movements against the Vietnam War and the nuclear arms race in later years. Here, too, the meeting of a variety of political, ideological, economic, racial, gender, and philosophical differences meant that both the civil rights and anti-war movements were diverse affairs.[20] The emergence of the New Left in the early 1960s further complicated matters; its members rejected the "liberal establishment" and pursued an agenda of participatory democracy and political authenticity. These movements overlapped, both in ideas and members.

The New Left also gave birth to radical feminism, itself a challenge to male domination of the New Left. And surrounding these movements was the "counterculture," often referred to as a cultural rebellion, a leaderless movement, or a youthful revolt, in which combinations of alternative expression – in art, lifestyle, politics, behavior and

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[18] See Lawrence S. Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 51-60.
[19] Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb*, p. 59.
[20] There exists an abundance of scholarship on these issues, but for a thorough treatment of the peace movement during these years, see Charles DeBenedetti and Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990).

spirituality – challenged a monolithic "establishment" of conformity, liberalism, and homogeneity.[21] Here exists what Van Gosse calls a "movement of movements," a useful idea that encourages us to think about a pluralistic assemblage of political and cultural actors engaged in various practices of change, challenge, dissent, and resistance.[22] The operation of these practices in the years following the 1960s, the way they relate to both personal and political expression, and how they interacted, demonstrates the essentiality of examining post-1960s social movements in light of the developments on the left during the 1960s.

The anti-nuclear movement offers an ideal case study in which these ideas can be illuminated, not only because it emerged as perhaps the major movement on the left in the early 1980s, but also because of the centrality of anti-nuclear sentiment on the left. Whilst this study does not go so far as to claim a pervasive, all-consuming "nuclear fear" or an affliction of "nuclearism" existed amongst Americans in the years of the second Cold War, as many scholars have done, it will demonstrate that amongst progressives and radicals, issues of nuclear power and nuclear weapons were crucial indicators of deeper concerns amongst activists.[23] The limits of state power, the multitude of dangers

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[21] Defining the counterculture, as Doug Rossinow correctly argues, is a difficult endeavor. Not entirely synonymous with the New Left, Rossinow describes the counterculture as an alternative cultural program of young, white, urban radicals, and one that was separate to, but reflective of, the New Left. Doug Rossinow, "The New Left in the Counterculture: Hypotheses and Evidence," *Radical History Review* 67, no. (1997), pp. 79-80, 109. Indeed, there existed many countercultures, divided by race, gender, location, and philosophy. The legacy of these countercultures, as they pertain to this thesis, is how visions of an alternative politics and culture in American life became manifested in progressive and leftist activism from the mid 1970s to the mid 1980s. Whether countercultures were intrinsically political in nature or whether they related to a diverse array of cultural expression, they are each are significant examples of cultural radicalism in American history since the 1960s. How countercultures operated in a variety of contexts – often defined by identity and difference – enables us to look in greater depth at the cultural character of leftist social movements in this era. It is this cultural character to which I shall refer as "the counterculture." For additional scholarship in this area, see Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, eds., *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s* (New York: Routledge, 2002). For a discussion of the relationship between the New Left and the "hippie counterculture," see Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp. 247-255.

[22] See Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretative History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); and Gosse, "Movement of Movements," pp. 277-302. Some scholars have used similar ideas to explain the interaction and influence between feminism and the peace and anti-nuclear power movements of the 1970s and 1980s, something I deal with in chapter four. For two noteworthy examples, see Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution*; and David S. Meyer and Nancy Whittier, "Social Movement Spillover," *Social Problems* 41, no. 2 (1994), pp. 277-298.

[23] Pervasive nuclear fears have been the subject of various studies dedicated to the impact of the nuclear age on American society. The concept of "nuclearism," too, offers a thesis that exposure to the overwhelming danger of a world threatened by nuclear annihilation instills in individuals. Advanced by psychologist Robert Jay Lifton in the early 1980s, "nuclearism" was described as the "psychological, political & military dependence on nuclear weapons" that existed in both the public and political spheres. The implication was such that, in the 1980s, American society had grown to regard nuclear weapons as an

inherent in the use nuclear energy and the production of nuclear weapons, and the volatility of Cold War relations between the superpowers didn't just speak to pacifists. They were issues central to the actions and organizational philosophies of feminists, religious groups, countercultural communities, environmentalists, scientists, teachers, and doctors, as well as other professional and political coalitions, citizen and neighborhood groups, and local, state, and national organizations of a great variety.

This study will look at a selection of such expressions of anti-nuclear activism, and how they indicate the nature of deeper themes inherent in social movement activism in the wake of the 1960s. How anti-nuclear activists negotiated the legacy of their predecessors in the civil rights and anti-war movements, the New Left, and the counterculture, can be examined though their actions, interactions, identities, and philosophies. Despite the extreme variety of activism on the left in the 1970s and 1980s, the spectrum of anti-nuclear activism – from liberal institutional challenges aimed at political reform, to radical forms of resistance seeking nonviolent revolution – the operation of these two sides of the left, examined together, indicates how the struggles over the processes of dissent mirrored those in the 1960s. In the context of a burgeoning historiography attempting to explain how social movements on both left and right demonstrate the enduring influence and reach of the 1960s on politics, society and culture in its wake, the anti-nuclear movement offers a somewhat overlooked opportunity to examine exactly how the meeting of different activists in this movement negotiated the meaning and memory of the 1960s.

Additionally, this thesis brings into question the nature of the effects of the New Left and the counterculture in progressive social movements of later years. Conservative commentators have decried the turn from traditional notions of political life and cultural behavior in the pre-1960s era to the excesses of personal and social malaise that characterized the 1960s and its aftermath. Also contributing to the "chronicle of decline"

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ordinary feature in public life; as such, Lifton argued that Americans were engaging in a process of "psychic numbing." Society's avoidance to think constructively about nuclear weapons was problematic, and accordingly, public action, conflict, and tension and "a more formed awareness" would stimulate a more thorough questioning of the danger posed by the existence of these weapons. See Robert Jay Lifton, "The Prevention of Nuclear War," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, October 1980, pp. 38-43; Robert Jay Lifton, "Beyond Psychic Numbing: A Call to Awareness," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 52, no. 4 (1982), pp. 619-629; and for a more comprehensive examination, Robert Jay Lifton and Richard A. Falk, *Indefensible Weapons: The Political and Psychological Case against Nuclearism*, updated ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

that has dominated the historiography of the 1970s and beyond, Roger Kimball describes the 1960s as "a synonym for excess and moral breakdown."[24] In deriding the New Left, the counterculture, and a vaguely defined "cultural revolution," such scholarship still demonstrates the transformative aims of countercultural movements since the 1960s.[25]

Even as the failures of the New Left became apparent, its promise of a world of social justice and participatory democracy was taken over by other movements seeking similar things, whilst doing so in the language popularized by the many movements seeking massive social change in the 1960s. As Robert Surbrug correctly argues, this was in many ways a linear progression:

> The new movements of the 1970s and 1980s, which also derived inspiration and a sense of legitimacy from the movements of the 1960s, sought to adapt lessons learned from the previous era to their changed environment. By the mid 1970s, the feminist and environmentalist movements had converged into the movement against nuclear power, which sought to employ New Left ideas of direct action and participatory democracy but also to elevate the role of women in a way that the anti-war movement never had. The No Nukes movement also pursued a community strategy that continued the trajectory of the antiwar movement in the late 1960s, attempting to move it from college campuses to mainstream communities.[26]

What Surbrug misses, however, is the issue of compromise and conflict that characterized the interaction between various parts of the anti-nuclear movement in this era, as many of its members and leaders sought to avoid the social and political marginalization that had beset the New Left in its search for authenticity through a fusion of political and cultural radicalism. Yes, many involved in the broad movement against nuclear dangers did utilize tactics, ideas and strategies developed by their predecessors in the New Left, civil rights, and antiwar movements. But others saw the conservative turn in American politics and culture as a sign that operating in such a shadow of the 1960s might be counterproductive. As such, they distanced themselves from the popular memory of the 1960s as an era of division and extremism, seeking instead to appeal to middle America as a new, polite movement of liberal reform.

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[24] Roger Kimball, *The Long March: How the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s Changed America* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2000), p. 4.
[25] See also John Harmon McElroy, *Divided We Stand: The Rejection of American Culture since the 1960s* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).
[26] Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, p. 4.

Within these very different modes of organizing against nuclear power and nuclear weapons exists a tension over basic, yet significant question. This question – how can citizens most effectively diminish the threat of nuclear catastrophe? – seems fairly amenable, but behind it lay vast differences in the perception of the nature of the nuclear threat. Some saw this threat in the proliferation of nuclear power plants, some in the existence of nuclear weapons and their potential use, and some in the tense relationship between the superpowers that had deteriorated with the failure of détente. Some looked even deeper, at the dangers of modernity, the evils of capitalism, and the crimes of a morally bankrupt state. Of course, major differences here led to differences in deciding the most suitable and effective course of action, and studying the diversity here gives us a valuable perspective on the immense variety of "tactical repertoires" (to use Charles Tilly's term) used by movement activists, and what that says about the contexts in which they decide to take a particular course of action.[27] Anti-nuclear activists utilized traditional legal or electoral strategies to effect reform, they mobilized large numbers of fellow activists in legal mass demonstrations, and they also engaged in illegal actions of civil disobedience. Some took things further, dramatizing opposition to the state in ways that symbolized an anarchic rejection of liberal democracy. Such activists, engaging in direct action and utilizing a kind of prefigurative politics, sought to define themselves in their acts of dissent, and separated themselves from public life and politics in the process.

Taken together, these diverse attempts to end – or at least reduce – the threat of nuclear disaster comprise what this thesis understands as "the anti-nuclear movement." By undertaking a detailed examination of these actions and interactions, this thesis also offers a counterpoint to existing histories of alternative social movements in the 1970s and 1980s. Such histories argue that there existed a powerful legacy of the New Left, and the civil rights and anti-war movements in the wake of the 1960s, and that this legacy succeeded in challenges to the "conservative revival" during the 1970s and 1980s. Studying these challenges, scholars contend, alters the conventional historical narrative

[27] Whilst tactics in social movements have earned a lot of attention from sociologists, Tilly popularized the concept in Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978). For a more recent and coherent position on the nature of tactical repertoires and the relationship between political and cultural social movement activism, see Verta Taylor and Nella Van Dyke, "'Get Up, Stand Up': Tactical Repertoires of Social Movements," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, *et al.* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 262-284. For additional interesting perspectives on these ideas, see James G. Ennis, "Fields of Action: Structure in Movements' Tactical Repertoires," *Sociological Forum* 2, no. 3 (1987), pp. 520-532; and Lee A. Smithey, "Social Movement Strategy, Tactics, and Collective Identity," *Sociology Compass* 3, no. 4 (2009), pp. 658-667.

of the "failure" of the New Left, or the "death of the sixties," in which an era of revolutionary promise was replaced by one of apathy, selfishness, and narcissism.[28] By doing so, they have created a literature that examines a series of movements – most notably feminism, environmentalism, and gay rights – as demonstrated by the vitality of New Left ideals in activism of later years, even if, as Stephanie Slocum-Schaffer comments, the excess and violence of the 1960s "brought forth a legacy of quieter, more mature, and more sophisticated social movements seeking change."[29]

This thesis argues that there is more to this story. By looking at anti-nuclear activists of many persuasions in the 1970s and 1980s, and the approaches they took to social change, it is clear they demonstrated a more ambivalent relationship to the 1960s than many scholars admit. Activists in the 1970s and 1980s responded to the promises of the New Left's ideological and countercultural program by both embracing *and* rejecting it. Often this had much to do with tactics; activists were often at loggerheads over the most appropriate methods of protest, as some wanted to attract mainstream public support, whilst others were more interested in styling themselves as egalitarian communities of radical resistance. What this amounts to, I argue, is a process not simply of conflict and compromise, but of *negotiating* the legacies of the 1960s. We cannot simply think of peace movement activists in years after the 1960s as "polite protestors," as John Lofland has termed them.[30] Nor can we consider them as comprising a movement dedicated to reviving the cultural revolution that had failed during the 1960s.[31] Rather, as this study argues, we need to look at activists demonstrating a wide spectrum of political and

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[28] The most eloquent work on this gulf between the 1960s and 1970s, and the shift into the "Me Decade," is Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: Norton, 1978). Also commonly cited is Tom Wolfe's idea of the "me decade." See "The 'Me Decade' and the Third Great Awakening" [1976], in *The Purple* Decade (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1983), pp. 265-296. A more recent work emphasizing this narrative of decline by looking at cultural and political radicalism in the 1960s, and its debilitating effect on American life in later years, is Kimball, *The Long March*. Plenty of histories of activism in the 1970s also make pains to point out that in fact, the more cerebral legacies of 1960s activism were well preserved in its aftermath, and that activism in the 1970s helps alter this conventional narrative of the decline of the New Left and the rise of the New Right. See Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, esp. pp. 2-8; Beth L. Bailey and David R. Farber, eds., *America in the Seventies* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004); Peter Carroll, *It Seemed Like Nothing Happened: America in the 1970s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990); and Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York: Da Capo, 2002). For a study that takes this approach to social movements and culture in the 1980s, see Martin, *Other Eighties*.

[29] Stephanie A. Slocum-Schaffer, *America in the Seventies* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003), p. 129.

[30] John Lofland, *Polite Protesters: The American Peace Movement of the 1980s* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993).

[31] See Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution*, esp. pp. 55-57.

cultural ideals in the 1970s and 1980s, including feminism, anarchism, pacifism and socialism, to more accurately assess how the left dealt with the remnants of the 1960s by contesting its legacy and its meanings.

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The modern study of social movements began in the late 1960s in the discipline of sociology, and was inspired by the explosion of social movement activity, particularly the civil rights movement and anti-war movement, but also movements of feminism, black power, and the New Left. Sociologists in particular were quick to recognize the implications of such activism, and moved beyond explanations of social movement activity that relied on explaining how collective behavior was brought about by individual grievances over the "structural strains" of mass society. Newer interpretations pointed to an expanded array of factors helping to explain social movements and the behavior of individuals within them, the most dominant being the resource mobilization theory. Often attributed to John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, the idea behind the theory was that studying collective behavior required looking at "resources" or "assets" available to social movement actors, and how they affect the opportunities open to those actors.[32] Political opportunities, too, as well as "frames" of collective action, became popular in the 1980s and 1990 to explain social movement action and interaction, as well as how movements interpret issues and events, how they create meaning around these issues and events, and how this affects the operation of social movements and their organizations. David Meyer, in particular, has used the idea of political process and opportunity to explain the rise and fall of the nuclear freeze movement that erupted in the early 1980s, how the movement responded to government policy, and how it created structures to best respond to that policy, such as coalitions or various styles of mobilization.[33]

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[32] The classic article on this approach is John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977), pp. 1212-1241.

[33] For Meyer's theoretical perspective, see David S. Meyer, "Protest and Political Opportunities," *Annual Review of Sociology* 30, no. 1 (2004), pp. 125-145. For some more specific discussion of how policy and political opportunity relate to the nuclear freeze movement, see David S. Meyer, "Protest Cycles and Political Process: American Peace Movements in the Nuclear Age," *Political Research Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (1993), pp. 451-479; and David S. Meyer, "Institutionalizing Dissent: The United States Structure of Political Opportunity and the End of the Nuclear Freeze Movement," *Sociological Forum* 8, no. 2 (1993),

Additional work amongst sociologists offers even further modifications of the resource mobilization model, and useful work has explained how types of "framing,"[34] "collective identity"[35] and "emotional dynamics"[36] help explore new facets of social movement operation and activity.[37] Such scholarship gives us great insight into the operation of the anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s, and how it mobilized different constituents, interacted with elites, and suffered a seemingly inevitable decline. Moreover, sociological analyses offer models of activism that help explain the relationship between expressive strategies and political strategies, pragmatism and idealism, and the role played by actors who prefer, as Meyer terms it, "protest without politics."[38] This thesis asks additional questions, involving how anti-nuclear groups and organizations interacted with each other, how they thought about their role and purpose, how they interacted with the media, and how they demonstrate – individually and collectively – the ways the legacies of the 1960s were contested in later years.

The inner workings of the anti-nuclear movement, and the popularity of anti-nuclear sentiment during the Cold War, have often been portrayed as having a cyclical nature. Paul Boyer has chronicled the reasons for the American public's passivity to the threat of nuclear weapons during the years of the Vietnam War and its aftermath, whilst Lawrence Wittner has described this aftermath as one characterized by an anti-nuclear movement

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pp. 157-179. For Meyer's detailed historical treatment of the freeze movement, see David S. Meyer, *A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1990).

[34] See Hank Johnston and John A. Noakes, eds., *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

[35] For a good summary of the theory and literature in this area, see Smithey, "Social Movement Strategy," pp. 658-671. Amongst historians, ideas about collective identity have recently been utilized to explain activism in western nations in the 1960s and 1970s. See Belinda Davis *et al.*, eds., *Changing the World, Changing Oneself: Political Protest and Collective Identities in West Germany and the U.S. In the 1960s and 1970s* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010).

[36] Some excellent edited collections offer numerous studies dedicated to opening up this sub-field, including Jeff Goodwin *et al.*, eds., *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper, *Rethinking Social Movements: Structure, Meaning, and Emotion* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), and Helena Flam and Debra King, eds., *Emotions and Social Movements* (London: Routledge, 2005). For an innovative specialized study, see Erika Summers Effler, *Laughing Saints and Righteous Heroes: Emotional Rhythms in Social Movement Groups* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

[37] For a brief summary of recent trends in social movement research in the social sciences, see Suzanne Staggenborg, *Social Movements* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 24-25.

[38] Meyer, "Institutionalizing Dissent," p. 166. For additional examples highlighting these themes, see Joel H. Rosenthal, *Righteous Realists: Political Realism, Responsible Power, and American Culture in the Nuclear Age* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991); and Tamar Hermann, "Contemporary Peace Movements: Between the Hammer of Political Realism and the Anvil of Pacifism," *Western Political Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (1992), pp. 869-893.

laying the foundations for its dramatic rise in prominence in the early 1980s.[39] David Meyer's work has emphasized how anti-nuclear movements found success in the circumstances of government policy, yet had that success co-opted by official redefinition of those policies the movement originally targeted.[40] This is often a story of an array of activists seeking to influence public opinion and government policy. Scholarship in these areas is often characterized by its focus on these institutional actors and their compartmentalization within a set of social movement organizations whose structure, finances, and public profile often provided activists and supporters with the best means of achieving public appeal and political reform.[41] Such studies are worthwhile, as organizations so central to the pursuit of anti-nuclear goals – however liberal – occupy an essential place within the history of postwar activism. These organizations were supplemented – and challenged – by alternative forms of activism, especially as interest group politics, identity politics, and movements seeking cultural revolution in the wake of the 1960s proliferated in the 1970s. This thesis seeks to combine these two seemingly dissimilar arenas of anti-nuclear activism. Studying their actions and interactions within the wider context of the anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s offers a more comprehensive and holistic assessment of how legacies of the 1960s were reinvigorated, redefined, and rejected in such a movement of diverse actors.

Looking at the Freeze Campaign – and the wider anti-nuclear movement it was a part of – as a coalition or a conglomeration of coalitions, provides historians with an insight into the political workings of this campaign and the organizational context in which it fit. As Meyer and Thomas Rochon write, successful social movement coalitions "straddle the boundaries between institutional politics and extra-institutional protest." With the freeze movement, this was key to the rapidity of its rise to prominence and its subsequent demise.[42] Looking more broadly, the different ways in which activists framed the nuclear

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[39] Boyer, "From Activism to Apathy," pp. 821-844; Lawrence S. Wittner, "The Forgotten Years of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1975-78," *Journal of Peace Research* 40, no. 4 (2003), pp. 435-456.

[40] See Meyer, "Protest Cycles and Political Process," pp. 451-479; and David S. Meyer, "Peace Protest and Policy: Explaining the Rise and Decline of Antinuclear Movements in Postwar America," *Policy Studies Journal* 21, no. 1 (1993), pp. 35-51.

[41] A dense, yet illuminating study of such organizations and their operation, within a sociological framework of social movement structures and processes is Lofland, *Polite Protesters*.

[42] David S. Meyer and Thomas R. Rochon, "Toward a Coalitional Theory of Social and Political Movements," in *Coalitions & Political Movements: The Lessons of the Nuclear Freeze*, ed. Thomas R. Rochon and David S. Meyer (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 1997), p. 243.

threat – and defined their own style of dissent in the process – demonstrates an additional tension between activist organizations and those less structured activist collectives. Was the nuclear threat one that could only be dealt with in terms of politics and policy, involving an understanding of the complex technical world of arms control and nuclear strategy? Or was the threat an issue that was the inherent domain of every American, whose moral and emotional protests transcended politics, strategy and diplomacy? On the other hand, however, what we might call movement "outsiders" operated far from the institutional dimension of peace politics and the freeze movement.[43] Such radical activists and their worldviews are diverse in orientation, and have been of great interest to scholars of pacifism, radical feminism, and other iterations of non-mainstream activism.

This thesis will delve into the interactions of these two realms of anti-nuclear activity in the 1970s and 1980s: mainstream, institutional actors and their radical, extra-institutional counterparts. Like notable histories of American peace movements in the twentieth century, I will analyze the institutional and popular base of the anti-nuclear movement, its leaders, and its interaction with the public. Building on essential histories by Lawrence Wittner, Charles DeBenedetti, Charles Chatfield and Robert Kleidman, this study will highlight the significance of peace activism in twentieth century American society and politics.[44] Moreover, it will situate anti-nuclear activism, as many scholars have done, within the lengthy and complex American traditions of pacifism and anti-war dissent. Histories of twentieth century pacifism have tended to favor the period to the onset of the Vietnam War, and many of these have used Christianity, nonviolence, and the influence of Gandhism to evaluate the developments in activism, particularly of the radical kind, in this era. Recent work by Sean Scalmer, Scott Bennett, Leilah Danielson, and Joseph Kip Kosek has been essential in promoting the religious underpinnings of

[43] The disctinction between "outsider" and "insider," as Jenkins and Wallace argue, is less clear cut than we might assume. This is certainly the case when we look at the background of activists in the anti-nuclear movement, something that will be discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. See J. Craig Jenkins and Michael Wallace, "The Generalized Action Potential of Protest Movements: The New Class, Social Trends, and Political Exclusion Explanations," *Sociological Forum* 11, no. 2 (1996), pp. 183-207.

[44] Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition*; Charles DeBenedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980); Charles Chatfield, *The American Peace Movement: Ideals and Activism* (New York: Twayne, 1992); and Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace*.

much peace activism in twentieth century America, and the importance of the philosophy of nonviolence to that activism.[45]

Additional studies by Allen Smith and Milton Katz have expanded our understanding of the institutional peace movement through some of its most significant organizations, whilst more localized studies from Len Ackland, John Wills, and Thomas Wellock have shed more light on the meeting of radical and mainstream activism surrounding nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons facilities in areas such as Colorado and California.[46] Local peace movement politics are the predominant focus here, and a look at the interaction of local activists, elites, and the public they hoped to sway is essential in understanding the incredibly diverse nature of activism around the United States, particular in the anti-nuclear movement. Robert Surbrug, meanwhile, has provided an illuminating look at the diverse array of movements on the left in Massachusetts; their interconnectedness and commitment to addressing global issues on a local scale is another worthwhile piece of this body of scholarship on activism in the wake of the Vietnam War.[47]

Historians of peace movements in the Cold War, however, seem to have neglected activism directed against nuclear power. This stems from the preference given to the threat of nuclear weapons by so many peace organizations and coalitions whose interests and goals were not so specific as the targeting of individual nuclear power plants. Even as they emphasized the link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons, many organizations began to view the nuclear arms race as the larger threat.[48] Much of this was due to historical factors, such as the downturn in the nuclear energy industry, a crisis brought about by economic mismanagement, accidents, dedicated opposition to new

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[45] Sean Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Scott H. Bennett, *Radical Pacifism: The War Resisters League and Gandhian Nonviolence in America, 1915-1963* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003); Leilah Danielson, "Not by Might: Christianity, Nonviolence, and American Radicalism, 1919-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2003); and Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

[46] Allen Smith, "Converting America: Three Community Efforts to End the Cold War, 1956-1973" (Ph.D. diss., The American University, 1995); Katz, *Ban the Bomb*; Len Ackland, *Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999); John Wills, *Conservation Fallout: Nuclear Protest at Diablo Canyon* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006); Thomas Raymond Wellock, *Critical Masses: Opposition to Nuclear Power in California, 1958-1978* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

[47] Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*.

[48] This was not a trend unique to the United States. See examples in Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition*, pp. 36, 66, 172.

nuclear power plants by residents and activists, and, of course, the profile of the 1979 partial meltdown at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.[49] At the same time, a burgeoning movement against nuclear weapons was taking off, spurred by increasing military budgets, a hardening of national defense policy, and a renewal of Cold War tensions, which only increased in the early years of the Reagan administration. However, even though such trends determined the actions of the wider anti-nuclear movement in these years, we cannot isolate the actions of radical pacifists, anarchists, radical feminists, and environmentalists, all of whom contributed to this movement and its challenge to what many still referred to as the military-industrial complex.

Nevertheless, the relevance of "peace history," as it is known, cannot be underestimated. The field is concerned with examining, as Charles Howlett summarizes, "nonviolent movements for peace and social justice."[50] Certain pacifist organizations feature prominently in these histories, and this thesis is no exception. The Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), the War Resisters League (WRL), the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), and other traditional adherents of nonviolence and promoters of peace are stable fixtures in many histories dedicated to assessing the institutional dimension of such movements dedicated to the opposition of war, militarism, and threats to human welfare, even in the most trying of historical circumstances.[51] As a field, peace history has grown remarkably since the early 1960s, and its interests in a diverse collection of expressions of pacifist activity have increased in the since that time. Issues such as radical feminism, religious pacifism, and peace activism on local, regional, national, and transnational scales, in institutional as well as personal and group dimensions, provides a rich scholarship of the many different avenues in which citizens have challenged systemic iterations of war, violence, and oppression.[52] This thesis adds to the existing literature on how such varieties of activism

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[49] For a description of this process, see Wellock, *Critical Masses*, pp. 243-248.
[50] Howlett and Lieberman, *The American Peace Movement*, p. 511.
[51] Noteworthy histories on these organizations, each an arm of a larger international network of pacifists, offer insightful analyses on the development and operation of twentieth century pacifism. See, for example, Kosek, *Acts of Conscience*; Bennett, *Radical Pacifism*; and Carrie A. Foster, *The Women and the Warriors: The U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-1946* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995). Few histories in this area, however, deal with pacifism in the 1970s and 1980s.
[52] For a detailed discussion of this historiography and its developments since the 1960s, see Charles F. Howlett, "Studying America's Struggle against War: An Historical Perspective," *The History Teacher* 36, no. 3 (2003), pp. 297-330. In addition, Howlett's extensive reference volume offers a comprehensive

existed within the anti-nuclear movement from 1976 to 1987. It also suggests that within this broad variety of activism there existed underlying themes of a search for movement unity, ongoing compromise over tactics and strategies, and above all, a negotiation of the contested meaning and nature of activism on the left since the 1960s.

DEFINING THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

In the study of the anti-nuclear movement, several trends emerge. As with histories of earlier anti-nuclear mobilizations, as well as histories of the civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement, histories of radical pacifism in the postwar era, and histories of the development of second wave feminism, themes of conflict and compromise between moderate and radical participants run throughout.[53] Often this had much to do with issues of gender and race, as Marian Mollin and Wini Breines have successfully argued.[54] Conflict and compromise also existed within such movements over issues of religious adherence, the question of violence, local identities and institutional contexts, or simply in a difference in orientation.[55]

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listing and analysis of scholarship on U.S. peace activism to 1991. Charles F. Howlett, *The American Peace Movement: References and Resources* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1991).

[53] Examples are too numerous to list here. However, several excellent studies exist. On the earlier anti-nuclear movement, see Wittner, *One World or None* and Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb*; on the civil rights movement, see Taeku Lee, *Mobilizing Public Opinion: Black Insurgency and Racial Attitudes in the Civil Rights Era* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002); on the anti-Vietnam War movement, see DeBenedetti and Chatfield, *An American Ordeal*; on radical pacifism, see Marian Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America: Egalitarianism and Protest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); and on second-wave feminism, see J. Zeitz, "Rejecting the Center: Radical Grassroots Politics in the 1970s - Second-Wave Feminism as a Case Study," *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 4 (2008), pp. 673-688. Robert Kleidman's work also uses the frame of organizational tension to examine the Emergency Peace Campaign of 1936-1937, the Test Ban Campaign of the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the Freeze Campaign of the 1980s. See Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace*.

[54] Mollin, *Radical Pacifism*; and Wini Breines, *The Trouble between Us: An Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[55] On religious adherence, see Angela M. Lahr, *Millennial Dreams and Apocalyptic Nightmares: The Cold War Origins of Political Evangelicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and Katha Miller-Winder, "Christian Denominations and the Nuclear Issue, 1945-1985: A Model of Pressures and Constraints" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 2003); on the question of violence, see Jeremy Varon, *Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, the Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); on local contexts, see Byron A. Miller, *Geography and Social Movements: Comparing Antinuclear Activism in the Boston Area* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); and on differences in orientation, see Sam Marullo *et al.*, "Pacifist and Nonpacifist Groups in the U.S. Peace Movement of the 1980s," *Peace and Change* 16, no. 3 (1991), pp. 245-255.

Interestingly, Tamar Hermann has identified this theme as one that exists in the context of social movements' competing demands, their political aims, and their historical identities and philosophies. In anti-nuclear movements of the 1980s, she suggests, tensions existed between the pragmatic attempt to gain concrete political success, and the more idealistic persuasion of absolute pacifism. This unfortunate and "convenient dichotomy between idealism and realism" was one that beset peace movement activists in the 1980s, and certainly applies in broader contexts of anti-nuclear activity.[56] As activists from moderate peace organizations began to build broad coalitions that included radical pacifists, these tensions came to the fore. Even within smaller domains of activism, tensions over tactics, strategies, and philosophies often characterized efforts to mobilize against nuclear dangers. Various studies have highlighted how this theme of tension, conflict and compromise existed in such smaller campaigns, and make a valuable contribution to the literature on the anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s as a whole.[57]

This thesis extends the reach of this theme, arguing that such tensions were also characterized by the reconfiguration of the legacies of the 1960s, and what they meant for anti-nuclear activism in the 1970s and 1980s. Conflict and compromise occurred over questions of radical protest, the image and style of protest, the suitability of political reform, and the role of single-issue causes. Each has their roots in a struggle between, alternately, an embrace or a rejection of 1960s style radical protest, its memory, and its reputation in the midst of a conservative revival in the United States.

Taken separately, the array of scholarship described above explains how seemingly isolated efforts on the left attempted to mobilize diverse constituencies, to influence public opinion and policy, and to engage in self-actualizing behavior. Each gives us an understanding of how American citizens responded to perceived threats – to individuals, to families, to communities and to a national collective citizenry. They demonstrate how Americans opposed state power, based on their understanding of the role of the state in the lives of its people. Existing scholarship also offers excellent accounts of how traditional values, morals, and ethics influenced activists attempting to build a world in

[56] Hermann, "Contemporary Peace Movements," p. 889.
[57] Noteworthy examples include Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution*; Wills, *Conservation Fallout*, esp. Chapter 4; and Louise Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer: The Clash of Communities at the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), esp. Chapters 5 and 11.

which social justice, egalitarianism, and participatory democracy were guiding principles. However extreme or revolutionary, mainstream or reformist, these "movements" – examined together – show us how the left attempted to develop an appropriate mass of anti-nuclear dissent. They also show us how activists, in their actions and interactions, negotiated the legacies and memories of activism in the 1960s. Existing scholarship has touched on these themes, but an account of how social movement activism on the left alternately embraced and rejected "the sixties" is wanting. By examining a selection of campaigns and stories within the anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s, this thesis will highlight how the legacies of 1960s activism were central to the struggles on the left in these later years.

Just as recent historians have taken issue with the history of the New Left as told through the lens of Students for a Democratic Society and its decline, or a history of the 1960s told through the lens of an all-encompassing "movement," this thesis argues that the lens of the freeze movement is inadequate for understanding the breadth of protest activity in the 1970s and 1980s.[58] That many types of dissent existed far beyond the life of the freeze movement indicates that their importance in a wider movement of anti-nuclear activity should not be underestimated. As Meyer explains, this view was also common at the time, not only amongst commentators, but in the public imagination as well:

> Virtually any challenger to the Reagan administration's nuclear and defense policies was widely, and incorrectly, seen as part of the freeze movement, ranging from advocates of traditional arms control who saw the freeze as naive and utopian to civil disobedients who castigated the freeze as being far too moderate.[59]

Put simply, the worldviews and actions of activists as diverse as feminists, religious pacifists, Christian anarchists, and socialists, as well as more mainstream peace groups and coalitions, each utilized the heightened fear of nuclear catastrophe in the 1970s and 1980s as central to their broader agendas of political and social change.

Looking at how activists conceptualized these fears, how they translated them into a protest agenda, and how they felt about the significance and efficacy of that particular

[58] See, for example, Hunt, "When Did the Sixties Happen?," p. 148; Breines, "Whose New Left?," esp. pp. 539-545; John McMillian, "Locating the New Left," *Reviews in American History* 34, no. 4 (2006), pp. 551-555; and David Farber, "New Wave Sixties Historiography," *Reviews in American History* 27, no. 2 (1999), pp. 298-299.
[59] Meyer, "Institutionalizing Dissent," p. 165.

agenda can tell us a great deal about the complex nature of anti-nuclear activism. Moreover, it highlights the tensions between programs of political reform and revolutionary alternatives, which that operated in the anti-nuclear movement in similar ways to organizations such as SDS.[60] The presence of so many alternatives, situated in conventional politics, in the creation of cultural identities, in separatism, in the practice of "emancipatory politics" and "life politics," and in a host of other alternatives, highlights the problematic nature of social movement activity in the 1970s and 1980s.[61] As it relates to the underlying theme of this thesis, these isolated identities and their often-competitive agendas speak to the contested nature of radical political and cultural activity in the wake of the 1960s, insofar as it was practiced in the broad spectrum of the anti-nuclear movement between 1976 and 1987.

STUDYING SPHERES OF ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTIVISM, 1976-1987

Assessing the actions and interactions of anti-nuclear organizations, coalitions, protest collectives, and individuals in such a diverse movement is a complex endeavor. As Lawrence Wittner has recently reflected, the study of anti-nuclear movements is one with inherent challenges in terms of the most appropriate sources to consult, and the most effective approach to take.[62] Should a study of anti-nuclear movements look at the leaders of key organizations, its rank and file, or the vast array of smaller groups engaged in protest? In order to assess the operation of what I call a variety of "spheres" of anti-nuclear activism, this thesis examines how anti-nuclear thought and action within these "spheres" contributed to a multifaceted anti-nuclear movement. In doing so, I argue that the combination of protest styles, organizational strategies, and activist ideals and philosophies highlight a larger negotiation of how the anti-nuclear movement ought to most effectively oppose the 'nuclear threat.' This negotiation, within the context of a conservative social and political climate, emphasizes the enduring influence of the 1960s and its memory in guiding activism within the anti-nuclear movement.

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[60] See Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 488.
[61] On the difference between "emancipatory politics" and "life politics," see Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), Chapter 7.
[62] Lawrence S. Wittner, "Problems and Opportunities in Researching Nuclear Disarmament Movements," *Peace and Change* 36, no. 2 (2011), pp. 285-292.

Organizational histories can tell us a great deal about this process of negotiating different approaches to anti-nuclear activism, and the first two chapters of this thesis chart how organizational interaction and tension emphasized the ways anti-nuclear organizations and their members negotiated the meanings of the 1960s in their strategies, tactics, and goals. Studying organizations such as the Freeze Campaign, SANE, Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament, the War Resisters League, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, highlights how the committees, councils, boards, and staff within these national organizations dealt with the process of defining the most effective and satisfying means of opposing nuclear dangers, and helping to mobilize additional support in the process. Coalitions devised in the mid-1970s for the purpose of bringing together disparate groups within a larger national movement also provide valuable data on the idea of movement unity. The papers and records of the individuals and organizations involved – as well as interviews with some key players – emphasize the prominence of conflict and compromise over the strategy and direction of different approaches to anti-nuclear activism.

Smaller anti-nuclear groups and campaigns also demonstrate the enduring influence of the 1960s in how anti-nuclear activism ought to be defined in terms of protest style, campaign strategy, and organizing philosophy. The second part of this thesis – chapters three through seven – examines how spheres of protest largely outside the national organizational history of the anti-nuclear movement also challenged the legacy and meanings of the 1960s. Utilizing ideas and strategies gleaned from the traditions and shared experiences of feminism, religious resistance, nonviolence, community, and identity politics, these smaller campaigns also engaged in an often passionate debate over the style, image, and direction of their acts of protest. Through campaign records, participant interviews, and personal papers, a story emerges of just how anti-nuclear activism interpreted the meanings of the 1960s, and negotiated the application of its legacies in ways that satisfied a wide variety of ideas about social and political change in the 1970s and 1980s.

This thesis begins by examining the struggle amongst grassroots anti-nuclear groups and pacifist organizations to develop a national coalitional response to these nuclear dangers. Chapter one assesses the beginnings of a national response to anti-nuclear protest in 1976, as it emerged from the long-standing peace national organizations, as well as from

efforts to unite a variety of local anti-nuclear campaigns into a broad movement. Combining extremely diverse grassroots groups and national peace organizations under the banner of an anti-nuclear coalition with a broad agenda, however, soon proved troublesome. Tensions over organizing style, ideological direction, and the diversity of movement goals beset efforts to mobilize a national movement within a unified coalition. This struggle to find common ground became much more of a pointed issue in the early 1980s, as national anti-nuclear sentiment, media attention, and grassroots activity rose to new levels of prominence. By using the umbrella coalition Mobilization for Survival and the pacifist organization War Resisters League as its base, this chapter argues that with the development of a widespread anti-nuclear movement came the struggle to define its agenda and strategies. Tensions between idealism and pragmatism within movement coalitions, most prominently surrounding the massive June 12 demonstration in New York City, emphasize how activism on the left was revised and contested in the wake of the 1960s. I demonstrate that in developing a new approach to activism in the late 1970s and early 1980s, activists both embraced and rejected the 1960s legacies of pacifism and radicalism, as they attempted to balance goals of comprehensive social change with the more pragmatic demands of building a mass movement.

Chapter two continues this examination of organizational responses to the legacies of activism, radical thought, and movement strategies in the 1980s. In what I call "mainstream" organizations, such as the Freeze Campaign, SANE, Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), and Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND), another set of challenges presented themselves.[63] These organizations and their leaders also attempted to build a unified movement, albeit one rooted in traditional political conventions and an accepted institutional framework. Aiming to create a critical mass of public opinion supportive of the nuclear freeze proposal, these organizations rejected the image and reputation of radical activism in favor of a safe, appealing message and style.[64] Reagan's re-election in 1984, however, only reinforced to many anti-nuclear

[63] I use the term "mainstream" as a means of identifying those organizations, groups, campaigns and ideas that did not seek to challenge political authority or the legitimacy of the state in any radical way. The "mainstream anti-nuclear movement," then, operated as a loose collection of organizations, activists, lobbyists and analysts whose challenge to the nuclear arms race was one of liberal reform, and sought to achieve political influence through accepted forms of democratic engagement.

[64] The freeze proposal, developed by Randall Forsberg in 1979 and jointly published by several pacifist organizations in 1980, was the key political document around which the freeze movement was based. It was a relatively simple arms control proposal, calling for the immediate, bilateral halt to the production, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. For the text of the proposal, see

activists the fickle nature of public opinion and the limited appeal of the freeze proposal. Some activists stressed that the movement needed to increase its public appeal by embracing corporate organization models and public relations strategies, seeking to shed the popular image of anti-nuclear activists as "leftovers" from the 1960s. In this sense the mainstream movement that emerged in the early 1980s explicitly attempted to counter the view that its style, its aims, and its leaders and its supporters were inescapably immersed in the legacies of the anti-war movement and counterculture of the 1960s. I argue that this rejection of the popular idea of "the sixties" and its reputation in the 1980s adds to the larger process of contesting the meanings of the 1960s in the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s.

The remainder of this thesis examines more specific case studies that continue to elucidate this theme of contested 1960s legacies. Chapter three looks at collectives of radical Catholic activists know as "Plowshares," whose use of direct action, religious symbolism and iconography, practice of communal activism, and confrontational styles of protest placed them at the fringes of the anti-nuclear movement in the 1970s and 1980s. The two most famous Plowshares activists – Jesuit and Josephite priests Daniel and Philip Berrigan – had achieved notoriety in the late 1960s when they engaged in campaigns of burning draft files, most famously in Catonsville, Maryland, in 1968.[65] The continuation of their radical program of symbolic resistance, updated for the 1970s and 1980s to count nuclear weapons as the most visible symbols of war and violence, further distanced them from the peace movement's mainstream. Although there exists a large volume of scholarship on the radical Catholic Left, and on the Plowshares movement more specifically, I argue that such radical actions by the Plowshares added significant challenges to the wider peace movement of the 1970s and 1980s, by extending the potential of radical forms of activism.[66] However alienating such activism was, it brought

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"Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race," in *Thinking About Nuclear Weapons: Analyses and Prescriptions*, ed. Fred Holroyd (Sydney: Croom Helm, 2001), pp. 208-225.

[65] A detailed history is Murray Polner and Jim O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous: The Radical Lives and Times of Daniel and Philip Berrigan* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

[66] For some noteworthy scholarship, see Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance in the Plowshares Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Anne Klejment and Nancy L. Roberts, eds., *American Catholic Pacifism: The Influence of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996); Leilah Danielson, "'It Is a Day of Judgment': The Peacemakers, Religion, and Radicalism in Cold War America," *Religion and American Culture* 18, no. 2 (2008), pp. 215-248; Penelope Adams Moon, "'Peace on Earth: Peace in Vietnam': The Catholic Peace Fellowship and Antiwar Witness, 1964-1976," *Journal of Social History* 36, no. 4 (2003), pp. 1033-1057; and Jason

into question the role of militant nonviolence and radical resistance within the anti-nuclear movement. In the wake of the 1960s, I argue, Plowshares activism highlights the resilience of radical religious pacifism on the left. It also demonstrates how communities of activists succeeded in contesting the nature of anti-nuclear activism, expanding its scope to include extreme acts of symbolic resistance as examples of personal, moral responses to the nuclear arms race as the precipice of the evils of modernity.

Such ideas about the role of direct action and the maintenance of unique protest identities also apply to radical feminist activism in this era. In chapter four, I examine the meeting of radical feminist collectives and their more moderate, liberal counterparts in the anti-nuclear movement. Tensions over the meanings of feminism and the suitability of inclusive and exclusive protest actions meant that quite often, the process of conflict and compromise that characterized earlier radical feminist movements were re-played in the 1980s.[67] The experiences for so many feminist activists here were so different from mainstream activity within the women's liberation movement, that it makes sense to discuss multiple "feminisms" in the context of women's anti-nuclear groups and organizations in the 1980s. The roles played by radical collectives such as the Women's Pentagon Action (WPA) and the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice (WEFPJ) contrast greatly with moderate women's anti-nuclear organizations such as the Women's Party for Survival (WPS) and its successor, Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND). I argue that the meeting of these two diverse strands of activism, within the context of the anti-nuclear movement, was representative of the wider negotiation over the applicability of the feminist slogan "the personal is the political" in the years following the popularization of personal politics in the late 1960s.[68] By extending the scope of anti-nuclear activism to include feminist concerns, and by engaging in styles of protest that emphasized the radical, personal potential of women's activism, the subjects of this chapter updated the legacies and lessons of the 1960s to the anti-nuclear and women's movements of the 1980s.

Bivins, *The Fracture of Good Order: Christian Antiliberalism and the Challenge to American Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), esp. Chapter 4.

[67] See Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), esp. Chapter 5.

[68] For the most well known treatise on this slogan and its origins, see Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980).

Chapter five expands on the expression of personal and lifestyle-based activism in the anti-nuclear movement. Robert Holsworth's excellent work on "personalism" has set the tone for how social movement historians have approached the nature of activism in which participants use personal and communal notions of "inner peace" to define their demand for "outer peace" on a wider social and political level.[69] This was not limited to radicals either; as Holsworth explains, notions of "old-fashioned decency, neighborliness and an abiding respect for American political ideals are not incompatible with a highly adverse appraisal of existing institutions and conditions."[70] With these ideas in mind, this chapter chronicles a curious campaign conducted in 1983 in the San Francisco Bay area called the Fast for Life (FFL). Its participants, a small group of countercultural proponents of simple living and austerity, sought to draw attention to the connection between world hunger and the nuclear arms race. Striving to present themselves as "ordinary citizens," these activists undertook an open-ended fast, envisaging a snowballing movement of media attention, public support, and eventually, political reform. I argue that this combination of a radical protest tactic with religious and spiritual overtones, and the promotion of a "polite" or "ordinary" public image, is indicative of many efforts within the anti-nuclear movement to move beyond the reputation of 1960s-style radical protest. At the same time, such protests drew inspiration from ideals of nonviolence, prefigurative politics and alternative living that reached their zenith in the New Left and counterculture of the 1960s. This struggle to demarcate between the legacies of 1960s activism as beneficial or divisive is one that defined so many political actors attempting to extend countercultural ideas and practices into the 1970s and 1980s.

In chapter six, the meaning of this struggle is examined within the context of a specific geographic area. I examine the operation of anti-nuclear activism in Lawrence, a college town in eastern Kansas, and follow the debate over the meaning of the nuclear threat and the role of local and regional identity in guiding local residents' responses to that threat. Lawrence operates as a particularly unique context in which to study these themes, since it served as the location and major setting for the ABC television movie *The Day After*, filmed in 1982 and broadcast nationally to great controversy in 1983. The multiple levels of meaning attached to the nuclear arms race due to this film and local residents'

[69] Robert D. Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak: A Study of Politics, Religion, and Antinuclear Weapons Activism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).
[70] Robert D. Holsworth, "A World Worth Living In: The Making of a Counterculture in the New Peace Movement," *The Massachusetts Review* 23, no. 4 (1982), p. 577.

experiences of it, combined with the vocabulary and activities of local anti-nuclear campaigns, highlights how anti-nuclear thought and action operated in a very different context to other instances of protest as described in this thesis. I argue in this chapter that the identities of activists, of residents, and of the locale itself were contested in light of the nuclear arms race and its implications for these Midwesterners. The relationship between radical activism and middle America in the 1980s mirrors its turbulent relationship in the 1960s, but within the new context of the conservative revival in the Reagan years.[71]

Ensuring the effectiveness of anti-nuclear activism in the midst of the conservative 1980s was, of course, one of the underlying challenges of the movement. Nowhere was the gulf so wide between conservative America and the anti-nuclear movement than in areas of the nation unaccustomed to radical activism, countercultural ideals, or progressive thought. My final chapter examines the Great Peace March for Global Nuclear Disarmament, a 1986 campaign that aimed to rejuvenate the anti-nuclear movement by taking the message of nuclear disarmament to Americans across the nation. From its starting point in Los Angeles, a group of several hundred marchers trekked the 3,300 miles to Washington, D.C., exploring the challenges of combining pragmatic grassroots organizing with the more idealistic forms of "lifestyle politics" many marchers brought with them on the nine month journey.[72] The Great Peace March works well as a microcosm in which the immense variety of activist ideals and sensibilities can be explored. In this chapter, I argue that the meeting of this variety of social movement actors, and their journey across a large geographic and cultural area, was indicative of the fragmentation of the anti-nuclear movement and its public profile in 1986. Tensions over the practice of participatory democracy, the expression of personal politics, and the pragmatism of a public appeal for nuclear disarmament characterized the Great Peace March and its negotiation of the legacies of radical and countercultural protest from the 1960s. The enduring influence of personal expression, lifestyle politics, and radical egalitarianism shows us that in many ways anti-nuclear protesters were "slightly reminiscent" of the 1960s. Their attempts to express such ideas about participatory

[71] On the turbulent 1960s in Lawrence, see Rusty L. Monhollon, *This Is America? The Sixties in Lawrence, Kansas* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
[72] On "lifestyle politics" in the anti-nuclear movement, see William Chaloupka, "Immodest Modesty: Antinuclear Discourse, Lifestyle Politics, and Intervention Strategies," *International Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (1990), pp. 341-351. See also Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Chapter 7.

democracy at the tail end of the anti-nuclear movement's heyday, however, emphasizes the troubled reputation of "the sixties" with a public not entirely receptive to radical activism.

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As Wini Breines reminds us, "new social movements tend to introduce new ways of looking at the past and new pasts to look at."[73] At face value, the history of the anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s might appear to demonstrate how a convoluted terrain of actors negotiated the applicability of idealism and realism – sometimes successfully, sometimes not – in engaging in protests designed to combat the threats posed by nuclear weapons and nuclear power. However, this negotiation emphasizes that a process of reinvigorating, redefining, and rejecting the meanings of "the sixties" is the more significant feature of the movement. This thesis agues that as activists struggled to find the most effective styles, strategies and tactics of protest required to oppose the 'nuclear threat,' they engaged with legacies of radical activism and countercultural politics that stemmed from the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 1960s. Finding ways to extend the benefits of those legacies – or alternatively reject them – demonstrates the enduring significance of the many reputations of "the sixties" in American life in the 1970s and 1980s.

[73] Breines, *Community and Organization*, p. 17.

CHAPTER ONE

CONFLICT AND COMPROMISE: NEGOTIATING ACTIVISM IN ANTI-NUCLEAR COALITIONS

The anti-nuclear movement in the United States in the mid-1970s arose from concerns held by Americans about the dangers of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Towards the end of the 1970s, with large increases in defense budgets, accidents at nuclear power plants, and troubling international developments, public concern about these dangers increased dramatically. As activists seized the opportunity to build a nationwide anti-nuclear movement that encompassed diverse concerns of environmentalism, militarism, and social justice, they also struggled to negotiate just what this movement would look like. Coalitions emerged from traditional peace organizations that sought to adopt a broad program of social change, uniting disparate campaigns scattered across the nation. The Mobilization for Survival – the first national umbrella coalition – also became a key player in the organization of mass demonstrations at two United Nations Special Sessions on Disarmament, held in New York in 1978 and 1982. Traditional radical and pacifist voices, however, came into conflict with more conservative actors attempting to increase the public appeal of these mass anti-nuclear demonstrations. Conflict and compromise in these coalitions highlighted the difficulty in developing a national agenda that was both comprehensive in scope and also had the potential to mobilize what one activist described as the great mass of "typical, uninvolved, unconcerned Americans" into a potent social and political force.[1]

This chapter argues that as the anti-nuclear movement expanded from its modest roots, tensions between radical and liberal activists within movement coalitions highlighted the wider struggle of defining the style of activism itself. Since the anti-nuclear movement developed as a middle class affair similar to the ban-the-bomb movement of the 1950s

[1] Alan F. Kay to Helen Caldicott, August 1981, Helen Caldicott Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, Box 1, Folder 38.

and early 1960s, a coalitional effort to galvanize the maximum amount of public support for the movement inevitably encountered division over the goals, strategies, and ideologies behind such efforts. Organizational tensions in peace activism, as Robert Kleidman observes, are "an interplay between forces pulling campaign organizations in different directions."[2] These different directions had as much to do with strategy as they did with deeper ideas about the nature of activism and the role of radical thought and action in the peace movement. These issues, as they were debated on the left in the wake of the anti-war movement and in the beginnings of the anti-nuclear movement, demonstrate an ambivalence about the direction and goals of anti-nuclear activism, as well as an uncertainty about how to best apply – or reject – the legacies of 1960s protest to this new movement.

Such tensions are common occurrences in social movements and individual social movement organizations, and various scholars have examined how they were manifested in parts of the anti-nuclear movement.[3] However, the sense that the early 1980s was a time of high stakes for anti-nuclear activists, cultivated division over the direction and strategy of the movement. Public interest in nuclear issues rose dramatically, much of it due to Ronald Reagan's bellicose stance towards the Soviet Union, and also to what Charles Chatfield calls "an ominous sense of threat" in international relations that heightened concern about nuclear weapons and the possibility of nuclear conflict between the superpowers.[4] Seeking to translate widespread concern into an effective movement, some anti-nuclear activists sought to maximize the breadth and scope of their constituencies. Others felt this approach negated the role of radical thought and its place in the goals and strategies of the movement.

As activists of various persuasions came together in broad coalitions designed to mobilize public opposition to the nuclear arms race, these tensions reflected older, deeper

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[2] Robert Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace: Neutrality, the Test Ban, and the Freeze* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), p. 39.

[3] See, for example, Robert Kleidman and Thomas R. Rochon, "Dilemmas of Organization in Peace Campaigns," in *Coalitions & Political Movements: The Lessons of the Nuclear Freeze*, ed. Thomas R. Rochon and David S. Meyer (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 1997), pp. 47-60; Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), esp. Chapters 2-4; Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace*, pp. 39-57, 172-182; and David S. Meyer, *A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1990), esp. Chapters 9-12.

[4] Charles Chatfield, *The American Peace Movement: Ideals and Activism* (New York: Twayne, 1992), p. 151.

differences within the left over the relationship between radical thought and political reform. Many of these stemmed from the peace movement's experience of the anti-war movement during the 1960s. As Chatfield writes, by 1972, movement leaders had identified some common issues related to the previous years of anti-war organizing:

> The movement had been frustrated by ideological factionalism and extremism; it had not functioned effectively as a coalition of disaffected minorities; it had known the difficulty of channeling spontaneous grass-roots sentiment into political action; it had learned the importance of addressing the public in acceptable language and national symbols; it had experienced the power f the media and advertising; and it had emerged more than ever committed to work within the political system on specific issues.[5]

These lessons were incorporated in many ways into the mainstream anti-nuclear movement, and most prominently in its flagship body, the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign.[6] What Chatfield underestimates, however, is the role of pacifism and radical ideas amongst movement organizers during its formative phase. Many organizers within the anti-nuclear movement came from traditional pacifist organizations – including the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), War Resisters League (WRL), Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and others. They sought to extend their often radical ideas about activism and movement-building into the forging of a broad peace movement dedicated to comprehensive social change.

As this chapter suggests, the presence of radical and pacifist actors in coalitions devised to facilitate the building of a mass, unified peace movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s is key to understanding the fraught nature of this coalitional response. The organizational, strategic, and political differences that came to dominate a process of conflict and compromise within these coalitions often pitted traditional peace organizations, newer radical groups, and campaigns of liberal reformism against each other. However, the significance of these tensions is also related to the deeper struggle on the left to define an appropriate profile and role for activism in the new anti-nuclear movement. The place of nonviolence, socialist and communist ideologies, pacifist activism, and civil disobedience in this movement were each contested sites. For some organizers, the presence of these ideas and strategies – both in local campaigns and in

[5] Chatfield, *The American Peace Movement*, p. 148.

[6] Throughout this thesis I refer to this organization as the Freeze (capitalized), whilst the more fluid national movement of affiliated organizations will be referred to as the freeze movement (uncapitalized). I turn to this movement and its coordinating body in greater depth in Chapter 2.

national coalitions – were uncomfortable reminders of the 1960s. For others, though, they were essential aspects of their identity as social activists, and fit squarely within their strategies for promoting comprehensive social change within the frame of the anti-nuclear movement. More than simply an expression of the tensions between idealism and pragmatism, these differences in approach highlight the contested nature of activism in a movement seeking to alternately extend or reject the legacies of dissent manifested so potently in the 1960s.

LOCAL ISSUES, NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The development of the anti-nuclear movement as a major social and cultural force in the early 1980s began with a series of isolated local campaigns in the mid-1970s. Localized opposition to issues such as pollution, overdevelopment, taxation, and other affairs dominated citizen politics and reform in the United States in this era, turning the ambitious struggles of the 1960s inward towards local and community affairs. Increasingly, nuclear power became a divisive issue, as energy crises, soaring costs of reactor construction, environmental concerns, and unease about nuclear safety dominated public debate in many states. Concerned citizens, some of them seasoned activists but many not experienced in protest of any kind, initiated local campaigns against planned nuclear power plants, as well as other nuclear-related facilities that were seen as threats to local health and safety. What emerged, gradually, in many parts of the country, were often successful local campaigns – some political and some not – that challenged the safety of nuclear power and weapons industries, as well as their legal legitimacy. Increasingly, toward the end of the decade, fears of nuclear war began to play into this web of anti-nuclear fear and anxiety.

In the mid-1970s, nuclear weapons played little role in the peace and environmental movements. As activist and writer Ann Morriset Davidon later wrote, "nuclear weapons are not only largely invisible, but their effects are practically inconceivable, and people prefer not to think about them."[7] Nuclear power plants, on the other hand, *were* visible targets, even if their radioactive dangers were not so visible. Many opponents at local,

[7] Ann Morrissett Davidon, "The U.S. Anti-Nuclear Movement," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, December 1979, p. 45.

regional, and national levels had been introduced to protest and a radical politics in the late 1960s. As activists of the anti-war generation, according to academic Dorothy Nelkin, "they are attracted to the movement because nuclear power is a visible and accessible target through which they can express their desire for social or political change."[8] In this sense, activism against nuclear power in the 1970s can be thought of as a localized expression of 1960s ideals of social change.

Indeed, connecting seemingly isolated dangers such as nuclear power plants to deeper issues of social decline or corporate wrongdoing became a common feature of radical responses to the broadly conceived 'nuclear danger' in the early to mid-1970s. This stemmed in part from the radicalization of large sectors of the anti-nuclear movement in the late 1960s, where, as Lawrence Wittner comments, "the ruthless military interventionism of the great powers, coupled with their intractable commitment to nuclear weapons, led many anti-nuclear activists to conclude that they faced a deeply rooted, systemic problem."[9] Opposition to rampant capitalism, interventionism and imperialism abroad, as well as to political systems that encouraged corporate misadventure along with ignoring systemic problems of racism and poverty, began to filter into the peace movement as it started to focus on nuclear power and weapons after the Vietnam War. In local contexts, though, such radicalization was harder to pinpoint, but it did exist, and radical activists soon rose to positions of leadership in anti-nuclear campaigns in various parts of the country, defining grassroots opposition to nuclear power plants and weapons facilities as radical in both style and substance.[10]

This movement of opposition was diverse in its composition, its strategies, and its tactics. High profile campaigns against nuclear power plant construction in Seabrook, New Hampshire, and San Luis Obispo, California, produced diverse alliances of activists whose ideas about civil disobedience, expressive protest, and personal politics were frequently sources of confrontation.[11] The partial meltdown at the Three Mile Island

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[8] Dorothy Nelkin, "Anti-Nuclear Connections: Power and Weapons," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, April 1981, p. 36.

[9] Lawrence S. Wittner, *Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 459.

[10] For a brief discussion of the radical beginnings of these campaigns and the background of their leaders, see Meyer, *Winter of Discontent*, pp. 149-151.

[11] See Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution*, Chapters 2 and 3; Lynn E. Dwyer, "Structure and Strategy in the Antinuclear Movement " in *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies*, ed. Jo Freeman

nuclear power plant in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in March 1979, succeeded in popularizing anti-nuclear power protest. Organizational tensions between local residents and outsiders, however, mirrored similar tensions at Seabrook, as well as an uncertainty amongst national anti-nuclear coalitions about how best to respond to the accident and to mobilize public interest in anti-nuclear causes.[12]

These struggles to appropriately define the targets of anti-nuclear activism were complicated by emerging campaigns against nuclear weapons and research facilities. The presence of intentional communities alongside nuclear submarine bases, for example, intensified the idea of anti-nuclear activism as a mode of radical dissent, and also linked local issues to wider critiques of militarism, capitalism, and the authority of the state within a framework of strategic nonviolent protest and civil disobedience.[13] Such campaigns demonstrated the resilience of radical pacifism in the wake of the Vietnam War, and the willingness of activists to apply their experience of activism in the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 1950s and 1960s to a new set of concerns.

The late 1970s were a time of burgeoning interest and activism on nuclear issues. In 1975 for, example, the *Directory of Anti-Nuclear Activists* recorded 149 anti-nuclear organizations active in the United States.[14] By 1984, as estimated by the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies' *American Peace Directory 1984*, 1,350 anti-nuclear and peace groups were counted.[15] A big part of this was a dramatic proliferation in citizens and professional groups dedicated to education, political action, and liberal reform. Utilizing ideas about citizen involvement in legislative politics, many anti-nuclear and environmental activists began campaigns designed to challenge the legitimacy of nuclear facilities through state ballot initiative and referendum processes.[16]

(New York: Longman, 1983), pp. 148-159; and Steven E. Barkan, "Strategic, Tactical and Organizational Dilemmas of the Protest Movement against Nuclear Power," *Social Problems* 27, no. 1 (1979), pp. 19-34.

[12] See a related discussion in Edward J. Walsh and Rex H. Warland, "Social Movement Involvement in the Wake of a Nuclear Accident: Activists and Free Riders in the Tmi Area," *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 6 (1983), pp. 764-780.

[13] See Chapter 3 of this thesis for a discussion of this model of anti-nuclear activism. On anti-nuclear protest at nuclear submarine bases in the mid-1970s, see Brian Casserly, "Confronting the U.S. Navy at Bangor, 1973-1982," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 95, no. 3 (2004), pp. 130-139.

[14] Dorothy Zinberg, "The Public and Nuclear Waste Management," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, January 1979, p. 36.

[15] See John Lofland, *Polite Protesters: The American Peace Movement of the 1980s* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), p. 257.

[16] See several excellent studies detailing the use of ballot initiatives in citizen campaigns political reform: David D. Schmidt, *Citizen Lawmakers: The Ballot Initiative Revolution* (Philadelphia: Temple University

The coalitions involved in opposing nuclear facilities were often very diverse, counting environmentalists, scientists, local residents and community groups in their ranks. Spirited opposition to nuclear weapons facilities like the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant near Denver had highlighted the grassroots nature of anti-nuclear campaigning since 1974. Similar local movements in Barnwell, South Carolina, Amarillo, Texas, and other locations utilized a combination of mass demonstrations and civil disobedience against nuclear facilities as their causes began to be taken up by national peace organizations as prototypes of a rising anti-nuclear sentiment.[17] The coalitional response to this web of weapons facilities and power plants would challenge the legitimacy of government authority and corporate accountability in matters of local health and safety throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and in the process, began to define the approach to anti-nuclear activism as one whose composition reflected interesting combination of radical activists and political pragmatists.

The Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant represented to national peace and anti-nuclear organizations both a threat of national significance, and a rallying point for activists around the country. The newly formed coalition Mobilization for Survival (MfS, also known as The Mobe) would refer to Rocky Flats in 1978 as the "nuclear crossroads of the nation," echoing similar sentiments amongst traditional peace organizations such as the FOR, WRL, and AFSC.[18] Other nuclear facilities, however, were beginning to dominate movement newsletter headlines and demand attention at meetings and conferences. The guiding hand of MfS, designed purposefully as a national umbrella coalition for both national peace organizations, as well as independent local groups, ensured that widespread interest in these facilities intensified.

Along with FOR member Mike Jendrzejczyk, Colorado activist Pam Solo of the AFSC, and Steve Ladd of the Berkeley chapter of the WRL, an inter-group project – the Nuclear Weapons Facilities Task Force – aimed to provide a national source of information, the sharing of tactics, and, of course, national publicity. A widely distributed booklet,

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Press, 1989); Thomas E. Cronin, *Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum, and Recall* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989); and for a more critical perspective, Richard Ellis, *Democratic Delusions: The Initiative Process in America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

[17] Two contemporary sources describe the extent of this local activism and its national potential in great detail, and are invaluable resources on anti-nuclear activism in these early years: Anna Gyorgy, *No Nukes: Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power* (Boston: South End Press, 1979); and Harvey Wasserman, *Energy War: Reports from the Front* (Westport, CT: L. Hill, 1979).

[18] "Spring Anti-Nuclear Campaign," *Progressive*, February 1978, p. 8.

Makers of the Nuclear Holocaust, published in 1981, demonstrated organized anti-nuclear movement's objective of building a sense of a nationwide community of grassroots action that hinged on what Solo called "the vast network of plants, federal agencies, and corporate contractors."[19] The booklet drew attention to the proliferation of nuclear power and nuclear weapons, particularly in what were considered war-making institutions, such as research laboratories, manufacturing plants, missile silos, and storage and waste facilities, presenting grassroots activists with plenty of ammunition for local organizing, but with a bigger picture in mind.[20] Several years prior to this, the broad anti-nuclear movement had begun to build a sense of national purpose and structure. With these developments, however, came the struggle to define a national strategy and agenda, whilst still maintaining the involvement of local organizers, activists, and volunteers.

The emergence of a nationwide anti-nuclear movement demonstrates the diverse array of interests and concerns that characterized activism in its many local manifestations. Radical strategies of social change and resistance often existed alongside moderate, liberal campaigns oriented towards electoral or legislative challenges to the legitimacy of nuclear plants or weapons facilities. Combining these disparate strategies, tactics, and ideas in coalitions of national reach, however, meant that a coordinated effort designed to challenge nuclear dangers nationwide would need to engage in a process of negotiation and compromise. This meant that coalitions struggled to define the nature and limits of anti-nuclear activism, and how such activism could mobilize enough interest to turn the movement into a potent social force. Moreover, this struggle emphasized the challenges faced by the left in the 1970s and 1980s to navigate the "turn to the right" that characterized American politics and culture. Coalitions such as MfS soon became embroiled in division over the role of activism in this conservative political environment. Extending the role of radical challenges to the state, or alternately embracing a liberal model of political reform, exemplified the choices faced by activists as they attempted to build a national, unified movement against nuclear threats. In the wake of the 1960s, activists seeking to define a new type of peace movement brought ideas about localism, community activism, and national coalitions to an anti-nuclear movement still in its

[19] Pam Solo, *From Protest to Policy: Beyond the Freeze to Common Security* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1988), p. 33.
[20] Samuel H. Day, ed., *Makers of the Nuclear Holocaust: A Guide to the Nuclear Weapons Complex and Citizen Action* (New York: Nuclear Weapons Facilities Task Force, 1981).

infancy. In negotiating its direction and its goals, they would raise the idea of extending, modifying, and re-applying the legacies of radical protest in the 1960s to the new challenges of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

DEFINING THE MOVEMENT

The scattered nature of anti-nuclear activism in the 1970s meant that nuclear threats needed to be defined as manifestations of a national or global nature. A rhetoric of symbolic dangers characterized the new movement's efforts to galvanize public concern about the extent of these nuclear threats, and promoted the necessity of grassroots citizen action in order to combat those threats. In these early days of the anti-nuclear movement, it was commonplace for activists to highlight nuclear facilities as both local hazards and symbols of a global threat. The Rocky Flats plant, proposed Jendrzejczyk and Solo, was "a monument to the dangers of the Nuclear Age [and] a suitable place for Americans to raise their voices against the madness of nuclear war and the hazards of nuclear energy."[21] Although the threats posed by nuclear weapons were gradually beginning to dominate the movement's attention, the means around which activism operated was very much still one dominated by localism, rather than a more abstract fear of nuclear war. Power plants, research laboratories, and factories and facilities with Department of Defense contracts were appropriate, popular targets.

Whilst *Makers of the Nuclear Holocaust* explained in explicit terms the interconnected dangers of the nuclear industries, other tools had emerged in order to "bring home" local dangers and threats. In 1978, for example, Ed Hedemann of the WRL designed and produced a series of "Nuclear America" maps, showing the location of nuclear power plants, waste facilities, weapons facilities, and other parts of the widespread nuclear danger. They were designed to highlight for local residents the dangers in their own backyards.[22] The Wisconsin-based group Nukewatch had done a similar thing, producing maps and guides to nuclear installations, with a particular focus on ICBM silos in the

[21] Mike Jendrzejczyk and Pam Solo, "Peril at Rocky Flats," *Progressive*, April 1978, p. 24.
[22] For examples, see "Nuke Maps: The Life of the Party," *WRL News*, May-June 1978, p. 7.

Midwest.[23] Each was part of an emerging national campaign to connect the multitude of local manifestations of what was increasingly seen as a national – and global – problem. As Solo explained it:

> The goal was to give people an entry point in their own communities for understanding that the arms race is not something "out there" but an everyday reality with profound impact on our lives. Campaigns began everywhere – from Hanford, Washington to Amarillo, Texas, from the Draper Labs at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts to Los Alamos, New Mexico, the state where it all began. These local campaigns generated heightened political consciousness and a tidal wave of public concern.[24]

Linking scattered evidence of nuclear dangers around the nation together in a framework of grassroots citizen activism, then, helped to define the burgeoning anti-nuclear movement as one located within that grassroots. The national scope of this grassroots movement, along with evidence of local campaigns mounting legal and illegal challenges in opposition to nuclear facilities, demonstrated the potential for a national movement of information and coordination.

Such was the reasoning behind Mobilization for Survival, the umbrella coalition that emerged in 1977 aiming to coordinate anti-nuclear activities around the nation. The coalition was initiated by Sidney Lens, a long-time labor leader, activist, and editor of *The Progressive* magazine. In a lengthy piece for that magazine, entitled "The Doomsday Strategy," Lens catalogued the looming nuclear danger emerging from government policy since 1945.[25] Taking cue from the need for a mobilization of an effective peace movement, Lens initiated the meeting of activists from a large variety of organizations, which would result in the formal organization of the coalition in April 1977. Recent developments in U.S. military policy, such as President Carter's decision to abandon the B-1 bomber program in favor of cruise missile development, prompted activists to encourage a new, national movement engaged not in piecemeal opposition to military

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[23] See Samuel H. Day and John Hooton, *Nuclear Heartland: A Guide to the 1,000 Missile Silos of the United States* (Madison, WI: Progressive Foundation, 1988). See also John LaForge, interview by Mary Ebeling, 3 January 2003, Minuteman Missile Historic Site, National Park Service, Oral History #2003-1, Acc. #MIMI-016.

[24] Solo, *Protest to Policy*, p. 33.

[25] Sidney Lens, "The Doomsday Strategy," *Progressive*, Februray 1976, pp. 12-35. Later published as Sidney Lens, *The Day before Doomsday: An Anatomy of the Nuclear Arms Race* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977). Lens' essay is often heralded as the signifying the beginning of the anti-nuclear movement in the 1970s. See, for example, James J. Farrell, *The Spirit of the Sixties: Making Postwar Radicalism* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 246; and Frances McCrea and Gerald Markle, *Minutes to Midnight: Nuclear Weapons Protest in America* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989), p. 93.

policies, but in opposition to what *The Progressive* called "the whole lunatic rationale of the arms race."[26]

The Mobe, as it would become known, set itself a somewhat grandiose task:

> To reawaken public awareness of the scale of the threat which faces us all; to channel this awareness into dramatic and effective actions; to take the initiative from those with a vested interest in the arms race; to build a truly massive movement which can change the policies and direction of the nation, and to achieve a transformation of consciousness on the international level, in cooperation with groups active in Europe, Asia, and the Third World.[27]

The Mobe (or MfS) was ostensibly working towards the inaugural United Nations Special Session on Disarmament in New York City, to be held in May 1978. Around four stated goals – "Zero Nuclear Weapons;" "Ban Nuclear Power;" "Stop the Arms Race;" and "Fund Human Needs" – MfS appealed to a growing conglomeration of peace groups under a very wide banner. This banner, though, emerged as a point of contention and controversy. As more and more groups joined the fold, each attempted to redefine the premise of not just the coalition, but also the rationale behind nationally organized anti-nuclear organizing as a whole. This redefinition of the idea of a nationwide peace movement challenged the widespread trend of local organizing. It also explicitly reacted to the peace movement's failure in the Vietnam War years to organize against nuclear weapons.[28]

DEFINING THE SCOPE OF ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTIVISM

As foreign policy and military priorities altered after the end of the Vietnam War, many activists saw the re-emerging danger of nuclear weapons and the arms race, something that the Vietnam War had obscured for many activists. As early as 1974, a piece in *WIN* magazine warned readers "It's Time to Start Worrying About the Bomb Again."[29] Towards the end of the decade, parts of the anti-nuclear movement began to link nuclear power with nuclear weapons. Many activists had dealt with the issues in mostly separate ways; nuclear power was a potent, present, and identifiable danger, whereas nuclear

[26] "Mobilizing for Survival," *Progressive*, September 1977, p. 5.
[27] MfS's "Call to Action," quoted in "Mobilizing for Survival," p. 6.
[28] See Meyer, *Winter of Discontent*, p. 147.
[29] Hendrik Hertzberg, "It's Time to Start Worrying About the Bomb Again," *WIN*, 1 August 1974, pp. 7-9.

weapons often presented a more abstract threat. Some activists, however, began to view both nuclear power and nuclear weapons as part of a larger framework of multifaceted threats to human life and safety. At a WRL executive committee meeting in February 1977, Norma Becker proposed the need for a "long range nuclear disarmament campaign." Educational priorities were a necessity, members argued: "to most people disarmament is a fuzzy issue; very abstract. People would just as soon leave disarmament to the government and not deal with it."[30] Becker hoped to make the issue as vivid and horrifying as possible, arguing that "the need for people to feel fear and terror" was a significant educational priority.[31] Although the committee could not agree upon a suitable educational strategy, it was agreed that disarmament, of both nuclear and conventional weapons, and on a global scale, would remain a key goal of the WRL for the foreseeable future.

The late 1970s, though, were marked by the anti-nuclear power movement's high profile, due largely to campaigns surrounding nuclear power plant construction at Seabrook, New Hampshire, and Diablo Canyon, California. The challenge for the WRL, as well as pacifists of other organizations, was to emphasize the link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons, and find ways for anti-nuclear activists to broaden their agendas. Whilst many WRL members were active in the Clamshell Alliance opposing the building of the Seabrook nuclear power plant, disagreements did arise as to the appropriate target behind the protests. The "ideological difference in emphasis" led to friction over the technology that deserved the movement's attention, and signaled deeper rifts between locally oriented actions and attempts at national mobilization.[32]

The formation of Mobilization for Survival in 1977 demonstrated that some within the movement were interested in organizing some form of structured network of local and national anti-nuclear groups. Although it began with meetings of representatives of the major peace organizations – the AFSC, FOR, WRL, CALC, SANE, and others – it soon emerged that interest in an umbrella coalition was much more widely spread. By September 1978, FOR member Tom Cornell estimated about 280 groups under the MfS

[30] WRL Expanded Executive Committee minutes, 19 February 1977, p. 2, War Resisters League Records, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania (hereafter WRL Records), Series B, Box 2, Folder 1.
[31] WRL Expanded Executive Committee minutes, 19 February 1977, p. 2, WRL Records, Series B, Box 2, Folder 1.
[32] WRL Executive Committee minutes, 2 November 1977, p. 2, WRL Records, Series B, Box 2, Folder 1.

banner.[33] These included "cooperating organizations" and "supporting organizations," a relatively open committee and conference, a small staff based in Philadelphia, and fifteen task forces. "What this country needs on the way to the 1980s," argued Cornell, "is a multi-faceted disarmament movement that can enlist the support of basically conservative union members, farmers, housewives, people in religious congregations, students, businessmen, the unemployed and political aspirants."[34] The Mobe was not the final step in national coalition organizing, but it was an important factor in the building of a mass movement, and encouraging spirited and serious opposition to the arms race through demonstrations, nonviolent direct action, and media.

This was done, primarily, through networking of existing groups and diversifying the MfS platform. As Emilie Schmeidler and Mayer Zald wrote in a 1982 study, "MfS saw itself as the organization which would join together many diverse organizations, and thereby both put more pressure on the government and help reawaken public awareness of the nature and scale of the problem."[35] Although in the late 1970s, this "problem" was nuclear power – environmental groups were often "the media darlings of the season" – input from those activists who saw the benefit in combining the twin evils of nuclear power and nuclear weapons was crucial.[36] Expanding the theoretical premise of the "nuclear threat," its implications for the peace movement, and the strategic organization required to build a united anti-nuclear movement, meant that MfS emerged as the first national coalition dedicated to a comprehensive program of activism in the movement. This broad scope, however, sowed the seeds of tension and dissent amongst activists interested in developing alternative coalitional responses.

At the onset of the 1980s, the larger peace organizations that had taken part in the founding of MfS became less interested in its operation. Its direction had become, to the unease of these organizations, more about broadening the scope of the organized peace movement than devising a coherent program of activism. As MfS organizer Bruce Cronin later summarized, MfS:

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[33] Tom Cornell, "The Mobe: A Look toward the Future," *Fellowship*, September 1978, p. 18.
[34] Cornell, "The Mobe," p. 18.
[35] Emilie Schmeidler and Mayer N. Zald, "Organizations in the Anti-Nuclear Power Movement," Working Paper #252 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Research on Social Organization, 1982), p. 21.
[36] Cornell, "The Mobe," p. 18.

> … evolved into a coalition of primarily local organizations. This came about both though a conscious choice to reach out to the grassroots movement and a decision by local groups to affiliate with MFS, eventually constituting the overwhelming majority of affiliates.[37]

Whilst this may have been an effect of an overwhelming interest shown by smaller local groups in joining the MfS network, it was as much a product of a sense amongst the traditional peace organizations that MfS was not a worthwhile endeavor.

Differences in approach emerged more comprehensively around the U.N. Special Session of May 1978. As MfS organizers struggled to agree upon the most effective style of protest at the Special Session, pacifists felt the need to engage in civil disobedience was being neglected. "Because MfS had failed to come up with a Civil Disobedience scenario for the UN," the WRL Executive Committee agreed, "the WRL and other interested groups [would] develop such a scenario."[38] The FOR and WILPF, too, were unsure about supporting actions developed by MfS. Traditions developed over sixty years, a strong moderate pacifist heritage, and the concerns of its membership did mean that these older peace organizations refrained from publicly endorsing MfS actions.[39] In any event, the major day of protest surrounding the Special Session – on 27 May 1978 – operated in ways that reminded the news media of the anti-war era. Commenting that the protest "seemed almost like old times," the *Los Angeles Times* emphasized the links MfS shared with anti-war radicals from the 1960s, including David Dellinger, the composition of the protesters – "most of them college age and in blue jeans" – and the presence of folk singer Pete Seeger, a common sight at anti-war rallies in years past.[40] Identification with the 1960s for some activists was counterproductive; they wanted to create a new movement with new goals and a new style. Others, however, were happy to extend the ideology of their activism to the new concerns of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Doing so would imbue the anti-nuclear movement with a much-needed sense of tradition

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[37] Bruce Cronin to Ms. Holdsworth, 29 November 1982, Leslie Cagan Papers, Tamiment Library, New York University, New York City (hereafter Cagan Papers), Box 7, Folder 2.
[38] WRL Executive Committee minutes, 1 March 1978, WRL Records, Series B, Box 2, Folder 1.
[39] See FOR National Council minutes, 16-19 April 1978, pp. 12-13, Fellowship of Reconciliation Records, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania (hereafter FOR Records), Section II, Series A-2, Box 8, Folder 4. FOR members Tom Cornell and Mike Jendrzejczyk sat on the MfS Coordinating Committee, and remarked that its planning for the Special Session was "somewhat frustrating."
[40] Grayson Mitchell and Robert Shogan, "Nuclear Protest in N.Y. Echoes Vietnam Era," *Los Angeles Times* 28 May 1978, pp. A1, A11.

and a set of shared ideals, rather than seeking to forge a new identity independent of the peace movement's recent past.

In seeking to accommodate both of these interests, however, MfS became, as one of its organizers Tom DeLuca described it, "a structural contradiction." MfS had turned into "a coalition of national organizations and an alliance of local independent groups and local Mobes." Championing the necessity of an umbrella coalition like MfS, DeLuca saw it as an essential comprehensive voice within the broader peace movement:

> There is a need in this country for a political organization that has a clear and comprehensive left-of-center political perspective… without being sectarian or a party, that is militantly antiwar without being exclusively pacifist, and that has a spiritual core without being rooted in organized religion.[41]

DeLuca viewed MfS as having the benefit of youth that the traditional peace organizations did not. As the limitations of the umbrella coalition became clear, smaller local groups began to either affiliate with MfS or work outside the MfS framework, for example, in the newly founded Freeze Campaign. The result was, according to DeLuca, "a genuinely grassroots national network."[42] What this meant for the older pacifist organizations, however, was an attempt at the mobilization of a national peace movement without the direction and focus that these older organizations provided.

Differences arose from factions within MfS supporting confrontational demonstrations, not heeding the links between nuclear power and nuclear weapons, and failing to appreciate the international dimension of the nuclear arms race, preferring instead to focus on unilateral disarmament and the United States' own nuclear arsenal. The FOR, for example, affirmed that it would "cooperate with Mobe where we can, but we must respond to our [own] heritage."[43] David McReynolds of the WRL agreed, also frustrated by many aspects of the operation of MfS, and argued in a 1978 issue of *WRL News* that the task ahead for the peace movement as a whole was monumental. Was MfS up to the task of planning for the long term?

> I think M.F.S. as a whole really has not yet understood that a serious national mass movement must do more than chant "Zero, Ban, Fund, End." It'll have to develop a reasonable network of local groups, build links with the political

[41] Tom DeLuca, "The Cutting Edge of Survival: Mobe Looks at Mobe," *The Mobilizer*, May 1982, p. 4.
[42] DeLuca, "The Cutting Edge," p. 4.
[43] FOR Executive Committee minutes, 20 February 1978, p. 3, FOR Records, Section II, Series A-2, Box 8, Folder 4.

> machinery of the country as well did during the Vietnam War… see the logic of using civil disobedience and mass legal rallies, and understand the need to educate those not in the movement, and reach out to labor and minority groups.[44]

McReynolds, an experienced pacifist and involved with the WRL and the Socialist Party since the early 1950s, was disturbed by voices within the network calling for "a series of organizational experiments," or advocating a "theory that the revolution will come from spontaneous combustion," rather than solid planning. The anti-nuclear movement, he urged, should not overlook practical and pragmatic issues of policy, of political demands, and of a serious approach to disarmament. A politically responsible movement could not afford to continue to simply demand "Zero Nuclear Weapons." Instead, it ought to offer a set of limited, clear-cut, short-term goals, with a view to the long-term building and maintenance of a mass movement against nuclear weapons, nuclear power, and associated threats to human life, safety, and dignity.[45]

McReynolds' outlook speaks to what was, in the late 1970s, a recognized need for the peace movement to get back on track after its post-Vietnam lull. Moreover, what barriers existed could be attributed largely to a lack of agreement on appropriate targets for a revitalized movement, but also to the decentralized nature of the movement. Grassroots activist networks established throughout the second half of the 1970s, each involved in local struggles, nevertheless had a strong sense of solidarity, largely achieved through regional alliances. National groups provided information, news, and contacts for networking purposes, but even this was fraught with difficulty. Geographical isolation and regional difference contributed to a very decentralized peace movement, one that not even umbrella groups like MfS, nor national clearinghouses like the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign were able to solve.

There were, however, other attempts at organizing some kind of cooperative networks other than MfS. Buoyed by the momentum of anti-nuclear activity around the nation in the late 1970s, various coalition groups sprung up, attempting to mobilize as much of the wide anti-nuclear, environmental, peace and social justice movements as they could. The Coalition for a Non-Nuclear World (CNNW), forming in 1978, drew attention to five main demands in its program: an end to nuclear power, an end to nuclear weapons, the

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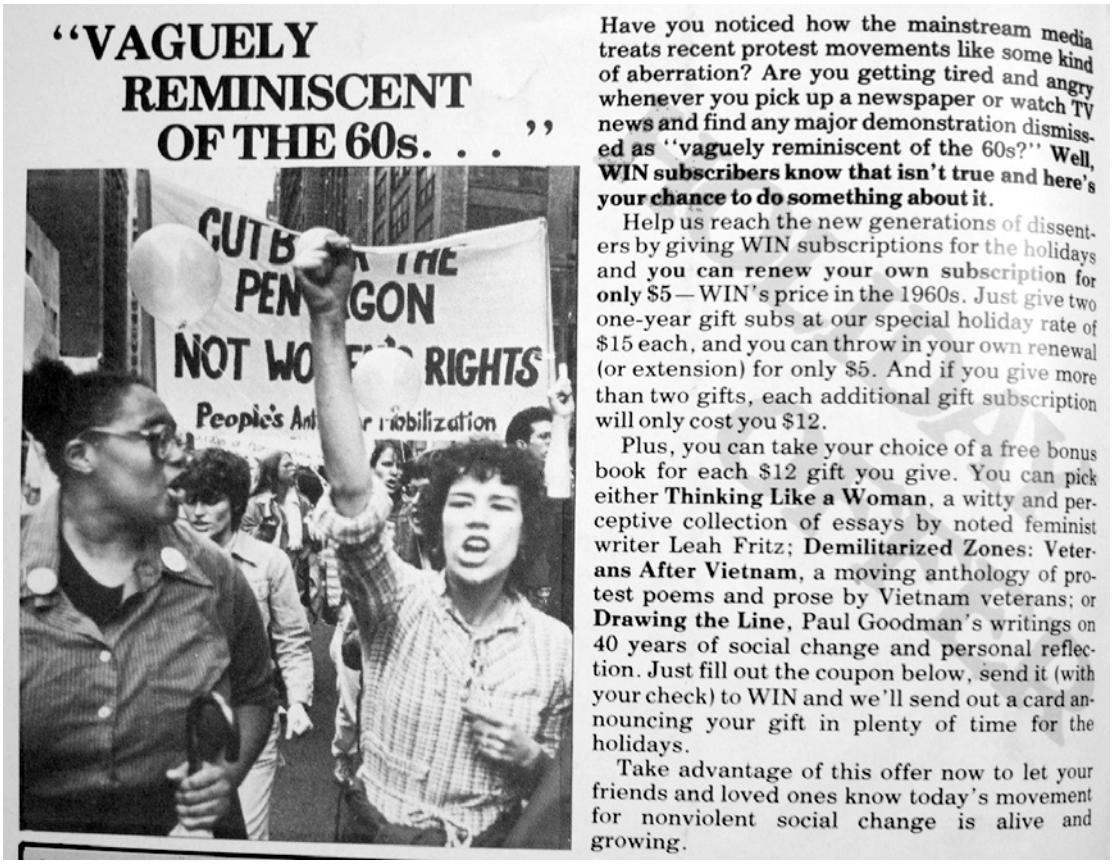
[44] David McReynolds, "From Chicago to Des Moines: The Second Mfs Conference," *WRL News*, November-December 1978, p. 2.
[45] McReynolds, "From Chicago to Des Moines," p. 2.

development of safe, renewable energy sources, full employment, and the honoring of treaties with Native Americans. “These goals constitute a major change in the way America lives,” recognized coalition literature, emphasizing that “we have no illusions.”[46] Such an expansive program ignored the ongoing debate between the perils of idealism and the ideological constraints of political realism, instead preferring to mobilize support on the broadest array of interests it could.



“VAGUELY REMINISCENT OF THE 60s. . .”

Have you noticed how the mainstream media treats recent protest movements like some kind of aberration? Are you getting tired and angry whenever you pick up a newspaper or watch TV news and find any major demonstration dismissed as “vaguely reminiscent of the 60s?” Well, WIN subscribers know that isn’t true and here’s your chance to do something about it.

Help us reach the new generations of dissenters by giving WIN subscriptions for the holidays and **you can renew your own subscription for only $5**—WIN’s price in the 1960s. Just give two one-year gift subs at our special holiday rate of $15 each, and you can throw in your own renewal (or extension) for only $5. And if you give more than two gifts, each additional gift subscription will only cost you $12.

Plus, you can take your choice of a free bonus book for each $12 gift you give. You can pick either **Thinking Like a Woman**, a witty and perceptive collection of essays by noted feminist writer Leah Fritz; **Demilitarized Zones: Veterans After Vietnam**, a moving anthology of protest poems and prose by Vietnam veterans; or **Drawing the Line**, Paul Goodman’s writings on 40 years of social change and personal reflection. Just fill out the coupon below, send it (with your check) to WIN and we’ll send out a card announcing your gift in plenty of time for the holidays.

Take advantage of this offer now to let your friends and loved ones know today’s movement for nonviolent social change is alive and growing.

An advertisement for subscription to *WIN* magazine from a 1982 issue emphasizes that since the 1960s, protest movements on the left had expanded upon the that decade’s legacies. Being treated as “vaguely reminiscent,” activists felt, was an insult, and the magazine attempted to offer an alternative source of news and movement community.
Source: *WIN*, 1 Jan 1982, back page.

At the heart of such coalitions as the CNNW and MfS was a commitment to multi-issue, rather than single-issue, organizing. As the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island showed, however, greater public interest in the anti-nuclear movement meant that broad agendas based in pacifist and radical ideals would often be muted, in favor of large, politically moderate campaigns on more specific issues. As the movement got bigger, more popular,

[46] CNNW mailout, n.d., Cagan Papers, Box 3, Folder 10.

and began to entertain the possibility of mobilizing millions of Americans not exposed to, or receptive toward pacifism or protest, the move from a radical to a moderate agenda and strategy attracted stauncher criticism. The core tensions in the wider anti-nuclear movement can be traced back to the late 1970s, when coalitions – in particular their organizers – recognized the difficulties involved in developing a movement that was at once popular as well as ideologically and strategically satisfying.

EXTENDING THE REACH OF THE MOVEMENT AFTER THREE MILE ISLAND

The WRL reacted swiftly to the Three Mile Island accident of 28 March 1979, with Norma Becker leading WRL members in organizing a rally in Manhattan a mere two days afterwards. A larger coalition of environmental and peace groups met in Washington, D.C. a week later to organize a larger, national demonstration, set for 6 May 1979.[47] In less than a month, buoyed by nationwide media coverage and the success of the film *The China Syndrome*, organizers managed what official estimates suggested were over 65,000 people but what organizers claimed were 125,000 people at the demonstration.[48] Demonstrations also occurred throughout May and June across the country, including instances of mass civil disobedience at nuclear power plants such as Shoreham, on Long Island, where a crowd of 16,000 braved heavy rain, and over 600 were arrested for civil disobedience.[49] This sort of mobilization, especially in such a short space of time, owed much to a growing public concern about nuclear power, and to a slightly lesser extent, nuclear weapons. After Three Mile Island, as surveys have shown, levels of opposition to nuclear power plant construction increased as support fell.[50] The challenge for the movement was to unite its diverse elements, finding a compromise between the galvanizing power of a single issue and the longer-term strategy for far more radical change. As the WRL saw it, looking at the twin dangers of nuclear power and nuclear weapons was an essential part of this long term strategic planning. MfS, whilst sharing the same idea, could not depend on an historic membership base,

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[47] David McReynolds, "D.C. Anti-Nuke Rally Draws 125,000," *WRL News*, July-August 1979, p. 2.
[48] See Wendell Rawls, Jr., "65,000 Demonstrate at Capitol to Halt Atomic Power Units," *New York Times* 7 May 1979, p. A1.
[49] McReynolds, "Anti-Nuke Rally," p. 2. See also John T. McQuiston, "15,000 Protest L.I. Atom Plant; 600 Seized," *New York Times* 4 June 1979, pp. A1, B3.
[50] See, for a worthwhile summary, see William L. Rankin *et al.*, "Overview of National Attitudes toward Nuclear Energy: A Longditudinal Analysis," in *Public Reactions to Nuclear Power: Are There Critical Masses?*, ed. William R. Freudenburg and Eugene A. Rosa (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1984), pp. 41-68.

tradition, or ideology. Similarly, the CNNW proposed an inclusive, multi-issue platform, hoping to unite disparate elements on the left against the resurgent new right, and to mobilize citizen action, taking advantage of a declining faith in government and corporate accountability.

Part of the CNNW's strategy was a "March for a Non-Nuclear World" in Washington, D.C. in late April, 1980. Affiliated with the march was a wide variety of groups, some connected through MfS, some through the "National No Nukes Conferences" that had run annually since 1978 in Louisville, Kentucky. Even before Three Mile Island, suggested CCNW literature, "there was a sense of urgency that the issues of nuclear power and nuclear weapons needed addressing in a nationally focused demonstration."[51] What organizers for the March hoped to achieve was what the Three Mile Accident had done in 1979, galvanizing a swathe of popular support against a destructive and dangerous nuclear technology. They also wanted to draw attention to the multitude of challenges posed to the left at the beginning of the 1980s, in the same way that MfS constructed its own diverse platform. However, problems beset the March for a Non-Nuclear World and its organization, signaling that despite the massive outpouring of support for the anti-nuclear movement in the wake of Three Mile Island, sustaining that kind of interest would be a substantial challenge.

The first major protest action for the 1980s, as organizers called it, proved a disappointment. Poor weather conditions, "hard working but inexperienced organizers," and a host of other factors were blamed for a turnout that was estimated between 25,000 and 50,000.[52] An aborted raid some days earlier on the U.S. embassy in Tehran, at which American hostages were being held, emerged as yet another facet in the multi-issue demonstration. Speakers highlighted environmental issues, the danger of nuclear weapons, Native American concerns about uranium mining on indigenous land, and the issue of unemployment amongst black and Hispanic communities.[53] Two days later, at a direct action demonstration at the Pentagon, between 300 and 600 were arrested in what the WRL regarded as a "major victory" for the movement, signaling the greatest number

[51] CCNW mailout, 13 February 1980, Cagan Papers, Box 3, Folder 12.
[52] "600 Arrested at Pentagon," *WRL News*, May-June 1980, p. 2.
[53] Paul W. Valentine and Judith Valente, "Nuclear Power and Iran Raid Condemned," *Washington Post* 27 April 1980, p. B1.

of arrests in the national capital since 1971.[54] Yet not all saw civil disobedience as the measure of a successful demonstration. Trouble over coalition politics signaled the beginnings of what would become a major issue for anti-nuclear organizers over the coming years. As interest in the broader anti-nuclear movement blossomed, and as alliances were built between environmentalists, alternative energy advocates, pacifists, communists and others, activists began to stake out less broad organizing strategies. Organizing on a national level became an effort in compromise and conflict, as well as a struggle to accommodate the interests of various constituencies and advocacy groups.

The WRL regarded such civil disobedience campaigns – and the number of arrests they produced – as major successes in demonstrating their opposition to the state. Not all WRL members were convinced of the effectiveness of mass arrests; as David McReynolds argued, "I think getting arrested is pretty boring, I don't think everyone *can* do it, and I think it's a very elitist, foolish approach to argue that you have to get arrested [in order to be successful]."[55]
Source: *WRL News*, May-June 1980, p. 1. Photograph by Dorothy Marder.

Within this environment of growing public interest, some coalitions clung to their roots in radical egalitarianism. The CNNW, for example, was designed as an explicitly decentralized group in which grassroots organizational principles would ensure fair and

[54] "600 Arrested at Pentagon," p. 2.
[55] David McReynolds, interview by the author, 12 November 2010, New York City.

proper representation was given to all interested parties and their constituencies. Elitism, as many in the grassroots anti-nuclear movement agreed, was best combated by a commitment to consensus-based decision-making and participatory democratic principles. These processes were valuable lessons from key experiments with participatory democracy in the civil rights and anti-war movements, as well as in New Left, countercultural, and feminist groups during the 1960s and 1970s.[56]

In practice, WRL representatives argued that the CNNW "attempted to function within an ideological framework that was hostile to and distrustful of "leaders"."[57] A compromise between the polarities of egalitarianism and effective coalition management, it seems, was never reached. This stemmed from organizational difficulties, communication problems, and a lack of attention paid to established procedure within the CNNW. Yet these difficulties stemmed from broader difficulties in maintaining a grassroots, democratic integrity within anti-nuclear organizations and collectives.[58] As two activists from the Abalone Alliance – the major group opposed to the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant in California – explained, the sheer numbers of people poised to enter the movement in the wake of Three Mile Island posed a challenge to "delicate processes of direct democracy and consensus decision-making," ideals which many in the movement held dear.[59]

The diversification of the peace movement in the late 1970s made matters more difficult for the movement's traditional socialist and pacifist leaders, emphasizing the dangers of popularity for radicals more accustomed to the fringes of political life. Boston-based MfS organizer Frank Brodhead, for example, lamented the effect of the influx of the many new constituencies that were "swept up in the growing movement against nuclear war." Amongst them were "the religious community, professionals, women, and some trade unions and Third World organizations [which] have dramatically changed the terrain of

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[56] The best study of this idea and its application in social movements in the 1960s and 1970s is Francesca Polletta, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

[57] Norma Becker and Nora Lumley, "Coalition for a Non-Nuclear World: An Analysis of the April 26 Rally and Coalition Structure," *WRL News*, July-August 1980, p. 4.

[58] This problem was common across the breadth of the anti-nuclear movement. As Robert Kleidman Thomas Rochon argue, "many activists saw strong leadership as incompatible with organizational democracy and participation." Kleidman and Rochon, "Dilemmas of Organization," p. 55.

[59] Liz Walker and Marcy Darnovsky, "April 7 San Francisco Anti-Nuke Rally," *WRL News*, May-June 1979, p. 3.

peace politics, legitimized and publicized peace concerns, and established new constraints within the peace movement which will affect the ability of socialists to take an active role."[60] The public profile offered to the anti-nuclear movement, greatly assisted by the influence of moderate and mainstream organizations, churches, and citizens groups, most certainly increased the potential for the movement's expansion from the fringes to the mainstream of American social and political life.

As churches and professionals groups took up highly publicized leadership positions within the movement, and the movement's membership increased rapidly, it became in many respects more conservative. Single-issue organizations proliferated, helped along by wealthy donors and philanthropists, and as a result, much of the multi-issue organizing spearheaded by socialists and pacifists was swept aside in favor of a movement with a seemingly singular objective: the nuclear freeze proposal. As Brodhead incisively observed, "The predominant view within the peace movement is that nuclear weapons are so dangerous and destructive that the political task of the movement is to mobilize as large a majority as possible to oppose, freeze, and dismantle them." This much was given; the influx of membership and press attention emboldened activists that a massive demonstration of public opinion against the nuclear arms race was possible, and would have an extensive impact. However, explained Brodhead, "the corollary to this position is that other issues, as important and pressing as they are, can only serve to divide the movement against nuclear weapons."[61] As nuclear weapons demanded more and more attention in 1979 and 1980, many groups and organizations pressed for a mass, united movement on that issue; the Freeze Campaign at that time was in its early stages of doing so. Yet older organizations, many of which preferred to see nuclear weapons as a symptom of deeper evils, were worried that a campaign advocating such a narrow single-issue platform might seek promote itself as *the* answer to the threat of the nuclear arms race, superseding the efforts of longstanding pacifist and radical anti-nuclear organizations and coalitions. It was not just the existence of alternative politics that separated these two approaches, but an uncertainty as to how to most effectively utilize new waves of support and turn them into a powerful force for change.

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[60] Frank Brodhead, Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War: The Peace Movement and the Left," [1982], p. 4, Cagan Papers, Box 38, Folder 1 (unprocessed portion).
[61] Frank Brodhead, Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War: The Peace Movement and the Left," [1982], p. 8, Cagan Papers, Box 38, Folder 1 (unprocessed portion).

In many ways the promise of public popularity and political influence in the early 1980s convinced many organizers that the anti-nuclear movement could not afford to let factionalism or any other kind of ideological difference diminish the reach of a moral, mainstream plea for public support. For some, this meant a concerted, moderate campaign to convince the public that a freeze on the arms race was needed, and the resulting critical mass would ensure that policy would follow suit. Others on the left, however, viewed such an electoral approach as overly cautious, and too contingent on a responsive political and electoral system. Moreover, it hadn't worked in the past. "The left's decade-long concentration on electoral strategies and personal issues has been a complete failure," opined a letter to the editors of *The Nation* in 1981. "We cannot afford to wait until 1982 to act decisively," the letter suggested; "this is clearly a time for dramatic and coordinated action, not for talk." An effective national mobilization could inspire the sort of mass civil disobedience campaigns that were utilized so effectively during the civil rights movement, for example.[62] That the burgeoning freeze movement failed to fulfill this role merely further convinced radicals that alternative campaigns were needed to demonstrate opposition to the arms race and its interlinked problems, and to bring about social and political change.

Civil disobedience in the anti-nuclear movement was nothing new in 1980. Anti-nuclear activism in western Massachusetts in 1974, for example, extended and dramatized the countercultural ideals of radical communards in their opposition to a planned nuclear power plant at Montague. Felling a weather monitoring tower used to gather meteorological data in preparation for the plant's construction, local activist Sam Lovejoy demonstrated that dramatic action was an essential, valuable response to what he saw as an "all-pervading technology that's beginning to drown us."[63] Commitment to these radical, prefigurative, and countercultural ideals of dramatic protest resulted in

[62] Andrew Stiller, letter to the editor, *Nation*, 14 February 1981, pp. 179-180.
[63] Quoted in *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, dir. Daniel Keller (Turners Falls, MA: Green Mountain Post Films, 1975). For detailed examinations of Lovejoy's action in the context of countercultural activism, environmentalism, and the very young anti-nuclear movement, see Robert Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam: The Politics of Protest in Massachusetts, 1974-1990* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), Chapter 1; and Blake Slonecker, "Living the Movement: Liberation News Service, Montague Farm, and the New Left, 1967-1981" (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 2009), Chapter 4. Slonecker's argument also, quite rightly, discusses the development of these ideas within the context of the splintering and decline of the New Left.

activist communities that advocated thinking about pressing issues and concerns – nuclear power and nuclear weapons amongst them – in wider contexts. They also tended to reject political approaches. For example, as John Wills writes, Diablo Canyon protesters were invited to support the Northern California Freeze campaign in 1981, but instead, "activists criticized the freeze movement for its overreliance on conventional politics, bilateral rather than unilateral rhetoric, and refusal to take a stand on nuclear power."[64] Adopting a broad platform, many radical activists emphasized, was necessary to combat the pervasive and multifaceted web of threats to life, health, and community.

This comprehensive outlook for radical activists meant, in many ways, a refusal to look to liberalism, politics, or the law for solutions, as many more moderate activists had done with ballot initiatives and referenda. Many local alliances understood this well, as did other, larger coalitions such as MfS. As its national coordinator, Reverend Robert Moore, wrote in 1981:

> We must deal with all manifestations of the Bomb… if we are to reach people where these survival issues directly touch their lives. It is only in taking all these survival struggles seriously, and understanding the links between them, that we can build a people's movement that can actually reverse the policies which so imminently threaten us all.[65]

The task, seemingly, was obvious. A broad movement dedicated to opposing the nuclear menace in its myriad forms was needed. It would define itself by its refusal to be co-opted by politics, by sectarianism, and by its willingness to include a vast array of constituencies, all of which were affected by the multi-pronged reach of the nuclear arms race.

In this way, the WRL refused to endorse the Freeze Campaign, citing its weak approach that failed to tackle the issue of disarmament.[66] Many radicals also saw the Freeze as weak, narrow, and catered to mainstream Americans. A more comprehensive program of social change was needed within the peace movement, they argued, lest new converts fail to develop the social consciousness required for true and lasting change. Beverly Woodward, an experienced pacifist, WRL member, and coordinator of the worldwide

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[64] John Wills, *Conservation Fallout: Nuclear Protest at Diablo Canyon* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006), p. 113.
[65] Robert Moore, letter to the editor, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, October 1981, p. 62.
[66] McReynolds interview; Ed Hedemann, interview by the author, 14 November 2010, New York City; Randy Kehler, interview by the author, 15 November 2010, Greenfield, Massachusetts.

network International Seminars on Training for Nonviolent Action, worried that in this way, the Freeze failed to offer a comprehensive kick start to a movement for social change. Writing to Freeze Campaign coordinator Randy Kehler, she argued:

> The success of the freeze campaign depends, in my view, on whether it (1) really deepens people's understanding of the war system and of how we got where we are; (2) establishes a momentum towards general disarmament (not just nuclear disarmament); (3) builds bridges between different groups working against war and militarism both nationally and internationally.[67]

Woodward's concerns speak to a deep divide between liberal and radical anti-nuclear activism. The freeze proposal, radicals argued, was too weak, and not designed to bring about disarmament. Nor were its campaign tactics and organizational strategies very comprehensive. Woodward wrote that some Freeze Campaign volunteers shared her concerns, that "signing a petition or making a phone call to the White House were empty gestures."[68] In March 1981, after much internal debate, the WRL rejected endorsing the Freeze Campaign, citing that "to moderate our position by adopting the Freeze is to moderate out impact, not strengthen or broaden it."[69] Opinion was, however, divided, demonstrating the troubling nature of the Freeze for pacifists. In some ways, activists argued that supporting a movement with the potential to mobilize mass interest in anti-nuclear issues was worth supporting as a "first step" toward more comprehensive disarmament.[70] On the other hand, compromise was not an option for activists dedicated to challenging the authority of the state.

In essence, the success of the Freeze Campaign presented radicals with a familiar problem: to maintain radical traditions and sensibilities, or agree to be part of a movement that had the potential to attract a level of support far more widespread than what radical activists were used to.[71] Steve Ladd, a west coast WRL member and later involved in the statewide Freeze Campaign in California, saw the promise of the Freeze in its potential to unite the peace movement: In a forum in *WRL News*, he argued:

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[67] Beverly Woodward to Randy Kehler, 5 December 1981, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign Records, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-St. Louis (hereafter Freeze Records), Box 2, Folder 25.
[68] Beverly Woodward to Randy Kehler, 5 December 1981, Freeze Records, Box 2, Folder 25.
[69] Ed Hedemann, "The Freeze: A Step Backwards," *WRL News*, May-June 1981, p. 6.
[70] See Steve Ladd, "The Freeze: First Step Approach to Disarmament," *WRL News*, May-June 1981, pp. 4-5; Kehler interview.
[71] This problem cropped up in many organizations and campaigns within the anti-nuclear movement in the early to mid-1980s. I discuss additional examples of the challenges of compromise in the remaining chapters of this thesis.

> Frankly, if we remain the scattered, small, relatively powerless movement we are now, we will *never* stop these new weapons, or cause the elimination of even one single weapon in our current arsenal. If we are to turn around the arms race and move towards disarmament, our most basic priority must be to build a massive movement that has the active and tacit support of large segments of this society.[72]

Ladd felt that acts of resistance or radical protest, whilst a necessary part of the peace movement, "will be relatively isolated and ineffective, ignored by most of the public, until there is a much larger movement."[73] The benefit of adopting a "realistic, winnable interim goal" meant that the peace movement's radical vanguard, rather than remaining marginal in their political impact, might be able to provide voice and perspective to a more mainstream, politically oriented movement that aimed not at global disarmament and a more just society, but at a more manageable, pragmatic goal. According to Ladd, each arm of the peace movement needed to unite in its support of the Freeze, lest the momentum and potential of this new campaign be forfeited in favor of ideological and strategic isolation.

On the other hand, however, WRL members committed to a more radical vision of pacifism rejected what Ed Hedemann described as the Freeze's "limited vision," its "tactical narrowness," and its naïve assumption that "appeals to the establishment *alone* will sustain the movement and create significant change."[74] For Hedemann, whilst educational anti-nuclear initiatives were by all means beneficial, the fact that the Freeze relied solely on such tactics was detrimental to the anti-nuclear movement as a whole:

> The basic Freeze strategy seeks to create change primarily through the educational means of petitions, referendums, resolutions, letters to the editor, visiting Congresspeople, and ads – *while discouraging direct action*. This is a strategy programmed to fail. Simply persuading the general public is not enough to alter government policy.[75]

What the peace movement needed, he argued, was a combination of different tactics – both moderate and radical – to expand the scope and reach of the movement. Street demonstrations, a focus on military facilities, and the role played by "imaginative and dramatic projects" would help preserve the WRL's traditionally pacifist vision of global disarmament, both conventional and nuclear. Hedemann's position, whilst critical of the

[72] Ladd, "The Freeze," p. 4. Emphasis in original.
[73] Ladd, "The Freeze," p. 4.
[74] Hedemann, "The Freeze," p. 5.
[75] Hedemann, "The Freeze," p. 5. Emphasis in original.

outlook, strategy and ideology of the Freeze, also demonstrates how radical pacifists valued the dramatic, sensational nature of nonviolent direct action as a campaign tactic, and how unsatisfactory they found less direct forms of activism.

The WRL's refusal to endorse the Freeze Campaign also highlights the weight of historical traditions of nonviolence and civil disobedience to these activists. Hedemann and his colleagues frequently cited the inspiration of earlier campaigns – such as the civil rights movement – where dramatic instances of civil disobedience by large numbers of people had contributed to a change in policy.[76] Martin Luther King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail" featured prominently as an authoritative source that activists used to explain their actions; King's explanation that nonviolent direct action was a tool that sought to "dramatize the issue so that it can no longer be ignored."[77] In the anti-nuclear movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s, the technologies of nuclear weapons, and national leaders' seeming willingness to use them, indicated that, as Beverly Woodward warned, "we must abolish war or war will abolish us."[78] Liberal reformism in anti-nuclear campaigning, Hedemann emphasized, was insufficient: "just being polite, and having nice discussions, and running candidates for office… isn't going to make the changes that need to be made."[79] Dramatic action, as a tool to radicalize the more moderate parts of the movement, and to combat public apathy, was essential.

As such, many pacifists refused to formally ally themselves with a movement, however popular, that was limited in scope, failed to address disarmament, and did not include direct action in its strategy. The AFSC, in similar ways to their colleagues at the WRL, agreed that "that there is a need to look beyond freezing of nuclear weapons to an alternative structure of security."[80] Others, though, urged that the AFSC get involved. Their organization was well poised, with adequate resources, contacts, and skills, to capitalize on the momentum of the Freeze Campaign. Ed Snyder, for example, suggested

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[76] Hedemann interview; McReynolds interview.
[77] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait*, 1st ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 81. See also *Blockade the Bombmakers: Civil Disobedience Campaign Handbook* (New York: Civil Disobedience Campaign, 1982), pp. 14-15.
[78] Beverly Woodward, "The Problem of War, and What to do About it," [1981], p. 1, Wilbur Hugh Ferry Papers (Addendum 4), Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, Box 2, Folder 28.
[79] Hedemann interview.
[80] AFSC Nationwide Peace Education Division Committee minutes, 14-16 May 1982, p. 6, Cagan Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.

that "that it was important for AFSC to keep the nuclear freeze from becoming a fad," and that it ought to promote a model of sustained, meaningful action to the peace movement and the wider public.[81] This qualified position, Pam Solo agreed, was necessary. Essentially, it was the role of the AFSC to "deepen" or "push" the Freeze, not to emphasize how it was inadequate as a strategy for disarmament.[82]

Yet the cooperation of national pacifist organizations within the Freeze movement *was* tenuous, especially when issues of broader social or economic change were raised.[83] On this note, Jon Saxton berated the Freeze Campaign for failing to emphasize the connections between nuclear weapons and other key issues, such as nuclear power, military spending, racism, sexism, cutbacks in social services, and so on:

> It would seem that ultimately what is supposed to be the Freeze campaign's strongest elements, its sheer practicality and simplicity, are lost through the artificial separation and isolation of the weapons question. Can we really say that perpetuating this mythical separation will help us achieve our goals in either the short or the long run?"[84]

The key issue here, in Saxton's estimate, was that the anti-nuclear movement needed to go deeper; "we have got to go to the roots of the problem," he urged, "if we ever hope to see the end of nuclear weapons."[85] Consolidation amongst the left, not a simplified or abstract appeal to the masses, was needed. Despite the fact that radical pacifists were deeply involved with the Freeze Campaign, whether on its national committee or with local or state affiliates, the issue of the narrowness of the Freeze continued to provoke debate. What many saw as an opportunity for movement unity – the second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament in June 1982 – proved to be another clash of identities, priorities, tactics and agendas.

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[81] AFSC Nationwide Peace Education Division Committee minutes, 14-16 May 1982, p. 7, Cagan Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.
[82] Comments by Pam Solo, AFSC Nationwide Peace Education Division Committee minutes, 17-19 September 1982, p. 10, Cagan Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.
[83] See comments by Pam Solo, AFSC Nationwide Peace Education Division Committee minutes, 7-9 January 1983, p. 2, Cagan Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.
[84] Jon Saxton, "Nuclear Freeze Campaign: Disarmament in a Vacuum," *WIN*, 1 December 1981, p. 14.
[85] Saxton, "Nuclear Freeze Campaign," p. 16.

CONTESTING THE SCOPE OF THE MOVEMENT IN 1982

In the autumn of 1981, as the popularity and scope of the freeze movement became clearer, many on the left began to organize a variety of activities to tie in with second U.N. Special Session on Disarmament, scheduled for the following year.[86] It was apparent to many that this might be a key moment in the anti-nuclear movement, where public support would find its most explicit expression. Bringing the peace movement together to help increase the impact of the event was another goal, yet the question of movement unity again proved a sticking point. The ostensible purpose of organizing around the Special Session was a mass demonstration in Manhattan taking place on the first Saturday after the U.N. convened, June 12. The demonstration would emerge as the largest political demonstration in American history, with estimates of attendee numbers ranging from 750,000 to one million. Under the auspices of MfS, a June 12 Coordinating Committee and Rally Committee were set up to organize the demonstration, and interested parties from the New York area became involved, as did representatives from national peace organizations. These committees were convened under the broader banner of a June 12 coalition, representing the organized peace movement, as well as other peace and social justice constituencies.

Other events, too, were on the agenda, including "vigils, rallies, cultural and educational programs, civil disobedience actions, forums, and other activities," with the cooperation of not just the major peace and religious organizations, but hundreds of smaller, community based peace and social justice groups across the eastern states (and beyond).[87] Initial discussions suggested that "different groups could highlight how they are affected by the arms race and the resultant cutback in social programs."[88] Various constituencies such as workers, women, the poor, and racial minorities represented natural allies; organizers expected to develop a broad platform for the rally and other associated activities, linking a myriad of concerns to the oppression and injustice – whether economic, moral, or otherwise – wrought by the nuclear arms race.

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[86] The Special Session ran from 7 June to 9 July 1982.
[87] June 12 Coordinating Committee organizational letter, 1 February 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 3.
[88] June 12 Coordinating Committee organizational letter, 8 October 1981, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 3.

For many peace and social justice groups taking part, the occasion was one at which *connections* between the threat nuclear weapons and other social ills ought to be highlighted. Much like traditional pacifist organizations, a coalition of African-American representatives calling themselves the "African-American Executive Committee (SSDII)" saw the potential of the event "to educate our people to see the inter-relatedness of militarism and racism." Black unemployment, federal budget cutes in education, housing, day care and other social services that affected black families, as well as poor people all over the world, all pointed to the arms race perpetrated by the United States.[89] Similarly, the National Organization for an American Revolution emphasized that its links with the civil rights movement, in particular with black and Chicano communities and local religious communities in 15 cities, would be of great benefit to a mass demonstration.[90] The unity of various issues and concerns, then, emerged from the outset as organizational priorities.

The Special Session was, initially, seen in this regard as a golden opportunity. An early draft paper for Mobilization for Survival's position penned by June 12 Coordinating Committee organizer Leslie Cagan indicated that the organization would pursue a policy of mobilizing diverse constituencies, united by "common concerns" of peace, justice and freedom. MfS would also "seek to unite people often separated by race, sex, or class differences," emphasizing the potential of events surrounding the Special Session for building a truly unified peace and social justice movement in the United States, albeit one centered around the organizational base of an anti-nuclear campaign.[91] Cagan, a New York radical, had been exposed to socialist thought in her youth through her parents. A "red diaper baby," Cagan soon embraced radical feminism and anti-war activism in the 1960s, broadening her concerns to feminism and gay rights in the 1970s. A key player in the Boston MfS office, she moved to New York to take up a key role in the coordination of the June 12 Coalition. This coordination, she found, reflected organizational tensions

[89] African-American Executive Committee (SSDII), information letter and march flyer, April 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 2.
[90] Richard Feldman to Bruce Cronin, 17 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 8.
[91] Leslie Cagan, draft statement, "General Political Overview for Work on UN Special Session on Disarmament," n.d., Cagan Papers, Box 16 (unprocessed portion).

and suspicions, many of them stemming from the presence of radical voices within the coalition and their ideas about comprehensive platforms of social change.[92]

As MfS played the major role in coordinating the June 12 demonstration, its radical leadership exerted what some considered undue influence on the nature and strategy of the campaign. WRL members complained that "a number of small leftist sects" within the June 12 coalition were intent on keeping the focus on the United States, and not promoting disarmament elsewhere in the world. Disquiet also existed due to the majority of the Coordinating Committee and Rally Committee being white leftists, lacking adequate representation from black and "third world" constituencies. Additionally, some figures within the coalition were "irritated" that the WRL had failed to support the Freeze, symbolic of a larger gulf between older, established organizations such as the WRL, and younger groups that proliferated in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[93] The enormous potential of the U.N. Special Session in June 1982 not only provided the peace movement with a swathe of interest and motivation, it increased the volatility of inter-group conflict; as Norma Becker surmised, everyone aimed for their organization to "get as much credit as possible."[94]

The June 12 Coalition soon realized the extent of public interest in the demonstration. As a result, there were concerns about the Coordinating Committee itself. Cagan saw this concern as evidence of disquiet about the radical direction of her own leadership; she recalled that "some of the more mainstream forces [within the coalition] were concerned that I represented not the MfS but a more radical approach… but I think that there was also a kind of homophobia."[95] Division within the June 12 coalition, and concerns from more "conservative elements" of contributing peace organizations emphasized the divide that existed over the strategy and tactics of such a large public campaign. As Hedemann recalled, moderates interested in pushing the idea of June 12 as a public demonstration

[92] Leslie Cagan, interview by the author, 11 November 2010, New York City. See also "Something New Emerges: The Growth of a Socialist Feminist - an Interview with Leslie Cagan," in *They Should Have Served That Cup of Coffee*, ed. Dick Cluster (Boston: South End Press, 1979), p. 226.
[93] WRL Executive Committee minutes, 3 February 1982, p. 2, WRL Records, Series B, Box 2, Folder 3.
[94] WRL Executive Committee minutes, 3 February 1982, p. 2, WRL Records, Series B, Box 2, Folder 3.
[95] Cagan interview. Cagan had been open about her homosexuality since 1972, and an active participant in the antiwar and gay rights movements since the late 1960s.

for the nuclear freeze, rather than a wider platform, didn't like the "riff raff" or the "sectarian leftist groups" within the June 12 Coalition.[96]

Suspicion of these radical motives spilled over into a wider organizational conflict amongst the national peace organizations involved in the June 12 coalition. All agreed that the June 12 demonstration was to be one that could attract as many people as possible. As parts of the peace movement leadership expressed, the June 12 coalition was the result of keen attempts "to put together a broad based coalition to attract the widest possible demonstration of public opinion in New York this June." The coalition remained fractured, though, due largely to division over ideology, organizational philosophy, tactics, and occasionally over personalities.[97]

Proposing "a new infusion of energy, funds, and leadership," an alliance composed of several leaders of groups such as the FOR, AFSC, CALC and SANE proposed the formation of a new "corporation" to "produce" the June 12 demonstration.[98] Such a corporation would remove, or at least render less effective, the contributions of radical voices within the June 12 coalition, such as the WRL, the communist U.S. Peace Council (USPC), MfS, WILPF, and the Black Veterans for Social Justice. Incensed at this development, David McReynolds alleged that Cora Weiss – of the AFSC and the Riverside Church Disarmament Program – saw "June 12th as her personal toy." Her considerable connections with a philanthropic funding base, however, meant she wielded sizeable influence in the peace movement.[99] The idea that money and influence would determine the strategy and direction of anti-nuclear activism was one that troubled radical activists such as McReynolds and Cagan found abhorrent. Nevertheless, it did demonstrate the nature of the division between radical and moderate models of activism within the anti-nuclear movement, emphasizing the essentiality of the processes and strategies of dissent to radicals and pacifists in their efforts to bring about comprehensive social change.

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[96] Hedemann interview.
[97] One coordinating committee member argued that "attitudes of mockery, of gloating [and] the sense of burden and blame" were examples of personal politics that ought not to disrupt the operation of a committee with such great responsibility. Julie Maloney to Leslie Cagan, 5 April 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 8.
[98] AFSC *et al*. to WRL *et al*., 8 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10.
[99] David McReynolds to Bronson Clark, John Collins and Richard Deats, 9 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10.

The takeover instigated by Weiss and her colleagues appeared to be some kind of purge of the June 12 coalition, reminding McReynolds of purge of communists from the ranks of SANE in 1958 at the tail end of the McCarthy era.[100] He viewed the takeover proposal as "arrogant, insulting, divisive, exclusionary, and inexcusable," and reminded the "alliance" of moderates of the longstanding institutional leadership and experience of those organizers working in the WRL and WILPF, and their contributions and commitment to a long history of mass demonstrations, diverse campaign tactics, and comprehensive approaches to issues of peace and war.[101]

McReynolds felt a coalition of peace organizations – from the communist USPC to the ecumenical pacifist FOR to the professional and secular SANE – could successfully organize June 12 in a manner that had been common for many years. Those attempting to hijack June 12, he argued, saw June 12 as "an event," whilst the more radical groups excluded from the organizing coalition "see June 12th as part of the process of building a movement."[102] It was this long-range vision that often set radical pacifists apart from their more moderate colleagues in the anti-nuclear movement, who were seemingly more interested in mobilizing public opinion in order to bring about legislative changes to either freeze the arms race, or to elect Representatives, Senators, and a President who would. Such a vision operated within a specific timeframe; the congressional elections of 1982, for example, were used as a platform for nuclear freeze resolutions in municipalities, counties and states across the nation, as well as the election of anti-nuclear candidates. Radicals, on the other hand, saw the arms race as a problem with deeper roots. The evils of violence, militarism, and war were not quick fixes, and mere lobbying could not offer any substantial strategies for fundamentally changing society.

The result of this drama was, expectedly, a compromise. Cagan remained in the June 12 Coordinating Committee, supported by two new coordinators nominated by the moderate

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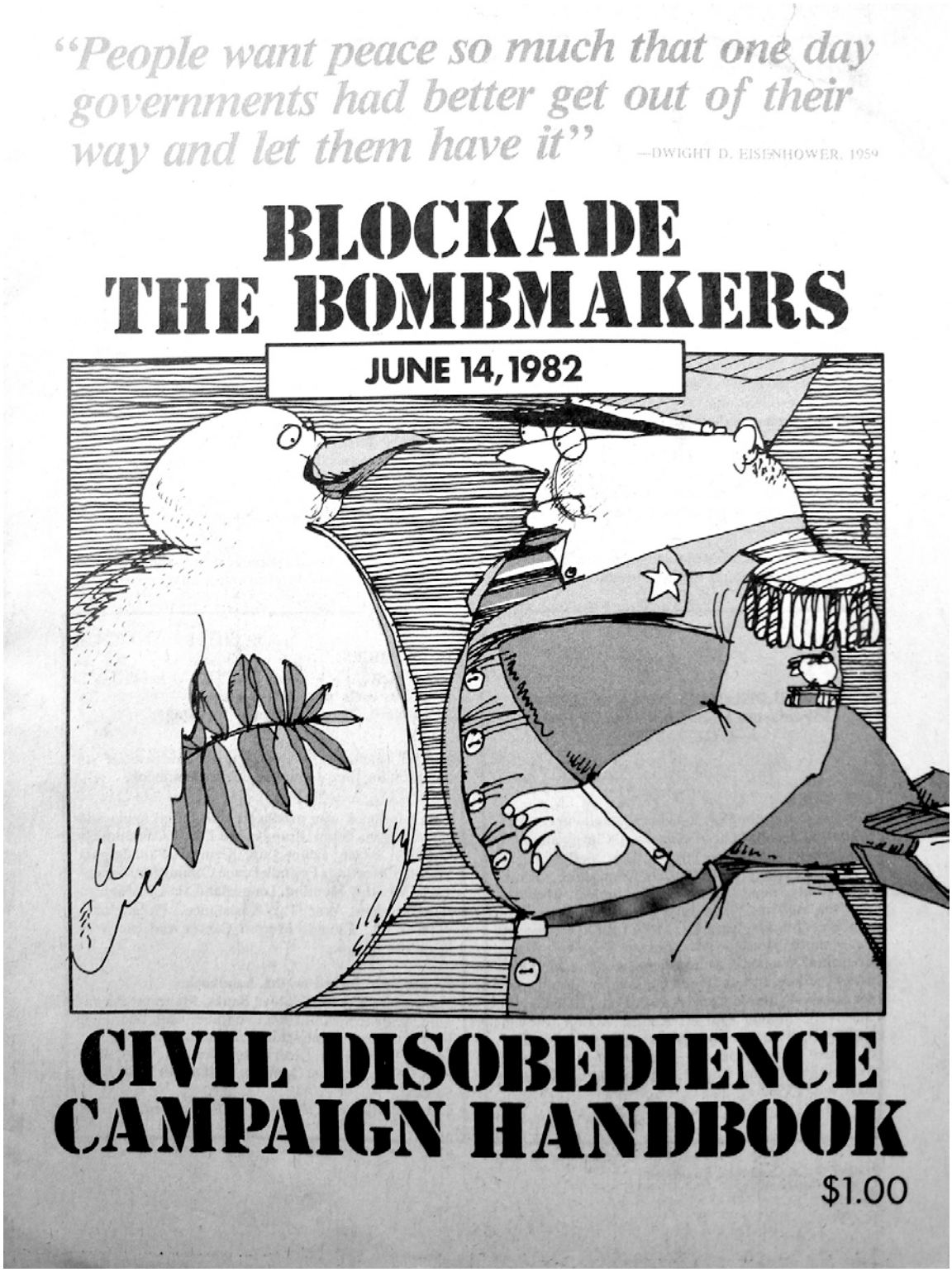
[100] For an account of this event and its ramifications in the peace movement of the late 1950s and early 1960s, see Robbie Lieberman, *The Strangest Dream: Communism, Anticommunism and the U.S. Peace Movement, 1945-1963* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000), Chapter 6.

[101] David McReynolds to Bronson Clark, Richard Deats, John Collins, Randy Kehler and David Cortright, 10 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10. It is important to note here that there did exist a significant history of organizational friendship and unity between these various peace groups. There was also a lot of overlap in organizational membership: WRL and WILPF members also belonged to FOR, the Freeze Campaign, and SANE, and held important positions on state and national executive committees of those organizations.

[102] David McReynolds to Bronson Clark, Richard Deats, John Collins, Randy Kehler and David Cortright, 10 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10.

"alliance." The WRL, WILPF, USPC and others continued to have their say in the coalition, and continued to organize for their members and friends to get to New York on June 12, but also became more interested in organizing civil disobedience actions on June 14, the Monday following the mass rally in Manhattan. As a divisive protest tactic, nonviolent civil disobedience was not endorsed by many of the mainstream peace organizations, and those that did promote it as a dramatic campaign tactic acknowledged its divisive nature. June 14 emerged as an event titled "Blockade the Bombmakers," and targeted not just the United States but also other nuclear powers. International in scope, the actions aimed to "emphasize and dramatize our concern."[103] Along with members of other pacifist organizations, including the FOR, Catholic Peace Fellowship, CALC, MfS, and others, the June 14 campaign aimed to do what the mass demonstration on June 12 had not – radicalize anti-nuclear protest.[104] Civil disobedience actions, as a preliminary proposal explained, "provide a means for many people to directly pressure the major nuclear powers while demonstrating the depth of their concerns." The actions intended to effect the "disruption of diplomacy as usual" at the U.N. missions of the five nuclear powers who held seats on the U.N. Security Council as permanent members – the United States, the Soviet Union, China, France, and the United Kingdom. Expectedly, the heaviest emphasis was on the United States. As organizers explained, "we feel as people who live in the United States we have a special obligation to focus on the US government, just as we expect those who live in other countries to strongly protest their governments [sic] nuclear policies."[105] Like other nonviolent direct action campaigns undertaken by anti-nuclear activists in the early 1980s, the June 14 organizers cited their willingness to raise the stakes of anti-nuclear protest by making more radical, dramatic demands than the 'mainstream' demonstration two days earlier had not. According to organizer Sharon Kleinbaum, the rationale behind this attitude was the importance of making a statement; "that we are willing to put our bodies on the line to make as strong a statement that we could."[106] Given the hitherto little concrete success achieved by

[103] June 14 Civil Disobedience Campaign staff organizational letter, 25 May 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 5.
[104] The rationale for June 14 was outlined in a comprehensive handbook produced by the June 14 Civil Disobedience Campaign, containing lengthy discussions of strategies, tactics, historical traditions, and logistics. See *Blockade the Bombmakers: Civil Disobedience Campaign Handbook* (New York: Civil Disobedience Campaign, 1982).
[105] "Proposal by the Civil Disobedience Task Force," n.d., Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 5.
[106] Letter to the author, 6 May 2011.



The cover of the June 14 handbook emphasized the confrontation between pacifists and the military, whilst stressing that the public desire for "peace" ought to motivate a suitable government response.
Source: *Blockade the Bombmakers*, p. 1.

"appeals to reason," such as the Freeze, emphasizing the radical and pacifist commitment to nuclear disarmament was a necessary activity, often as a means of pulling moderate activists in a more radical direction.[107]

What emerged from the June 12 demonstration and the June 14 civil disobedience action is difficult to decipher. The monumental turnout for the demonstration on June 12 was by many accounts the largest demonstration of public opposition to government policy in American history. Such a surge of new interest in the anti-nuclear cause prompted many in the movement to strategize how to retain their support, and how to further develop sustained, meaningful action in opposition to the arms race. For radical groups, the way forward for the movement was to develop broad coalitions of support, finding common ground amongst diverse constituencies to push for an agreed set of goals. For this to happen, though, these constituencies needed to take part, or at least be represented, in coalition politics. Fuming at the proposed "takeover" of the June 12 Coordinating Committee, the WRL National Committee sensed an exercise of exclusionary policy. Contrary to the WRL's aim of including diverse constituencies in its short and long term programs and strategies, no women's groups, student groups, black or Hispanic groups, or communist groups were to be included in the new, reorganized June 12 rally committee.[108] It also suspected an attempt at ousting New York metropolitan area groups from the June 12 organizing process, in favor of national peace and social justice organizations, few of which were based in New York City.[109] In the pursuit of the broadest possible unity, it seemed, sacrifices were being made.

Many of these sacrifices related to problems of racial diversity that had beset the peace movement for decades. Irrespective of the differences between McReynolds and Weiss, between radicals and moderates, there was the problem that the June 12 coalition was not in its composition a comprehensive snapshot of the peace and social justice communities. Black and Puerto Rican groups, feminist groups, and lesbian and gay groups were left

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[107] June 14 Civil Disobedience Campaign information booklet, [1982], Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 5. See also Richard Deats, interview by the author, 10 November 2010, Nyack, New York; Hedemann interview.

[108] See WRL National Committee to AFSC *et al*., 15 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10.

[109] See WRL National Committee to AFSC *et al*., 15 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10. The WRL, of course, had been housed at 339 Lafayette Street in New York City since its founding in 1923, in a building (often referred to as the "Peace Pentagon") it shared with a variety of other socialist and pacifist groups.

out of the coalition. In effect, many individuals from the WRL, USPC, WILPF and MfS worried that by streamlining the organization of June 12 within a moderate, homogenous committee structure and without the participation of radicals, the opportunity to mobilize a truly diverse array of constituencies for the rally would be lost. A middle class march, whilst surely impressive and media-worthy, would not satisfy the longer-term ambitions of the peace movement to create a broad partnership of minority constituencies agitating for fundamental social change.[110]

This issue of the racial and ethnic makeup of the June 12 coalition went back to January 1982. At a coalition planning meeting, more than 200 attendees agreed that "one third of the participants at all levels of the coalition would be third world groups or individuals chosen by third world constituents." As Cagan later argued, "this was a commitment to break away from the old habit of letting white people set the terms for third world participation [in the peace movement]."[111] In a way, addressing the traditional white, middle class leadership of the peace movement was a means whereby the movement could look at its own attitude to other issues besides nuclear weapons. This broad perspective harked back to the early days of the MfS umbrella group in its efforts to develop a nationwide anti-nuclear movement. Its efforts in 1982 extended this organizing principle, linking the nuclear arms race to a host of other troubling concerns that demonstrated the malevolent, militaristic activities of the state.

Domestic racial issues, along with the concern for third world nations affected by U.S. military intervention, covert or otherwise, were potentially as relevant as the single-issue consensus that many organizations and coalitions in the early 1980s adopted. As Cagan argued, postponing the challenge of racial unity within the movement in favor of a narrow agenda simply served to create "a false unity."[112] Other issues, including feminism, gay rights, and abortion also surfaced, further complicating the terrain of the anti-nuclear agenda, and leading to struggles to maintain an effective consensus amongst participants in the June 12 coalition. According to Cagan, though, confronting these

[110] The official response from the WRL, USPC and MfS to the original letter from the "alliance" of the AFSC, FOR *et al*. identified these aims within the context of its intent to do so within "a commitment to a center-left unity." It was perceived that the "takeover" of June 12 was done so in the name of a centrist, mainstream organizational philosophy that paid scant attention to the left on its role in the peace movement. See Norma Becker, Sandy Pollack, Mike Myerson, Connie Hogarth, Leslie Cagan, Tom DeLuca and Paul Mayer to AFSC *et al*., 13 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10.
[111] Leslie Cagan, "June 12th: A Look Back, a Look Ahead," *The Mobilizer*, September 1982, p. 9.
[112] Cagan, "June 12th," p. 9.

issues in movement coalitions resulted in a broader, more comprehensive movement, where diverse interests and agendas made contact, rather than operating in separate spheres.[113]

In any event, as Cagan wrote after the rally, "June 12 became a reality larger than the internal tensions and dynamics of the coalition."[114] It demonstrated how the left could begin to address wider choices about its direction and strategy. Could socialists, pacifists, and other radicals stand firm in their radical vision of a world without war, or should they strive to build coalitions with those more mainstream figures and groups that rejected ideological isolation in favor of a liberal model of political action. Moreover, how effective could those coalitions really be? In the early 1980s, as the extent of anti-nuclear sentiment in the United States and in Europe demonstrated, the stakes were too high for radicals to remain isolated. As the WRL identified:

> When we must stand alone, we will do so. But when we can stand with tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of others – more, when we can be part of the process which mobilizes those hundreds of thousands – then which of us would choose to stand alone?[115]

Inclusivity and unity, rather than mainstream elitism, was imperative to maintain this effectiveness. Of course compromises would exist, but they existed to ensure that a campaign's integrity was matched by its scope, in a way that could successfully mobilize large and diverse numbers of people. But how diverse should these coalitions really be? Patrick Lacefield, a member of the WRL, FOR, and the Democratic Socialists of America, felt the "infighting" within the June 12 coalition instructive, insofar as it could teach future coalitions how *not* to operate. Divergent agendas and broad aims were also counterproductive when stretched too far, he argued. "We must be able to co-exist in coalitions with people who hold our position on nuclear arms, but not on Cuba, on the transfer of funds from military uses to domestic needs, but not on abortion."[116] There was a limit, he argued, to how many interests a coalition ought to pander to.

Others in the movement disagreed with Lacefield's sentiments, contending that a comprehensive vision for social change was what set the left apart from mainstream anti-

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[113] Cagan interview.
[114] Cagan, "June 12th," p. 9.
[115] WRL National Committee to AFSC *et al*., 15 March 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 10.
[116] Patrick Lacefield, "Holding Us All Together," *Democratic Left*, June 1982, p. 4.

nuclear efforts like the Freeze Campaign. "We're talking about more than disarmament," argued Jon Saxton, as the Boston chapter of MfS attempted to build on the success of June 12. "What moved people was not only a demand for arms control, but opposition to the budget and intervention. Even those whose sole focus is annihilation need to recognize that the Freeze is a pitifully small step." In short, Saxton emphasized that MfS, and the peace and social justice movement more broadly, ought to try to build a successful coalition of diverse constituencies that could agitate for a set of basic, radical demands. Whilst moderate religious organizations often held center stage at disarmament rallies, Saxton maintained that MfS and its allies on the left needed to "move liberals to the left," swinging movement leadership and membership away from those moderate organizations such as SANE and the Freeze and into centre-left coalitions. This way, a more comprehensive program and strategy for social, political, and economic change could be adopted.[117]

Carl Conetta, also of Boston MfS, had similar ideas. The arms race had much deeper implications that much of the public did not yet appreciate, and efforts needed to be undertaken to educate about these bigger connections. "This isn't about the facts of nuclear war of the military balance," Conetta wrote in early 1983, "but an attempt to help folks start thinking about deeper causes and, indirectly, about the common foundation of the many different forms of oppression."[118] This spoke to the heart of the radical vision for social change in America, where pacifists, socialists, and anarchists sought to best communicate an understanding of how violence, oppression and war operated in the world, what made them possible, and what could be done about it.

NEGOTIATING ACTIVISM IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE 1960S

The efforts at building a mass anti-nuclear movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s stem from the waning of peace activism after the Vietnam War. "Many [activists] went home and became uninvolved," wrote a Connecticut-based activist to the June 12 Rally Committee. "Nothing fundamentally changed [and] we just had to wait for the next

[117] Jon Saxton, quoted in Boston MfS Coordinating Committee minutes, 15 June 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 19, Folder 6 (unprocessed portion).
[118] Carl Conetta, "Course Ideas," 4 January 1983, Cagan Papers, Box 19, Folder 8 (unprocessed portion). Emphasis in original.

crisis." That crisis – the nuclear arms race – needed to be met with a level of continuity and organization that could sustain a long-term movement.[119] Building this continuity and organization from initially disparate campaigns around the country, many of them interested in opposing nuclear power, was a slow process. It involved combining concerns about both environmental and disarmament, as well as finding ways in which diverse constituencies could produce the most effective and popular campaign to oppose various nuclear threats. In some ways this was a "contest" between environmentalism and pacifism, sparked by the accident at Three Mile Island. Both sought to capitalize on the swathes of public support emerging in the spring of 1979, and as McReynolds recalled, environmentalists "thought we were wildly radical, [whilst] our side… thought we ought to bring the two issues [power and weapons] together in an anti-nuclear movement."[120] As public interest in the dangers of nuclear power waned in the early 1980s, the nuclear arms race became the primary concern of this broad movement. However, struggles over the appropriate direction of various coalitions and campaigns remained from the anti-war movement of the 1960s, reflecting deeper division on the left about the nature and structure of organizational dissent.

As more radical voices in the movement attempted to broaden the scope and perspective of various anti-nuclear campaigns and coalitions, a significant divide was demonstrated. Older activists, including many who had been active in the anti-war and civil rights movements, were often suspicious of newer actors in anti-nuclear groups, and this included the Freeze Campaign. Traditionally, pacifists, socialists, and other radicals had a history of cooperation and an overlapping sense of purpose; the need for fundamental social change was, more often than not, agreed upon. With a new outpouring of interest in disarmament at the beginning of the 1980s came a shift in the constitution of the peace movement – in terms of membership, public support, and profile. As moderate organizations sprung up and captured the media's attention, the left debated fiercely about the best course of action. A choice – to put it bluntly – between enthusiastic grassroots support and public disinterest was one that led to controversies that in many ways illuminated wider problems on the left.

[119] David Nelson to June 12 Rally Committee, 10 May 1982, Cagan Papers, Box 10, Folder 8.
[120] McReynolds interview.

The left had struggled to find common ground on how to best engage with moderate and mainstream public support for a nuclear freeze, and with organizations that championed that goal.[121] Diversifying and widening the perspective of campaigns opposed to the arms race was difficult, though, despite the general consensus for a comprehensive approach to nuclear disarmament. The constitution of the movement and its leadership, for example, was a sore point in coalition building. Should the anti-nuclear movement take a stance on abortion, gay rights, or racism? If it didn't, what did this say about the movement itself, its leaders, and its philosophy? The struggle to define the strategy, the organizational philosophy, the tactics, and the worldview of the anti-nuclear movement illuminates familiar struggles in coalition building amongst diverse constituencies. However, as activist Peter Hayes commented, these debates were about much more than the relatively simple choice between a single-issue movement and a "broadest-movement-possible strategy for social and political change." Hayes' advice was to both radicals and moderates:

> Disarmament activists have to think through what kind of world they want to live in; what changes it will take to get there; what strategies, in what order, will achieve those changes in the least contradictory and maximally effective way.[122]

These ideas reflect a long-running dilemma on the left. When presented with the potential for expanding its base, the left has always needed to examine how this might affect its traditional pursuit for fundamental social change. Such a challenge had not abated since the 1960s, and the experiences of radical activists in the late 1970s and early 1980s demonstrate the enduring legacy of the struggle between pacifist idealism and political pragmatism in the peace movement.

Without their idealistic vision of a better world, the anti-nuclear movement's radical voices might have lost sight of deep-seated beliefs in the value of nonviolence, of resistance to the state, and of a refusal to compromise these principles. Connecting these philosophies – both idealistic and pragmatic – to a potential goldmine of public support in the early 1980s, was, understandably, mired in a complex negotiation of the

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[121] As L. Bruce van Voorst wrote at the time, "older organizations showed a measure of hostility toward groups such as Physicians for Social Responsibility or Ground Zero, which were considered late comers in the national drive for disarmament." Their professional approach and mainstream image also set them apart from older, more radical organizations. I deal with these issues in the following chapter. L. Bruce van Voorst, "The Critical Masses," *Foreign Policy*, no. 48 (1982), p. 90.

[122] Peter Hayes, "Freeze at the Crossroads," draft position paper, [early 1982], Freeze Records, Box 5, Folder 137.

movement's direction and strategy. Pacifists committed to an ideology of social change were troubled by the existence of this sort of compromise that in effect required them to dilute their beliefs. As McReynolds suggested some years before, "what is required by pacifism and what cannot be given up is the ability of people to make individual judgments. But that also mitigates against its becoming an effective political force."[123] In the history of the anti-nuclear movement to 1982, mitigating the demands of individual conscience, radical ideology, public and political success, as well as contesting the nature and scope of anti-nuclear action itself, highlights the persistence of the challenges of marrying idealism and pragmatism in social activism. In the wake of the 1960s, the development of an anti-nuclear movement demonstrates the interaction of attempts to both extend and reject the meaning and scope of radical activism in its local and national organizational guises in these years of conservative revival.

[123] Quoted in Charles F. Howlett and Glen Zeitzer, *The American Peace Movement: History and Historiography* (Washington, DC: American Historical Association, 1985), p. 41.

CHAPTER TWO

BUILDING A MAINSTREAM MOVEMENT: ADVERTISING, PUBLICITY, AND IMAGE

The attainment of mass public support and a favorable response from political institutions has always been a primary challenge for oppositional social movements. In the aftermath of the 1960s, a variety of social movement organizations began seeking new ways to influence elites, mobilize additional support, and demonstrate the magnitude of a particular issue. As the nuclear freeze movement took shape in 1979 and 1980, its proponents developed its structure and strategy through an institutional approach. Ballot initiatives, educational outreach, and advertising were conventional strategies that had – freeze organizers anticipated – a solid potential to capture public interest. As such, a variety of anti-nuclear organizations and campaigns devoted their energies to mobilizing public opinion through these strategies. Mobilizing favorable public opinion and attracting institutional support for the nuclear freeze proposal were key aims of this "polite" movement, whose emphasis on political realism and liberal reform stood in stark contrast to the pacifist approach of many traditional peace groups, or the model of personal expression and inner transformation favored by so many activists engaging in small-scale challenges to the nuclear arms race.

This chapter examines how the nuclear freeze movement – and its many organizations – attempted to become a mass movement that was at once a grassroots citizen's movement and an effort in political lobbying.[1] Its "populist orientation" was crucial in mobilizing public support and involvement, whilst at the same time demonstrating to elected

[1] I use the term "freeze movement" loosely. Its very nature as a decentralized assortment of peace groups meant its composition was quite fluid. When referring to the national coordinating body of this movement, I use the term Freeze Campaign. This campaign, and the movement around it, formed part of a wider movement that both scholars and movement participants have described as populist, decentralized, and a locally-based demonstration of demoncratic principles and practice. See, for example, Charles Chatfield, *The American Peace Movement: Ideals and Activism* (New York: Twayne, 1992), p. 254; and Pam Solo, *From Protest to Policy: Beyond the Freeze to Common Security* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1988), p. 62.

officials the widespread demand for an end to the arms race.[2] Although it was a very decentralized, often uncoordinated 'movement,' its key players demonstrated a willingness to promote the freeze as a mainstream endeavor with a broad appeal. Doing so eschewed a radical analysis of the nuclear arms race in favor of a simple message that would not alienate more conservative Americans. In presenting this simple message to the public, organizations in the freeze movement emphasized the liberal nature of the anti-nuclear campaign and its mainstream image, attempting to maximize individual organizations' membership and promote favorable public opinion. Many organizations did so in a professional, corporate manner, hiring public relations consultants and advertising firms to assist in developing an image and an appeal for the anti-nuclear movement that strayed far from its roots in traditional pacifism.

Such ideas were fairly unique in the history of peace activism. The corporate approach identified the 1960s as a time of radical confrontation, extra-legal protest, and a proliferation of ideas that challenged traditional concepts of American democracy, citizenship, and authority. The Freeze Campaign, the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND), Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), and a host of other organizations saw the "backlash" against the radical challenges and liberal reforms of the 1960s as evidence of a conservative turn in American politics and society. This was evidence enough that the left needed to approach its activism more gingerly if it were to have any success in mobilizing the support of a conservative citizenry. As a result, anti-nuclear groups and organizations worked within existing institutional frameworks, adopting a safe and non-threatening rhetoric, and promoting themselves, John Lofland argues, as "polite protestors." In the eyes of the public and through the media, the anti-nuclear movement became defined by this "remarkable degree of genteel civility, restraint, and even affability."[3]

This method of organizing challenged the grassroots nature of much anti-nuclear activism. Most national bodies had a paid, professional staff, sought endorsements, lobbied Congressional offices in Washington, D.C., and worked towards increasing their

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[2] Douglas C. Waller, *Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An inside Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), p. 37.
[3] John Lofland, *Polite Protesters: The American Peace Movement of the 1980s* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), p. 7.

membership base and their numbers of regular donors and benefactors. More money for the movement, many organizers felt, could translate into more publicity, which would in turn mean a greater public profile for the movement and assist in its political lobbying. However, when the freeze resolution became stalled in Congress in 1983, and when Ronald Reagan decisively defeated Walter Mondale in the 1984 presidential election, many organizers began to question their approach to social change. They sought to find out how they could understand the public mood, exploit popular values, and utilize mainstream media in more effective ways. Other activists retreated from such ideas, radicalizing their strategies and endorsing campaigns of direct action. The fallout from the 1984 elections was enormous, and in some ways contributed to the slow demise of the nuclear freeze movement as a potent social and political force.

What this story of the freeze movement's dramatic rise and fall demonstrates is more than the conventional narrative of a incredibly broad, decentralized, grassroots campaign that lacked the skills for effective political negotiation and media manipulation.[4] It emphasizes that the strategies of key organizations contributed to a new type of activism on the left, one that relied less on public demonstrations of opposition to government policy, and more on media attention, public relations, endorsements, fundraising, and other methods of sustaining a very mainstream, almost corporate kind of organizational model. This chapter argues that in developing such a model, key anti-nuclear organizations such as the Freeze Campaign, WAND, SANE, and PSR distanced themselves from a heritage of activism that had characterized the left since the 1960s. Moreover, they rejected traditional grassroots approaches to anti-nuclear activism that identified with the anti-authoritarian impulse of the New Left and counterculture. This did not simply mean working within the system to bring about political change, it meant challenging the notions of activism and political efficacy as they existed on the left in the

[4] This narrative is useful in its understanding of the relationship between the freeze movement, mainstream media, and political institutions, and how this relationship explains the failure of the movement to directly influence government policy. Examples of this approach include J. Michael Hogan, *The Nuclear Freeze Campaign: Rhetoric and Foreign Policy in the Telepolitical Age* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994); Andrew Rojecki, *Silencing the Opposition: Antinuclear Movements and the Media in the Cold War* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); David S. Meyer, "Institutionalizing Dissent: The United States Structure of Political Opportunity and the End of the Nuclear Freeze Movement," *Sociological Forum* 8, no. 2 (1993), pp. 157-179; David S. Meyer, "Peace Movement Demobilization: The Fading of the Nuclear Freeze," in *Peace Action in the Eighties: Social Science Perspectives*, ed. John Lofland and Sam Marullo (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), pp. 53-71; Chatfield, *The American Peace Movement*, Chapter 7; and Thomas R. Rochon, "Three Faces of the Freeze: Arenas of Success and Failure," in *Coalitions & Political Movements: The Lessons of the Nuclear Freeze*, ed. Thomas R. Rochon and David S. Meyer (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 1997), pp. 168-177.

wake of the 1960s. In this sense, this "mainstream" anti-nuclear movement distanced itself from the reputation of "the sixties" as an era of radicalism and extremism, preferring instead to challenge the idea of civic engagement on the left as one that could operate successfully *within* the system, rather than opposed to it.

MASS MOVEMENTS AND POLITICS

As the multifaceted anti-nuclear movement steadily gained support from more and more corners of the nation during the early 1980s, its net membership rose dramatically, and newer, more mainstream organizing efforts emerged. These aimed to appeal to the widest possible audience, to gain support from liberal and conservative business and media interests, and to move anti-nuclear sentiment from outside the political establishment to within, promoting legislative change in Congress. The most obvious example of these efforts is the Freeze Campaign, yet equally significant were other professionally organized anti-nuclear campaigns. SANE had existed since 1957; PSR was founded in 1961, but became inactive in the early 70s. Australian born anti-nuclear activist and doctor Helen Caldicott revived it under the same name in 1978, running it concurrently with her women's peace group WAND.[5] What these organizations aimed to achieve was, essentially, political influence.

This wing of the broad and diverse anti-nuclear movement started out as a means to mobilize the largest possible number of American citizens in opposition to the nuclear arms race, using education and civic engagement as its key strategies. As such, they preached a politically safe message of, alternately, bilateral initiatives to freeze the arms race at its current levels, the scientific and medical consequences of a possible nuclear war, and the economic and social cost of the administration's nuclear arms policies. Initially, these strategies worked – the movement gained substantial public support in 1981 and 1982, and began to push for nuclear freeze initiatives and referenda electorally, in November 1982, on nine state ballots and hundreds of local and municipal ballots across the country. Buoyed by their success, the national Freeze Campaign took the

[5] Others existed, including the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), the Council for a Livable World (CLW), Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR), the Lawyers' Alliance for Nuclear Arms Control (LANAC), and many others. For purposes of clarity and length, however, this chapter will focus on the examples of the Freeze, SANE, PSR and WAND.

freeze proposal to Congress, beginning a lengthy process of debate and dissection in the House and Senate. At this stage, what had been a largely grassroots movement, propped up by volunteers and characterized by decentralized local organizing suddenly became an exclusively political campaign, marked by an involvement in federal politics that was elitist, rather than egalitarian. Such a departure from the movement's grassroots base sat at odds with its rhetoric of building a mass citizen's movement, and instead pioneered a strategy of political change that operated somewhat independently from those local groups that formed the basis of the anti-nuclear movement.

The movement's involvement in politics, however, was offset by the movement's image as one composed of mainstream, politically moderate, ordinary Americans. For Helen Caldicott, activism was the "antidote to such terminal ills" as nuclear war. Nuclear testing in the South Pacific and nuclear power plant construction in the United States had, in the past, both been halted by protests, she argued. These were not led by "radical kooks," but by ordinary people: "it's more of a conservative movement that's led by doctors and lawyers and the churches."[6] Writing in her autobiography a decade later, Caldicott reiterated this idea:

> The 'movement' was really an ad hoc, heterogeneous collection of millions of people across the country arranged in disparate and individual units – churches, psychologists, lawyers, real estate brokers, artists, the Sane and Freeze groups, and many more.[7]

The movement's leadership saw the movement itself as a reflection or microcosm of American society: basically conservative, self-interested, and with a desire for the preservation of human life, health, and safety. Hence, the challenge facing the anti-nuclear movement was to effectively mobilize this conservative, value-driven public into action against the nuclear arms race.

Each mainstream anti-nuclear organization, although largely working independently, adopted a similar outlook toward what sort of public profile it might advertise. This was not to be a movement in which pacifists or advocates of nonviolence or direct action played much part, in contrast to the campaigns and coalitions of earlier years. As MfS activist Frank Brodhead argued in 1982, there was "little place left for the morality of

[6] Quoted in Gerri Hirshey, "Women and Children First…" *Family Circle*, 18 May 1982, pp. 6, 70-71.
[7] Helen Caldicott, *A Passionate Life* (Milsons Point, NSW: Random House, 1996), p. 343.

non-violence" in the Freeze proposal.[8] The freeze was anticipated to be a mass movement of ordinary Americans, and one that would appeal to both liberals and conservatives, and not encourage identification with pacifism, anti-war activism from the 1960s, or anything else that might stigmatize the campaign in the eyes of the administration or middle America.

Initially, this style of polite opposition to the nuclear arms race was done in a seemingly independent fashion. Campaigns sprung up across the country to use local and state processes of legislative initiatives, referenda, and town meetings to register their anti-nuclear sentiment with their elected officials in a more formal way. This was rarely a centrally orchestrated strategy.[9] Indeed, the very first ballot initiatives took place in Western Massachusetts, where the Traprock Peace Center in Deerfield spearheaded what it saw as an ideal method of the very 1960s idea of "consciousness-raising."[10] These loosely coordinated strategies were an ideal means for anti-nuclear activists to pursue opposition to nuclear power and nuclear weapons through accepted, legal means.[11] This idea mirrored other strategies designed to promote the freeze movement as a decidedly mainstream, middle class affair that distanced itself from traditional anti-nuclear campaigns built on pacifist ideals.

Nowhere was this more apparent than the Californian Freeze Campaign, whose leadership was usurped in 1981 by the Los Angeles millionaire entrepreneur and activist Harold Willens. Willens, who had been a fundraiser for Jimmy Carter's 1976 and 1980 presidential campaigns, led the state's Freeze body after taking over the chair from its co-founder Nick Seidita. Willens helped the campaign along with substantial reserves of money, media contacts, and public relations expertise, but at the same time altered the tone of the campaign in order to bolster its popular support, amongst the public, the

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[8] Frank Brodhead, Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War: The Peace Movement and the Left," [1982], p. 26, Leslie Cagan Papers, Tamiment Library, New York University, New York City (hereafter Cagan Papers), Box 38, Folder 1 (unprocessed portion).

[9] See John Walsh, "Nuclear Freeze Candidates Claim Mandate," *Science* 218, no. 4574 (1982), p. 776.

[10] Randy Kehler, interview by the author, 15 November 2010, Greenfield, Massachusetts.

[11] This continued a tradition of similarly styled citizen-led movements that erupted in the 1970s. For more detailed discussions, see Lettie Wenner and Manfred Wenner, "Nuclear Policy and Public Participation," *American Behavioral Scientist* 22, no. 2 (1978), pp. 282-287; and David D. Schmidt, *Citizen Lawmakers: The Ballot Initiative Revolution* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), Chapters 4 and 7. The most nuanced examination of the process of ballot initiatives, although it does not discuss the nuclear freeze initiatives of the 1980s, is Richard Ellis, *Democratic Delusions: The Initiative Process in America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002).

Only one person can prevent a nuclear war.

You.

Right now, nuclear warheads sit waiting all over the world. They are aimed at you, your family and your friends. And there are enough nuclear weapons around the world to destroy every person on earth.

Each day the nuclear arsenals grow larger as they have grown for 35 years. Each new warhead that is built increases the chance of nuclear war either by accident or by deliberate action. No one will stop nuclear weapons for you. For 35 years the people of the world have stood by and watched their governments assemble 50,000 nuclear warheads. No one asked us if we wanted these weapons. We have stood by silently and allowed them to be built. It is our silence that threatens the future of the world.

The First Step

You can help eliminate this threat. On November 2, Election Day, 1982, a critical first step can be taken toward averting a nuclear holocaust. Whether or not that step is taken depends on the outcome of a vote on that day—a vote in which every American concerned about the threat of nuclear war needs to take part. Even though you don't live in California, where the vote will be held, you can play a major role in the outcome of the election just as surely as if you cast your ballot there. Tens of thousands of Americans throughout the country have already lent their support to assure the success of the vote there. One more person is needed to help in the campaign. That person is you.

The campaign is to have the citizens of California call for an end to the arms race—to press upon Congress and the President the urgent need "to propose to the Soviet Union an immediate mutual freeze on the testing, production and deployment of all nuclear weapons, missiles and delivery systems" which can be checked and verified.

These words are the heart of the Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze Initiative which can be on the California Ballot this Election Day. This Initiative, by itself, is not going to stop the arms race. *But right now it is the most important first step toward that goal.*

It Has Never Been Done Before

Never in history have the voters in any state or country had the opportunity to vote against the nuclear weapons race. When the 23 million people of California express their opposition to nuclear war, it can spark a citizens' movement across the entire country against the buildup of nuclear weapons—a movement our government could not ignore. The challenge is great. To qualify an initiative for the California ballot, 500,000 signatures must be collected. This task has begun. Once the Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze has been placed on the Ballot we must ensure it has strong support from all segments of society.

It's time now for every concerned American to speak out, time to consolidate our actions into this one major step.

That is why a national citizens' organization has been established to assure the success of this campaign: Citizens for a Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze.

We are not challenging our country's need for a strong defense. We are challenging the buildup of nuclear arms in a never-ending race that can lead the world down the road to annihilation.

No One Wants Nuclear War

In one millionth of one second, one large strategic warhead can release more energy to kill than that produced by all conventional weapons in all wars in the history of mankind.

There's no need to reiterate the horrors of what will happen if nuclear weapons are used. There's hardly an intelligent man or woman alive who doesn't know of these horrors . . . of the firestorms of over 1000 degrees Farenheit that will be set in motion . . . of people choking to death from toxic gases and lack of oxygen . . . of the millions who will suffer from radiation burns . . . of the radioactive dust clouds that will cover hundreds of square miles bringing with them excruciating pain, gut-wrenching sickness and death.

These are the known effects. The unknown effects are as important. We just don't know all the horror that a nuclear war could bring. We do know that disease, deformation and horrible genetic aberrations would be our legacy to the survivors and their progeny, if indeed they were able to have children. And that all the accomplishment of centuries of civilization would vanish and the abundant earth would become a wasteland.

We can't afford to hope that someone will stop the nuclear weapons race for us. We must each make a personal commitment to return our country and the world to safety and sanity. The California Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze is the best place to start.

That is why you are urged to give moral and financial support to the California initiative. It's going to take money to mount an effective campaign, and in doing so ensure that people across the nation and the world understand the significance of this landmark decision in California—our largest state and our largest defense contractor.

So right now, take that important action. Help assure the success of the Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze Initiative on the 1982 California Ballot. Fill out the coupon below and return it with your contribution. Send $50 if you can. It's an investment in your future. If you can't send $50, send $15. Send whatever you can.

Can one person make a difference? Absolutely! And if the longest journey begins with a single step, then the loudest protest begins with a single voice—your voice. Make it heard. Send your contribution today and be as generous as you can.

The stakes are too high to stay silent.

> *"These [nuclear] bombs were built as 'weapons' for 'war,' but their significance greatly transcends war and all its causes and outcomes. They grew out of history, yet they threaten to end history. They were made by men, yet they threaten to annihilate man. They are a pit into which the whole world can fall—a nemesis of all human intentions, actions, and hopes. Only life itself, which they threaten to swallow up, can give the measure of their significance. Yet, in spite of the immeasurable importance of nuclear weapons, the world has declined, on the whole, to think about them very much. We have thus far failed to fashion, or to discover within ourselves, an emotional or intellectual or political response to them. This peculiar failure of response, in which hundreds of millions of people acknowledge the presence of an immediate, unremitting threat to their existence and to the existence of the world they live in but do nothing about it—a failure in which both self-interest and fellow feeling seem to have died—has itself been such a striking phenomenon that it has to be regarded as an extremely important part of the nuclear predicament as this has existed so far.*
>
> *". . . . once we learn that a holocaust might lead to extinction we have no right to gamble, because if we lose, the game will be over, and neither we nor anyone else will ever get another chance."*
>
> From *The Fate of the Earth* by Jonathan Schell appearing in The New Yorker February 1, 1982

> Why a bilateral nuclear weapons freeze will NOT threaten U.S. security, WILL solve many U.S. dilemmas
>
> - A freeze on nuclear missiles and aircraft can be verified by existing national means.
> - A freeze would hold the existing nuclear parity between the United States and the Soviet Union, and would eliminate excuses for further arming on both sides.
> - A freeze would save as much as 100 billion dollars a year in U.S. and Soviet military spending . . . help reduce inflation in the U.S. . . . balance our budget . . . reduce our taxes . . . and raise employment.

This national campaign for the Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze Initiative on the 1982 California Ballot is endorsed by:

*Paul Berg, Ph.D.
Bio-Chemist

Rear Admiral Eugene J. Carroll, Jr.
U.S. Navy (Retired)

*Owen Chamberlain, Ph.D.
Physicist

Norman Cousins

Charles H. Dyson
Business Executive

Paul R. Ehrlich, Ph.D.
Biologist

Richard P. Feynman, Ph.D.
Physicist

Sally Field
Actress

Rear Admiral Gene R. LaRocque
U.S. Navy (Retired)

Norman Lear
Television Producer

Karl Menninger, M.D.

Paul Newman
Motion Pictures

Victor H. Palmieri
Business Executive

Archbishop John R. Quinn
Archdiocese of San Francisco

Carl R. Rogers, Ph.D.
Author

Jonas Salk, M.D.

Jacob Scheinkman

Alfred P. Slaner

Paul C. Warnke
Attorney

Jerome B. Wiesner, Ph.D.
President Emeritus, M.I.T.

Joanne Woodward
Actress

Leopold S. Wyler
Business Executive

Harold Willens
Campaign Chairman

Porter Briggs
Treasurer

*Nobel Laureates

> **Yes,** I want to help stop the greatest potential killer in the history of humankind. Here is my contribution to bolster the campaign to put the Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze Initiative on the 1982 California Ballot. Keep me informed about your progress.
>
> Enclosed is my check for:
>
> ☐ $15 ☐ $25 ☐ $50
>
> ☐ $100 ☐ $500 ☐ Other $ _____
>
> Please make your check out to *Nuclear Weapons Freeze.*
>
> Name _____
>
> Address _____
>
> City/State _____ Zip _____
>
> *Mail to:* **Citizens for a Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze**
> *Attn: Porter Briggs, Treasurer*
> 7250 Franklin Avenue, Suite 101
> Los Angeles, CA 90046

An advertisement for the California statewide Freeze Campaign – officially called Citizens for a Bilateral Nuclear Weapons Freeze – emphasized that undertaking a "personal commitment to return our country and the world to safety and sanity" meant donating financial support. Money, the Campaign suggested to potential donors, was "an investment in your future."
Source: *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, April 1982, p. 56.

media, and the political establishment. As David Meyer has written:

> The nuclear freeze was in this way designed to be as inoffensive as possible to the largest number of people. Discussions of massive direct action campaigns or advocacy of unilateral initiatives were purged from the mainstream of the freeze, not only in California, but across the United States, as the Willens style came to dominate.[12]

Similarly, as Willens wrote in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* in May 1982, the broad success of the Freeze, with Congress and with the administration, was dependent on keeping the campaign "as hard-nosed and free from peace-rally rhetoric as possible. Our job is to reach out to as wide a political spectrum as possible."[13] This attitude clarified the rift between the freeze movement's leadership and its predecessors, who had been much more amenable to radical tactics, nonviolence, and traditional pacifism.

Nationally, the Freeze Campaign was not so strident in its rejection of traditional "peace-rally rhetoric." It actively avoided the bureaucratic, hierarchical style that dominated its California office, instead favoring a large degree of local autonomy, granting local and state Freeze bodies a high degree of self-determination.[14] Its national coordinator Randy Kehler, a "clean-cut, articulate individual" with experience as a draft resister and anti-war activist in the WRL, was in this sense an ideal choice to lead the Campaign.[15] Emphasizing this decentralized structure, as well as promoting the Freeze Campaign as a grassroots organization with a national reach, the national body established itself in St. Louis, Missouri as a clearinghouse for information, strategies, tactics, and resources for all local and state Freeze bodies.[16] However, this was not always successful. Often local Freeze groups sometimes had no idea the national Freeze Campaign even existed.[17] Many Freeze groups struggled to find appropriate methods of organizing in conservative communities where peace activism was not considered "normal" or "culturally

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[12] David S. Meyer, *A Winter of Discontent: The Nuclear Freeze and American Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1990), p. 112.
[13] Harold Willens, "California Freeze Initiative," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May 1982, p. 64.
[14] On this attitude within the Freeze Campaign, see Field Organizing Project, proposal, [late 1982], p. 1, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign Records, Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-St. Louis (hereafter Freeze Records), Box 3, Folder 60; and Rob Bartlett, memorandum to NWFC Executive Committee, other committee leadership, and staff, 1 December 1983, p. 2, Freeze Records, Box 2, Folder 56.
[15] Lawrence S. Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1971 to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 176.
[16] Kehler interview.
[17] Randy Kehler to Karin Fierke, 3 June 1983, Freeze Records, Box 3, Folder 61.

acceptable."[18] Conservative opposition was also common in St. Louis; as an anonymous letter to Freeze Campaign coordinator Randy Kehler opined, the lower Midwest was hardly a receptive area for progressive activism. "The only "Freeze" you will experience in this area," the author argued, "is the icy stares from the populace who wonder what your game is."[19] In an environment of political conservatism, the Freeze Campaign ambitiously defined itself as a broad-based movement. Even more ambitious was its attempt to mobilize public opinion and local action to such an extent that the Freeze would dominate local, state, and federal politics.

What the disparate nature of Freeze Campaign organizing around the nation demonstrates is a commitment to grassroots-based organizing, even in the midst of the attempt to build a national anti-nuclear movement. A Freeze field organizing proposal from 1982 confirms the campaign's unusual nature, noting that "the Freeze is not a campaign in the usual sense. It is not a centralized, top-down, Washington- or New York-based effort."[20] The localized, grassroots, community-based organizing model adopted and vigorously defended by the Freeze Campaign built on, and responded to, a 1970s trend towards the decentralization of business, information, bureaucracy, and unions. Taking full advantage of the decentralized and diffused institutional mood, community-based organizing flourished, rejecting national organizing bodies in favor of local groups, preferring local knowledge over 'experts,' and mistrusting large scale institutions.[21] In this sense, the wider freeze movement advocated a localized, grassroots approach to political change. In translating such ideas to political strategies, however, the idea of the 'freeze' took on new meaning and significance. Its nature as a political campaign was defined by its promotion as a mass movement. Organizers and mainstream media both contributed to this image of a broad-based movement with a simple message, turning what had been a decentralized grassroots movement into policy focused campaign of national reach. This image emphasized the polite nature of the freeze movement, distancing the freeze from its radical or pacifist counterparts in the wider anti-nuclear movement, and from the memories of divisive, confrontational, revolutionary, and countercultural protest in the 1960s.

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[18] See, for example, Alexia Hunter, "Rural Organizing" segment of Field Organizers Project draft manual, 2 November 1983, Freeze Records, Box 3, Folder 62.
[19] Anonymous to Randy Kehler, [March 1982], Freeze Records, Box 5, Folder 137.
[20] Field Organizing Project, proposal, [late 1982], p. 1, Freeze Records, Box 3, Folder 60.
[21] See Harry C. Boyte, "The Formation of the New Peace Movement: A Communitarian Perspective," *Social Policy* 13, no. 1 (1982), pp. 5-6.

This national peace movement – its leaders anticipated – would have massive popular appeal, involving millions of hitherto politically uninvolved Americans. As the Freeze Campaign planned its 1982 strategy, it hoped to "make the Freeze highly visible to a national audience so that it becomes a "household word" and a clear alternative to the continuing arms race."[22] Achieving this, however, meant much more than continuing to expand the campaign's grassroots base. Mainstream media were needed to "substantially broaden the [Freeze Campaign's] base of support," another stated goal for 1982. The Freeze coordinators intended that this broadening would be national in scope, complimenting the existing grassroots base of the campaign. As the 1982 strategy paper suggested:

> Our efforts to date have been quite diverse and localized, often with little national coordination. This has allowed a significant building up of grassroots Freeze activities tailored to particular communities and their resources. None of this needs to be sacrificed. Rather, we need to set more national goals and generate more nationally-coordinated activities so as to take advantage of the work already done.[23]

What this meant in practice was to move campaign priorities from the local and tangible, to the national and abstract, effectively promoting campaign platforms to as wide an audience as possible.

There were, however, dangers in pursuing a broad base for the movement, and pacifists, socialists, and other radicals often criticized the Freeze Campaign for its "soft" or "safe" approach.[24] By 1981, the Freeze had become, in many ways, a "bandwagon" whose popularity had eclipsed other peace and disarmament campaigns. "Its narrow focus leaves no room for these other efforts," felt Tony Webb of the Foundation for National Progress, publisher of *Mother Jones* magazine. More importantly, he argued, the Freeze "focuses on weapons and hardware instead of people," losing the potential impact of a humanist approach.[25] The freeze needed a "backyard" strategy, one "that brings the issue

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[22] Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, "1982 National Strategy: Broadening the Base and Creating a New Political Reality" (draft), 8 February 1982, p. 3, Cagan Papers (unprocessed portion), Box 38, Folder 1.
[23] Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, "1982 National Strategy: Broadening the Base and Creating a New Political Reality" (draft), 8 February 1982, p. 4, Cagan Papers (unprocessed portion), Box 38, Folder 1.
[24] Richard Deats, interview by the author, 10 November 2010, Nyack, New York; Leslie Cagan, interview by the author, 11 November 2010, New York City; Bruce Cronin, interview by the author, 11 November 2010, New York City; and David McReynolds, interview by the author, 12 November 2010, New York City. See also Sidney Lens, "How Deep a Freeze?" *Progressive*, May 1982, pp. 16-17.
[25] As paraphrased in Randy Kehler to Tony Webb, 9 November 1981, Freeze Records, Box 5, Folder 137.

home."[26] Jon Saxton of MfS questioned whether the Freeze was too broad, again raising the dangers of a campaign that was too wide in its appeal. "One can support the Freeze without taking *any* political position on *any* aspect of *any* issue," he wrote in *WIN* magazine. "As the [Freeze] strategy paper says, "The Freeze cuts across traditional political lines and appeals to all who are concerned with the nuclear threat to our survival"."[27]

Conversely, the response to Saxton's article demonstrated that Freeze proponents felt that it was such a good idea *because of* its lowest-common-denominator appeal. "What has been lacking until now is a program that can mobilize masses of people," argued a *WIN* reader, linking the issue of mass public support to the wider fortunes of the anti-nuclear movement.[28] At any rate, the Freeze Campaign blustered on, remaining, in the words of its leaders, "a mile wide and an inch deep."[29] Its mass appeal, for instance, minimized its ability to debate more comprehensive arms reduction policies. The Freeze Campaign's approach essentially succeeded in popularizing the idea of nuclear arms control amongst the public, but at a cost. It helped to redefine the idea of a mass social movement; by involving itself in electoral and legislative politics, and by distancing itself from its radical and pacifist roots, the Freeze challenged the idea of the anti-nuclear movement as one that existed on the fringes of American political and cultural life.

In some ways the Freeze Campaign sought to usurp the wider anti-nuclear movement, popularizing the idea of "polite protest" at the expense of a more comprehensive engagement with social activism and political change, being the domain of traditional peace groups whose origins lay in the anti-war movement of the 1960s. Its relationship with the 1960s, of course, was more complex; many Freeze Campaign organizers had been involved in the anti-war movement, draft resistance, and civil rights campaigning earlier in their activist 'careers.' Organizers, especially at the local level, also emphasized 1960s ideas about peace movement protest, using ideas of "consciousness raising" to highlight the process of their public appeal. The strategies involved in building a movement with mass appeal, however, required a more nuanced negotiation of the

[26] Randy Kehler to Tony Webb, 9 November 1981, Freeze Records, Box 5, Folder 137.
[27] Jon Saxton, "Nuclear Freeze Campaign: Disarmament in a Vacuum," *WIN*, 1 December 1981, p. 14.
[28] Morris Friedell, letter to the editor, *WIN*, 15 January 1982, p. 2.
[29] Kehler interview. See also, for example, Solo, *Protest to Policy*, p. 24; and Randall Forsberg, interview for WGBH (Boston), 3 March 1988, WGBH Media Library & Archives, http://openvault.wgbh.org (accessed 16 Feb 2011).

legacies of 1960s activism. Hence, whilst the Freeze can be viewed as a very 1980s style of political campaign, *rejecting* the idea and reputation of the 1960s, its engagement with localized grassroots activism, publicity, and institutional politics shows us that a *negotiation* of the meanings of the 1960s was the more appropriate way forward for the Campaign.

POLITICIZING THE MOVEMENT

After the 1982 congressional elections, the Freeze Campaign hoped to further broaden its base of support, extending the promise of a popular grassroots movement into the political arena. In ten statewide referenda, 37 city and county referenda around the country, and in over 400 New England town meetings, voters representing approximately one-third of the national electorate had endorsed the Freeze by strong margins.[30] Planning its 1983 strategy, the Freeze Campaign recommended expanding its operations into areas of the country where it had yet to make a mark. The Freeze aimed to "increase support in the swing states and congressional districts and to include the labor, minority and business communities."[31] Gaining the support of these constituencies was key to developing the freeze movement as one that was not just bipartisan, but one that could unite disparate interests and communities. Doing so would increase its political sway; Congressional representatives would be much more likely to listen to a campaign that counted labor unions and business associations amongst its supporters. Essentially, a greater support base around the nation would strengthen the ability of the Freeze to influence the 1984 presidential election, and it was towards this event that the Freeze – and plenty of other anti-nuclear organizations – turned its attention.

Targeting key congressional districts for field organizing, the Freeze Campaign's Field Organizers Project aimed initially to build momentum and support in states such as Illinois, Oklahoma, Texas, Pennsylvania, and Georgia, where little organized support existed. Since states such as Massachusetts, New York, and California already had strong statewide freeze campaigns, Freeze organizers looked to the Midwest, the south, the

[30] Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition*, p. 177.
[31] NWFC 1983 strategy paper, quoted in Field Organizing Project, proposal, [late 1982], p. 2, Freeze Records, Box 3, Folder 60.

plains states, the mountain states, and the desert states to expand the impact of the movement. It was an ambitious plan, but the momentum and enthusiasm of the campaign's successes in 1982 suggested that the timing was right to develop and diversify the movement's geographical constituencies outside of their existing strongholds.[32] It was not going to be easy, especially with a relatively small national staff based in St. Louis. Building a strong freeze movement in large, rural states like Kansas, according to Freeze Campaign field staff member Frank Blechman, was "a long-term proposition; not the work of a few short visits."[33] As such, throughout 1983 and 1984, the Campaign attempted to galvanize more specific support around the country in ways that would impact decisively on the 1984 elections. This time, the movement would not simply use ballot initiatives and referenda; it would seek to influence Congressional and Senatorial races in as many districts as possible. Hence, a decidedly political push was needed.

In June 1983, the Freeze Campaign established Freeze Voter, an independent lobbying body. Freeze Voter was one of several lobbying efforts on behalf of a peace movement that ostensibly sought to translate favorable public opinion into Congressional support. The national Freeze body would remain non-partisan; as its coordinator Randy Kehler confirmed in a July 1983 interview, there existed no plans for the Freeze to endorse any Congressional or presidential candidates.[34] As a result, Freeze Voter began as a means to channel the Freeze movement's success into more specific electoral goals. Phone banks, mass mailings, and door-to-door canvassing were carried out by some 25,000 volunteers in 40 state affiliates.[35] Meanwhile, Freeze Voter became a glitzy Political Action Committee (PAC), using support from high profile donors to make a very public appeal for voter registration and the election of pro-Freeze candidates. Lisa Weinstein, a film producer from the famous Weinstein family in Hollywood, organized fundraisers that attracted Barbara Streisand, Olivia Newton-John, and the Pointer Sisters, amongst others.[36] This kind of publicity would help to target those groups of citizens "who have

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[32] Field Organizers Project, nationwide congressional district survey, spring 1983, Freeze Records, Box 3, Folder 60.
[33] Frank Blechman, "Field Report: Kansas," 13 March 1984, p. 2, Freeze Records, Box 3, Folder 63.
[34] David Corn, "Doing the Freeze Better," *Nuclear Times*, July 1983, p. 19.
[35] Mark Hertsgaard, "What Became of the Freeze?," *Mother Jones*, June 1985, p. 46.
[36] David Talbot, "Lights, Camera, Activism!" *Mother Jones*, May 1985, p. 9. Freeze Voter also managed to raise substantial amounts of money for a new, non-traditional lobbying group. See Solo, *Protest to Policy*, p. 169; and Lofland, *Polite Protesters*, pp. 162-163.

been traditionally excluded from the [electoral] system."[37] In doing so, the Freeze Campaign, Freeze Voter, and associated coalitions engaged in explicitly electoral strategies – combined with glitzy publicity campaigns – designed to turn the Freeze's broad appeal into political success.

This new involvement in politics was not just limited to elections and lobbying; the Freeze Campaign had been working since February 1982 with Representative Edward Markey, who had introduced a freeze resolution in the House of Representatives, and Senators Edward Kennedy and Mark Hatfield, sponsors of a freeze resolution in the Senate.[38] In retrospect, Kehler regards this move into negotiating with Congress as one that came too early. Ted Kennedy's enthusiasm had led Freeze organizers to embrace the House and Senate resolutions before the campaign had time to develop a sufficient public base of support.[39] Part of the reason the Freeze embraced Kennedy's suggestions so wholeheartedly was that, as Kehler recalls, "we believed our own press."[40] The news media had elevated the movement beyond what it was, and suggested the mass interest in grassroots campaigning had come from nowhere. As Randall Forsberg recalled in a 1988 interview, "a dead, dead silence" in the national news media throughout 1979, 1980 and 1981, even as activists were working solidly at organizing local anti-nuclear campaigns around the nation.[41] This story of a rapid and dramatic rise in visibility further promoted the idea of the freeze movement as the exemplar of a new form of anti-nuclear activism, reliant on the involvement of ordinary citizens, and responding primarily to the Reagan administration's nuclear weapons policies.

The Freeze Campaign's political strategies were a disappointment to many activists in the peace movement. "Lobbying and electioneering may help slow the U.S. nuclear arms buildup," argued Normon Solomon and Ada Sanchez in *Nuclear Times*, "but these tactics do not challenge its underlying momentum. We cannot rely on institutional channels of conventional politics which, for 38 years, have served military interests in Nuclear Age

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[37] National Register for Democracy Mobilization, "Call for National Voter Registration Mobilization," July 1982, Freeze Campaigns Collected Records, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, Box 1, Folder 19.
[38] This story is told in depth elsewhere, most comprehensively in Waller, *Congress and the Nuclear Freeze*.
[39] Kehler interview.
[40] Kehler interview.
[41] Randall Forsberg, interview for WGBH, 3 March 1988, WGBH Media Library & Archives, http://openvault.wgbh.org (accessed 16 Feb 2011).

America."[42] They argued that the Freeze Campaign, getting embroiled in legislative efforts to have a resolution passed in Congress, appeared a "sad spectacle… In our eagerness to matter more to those in power, we will matter less to the vital impulses that initiated our efforts in the first place."[43] Disquiet about the Freeze's apparent departure from its grassroots base emphasized the new, untested terrain the Freeze attempted to navigate. Traditional peace organizations and political groups, on the other hand, preferred to challenge the nuclear arms race through their established strategies and tactics. This divergence speaks to the different approaches of these two sides of the anti-nuclear movement in the early 1980s.[44] This difference, in turn, became amplified as the movement debated the role of electoral politics in the 1984 elections, and how it sought to deal with the aftermath of Reagan's re-election. Such political strategies emphasize just how deep the Freeze became involved in institutional activism. Contesting the idea that widespread grassroots protest was the most effective means of developing a movement for political change, the Freeze attempted to do both. Not without its problems, this dual approach meant the Freeze sat in two worlds, borrowing ideas and strategies from institutional campaigns from the ban-the-bomb movement, as well as the diverse expressions of local, grassroots opposition to the arms race that had flourished in the late 1970s.

SELLING DISARMAMENT

Like the Freeze, other anti-nuclear organizations saw enormous potential for increased membership in the climate of high profile anti-nuclear sentiment that characterized the early 1980s. In essence, the key challenge for these organizations was to create an effective mass movement through strategies of fundraising and advertising that were national in scope. SANE, whilst having existed continuously since 1957, found itself wondering in 1980 how it could go about developing new membership in pursuit of this mass movement. SANE also sought to distinguish itself from the plethora of other anti-nuclear organizations, many of which had a similar organizational model of a paid

[42] Norman Solomon and Ada Sanchez, "Doing Better Than the Freeze," *Nuclear Times*, July 1983, p. 16.
[43] Solomon and Sanchez, "Doing Better Than the Freeze," p. 16.
[44] Such a distinct categorization might seem arbitrary, but research by Sam Marullo *et al*. has also found that in terms of goals and strategies for social change, there existed noticeable differences between pacifist and non-pacifist peace movement organizations. See Sam Marullo *et al.*, "Pacifist and Nonpacifist Groups in the U.S. Peace Movement of the 1980s," *Peace and Change* 16, no. 3 (1991), pp. 235-259.

membership, a professional staff, and a high profile board.[45] Organizations such as Common Cause, state and local Freeze Campaign affiliates, PSR, WAND, the Council for a Liveable World, and many others all competed to some degree for membership and influence, even though many of them worked toward similar goals. Although many of these organizations began as volunteer-run peace groups, they soon evolved into large, national entities with a head office, executive and national committees, and local chapters around the country. This necessitated a paid, professional staff. Such moves toward a corporate organizational model were not, however, without misgivings. For example, in a 1983 PSR board meeting, Judy Lipton expressed concern about "the problem of eroding the concept of volunteerism in the organization by paying officers of the Board;" something not heeded by others invested in steering the peace movement in the direction of corporate America.[46] Uncertain about this new direction, yet very much committed to redefining the idea of a what a large, successful anti-nuclear movement would look like, organizers engaged in finding the most appropriate way to advertise and promote the necessity of nuclear arms control to the wider public.

SANE's fortunes had not improved substantially by the beginning of 1982. Despite its ability to attract tens of thousands of new members, the organization still struggled to translate those figures into more concrete gains, both in terms of consistent fundraising, and in the creation of some form of political influence. SANE's membership rose from 12,000 members in 1980 to 65,000 by mid-1983, and to over 100,000 by the end of 1984.[47] The challenge beyond this process of attracting new members, writes Milton Katz, was whether SANE had the potential to be "a potent political force and one that would have an impact on public policy."[48]

In January 1982, SANE was approached by a direct marketing agency, offering to assist with SANE's goal of mobilizing public opinion against the arms race. Rapp & Collins, Inc., an agency interested in assisting progressive advocacy groups, suggested that

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[45] For a detailed history of SANE to 1985, see Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb: A History of Sane, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 1957-1985* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986).
[46] PSR Executive Committee minutes, 4 February 1983, p. 4, Physicians for Social Responsibility Records, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania (hereafter PSR Records), Series II, Box 35, Folder 1 (Acc. 94a-073).
[47] See William Robbins, "Diverse Antiwar Movement Cites Gains," *New York Times* 18 July 1983, p. A6; and Tim Carrington, "Anti-Nuclear Movement Loses Force as Reagan Seeks Arms-Reduction Agreements with Soviets," *Wall Street Journal*, 5 February 1985, p. 64.
[48] Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, p. 152.

carefully planned advertising be utilized. SANE would require a mail campaign "seeking to convert a substantial number of [existing donors] to monthly contributors, for the purpose of financing the expanded appeals for membership from the mainstream of American life."[49] An "all-media campaign for a test market" would be developed, utilizing direct mail and advertising on radio, television, and in newspapers "to recruit members and influence public opinion." Public opinion surveys would help SANE determine the success of the media campaign, and if successful, work towards larger, more ambitious national advertising campaigns.[50] The ideas behind these strategies reiterate the mainstream, national reach that anti-nuclear organizations such as SANE aimed for. By mobilizing members of the public through national marketing and media campaigns, SANE's platform could benefit from a substantial interest in funds, furthering its goals of public and political influence.

The Rapp & Collins proposal also recommended SANE work to promote a clear identity, free from ambiguity, separate from the Freeze Campaign, and one the emphasized its focus on a long-term strategy of a reduction of the arms race and the defense budget.[51] Indeed, SANE's goals were more than simply freezing the arms race; it hoped to reverse the nuclear build-up, converting federal funds to more socially humane economic programs such as health and education. The Rapp & Collins proposal suggested that SANE work on soliciting monthly donations from a dedicated supporter list as the best way to raise funds. Prospective direct mail used by peace organizations was cheap, and whilst it didn't often generate high returns, it usually made back some profit on top of costs.[52] Rapp & Collins warned that other forms of fundraising, such as paid advertising in newspapers and magazines, and on radio and television, was much less reliable than direct mailing in terms of any guaranteed financial return.[53] However, it suggested SANE

[49] Stan Rapp to David Cortright, 14 January 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.
[50] Stan Rapp to David Cortright, 14 January 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.
[51] Rapp & Collins, Inc., "A Plan for a SANE Development Program and Public Opinion Campaign," April 1982, pp. 15-16, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 2.
[52] A direct mail campaign run by Clergy and Laity Concerned in 1981, for example, had a mere 0.42% response rate. It did, however, make back its costs for the mailing. SANE's own campaign in the fall of 1981, costing $70,000 to reach 390,000 individuals, returned those costs with a profit of $30,000. Other mailing lists it targeted generally made back about 50% on top of costs. See Rapp & Collins, Inc., "A Plan for a SANE Development Program and Public Opinion Campaign," April 1982, p. 22, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 2.
[53] Rapp & Collins, Inc., "A Plan for a SANE Development Program and Public Opinion Campaign," April 1982, p. 25, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 2.

conduct a pilot advertising campaign, to "strike while the iron is hot."[54] The emerging scope of the soon-to-be-held June 12 rally in New York, and a rising tide of anti-nuclear sentiment around the nation indicated that a media campaign at this time could satisfy SANE's aims in the development of a mass movement whose financial contributions would sustain the ability of SANE – and other organizations – to educate, lobby, and mobilize additional support.

SANE's reaction to the proposal was supportive, but identified limitations in what it could afford, or achieve. SANE executive committee member Alan Silver, for example, felt that national media saturation was an ambitious goal to set. Instead, he argued, "What seems helpful is the idea of enlisting local chapters in strenuous, continuous activities – thus tapping the great strength of American social movements, their voluntarism – while developing appeals through relatively inexpensive local outlets."[55] Silver's comment appeals to the significant challenge of creating an effective mass movement through media coverage and advertising of national reach. As various direct action campaigns in the late 1970s had shown, local mobilization was often much more achievable and effective. Organizing locally was also much more feasible in terms of finances, word-of-mouth publicity, and affordable access to local media. "The real question," asked SANE staff:

> … is how we will put together the political organizing strategy and tactics to activate the people reached by the campaign. It is important to convince people that the campaign is a real, effective, political plan to reverse the arms race and not just a massive advertising of an idea or an organization.[56]

SANE wanted to promote itself as *the* answer to the problem of the arms race on a national scale, and to do so it shouldn't simply advertise to literate, educated Americans. Like many other peace organizations, SANE wanted a diverse constituency involving Americans of all races and classes. Developing an advertising strategy, then, that could appeal to diverse demographic targets to "build effective political power, [and] not just to popularize a slogan," was agreed upon.[57]

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[54] Rapp & Collins, Inc., "A Plan for a SANE Development Program and Public Opinion Campaign," April 1982, p. 40, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 2.
[55] Alan Silver, "Understanding the Audience," 7 June 1982, p. 2, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 2.
[56] SANE Staff to Tom Collins and Stan Rapp, 17 April 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.
[57] SANE Staff to Tom Collins and Stan Rapp, 17 April 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.

Much of SANE's concerns about effective advertising were based on the challenge of mobilizing politically uninvolved Americans. It wanted to appear in its advertising as a significant, popular and respectable organization with a concrete political program. The use of celebrities and public figures in anti-nuclear campaigning was one way of promoting the movement to a wider audience. Endorsement by, or involvement of celebrities and public figures was a central part of a movement aimed at maximizing its

Helen Caldicott (center), with actress Sally Field (left) and comedian Lily Tomlin (right) at WAND's annual Mother's Day ball in 1985. Field and Tomlin jointly received WAND's "Helen Caldicott Leadership Award" at the ball. Other recipients in the mid-1980s included actresses Meryl Streep and Jane Alexander; Streep described the award as "better than an Oscar."[58]
Source: Helen Caldicott, *A Passionate Life*.

appeal. "The cause is so broad-based that celebrities can endorse it without losing popular appeal or being charged with engaging in 'radical chic'," *Nuclear Times* observed. "And since the movement makes a point of calling non-experts, it lets stars speak as average people – who happen to be very visible."[59] Hollywood stars had proven highly successful in popularizing specific anti-nuclear campaigns and organizations, and attracting public interest to the movement in general. For example, Margot Kidder, most famous for her role as Lois Lane in the *Superman* films (1978-1987), accompanied

[58] Quoted in Diane Carasik Dion, "Catching up with Meryl Streep," *Dial* 5, no. 7 (July 1984), p. 7.
[59] Cathy Cevoli, "Antinuclear Stars Come Out," *Nuclear Times*, July 1983, p. 27. Robert Holsworth has demonstrated similar findings. He writes, "buoyed by their success, activists still feared that the movement would eventually be reduced to a nostalgia clipping in which people would remember 1982 as the year when they joined Jane Fonda workout clubs, danced to the Go-Gos, and voted for the freeze." Robert D. Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak: A Study of Politics, Religion, and Antinuclear Weapons Activism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), p. 100.

Harold Willens on a statewide speaking tour in 1982 in the lead-up to the November freeze referendum, one that passed in California by a slim margin.[60] Helen Caldicott's publicity agent Pat Kingsley was instrumental in attracting the vocal support of high profile actresses such as Sally Field, Meryl Streep, and Lily Tomlin to the WAND cause. Field and Tomlin appeared on the *Merv Griffin Show* with Caldicott in March 1982, whilst Field and Amarillo bishop Leroy Matthiesen accompanied Caldicott on *Donahue*. Each generated large responses from viewers, many of them women; WAND received around 6000 letters from viewers following the *Donahue* appearance.[61]

Celebrity involvement, however, troubled some organizers. SANE's Alan Silver thought the use of celebrities would actually harm SANE's credibility. What would work better, he suggested, were the voices of ordinary people.[62] Maintaining the organization's egalitarian image, as a voice of ordinary Americans, was essential. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, SANE attracted scorn from the peace movement for purging its ranks of communist members.[63] The organization, stressed SANE executive director David Cortright, had come a long way since then. Cortright had become active against the Vietnam War whilst a soldier in the U.S. Army in 1968. Pursuing a life of academia and activism, he joined the leadership of SANE shortly after completing his doctorate in the late 1970s. Writing in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* in 1984, he stressed that SANE had embarked on a new course in the 1980s. "The SANE of today is much different from the organization [of the past]," he wrote. "The elitism and exclusionist policies of the past are gone. Far from eschewing mass action, SANE now actively encourages citizen action and grass-roots activism."[64] SANE was, like many other mainstream anti-nuclear organizations, presenting itself as a moderate, populist answer to the nuclear arms race, attempting to appeal to as many Americans as possible.

At the heart of the debate over SANE's public profile, though, was the question of how to educate and recruit support, whilst at the same time achieving political clout and maintaining public respectability. "I like the fact that [in our advertising] we inform

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[60] Cevoli, "Antinuclear Stars," p. 27.
[61] Caldicott, *A Passionate Life*, pp. 261-262.
[62] Alan Silver, "Understanding the Audience," 7 June 1982, p. 3, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 2.
[63] See Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, Chapter 3; and Robbie Lieberman, *The Strangest Dream: Communism, Anticommunism and the U.S. Peace Movement, 1945-1963* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000), Chapter 6.
[64] David Cortright, letter to the editor, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November 1984, p. 54.

people as well as recruit them," wrote organizer Ed Glennon of a sample direct mailing letter put forward by Rapp & Collins. For Glennon, the advertising plan proposed by Rapp & Collins was presented in a way that made it seem like advertising *was* SANE's program, rather than *supporting* SANE's program. As Glennon argued, "advertising per se does not give you political clout, only organizing does."[65] Still, SANE duly considered the many proposals offered by Rapp & Collins, attempting to take advantage of the burgeoning public opposition to the arms race.

SANE decided to run a series of one-page advertisements in the *New York Times* in several editions of the paper along the east coast. These ran in two editions of the newspaper on 23 May 1982 – a Sunday – to admittedly little fanfare or success. The advertisement generated only 260 responses, with contributions totalling just under $6,000.[66] The advertisements were very text-heavy, featuring large headlines stating "How to stop feeling hopeless and helpless about preventing nuclear war," and "The time has come for THE GREAT TURNAWAY FROM NUCLEAR WAR." David Cortright later described the campaign as an "abysmal failure, and noted that the experience had "left a bitter taste" within the organization.[67] SANE lost $22,000 on the campaign, as well as the confidence of some of their financial benefactors. "I personally consider my approval of the ad the greatest failure of my five years at SANE," he wrote to Rapp & Collins some months after SANE had regrouped, expressing his wish to terminate their relationship. Newspaper advertising, however significant it might have appeared, failed to prove an effective means of publicity or fundraising.

Cortright also regarded some of the proposals submitted for additional advertising by Rapp & Collins unsuitable, arguing that in 1982, at the height of the anti-nuclear movement's popularity, SANE needed a new approach:

> We should not be trying to educate people about the numbers and facts of the arms race. It's impossible to communicate substantial information within the narrow time limits of a radio or television commercial. Most important, such an approach is inappropriate to the current political climate, in our view. It appears

[65] Ed Glennon, comments on a sample SANE direct mailing letter, [1982], SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.
[66] "Results: New York Times Ad," [June 1982], SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 3. Constrast this to SANE's three full page adversisements in the same newspaper in 1959, generating nearly 12,000 responses and almost $10,000 in contributions. Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, p. 42.
[67] David Cortright to Tom Collins and Stan Rapp, 9 September 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.

> that substantial majorities of the American people are already deeply concerned about the threat of nuclear war and want to see the arms race stopped. They are not concerned about who's ahead or how many times one side or the other can blow the world up. They want to be told that something can be done about the problem, and that their involvement can make a difference. For these purposes the type of ad we need should be more "personal" and "emotional." As I say, we don't have the magic formula ourselves, but we both agree that the previously submitted concept papers, like the *New York Times* ad, miss the mark.[68]

Cortright did appreciate Rapp & Collins' direct mail appeal drafts, and adapted them for a run of 50,000 in a test mailing in October 1982. It appears that this method was much less fraught than the "difficult and risky business" of advertising on radio and television.[69]

In assessing the shortcomings of SANE's *Times* advertising campaign, Tom Collins argued that the pool of support the *Times* advertisements hoped to appeal to had already been "pre-empted by the freeze movement."[70] It appears both SANE and their direct marketing advisors were "swept up and perhaps over-affected by the anti-nuclear mood which gripped the country in the early part of [1982]."[71] SANE's program, given the success of the freeze movement, simply didn't 'sell' as well as it might have. Attempting to understand the impact of the *Times* advertisements on the general public, SANE commissioned focus group research, which produced some illuminating results. A general response amongst participants was that there was a strong need in American politics for an organization against any build up of nuclear weapons. Asking the public for financial support to help SANE prevent nuclear war was seen as an ineffective rhetorical strategy.[72]

SANE's efforts to portray itself as different from its earlier, elitist incarnation also hadn't worked. Focus group participants perceived SANE as "rather elitist and more intellectually-oriented rather than activist-oriented." Its history of collaboration with

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[68] David Cortright to Tom Collins and Stan Rapp, 9 September 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1. Emphasis in original.
[69] David Cortright to Tom Collins and Stan Rapp, 9 September 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.
[70] Tom Collins to David Cortright, 23 September 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.
[71] Tom Collins to David Cortright, 23 September 1982, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 1.
[72] Tracy Research, "Qualitative Evaluation of Two Alternative Print Ads Developed for SANE," June 1982, p. 8, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 4.

How to stop feeling hopeless and helpless about preventing nuclear war

Suddenly there's a flood of newspaper and magazine articles, television programs, and books about the danger and horror of nuclear war.

According to polls, nearly two-thirds of all Americans fear that a nuclear war may start somewhere in the world in the next five years.

And at least 60 percent of the public believes that their personal chances of surviving an all-out nuclear war are poor.

People who have never before been involved in peace activities are getting together and getting active.

Physicians for Social Responsibility. *High-Technology Professionals* for Peace. *Lawyers'* Alliance for the Prevention of Nuclear War. *Musicians* Against Nuclear Arms. *Educators* for Social Responsibility.

And literally from Maine to California, there has been a rising popular demand for a mutual U.S.-Soviet freeze on additional nuclear weapons.

As of a few weeks ago, the freeze initiative had been endorsed by at least 414 political bodies—317 Town Meetings, 67 City Councils, 19 County Councils, 3 State Senate Districts, and the legislatures of 8 states.

It would be nice to think it's all over but the shouting.

But it's not.

Alas, it's not the end of the nuclear arms race.

But it *may* be the beginning of the end.

It really all depends on you and others like you.

Will the freeze movement harden into powerful, permanent, effective political opposition to the arms race and support for workable programs?

Or, will it melt away with the next contrived war scare? Or the next summit conference at which the two superpowers make tricky arms control proposals designed chiefly for the propaganda effect?

It all depends on you.

But what can one person really do?

That's what stopped so many people in the past. They felt so hopeless and helpless...

"Sure, I'm worried. But what can I do? *What can one person do?*"

Basically, the answer boils down to two things:

1. What you *understand* about nuclear war.
2. What you *demand* of your elected representatives.

In other words, if enough people really *understand* the situation—and then *demand* the right things from their elected representatives in the House, the Senate and the White House—we can actually turn the arms race around.

Let's start with what we all need to understand.

1. Hiroshima times one million equals zero.

The explosive power of all the nuclear weapons in the world today is *one million times* greater than that of the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima. Enough to destroy life on this planet.

2. The next World War will be nuclear.

With the combat forces of the major powers equipped with nuclear *artillery*, most experts agree that the next world war can't be "confined" to Europe or "confined" to conventional weapons.

The side that's losing is going to use nuclear weapons. And, the side that's hit is going to retaliate. And then what?

3. There can be no neat "surgical strikes."

If the Russians "merely" attack our missile silos and we attack theirs—or vice versa—our two societies will end.

Most Americans and most Russians will die from blast, radiation, burns, suffocation, cancer, starvation, disease. And they will be the lucky ones.

4. Civil Defense is useless.

No bomb shelters will save us. No digging holes in the ground. No evacuation of our cities.

(Evacuating our cities might *cause* a nuclear war. The Russians might conclude that we're getting ready to attack *them*—and strike first.)

5. Claims of Soviet "superiority" are baloney.

It all depends on who's counting. And how they do it.

The U.S. has 9,200 strategic warheads. The Soviet Union has 7,800.

They've got more "throw weight" (total explosive tonnage). But we've got more warheads on invulnerable submarines—4,750 to their 1,900. And so on. And so on.

Even our own Defense Department report for fiscal year 1982 conceded that "the United States and the Soviet Union are roughly equal in strategic nuclear power."

6. Nuclear "superiority" has no meaning anyway.

Each side needs only a few hundred bombs to wipe out the cities, population, and industry of the other side.

Yet we have 30,000 warheads. The Russians have 20,000. And President Reagan wants to produce 17,000 new ones!

How many times do we plan to "make the rubble bounce" before we declare "victory"?

7. The Russians don't want nuclear war either.

True, the Soviet Union is not a democracy. But, their economy is suffering from the arms race as much as ours.

And they haven't forgotten the horror of war. Twenty million Russians died in World War II.

These are the basic truths about nuclear war. And yet, our government leaders go on ignoring them year after year.

So here are some ideas on what you can *do* about it.

1. Support the freeze movement.

It's not the whole answer, but it's a beginning.

If people in your area are trying to get a mutual U.S.-Soviet freeze resolution passed, help them.

And urge your representatives in the House and Senate to support the Kennedy-Hatfield freeze resolution endorsed by 25 senators and 169 representatives.

2. Dump the Civil Defense boondoggle.

Tell your U.S. senator and representative that you oppose President Reagan's plan to spend $4 billion on Civil Defense.

All it could accomplish is to delude some people into thinking that we could survive nuclear war—and thus make it more likely.

And we need the money for things like school lunches, college tuition loans, crime control—and to repair and upgrade things like crumbling bridges, sewer systems, railroads, and water mains.

3. Put pressure on Congress (and Congressional candidates) for serious arms reduction negotiations.

Did you know that in 1962 President Kennedy presented detailed, *workable* proposals for arms race reversal in carefully planned stages?

Then the Cuban Missile Crisis blew it away. But the basic principles of the Kennedy plan still offer a sound foundation for a workable agreement with the Soviet Union today.

However, postcards to the White House aren't likely to bring it back.

President Reagan has frequently expressed his determination to pursue a huge arms build-up. He has appointed "super hawks" to plan and carry on arms control negotiations with the Russians.

His idea of negotiations seems to be to submit proposals he knows the Russians won't accept—so he will then be free to build more weapons.

The legislative branch holds the purse strings of government. If a majority of both Houses demands that the President pursue a workable, "no fooling" disarmament approach, he will be much more likely to respond.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN'S ARMS CONTROL PROPOSAL?

President Reagan's arms control proposal of May 9 merely seeks to pacify the millions who are demanding a bilateral arms race freeze. It does not answer or satisfy the demand.

SALT II took seven years to negotiate. President Reagan's plan could take longer.

It is filled with trick features which would give the U.S. certain nuclear advantages and which the Soviets are sure to reject.

Thus the negotiations could drag on for many years. And meanwhile the President obviously intends to continue the U.S. overkill build-up and add $222 billion in nuclear war-fighting capability by 1986. This will increase the danger of nuclear war.

The only arms reduction approach which has a realistic chance of early agreement is *proportionate* reduction of all arms by both sides.

Meanwhile a mutual freeze in new arms production would be a clear and symbolic first step. But President Reagan apparently refuses to consider it.

4. Make them stop wasting your tax dollars on "crackpot technology."

Billions of dollars of your money are being squandered on "gold plated" electronic weapons so complicated they break down after a few hours of use. On super-weapons of nuclear war, designed not just to deter or defend but to "win" the unwinnable war. And on costly preparation for more Vietnams.

Meanwhile our economy is in bad shape and getting worse. We're losing ground to other countries. Our soaring budget deficit keeps forcing up interest rates and bankrupting businesses.

Our organization, SANE, has developed data showing how we can whack $65 billion off the defense budget without subtracting one iota from our real national security.

It's time we demanded that our representatives in Congress—and all of our *candidates* for Congress—stand up and be counted on this critical issue.

5. Help kick our addiction to a permanent war economy.

President Eisenhower warned us of the growth of the military-industrial complex.

Our huge annual defense expenditure gives too many people, from corporate officer to plant worker, an economic stake in continuing the arms race. We've got to change that.

It is possible to convert defense plants, shipyards, and military bases to peacetime production as the military need declines.

But it requires advance planning and preparation to guarantee defense workers economic security during the changeover.

It's time to demand Congressional hearings on the laws needed to get us started.

Any plan for mutual disarmament can hardly be taken seriously unless there is also simultaneous planning for the economic consequences.

6. Come to the big rally on June 12.

SANE has joined with diverse citizens' organizations to sponsor a rally on June 12 in New York City to "freeze and reduce all nuclear weapons, and transfer funds from military budgets to human needs."

7. Plug in to SANE.

We're a citizens' group that has spent the last 25 years developing sane alternatives to the madness of nuclear war preparation.

We lobby. We sponsor political action. We have a national radio network on more than 150 stations.

We distribute research materials to schools, civic groups, and others. We organize chapters in local communities.

We activate a network of thousands when citizen pressure is needed.

We disseminate facts about nuclear war and military spending to decision-makers in Washington.

We provide the media with data to counter Pentagon propaganda. We have strong ties with labor unions, environmental groups, and human needs organizations.

We don't just plead for peace. We work for it.

Now we are launching a nationwide campaign for nuclear arms race reversal that will be unprecedented in its scope and persistence.

If you'll join us, we'll help you keep up-to-date on what we all need to *understand* and to *demand*.

And your dollars will help us repeat messages like this all across the country—through paid advertisements in newspapers and magazines, on radio and television.

Until millions of Americans get the message—and act on it.

The way you can become personally powerful in the quest for peace is to act powerful. Starting right here, right now, by mailing the coupon with your contribution.

And that's how to stop feeling hopeless and helpless about preventing nuclear war.

SANE
711 G Street, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

YES, I want to join your nationwide campaign to reverse the arms race. Enclosed is my contribution of:

☐ $20 (basic membership) ☐ $25
☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ Other: $ _____

Please keep me informed on what I need to know and what I can do. Send me details of the 1962 President Kennedy disarmament plan and Rep. Ted Weiss's bill for converting defense establishments to peacetime use.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Please make check payable to SANE. For an additional tax-deductible gift, make a separate check payable to the National SANE Education Fund.

N.Y.T. 5/23/8

SANE
711 G St., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003
William Winpisinger and Seymour Melman, Co-Chairmen
David Cortright, Executive Director

The emotive headline and extensive amount of text was, by 1982, an antiquated form of advertising, much the same as earlier SANE or PSR full-page newspaper advertisements.
Source: *New York Times*, 23 May 1982, p. E24.

professional and intellectual groups didn't find favor with respondents interested in how ordinary, blue-collar Americans could be involved in SANE activities.[73] They wanted a peace organization that was "reliable, responsible, non-radical."[74] Respondents agreed that "the peace movement needs an organization that represents the concerns of the average American. The people need an organization that is for them and expresses their views; a moderate, not a radical or splinter group."[75] Basically, SANE's approach, using text-heavy advertising that offered the public the facts of the arms race and its inherent dangers, wasn't working. As the SANE Executive Committee discussed in an August 1982 meeting, there existed "a need for a rhetorical, image message rather than a detailed rational argument."[76] Updating SANE's advertising strategies would bring the organization into line with other mainstream anti-nuclear groups, where image and simple rhetoric, rather than information, was the focus of publicity campaigning.

In 1983 and 1984, however, SANE's strategies had not evolved considerably. Most of the organization's advertising was informational, "to counter Pentagon propaganda" as one mailing explained. SANE targeted not only the general public, but Representatives and Senators in Washington, schools, civil groups, unions, and other such bodies.[77] By 1983 it was producing 500,000 flyers and brochures a year, seeking to extend its paid membership and regular base of donors, in pursuit of more concrete political strategies.[78] As the 1984 elections approached, it sought to expand this strategy even more; SANE asked its members for money for "millions of brochures, radio broadcasts, canvassing, [and] press conferences." Each would help SANE promote an anti-nuclear stance, but also brought it closer to partisan political activity. However, partisanship was merely an extension of SANE's general strategy in building a mass anti-nuclear movement whose political weight would bring about change in federal politics. By mobilizing public opinion in its advertising and publicity, SANE could successfully demonstrate its "political clout" by electing, as its legislative director hoped, "a Congress more

[73] Tracy Research, "Qualitative Evaluation of Two Alternative Print Ads Developed for SANE," June 1982, pp. 14, 18, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 4.
[74] Focus group member, quoted in Tracy Research, "Qualitative Evaluation of Two Alternative Print Ads Developed for SANE," June 1982, p. 18, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 4.
[75] Tracy Research, "Qualitative Evaluation of Two Alternative Print Ads Developed for SANE," June 1982, p. 18, SANE Records, Series G, Box 65, Folder 4.
[76] SANE Executive Committee meeting minutes, 12 August 1982, p. 1, SANE Records, Series G, Box 4, Folder 1.
[77] David Cortright, SANE fundraising letter, January 1983, SANE Records, Series G, Box 29, Folder 4.
[78] David Cortright to SANE members, 1 September 1983, SANE Records, Series G, Box 11, Folder 2.

responsive to our demands."[79] Such an approach differed substantially from other, more radical forms of anti-nuclear protest, and identified itself as a departure from anti-authoritarian challenges to government that characterized popular memories of the anti-war movement of the 1960s.

PROFESSIONALIZATION, LOBBYING, AND NATIONAL POLITICS

Expanding its strategies into federal politics, SANE extended its program of organization. In 1984, at the same time it engaged in citizen education, training for local chapters, and extending its outreach into black and Hispanic communities, it also hired two full-time lobbyists in Washington, D.C.[80] This was another part of its goal of building a mass movement with national political significance. SANE complemented its rhetoric of citizen empowerment and local organizing with a mainstream, polite image in its political lobbying, further removing itself from the idea of traditional peace group politics.[81] A *New York Times* feature on SANE's lobbyist made this abundantly clear:

> Wearing a blazer, grey skirt and blouse, Miss [Beth] Duker hardly fits the stereotype of the dishevelled antinuclear activist. Nor is she the exception in the disarmament movement these days. In the last decade, antiwar and antinuclear groups have been struggling to change the radical leftist image that was a part of the demonstrations against the Vietnam War.[82]

Whilst popular memory may have stereotyped activists as radicals, and that image may have lingered throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, peace movement leadership didn't exactly refute the idea of a violent, radical left in the Vietnam War era. As David Cortright argued:

> In the late 60's and early 70's the peace movement had an aura of antipatriotism. Our vision is more specific, and we're willing to work within the system, rather than working to bring it down. The movement today is much more unified. Militant and sectarian arguments used to split the movement in those days. Now

[79] Michael Mawby, "Moderates, if we Must," *Nuclear Times*, January 1984, p. 15.
[80] On the range of activities in SANE's 1984 and 1985 programs, see "National Sane Education Fund Progress Report, November 1984-May 1985," p. 6, SANE Records, Series G, Box 11, Folder 1; David Cortright to SANE members, 1 September 1983, SANE Records, Series G, Box 11, Folder 2; and David Cortright to James Kettler and Stewart Mott, SANE Records, Series G, Box 101, Folder 2.
[81] This approach, common to many anti-nuclear organizations including the Freeze, WAND, and PSR, was not without its critics. On the divide between the movement's traditional educational efforts and its political focus, see Meyer, *Winter of Discontent*, pp. 190-191; Kehler interview; and Helen Caldicott, interview by the author, 20 September 2010, Bermagui, New South Wales.
[82] "A New Image for Antinuclear Lobby," *New York Times* 17 April 1984, p. A18.

> we are in the mainstream – no longer dominated by the student hippie types but rather more by the middle class, religious groups and women.[83]

This revisionist sentiment not only marginalized moderate, middle class opposition to the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s, but it also aimed to further promote the anti-nuclear movement in 1984 as a mainstream political force, far removed from the grassroots, or its radical components.

In 1984, as SANE attempted to extend the reach of this new image and style of organizing, its leaders debated how SANE might go about promoting the idea of a mass movement of middle class citizen activists. SANE realized that mass media coverage was not simply an expensive option for the movement; it ought to be a central feature of its public relations campaign. As such, it aimed to produce TV ads for airing on commercial networks:

> For the first time in the history of the peace movement, we will bring the theme of nuclear arms reduction to the mass media in a controlled, systematic campaign effort. We'll use everything from paid radio and television to full-page newspaper ads, millions of letters, slide shows and films before thousands of organizations, national and local conferences, and put pressure on Congress, both directly and through our many members.[84]

The organization wanted a "serious and well-financed effort," figuring that only this could bring about serious change.[85] With the SANE Associates program, Cortright hoped to bring 10,000 new members into the organization in the coming years. More and more members would produce a "widening circle of influence," which would mean more money, more publicity, and a more discernible effect on Congress.[86] This approach operated on the assumption that more members and more funds would enable SANE to develop a larger public profile through advertizing, and a stronger presence in Washington through lobbying. Doing so, Cortright argued, would help the organization realize its aim of becoming a mainstream political force of anti-nuclear reform.[87]

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[83] David Cortright, quoted in "A New Image for Antinuclear Lobby," p. A18.
[84] David Cortright to SANE members, March 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 29, Folder 3.
[85] David Cortright to SANE members, March 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 29, Folder 3.
[86] David Cortright to SANE members, March 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 29, Folder 3.
[87] "The decision to rely on money as a resource," Oliver and Marwell argue, "propels activists into a world dominated by professionals, moderation, and ritual." For organizations such as SANE, whilst this world may not have appeared particularly different, the scope of influence it aimed for in the 1980s meant it entered a mode of activism reliant on organizational demands quite different to those facing more grassroots styles of activism. See Pamela Oliver and Gerald Marwell, "Mobilizing Technologies for Collective Action," in *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, ed. Aldon Morris and Carol Mueller (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 259.

By the time of the 1984 elections, however, neither SANE, nor other anti-nuclear organizations engaged in lobbying and electoral campaigning had influenced public opinion to the extent required to affect the election results, yet they had succumbed to what Theda Skocpol calls "the lure of Washington, D.C." for advocacy groups seeking to bring about legislative change.[88] A "turning point" for the movement, the elections saw the Reagan-Bush campaign triumph with 58.8% of the popular vote and 97.6% of the electoral vote, with the Mondale-Ferraro campaign winning only the District of Columbia and Mondale's home state of Minnesota.[89] Despite the promise of political impact, the anti-nuclear movement had failed to translate favorable public opinion and a large grassroots base of support into political results. This failure emphasized the struggle in developing and maintaining a public profile that matched public support with political clout. In their advertizing strategies and membership and fundraising drives, anti-nuclear organizations such as SANE found that a large membership did not necessarily equate with political impact. Its uncertainty regarding political partisanship – a clear departure from its history as a non-partisan advocacy group – also demonstrated the perils of defining a new model of anti-nuclear organizing that identified more with liberal reformism than the heritage of grassroots activism and political confrontation that had defined the peace movement in previous decades.

Defeat in 1984, and the enduring popularity of Ronald Reagan, was enough to convince SANE that it needed to do more. The task ahead, Cortright argued, was massive; in a funding appeal letter sent shortly after the elections, he stressed that "stopping the nuclear arms race will require a quantum leap in the organizational strength and political clout of the American peace movement."[90] Indeed, SANE and its fellow organizations faced considerable challenges in mobilizing enough public sentiment to effectively pressure Congress, something that required more lobbying skills, more advertizing coverage, and more media manipulation than it had so far been able to muster. Of course, this meant more money, and the movement would spend the aftermath of the elections

[88] Theda Skocpol, "Advocates without Members: The Recent Transformation of American Civic Life," in *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*, ed. Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), p. 487.

[89] *Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections*, http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1984 (accessed 5 September 2011). On the Republican victory and its implications for the anti-nuclear movement, see Waller, *Congress and the Nuclear Freeze*, p. 293-299. On the elections as a "turning point," see Solo, *Protest to Policy*, p. xiv; and Hogan, *Nuclear Freeze Campaign*, pp. 2-3.

[90] David Cortright, SANE funding appeal letter, [late 1984], SANE Records, Series G, Box 11, Folder 2.

figuring out just how it could begin to raise the finances necessary to operate in the ways its leaders hoped it could.

Within SANE, Cortright proposed a long-term vision for the organization, and the peace movement more widely, with its rejuvenated fortunes in mind. His vision had the 1986 elections in mind, but the years beyond as well:

> An intensive education and organizing campaign aimed at enlarging public support for peace and building a large activist network in at least 10 key states. The goal is to develop a capability by 1986 of seriously challenging the policies of arms escalation in each of these 10 states. Over the course of five years, the proposal envisions the creation of a permanent, large-scale, American peace movement of over 1 million members.[91]

Basically, Cortright wanted to see "constituency development," "financial self-sufficiency," and "concentrating resources in those regions of the country most in need of peace activity."[92] Also needed was cooperation and consolidation of existing peace organizations. It would work on two levels, as most national peace groups already did: "strong, self-sustaining local peace groups in selected communities throughout the country [and] a coordinated, well-organized presence at the national level in Washington."[93] Consolidating the major existing peace groups, combining the influence of their local chapters, and coordinating their mailing lists and phone banks could help build a mass, unified movement that was comprehensive in its scope and influence across the nation. Whilst this would eventually be realized (in some form) with the merger of SANE and the Freeze Campaign in 1987, the state of the movement in 1985 was one of fragmentation. Activists were becoming interested in new issues such as U.S. intervention in Central America, and apartheid in South Africa, adding to the already cluttered set of concerns shared by those within the peace movement. Organizations continued to compete for membership and funding, and at the same time, media interest was diminishing as public interest in the threat of nuclear war became less and less of a noteworthy news story.[94]

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[91] David Cortright, "Expanding the Peace Movement," first draft, p. i, 11 October 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 1.
[92] David Cortright, "Expanding the Peace Movement," first draft, p. i, 11 October 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 1.
[93] David Cortright, "Expanding the Peace Movement," first draft, p. ii, 11 October 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 1.
[94] On diminishing media interest, see, for example, Hertsgaard, "What Became of the Freeze?," pp. 44-47; and Waller, *Congress and the Nuclear Freeze*, pp. 299-301.

Cortright envisaged the need for SANE to embrace new issues; part of an expanded issue agenda meant that SANE would adopt an increased focus on nuclear testing, on the MX missile, and on the Strategic Defense Initiative. Cortright also foreshadowed an increasing amount of peace movement attention paid to military spending and U.S. intervention in Central America. Anticipated membership numbers, however, spoke clearer than Cortright's "common vision for peace." He hoped to increase SANE's membership from 100,000 in 1984 to 250,000 by the end of 1985, and to one million by the end of the decade. He also hoped, in 1985, to double the number of SANE offices around the country, and to reach an outgoing mail volume of ten million items in 1985. Again, collaboration and sharing of resources between SANE, the Freeze, and groups such as WAND could lighten the financial load involved with such an endeavor, speaking to the recognized need for inter-group cooperation and coordination in the building of a mass movement.[95]

Such an ambitious strategy meant that some semblance of corporate philosophy would be woven into SANE's organizational strategy; suggested budgetary items, for example, included incentives and bonuses awarded to local chapters that performed well with attracting new members.[96] National field organizers would also ensure that each local chapter was performing adequately, and had enough training and resources to function, especially if that local group was staffed mainly by volunteers. Essentially, SANE hoped to use financial strategies to mobilize an even greater number of people than had been involved in the freeze movement in the early 1980s. Those Americans turned off by, or uninterested in peace movement activity and its moralistic, grassroots image could be persuaded, SANE argued, by slick advertizing, professionalism, and a white collar image befitting a serious political advocacy group, rather than the conventional idea of a volunteer-based, idealistic peace group.[97]

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[95] David Cortright, "Expanding the Peace Movement," first draft, pp. 1-2, 11 October 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 1.

[96] David Cortright, "Expanding the Peace Movement," first draft, p. 3, 11 October 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 1.

[97] On these differences in organizational style in the 1980s, see Lofland, *Polite Protesters*, esp. pp. 144-153. On the differences in funding style and philosophy across diferent types of peace movement organizations, see pp. 155-172. And on the idea of professionalism and bureaucracy in peace movement organizations, see Robert Kleidman, "Volunteer Activism and Professionalism in Social Movement Organizations," *Social Problems* 41, no. 2 (1994), pp. 257-276; David S. Meyer and Douglas R. Imig, "Political Opportunity and the Rise and Decline of Interest Group Sectors," *Social Science Journal* 30, no. 3 (1993), esp. pp. 260-261; and Pamela Oliver, "The Mobilization of Paid and Volunteer Activists in the Neighborhood Movement," *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 5 (1983), pp. 133-170.

This type of mainstream organizing philosophy became prominent in large anti-nuclear campaigns around 1985 and 1986, in part due to a perceived need to increase publicity, outreach and spending to reignite some of the movement's popularity that was lost in previous years. It also saw a need to utilize mass media and marketing in ways that would increase the spread of the movement's message, primarily to Americans as yet unmoved by, or uninvolved in antinuclear activity. *U.S. News & World Report* described these changes as "a new drive using Madison Avenue techniques to promote its vision." Media campaigns in regional markets and the use of mainstream press were seen as ways for movement leaders "to demonstrate that the movement is not "deader than a doornail" as opponents claim."[98]

Although the peace movement's failure to make any serious impact on the 1984 elections did contribute to serious changes in the operation of its larger organizations, a changing public mood also influenced its attempts to put disarmament back on the national agenda. As a 1985 public opinion survey commissioned by WAND found, Ronald Reagan's enduring popularity ensured the administration's success in selling its position on arms control. Making a dent in Reagan's seemingly impenetrable public image, it seemed, was an uphill battle for the anti-nuclear movement.[99] The way in which the movement debated its options after the 1984 elections are significant, mostly because they demonstrate an uncertainty within many movement organizations about the nature of political activism, public opinion, and movement image, and how organizations might further remove themselves from their traditional grassroots base, from their radical and pacifist counterparts, and from the popular memory and divisive reputation of "the sixties." It is the nature of this removal and the search for a coherent, mainstream movement identity, to which this chapter now turns.

[98] Steve L. Hawkins and John W. Mashek, "Antinuclear Campaign Reawakens," *U.S. News & World Report*, 27 January 1986, p. 22.
[99] Marttila & Kiley, "A National Study of Attitudes Toward Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control," September 1985, p. 16, Women's Action for New Directions Records, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts (hereafter WAND Records), Box 11 (Acc. 89s-73).

REVISING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Building a mass movement in the wake of Reagan's re-election, characterized by a professional image and an ability to successfully mobilize opinion and funds within a conservative political climate required substantial strategic planning. SANE, WAND, and other organizations hired consultants and conducted extensive interviews to help them assess just how the anti-nuclear movement could rekindle the levels of public support and media attention that it had commanded some years earlier, combined with an effective political program that could make some concrete impact on Congress and on the Reagan administration. A more coherent public identity, more effective media and communications strategies, and greater coordination between organizations were all considered necessary developments. In essence, mainstream anti-nuclear organizations sought to further redefine their image and identity as a means of placing themselves squarely in the center of American political life, rather than retreating to its radical fringes.[100] Doing so would help redefine the nature of the peace movement as one that relied less on the idea of oppositional activism and more on the idea of institutional advocacy, bringing these peace organizations into line with larger changes occurring in interest group politics and advocacy organizing in the 1980s and further distancing themselves from the popular idea of 1960s protest movements.[101]

To achieve this within SANE, Cortright proposed a complex system of polling, market research, and public relations as a way of "expanding the peace movement." This way, the movement could reach new audiences, and develop the most effective advertizing messages to elicit support. A coordinated effort in public opinion polling, the sharing of media resources, and a joint media presence between SANE, the Freeze, WAND, and other leading anti-nuclear organizations were proposed to help the movement present a professional image and a coherent media presence.[102] Cortright argued that the expanded scope of the movement's presence, coordinated through national and regional media

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[100] See Hogan, *Nuclear Freeze Campaign*, pp. 192-194

[101] As Theda Skocpol argues, the massive changes in civic and political engagement in the 1970s and 1980s meant that new models of interest and advocacy groups were being developed. Groups such as SANE and WAND form a part of these changes in organizing style and strategy. See Skocpol, "Advocates without Members," esp. pp. 487-498.

[102] David Cortright, "Expanding the Peace Movement," first draft, pp. 22-23, 11 October 1984, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 1.

markets, would assist in mobilizing extensive public and media interest, akin to the success of the religious right.[103]

There was a common belief amongst anti-nuclear movement leaders that in terms of media coverage, the religious right – in particular the right-to-life movement – had been especially successful in grassroots mobilization and in the garnering of media interest. Ellen Hume, a public opinion reporter for the *Wall Street Journal* agreed. The movement, she argued, "could learn something from the right-to-life groups. They are tenacious and persistent. They are always there, so they can't help but get coverage, and they continue to work from the ground up."[104] WAND saw the large membership and extensive fundraising capabilities of the "conservative network" as far more advanced than that of the peace movement, or of the progressive left more generally. As WAND argued in 1985:

> If progressives want to compete more effectively in the public arena in the years ahead, they must be willing to match or exceed the organizing capabilities of the conservative grassroots movement. To do so, they must recognize certain conditions of American contemporary life and politics which make a strong grassroots fundraising program essential.[105]

This meant, essentially, that progressives understand that civic participation had changed, and mould their organizing strategies appropriately. The WAND report continued:

> Too many progressive grassroots organizations are wedded to old-fashioned notions about citizen participation. Hoping their organizational missions have sufficient appeal to resist these profound social forces, they continue to believe hundreds and thousands of volunteers can be persuaded to assume a broad range of organizing tasks.[106]

The days of moral appeals to public sensibilities, mass demonstrations and public rallies were over, it argued. A trained professional staff, soliciting funds through modern forms of advertizing and marketing, was the new way of giving a grassroots cause political legitimacy. With a dedicated small donor base, it could much more effectively lobby, advertise more broadly, and push for electoral and legislative change. This was, WAND

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[103] David Cortright and Richard Pollock, "Peace Media Short-Term Project," meeting minutes, 17 May 1985, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 2.
[104] Ellen Hume, portion of interview transcript quoted in WAND, "Notes on Marttila & Kiley Interviews – For Press Strategy Article," [late 1985], WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 1 (Acc. 91s-80).
[105] WAND, report on Marttila & Kiley survey, 25 November 1985, Section E-1, p. 2, WAND Records, Box 11, Folder 55 (Acc. 98s-73).
[106] WAND, report on Marttila & Kiley survey, 25 November 1985, Section E-1, p. 3, WAND Records, Box 11, Folder 55 (Acc. 98s-73).

argued, the new model for a politically successful anti-nuclear movement, far removed from traditional ideas about grassroots activism.

Overall, those media and public relations consultants SANE met with recommended the peace movement seek to adopt a new image, one that offered the public a clear message of stability and security, rather than letting itself be too readily identified as idealistic or weak, appealing to moral issues like fear and helplessness.[107] Movement spokespersons ought to be, according to pollster David Garth, "people who can't be seen as left, who can't be stereotyped as peaceniks." Using personalities such as Paul Newman or Harold Willens in anti-nuclear media campaigns meant the movement's message became buried; retired military figures and former government officials ought to be put forward as the face of a movement that desperately needed to attract liberal and conservative support.[108] Breaking with the stigma of 'the sixties' would also enhance the movement's support. As Garth observed, the public and the media perceived groups such as SANE as too liberal, and recommended SANE adopt a more patriotic image. Avoiding any identification with extremism or unrealistic goals was absolutely necessary; another pollster suggested movement leaders should evoke "images of strength and security" in the minds of the public.[109]

It was a big move, but to achieve success, outsiders all recommended the same thing: the peace movement needed to be more "professional," to remove any identification with its heritage in the anti-war movement of the 1960s, to avoid association with any pacifist and radical colleagues, and to make sure it could not be labelled as a group of unrealistic peaceniks or hippies. Essentially, these recommendations emphasized what many anti-nuclear organizers had long suspected. Making a political impact in the midst of the conservative revival, they felt, warranted a redefinition of the image, identity, and overall strategy of the anti-nuclear movement. As they discussed the implications of revised model of activism after the 1984 elections, movement leaders challenged the accepted notions of protest on the left, and sought to apply new ideas and tactics in attracting new membership and lobbying for political reform.

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[107] For a fascinating discussion of the backlash against such moral appeals, see Hogan, *Nuclear Freeze Campaign*, pp. 73-75.
[108] David Cortright and Richard Pollock, "Notes of Meeting with David Garth," 27 June 1985, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 2.
[109] David Cortright and Richard Pollock, "Meeting with David Crane and Humphrey Taylor of Lou Harris Associates," 19 June 1985, SANE Records, Series G, Box 72, Folder 2.

ASSESSING THE PUBLIC MOOD

Much like SANE's efforts to understand the implications of this new model of professionalism, WAND also investigated the options for anti-nuclear organizing. WAND interpreted Reagan's re-election as a sign that the anti-nuclear movement required a coordinated communications strategy. In 1985, WAND commissioned a study to gauge what went wrong in 1984, and how the peace movement could recuperate and find substantial success in the coming years. Eventually published as *Turnabout: The Emerging New Realism in the Nuclear Age*, the study was the product of a public opinion survey of over 1,000 registered voters, interviews with one hundred journalists, reporters, and editors in the mainstream press, and talks with about 35 members of Congress and their staff.[110] WAND aimed to use the findings of the commissioned survey and interviews to begin setting up a more stable, more effective movement with a much larger membership, much like SANE's own informal consultations had suggested.[111] In the process, WAND could learn how to avoid the pitfalls that had befallen the Freeze Campaign in years prior, including its shallow and often insincere treatment by mainstream media, its coopting in Congress, and its decentralized structure and lack of public relations expertise. Furthering the anti-nuclear movement's removal from its grassroots base, WAND and its survey findings emphasized the necessity of a centralized, institutional response to the challenge of political reform.

This process required a primary emphasis on strategic planning, something that the Freeze had avoided with its haphazard organizational style. As John Marttila, the coordinator of WAND's survey project emphasized:

> I can't stress enough that the key enduring, non-trendy foundation for all communications programs is thinking about strategy that will affect coverage... To think that ads can be used to move American opinion is ridiculous. There will never, never be enough money.[112]

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[110] The surveys and interviews were undertaken by Boston public opinion consulting firm Marttila & Kiley over a few months in 1985. The *Turnabout* report was published in 1986 by WAND Education Fund.

[111] Marttila & Kiley, "A National Organizing Program for WAND," draft, [early 1985], WAND Records, Box 11, Folder 56 (Acc. 89s-73).

[112] Quoted in Renata Rizzo, "The Media and the Movement," *Nuclear Times*, November-December 1985, p. 16. Marttila had also run campaigns for Representative Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Vermont governor Madeline Kunin, giving him a fair degree of experience in political campaigning and advertising.

As *Nuclear Times* reported, the Marttila-led project, like others commissioned after the 1984 elections, hoped to "provide what many term the "missing link" in [peace] movement strategy."[113] Not seeking a smoking gun by any means, WAND anticipated that it would find some answers to enable a successful redefinition of the movement's strategy and image in Reagan's second term.

Behind John Marttila's initial proposal was a systematic recruitment drive, which would help WAND build a massive membership to make a serious impact on the 1986 congressional elections. Fundraising, local and national rallies, and door-to-door canvassing, along with a continued educational focus, would be cornerstones of WAND's operation in this regard.[114] As Marttila argued, "several hundred thousand dues-paying members expressly organized for political activity has the potential to send shock waves throughout America's political leadership."[115] WAND staff, recognizing that the political mobilization of its members and the wider public was something they had been doing all along, reacted to the proposal with suspicion. It was, they argued, more of the same, just on a larger scale. They also identified a key problem with the paid membership model – those members who donate money, even on a regular basis, were not the same sort of members who were actually involved with the running of the organization and its chapters. Contributing funds to WAND or through its PAC was one thing, but contributing one's time and energy was certainly another.[116]

WAND's staff were clearly operating under a philosophy of grassroots organizing, and were appropriately worried at the prospect of their organization becoming somewhat corporate. They expressed concern at the assumption "that we view our members as "passive" or only giving money or providing "clout" in the form of sheer numbers for the electoral process."[117] WAND viewed its grassroots base as one of its greatest assets, as this added to the empowering, politicizing nature of women's involvement in organizing against the arms race. To embrace corporate marketing and advertising strategies, therefore, would almost betray the hard work done at the local level by dedicated

[113] Rizzo, "The Media and the Movement," p. 16.
[114] John Marttila, memorandum to Helen Caldicott, Diane Aronson, and WAND leadership, 14 December 1984, pp. 4-5, WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 2 (Acc. 91s-80).
[115] John Marttila, memorandum to Helen Caldicott, Diane Aronson, and the WAND leadership, 14 December 1984, p. 5, WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 2 (Acc. 91s-80).
[116] 'Judy' to Diane Aronson, 25 January 1985, WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 2 (Acc. 91s-80).
[117] 'Judy' to Diane Aronson, 25 January 1985, WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 2 (Acc. 91s-80).

volunteers. It could also prove a futile attempt to tap into imaginary pockets of financial support, and given WAND's already significant donor list, both for WAND itself and for its PAC, overlap could be significant.

With the limitations of its financial position in mind, WAND officially announced the commencement of the Marttila and Kiley study with a qualification on the nature of its advertising. The peace movement, with its traditional emphasis on grassroots organizing, had never approached advertising and communications with the intention of matching corporate or government expenditure or influence. The Reagan administration's spin, however, posed a problem to the ability of the peace movement to mobilize support, especially considering the reach of the administration's message via media such as network television, national newspapers and magazines, and large radio networks. By mimicking the White House's communications strategies, the WAND report argued, the peace movement could hope to approach the level of visibility of the nation's executive in public debate.

This did not necessarily mean the movement ought to squander its funds in seeking blanket coverage in mainstream media. Paid advertising, WAND argued, was to be a strategy with a limited role:

> The peace movement will never have the money to support a national advertising campaign large enough to move American public opinion on its own… Instead, paid advertising should be used tactically to support major public relations initiatives. We must remember the real challenge of this national effort is thinking; i.e., setting into motion a strategic process which will understand its primary responsibility is to affect the news coverage of the nuclear arms race.[118]

Such strategic thinking, however, assumed that news media could translate peace movement agitation into a meaningful dialogue in the nation's media, both local and national, alternative and mainstream. Attaining comprehensive media coverage, of course, depended on the success of peace movement media strategies, but also on the newsworthiness of arms control issues. After all, interest groups can only ever hope to mobilize as much news coverage as external circumstances demand. In the case of nuclear arms control, this depended substantially on the administration's actions and

[118] "A National Communications Strategy for Nuclear Disarmament," WAND report, [spring 1985], p. 4, WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 3 (Acc. 91s-80). Emphasis in original.

rhetoric, which after 1985 was characterized by a much softer approach to U.S.-Soviet relations.[119]

The *Turnabout* project's results didn't instil WAND with optimism; Aronson found the outlook from the survey and interviews "very sobering." She commented that the conservative mood of the nation, along with its politicians and the national media, was substantial cause for concern.[120] The public opinion survey portrayed a public that was, according to Marttila & Kiley, deeply sceptical of mechanisms for managing, or ending, the arms race:

> Our survey reveals a critical realism about the two superpowers, their leaders, the nature of the nuclear dilemma, and the prospects for change. Those who have grown up with the threat of all-out nuclear war appear to glance with a jaundiced eye at claim that treaties on the one hand, or more arms on the other, can solve the nuclear problem.[121]

What the Marttila & Kiley report identified as a "hard-look realism" or "critical realism" toward the nuclear arms race might be seen as another form of public ambivalence about the extent to which citizen action or initiative could help or affect the state of affairs. Whilst the report did not identify much evidence of fatalism – the belief that nuclear war between the superpowers was inevitable – it did find that survey respondents lacked much confidence that the arms race could be resolved. To combat this, Marttila & Kiley recommended WAND adopt a coordinated strategic approach toward mobilizing favorable public opinion. "By honing a unified message in this fashion," it argued, "and advancing it in the relentless, disciplined manner so characteristic of the Reagan White House, the arms control movement can claim a larger share of victories in the public debate over nuclear weapons.[122] Of course, matching the resources commanded by the administration's public relations machine was impossible for any progressive interest group. The *style* of a new approach, however, needed to depart from the grassroots activist base that the anti-nuclear movement was built on.[123]

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[119] For a recent and comprehensive discission on the softening of Reagan's anti-communist rhetoric in his second term, see Jon Peterson, "'An Evil Empire': The Rhetorical Rearmament of Ronald Reagan" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio University, 2010), Chapter 8.
[120] Diane Aronson, quoted in Rizzo, "The Media and the Movement," p. 17.
[121] Marttila & Kiley, "A National Study of Attitudes Toward Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control," September 1985, p. 20, WAND Records, Box 11 (Acc. 89s-73).
[122] Marttila & Kiley, "A National Study of Attitudes Toward Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control," September 1985, p. 39, WAND Records, Box 11 (Acc. 89s-73).
[123] WAND developed this new style fairly consistently from 1986 onward, although its institutionalization of political strategy had been developed from 1982. See Melissa Haussman, "From Women's Survival to New Directions: Wand and Anti-Militarism," in *Teamsters and Turtles?: U.S. Progressive Political*

WAND began to engage much more successfully with political elites after 1986, demonstrating the persuasiveness of the *Turnabout* findings. Here, WAND board members (from left) Diane Aronson, Sayre Sheldon, Beverly Droz and William Caldicott meet with Senator John Kerry (D-Massachusetts) in 1986. Kerry himself became a board member in that same year.
Source: Helen Caldicott Papers, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, MSS7799, Box 45.

NEWS MEDIA AND THE IMAGE OF ACTIVISM

The potential for success lay in effective media management. The Freeze Campaign had demonstrated in the years prior to Reagan's re-election that without serious treatment by mainstream media, no arms control movement could hope to make any impact on public policy. Promoting a more adequate image, *Turnabout* suggested, would enable the anti-nuclear movement to emphasize its professionalism, key strategic issues, and would be policy-oriented. If the movement could influence news reporting successfully, it could develop a more serious, mainstream image that emphasized the movement's pragmatism and expertise, replacing the image of its background in moralistic, emotional appeals by a movement of ordinary citizen activists.[124] As another departure in style and rhetoric

Movements in the 21st Century, ed. John Berg (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), pp. 113-120. Former national board member Bobbie Wrenn Banks also argues that towards the end of the 1980s, WAND began to successful organize in a much more mainstream style; its efforts in the early to mid 1980s, by contrast, were very grassroots in nature, even at the level of the national body. Interview by the author, 28 October 2011, by telephone.

[124] In this sense, *Turnabout* reacted explicitly to news reporting that had, in the early days of the freeze mvoement, focused on its particpants and their style rather than the issues behind their actions. As Rojecki explains, CBS News "treated the movement as a fun activity, a way for the sixties generation to relive an earlier dream – this time with their children." In humanizing the movement, such reporting also diminished its sense of political seriousness. Rojecki, *Silencing the Opposition*, p. 157.

from the traditional peace groups that had given birth to the Freeze, major anti-nuclear organizations in 1985 sought to define a new mode of peace movement, one that relied on mainstream media for public respect and political clout.

Doing so required access to the most suitable arenas of public news and information, in which television was perhaps the most significant medium. The *Turnabout* survey found that most Americans relied on television to access news (45%), followed by newspapers (30%), with 18% using both media equally. Viewership of television news and current affairs rose to 61% for Americans in a lower socio-economic bracket. Over a third of those surveyed watched television news every night, and a further third watched news most nights per week.[125] At any rate, air time on television was essential, but needed to be utilized carefully for the movement's message to be taken with the utmost seriousness.

Although education was a primary element of the movement's communication strategy, it needed to be further refined to ensure it could be effective in its appeal; after all, it needed to speak "to a mass audience whose interest and knowledge is limited." As Marttila & Kiley suggested, arms control advocates "must simplify their own message, and repeat it in ways that tap those durable beliefs of the average Americans who share that viewpoint, without requiring unrealistic levels of knowledge or information."[126] Gil Friend of a Berkeley-based peace movement foundation agreed:

> People in environmental and peace groups are a subculture. Many of them think TV's tacky. We have to decide if we're committed to this subculture or to changing the world. We can't say that television is sleazy. So what? Eighty-four percent of America gets its election information from TV. If we're too holy to get down in the trenches to do battle, we may as well hand it over to the American Security Council. We ignore TV at our peril.[127]

The movement had not entirely ignored mainstream media in previous years. Caldicott had appeared on a variety of talk shows, managed a gruelling publicity schedule, and constantly sought out ways to ensure she, and the issues she raised, remained in public view. Other groups had produced anti-nuclear commercials; California group People Against Nuclear Arms produced television advertisements featuring Liza Minnelli and

[125] Marttila & Kiley, "A National Study of Attitudes Toward Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control," September 1985, pp. 52-53, WAND Records, Box 11 (Acc. 89s-73).
[126] Marttila & Kiley, "A National Study of Attitudes Toward Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control," September 1985, p. 58, WAND Records, Box 11 (Acc. 89s-73).
[127] Gil Friend, quoted in Rizzo, "The Media and the Movement," p. 18.

Leonard Bernstein, whilst WAND commercials featured Meryl Streep.[128] Each offered very general, non-political statements against nuclear war, keeping away from the "information overload" offered by so many anti-nuclear organizations.[129]

In the world of corporate advertising and public relations, this "information overload" posed a challenge to the peace movement, if it hoped to reach the public through mass media. Doing so required, as WAND argued, adept understanding of "perceptions and symbols," rather than substance. "A powerful manipulation of symbols," the *Turnabout* report argued, "may be far more persuasive than the most brilliant technical analysis… In this environment, understanding public perceptions of risk, communism, peace and destruction may be as important as understanding public attitudes towards a specific policy consideration."[130] As WAND maintained, the peace movement needed to keep a constant finger on the pulse of the nation to ensure its public relations were able to tap into themes and ideas that the public would be most receptive to. If the peace movement could utilize "enduring American themes and values" in its advertising, the hitherto accepted use of factual information within the peace movement's advertising strategies could be replaced by something that WAND described as "criticism in a larger thematic context, which would be more accessible to the average American."[131] Becoming mainstream in the eyes of the public, then, would match a revitalized anti-nuclear movement's focus on corporate strategy and fundraising tactics. "Long term notions of political participation are gradually being redefined," argued WAND, and in doing so, heralded the abandonment of its grassroots ideal that had in the past aimed to involve more and more American citizens in direct opposition to the administration's nuclear arms policies.[132]

In seeking to develop this new image and approach, Marttila & Kiley also interviewed a large number of journalists, editors, and decision makers within national media

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[128] People Against Nuclear Arms, "Everybody Speaks" advertisement, BAT:56604; and WAND, "Millions of Moms Public Service Announcement," BAT:56587, in-house collection, Paley Center for Media, Beverley Hills, California.
[129] See SANE's *New York Times* advertisement earlier in this chapter for an example of such an information-heavy style of advertising.
[130] WAND, report on Marttila & Kiley survey, 25 November 1985, Section B-4, p. 4, WAND Records, Box 11, Folder 55 (Acc. 98s-73).
[131] WAND, report on Marttila & Kiley survey, 25 November 1985, Section A-3, WAND Records, Box 11, Folder 55 (Acc. 98s-73).
[132] WAND, report on Marttila & Kiley survey, 25 November 1985, Section A-12, WAND Records, Box 11, Folder 55 (Acc. 98s-73).

organizations to gauge the significance of the freeze movement's media popularity in 1982-83, and its disappearance from the spotlight thereafter. Its findings were instructive:

> The novelty of the nuclear freeze as a grassroots movement for a ready-made arms control position was what energized the broad popular base whose actions drew the enthusiastic attention of the national media. However, this same novel combination of both a grassroots base and an actual policy proposal was also what eventually made it hard for the nuclear freeze to gain the national media's lasting understanding and respect – even though a majority of leading figures in the media do credit the freeze with altering Ronald Reagan's public posture on arms control… Freeze supporters didn't explain the policy effectively enough to the national media, and they failed to fully understand just how important the national media was to their ultimate chances for success.[133]

As such, when the Freeze Campaign took the freeze proposal to Congress, anticipating that the wealth of grassroots support it had cultivated would be transformed into a successful binding resolution, it was ill prepared for the political process required for successful action in the Capitol.

Journalists and editors also had differing thoughts on the public face of the freeze movement. Some argued it didn't have any 'big name' leaders, and due to its very broad and diverse nature, there was often "confusion as to who speaks for the movement." Joelle Attinger of *Time* magazine stressed that "the press likes to discover new things. They are very elitist and like big names. I want to do a story on the freeze and all I get is a big yawn from *Time*."[134] The freeze's 'big name' leaders, however, did suffer from the stigmatization that association with a progressive movement brought. As a reporter from the *Orlando Sentinel* told Marttila & Kiley, the "public and reporters get tired of the same spokespeople and their self-righteousness. I heard someone say: "I'll throw up if I have to listen to Carl Sagan one more time"."[135] These comments highlighted for WAND the need to redefine the peace movement as a professional, mainstream affair that retained little to no attachment with the idea of grassroots activism that had defined the peace movement in its earlier years. Removing itself from the stigma of 1960s protest, too, would ensure that the anti-nuclear movement could strive for political influence anew, free of the baggage of its radical past.

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[133] WAND, report on Marttila & Kiley survey, 25 November 1985, Section B-1, p. 3, WAND Records, Box 11, Folder 55 (Acc. 98s-73).
[134] Joelle Attinger, portion of interview transcript quoted in WAND, "Notes on Marttila & Kiley Interviews – For Press Strategy Article," [late 1985], WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 1 (Acc. 91s-80).
[135] Anne Groer, portion of interview transcript quoted in WAND, "Notes on Marttila & Kiley Interviews – For Press Strategy Article," [late 1985], WAND Records, Box 2, Folder 1 (Acc. 91s-80).

As the anti-nuclear movement's mainstream organizations found themselves at a crossroads in 1985 and 1986, discussion and debate over the strategies of reinvigorating the movement and securing political gains reiterated deeper divisions about the movement's direction and strategy that had existed in years prior. Throughout the life of the Freeze Campaign, its leaders had struggled to defend its premise against criticisms from throughout the peace movement.[136] Such division, various organizers argued, stymied the potential for developing a wider anti-nuclear movement that would prove popular with the public and effective in Congress. Pleading for unity in *Nuclear Times* in June 1984, Randy Kehler argued:

> We are *not*, in fact, a disarmament movement. We are a collection of disarmament organizations (or organizations whose programs include major nuclear disarmament components). It is true that there are generally good relations among us. It is also true that many of us have participated in collaborative projects on a sporadic basis, not to mention some important ongoing communication mechanisms.
>
> Nevertheless, most of us operate most of the time within separate organizational frameworks. The result is that funders, the media, most politicians, and the public tend to see us, at best, as fragmented and uncoordinated, and at worst, as competitive and self-serving. I am increasingly convinced that we cannot continue this way.[137]

Kehler's concerns also spoke to two strands of thought within the Freeze, and within the wider mainstream peace movement. One favored the continued building of large bases of support in key states, a continued pressure on legislative and electoral politics in those states, and a continued emphasis on educational initiatives. The other favored a radicalization of the Freeze's message and tactics. Fearing that to date the Freeze had been too timid in its organizational strategy and philosophy, proponents of a more radical direction urged that the Freeze endorse direct action, begin to emphasize the benefits of disarmament, rather than simply a first-step freeze, and be more involved in hands-on actions – such as demonstrations or blockades – and demonstrate its commitment to the wider dangers of the arms race.

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[136] See, for example, Solomon and Sanchez, "Doing Better Than the Freeze," p. 16; Randy Kehler, "Doing the Freeze Better," *Nuclear Times*, July 1983, pp. 17-18, 29; Ed Hedemann, interview by the author, 14 November 2010, New York City; Cagan interview; Cronin interview.
[137] Randy Kehler, "We Need a Common Voice," *Nuclear Times*, June 1984, p. 9.

Advocates of this radical turn found the mainstream elitism and professionalization of the anti-nuclear movement's image and strategy counterproductive. Working within the system, they argued, was going nowhere, and activists needed to dramatize and extend their dissent. Others disagreed, and cited concern that embracing direct action would alienate the public that was the ostensible target of the movement's public relations efforts, advertising campaigns, and electoral strategies.[138] This division demonstrates that in the early to mid 1980s, different activists – even within the fairly moderate sphere of the Freeze Campaign – had very different ideas about how to extend the reach and the impact of the movement in an uncertain political climate. Debate over the role of direct action within the institutional framework of organizations such as the Freeze and WAND also emphasize just how concerned many movement leaders were about the image of anti-nuclear organizing and its tactics and strategies. Seeking to maximise the movement's broad public appeal, many leaders had spent substantial time and effort devising ways they could develop a new, slick movement identity, one that avoided identification with grassroots activism, let alone radical tactics such as direct action.

Discussion within SANE, the Freeze, WAND, and PSR about how best to extend the reach of the anti-nuclear movement also demonstrates the struggle of a movement attempting to move beyond its initial wave of popularity. John Lofland, amongst other scholars, emphasize that a steep decline in anti-nuclear activity marked the period from 1985 to the end of the Cold War.[139] Such a narrative of decline might seem simplistic, but it helps to shed light on what many participants and observers saw as a movement making sincere attempts at consolidating strong public support, and subsequently attempting to manage a sharp decline in interest, both from the public and the media. A drop in funding, the absence of perceived crises to assist with mobilizing support, and skilful manoeuvring from the administration to counter Reagan's trigger-happy reputation all contributed to the decline of the movement's vitality. What studies such as *Turnabout* and strategies for extending advertising and fundraising campaigns reveal, however, is a genuine belief from many within the movement that a significant reversal could take place. The findings from the study, on the other hand, demonstrated to

[138] See comments from Freeze activists, quoted in Renata Rizzo, "Freeze Debates Direct Action," *Nuclear Times*, January-February 1985, pp. 9-10, 21. See also "Nuclear Madness: Helen Caldicott's Farewell Speech," in Diana E. H. Russell, ed., *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1989), pp. 14-15.
[139] Lofland, *Polite Protesters*, p. 234.

movement leaders that the reality was much more grim, and in many ways sounded the death knell for organizations such as SANE and the Freeze, which merged in 1987, only to suffer a further drop in income and membership as SANE/Freeze became Peace Action in 1993.[140]

Thinking about the anti-nuclear movement's political focus, its experiments with advertising and corporate philosophy, and its difficulties in achieving beneficial media coverage leads us to a view of the movement that is complex, but illuminating. It was an extremely diverse movement due to the immense variety in perspectives of the movement's many organizers and volunteers, spread across the nation. A lack of consensus over direction and strategy in many instances portrays a complicated entity whose somewhat polished organizational exterior often belied the dissent within. But this picture is also an illuminating one, as it shows how activists, lobbyists, marketing consultants, strategists and public opinion pollsters came together to attempt to mobilize the American public against the nuclear arms race, even as the best tool with which it could achieve this – the Freeze – had failed to make much ground in Congress, and had been rejected outright by the administration.

The key theme here is the process of revision and renewal that took place in the anti-nuclear movement as it sought to institutionalize its opposition to the nuclear arms race, rather than express it through traditional modes of protest. Within the Freeze Campaign, an uncertainty about the nature of its grassroots, decentralized base contrasted with the structured network of coordination that other organizations pioneered. SANE, WAND, and PSR demonstrated that a "new vocabulary" of corporate marketing, public relations, and advertising spoke to organizers seeking to remove the image of the anti-nuclear movement from one of well-meaning grassroots activism.[141] The treatment of such activism as novel incidences of protest where "music and rhetoric of the late 1960s returned in updated fashion" only emphasized the need to escape from such association with an era of activism whose reputation had not fared well in the 1980s.[142]

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[140] See Lawrence S. Wittner, "A Short History of Peace Action," in *Peace Action: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Glen Harold Stassen and Lawrence S. Wittner (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), p. 12.
[141] PSR Executive Committee meeting minutes, 4 February 1983, p. 2, PSR Records, Series II, Box 35, Folder 1 (Acc. 94a-073).
[142] *CBS Evening News*, 10 April 1982.

What these struggles over movement image and strategy demonstrate is the challenge of maintaining and sustaining a respectable public profile for anti-nuclear organizing that had a solid potential for political influence. Building a movement national in scope whose membership base provided numbers, funds, and votes, was a difficult endeavor. Ensuring such a movement would retain political clout was perhaps even more difficult, especially considering the nature of local anti-nuclear protest and its treatment by news media. Essentially, the development of a new, professional model of anti-nuclear organizing demonstrates the significance of the stigma of the 1960s in the peace movement of the 1980s. Challenging the legacies of traditional peace activism, anti-nuclear organizations in the mid-1980s sought to pioneer a model and an image of organizing that would not fall victim to the reputation of protest and its association with the 1960s. Doing so would enable it to pursue mainstream popularity and political reform much more suited to the conservative 1980s, and in the process define a new model of civic and political engagement for activists on the left.

CHAPTER THREE

"PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS": PLOWSHARES ACTIVISM AND NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

> *Instead, give yourselves to God, as people who have come back from the dead to life, and surrender your whole being to God, as weapons for justice.*[1]

Radical religious pacifists occupy a significant, almost sensational place in the peace movements of the post-war United States. Their notoriety, stemming from radical acts of symbolic resistance, also situates them somewhat outside the anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s. Largely comprised of Catholics, a network of activists built on a heritage of community and resistance, inspired by modern dissenters such as Thoreau, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as Jesus and the prophets of the Old and New Testaments. These activists sought to adapt that heritage in both private and public demonstrations of resistance to the most pragmatic contemporary evils, and from the mid-1970s this included nuclear weapons. The confrontational nature of the public acts of protest by such activists – known as Plowshares actions – earned the radical Catholic pacifist community a reputation for extreme nonviolence. Amongst the anti-nuclear movement's many pacifist groups and organizations, and their general adherence to the concept of religious nonviolence, Plowshares' commitment to traditional ideas of nonviolence and communal identity might seem quite commonplace. However, their application of these ideas from the private realm of everyday life in pacifist Catholic communities to the public arena of political protest highlighted these activists' almost militant devotion to resisting the authority of the state.

[1] This is a slightly altered wording of Romans 6:13 in the New American Bible, used by Philip Berrigan in his statement prepared for the U.S. Disctrict Court in Alexandria, Virginia, on 28 April 1978, following an action of civil disobedience at the Pentagon. The judge refused Berrigan's request to read the statement without interruption, and it was later printed in *Year One*, the newsletter of Jonah House where Berrigan resided. See *Year One*, May 1978, p. 1.

This chapter argues that the Plowshares movement – as it is most commonly known – engaged in a unique combination of communal personalism and radical resistance, and in doing so, distanced itself substantially from the "polite" anti-nuclear movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s.[2] Plowshares activists and their communities of supporters rejected the authority of the state, and refused to live by its rules. Taking their cue from pacifist ideas about the vulnerability of individual personhood in the midst of modernity's most demoralizing and corrupting influences, these resisters sought to combat modernity by building a close-knit community resilient to its effects. What made Plowshares activists different, though, were their public demonstrations of protest. Plowshares actions were far from conventional mass rallies; instead, activists engaged in the symbolic destruction of the state and its most dangerous objects. In "bearing witness" to the evils of modernity and the state, activists would take household hammers, bottles of their own blood, and prayers to nuclear missile silos, air force bases, and public buildings such as the Pentagon, seeing themselves as human agents of God in acts of spiritual witness against symbolic manifestations of evil.

Such actions made very visible the connection between acts of resistance and the spiritual guidance behind them. Such ideas of spiritual witness did operate as a "tactical validation" of acts of civil disobedience; as Sharon Nepstad argues in an incisive work on Plowshares activism, without such legitimation, these activists might have been considered "eccentric zealots" by the public, the media, and the wider peace movement.[3] Like other spheres of activism in the anti-nuclear movement, radical Catholic resisters were not immune to the question of their public image, and wondered about issues of efficacy and publicity. The nature of their actions and the radical religious principles guiding them, however, did influence their reception by the public and by the wider peace movement. By extending the radical potential of religious pacifism in the anti-nuclear movement, Plowshares activism brought attention to ideas of militant nonviolence and the spiritual base of radical pacifism. It also helped identify the Catholic left of the 1970s and 1980s with the alienating, provocative practice of what theologian

[2] It is important to note that the term "Plowshares" was not used until 1980, when the first "Plowshares action" took place in Pennsylvania. Before that time, the movement of radical Catholic pacifism was more commonly knows as "the Catholic Left" or some variation thereof.
[3] Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance in the Plowshares Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 61.

Ched Myers calls "offensive civil disobedience."[4] The extreme nature of Plowshares actions, and their consequences for the wider anti-nuclear movement, raises interesting questions for the place of radical religious pacifism on the left in the wake of the 1960s. They also suggest that by resisting the state in such ways, Plowshares activists did not so much respond to the legacies of the 1960s as transcend them. Their actions were, in a way, timeless.

RESISTING MODERNITY

Plowshares activism is best understood in the context of Catholic pacifism and its evolution since the 1930s. Emerging from the Catholic Worker movement, founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933, a network of communities of Catholic pacifists engaged in opposition war, violence, and injustice. In doing so, they sought to build a world of social justice defined by communitarianism, personalism, and hospitality.[5] For these Catholics, pacifism was based on a particular interpretation of the bible, and expressed itself in a variety of social and political activities. Principles of nonviolence, many inspired by the writings and actions of such figures as Henry David Thoreau, Mohandas Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr., played a similarly influential part in the development of this radical Catholic pacifist movement.[6] Aiming to bridge private,

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[4] Quoted in Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, p. 65. Many Catholic resisters did not like the term "civil disobedience," due to its connotations as an act of illegal protest. As activist and former nuclear weapons engineer Robert Aldridge argues, "citizen intervention" is a better term, as it raises the issue of citizens breaking "legitimate lesser laws to prevent a greater harm." Letter to the author, 14 February 2011. See also Robert Aldridge and Virginia Stark, "Nuclear War, Citizen Intervention, and the Necessity Defense," *Santa Clara Law Review* 26, no. 2 (1986), pp. 299-353.

[5] There are several thorough and incisive studies of the Catholic Worker movement. See, for example, Mel Piehl, *Breaking Bread: The Catholic Worker and the Origin of Catholic Radicalism in America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982); Patrick G. Coy, ed., *A Revolution of the Heart: Essays on the Catholic Worker* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988); Anne Klejment and Nancy L. Roberts, eds., *American Catholic Pacifism: The Influence of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996); and a richly detailed Ph.D. dissertation, John Lebrun, "The Role of the Catholic Worker Movement in American Pacifism, 1933-1972" (Ph.D. diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1973). See also an interesting discussion of Catholic Worker pacifism in the decades following Dorothy Day's death in 1980, Dan McKanan, *The Catholic Worker after Dorothy: Practicing the Works of Mercy in a New Generation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), esp. Chapters 4 to 7; and an excellent discussion of pacifism in the Catholic Worker movement, in Leilah Danielson, "Not by Might: Christianity, Nonviolence, and American Radicalism, 1919-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2003), Chapter 3.

[6] For some contemporary discussion of these ideas amongst theologians, see James Douglass, *Lightning East to West: Jesus, Gandhi, and the Nuclear Age* (New York: Crossroad, 1983); Gerard A. Vanderhaar, *Christians and Nonviolence in the Nuclear Age* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1982), esp. Chapter 4; and John Dear, *Peace Behind Bars: A Peacemaking Priest's Journal from Jail* (Kansas City:

personal goals of inner peace, the attainment of nonviolent community, and larger targets such as resisting the state, activists operated outside of the influence of the Catholic Church. They also aimed, as the Catholic Worker philosophy suggested, to 'build a new society in the shell of the old,' and undertook a variety of activities to help realize this goal. Communal living, working with the poor and underprivileged, and living in voluntary poverty satisfied some of these activists' consciences.[7] However, dramatic and symbolic protests against institutions of war and violence occupied the more militant side of this movement's program. As personal yet also public and communicative acts, such demonstrations of resistance exist as a more infamous part of the legacy of the Catholic Left.

This radical Catholic vanguard emerged in the 1960s in opposition to the Vietnam War. Drawing on the ideas, membership, and often leadership of older pacifists, the Catholic Peace Fellowship spearheaded radical methods of protest against the conflict.[8] It was in this environment that the more notorious acts of symbolic protest occurred. Draft card burnings earned radical pacifists a certain infamy amongst the public, as well as amongst the more moderate anti-war movement. A small number of pacifists, however, felt that such action was not dramatic enough. As the "Baltimore Four," Josephite priest Philip Berrigan and three colleagues broke into the draft board office at Baltimore Customs House in October 1967, pouring their own blood over draft files.[9] In devising the action, Berrigan operated on the belief that "if a dedicated group pulled off the right symbolic protest, then maybe individual consciences would ignite across the country, forcing peace."[10] Another, even more dramatic action followed in May 1968, where Philip Berrigan, his brother and Jesuit priest Daniel, and seven others raided the draft board office in Catonsville, Maryland, burning about 600 draft files with homemade napalm.[11] Such actions inspired other draft board raids in following years, in Chicago, San

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Sheed & Ward, 1995). See also Ross Labrie, *Thomas Merton and the Inclusive Imagination* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001), pp. 208-209.

[7] This built on the combination of hospitality and protest that was a core ethic of the Catholic Worker movement. See Angie O'Gorman and Patrick G. Coy, "Houses of Hospitality: A Pilgrimage into Nonviolence," in *A Revolution of the Heart: Essays on the Catholic Worker*, ed. Patrick G. Coy (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), pp. 239-269.

[8] See Penelope Adams Moon, "'Peace on Earth: Peace in Vietnam': The Catholic Peace Fellowship and Antiwar Witness, 1964-1976," *Journal of Social History* 36, no. 4 (2003), esp. pp. 1040-1042.

[9] A thorough chronology of the events and their preparation can be found in Murray Polner and Jim O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous: The Radical Lives and Times of Daniel and Philip Berrigan* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 172-179.

[10] Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, p. 172.

[11] See Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, Chapter 10.

Francisco, New York, Boston, and Milwaukee, amongst other cities, forming a burgeoning radical Catholic resistance against the war.

For the individuals taking place in such actions, explains Gordon Zahn, "traditional opposition to the [Vietnam] war no longer held promise of success, [and] that only some dramatic act of resistance and obstruction could have any impact at all upon a continuing moral evil."[12] Yes, the draft board raids were successful as personal acts of witness, and yes, they did communicate the urgency of dramatic action successfully to the wider movement and the media. But as Zahn notes, there existed "tremendous numbers of people" who were "'turned off' by what seemed to them an excessive form of protest."[13] It was one thing to organize mass rallies within the confines of the law, but quite another to undertake radical acts of sabotage and property destruction on the premise of a personal commitment to religious ideas of nonviolent resistance. Herein lay the difficulty in these acts of moral witness. Catholics felt, as did Zahn himself, that "one must always act as his conscience demands, even at the price of alienating others."[14] Problems existed when this alienation divided the peace movement, and other activists interested in resistance began to engage in "highly indiscriminate and individualized rejection of all authority which is then justified in the name of a vaguely defined and romanticized revolutionary ideal."[15] Younger pacifists and anti-war activists, seizing the momentum and daring of Catholic civil disobedience, took this action into a territory that older pacifists viewed as dangerous. A polarized movement resulted, eschewing traditional pacifism in favor of a more militant activism and rhetoric synonymous with parts of the New Left.

Philip Berrigan and his colleagues in the Catholic Left rejected the liberal optimism of their more moderate colleagues in the peace movement. Berrigan saw liberal reform as "a misnomer, a bad joke played and re-played on good people. The system must be taken down altogether, replaced by something altogether new, something vital and life-giving – a world where love, not war, prevails."[16] As Jason Bivins has suggested, the Berrigans' experience with the legal system in the wake of their draft board raids encouraged them

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[12] Gordon C. Zahn, *Vocation of Peace* (Baltimore: Fortkamp Publishing, 1992), p. 111.
[13] Zahn, *Vocation of Peace*, p. 112.
[14] Zahn, *Vocation of Peace*, p. 113.
[15] Zahn, *Vocation of Peace*, p. 114.
[16] Philip Berrigan and Fred Wilcox, *Fighting the Lamb's War: Skirmishes with the American Empire* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1996), p. 124.

to embrace a kind of anarchistic separatism; they rejected the state and its authority, preferring instead to live by God's law, and enacting a small-scale revolution within their version of a radical, countercultural community. The state, they felt, was beyond saving; "they began encouraging others to resist state power by withholding taxes, harboring dissenters, preaching to new GIs, and organizing protests."[17] The Vietnam War, the Berrigans contended, was merely a symptom of the evils of modernity. As such, they viewed their duty as faithful Christians as one that required them to resist all iterations of violence, evil, and oppression perpetuated by the modern state. In doing so, they expressed their rejection of modernity in both private and public ways, helping to define the radical potential of personalism in ways that would be adopted by other radical religious pacifists in later years.[18]

As radical Catholic pacifists continued their symbolic acts of resistance into the 1970s and 1980s, they sustained a particular framework of activism built on notions of faith-based dissent. Charles Chatfield explains that what became the Plowshares movement was "self-consciously grounded in the prophetic biblical tradition, penitential sacrifice, and spiritual discipline."[19] Owing much to the Catholic Worker philosophy of personal responsibility, but also to much older traditions of civil disobedience, this small movement of resisters aimed to satisfy their individual and collective consciences with activities that emphasized allegiance to their faith over the law of the state. Often citing Ephesians, the tenth book of the New Testament, Catholic resisters underscored their opposition to the state with a more general dissenting attitude, grounded in Christian pacifism. By opposing "principalities and powers" and "spiritual wickedness in high places," these activists acted, like many Christians, as agents of change against evil

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[17] Jason Bivins, *The Fracture of Good Order: Christian Antiliberalism and the Challenge to American Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), p. 126.

[18] The literature on the Berrigan brothers and the Catholic Left is enormous. For an early, yet very detailed treatment, see Charles Meconis, "Religion and Radicalism: The American "Catholic Left" as a Social Movement, 1961-1975" (Ph.D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University, 1977). The writings of the Berrigans themselves, plus Philip Berrigan's wife Elizabeth McAlister, was prolific enough to prompt a bibliography in 1979, also containing entries about the three, their writings, and their actions. See Anne Klejment, ed., *The Berrigans: A Bibliography of Published Works by Daniel, Philip, and Elizabeth Mcalister Berrigan* (New York: Garland, 1979). For shorter, yet thorough treatments, see Anne Klejment, "The Berrigans: Revolutionary Christian Nonviolence," in *Peace Heroes in Twentieth-Century America*, ed. Charles DeBenedetti (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 229-254; and Bivins, *Fracture of Good Order*, Chapter 4. And for a complete biography, see the aforementioned Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*.

[19] Charles Chatfield, "The Catholic Worker in the United States Peace Tradition," in *American Catholic Pacifism: The Influence of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement*, ed. Anne Klejment and Nancy L. Roberts (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996), p. 11.

forces.[20] As Anthony Campolo explains, biblical scholars argue that the "principalities and powers" in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians as much more than demonic entities, and contend that the phrase also includes "such suprahuman institutions and influences as the media, government, the educational system and the economic structures of society."[21] Activists could work towards transforming society by resisting these institutions through prophetic acts of witness. The small community of the Catholic Left did experiment with the methods and targets of their resistance over time, but essentially, their biblical focus remained the same.

NONVIOLENCE, COMMUNITY, AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Towards the end of the Vietnam War, the Catholic Left, like the peace movement more broadly, struggled to find ways to consolidating its position after many years of sustained activity. Writing in 1973, Gordon Zahn argued that after the Second World War, the Catholic peace movement had fragmented and disappeared. "This history must not be allowed to repeat itself," he urged, citing examples of Catholics experimenting with communal living and other expressions of "creating a lifestyle more conducive to the fullest expression of the Gospel teachings."[22] Catholics needed to tread carefully, though, as the pacifist fringe risked alienating itself from more conservative Catholics, both clergy and lay. Blending an emphasis on the spiritual and biblical bases of pacifism with an appealing image would help make pacifism a mainstream concern.

By the mid-1970s, however, it was not clear how this would happen. The trial of the 'Harrisburg Seven' in 1972 had involved members of the Catholic Peace Fellowship – including Philip Berrigan and Elizabeth McAlister – accused by the FBI of conspiring to kidnap Henry Kissinger, as well as to blow up several federal buildings. The trial occupied substantial resources of the small community and its supporters, and marked the end of an active period of dramatic protest, court trials, and jail time. The trial also brought to public attention the secret marriage of Catholic priest Philip Berrigan and

[20] Ephesians 6:12. Translations differ slightly, but the general emphasis is the same.
[21] Anthony Campolo, *Red Letter Christians: A Citizen's Guide to Faith and Politics* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2008), p. 35.
[22] Gordon C. Zahn, "The Future of the Catholic Peace Movement," *Commonweal* 99, no. 13 (28 December 1973), p. 338.

Elizabeth McAlister, a nun in the order of the Sacred Heart of Mary, and also contributed to what Charles Meconis calls the end of the Catholic Left.[23] Yet Daniel Berrigan, often acting as a spokesperson for the small movement, rejected any suggestions that despite jail time and harassment from the FBI, the group might abandon its commitment to resisting the state. "I don't believe that we're suddenly going to give up resistance for electoral politics," he argued in a 1972 interview. For Berrigan and his colleagues, true change required extra-legal activity, rather than traditional democratic participation.[24] It also required the development of a network of resistance communities, which would contribute to the growth of a larger nonviolent movement.[25]

As much as an organized group dedicated to resistance, education, and prayer may have been the locus of radical Catholic dissent in the 1960s and early 1970s, the period after the Vietnam War was typical of the splintering of organized activism on the left. Various groups of concerned and committed Christians established "intentional communities," which provided them with a locus for not only resistance, but of organizing their lives in spiritually enriching ways. Although such faith-based communities existed – and prospered – in areas where there existed an ideal institution representing a threat to the planet, such as a nuclear power plant, nuclear weapons laboratory, or submarine base – communities did not restrict their actions to such a narrow field. Intentional communities sought to "bear witness" in poor neighborhoods or inner city ghettoes; the progressive evangelical group Sojourners, for example, ran its operations from a house in a poor black area of Washington, D.C.

Philip Berrigan and Elizabeth McAlister's community – Jonah House – was established in an impoverished area of West Baltimore in 1973, and served as the base from which concentrated programs of resistance would operate throughout the remainder of the decade. Jonah House further solidified the separatist philosophy of Philip Berrigan and

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[23] Charles A. Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace: The American Catholic Left, 1961-1975* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), pp. 114-117. As this chapter argues, as well as several other scholars, the idea of the disappearance of the Catholic Left after the early 1970s ignores the proliferation of radical Catholic intentional communities, the survival of the Catholic Worker movement, and the persistence of radical acts of witness as I detail later in this chapter. See also David J. O'Brien, "What Happened to the Catholic Left?," in *What's Left? Liberal American Catholics*, ed. Mary Jo Weaver (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 272; and Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*.

[24] "'It's Not Enough to be Sympathetic': An Interview with Daniel Berrigan, S.J." *Commonweal* 96 no. 16 (14 July 1972), p. 377.

[25] See Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, pp. 55-56; and Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, p. 132.

his colleagues: by living communally, committed to voluntary poverty, individuals could live spiritually enriching lives outside the demands of life in contemporary capitalist society. Free of material concerns and surrounded by like-minded, supportive individuals, activists could then begin to sustain a more meaningful commitment to social change: personally, communally, and when necessary, publically and politically.[26] It is the realization of harmony between one's personal and political life that characterized such communities in their quests for social change.[27]

It was around the time of the establishment of Jonah House that Philip Berrigan, McAlister, and their colleagues turned their attention to nuclear weapons. They designed their ritual acts of resistance to draw attention to the emerging crisis of the nuclear arms race, which would be a focal point of religious anti-nuclear action in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s.[28] Jonah House's location in Baltimore also meant that its residents and supporters now had a dedicated base of operations for planning direct action, much like Catholic Worker Houses, but with a greater focus on public acts of "bearing witness." The proximity of Jonah House to Washington, D.C. meant that government institutions could easily be targeted in regular, sustained protests and vigils. In November 1975, for example, Daniel and Philip Berrigan, along with eleven other colleagues, were arrested for digging makeshift graves on the White House lawn.[29] Daniel Berrigan described the grave-digging action as one that aimed, "literally and symbolically, to bring home to our leaders and our people, the consequences of nuclear brinkmanship – a cosmic grave."[30]

The following year, Jonah House established a program of regular "Faith and Resistance retreats," designed to focus opposition to the state and its nuclear policies in coordination

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[26] On the withdrawal of Christian pacifists from politics to a more engaging communal activism, see Robert D. Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak: A Study of Politics, Religion, and Antinuclear Weapons Activism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 106-108.

[27] This is a key feature of "personalism," a Catholic Worker ideal modeled on the writings of French philosopher Emmanuel Mounier. In its rejection of the "impoverished individualism of contemporary liberalism," personalism seeks to claim a more spiritually satisfying form of social change, based on the benefits of community, personal spiritual fulfillment and individual responsibility, and meaningful public engagement. See Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak*, pp. 7-12.

[28] Both Daniel and Philip Berrigan had taken strong positions on the existence of nuclear weapons earlier in their careers as priests and activists, but the mid-1970s marked the beginnings of a more thorough engagement with opposing the arms race as a serious evil. See Klejment, "The Berrigans," pp. 238, 251n17.

[29] "Another Protest," *Washington Post*, 27 November 1975, p. B7.

[30] Daniel Berrigan, "What Do You Really Believe About Church, Peace, and Justice?," *Religion Teachers Journal*, March 1977, p. 37.

with the Catholic liturgical calendar, emphasizing the theological core of their activities. Like-minded Catholics from the mid-Atlantic coast – eventually dubbing themselves the Atlantic Life Community – began to converge upon government institutions in Washington, D.C. during Easter and Christmas, as well as on the anniversaries of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to pray and bear witness to what they saw as evils being devised within such institutions.[31] The Pentagon, Department of Energy, Department of State, the Air and Space Museum, and of course the White House were popular targets; each protest consisted of an act of collective civil disobedience, discussion sessions about the significance of the action – both politically and spiritually – and rituals of prayer.

In January 1977 a group from the Jonah House community journeyed to Plains, Georgia, to demonstrate outside Jimmy Carter's home. Their intent was to meet with the newly elected president, "to encourage his campaign commitment to a reduction of nuclear weapons, and to discuss with him, if possible, the Biblical and human urgency of that commitment."[32] Philip Berrigan and several others were instead promptly arrested for unfurling a banner reading "Nuclear Weapons Massacre the Innocent" without prior approval from local police.[33] Generally, such demonstrations and vigils identified that the task for Christians against such manifestations of evil was relatively simple. If enough Christians acted in a similar manner, bearing witness to these manifestations in a public way, the "great awakening" of dissent – argued Daniel Berrigan – would help disband the nuclear apparatus, much like mass dissent was an essential feature of the successes of the civil rights and anti-war movements in the 1960s.[34]

With increasing frequency, and mirroring Vietnam War-ear protest actions, activists from the Atlantic Life Community began to target the Pentagon, perhaps the most appropriate

[31] See Jerry Mechtenberg-Berrigan and Ronald C. Kramer, "State Crime and Christian Resistance: The Prophetic Criminality of Philip Berrigan and Elizabeth Mcalister," *Contemporary Justice Review* 11, no. 3 (2008), p. 253. See also Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, pp. 56-57.
[32] Philip Berrigan and Elizabeth McAlister, *The Time's Discipline: The Beatitudes and Nuclear Resistance* (Baltimore: Fortkamp Publishing Company, 1989), p. 32.
[33] Philip Berrigan Taken into Custody with 6 Others near Carter's Home," *New York Times*, 9 January 1977, p. A18.
[34] Daniel Berrigan, open letter, October 1979, Daniel and Philip Berrigan Collection, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York (hereafter Berrigan Collection, CU), Box 99, Folder B.

government institution towards which their attention could be directed. "For all of us," argued Daniel Berrigan,

> … the pentagon is not merely a moral affront on the Potomac; it is a tentacled monster ruling our economy, tainting our bread, corrupting mothers' milk, claiming our sanctuaries. An unholy Spirit, reaching in defiance of holiness, to 'the joining place of soul and body.' Let us draw the nuclear blade, and be healed.[35]

Berrigan's flowery prose demonstrates an almost militant call to arms for like-minded Christians to resist. If they could mobilize an effective spiritual witness against such an evil, as agents of God on earth, their pursuit to rid the world of its "spiritual cancers" – nuclear weapons – could be realized.[36] The Pentagon was also significant for more practical reasons; it provided activists the means to test their commitment in the most significant way, and for that demonstration to be expressed publically, and squarely in the face of the institutions of power the activists opposed. It was this combination of individual spiritual witness and public protest that characterized these activists' unique approach to anti-nuclear dissent. In some ways undertaking protest as a personal act, motivated by one's faith, Jonah House's public demonstrations exhibited collective acts of spiritual witness, intimately tied to theological symbolism and ritual. Yet these demonstrations were also public acts; protests at the White House were undertaken during the day whilst tour groups were going through the building, with activists inviting tourists to join their resistance.[37] Throughout the cycle of activism – from action, to court, to prison – activists exhibited dual characteristics of personal action and public protest.

Resistance at the Pentagon, and at other locations in the nation's capital, took the form of a variety of nonviolent direct actions throughout the late 1970s, most often on holy days. A typical Easter protest in 1978, for example, was marked by silent vigils, symbolic 'die-ins' accompanied by bags of ash, leaflets, signs that read "Temple of Death," and of course, several incidences of blood pouring. Blood was spilt on the entrance columns and steps of the Pentagon, as well as on a wooden cross brought in for a Good Friday action. It was accompanied by a small group of about thirty protestors chanting, "This is the

[35] Daniel Berrigan, open letter, October 1979, Berrigan Collection, CU, Box 99, Folder B.
[36] See Philip Berrigan, "The Bomb as Cancer," *Year One*, February 1979, pp. 3-4.
[37] For examples, see the chronology of Jonah House actions from 1973 to 1988, in Berrigan and McAlister, *The Time's Discipline*, pp. 226-266.

blood of the nuclear victims. May it be a sign leading us to repentance."[38] This type of expressive political demonstration highlights first and foremost the religious motivation of its actors, but also the ritual symbolism that characterized actions by radical Christian pacifists. Operating in both private and public ways, the religious ritual that accompanied these protests helped create an identity for the movement that publicized its intensely spiritual private qualities, and its daring, dramatic, and symbolic political expression.

RITUAL, TRADITION, AND POLITICS

Using one's own blood in such acts of civil disobedience was for more than simply shock value. Protests involved other means of communication – leaflets, prayers, songs, and so on – but the symbolic power of blood, explained Daniel Berrigan in a 1979 interview, was part of "an effort to make death concrete."[39] The use of such symbolism in expressive protest grew out of Christian tradition, Berrigan explained:

> For us, as we are mostly Christians, this is also an extension of our normal worship. Our tradition is sacramental. It is full of symbols: human blood, ashes, water, oil… Our conviction is that the sacraments, properly understood, are not merely a principle of worship but also a command of ethics and conduct.[40]

The basis of Berrigan's direct action lay within a strong commitment to biblical traditions of social action, and the symbolic ritual that accompanies such action. Within the activist, such a commitment produced a kind of embodied spiritualism. For the individual themselves, resisting injustice was the only logical outcome of this commitment. It was, argued Philip Berrigan, a pursuit of "truth" in the vein of such proponents of civil disobedience as Tolstoy, Gandhi, Thoreau, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Citing the writings of New Testament prophets Isaiah and Micah, Berrigan aimed to realize in a physical sense the will of a pacifist God on earth; confronting institutions of evil was the means by which this would happen. In the process, a higher "truth" might be glimpsed en route to wider social change.[41] This was, in essence, a public act. As fellow Catholic resister Jim Douglass argued, "Jesus didn't die on a private cross." The

[38] Liz McAlister, "Holy Week 1978: Actions and Re-Actions," *Year One*, May 1978, p. 3.
[39] Daniel Berrigan, "Connecting the Altar to the Pentagon," *Fellowship*, November 1979, p. 7.
[40] Berrigan, "Connecting the Altar," p. 8.
[41] See "Confronting Uncivil Obedience: An Interview with Philip Berrigan," *Catholic Agitator*, August 1979, p. 1.

"personal experiment with truth," as he described it, was a public act, with wider social ramifications beyond the conscience and faith of the individual.[42]

In a fairly typical protest at the Pentagon, Catholic resisters pour blood on the steps and columns, read from the bible, and stage a mock 'die-in.' Here, personal religious ritual is mixed with a protest of public spectacle.
Source: Elmer Maas Papers, DePaul University, Box 7, Folder 8. Photo taken April 1985, photographer unknown.

Molly Rush, another member of the Atlantic Life Community, affirmed that her actions relied on an effort to bring into action the message of the Gospels. "To confront such things as nuclear weapons," she said, "one has to have some kind of a belief system which says that there are things in our lives more powerful than nuclear weapons. We have to make the Gospel messages seem more real."[43] Catholic radicalism, therefore, required more than lawbreaking intended to serve a personal witness against social injustice. This commitment to the biblical traditions of Christian pacifism, and its expression in social action, according to Zahn, spelled the essence of "Catholic peace radicalism." Rather than "ego gratification through exhibitionistic extravagance," Catholic pacifists acted upon their consciences, and in accordance with their faith. As

[42] Douglass, *Lightning East to West*, p. 14; James and Shelley Douglass, interview by the author, 2 November 2010, Birmingham, Alabama.
[43] Molly Rush, quoted in Joe Hurd, "Catholic Activist Believes Jail Sentence 'A Small Price to Pay' for Man's Survival," *The Catholic Register* (Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, Pennsylvania), 24 August 1981, p. 1.

such, argues Zahn, "the Cross, more than either the olive branch or the fist, still holds promise of being the most radical symbol of all."[44]

In this sense, the actions of this community in protesting nuclear weapons were no different to the draft board raids in the late 1960s. The target was essentially the same: the state's role in the destruction of human life. As Philip Berrigan explained in 1978, "we said at Catonsville that the genocide stops here. Now, we say the mass suicide stops here."[45] The threat posed by nuclear weapons, he felt, was of an infinitely more powerful nature than the conflict in Indochina. Resisting nuclear weapons and the state that sanctioned their production and use, however, operated in a timeless fashion. Where there existed injustice and oppression, the same calling to resist would operate.

Daniel Berrigan emphasized as much in a 1979 interview, describing the wider program of faith-based resistance as a political one:

> Interviewer: What of your own future?
> Daniel Berrigan: It's no different than the past. Opportunity for more growth, and more prayer, and more salvation.
> I: Political plans?
> DB: That's the political plan.
> I: You're sure?
> DB: Absolutely.[46]

As the development of postwar religious pacifism indicates, these ideas about a socially conscious, theologically conservative framework of nonviolent direct action found their clearest expression in an *active* sense. "Preventing global holocaust is" argued Elizabeth McAlister, "not a way of speculation but a way of practice. It is a way of living and acting-out a day-to-day personal and communal struggle to find what could be a transforming truth for humanity."[47] Activists rejected inaction altogether; given the nature of the impending nuclear crisis, to not act was itself considered an affront to the vocation of resistance, and was antithetical to the philosophy of nonviolence. Philip Berrigan clung to this notion in an almost extreme way, challenging the traditional pacifist concept of nonviolence. "I've always felt that even when one bumbles into civil

[44] Zahn, *Vocation of Peace*, p. 120.
[45] Letter to the editor, *Commonweal* 105 no. 14 (21 July 1978), p. 479.
[46] Berrigan, "Connecting the Altar," p. 22.
[47] Draft of closing statement at Griffis Plowshares trial, [March 1984], p. 2, Jerome Berrigan Collection, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois (hereafter Jerome Berrigan Collection), Box 1, Folder 11.

disobedience, perhaps with a lot of the wrong motivation and wrong perception and even a frightening lack of love, this probably is better than not doing anything," he mused in a 1979 interview.[48] To do nothing, he felt, was as violent an act as acting violently. Acting in the appropriate way, he argued, would satisfy the personal, communal, and public requirements necessary to effectively engage in resistance.

Philip Berrigan's unconventional approach to nonviolent action was creative in its challenge to traditional pacifism. Both Berrigans had dramatically demonstrated their willingness to radicalize the potential of nonviolent action in their Baltimore and Catonsville actions in the 1960s, rejecting the timidity or conventionality of less extreme pacifists. Actions in the late 1970s furthered the idea of a well-rounded program of resistance against the state and its construction of what Catholic resisters called "nuclear idolatry."[49] In short, an idea developed within the Catholic Worker community in the immediate aftermath of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where, as Dorothy Day noted, "the Lordship of Christ has been replaced by the Lordship of the bomb."[50] Catholics resisters argued that American society's 'love affair' with nuclear weapons amounted to the worship of false gods, contravening the teachings found in Chapter Five of the Book of Deuteronomy. As Catholic Worker member Arthur Laffin argued, "to pledge our ultimate allegiance to the state and to place our security in idols of death betrays our faith in God and constitutes the ultimate blasphemy."[51] In emphasizing the power of God over the authority or legitimacy of the state, Catholics sought to draw society's attention to its own 'worship' of such destructive weapons, whilst in the process demonstrating the loving and nonviolent promise of an adherence to the Christian faith. Such a position emphasized, as pacifists had done since the dawn of the atomic age, that to accept the existence of nuclear weapons without resisting their influence was to accept "the deification of the state at the expense of the individual."[52]

In resisting this "nuclear idolatry," radical Catholics argued that they would restore a sense of individual responsibility, personal spiritual fulfillment, communal strength and

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[48] "Confronting Uncivil Obedience," p. 2.
[49] A useful summary of this idea can be found in Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, pp. 66-67.
[50] Quoted in Berrigan and McAlister, *The Time's Discipline*, p. 83.
[51] Arthur J. Laffin, "The Nuclear Challenge," in *Swords into Plowshares: Nonviolent Direct Action for Disarmament*, ed. Arthur J. Laffin and Anne Montgomery (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 12.
[52] This quote is taken from the seminal AFSC pamphlet *Speak Truth to Power: A Quaker Search for an Alternative to Violence* (Philadelphia: American Friends Service Committee, 1955), p. 2.

wellbeing, and a refreshing sense of social authenticity to a world dominated by the evil hand of the bomb. In promoting their activities in such a way, argues Nepstad, Plowshares activists attempted to endow their movement with an air of legitimacy.[53] They also engaged in a form of resistance that was personally satisfying, sustaining the spiritual lives of activists and their community. But resistance was also public, and it is the public performance of this resistance that has brought fame (and notoriety) to Catholic resisters in the peace movements since the 1960s. It was in 1980, though, that activists from Jonah House set the standard for what was a far more dramatic form of opposition to nuclear weapons, and in the process radicalized the public image of nonviolent resistance that had been cultivated by activist communities throughout the 1970s.

UNDERTAKING SYMBOLIC DISARMAMENT

In 1978, the Berrigan brothers, their colleagues at Jonah House, and others in the Atlantic Life Community began devising a more dramatic sacrifice than simple acts of civil disobedience in Washington, D.C. had demonstrated thus far. In consultation with Robert Aldridge – a former weapons engineer at Lockheed Martin turned Catholic resister with the Pacific Life Community in California – activists identified the production of Mark 12A warheads, powerful and accurate nuclear weapons. These weapons were being manufactured at the Re-Entry Systems Department of the Missile and Space Division of General Electric Company, in King of Prussia, an outer suburb of Philadelphia. A local peace group, the Brandywine Peace Community, had been conducting regular vigils at the King of Prussia plant, as well as at General Electric headquarters in downtown Philadelphia, since the mid-1970s. Activists had demonstrated against General Electric's military contracts, participated in symbolic acts of witness and civil disobedience, and attempted to persuade the company's employees through leaflets and vigils that their work had dangerous consequences for human life.[54] Actions of trespass onto the G.E. site accompanied by the pouring of bottles of human blood and bags of ash earned Brandywine members short prison sentences, but few of their actions mustered the level

[53] See Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, Chapter 2.
[54] See, for example, Brandywine Peace Community newsletter, 30 April 1980, Brandywine Peace Community Records, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania (hereafter BPC Records), Box 1, Folder 6.

of public and media attention of the dramatic witness undertaken in September 1980 by the group known as the 'Plowshares Eight.'

The Eight were Daniel and Philip Berrigan; John Schuchardt, a former lawyer and resident of Jonah House; Molly Rush, founder and director of the Thomas Merton Center, a peace and social justice ministry in Pittsburgh; Elmer Maas, a New York academic and social worker; Dean Hammer, a graduate of Yale Divinity School; Carl Kabat, a Catholic priest in the Oblate of Mary Immaculate Order and resident of Jonah House; and Anne Montgomery, a nun of the Order of the Sacred Heart in New York. Each was active in various radical pacifist communities on the east coast, and each was recruited through the network of the Atlantic Life Community. John Schuchardt, having participated in several protests with the Brandywine Peace Community at the G.E. site in King of Prussia, noticed that with fairly minimal security, the potential existed to enter the facility and "bring the production line to a halt."[55] A plan was devised to enter the facility dressed as G.E. workers, carrying falsified identification cards. Household hammers and bottles of their own blood would then be used to symbolically disarm whatever weapons they could locate within the building.

In undertaking such an action, the risks were much higher than simpler protests involving trespass and property destruction, like the many actions at the White House and Pentagon undertaken throughout the 1970s. General Electric was, at the time, the fifth largest military contractor in the United States. Just as the Brandywine group had found, the Plowshares Eight also identified the company's operations as evidence of "a $3 million-a-day drain on the public treasury; and enormous larceny against the poor."[56] They used their experience in houses of hospitality in the style of the Catholic Worker to connect their daily encounters with the poor to the underlying threat of militarism that infiltrated everyday life. Plowshares supporter Marcia Timmel, also a member of the Catholic Worker, felt that "corruption and greed, selfishness, and [an] insane lust for power" were all "minor manifestations of the bomb."[57] Action, therefore, was necessary.

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[55] Quoted in Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, p. 30.
[56] Plowshares Eight statement, quoted in John Kent, "Merton Center Founder, Seven Others Arrested," *Pittsburgh New Sun*, 2 October 1980, p. 2.
[57] Marcia Timmel to John Schuchardt, 26 November 1981, John Schuchardt Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Madison (hereafter Schuchardt Papers), Box 2, Folder 2.

In justifying their action, the Plowshares Eight argued they were responding to extreme crises in American social and political life in the nuclear age. As Philip Berrigan argued, he saw combating "the slavery of ignorance, fear, indifference, cowarness, and exploitation," that the arms race instilled in the American people.[58] In drawing attention to this "slavery" in the most dramatic way, the Plowshares Eight were acting in the same vein as had other prophetic Christians seeking social justice, Jesus included.[59] Their calling was to counter such trends, not only to arouse and engage the public, but to restore a sense of community, personhood, and humanity within American society. Theirs was an ideal vision of a society free from the oppressive hand of the state; rejecting liberalism, rationality, and modernity, individual and communal acts of resistance, combined with a strong understanding of the application of the Gospels, were necessary in the pursuit of this utopian vision. The Plowshares action at General Electric was simply envisaged as the most effective way to emphasize such a vision in 1980, by extending the movement's focus on nonviolent civil disobedience to include a more militant form of action.

There was also a pragmatic understanding of protest activity at work in the deliberations of the Plowshares Eight. The group spent some nine months developing a coherent strategy, praying, and preparing for the retaliation they anticipated from the state. It was in this planning stage that John Schuchardt made the connection between the group's action and a passage from the book of Isaiah that reads: "and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."[60] By destroying nuclear weapons with hammers, the Eight would be able to enact the vision of Isaiah against the "swords" of the nuclear age.[61] Hence, the group used the passage from Isaiah in its statements, emphasizing the biblical rationale behind its act of symbolic disarmament, and calling

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[58] Philip Berrigan, statement at sentencing, in Transcript Notes of Testimony, *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Daniel Berrigan, et al.*, Court of Common Pleas, County of Montgomery, No. 2647-80, 28 July 1981, p. 16.

[59] Many Catholic resisters also referenced Gandhi as a pivotal figure in their inspiration for undertaking various methods of nonviolent resistance. This is a complex and interesting issue in the postwar history of American pacifism, where Gandhi's ideas about nonviolence were diffused, romanticized, and reconfigured by Christian pacifists in the West. For a thorough discussion of this issue, see Sean Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[60] Isaiah 2:4, American Standard Bible.

[61] See Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, pp. 30-31.

upon Christians to respond to the nonviolent precepts of the Bible and take it upon themselves to bring about peace.

In essence, Molly Rush later argued, the Eight attempted "to make the Gospel messages seem more real." She argued that "to confront such things as nuclear weapons, one has to have some kind of a belief system which says that there are things in our lives more powerful than nuclear weapons."[62] Indeed, Plowshares activists repeatedly iterated that such actions were iterations of the biblical imperative to resist injustice. Following the teachings of Jesus and the Old Testament prophets, they argued that they were acting to bring about God's vision for peace on earth. Theirs was an active, extreme commitment, unlike the isolationist pacifism of Quakers or Mennonites. Moreover, Plowshares actions enabled activists to express their commitment to their pacifist faith in the most dramatic of ways.

With this set of motivations and principles, the eight activists carried out their planned action at the King of Prussia facility on the morning of 9 September 1980. Gaining entry to the building with other workers entering for the morning shift, they managed to locate a room housing several nosecones used on the Mark 12A nuclear missile.[63] After several minutes of using household hammers to damage the nosecones and pouring blood over documents and blueprints, the group knelt down to sing and pray until they were arrested. Charged with a lengthy list of felonies under Pennsylvania law, the Eight anticipated a well-publicized trial in which their opposition to the state could be aired. The mobilization of publicity for Plowshares activists, however, was only part of a multilayered strategy in their pursuit of justice.

Charles Glackin, an attorney who had served as counsel for the Berrigans and their colleagues in the 1972 trial of the "Harrisburg Seven," was offered a deal by the district attorney's office on behalf of his clients: if they pleaded guilty to misdemeanour and trespass, they would receive immediate release from prison, and the opportunity to each

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[62] Molly Rush, quoted in Hurd, "Catholic Activist Believes," p. 1.

[63] Members of the group later maintained that they were guided to the location of the nosecones by divine intervention; to the contrary, Murray Polner and Jim O'Grady have written that the Eight used "information given to them by a disaffected GE employee." See Daniel Berrigan, "Swords into Plowshares," in *Swords into Plowshares: Nonviolent Direct Action for Disarmament*, ed. Arthur J. Laffin and Anne Montgomery (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), p. 56, and Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, p. 346.

make a 30 minute statement before a court – uninterrupted – prior to the delivery of their sentences.[64] Before meeting with the Eight, Glackin consulted with former United States Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who had also represented the Catholic activist community since Harrisburg, and Leonard Boudin, a partner in the famous New York law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin and Standard, which counted Fidel Castro, Salvador Allende, Jimmy Hoffa, and Daniel Ellsberg amongst its clients.[65] As Glackin recalled,

> The defendants did not do what they did to have a deal. They were "bearing witness" to the atrocious conduct of their government and were willing (like Thoreau or Gandhi) to bear the consequences of what they considered to be their civil disobedience… The defendants never sought a deal and could not accept one. They were less interested in their own freedom than with the issue ("crisis" to them) that brought them to [General Electric].[66]

As expected, the Plowshares Eight rejected the deal outright. Philip Berrigan had made his peace with the risks of resistance much earlier; he recalled that in 1970,

> … I had made peace with myself. If I had to spend the rest of my life behind bars, so be it. I was prepared for the worst, and I wasn't going to make any deals with anyone except my God, and my conscience.[67]

At ease with the punishment they expected to receive for their actions at King of Prussia, the Plowshares Eight were assigned a trial date in Norristown, Pennsylvania, with Judge Samuel W. Salus, Jr., who had a reputation for "inappropriate judicial conduct."[68] Preparing a defence based on precepts of international law, necessity, and the illegitimacy of nuclear weapons, the Eight would also call into question the validity of the legal system that sanctioned the nuclear state, indicating that the law, as Ramsey Clark later observed, "is an imperfect instrument of justice."[69] These ideas demonstrate a pragmatism amongst the activists' almost stubborn commitment to their cause; the politics of the Plowshares Eight were sophisticated enough that a legal defense, arranged to extend the airing of their message of resistance, would form another part of their public protest.

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[64] Charles Glackin, letter to the author, 25 August 2010. See also "Plowshares 8 Chronology of Legal Proceedings, 1980-1990," p. 2, Schuchardt Papers, Box 5, Folder 3.
[65] Involvement with Rabinowitz, Boudin and Standard highlights the roots the Berrigans had in both the Old Left and New Left. Boudin's daughter Kathy was at the time a fugitive from her involvement with the Weather Underground in the early 1970s. For a fascinating history of this "aristocratic left," see Susan Braudy, *Family Circle: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left* (New York: Knopf, 2003).
[66] Letters to the author, 25 and 28 August 2010.
[67] Berrigan and Wilcox, *Fighting the Lamb's War*, p. 126.
[68] Charles Glackin, letter to the author, 25 August 2010.
[69] Ramsey Clark to Howard Munson, 13 July 1984, Berrigan-McAlister Collection, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois (hereafter Berrigan-McAlister Collection), Box 1A, Folder 10.

The trial, held in March 1981, was notable for the substantial difference in the approaches of the prosecution and the defense. The state's insistence that the trial deal exclusively with the question of property destruction stood in stark contrast to the activists' focus on the deeper issues behind their actions at the General Electric plant. The Eight freely admitted their guilt, refusing to accommodate the court in a discussion of the legal issues of property destruction and trespass. Instead, they attempted to reconfigure the focus of the trial to a discussion of the implications of their action within the context of the nuclear arms race, and the complicity of General Electric in that race. Their presence at G.E. that morning intended to (symbolically, of course) prevent, rather than commit a crime.

Defending themselves, the Plowshares Eight used the services of Clark, Glackin, and several other attorneys only for research and consultation. The trial was, insisted Anne Montgomery, "for education and confrontation," not for "quibbling over legal points."[70] As Philip Berrigan later recalled:

> Our aim during the trial was to tell the truth about the arms race, not to win exoneration or acquittal. It was our intent during this trial to assert that the arms race was criminal against God's law, international law, and the law of this land, and that every court was duty-bound, given the opportunity, to condemn its illegality if it seriously claimed to be a court of law.[71]

Furious at what he perceived as irrelevant time wasting, Judge Salus refused to hear testimony from several expert witnesses who had been recruited to deliver their testimony on nuclear weapons, international law, the "necessity argument," and the predicament of the nuclear arms race.[72] Incensed at the activists' attempts to turn the

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[70] Anne Montgomery to Elmer Mass and Carl Kabat, 2 October 1980, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 8.

[71] Philip Berrigan, statement at sentencing, in Transcript Notes of Testimony, *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Daniel Berrigan, et al.*, Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas, Docket No. 2647-80, 28 July 1981, p. 14.

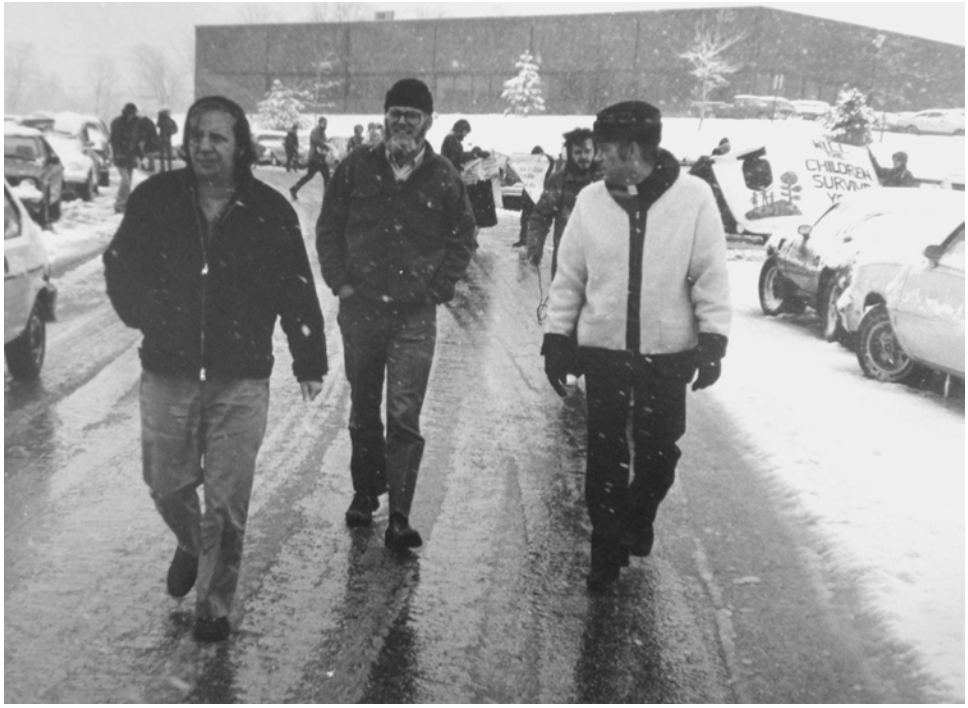
[72] These witnesses were Robert Aldridge, Yale University psychiatrist and author Robert Jay Lifton, Princeton University professor of international law Richard Falk, and Nobel Laureate in medicine George Wald. Each was a strong advocate of disarmament. There exists a sizeable literature on the "necessity" defense and the use of international law in civil disobedience cases. See, for example, Arthur W. Campbell, "The Nuremberg Defense to Charges of Domestic Crime: A Non-Traditional Approach for Nuclear-Arms Protestors," *California Western International Law Journal* 16, no. 1 (1986), pp. 94-117; and Steven M. Bauer and Peter J. Eckerstrom, "The State Made Me Do It: The Applicability of the Necessity Defense to Civil Disobedience," *Stanford Law Review* 39, no. 5 (1987), pp. 1173-1120. For a general discussion about the legal defense of civil disobedience activists, see Francis A. Boyle, *Protesting Power: War, Resistance, and Law* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008), esp. Chapter 2.

discussion of their action into an indictment of nuclear weapons, an infuriated Salus admonished, "Nuclear war is not on trial here in this courtroom; you are!"[73]

After allowing a lengthy statement from Daniel Berrigan, Salus also repeatedly interrupted Elmer Maas' testimony, refusing to hear any statements on the wider rationale for his actions. Abandoning his attempt to speak in court, Maas and several others refused to return to the courtroom following an adjournment, instead returning to the General Electric site in King of Prussia to vigil. Those of the Eight remaining in court turned their backs on Salus, whilst their group of advisory attorneys walked out in protest at the "pettiness and impulsive rulings" of Judge Salus.[74] Later, as the Eight were read their guilty verdict arrived at by a troubled jury, they again turned their back on the judge, refusing once more to be party to the system that failed to hear their plea for nuclear sanity.[75] The "silly legal process," as Anne Montgomery called it, had only served to protect the status quo.[76]

The Plowshares Eight turn their backs on Judge Salus in protest.
Source: Berrigan-McAlister Collection, DePaul University, Box 1A, Folder 4.
Artist unknown.

[73] Judge Samuel W. Salus, Jr., quoted in Robert Jay Lifton, "Norristown, Pa., 1981: The Plowshares 8," *New York Times*, 28 March 1981, p. 23.
[74] Charles Glackin, letter to the author, 28 August 2010.
[75] See also Peter Hood, "Impressions of the Last Days of the Plowshares 8 Trial," *Peacework*, April 1981, pp. 2-3.
[76] Anne Montgomery to Elmer Mass and Carl Kabat, 2 October 1980, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 8.



Despite freezing conditions, Elmer Maas, John Schuchardt, and Carl Kabat (from left) refuse to appear in court and vigil at the General Electric site in King of Prussia instead. Note the banner in the background, carried by a supporter, which reads "Will the Children Survive Your Work?" – a question posed to General Electric employees in order to awaken their consciences to the nature of their work.
Source: Elmer Maas Collection, DePaul University, Box 1, Folder 14. Photo taken 5 March 1981, photographer unknown.

These tactics can easily be interpreted as disruptive, antagonistic, intrusive or confrontational, but to do so ignores the deeper motivations of the activists themselves. The Eight were, they believed, enacting God's will; Carl Kabat wrote a year after the act that "God's Spirit was responsible" for the symbolic acts of disarmament at King of Prussia.[77] By refusing to live in complicity with the state, resisters were bearing witness to personal understandings of a spiritually disciplined life, as well as displaying their commitment publically. "We protest not to indict others, but to discipline ourselves," explained Jim Wallis, of the progressive evangelical group Sojourners in a 1981 talk.[78] Wallis, the Berrigans, and other radical Christians aimed to incorporate a sense of spiritual obedience into their activism.

[77] Carl Kabat, open letter to Pax Christi, 10 October 1981, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 4.
[78] Quoted in Garry Wills, "Testing Our Sanity: Who Are the Crazy Ones?," *Anchorage Daily News* 15 April 1981, p. A14.

Their attitudes were closely tied to the Catholic Worker ethic of personalism, a philosophy of change that emphasized the virtue of personal responsibility in social, political, and economic life. But rather than paying close attention to the demands of integrating an ideal of personal spirituality and communal values with the modern state, those practicing an "anarchistic personalism" rejected any such cooperation.[79] Instead, the operation of personalism within Christian communities such as Jonah House was a pursuit of justice through pure, nonviolent means. As William Au has observed, theirs was an "essentially religious commitment to a counter-cultural community," pioneered by Catholic Worker houses since the 1930s.[80] The personalist, pacifist ethic, he argues,

> … is basically a commitment to the "foolishness" of the cross and not a search for success. Success is always secondary to moving in the direction of the truth. In the end, what is of consequence for the movement is the constant reassertion of the value of the person in the face of a depersonalizing mass society.[81]

The Plowshares Eight, sharing this ideal in their personal and social lives, sought to express their form of Christian personalism in a wholly public manner. Like various incidents of Catholic Worker civil disobedience before them, they maintained that their action was one of a personal conscience directed against the threats to human life and to the realization of the Kingdom of God on earth.

In defending this worldview at trial, however, the Plowshares Eight reiterated their obedience to the law of God the law of the state, which they regarded as unjust. Obeying conscience rather than law, argued Judge Salus, meant anarchy**.** In a letter to Plowshares supporter Liane Norman, he argued that he feared "anarchy in lack of rules or structure. A capitulation of 'inner conscience' over the conscience of the community would allow for no rules and regulations. What would result would be a complete lack of order."[82] As Salus later warned a correspondent, "don't be fooled by the broad sweep of inner conscience, justification and peace as asserted by these people," reinforcing his disdain for the rhetoric the Eight brought to the trial.[83]

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[79] William A. Au, *The Cross, the Flag, and the Bomb: American Catholics Debate War and Peace, 1960-1983* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 25. See also Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak*, p. 100.
[80] Au, *The Cross*, p. 25.
[81] Au, *The Cross*, p. 25.
[82] In Liane Ellison Norman, *Hammer of Justice: Molly Rush and the Plowshares Eight* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Peace Institute, 1989), p. 165.
[83] Samuel W. Salus to John P. Brennan, 9 April 1981, Berrigan-McAlister Collection, Box 1B, Folder 13.

Elmer Maas' testimony – despite being cut short by Judge Salus – offered an eloquent argument that emphasized the group's personal motivations, driven by conscience and by a need to communicate the necessity of nuclear disarmament. The action at General Electric was merely one small act of peaceful defiance:

> In my mind, it was necessary to do what we did together on September 9, 1980, within the context of the Biblical imperative to beat swords into plowshares, to act in some small way to do what is possible to avert the greater harm of nuclear holocaust, by committing this act in witness to the perils of nuclear annihilation even though this action might be interpreted as illegal. Not only would doing what we have done bring some additional focus to the immediate dangers of the arms race, but it might suggest to others the peaceful destruction of all nuclear weapons as a necessary alternative to the arms race.[84]

For Maas, and the rest of the group who would reiterate this sentiment throughout the trial and the sentencing, their commitment to their faith was such that they could not *not* act.[85]

The law, whilst getting in their way, was merely another layer of a 'system' that sought to preserve a state of nuclear terror, contrary to core Christian values of love, nonviolence, and peace. As Daniel Berrigan observed, the law acted more than a deterrent to civil resistance; "in practice, [the legal system] is a kind of 'first strike' against those who dare resist."[86] The specter of lengthy prison sentences, however, was no barrier for the Eight. "No sentence that you impose," argued Maas at the sentencing, "will change our mind about the truth, the true dangers posed to humanity by the weapons systems made by General Electric." The state, he argued, could not suppress such 'truths.' Instead, to bear witness to such weapons and their true purpose was "a liberation that transcends imprisonment, torture, or any other punishment that you or anyone else can devise to bring about their suppression."[87] Carl Kabat aired similar

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[84] Elmer Maas, under direct examination, in Transcript Notes of Testimony, *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Daniel Berrigan, et al.*, Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas, Docket No. 2647-80, 5 March 1981, p. 55.
[85] For an example of this idea, see Molly Rush, "A Grandmother and Activist," in *Peacemakers: Christian Voices from the New Abolitionist Movement*, ed. Jim Wallis (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 68.
[86] Daniel Berrigan to John Schuchardt, 17 August 1989, Schuchardt Papers, Box 5, Folder 6.
[87] Elmer Maas, statement at sentencing, in Transcript Notes of Testimony, *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Daniel Berrigan, et al.*, Court of Common Pleas, County of Montgomery, No. 2647-80, 28 July 1981, pp. 13-14.

sentiments, informing Salus "what you do to me matters very little."[88] There was, the Eight argued, a higher power at work.

In this sense, the Plowshares Eight's response to the legal process was one that emphasized the primacy of their pursuit of justice through civil disobedience. Moreover, as a public forum for the airing of their attitudes, the Eight sought to use the occasion to reiterate the value of nonviolence and the role of individual conscience in resisting the state.[89] As Daniel Berrigan argued, the "civilly disobedient" acted with the "moral grandeur" of the civil rights movement in mind, and in doing so, followed the example of such figures as Martin Luther King, Jr., or even Gandhi.[90] Just like their predecessors in the long American tradition of nonviolent civil disobedience, the Plowshares Eight also shared a moral, spiritual and personal compulsion to break the law. Whereas the civil rights movement made the law the object of their protest, anti-nuclear activists in the late 1970s and early 1980s acted against a much broader 'system' of industry, military, law, and government that sustained the threat of nuclear war.

In resisting this system – through action, the legal process, and in prison – such an 'indirect' form of civil disobedience highlighted the dual nature of Catholic resistance as simultaneously private and public.[91] Christian communities engaging in acts of bearing witness to nuclear evils were, in practice, both personal *and* political expressions of resistance, in terms of their style and religious rhetoric. The more pragmatic element of such activism – persuading the public that their actions were necessary and justified – was never far from the minds of Plowshares activists as they planned their symbolic acts of disarmament. In a legal sense, the activists aimed to convince the jury – not the judge – that their actions were appropriate within the confines of international law and were justified as personal acts of conscience.

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[88] Carl Kabat, statement at sentencing, in Transcript Notes of Testimony, *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Daniel Berrigan, et al.*, Court of Common Pleas, County of Montgomery, No. 2647-80, 28 July 1981, p. 4.

[89] Recognizing that groups of radical resisters were using courtroom trials as political forums, federal and district courts were divided over whether to give such activists harsh sentences as a deterrent, or soft sentences to avoid the politicization of the trial process. See "Hard Law, Soft Law," *Progressive*, August 1981, p. 12.

[90] Berrigan, "Connecting the Altar," p. 8.

[91] See Deborah Greenblatt, "Defense of the Civilly Disobedient," *North Carolina Central Law Journal* 13, no. 1 (1981), pp. 159-160.

In their 1984 appeal against the Salus trial and sentence, the Eight's motivations were recognized as such by appellate Judge Edmund Spaeth. He observed:

> Appellants do not assert that their action would avoid nuclear war (what a grandiose and unlikely idea!). Instead, at least so far as I can tell from the record, their belief was that their action, in combination with the actions of others, might accelerate a political process ultimately leading to the abandonment of nuclear missiles. And that belief, I submit, should not be dismissed as "unreasonable as a matter of law." A jury might – or might not – find it unreasonable as a matter of fact. But that is for a jury to say, not for a court.[92]

Spaeth found that the conduct of Salus towards the jury was in error, and argued that Plowshares Eight were indeed entitled to air their grievances with the state in front of a jury, not in front of the legal machine which Schuchardt saw as "the chief apologist and defender of first strike nuclear holocaust."[93] But to outsiders – including the jury and the secular media – the articulation of the Eight's rationale appeared contradictory. Although they came across as well meaning Americans, the fact that they believed their actions were *above the law* was seen as an ill founded, even arrogant attitude.

Many Plowshares activists worried that their public reputations would appear as such; the support committee for the 1982 "Trident Nein Plowshares," for example, raised concerns that its activists were "inaccessible" to the public and to the wider peace movement. The "mystique" that surrounded them, and the impression they gave as "a group of 'hard-core', self-righteous, 'above it all' radicals who discount the work of others," was not ideal in the promotion of sympathy from the public and the media. It was difficult to empathize or identify with a Plowshares activist, committee members suggested, given the radical nature of their protest.[94] Such concerns – applied to the Plowshares Eight as well – emphasize the troubled relationship between the idea of direct action as a personal ritual on one hand, and as a part of the wider anti-nuclear movement on the other.

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[92] Edmund Spaeth, concurring opinion in *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania vs. Daniel Berrigan et al.*, Superior Court of Pennsylvania, Docket No. 1959 Phila. 1981, 17 February 1984, p. 5. Emphasis in original.

[93] John Schuchardt to Father Dirr and Katherine Marschall, 24 January 1986, Schuchardt Papers, Box 2, Folder 6.

[94] Trident Nein Support Committee, "Summary of Comments Made – Weekend Meeting, July 16-17, 1983," Elmer Maas Collection, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois (hereafter Maas Collection), Special Collections and Archives, John T. Richardson Library, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, Box 2, Folder 1.

In the wake of their action at General Electric, the Plowshares Eight began to discuss the need to spread their message most effectively to the public. Whilst in prison, Molly Rush suggested to her colleagues that they, as a group, needed to promote themselves as ordinary Americans, "which would help people to humanize us, allowing them to respond out of their own life struggles."[95] They were not extremists, as Daniel Berrigan emphasized at the trial:

> We have not come from outer space or from chaos or from madhouses to do this thing… We come from churches. We come from America. We come from neighborhoods. We come from years of work. We come from earning a living.[96]

There was no way to earn a living "going around banging on nosecones," he continued, reiterating what other religious pacifists had been publicizing for some years. Just like any concerned, committed Christian, the Plowshares Eight were simply exercising their consciences against what they saw as unjust manifestations of power and authority.

In advertizing this image to the public, Molly Rush suggested, the Eight should avoid focusing on their political or religious rationale as they had done in the action itself, and at trial. Rather, the group ought to underscore the fact that they were willing, as should every concerned American, to take responsibility and resist the nuclear menace. This was a loaded issue; social and economic pressures meant that not every ordinary American could afford to engage in civil disobedience. As one Plowshares supporter explained:

> People [engaged in works of mercy] simply do not have the time to give to resistance. In fact, that's where all my conflicts begin. Do I really have the time and the energy to give to that or should I devote my whole self to my family?[97]

Another supporter described himself as a "timid activist," lacking the courage to "do anything that takes real guts."[98] The jurors in the Plowshares Eight trial, echoing these sentiments, also suggested that the Eight had used a kind of manipulative moral authority in court. As juror Laura Zoltex explained, "they wanted to get caught… but still, they

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[95] See Molly Rush to fellow Plowshares activists, 27 September 1980, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 5.
[96] Daniel Berrigan, direct examination, in Transcript Notes of Testimony, *Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Daniel Berrigan, et al.*, Court of Common Pleas, County of Montgomery, No. 2647-80, 5 March 1981, pp. 20-21.
[97] [Anonymous] to John Schuchardt, 22 December 1981, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 7.
[98] Gordon Bennett to John Schuchardt, 3 August 1981, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 7.

made you feel sorry for them."[99] Another of the jurors, Mary Anne Ingram, was disturbed by the weight placed upon her to charge the group as guilty. "I knew it wasn't a plain breaking and entering," she recalled. Other jurors, though, felt there was no room for emotion in a case where the facts were of utmost importance.[100] Juror John Pizza expressed his frustration that the Plowshares had "weakened their case and their credibility with some of the jurors" by refusing to cooperate with the legal language of the court, instead claiming to obey the law of God, and their own consciences.[101] Here the problem of the dual nature of Plowshares activism emerged: by emphasizing their motivations for acting in a personal and religious sense, the activists proceeded to marginalize themselves from those members of the public they were hoping to convince of the justness of their cause.

Essentially, the jurors – mostly white, middle class residents of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania – expressed conflicted emotions regarding the legal nature of the Plowshares actions. Whilst one juror agreed that the Eight were "basically very good people… not criminals," another explained that it was not the place of the citizen to act in such a way toward nuclear weapons: "that's not my – or their – decision to make."[102] Letters printed in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* stressed similar themes. One reader felt the Plowshares Eight held "no regard for property and the law… Since when are they trustworthy spokesmen for nonviolence when their actions are so dramatically destructive?"[103] Public opinion stressed the incompatibility between the group's rationale of nonviolence, and its almost militant destruction of property.

Appearing on the *Donahue* talk show in the wake of the trial, Daniel Berrigan, Philip Berrigan, and Molly Rush attempted to justify their actions to an audience that was often critical of the way the Eight broke the law. Although the three emphasized that they had satisfied their consciences by acting in such a way – Rush explained that she did not worry "about whether what I would do would have an effect but whether what I would

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[99] Anonymous, notes from a conversation with Laura Zoltex, 19 March 1981, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.
[100] Anonymous, notes from a conversation with Mary Anne Ingram, 24 March 1981, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.
[101] Anonymous, notes from a conversation with John Pizza, 12 March 1981, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 14.
[102] Unnamed jurors, quoted in Ann Morrissett Davidon, "The Plowshares Eight: Confronting the System," *Fellowship*, April-May 1981, p. 15.
[103] Nancy Alexander, letter to the editor, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 September 1980, p. 10A.

do would be faithful and true to my own conscience" – they struggled to convince the audience that civil disobedience was the best tactic for the peace movement.[104] Radical pacifists, audience members argued, could not hope to appeal a potentially sympathetic public; as one suggested, "we need someone to lead [the peace movement] in the right way."[105] These attitudes suggest that radical acts of civil disobedience lacked the public appeal that pacifists might hope they would have. Criticisms centered on the *methods* of direct action, rather than the *object* of protest.[106] In doing so, they highlighted the wider tensions between radical, expressive protest and the problems of efficacy in anti-nuclear activism.

Although coming across as well meaning Christians, their experiment with direct action at King of Prussia found them little favor with the public, the judiciary, or the Christian community. The Berrigans had experienced a similar alienation in the wake of their draft board raids during the Vietnam War, but popularity, as Gary Wills explained, was "a concept that is meaningless to prophets."[107] Despite the recognition of the legitimacy of nonviolent civil disobedience by the Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council in 1962, critics of radical Catholic activism repeatedly mobilized issues of patriotism, un-Americanism, and political naiveté in dismissing symbolic acts of resistance as legitimate religious or public protests. The editors of the *Catholic Standard and Times*, for example, criticized the Plowshares Eight action as "juvenile," and "immoral."[108] In a similar vein, an editorial in the *Philadelphia Bulletin* chastised the Eight's "childish antics" as "more embarrassing than amusing," and saw them as an indication the Berrigan brothers were tired relics of the 1960s, who had become "aging and pathetic – and awfully boring – nuisances." In addition, the editorial suggested, such violent acts of civil disobedience turned away potential support, and further relegated the Berrigans and their colleagues to the fringes of the religious peace movement: "Self-serving publicity

[104] Transcript of *Donahue*, 19 March 1981, p. 24, Berrigan-McAlister Collection, Box 49A, Folder 3.
[105] Transcript of *Donahue*, 19 March 1981, p. 24, Berrigan-McAlister Collection, Box 49A, Folder 3.
[106] As Penelope Moon has suggested, criticism of the Plowshares Eight action in Catholic periodicals, whilst not consistent with the church's position on the immorality of nuclear weapons, reflected the general attitude toward the Berrigans and their actions as illegitimate, illegal, and "outside the bounds of respectability among mainstream American Catholics." Penelope Adams Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God? American Catholics Debate Catholic Antiwar Protest," *Peace and Change* 33, no. 1 (2008), pp. 21-22.
[107] Wills, "Testing Our Sanity," p. A14.
[108] "Berrigan Break-in: Misplaced Zeal," *Catholic Standard and Times*, 18 September 1980, p. 6. See also Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters," pp. 16-17.

stunts – and especially violent stunts – will turn people away from antiwar activism out of fear that they'll be labeled 'kooks' or 'crazies'."[109]

The *Bulletin*'s view typifies mainstream reaction to the Plowshares movement, emphasizing how radical acts of civil disobedience – especially those that involved the fraught issue of property destruction – did not sit comfortably with either ordinary Christians or with the secular public, who viewed such acts as unimpressive reminders of the radical 1960s. Generally, the religious and moral nature of Plowshares activism was not controversial. Critics and supporters alike agreed that the Eight's intentions were noble, and their actions were reasonable expressions of their clear Christian commitment to peace. This becomes more complicated, however, when we consider the idea that some critics were put off by the Plowshares Eight's "air of spiritual superiority." Trial prosecutor Bruce Eckel felt that the group seemed "haughty, even arrogant. I don't know how much they are doing for their cause, and how much for themselves."[110] The idea that the Eight were 'above the law' did them few favors with the jury either. Of the twelve jurors, eight were Catholics, reflecting the traditionally strong Catholic makeup of Montgomery County.[111] One juror sympathetic to the defendants, Mary Ann Ingram, "expressed surprise that the strictest Catholics were the most hard-line about the defendants' guilt." In addition, the younger members of the jury were the most adamant that the Eight's action was one of simple lawbreaking, and refused to consider the deeper motivations behind the action.[112]

The Eight, meanwhile, had objected to the jury selection process, in which "there was only one black person and only one 19-20 year old in the 108-member jury pool."[113] However, Montgomery County was an overwhelmingly white, blue-collar area; less than five percent of the resident population in 1980 were African-American, and even less were Asian, Hispanic, or of other races.[114] The group had envisaged a jury in which

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[109] "The Berrigans: One More Time," *Philadelphia Bulletin*, 11 September 1980, reprint in Berrigan Collection, CU, Box B24.
[110] Bruce Eckel, quoted in Margaret Halsey, "Prosecutor Reflects on Plowshares Eight," *Times Chronicle* (Jenkintown, Pennsylvania), 10 September 1981, [page unknown].
[111] Catholics comprised over 50% of all religious adherents in a 1980 survey. See Montgomery County 1980 Membership Report, Association of Religious Data Archives, http://www.thearda.com/mapsReports/reports/counties/42091_1980.asp (accessed 24 December 2010).
[112] Patricia Moore, "Jury Anguished Over Berrigans, 2 on Panel Say," *Boston Globe*, 11 March 1981, p. 6.
[113] Michael Diamond, "The Trial of the Plowshares 8," *WIN*, 1 May 1981, p. 18.
[114] U.S. Census Bureau, *USA Counties* data supplement, http://censtats.census.gov/usa/usa.shtml (accessed 24 December 2010). Interestingly, the Plowshares movement was also overwhelmingly white. As Tobey

racial, gender, and socio-economic diversity might prove more receptive to the arguments of moral and spiritual justification. They also hoped that a younger jury might be able to look beyond the basic facts of the action, and appreciate the wider virtues – moral, religious, and political – of civil disobedience. However, the illegality of such acts of civil disobedience sat uneasily with a public sceptical of radical protest. Tellingly, many who recognized or even admired the spiritual rationale behind the action of the Plowshares Eight admitted its futility in finding a sympathetic ear with members of the public, both religious and secular. As a letter to the *Inquirer* suggested, "Father Berrigan is a man of greater faith than I, and I wish him well; but splashing blood on a nose cone only appeals to certain people."[115]

ALIENATION

Within the wider peace movement, the radical nature of Plowshares actions again struggled for acceptance. Not least due to the religious symbolism and iconography employed by Plowshares activists, others on the left struggled to understand how such direct action could make any discernible impact. Lauri Lowell, a writer from *WIN* magazine, whilst possessing similar radical ideals to the activists in the Atlantic Life Community, could not understand the ritual act of blood pouring. In a letter to Liz McAlister, Lowell also questioned "the impact of moral witness upon the structures and powers we are opposing."[116] By no means representative of the editorship of *WIN*, nor of the secular pacifist movement more broadly, Lowell's reservations about spiritually-based dissent mirror similar disquiet within the peace movement from the 1960s about the infamy of the Berrigan brothers and their relentless pursuit of radical direct action. As Moon argues, "sentiment against the Berrigans was so strong that in 1973 famed Catholic peacemakers Eileen Egan counseled those organizing Pax Christi-USA to avoid affiliation with the Berrigans."[117] Daniel Berrigan evidently noticed this trend amongst the religious peace movement; speaking to a Quaker Meeting in Manhattan in June 1981,

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has observed, "the racial homogeneity of the movement is striking, but in keeping with the demographics of the American peace movement in general, and the larger anti-nuclear movement." Kristen Tobey, "Performing Marginality: Identity and Efficacy in the Plowshares Nuclear Disarmament Movement" (Ph.D. diss., Divinity School, University of Chicago, 2010), p. 46.

[115] J.J. Webster, letter to the editor, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 September 1980, p. 10A.

[116] Lauri Lowell to Liz McAlister, 23 August 1979, Berrigan Collection, CU, Box B23.

[117] Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters," p. 22.

Berrigan was "particularly critical of religious bodies who talk of peace but who are fearful of witnessing when that witnessing may lead to imprisonment." Berrigan's view was that all Christians ought to embrace a commitment to God's vision "regardless of personal convenience."[118]

A month later, in August 1981, Berrigan complained to theologian Jim Wallis, founder of the Sojourners community in Washington, D.C., that the mainstream Christian peace movement did not take civil disobedience seriously. Accusing Wallis of regarding civil disobedience as an irrelevant strategy, Berrigan argued that Sojourners and other like-minded Christian pacifist groups were "quietly burying non violent law breaking as a spiritual tool of rebirth, judgment, and social change. In two ways; neglecting to encourage its practice among their own constituencies, and ignoring those who are doing such things."[119] By developing what Nepstad calls a "theology of resistance," Berrigan and other Plowshares activists attempted to combat such silence from the mainstream peace movement. They cultivated pockets of support in parts of the peace movement respectful of the role of prophetic action and "Gospel nonviolence."[120] Through independent media, the publications of progressive and leftist groups and organizations, some religious presses such as the *National Catholic Reporter*, and through public speaking events, public radio, and other such forums, Plowshares activists' ideas attained a small, but effective audience. Some Plowshares activists even saw interpersonal discussion, rather than headlines in mainstream media, as a more valuable means of communicating the meaning and merit of their ideas about resistance and nonviolence.[121] It is this communicative aspect of radical Catholic pacifism that placed Plowshares activism at the fringes of the peace movement. Like true pacifists, they were most interested in resisting the evils of modernity in personal and communal ways. But in advertising their resistance, they updated and extended the public nature of their resistance.

Whilst these ideas suggest that radical direct action by Christian pacifists was an effort in community building well outside the confines of mainstream public life, the notoriety of

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[118] Arthur Berk, "Dan Berrigan Challenges Friends," [June 1981], Berrigan Collection, CU, Box B3, Folder 3.
[119] Daniel Berrigan to Jim Wallis, 24 August 1981, Schuchardt Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.
[120] Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, Chapter 2.
[121] See Per Herngren, quoted in Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, p. 85.

Daniel and Philip Berrigan ensured that the actions of the Plowshares Eight were well publicized by major news outlets. The group were prepared for this: police produced evidence at the trial of a notebook carried by Carl Kabat on the day of the action, in which an entry read "What should we say to the press."[122] Journalists saw this as arrogant; as one reporter told the Norristown daily *Today's Post*, "What I really hate is the way they're using us."[123] Other media emphasized that the trial was a kind of "1960s flashback," and that the ageing Berrigans were "caught in some kind of time warp."[124] Similarly, argued Robert Hillegass in the New England Quaker magazine *Peacework*, mainstream media reporting on the trial "essentially avoided the question of meaning." Missing from their analysis, he wrote, was "any sustained attention to either the political significance or the spiritual and social meaning of these actions." The media silence was "almost conspiratorial," perhaps suggesting that Plowshares actions were frightening the establishment; some might have even considered this fact a measure of success.[125]

The establishment, meanwhile, had taken care to ensure the Plowshares Eight trial did not achieve the level of publicity the activists could take advantage of. U.S. attorney Peter Vaira had successfully arranged for the case to be tried in the county court in Norristown, rather than in a federal court, and charging the Eight under Pennsylvania law rather than federal law. A bigger trial, he argued, "would simply give them another platform to advance what is obviously a publicity campaign."[126] For the defendants and their supporters, however, the process was merely another step in their ongoing effort to alert the public at large to the immorality of nuclear weapons, and the illegitimacy of the state that made them. Sympathy from judges, jurors, reporters, or the public was a bonus, but was never sought from the onset. For a separatist community of prophetic resisters, support would grow organically through the "transformative power of the spirit," rather than through any diluted public relations campaign aimed at moderate reformism.[127] The attitudes of radical religious pacifists, then, highlight a rejection of liberal challenges to

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[122] Don Russell, "Plowshares Eight Reporter Indicts Press," *Today's Post* (Norristown, Pennsylvania), 10 March 1981, p. 16.
[123] Russell, "Plowshares Eight Reporter," p. 16.
[124] According to an opinion piece in a Philadelphia community newspaper, the media in the Philadelphia area reflected the tendency of news media to not take the Plowshares Eight at all seriously. Elma Kay Sabo, opinion piece in the *Chestnut Hill Local* (Philadelphia), 19 March 1981, reprint in Schuchardt Papers, Box 5, Folder 8.
[125] Robert Hillegass, "Plowshares Prophets and the Press," *Peacework*, September 1986, p. 4.
[126] Quoted in Davidon, "The Plowshares Eight," p. 13.
[127] Hillegass, "Plowshares Prophets and the Press," p. 5.

the political system and public opinion. Real social change occurred by living and acting in accordance with Christian values of nonviolence and peace.

These divergent views on the value of media coverage again illuminate the curious nature of Plowshares activism as a combination of religious rituals, prophetic nonviolence, alternative spirituality, and symbolic protest that oustiders found confusing. For the activists themselves, a close-knit community could provide the sort of security that could sustain radical activism and ongoing witnesses to the crisis of modernity. Since its inception, Jonah House operated as a source of communal unity that enabled its members to realize their own sense of personal responsibility, as well as work together toward the somewhat utopian Catholic Worker goal of building 'a new society in the shell of the old.' This was in many ways a spiritual quest, far removed from the reformist world of liberal politics. Theologian Henri Nouwen saw civil resistance as biblical, not political, and successful activists realized that "the value of their protests was based less on their ability to change the course of political history than on their vocation to announce the hope of the Cross in the midst of a self-destructive human society."[128] Towards this end would emerge some semblance of what Martin Luther King, Jr. called the 'beloved community,' a vision of a peaceful, nonviolent, and just society.

This process of building a resistance community engaged in the process of nonviolent revolution was not simply a dramatic, ill-defined affair. Rather, since the beginnings of Jonah House and the Atlantic Life Community in the early 1970s, Catholic resisters on the east coast paid serious attention to the procedure, rationale, philosophy and theology behind their commitment to the creation of a new society. It was a process of trial and error, argued Liz McAlister in a 1974 article, on of "reflection and evaluation… [and] communal judgment."[129] Only by experimenting with an ongoing process of "action and contemplation" could a community of resisters begin to bring into their version of 'truth' into the public realm. This way, by defining their spiritual and social roles in relation to this understanding of 'truth,' the community could begin to spread its liberating philosophy to other sectors of society afflicted by the evils of modernity, and the political system that enforced those evils.

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[128] Foreword to Christopher Grannis *et al.*, *The Risk of the Cross: Christian Discipleship in the Nuclear Age* (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), p. vii.
[129] Elizabeth McAlister, "Some Reflections on the Meaning of Resistance Action Today," *WIN*, 23 May 1974, p. 15.

Success in such a venture, however, was not instantaneous. McAlister lamented the inaction from a peace movement that had stalled as the United States' participation in the Vietnam War wound down, accusing peace groups of not being interested in ongoing resistance. Peace organizations, she argued, "have assumed orientations that are either toward reform or research. A few have put all their energies into the impeachment of President Nixon as if his removal would trumpet the new society."[130] With the establishment of Jonah House in 1973, and the beginnings of the Plowshares movement in 1980, McAlister and her colleagues engaged in ritualized resistance on a regular and dramatic basis. By doing so, they demonstrated that they were not interested in reform, preferring instead to act upon what they saw as grave dangers in the exercise of power and authority. As public protests, these resisters were at once enacting their spiritual beliefs, and also advertising their moral opposition to nuclear weapons to the public. Within the context of the peace movement in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, such a particular set of ideas, tactics, and strategies demonstrated the complicated way in which radical pacifists sought to continue to resist the state.

EXTENDING THE SCOPE OF PRIVATE RITUAL AND PUBLIC PROTEST

As the saga of the Plowshares Eight shows, there existed a complicated relationship between the religious or spiritual aspects of resistance, and the public face of that resistance. Was activism in a Plowshares campaign a private matter, or was it part of a larger campaign of nonviolence that hoped to mobilize others into resisting the state? The case of Helen Woodson illustrates this divide well. A Catholic from Madison, Wisconsin, Woodson took part in a Plowshares action in Missouri in November 1984, having previously engaged in smaller acts of resistance in Washington, D.C. and Madison in the early 1980s. Calling themselves the 'Silo Pruning Hooks,' Woodson, Carl Kabat (of the Plowshares Eight), his brother Paul Kabat (also an Oblate priest), and native American activist Larry Cloud-Morgan, drove to N5, a Minuteman II nuclear missile silo some 40

[130] McAlister, "Some Reflections," p. 13.

miles east of Kansas City.[131] There they used a hired jackhammer to damage the silo hatch, but it broke down after fifteen minutes. The four then began to damage other equipment on the unmanned site with bolt cutters and sledgehammers, also taking care to place around the site some pictures of their children and grandchildren, a bottle of fake blood, a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, and a quilt-like banner reading "Violence Ends Where Love Begins."[132]

Larry Cloud-Morgan takes to part of the missile silo with a sledgehammer. The dramatic aspect of property destruction was a major factor in the divisiveness of these sorts of actions.
Source: http://www.jonahhouse.org/archive (accessed 15 October 2010).

Some time later, an Armed Response Team from nearby Whiteman Air Force Base found the group sitting with hands held, singing and praying. A prepared statement read, in part:

> Our Christian faith calls us to accept personal responsibility for ending the cycle of violence which threatens us all… We affirm the responsibility of each person

[131] Cloud-Morgan presence was an oddity in a largely Christian, and Catholic movement. However, his ideas about the oppression of the state and the spiritual value of resistance fit with Catholic resisters' attitudes perfectly.
[132] *United States v. Kabat, et al.*, 797 F.2d 580 (U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit, 1986), p. 1.

> to stand firmly in the way of the forces of death with life-giving witness and action.[133]

Similar in style and rhetoric to other Plowshares actions, what set the Silo Pruning Hooks incident apart was the severity of the sentences dealt; U.S. attorney Robert Ulrich successfully sought bringing charges of conspiracy, trespassing, destruction of government property, and sabotage against the four, and a jury convicted them on all counts. Judge Brook Bartlett meted out the harshest sentences to date for Plowshares activists, with Woodson and Carl Kabat each earning eighteen-year prison terms.[134]

For such strict practitioners of resistance such as Helen Woodson, though, the legal system existed merely as an inconvenience. She acted not to publicize her opposition to nuclear weapons, nor to build any semblance of a radical Christian community in opposition to the state. When approached by *Mother Jones* magazine for an interview, Woodson replied:

> We are not a 'story,' and our experience is unimportant except to ourselves. There is only one thing to say – the missiles are there and must be disarmed; the rest is a matter of personal conscience, which can neither be created nor aroused by publicity. I'm grateful that I participated in a beginning disarmament, I'm experiencing prison as a joyous blessing, but the only public statement I intend will be with action, not words, when I return to the missile silo upon release.[135]

Unlike her peers in the Silo Pruning Hooks, Woodson did not appeal her sentence. She wanted the eighteen-year prison sentence to be a matter for the conscience of the sentencing judge, rather than a legal issue to be heard by an appellate court.[136] In refusing to join her three codefendants in an appeal, and expressly denying her legal counsel permission to file an appeal for sentence reduction, Woodson explicitly refused to cooperate with the system that perpetuate the evils that took her to the N5 missile site in Missouri. As she explained, "judicial gestures are not equivalent to justice. A sentence reduction does nothing to reduce the threat of nuclear war, and our freedom will not secure freedom for the world's population held hostage under the Bomb."[137] Judge Brook Bartlett subsequently reduced Woodson's sentence to twelve years, yet she was

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[133] Carl Kabat *et al*., Silo Pruning Hooks statement, [12 November 1984], Berrigan-McAlister Collection, Box 36A, Folder 18.

[134] Richard Pollak, "Crime and Punishment," *Mother Jones*, May 1987, p. 25. For a discussion of the charge of sabotage and its place in the legal history of civil disobedience, see William L. Switzer, Jr., "If I Had a Hammer: *United States V. Kabat* - Sabotage and Nuclear Protestors," *Creighton Law Review* 20, no. 4 (1987), pp. 1167-1198.

[135] Quoted in Pollak, "Crime and Punishment," pp. 21-22.

[136] *United States v. Kabat, et al.*, 797 F.2d 580 (U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit, 1986), p. 19n3.

[137] Quoted in Paula Rochman, ed., "Letters From Prison," *Peace*, December 1985, p. 5.

unrepentant about her opposition to nuclear weapons, sending Bartlett an affidavit that she would return to N5 upon release, ready to commit civil disobedience once more.[138]

For Woodson, her actions were solely based on what she calls "orthodox Christianity." Citing obedience to "an authority that transcends human thought – an infallible authority," Woodson explains that her actions exist in terms of the difference between the 'City of Man' and the 'City of God.'[139] In her actions of civil disobedience, Woodson attempted to combine elements of both secular pacifism and eschatological witness. As she explains it, this was difficult to explain to a judge, a jury, or to the media:

> I was attempting to bear witness to Christ as the Lord of creation who will, at the end of time, come into His universal, eternal reign. But since that entire concept is lost on modernity, how should I express myself in public statements and in court? I tried to resolve it by combining elements of the two "dynamic principles," but I was never really satisfied with the result and in retrospect I realize that it may have been a mistake. With that approach, there's always the danger of appearing to be a politically-correct Christian with a heavy emphasis on activism or a secular activist with a little of the politically-correct Jesus appended to it. Neither good in orthodox terms.[140]

Woodson's efforts to satisfy her personal commitment to bear witness faithfully speak of the 'two worlds' of radical Christian pacifism. The secular world, resisters contend, is one in which the modern state rules without mercy or compassion. War, the building of nuclear weapons, and other examples of state violence (or its potential) are targets for activists wishing to draw attention to the immoral exploits of the state, and expose its hypocrisy. In the religious world, however, resisters act out of a sense of personal crisis, responding to a biblical call to enact some semblance of justice, however symbolic, in accordance with what they see as Gospel nonviolence. Public appearances such as courtroom trials are where these 'two worlds' meet, as activists attempt to justify their motivation for acting in religious as well as secular terms.

Utilizing a variety of statements in court – personal, spiritual, legal, and moral – Plowshares activists attempted to cast a wide net. Occasionally, activists as steadfast in the faith as Woodson were firm in their attitude to the court and its procedure; as she

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[138] Mary McGrory, "Saga of an American Dissenter," *Washington Post*, 15 April 1986, p. A2.
[139] Letter to the author, 31 October 2010.
[140] Letter to the author, 31 October 2010. Woodson refers to theologian Christopher Dawson and his idea of the 'dynamic principles' of the two societies, the 'City of Man' and the 'City of God.' Dawson's ideas were most directly expounded in his book Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1935).

announced during the Silo Pruning Hook trial, "the point in the courtroom is not to be acquitted, but to speak the truth." The role of the activist in a public trial was, she felt, "to speak about nuclear weapons, about God, about personal responsibility."[141] According to *Mother Jones* magazine, her co-defendants were not so successful in airing their philosophy of resistance. Hiring Henry Stoever, a Kansas City lawyer sympathetic to their cause but with no criminal law experience, the Kabat brothers and Cloud-Morgan struggled to articulate a coherent reasoning in their defense. The activists spoke "with a frustrating and damaging lack of cohesiveness" on the Boston Tea Party, the civil rights movement, the Nuremberg trials, and other issues key to Plowshares activists' understanding of their historic context and their biblical duty to resist.[142]

For a jury, however, especially in the blue-collar heartland of western Missouri, such precepts were a little alien. "One could chide them," editorialized the *National Catholic Reporter*, "for not standing before the judge, choosing, instead, to shake his hand." The editorial suggested that the Soli Pruning Hooks' failure to gain jurors' sympathy was a result of their separation from the system they opposed:

> If some of their court actions seemed strange, they perhaps can best be understood by sensing the profound alienation they seemed to feel. It's an alienation from a system of government they view as legally preparing for the end of civilization, even of life on the planet. And this alienation extends to a judicial system that supports and enforces that preparation.[143]

Mirroring the imbalance between the worldview of radical religious pacifism and that of the conservative middle American heartland, the case of the Silo Pruning Hooks, and their zealous prosecution by the state demonstrates another facet in the difficulty Plowshares activists had in convincing the public of the validity or justness of their cause. As a public forum, a court trial in Missouri was perhaps not the best strategy for stirring the consciences of the community, but nevertheless, it demonstrates the dedication of these activists to their struggle, and the swiftness with which they rejected any inkling of compromise, preferring instead an organic appeal for spiritual revolution.

Although not at the N5 missile silo, Woodson made good on her promise for continued civil disobedience. When released in 1993, she held up a bank in Illinois with an

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[141] Quoted in Pollak, "Crime and Punishment," p. 23.
[142] Pollak, "Crime and Punishment," p. 24.
[143] Tom Fox, editorial, *National Catholic Reporter*, 1 March 1985, p. 2.

unloaded starter pistol, and proceeded to burn the $25,000 stolen cash on the floor of the bank whilst admonishing to bank employees and customers, "Money is evil. You don't believe in God, you only worship money." When released for that offence in 2004, she sent letters to several federal judges, as well as the commander of Whiteman Air Force Base, warning of a "weapon of mass destruction" on the base. Arrested when she splashed fake blood on a screening device and security desk at the U.S. District Courthouse in Kansas City, Woodson was again returned to prison.[144]

INNER PEACE, RESISTANCE, AND THE MEANING OF PLOWSHARES ACTIVISM

Like other Plowshares activists who considered prison another essential feature of bearing witness, Woodson considers jail time a natural part of her spiritual life. Prison, she argues, "is not a temporary interruption of 'normal' life… after all, the quality of one's life is not determined by the location of one's body."[145] For other Plowshares activists, prison sentences served to further similar altruistic sentiments. As John Schuchardt emphasized, "I'm staying in [prison] to remind people of the real issues. Being in here is like a constant prayer for peace."[146] This type of witness, unlike the communal affair of Plowshares actions, was decidedly solitary, and unlike the act of protest or the trial, there existed no audience, only God.[147] As Carl Kabat explained, "I personally don't find jail all that unpalatable. It's a great milieu for cultivating an interior life."[148] By helping an individual further demonstrate their solidarity with the poor and the oppressed, prison time served as a key feature of radical Christian discipleship, so much so that Jesuit priest Joseph Towle speculated in 1981 that "there might even be something defective in one's discipleship if one has never gone to jail."[149] These attitudes emphasize the extreme nature of bearing witness as an act of personal protest, but also highlight the almost sacrificial nature of a 'career' of civil disobedience.

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[144] Mark Morris, "Peace Activist Pleads Guilty to Vandalism and Threats," *Kansas City Star*, 18 June 2004, p. B2. As of mid-2011, Woodson has spent just five days outside prison since her arrest in 1984 for the Silo Pruning Hooks action.
[145] Letter to the author, 31 October 2010.
[146] "'Plowshares' Activist Prefers Prison to Bail," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 7 November 1981, p. 21.
[147] See John Schuchardt, "Imprisonment," in *Conscience and the Law: A Court Guide for the Civilly Disobedient*, ed. William Durland (Colorado Springs, CO: The Center on Law and Pacifism, 1982), p. 107.
[148] In Sara Rimer, "Haven for Protest: Antiwar Activists of '80s Share Hopes, Dreams at Jonah House," *Washington Post*, 23 August 1981, p. A1.
[149] Joseph Towle, S.J., "S.J. News," 16 March 1981, p. 2, Berrigan Collection, CU, Box B4.

Such attitudes have prompted, since the late 1960s, strong criticism of radical Catholic pacifists, centered on the issue of what critics regarded as "pointless personal martyrdom." Other pacifists saw such a militant attitude, which ran the risk of turning activists into "professional prisoners," as less enriching, empowering, or constructive than alternative activities, such as working with the poor or less fortunate in Catholic Worker houses of hospitality.[150] Ultimately, such concerns reflect key elements of the Catholic resister's sense of purpose; as Nepstad reminds us, Plowshares activism is not "driven by political instrumentality but rather by moral conscience."[151] Rather than describing the Plowshares Eight action, as Polner and O'Grady have done, as "a small but stubborn challenge to ascendant Reaganism," we need to look beyond Plowshares activists' opposition to nuclear weapons in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[152] Taking their cue from the Catholic Worker movement and anarchistic, countercultural version of personalism espoused by its founders, communities of Catholic resisters engaged in a utopian quest for peace, in both private and public ways. Doing so transcended the legacies of radical pacifism from the 1960s, and Plowshares activists' commitment to acting on their faith was, instead, an almost timeless quest.

On one hand, activists maintained a strict observance of the Gospel nonviolence in the cultivation of personal and communal peace and strength. Living communally, as did many countercultural activists in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Catholic resisters were able to engage more wholeheartedly with the building of a resistance community. The founding principles of Jonah House, for example, stressed key issues in the communal maintenance of nonviolence and the realization of justice:

- Nonviolence, resistance, and community are interchangeable – their effects are identical
- Contemplation (in whatever form – prayer, meditation, reflection, analysis) gives sustenance to spirit and resistance.
- Holding property in common is essential to justice.
- The Scriptures hold the vision of a society faithful to God whose members are loving toward each other, reverent toward all of life.[153]

Within this communal environment, more public acts of resistance could be planned and executed. Just like countercultural activists in the 1960s and pacifists before them, radical

[150] Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous* p. 349.
[151] Nepstad, *Religion and War Resistance*, p. 16.
[152] Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, p. 347.
[153] Berrigan and McAlister, *The Time's Discipline*, p. 13.

activists in the 1980s applied their spiritual ideas about social change to contemporary concerns. As James Farrell writes:

> Eighties activists, like their predecessors, had a more comprehensive vision of cultural and economic reorientation in America. For them, nuclearism and militarism were symptoms of deeper ills associated with capitalism, consumerism, and individualism. They resisted a society that seemed to have lost its priorities, and they looked forward to a new world in which people would live simply so that others could live in justice, community, and nonviolence.[154]

Incorporating such a critique of modernity into a religious worldview that called them to resist in dramatic, symbolic ways, and in doing so, fulfilling their spiritual calling. Such resistance was small-scale in operation, yet demonstrates a radicalization of the ideas of personalism and countercultural activism that had, Plowshares activists contended, stagnated in the 1970s.

Resisting the state in these private and public ways enabled the Plowshares movement to communicate the dire need for radical activism in opposition to the nuclear arms race. Activists performed very personal acts of dissent, whose greater meaning and significance were meant solely for the individual activist. At the same time, however, these acts were communicative in a very public way, as they spoke to an audience about the evils against which they demonstrated. As Tobey writes, "Plowshares activists claim that their actions are radical engagements with the world via the manipulation of potent symbols; and they understand the trials as opportunities for radical engagement with its citizens."[155] The dramatic style of Plowshares actions, the publicity given to them, and the public process of court trials were all opportunities to publicize the necessity, the value, and the legitimacy of resisting the state. In the wake of the 1960s, this style of dissent grew in popularity as activists on both left and right experimented with the potential for radical expressive protest. For the Plowshares movement, their actions formed part of a growing rejection of the reformist approach of the liberal peace movement, and highlighted the lengths to which citizens would go to resist the omnipotence of evil wielded by the state and its military-industrial complex. Layering their rhetoric with moral, theological, and personal elements, these activists attempted to extend the boundaries and the scope of radical pacifism in the 1970s and 1980. Doing so, although alienating potential support and marginalizing the movement, nevertheless

[154] James J. Farrell, *The Spirit of the Sixties: Making Postwar Radicalism* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 248.
[155] Tobey, "Performing Marginality," p. 141.

speaks to the ways in which private and public action existed in a complex philosophy of religious pacifism. In the context of the wider negotiation of the legacies of the 1960s in the anti-nuclear movement, Plowshares activism demonstrates how the limits of radical activism – and its public reception – could be tested and expanded by a strong adherence to expressing one's faith in the private and public arenas of social action.

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL POLITICS: RADICAL FEMINISM, DIFFERENCE, AND ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTIVISM

In the late 1970s, as the anti-nuclear movement began its large-scale revival, an array of women's protest collectives and activist organizations formed, aiming to offer feminist perspectives on the nuclear threat and define an activist response. Women with interests in peace activism were well placed to develop a unique response to the nuclear arms race, utilizing additional concepts developed over the course of the feminist movement, particularly in its second wave. Some female activists situated their response within political and legislative institutions, drawing a great deal from the successes of the women's liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Others, more radical in their approach, used ideas about eco-feminism, militarism, and countercultural expression to oppose nuclear arms as merely one of a myriad of crises threatening women the world over. Mirroring the meeting of women's liberation and radical feminism in the late 1960s, these very different strands of feminist thought – and their expression within the anti-nuclear movement – reflect how much second wave feminism had changed in the 1970s. They also demonstrate the significance of the rise of cultural feminism in the 1970s, and the subsequent marginalization of radical feminists from the wider women's peace movement.[1] As female activists in the late 1970s and early 1980s turned their attention to the threats of nuclear power and nuclear weapons, they found themselves engaging in debates that continued to contest the meanings of feminism in ways that offered the larger anti-nuclear movement a series of voices that were both traditional and extreme.

Just as the left struggled to unify its liberal and radical elements in a comprehensive anti-nuclear coalition, so too did feminists struggle to build a unified "sisterhood" in

[1] See Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), pp. 284-286.

opposition to threats of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Far from achieving any such unity, however, feminist activists struggled to find much common terrain in ideology, politics, or strategy. This chapter discusses the emergence of a politics of difference in the women's anti-nuclear movement, which was marked by problems of exclusivity, intolerance and considerable divisions in political vision.[2] Women with different ideas about the organization of feminist peace activism, rather than consolidating their potential power as an activist community, underwent difficulties of compromise, alienation, and marginalization throughout the first half of the 1980s in their attempt to galvanize ordinary women, feminists, radical feminists, lesbians, separatists, and even men into an assortment of political activist voices. Key issues within women's activist groups and peace organizations in this period demonstrate the tensions between idealism and pragmatism, most importantly in the effort to oppose the threat of nuclear weapons.[3] The possibilities enabled by cultural feminism, though, expanded the diversity of issues and interests available to feminists interested in a larger framework of change within radical and cultural feminist identities.[4]

Tensions between moderate and radical women in the anti-nuclear movement stemmed from a variety of sources, but many involved differing views about the role and meaning of feminism within political activism. Moderates argued that their view of feminism – based on traditional ideas of gender, femininity, and motherhood – was essential in

[2] By a "politics of difference," I am not referring exclusively to the difference between men and women, the subject of much historical and theoretical feminist scholarship (see Chris Weedon, *Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999)), but in a wider sense to differences within the women's movement – broadly conceived – over the interpretation of feminism and the meanings of feminist activism. This was not an entirely new development; radical feminism had undergone a similar "eruption of difference" in the early 1970s, and "difference" continued to provoke debate amongst feminists in the 1980s and 1990s. See Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, Chapter 5; Lynne Segal, *Is the Future Female? Troubled Thoughts on Contemporary Feminism* (London: Virago, 1987).

[3] Please note that by the early 1980s, despite the March 1979 accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania, the nuclear arms race was the focus of anti-nuclear organizing. This certainly applied to women's anti-nuclear groups such as Caldicott's Women's Party for Survival – later Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament – but as I will demonstrate, radical feminists took a more holistic position on nuclear dangers. Nevertheless, the nuclear arms race – broadly conceived – was the frame of reference for most women's anti-nuclear activism, and this chapter's focus will be the same.

[4] The differences between radical and cultural feminism are, as Alice Echols argues, poorly understood. Defining the two, she writes, "most fundamentally, radical feminism was a political movement dedicated to eliminating the sex-class system, whereas cultural feminism was a countercultural movement aimed at reversing the cultural valuation of the male and the devaluation of the female." In this chapter I use Echols' distinction, yet I emphasize that in anti-nuclear campaigns in the early 1980s, both radical and cultural feminists (as well as liberal feminists) met in campaigns that attempting to both mobilize women against a variety of nuclear-related threats, and also to express and celebrate "femaleness" as an antidote to the oppression of the "male" world. See Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, pp. 6-8.

combating the looming nuclear danger.[5] Nuclear politics, they argued, was men's business, and those men involved in the decision-making process on issues of nuclear security and foreign policy lacked maternal, nurturing, and emotive qualities that women were able to offer. Advocates of such feminist ideas, such as Helen Caldicott and her Women's Party for Survival – later called Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament – also promoted a gendered reading of politics to undermine the "nuclear state." Rather than advocating revolution, however, they recommended a polite women's politics akin to the League of Women Voters, or the National Organization of Women, and built upon older women's activist traditions from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[6] What set this new women's movement apart from its historical antecedents was not just its consolidation of the gains made by second wave feminism in the 1970s, but its exclusive focus on nuclear disarmament as *the* critical issue for women's political organizing.

Radical and cultural feminists, on the other hand, rejected such political solutions as a compromise, preferring instead to pursue a revolutionary program of feminist activism well outside what they saw as the corrupted, male-driven domain of politics. Like their predecessors in the 1960s, they rejected electoral or legislative action as a fickle pursuit, preferring instead to construct feminist identities within communities of radical activism and countercultural expression. These communities, such as Women and Life on Earth, the Women's Pentagon Action, and the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice also operated in response to what many regard as the failure of the radical feminist vision in the mid-1970s, or at least its transition into a kind of cultural feminism.[7] The rise in cultural feminism and the success of women's liberation prompted

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[5] These can be defined as a kind of maternal cultural feminism. In this chapter, these ideas were confined to feminists engaged in less radical or countercultural pursuits. For the expression of these ideas in feminist thought since the 1960s, see Lauri Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived: Feminism and the Legacies of the Sixties* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).

[6] Melissa Haussman has suggested that WAND combined, "perhaps unwittingly," the liberal feminist method of reformism with cultural feminism's ideas about biological determinism, in that "women differ inherently on some values from men, including being more supportive of peace initiatives." Melissa Haussman, "From Women's Survival to New Directions: Wand and Anti-Militarism," in *Teamsters and Turtles?: U.S. Progressive Political Movements in the 21st Century*, ed. John Berg (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), p. 104. On older women's activist traditions –as they relate to peace activism – see Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), Chapter 2.

[7] See, for example, Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, Chapter 6; Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived*, Chapter 4; and Sara Evans, "Beyond Declension: Feminist Radicalism in the 1970s and 1980s," in *The World the Sixties Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*, ed. Van Gosse and Richard Moser (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), pp. 52-54.

radical women to redefine what "feminism" meant in the early 1980s. For these collectives of feminists, political movements such as those calling for nuclear disarmament were narrow, rigid political ideas, and ignored the vast and complicated set of crises threatening women and the world in which they lived. As such, they organized around a more challenging politics based on separatism, a rejection of the patriarchy, and the expression of countercultural ideas about ecology and mysticism.

What this meant for the women's anti-nuclear movement in the early 1980s was that a feminist coalition against the nuclear arms race would be difficult, if not impossible, to forge. Just as grassroots movements on both left and right sought to define the political implications of gender and sexuality in the 1970s, the struggles within the women's anti-nuclear movement also show us how these contested meanings were as much about womanhood as they were about politics.[8] Feminism, rather than nuclear issues, was often the primary site of tension in these struggles. Activists attempting to define an authentic anti-nuclear feminist politics found themselves embroiled in clashes over the uses of sex and gender as political tools. Exclusion, in turn, appeared to be the defining feature of a movement struggling with the weight of an influx of politically inexperienced women interested in nuclear disarmament, and relatively unschooled in second wave feminism. Radical feminists, rather than settling for compromise, instead continued their pursuit of a radical alternative to mainstream society, utilizing countercultural ideas about personal, expressive politics and protest. When examined alongside pragmatic efforts at political reform from women's anti-nuclear groups, we can observe how the contested meaning and scope of feminism operated within the anti-nuclear movement, and how women challenged ideas of activism developed in the peace and feminist movements in the 1960s and 1970s.

MATERNALISM, PACIFISM, AND MULTIPLE FEMINIST IDENTITIES

These quite different responses to the nuclear arms race amongst feminist activists had shared roots in the social, humanist, pacifist, and liberal politics of both first and second

[8] For an interesting discussion of these issues, see J. Zeitz, "Rejecting the Center: Radical Grassroots Politics in the 1970s - Second-Wave Feminism as a Case Study," *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 4 (2008), pp. 673-688; and Tina Managhan, "Shifting the Gaze from Hysterical Mothers to 'Deadly Dads': Spectacle and the Anti-Nuclear Movement," *Review of International Studies* 33, no. 4 (2007), pp. 637-654.

wave feminism.[9] In general, feminist activism in the peace movement stemmed from, as Harriet Alonso discusses, "the connection… between institutionalized violence and violence against women, wether the institution be slavery, the military, or governmental oppression."[10] This idea of "connections" grew more complex during the 1960s and 1970s, when feminists in the second wave integrated ideas about environment and ecology into their worldview.[11] Second wave feminists also developed more radical critiques of Betty Friedan's "problem that has no name," encouraging the emergence of radical challenges to patriarchal systems of oppression, both literal and symbolic. Mobilizing against war – real or threatened – produced influential feminist peace groups that straddled both liberal reformism and radical tactics and philosophies.

Since the 1960s and the beginnings of radical feminism, women have challenged, expanded, and embellished the many different concepts of feminist activism, not just on "women's issues" – such as rape, pornography, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and so on – but also on issues to do with external crises of war, militarism, environmental destruction, and other forms of oppression against women, nature, and the poor. This posed challenges for feminists within the peace movement. As Carolyn Strange writes:

> Feminists caution against equating what is good for the peace movement with what is progressive for women. They are especially critical of women who justify their protest on the basis of their maternal feelings. Maternalist pacifists apparently garner social approval because they operate within the prescribed boundaries of femininity. Thus many feminists fear that while campaigning for a nuclear-free world, the mothers for peace perpetuate their own and all women's enslavement under patriarchy. In fact, maternally inspired protestors may march

[9] Like my use of the terms "activism" or "protest," I use fairly loose definitions of "feminism," and its varieties in this chapter. Although some scholars have attempted to compartmentalize different varieties of feminist activism, the women discussed in this chapter had a much more fluid grasp of what feminism meant, and how its radical, liberal, and cultural ideals could be applied. For additional discussion about terminology in this sense, see Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived*, pp. 13-15.
[10] Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue*, p. 8.
[11] This became known as eco-feminism. Its advocates highlighted the significance of the non-human world, emphasizing that oppression and violence impacted severely on nature. Eco-feminists also saw women and nature as equal victims of the patriarchal system of oppression. Movements against nuclear power plants in the mid to late 1970s marked the most concrete beginnings of an organized eco-feminist movement in the United States. The most authoritative work on eco-feminism as a feminist theory and as a political movement is Noël Sturgeon, *Ecofeminist Natures: Race, Gender, Feminist Theory, and Political Action* (New York: Routledge, 1997). See also Stephanie Lahar, "Ecofeminist Theory and Grassroots Politics," *Hypatia* 6, no. 1 (1991) and Judith Plant, ed., *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism* (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1989).

> for peace one day and speak out against feminists demands such as abortion, day care, or the availablility of safe and effective birth control the next.[12]

At issue here is the divide between different interpretations of feminist activism, and how it applies to different spheres of protest. Within the wider anti-nuclear movement of the early 1980s, similar differences emerged over the contested scope of feminism within this movement. Various feminist ideas – and their expression as personal or political forms of protest – operated in interesting ways in this period. Women involved in protest groups, coalitions, and larger anti-nuclear organizations vigorously debated the meaning and the nature of feminism in the wake of the beginnings of its second wave in the 1960s.

Second wave feminism in the 1960s and in its wake, as Lauri Umansky reminds us, is best thought of in its liberal and radical guises, and that motherhood is an ideal framework for exploring the differences between the two:

> While liberal and radical feminism have merged both organizationally and ideologically at various junctures – as for example in the fight for abortion rights – they are at root distinct movements and philosophies. The intense – and primarily positive – emphasis on motherhood in feminist thought draws more from the predominantly white cultural left and the black feminist discourses of the 1960s and early 1970s than from the reformist activism of liberal feminist organizations like the National Organization for Women. The cultural left, in its many 1960s guises, was most influential in shaping the attitudes toward the body, sexuality, nature, and community that would form the basis of feminist theory about motherhood.[13]

These differences did not go away with the transition from radical to cultural feminism in the 1970s; indeed, much feminist thought from the late 1970s through the 1980s did emphasize innate differences between liberal reformism and other, more radical approaches to sexuality and identity. In essence, feminists' approach to gender, and political strategy demonstrated two parallel fields in which the negotiated the idea of 'difference.' Varieties of feminist activism – including that within the anti-nuclear movement – stressed that the idea of *difference* drove their responses to various social and political ills. Not simply confined to gender difference, feminists interested in the innate qualities of womanhood and motherhood forged unique identities and created ideal communities to combat the evils of "the patriarchy" and the oppression of

[12] Carolyn Strange, "Mothers on the March: Maternalism in Women's Protest for Peace in North America and Western Europe, 1900-1985," in *Women and Social Protest*, ed. Guida West and Rhoda Lois Blumberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 210.
[13] Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived*, pp. 10-11.

modernity. In this sense, women combined feminist sensibilities inherited from their experience of the second wave and the countercultural left with new ideas about environment and ecology, spiritualism, and peace activism to define themselves as exclusionary communities based on difference, rather than an equal "sisterhood" of earlier feminist culture.[14] Within the anti-nuclear movement, such ideas served to further disagreements over an ideal response to the nuclear arms race.

Hats and dresses were the defining style of Women Strike for Peace protests in the late 1950s and early 1960s – before the rise of radical feminism and the counterculture. Here, a group of women demonstrate at the Nevada Testing Grounds, June 1962.
Source: Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace*.

In many women's peace organizations, ideas about legitimacy and respectability were prominent, and attempted to promote a "safe" image of female activists that did not challenge social or gender norms. Amongst anti-nuclear organizations, this was particularly true of Women Strike for Peace (WSP). Formed in 1961, WSP was a white, middle class, middle-aged women's group that was initially concerned with calling for a test ban treaty. Non-hierarchical in organization, WSP placed an emphasis on motherhood and children, refrained from immersing itself in ideology, and advertised its

[14] Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived*, p. 133; Echols, *Daring to Be Bad*, pp. 288-291.

members as ladylike and ordinary. As Amy Swerdlow writes, "the image projected by WSP of respectable middle-class, middle-aged ladies, wearing white gloves and flowered hats… helped to legitimize a radical critique of the Cold War and U.S. militarism."[15] Aware of the dangers of this radical critique, WSP members used the "exploitation of traditional domestic culture in the service of radical politics" as a combative measure against Red baiting and Cold War hysteria.[16] Its ideas about traditional feminism and the reformist impulse of its political activities, however, set it apart from the radical challenges of the New Left, counterculture, and the rise of radical feminism later in the 1960s.[17]

In the late 1960s, younger feminists of the second wave rejected the polite approach of women's protest organizations such as WSP and WILPF, and liberal women's organizations such as the National Organization of Women (NOW).[18] The influx of new ideas led to WSP broadening its focus and the other organizations adopt more radical tactics; WSP, for example, began to oppose the Vietnam War, the broader concept of militarism, and radical critiques of the lack of economic and social justice for women in the United States and in the third world.[19] Setting the template for the splintering of radical feminism into a swathe of cultural varieties in the late 1970s, the broad scope of feminist thought within WSP emphasizes the diversity of ideas women brought to anti-nuclear organizing. From the polite rhetoric of white, middle class women using ideas about motherhood, to radical critiques of the patriarchal, militaristic state, both liberal and radical women worked together in organizations dedicated to broad platforms. Here, as Sara Evans and Stephanie Gilmore have convincingly argued, the division between liberal and radical feminist activism in the 1970s and 1980s was often a blurry one.[20] The dynamics of protest and the application of both liberal and radical feminist ideas to key issues – amongst them the threat of nuclear weapons – can tell us much about how

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[15] Amy Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 3.
[16] Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace*, p. 97.
[17] As Andrea Estepa has demonstrated, the meeting of older WSP members and younger, more radical feminists in the late 1960s and early 1970s ensured in the radicalization of WSP's platform and tactics. See Andrea Estepa, "Taking the White Gloves Off: Women Strike for Peace and 'the Movement,' 1967-73," in *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second-Wave Feminism in the United States*, ed. Stephanie Gilmore (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), pp. 84-104.
[18] See Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace*, pp. 4-5.
[19] Estepa, "Taking the White Gloves Off," pp. 93-96.
[20] Evans, "Beyond Declension," pp. 52-64; Stephanie Gilmore, "Rethinking the Liberal/Radical Divide: The National Organization for Women in Memphis, Columbus, and San Francisco, 1966-1982" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 2005).

women's peace activism operated in the wake of the 1960s. Moreover, feminist ideas of essentialism, identity, difference, and the role of personal, expressive politics also helps us understand the development of multiple anti-nuclear feminisms in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

DEFINING ANTI-NUCLEAR FEMINISM

It is this relationship between moderate, liberal feminist activism and its radical counterpart that defined the women's anti-nuclear movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Whilst organizations such as NOW or WILPF were characterized by their focus on both liberal reform and their use of what Sara Evans calls the "tactical toolbox of the radicals" – demonstrating, picketing, guerrilla theater, and so on – newer groups adopted stricter definitions of their ideological boundaries.[21] On one hand, women's anti-nuclear organizations such as Caldicott's Women Strike for Peace were single issue, policy focused, and liberal. On the other, groups comprised radical and cultural feminists were interested in multiple issues, personal expression, and radical challenges to the oppression of women. Within a wider framework of feminist concerns about equality and difference and their expression in feminist activism from the late 1960s, these new anti-nuclear organizations looked to the threat of nuclear weapons as an ideal crisis around which to mobilize.

By the early 1980s, the rise in popularity of the anti-nuclear movement meant that peace organizations received an influx of new members, and women's peace groups were certainly no different. Concerns about environmental disaster, a maternal concern for the safety and health of children, and traditional feminist ideas about equality guided these impulses.[22] Ideas about motherhood as a rhetorical framework mobilized both moderate

[21] Evans, "Beyond Declension," p. 56.

[22] Of course, the variety of motivations for women joining the anti-nuclear movement is enormous, but several scholars have shed some light on these motivations with interesting sociological and participant research. See, for example, Ginger Hanks-Harwood, "'Peacing' It Together: Recruitment, Motivation, and Social Critiques of Peace Activist Women in the United States in the 1980s" (Ph.D. diss., Illif School of Theology and the University of Denver-Colorado Seminary, 1991); Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); esp. Chapter 5; and Karen J. Warren and Duane L. Cady, "Feminism and Peace: Seeing Connections," *Hypatia* 9, no. 2 (1994), pp. 4-20.

and radical feminists in similar ways.[23] Developing a coalitional response amongst women to the nuclear threat, however, was a different matter. As Anne Marie Pois notes, the scene was littered with potential support:

> Radical, liberal, cultural, peace, and socialist feminists contributed a variety of approaches that they had developed during the 1960s and 1970s. Ecofeminism in particular evolved from the environmental, women's health, labor, peace, antinuclear, antiracist, and animal liberation movements, whereas the women's peace movement experienced rejuvenation through the ideas of contemporary women's spirituality and ecofeminist groups.[24]

As pervasive and immense as the nuclear menace was, each arena of feminist thought responded in different ways, using different ideas and tactics. Nonviolent resistance, coupled with ideas of spiritualism, paganism and magic, emerged as a force in the feminist movement in the late 1970s. Alonso remarks that new organizations interested in such ideas, and a self-sufficient organizational culture that had solidified by the 1980s, added "renewed energy" to the women's peace movement.[25] It would be a mistake to compartmentalize the many strands of radical feminism, such as its rationalist, cultural, socialist and spirituality offshoots. Most women in the feminist anti-nuclear movement at the beginning of the 1980s subscribed to a combination of these philosophies, each adhering to the promise of a community dedicated to peace of various kinds, in which personal politics played a defining role.

Women activists would also draw on ideas that earlier, first wave feminists such as Jane Addams and Emily Greene Balch had used, such as interconnectedness, diversity, collectivism and internationalism, to inform their responses to crises of militarism and war. The spectrum encompassed by such crises, along with the concerns of feminists, made the playing field suitably vast. As a women's peace camp in Seattle saw it:

> We believe that feminism implies a total world view rather than simply positions on traditional women's (biological/reproductive) issues. We see no reason why women should limit our struggle for liberation to narrowly defined women's issues. The feminist resistance to war and nuclear weapons challenges the system of male supremacy at least as fundamentally as these struggles... Challenging militarism is essential for a feminist revolution.[26]

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[23] See Umansky, *Motherhood Reconceived*, pp. 147-149.
[24] Anne Marie Pois, "Foreshadowings: Jane Addams, Emily Greene Balch, and the Ecofeminism/Pacifist Feminism of the 1980s," *Peace and Change* 20, no. 4 (1995), p. 442.
[25] Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue*, p. 245.
[26] "Feminist Revolutionary Force for Change," in *We Are Ordinary Women: A Chronicle of the Puget Sound Women's Peace Camp* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1985), p. 17.

As such, feminists who wanted to change the world did not limit themselves to narrow political work on nuclear disarmament, nor did they compromise their worldviews by focusing on feminist issues such as abortion or the ERA. Concentrating their activities on the bigger picture of an interconnected web of patriarchal violence, oppression, and militarism on an international scale, radical feminists shunned the view that disarmament was a narrow political issue.

Feminist opposition to militarism in general, and the nuclear threat in particular, did not occur in a vacuum. For those women who saw the nuclear arms race as an inevitable successor to the Vietnam War – in terms of an expression of the patriarchy's militaristic policies – anti-nuclear activism in the late 1970s and early 1980s was the most logical arena for feminist activism. As activist and feminist scholar Ynestra King argued, because nuclear weapons did not "exist apart from a contempt for women and all of life, the issue of disarmament and threat of nuclear war is a feminist issue."[27] Although some feminist groups preferred to concentrate their activities on the bigger picture of an interconnected web of patriarchal violence, oppression, and militarism on an international scale, others directed their efforts in a focused way toward the nuclear arms race, and the various proposals – such as the Freeze – that aimed to curb this particular threat. It is this array of feminist opposition to nuclear weapons in particular, and violence, militarism, and oppression more generally, that demonstrates the overlap of – and the difference between – a variety of feminist activist identities. The interaction of these identities in the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s highlights just how much second wave feminism had changed since the heyday of the movement in the late 1960s.

Connecting feminist concerns to the nuclear arms race was as much a personal issue as a political one. Emotionalism, spirituality, and supposedly unique female qualities of caring and nurturing were seen as ideal tools to equip women to ensure nuclear war could be prevented. As eco-feminist Dorothy Dinnerstein commented:

> Feminism means mobilizing wisdoms and skills with which our female history has equipped us, and focusing them upon the chance that this worldmurder [sic] can be interrupted – stopped; reversed – and human life re-ordered; reworked into forms harmonious with those we now threaten to smash.[28]

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[27] Ynestra King, "Toward an Ecological Feminism and a Feminist Ecology," in *Machina Ex Dea: Feminist Perspectives on Technology*, ed. Joan Rothschild (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), p. 127.
[28] Dorothy Dinnerstein, "Survival on Earth: The Meaning of Feminism," in *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*, ed. Judith Plant (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1989), p. 194.

As a specifically female activity, working for nuclear disarmament used radical feminism's challenge of the male establishment to put together a politics of difference, which set the sexes apart in biological, psychological and moral terms. Women, such feminists argued, had a greater potential for peace activism than men. Mobilizing this identity, the feminist monthly *Off Our Backs* found, women "were attempting to redefine the value of nurturance, and to consider this new view of nurturance a political tactic."[29] Both moderate and radical feminists used such tactics, politicizing motherhood and femininity in peace activism. "Common sense, sensitivity, nurturance and survival" were seen as typically female traits, contrasting severely with male virtues of aggression, intolerance, and a propensity for war. Women were also good organizers, and when not stymied by male dominance within peace groups, could operate more effectively.[30]

"A NEW WAY OF BEING AND THINKING": RADICAL FEMINISTS AND MILITARISM

Existing on the fringes of the mainstream peace movement, radical feminists were interested in the ability of their political and cultural vision to transcend the limitations of traditional peace groups, hindered as they were by men, hierarchy, and a narrow vision that, as critics argued, "defines peace as disarmament."[31] A notable coalition of these feminists emerged in 1979 when several women from the New York and Boston areas began talking about organizing a regional conference to discuss feminist perspectives on peace, militarism, environmentalism and ecological concerns, in the wake of the accident at Three Mile Island. Dubbed "Women and Life on Earth: A Conference on Ecofeminism in the '80s" (hereafter WLOE), the event hoped to draw an "ecological perspective out of feminism," and also to develop an agenda of political action to combine these dual concerns.[32] Held in Amherst, Massachusetts, in March 1980, the several hundred women who attended aired a very broad spectrum of concerns. Prominent eco-feminist Ynestra King later wrote that this variety strengthened the burgeoning movement. "The political

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[29] Tacie Dejanikus and Stella Dawson, "Women's Pentagon Action," *Off Our Backs* 11, no. 1 (1981), p. 2.
[30] WAND founding statement, quoted in Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue*, p. 240.
[31] Gwyn Kirk, "Our Greenham Common: Feminism and Nonviolence," in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, ed. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), p. 117.
[32] Conference outreach notes, [late 1979], Women and Life on Earth Records, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts (hereafter WLOE Records), Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).

and the personal are joined," she argued; "the activities of women as feminists, anti-militarists, and activists in our neighborhoods and communities for survival and dignity are in the same struggle."[33] Eco-feminists expressed a goal of "a decentralized society celebrating diversity and living with nature," often as a means of averting present crises stemming from a patriarchal military industrial complex.[34]

Within an environment of global political, social, and environmental crises, liberal feminist reformism was not enough; new revolutionary feminist thought and action were needed. Ynestra King felt that combining feminist and ecological perspectives in a movement theory could be "not only revolutionary in the old sense, but the beginning of a total transformation."[35] As such, it was the task of eco-feminists to create "a new way of being and thinking" which might be best equipped to deal with the present crisis, on a personal level, in the most effective manner. Moreover, the crisis was urgent, and could not afford to be bogged down by working within the existing political system. Ynestra King spoke of a "great urgency" where "life on earth and the earth itself is in terrible danger."[36] Women, she argued, possessed the appropriate political consciousness, and a historical culture of activism, to counter this danger. As such, radical feminists were in a unique position to apply their own philosophies to strategies seeking to solve the crises facing women and the natural world.

The broad agenda of the WLOE conference did not appeal to all participants. One woman felt that education and discussion about nuclear issues were needed much more than "consciousness raising groups about sexual orientation and violence. We have opportunities to talk about those things at home," she argued, rejecting the personal nature of feminist organizing inherited from the earliest days of women's liberation in the 1960s.[37] Discussing feelings was not constructive, she felt, especially in a location so potent for anti-nuclear protest. Another conference attendee felt that the gathering's agenda was too broad. Rather than focused sisterly solidarity, she found "very divergent

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[33] Ynestra King, "May the Circle be Unbroken: The Eco-Feminist Imperative," in WLOE introductory booklet, 1 May 1981, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[34] Draft paper, n.d., WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17). See also Grace Paley, transcript of introductory address to the 'Issues' panel, WLOE Conference, 22 March 1980, p. 1, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[35] Ynestra King, transcript of address to 'Theory' panel, WLOE Conference, 22 March 1980, p. 2, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[36] Opening remarks to the conference, quoted in WLOE Post-Conference Mailing #1, 18 April 1980, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[37] [Anonymous], WPA Evaluation, [late 1980], WLOE Records, Box 6 (Acc. 03S-17).

agendas, lack of clearly shared goals and an appalling lack of trust" amongst both organizers and participants. "Animosity and isolation" expressed by participants at an open-mike session were also disappointing, and spoke to the larger challenges of building a radical feminist coalition for the 1980s.[38]

The conference also highlighted a pragmatic understanding of militarism and its significance to women's lives. Randall Forsberg, author of the nuclear freeze proposal, saw "no essential difference between… being against militarism and in favor of disarmament."[39] Speaking at the conference, she felt that working toward halting the arms race was much more sensible than advocating complete disarmament or other grand agendas; whilst not removing the possibility of a nuclear war, it would avoid "scaring off the majority of the American public."[40] Forsberg was an oddity at the WLOE conference, advocating political moderation amidst a variety of consciousness-raising sessions on issues like lesbianism, rape, racism, and sexism. To many radical feminists interested in these bigger issues, such soft political compromise like Forsberg's nuclear freeze, pandering to the mainstream media and the public, was abhorrent. New revolutionary feminist thought and action were needed; Ynestra King's solution was a movement built on principles of feminism and ecology – "a new way of being and thinking" – to combat the challenges faced.[41]

UTOPIAN VISIONS AND PRAGMATIC CHALLENGES

Following the WLOE conference, an umbrella coalition emerged of the same name, seeking to organize a program of action around the key conference theme of militarism. Plans emerged for a mass protest at the Pentagon, which became the Women's Pentagon Action (WPA), carried out over two days in November 1980, and repeated again in November 1981. Both Actions operated on an edgy assumption of imminent calamity, which could be countered by effective feminist dissent; in practice, this amounted to

[38] [Anonymous] to Women and Life on Earth, 23 May 1980, WLOE Records, Box 3 (Acc. 03S-17).
[39] Randall Forsberg, transcript of address to 'Issues' panel, WLOE Conference, 22 March 1980, p. 4, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[40] Randall Forsberg, audio recording of presentation to Workshop A-1: "Women, Militarism and the Arms Race," 22 March 1980, WLOE Records, Box 7 (Acc. 03S-17).
[41] Ynestra King, transcript of address to 'Theory' panel, WLOE Conference, 22 March 1980, p. 2, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).

expressive, personal protest and acts of civil disobedience.[42] According to organizer Donna Warnock, "we wanted to address a wide range of concerns, pointing to the Pentagon sometimes literally, sometimes symbolically."[43] Some participants felt that an action at the Pentagon was the ideal place to express their opposition to "the system" – an ill defined and broad definition of establishment oppression.[44] What the WPA intended was a response to "the imperial power which threatens us all." By way of mass dissent against such power, feminists could engage in the building of community, expressing personal and political ideas about oppression, and publicizing the role of radical feminist thought and behavior as an ideal model for social change.[45]

Whilst many women were attracted to the WPA as an outlet to express anti-nuclear sentiment, WPA organizers saw single-issue protest as too narrow, and ignorant of the idea of "connections" between their feminist sensibilities, and their concerns of a world in peril.[46] As such, the protest evolved, like the conference that preceded it, as a broad affair of diverse interests. This attitude was bound to reinforce division between moderate and radical feminists, but according to WPA organizer Jan Clausen, liberal approaches to feminist activism were limiting, and a diverse, comprehensive approach to women's oppression was needed. Whilst Clausen had come across "frequent disparaging remarks about "anti-nukers" and "peace movement types," such attitudes were counterproductive.[47] As she advocated, "if anti-nuclear activists are to build an effective, inclusive movement, we will have to address seriously the relationships among *all forms* of militarism."[48] A potential feminist anti-militarist movement that remained white, middle class, and heterosexual would also be problematic; differences of race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and environment did exist and served to minimize the potential for an effective, comprehensive movement.

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[42] Women's Pentagon Action flyer, [1980], WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[43] Annie Popkin and Gary Delgado, "Mobilizing Emotions: Organizing the Women's Pentagon Action – an Interview with Donna Warnock," *Socialist Review* 12, no. 3-4 (1982), p. 37.
[44] See comments printed in "Voices of the WPA," in *Tidings* (WLOE Newsletter), May 1981, p. 6, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[45] Women's Pentagon Action flyer, [1980], WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[46] See WLOE meeting minutes, 7 February 1981, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[47] Jan Clausen, "Women and Militarism: Some Questions for Feminists," *Off Our Backs* 11, no. 1 (1981), p. 6.
[48] Clausen, "Women and Militarism," p. 6. Emphasis added.

For other WPA participants, the two-day demonstration, consisting of workshops on such diverse issues as racism, the plight of women in the third world, lesbianism, and domestic violence, was unproductive. Many women had been attracted to the idea of the women-only protest due to its anti-nuclear premise; as one participant commented, "the concerns of women attending the Women's Pentagon Action could not have been more diverse, the one exception to this being our common concern with militarism in this country. Had the day been organized around this topic alone, it would have been more productive."[49] This divergence between single-issue women's organizations and broad feminist politics was to be repeated throughout the early 1980s. Women involved in these multi-issue campaigns, however, increasingly advocated the idea of "connections" between their the oppression of women and their concerns of a world in peril. As organizers for the WPA commented, "while we support anti-militarism we feel that we need to reaffirm the connections rather than focus on single issues. We can't ignore the connection between feminism and militarism."[50] In doing so, these activists widened of the scope of women's anti-nuclear activism, at least amongst its radical wing.

The ideas behind the Women's Pentagon Action were, for its organizers, as important as the actual activity of protest itself. Much effort went into defining the appropriate theoretical bases from which meaningful action would be taken. Rather than a conventional protest, which would involve a march, some speakers, and a host of banners with slogans, the WPA was different. Its expressive, personal politics emphasized a collective feminist identity, as well as providing space for individuals to respond to the relevant issues as she saw fit. The passivity and anonymity of a mass crowd of demonstrators was thus reconfigured, promoting an empowering, personal experience for participants.[51]

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[49] [Anonymous] to WLOE, 20 November 1980, WLOE Records, Box 6 (Acc. 03S-17).
[50] WLOE meeting minutes, 7 February 1981, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[51] See WPA mailout, [1981], Sybil Claiborne Papers, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts (hereafter Claiborne Papers), Box 1. See also Dejanikus and Dawson, "Women's Pentagon Action," p. 2, and Rhoda Linton and Michelle Whitham, "With Mourning, Rage, Empowerment and Defiance: The 1981 Women's Pentagon Action," *Socialist Review* 12, no. 3-4 (1982), pp. 15-16.

Giant puppets with expressive faces and signs expressed base emotions such as anger, fear, and rage at the Women's Pentagon Action of 1980.
Source: Sybil Claiborne Papers, Radcliffe College, Box 3. Photo taken by Colleen McKay.

These ideas rejected traditional oppositional activism, instead borrowing from the expressive, personal ideals of late 1970s cultural feminism, and late 1960s countercultural activism. Organizing for the event in September 1980, Donna Warnock had raised the prospect of doing something different to other political demonstrations, which had, she felt become tired and cliché:

> And so I said, "Look, why don't we just figure out how we *feel* about all these different issues that we want to address and then try and group those feelings together and move through them and within each one deal with the issues that are appropriate to those feelings." And so I thought about it for a second and added, "I know some of the emotions that come up for me are grief, anger and power." That really got us rolling.[52]

[52] Popkin and Delgado, "Mobilizing Emotions," p. 43. Emphasis in original.

Building the Action from this framework encouraged "safe spaces for women to release emotions," and accordingly, "each individual could find her niche."[53] Emotional activism and politicizing was common in other women's peace efforts at the time, and added a specifically female air to anti-nuclear demonstrations. For the activists themselves, being in touch with their emotions regarding these issues enabled them to see nuclear weapons in more human terms, much more so than the cold, rationalist, analytical ways those men in the Pentagon saw them.[54]

THE EXPRESSION OF PROTEST

In operation, the Women's Pentagon Actions of 1980 and 1981 were emotional, expressive, and personal statements of feminist outrage with the system, rather than any type of conventional protest. Symbolic ritual played a large part in the protest, creating a curious spectacle, yet operating for many women as an invigorating, empowering and moving affair. The Actions both involved weaving, planting seeds and plants, collective chanting, singing and crying, and a lot of talk about circles, empowerment and connections. These were realized with symbolic activity, designed to highlight themes to the women themselves, and not necessarily to onlookers, spectators, or the media. There were rituals involving pentagrams of cornmeal, mirrors to reflect the Pentagon's "destructive energy back into itself," the building of a makeshift women's graveyard, and other such things.[55] Women braided pieces of cloth or fabric together to encircle the entire Pentagon building, they wove various doors and gates together with string, yarn and ribbons, they baked bread, and finally, many committed civil disobedience.

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[53] Popkin and Delgado, "Mobilizing Emotions," p. 43.

[54] The linguistic differences between women peace activists and military men, based on a comparison of female emotionalism and male rationalism, whilst informing much women's anti-nuclear activism has also been critically examined by Carol Cohn. See Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs* 12, no. 4 (1987), and Carol Cohn, "Emasculating America's Linguistic Deterrent," in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, ed. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989).

[55] [Anonymous] to WLOE, 8 September 1981, WLOE Records, Box 6 (Acc. 03S-17).

String and yarn blocks entrances to the Pentagon during the second Women's Pentagon Action of 1981. Note the fake blood dashed against the column in at the top of the stairs.
Source: *WRL News*, January-February 1982, p. 1.

Women create a mock graveyard with names of female victims of male violence and oppression during the first Women's Pentagon Action in 1980.
Source: Sybil Claiborne Papers, Radcliffe College, Box 3. Photo taken by Dorothy Marder.

The Women's Pentagon Action promoted itself as an inclusive project, open to all women, to emphasize sisterhood and solidarity. The reality, however, was quite different. A majority of participants were lesbians, and around one third were under twenty-five.[56] Despite organizers' aims to avoid elitism and promote inclusivity, almost all were white. Racism and sexual orientation were big issues at workshops surrounding the Action. As one woman remarked afterwards, "there are reasons why our gathering was 90% white and we need to analyze them."[57] At the 1981 Action, an African American woman raised the fact that she had felt excluded from the demonstration and its planning, an issue that left organizer Rhoda Linton "very disturbed."[58]

These issues of an exclusive sisterhood of white feminists remained unanswered from the WLOE conference earlier in 1980. Following that event, participants wrote to the organizers, expressing their lack of comfort that a feminist politics emphasizing diversity and inclusivity was, in terms of its demographic reality, so narrow. One evaluation form stated that:

> … the weakest part of the conference was the naïve and middle class assumptions of many of the participants... the lack of social connection and economic consideration was appalling; as was the lack of diversity among the participants.[59]

Despite the token presence of several African American feminists, the lack of diversity at the WLOE conference and the WPA highlighted the failure of radical feminist activism to effectively put into practice the ideas of inclusivity it preached. Rather than operating as an open, diverse community of feminists, these gatherings merely repeated the rhetorical ideas of the New Left's "romance" with oppressed and disenfranchised members of society.[60] By idealizing a multi-racial, international feminist unity but failing to effectively pursue it, radical feminists succeeded in reinforcing their identity as an exclusive community of white, middle class feminists.

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[56] Dejanikus and Dawson, "Women's Pentagon Action," p. 2.
[57] Anonymous WPA evaluation, quoted in "Voices of the WPA," *Tidings* [WPA newsletter], May 1981, p. 6, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17). Of course, the experiences of second wave feminism were very different for women from different racial, ethic, and socio-economic backgrounds. Some important recent scholarship has highlighted these differences. See Benita Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), and Wini Breines, *The Trouble between Us: An Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[58] Linton and Whitham, "Mourning, Rage, Empowerment and Defiance," p. 24.
[59] Anonymous conference evaluation, [1980], WLOE Records, Box 3 (Acc. 03S-17).
[60] See Richard Ellis, "Romancing the Oppressed: The New Left and the Left Out," *Review of Politics* 58, no. 1 (1996), pp. 109-154.

There were additional problems that emerged along these lines. At the two Actions, women found themselves singing and demonstrating in front of policemen, not Pentagon officials, and most of these police were black.[61] A common criticism emerged over women who verbally abused Pentagon employees; organizers countered that women must fight the system, not those individuals who were caught up in it.[62] Protest chants and songs also caused division:

> Anti-male chants are not appropriate in a black community, nor is the singing of 'we shall overcome'. The chant 'Take the toys away from the boys' is not clear in the setting we were in. Most of the 'boys' who heard it were black and hardly have access to the 'toys' we spoke of. More emphasis in song, chant, speech and posters should have been placed on the connections between capitalism's 'toys' and racism and poverty and sexism, etc.[63]

In addition, the protest was open to women only. For some participants, this was their first feminist or all-women protest. Others, such as lesbian separatists, would only agree to involvement if no men were participating at all. The expression of these radical ideals about gender difference set the Action apart from other mainstream women's peace protests. Donna Warnock felt that since organizers did not seek endorsements from other peace organizations, the exclusion of men was not as controversial as it might have been.[64] However, this also meant that the group would find it difficult to work with other peace efforts, or to join coalitions, due to its exclusionary policies.

The operation of the protest, its ideas about expressive women-only activism, and claims of unity and inclusiveness portray this era of radical feminism as one in which old and new identities overlapped. Activists within new protest collectives were essentially contesting the meaning of feminism in the early 1980s, and its applicability to areas of social concern outside the traditional world of feminist activism. Women in the WLOE conference and the WPA inherited modes of activism from radical feminists in the late 1960s, but also utilized ideas about cultural feminist expression developed in the 1970s. More specifically, they rejected liberal feminist agendas of political reform. Such strategies sought efficacy within "the system" that radical feminists saw as yet another domain of patriarchal oppression. By operating outside this system, forging new

[61] Notes on the WPA, [1981], WLOE Records, Box 5 (Acc. 03S-17).
[62] Notes on the WPA, [1981], Box 5, WLOE Records (Acc. 03S-17). See also several anonymous WPA evaluations, [1981], WLOE Records, Box 6 (Acc. 03S-17).
[63] "Quotes from WPA Evaluation Forms," [1980], WLOE Records, Box 5 (Acc. 03S-17).
[64] Popkin and Delgado, "Mobilizing Emotions," p. 38.

identities and ideas about protest, and by making connections between feminist concerns and the dangers of militarism, these women consciously challenged the liberal successes of the women's liberation movement and their legacy in the early 1980s. Moreover, they used radical ideas developed in the New Left and counterculture to mobilize against what was a contemporary set of crises; amongst them, the threat posed by the nuclear arms race loomed largest.

CONFLICT, COMPROMISE, AND COALITIONS

In 1981, before the second Women's Pentagon Action, a coalition emerged proposing a Mother's Day anti-nuclear demonstration at the Pentagon. The idea came from Helen Caldicott, who had formed the Women's Party for Survival (WPS) the previous year in Boston. Caldicott and the WPS were adamantly a single-issue party, and devoted their efforts exclusively to nuclear disarmament, which in Caldicott's view was the most pressing issue, for all humans, of the time. WPS was a mainstream political party that operated as a grassroots anti-nuclear group, and its organizational philosophy hardly espoused any radical feminist ideas. However, it did promote itself exclusively to women, and whilst not exclusionary in its membership policy, used maternal issues in its rhetoric. Working to prevent nuclear war, Caldicott argued repeatedly, was "the ultimate parenting issue."[65]

Mother's Day, therefore, represented the ideal occasion to protest nuclear weapons, since such activists felt that "the ultimate mothering issue is life for all children," and that "a nuclear war represents the greatest threat to the future of all children."[66] Annual Mother's Day demonstrations were emblematic of the polite image that the WPS – later the Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND) – projected. The organization interpreted Mother's Day, founded in 1872 by Julia Ward Howe, as "a time when mothers and children can come together to speak out against war and to work for

[65] See, for one example, a transcript of a Helen Caldicott speech given at a Mother's Day rally at the Boston Common, 9 May 1982, Women's Action for New Directions Records, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts (hereafter WAND Records), Box 10, Folder 21 (Acc. 98s-73).
[66] This was a commonly reiterated line of argument in such maternal anti-nuclear rhetoric. See "Sample Proclamation – Mother's Day Peace Proclamation," 1985, WAND Records, Box 3, Folder 4 (Acc. 89s-73).

peace."[67] Such polite maternal rhetoric, unsurprisingly, did not sit easily with the radical feminists involved in the Women's Pentagon Action, and associated communities and coalitions.

The Mother's Day coalition of 1981, proposed by the WPS, asked a variety of peace groups to be involved, including Women and Life on Earth, which had continued as an umbrella organization after the Amherst conference was over. After heated debate, WLOE refused to join the coalition, as its members felt that a single-issue demonstration was self-defeating. At a February 1981 meeting, women of WLOE stressed that "disarmament is a self-defeating word… [it] should be Anti-Militarism."[68] Interestingly, the Women's Pentagon Action sought Caldicott's support in the lead up to its initial demonstration in November 1980, hoping for unity amongst women's groups. "It's important that our work not conflict in any way," wrote Anna Gyorgy, a WLOE conference organizer, to Helen Caldicott.[69] Caldicott's refusal to endorse the WPA revealed deeper conflicts over issues of exclusion and difference.

Since the Mother's Day action was not to be a feminist action, women from the WPA group argued, "now is not the time to obscure and compromise feminist issues in order to appeal to the 'average American housewife'."[70] In a mailing to its members, WLOE explained similar ideas in its rejection of the Mother's Day coalition:

> There are fundamental differences in the politics and process of the two groups. We are committed to a participatory feminist process while in… the WPS the decision-making process was not open to all women.... In addition, WLOE and WPA are committed to keeping our feminist politics foremost.[71]

WPA felt that the Caldicott and the Women's Party "tends to prefer more conservative methods of registering protest, evident in the focus on media coverage."[72] By contrast, women from WLOE and WPA preferred more organic forms of activism – individual,

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[67] "Sample Proclamation – Mother's Day Peace Proclamation," 1985, WAND Records, Box 3, Folder 4 (Acc. 89s-73).
[68] WLOE meeting minutes, 7 February 1981, WLOE Records, Box 1 (Acc. 03S-17).
[69] Anna Gyorgy to Helen Caldicott, 14 October 1980, Helen Caldicott Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts (hereafter Caldicott Papers, SSC), Box 1.
[70] WPA discussion paper on the Mother's Day Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament, [1980], p. 2, WLOE Records, Box 5 (Acc. 03S-17).
[71] "Mother's Day Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament" mail out, n.d., WLOE Records, Box 5 (Acc. 03S-17).
[72] WPA discussion paper on the Mother's Day Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament, [1980], WLOE Records, Box 5 (Acc. 03S-17).

personal, and expressive – which demonstrated the promise of feminism as a force against systemic violence and oppression. Caldicott desperately wanted concrete political results, but for radical feminists, the process toward a vaguely defined end – a just society – was the more rewarding part of their activism.

Nonetheless, WPS stuck to its single-issue platform, fearing that "if we attempt to address all the issues associated with militarism we are concerned our work will become fragmented and [WPS] will dissipate and we will be written off as another splinter group."[73] It was not that the Women's Party was averse to radical feminists or lesbians – it counted many amongst its ranks and one radical lesbian feminist was even on the board of the administrative council. The group's overall stance, though, was one that combined traditional values of motherhood and family with "the insight and strength gained through feminism," hesitantly poising itself as an arena for women's unity against the nuclear threat.[74] Achieving such unity with radical feminists, so intent on preserving their identities, was near impossible. A letter from Kady Van Duers to Helen Caldicott emphasizes this divide:

> I had hoped to march with you, but I am distressed to hear you say that we will wear our "Sunday best," and that we will bring the children, and that we will talk with our representatives in Congress. I am a radical lesbian feminist. I wear the same clothes every day… I have no children. I have no representatives in Congress.[75]

Caldicott replied, "while I personally may share many of your feminist beliefs, I feel that the cause of survival will be better served by concentrating on this issue alone, leaving radical feminism to other groups. In this way we hope to get a broad base of support for the party and effect meaningful change."[76] Such change was under no circumstances to be personal, or based on alternative belief systems, worldviews and lifestyles.

Caldicott was focused on the much more concrete goals of electoral and legislative change, a foreign domain to radical feminists engaged in more intimate expressions of opposition to a generalized system of war and violence, of which the nuclear arms race was but one small but integral part. Through the WPS, she also advocated greater

[73] Janice Trickett, "Open letter to a sister in Vermont," 20 March 1981, WAND Records, Box 10, Folder 25 (Acc. 89s-73).
[74] Janice Trickett, "Open letter to a sister in Vermont," 20 March 1981, WAND Records, Box 10, Folder 25 (Acc. 89s-73).
[75] Kady Van Deurs to Helen Caldicott, 21 March 1981, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 3, Folder 3.
[76] Helen Caldicott to Kady Van Deurs, [April 1981], Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 3, Folder 3.

political representation for women, but radical feminists were not interested in this sort of compromise; politics was men's business, the few female Representatives and Senators in no way represented the interests of female radicals, and Congress was merely another facet of the patriarchal "system" that oppressed women. As a radical lesbian feminist, it is not surprising Van Duers' perspective clashed with Caldicott's. Her final letter stated that "one issue is not enough for me and I can't work with you."[77]

These divisions highlight larger themes in the nature of feminist activism in the years since the late 1960s. Changes in social and economic conditions in the 1970s meant that radical feminists had expanded the ways in which they contributed to their activist communities. Of course, as Barbara Ehrenreich has commented, "the economic stresses of the seventies split women into two camps: those who went *out* to fight for some measure of economic security… and those who stayed at home to hold on to what they had."[78] As activist women who had come to the women's liberation movement in the late 1960s or early 1970s, the pressures of work, family, and financial stability often precluded maintaining a regular activist schedule. Radical feminist communities, like their socialist feminist counterparts, had not prospered well in the 1970s, but the cultural varieties of radical feminism, open to women who pursued alternative or unconventional lifestyles, existed as attractive alternatives.[79]

Operating outside the mainstream women's or peace movements, and distancing themselves from the political left, these groupings of feminists found a home in an alternative political culture. Whilst forming the base of the radical end of the broader anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s, such activists also were prominent in advocating and practicing direct action, spirituality, environmentalism and lesbianism as political philosophies, tied intimately to a worldview of spiraling militarism, violence, and patriarchal domination of both women and nature. These new ideas, formulated most importantly as a personal identity politics, rather than an oppositional political movement, existed at odds with the safe, polite maternal image of other women's peace organizations, most of which were dedicated to nuclear disarmament.

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[77] Kady Van Deurs to Helen Caldicott, April 1981, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 3, Folder 4.
[78] Barbara Ehrenreich, "The Women's Movements: Feminist and Antifeminist," *Radical America* 15, no. 1-2 (1981), p. 99. Emphasis in original.
[79] See Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution*, pp. 179-180. See also Barbara Ehrenreich, "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Socialist Feminism," *Heresies* 3, no. 1 (1980), pp. 5-6.

In addition, The Women's Pentagon Action and the activists involved developed independently of the organizational left. Many felt that the left did not understand feminism or sexism, and that radical feminists, including lesbians, needed to operate outside the strict frame of leftist politics.[80] In doing so, organizers conceived of the WPA as a very different type of protest, more to do with personal politics and expression than challenge the authority of the state from the left. Much of this was due to the changes that had taken place in radical and cultural feminist communities in the late 1970s. Whilst WPA demonstrators were of all ages, most were under 30; as an older activist commented in the mainstream *Ms.* magazine, this was "a generation that hasn't been famous for its activism in general and has often seemed to take feminism for granted in particular."[81] Many of these younger feminists were lesbians, and many of these lesbians were separatists, taking advantage of the emergence of a greater societal openness about homosexuality, but also rejecting cooperation between the sexes.

This repeated a pattern of younger feminists preferring expressive, confrontational activism, and embracing lesbianism, in the early years of radical feminism in the late 1960s.[82] Combined with older radical feminists schooled in political activism in the civil rights and anti-war movements, collective radical feminist identity was at a point where it could challenge the authority and legitimacy of the state in ways that drew on varieties of feminist thought, especially those from the late 1970s that criticized militarism and environmental destruction, and identified with women's oppression on a broad scale. These radical perspectives, within the umbrella of the anti-nuclear movement, led to problematic confrontations with other, more mainstream women's anti-nuclear groups, as well as amongst themselves, emphasizing the idea of *difference* as a defining factor in the multiple feminisms within the movement in the early 1980s.

[80] See Popkin and Delgado, "Mobilizing Emotions," pp. 39-40.
[81] Lindsy Van Gelder, "A 1960s Rebel Reviews the New Protesters," *Ms*, November 1981p. 68.
[82] See Zeitz, "Rejecting the Center," pp. 679-680.

Radical feminists interested in a rationalist response to women's political organizing, rather than isolating radical feminist activity from the wider women's liberation movement, preferred to seek compromises that would not alienate liberal feminists. Barbara Ehrenreich described this rationalist approach as "a feminist politics that is both revolutionary *and* true to the totality of our experience as women."[83] That is, they rejected the negative effects of separatists in favor of a more whole, unifying feminism that was inclusive, rather than exclusive. More extreme factions of the radical feminist movement advocated political philosophies that were "exotic, spiritualist [and] impossible to connect with ordinary women's needs and fantasies."[84] Although many within the movement would propose a truce between moderate and radical feminists of various political persuasions, there was never a singular, unifying philosophy or vision that brought women together to work against militarism, war, and the nuclear arms race in its myriad manifestations.

Caldicott's Women's Party for Survival aimed to be a source of unity in this regard, eschewing debate over the meaning of various feminisms in favor of a broader women's approach. The party, very much Caldicott's brainchild, operated as a fairly conservative style of women's disarmament politics. As Caldicott would reiterate throughout her involvement with the organization, "I'm for conserving life on the planet. I'm for conserving God's creation. I'm not a radical – I'm a conservative."[85] As her exposure to feminism in the 1970s was an "awakening" to the possibilities and potential of the women's political activism, her outlook in the early 1980s was one based on ideas of motherhood and traditional concepts of a "female consciousness" in social protest and political action.[86] Caldicott saw the potential for women to lead the peace movement, due to a series of qualities that set them apart from men. She argued:

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[83] Ehrenreich, "A Funny Thing Happened," p. 6.
[84] Ehrenreich, "A Funny Thing Happened," p. 6.
[85] Caldicott speech featured in *Working For Peace*, WAND promotional videotape, 1985, WAND Records, Box 3 (Acc. 89s-73).
[86] See Helen Caldicott to Sherri Arden, 25 February 1982, Helen Caldicott Papers, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney (hereafter Caldicott Papers, ML), Box 12, Folder 2 (MSS 5451); and Helen Caldicott, *A Passionate Life* (Milsons Point, NSW: Random House, 1996), p. 115. On the idea of a "female consciousness" or innate women's sensibilities in matters of war and peace, see Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue*, Chapter 1; Strange, "Mothers on the March," pp. 209-222; Elise Boulding, *Cultures of Peace: The Hidden Side of History* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), Chapter 5; and Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Women, War, and Feminism," *Nation*, 14 June 1980, pp. 723-724.

> Women have the key to the future. Over the last twenty years in the era of liberation, I have discovered my power and intelligence, and I learned eventually to be proud of the innate feminine qualities of passion, nurturing intuition and receptivity. I believe we can teach the men to become more civilized by teaching them to acknowledge and be proud of their own feminine qualities. In fact, as [Riverside Church disarmament advocate] William Coffin told me, the woman most in need of liberation is the woman in every man.[87]

Whilst Ynestra King had argued that using this essentialist idea of biological determinism as a protest tactic was "a dangerous tendency in the women's movement," Caldicott felt women's voices were essential in the insensitive, morally corrupted realm of men's politics, whose leaders were characterized by typically male traits of insensitivity and aggression.[88] A female perspective in nuclear politics, organized around the innate qualities of motherhood, could bring much-needed sense and stability to national defense; as Caldicott iterated, "I believe women and nurturing men hold the key to survival."[89] Mobilizing women and "nurturing men" was essential to end the arms race – no small feat – but women were to Caldicott an "untapped majority" with so much political potential that, as she repeatedly argued, "if we get moving we can save the earth."[90]

Caldicott felt that radical feminist politics only served to isolate different strands of the women's movement. Ideas of spirituality, mysticism, and personal expression failed to offer women pragmatic choices in political action.[91] Instead, she argued, women should change the system from within:

> It is time then for us to take up the challenge, run for local, state and federal positions and at least acquire 50% representation in government. We must bring with us power, intelligence and [the] precious feminine qualities that are so often abrogated by women as they enter the bastions of the male world.[92]

As such, Caldicott's organizations WPS and WAND worked through existing political channels. As WAND director Diane Aronson argued in 1982, "the most effective way to stop the nuclear arms race is to remove the people who insist on running that race."[93]

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[87] Helen Caldicott to Sherri Arden, 25 February 1982, Caldicott Papers, ML, Box 12, Folder 2 (MSS 5451).
[88] Ynestra King, quoted in Dejanikus and Dawson, "Women's Pentagon Action," p. 2. On Caldicott's ideas about gender difference, see Helen Caldicott, *Missile Envy: The Arms Race and Nuclear War*, rev. ed. (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1986), pp. 235-245.
[89] Helen Caldicott to Jim Martin, 15 June 1982, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 2, Folder 19.
[90] WPS pamphlet, 1980, WAND Records, Box 4, Folder 12 (Acc. 91s-80).
[91] Jo Ann Rasmussen to Helen Caldicott, [1981], Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 1, Folder 12.
[92] Helen Caldicott to Sherri Arden, 25 February 1982, Caldicott Papers, ML, Box 12, Folder 2 (MSS 5451).
[93] WAND press release, 11 August 1982, WAND Records, Box 6, Folder 45 (Acc. 89s-73).

Removing the gender imbalance in local, state, and federal politics, stimulating voter registration, and lobbying for suitable political candidates, both women and men, were part of the strategy.

In this process, women could put into action the promises of women's liberation. However, the primary focus would be stopping the arms race through political activity. As former WAND President Sayre Sheldon recalled, "Helen's primary goal was to enlist women in working on disarmament. There were other women's groups working for peace, but none that had the capacity to be as political as WAND."[94] Much like older women's political organizations like the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom or Women for Racial and Economic Equality, WAND attracted a diverse, yet almost exclusively white and middle class membership, most of whom had never been involved in political activism before.[95] For example, a Tuscon, Arizona WAND chapter estimated that 90% of its members were first time activists.[96] Appealing to ordinary women across the nation was difficult, yet with effective media campaigning, argued a correspondent, the organization could use daytime television talk shows and "ordinary women's magazines" such as *Family Circle* or *Ladies' Home Journal* – exemplars of non-feminist, mainstream women's literature – to spread an inspiring anti-nuclear message to otherwise politically uninvolved women across middle America.[97] Yet what made WAND so significant, and so different in the landscape of women's political organization in the early 1980s was its exclusive commitment to nuclear disarmament. Caldicott even went so far as to express a willingness to resign if the group's goals were broadened.[98]

Not without their teething problems, both WPS and WAND also experienced division over their nature as women's organizations. WPS chapters in Pennsylvania and California, for example, had interpreted the party's name and agenda as sexist and

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[94] Sayre Sheldon, quoted in Janice M. Kelley, "The Evolution and Impact of WAND PAC," unpublished undergraduate paper, 12 January 1989, p. 1, WAND Records, Box 1, Folder 30 (Acc. 06s-94).
[95] See Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue*, p. 240. See also Helen Caldicott to Rachel Parens, 28 August 1981, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 3, Folder 3.
[96] Elaine G. Schwartz to Helen Caldicott, 19 January 1982, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 4, Folder 7.
[97] Ann Elizabeth Bowen to Helen Caldicott, 27 October 1981, WAND Records, Box 1, Folder 30 (Acc. 07s-49).
[98] WPS minutes – Executive Board formation, 5 February 1981, WAND Records, Box 10, Folder 25 (Acc. 89s-73).

exclusionary.[99] Other chapters stressed that many of their most committed members were attracted to the group exactly *because* it was a women's party. The name was seen as welcoming to women who might assume that a gender-neutral group would be "male-run and impersonal."[100] Evidently, the issue encouraged different responses around the country, with chapters uncertain about affiliation with even a moderate feminist identity.

Aiming at inclusivity rather than a narrow, gender-specific politics, members were concerned that WPS "must not eliminate 50% of the population" in its rhetoric.[101] "I would hate to feel that the answer lies only with half of us," a male Vermont activist wrote to Caldicott, emphasizing the restrictive nature of a women's organization.[102] On the other hand, women involved with WPS and WAND relished their unique political voice; as one agreed, "We DO have a different view of things. We DO think diapering our own babies is more important in the scheme of things than going out to kill some total stranger."[103] The experience of motherhood was seen as so intrinsic to this process of peace that it became a cornerstone of WAND's rhetoric. As "mothers of the universe" and with "some degree of common sense" that was shared by all ordinary women, WAND members possessed the biological and emotional goods to bring about disarmament in the political realm.[104]

Caldicott would encourage WPS members to consider similar tactics, flooding the offices of their Representatives and Senators with their children, as well as apple pies, since "there's nothing more American than motherhood and apple pie."[105] As Caldicott came out in support for the Mondale-Ferraro campaign in 1984, she emphasized the maternal instinct inherent in her politics. Appearing in television advertisements, she pleaded, "if you're a parent who loves a child in America then this election is the most important election of your life," and "as a paediatrician and a mother I urge you to vote for Walter

[99] Diane Aronson to Jane Flood, 15 December 1981, WAND Records, Box 6, Folder 16 (Acc. 06s-94). See also Rachel Parens to Helen Caldicott, 16 June 1981, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 3, Folder 5.
[100] WPS name change survey summary, [1981], Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 23, Folder 2.
[101] Vivian Franklin to Janice Trinkett, 23 December 1981, WAND Records, Box 6, Folder 17 (Acc. 06s-94).
[102] Charles Hall to Helen Caldicott, 25 January 1981, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 3, Folder 3.
[103] Jaymee Sidel to Helen Caldicott, 12 March 1982, Caldicott Papers, SSC, Box 3, Folder 8. Emphasis in original.
[104] Diane Aronson and Janice Trinkett, untitled WPS position paper, n.d., WAND Records, Box 1, Folder 29 (Acc. 07s-49).
[105] Helen Caldicott, WPS mailout, 28 April 1980, WAND Records, Box 10, Folder 25 (Acc. 89s-73).

Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro. For your children's sake."[106] WAND would continue with an emphasis on children and babies, sending boxes of diapers to the White House in 1986 as a symbolic statement of concern.[107] While the maternal image is paramount here, as Tina Managhan has argued, it is not the identity of womanhood or motherhood that is important in feminist anti-nuclear protest, it is the subversive nature of the symbolic act that is the more significant issue.[108] Motherhood, used by activists as both a political identity and as a site of bodily protest, invoked "historical associations between women, nature and emotion as a rallying cry to motivate and unit women *as* both biological mothers and symbolic mothers of the earth."[109] Whilst there was little difference between liberal and radical feminists' use of maternal imagery, however, the scope of such attitudes and the nature of the protests organized around them exacerbated the liberal/radical divide.[110]

The ideas and activities of Caldicott and WAND highlight a polite feminist mode of grassroots political organizing, one far from the cultural revolution promised by radical feminists' ideas about the interconnectedness of "women's issues," environmental destruction, nuclear dangers, patriarchal oppression of women and the irresponsible power of the state. However, they both demonstrate how feminist thought about social and political activism endured substantial changes and challenges in the late 1970s and early 1980s. They show how radical feminist thought had expanded to encompass a variety of cultural offshoots, including ideas about ecology, spiritualism, and separatism, that didn't share the vision of a unified "sisterhood" promised by more liberal advocates of women's liberation. Within both radical anti-nuclear protests – such as the WPA – and liberal reformist organizations – such as WAND – ideas about the scope and the limits of feminist activism were hotly contested. Looking at the overlap between the two, common ideas about motherhood, "maternal thought," and women's innate sense of pacifism

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[106] "Helen Caldicott TV spot" drafts, 1984, WAND Records, Box 5, Folder 55 (Acc. 89s-73). See also Caldicott, *A Passionate Life*, p. 338.
[107] Diane Aronson to Ronald Reagan, 17 May 1986, WAND Records, Box 3, Folder 27 (Acc. 07s-02).
[108] Managhan, "Shifting the Gaze," pp. 637-654.
[109] Managhan, "Shifting the Gaze," p. 638. Emphasis in original. Managhan is referencing a speech given by Caldicott at the 1986 Convention of the National Women's Studies Association, which was later published as Helen Caldicott, "Nuclear Madness: Helen Caldicott's Farewell Speech," in *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies*, ed. Diana E. H. Russell (New York: Pergamon Press, 1989), pp 11-15.
[110] Micaela di Leonardo comments that there was such little distinction between feminist and nonfeminist uses of maternal imagery in the anti-nuclear movement. Micaela di Leonardo, "Morals, Mothers, and Militarism: Antimilitarism and Feminist Theory," *Feminist Studies* 11, no. 3 (1985), p. 602.

emerge, but the use of these ideas within social and political protest remained contested.[111]

INCLUSION, EXCLUSION, AND FEMINIST SPACES

The negotiation of the meanings and the scope of feminist anti-nuclear activism within organizations, collectives, protests and conferences was somewhat constrained by the limitations of short-term activities. So too was the ability of radical feminist activism to seriously challenge nuclear weapons; occasional demonstrations at the Pentagon were not enough. The maintenance of an alternative cultural community of feminists, similarly, could not be achieved with short-term political action, however personal or expressive. In response, activists conceived the idea of "peace camps" – permanent demonstrations of opposition to the nuclear arms race. The phenomenon originated in England in 1980, with the famous women's camp at Greenham Common. Concerned activists in Wales and west England had focused their attention on the storage of nuclear missiles at an Air Force base in Berkshire, about 50 miles west of London. While the camp began as a space in which white, middle class, respectable mothers dominated the image projected to the public, the camp soon transformed into a space for feminists, was dominated by lesbian politics, and this radicalization earned the ire of the surrounding communities.[112]

Similar issues characterized the major American counterpart to the Greenham camp. Inspired by the radical challenge posed by a permanent display of opposition, and the invigorating, empowering nature of a women-only protest community, U.S. activists hatched plans for a peace camp during an "International Feminist Disarmament Meeting" in New York City during the Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament in June 1982. Organized by the AFSC's Disarmament Program and the U.S. section of WILPF, the meeting aimed to provide a platform for feminist peace activists to realize more explicitly the relationship between feminism and militarism, strengthen national

[111] On the operation of these ideas within the feminist movement in 1980, see Elshtain, "Women, War, and Feminism," pp. 723-724.

[112] Noteworthy histories include Sasha Roseneil, *Disarming Patriarchy: Feminism and Political Action at Greenham* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1995); Sasha Roseneil, *Common Women, Uncommon Practices: The Queer Feminisms of Greenham* (London: Cassell, 2000); several edited collections, including Barbara Harford and Sarah Hopkins, eds., *Greenham Common: Women at the Wire* (London: The Women's Press, 1984); and a journalist's account, David Fairhall, *Common Ground: The Story of Greenham* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006).

and international contacts, and "weave an international feminist web."[113] Feminist activists from the New York area expressed interest in a women's peace camp in the Finger Lakes region of New York state, and the Seneca Army Depot (SEAD) was chosen as a suitable site for a "sister encampment" to that at Greenham Common.

The Depot was a suspected storage site for the United States' nuclear weapons arsenal that was due to be shipped to strategic locations in Western Europe in 1983, a fact that was never confirmed by SEAD, the Department of Defence, or local or state governmental authorities.[114] However, what organizers regarded as the "high probability" of weapons being stored at Seneca, combined with the significance of the region in the history of the women's rights movement, led to the site being chosen.[115] Unlike the camp at Greenham, which was situated on public land, women from the greater New York area peace community contributed to the purchase of a 53 acre farm next to the Depot, saving it from the troubles of eviction and police harassment that women at Greenham faced on a regular basis. The farm – dubbed the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice (WEFPJ) – subsequently became a permanent symbol of a women-only protest site and the heart of the feminist peace community in the region.

The Encampment eventually opened on the Independence Day weekend in the summer of 1983, on its own lot adjacent to the Depot, and located in the small rural township of Romulus. This area of New York state was conservative, and patriotic, and the relationship between Encampment women and local residents was to prove problematic, and at times hostile, during the summer. Initially the focus was anti-nuclear, in keeping with the initial premise of the Encampment and its location next to the Army Depot. However, additional concerns and philosophies emerged as a great variety of women activists arrived at the camp over throughout that summer. Radical feminists, politically conservative housewives, nuns, and politically uninvolved middle class women brought

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[113] Linda Bullard and Mary Noland, letter to meeting participants, 19 May 1982, Ephemeral Archives, Barnard Center for Research on Women, Columbia University, New York City.

[114] Journalist Mark Hare of Rochester's *City Newspaper* confirmed the presence of nuclear weapons at SEAD in an October 1981 investigative piece. See Andrea Doremus and Stephanie Taylor, "Seneca Stories: Responses to a Call for Memories," *Iris*, no. 40 (1999), p. 36. See also Mark Hare, "New York: Home Is Where the Bomb Is," *WIN*, 1 April 1982, pp. 4-9.

[115] The first women's rights convention was held in nearby Seneca Falls in 1848. In addition, women from the Iroquois tribes met in the region to plea for an end to inter-tribal fighting in the sixteenth century. See WEFPJ flyer, [1983], Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice Records, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts (hereafter WEFPJ Records), Box 6, Folder 189.

to the camp a swathe of expectations that the space would be one in which a series of women's concerns could be aired, not only those related to nuclear disarmament.

Leaders in the Women's Pentagon Action coalition were instrumental in the organization of the camp, and attempted to promote it as an inclusive space representative of their ideas about feminist unity and inclusivity. WPA hoped that the Encampment would "reach women of color, trade union women, welfare mothers, the differently abled... in short, women outside the traditional radical feminist and peace communities." Organizers also expressed hope that the Encampment would function as an open and diverse women's peace community to which ordinary American women could relate.[116] The Encampment prided itself on its inclusion of "lesbian, anarchist, communist, heterosexual, democrat, socialist, [and] republican" women, extending its welcome to women who were either "single, married, divorced… employed and unemployed, feminists and non-feminists, lesbians and heterosexuals…"[117] However, it emerged that the Encampment was not completely inclusive, and its organizers made pains to emphasize that excluding some women, whilst difficult and unfortunate, was sometimes necessary for the camp to continue functioning as a peace camp. One resident argued "the encampment is not a place for all women. We're not a half-way house or a place for women to act out their authority struggles."[118] Essentially, these differences were over compromise; the question at hand was whether the camp's official policy "should give women space to challenge patriarchal oppression in their own ways without treading on other women's needs."[119]

The fact that the Encampment was a closed, safe space for political expression also encouraged the airing of personal politics, a process many women found to be personally empowering. They saw the Encampment as a secluded women-only space in which they could "strive to shed the old expectations, habits, and systems of oppression" that existed

[116] Donna Gould and Eva Kollisch to Marsha Bonner, 23 May 1983, Claiborne Papers, Box 1.
[117] Loraine Hutchins, "Seneca: Summer of Action and Learning," *Off Our Backs* 13, no. 9 (1983), p. 3; Ann V. Sorenson, "Impressions From 18 Hours at the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice," 3-4 August, 1983, p. 2, WEFPJ Records, Box 10, Folder 437.
[118] Comments by 'Cindy,' WEFPJ Regional Extended Family Meeting Minutes, 2-3 November 1985, p. 2, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 9.
[119] Comment by 'Hershi,' WEFPJ Regional Extended Family Meeting Minutes, 2-3 November 1985, p. 4, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 9.

in the outside world.[120] The experience of social protest in the outside world, which was frequently unsatisfying, could also be reconfigured at the Encampment. One woman, arrested for civil disobedience at SEAD, argued that

> Writing my congressman is not enough... I have to do something in order to live, with my whole body, my mind my spirit, every inch of me. I have to try to live a free and just and loving and life-affirming life. That is the most difficult continuous act in a world which worships death.[121]

The Seneca Encampment, for many of its visitors, as a place in which the *totality* of separatist feminist ideal could be practiced, and feminist life could flourish free from male oppression. Hence, it could promote itself as "a place where the feminist peace movement *as a whole* becomes visible to the mainstream of society."[122]

"UNAFFORDABLE LUXURIES"? PERSONAL PROTEST AND SEXUAL DIFFERENCE

The permanence of the Encampment as a site of protest enabled a style of political action linked to personal behavior and lifestyle. "People are most empowered when they feel that they can directly affect something in their daily lives which is also linked to a larger picture," argued organizer Andrea Doreumus a year later.[123] For Encampment women, this was the key to a process of feminist resistance that living at the camp on a long-term basis would enable. Nuclear disarmament, starting with the missiles at Seneca Army Depot was not enough to bring about peace. Real peace, women argued, required economic, racial, and social justice across various boundaries, and this began with a living demonstration of that peace within the small community of the Encampment. Women would, through their experiment in a utopian vision, enact the beginnings of such a "future of peace and justice," which would ideally spread outward from these modest beginnings.[124]

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[120] Andrea Doremus, "Proposal: To Bring in Wymin to Work Full-Time at the Peace Camp," [1985], p. 1, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 22.
[121] Holly Zox, part of a personal statement at her trial for criminal trespass at the Seneca Army Depot, 21 November 1983, quoted in Mima Cataldo *et al.*, *The Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice: Images and Writings* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), p. 53.
[122] Andrea Doremus, "Proposal: To Bring in Wymin to Work Full-Time at the Peace Camp," [1985], p. 3, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 22. Emphasis added.
[123] Andrea Doremus, notes from regional meeting, [1984], WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 28.
[124] See Mairi Cohen, "Living in the Future," [1984-1985], p. 4, WEFPJ Records, Box 10, Folder 437.

Part of this commitment to a peaceful, feminist lifestyle involved a rejection of authoritarian forms of organizing. Like other grassroots peace groups, communities of pacifists, and other activist organizations on the left, women at Seneca were devoted to spontaneous organizing and activism, respectful of individual political expression, and suspicious of the oppression of formal policies, agendas, schedules, planning, and responsibility. This was so much so, that Doremus wrote "I have seen voices tense and fear rise in wymin's [sic] eyes when these words are proposed."[125] Division at the Encampment arose when women disagreed about the role of camp policy and decision-making. On one hand, women wanted some form of order so the Encampment would function more effectively; on the other, radicals felt oppressed and restricted by any form of procedure or rule, and preferred what one correspondent called a "do-your-own-thing individualism" contrary to group consensus.[126]

Expressive protests at the Army Depot gates, sometimes involving only a few women, were personally satisfying demonstrations of "connections" between women's bodies and threats of militarism and male oppression.
Source: WEFPJ Records, Radcliffe College, Folder 396. Photo taken by S. Turner, 4 September 1983.

[125] Andrea Doremus, "Proposal: To Bring in Wymin to Work Full-Time at the Peace Camp," [1985], p. 6, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 22.
[126] Ruth Yarrow to WEFPJ, 13 July 1983, WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 107.

Organizing by consensus was a long, difficult process, but Encampment women saw it as necessary to avoid the pitfalls, exclusivity, and oppression that an authoritarian or hierarchical community would instil in its members. As Doremus argued, "our challenge is to find a creative feminist solution to the age-old philosophical conflict between (1) the oppressiveness of hierarchy and rigid planning and (2) the tyranny of structurelessness."[127] These tensions were instrumental in defining the boundaries of acceptable organizing, activism, and expression at Seneca. Radicals did not want their values, nor themselves, to be compromised by moderates at the camp, especially those who did not reside there long term.[128] Most women would travel to Seneca County to visit the Encampment for a weekend or a few days, but only a small number of committed activists resided there full time. Despite an anti-hierarchical stance being "official" Encampment policy, some women felt that long-term residents of the Encampment held an undue amount of authority.[129]

Many of these resident women were also lesbians, and lesbianism held a dominant position in the camp, not as a sexual orientation, but as a political philosophy.[130] The freedom of lesbian expression, often as a political statement, was attractive to many lesbians and bisexual women who visited, or lived at the Encampment. Of course, conflict occurred when this expression violated the sensitivities of more socially conservative women, and the surrounding community.[131] Rather than interpreting the Encampment as a political statement about nuclear disarmament, local residents often viewed the camp in terms of the alternative sexual and lifestyle politics of the women. At a parade which passed through Seneca Falls on 15 July 1983, an initially warm reaction to various peace signs and slogans turned cold once onlookers saw some Encampment

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[127] Andrea Doremus, "Proposal: To Bring in Wymin to Work Full-Time at the Peace Camp," [1985], p. 4, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 22. See also Rhoda Linton, "Seneca Women's Peace Camp: Shapes of Things to Come," in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, ed. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), p. 259, and Joreen, "The Tyranny of Structurelessness," in *Radical Feminism*, ed. Anne Koedt, *et al.* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1973), pp. 285-299.

[128] See WEFPJ Regional Extended Family Meeting Minutes, 2-3 November 1985, p. 2, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 9.

[129] Comments by 'Sharon,' 'Harriet,' 'Laura' and 'Ellie,' WEFPJ meeting minutes, 11 December 1983, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 4.

[130] For a discussion of lesbianism in radical feminism as it existed in the early 1970s, see Anne Koedt, "Lesbianism and Feminism," in *Radical Feminism*, ed. Anne Koedt, *et al.* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1973), pp. 246-258. See also an interesting discussion in Kathy Rudy, "Radical Feminism, Lesbian Separatism, and Queer Theory," *Feminist Studies* 27, no. 1 (2001), pp. 191-222. For the place of lesbianism at the WEFPJ, see Louise Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer: The Clash of Communities at the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 67-71, 149-150.

[131] See Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer*, p. 215-217.

women carrying a sign stating 'Lesbian Rights is a Women's Rights Issue.'[132] Whilst supportive of the camp as a safe and welcoming place for women of all sexual orientations, many worried that any overt advocacy of an issue as polarizing as lesbianism, especially in a socially conservative area, was alienating of potential grassroots support which the peace movement so desperately needed.[133]

As the spectre of separatism and exclusion placed itself at the centre of the Encampment's principles, to the exclusion of heterosexual women and mothers, the scope and meaning of the practice of feminism at the camp was again questioned and contested.[134] Just as some women wanted to expand the boundaries of feminist unity in this women-only space, others wanted to restrict the application of feminism to the exclusive identities of its most radical practitioners. Throughout the development of the camp as a feminist experiment, many women were left disappointed and disturbed by the dilution of the anti-nuclear message in favor of sexual and lifestyle politics. Sue Guist, visiting the Encampment in 1986 on a side trip from the cross country Great Peace March, felt that it was "wrong to mix gay rights with disarmament."[135] Accused of homophobia, she could not grasp the "connectedness" that drove radical feminists to campaign against "the system." Confrontation between Encampment women and local residents over lesbian identity, of "naked swimming parties and carrying on in the woods" served only to highlight the divide between these two communities of thought, so alienated in their views of sexuality, politics, and lifestyle.[136] Women attracted to the camp were, by and large, quite foreign to the rural world of such areas as Seneca County, a place largely unfamiliar with second wave feminism. As a correspondent observed, the arrival of the Encampment was "a mass experiment in being forced to accomplish 20 years of social evolution in two months."[137] Organizers were defensive, arguing "it isn't our purpose to shock them with our lifestyle," but polarization remained nonetheless.[138]

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[132] Gilda De Ferrari to WEFPJ, 21 July 1983, WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 107.
[133] See Joan Van de Water to WEFPJ, 25 July 1983; and Kathleen Joyce to WEFPJ, 11 August 1983, both in WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 107.
[134] This was certainly nothing new. Similar confrontations brought about by what Anne Koedt describes as "the perversion of 'the personal is the political' argument" existed in radical feminist groups in the late 1960s and early 1970s. See Koedt, "Lesbianism and Feminism," p. 255.
[135] Sue Guist, *Peace Like a River: A Personal Journey across America* (Santa Fe, NM: Ocean Tree Books, 1991), p. 157.
[136] Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 157.
[137] Mary Moon to WEFPJ, 11 August 1983, WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 130.
[138] Anonymous to Mary Moon, 22 August 1983, WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 130.

Some locals objected to the Encampment's ideas about foreign policy as well as their challenge to traditional gender roles.
Source: Peace Encampment Herstory Project, http://peacecampherstory.blogspot.com (accessed 8 April 2009). Photo taken by Ruth Potter, 1 August 1983.

These divisions characterized the Encampment's struggle over its image and identity. Other controversial issues ranged from playing loud music at night, public nudity, displays of lesbian affection, smoking in various areas of the camp, and in general respecting the sensitivities of the neighboring farming families, many of whom were Amish and Mennonites. Some women expressed dismay that several women at the encampment refused requests to remain clothed outdoors, and indeed flaunted themselves in occasionally risqué behavior with each other in defiance of such requests. Evidently, the freedom that this women-only space symbolized meant different things to different women, and further contested the scope of radical feminist activism in the early 1980s.

EXCLUSIONARY SPACES AND GENDER DIFFERENCE

After the initial summer of 1983, the Encampment that remained, although smaller, further alienated surrounding residents with its embrace of radical feminism, alternative lifestyles, and expressive politics. Allegations of witchcraft and paganism sat side by side with criticisms that the women were communist, anti-American, and were destroying the

idyllic way of life of the rural community of Romulus. "Categorized biases and prejudicial stereotypes" dominated the exchange on both sides, with numerous incidents of conflict serving to mark the boundaries of rural, conservative America and radical feminism quite clearly.[139] As Louise Krasniewicz has concluded, the Encampment's largest challenge to the local residents was in the realm of difference, with the vivid and dangerous confrontation of the stability of the system of local patriarchal identity being the community's "heaviest cost."[140] The conflicting views of Encampment women, alternately advocating a respect of local residents, and the respect of individual women's expressive freedoms, add another layer to this story of diversity and compromise.

The exclusion of men added another layer of controversy to the Seneca Encampment's already troubled reputation. Much like feminist activists throughout the 1980s, the organizers advocating an exclusionary policy raised stereotypes of dominating and aggressive male behaviour in their wish for the camp to be a women-only space.[141] One separatist phrased her opposition to a non-segregated camp as follows:

> Women who want to hang out with men, sexually or politically, can do so anywhere, and even gain privilege for doing so. Separatists have a hell of a hard time finding harassment-free space. We are a special interest group of wimmin [sic] who deserve outreach as much as women with kids, womyn [sic] of color, differently abled, and lesbians do. Whenever men are invited, separatists are excluded.[142]

Separatism, enabling the empowering practice of expressive politics, was seen by many radicals at the Encampment as more productive and rewarding than mainstream protest tactics.[143]

However, the practical nature of separatism at the camp often led to anguish. Moderate feminists, heterosexual women, married women and women coming to the camp with young sons often felt maligned by the separatist lesbian contingent that dominated much

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[139] Phil Barber to Kim Blacklock, 5 July 1983, WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 128. See also numerous examples that demonstrate this divide, in Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer*, Chapters 6, 8, 11-13.
[140] Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer*, p. 240.
[141] "Minutes of the Third Planning Meeting for the Women's Encampment," 20 November 1982, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 2.
[142] 'Storm' to WEFPJ, 2 June 1985, WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 99.
[143] See Lois Hayes, "Separatism and Disobedience: The Seneca Peace Encampment," *Radical America* 17, no. 4 (1983), p. 57. See also Judith McDaniel, "One Summer at Seneca: A Lesbian Feminist Looks Back in Anger," *Heresies* 5, no. 4 (1985), pp. 8-9. McDaniel argued that the "positive energy" of the Encampment's activities was necessarily erotic and sexual, and could only flourish without men.

Encampment policy. Phyllis Sawyer, who had hoped to visit the Encampment with her two teenage sons, wrote that one of her boys:

> … was so excited about Seneca. He thinks of peace activists as his friends. And now he understands, there is nothing on earth he can do in some women's minds to be considered a friend. And that is sexism, not women's liberation.[144]

Such tensions speak to the success of the Seneca Encampment in creating a provocative challenge to political, cultural, and sexual conformity. Rather than pursuing a unified vision of feminism in action, the camp's radical vision operated as a space in which extreme expressions of a feminist revolution could be practiced. The Encampment's residents also alienated themselves from parts of the radical feminist peace movement, as well from more moderate women's groups.[145] Internal division over the practice of individuality, separatism, and a lifestyle of anarchistic cultural feminism meant the small community became severely marginalized, existing on the fringes of the peace movement until its closure in 1990.

Overall, what emerged from the Encampment's experiment in a utopian feminist community was, as one woman expressed it, the prove confirmation that "we are too politically different to work together."[146] What would have been, ideally, a "center where the many strands of the women's peace community cross and become visible to the general public," as well as "a place for strangers to come home to" was ruined by squabbling over radical feminist politics, and the inability of a political process of consensus to resolve such issues.[147] As a longer-term venture, the camp lost the initial energy and dynamism of its early days. Some camp residents, such as Andrea Doremus, later recalled that it was

> … easy to succumb to the pressures and sexiness of wanting to be <u>the</u> hot event and 'in' place for politically correct wymin [sic] to reside (like Seneca was in the summer of '83). I see our commitment to the strategy of feminist nonviolence as deeper than this.[148]

As such, a continued presence of confrontation by a small, effective community was needed. This community was comprised of women who were able to stay on at the camp

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[144] Phyllis Sawyer to WEFPJ, 29 June 1983, WEFPJ Records, Box 4, Folder 107.
[145] WEFPJ mailout, 25 January 1985, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 7.
[146] Comment by 'Estelle,' WEFPJ Regional Extended Family Meeting Minutes, 2-3 November 1985, p. 4, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 9.
[147] WEFPJ mailout, 31 January 1985, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 17.
[148] Andrea Doremus, "Proposal: To Bring in Wymin to Work Full-Time at the Peace Camp," [1985], p. 7, WEFPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 22. Emphasis in original.

outside of the summer months, and tended to subscribe to anarchism and cultural feminism as political philosophies and lifestyles.[149]

Ynestra King concluded that it was impossible to categorize the Seneca Encampment, or to draw any one conclusion from the experience, as its "enormous ambitiousness" meant that it existed as many different entities and experiments at once.[150] Its problematic place in both the women's movement, the peace movement, and radical feminism was compromised by this ambitiousness; as King acknowledged:

> Some Seneca critics have argued that Seneca took on too much. Some women worry about feminist energy being drained from longtime women's service projects into peace work, or about reinforcing the traditional ideas of virtuous womanhood by acting as planetary housewives. Some leftist peace movement activists have criticized the multi-issue countercultural emphasis and visible lesbian presence at Seneca as unaffordable luxuries in the face of the 'really heavy stuff.'[151]

Peace activists, King suggested, should prioritize issues and act in a politically pragmatic way, rather than expanding and diversifying their platform to accommodate a large variety of personal political philosophies enabled by the flexibility of radical feminism. King argued that the Encampment attempted an ambitious place between a specific platform of opposing nuclear arms at the Seneca Army Depot, as well as enacting a "utopian feminist imagination."[152] It built on the small beginnings of women's liberation in consciousness raising groups, expanding to public spaces in liberal *and* radical ways throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The challenge of the nuclear arms race, posited as a feminist issue, meant that the women's protest would ideally straddle many spheres relating to, as Gwyn Kirk has phrased it, "connections between personal violence and violence on an international and planetary level."[153]

What the experience of the Seneca Encampment in the mid-1980s shows most vividly is the struggle of feminists across the political spectrum to apply their philosophies in a single environment, using the spectre of nuclear war as an underlying concern. The failure of women at the Encampment to achieve a unified approach to their purpose and

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[149] See Linton, "Seneca Women's Peace Camp," pp. 258-259, and Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer*, pp. 238-239.
[150] Ynestra King, "Thinking About Seneca," [1984], p. 6, WEFPJ Records, Box 10, Folder 437.
[151] Ynestra King, "Thinking About Seneca," [1984], p. 6, WEFPJ Records, Box 10, Folder 437.
[152] Ynestra King, "Thinking About Seneca," [1984], p. 9, WEFPJ Records, Box 10, Folder 437.
[153] Gwyn Kirk, "Ecofeminism and Environmental Justice: Bridges across Gender, Race, and Class," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 18, no. 2 (1997), p. 3.

activities demonstrates several issues. Firstly, the convergence of so many varieties of feminism in one space would inevitably arouse division, just as broad political coalitions on the radical left had always done. Secondly, the peace movement attracted women (and men) from very moderate and conservative backgrounds, which despite the overarching umbrella of common women's concerns at the Encampment, did not mesh well at all with the presence of radical feminists that advocated a very different politics to that championed by mainstream feminism. In general, as King suggests, the Encampment was indicative of the problems faced by feminism in the mid-1980s; feminism "as a philosophy and a movement [was] at a crossroad," and Seneca was the place where problems of utopian feminist idealism and pragmatic women's peace activism were made apparent.[154] Occasionally these two issues were married in cooperative harmony, with the participation of a diverse group of women; occasionally they were not. The promise of an inclusive feminist project is typical of Ehrenreich's "second generation" of second wave feminists, but the failure of this promise in Seneca County marked another example of the chasm between women who wanted nuclear disarmament, and women who wanted to change the world.[155]

PERSONAL AND POLITICAL FEMINISMS IN THE 1980S

The failure of the promise of unity and empowerment offered by the Seneca Encampment illustrates well the chasm between women who were interested in nuclear disarmament, and women who wanted to change the world. For radical feminists, ideas about separatism and the invigorating possibilities of alternative sexual and political expression, further developed a countercultural feminist politics that had begun in the 1960s. This not only alienated more moderate feminists from parts of the peace movement – the site in which these diverse feminisms met in the early 1980s – it also alienated radical feminism from a public confused by alternative politics, lifestyles, and philosophies. In addition, the broad agenda of these radicals in many instances obscured the potential for a uniquely women's anti-nuclear movement, again turning away potential supporters. The popularity of nuclear issues, especially with women not

[154] Ynestra King, "Thinking About Seneca," [1984], p. 11, WEFPJ Records, Box 10, Folder 437.
[155] This "second generation," beginning with the onset of the 1980s, was "rooted in a broad stream of radical upsurge." See Ehrenreich, "A Funny Thing Happened," p. 5.

experienced in feminism or countercultural ideals, did not mesh well with a radical agenda of broad opposition to an ill-defined "system" of oppression. That this opposition was based largely on gender shows us that the nuclear arms race was *not always* the site of inter-movement controversy. Issues of sexual difference and the interpretation of the link between womanhood and peace played far more significant roles.

Like other schools of anarchist or pacifist thought, radical feminism meant much more than the narrow political vision of nuclear disarmament. Whilst nuclear weapons were an easily identifiable and popular target for peace protests, radical feminists approached them in very different ways to activists in the mainstream peace movement. Emphasizing the link between the personal and the political in their rhetoric as well as in expressive protest rituals, radical feminists stressed their separation from women's liberal reformism, despite common understandings of maternalism and its impact on feminists' political behavior. Radicals also utilized the idea of motherhood in similar ways, but their heritage owed more to the legacy of radical feminism and cultural feminism from the 1960s and 1970s than it did to the polite model of women's peace politics as pioneered by Women Strike for Peace in the 1950s, or by WILPF in the first half of the twentieth century.[156] Part of this was generational; younger women subscribing to radical philosophies had little in common with the middle aged and elderly women in WILPF or WAND whose politics were seen by radicals as non-feminist.[157] Younger women were also more inclined to benefit from the explosion of radical and countercultural ideas advanced by the many feminisms evolving throughout the 1970s.

Ideological and generational differences aside, the experience of mobilizing women in opposition to the nuclear arms race in the 1980s shows us that issues of both gender and sexual difference were influential. The "difference within," as Louise Krasniewicz describes it, challenged traditional boundaries of femininity and womanhood that had limited the nature and scope of earlier women's peace protest.[158] As *Village Voice* columnist Ellen Willis argued, "the idea that women have a specifically female interest in preventing war," as promoted by women's peace organizations, served to "simply

[156] See di Leonardo, "Morals, Mothers, and Militarism," pp. 601-602. As di Leonardo argues, there was little distinction between feminist and non-feminist uses of maternal imagery in the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s.
[157] See Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue*, pp. 265-266.
[158] Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer*, pp. 219-220, 240

reinforce female segregation."[159] Differences, between men and women, between heterosexual women and lesbians, and between inexperienced female activists and more seasoned feminists, reverberated in this women's peace movement whose ostensible purpose had little to do with gender. Nevertheless, feminism – as a personal and a political idea – did define political activism for many women, in terms of its cultural practices *as well as* its political goals. Different agendas, whilst proposing radically different solutions to the crises afflicting women in the nuclear age, served to amplify the divergent interpretations ascribed to the scope and meaning of second wave feminism, and its place within convoluted terrain of the anti-nuclear movement. In the wake of the 1960s, just like other activists on the left, feminists contested the legacies of radical protest and countercultural expression in finding satisfying ways to oppose the state – and nuclear weapons – in the 1980s.

[159] Ellen Willis, quoted in Ynestra King, "Feminism and the Revolt of Nature," *Heresies* 4, no. 1 (1981), p. 12.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRAYER OR PROTEST? FASTING, NONVIOLENCE, AND ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTIVISM IN THE 1980S

In the wake of the 1960s, Americans interested in nonviolence and pacifism experimented with innovative forms of protest, linking their ideas about a just and peaceful world to contemporary concerns such as military budgets, poverty and homelessness, environmental devastation, nuclear power and, of course, nuclear weapons. In doing so, they expanded upon the scope of nonviolence and its application. In the 1980s, campaigns of nonviolent protest forged a polite, morally persuasive image, devised to attract public support. Mindful of the potentially divisive impact of acts of civil disobedience – unlike the Plowshares activists interested in a more 'pure' version of direct action – some pacifists attempted to locate their actions firmly within the model of "polite protest" that characterized much of the peace movement. In the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s, certain pacifist campaigns sought to blend traditional ideas about nonviolent protest with modern publicity strategies, intending to mobilize public opinion and provoke a favorable response from elites. Doing so updated the operation of pacifism, and incorporated contemporary trends of mainstream social movement organizing. In the process, however, pacifists attempted to marry seemingly incongruous tactics of nonviolent protest with modern public relations strategies. Such campaigns also sought to combine nonviolence with ideals of liberal reformism that characterized the nuclear freeze movement, an approach that was out of step with traditional pacifism.

This chapter examines one such campaign in the anti-nuclear movement. The Fast for Life (FFL, or simply the Fast) was devised in the early 1980s by Oregon-based pacifist Charles Gray as a means towards halting the nuclear arms race through the act of a communal, open-ended fast. The FFL built on a variety of traditions of fasting as an act of social protest. The ancient biblical ritual of fasting had long been used as a tool to

enhance spiritual purity, to identify with the poor, and to emphasize one's commitment to a personal version of religiously disciplined 'inner peace.' In the twentieth century, however, this idea became politicized. Social activists began to use the religious idea of fasting, laden with the persuasive moral weight of a hunger strike, to dramatize their protests about the immoral, unjust wielding of state power. Doing so blurred the line between fasting as an ascetic act, intimately tied to one's spiritual discipline, and fasting as a public act, used to manipulate others in pursuit of a particular goal. In publicizing their suffering, fasters sought public support in their protest against illegitimate authority and injustice.

Whereas Plowshares activism was characterized by its strict adherence to religious ritual and symbolism, and its almost timeless nature, campaigns of fasting in the anti-nuclear movement are notable for the fluidity of their ideological approach, and their specific political and social contexts. Taking their cue from Gandhi, fasters engaged in well-publicized campaigns intended to attract public sympathy. Media attention was essential; with skilful manipulation, public opinion could be successfully mobilized, the attention of elites could be captured, and the campaign could move towards achieving its stated aims. This pragmatic approach is significant for a few reasons. Firstly, it demonstrates the willingness of pacifists to pay close attention to the business of media coverage and public relations in their strategy. Secondly, it shows us how fasting campaigns combined personal ideals and political tactics into a malleable understanding of nonviolent protest. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it highlights just how polarizing an extreme act of nonviolent protest could be, and how activists would seek to advertize the extreme act of an open-ended fast in a language of traditional nonviolence and civil disobedience.

The complex nature of the Fast for Life – which took place in Oakland, California, in August and September 1983 – mirrors the operation and motivation of other political fasting or hunger strike campaigns in postwar American history. However, its place in the anti-nuclear movement of the early 1980s is important for other reasons. The fasters and their supporters were convinced that a dramatic act was needed to mobilize public opinion and instigate political momentum towards ending the arms race. The strategy of the Freeze Campaign and other educational anti-nuclear efforts, however broad their appeal, had hitherto not been effective in promoting meaningful political action. Greater acts of sacrifice were needed to intensify the public demand for nuclear sanity. The

vehicle of an open-ended fast was, its proponents argued, the ideal way to go about this. Combined with morally persuasive ideas about hunger, poverty, and global inequality, a fast would be able to mobilize public support in pursuit of its political goals. Moreover, since fasting was not illegal – unlike other acts of civil disobedience – it would not alienate more conservative Americans. Its extended nature, rather than a one-day demonstration or civil disobedience action, would also enable a steady, snowballing accumulation of support and attention.

Within the wider history of social protest since the 1960s, these ideas demonstrate the willingness of some activists to steer clear of divisive, confrontational protest. Instead, as Robert Holsworth argues, pacifists became embroiled in debates over the value of political action, and whether their principles ought to be applied, and perhaps compromised, within campaigns geared toward political reform. Often, like Holsworth's subjects, activists interested in a personalist approach to politics had neither political experience, nor the means to communicate pragmatic political solutions to either the public or to elected officials in an effective manner. More significantly, many were often more interested in demonstrating how peace and justice could operate in the lives of individuals and communities, by "reorganizing individual lives and constructing exemplary communities." As many countercultural groups demonstrated in the 1960s, there were problems with retreating from politics into an alternative communal space. As Holsworth argues, these groups showed how "a politics grounded in exemplary communities can become so inward-looking that it loses sight of its political goals."[1] It is this tension that characterized the 1983 Fast for Life. In its efforts to demonstrate the extent of a few individuals' extreme commitment to political change, the campaign suffered from a confusing combination of religiously inspired ritual, a fluid interpretation of nonviolent protest, and a well intentioned but somewhat amateurish publicity campaign. In the wake of the 1960s, the Fast for Life highlights the persistence of pacifism in experimenting with dramatic performances of nonviolent protest, but also the ways in which they attempted to link these performances to campaigns based on conventional strategies of mobilizing public opinion and stimulating political reform.

[1] Robert D. Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak: A Study of Politics, Religion, and Antinuclear Weapons Activism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 105-106.

Throughout the twentieth century, pacifists in the United States experimented with and revised the idea of nonviolence as a form of social protest. Nonviolence was both a an ideal and a program of activism, and in its older guise, was intimately related to Gandhi's concept of *satyagraha*, a program of nonviolent protest that encompassed notions of personal suffering, love, truth, justice, and the potential for converting one's antagonists.[2] Among pacifists, these ideas had a mixed reception. In the 1960s, activists began to mobilize the potential of nonviolent civil disobedience for purely pragmatic purposes, seeking to extent the reach of their movements for change. In movements for civil rights, against the war in Vietnam, and against nuclear weapons and nuclear testing, tradition concepts of nonviolent protest and their underpinnings of personal suffering and enlightenment changed substantially. As Sean Scalmer writes:

> Protests were increasingly large affairs; marked by a sometimes truculent spirit and a merely tactical (and therefore temporary) attachment to the value of peace. Suffering was henceforth repudiated as a duty; a willingness to evade penalties and commit violence instead became the epitome of radical chic. The very concepts that once identified activism – 'civil disobedience,' 'protest,' 'non-violence' itself – were now increasingly consigned to the past. 'Gandhism,' it appeared obvious, no longer held sway.[3]

It is this revision – and rejection – of traditional nonviolence in the 1960s that influenced later pacifists attempting to reclaim the role of *satyagraha* in social protest.

In the wake of the 1960s, pacifists sought to reclaim the earlier spirit of nonviolence that had become marred by violence, countercultural experimentation, and a radical interpretation of the nature and scope of civil disobedience. In doing so, they envisaged a mass movement comprised of ordinary, middle class Americans, a palatable public appeal, and a safe, traditional message of nonviolence and peace that evoked the "moral prestige" of Martin Luther King, Gandhi, and, in some ways, Jesus.[4] In many ways, activists in the late 1970s and early 1980s envisaged a return to the expression of traditional nonviolence not for its performative qualities or its newsworthiness, but for its potential to instill a revolutionary spiritual peace in the individual. The performance of

[2] On the process of defining *satyagraha*, and the problems with its translation in Britain and America, see Sean Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 73-86.
[3] Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West*, pp. 222-223.
[4] See Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels against War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), p. 279.

satyagraha in the early 1980s, argued Joe Peacock of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, "places primary emphasis not on recruitment, but on *speaking the truth* through both words and deeds. Speaking the truth, according to Gandhi and King, is the most effective way (and ultimately the only way) to reach people's consciences."[5] Hence, ideas of asceticism, voluntary poverty, and suffering in solidarity with the poor and the oppressed became staples of the nonviolent activist's 'tactical repertoire.'

Fasting was a key way to achieve this. As acts of protest, fasts can be situated within a global history of pragmatic, and largely secular nonviolent resistance; in this guise 'hunger strike' is a more appropriate term. Yet fasting for pacifists was often much more than this; as a personal act of spiritual purification, sacrifice, and penitence, fasting worked on a level much deeper than that of a hunger strike. When attempts were made to combine both the pragmatic and the personal aspects of fasting in campaigns for social change, this divide was amplified, and is illustrative of the problems pacifists faced in promoting their cause to the wider peace movement, and to the public.

These ideas responded to a rich, yet complex history of social protest that has characterized the experience of Christianity in the United States. More importantly, campaigns of protest involving fasting defined themselves as radical, if not extreme attempts to effect social or political change through a basic, almost primal Christian ritual. Fasts undertaken in the pursuit of social change can be as much about the personal and spiritual effects of fasting than their political consequences. Hunger strikes, on the other hand, often take place outside of the margins of religious life, and primarily operate as political campaigns.[6] Within the history of nonviolent action, however, fasting as both a spiritual and political pursuit owes much to the ideas of poverty and suffering popularized by Gandhi.[7] Whilst not a Christian, Gandhi's example inspired activists in

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[5] Joe Peacock, "Catching the King's Conscience," *Nuclear Times*, January 1983, p. 14.

[6] Recent literature, much of it from sociologists, has emphasized the international nature of hunger strikes as a dramatic form of political nonviolence. The scope of hunger strikes, as Scanlan *et al*. have demonstrated, is diverse. The authors identify a large variety of hunger strikes distinct in geographical, ideological, cultural and social status. The use of hunger strikes in arenas such as civil rights, prison reform, anti-apartheid, anti-war, and labor movements suggest their flexibility, yet as the authors identify, religious figures and activists only occupied 3.8% of their sample data from twentieth century hunger strikes. Prison hunger strikes dominated this data. See Stephen J. Scanlan *et al.*, "Starving for Change: The Hunger Strike and Nonviolent Action, 1906-2004," *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 28 (2008), pp. 291-299.

[7] The two most famous works advocating Gandhi's example of nonviolence are Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973) and Erik Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of*

the West to experiment with *satyagraha* and its implication for local and contemporary political struggles.[8] His philosophy of nonviolence in the pursuit of social change incorporated both pragmatic and moral agendas, speaking to the potential of nonviolent action to influence public and governmental opinion, whilst at the same time demonstrating the purity and spiritual strength a commitment to nonviolence could fashion in the individual.

FASTING, PROTEST, AND AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY

These spiritual ideals have a deeper history in American Christianity, which is illustrative of the moral value of fasting in religious and public life. Activists attempted to command and manipulate this moral value when fasting for social change. Fasting for political purposes has a rich twentieth century historiography, due especially to Gandhi, as well as the notoriety of Bobby Sands and his fellow Irish Republican prisoners in their fatal hunger strikes in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[9] Other research has looked at the social and cultural discourse around anorexia and other forms of self-starvation,[10] but rarely has fasting been treated as a tool of nonviolent activists interesting in resisting not only the state, but also drawing public attention to the folly of modernity itself.[11] Fasting as an act of social protest is significant due to its unique application; pacifists incorporated

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Militant Nonviolence (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969). Sharp, especially, deals with the pragmatic implications of Gandhi's program of action, as well as a large history of political fasts, as an illustrative example for contemporary nonviolent action campaigns. See his discussion in Sharp, *Nonviolent Action*, pp. 360-368.

[8] Recent scholarship here has emphasized the modification of Gandhi's often eccentric philosophies in their transportation to the west. See Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Sean Scalmer, "Globalising Gandhi: Translation, Reinvention, Application, Transformation," in *Rethinking Gandhi and Nonviolent Relationality: Global Perspectives*, ed. Debjani Ganguly and John Docker (New York: Routledge, 2007); and Leilah Danielson, "'In My Extremity I Turned to Gandhi': American Pacifists, Christianity, and Gandhian Nonviolence, 1915-1941," *Church History* 72, no. 2 (2003), pp. 361-388.

[9] The literature here is sizable, but for two worthy examples, see Padraig O'Malley, *Biting at the Grave: The Irish Hunger Strikes and the Politics of Despair* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990); and George Sweeney, "Irish Hunger Strikes and the Cult of Self-Sacrifice," *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 3 (1993). A fascinating discussion of the myriad meanings and implications of the hunger strike can also be found in Begoña Aretxaga, *Shattering Silence: Women, Nationalism, and Political Subjectivity in Northern Ireland* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), Chapter 4.

[10] A good example here is Walter Vandereycken and Ron van Deth, *From Fasting Saints to Anorexic Girls: The History of Self Starvation* (London: Athlone Press, 1994). See also an interesting discussion in Terence M. O'Keeffe, "Sucide and Self-Starvation," *Philosophy* 59, no. 229 (1984), pp. 349-363.

[11] Occasionally scholarship on radical and religious pacifism has dealt with small campaigns of fasting. A notable incident was the 1950 Fast for Peace, which shall be discussed briefly below. For an excellent analysis, see Marian Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America: Egalitarianism and Protest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), pp. 62-66.

elements of theology, nonviolence, and personal spirituality to what were often pragmatic programs of social and political change. It is in this context that fasting as a form of nonviolent protest can be understood, especially as it sought to promote an act of personal spirituality within the framework of a political campaign.

Theologically, fasting holds a special significance for Christians. It has historically demonstrated a type of sacrificial devotion to God, whereby an individual or community's penitence was enacted; as Vendereyken and van Deth have noted, Old Testament fasting was "intended as a kind of self-humiliation and self-castigation to excite Divine compassion."[12] However, the penitential attraction of fasting usually served more pious Christians; others practiced fasting in terms of an ascetic pursuit, others to strengthen the spirit at the expense of the body.[13] This should be interpreted in terms of the pious person's pursuit for sacred truth, which can be found, for the purposes of this discussion, within reality, rather than in the realm of the Spirit. In the course of this pursuit for 'truth' comes religious practice and custom, which has sought to best respond to the condition of man and his environment in the service of God and the teachings of the Bible. The way in which individuals and communities engage in this pursuit, argues John Hick, is a popular definition of "true religion," which is located

> … within the wide spectrum that begins with commitment, dedication, singleness of mind, purity of heart, and self-discipline in prayer or meditation; that extends into practices of pilgrimage, fasting, vigils, celibacy, poverty, and obedience; and that may go on to further and sometimes extreme austerities.[14]

Historically, pacifists utilized such practices to respond to social and political circumstances that contradicted their sense of right and wrong, leading to the development of an ethic of personal responsibility. Such responsibility, argued pacifists, was the role of the Christian to bring about in contemporary society what Jesus had done. This extended to acts as such as voluntary poverty, civil disobedience, and nonviolent action. Within each of these frames of reference can be found fasting, which for pacifists

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[12] Vandereycken and Deth, *From Fasting Saints*, p. 17.

[13] There is a small but worthwhile body of literature on the history of Christian fasting. For a brief summary, see Vandereycken and Deth, *From Fasting Saints*, Chapter 2. A more detailed treatment can be found in three volumes covering fasting's biblical and theological heritage: Scot McKnight, *Fasting* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009); Romara Dean Chatham, *Fasting: A Biblical Historical Study* (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos, 1987); and Kent D. Berghuis, *Christian Fasting: A Theological Approach* (Richardson, TX: Biblical Studies Press, 2007). A broader discussion of asceticism, in various historical and religious contexts, can be found in the many essays in Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantasis, eds., *Asceticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[14] John Hick, Foreword to Wimbush and Valantasis, eds., *Asceticism*, p. ix.

retained its ancient qualities of purity and spiritual strength, but in the modern era was laden with additional weight, being used not just for personal religiosity but also to encourage profound changes in politics and in public life.

In the United States, these ideas about the expression of religious ritual as a public act owe much to the Puritans. In the New World, Putitans hoped to create a new, more 'godly' type of individual through new behaviors, free of excess and the temptations of the 'flesh.' Fasting, in such a structured and sculpted existence, was undertaken for repentance, as well as to respond to times of difficulty or danger. As Finch writes, "calling for spontaneous days of fasting, humiliation, and prayer allowed the church to gather itself as a body in order to respond directly to crises of sin that threatened its health."[15] Although Puritan culture was not one of asceticism, it did eschew the trappings of materialism and pleasure that afflicted the Europeans from whom they had fled. Yet as their pursuit was one of godliness, not of happiness, fasting, prayer and other acts of self-humiliation were used to continually remind them of the perils of failing to meet the standards set for them by God and the Bible.[16] This staunch use of fasting in social life – which was at once political, religious, and cultural – was first and foremost a spiritual practice. In later generations of colonial life in America, the religious ritual of fasting would be employed as a reactionary tool, adding more layers to this ancient, almost primitive practice.[17]

In this sense, the use of fasts in American public life, whilst acknowledging the values on which communal fasting was built, paid little attention to its ascetic heritage. Just prior to the Revolutionary War, the colonies used public fasts as a measure of protest within an environment of deteriorating relations with England. Days of fasting and prayer, retaining some of their spiritual significance as developed by the Puritans, were laden with added political potential. Thomas Jefferson liked the idea, seeing the promise of fast days in Virginia in mobilizing the populace. Jefferson and several other members of the

[15] Martha Lawrence Finch, "Corporality and Orthodoxy in Early New England: Plymouth Colony, 1620-1692" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2000), p. 305. See also Martha Finch, "Pinched with Hunger, Partaking of Plenty: Fasts and Thanksgivings in Early New England," in *Eating in Eden: Food and American Utopias*, ed. Etta Madden and Martha Finch (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), pp. 35-39.
[16] See John Chester Miller, *The First Frontier: Life in Colonial America* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986), pp. 50-53.
[17] Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 31.

House of Burgesses recognized, he argued, "the necessity of arousing our people from the lethargy into which they had fallen as to passing events; and thought that the appointment of a day of general fasting and prayer would be most likely to call up and alarm their attention."[18] Jefferson and his colleagues "cooked up" a resolution designed to accommodate some semblance of religious recognition in American political life, whilst using the exercise to mobilize public sentiment against the English.[19] The Continental Congress also set aside a public day fasting and prayer for all colonies in 1775, in an attempt to unite the various individual fast days that had been occurring sporadically in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and other colonies since 1768.[20]

Throughout the Revolutionary War, the Continental Congress continued to declare annual fast days, as well as days of thanksgiving. As in the Puritan tradition, the two would be complementary, imbuing the social body – by the 1770s a pluralistic one – with religious significance.[21] The idea continued, however, most importantly in times of crisis. Abraham Lincoln proclaimed three days of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer" during the civil war, and in the wake of Watergate, the Senate recommended a similar national day in April 1974. Edward Tiryakian argues that such a continuation of the ritual can be seen as "a reaffirmation of deep-seated collective values grounded in Puritan culture," emphasizing the endurance of Puritanical ritual in the midst of adversity, as well as the value of collective purification in response to the dangers of materialism and affluence.[22] These ideas were to be diffused throughout various sectors of American life since their Puritan origins; one significant application was within movements of spiritual nonviolence, which rose in significance in the twentieth century.

It was not until the 1920s that American Christians took note of fasting in the context of nonviolent social or political change. They were most likely less motivated by theology than by ideals of Christian pacifism inherited from the peace churches, and in response to

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[18] Quoted in Derek Davis, *Religion and the Continental Congress, 1774-1789: Contributions to Original Intent* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 84.
[19] See Daniel L. Dreisbach, "Thomas Jefferson, a Mammoth Cheese, and the 'Wall of Separation between Church and State'," in *Religion and the New Republic: Faith in the Founding of America*, ed. James H. Hutson (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), p. 77.
[20] Davis, *Religion and the Continental Congress*, pp. 84-85.
[21] See Harry M. Ward, *The War for Independence and the Transformation of American Society* (London: UCL Press, 1999), p. 15.
[22] Edward A. Tiryakian, *For Durkheim: Essays in Historical and Cultural Sociology* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2009), p. 301.

the Great War, looming crises of democracy in Europe, and domestic industrial turmoil. News of Gandhi's campaigns in India and South Africa hinted to Americans, especially to more radical Christian pacifists, of the potential use of nonviolence as a political tool.[23] Whilst Gandhi fasted as an ascetic pursuit, he also employed lengthy fasting as a tool in his nonviolent campaigns. Many American pacifists felt this too coercive, and were reluctant to adopt Gandhian nonviolence, preferring instead conventional, western methods of protest and resistance.[24] Still, Gandhi's ideas began to gain credence in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s. Due to the efforts of A.J. Muste, and his leadership of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, along with such groups as the Peacemakers and the Committee for Non-Violent Action, Gandhian nonviolence was by the early 1940s, as Danielson argues, "an institutionalized component of American pacifism."[25]

FASTING AND POSTWAR PACIFISM

Pacifists in the 1950s and early 1960s experimented with fasting as a powerful act of social protest that highlighted individual activists' commitment to nonviolence and peace. Activists in the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Peacemakers, and the Catholic Worker expressed this most explicitly in the 1950 Fast for Peace, a week long demonstration of protest and prayer in Washington, D.C. Using the "teaching and example of Jesus" to guide their action, the small group emphasized that the protest was an act of penitence and self-purification, as well as an indictment on the recent decision to develop the hydrogen bomb.[26] They cited a "willingness to give life itself if necessary in the cause of peace," yet having next to no impact on public opinion or military policy, the Fast for Peace was abandoned. Whilst its political aims were fuzzy, it is better seen in terms of a personal expression of faith and inner spirituality than a pragmatic program of

[23] For an insightful discussion, see Joseph Kip Kosek, "Richard Gregg, Mohandas Gandhi, and the Strategy of Nonviolence," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (2005), pp. 1318-1348.
[24] See Leilah Danielson, "Not by Might: Christianity, Nonviolence, and American Radicalism, 1919-1963" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2003), pp. 29-30. See also Charles Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice: Pacificism in America, 1914-1941* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), pp. 218-219.
[25] Danielson, "Not by Might," p. 107.
[26] Fast For Peace Committee brochure, 1950, quoted in Patricia Faith Appelbaum, *Kingdom to Commune: Protestant Pacifist Culture between World War I and the Vietnam Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), p. 63.

political action.[27]

In a similar vein, Catholic Worker founder Dorothy Day traveled to Rome for the final session of the Second Vatican Council in September 1965. Day hoped not so much to influence the Council's position on war and peace – which became the slightly pacifist Schema 13 – but to call to God to encourage the Council to respect the Gospel's message of peace and social justice in its deliberations.[28] This was done through a ten day fast – more a spiritual witness than a protest.[29] Eileen Egan, herself a key member of the Catholic Worker, notes that Day fasted "for the victims of famine in the world as well as for peace. She called it a small thing in the face of world suffering, 'a widow's mite'."[30] Day's pacifist stance, and her nonviolent action of fasting, was steadfastly rooted in her Catholicism; she constantly asserted a commitment to mercy, compassion, and suffering, hoping to follow the example of Jesus.[31]

This was, essentially, the core of radical Christian nonviolent pacifism, and Day's ethic would be iterated and reiterated by successive pacifists as the rationale behind true Christian responses to social ills, such as poverty, war, injustice and oppression of various types. Fasting in the way intended by Isaiah, as "the faithful person's pathos for and with the poor," was behind this form of public ritual, however political its aims might appear.[32] César Chávez expressed similar issues when fasting in campaigns for Mexican-American civil rights in the 1970s and 1980s. When fasting in 1972 in a United Farm Workers campaign, he wrote:

> The fast is a very personal spiritual thing, and it's not done out of recklessness. It's not done out of a desire to destroy yourself, but it's done out of a deep conviction that we can communicate with people, either those who are for us or against us, faster and more effectively spiritually than we can in any other way.[33]

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[27] Fast for Peace Committee article in *Peacemakers* newsletter, 25 April 1950, quoted in Leilah Danielson, "'It Is a Day of Judgment': The Peacemakers, Religion, and Radicalism in Cold War America," *Religion and American Culture* 18, no. 2 (2008), p. 231. See also Mollin, *Radical Pacifism*, p. 65.
[28] See Eileen Egan, "Dorothy Day: Pilgrim of Peace," in *A Revolution of the Heart: Essays on the Catholic Worker*, ed. Patrick G. Coy (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), pp. 94-96.
[29] Interview with James and Shelley Douglass, 2 November 2010, Birmingham, Alabama.
[30] Egan, "Dorothy Day," p. 99.
[31] See Egan, "Dorothy Day," pp. 109-110.
[32] McKnight, *Fasting*, pp. xxi, 101.
[33] Quoted in Richard Griswold del Castillo and Richard A. Garcia, *César Chávez: A Triumph of Spirit* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), p. 121.

Chávez was Catholic, but not exclusively so, and his "savvy Christian identity" had a broader appeal, which enhanced the effectiveness of his fasts.[34] The resonance of these fasts with members of the public, themselves not exclusively proponents of nonviolence or pacifism, speaks to the significance with which we must treat religiosity in the context of fasting for social change.

These currents of pacifist thought, utilizing fasting as a public act, also fit within religious – and secular – traditions of austerity and voluntary poverty, which by the 1970s were gaining increasing visibility within alternative social movements. Environmentalists, radical feminists, and other countercultural groups advocated a program of personalism as a critique of mainstream cultures of consumerism and waste, whilst also developing protest cultures of various persuasions. Around these countercultural trends existed communities of religious pacifists interested in an embodied spirituality that also rejected dominant cultural ideals of capitalism, individualism, and upward mobility. In some ways adopting the ritual and custom of earlier proponents of voluntary poverty – Puritans, Quakers, Amish, Shakers, and so on – those practicing simple living as a religious pursuit in the 1970s and 1980s adopted an aesthetic lifestyle removed from the dominant contours of mainstream life. Motivated by the challenges and promise of social activism in the 1960s, these ideals found expression in a wide variety of personal, social and political pursuits in the 1970s, and it is in this context that public fasting as a form of anti-nuclear activism reemerged.

VOLUNTARY POVERTY AS SOCIAL PROTEST

Henry David Thoreau looms large in the background as the most significant figure in postwar American movements of voluntary poverty and alternative lifestyles, but it was figures such as Gandhi and Chávez that dominated the rhetoric of practitioners of austerity who saw the potential of this type of ethic in social change. Nonviolent action, as an outgrowth of the commitment to personalism, in this sense meant a combination of the pragmatic act itself, with the strength and fortitude of an individual, spiritual undertaking. Acts such as fasts, designed to attract mass sympathy and bring about some

[34] Luis D. León, "César Chávez in American Religious Politics: Mapping the New Global Spiritual Line," *American Quarterly* 59, no. 3 (2007), p. 865. See also pp. 874-875.

degree of social change, were combined with a vague sense that the fast also operated as an individual and communal prayer. This was separate to the political realm of the act, and existed for fasting activists in a way that supporters, media, and the public could glimpse, but not touch. For the most part, the spiritual act of fasting was undertaken for personal reasons – penitence, humility, or purification – and had little to do with the political mission of the act, its appeal to the public, and its effectiveness.

Charles Gray was an advocate of simple living, and his story fits neatly within this context of postwar pacifism that sought to bring about small-scale social change via the personalist ethic of social responsibility. A Quaker and conscientious objector, with degrees in sociology and political science from the University of Colorado, founder of the first Colorado chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, and a member of the World Federalists, Gray seems like the quintessential pacifist. He had been inspired by the writings of Gandhi, Tolstoy, and Thoreau in his late teens, and for a time, practiced simple living as a means of purifying his personal ideals and solidifying his own "break from the establishment."[35] Gray also developed a long-standing interest in analysing and rectifying the uneven distribution of wealth in the world, and defined his pacifism in economic as well as social and spiritual terms.[36] Involved in the civil rights movement in Denver in the 1950s and 1960s, Gray would also embrace civil disobedience against the Vietnam War. Relocating to Eugene, Oregon in the mid 1960s, Gray engaged in tax resistance, and was involved in protests against nuclear power plant construction in Oregon in the 1970s.

However, Gray felt burdened by his wealth and lifestyle. His first wife, Leslie Brockelbank, had inherited a small fortune shortly after their marriage, but even through philanthropy and organizing for social justice, Gray was still uncomfortable. The "rather soft liberal pacifism" he and his wife practiced was not enough, nor was their limited engagement with civil disobedience and tax resistance. Inspired by their involvement with the revolutionary anarchism of the Movement for a New Society (MNS), Gray and Brockelbank retreated from comfortable suburban life, living in a collective and

[35] Charles Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, 2nd ed. (Eugene, OR: The Author, 1994), p. 10.
[36] See Kera Abraham, "Peace through Poverty: The Simple Rich Life of Charles Gray," *Eugene Weekly*, 13 July 2006, p. 1.

dedicating themselves to change in both personal and institutional ways.[37] For Gray, this lifestyle was liberating:

> By 1977, I felt that the all encompassing threat facing humanity demanded a complete reconciliation of our personal lifestyles with our most precious ideas and that such personal change was necessary if essential institutional change was to occur.[38]

Brockelbank refused to join Gray on this personal quest, and their marriage ended. Their differences attest to the divergences in pacifism in the 1970s; one geared towards philanthropy and liberal institutional change, the other dedicated to a personal revolution in lifestyle. Each sought to realize some kind of systemic change, but with wildly different strategies that emphasize the attraction of prefigurative lifestyle politics and their expression in alternative social movements in the 1970s.

Gray's interest in a variety of systemic threats to human life and dignity, and his desire to do something about it, found its clearest expression in what he called the "World Equity Budget" (WEB): a means of living that was both environmentally and socially sustainable, in identification and solidarity with the world's poor. Embarking on the WEB in 1977 at age 52, Gray limited his earnings and his expenditure, scavenging for food and supplies, living rent free wherever he could, and riding a bicycle. He did carpentry and odd jobs around Eugene and Portland to earn enough to get by, still limiting his spending to a sustainable level, and saving the rest. Limiting spending to $75 per month did not amount to an easy lifestyle, however much satisfaction it may have brought him. In 1989, Gray wrote:

> In a sense, the WEB for me was not my personal ideal, but rather a compromise with my social circle, an effort to establish a principle of equal sharing, a principal less extreme than real identity with the world's poor who had far less than their equal share.[39]

Whilst he could not hope to live in absolute poverty, his identification was at least a partial form of repentance:

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[37] Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, pp. 11-12. For a history of the MNS in the 1970s and 1980s, and a thorough examination of its radical, lifestyle-oriented approach to social change, see Andrew Cornell, "The Movement for a New Society: Consensus, Prefiguration, and Direct Action," in *The Hidden 1970s: Histories of Radicalism*, ed. Dan Berger (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), pp. 231-148.

[38] Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, p. 12.

[39] Charles Gray, "Hanging to the Cliff Edge," *Aisling Magazine* 17 (1995), http://www.aislingmagazine.com (accessed 25 July 2010).

> For me the WEB was a morally defensible philosophical position, not a personal preference. My personal preference, my feeling for the poor, my guilt at so long being complicit in oppression pushed me toward a level of consumption at least closer to that of the world's poor than the level of the WEB. The desire to at least partially identify with the world's poor became another reason to push my expenditures further downward.[40]

Gray found poverty liberating, on a personal, ideological, and spiritual level. His alienation from society was offset by him feeling "in tune with a larger humanity and a more nonviolent morality," and reveling in his rejection of the 'throw away society' of consumption and waste.[41] There were, however, dangers to such a pursuit larger than social isolation and living at the mercy of the elements. "The danger of practicing what you preach," wrote Gray, "is that it can become an end in itself, a searching for personal purity or salvation."[42] His philosophy was that actions should be more than simply expressions of embodied spirituality; they should have a wider social, economic, and political basis.

Gray's analysis of his experiment in simple living is demonstrative of how pacifists made sense of small-scale challenges to systemic ills. The role of individual action as a form of resistance was often undertaken as a means of escape from institutional structures that were primary causes of violence or oppression. As Gray explained:

> Part of our praxis should focus on our personal relationship to the social systems of institutionalized violence. As we analyze the social structures of oppression we do well to reflect on our own participation in those structures. Where are we in the structures of capitalism, consumerism, classism, racism, sexism, and militarism? How extensive is our complicity in them?[43]

For Gray, removing himself from such systems meant a full-scale retreat from mainstream society. His resistance was local, personal, and radical, and it emphasized Gray's commitment to a downward mobility at odds with social trends of materialism and consumption. It was not, he argued, a form of personal witness, nor was it intended as "the way to start a social movement." Rather, Gray's WEB was more like "an effort to reduce the tension between the way we lived and the beliefs we professed. There was a great gap between our lifestyles and our ideals."[44] Gray's ideas correlated with a rich

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[40] Gray, "Hanging to the Cliff Edge."
[41] Gray, "Hanging to the Cliff Edge."
[42] Charles Gray, "The World Equity Budget, or Living on About $142 Per Month," in *Downwardly Mobile for Conscience Sake*, ed. Dorothy Andersen (Eugene, OR: Tom Paine Institute, 1995), p. 110.
[43] Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, p. 8.
[44] Gray, "World Equity Budget," p. 109.

heritage of simple living in the Untied States. Building on the ideas of Thoreau, proponents of simple living, homesteading, and naturalism pursued peace and personal fulfillment through an aesthetic lifestyle removed from the dominant contours of mainstream life.[45]

Retreating from society, though, was not Gray's primary aim. Although many alternative movements advocating a communal lifestyle and an escape from the depersonalizing, demoralizing confines of mainstream life had erupted in the 1960s and 1970s, Gray's pursuit was different. He avoided the confines of this rejection of social and political life, he did not move to the countryside, and he did not live on the WEB as to achieve some kind of personal purity. His aims were grounded in his perceptions of global injustice and poverty, and his ideas about systemic violence and oppression. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the most pertinent crisis brought about by this system was the nuclear arms race, and it was towards challenging this crisis that Gray turned his attention.

HUNGER, NONVIOLENCE, AND POLITICAL FASTING

Gray felt that several years living on the WEB were a type of practically and spiritually clarifying preparation for his campaign of an anti-nuclear fast. He came to the conclusion that first strike nuclear missiles – those that were eventually deployed in Western Europe in November 1983 – must be stopped by a bold and daring peace movement. Inspiration from theologian and pacifist Jim Douglass, himself participating in a nonviolent resistance community adjacent to the Trident submarine base on Puget Sound near Seattle, was pivotal. Gray thought that a campaign of fasting might be dramatic enough a statement to encourage the reversal of such a development in the Cold War. The same way Gandhi had advocated fasting campaigns as an act of last resort, Gray felt that the peace movement had exhausted its options, and had so far failed to curb the nuclear arms

[45] The literature here is complex, but general works surveying the history of such cultural movements interested in simple living and the benefits of austerity, see David E. Shi, *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Rebecca Kneale Gould, *At Home in Nature: Modern Homesteading and Spiritual Practice in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); and Dona Brown, *Back to the Land: The Enduring Dream of Self-Sufficiency in Modern America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011). On downward mobility more specifically, see Lawrence Buell, "Downwardly Mobile for Conscience's Sake: Voluntary Simplicity from Thoreau to Lily Bart," *American Literary History* 17, no. 4 (2005), pp. 653-655.

race.[46]

Gray had met his second wife Dorothy Granada in 1978 at a blockade of the Trojan nuclear power plant in Rainier, northwest Oregon.[47] Granada, an Episcopalian with Mexican-Filipino heritage, had pursued a life of prosperity and upward mobility, married to a physician trained at Harvard, and directing the medical nursing program at the University of Chicago. However, the Vietnam War sparked in her a realization that the white, middle class world that she had joined was not for her. A "downward mobilization" followed, which led her to join Gray, his pursuit of a life of austerity, and the Fast for Life.[48]

In 1980, the pair began planning the fast in earnest. As they explained, the dual targets of the Fast for Life were "the silent holocaust of hunger and the impending holocaust of nuclear fire".[49] They were convinced that their act of protest was appropriate, considering the magnitude of the nuclear threat, and determined that it would be morally persuasive, and above all, nonviolent. Through their fast, an act of "love and moral suasion," they would approach some kind of 'truth' as Gandhi had envisaged.[50] But, in order to succeed, it needed to be dramatic. Gray began circulating literature on the Fast for Life in 1980, announcing its seriousness by committing to an open-ended fast, which would begin on the 38th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima – 6 August 1983 – and would end only when the superpowers made "significant steps" toward curbing the arms race. The campaign motto – "To affirm that all humanity has a right to live freed from the pain of hunger and the dread of holocaust" – emphasized the link between the arms race and the diminishing of social services and aid to poor nations that bulging defense budgets had occasioned.[51]

Gray and Granada's campaign received a boost with a large relay fast in the lead up to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament in June 1982. Groups of fasters in Washington, D.C., Pittsburgh, New York City, and other communities on the east coast

[46] Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, pp. 7, 59-62.
[47] James Rosen, "A Hunger for Peace," *Express* (Oakland), 9 September 1983, p. 8.
[48] Rosen, "A Hunger for Peace," p. 9.
[49] Dorothy Granada and Charles Gray, "Fast for Life: A Report of an Experiment in Nonviolence," 1 May 1984, p. 7, Fast for Life Records, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Madison (hereafter FFL Records), Box 1, Folder 1.
[50] Granada and Gray, "Fast for Life," p. 6, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 1.
[51] Granada and Gray, "Fast for Life," p. 1, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 1.

engaged in group fasting, from four days to twenty-one days, until the conclusion of the Special Session. Although this "Fast for Disarmament" had little effect or mainstream media coverage, Gray and Granada nevertheless drew inspiration from its efforts, and from the enormous public support for disarmament around the Special Session. They were also inspired by Mitch Snyder's Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) in Washington, D.C., a homelessness advocacy group with a radical Christian background. The CCNV had engaged in direct action and campaigns of fasting in order to secure access to funds and shelter from city authorities and church groups for the local homeless.[52] "Deeply impressed" with the CCNV's use of protest, especially at it confronted the government in Lafayette Park across from the White House, the experience for Gray and Granada "deepened our resolve to have the Fast become a symbol of the connection between world hunger and the arms race. The two were bound together and we hoped our fast would be a contribution to the peace movement, symbolizing that connection."[53] Subsequently, they formally announced the Fast for Life on 19 June 1982. Gray and Granada were also joined by two others, Canadian forester André Larivière and former Japanese Buddhist monk Mitsuyoshi Kohjima, and support fasts were held in France and West Germany, as well as many locations around the United States.[54]

The Fast for Life's ultimatum might seem like a hunger strike in the purest political sense, but as Granada would reiterate, she thought of it "more along the lines of a prayer than a hunger strike with specific demands… the Fast will be a plea to deeper into ourselves and others to do the same."[55] In essence, it was envisaged as an alternative form of civil disobedience, one that did not suffer from the same marginalization as other forms of resistance that were illegal. The fasters hoped that their own campaign would inspire the public as Gandhi and Chávez had, attracting mass support due to the moral and spiritual weight of their sacrificial act. The Fast for Life envisaged a slow, steady

[52] On the CCNV and its activities, ideas, and strategies in the late 1970s and early 1980s, see Cynthia J. Bogard, *Seasons Such as These: How Homelessness Took Shape in America* (Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 2003), Chapter 1. Snyder had met Daniel and Philip Berrigan in prison in the early 1970s, and inspired by their commitment to faith and social justice, formed the CCNV shortly after his release in 1972. His own fasts were extended affairs; in 1982, for example Snyder fasted for sixty-three days, and in 1984, for fifty-one days. See Robert M. Collins, *Transforming America: Politics and Culture in the Reagan Years* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 118-119.
[53] Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, pp. 61-62.
[54] Granada and Gray, "Fast for Life," pp. 8-9, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 1.
[55] Dorothy Granada to Helen Woodson, 2 February 1983, FFL Records, Box 4, Folder 14.

snowballing of public sympathy in support of this group of ordinary citizens undertaking an act of extraordinary commitment. Gray ambitiously predicted an international movement that would gain momentum and support from millions of citizens, until the United States and the Soviet Union were pressured to agree to the Fast campaign's proposals and halt the arms race, eventually disarming their entire nuclear stockpiles by 1989.[56] He also imagined ambitious numbers of active supporters, foreseeing "an international, open-ended fast with 2,000 persons entering the fast in cohorts of a hundred or so every week or two."[57]

However, supporters and colleagues within the peace movement were apprehensive about such an ambitious campaign. Many worried that politics did not respond to public demands in such short timeframes; as one correspondent argued, "by the natural timetable of your fast, there is an ultimatum which the political system is not going to meet."[58] Others expressed concern that an open-ended fast was itself a violent act, and some raised issues of "moral blackmail," arguing the fast was morally coercive, rather than persuasive.[59] Echoing wider rifts between the moderate peace movement and its radical fringes, critics warned that the Fast for Life would damage a peace movement that by 1983 had spent much effort building mainstream public support and harnessing public opinion in preparation for the 1984 elections. An extreme campaign of radical nonviolence – even without the presence of lawbreaking civil disobedience – was out of step with a pacifist anti-nuclear movement interested in developing comprehensive challenges to state power, and a mainstream movement that gave scant regard to such extreme acts of nonviolent protest.

FFL supporters, on the other hand, argued that an anti-nuclear movement that did not recognize the value of nonviolence and dramatic action was insufficient. Like Gray, Granada, and their colleagues, supporters felt that the polite Freeze Campaign had achieved little concrete success by 1983, and more radical tactics were needed to inspire and mobilize a seemingly apathetic public. Similarly, other acts of civil disobedience – including Plowshares actions, mass occupations at sites such as Seabrook, Livermore, Rocky Flats and so on, and blockades at isolated events such as the UN Special Session

[56] See Charles Gray *et al*, open letter, [early 1980], pp. 2-4, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 2.
[57] Granada and Gray, "Fast for Life," p. 7, Box 1, Folder 1, FFL Records.
[58] Tony Scarr to Dorothy Granada and Charles Gray, 24 August 1983, FFL Records, Box 4, Folder 34.
[59] See, for example, Mary Ellen Eterno to Fast for Life, 7 September 1983, FFL Records, Box 5, Folder 5.

in June 1982 – had made little inroad into building a mass movement against the nuclear arms race. Hence, the Fast for Life and its morally compelling message might appeal to ordinary people. As campaign member Wendy Tripp observed:

> … it is sobering to consider that holding hands around Livermore no longer suffices to express the aspirations of ordinary people, nor going to jail for sundry acts of civil disobedience. The desire to end fear of global murder is now so intense that some people are getting down to the base line of things. They are putting their own lives on that line.[60]

Other activists raised similar issues. They felt that traditional anti-nuclear politics had to date been "routine, uninspired and basically ineffective – except that they registered the breadth of popular sentiment. The fast suggested a more serious/more profound step – one that had a certain daring."[61] The FFL campaign argued that the example of ordinary people, like Gray, Granada, and their colleagues, could appeal to the public via their personal commitment and its corresponding moral value.

For some supporters, the simplicity of the act of fasting carried significant value, due in part to its nature as an ancient religious ritual, and in part to the radical commitment of the fasters themselves. Activist Nancy Hale, who would later coordinate the American Peace Test – a civil disobedience campaign at the Nevada Test Site – felt that "instead of being bombarded with enormous out-of-control facts, we move to the other side of the scale. Here are eleven unimportant people who have thrown in their lot with the poor and hungry of the world, that's all."[62] The public, other supporters argued, could relate to this sacrificial message, as opposed to the alienating, impersonal language of arms control and foreign policy that emanated from both the White House and from arms control advocates. Hence, many supporters favored an approach that focused "on what really matters."[63] The Fast for Life was a small, yet spiritually pure undertaking, and this was key to its potency and its legitimacy as a pacifist enterprise.[64] Its spiritual and moral dimensions transcended ideology, strategy and policy, both in the religious and secular

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[60] Wendy Tripp, unpublished copy of open letter to politicians, religious leaders and newspapers, 25 July 1983, FFL Records, Box 4, Folder 11.
[61] George Levenson, Fast for Life questionnaire, [1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20. The questionnaire was conducted with supporters and fellow activists after the end of the Fast Campaign to assess its effectiveness.
[62] Nancy Hale, quoted in Elissa Melamed, "A Disarming of the Heart," Fast for Life Media Update, n.d., p. 2, Robin Knowlton Papers, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, Madison (herafter Knowlton Papers), Box 1, Folder 1.
[63] Ben Richmond to Charles Gray, 5 January 1984, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 18.
[64] See Dan Lawrence to Fast for Life, [February 1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 19.

worlds. As such, the Fast was a more direct campaign, appealing to people's consciences, and could avoid getting mired in politics as the Freeze had.[65] The campaign saw itself as a movement that had more in common with traditional campaigns of nonviolent civil disobedience, breaking with the model of large, highly structured organizational movements that characterized the experience of pacifism in the 1960s.

PRAGMATISM, PUBLICITY, AND IMAGE

To ensure its success in mobilizing public interest, the FFL framed its message and its image various ways. In many ways, its organizers eschewed a comprehensive campaign of public relations, complete with a sound analysis of nuclear weapons policy, and instead promoted the Fast for Life as a spiritual witness, an act of love, and a dramatic statement in pursuit of social and economic justice. Gray also framed the campaign in terms of a challenge to the moderate peace movement. As he discussed in a 1981 piece in *WIN* magazine:

> The scenario is pure fantasy, but it may be within the realm of possibility if the peace movement takes itself seriously. That is the big if. Do the people who put out the leaflets about the impending holocaust really believe their own literature – believe it enough that a sizeable number will go for such a high commitment, high-risk tactic as an unlimited political fast? Would we offer our individual lives to save our collective lives?[66]

He argued that the potential for mass dissent existed, if people were willing. It would require "hundreds or thousands of people… in both mundane and dramatic acts to put their own lives on the line" before change was possible.[67] Converting people, through a drastic demonstration of commitment, would put the peace movement one step closer to success.

It was the particular use of the open-ended fast that divided activists and colleagues within the peace movement alike. Many individuals were forthcoming with endorsements, including Daniel Berrigan, Helen Caldicott, Daniel Ellsberg, as well as members of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the American

[65] Peter Klotz, Fast for Life questionnaire, [1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.
[66] Charles Gray, "Fasting to Clinch the Nuclear Freeze," *WIN*, 15 June 1981, p. 14.
[67] Charles Gray *et al*, open letter, early 1980, p. 4, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 2. See also "First Step: A Proposal for an International Campaign Against First Strike Weapons," brochure, n.d., Knowlton Papers, Box 1, Folder 7.

Friends Service Committee, and Clergy and Laity Concerned. Most clergy refusing to endorse the Fast for Life did so on the basis of its harmful nature; Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit argued that whilst Gandhi undertook open-ended fasts, he "never intended to commit suicide."[68] The councils of both the U.S. and International Fellowship of Reconciliation also decided against endorsing the Fast, as did the International Peace Bureau.[69] Activist Shelley Douglass, a member of the national council of the U.S. Fellowship, who presented the Fast for Life's appeal to the council for endorsement, felt that many council members were unsure about a radical action undertaken by a small number of people that was aimed squarely at changing the direction of government policy and influencing mass public opinion.[70] Thomas Fox, editor of the progressive *National Catholic Reporter*, asked similar questions. Were fasting activists engaging in sacrifice or suicide? Was it suitable to support a faster intent on dying, so that others might live? Were they, more importantly, "martyrs or modern fanatics?"[71] These key questions about the controversial nature of an open-ended fast in a peace movement committed to nonviolence also reflect the troubled compromise between fasting as a dramatic protest tactic and an ethic of activists' religiosity.

Additional problems with the Fast for Life's campaign strategy were characterized by the melding of the fasters' personal, spiritual quest with the more pragmatic task of eliciting public support. It certainly didn't help that none of the fasters were well known or revered public figures; neither could they claim to command serious political influence nor extensive public support, as did Gandhi.[72] But the Fast for Life stuck steadfastly to Gandhi's understanding of fasting as a moral venture, and the demonstration of an ethic that has been described as "principled" or "conscientious" nonviolence. In contrast to the understanding of nonviolence as a pragmatic tool for social change and political

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[68] Quoted in Gordon Oliver, "Open-Ended Fast Tool that Divides Activists," *National Catholic Reporter*, 12 August 1983, p. 7.
[69] Oliver, "Open-Ended Fast," p. 7.
[70] Shelley Douglass to Charles Gray and Dorothy Granada, 18 May 1983, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 11. See also Dan Ebener, "A Fast for Life," *Fellowship*, May-June 1983, p. 19.
[71] Thomas Fox, "Faster Set Nation's Eyes on Hunger but Blurred Life Issues," *National Catholic Reporter*, 12 August 1983, p. 14. Note that Fox was writing about another open-ended fast occurring at the same time in Washington, D.C., conducted by members of the Community for Creative Non-Violence, and related exclusively to domestic poverty and homelessness. However, the issues raised by both actions, and Fox's response, are strikingly similar.
[72] As Michael Nojeim explains, fasts as a form of Gandhian *satyagraha* are "a limited weapon because not everyone can use them. Few people command the moral stature and respect that is required for a fast to receive great attention and to be effective." Michael J. Nojeim, *Gandhi and King: The Power of Nonviolent Resistance* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), p. 148.

campaigning, the utopian elements of "principled" nonviolent action aim for the realization of a more pure self and the conversion of society. Gene Sharp, the most famous theorist of nonviolence, viewed these existential elements of Gandhi's philosophy of *satyagraha* as problematic for western audiences, instead developing a realistic, pragmatic model of nonviolent action which was freed from an ignorance of social realities.[73] Gray and Granada, attempting to speak to the "higher truth" that Gandhi was revered for approaching in his fasts, also designed their campaign around this ideal. Whilst alienating for many supporters, the fasters nevertheless felt that combining their act of inner spirituality with a coordinated media strategy, the divide between religious idealism and political practice might be alleviated. It was curious and often confusing strategy, but for Gray and Granada, and their many supporters, promoting themselves as humble, committed pacifists engaged in a selfless quest for peace and justice was the key to public success.

CONSTRUCTING PUBLIC APPEAL

Publically, the Fast for Life attempted to straddle two spheres. On one hand, it was an act of personal religious faith for a group of four spiritually committed individuals. On the other, it was a political campaign with a core set of goals, however vaguely defined they were. This dual nature of the FFL campaign posed a challenge for Robin Knowlton, hired as the campaign's media coordinator. Knowlton had little prior experience in public relations, yet relished the challenge to "translate something spiritual and something political, something Eastern into layman hardened news. Could the Fast translate in writing? In to radio? Over television?" she wrote after the campaign was over.[74] She stressed that from the outset, the credibility of the fasters must be established and emphasized for media.[75] This was a serious challenge; they mustn't come across as extremists, she felt, nor should they minimize the nature of their commitment in order to appeal to a larger public.

[73] See Thomas Weber, "Nonviolence Is Who? Gene Sharp and Gandhi," *Peace and Change* 28, no. 2 (2003), esp. pp. 257-258.
[74] Robin Knowlton, "Media Summary," n.d., Knowlton Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.
[75] Robin Knowlton to Bart Tibetts and Sam Hope, 5 September 1986, Knowlton Papers, Box 2, Folder 49.

Gray agreed, but recommended that the key motivation for the Fast – the connection between nuclear weapons and world hunger – be emphasized. Writing later, he remarked that in the Fast for Life, and in his pursuit of a just lifestyle under the WEB, he and Granada attempted to retain their middle class identity. "We didn't want to come off as fanatical purists. We weren't interested in sack cloth and ashes."[76] However, Gray still felt uncomfortable with material expenditure that came with promoting the Fast for Life:

> Somehow the means for organizing the Fast seemed very inconsistent with the ends. I was, of course, caught up in a movement that did not always recognize that disarmament required economic justice. I hoped that the Fast would help symbolize this truth by pointing out the many connections between the arms race and world hunger.[77]

The means by which this would be communicated relied on the words of the fasters themselves, and the sympathy of reporters, journalists, and commentators. As a publicity campaign, the Fast attempted to extend the application of polite, non-confrontational nonviolence to the contexts of the arms race and world hunger, and attract attention and mass support for its premise.

Supporters were divided over this issue. As one wrote, "if a Faster had placed himself or herself in the hands of God, ready to give his or her life, why the feverish quest for media coverage?"[78] Other correspondents raised issues of the fallibility of working within the political sphere. According to one activist, real peace would come not through oppositional activism, but through individual transformations toward perceiving the "unbreakable web of life." Depending on the media to convey the urgency that individual consciences are appropriately alerted assumed that "peace can be promoted in the same way as toothpaste or beer."[79] It also seemed to some like a surreal exercise in suicide. FFL correspondent Molly Sandperl felt that such an act of open-ended fasting did not belong in the peace movement:

> … it is discouraging to think that the Fast seemed real to so many people while I found it unreal. It was a strange and eerie sight to behold a white-middle-class American church group singing hymns to encourage some one on to a futile and painful death.[80]

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[76] Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, p. 38.
[77] Gray, *Toward a Nonviolent Economics*, p. 62.
[78] Molly Sandperl, Fast for Life questionnaire, [1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.
[79] Jim Gordon to Fast for Life, 15 January 1984, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 16.
[80] Molly Sandperl, Fast for Life questionnaire, [1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.

Evidently, the moral quandaries raised in the public act of fasting often outweighed questions of its application in the realm of political reform and public relations.

Similarly, Shelley Douglass stressed to Gray and Granada that large numbers of supporters would not necessarily lead to 'true' disarmament. "The meaning of peoples' actions isn't contingent upon their numbers," she wrote some months prior to the commencement of the fast. Douglass was "uncomfortable with tying everything to governments or large numbers," seeing small incidents of activism as "a sort of widow's mite that in my eyes would signify a tremendous change."[81] The Fast would be most useful, she felt, as a small action of individual witness, deepening the commitment of existing activists to nuclear disarmament and strengthening the personalist mission, but Douglass balked at the Fast's grand plans for soliciting millions of supporters and persuading sympathy from governments. The Fast for Life, in this sense, aimed at mainstream acceptance and appeal, which was an unfamiliar goal for religious pacifists more accustomed to small-scale campaigns of performative nonviolence. Indeed, the specter of Gandhi hung over the fasters' appeals; they hoped to follow his example and lead mass nonviolent movements for social change through campaigns of political fasting.

FFL organizer Hal Darst despaired at the campaign's attempt to have its message straddle two spheres: "it got caught on the horns between being a political/organizing effort, and a spiritual witness," he lamented. "Trying to be both was a mistake."[82] This dualism encouraged strident criticism from activists who saw any compromise between a spiritual witness and a political campaign as a failure. On one hand, respondents to a post-campaign survey strongly objected to "meaningless, useless sermon-like generalizations," favoring instead coherent, realist strategies from activists.[83] On the other, it was argued that the Fast for Life was small, yet spiritually pure, and this was key to its potency.[84] Helen Woodson, herself a purist in radical Christian nonviolent action, argued that the Fast would only be of value if it were "left in the hands of God… To

[81] Shelley Douglass to Charles Gray and Dorothy Granada, 18 May 1983, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 11.
[82] Hal Darst, Fast for Life questionnaire, [1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.
[83] Richard Bowers to Fast for Life, 9 January 1984, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.
[84] See Dan Lawrence to Fast for Life, [February 1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 19.

attempt to manipulate it, control it, evaluate it is to place it on the political level, subject it to human terms and become overly concerned with success and effectiveness."[85]

In this sense, pacifists well versed in the rationale and practice of bearing witness argued that the Fast was much needed in 1983, in terms of its nature as a dramatic, personal prayer. To promote its meaning and significance in any other way, pacifists argued, was useless. The scant notice paid by media to small-scale peace campaigns was a telling sign, argued Dan Lawrence of Clergy and Laity Concerned:

> As I become frustrated over the near-nil effects of peace actions, and as I elate over outwardly effective actions, my inclination, for me as a person is more to do the action; I feel less inclined to notify media… I believe very strongly that prayer in my closet (where I can't be seen) is tremendously more effective than if I blow my bugle out on the street.[86]

Some supporters argued that this ethic helped the Fast for Life to "transcend political expediency," whilst criticisms centered on the way the fasters expressed vague ideas of "the human family," "connection with the spirit," and "chains of human energy," as a *Los Angeles Times* piece noted.[87] The fasters also struggled to promote themselves as credible arms control activists, instead finding themselves alienated as 'kooks,' 'freaks,' or 'extremists.'[88] The difficulty for radical nonviolent pacifists in appealing to the mainstream peace movement, or to the public, was one the fasters hoped in vain to overcome via a strong focus on personal commitment and spirituality. Their attempt alone is significant, as it demonstrates the willingness of activists to extent the application of nonviolence within the peace movement of the early 1980s. Experimenting with strategies and tactics that would succeed in capturing public attention and political support was – for some pacifists – a major challenge of the anti-nuclear movement. For others, such an attitude was folly, and only succeeded in compromising the principles of genuine nonviolence, personal protest, and lifestyle politics that operated primarily in individual and communal contexts, with little view to public impact. These two perspectives highlight the tension between 'pure' or 'true' nonviolence and its reformist impulse.

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[85] Helen Woodson to Scott Kennedy, 7 March 1984, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.
[86] Dan Lawrence to Fast for Life, [February 1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 19. Emphasis in original.
[87] Sandy Banks, "'Maybe We'll Touch Hearts,' Faster Says," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 August 1983, p. B1.
[88] For a discussion of these issues, see George Levenson, Fast for Life questionnaire, [1984]; and Jim Gordon to Fast for Life, 15 January 1984, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20 and Folder 16 respectively. See also comments made by Daniel Ellsberg at an END (Europeans for Nuclear Disarmament) press conference, 3 May 1983, Knowlton Papers, Box 1, Folder 7.

By the fifth week of fasting, the four Oakland based fasters were having second thoughts. Neither mass public support nor an encouraging response from the peace movement had materialized. Moreover, their efforts were severely hampered by the downing of a Korean Air Lines flight by Soviet fighter pilots on 1 September.[89] The public outcry and government response fiercely denounced the Soviet Union, whilst the fasters viewed the incident as "a tragic example of the arms race which the Fast sought to end."[90] In the midst of a lackluster public response, the group felt that their contribution to the peace movement had been significant enough, and any sacrifice would be unnecessary. By 15 September, after 41 days of fasting, all had broken their fast. Supporters felt alternately confused, relieved and betrayed by this anticlimactic ending, fearing the Fast for Life had ended in a dismal failure, but nevertheless sparing the lives of their colleagues and friends.

The failure of the Fast to bring about serious change prompted some serious reflection by organizers and supporters who had been convinced of its potential for success. Organizer Hal Darst felt the implications of this inglorious end were wider reaching, writing to Gray that "the real pain – the shattering of my spirit, came more from the recognition that, not the Fast but the whole American peace movement, had failed."[91] For Darst, the failure of the Fast for Life was emblematic of the futile pursuit of public success and political reform that characterized most of the anti-nuclear movement's strategies. Robin Knowlton, on the other hand, recognized that whilst the Fast had failed in real terms, its success as a spiritual witness, and as a "vehicle of hope" to others in the peace movement, was its most lasting gift.[92] Like all forms of nonviolent action, Knowlton felt that fasting remains the more difficult, more moral and more life-affirming form of protest, although it is certainly a more extreme form of nonviolent action.[93] Measuring this success in real terms was, of course, impossible. In this sense, campaigns of

[89] Granada and Gray recalled that in the political climate following this incident, there was "no chance of any positive action in the capitol." This view was supported by two sympathetic politicians, Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon and Representative Ron Dellums of California. See Granada and Gray, "Fast for Life," p. 16, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 1.
[90] Tony Scarr to Charles Gray, 12 April 1984, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 12.
[91] Hal Darst to Charles Gray, n.d., FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.
[92] Robin Knowlton, media report to Charles Gray and Dorothy Granada, 7 March 1984, Knowlton Papers, Box 1, Folder 1.
[93] Letter to the author, 8 May 2010.

nonviolent action that attempted to generate large-scale support found their principles of nonviolence and *satyagraha* compromised within the dynamics of public protest.

In striving for public impact, fasting in the anti-nuclear movement needed to suit that movement's need for publicity, endorsement, and the mobilization of favorable public opinion. Knowlton argues that fasting, whilst an extreme form of protest, occupies a small but significant place within the wider mélange of ideas, opposition, and action that characterized the anti-nuclear movement in the 1980s:

> Fasting as a public act seems to fit our cultural need for drama and sensationalism. Who can say if one singular action was worthwhile when change happens when you've reached a tipping point; when an accumulation of things finally changes the balance. In that way, the Fast added a few more "pounds" to the scale.[94]

Knowlton's recollections describe the Fast for Life as a 'slow burn' process of social change. This fits with traditional ideas about nonviolence and its practice in small-scale peace campaigns. Personal discipline, experimentation with different ways of expressing nonviolence in direct action campaigns, and the building of a community were localized issues that had little to do with politics. Like other pacifists, and building upon Gray's ideas about voluntary poverty, the Fast for Life sought to experiment with nonviolence as a means for expressing one's personal commitment against injustice.

In terms of an act of principled nonviolence, or Gandhian *satyagraha*, the Fast for Life also fit within the historical and theological traditions of fasting as outlined earlier in this chapter. With its explicit identification with the issues of hunger and poverty, the FFL fit within theological traditions of fasting as "the faithful person's pathos for and with the poor," rather than "an instrument designed to get desired results."[95] "We're just trying to make the picture sharper… by voluntarily making ourselves vulnerable," Gray emphasized.[96] Similarly, Granada stressed her solidarity with the poor, arguing in an interview that "fasting is a way of holding up the victims of the arms race, and in a small way participating in their suffering."[97] These motivations were spiritual in nature, and the fasters repeatedly iterated their religiosity, promoting their actions as a selfless one,

[94] Letter to the author, 8 May 2010.
[95] McKnight, *Fasting*, pp. xxi, 101.
[96] Interviewed by Dio Neff on KVMR (Nevada City, California), 14 June 1983, audio recording in FFL Records, Tape 1.
[97] Interviewed by Michael Dixon on KCBS (San Francisco), 16 August 1983, audio recording in FFL Records, Tape 3.

designed to beget a more personal, just, and loving society free from the afflictions of the arms race.

FASTING, SPIRITUALITY, AND THE MEANING OF PROTEST

Within the larger context of radical religious campaigns of prayer and protest, the Fast for Life might seem a typical, dramatic statement of personal commitment to peace. It inspired Christian activists that such severe acts of witness could, as one Fast supporter noted, "authenticate my beliefs."[98] This gave the core group of fasters a kind of moral and spiritual authority as prophetic figures, engaged in the creation of a more spiritually pure community dedicated to social change. Indeed, supporters observed that Gray and Granada appeared to them as "two saints of Christian pacifism" engaged in messianic acts of "redemptive power."[99] Smaller support fasts, demonstrations, and letter writing campaigns surrounded the Fast for Life, highlighting the nature of this community it had created, but also furthering the ideals behind the Fast as "an experiment in truth in the Gandhian sense."[100] These actions, undertaken collectively, brought society closer to a vision of personalism in action.[101] Indeed, Gray felt the Fast for Life's most substantial contribution to peace was more personal than religious, in the traditional understanding of the term. Asked by a journalist for an Oakland weekly newspaper whether he believed in God, Gray responded:

> I consider myself a religious person in my definition, involving the sanctity of life. I've been affected by many religious traditions, but I feel quite agnostic… When I pray, I pray more that *people* will hear and respond than some deity… I don't deny that there is a god. But I feel that if there is one, then people are the hands of God.[102]

In this spirit, Gray saw his actions in the same context as other famous religious pacifists who had taken an extreme commitment to protest as an act of prayer. Just like Gandhi,

[98] Ben Richmond to Charles Gray, 5 January 1984, FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 18.
[99] Eugenia Durland, letter to the editor, *Fellowship*, July-August 1983, p. 28.
[100] Granada and Gray, "Fast for Life," p. 6, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 1.
[101] For example, organizers estimated over 150 support fasts took place in 24 countries. Granada and Gray, "Fast for Life," pp. 11-12, FFL Records, Box 1, Folder 1.
[102] Charles Gray, quoted in Rosen, "A Hunger for Peace," p. 11. Emphasis in original.

Chávez, Jesus, or the Buddhist monks who had engaged in self-immolation in protest of the Vietnam War, fasting was an act of sacrificial power and spiritual strength.[103]

Gray's religious ideals speak to the broad changes in religious thought and practice that characterized American spiritual life in the 1970s and 1980s. Declining church membership, and a change within traditional churches from an emphasis on ritual and dogma to a focus on individual spirituality, altered the way Christians interacted with the world around them. This found expression in the rise of transcendentalism, fundamentalism, and various forms of evangelical Protestantism that found popularity in the late 1970s and early 1980s. But at the same time, changes in the role of religion and spirituality in American life prompted progressive Christians to seek more socially oriented expressions of their faith; communal activism, voluntary poverty, and identifying with the poor and oppressed were common examples of these changes. Personal responsibility was advocated, as well as the avoidance of "cheap grace." True discipleship, progressives argued, came at a cost.[104]

The existence of the Fast for Life demonstrates the realization of these ideals within the context of a troubled peace movement. Not quite an intentional community, not quite a group of extreme activists committed to civil disobedience, the fasters aimed for their witness to play two roles – on one hand, their sacrifice would be a model of both nuclear resistance and a vision of a "new life" of community, love, and reverence for a common good.[105] It would inspire others to realize their faith in more active ways, due to the demonstration of penitence and purification of the fasters. On the other hand, the fasters hoped to play a role of a more pragmatic nonviolent campaign, more akin to a hunger strike than an act of *satyagraha*.[106] In occupying these two sites, the Fast for Life bears

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[103] Gray remarked in an interview that upon first hearing of protestors who burned themselves to death, he thought they were "crazy." Later, though, he saw that "they very consciously took their lives as a prayer, as an effort to draw attention to the horror of the war." Interviewed by Dio Neff on KVMR (Nevada City, California), 14 June 1983, audio recording in FFL Records, Tape 1. For an extended discussion on religious acts of self-immolation during the Vietnam War, see Sallie B. King, "They Who Burned Themselves for Peace: Quaker and Buddhist Self-Immolators During the Vietnam War," *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 20 (2000), pp. 127-150.

[104] On the concept of "cheap grace," see Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, trans. R. H. Fuller, rev. and unabridged ed. (London: SCM Press, 1966). See also Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak*, p. 29.

[105] See Holsworth, *Let Your Life Speak*, p. 30.

[106] Often the line between a political fast and a hunger strike can be blurred. For a categorization of different forms of political fasting, see Sharp, *Nonviolent Action*, pp. 360-368.

more resemblance to the 1950 Fast for Peace than to the fasts of Gandhi or Chávez.[107] Political goals relating to nuclear disarmament were mixed with personal affirmations of spiritual strength, based around Christian rituals of prayer and an understanding of fasting as "a way for people to enhance their spiritual life."[108]

However, the Fast for Life was more extreme, and occupies an unusual place within the postwar history of radical nonviolent pacifism. Unlike minor fasts, usually designed to accompany larger protest campaigns in imbuing activists with spiritual purity, the Fast for Life aimed at a goal much more grandiose, hoping to follow in the footsteps of other modern religious prophets who used fasting as a key campaign tactic, winning public support and political recognition in the process. In this sense, the means and ends of the FFL campaign were combined in a single public act, built on the complex traditions of Christian pacifism, nonviolent action, and the ancient practice of fasting. The Fast for Life, as with its antecedents, is illustrative of the provocative role of the religious dissent within the history of twentieth century American politics, as does it demonstrate the presence, and seeming vitality, of the nature of religious ritual within peace movements. As an act of Gandhian nonviolence, the Fast for Life exhibited less rigid ideas about theological ritual, and promoted fasting as more of a fluid interpretation of spiritually-minded social activism. Influenced by a variety of approaches to pacifism and spiritual fulfillment as they existed in the history of pacifist thought and protest since the 1960s, the Gray, Granada, and their colleagues instead adopted a much more flexible attitude toward the ideas and processes of nonviolence.

In its attempt to build a mass movement to bring an end to the nuclear arms race, the FFL applied their own understandings of nonviolence to contemporary environment of political protest. In some ways, the Fast for Life tried to have their cake and eat it too; their action was both a spiritual undertaking *and* a public demonstration that very much aimed to set in motion a mass movement of dissent. Because the fasters incorporated elements of nonviolent protest and pacifist thought from such a great variety of sources, their appeal lacked the simplicity they had hoped for. The extreme nature of their tactics, of course, were primary factors behind their lack of support, from both the public and the

[107] Interestingly, César Chávez's 1988 fast campaign was also called the Fast for Life. For a brief summary, see Griswold del Castillo and Garcia, *César Chávez*, p. 137.
[108] Dorothy Granada, interviewed by Michael Dixon on KCBS (San Francisco), 16 August 1983, audio recording in FFL Records, Tape 3.

peace movement. Their optimistic understanding of the processes of public opinion and elite reaction were also based on a somewhat romantic view of nonviolence as a means toward social change.

In undertaking their dramatic action of an open-ended fast, the activists in the Fast for Life campaign are significant for the ways in which they extended the promise of nonviolence, pacifism, and radicalism in the anti-nuclear movement to encompass spiritual ideas about the roles of sacrifice and personal commitments to peace and social justice. In the wake of the 60s, combining strategies of individual spiritualism, religious ritual, the personalist vision of an activist community, and a reformist understanding of media attention and public relations, the Fast's hopes for success were, as one supporter argued, "innocent and amateurish."[109] This was both its beauty and its weakness; seeking to accomplish grandiose goals within the context of a small campaign of dramatic nonviolent protest highlights Gray's ambitiousness. However self-affirming his experiments in voluntary poverty and simple living might have been, to extend those ideals to a mass movement went against the tide of unbridled consumerism that characterized American life in the 1980s. Gray's significance, though, is more subtle. Combining the ethic of austerity with an extreme form of activism like open-ended fasting succeeded in contesting the nature of nonviolent action in the 1980s, mirroring similar struggles in the 1960s to define a suitable nonviolent politics for mass movements.[110] Like other campaigns in the 1980s that utilized activists' bodies as symbols of the oppression of the state, the Fast for Life also succeeded in combining core moral and spiritual beliefs with a pragmatic strategy geared towards a political solution. However, challenging this symbolism was, its role in the anti-nuclear movement highlights the enduring challenges faced by proponents of nonviolence in finding new ways to capitalize on their radical ideals within the larger context of a movement for anti-nuclear reform.

[109] George Levenson, Fast for Life questionnaire, [1984], FFL Records, Box 2, Folder 20.
[110] See Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West*, pp. 223-228.

CHAPTER SIX

ACTIVISM IN THE HEARTLAND: LOCAL IDENTITIES, 'THE DAY AFTER,' AND THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT IN LAWRENCE, KANSAS

In the early 1980s, as the "polite," mainstream anti-nuclear movement grew under the banner of the Freeze Campaign, activists and supporters at the local level strove to achieve much the same thing as the Campaign's national organizers in St. Louis did. Political efficacy, public support, and the registering of grassroots opposition – however small or insignificant it might seem – was sought in order to demonstrate widespread opposition to the Reagan administration's nuclear weapons policies. Local freeze activism existed in all 50 states, along with additional campaigns on related issues complementing the wider anti-nuclear movement. Many local groups that had sought affiliation with the Freeze Campaign in the early 1980s were established peace groups, and found the freeze proposal a simple and effective mobilizing tool. Lawrence, Kansas, was no different. A medium sized college town in eastern Kansas, it had a history of confrontation between radicals and conservatives, a progressive spirit, and existed in the midst of the nation's conservative heartland. The major local peace group – the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice – became involved in the freeze movement in 1982, some years after local organizing efforts were pioneered in western Massachusetts, but at around the same time as state and local freeze referenda campaigns were emerging around the nation. Lawrence's story might seem typical of local anti-nuclear campaigns in the early 1980s, but like most local stories, it offers a unique perspective on the anti-nuclear movement and its operation in the midst of middle America.

Lawrence's relationship with the nuclear arms race took a rather distinctive turn in the fall of 1982, when ABC Television location scouts chose the town as the site for filming a movie about nuclear war. Titled *The Day After*, the film aimed to depict in graphic

fashion the aftermath of a nuclear attack on nearby Kansas City, and to show how ordinary people in the area coped with the resulting devastation and chaos. In the imaginary realm of television culture, then, Lawrence was positioned as an innocent community typical of the nation's heartland. In the realm of the town's and social life, however, such stereotypes presented residents with the opportunity to offer their own interpretations on what it meant to be a Lawrencian, a Kansan, a Midwesterner, or an American. And politically, the film offered both progressive and conservative residents with an unparalleled opportunity to amplify their views on the nuclear arms race. This chapter will explore how these issues of localism, identity, and nuclear politics resonated amongst residents of Lawrence in the early to mid 1980s. Moreover, it will help to explain how a modest anti-nuclear campaign operated in the environment created by *The Day After*. This chapter also assesses how anti-nuclear activism operated in the environment of the American 'heartland.' This environment – a cultural idea about the location of archetypal American values in the centre of the nation – meant that anti-nuclear identity was born, and contested, within such a space. In the wake of the 1960s – a divisive and violent era in Lawrence – the evolution of this anti-nuclear identity gains additional significance.

These issues of community politics, local and regional identity, and the nuclear arms race in Lawrence were tempered - but not radically altered – by the influence of *The Day After* and its vision of nuclear devastation in Kansas. How these issues coincided at this particular historical juncture speak most clearly to the way locals negotiated the idea of "ordinariness"; that is, Lawrencians often thought of themselves as providing alternative, "ordinary" voices to the wider national debate over nuclear weapons policy. These Kansan voices were unclouded by the prejudices of establishment politics, elite scientific debate, and big city attitudes. Just like Americans in all other parts of the country, these ordinary Kansans were also at risk if the nuclear arms race be allowed to continue toward its seemingly catastrophic end, which would spell devastation for all Americans, be they northern or southern, metropolitan or rural, Republican or Democrat. It was, many Lawrencians argued, the responsibility of middle America to participate in the political debate over nuclear weapons, as ordinary Kansans exemplified an imagined authentic American citizenry, yet often an unheard and maligned one. Through the national media attention heaped on Lawrence due to *The Day After*, this conversation about what it meant to contribute a local voice to a national debate asked additional questions: Could

the abstract concept of nuclear war be considered a "local issue"? What was the role of the local democratic process in this discussion? And could those residents of the "heartland" offer anything unique to this debate?

This chapter's focus on Lawrence enables us to concentrate on themes of political engagement and anti-nuclear sentiment, as they existed in this "microsphere" of local community-based activism. The example of Lawrence demonstrates that community engagement with anti-nuclear activism is significantly more complex than existing scholarship on the anti-nuclear movement has suggested. Compartmentalized organizational histories, whilst useful, often neglect the roles played by smaller, local anti-nuclear groups, as well as individuals working in exclusively local contexts. There are, of course exceptions here, and specialized studies by Byron Miller, Louise Krasniewicz, Len Ackland, and John Wills tell us a great deal about how anti-nuclear activism operated in specific local contexts.[1] For those without the access to establishment politics, just like their counterparts in more radical campaigns against nuclear weapons facilities or nuclear power plants, these "ordinary voices" in Lawrence saw community politics as *the most appropriate* arena in which their opposition to the nuclear arms race could be expressed. Here, grassroots anti-nuclear activists could engage in meaningful ways with citizens, and on a personal level. By presenting themselves as "ordinary" meant these activists hoped to avoid the taint of radical activism that had beset anti-war activists and countercultural radicals in Lawrence in the 1960s. A less divisive approach used ideas of localism to promote the town as a "middle American community of concerned souls," as well as "ordinary people in ordinary

[1] Byron A. Miller, *Geography and Social Movements: Comparing Antinuclear Activism in the Boston Area* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); Louise Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer: The Clash of Communities at the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); Len Ackland, *Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999); and John Wills, *Conservation Fallout: Nuclear Protest at Diablo Canyon* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006). Several interesting studies about anti-nuclear activism in the Pacific Northwest, nuclear freeze referenda in New Jersey and South Dakota, activist discourses in anti-nuclear campaigns in Idaho, and the impact of nuclear facilities in Washington state on local culture and identity, all add to this diverse, yet illuminating body of scholarship on localism within the nuclear arms race. See, respectively, Brian Casserly, "Confronting the U.S. Navy at Bangor, 1973-1982," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 95, no. 3 (2004); Susan L. Cutter *et al.*, "From Grass Roots to Partisan Politics: Nuclear Freeze Referenda in New Jersey and South Dakota," *Political Geography Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (1987); Michael Blain, "Rhetorical Practice in an Anti-Nuclear Weapons Campaign," *Peace and Change* 16, no. 4 (1991); and William Chaloupka, *Knowing Nukes: The Politics and Culture of the Atom* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992). Additional scholarship has usefully examined the local consequences of the Cold War, providing another means to assess the impact of this larger conflict on communities, local economies, environments, and politics. See Jeffrey A. Engel, ed., *Local Consequences of the Global Cold War* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2007).

towns" against the arms race.[2] Such images would be much more likely to draw on mainstream local support, rather than challenge traditional concepts of authority, culture and identity as had radical activists some fifteen years prior.[3]

What this meant in the context of the wider anti-nuclear movement is that such instances of "polite" local activism operated in ways similar to the mainstream, politically moderate, national anti-nuclear organizations based in St. Louis, Boston, New York, and Washington, D.C. But unlike national organizations or coalitions, local anti-nuclear campaigns tell us much more about the operation of anti-nuclear sentiment as it interacted with issues of local identity, images of middle American "ordinariness," and the contest over the efficacy of local anti-nuclear action. Anti-nuclear organizing in Kansas also provides us with an excellent means of understanding the challenges that faced progressive movements in this conservative state. Lawrence was at once a liberal, progressive college town *and* a place where many residents inhabited the state's conservative, moralistic political culture. The issue here is that in such an environment of overlapping identities – related to race, sex, age, profession, politics, or religion – the meaning of anti-nuclear action in Lawrence was subsequently contested.[4] Following the progress of anti-nuclear sentiment in this sphere, then, demonstrates just how local anti-nuclear activists identified their role in American social and political life in the wake of the 1960s.

LAWRENCE AND THE HEARTLAND MYTH

Lawrence exists far from the corridors of power in Washington, D.C., and far from the metropolitan areas of the east and west coasts. Sitting 40 miles west of Kansas City, it is by no means considered rural or remote, like most of western Kansas. Historically notable for being an outpost of resistance against the westward expansion of slavery in the 1850s, Lawrence's contemporary political character stems largely from its major

[2] Bob Swan to 'Mimi,' 19 October 1983, Bob Swan Personal Collection, Lawrence, Kansas (hereafter Swan Collection); Press release, "Let Lawrence Live!" 5 November 1983, Lawrence Coalition of Peace and Justice Records, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence (hereafter LCPJ Records), Box 3, Folder 14.

[3] For an excellent study of such conflicts in Lawrence in the 1960s, see Rusty L. Monhollon, *This Is America? The Sixties in Lawrence, Kansas* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

[4] For a brief summary of these issues of overlapping identities in Lawrence, see Beth L. Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 6-7.

economic attraction, the University of Kansas. As "the quintessential college town," according to Blake Gumprecht, Lawrence exists, as do other college towns in parts of the Midwest and the South, as "cultural islands in comparatively conservative states."[5] Such areas are "bastions of liberal politics," boasting an educated community with a large number of young people and a "traditionally left-leaning faculty."[6] As such, Lawrence existed as a unique place in the Kansas of the 1980s, quite unlike its other major cities, and certainly unlike the rural areas that dominate western Kansas.

As Beth Bailey writes, "Kansas is the state that most consistently represents the antithesis of biocoastal sophistication. It is the ultimate provincial place, the ultimate not-New York… Kansas is the quintessential heartland state."[7] Within this heartland, Lawrence is the ideal place to study the meeting of social and political activism and its interaction with such ideas about heartland identity. In the 1960s, it was the site in which tensions over race, sex, war, authority, and participation in civic affairs often boiled over. By 1970, Lawrence was not only the home of "an alternative culture of self-styled street people, hippies, freaks, dropouts, and other seeking to escape from middle America." It was, as Monhollon adeptly argues, a place in which moderate and conservative voices contributed "their own sense of the just society," responding in kind to the alternative expressions of political and cultural radicalism within Lawrence in the 1960s.[8] Activism in Midwestern college towns has not gone unnoticed by historians and its significance in the history of radical activism, violent protest, and contests over the meaning of authority helps to position the study of the anti-nuclear movement of later years.[9] In the nation's heartland, in the wake of the 1960s, reactions to that era's violence and social division, the idea of the "heartland myth" was reconfigured, situating the region in the midst of conservative middle America. As Victoria Johnson comments, after the 1960s "the

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[5] Blake Gumprecht, *The American College Town* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), pp. ix, 191.
[6] Blake Gumprecht, "The American College Town," *Geographical Review* 93, no. 1 (2003), p. 66.
[7] Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland*, p. 4.
[8] Monhollon, *This Is America?*, p. 7.
[9] On violence in Lawrence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, see Monhollon, *This Is America?*, Chapters 7 and 8; and Joel P. Rhodes, *The Voice of Violence: Performative Violence as Protest in the Vietnam Era* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), Chapter 4; and Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland*, Chapter 5. For an excellent discussion on the historiography of 1960s student activism in the Midwest, see Robbie Lieberman, *Prairie Power: Voices of 1960s Midwestern Student Protest* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004), pp. 1-25. Other histories add to this body of scholarship about 1960s activism in the Midwest. See Paul Buhle, *History and the New Left: Madison, Wisconsin, 1950-1970* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); Kenneth J. Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era* (New York: New York University Press, 1993); and Mary Ann Wynkoop, *Dissent in the Heartland: The Sixties at Indiana University* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

Midwest Heartland was recuperated, popularly, as the place where the traditional American Dream still lived *untouched* by political turmoil. The region was idealized, in this sense, as that which survived the sixties unfazed, unaltered, and in balance."[10] It is in this context that progressive activists in Lawrence in the 1980s worked, drawing from, and responding to, such imagined ideas about the heartland, its identity, and its values.

Geographically, demographically, and politically, Kansas exists in the nation's popular imagination as the epitome of "the ordinary." This ordinariness is closely related to common presumptions of modern Kansas as a state particularly unique in terms of its "averageness."[11] Lawrence, as a sizeable Kansas town but also as an exception to the state's image of bland normality, operated within this paradigm, but also consciously skirted around it, particularly when a Hollywood vision of Kansas stereotypes was introduced to its residents via *The Day After*. In a wider sense, however, Lawrence's image was invoked in historical, social and political ways by local residents in relation to the issue of nuclear war. Their identity as citizens of a liberal town, yet also as ordinary, average Kansans, was a key theme in their responses to the nuclear threat as it was presented in Lawrence in these years.

The difference between the political character of Lawrence and its shared political heritage as part of Kansas is an essential theme here, as it demonstrates the significance of overlapping identities in locals' social, political and cultural activity. This area of eastern Kansas was opened up for settlement by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which left the question of slavery up to individual settlers. In turn, this question led to bloody conflict, with New England abolitionists moving to the area to deliberately block the westward expansion of slave-owners, many of whom were concentrated in Missouri. Lawrence was founded that same year by a group of settlers from Massachusetts, who named the town after the backer of the New England Emigrant Aid Society, the sponsor of the settlement. Confrontation with pro-slavery forces in and around Lawrence was typical of this period of Kansas history, commonly known as "Bleeding Kansas." When

[10] Victoria E. Johnson, *Heartland TV: Prime Time Television and the Struggle for U.S. Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), p. 117. Emphasis in original.

[11] For some interesting discussions of the self-perceived crisis of image suffered by contemporary Kansans, see Robert Smith Bader, *Hayseeds, Moralizers, and Methodists: The Twentieth-Century Image of Kansas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988); Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004); and Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa, eds., *The Almanac of American Politics* (Washington, DC: National Journal, 1986), pp. 498-499.

William Quantrill and his pro-slavery raiders sacked Lawrence in 1863, the town's destruction and subsequent "rise from the ashes" earned it a reputation as an outpost of abolitionism in the western front of the Civil War. Lawrence's survival of the Quantrill massacre continued to influence local self-perceptions, and many still think of the town in terms of its "embattled" nature.[12] As an outpost against surrounding conservative forces, this idea helped motivate progressive activists in Lawrence in the postwar era, especially in times of crisis. In this sense, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, and the nuclear arms race were no different in galvanization progressive or radical support to challenge racism, war, or the misuse of authority.

Lawrence has existed since its founding as strong outpost of traditional Republicanism, which has historically tended to oppose the "Old Guard" Republicans of the Northeast. This traditional Republicanism established itself very much as a western alternative, strongly influenced by progressive ideals forged in Kansas in the later part of the nineteenth century. It is important to note that political ideals in Kansas were often based on an opposition to corporate wealth that had seen the ruin of farmers throughout the state, especially in times of drought. Lawrence, however, distinguished itself as an urban area and the home of the University of Kansas, its most significant institution since 1866. A bastion of alternative ideologies and philosophies, none of which came to dominate local or state politics, the University was nonetheless extremely influential in the development of political life in Douglas County. This has partially separated Lawrence from the self-conscious crisis of image and identity stemming from economic decline in tweneieth century Kansas, but also from the reworking of the heartland myth in the wake of the 1960s.[13] Whilst existing somewhat outside these trends, Lawrence's political, social, and cultural history is nevertheless intertwined with them.

The social and cultural upheavals of the late 1960s and early 1970s, like in many other Midwestern college towns, manifested themselves dramatically in Lawrence.[14] The less

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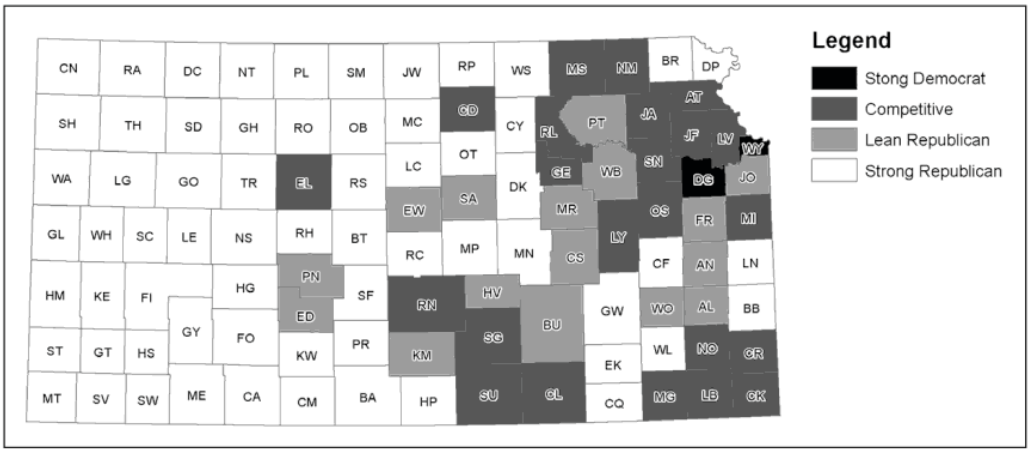
[12] This is the ostensible theme of a collection of local history essays, Dennis Domer and Barbara Watkins, eds., *Embattled Lawrence: Conflict & Community* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Continuing Education, 2001). See also Craig Miner, *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State, 1854-2000* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), Chapter 2.

[13] On this crisis of image, see Bader, *Hayseeds, Moralizers, and Methodists*, and Miner, *Kansas*, esp. pp. 3-4, 292, 304.

[14] The national phenomenon generally described as "the sixties," argues Rusty Monhollon, was "constructed and created locally," and in Lawrence, it "reshaped and redrew the community's social

chaotic 1970s saw extensive urban and suburban development, prompting Lawrencians to organize in less antagonistic ways in order to resist the corrupting influence of unrestrained commercial growth.[15] Neighborhood associations and grassroots political manoeuvring in this era ensured the maintenance of a progressive City Commission.[16] It is in the 1970s that we can observe distinct changes in the voting patterns of the city; Democratic candidates dominated federal elections in the second Congressional district (where Lawrence sat at the time) from the early 1970s to the mid-1990s, contrasting to the steadfast Republicanism of the state at large, and its realignment to the New Right from 1980.[17]



Political preferences in Kansas counties in 1980. Douglas County (DG) – home of Lawrence – is one of only two counties that exhibited Democratic preferences. Source: Edward Flentje and Joseph Aistrup, *Kansas Politics and Government: The Clash of Political Cultures* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), p. 65.

space". See Monhollon, "Lawrence, Kansas, and the Making of the Sixties," in Domer and Watkins, eds., *Embattled Lawrence*, pp. 209, 218.

[15] See Steve Lopes, "Building Community Power Structures, 1984-1998: The Rise of Grassroots Neighborhood Influence," in Domer and Watkins, eds., *Embattled Lawrence*, p. 277; and the comprehensive argument about local power structures and community influence in Lawrence in Paul Schumaker, *Critical Pluralism, Democratic Performance, and Community Power* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991).

[16] See Allan Hanson, "History of Lawrence," n.d., LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 14.

[17] It must be noted that Republicanism in this era contrasted heavily to the traditional western Republicanism that more or less dominated Kansas politics since the establishment of the state. The rise of the New Right in the 1960s and 1970s, and the transformations in conservative politics nationally since the 1960s, were also felt in Kansas. For a comprehensive analysis of party alignment in Kansas, especially the changing alignments of voting since the 1960s, see H. Edward Flentje and Joseph A. Aistrup, *Kansas Politics and Government: The Clash of Political Cultures* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), pp. 60-68. See also Barone and Ujifusa, eds., *Almanac of American Politics*, p. 509; and David T. Courtwright, *No Right Turn: Conservative Politics in a Liberal America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), pp. 90-94.

It is within this climate of "moralistic" political culture in Kansas, a reconfiguration of the heartland myth in the Midwest, the rise of the New Right, and historical ideas about "ordinary" or "average" citizens that activism in Lawrence developed.[18] A history of oppositional politics in Lawrence did inform political activity in the 1980s, most visibly in the local nuclear freeze campaign. Before such discussion of the prospect of a nuclear war became widespread, however, anti-nuclear activity around Lawrence was perhaps less ambitious in its focus and efforts, and certainly more oriented to concrete local issues. The Wolf Creek nuclear power plant near Burlington, 70 miles southwest of Lawrence, for example, drew some spirited opposition from Lawrencians in the late 1970s.[19] The rise in anti-nuclear sentiment that coincided with the freeze movement of the early 1980s, however, shifted the focus of Lawrence's reception of anti-nuclear ideas. Despite the rise of the New Right and the popularity of moral conservatism throughout Kansas, however, Lawrence remained, as it had always done, a "liberal island in a conservative sea."[20] Although we cannot think of the town entirely as a community of consensus, effective grassroots political movements had ensured the strength of a City Commission sympathetic to liberal concerns.[21] With the emergence of large-scale anxieties over nuclear weapons in the early 1980s, the relationship between local peace activists and City Commissioners would prove advantageous. Its success at a community level, however, was a different matter. We shall return to these issues shortly.

THE PEACE MOVEMENT IN LAWRENCE

The organized peace movement in Lawrence, although small, had been consistent since the late 1940s. Begun by a community of Quakers, the group had met regularly in Lawrence to talk, pray, and organize on civil rights and social justice issues. Designated the Oread Friends Meeting, members of the group were socially conscious, and like many of the traditional peace churches, saw personal faith and social justice as

[18] On "moralistic" political culture in Kansas, see Daniel J. Elazar, "Political Culture on the Plains," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (1980), pp. 280-281.
[19] Although it is a study commissioned by the power plant itself, Craig Miner, *Wolf Creek Station: Kansas Gas and Electric Company in the Nuclear Era* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1993) gives some indication of the controversial nature of the building of Kansas' only nuclear power plant.
[20] Dennis Domer and Barbara Watkins, "Introduction," in Domer and Watkins, eds., *Embattled Lawrence*, p. xix.
[21] See Lopes, "Building Community Power Structures." See also Barkley Clark, "Lawrence in the 1970s: Reflections of a Mayor," in Domer and Watkins, eds., *Embattled Lawrence*, pp. 249-251.

interlocking issues that required attention at the community level. Whilst the Vietnam War dominated the group's attention in the late 1960s and early 1970s, it was the looming issue of nuclear tensions in the later 1970s that encouraged the formation of the Lawrence Coalition of Peace and Justice (LCPJ).[22] On again, off again member Howard Baumgartel had met the eminent British Quaker Adam Curle in 1976; Curle stressed to Baumgartel the need to "solve local problems first."[23] As such, Baumgartel felt the most appropriate means of promoting peace and social justice issues within Lawrence was to hold "peace lectures," which was the first major outreach activity of the LCPJ. Prominent Quaker intellectuals such as Kenneth Boulding, Richard Barnet, Frances Moore Lappe, and Roger Fisher spoke in Lawrence to small but enthusiastic audiences in 1980 and 1981. Furthermore, the Coalition had the support and sponsorship of a variety of academic departments at the University of Kansas, various local churches and a swathe of community groups. As a small local peace group, it *was* modest, but then again, the City of Lawrence had a population in 1980 of a mere 52,738, some 78% of the population of Douglas County.[24] Although the County counted 35,701 registered voters in 1982, only 61% of those cast votes for their Congressional Representative in the federal elections in November of that year.[25] Hence, the net of politically active citizens in Lawrence was small, and as a result, the LCPJ would deal with problems of lax political participation in its efforts to mobilize locals on the issue of the nuclear freeze.

Individual members of the LCPJ undertook other personal activities to demonstrate their commitment to peace. In 1980, for example, Tom and Anne Moore bought shares in the Kansas Gas and Electrical Co. and presented a stockholder's proposal to the board opposing the construction of the Wolf Creek nuclear power plant.[26] In doing so, Tom Moore argued that "our religious perspective is to see life as all one piece." The Moores' concern not only encompassed the power plant itself, but was part of a larger worldview, in which "concern for nuclear weapons has to do with concern for peace, for future generations for the quality of the environment."[27] This perspective was common amongst

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[22] Jean Grant, *Seeds of Silence: Oread Friends Meeting, 1950-2000* (Lawrence, KS: Imprint Memoirs, 2000), pp. 6-8.
[23] Grant, *Seeds of Silence*, p. 7.
[24] *1980 Census of Population* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1981), Volume 1, Chapter A, Part 18 – Kansas, p. 14.
[25] "Heard in Lawrence," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 6 August 1982, p. 3; *Kansas Statistical Abstract, 1982-1983* (Lawrence: Center for Public Affairs, University of Kansas, 1983), p. 87.
[26] Anne Moore, letter to the author, 15 February 2009.
[27] Tom Moore, quoted in Grant, *Seeds of Silence*, p. 8.

religiously motivated anti-nuclear activists in the early 1980s; the intertwining dangers of nuclear weapons, nuclear power, militarism, uncontrolled capitalism, and misdirected government spending all encouraged a variety of forms of protest.[28] However, despite the trend toward anti-nuclear action at this time, the anti-nuclear perspective was by no means exclusive. The myriad of concerns over peace and social justice, and their interconnectedness, spurred a particular worldview through which an often vague mission of "peace activity" was undertaken. It was the prevalence of the threat of nuclear war in the early 1980s that ensured activists would interpret their mission of peace by concentrating on anti-nuclear activities. The very nature of small-scale protest meant that this would be done locally, and would utilize notions of local identity in the process.

Other LCPJ activities included canvassing, fundraising, demonstrating, petitioning, letter writing, and lobbying Representatives and Senators at both state and federal levels. The explosion in 1981 and 1982 of media coverage of the consequences of a potential nuclear war was picked up by the LCPJ, which produced a comprehensive information packet on the scientific, medical, and political dimensions of the arms race and its associated dangers.[29] Ground Zero Week, a nationwide series of decidedly nonpartisan educational symposia devised by former White House National Security Council official Roger Molander, also made its way to Lawrence in April 1982. In conjunction with the events of that week, the LCPJ accumulated several hundred signatures for a petition for a Nuclear Freeze, which it sent to Kansas senators Nancy Kassebaum, as well as to the ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick.[30] The LCPJ was also able to sponsor an official City proclamation that declared this week, April 4-10, as "Nuclear Weapons Awareness Week," which was to encourage Lawrencians to "explore the issues and to determine their own positions on this most critical matter."[31] In addition, the arrival in Lawrence in January 1982 of the World Peace March, a group of primarily Japanese Buddhist monks who undertook a walk across the United States to promote nuclear disarmament, inspired many in the local peace community. Mark Larson wrote of the monks' commitment in bearing witness "for life, and in opposition to the machines and logic which mow move towards the destruction of this Earthly creation." Echoing

[28] See Chapters 3 and 5 of this dissertation.
[29] Clark Chinn and John Linscheid, "Nuclear Freeze Background Facts," n.d., LCPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 14.
[30] Anne Moore to Nancy Kassebaum, 8 April 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 2.
[31] City of Lawrence, copy of unnumbered proclamation, n.d., LCPJ Records, Box 2, Folder 7.

sentiments made by pro-freeze Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Oregon) about the spiritual, rather than political nature of the nuclear threat, Larson and the LCPJ proposed ecumenical cooperation in the summer of 1982 to both engage in an "affirmation of life" more generally, but to voice their support for a mutual freeze on nuclear weapons more specifically.[32]

With this guiding impulse of a religiously motivated commitment to peace, the LCPJ saw the arms race as a local issue. For Lawrence, and other areas in northeastern Kansas, the presence of Minuteman II missile silos near Harrisonville, Missouri, the Bendix Corporation plant in south Kansas City (a large manufacturer of nuclear weapons parts), the McConnell Air Force Base on the outskirts of Wichita, and many other missile sites in western Missouri surrounding the Whiteman Air Force Base, spelt a uniquely Midwestern nuclear danger.[33] The headquarters of Strategic Air Command in Omaha, Nebraska, was also "uncomfortably close."[34] The looming presence of such weapons, and the secrecy behind most military activities, encouraged some Midwesterners to imagine the area as a particularly vulnerable one, with the potential to be involved as a target in a nuclear war between the superpowers. The LCPJ promoted this idea in various flyers and mailings; since Lawrence was a city of over 50,000 inhabitants, the LCPJ determined that "in an all-out nuclear exchange, Lawrence would in all probability be totally destroyed."[35] The group also printed maps showing "high risk areas in the event of a nuclear war," identified as such by a 1980 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) report.[36] The shaded areas in western Missouri, in and around Kansas City, and in the vicinity of Wichita demonstrate the geographical dimension to the fear of nuclear devastation as imagined by Lawrencians.

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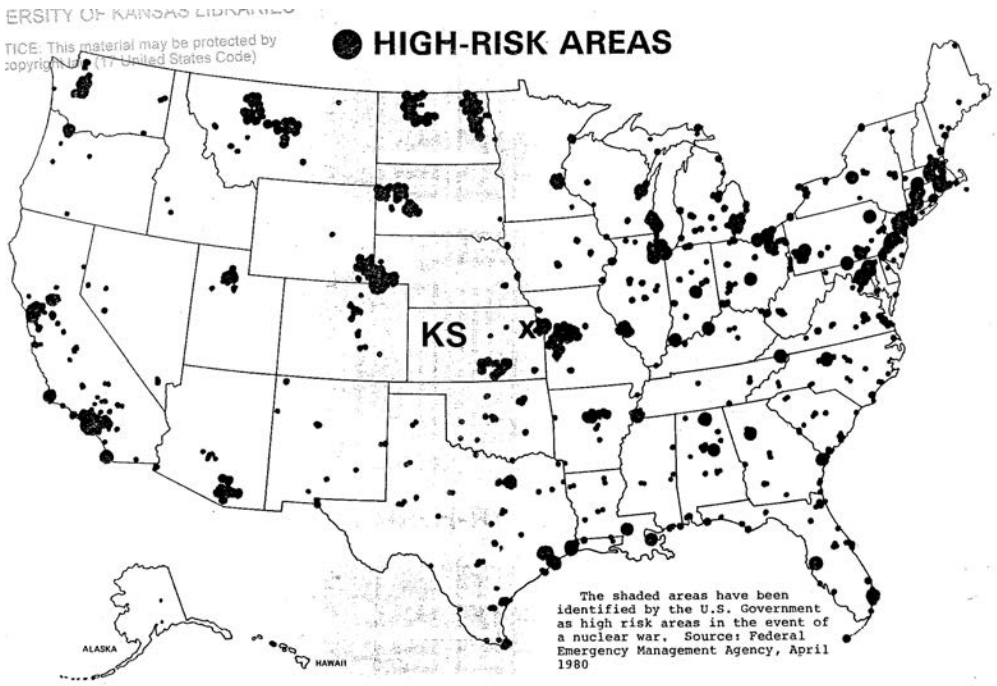
[32] Mark Larson, untitled open letter, 8 May 1982, LCPJ Records Box 2, Folder 2.
[33] See Clark Coan, "A Sunday Drive," *LCPJ Freeze Newsletter*, 7 October 1982, p. 4, LCPJ Records, Box 2, Folder 18; "A Nuclear Tour," *LCPJ Freeze Newsletter*, [October 1982], pp. 2-3, LCPJ Records, Box 2, Folder 18; "Nuclear Targets," n.d., Clark Coan Collection, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence (hereafter Coan Collection), Box 1, Folder 26; and "A Look at the Arms Race in Our Own Backyard," n.d., Coan Collection, Box 1, Folder 26. For additional examples, see *Show Me! A Citizen's Action Guide to the Missile Silos of Missouri* (Madison, WI: Nukewatch, 1985); and Samuel H. Day and John Hooton, *Nuclear Heartland: A Guide to the 1,000 Missile Silos of the United States* (Madison, WI: Progressive Foundation, 1988).
[34] "What is the Freeze?" pamphlet, [1982], LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4.
[35] "The Day After – Fact Sheet," [1983], Coan Collection, Box 1, Folder 21.
[36] "High Risk Areas" map, n.d., LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4.



Source: LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4. Kansas is labeled "KS" and Lawrence marked with an "X".

This geographic dimension to a pervasive nuclear "fear" in Kansas was tempered by its location – both real and imagined – in the nation's heartland. Just as many Kansans saw themselves as "ordinary" Americans, they also invoked such ideas about rural isolation and insignificance within the wider threat of nuclear war. Although the struggles of the 1960s and early 1970s had abated, and the social and economic climate of the state was relatively steady and assured, political debate over an issue so abstract and bizarre as nuclear war might seem odd. For many Kansans, debating such an issue did indeed seem pointless; issues of international diplomacy, defense, and the military were far removed from the lives of ordinary Kansans. This sort of talk was typical of the northeast, or even California, and did not belong in the heartland. Moreover, what could Kansans offer to these debates? How significant were they to their political and social lives? For some Lawrencians, such large issues of war and peace *did* reverberate at the local level. It was the responsibility of all Americans, as potential victims of a possible nuclear war, to discuss the issue – the responsibility of an active democratic citizenry. Such ideas about active citizenship had been debated at length in Lawrence before – most recently during the turmoil of the 1960s – and the 1980s were no different. With these ideas about democratic participation, local identity, and heartland isolationism and authenticity, the LCPJ went about promoting a fiercely local response to the threat of nuclear war.

CONTESTING THE MEANING OF "LOCAL"

Like many other cities and towns in 1982, Lawrence became involved in the national Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. Randall Forsberg's Freeze proposal, as the most popular nuclear disarmament initiative in the early 1980s, gained immense popularity as it found its way onto ballots in local and state elections, with the vast majority occurring in the federal election of November 1982. State legislatures and city councils also passed non-binding freeze resolutions throughout 1981 and 1982, and Kansas was no different.[37] In Lawrence itself, the issue manifested itself much the same as it did in other locations. In local freeze campaigning across the nation, the idea that ordinary citizens could take part in a national debate over military policy was exciting, daunting, and controversial. Unlike New England town meetings, however, the opportunity for such sanctioned public debate was less marked in Lawrence. Kansan political culture had not developed such an emphasis on public participation, and as such, any meaningful political action needed the involvement, or at least the sympathy, of members of City Commissions, municial councils, and township boards.

This is exactly what occurred in Lawrence in early 1982, when members of the LCPJ proposed a local referendum on the nuclear freeze issue in the local elections that May. Members of the group had been aware, through contacts in Boulder, Colorado, of a successful vote that occurred there in the fall of 1981.[38] The Lawrence City Commission determined that the Freeze vote might be more appropriately held in the November 1982 general election, and it was toward this event that a majority of the LCPJ's efforts were directed throughout the year.[39] What the referendum would entail was this: the LCPJ would obtain the approval of the City Commission, through the adoption of a resolution, to legally allow the issue of nuclear disarmament to be voted on by the public in an "advisory election." The voting public would be supporting or rejecting a proposal for the City of Lawrence to officially announce its objection to the nuclear arms race, and voice its support of the Freeze to the Reagan administration and the Kansas congressional delegation. None of this was particularly binding on federal nuclear policy,

[37] The Kansas House of Representatives passed Resolution HR6127 on 5 March 1982, calling for a nuclear freeze between the United States and the Soviet Union. The resolution was proposed by the Representative Betty Jo Charlton of Lawrence, and was co-signed by 56 other House members. See copy in LCPJ Records, Box 2, Folder 2.
[38] Anne Moore to David C. Smith, 21 December 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 2.
[39] Anne Moore to David C. Smith, 21 December 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 2.

but it would, proponents argued, highlight the extent of public opposition to the nuclear arms race. As such, City Commissioners unanimously adopted Resolution 4616, which stipulated that the nuclear freeze issue was "of such vital local concern" that the City sponsor the poll.[40]

Despite the willingness of the City Commission to proceed with the matter, some legal controversy resulted. Although the so-called "Home Rule amendment" to the Kansas Constitution allowed cities to exercise a degree of self government, the City was advised as early as April 1982 that "home rule" was limited by the Constitution to "local affairs," and the interpretation of this section would be unlikely to favor an advisory election on the issue of a nuclear Freeze.[41] The Home Rule amendment was, according to the Constitution, to be "liberally construed for the purpose of giving to cities the largest measure of self-government."[42] Was an electoral ballot on a nuclear freeze a sufficiently local matter, though, to warrant the invocation of the amendement? One City Commissioner, Barkley Clark, argued that the nuclear freeze vote in Lawrence involved "a 'local affair' imbued with a 'public purpose'." The polling of public opinion, the availability of federal financial aid to local governments considering increases in defense spending, and issues of local civil defense meant that "the voters of Lawrence have a direct interest, on a local level, in what goes on regarding federal expenditures for nuclear arms."[43] Such ideas reiterated wider fears aired by anti-nuclear activists that the nuclear arms race was indeed an issue of global reach with explicit local ramifications. Challenging the arms race at the community level, then, utilized ideas about local identity. In Lawrence, activists, residents, and City officials debated the meanings of this identity and their role in challenging – or accepting – the impact of the nuclear arms race on their community and their state. Incorporating these contested meanings into Kansan electoral processes, however, was a different matter.

In August 1982, as the City adopted the Resolution designed to allow the freeze question to be voted on at the general election, objections from residents called into question the

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[40] City of Lawrence, Resolution 4616, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4. The resolution was closely modelled on a draft resolution proposed to the City by the LCPJ. See John Linscheid to Lawrence City Commission, 9 August 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4. Again, the alignment between activist and official interests here is interesting.
[41] Milton P. Allen, Sr. to Mike Wildgen, 5 April 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 3.
[42] *Constitution of the State of Kansas*, Article 12, §5(d).
[43] Barkley Clark to Daniel Young, 10 May 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 3.

"local" nature of this issue. Bill Halvorsen, a local law student, held that the opinion poll would "ruin the sanctity of the polling place," whilst also creating a legal precedent for other interest groups to hold similar opinion polls.[44] His concerns related to the application of the Home Rule amendment; Halvorsen rejected Commissioner Clark's assertions that the issue of a nuclear freeze was indeed of local concern.[45] With the Commission noting his concerns, yet still proceeding with the adoption of Resolution 4616, Halvorsen announced his intention to challenge the City in the Douglas County District Court on its authority to sponsor the poll.[46] However, Halvorsen soon found himself in receipt of an anonymous letter, threatening him to abandon his legal challenge to the poll; he had received a number of supportive phone calls following his announcement on August 26, but the letter led him to reconsider in lieu of the safety of his family.[47] This rather strange occurrence, whilst seemingly unrelated to the noble intentions of the LCPJ, nonetheless demonstrates the air of controversy that enveloped the nuclear freeze issue at the local level. It also complicates the debate over participatory democracy in Lawrence, one that evidently involved a great variety of actors with differing intentions and attitudes.

Another resident, James Makin, resumed the legal challenge after Halvorsen had ceased his involvement. Makin's argument essentially objected to official City sponsorship of the freeze poll, which would allegedly damage the sound legal province of the electoral process by allowing the involvement of private interests.[48] The District Court, however, found that Makin could not sufficiently demonstrate that he would suffer any individual harm or damage as a result of the way the freeze poll was to be conducted.[49] Of course, the political views of Makin, Halvorsen, and others who rejected the validity of the freeze poll were also a major factor; these Lawrencians saw the administation's policy of

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[44] City Commission minutes, 17 August 1982, Lawrence City Commission Records, City Hall, Lawrence (hereafter LCC Records).
[45] See LCPJ handwritten notes on City Commission meeting, 17 August 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4.
[46] Caroline Trowbridge, "Law Student Says He'll Challenge Nuclear Freeze Poll," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 26 August 1982, p. 3.
[47] Douglas County Law Enforcement Center Offense Report, Case H-6794, 30 August 1982, Lawrence Police Department Records Office; Bill Halvorsen, interview by the author, 25 November 2008, by telephone.
[48] See Petition, *James Makin vs. City of Lawrence et al*., District Court of Douglas County, Case CV 82-756, 6 October 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4.
[49] Judge James W. Paddock, Memorandum of Decision, in *James Makin vs. City of Lawrence et al*., District Court of Douglas County, Case CV 82-756, 12 October 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4.

"peace through strength" as necessary to keep the "evil empire" at bay.[50] Combined with a certain unease about the progressive City Commission, many more citizens rejected the idea of the poll on political grounds, giving credence to the idea that the application of liberalism in local government had its limits, at least when related to anti-nuclear activity.[51] These views echo local opposition to the emergence of progressive social movements in the 1960s, and can also be characterized as pertinent examples of the "silent majority" of local conservatism that ensured a partially successful "backlash" against liberal reform in the wake the 1960s.[52]

Meanwhile, as Lawrence City officials sought legal advice from Douglas County. Both the County counselor and clerk agreed that the freeze vote could not legally proceed as an advisory election; instead, it could operate as an independent public opinion poll concurrent with the general election, but not interfering with it.[53] Like critics and supporters of the freeze poll, Douglas County officials were also committed to preserving the "sanctity of the polling place."[54] The LCPJ, too, conducted the poll in the most legally satisfying means, enlisting the support of the local chapter of the Kansas League of Women Voters, who had not yet taken an official position on the nuclear freeze issue, to tally the votes.[55] If the integrity of the democratic tradition in Lawrence was not respected, freeze propoenents and their supporters on the City Commission would fall into disrepute with the wider community; memories of the anarchic challenges of the late 1960s, evidently, still resonated with local residents.

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[50] Halvorsen interview.

[51] A large number of phone calls were made to the Kansas Secretary of State Jack Brier, with complaints about the City's sponsorship of the freeze poll. Brier subsequently met with the LCPJ, as well as the election official for each of the City's thirty-one polling places, to ensure that the freeze poll would not interrupt, or influence, regular voting procedures. See Anne Moore to David C. Smith, 21 December 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 2; and John Linscheid, "Final Progress Report to the City Commission," 9 November 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 3.

[52] The story of the "backlash," the "silent majority," and the relationship between radical social movements, liberal reform, and conservative reaction since the late 1960s is, of course, much more complex than I allude to here. For an excellent and nuanced discussion of this relationship, see Courtwright, *No Right Turn*. See also Jeff Roche, "Political Conservatism in the Sixties: Silent Majority or White Backlash?," in *The Columbia Guide to America in the 1960s*, ed. David R. Farber and Beth L. Bailey (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 157-164; Seymour Martin Lipset, *Consensus and Conflict: Essays in Political Sociology* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1985), pp. 256-259; and many essays in Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, eds., *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).

[53] See Lawrence City Commission meeting minutes, 17 August 1982, LCC Records.

[54] Daniel Young to Patty Jaimes, 20 September 1982, LCC Records.

[55] John Linscheid, "Final Progress Report to the City Commission," 9 November 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 3.

Nevertheless, the City Commission's cooperation with the LCPJ attests to its progressive nature. It also demonstrates the level of access to local government that was available to Lawrencians. Paul Schumaker has argued that in Lawrence, "most citizens – regardless of ideology – believe that voters should be empowered to decide major issues."[56] It was this ideal of participatory democracy that had motivated so many activists in the 1960s. Yet whilst radicals in the 1960s challenged the legitimacy of local authority, grassroots community actors in the 1980s sought to utilize it in pursuit of more moderate goals. Proponents of anti-nuclear action – and their critics – were nevertheless contesting the meaning of local action, insofar as it involved the public institutions of local government. Outside Lawrence, these ideas would gain additional layers of meaning, as the involvement of "ordinary" Americans in the nation's heartland reinforced the role of grassroots voices in the national debate over the nuclear arms race.

THE LIMITS AND BOUNDARIES OF LOCALISM

So why did Lawrence, like so many other towns, cities, and states in the fall of 1982, strive to demonstrate its opposition to the nuclear arms race through local opinion polls and ballots? There were two primary reasons. Firstly, it gave citizens a voice in matters of state that were traditionally considered matters of high politics and military strategy – matters that were rarely heard in outside Washington, D.C. This returned what was emerging as the most pressing political, ethical, moral and environmental issue of the 1980s to the public sphere. Encouraging participatory democracy in the form of officially-sanctioned (or officially tolerated) public opinion polls was evidently a motivation for many local and state politicians, who thought the symbolism of raising an electoral challenge to the nuclear arms race – however small – would help promote the idea of an engaged and concerned citizenry. For citizens themselves, nuclear freeze polls would help to "promote a healthy discussion among citizens on all sides of this debate," and this idea was shared by the LCPJ and local residents alike.[57] Although it incurred the dissatisfaction of less progressive-minded residents, the poll still promoted the image of a forward-thinking community making a meaningful statement against the arms race, its

[56] Schumaker, *Critical Pluralism*, p. 65.
[57] LCPJ handwritten notes, [1982], LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4. See also Lydia Cooley, letter to the editor, *Lawrence Journal-World*, 31 August 1982, p. 4.

threat to world peace and security, and its economic costs. That this statement was made on behalf of residents of the heartland only increased its imagined appeal.

The second, related reason behind the promotion of the freeze poll in Lawrence was that many Americans perceived themselves, as Tom Moore noted at the time, "part of the potential nuclear war victims constituency."[58] The nuclear arms race, as citizens and local officials pointed out, was an issue that affected all Americans, irrespective of geography. Common within much anti-nuclear activism, not just in the 1980s but also in its earlier incarnations, was a theme of potential victimhood, uniting citizens against government policies that encouraged the production of nuclear weapons and threatened their use. The LCPJ often stressed the popular sentiment that "the threat of nuclear war is the most pressing problem facing humanity today."[59] The apolitical humanism behind such attitudes attempted to separate anti-nuclear activity from political partisanship, and from debates about military strategy, economic policy, and international diplomacy. Taking a stand against the arms race was, for many Americans, a matter of conscience, representative of a personalist politics governed by religion, morality, and ethics more than traditional politics. For example, the board of Palmyra, a rural township near Lawrence, adopted a nuclear freeze resolution in April 1982, basing their decision "mainly out of our own consciences," and not representative of public opinion in the township.[60] This is not to suggest that anti-nuclear activists shunned conventional debate over nuclear policy; to the contrary, the LCPJ amassed a healthy collection of fact sheets, pamphlets and brochures that kept their constituents updated on key political and military issues. The humanist notion of anti-nuclear sentiment based on conscience, however, ran alongside these issues.

In Lawrence, these ideas were aired within the framework of the local community. The primary campaigning slogan used by the group in the summer preceding the November election was, simply, "Enough." Pamphlets promoting the nuclear freeze poll also suggested that "in a democracy, we are all responsible for pushing the button,"

[58] Quoted in "What We're Working For," *LCPJ Freeze Newsletter*, 23 September 1982, p. 1, LCPJ Records, Box 2, Folder 18.
[59] LCPJ open letter soliciting support, 21 September 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4.
[60] Larry Kipp (Palmyra board trustee), quoted in "Trustee Gives 'Freeze' Vote Details," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 30 August 1982, p. 12.

highlighting the equally potent theme of citizen responsibility.[61] But how much did this ideal of a concerned, active citizenry reflect reality? Of the 16,667 residents of the City of Lawrence who voted in the general election of November 2, only 53% of voters chose to participate in the concurrent nuclear freeze poll along with casting their regular votes. This amounted to just less than a quarter of the registered voters in Douglas County, hardly a resounding statement of local democracy in action, and even less one of communal anti-nuclear unity.[62] The poll's outcome was nevertheless considered a success by the LCPJ, with 6,541 voters supporting the freeze resolution, and 2,298 opposed, just shy of a 3:1 success ratio.[63]

Members of the LCPJ nevertheless realized the limited potential of the freeze poll, however successful it was claimed to be. Public opinion, argued Clark Coan, could only go so far, and public votes in favor of freeze resolutions, in Lawrence and elsewhere, were only the beginning of what he hoped would be "a sophisticated campaign to influence our Senators and Congressman [sic]."[64] Countering the military lobby in Washington would require intensive citizen action in the form of letter writing campaigns, lobbying efforts, and the maintenance of a consistent, organized operation to influence local public opinion. This had been going on with other grassroots anti-nuclear movements in different areas of the country for some time, but considering the fledgling nature of the LCPJ's anti-nuclear efforts, and their isolation in the nation's heartland, this was a difficult terrain to navigate.[65] Concerns were raised within the group prior to its work on the Freeze vote that preaching to the converted was ineffective. A working

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[61] Pamphlet, "What is the Freeze?" [1982], LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 4.
[62] Whilst the statistics for the number of registered voters in the City of Lawrence are not available, the fact that the City comprised a great deal of Douglas County's population gives a similar figure.
[63] John Linscheid, "Final Progress Report to the City Commission," 9 November 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 3.
[64] Clark Coan, "Where Do We Go From Here?" *LCPJ Freeze Newsletter*, 4 November 1982, p. 6, LCPJ Records, Box 2, Folder 18.
[65] Letter writing campaigns did take place, of course. Such a simple, yet effective means of communicating with elected officials was utilized by most grassroots interest groups. Whilst the archives of Lawrence's Congressional Representative at the time – Democrat Jim Slattery of Kansas' 2nd Congressional District – are not available, a survey of the mail received by the Republican Larry Winn of the neighboring 3rd Congressional District yields some interesting results. Winn received mail from a small, but significant number of Lawrence residents concerned about his position on nuclear arms race and his rejection of the nuclear freeze proposal. LCPJ members logged phone calls or sent telegraphs to Winn's office, often before a Congressional vote on a nuclear issue was due. In December 1982, Mary and Bill Tuttle, John Linscheid, Allan and Louise Hanson and Bob Swan all expressed their opposition to Congressional support for the MX missile budget. See samples in Larry Winn Congressional Papers, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Box 140, Folder 28.

paper suggested that talk about nuclear disarmament was the smallest part of their peace advocacy:

> Our task, as I see it, is to being reaching all kinds of people and to get them to ACT responsibly. We need to generate broad based support for a new kind of lifestyle, one that is just, ecologically sound, and socially responsible. Our task only begins with reversing the arms race.[66]

In converting mainstream America to this broad worldview of peace and justice, a comprehensive program of publicity and action was needed. Yet the limitations of citizen involvement in political action might pose the greatest difficulty; as a result, the group was extremely fortuitous to have the opportunity to organize around an event as major as *The Day After*. The significance of the film to the wider community in Lawrence extended far beyond the influence of the relatively minor activities of the LCPJ, however successful they perceived themselves as being. Moreover, it would galvanize progressive thinking about the efficacy of their anti-nuclear message, and how they could mobilize ideas about local identity and heartland authenticity towards a much larger audience.

Before the film was screened in November 1983, however, a host of other issues further contributed to the utilization of local identity in matters of national and global reach, at the same time seeking to transcend the boundaries of local political action. In the intervening year between the end of the filming and the premiere of *The Day After* in Lawrence, many residents remembered that the issue of nuclear war almost disappeared from public consciousness, at least in terms of its visibility. Those who had taken part in the filming of *The Day After* as extras recalled not thinking about the issue of nuclear war much at all once the production had wrapped up.[67] This is not to suggest the peace community was not busy at this time; the groundswell of national support for nuclear disarmament that had reached its peak in mid-1982 had by no means dissipated.

Throughout 1982, occasional LCPJ member and local insurance agent Bob Swan had been busy organizing for a Soviet athletics team to visit Lawrence to take part in the Kansas Relays, a popular annual track and field meet at the University of Kansas. Founding an organization in late 1982 called Athletes United for Peace (AUP), Swan and co-founder Mark Scott began negations with Soviet sports and diplomatic officials in

[66] Untitled working paper, [late 1982 or early 1983], LCPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 18.
[67] Maria Butler, interview by the author, 21 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas; Ellen Anthony-Moore, interview by the author, 1 February 2009, New York City.

February 1983 to bring an athletics team to Lawrence. A letter writing campaign, in which over one thousand letters by Lawrence schoolchildren were written to the Soviet Embassy in Washington, greatly impressed Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Support from Senators Bob Dole (R-Kansas) and Ted Kennedy (D-Massachusetts) also helped persuade the Soviet Sports Committee to accept the invitation.[68] As a piece in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* adeptly observed, AUP was a groundbreaking initiative engaged in a valuable education and cultural endeavour. Within the Cold War, its implications were also political:

> The sports metaphor is being used by a new national organization of professional, Olympic, amateur, and recreational athletes to educate young people on peace issues, to reach middle America, and to lobby elected officials to speak out against the arms race. The group, Athletes United for Peace (AUP), is developing sports images for peace.[69]

The AUP events emerged as a unique counterpoint to U.S.-Soviet tensions that made their way into the American boycott of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. Additional AUP activities included athlete exchanges in New York & Moscow marathons, at the "Human Race against the Arms Race" running event in Boston, a peace ceremony at a U.S.-Soviet soccer match in St. Louis, and other events in San Francisco.

Ostensibly efforts of cultural diplomacy aimed "to help improve the present strained relations between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.," holding events such as the Kansas Relays in Lawrence were laden with added significance, due to the its unique relationship with the issue of nuclear war.[70] Indeed, Swan remarked in February 1984 that the international attention on Lawrence due to *The Day After* had given locals "a unique opportunity to continue our contribution to peace and to improving Soviet-American relations."[71] Swan had been inspired in anti-nuclear activity after attending the June 12 rally in New York City in 1982; the march "awakened" and "energized" his motivations to become active in the peace movement.[72] However, AUP was promoted as an apolitical venture, as a more humanistic image of symbolic sporting events was much more palatable to national and international media. Swan nevertheless asserted that AUP and the Kansas Relays were still undertaken "to speak out for peace and against the insanity of further nuclear

[68] Steve Hale, "The Russians Are Coming... in Peace," *Lawrence Downtowner*, 20 April 1983, p. 1.
[69] Paul Good, "Athletes Unite For Peace," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November 1985, p. 43.
[70] Open letter by Bob Swan, 16 February 1983, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 10.
[71] Open letter by Bob Swan, 10 February 1984, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 10.
[72] Bob Swan, interview by the author, 27 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas.

buildup."[73] The peaceful competition of a track and field meeting, he had decided, was the ideal forum for this statement to be made.

At the "Friendship Relays," as they had become casually known, Lawrence Mayor David Longhurst was invited to meet the visiting Soviet athletes. Elected to the City Commission in 1983, Longhurst became involved in peace activities for the first time when the Relays were held, beginning a journey of civic involvement with the local peace movement as Mayor and, later, as a City Commissioner. Longhurst recalled experiencing a moment of bonding with a visiting Soviet athlete in April 1983; as the athlete spoke no English, Longhurst and the shot-putter exchanged photos of their children, finding a "feeling of common ground" that seemed at the time antithetical to the bitter relations between their respective governments.[74] His welcome to the visiting athletes and spectators at the University stadium the following day repeated this story, stressing to those gathered that the feeling of mutual understanding ought to be attempted at the highest levels of government, which would be an ideal first step into eliminating the threat of nuclear war.

Longhurst's comments were interpreted by the press as an invitation for President Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Andropov to come to Lawrence to ideally begin a dialogue for peace, and this idea was harnessed by Swan and interested members of the City Commission.[75] Promoting a small town in the nation's heartland as an exemplar of peace was largely symbolic, but the publicity surrounding the anticipated "Meeting For Peace" intentionally demonstrated the political value of "ordinary" Kansan voices. The fact that this emanated from a place like Lawrence, recalled Longhurst, prompted criticism from some and praise from others. The principle behind promoting Lawrence as a community of ordinary voices demanding an end to the arms race, he argued, was done purely to express communal fears as they reverberated in Lawrence in 1983 – that since "each side has enough weapons to destroy the other many times over, every community is a potential target."[76]

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[73] Bob Swan, "Speech to International Meeting of AUP, July 27, 1983, Moscow, USSR," LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 10.
[74] David Longhurst, interview by the author, 5 February 2009, by telephone.
[75] Longhurst interview.
[76] David Longhurst, "In the Kansas Town of Lawrence, it's Still 'The Day Before'," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 November 1983, p. D5.

After his exposure to the constructive relationship between City Commissioners and local interest groups, became inspired by the potential his role could offer in expressing such humanistic, optimistic statements in favor of nuclear disarmament. Longhurst succeeded in mobilizing heartland myths of quintessential American-ness and a hardworking, honest people as he drew media attention to Lawrence in 1983, especially in surrounding the broadcast of *The Day After*. His responsibility in doing so was not only to his community, but to his children; Longhurst argued that the responsibility belonged to all adults to "do everything they can to build a safe tomorrow for our children."[77] Given the role played by so many local residents in the filming of *The Day After* in the fall of 1982, this self-conceptualized frame of reference of an "ordinary" community of concerned citizens, publicly demanding an end to the arms race, gained additional credence as the broadcast of *The Day After* drew nearer. The larger stage for these demands only served to enhance local activists' attempts to transcend the limits of local organizing, yet at the same time enhanced the "rhetoric of freedom and equality" that Monhollon argues was a key feature of local identity in Lawrence.[78]

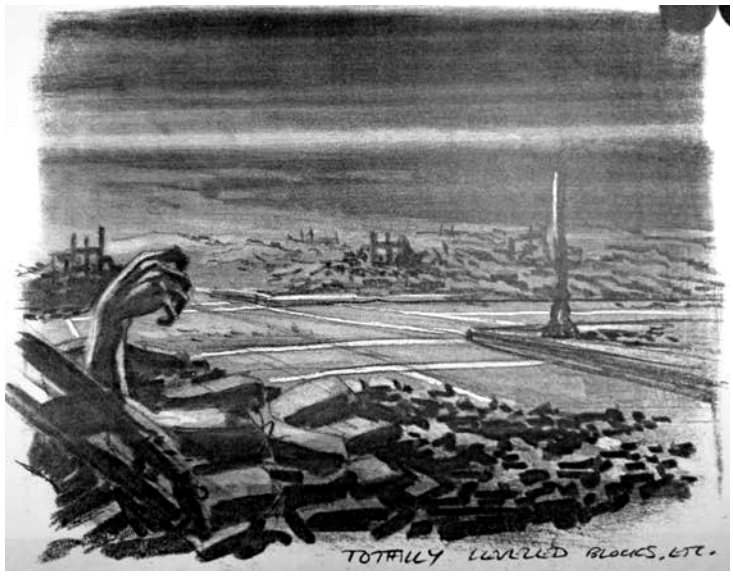
MEDIATING LOCALISM ON TELEVISION

In the months leading up to the nuclear freeze poll of November 1982, Lawrence had been host to a Los Angeles film crew recreating scenes of nuclear devastation for *The Day After*. The television film's premise was fairly basic: confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union over troop deployments in Germany leads to a mutual exchange of nuclear bombs. One of the Soviets' targets is Kansas City, approximately 40 miles east of Lawrence. The film follows several families in the vicinity as they go about their lives, in a blatant display of middle American ordinariness, before the bombs fall. In the aftermath, we follow the survivors as they slowly fall ill and die of radiation poisoning, and the once vibrant Midwestern college town of Lawrence, not immediately destroyed in the attack, descends into chaos and anarchy. The filmmakers intended to film in the nation's heartland to specifically show the effect a nuclear war might have on ordinary Americans, and Kansas fit the bill "both technically

[77] David Longhurst, "Comments made at Candle-Lighting Ceremony November 20, 1983," Swan Collection.
[78] Monhollon, *This Is America?* p. 11.

and just creatively," according to producer Bob Papazian.[79] The stereotypical image of ordinariness that the film purposefully projected identified Lawrence as a symbol of middle America, as the *Nation*'s review put it, with "Americana [that] is even more banal than usual. The film is set… smack-dab in the middle of the country and right in the middle of the road."[80] Banality, however, was one of director Nick Meyer's main objectives. Describing the film as a "public service announcement," Meyer aimed to prompt public discussion and debate within a package, as he put it, "as banal, and lowly, as a fucking TV movie."[81] The format for this "announcement" – network television – would be matched by the ordinariness of the lives depicted onscreen, so that the film would not be about politics, rather, as Meyer explained, "about the farmer and people like him and what it's like to get bombed."[82]

[79] Bob Papazian, interview by the author, 20 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas.
[80] Lawrence Weschler, "ABC Drops the Big One," *Nation*, 26 November 1983, p. 542.
[81] Nick Meyer, interview by the author, 20 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas.
[82] Nick Meyer, quoted in Howard Rosenberg, "'Humanizing' Nuclear Devastation in Kansas," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 September 1982, p. G9.



Storyboards for the film contrast idyllic farm life in rural Kansas (top) with urban devastation wrought by nuclear weapons in Kansas City (bottom). Source: Nicholas Meyer Papers, MsC 425, Special Collections, Main Library, University of Iowa, Box 37, Folder 6.

When ABC announced its intention to film in Lawrence, the implication was that the town would be heavily involved in the filming. Many extras would be needed for large crowd scenes, construction crews would be required, and the sizeable crew from Los Angeles would of course require accommodation and meals, contributing greatly to local businesses.[83] Jack Wright, Professor of Theater at the University of Kansas, was enlisted as local casting director to find locals to fill about 65 speaking roles, and help coordinate the several thousand non-speaking roles for several key scenes. The necessities of

[83] Chuck Twardy, "Moviemakers Cast About for Local Crowds," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 16 August 1982, pp. 1, 7.

shooting on location meant that the town was to be instrumental in the production, a prospect which many residents found exciting. Others, Meyer speculated, were interested in being involved with *The Day After* because "they wanted to be part of an anti-nuclear exercise."[84] Considering the national proliferation of anti-nuclear sentiment at this particular time, and considering the particular nature of Lawrence's liberal "socio-cultural mix," this is not an unreasonable assertion.[85] This idea also furthers the reputation of the town as an outpost of progressive thought in a conservative area. Local identity, then, made its way into *The Day After* by default, adding to the many meanings of localism that the film consciously promoted.

Despite ABC's strident attempts to promote the film as free of partisanship or politics, many interest groups felt otherwise. The LCPJ, upon hearing of *The Day After* and its imminent arrival in Lawrence, planned to use the filming as a "propaganda event," and an idea was floated in a meeting to ask extras in the film to pledge some of their earnings from the film to the group's efforts.[86] One of the LCPJ's members, Allan Hanson, noted that the film was fortuitous – the group had been promoting similar issues for some time – but that it was a decidedly ideal opportunity to reach even more local citizens with an anti-nuclear message.[87] However, as the hype and controversy intensified within the nation's media, this potential was even greater than the confines of Lawrence would imply; the group proposed that *The Day After* would give them "the chance… to voice our commitment to disarmament not just to our fellow citizens, but to the entire nation."[88] The image of Kansans "voicing commitment" would, it was implied, inspire similar endeavours of anti-nuclear dialogue and activity around the nation. Heartland activism, then, was cast in an especially meaningful light.

Despite these ideas about mobilizing anti-nuclear sentiment as *The Day After* was being filmed, the LCPJ struggled to speak to a citizenry that regarded the filming as a local novelty and curiosity, rather than anything politically significant. At this time, the organizational effort to bring November's freeze poll to fruition demanded much of the LCPJ's attention, and the publication of a local FEMA civil defense guide was also

[84] Meyer interview.
[85] Bob Papazian, quoted in Twardy, "Moviemakers Cast About," p. 1.
[86] LCPJ meeting minutes, 18 July 1982, LCPJ Records, Box 1, Folder 10.
[87] Allan Hanson, interview by the author, 19 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas.
[88] LCPJ newsletter, 8 November 1983, LCPJ Records, Box 2, Folder 19.

capturing public interest. Lawrence resident Anne Marvin recalled being "really appalled at the timing" of the guide's publication as concurrent with the filming of *The Day After* and its vision of nuclear disaster.[89] Marvin argued that the absurdity of this "scaremongering" was offensive and irresponsible, given that the alarmist nature of civil defense seemed to have progressed little since the "duck and cover" days of the 1950s. At a time when "everybody is scared enough by all this [talk of nuclear war] anyway," the combination of civil defense guides, nuclear freeze polling, and fictional representations of a nuclear war suggested a mediated environment of nuclear panic and excessive hype.[90]

As these ideas overlapped in Lawrence in late 1982, they accentuated the scope of anti-nuclear thought amongst the town's residents. By no means isolated to a small group of moderate pacifists and University faculty, the theme of the local response to the nuclear arms race was one that enveloped many aspects of City politics, culture, and industry. *The Day After* has cast the net much wider than the LCPJ could have every hoped, and these "ordinary," heartland responses to the nuclear arms race would soon have a national reach. Lawrence's experience within the national anti-nuclear movement was, of course, unique, but the way *The Day After* stimulated debate about the role and efficacy of citizen voices in local and federal government matched the debate that had occurred at the City level with respect to the nuclear freeze poll. The film, its media controversy, and its viewership merely pushed this debate – along with the idea of a unique Midwestern identity responding to the threat of nuclear war – into a wider realm.

MOBILIZING FEAR

Hoping to capitalize on the intense local interest and media attention *The Day After* would arouse when it was seen for the first time later in the year, the LCPJ formed an offshoot group in February 1983 called "Let Lawrence Live." The group was formed to coordinate local activities, as well as a media presence, in order to maximze the film's impact on local anti-nuclear politics. Essentially, the Let Lawrence Live campaign aimed

[89] Quoted in Bonnie Dunham, "Emergency Preparedness Guide Prompts Questions," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 2 September 1982, p. 3.
[90] Anne Marvin, interview by the author, 22 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas.

at educating more local residents on nuclear issues, so that their response to the film, when they viewed it, would contribute to a more meaningful, unified local statement for peace. Proposed activities included everything from re-staging scenes from the film, outdoor concerts, children's letter writing campaigns, and surrounding the city with a human chain, but the eventual schedule included some workshops, a town meeting, and a candlelight vigil after the film finished showing on television.[91] The idea behind these activities was relatively simple: the Let Lawrence Live campaign proposed *active* viewership of *The Day After* in order for viewers to pressure Washington to ensure "that the arms race be reversed and the threat of nuclear war be removed from human existence."[92] This way, local residents would join the already established movement of ordinary voices objected to the nuclear arms race.

As the organizers of Let Lawrence Live were at pains to point out, they were no experts in military strategy or nuclear politics:

> Let Lawrence Live is not committed to any *particular* disarmament scheme, such as a test ban treaty, the freeze, or a "build-down" concept. We leave decisions as to the means to world leaders, but we insist on the end: that the arms race be reversed and the threat of nuclear war be removed from human existence.[93]

Emphasizing this generalized perspective enabled the group to reach a broader audience. By virtue of its unique experience with *The Day After*, Lawrence would be ideally poised to register its demand that the events portrayed in the film never occur, not in Lawrence, not in Kansas, and not anywhere else in the United States, or indeed the world. The campaign's voice spoke loudest to the theme of ordinary Americans affected by a nuclear war. This prospective horror, foreshadowed in fiction in *The Day After*, was a repeated focus of local discussion around the time of the broadcast; a nuclear war, it was reiterated by activists, must never occur. What local voices added to this call for nuclear sanity was – intentionally or not – an authentic, heartland rhetoric of common sense, something the film's fictional characters could not offer.

[91] Let Lawrence Live seed meeting minutes, 26 February 1983, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 13.
[92] "Let Lawrence Live Programs" brochure, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 14.
[93] "Let Lawrence Live Programs" brochure, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 14. Emphasis in original.

Let Lawrence Live used an excerpt from a poem by African American poet Langston Hughes in its logo. Hughes had spent his childhood in Lawrence. Source: Let Lawrence Live flyer, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 12.

Let Lawrence Live coordinator Allan Hanson recalled that in 1982 and 1983, many people in Lawrence became acquainted with the issue of nuclear war only because they took part in the *The Day After*.[94] Ellen Anthony-Moore, then an 11-year-old with a speaking role in the film, recalled that she could only think about nuclear war as it existed in her experience of the film; as she remarked a few years later, "I didn't really think about these things before I was in the movie."[95] For many, the attraction of appearing in a major television production prompted their involvement as extras or crew. There were huge lines at local casting sesions; producer Bob Papazian described the novelty of a Hollywood film crew in a small town as inspiring a kind of "circus."[96] But what meanings did locals attach to their participation in the film? It was true that many Lawrencians were interested in the political and educational aspects behind the production. Harliss Howard was a non-professional actor, and felt "pleased to be associated with a film that intends to educate people about the effects of a nuclear war."[97] It was important, he argued at the time, that people realize the nuclear threat was "not a fantasy."

Casting director Jack Wright shared similar sentiments, and encouraged his step-daughter Ellen Anthony-Moore to think of her role in the film as a "socially conscious act." As Anthony-Moore recalled, her parents talked about the film as:

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[94] Hanson interview.
[95] Anthony-Moore interview; quoted in David Shipler, "Soviet Embassy Welcomes Kansans and Message," *New York Times*, 19 September 1986, p. B4.
[96] Papazian interview.
[97] Chuck Twardy, "Fake Farmstead Goes Up in Flames for Film," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 17 August 1982, p. 3.

> … a social project, not "you're going to be in a movie"… They talked to me about it as a film about war… it was a social issue before it was the idea of a child thinking of themselves as someone "in the movies."[98]

But did participation in the film necessarily represent such social and political ideas? Viewing the project as a local curiosity, though, was inevitable. The outdoor locations and the thousands of extras, rather than some ill-defined unease about nuclear weapons and nuclear war, defined the film's setting and premise in the minds of locals and outsiders alike.

Other local voices can tell us much more about the many meanings ascribed to *The Day After* and its significance as a local anti-nuclear statement.[99] Anne Marvin felt the fact that Lawrence was the centre of attention in the film was a bit of a joke, since Lawrence was not "in the middle of the action... not a coastal city". Marvin was, she admitted, "kind of defensive" about her own image of Kansas, and thought the dialogue in the film was a little silly – that was "how [the filmmakers] thought farm people talk". However, Marvin did recognize the geopolitical significance of the area within the film; as she recalled:

> There was always a lot of consciousness in this area that we're not that far from the Strategic Air Command base up near Omaha, that Kansas City would be a major target, that there were a lot of missile silos around here. I mean, everyone knew that, and it's not like it was any big surprise to have someone portray the area as a target.[100]

Through her personal interests and her professional life, Marvin had been conscious of the image of Kansas as it was portrayed "in the popular mind," and the fact that *The Day After* was a very conventional representation of Midwestern stereotypes bothered her greatly. However, Craig Miner has argued that historically, Kansas' reputation has stemmed precisely from such media exaggeration. In the 1980s, though, *The Day After* could be considered a completely expected and conventional way of reinforcing this idea

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[98] Anthony-Moore interview.

[99] My series of interviews with local residents, whilst entirely unscientific, nevertheless highlights common themes amongst locals as they viewed *The Day After*, its production, and its larger meanings. This sampling of local opinion on the film, whilst contemporary, also raises interesting issues of historical memory as it pertains to the recent past in Lawrence. Organizing this series of interview around a 25th anniversary screening of the film at a local cinema, featuring a post-film panel discussion by director Nick Meyer, producer Bob Papazian, and others, also served to pique local interest and encourage reminiscences about how locals experienced *The Day After* in 1982 and 1983. For a brief summary of the event, see Ryan McGeeney, "25 Years After 'The Day After'," *University Daily Kansan*, 21 November 2008, p. 1.

[100] Marvin interview.

of Midwestern ordinariness.[101] Combined with ideas of localism and regional identity attributed to Kansas by the heartland myth as it developed since the 1960s, *The Day After* is significant due to its contribution to this myth on the one hand, and its progressive political views on the other.

For other extras involved in the production, the experience such scenes of imagined devastation was part exciting and part chilling. The eeriness of the highly effective makeup and set construction that made the setting seem so real encouraged extras to wonder "what if this were real?"[102] Local resident Beth Myers, having taken part in two large crowd scenes, was fascinated by the whole process of creating such a large production, along with the eerie quality of the extras' makeup. However, when she saw the film for the first time, she recalled that "nothing prepares you for when you sit and see what the realization has been." In eastern Kansas, a nuclear war was "entirely plausible and entirely believable," and she considered *The Day After* a seminal representation of nuclear fears that had, at least for her, been reverberating even in the smallest rural Kansan communities since her childhood in the 1960s. Myers' recollections suggest an explicit connection between the "fun, but thought provoking" experience of the filming, and the horrifying end product that she still cannot sit through. Another resident, Maria Butler, recalled similar experiences; whilst the filming was interesting and fun, yet deeper thoughts were "sobering" due to the realism of the sets and makeup, which encouraged her to wonder "what if this really happened?"[103] Seeing areas of Lawrence, as well as its residents, transformed to show what a nuclear war might look like, prompted locals to think about nuclear issues more than they otherwise would. It took the transformation of the physical environment by the filmmakers to stimulate amongst locals the thought of "that whole reality of what was possible," according to another local, Kelly Cooper.[104]

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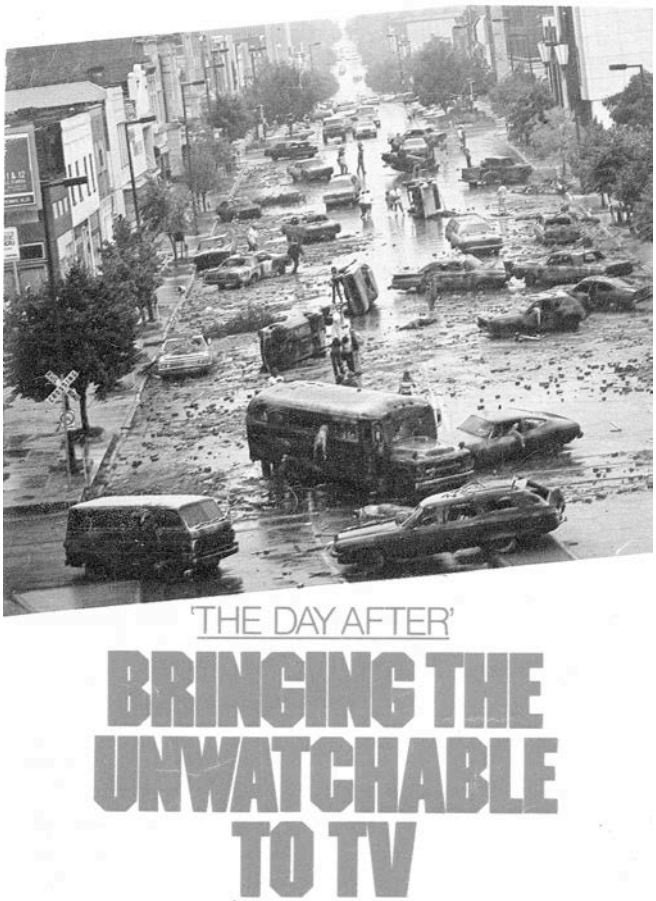
[101] Miner, *Kansas*, pp. 3-4.
[102] Beth Myers, interview by the author, 22 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas.
[103] Butler interview.
[104] Kelly Cooper, interview by the author, 21 November 2008, Lawrence, Kansas.



TV Guide, like many other magazines, featured an image of 9th Street in Lawrence as it appeared during filming. Such scenes emphasized to locals the relationship between a fictional film and a potentially real disaster.
Source: *TV Guide*, 19 November 1983, p. 6.

These statements mirror the local dialogue that emerged around the time of the film's premiere at the University of Kansas in October 1983, and its national broadcast one month later. The *Washington Post* surmised that Lawrencians watching the film would find it a "bizarre experience of watching as their town is destroyed and they suffer and die."[105] Local resident Mo Gronniger felt that seeing scenes of nuclear war played out locally "woke a lot of people up," as many locals "never really thought about it in terms of our geographic location."[106] The experience moved Gronninger to become more active on the issue, writing letters and urging friends and colleagues to do the same.[107] No doubt many Lawrencians – and many Americans – found the experience of watching *The Day*

[105] Tom Shales, "'The Day After' Approaches: ABC's Movie on Nuclear War Runs Into Early Fallout," *Washington Post*, 11 October 1983, p. C9.
[106] Quoted in Let Lawrence Live, "Voices From Lawrence," n.d., Swan Collection.
[107] Quoted in Let Lawrence Live, "Comments From Extras Appearing in 'The Day After'," n.d., Bob Swan personal Collection.

After a similar motivation for anti-nuclear activity.[108] The isolation felt by many progressive-minded Lawrencians in the conservative heartland also influenced their drive to educate and mobilize their neighbors. For such residents, it seems, *The Day After* imbued local anti-nuclear politics with a wider, national significance. At the same time, though, the film and its reception invoked these ideas of localism and "ordinariness" to stress the authenticity of heartland citizens in the midst of the nuclear threat. Hence, their reactions to such issues of national and global significance were characterized as *exceptionally* local in nature.

Similarly, the local newspaper was flooded with letters, most arriving at the time of the television broadcast of 20 November 1983. The *Journal-World* devoted several pages to local reaction to the film, with a majority expressing similar feelings of horror, fear, and cautious hope.[109] The newspaper also conducted an informal telephone survey of a two block area in Lawrence that represented "stable, family neighborhoods." Only one household contacted in the survey supported the anti-nuclear ideas behind *The Day After*, whilst others rejected it as propaganda, and most said it had done little to influence their views on nuclear issues.[110] As many residents echoed diverse views, a widespread mistrust in Cold War politics – made more significant due to the "ordinariness" and isolation of Kansas – was present in local reaction to the film. The issue of citizen involvement in such matters of Cold War policy was similarly contested. One letter to the *Journal-World* urged greater public participation in nuclear decision-making:

> Some say we should leave the decision-making on nuclear weapons and strategies to the military and high government officials. I strongly disagree. No matter what your theory on how to prevent nuclear war (for that is everyone's goal), the involvement of the populace in the political process and debate is imperative.[111]

Of course, this is what civic-minded individuals in Lawrence had been advocating for some time. But the broad sweep of *The Day After*, being delivered through the fairly ubiquitous realm of network television, enabled these issues to be debated at a much

[108] WAND member Bobbie Wrenn Banks recalled the existence of similar sentiments amongst Atlanta residents, especially the Emory University community. Interview, 28 October 2011, by telephone.
[109] See "Readers Respond to 'The Day After'," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 23 November 1983, pp. 8-9.
[110] Chuck Twardy, "'Day After' Scores High in TV Ratings," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 21 November 1983, p. 7.
[111] Patti Hackney, letter to the editor, *Lawrence Journal-World*, 23 November 1983, p. 8.

broader level than the LCPJ could have ever reached alone.[112] The intense local interest in the film, coupled with the skilled promotion and hype by both ABC and the nation's media, increased the potential impact of *The Day After* as a media event, rather than simply another made-for-TV movie.[113]

Following the broadcast, a candlelight vigil was held on the University grounds. Residents hopeful that the film's impact be more than a transient media affair walked from their homes to the vigil, organized by the LCPJ. Mayor David Longhurst addressed the crowd of around one thousand, and recalled his failure to find adequate words of consolation for his community.[114] However, the example of this ordinary community, potentially identical to any other ordinary community affected by the nuclear threat, demonstrated the need for ordinary people to participate in the widespread demand for nuclear disarmament. "Working to prevent nuclear war is our ultimate duty," asserted Longhurst at the vigil, "as elected officials, parents and citizens."[115] What is significant about this conscious demonstration of local democratic citizenship is the determination that a unified voice from a small Midwestern community might be able to somehow affect the course of foreign policy and nuclear strategy. Again, residents ascribed national signficiance to local anti-nuclear politics, attaching additional significance to the meanings of "localism" and "ordinariness."

The most important feature of these statements for peace expressed by local residents was their status as an ordinary community. In a letter to a producer for *60 Minutes*, Bob Swan wrote:

> … the people of our community, of the "heart of America," are inherently optimistic. We believe that good things happen through hard work, that seemingly insurmontable (sic) problems can be solved by dedicated endeavor. Yet like all humans we often feel powerless in the face of the growing nuclear threat.[116]

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[112] Whilst viewing figures for Lawrence or Douglas County are not available, survey data from ABC found that viewership at a national level was around 53%, with another 40% were aware of the film. See Guy Lometti and Ellen Feig, "The Social Impact of *The Day After*: A Summary of Research Findings" (New York: ABC, Inc. Social Research Unit, 1983), p. 2.
[113] See Gregory A. Waller, "Re-Placing *the Day After*," *Cinema Journal* 26, no. 3 (1987): pp. 3-4.
[114] Longhurst interview.
[115] David Longhurst, "Comments made at Candle-Lighting Ceremony November 20, 1983," Swan Collection.
[116] Bob Swan to 'Mimi', 19 October 1983, Swan Collection.

Much of this sentiment was reflected in *The Day After* itself; despite the hackneyed portrayals of Kansas farm folk and the stereotypical Kansas imagery, the response of concerned Lawrencians almost mimicked the deliberate representation of ordinariness on the part of the filmmakers. What set Lawrencians apart from other "ordinary" viewers of the film was this ready promotion of their Kansan identity, insofar as it enabled them to more coherently express their views on the nuclear danger. Surrounding the broadcast of *The Day After*, Lawrencians often expressed the concept of their community's unique identity in both contemporary and historical terms. At a town meeting the day following the broadcast, Swan compared the abolitionist movement of the 1860s to the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s. He saw a key link between Lawrence's actual destruction by William Quantrill and his pro-slavery radiers in 1863, and its imagined destruction by nuclear weapons in 1983.[117] Invoking the town's legacy of resilience and a mythic commitment to longevity, Swan and others actively promoted Lawrence's self-perception as an "embattled" community.

FRAMING IDENTITY AND ORDINARINESS, BOTH LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY

The overlapping of local reactions to *The Day After* and outside reports of a unique Midwestern activist community highlight the multiple meanings ascribed to the film, the identity of the community, and the efficacy of local anti-nuclear politics. *The Day After* did provide an astute, but fairly conventional outsider's interpretation of heartland imagery and romanticism. Combined with the potent socio-political issue of nuclear war, the film, according to *Newsweek*, "removes the unimaginable from the abstract and makes it shatteringly real: this is what a nuclear Armageddon is going to look like."[118] Locally, this reverberated in additional ways when concerned residents pondered how they might respond to the film's message, as they realized their experience with *The Day After* was unique. But beyond these considerations, what can the local response to *The Day After* tell us about issues of community, politics, and the nuclear threat in middle America?

[117] Bob Swan, "Opening Remarks of the Town Meeting," 21 November 1983, Swan Collection.
[118] Harry F. Waters *et al.*, "Fallout over *the Day After*," *Newsweek*, 24 October 1983, p. 42.

Influenced by the film, many Lawrencians were prompted to actively respond to the threat of nuclear war in a *political* way. As they viewed the arms race as an issue that transcended the social commentary of *The Day After*, concerned residents aired their perspectives accordingly, whether through letter writing, campaigning, or at the polling place. These activities were mirrored by local peace activists. Several months after the excitement of *The Day After* had died down, a newly formed coalition of peace-oriented community groups dubbed the Progressive Coalition deemed the film an event that ought to be capitalized on. Their statement of principles emphasized issues of civil responsibility, partricipatory democracy, and local identity:

> Recent events have thrust the city of Lawrence onto the national and international stages as a symbol of humankind's desire for peace. The visit of Soviet athletes, the Mayor's invitation to President Reagan and Secretary Andropov for a meeting for peace, and the intense debate stimulated by the film "The Day After" have place [sic] the people of Lawrence in a position of influence far in excess of their numerical size. Media commentators frequently allude to our community as being representative of mainstream America. This prominence places on all caring citizens of our community a special responsibility to develop approaches and policies which can enhance an atmosphere for world peace and social justice and this will require on going dialogue among our citizens and particularly among our local organizations and institutions.[119]

Emphasizing a united response to the civic challenges laid down by *The Day After* necessarily entailed an effective community response, something which, at least on the surface, Lawrence had already achieved. However, not all local residents responded actively to nuclear concerns at all. Many thought the film an overhyped political stunt, some denigrated it as leftist propaganda, and, of course, not all Lawrencians watched it at all.[120]

In much of this dialogue, we can see a conscious identification of the community of Lawrence with the notion of the "heartland," or of "middle America." The manipulation of these concepts by local residents coincided with *The Day After*'s promotion of stereotypical Kansan imagery, which attempted to reinforce the idea of the plight of the

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[119] Progressive Coalition, "Statement of Principles: Tentative," 4 January 1984, LCPJ Records, Box 3, Folder 16.

[120] One letter published in the *Journal-World* argued that the film, the surrounding "hysterical hype," and the various peace and protest activities were "a wonderful catharsis for the feelings of frustration and helplessness we all feel, but we are naive to think they will change the chain of events of international politics." Carmela Sibley, letter to the editor, *Lawrence Journal-World*, 23 November 1983, p. 8. On a similar, yet more critical note, a letter to the University's student newspaper argued that, to its detriment, "the peace movement is not founded on principles of humanitarian need, but on personal fear." Paul Longabach, letter to the editor, *University Daily Kansan*, 13 October 1982, p. 4.

ordinary Midwestern citizen in the face of the nuclear danger. The premise of the filmmakers' intentions was to enable a national discussion over nuclear weapons that positioned ordinary citizens at the centre of the debate, and fortuitously, Kansans occupied the cultural imagination as archetypes of American ordinariness. The key issue here is that in response to, or perhaps in conjunction with these archetypal Kansan images, many Lawrence residents saw themselves as having authentic voices to contribute to this national discussion. By virtue of their geographical location, their identity as Kansans, whether real or imagined, and their status as civic-minded citizens, they offered their ordinary heartland voices as essential citizen voices in a debate of national, and global, significance. This debate, they argued, lacked the perspective and insight that middle Americans could offer.

The myth of Kansas, and indeed the Midwest, as the nation's "heartland" has been excellently explored by Robert Smith Bader, in his discussion of the revolving ideas of centrality, "middleness," and geography in both Kansan and national culture, language and discourse.[121] However, these ideas reverberated in Lawrence around questions of nuclear threats long before *The Day After* promised local activists a national media stage for anti-nuclear platform. *The Day After* certainly tempered questions of local identity and the efficacy of local anti-nuclear activity in Lawrence, and brought such activism far more attention than, for example, the nuclear freeze poll. Yet much of the local reaction to the film was intrinsically tied to the way the filmmakers deftly and effectively harnessed the heartland myth, using it not as a concept far removed from the realities of geographic location, as Bader argues, but as an idea that highlighted the "averageness" of Kansas whilst simultaneously promoting its position as the geographic centre of the conterminous 48 states.[122] These issues of "averageness" and isolation were complementary ideas, according to *The Day After*'s producer Bob Papazian, as he and director Meyer exploited stereotypes in order enhance the dramatic impact of a nuclear war affecting "ordinary people."[123]

[121] Bader, *Hayseeds, Moralizers, and Methodists*, Chapter 7.
[122] Bader, *Hayseeds, Moralizers, and Methodists*, pp. 156-157.
[123] Papazian interview.

KANSAS SINCE THE 1960S

In the American imagination of the early 1980s, Kansas was the exemplar of ordinary. Bader cites a 1985 survey which showed that Americans perceived the region as one associated with rural traditionalism.[124] Here, the heartland myth involves a kind of romanticism, whilst associated with ideas of a languishing cultural landscape devoid of progress or modernity. For Kansans though, argues Miner, the heartland exists as "knowledge with a deeper root," and its treatment by outsiders belies the complexity of the state's tumultuous history of violence, political extremism, and economic hardship.[125] Since the 1950s, most of Kansas was no longer a rural area dominated by agriculture, and its changes in the postwar era stand in contrast to cultural imaginings of the state.[126] Since the 1960s, though, the changing meaning of the heartland myth recast the region's history as one that emphasized the idea of a populist middle America, exhibiting traditional American characteristics of hard work, common sense, and traditional values. "Popular imaginings of the Midwest," writes Victoria Johnson, "implied that its historically *mundane* identity was, by contrast to the "rest" of the nation, now *exceptional* – the average, ordinary, everyday "square" was also stable, functional, and representative of core, national ideals."[127] Anti-nuclear sentiment in Lawrence simultaneously challenged and embraced this myth as it existed in the early 1980s, in response to the division and tension of the late 1960s, but also as a means to reaffirm local identity and civic engagement on an issue of local, national, and global significance.

It was this imaginary landscape of rural traditionalism, college town progressivism, and a mythic ideal of grassroots ordinariness and authenticity that best characterizes local activism in opposition to the nuclear arms race. Mobilizing additional local opposition with *The Day After*, however, was slightly more difficult. On one hand, the film's

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[124] Bader, *Hayseeds, Moralizers, and Methodists*, p. 157. In addition, a 1986 survey done by the Institute for Public Policy and Business Research at the University of Kansas found that less than 7% of respondents felt that Kansas had an excellent image in other parts of the United States. Survey Research Center, Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, "Second Annual Public Opinion Survey of Kansas," Report no. 105 (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1986), p. 9.
[125] Miner, *Kansas*, p. 30.
[126] For a comprehensive examination of the changing social, economic, and industrial nature of the Midwest, see Robert Wuthnow, *Remaking the Heartland: Middle America since the 1950s* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011). On the Midwest as a cultural symbol, see James R. Shortridge, *The Middle West: Its Meaning in American Culture* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1989).
[127] Johnson, *Heartland TV*, p. 120.

Kansan location provided outside viewers with images of heartland honesty and Midwestern openness that a big city setting would lack. On the other, local interpretation of these ideas was missing; Lawrencians generally found the local setting of the film interesting and curious, and only rarely interrogated its contribution to the heartland myth.[128] Those who responded to the film by invoking issues of local identity felt there was more to the relationship between the heartland and the nuclear threat than merely this representation of ordinariness. Of course, the Kansan setting of *The Day After* "made the tale more representative for what would happen to the average Joe," but of course this "average Joe" was a construct, providing the filmmakers, anti-nuclear activists, and those seeking to further the film political implications with an opportunity to promote the role of the ordinary Midwestern citizen in the national nuclear debate.[129]

Stepping away from the imaginary realm of a television movie, we can see that the less transient aspects of Lawrence's relationship with nuclear war demonstrate how this idea of the ordinary citizen operated. The activities of the City Commission, politically involved local residents, and the local peace community, demonstrate how Lawrencians used their convictions about the effectiveness of local politics to confront what they perceived as the seriousness of the nuclear arms race and its local manifestations. When the opportunity arose to promote these actions to those outside the city limits, the local response to the threat of nuclear war was conceived as one incorporating notions of the ordinary American community, mixed with a romanticized affection for the fabric of everyday life under threat from an nuclear confrontation which was part real, part imagined. This was done very consciously, taking advantage of, as well as reinforcing, popular stereotypes of middle America, of the heartland, and of Kansas. Nonetheless, the noble intentions of these civic-minded Lawrencians remained. Perhaps what we can see in Lawrence in the 1980s is a modern populism, where the "class antagonism and the nobility of the common man" of the older populist movements of the 1890s was redrawn as a proud, Midwestern identity, priding itself on ordinariness and its associated traits of honesty, authenticity, and "American-ness."[130]

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[128] Interviews with Judy Billings, 21 November 2008; Frank Day and Chris Mulvenon, 22 November 2008; Ellen Musick, 23 November 2008; and Lauraine Mulally, 24 November 2008, all undertaken by the author in Lawrence, Kansas.

[129] Jon Niccum, "Fallout from 'The Day After': Cast and Crew of the TV Movie Remember How Lawrence Coped with Nuclear Devastation," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 14 November 2003, http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2003/nov/14/fallout_from_the/ (accessed 18 July 2008).

[130] Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas?*, p. 32.

Whilst the story of Lawrence's engagement with anti-nuclear issues in the early 1980s demonstrates the significance of these ideas of local identity, community politics, and the meanings of the heartland myth, it highights broader issues regarding the historical trajectory of community social movements in middle America. Lawrence operates as a unique context in which to study the anti-nuclear movement, not least due to the legacy and memory of violence in the town, during the Civil War of the 1860s and what Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin call the "new" civil war of the 1960s.[131] In addition, the story of progressive activism in Kansas in the 1980s – an era marked by the extraordinary rise of a conservative moralistic political culture – shows us how the challenge of success for anti-nuclear activists was laden with additional significance.[132] Most significantly, this challenge reconfigured the meaning of localism in Lawrence. Whilst "social movements need communities," as James DeFilippis *et al*. have argued, and community-based political action is always local in nature, it is the "wider vision" of this organizing that matters here.[133] In the 1980s this wider vision was the nuclear arms race, an international threat with both global and local implications. Understanding the threat at the global and national scales helped local organizers place more perspective on its impact at a community level, enhancing the value of ideas of local identity, "ordinariness" and heartland sensibilities.

The nuclear freeze poll of 1982 and the impact of *The Day After* the following year highlight how the meaning of "localism" in Lawrence politics was challenged. As Paul Schumaker has demonstrated, community political behavior in Lawrence can be characterized by the pluralist interaction of bureaucrats, citizens, elites, mobilizers, and activists.[134] If Daniel Elazar's contention is correct – that in moralistic political cultures such as Kansas, politics is "a matter of concern for every citizen" – we might observe greater public participation in the local political debate over the local significance of the nuclear arms race.[135] However, the local implications of this issue became contested, as citizens and local officials debated the meaning of localism and the appropriate local

[131] Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[132] On liberal-conservative tussles in Kansas in the 1970s and the rise of conservatism in state politics, see Courtwright, *No Right Turn*, pp. 90-96.
[133] James DeFilippis *et al.*, *Contesting Community: The Limits and Potential of Local Organizing* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010), pp. 22, 32.
[134] Schumaker, *Critical Pluralism*, p. 150.
[135] Daniel Elazar, *American Federalism: A View from the States* (New York: Crowell, 1966), p. 90.

response to the nuclear threat. As Lawrencians politicized ideas about local identity and the meaning of citizenship in the nation's heartland, we more easily can appreciate the contested nature of anti-nuclear politics in the "microsphere" of local anti-nuclear activism. In the midst of middle America in the 1980s, this contest gives added significance to the catchprase "think globally, act locally," as it helped to redefine the overlap between local identity, community politics, and social movement activism.

In the wake of the 1960s, the contest over the style of activism in the anti-nuclear movement involved the mobilization of new ideas about civic engagement and the practice of democracy. In Lawrence, this was no different. Most people involved in the the Lawrence Coalition for Peace and Justice and in the Lawrence City Commission lived through the tumult of the 1960s in Lawrence. Determined to move beyond this period of violence and division, they created a relationship of mutual respect in the sphere of local politics. Local identities were then applied to issues of major concern, and it is in this context that Lawrence residents responded to the threat of nuclear weapons. Local contexts of activism show us another side of the anti-nuclear movement, quite different to the process of national organizationing as covered in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis. Here, with ideas of civic engagement and local identity intertwining with popular images of the American heartland, the legacies of activism in the wake of the 1960s were again negotiated through various lenses.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE GREAT PEACE MARCH FOR GLOBAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT: GRASSROOTS PRAGMATISM OR HIPPIE IDEALISM?

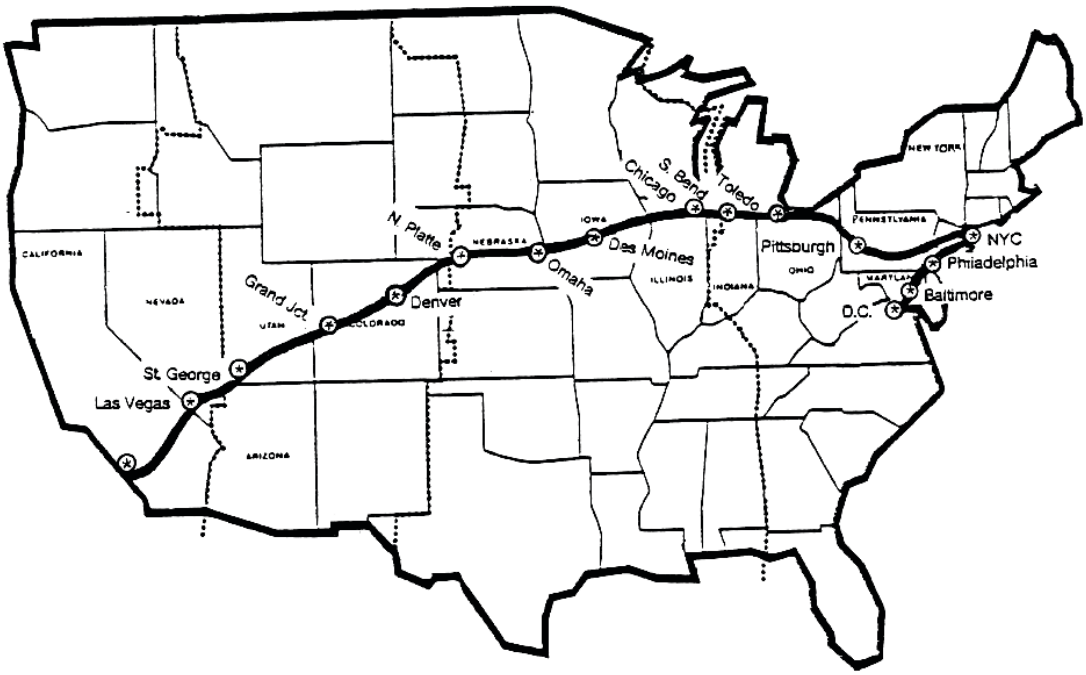
As the unprecedented momentum of the anti-nuclear movement – most importantly the Freeze Campaign – began to wane in the mid-1980s, activists throughout the movement argued that the movement needed a change in direction.[1] Ronald Reagan's re-election as President in 1984 had devastated many within the movement who felt their efforts at public education would make a difference at the federal elections. At the same time, Reagan's re-election demonstrated to others that they were right about the pitfalls of getting involved in electoral politics, and only reinforced their beliefs that anti-nuclear action was best undertaken outside the realm of organized politics. These activists within the movement also questioned whether the strategy of mobilizing public opinion through advertising and educational endeavours was appropriate, or indeed, if it worked. Some within the Freeze Campaign began to argue for a greater commitment to direct action, and other campaigns, such as the American Peace Test, brought a great deal of public attention to the continuation of nuclear testing in Nevada, and to those citizens engaged in dramatic displays of opposition to it.[2] Such incidences, far removed from the conventional narrative of the anti-nuclear movement's rapid decline, highlight the

[1] See Mark Hertsgaard, "What Became of the Freeze?," *Mother Jones*, June 1985, pp. 44-47; Pam Solo, *From Protest to Policy: Beyond the Freeze to Common Security* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1988), pp. 171-177; and David S. Meyer, "Peace Movement Demobilization: The Fading of the Nuclear Freeze," in *Peace Action in the Eighties: Social Science Perspectives*, ed. John Lofland and Sam Marullo (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), pp. 53-71.

[2] On the splintering of the anti-nuclear movement after 1984 and this increase in incidences of direct action more generally, and on the American Peace Test more specifically, see Hugh Gusterson, *Nuclear Rites: A Weapons Laboratory at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 175-180. On this debate as it evolved in the merger of SANE and the Freeze Campaign in 1986-1987, see Bruce Ferguson, "Different Agendas, Styles Shape Sane/Freeze," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, April 1988, pp. 26-30.

significant and complex presence of ongoing activist opposition to the nuclear arms race.[3]

In the midst of this splintering of the movement and the debates within its key organizations over movement direction, a proposal emanated from prominent gay rights activist and political campaign strategist David Mixner that aimed to reinvigorate the movement and its fortunes amongst the American public. Dubbed the Great Peace March for Global Nuclear Disarmament (hereafter the GPM, or simply, the March), Mixner envisaged a moving campaign – a "portable city" – of 5,000 Americans, traversing the country and building momentum for nuclear disarmament everywhere it went on its 3,700 mile journey, starting in Los Angeles and ending in Washington, D.C.[4]



The route of the Great Peace March.
Source: Franklin Folsom *et al.*, *The Great Peace March: An American Odyssey* (Santa Fe, NM: Ocean Tree Books, 1988), p. 194.

[3] On this ongoing, radical movement in the mid- to late 1980s that used direct action as a favored tactic, quite different to the mainstream movement's conventional tactics as discussed in Chapter 2, see J. Michael Hogan, *The Nuclear Freeze Campaign: Rhetoric and Foreign Policy in the Telepolitical Age* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1994), pp. 192-194; and for data on the anti-nuclear protest from 1984-1987, see Elizabeth Heneghan Ondaatje, *Trends in Anti-Nuclear Protests in the United States, 1984-1987* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 1989).
[4] "Peace Trek Steps Off in '60s Mood," *Los Angeles Times*, Southland ed., 2 March 1986, p. B1.

Essentially, the Great Peace March aimed to take the message of disarmament directly to the public, mobilize public opinion in its favor, and convert that opinion into a massive oppositional political culture. Such a snowballing of opposition would, Mixner assumed, encourage the Reagan administration to pursue not only a policy of nuclear disarmament, but also a less aggressive foreign policy, and more egalitarian social and economic programs. Its scope and anticipated reach gave the Great Peace March, and its parent organization PRO-Peace (short for People Reaching Out for Peace) the dubious honor of heralding the start of an entirely new "movement," one that seemingly intended to accomplish all that the existing anti-nuclear movement had hitherto failed to achieve.

This chapter explores how the Great Peace March evolved from its original incarnation as a glitzy, mainstream affair under PRO-Peace, to a grassroots endeavor that displayed a very different character. It looks at the identities of individual marchers, and how those interacted in the March community, itself a kind of microcosm for the broader anti-nuclear movement. Within an environment of declining public and media interest in the anti-nuclear movement, a variety of styles of activism came together in this ambitious attempt at reinvigorating the anti-nuclear movement. How and why activists on the Great Peace March advocated different approaches to anti-nuclear activism within the confines of the March itself, and the community within it, tells us a lot about the nature of participatory democracy and its practice in the context of a large and varied group. Just like other communities of anti-nuclear activism, tensions between organizational strategy and moral principles were present on the Great Peace March, but their operation in this unique context highlights additional factors. The experience of the March shows that the anti-nuclear movement's relationship with middle America was complex and multifaceted, due in no small part to the direct engagement marchers had with American communities across the entire nation. Maximizing these encounters as sources of peace movement growth, therefore, was an original and lasting aim of the Great Peace March. The presence of radical marchers, including those whose commitment to nuclear disarmament was more personal than political, ensured that the meeting of the Peace March and hundreds of middle American communities would result in tense debates over the role of "personal" or "lifestyle" politics on the March.

These debates were by no means unique to the Great Peace March, but their presence within this type of activist community in 1986 raises additional questions about the

function of performative dissent in the anti-nuclear movement of the mid-1980s. Just as movement organizers argued that mainstream public support was essential to the growth and success of the movement, there still existed a sizeable contingent of more radical organizations, smaller groups, and individuals, who embraced personally satisfying methods of expressing their opposition to the nuclear arms race. It was the meeting of these seemingly oppositional styles of activism within the March community that heightens their significance; as the March encountered rural communities unfamiliar with countercultural lifestyles, many marchers argued that the display of such lifestyles ought to be minimized in favor of a more coherent, palatable anti-nuclear message. Middle America, they argued, would all too easily view the Great Peach March as a shambolic gathering of hippies who could not let go of the 1960s, lest the March be branded as a unified, ordinary community, comprised of families, grandparents, students, and professionals.

The challenge of the Great Peace March in designing an effective image and voice speaks to the tensions between pragmatism and idealism that most social movements encounter. As Francesca Polletta argues, organizational conflicts within social movements over participatory democracy are never as simple as this "clash between moral principle and political reality."[5] On the Great Peace March, given its nature as a nine-month-long protest, the practice of egalitarianism and the nature of March decision-making were issues that were debated daily. As the March was in the public eye on a daily basis, its image was a continual matter of concern. And as much as practical realities may have dominated the organizational dilemmas of the Peace March – not least the matters of feeding, sleeping, occasionally showering, and transporting equipment for a large group of people – ideas about the practice of democracy and the meaning of peace in such practices were equally prescient concerns. In light of the legacies of the 1960s, the Great Peace March of 1986 can be studied as an experiment in contesting those legacies, insofar as they mattered to several hundred people, travelling across the nation on foot, in the name of nuclear disarmament.

[5] Francesca Polletta, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 12.

Wide-scale public debate and media coverage of nuclear fears and Cold War dangers, whilst prescient in 1982 and 1983, had been in decline since the beginning of 1984, prompting many anti-nuclear organizers to seek ways to redress this decline.[6] Mobilization various social movement constituencies and responding to perceived windows of political opportunity, some within the anti-nuclear movement hoped to create a new sphere of opposition to nuclear weapons. The disinterest with which the American public viewed the movement would be overcome, they argued, by utilization a new language and style of protest. Attempting to place itself squarely within mainstream political culture, yet without the rhetoric of fear that characterized much anti-nuclear activism in the earlier part of the decade, these organizers hoped to persuade ordinary Americans that "peace is patriotic."[7] One such organizer was David Mixner, who saw this tactic as the most ideal way to move the peace movement forward in early 1985. Mixner had worked on Eugene McCarthy's presidential campaign in 1968, had been one of four core organizers of the Vietnam War Moratorium in October 1969, and also served as national co-chairman of Colorado Senator Gary Hart's presidential bid in 1984. Responding to his children's concerns about nuclear war, just like so many other movement organizers, Mixner devised a movement around his conviction that mobilization public opinion could inspire a mass movement dedicated to bringing about nuclear disarmament, and to restoring hope amongst Americans worried about the seeming inevitability of the nuclear arms race.[8]

Mixner envisaged PRO-Peace as a wealthy, reputable, highly publicized, endorsed venture, with a paid staff and a corporate image. The organization was essentially a "big machine," one "completely oriented to attract media attention," and was built on the premise that if such an image were maintained, support could be gleaned from sectors of the public hitherto untapped by the anti-nuclear movement.[9] Through this particular

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[6] See David S. Meyer, "Protest Cycles and Political Process: American Peace Movements in the Nuclear Age," *Political Research Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (1993), p. 470.
[7] On this idea, see Sue Guist, *Peace Like a River: A Personal Journey Across America* (Santa Fe, NM: Ocean Tree Books, 1991), p. 28.
[8] Kathleen Hendrix, "Marchers' Credibility on the Line: Celebrities Join Group to Publicize Pro-Peace Trek," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 October 1985, pp. F1, F21.
[9] Diane Hara, quoted in Kathleen Hendrix, "Peace March: The Long Thin Line Gets Thinner," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 March 1986, p. H21; Dan Weinshenker to 'Mom & Dad,' 22 March 1987, Great Peace March

approach, marchers would "spread the gospel of peace" across the nation and inspire amongst ordinary Americans, according to Mixner, "the belief that they can do something about the nuclear arms race."[10] The creation of this "moral force" of public opinion was ambitious; Mixner purposefully aimed for "something so immense that it would in itself demonstrate what commitment and will can do."[11] Similarly, PRO-Peace literature spoke about "restoring hope" to a world where "a sense of individual powerlessness" had resulted from a runaway arms race. A movement of ordinary citizens on a major peace march would be transformative, as "their courage and dedication will inspire in millions both the renewed hope that the nuclear threat can be removed and the new will to act on that hope."[12]

Various drafts of the GPM statement of purpose reflect the wide scope of the March, its intended impact, and the ideas proffered by PRO-Peace. The statements emphasized the significance of people power, and an assumed heritage of nonviolent protest inherited from Gandhi, King, and Thoreau. This emphasis placed the GPM, interestingly, in the pacifist tradition. By stating "it is through individual acts of conscience that the movement to abolish nuclear weapons will prevail," PRO-Peace clearly demonstrated a strong identification, if not an affinity, with personalist varieties of pacifism. In doing so, PRO-Peace hoped for the GPM to exist within the tradition of pacifist opposition to nuclear weapons, yet moving its reach far beyond what pacifists had hitherto achieved. The results it anticipated were no less emphatic:

> The March will spark nine months of grassroots organizing and media coverage which will educate and mobilize millions of people in this country to abolish nuclear weapons. The scope and dignity of the March will draw thousands of new volunteers and donors to the peace movement. Activities and events of the March will affect the lives of us all, and generate a list of millions of people who support global nuclear disarmament. At the conclusion of the March, thousands of marchers and those inspired by the March will return home more dedicated to pursuing peace within their communities.[13]

Records, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania (hereafter GPM Records), Box 19, Folder 2.

[10] Mary McGrory, "A Moratorium for the 80s," *Washington Post*, 2 April 1985, p. A2.

[11] Jack W. Germond and Jules Witcover, "Planning the Ultimate Peace March," *San Francisco Chronicle* 11 September 1985, p. C9.

[12] "Great Peace March Statement of Principles," draft, 10 October 1985, PRO-Peace Records, Swarthmore College Peace Collection, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania (hereafter PRO-P Records), Box 1, Folder 2. 03733-4

[13] PRO-Peace, "The Great Peace March Statement of Purpose," 22 January 1986, p. 2, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 2.

Emphasizing the potential of citizen action and the mobilizing power of a committed community of peace marchers – whose "dignity" would attract new support, Mixner's vision of the GPM was particularly unique, and according to anti-nuclear movement leaders, particularly misguided.[14]

With this idea of citizen agency, the campaign of the Great Peace March aimed at involving as many Americans as possible in a renewed climate of anti-nuclear fervor. Throughout 1985, PRO-Peace revealed grand plans for a contingent of 5,000 marchers, a support crew equipped with portable showers, toilets, kitchens, a laundry, and enough comforts to enable middle class Americans to take part. A "hospital unit, day-care center, waste and water recycling facilities, even an internal radio station" were also planned, furthering the image of a wealthy, organized endeavor.[15]

"These Yuppie peace marches sure ain't like the good ol' days!"

The idea of middle class comforts on a peace march was an intriguing concept, yet fit perfectly with the style of mainstream, middle class protest organizing championed by PRO-Peace, Beyond War, and other organizations.
Source: Joe Thompson, *PRO-Peace Profile*, August 1985, p. 3, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 7.

[14] David McReynolds, interview by the author, 12 November 2010, New York City; Leslie Cagan, interview by the author, 11 November 2010, New York City.
[15] Germond and Witcover, "Planning the Ultimate Peace March," p. C9.

PRO-Peace itself had a salaried staff, an office on Beverly Boulevard in Los Angeles, and was using computers, "further evidence of a 1980s-style professionalism unheard of in the peace movement."[16] The removal from traditional peace movement organizing seemed dramatic; as the *Washington Post* commented, PRO-Peace's "full computer setup… gave a professional '80s aura to the groovy '60s scenario."[17] As the style of PRO-Peace different markedly from traditional stereotypes of peace movement activism, the organization succeeded in distancing itself from the anti-nuclear movement's popular image of low budget, grassroots protest reminiscent of the 1960s.

Just as PRO-Peace intended, this professional image encouraged the involvement of non-traditional peace movement supporters. As PRO-Peace staffer Torie Osborn commented, "we tapped people who had never given [money] to the peace movement, people who were impressed by the activity and spirit in the office."[18] This was partially a response to the lack of support from established sources of support, and partially a means to re-mould the dominant mode of leftist peace activism. Osborn suggested that PRO-Peace's ambitions in soliciting non-traditional support "will raise the standard of political organizing on the left."[19] The "feverish intensity" with which PRO-Peace sought support from Hollywood celebrities and others in the entertainment industry further demonstrated this non-traditional approach.[20] However, this also reinforced an underlying goal of appealing to the public independent of any notions of partisanship, negativity, the potential "stigma" of the grassroots left, or the memories of 1960s style activism. Mixner's grand ambition and style further separated PRO-Peace and the Great Peace March from traditional anti-nuclear ventures with, as *Mother Jones* observed, a "rhetoric and delivery [that] drew upon firebrand evangelism as well as the human potential movement."[21] As such, the Great Peace March was borne from a lofty idealism, matched with untested methods that were quite foreign to the anti-nuclear movement, its membership, and its constituencies.

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[16] Howard Cushnir, "The Great Peace March That Couldn't," *Mother Jones*, June 1986, p. 40.
[17] Mike Sager, "Marching to Save the World," *Washington Post Magazine*, 9 November 1986, p. 23.
[18] Quoted in Bernard Ohanian and Kathryn Olney, "We Might Have Been Successful," *Mother Jones*, June 1986, p. 43.
[19] Quoted in Ohanian and Olney, "We Might Have Been Successful," p. 43.
[20] Cushnir, "Great Peace March," p. 40.
[21] Cushnir, "Great Peace March," p. 40.

Familiar benefactors of progressive causes assisted in PRO-Peace fundraising. Courting celebrities, for many professional anti-nuclear campaigns, was necessary to raise publicity and funds.
Source: *PRO-Peace Profile*, December-January 1985-1986, p. 5, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 7.

Mixner didn't operate entirely independently to the established anti-nuclear movement. In drafting PRO-Peace literature and promotional material, he sought the advice of prominent figures within the movement. In soliciting responses on the GPM Statement of Purpose from legislators, activist academics, and peace movement organizers, PRO-Peace aimed to cover all its bases with a comprehensive and palatable approach. The organization received supportive feedback from Congressman Ron Dellums (D-California), Bishop of Detroit Thomas Gumbleton, the AFSC, various state and city Freeze groups, Norman Solomon of the FOR, and Plowshares activist Molly Rush, amongst others. Most supported the general premise of the GPM. Some, however, felt its ideas were too narrow, and wanted the GPM Statement of Purpose and the ideas behind it broadened, to take into account issues such as racism, sexism, conventional weapons, and electoral drives, to name a few.[22]

More specifically, not all were supportive of PRO-Peace's approach or its language. Randy Kehler, who had recently left the Freeze Campaign in St. Louis for his home in

[22] See, for example, Molly Rush to PRO-Peace, 5 December 1985; Diane Aronson to Tim Carpenter, 3 December 1985; Pat Gross to Tim Carpenter, 6 December 1985; and Gary Ferdman to Tim Carpenter, 16 December 1985. All items in PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 2.

Western Massachusetts, told David Mixner he felt the idea was appealing in its approach and its attitude towards nonviolence and peace:

> Most of all I like the call for greater commitment, risk-taking, personal sacrifice – the call for unrelenting effort – for this is certainly what it will take to turn the nuclear arms race around. I am convinced that the great volume and variety of educational and consciousness-raising activities of the past four years have brought many people to the point of personal readiness for this kind of effort. Imaginative, dramatic action of the sort you are planning – especially if set in the context of a longer-term, transnational strategy for achieving a meaningful yet realistic goal – may well provide the necessary inspiration for people to make this greater commitment.[23]

The problem with PRO-Peace, Kehler argued, was that it was too vague in its planned application of these ideas. PRO-Peace literature was adept at mobilizing ideas about citizen empowerment and feel-good activism for mainstream Americans, but as a peace organization, its structure was indeed quite undefined. Moreover, PRO-Peace was an entirely new entity, that although geared towards a relatively short-term campaign – the GPM – hinted at a longer term strategy towards nuclear disarmament and a vague ideal of 'world peace.'

Kehler also found Mixner's organizational model unsatisfying. The GPM was not to be a democratically run endeavor; PRO-Peace would operate as its bureaucratic organizing body from Los Angeles, with Mixner's executive directorship, a paid staff, and a board of directors guiding the promotion, image, and activities of the March. "It seems to me," Kehler responded:

> … that at least <u>one</u> of the things needed in order to overturn or transform the attitudes and practices that now push us closer and closer to nuclear catastrophe is, for want of a better term, "citizen empowerment." […] What's needed are actions and strategies that encourage people to become more involved in, and thus more responsible for, important decisions that affect their lives.[24]

For pacifists like Kehler, a former draft resister and war tax resister, PRO-Peace appeared a bit of a contradiction; its leader discussed nonviolence and mass citizen movements, yet still framed his campaign in a bureaucratic organization that failed to allow movement participants to be serve "no other role than to courageously provide their bodies for this difficult ten-month trek."[25] Leslie Cagan of MfS echoed these sentiments, and worried about Mixer's assumption that through "individual acts of

[23] Randy Kehler to David Mixner, 8 July 1985, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 12.
[24] Randy Kehler to David Mixner, 8 July 1985, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 12.
[25] Randy Kehler to David Mixner, 8 July 1985, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 12.

conscience" from marchers, an inspirational force of social movement action would result. Failing to properly define the relationship between individual and group action in the peace movement, and confusing the personal and the political results from that action, PRO-Peace ensured that, from its inception, the established peace movement would not take it particularly seriously.[26] The media, too, commented on PRO-Peace as a curious spectacle, where Hollywood celebrities mixed with ordinary folks in a combination of glitzy campaigning and grassroots protest.[27] As memories of 1960s-style peace marches met a new image of mainstream, well-financed, professional organizing, the Great Peace March emerged as a flawed, yet unique endeavor.

CRISIS AND TRANSFORMATION

With its grand plan of a nine-month travelling campaign came PRO-Peace's struggle to accumulate funding. Whilst funds were pledged from Mixner's contacts in Los Angeles, such as Hollywood celebrities and entrepreneurs, the anticipated $21 million did not materialize. Neither did the 5,000 marchers sought, each of whom was required to raise around $3,700 themselves – one dollar for each mile of the March.[28] To many PRO-Peace staff members, Mixner's failure to raise the necessary funds for the GPM came as no surprise. The illusory promise of a successful March was put down to Mixner's lack of accountability, and a certain arrogance with PRO-Peace's style that "turned off many, many people" within the traditional peace movement.[29] Some also felt the ambition of 5,000 marchers crossing the deserts of the southwest, the Rocky Mountains, and the plains of Nebraska – especially during summer – reflected PRO-Peace's "logistical naïveté."[30] In any event, the 1,400 people who had been accepted as marchers arrived in Los Angeles in late February 1986, to a more modest spectacle than had been advertised. Rumours abounded as to the financial troubles in which PRO-Peace found itself; insurance was not forthcoming, camping permits were denied, donations were far less

[26] See Leslie Cagan to David Mixner, 23 December 1985, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 2.
[27] See, for example, "Peace Trek Steps Off in '60s Mood," p. B1; and Bob Sipchen, "Taking Their Message Across America," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 February 1986, pp. D1, D20-D21.
[28] Kathleen Hendrix, "Marchers Prepare to Start Long Walk for Peace," *Los Angeles Times*, 28 February 1986, pp. H1, H4.
[29] Dan Weinshenker to 'Mom & Dad,' 22 March 1987, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[30] "The Great Peace March: Denver Evaluation," [June 1986], p. 4, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 3.

than anticipated, and corporate sponsorship had proved largely unattainable.[31] Mixner's vision of a well financed, professional campaign did depend on large, sustained financial backing, and with his failure to demonstrate the success of his new model, also failed to alter the style of mainstream anti-nuclear protest.

Despite these setbacks, the determined group of marchers departed downtown Los Angeles on 1 March 1986, heading east towards the Mojave Desert. At this time, with the failures of the "big" approach becoming painfully apparent, a more grassroots style of peace march began to take hold. Mixner referred to the marchers as "the genuine article," and lengthy profiles in the *Los Angeles Times* stressed the ordinariness of the marchers.[32] On 14 March 1986, with poor weather, low supplies, and a deterioration in planning and organization leading to an ever-dwindling group of marchers, PRO-Peace officially folded. Creditors repossessed vehicles and many marchers gave up and returned home, but a sizeable group remained, camped in the small town of Barstow, California, and were determined to continue. It was here that the Great Peace March began to redefine itself in a more modest way, shedding the corporate image devised by PRO-Peace, and characterizing itself as a more traditional peace march; it did, after all, have more in common with the WRL's 1976 Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice than it did with, say, Live Aid. This small group of marchers stranded in the desert were indeed, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported:

> … a far cry from the well-financed group of 5,000 that were to leave a star-studded send-off at a packed [Los Angeles] Coliseum and set off for Washington, erecting their movable monument to creative and alternative technology, "Peace City," every night as they marched, financed like the Olympics by an impressed corporate America and an admiring entertainment community.[33]

As PRO-Peace's vision of glitz and glamour disappeared, and with it, the corporate style and message, an authentic grassroots organization took its place. With a new incorporated organization, The Great Peace March for Global Nuclear Disarmament, Inc., and free of the top-down organizational hierarchy of PRO-Peace, around 400

[31] See Hendrix, "Marchers Prepare," pp. H1, H4.
[32] Hendrix, "Marchers Prepare," p. H1. See also Bob Sipchen, "Their Tales of the Great Trek for Peace Begin," *Los Angeles Times*, 23 February 1986, p. D1.
[33] Hendrix, "Peace March," p. H1.

marchers resumed their trek on Good Friday, 28 March 1986, and headed towards Las Vegas.[34]

Between leaving Los Angeles and being stranded in Barstow, the Peace March became, according to former PRO-Peace staff member Howard Cushnir, a "strange amalgam of a mainstream group, a left-wing veneer, a dictatorial structure, and a non-stop media blitz."[35] It was during the two weeks of re-orientation and re-organization in Barstow that tense debate over the style of the new March occurred. Many marchers voiced their dislike of the corporate image that PRO-Peace had cultivated, stressing that a more honest, down-to-earth, grassroots approach would be more effective in building the appropriate levels of grassroots support in communities the March passed through on its journey. Field director Tim Carpenter stressed the need for the group to organize itself effectively as a "citizens' educational movement." This would involve a "commitment to coalition work," forging relationships with other peace groups that PRO-Peace failed to, letter writing, bumper stickers, a weekly fast to "build our spiritual strength," and lobbying city councils and state Congresses to pass supporting resolutions. These things would all be part of the key process of the Great Peace March in the wake of PRO-Peace's failure, designed not only towards building a "recognizable national image," but also as essential steps to test, as Carpenter suggested, "how we can mobilize and agitate more effectively.[36] Finding the ideal mode of organizing, as far removed from Mixner's "ambitious blend of high-tech showmanship and deep personal conviction" as possible, was needed to communicate the urgency of the need for nuclear disarmament in more authentic, effective ways.[37] As such, marchers proposed strategies more familiar to traditional peace activism and pacifism, and in light of the GPM's financial limitations, more realistic.

This re-organization was not without difficulty, and it was during this two-week hiatus in Barstow that key tensions over participatory democracy, identity and image were first encountered. Part of the new GPM organization was a marcher contract, which forbade drugs, alcohol, and violence, and required marchers to work, keeping the March on the

[34] Whilst the number of marchers fluctuated for the entire nine-month duration, estimates cite between 300 and 500 full-time marchers completed the entire trek. As the march travelled between New York City and Washington, D.C. in its final week, up to 2,000 marchers were involved.
[35] Cushnir, "Great Peace March," p. 43.
[36] Tim Carpenter to GPM Board of Directors, [April 1986], GPM Records, Box 5, Folder 2.
[37] Cushnir, "Great Peace March," p. 39.

road whilst at the same time preserving the camp as a safe space.[38] Some marchers, committed to ridding the GPM of any form of centralized authority or regulation, rejected this contract, yet still remained with the March. Other "freeloaders" who attached themselves to the March could also not be controlled, with the new City Council and Board of Directors powerless to eject any persons from the March. This compromise between an open, inclusive and non-confrontational community, and the need to maintain some kind of "practical and political viability" would color internal discussion and debate for the duration of the March.[39] Despite its general goal of convincing the American public of an anti-nuclear message, many marchers saw the GPM as an ideal space for the expression of personal or lifestyle politics. Naturally, a group of 400 or so peace activists prepared to walk 3,300 miles across the country would display great political diversity, but the failure of PRO-Peace's hierarchical approach, and the subsequent experiment with consensus-based participatory democracy that evolved in the ensuing months, meant that such diversity would both help and hinder the March. Whilst tensions ran high in Barstow – meetings and negotiations dragged on for days at a time – wider divisions over tactics, image, and style would come to a head some months later. There was, of course, a pragmatic task at hand, not least of all successfully navigating the harsh conditions in the deserts of southeast California, Nevada and Utah. In the meantime, though, the March continued to define itself as a working demonstration of a democratic community, characterized by ordinariness, diversity, and an aversion to corporatism.

NEGOTIATING AN EGALITARIAN IDENTITY

The new Great Peace March was determined to be an egalitarian affair, and one that emphasized principles of peace, nonviolence, and equality in its operation and structure, as well as in its message. Some of this was inherited from PRO-Peace, which actively sought a racial, sexual, and geographic balance in its group of 5,000 marchers. It anticipated 25,000 applications, from which the most suitable group would be chosen,

[38] Franklin Folsom *et al.*, *The Great Peace March: An American Odyssey* (Santa Fe, NM: Ocean Tree Books, 1988), pp. 38, 111.
[39] Tom Johnson, "Shifting Sands: Unfolding Stories from the Great Peace March," p. 8, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 4.

reflecting the intended image of a diverse, ordinary, committed group of citizens.[40] To facilitate this diversity, Mixner did insist, as *Mother Jones* reported, "there will be no financial requirement to walk." Mixner also revealed that he planned to offer scholarships to those potential marchers who were less well off, in order to "make the march as representative of society as possible."[41] Echoing a radical egalitarianism that had characterized other movements in American history, these ideas purported to present an image of a united citizenry within the GPM community. PRO-Peace's thinking was that the American public, inspired by this demonstration of egalitarianism in practice, would follow suit.

Egalitarian ideals aimed at enhancing the authenticity of peace movement activity stemmed from much older traditions of social movement egalitarianism and social reform. In the abolitionist movement, the populist movement in nineteenth century Russia, and more recently in the New Left, social movement actors engaged in effecting a kind of purity in their own structures and processes by demonstrating an alliance with the poor, outcast, or dispossessed. Its members recognized the value in equality, and its ramifications for the practice of participatory democracy. In addition to pursuing equal or egalitarian processes within their organizations, they looked to the poor and dispossessed as "uncorrupted" communities whose experiences demonstrated first hand the oppression wrought by the state. By identifying with this oppression, and mobilizing its victims in a broad coalition of dissent, activists "invested the poor with an uncorrupted authenticity and goodness," as Richard Ellis argues.[42] New Left activists looked to southern blacks, the unemployed and the poor in the urban north, and other victims of the state's oppression in the third world, particularly in Cuba and Vietnam as sources for their own pursuit of radical egalitarianism.[43]

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[40] Leslie Cagan, report on PRO-Peace meeting, 17 October 1985, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 4.

[41] Frank Clancy, "A Walk on the Peace Side," *Mother Jones*, November-December 1985, p. 8. Not many of the marchers who arrived in Los Angeles in late February 1986 before the onset of the GPM had raised the necessary capital, compounding PRO-Peace's financial woes. After the new GPM was incorporated in Barstow in mid-March 1986, it instigated a policy that new marchers ought to pay $15 per day of the March, to help cover financial costs. For some marchers, this was hardly an egalitarian policy. As one marcher argued, the policy was exclusionary, and didn't fit with the GPM's "peaceful" nature. Steve Jones, "The Great 'Peace' March?" n.d., GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.

[42] Richard Ellis, "Romancing the Oppressed: The New Left and the Left Out," *Review of Politics* 58, no. 1 (1996), pp. 117-118.

[43] For a more comprehensive discussion of these ideas in American history, see Richard Ellis, *The Dark Side of the Left: Illiberal Egalitarianism in America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998).

The anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s, however, was no New Left. Its ideological roots as they related to social and economic relations in the United States arose the pacifist tradition, rather than the radical social programs of the New Left. Within the community of the Great Peace March, rather than seeking to utilize the poor and oppressed in a program of solidarity, marchers attempted to build a truly diverse community, a kind of social microcosm. In this sense the March would be a true citizens' movement, one that fellow Americans, nor the state, could not afford to ignore. Its authenticity would inspire more and more Americans to join the Peace March and the resulting movement, which, although vaguely defined, envisioned a snowballing of public demand for nuclear disarmament, both domestically, in Western Europe, and in the Eastern Bloc. The realities of such egalitarian ideals, however, were more difficult to achieve. Despite its outreach activities, the March remained, as marcher Gary Stall regretfully admitted, "predominantly and unfortunately Anglo-White."[44] New Zealand marcher Anne MacFarlane confirmed this reality, recalling "there were next to no black marchers, a few Hispanics. I put this down to their day-to-day problems taking precedence over anti-nuclear issues."[45]

In a general sense, such attitudes were typical of white, middle class peace movements. Some organizers attempted to move beyond this view, citing concerns about deeper systemic injustices that activists could address.[46] Pat Gross, national secretary of Women Strike for Peace, echoed these sentiments, criticizing PRO-Peace's mainstream understanding of the operation of injustice. "White, middle-class people often approach the issue [of human needs] from a kind of cosmic sense of saving the planet," she wrote to Tim Carpenter in December 1985. "But many other Americans think about the killing and destruction going on <u>right</u> <u>now</u> because of this misallocation of resources from human needs to armaments."[47] Still, for all its attempts at paying lip service to such concerns, the Great Peace March was – in name and in mission – a movement for nuclear disarmament. Although its single-issue focus had lost endorsements from groups such as the national body of Mobilization for Survival, its simple message resonated with many marchers untrained in more complex issues of pacifism and radical egalitarianism.

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[44] Gary Stall, transcript of radio report for KGNU, [4 March 1986], GPM Records, Box 20, Folder 10.
[45] Letter to the author, 7 February 2010.
[46] For a further elaboration of these issues, see the discussion on the Fast for Life in Chapter 5 of this thesis.
[47] Pat Gross to Tim Carpenter, 6 December 1985, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 2. Emphasis in original.

Marchers' experiences, however, did enliven some hopes it would successfully engage with the poor and the unemployed, as well as with black and Hispanic communities. In its earliest days, as it reached the outskirts of Los Angeles, marchers encountered an entirely different response from local Hispanic families, contrasting greatly to the indifference of whites, office workers, and commuters in the downtown area. This pattern was to be repeated across the country, especially in non-white enclaves in the outskirts of cities.[48] As *Rolling Stone* reported: "The marchers, most of whom were white and middle-class, were especially moved by the reactions of poor people – unemployed steelworkers in the mill towns of the Midwest, impoverished blacks living in big cities… it seems like the poorer people are, the better they respond."[49] Converting this favorable response into social change, however, was another matter. Just as the New Left's Economic Research and Action Project found that poor and destitute communities were not that interested in broader social change, the Peace March's white, largely middle class members were often alone in promoting nuclear disarmament via their own personal commitment. Sticking to this mode of protest distanced the Great Peace March from its predecessors in the peace movement – 1961's San Francisco to Moscow March for Peace,[50] 1963's Quebec-Washington-Guantanamo Walk for Peace,[51] and 1976's Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice[52] – and emphasized its predominantly white membership. The GPM's style also attempted to distance itself from the reputation of 1960s protest, as it perceived a hostile conservative reaction to images of hippies, radicals, and pacifists. The struggle within the GPM to alternately embrace and tame the expression of such images characterized terse debates within the March community as it traversed the Great Plains.

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[48] See Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, pp. 18-19, 56, 119. See also Gene Gordon, *Lost Journals from the Great Peace March*, p.13, http://wochica.tripod.com/lostjournals/id23.html (accessed 4 April 2009).

[49] William Greider, "One Small Step: One Story the Press Overlooked Last Year Is That Peace Got a Chance," *Rolling Stone*, 15 January 1987, p. 29.

[50] See Günter Wernicke and Lawrence S. Wittner, "Lifting the Iron Curtain: The Peace March to Moscow of 1960-1961," *International History Review* 21, no. 4 (1999), pp. 900-917.

[51] See Marian Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America: Egalitarianism and Protest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), esp. pp. 128-139.

[52] No thorough scholarly treatment of this peace march exists, but its organizers published a comprehensive memoir, which details the Walk's activities, strategies, and philosophy. Vickie Leonard and Tom MacLean, eds., *The Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice* (New York: Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice, 1977). As WRL organizer Ed Hedemann recalled, the Continental March was an explicit attempt "to reenergize the peace movement following the end of the Vietnam War and to shift the emphasis back to disarmament, which had been the main focus before the war. As the Vietnam War was ending, many single issue groups folded and a lot of former activists drifted away. We also felt that an ideal time to do this would be during the 1976 bicentennial." Letter to the author, 25 November 2010.

As much as the GPM's program was a little vague, its membership diverse, and its heritage convoluted, it did maintain that its members – several hundred full time marchers – were a diverse group of ordinary citizens committed to nuclear disarmament and the practice of traditional participatory democracy. Of course, the way to ensure the March could achieve some semblance of success was to get more and more people involved in political activity – voting, letter writing, lobbying representatives, and so on. But could this be done through the vehicle of a mass of committed citizens, walking for peace, engaging with those members of the public it encountered on its journey? Would the public respond to these marchers and take up similar endeavours themselves, reigniting the peace movement in the process? As marcher Dan Weinshenker argued, the very act of marching was something different, and a key device for public relations. "If nothing else, they are fun," he stressed, "and only if things are fun are people going to stay involved."[53] Activities like peace marches were most useful for ensuring that ordinary Americans could contribute something to the peace movement they felt was worthwhile – without getting involved in politics – and thus providing an alternative to political pessimism and apathy, markers of a decline in voter turnout at elections since 1960.[54] As such, Weinshenker commented, the combination of "conscience raising, living a peaceful life, and working in politics are not mutually exclusive."[55] Undertaking the three together, and inspiring the same amongst the public, was the key for a successful peace movement. Within the context of the Great Peace March, this seemed wholly appropriate to many marchers. The March was a place to which each person could "bring not just our political selves or our work selves, but our *whole* selves," as marcher Steve Brigham later wrote.[56] Many marchers really felt that they were really engaging in a politically, morally, spiritually and philosophically fulfilling activity,

[53] Dan Weinshenker to 'Mom & Dad', 22 March 1987, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[54] See Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), p. 35; Paul R. Abramson *et al.*, *Change and Continuity in the 1984 Elections*, rev. ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1987), pp. 102-107.
[55] Dan Weinshenker to 'Mom & Dad', 22 March 1987, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[56] Steve Brigham, "A Laboratory in Democracy: Revisiting the Great Peace March," *Reflections* 2, no. 1 (2000), p. 46.

whilst at the same time communicating "peace" to those they came across on their nine month venture.[57]

In this sense, if "peace" was to be inspired in the hundreds of towns and cities the March passed through, public opinion would have to snowball against the administration's nuclear weapons policies in the wake of the March. One version of the GPM Statement of Purpose developed in Barstow promised that the March's efforts, "like a pebble tossed into a pond, will generate ripples across the surface of our World to inspire the many people, groups, and existing organizations to embrace each other and work together towards this common goal" – nuclear disarmament."[58] Such an attitude, like PRO-Peace's assumptions of "restoring hope," were problematic. Of course not everyone the march encountered would be immediately impressed, inspired, or converted. By its very nature, the March would be also be a temporary or transient presence in each community it came across; marcher Tom Atlee noted that the March "could have only as much impact as a circus or convention coming to town." However, with the right effort, the opposite could be true: "it could provide a quantum leap to local peace activism, energizing existing peaceworkers and involving in long-term ways people who have never considered working for peace before." Atlee felt the March would inspire a "grassroots burst of aliveness" that would ideally involve tens of millions of Americans in a simultaneous demonstration of opposition.[59] What set the Great Peace March apart from previous anti-nuclear efforts in the 1980s was its ability to reach Americans in areas of the country that traditional peace organizations hadn't touched. Rural America was a potential goldmine of public support, but effectively mobilizing this support was suitably difficult, if not impossible. Like its predecessors in 1961, 1963, and 1976, the GPM was confident it could make a dent on Americans in such areas, due to its person-to-person approach, ordinary image, and grassroots style.[60]

The compromise over style and tactics reached by the GPM in Barstow enabled the March to enact key outreach activities with America's "common people" – those

[57] According to Dawn Friesen, a 25-year-old marcher from Denver, "I'm used to being so logical… The march has really developed my emotional side, my spiritual side." Quoted in Greider, "One Small Step," p. 29.
[58] "Statement of Purpose of the Peace Academy of the Great Peace March," [March 1986], GPM Records, Box 1, Folder 2.
[59] Tom Atlee, "Peace City and the Peace Movement," *Thinkpeace* 11, no. 4 (1986), p. 5.
[60] Clear similarities existed in this sense to these other marches. On the Quebec-Washington-Guantanamo Walk for Peace of 1963 and its approach to social change, see Mollin, *Radical Pacifism*, pp. 128-129.

ordinary folks along the March route who offered shelter, food, and support.[61] Since the route between Los Angeles and Chicago was mostly populated by small towns and mid-sized regional cities such Denver and Omaha, most of the March's time would be spent attempting to inspire Americans in more rural, conservative areas. The Mormon stronghold of Utah and the farmlands of Nebraska were perceived as particularly tough regions to penetrate.

The geography of the GPM's route meant that rural isolation, especially in the southwest and the Great Plains, would make it difficult for marchers to effectively mobilize voluminous public support for disarmament.
Source: GPM Records, Series IX, photo collection.

Outreach in these areas meant connecting with rural America in the most intimate terms, and marchers realized that this connection needed to be exploited. Allen Smith felt that going through small towns was effective; residents there who saw the marchers helped to humanize the peace movement, and humanize "political activity in general."[62] Activists assumed, unsurprisingly, that rural America held negative stereotypes of protest and the left. Nixon's "silent majority" thesis, the "backlash" against liberals and radicals on the

[61] Hendrix, "Peace March," p. H1.
[62] Allen Smith, "The Great Peace March: Chicago to D.C.," [August 1986], p. 3, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 10.

left, and the concept of "middle Americans" in the late 1960s were recent memories for many peace activists seeking to avoid attracting the same stigma as their predecessors had in the 1960s. Contesting the memories of the 1960s, and the reputation of activism, then, was best done in the nation's heartland.

Marchers argued that these memories and stereotypes were best challenged on a personal level. Marcher J. Walter Cobb felt that engaging with farmers in the Midwest individually essential; farmers would be "more likely to be influenced by our commitment and personal conversation than by a depersonalized mass march by their homes," he argued.[63] However, Cobb argued that the reverse was true in cities, where "urban media people want bigness, numbers, drama, glitter and glare."[64] The spectacle of a mass of committed activists would, Cobb assumed, present to urban populations the appropriate image, in a space where personal contact with local residents was not as practical. The need to cater to mainstream media was not so prominent in the earlier stages of the March, where small town newspapers and local television news presented adequate opportunity for effective coverage.[65] The challenges provided by metropolitan environments did mean that the March's impact was lessened in this regard; Steve Brigham noted that in contrast to small towns, "the big cities… never paid us any mind."[66] These two approaches – catering to rural and urban America – suggests that the March had different ideas of how political goals would best be achieved in areas where vastly different types of social capital and political opportunity existed.

As the Great Peace March slowly made its way towards Chicago, it attempted to combat the political disinterest, isolation, and rural conservatism it encountered in small towns along the route. Marchers appealing to what they thought were core community values, using their own ideas of anti-nuclear humanism to communicate their message most effectively. The nature of everyday life in towns and cities of the southwest and the Great Plains, which the March passed through in the summer of 1986, was often very apolitical, as marchers understood it. The Mormon farming community of Boulder, Utah, for example, was generally "wary of outsiders." Although local primary school children

[63] J. Walter Cobb, "The Quest For March Unity," 14 June 1986, p. 2, GPM Records, Box 5, Folder 12.
[64] J. Walter Cobb, "The Quest For March Unity," 14 June 1986, p. 3, GPM Records, Box 5, Folder 12.
[65] See Allen Karcher *et al*., "Grand Junction Assessment," [May 1986], p. 1, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 11.
[66] Brigham, "Laboratory in Democracy," p. 41.

expressed an interest in the March, local schoolteacher Sue Bassett commented that "parents here have no desire to know what's going on in the outside world."[67] How effective could the March really be in such an environment? A similar mood existed in Rifle, Colorado, where locals disinterested in politics were "resentful of [the marchers'] ability to take off and walk across the country."[68] Further east, in attempting a post-March survey outside a Des Moines, Iowa, shopping mall, Ed Fallon noted that around 70% of people approached "flatly refused to even stop and acknowledge our existence."[69] Locals, he surmised, were "so involved with the mundane aspects of day to day living as to feel no strong motivating inclination to become more actively opposed to the arms race."[70] Here, marchers connected public apathy with the realities of everyday life in the nation's heartland; mobilizing Americans in such areas without a visible oppositional political culture was, admittedly, an experimental and optimistic venture.

This casts the marchers in a certain privileged light. As many of them were retirees or students, taking a nine-month hiatus from the "drudgery" of everyday life was a feasible option.[71] Most marchers were also from urban areas; Sue Guist, from San Jose in California, relished the opportunity to feel as though she was doing something meaningful with her life, however small and insignificant her individual contribution to nuclear disarmament might be.[72] Such sentiments did set the marchers apart from those "ordinary people" they were trying to mobilize with their anti-nuclear message. A common taunt in the blue-collar rust belt of Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania centred on the impression that marchers were "independently wealthy people who could afford to stop working for nine months."[73] Like other marchers, Tom Atlee recognized there was a way around this, using person-to-person contact as a means to transcend marcher stereotypes. In turn, this could be an ideal form of publicity. Atlee felt that the March ought to show local and national media:

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[67] Sue Bassett, transcript of interview by Connie Fledderjohann, 6 June 1987, GPM Records, Box 21, Folder 1.
[68] Audrey Squires, transcript of interview by Connie Fledderjohann, 10 June 1987, GPM Records, Box 21, Folder 1.
[69] Ed Fallon, "Des Moines Great Peace March Evaluation," [July 1986], p. 1, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 11.
[70] Ed Fallon, "Des Moines Great Peace March Evaluation," [July 1986], p. 2, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 11.
[71] See Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 23.
[72] See Guist, *Peace Like a River*, esp. Chapter 1.
[73] Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 133.

> … that the real story in this march is the mothers crying as we pass, the young man discussing bombs with an 87-year old great-grandmother on her lonely porch in Nebraska, or the young Mormon couple who joined a demonstration at the Nevada Test Site because they'd talked to marchers and decided to do their part.[74]

Here, ordinariness was used as an inspirational caveat in extraordinary circumstances. "We ourselves are the message" urged Atlee, emphasizing the March's humanism, its eschewing of any alienating strategic or economic analysis, and its attempt at using the medium of a peace march as a message of peace, hope, and an antidote to public cynicism, political apathy, and negative stereotypes about the left.[75] In 1986, striving to avoid identification as a "demonstration" or "protest," the GPM advertised itself as a simple, nonpartisan, and "dignified" statement for peace, thereby contesting the heritage of activism upon which it was built.[76]

IMAGE, UNITY, AND INDIVIDUALISM

Within the March community, this image of polite protest did not sit well with all marchers, nor with those they encountered along the route. As marcher June Thompson commented, "people are happy enough to wave and cheer and shout peace slogans, but fewer are willing to hear the message about why global nuclear disarmament is crucial."[77] Most people marchers spoke with raised their doubts about whether the GPM could anticipate any form of success.[78] Some marchers aimed to combat this, continually stressing the March reinforce the importance of the overriding March goals, rather than drawing attention to their style, diversity, and vague concepts of citizen commitment and "hope." Tom Atlee recommended the GPM retain a clear educational focus:

> Fear of nuclear war and the almost universal desire to end the nuclear threat provide the basis for getting people's attention, and the Great Peace March is an effective means of doing that. But how effective it will be in actually helping to

[74] Tom Atlee, "Ordinary Folks," n.d., GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2. Emphasis in original.
[75] Tom Atlee, "Ordinary Folks," n.d., GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2. Emphasis in original.
[76] John Lofland, *Polite Protesters: The American Peace Movement of the 1980s* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993), p. 106.
[77] June Thompson, "Whooping Through the Loop: The Great Peace March Reaches Chicago," 21 August 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 11.
[78] See Ed Fallon, "Des Moines Great Peace March Evaluation," [July 1986], p. 3, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 11.

> end the nuclear threat depends very much on how it helps people to understand the real causes of the arms race and how they can actually affect those causes.[79]

Other marchers agreed, emphasization that the sheer diversity of concerns promoted by various marchers detracted from the effectiveness of the March as a whole. In this sense, argued another marcher, the GPM needed "a singular educational outreach project, properly managed, [which] would restore some semblance of respectability to the March."[80] Doing so might compromise the spirit of openness and egalitarianism that had developed in the March community since Barstow, but the issue of its effectiveness still remained an underlying concern of many marchers as well as sympathetic supporters.

In this sense, it was essential that "favorable and effective media coverage" be attained in order to maximize the March's impact.[81] J. Walter Cobb argued that minimizing individual behavior, coordinating work crews and drivers, and involving local organizers and helpers to march in unison whilst passing through a town, would help present a unified image to townspeople. This concern was often the domain of older, slightly less radical marchers, who felt that the GPM should target middle class Americans. A respectable, unified image was the way to achieve this. The GPM's most senior marcher Franklin Folsom, a 79-year-old author and former member of the Old Left, felt that "we are by and large middle class, and there is merit in that… We are a middle-class movement trying to influence members of the middle class."[82] Again, this had much to do with emphazing the ordinariness of the marchers. According to Sue Guist, "The March'll need people like me in Nebraska. A middle-aged, ordinary grandmother, I looked like middle America."[83]

It emerged early on that local media were not focusing on such "ordinary" marchers, instead turning their attention to those with a more outlandish dress sense. A follow up report after the March's activities in Grand Junction, Colorado, stressed that the "lack of ordinary folks (i.e. teachers, families) on TV/press coverage was seen as

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[79] John Atlee, "What is the Main Purpose of the Reborn Great Peace March?" 21 April 1986, p. 3, GPM Records, Box 1.
[80] Wayne Vincent, untitled account of marcher experience, 5 June 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[81] J. Walter Cobb, "The Quest For March Unity," 14 June 1986, p. 2, GPM Records, Box 5, Folder 12.
[82] Quoted in Iver Peterson, "500 Hardy Souls Press Peace March in Desert," *New York Times*, 26 April 1986, p. A6.
[83] See Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 55.

counterproductive."[84] Similar findings had also occurred in Denver.[85] Although the March prided itself on being an diverse, egalitarian community, March organizers still hoped that it be portrayed in local media as a white, middle class movement. This would soften the stereotype of hippie radicals that often preceded the March, something many marchers worried was damaging to their efforts.[86]

Often, media attention and public reaction focused on younger, radical marchers, describing them as leftovers of 1960s-style hippiedom.
Source: GPM Records, Series IX, photo collection.

This issue of respectability in the eyes of the public was to prove divisive. In its simple appeal for nuclear disarmament, though, the GPM had a "broad, non-specific appeal," it elicited "strong emotional responses," and its "circus media atmosphere is like a giant advertisement for the peace movement."[87] Whilst many, mostly older marchers hoped to offer the public this simple, polite movement of "ordinary" citizens, radical factions of marchers approached the Great Peace March with a wholly different perspective. For

[84] Allen Karcher *et al*., "Grand Junction Assessment," [May 1986], p. 4, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 11.
[85] "The Great Peace March: Denver Evaluation," [June 1986], p. 6, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 3.
[86] See comments by Nancy Taylor, quoted in Folsom *et al*., *Great Peace March*, p. 111.
[87] Tom Atlee, "Consider This Mission: To Empower People for Peace," n.d., p. 1, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.

these largely younger marchers, the GPM was the perfect arena for the expression of personal political philosophies. Here, the attainment of specific goals of mobilizing public support for the anti-nuclear movement was secondary to the experiment of "living peace." One group of marchers rejected any form of authority, camping under a black flag and earning the tag "anarchists."[88] When two anarchists secured places on the GPM Board of Directors after an election in mid-June, any effective exercise of authority or decision-making from the Board was impossible.[89] Division on the Board also emerged over the fact that young children – some as young as four – were participating in the voting.[90] Additional controversies emerged over whether marchers should be bussed past sections of highway considered unsafe (as opposed to walking the entire way), whether marchers should walk together as one large group or in separate clusters, or whether financial control of the March should rest with the entire body of marchers, as opposed to a small finance committee. Whilst it might be appropriate to think of such events as a clash of idealists and pragmatists, individual philosophies of protest give a more accurate sense of how a community of activists operated in the context of a movement both embracing – and rejecting – popular stereotypes of peace activism as they existed in the mid-1980s.

To some marchers, these terse debates over internal March politics were essentially "small-spirited bickering", and disagreements over lifestyle, personal expression, and the political organization of the March detracted from marcher unity and the need to focus on the March's principal goal.[91] However, as Folsom *et al*. later explained:

> A sizeable group of Marchers felt that nuclear weapons are but a symptom of society's ills and that peace can only be achieved by each individual searching for and finding inner peace and exemplifying that in his or her daily life.[92]

This commitment to personalism superseded the official GPM goal of nuclear disarmament, and demonstrates an individualist pursuit of personal politics common amongst younger marchers. As Anne MacFarlane recalled, "some of the younger marchers seemed to have minimal or fluctuating interest in our aims… For those young,

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[88] Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 38. Sue Guist recalled that the anarchists were "the only ones with a dress code: they always wore black." Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 128.
[89] Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 113. See also Brigham, "Laboratory in Democracy," p. 43.
[90] Gene Gordon, *Lost Journals from the Great Peace March*, p.16, http://wochica.tripod.com/lostjournals/id23.html (accessed 4 April 2009).
[91] Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 116.
[92] Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 117.

minimally–committed 'marchers,' the march was viewed as an escape from perhaps the family, study, the job market."[93] The "spirit" of the march, its escapism, and its countercultural potential were of crucial importance to many younger marchers. According to Martin Sickler of San Diego, the communal aspect of the GPM's experiment was most invigorating. Sickler described himself as "a real life relic from the sixties" and often went under the name "Born Again Hippie."[94] Describing the GPM as "a neo-60s movement," Sickler's enthusiasm for countercultural expression was curious; at the time of the March, he was only 25 years old, hardly a genuine product of the era.[95]

Martin Sickler (aka Born Again Hippie) on the GPM, wearing what he described as an "authentic '60s helmet" that he had bought at a swap meet in a San Diego suburb.[96]
Source: GPM Records, Series IX, photo collection.

[93] Letter to the author, 7 February 2010.
[94] See "Rent-A-Hippie," *Homefront: San Diego's Independent Newsletter of the Great Peace March*, January 1986, p. 4, PRO-P Records, Box 1, Folder 7.
[95] Kathleen A. Hughes and Trish Hall, "Great Peace March Ends up 3,115 Miles Short of Destination," *Wall Street Journal*, 20 March 1986, p. 22.
[96] Janny Scott, Rainbow Invasion a Peaceful Event: Gathering Marks One Man's Crusade Against N-Arms," *Los Angeles Times*, San Diego ed., 28 October 1985, p. A2.

Sickler and other marchers interested in personal expression, countercultural ideals, and the freedom of alternative lifestyles on the Great Peace March were engaging in a type of "lifestyle politics" that William Chaloupka defines as "intensely private personal practices in the name of … larger issues of world peace."[97] The ideas behind these practices – rejecting authority, alternative dress codes, an extreme commitment to participatory democracy, and so on – demonstrates a willingness to extend the promises of radical protest into the confines of moderate, mainstream anti-nuclear campaigning. As the GPM was conceived as a decidedly conventional expression of middle class humanism and simple messages of "hope" in the midst of the nuclear arms race, the presence of alternative ideas challenged the legitimacy of such an approach. This increased after PRO-Peace abandoned the GPM in Barstow, and whilst some marchers continued to approach the GPM as Mixner had – appealing to middle America through a safe vehicle of polite protest – alternative voices on the March demanded a more comprehensive approach that would be personally, politically, and ideologically satisfying.[98] Moreover, they rejected the idea that the March pander to conservative fears of radical protest and the stigma of the 1960s, preferring instead to ignore such concerns about the image of the March.

WHO OWNS THE PEACE MOVEMENT?

Throughout the Great Peace March, differing ideas about what was "appropriate" marcher activity were constantly aired. When the New Age philosopher Ram Dass – formerly Richard Alpert, a colleague of Timothy Leary at Harvard University in the early 1960s – visited the GPM camp in Iowa, many welcomed his presence and message. Others, however, considered Dass' ideas about of inner peace and faith in the wisdom of the universe an affront to productive GPM behavior. Anne MacFarlane felt this sort of talk detracted from the energizing influence of anger as a motivation for social change. The "woolly thinking" of personal philosophies were antithetical to realistic, pragmatic, and political solutions that sought to halt the arms race, which for MacFarlane were more

[97] William Chaloupka, "Immodest Modesty: Antinuclear Discourse, Lifestyle Politics, and Intervention Strategies," *International Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (1990), p. 341.
[98] Not to mention spiritually or philosophically satisfying, as many marchers anticipated the experience of the GPM in such terms. See, for example, marcher applications from Nancy Stockwell, Brian Szittai, Bob Taft, and Chris Taudvin, November-December 1985, PRO-P Records, Box 12, Folder 1.

pressing issues than finding one's own inner peace.[99] Still, marchers intent on enacting these personal practices of peaceful living within the March community went about contributing to their own vague mission of a just and peaceful society, irrespective of efforts to build GPM unity. Lacking any specific, coherent political program, practitioners of such philosophies appeared trite to other marchers hoping that public support could be rallied for the March's original, stated objectives.

The GPM Board of Directors meets in Lincoln, Nebraska. The Board was unwavering in its commitment to consensus-based decision-making, a difficult yet rewarding process.
Source: Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 113.

Another faction of marchers was marked by a complete lack of principles or ideology. Described as "freeloaders" or "potatoes," these people would join the March community, but refused to adhere to the marcher contract, wear ID badges, or work. Many speculated such "freeloaders" were simply interested in free meals.[100] Affirming their commitment

[99] Anne MacFarlane, *Feet Across America* (Auckland: New Women's Press, 1987), pp. 69-70.
[100] Alternative tags for such freeloaders were "drifters, seekers, lost souls, misfits, [and] crazies." Kathleen Hendrix, "Peace Marchers Make It to Chicago: Anti-Nuclear Group Finds Limited Public Reaction," *Los Angeles Times*, San Diego ed., 25 August 1986, p. C10.

to an open, diverse community, the GPM Board of Directors worried about what to do with such people.[101] Safety was also a concern, especially with the number of young children also on the March.[102] Additional problems arose throughout the March that called into question this openness, as well as the idea of a palatable image of March respectability. In Pennsylvania, a busload of people from the recent Rainbow Gathering arrived, prompting questions about drug use on the March and mainstream legitimacy and respect. The Rainbow Gathering was an annual gathering of hippies and counterculturalists, that Folsom *et al.* described as "a get-together [that] goes on for days and involves alleged dope smoking and spiritual activities that are not in the mainstream of religious life."[103] Similar questions were raised about the support given to the GPM by the Cleveland Communist Party, who walked with the March as a contingent of the annual Cleveland Walkathon.[104] Identifying with such groups, many marchers argued, tarnished their intended image as "ordinary" citizens carrying a simple, non-partisan message of nuclear disarmament.

In addition, the fact that many marchers chose to participate in an action of nonviolent civil disobedience at Strategic Air Command (SAC) Headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, also caused division within the March community.[105] The GPM's spirit of tolerance and a rejection of authoritarianism prevailed, but fearing donors would withdraw their financial support, the March refused to officially sanction such marcher behavior. The GPM's Nebraska spokesperson John Martin stated that "we don't encourage civil disobedience, and a lot of people don't believe in it, but we don't run a concentration camp either."[106] The fact that marchers participating in civil disobedience were breaking the law showed that the March was vastly different to the innocent public relations exercise that many hoped it would be. Moreover, the impossibility to achieve consensus on the issue was

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[101] See Steve Jones, "The Great 'Peace' March?" n.d., GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[102] See Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, pp. 39-40.
[103] Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 132. See also similar concerns aired by Allen Smith, co-director of the GPM field department, "Great Peace March: Chicago to D.C.," [August 1986], p. 4, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 10. On the Rainbow Gathering and the remnants of hippie culture in the 1980s, see Scott MacFarlane, *The Hippie Narrative: A Literary Perspective on the Counterculture* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2007), p. 228; and Peter H. Conners, *Growing up Dead: The Hallucinated Confessions of a Teenage Deadhead* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2009), pp. 32-33.
[104] See Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 126.
[105] A popular target of pacifists, SAC headquarters was the site of a large campaign of civil disobedience in 1959 that energized radical pacifists in their opposition to militarism and the nuclear arms race in similar ways to the 1986 actions by peace marchers. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels against War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), pp. 240-268; and Mollin, *Radical Pacifism*, pp. 90-95.
[106] Quoted in Cindy Gonzalez, "March Spokesman Says Protesters on Their Own," *Omaha World-Herald*, Metro ed., 27 June 1986.

dispiriting. Guist recalled once such meeting that accomplished nothing as "a powerful lesson in what happens to the consensus process when people don't put limits on it."[107] Another marcher felt that if consensus decision-making was left unchecked, "this noble project may die under the weight of its own bullshit."[108] The spirit of tolerance, it seemed, meant that the personal, ideological, and political differences amongst marchers could come to the fore, for some detracting from the March's political objective, for other providing evidence of a community "practicing democracy with a passion foreign to most Westerners."[109] This places the Great Peace March's well-intentioned commitment to democracy outside the realm of the mainstream political culture it originally tried to enter.

The controversy over civil disobedience in Omaha marked the zenith of a trying period for the March. The sweltering summer weather and the endless flatness of Nebraskan cornfields had taken their toll on marchers. Small, disinterested rural populations in the conservative Great Plains also contributed to the monotony, emphasizing to many marchers that "the novelty hs [sic] sure worn off."[110] One marcher spoke of the depression that the Nebraskan plains had wrought, calling into question the nature of the March itself:

> I'm just really depressed. I cried myself to sleep last night… there doesn't seem to be any purpose right now. We're walking through these towns, and they have felt like ghost towns, and I think that is doing something to us also, psychologically. The fact that here we are, walking these long hot days, we come into a little town where hardly anybody is out on the street, we walk by through little residential areas, and you see somebody peering out a window.[111]

This sort of drudgery and lack of public response left many other marchers feeling that they were failing to make a difference. The March's potential for success in Nebraska was also compromised when, in response to attempts to control marcher dress and behaviour, a group of younger male marchers wore women's dresses in protest. Complaints of "dirty, torn and bizarre clothing" had brought on this display, as several men dressed in frocks put on a fashion show one evening for a community potluck dinner

[107] Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 130.
[108] Wayne Vincent, untitled account of marcher experience, 5 June 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[109] Brigham, "Laboratory in Democracy," p. 48.
[110] Anonymous marcher's letter and journal excerpts, 30 June 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[111] Anonymous marcher, quoted in *Just One Step! The Great Peace March* (dir. Cathy Zheutlin, Peace Films, Inc., 1987).

in Grand Island, Nebraska.[112] The controversy of such a display exacerbated the rift in the March community over its relationship with the public, its image, and notions of constructive personal politics. As Anne MacFarlane recalled, the experience infuriated her, reinforcing the foolishness of such personal expression, especially in the nation's conservative heartland:

> The worst day of the March for me was when young men started to appear, wearing frocks. Some days before, one or two of the seniors had spoken with concern about the dirty, torn and bizarre clothing of some of the younger men. This had provoked the rebellion. "If the seniors want a dress code, we'll give them a dress code," they said… Their civil rights were at stake. They were entitled to wear anything they chose… We knew people were apprehensive about us and now some of our men were going to march in frocks. I began to feel as though all my efforts were being negated by those who were making us look foolish with their insistence on their right to wear dresses.[113]

This episode in marcher division highlights, in a broad sense, how the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s struggled to achieve mainstream credibility. The existence of radical pacifists, anarchists, and counterculturalists within many movement campaigns and coalitions meant that movement unity was an illusion; instead, within these campaigns and coalitions, the politics of confrontation and compromise would inevitably color efforts to present an image of middle class respectability to the public.

The presence of radical factions on the March, along with the "profusion of beards and sandals, braless breasts and denims," earned the GPM comparisons with a stereotype of the hippie counterculture of the late 1960s amongst mainstream media.[114] Interestingly, some marchers were worried that hippies would be attracted to the GPM even before it left Los Angeles. Marcher John Bogner had misgivings the GPM "was going to be a raggedy, hippie-dip kind of operation," yet he found the cooperation and patriotism of so many other marchers antithetical to anything revolutionary. The peace marchers Bogner encountered simply weren't interested in "fighting the system" like their predecessors on the radical left in the 1960s.[115] Nevertheless, critics pounced upon the GPM's aims, if not its style, as naïve and misguided; the *Chicago Times* thought the March was "out of place in 1986 [due to] its modest scale and its relative obscurity."[116] Onlookers denounced the

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[112] See Tom Johnson, "Shifting Sands: Unfolding Stories from the Great Peace March," pp. 21-22, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 4; and Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, pp. 110-111.
[113] MacFarlane, *Feet Across America*, pp. 60-61.
[114] Paul Galloway, "Peace Marching in the Heartland Heat," *Chicago Tribune*, 5 August 1986, p. D1.
[115] Quoted in Sipchen, "Tales of the Great Trek," p. D1.
[116] Galloway, "Peace Marching in the Heartland Heat," p. D1.

GPM as "a mob waving signs and shouting at me," whilst others recommended marchers should "get off the streets and use your time more effectively."[117] Since the GPM failed to adhere to traditional, political recourse, such as lobbying and letter writing, critics argued that it had failed to learn the lessons of the 1960s, suffered a "backlash" from conservatives equating their tactics with radicals and revolutionaries from the New Left.

THE PUBLIC BACKLASH

Despite their best efforts at offering a simple message of nuclear disarmament to the American public, peace marchers' life-affirming positivity was still seen by some as counterproductive. Marchers would strive to promote their cause as humanistic and patriotic, but often this came across as vague, ill informed, and ignorant of Cold War strategy and foreign policy. After a contingent of marchers appeared on the popular daytime talk show *Donahue* as the GPM entered New York City, a supporter wrote to the March "appalled" at their performance. "Your speakers came across as dedicated, sincere, and idealistic," he wrote, but "peace proposals must be realistic and hard-headed… It is not enough to hate the bomb.[118] Another commented that "the smiles, peace and love transcended through the television were nice, but not convincing." Constructive analysis of political alternatives to the arms race was needed, rather than the "personal comments and songs" offered by peace marchers.[119]

A common theme emerging in letters received by the GPM in the wake of the *Donahue* episode was the extent to which the March was visually, stylistically, and philosophically removed from the mainstream with which it was hoping to connect. As a caller to the program argued:

> These people do not appear to be a part of any mainstream that anybody can identify with, with their own styles, with their own way of speaking, with their own language, with their own symbols – they are completely alienated with the mainstream of the United States.[120]

[117] Shaun Hellenly to the Great Peace March, [October 1986], GPM Records, Box 13, Folder 4; Mark Gurrola to the Great Peace March, 24 October 1986, GPM Records, Box 13a, Folder 6.
[118] Jim Amory to the Great Peace March, 23 October 1986, GPM Records, Box 13a, Folder 1.
[119] Margaret Vance to the Great Peace March, 24 October 1986, GPM Records, Box 13c, Folder 6.
[120] *Donahue*, 23 October 1986.

Donahue asked the caller "What is the mainstream?" to which the he responded, "people who look like you and me, Phil!" reinforcing the idea of marcher appearance as a divisive element in the GPM's public relations. The public was, generally, not ready to accept a political message emanating from an oppositional minority that differed vastly in appearance, let alone in their idealistic worldviews. A marcher in the *Donahue* studio audience reacted to the caller's statement with a familiar retort, stating that "on the march we have doctors, lawyers, I'm a software engineer. *We are you*."[121] The March did encompass diversity, he argued, and it did have a large number of white collar professionals amongst its ranks, yet these factors were no substitute for a political language and style familiar and palatable to middle America. The presence of hippies and radicals within the GPM's ranks also diminished the potential to promote a cause with which the mainstream could identify. Although it aimed for mainstream acceptance, the March still operated on the fringes of conventional political culture, where its profusion of personal politics and alternative lifestyles helped to distance the marchers from the public. This speaks to the diversification of the peace movement in the 1980s, but also to the limited extent to which it could effectively pursue concrete political goals.

Additional correspondence from *Donahue* viewers complicates this picture. A letter from Snyder, a "small West Texas town that has a do-not-disturb sign on the door labelled 'Status Quo'," congratulated the marchers, and its authors found the GPM's patriotism and positivity encouraging enough to promptly write to their Congressional Representative.[122] Other viewers were less sympathetic; Barbara Statkiewicz of Pennsboro, West Virginia, argued that uneducated, illiterate Americans found it hard to connect with the peace movement, largely comprised of students and educated professionals.[123] As much as members of the public were indeed inspired by the GPM's message, others were alienated by its style and its politics. In many cases, though, the stigma of the 1960s hung over the GPM; one *Donahue* viewer chastized the March for using "the same old, tired, overworked, and antiquated ways to reach a stratospheric goal." The author felt that "peace marches and flower power of the sixties has little direct effect on changing the policies of this country."[124] Such criticism targeted the very

[121] *Donahue*, 23 October 1986. Textual emphasis added.
[122] Robert and Lanelle Joplin to the Great Peace March, 31 October 1986, GPM Records, Box 13b, Folder 1.
[123] Barbara Statkiewicz to the Great Peace March, [October 1986], GPM Records, Box 13c, Box 4.
[124] Mark Gurrola to the Great Peace March, 24 October 1986, GPM Records, Box 13a, Folder 6.

premise of the GPM and its aim of social and political change, linking them explicitly with its style of protest. The GPM's diversity – something it could not avoid, and in many ways embraced – further encouraged its association with confrontational and countercultural protest.

The Great Peace March's struggle for public acceptance emphasizes the disparity between the attitudes of social movement activists and the public they hoped to reach. Those on the GPM faced an additional obstacle in this regard, as they would shower infrequently throughout their nine-month trek, appearing somewhat unkempt.[125] Sometimes, their appearance precluded any type of meaningful interaction with the public in the towns and cities marchers passed through.[126] Many were enlivened by the roughness of their activity, and found the contrast between their appearance and the ordinariness of city dwellers especially significant. In Chicago, the first major metropolitan area the March had encountered since its departure from Los Angeles, the March faced its first real test in mobilizing large numbers of potential supporters. Whilst "pinned-together rags, torn rainbow t-shirts, dreadlocks and punk haircuts… took on a new vitality when juxtaposed with sidewalks full of men in dark grey suits," problems of public indifference soured what might have been an inspirational demonstration of contrasts.[127] Local writer and broadcaster Studs Terkel, referencing Hannah Arendt, called the GPM's difficulty in mobilizing public support a challenge against "the evil of banality" that existed in everyday life.[128] In many ways, the gulf between the ordinariness of daily routine for city dwellers and the extraordinariness of the peace marchers was almost impossible to bridge. The failure of the GPM to interact meaningfully with urban populations – especially in Chicago – highlighted deeper issues of public apathy that plagued the March. Lifestyles, dress sense, and alternative behaviors each served to alienate the GPM from its audience. As mainstream media described the GPM as "old-fashioned" or "unconventional," many marcher attitudes and appearances reinforced such labels, further separating the novelty of the GPM from mainstream life.

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[125] Interestingly, Phil Donahue, several callers to the program, and the marchers in the studio themselves all commented on the gruelling, physical nature of the March and the issue of marchers' cleanliness and appearance.
[126] See MacFarlane, *Feet Across America*, p. 83.
[127] June Thompson, "Whooping Through the Loop: The Great Peace March Reaches Chicago," 21 August 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 11.
[128] Quoted in Hendrix, "Peace Marchers Make It to Chicago," p. C3.

Anticipating this alienation, the GPM continued to promote its main drawcard – the image of an "Ordinary Folks Peace March" in which ordinary citizens were undertaking a dramatic commitment.[129] But were the marchers really so "ordinary" that they could engage effectively with the middle American public? As Lynne Ihlstrom recalled, many "who came into contact with the Peace March… were afraid that the March participants were a group of radical, unwashed hippies. One town in Nebraska actually boarded up their stores and disappeared." Actively promoting its diversity, though, along with its commitment to personalism and participatory democracy, did succeed in communicating ideas of peace to those communities it came across along the March route:

> With each community passed through, residents were able to witness not only the broad societal representation by the marchers, but also observe the peaceful processes used by this mobile Peace City. The original goal of the March to "educate" the public far surpassed their goals. Many peace movements advocate dismantling of certain destructive institutions but rarely do they offer a substitute. The Peace March was able to offer a living model of alternatives.[130]

Many marcher recollections, however, reiterate that people in small towns were generally more open, friendly, and welcoming than city dwellers. Sue Guist met people in Iowa who told her "when we heard you were coming, they said 'lock up your chickens and your daughters.' But you turned out to be regular folks, just like us."[131] An Amish woman she spoke with in Indiana expressed similar sentiments, saying, "at first I felt a little strange about talking to you, you look so different. But underneath, it's just the same. We're all the same."[132]

These responses did not necessarily translate to political support for nuclear disarmament, but they did impress upon members of the public the fact that the peace movement, rather than being "a bunch of rabblerousers," could be afforded the respect one would give a movement with impeccable "conduct, effort, and behavior."[133] Irrespective of the internal division that plagued the March, in the eyes of such citizens the group emerged as an exemplar of polite grassroots organizing on the left. The

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[129] Tom Atlee, "Ordinary Folks," n.d., GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2. Emphasis in original.
[130] Lynne Ihlstrom, "Peace March: Process = Success," Working Paper 90-3 (Boulder: Conflict Research Consortium, University of Colorado, 1990), http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/full_text_search/AllCRCDocs/90-3.htm (accessed 8 September 2009).
[131] In Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 122.
[132] In Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 141.
[133] Dale Young, transcript of interview by Connie Fledderjohann, 10 July 1987, GPM Records, Box 21, Folder 1.

interaction between marchers and ordinary Americans in the nation's heartland showed that the process of peace was real and concrete, and the myriad of social and economic concerns shared by Americans could fit together in a conceptual framework of peaceful activity.[134] The anti-nuclear movement, marchers argued, ought to aim to integrate itself into common concerns shared by all Americans; doing so would lose its single-issue focus and educational drive, but it would make its ideas more accessible to ordinary Americans.

Whether or not the "inspirational presence" of the March converted political apathy into "hope," or at least into public support for nuclear disarmament, successful outreach in these heartland areas was, for many marchers, far more important to than yet another mass rally in Washington, D.C. Meeting and talking with real Americans across the entire nation, "with farmers and truckers and doctors and lawyers and teachers and just everybody" was considered the more effective way of mobilizing public thought and behavior in the move toward a more just and peaceful society.[135] Doing so in person would also minimize public backlash that attacked marchers for their appearance, their countercultural "aura," or their naïve politics. William Chaloupka claims that "as an exercise in forming public and elite opinion, the lifestyle gestures are incomplete and insufficient. The notion that one can build a society by "acting peacefully" is naïve and limited."[136] For marchers, though, even despite such criticisms from members of the public, the practice of peaceful lifestyles in a community based on participatory democracy was itself a worthwhile endeavor.

As the March approached Washington, D.C. in November, proposals for public relations stunts again reflected the disparity between conservative and radical marchers. Some advocated walking into the nation's capital backwards, some proposed a citizen's arrest of the President. Others recommended calling for a worldwide general strike.[137] The March finale was nevertheless a fairly conventional affair, with about 10,000 demonstrators joining the marchers at the Lincoln Memorial. Although a far cry from the million protesters envisaged by Mixner, marchers were still invigorated by the

[134] See anonymous marcher journal entry, 30 June 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[135] John Records, transcript of interview on WAMU, n.d., GPM Records, Box 20, Folder 2.
[136] Chaloupka, "Immodest Modesty," p. 345.
[137] Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 149. See also Carol Littlebrant and Sondra Fields, "A Plan to Save Planet Earth from Nuclear War," [June 1986], GPM Records, Box 5, Folder 17.

outpouring of public support at such a rally, along with speeches by Jesse Jackson, Carl Sagan, Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Representative Ed Markey (D-Massachusetts). The GPM's impact in the nation's capital, however, was less auspicious. As Sue Guist writes, "President Reagan was out of town. Congress was no longer in session. Nobody was going to be so amazed at our arrival in the Capitol that they would instantly declare Peace on Earth."[138] But as the experience of the March throughout the nation had demonstrated, its impact could not be measured in political terms.

At its conclusion, more reflection occurred as to whether the March had made any kind of difference. One marcher felt that "the march has given life to the peace movement," whilst another saw the poor public turnout at the Washington rally, as well as at other events across the country, as a disappointment.[139] As marcher Dick Edelman commented, the March was best measured in terms of "raising the consciousness of millions of Americans," which it had indeed achieved.[140] Allen Smith, at one time co-director of the GPM Field Department, felt that the March's survival emphasized a kind of "moral capital," which could be used as an empowering device, used to inspire and mobilize what was marchers presumed to be a latent anti-nuclear sentiment amongst the American public.[141] Many marchers echoed this sentiment, citing an altruistic motivation to "work for peace" after the GPM, and continue to enact the "spirit" of the March in their lives back home.[142] Other marchers continued to walk, taking part in the American-Soviet Walk from Leningrad to Moscow in June 1987. Overall, marchers emphasized the personal value in taking part in the GPM, irrespective of its effect, however large or small. By combating stereotypes of anti-nuclear protest, by anticipating conservative backlash, and by mitigating charges of impracticality with assertions their activities were apolitical, marchers reiterated the centrality of *personal* behavior as the key to *political* change. Redefining the meaning of anti-nuclear protest in such a public way, the GPM actively challenged the meanings of activism, of citizenship, and of democracy in the twilight of the Cold War.

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[138] Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 193.
[139] Valerie Gaddis and David Sheehey, quoted in Saundra Saperstein, "Quiet End to a Long Walk for Peace," *Washington Post*, final ed., 16 November 1986, p. B1.
[140] Quoted in Saperstein, "Quiet End to a Long Walk for Peace," p. B1.
[141] Allen Smith, "The Great Peace March: Chicago to D.C.," [August 1986], p. 1, GPM Records, Box 6, Folder 10.
[142] See Doug Brown, "Cross-Country Walk Forged Commitment to Peace, Marchers Say," *Los Angeles Times*, Orange County ed., 1 December 1986, p. C1. See also comments made by several marchers in *Just One Step! The Great Peace March* (dir. Cathy Zheutlin, Peace Films, Inc., 1987).

THE GREAT PEACE MARCH AND THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

The Great Peace March stands outside the organizational history of the peace movement in the 1980s, but it also provides us with a loose microcosm of the American left, and gives us insight into its struggle to define the most appropriate application of anti-nuclear activism in the mid-1980s. The differences between the anti-nuclear movement's radical vanguard and its elite, middle-class, "polite protesters" was most easily identifiable in the GPM once the façade of PRO-Peace's "glitzy high-tech public relations event" was stripped away.[143] When PRO-Peace collapsed and the Great Peace March emerged as an independent grassroots entity, its participants heralded the GPM as the vehicle for the expression of authentic voices for peace. Assuming they represented a diverse, egalitarian community built on principles of participatory democracy, peace marchers attempted to define their interaction with the public in such terms, speaking of "inspiration," "hope" and "ordinary citizens."

As a conglomeration of all kinds of activists, the Peace March did suffer crises of identity, image, and method. These crises, within the enclosed, finite space of the March community, demonstrate the tense relationship between middle class activists and radical pacifists that also existed in the wider peace movement of the 1980s. The meaning and significance of the 1960s – in particular the New Left, the counterculture, and the civil rights and anti-war movements – were also a part of this divide between moderates and radicals. Some marchers argued it was essential in the 1980s anti-nuclear movement to avoid identification with the stigma of 1960s protests. This approach alienated radicals, environmentalists, hippies, anarchists, counterculturalists, "neocounterculturalists," and others within the March community, who instead were more interested in advocating a new age ethos, building a new world, rejecting mainstream society, and enacting personal philosophies of peace.[144]

These radical or alternative peace marchers hoped to realize the unfulfilled promises of the cultural revolution of the 1960s, but were quashed in the 1970s and 1980s by the rise of conservatism and the "backlash" against liberal reform and radical protest. Barbara

[143] Lofland, *Polite Protesters*, p. 105.
[144] Lofland, *Polite Protesters*, pp. 45-46.

Epstein calls this the "blocked cultural revolution," as it encouraged the development of direct action movements in the 1970s that sought to "articulate [cultural revolution] as a philosophy of political protest."[145] The more organized direct action movements – such as those opposed to nuclear power plants at Diablo Canyon, California, and Seabrook, New Hampshire, as well as nuclear weapons facilities such as the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California – gave coherence to the somewhat vague ideals of social and political change in the direct action movement of the 1970s and 1980s.[146] Within the diverse community of the GPM, however, tensions over the role of direct action and civil disobedience mirrored the wider division in the movement between mainstream organizations interested in mobilizing public opinion, and radical pacifists interested in dramatically challenging the authority of the state. Of course, not all peace marchers were experienced pacifists, and were drawn to civil disobedience as an outlet of personal expression. The profusion of personal politics within the Great Peace March community caused much consternation for mainstream, middle class marchers, but it also highlights how the meaning and efficacy of activism was so thoroughly debated within such protest communities.

In many ways, these divisions on the GPM were generational. As Tom Atlee recalled, older marchers favored an orderly procession as a "PR event," whilst younger marchers saw the March as a place for more spontaneous venue for enjoying themselves and meeting people along the road. The "giant division" between the two perspectives was, to Atlee, the most significant test for the March's problem of decision-making.[147] It also didn't stimulate March unity; Sue Guist wrote that "Lots of us [older marchers] had spent our lives as activists; it felt really weird to be discounted as *The Conservatives*."[148] Others felt the presence of younger, more radical marchers was essential. As one marcher wrote, "there is a vitality that comes from the younger, freer spirits on our march that is irreplaceable, invaluable and it sometimes comes with long hair and sometimes unkemptness."[149] Atlee agreed, appreciating the spontaneity, creativity and "aliveness" of the less predictable marchers, and hoping that this might enrich the outlook of those who

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[145] Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 21.
[146] See Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution*, Chapters 2-4.
[147] Tom Atlee, interview for *What is Enlightenment* magazine, May 2004, http://www.enlightennext.org/magazine/collective/bio-atlee.asp (accessed 8 September 2009).
[148] Guist, *Peace Like a River*, p. 112. Emphasis added.
[149] Anonymous marcher's letter and journal excerpts, 30 June 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.

favored order and structure.[150] The fact that the March contained such diverse perspectives in its experiment with consensus democracy shows its significance as "a healthy and vigorous, though tempestuous, community."[151] The survival of the March despite such diversity and dissent served not only as an ideal model for other peace groups, but also as a model of nonpartisan activism that transcended traditional understandings of organization and activism on the left.[152]

In its attempt to pose a serious challenge to Reagan-era conservatism, the Great Peace March operated as both a polite, middle class, *safe* anti-nuclear campaign, and as a grassroots, expressive protest. Due to this combination, it was destined to remain outside the realm of professional oppositional movements that found success in the 1970s and 1980s by working *within* the political system. On the left, though, liberal social movements such as environmental conservation, gun control, and the anti-nuclear movement fared less well than their conservative counterparts: the Moral Majority, the anti-ERA movement, and other segments of the religious right.[153] As such, moderate or mainstream peace organizations strove to maintain political credibility and public respectability, and in doing so, distanced themselves from the direct action and pacifist movements. Touting itself as *the* peace movement of the mid-1980s, and one that would unite all liberals and conservatives alike against the oppressive danger of the nuclear arms race, the Great Peace March inevitably attracted an incredibly diverse range of participants. As such, it cannot be characterized as a moderate or a radical campaign; rather, its combination of perspectives – political, personal, and ideological – distinguishes it as a particularly unique challenge to the nuclear arms race in the wake of Reagan's re-election of 1984.

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[150] Tom Atlee, "The Prism of the March," 8 March 1986, GPM Records, Box 19, Folder 2.
[151] Brigham, "Laboratory in Democracy," p. 41.
[152] See Folsom *et al.*, *Great Peace March*, p. 117.
[153] See Theodore Caplow *et al.*, *Recent Social Trends in the United States, 1960-1990* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), pp. 326-327; Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson, eds., *Waves of Protest: Social Movements since the Sixties* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), pp. x-xi; David T. Courtwright, *No Right Turn: Conservative Politics in a Liberal America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), Chapter 5; and Paul Lyons, *New Left, New Right, and the Legacy of the Sixties* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), Chapter 6. For a comprehensive account of grassroots conservatism within the revival and triumph of the right in the 1970s and 1980s, see Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), Chapters 9 and 10.

Controversies within the March over image and reputation highlight a deeper struggle on the left to achieve mainstream legitimacy. The anti-nuclear movement itself was deeply concerned about being labelled as "yet another throwback to the '60s." Memories of hippie culture and protest movements of that era still resonated with a conservative citizenry that was wary of alternative movements with liberal attitudes to sex and drugs, and a commitment to oppositional grassroots politics. The comfortable nature of anti-communism, moral conservatism, and patriotism were at odds with the GPM's experiment in community, participatory democracy, and social justice. Converting "the masses" – in this sense, Nixon's "silent majority" – was therefore a suitably monumental task.[154]

Still, many marchers believed that they were successfully engaging in a larger process of social and political change through their personal activities. As William Chaloupka argues, this style of activism was global and political in its ideas, but incredibly local and personal in its practice. "With one eye on global, ideological meaning," he argues, "activists move toward utopia indirectly, by expressively redesigning the ordinary matters of life." In their modest, personal approach, these activists had "an immodest goal: the reconstruct world politics."[155] The practice of personal or lifestyle politics, in this ideological sense, was simultaneously a pragmatic *and* an idealistic affair. The debates about personal behavior on the Great Peace March, displayed similar characteristics; at once attempting to ensure the GPM operated smoothly and effectively *as well as* moving towards and attainment of a moral ideal in the practice of peace. When the American public failed to respond to the resonance of the GPM's ideas about citizenship, democracy, and personal politics, the March unfortunately became another victim of the widespread marginalization of the radical grassroots left in the wake of the 1960s.

[154] See William Chaloupka, *Knowing Nukes: The Politics and Culture of the Atom* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p. 90.
[155] Chaloupka, "Immodest Modesty," pp. 342-343.

CONCLUSION

The anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s might also be described as the anti-nuclear "movements" of an even longer period in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As Lawrence Wittner has shown in his massive three volume set *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, anti-nuclear activism has endured since the first atomic scientists opposed the development of the bomb during the Second World War.[1] Peace organizations, activist communities, and dedicated individuals continue to oppose nuclear weapons today, despite the end of the Cold War. Many of them were exposed to anti-nuclear activism in the late 1970 and early 1980s, but some of them began their activist 'careers' during the Vietnam War era, some in the civil rights era, some in the ban-the-bomb movement of the 1950s and early 1960s or even earlier.[2] It was the "second" antinuclear movement that began in earnest in 1976, however, that marked the most visible mobilization of activism and public interest in opposition to the nuclear arms race.[3] Within this mobilization, the memories of "the sixties" loomed large, and the legacies of radicalism, protest, and dissent informed and influenced activists in its wake. The division within the protest movements in the 1960s and early 1970s, emblematic of a "bad sixties," also influenced anti-nuclear activism, and it is this legacy of division and confrontation that characterized what I call different "spheres" of anti-nuclear protest from the mid-1970s until the mid-1980s.[4]

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[1] Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle against the Bomb*, 3 vols., (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993-2003).

[2] See, respectively, Helen Caldicott, interview by the author, 20 September 2010, Bermagui, New South Wales; Leslie Cagan, interview by the author, 11 November 2010, New York City; Randy Kehler, interview by the author, 15 November 2010, Greenfield, Massachusetts; David McReynolds, interview by the author, 12 November 2010, New York City; and Richard Deats, interview by the author, 10 November 2010, Nyack, New York. Each is still an active campaigner against nuclear weapons, militarism and war, social injustice, and other related concerns.

[3] Scholars call this the "second" anti-nuclear movement for a variety of reasons. Firstly, a lull between the ban-the-bomb movement and the end of the Vietnam War helps explain how peace activists' priorities and public attention became diverted by the Vietnam War. Secondly, the failure of détente and the revival of a "new" Cold War explains the subsequent rise in the anti-nuclear movement of the 1970s and 1980s. For examples of this discussion, see Paul Boyer, "From Activism to Apathy: The American People and Nuclear Weapons, 1963-1980," *Journal of American History* 70, no. 4 (1984), pp. 821-844; and Fred Halliday, *The Making of the Second Cold War* (London: Verso, 1983).

[4] On the "good sixties/bad sixties" dichotomy, see M. J. Heale, "The Sixties as History: A Review of the Political Historiography," *Reviews in American History* 33, no. 1 (2005), p. 139.

In the early 1980s, as Chapters 1 and 2 have highlighted, a widespread public concern about the possibility of a nuclear war between two belligerent Cold War enemies prompted large-scale campaigns opposing the nuclear arms race. The Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign – the coordinating body for a large, decentralized movement of anti-nuclear groups scattered across the nation – aimed to "freeze" the arms race, essentially halting the production, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons. For activists who had been building a movement with broader concerns and more comprehensive answers to the problem of the arms race, the Freeze Campaign was a shallow attempt at developing extensive public and political support in an attempt to challenge the arms race through political reform. Radical activists on the left rejected this approach as pandering to a public by burying the legacies of 1960s radicalism. They argued that the history of radical strategies for social change developed in the 1960s – and earlier – were required more than ever in a political climate of conservatism, individualism, and apathy. This diversity of anti-nuclear strategies, tactics, and ideas, as I have examined separately in each chapter, shows us how anti-nuclear activists reconfigured the history and heritage of activism, most prominently as it was developed by the New Left in the 1960s, into new modes of dissent.

The ways in which these activists responded to such political and cultural challenges during the 1970s and 1980s, however, were not exclusively tied to their reaction to the "conservative revival" that reached its peak with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. Often, anti-nuclear activism, in its many forms, operated as a means for progressive-minded Americans to find their feet in the wake of the 1960s. Seeking to extend their experiences of social activism in the civil rights or anti-war movements, activists applied the lessons of the 1960s to new challenges. As Doug Rossinow writes:

> Many leftists found positions of substantial status and comfort in the cultural apparatus of post-1960s America, in some ways estranged from mass culture and in other ways absorbed in the culture of the professional class. They became awkward tribunes for downtrodden minorities and often appeared uninterested in championing the majority. Perhaps most ironically, in light of the fervency with which earlier generations of leftists had embraced a doctrine of social progress in America, leftists in the post-World War II era developed grave doubts about any such doctrine, sometimes gravitating toward ideas of cultural renewal and spiritual enchantment and losing faith in the vision of knowledge-driven upward historical movement that had constituted the intellectual patrimony of the western left since the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. Those who might have been, in the light of history, the most forceful advocates for a robust idea of

> progress in America became confused and ambivalent about it, their trumpets uncertain if not stilled.[5]

Rather than looking outward in the 1970s and 1980s, some activists on the left looked inward, finding solace in movements dedicated toward minority rights, community issues, and environmental conservation. In many ways, these were what Michael Foley calls "front porch politics" – issues that mobilized individuals, neighborhoods, and communities in a local and tangible manner.[6]

However, this is only part of the story of social activism in the 1970s and 1980s. As this thesis has shown, the anti-nuclear movement, as a diverse expression of opposition to the threats posed by nuclear power, nuclear weapons, and the militaristic policies of the state, operated in ways that challenged the legacies of the 1960s by negotiating their meaning and their application. From radical collectives of religious resistance to political lobbying campaigns, anti-nuclear activism was in many ways defined by what Douglas Waller calls "an amalgam of personalities, forces, energies, and activities, which were fomenting, bursting, simmering, diverging, converging."[7] Within these "spheres" of activism, this thesis has demonstrated that the legacies, memories, and meanings of the 1960s were alternately reinvigorated, redefined, and rejected. This struggle over the meanings of the past meant that defining the nature of the 'nuclear threat' – and the scope of the movement required to resist it – produced an array of different types of activism characterized by difference as much as they were by unity.

Activists themselves recognized the legacies of the 1960s as polarizing, leading progressives and radicals to either retreat from society, or to "dig in," continuing to resist the state, repressive institutions, racism, environmental devastation, and a host of other problems that defined social protest on the left in the 1970s. As Californian anti-nuclear activist Dan Hirsch wrote in 1978, these differences emphasized the differences between the quest for "inner peace" and the demands for "outer peace":

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[5] Doug Rossinow, *Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal Tradition in America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 9-10.

[6] Michael Foley, "No Nukes and Front Porch Politics: Environmental Protest Culture and Practice on the Second Cold War Home Front," conference paper presented at *Accidental Armageddons: The Nuclear Crisis and the Culture of the Second Cold War, 1975-1989*, German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C., November 2010.

[7] Douglas C. Waller, *Congress and the Nuclear Freeze: An inside Look at the Politics of a Mass Movement* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), p. 38.

> One [group of people] repressed their dreams, fearing escape, the other repressed their compassion, fearing involvement. Some of us stressed analytic thinking, learning to be tacticians and theoreticians; others stressed emotions and intuitive thought, in order to become more kind. Some learned to love Nature, friends and God more; others learned to hate Nixon, capitalism and exploitation more. Some sat meditating for hours, trying to get beyond suffering through forgetting desire; others stood marching for hours, trying to end suffering through making people aware of their forgotten desire. Some of us tried to find ourselves by forgetting others. But very, very few did both; very few tried to transcend the polarity between inner and outer.[8]

Hirsch's analysis implicitly criticizes the divergence of personal and political approaches to peace that occurred in the 1970s. Like many other activists interested in bridging strategic and prefigurative approaches to peace activism, Hirsch suggested that activists combine the two, internalizing a pacifist sense of inner peace whilst working for social and political change on a broader scale. Certainly, many activists did such things in the anti-nuclear movement, engaging in acts of protest that satisfied the pursuit of personalism whilst symbolically promoting peace and social justice in public and political demonstrations.

Many activists, though, were involved in the anti-nuclear movement in exclusively liberal contexts, hoping to reform the system from within, and in the process foregoing divisive tactics of civil disobedience ideological radicalism that had fragmented and alienated the left in the 1960s. Personal expression and communal solidarity were not priorities for such liberals. Instead, seeking to build a consensus amongst a broad coalition of constituencies, what became the freeze movement addressed the threat of nuclear weapons in an exclusively political context. Such an approach rejected the anti-war movement's embrace of political radicalism in the late 1960s, contributing to the periodization of "good" and "bad" 1960s. Instead, it sought to reclaim social activism as a "polite" affair, combining the idea of the "moral prestige" of the civil rights movement with a professional edge suited to the style of 1980s advocacy or lobby groups.[9]

This approach was not by any means popular amongst the left, and many activists rejected the freeze proposal and its safe political appeal as a weak challenge to the nuclear arms race, one that failed to consider its roots in a culture of militarism. Radicals also considered the quest for media attention and favorable public opinion as cursory

[8] Dan Hirsch, "Spirituality and Political Action," *Year One*, February 1978, p. 2.
[9] On "moral prestige," see Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels against War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), p. 279.

pursuits. More meaningful change, they argued, came from the comprehensive engagement with social activism that attempted to build a better, more just world. Often this was a personal process; many pacifists, feminists, and religious radicals engaged in expressive demonstrations of their commitment to social change as a way of 'internalizing peace.' Creating a world more committed to peace and social justice, therefore, began at the smallest levels, in individuals and communities. As Chapters 3 and 5 have demonstrated, activists believed that through a gradual process of symbolic and dramatic expression of their commitment, a revolution in thought, lifestyle and behavior would spread outward. This was far from a "retreat" into individualism and cultural selfishness that critics such as Christopher Lasch and Tom Wolfe described as key trends in the 1970s.[10] Instead, as Richard Ellis convincingly argues, radical movements committed to egalitarianism – like the New Left, feminist movement and environmental movement – justified extreme acts of protest by "appealing to pure or selfless motives."[11] In chapters three and five of this thesis, I have demonstrated that the purity of activists' expressions of personal commitment to peace and social justice – whether through biblical motives or a less dogmatic understanding of nonviolence – was part of a radical engagement with the nuclear arms race as *the* crisis of modernity.

The key theme of this thesis is how the many differing visions of cultural radicalism and political reform operated within the anti-nuclear movement of 1976 to 1987, and what such differences say about the legacies of the 1960s in the many social movement cultures that arose in its wake. The operation of such instances of "personalism," "lifestyle politics," and "identity politics" in the anti-nuclear movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s often stood in stark contrast to the politically oriented organizations working for reform. Such a divide, as demonstrated in Chapters 1 and 4, gives us greater insight into the resonance of alternative forms of cultural protest and civic engagement in the wake of the 1960s. As Chapters 3 through 7 have shown, the operation of these various "spheres" of activism in local and organizational contexts highlights just how anti-nuclear protest played out in the wake of the 1960s, and how the challenge of

[10] See Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: Norton, 1978); and Tom Wolfe, "The 'Me Decade' and the Third Great Awakening" [1976], in *The Purple* Decade (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1983), pp. 265-296.
[11] Richard Ellis, *The Dark Side of the Left: Illiberal Egalitarianism in America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), p. 278.

negotiating its legacies reverberated within even the most smallest or most isolated anti-nuclear campaigns in the 1970s and 1980s.

Despite various attempts to explain the decline of civic culture in the United States, other scholars have emphasized that the "personal" citizen is a much more adequate explanation for the widespread aversion to traditional modes of political and social organization.[12] According to Mitchell McKinney *et al*., such newer forms of citizen behavior demonstrate

> … a tendency to eschew formal memberships and centralized organizations in favor of more transitory engagements with localized and loosely organized associations that address issues of personal concern. The "lifestyle" citizen places greater faith in personal rather than collective identity; and traditional political approaches and more formal, centralized institutions are often viewed as ineffectual in responding to individuals' pressing day-to-day concerns.[13]

If we look at these issues of new forms of political and cultural engagement within the historical framework of the explosion of identity-based movements in the 1970s, a strong case against the "narrative of decline" can be made. Furthermore, as this thesis argues, the existence of identity and lifestyle politics, as well as other alternative and countercultural visions of social justice and radical protest within the anti-nuclear movement, confirms this view that social movements of the 1970s did not succumb to the "death of the sixties," in that they cannot, and should not, be seen as victims of the failures of the New Left and counterculture.

Adding to this story, this thesis has advanced the idea that because there existed so many different kinds of anti-nuclear protest, and because they operated in so many different contexts, the legacies of the New Left and counterculture, as well as the civil rights and anti-war movements with which they intertwined, are much more complex. It makes sense, as Van Gosse suggests, that "radicalism's post-Sixties segmentation should not be seen… as the conscious preference of the current and former activists, self-identified "liberals," and less ideological single-issue supporters that back the major progressive

[12] The most famous of the "civic decline" arguments is Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).
[13] Mitchell S. McKinney *et al.*, "The Role of Communication in Civic Engagement," in *Communicating Politics: Engaging the Public in Democratic Life*, ed. Mitchell S. McKinney, *et al.* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005), p. 12.

groups." Instead, we need to look at a "dispersed, pluralist Left," which arose from the decline of formal political participation in the postwar era.[14]

One major impact of "the sixties" was the reorganization of citizen engagement with politics into radical forms of dissent and resistance that often explicitly reject the formal, traditional modes of operation of left-wing politics. Instead, Gosse argues, the movements on the left since the 1960s have embraced non-traditional, radical, and experimental ways of confronting state power. Yes, older, national organizations maintained their structure and formality, as did plenty of younger ones, seeking traditional, socially accepted forms of challenge within the political system. But their existence, along with more radical expressions of dissent, did exist in an era in which progressive causes and their legitimacy had advanced considerably.[15] Of course, this type of institutionalized lobbying, however progressive or radical in its demands, does not constitute the entirety of the left in the 1970s and 1980s. What this thesis has offered is an analysis of the interaction between activists, grassroots groups, and national organizations across the political, cultural, and ideological spectra of the the anti-nuclear movement. How these actors dealt with the legacies of the 1960s and extended progressive and radical politics in the 1970s and 1980s emphasizes how diverse the left was in these years, how divided by identity its participants became, and how it aimed to challenge state power. In this study, such state power was manifested, in the views of its opponents, in the monolithic dangers of nuclear power and nuclear weapons.

In the anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s, as Steve Breyman suggests, a plethora of different groups, organizations and individuals operated, each continuing to develop new structures and behaviors, improvising as circumstances allowed, but also borrowing heavily from their predecessors in the New Left.[16] The ideas behind anti-nuclear activity in the 1980s might not have been terribly new, but the manner in which that activity was implemented often was. Different ideas, different audiences, and different technologies were present in the 1980s, yet many activists were surprisingly traditional, innovating

[14] Van Gosse, "Postmodern America: A New Democratic Order in the Second Gilded Age," in *The World the Sixties Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*, ed. Van Gosse and Richard Moser (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), pp. 27-28.
[15] Gosse calls this the "legalization" and "pacification" of resistance, whilst others have referred to it as the "legitimization of dissent." Gosse, "Postmodern America," p. 29; Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson, eds., *Waves of Protest: Social Movements since the Sixties* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), p. xi.
[16] Steve Breyman, "Were the 1980s' Anti-Nuclear Weapons Movements New Social Movements?," *Peace and Change* 22, no. 3 (1997), pp. 319-324.

and experimenting with understandings of pacifism and nonviolence developed decades, if not centuries earlier. As anti-nuclear activists updated the meanings of "the sixties," they also contested the role of dissent in the conservative environment of the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, attempting to find the most effective and satisfying mode of agitating for change.

These new modes of dissent can be understood in different ways. We tend to see them as outgrowths of the New Left; just like their predecessors in the 1960s, activists in later years "bundled together authenticity, radical democracy, and social justice" as core aims in a diverse program of social change.[17] These core philosophies and processes remained central to the activities and philosophies of so many activists on the left – a left that was often very decentralized – and help us make sense of the legacy of the New Left in American cultural and political life since the 1960s. On the other hand, we can see these new modes of dissent as leftovers from the New Left's failures. If the spirit of the New Left had really been "split apart into discordant cultural and political elements," as Todd Gitlin has argued, surely the task for the anti-nuclear movement in the 1980s would recognize the need to move beyond the "centrifugal tendencies of the seventies: tendencies which represented the playing out of the incomplete and self-contradictory revolts of the sixties."[18] In many ways this is true, but it obscures how so many activists in the anti-nuclear movement had embraced a form of cultural revolt unique to the 1970s, and then carried this style of personal, almost quixotic dissent into the 1980s.

Working for a utopian vision of social change alongside more pragmatic movement goals of freezing the arms race, convincing the superpowers to disarm, ending nuclear testing, or shutting down nuclear power plants, were goals that were not as incongruous as Gitlin suggests. As "spheres" of activism, they contributed to a movement in which sentiments of radical change had been diffused, altered, expanded upon and contested in the years since the 1960s. This thesis, in looking at how such sentiments operated within the wider context of the anti-nuclear movement, has argued that from 1976 to 1987, they helped to define the structure, strategy, and image of the movement. However diverse, sentimental,

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[17] Doug Rossinow, ""The Revolution Is About Our Lives": The New Left's Counterculture," in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s*, ed. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 120-121.
[18] Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*, new ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 292.

pragmatic, strategic, or revolutionary these sentiments were, those who practiced them, separately and together, highlight how the "spirit" of the New Left, the counterculture, and "the sixties" was contested, revised, and redefined during the course of social movement activism in the 1970s and 1980s. For anti-nuclear activists, properly navigating the idea of "the sixties" would enable them to *transcend* the influence of its legacies, implementing successful social and political changes in the process. By understanding this negotiation of the past, a more thorough picture emerges of the enduring power of "the sixties" – and popular memory – on the development new models of social activism in the late twentieth century.

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APPENDIX

22 September 2008

Mr Kyle Harvey
Department of Modern History
Macquarie University

Reference: HE26SEP2008-D06068

Dear Mr Harvey

FINAL APPROVAL

Title of project: "The impact of The Day After (1983) on Lawrence, Kansas: A study of local responses to the televised depiction of nuclear war"

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Committee and you may now proceed with your research. This approval also applies to the following amendment:

1. Mrs Helen Krische will be involved on the project as an independent local contact. Participants will be invited to contact Mrs Krische if they have any questions on the project and these will be forwarded to the chief investigator.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. Approval will be for a period of twelve (12) months. At the end of this period, if the project has been completed, abandoned, discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are required to submit a Final Report on the project. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. The Final Report is available at: http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms
2. However, at the end of the 12 month period if the project is still current you should instead submit an application for renewal of the approval if the project has run for less than five (5) years. This form is available at http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/forms If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report (see Point 1 above) and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).
3. Please remember the Committee must be notified of any alteration to the project.
4. You must notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
5. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics/policy

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project **it is your responsibility** to provide Macquarie University's Research Grants Officer with a copy of this letter as soon as possible. The Research Grants Officer will not inform external funding agencies that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Officer has received a copy of this final approval letter.

ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (HUMAN RESEARCH)
LEVEL 3, RESEARCH HUB, BUILDING C5C
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
NSW, 2109 AUSTRALIA
Ethics Secretariat: Ph: (02) 9850 6848 Fax: (02) 9850 4465 E-mail: ethics.secretariat@vc.mq.edu.au
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics

Yours sincerely

P.Th

PP

Dr Margaret Stuart
Director of Research Ethics
Chair, Ethics Review Committee (Human Research)

Cc: Dr Michelle Arrow, Department of Modern History

ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (HUMAN RESEARCH)
LEVEL 3, RESEARCH HUB, BUILDING C5C
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
NSW, 2109 AUSTRALIA
Ethics Secretariat: Ph: (02) 9850 6848 Fax: (02) 9850 4465 E-mail: ethics.secretariat@vc.mq.edu.au
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/researchers/ethics/human_ethics

Kyle Harvey <kyle.harvey@mq.edu.au>

Ethics application reference- 5201000917- Final approval

Ethics Secretariat <ethics.secretariat@mq.edu.au> Fri, Sep 3, 2010 at 12:41 PM
To: Dr Michelle Arrow <michelle.arrow@mq.edu.au>
Cc: Mr Kyle Harvey <kyle.harvey@mq.edu.au>

Dear Dr Arrow

Re: "Anti-nuclear activism in the 1980s"

The above application was reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee at its meeting on 27/08/2010 . Final Approval of the above application is granted, effective 03rd September 2010, and you may now commence your research.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Dr Michelle Arrow- Chief Investigator/Supervisor
Mr Kyle Harvey- Co-Investigator

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).

2. Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports. Your first progress report is due on 03rd September 2011.

If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report for the project.

Progress reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms

3. If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).

4. All amendments to the project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee before implementation. Please complete and submit a Request for Amendment Form available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms

5. Please notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

6. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University. This information is available at the following websites:

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/policy

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide the Macquarie University's Research Grants Management Assistant with a copy of this email as soon as possible. Internal and External funding agencies will not be informed that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Management Assistant has received a copy of this email.

If you need to provide a hard copy letter of Final Approval to an external organisation as evidence that you have Final Approval, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Secretariat at the address below.

Please retain a copy of this email as this is your official notification of final ethics approval.

Yours sincerely
Dr Karolyn White
Director of Research Ethics
Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee