

**Cindy Sheehan and the Peace Movement:
Networks of Care and Rhetorical Exploits**

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When one chooses to become an academic (or activist), its often a choice that leads one to live as a nomad: remaining in a place long enough for one degree or one term teaching contracts, until moving on to the next institution. At times, it feels like you are on your own, knowing you will soon be uprooted and moving to the next location. At the same time, it requires you to be flexible, constantly reconfiguring your position within an ever changing network. This project would not be possible and certainly would not have manifested as it did without the network supporting me these past five years. It would be hard to thank all the various individuals who have influenced this work in direct and indirect ways, but a few key nodes deserve recognition here.

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Abstract

Cindy Sheehan became the “face” of the peace movement during the Iraq War by camping outside of President Bush’s Crawford Ranch in August 2005. This project explores the possibilities for resistance in the first US war of the Internet Age, specifically analyzing Sheehan’s rhetorical acts (an open letter, camping, and her autobiography). Utilizing Galloway’s and Thacker’s network theory as social ontology and heuristic, resistance is defined through the concept of exploit, where, like computer viruses, movements use rhetorical forms to exploit norms of dominant systems to gain access, “recode” norms, or disrupt systems. Movements, employing distributed structures, work to “write code” or build new systems through a *politics of the act*. Sheehan’s work is an extension of other women’s peace movements that have employed networks and rhetorical acts to exploit otherwise exclusionary publics or build new systems.

Tracing historical practices of rhetorical forms for their exploitive possibilities, Sheehan’s rhetoric is analyzed against State constituted norms post-9/11, and following Butler and Faludi, I argue dominant discourse constructed norms of heightened patriotism, traditional gender (mother) roles, and fear after 9/11. Although Sheehan’s open letter on the internet did not constitute a public tribunal as other women’s letters, Sheehan’s Camp Casey, initiated by the question of “What noble cause?,” spoke through post-9/11 norms while developing a peace movement network constituted through an ethics of care. Camp Casey posed a threat to State order by building a new system operating under care protocols that shifted power away from the State. Resistance and possibility for social change are rooted in changing affective relations, and Sheehan was attacked by Right-wing networks to question her motives and undermine care protocols. Sheehan uses her autobiography to combat the netwar waged by the Right in an attempt to maintain the peace movement. The current peace movement was strongest during Camp Casey where it fully utilized a distributed form, was constituted through an ethics of care, and gained popular support against a sovereign unable to respond or care for the public. Movements should consciously employ network logics, and understand affective dimensions of social change.

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IN ORDER TO HAVE A LARGE IMPACT, A MOVEMENT MUST BE GUIDED NOT JUST BY CONSCIOUS AND IMAGINATION, BUT ALSO BY AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONSTRAINTS AND POSSIBILITIES OF ITS HISTORICAL MOMENT; AND IT MUST PAY SERIOUS ATTENTION TO BUILDING LASTING ORGANIZATIONS.¹

Why Cindy?

In 2005, Cindy Sheehan's name evoked immediate familiarity. She is the mother who lost her son, Casey Sheehan, in the Iraq War.² She became infamous for camping outside of President Bush's Crawford ranch, drawing thousands of supporters to join her in asking Bush "what noble cause" her son died for. Although Cindy³ still makes the news periodically (most recently for campaigning against Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi for her House seat in 2008, demonstrating on the anniversary of her son's death outside of President Obama's vacation home in Martha's Vineyard, and getting arrested in 2010 at a protest outside of the White House on the anniversary of the Iraq invasion), she has become, like most media celebrities today, a vague memory—a "I should know what that name refers to." Perhaps more disturbing, her name barely resonates with college-age activists following in her anti-war footsteps. At the same time, when I've mentioned her as the subject of this dissertation, the

¹ Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

² The Bush Administration has been rhetorically strategic in "naming" the current and ongoing war fronts in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the public has no clear consensus on what the official "names" are. The US started operations in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 following the September 11, 2001 attacks to fight and find al-Qaeda terrorists responsible for 9/11, and followed by invading Iraq on March 20, 2003 under the rationale Saddam Hussain aided al-Qaeda and had "weapons of mass destruction." Afghanistan ("War in Afghanistan" or "Operation Enduring Freedom") and Iraq ("Operation Iraqi Freedom" or "Second Gulf War") have both been labeled part of the same "War on Terror." The Bush Administration and its critics problematically generalize all US combat as the same war, so I will attempt to provide distinction on each front as appropriate in my own critique. Cindy's activism is explicitly linked to the Iraq War, although she, too, links events of 9/11 to Iraq in her critique of the Bush Administration in that Bush's policies and decisions in Iraq started even before 9/11.

³ In this project, I will refer to Cindy by her first name. As this is a project about connecting with others and ultimately to promote relationships of care, speaking of her on a first name basis is appropriate for conveying intimate and caring protocols.

clarification of “she was the mother who lost her son...” sparks what little memory of Cindy is left in the public’s mind. For better or worse, Cindy will be forever tied to her title as “Peace Mom,” and the story of her anti-war efforts will be forever linked to mothers who have lost their sons and daughters. Just as Cindy’s activism is an effort to uncover “the truth” about the Iraq War, following Cindy’s journey is a means for me to uncover the “truth” and possibilities for contemporary anti-war dissent and resistance given the socio-political climate, use of internet and social networking technologies, and the use of affect in gaining support for movements.

Usually after I inform others my dissertation is on Cindy, those who remember her want to know if I met her because they are most interested to know about her biography, life, and drive to be a professional activist. To those who know less about her or have less commitment to any anti-war activity usually ask the more obvious questions of “why her?” or “is there even a peace movement to study at all?” I disappoint my interlocutors by informing them I have not actually met Cindy, and have no easy answers for “why Cindy because she has proven to be a problematic subject for any rhetorical criticism or social movement study. She is not the “leader” of a full-scale nor easily recognizable “peace movement.” Rhetorically, her message is simple and perhaps limiting in blaming Presidents and politicians for going to, and staying the course, in the Iraq War. Although Camp Casey⁴ and Cindy’s use of blogs as part of her activism are interesting, Cindy is an unlikely and problematic “face” for any movement. Her ethos is colored by being a woman who unapologetically swears in her writings and speeches, and who is routinely called a nutjob and wingnut by right-wing politicians,

⁴ Cindy’s “camp” outside of President Bush’s Crawford ranch in 2005 was named “Camp Casey” by the supporters who went to Crawford with Cindy on the first day.

pundits, and bloggers alike. Cindy is a problematic dissertation subject because I can't make easy claims on the effectiveness of her rhetoric or even the movement itself because the US continues to be engaged in war both in Afghanistan and Iraq. The story I have to tell is more about lost opportunities or rhetoric stuck in "old ways" of thinking—not taking advantage of resistance in a networked age. At the same time, and perhaps more importantly, Cindy allows us to remember the foremothers of peace movement work *and* pushes us to problematize and strategize resistance in new ways. Her "failings" (and successes) are instructive for this and future movements.

After all, one cannot speak of the current peace movement without speaking about Cindy. After Camp Casey ended, Cindy's name was used metonymically in newspapers to identify "those against the war."⁵ She has remained active with feminist anti-war activist group CODEPINK, and, as noted above, continues to "make the news" for arrests and her participation in demonstrations. In books by Tom Hayden⁶ and Scott Ritter⁷ prescribing what the anti-war movement needs to do now, Cindy and Camp Casey are praised for energizing the movement, but derided for not transforming Camp Casey into a more organized campaign. Among progressive circles, Cindy is admired; her blog posts, although not as frequent, are still circulating amongst the *Daily Kos* and *Huffington Post* sects. Her writings and speeches have been published in two book collections, her own autobiography⁸ is posted on book lists for CODEPINK and other

⁵ An exhaustive search of the *New York Times* through Lexis-Nexus for Cindy Sheehan from 2004-2008 pulled articles directly about Cindy Sheehan and her actions and articles about the Iraq War or Bush war policies where Cindy and/or Camp Casey were referred as representing the anti-war opinion (e.g. "anti-war supporters like Cindy Sheehan...").

⁶ *Ending the War in Iraq* (New York: Akashic Books, 2007).

⁷ *Waging Peace: The Art of War for the Antiwar Movement* (New York: Nation Books, 2007).

⁸ Cindy Sheehan, *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey Through Heartache to Activism* (New York: Atria Books, 2006). As I draw heavily from her autobiography, hereafter referred to as "Autobiography."

activist organizations, and her writings have been included in CODEPINK's own book.⁹

To discover this peace movement network, Cindy is the place to start because she continues to leave traces of the movement's message. Moreover, while she self-acknowledges being the face of the movement, it remains unclear what is to be made of that fact.¹⁰

Cindy raises more questions about the movement and what is possible for movements in contemporary politics. On the one hand, Cindy's rhetoric is typical of past anti-war dissent. As Robert Ivie points out, "anti-war dissent tends toward an idiom of negative criticism chiefly...and a dehumanizing exercise in reverse recrimination that demonizes the nation at war and its leadership."¹¹ Speaking as a *mother* for the cause of peace is one of the oldest strategies of U.S. American peace movements reoccurring in nearly every historically recognized moment of the "women's peace movement."¹² Even camping for peace has been employed by women and environmental activists as a direct action tactic to take the movement's message directly to the site or source of power (i.e. military bases or Presidential homes). In these ways, Cindy's actions continue in a tradition of women's peace movement work, invoking a history otherwise forgotten. On the other hand, Cindy is acting in an age where blogs and email list-serves replace printed newsletters and personal epistles used

⁹ *Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism*, eds. CODEPINK Founders Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans (Maui, HI: Inner Ocean Publishing, Inc, 2005).

¹⁰ In a brief conversation with Susan Faludi at a book signing, Faludi was excited that I was writing on Cindy as she noted that she wanted to include something about Cindy in her book: *The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America* (NY: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, 2007), but knew that she would be biting off a lot to include Cindy, and had a hard time figuring out what to make of Cindy.

¹¹ Robert L. Ivie, *Dissent from War* (Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, Inc., 2007), 5.

¹² See Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the US Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1993) for a comprehensive history.

by past women's activists. Cindy pushes us to question: as the first war of the Internet Age, what are our options for resistance and advocating for peace? At the same time, because Cindy's rhetorical action mimics the strategies of past movements, the "new" possibilities of resistance can also be thought as a continuation of peace movement work, building upon the work of historical forbearers and showing movements are not bound solely to particular moments in time.

In connecting Cindy to past movements as well as to give the context of a world post- 9/11, this chapter constructs her "rhetorical situation"—speaking as a mother in a time where women engage in combat yet still conform to traditional feminine roles, and speaking in a post 9/11 age where dissent was limited. As most concur, "everything changed" after 9/11, which had sizable consequences for messages of peace largely unable to be articulated and otherwise assumed to be traitorous leading up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In the spirit of critical rhetoric defined by Raymie McKerrow,¹³ I aim to uncover "what is possible" for peace movements given the particular discursive formation that emerged post-9/11 that emphasized traditional family roles, uncritical patriotism, and promoted security over civil liberties. As I will develop here and in the chapters to follow, Cindy's ability to speak *as a mother* gives legitimacy to her voice, and her role as mother and the ethics of care constituted through her rhetoric that defined the movement. Through Cindy, we discover what has been accomplished by this movement, and problematize what is possible in this war context.

In recovering and demonstrating historical women's peace movement work, my second aim in this project is to show that movements—especially peace movements—

¹³ Raymie McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis," *Communication Monographs* 56 (1989): 91-111.

should be understood as a continuation of previous movements.¹⁴ Although there are times the movement becomes more visible such as when a country is at war, many peace movement activists are persistent in their call for peace—working on various campaigns for related causes—using the same tactics, rhetorical tropes, and ideologies of developed from “the movement” over the years. Although rhetorical social movement scholars have allowed that “rhetorical movements” do exist as continuations through history defined as the “lines of argument, strategies, stylistic choices of a particular kind of protest which transcend particular social organizations in historical periods,”¹⁵ I push this further to show continuation is both discursive and material. The networking of movements in the past leaves traces of actions, strategies, and activists waiting to be re-linked and awakened for the next movement manifestation. This dissertation project is about networks—both as a heuristic to analyze movements and as a social ontology for how movements (and other social constructs) exist. Although I develop the theory for networked movements in the next chapter, it is important to underscore movement networks exist across time and space, providing resources for movements of the present. As a social ontology, I argue that possibilities for movements exist by understanding contemporary movements are a reconfiguration of

¹⁴ Josephine Elgin similarly understands the peace movement as a continuous movement in her study of women’s peace movement work in Britain stating, “there has always been a women’s peace movement in Britain, although sometimes during the intervening years it has been relatively quiescent, and at all times its history has been inadequately recorded” (“Women and Peace: From the Suffragists to the Greenham Women” in *Campaigns for Peace: British Peace Movements in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Richard Taylor and Nigel Young (Manchester University Press, 1987): 221). Roberta Coles similarly contends that the US peace movement goes through periods of abeyance and resurgence with organizations regrouping or accommodating new groups in the face of new wars and issues (“Odd Folk and Ordinary People: Collective Identity Disparities between Peace Groups in the Persian Gulf Crisis,” *Sociological Spectrum* 19 (1999): 325-357). Coles’ study of Peace Groups shows how collective identities based on particular *organizations* is the general trend, and thus the peace movement must attempt to knit different identities/organizations together to be powerful as a movement.

¹⁵ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “Femininity and Feminism: To Be or Not to Be a Woman,” *Communication Quarterly* 31, no. 2 (1983): 101.

historical movements, made “live” for a present movement. Whether this is literally activists from the Vietnam War participate in actions against the Iraq War, or means movements build support and strategize based on historical movement work, it emphasizes the “connectedness” of a movement over time. We never begin from scratch, unless we forget the work that has gone on before.

In part, defining networked movements continuing over time underscores network logics are not a new phenomenon of the Internet Age, and women’s movements especially have utilized the network form consciously and unconsciously as part of their strategy—even to the extent of “deactivating” movements in times where it was not strategic to act. For example, the Women’s Suffrage Movement did not actively work for the vote during WWI, in order to strategically gain ground when they resumed their campaigns after the war.¹⁶ Differently, Epstein shows how networks can reconfigure for new campaigns with Direct Action Movement activists continued participating over time by joining different organizations or going to different demonstrations after one campaign ended.¹⁷ Understanding the relationships between organizations of past movement iterations can also be instructive for the present. Although the history of the U.S. women’s peace movement is littered with various organizations that have come and gone over the years, some organizations have endured such as Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) that was first organized after WWI. Stable organizations such as WILPF allow us to understand a single movement can exist, reconfiguring around key organizations. It is no

¹⁶ See Alonso. In part, this strategy was to show women as Patriotic by not hindering the war effort through suffrage campaigns, but also to show women voters were essential for making decisions about war and peace.

¹⁷ Epstein.

coincidence, then, that the movement will have similar types of organizations in each historical manifestation. For every movement era, there are more conservative or liberal politically orientated organizations and more radically oriented organizations—today’s CODEPINK arguably is the counterpart to Women’s Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND). WAND helped create the Seneca Women’s Peace Camp of the 1980s, while CODEPINK aided Cindy in building Camp Casey. In other words, movements should be understood as networks made up by various organizations, individuals, discourses, images, and tactics that exist over time, connected by the histories of previous connections between parts and activated at different moments (with different configurations). It is important to read this present movement (and Cindy) into the history of the movements of the past as this, too, becomes resources for what is possible for the present movement.

The history of women’s peace movement work is integral to the dissertation project both in a sense of privileging and recovering the history of women’s action largely overlooked—causing social amnesia of peace work—and in rewriting the narrative of peace movements as a persisting movement. Not only do movements act against a backdrop of particular historical, State sponsored conflicts, but are also challenged by how the public (an activists themselves) understands the movement. As rhetorically constituted social conditions shape what is expected or appropriate (possible) for a movement, recontextualizing “the movement” as a recognized historical network is integral. Melissa Deem similarly argues for a radical recontextualization of feminism under the same terms:

[The map of feminism] must be a complex articulation of the material, social, discursive, and institutional practices in which feminism partakes. Feminism cannot simply be situated within preconceived temporal logics of revolutionary change or historical progress; instead these discourses must be read differently with minute attention paid to the specificities of the spatial and temporal logics which are enacted within the various practices of feminism, producing a different kind of history for feminism, one that does not function along accepted historical logics.¹⁸

Peace movements do not just form when there is a war, and activists do not just come out of nowhere. Moreover, in the Internet Age where “network” is the predominant construct to understand power and resistance, the narrative of peace movements needs to reflect this term as well. If this project is read as a prescriptive for the peace movement at all, it is to translate historical networking practices into a networked language which, in turn, offers new understanding of spaces of resistance analogously through internet code, viruses, and exploits.¹⁹ Movements do not just need to strategize for present day actions or current campaigns, but rather should also recognize that building and maintaining movement networks is essential as well. Importantly, how a movement articulates and tells its own story is another strategic thread. Following Francesca Polletta, “Narratives may be employed strategically to strengthen a collective identity, but they also may precede and make possible the development of a coherent community or collective actor.”²⁰ The narrative of peace movements I wish to tell here attempts to make a women’s peace movement network coherent both to its historical self and to today’s networked logics.

¹⁸ Melissa Deem, “Scandal, Heteronormative Culture, and the Displacing of Feminism,” *Critical Studies Mass Communication* 16, no. 1 (1999), 92.

¹⁹ I draw largely from Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker’s *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007) for this theory, which I will explain more in Chapter 2.

²⁰ Francesca Polletta, *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 12.

In order to build this collective narrative and to connect Cindy more directly, a general chronology of Cindy is in order along with some general comments about how to understand peace movements. Cindy's story illuminates 1) the strategic use of the mother persona in advocating for peace, 2) the tension of mourning and care in the face of patriotism and war-sacrifice, and 3) the confrontation of movements against State power (as States are the ones that "go to war").²¹ Cindy's story also shows how movements are attacked by state power in order to maintain support for violence and war while dismantling peace culture. First, I will provide some general background on women's peace movements to underscore their networked nature. Then I will show the post-9/11 context that constrained dissent, and how, like movements past, Cindy speaking as mother rhetorically fit this context.

Women's Peace Movement Networks

Cindy prefers to call her work part of the *peace* movement, and I shall follow suit. "Anti-war" is too limiting a term to connect Cindy to the diverse range of movement groups organized over the past century. Understanding a *peace* movement also connects Cindy to groups organized against other forms of oppression and violence as well as organizations who may have organized for different purposes (i.e. suffrage) and shifted towards organizing for peace in a time of war.²² More so as will be discussed further in Chapter 4, "anti-war" defines a particular persuasive campaign and

²¹ This is not to deny that other wars and violence occur that are not initiated by legitimate nation-state governments, but does recognize that (at least for 20th-21st century U.S. American movements) this is the predominant type of conflict that peace movements articulate around. Even anti-nuclear efforts are still directed towards the state/military who "own" the missiles.

²² WILPF formed during WWI when women's suffrage activists met in 1915 at the Hague (in lieu of the originally planned suffrage conference). The International Committee of Women for Permanent Peace (ICWPP) was formed with Jane Addams as its initial leader, and the women planned to meet with President Wilson and other statesmen to advocate for peace. See Alonso.

not a *movement* where anti-war campaigns have a clear goal and message—a goal that unfortunately is rarely attained. “Campaigns” are often waged by singular organizations and rely on lobbying governments or public petitions. Women, often excluded from traditional organizations or barred from power centers, have created movement work outside “campaigns” within networked structures. Thus, the peace movement I am describing here, derived from women’s peace movement history, is more “anti-establishment” and recognizes peace is not merely the absence of war nor achieved solely through governmental policy.²³ Rather, peace is the construction of cooperative relationships free of oppression, or as Ivie describes, dissent from war requires the “double gesture” of peacebuilding where peacebuilding is the expression of humanizing solidarity which redirects our attention away from evil and towards the need for tolerance and reconciliation.²⁴ To connect Cindy to *peace* movement work is also to connect her to networks existing outside of State conflict or State defined change mechanisms.

Although labeling the movement as a *peace* movement creates a more inclusive network of causes and organizations, it also presents conceptual vagueness on what constitutes “peace.” Although peace movements are usually aligned with Left or liberal agendas and, in general, oppose military action, there is little consensus to what will achieve the goal of peace. This becomes more problematic on the level of organizing when some peace advocates allow for Just Wars while others oppose any act of violence—even in their own civil disobedience tactics. Peace activists vary in political

²³ Kim Salomon, “The Peace Movement: An Anti-Establishment Movement,” *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no. 2 (1986): 115-127.

²⁴ Ivie, 5.

and religious ideologies, although peace movement activists aligning under the same ideology might also be diverse in terms of age, tactics, or involvement.²⁵ The diversity of approaches, definitions, and campaigns for peace have made it a challenge for scholars to define and classify peace movement organizations, and by extension pose a challenge to activists themselves in identifying and collaborating with other groups.

Women's peace movements, however, have been more successful in combining various issues under the banner of peace and fostering international networks. Whereas women have been spinning peace webs and organizing through informal networks since the beginning of recorded US peace movement work, it is only recently scholars and other activists have been more intentional of and understand movement work through network forms. April Carter notes by 1990, transnational peace activity has become more permanently established, and notes it is, in part, feminist commitments that have fostered peace activity extending peace work globally. Women's movements have prioritized international relations—critical in times of war when nationalism and patriotism is promoted and where global thinking is understood as assisting the enemy. As example, WILPF's members defied their governments during WWI to meet together, with some women being detained from traveling to the Hague altogether. Similarly, during the Vietnam War, members of Women Strike for Peace (WSP) traveled to Indonesia to meet with women delegates from North and South Vietnam.²⁶

Fostering interpersonal connections extended into organizing tactics where WSP used

²⁵ April Carter offers a summary of and defines criteria for identifying peace movement organizations, and shows that peace movement groups range from Christianity to Buddhism, from liberal realists to utopian anarchists. She also shows that even among groups with similar political ideologies (such as anarchism), there will be diversity in the allowable tactics from those who will allow for violence in direct action to those that practice radical pacifism. See *Peace Movements: International Protest and World Politics since 1945* (London: Longman GroupUK, 1992).

²⁶ See Alonso.

PTA phone trees and women camping at Greenham Common Airforce Base in Britain against nuclear missiles in the 1980s made use of chain letters to invite other women to participate in various actions. In both cases, women decided to participate in peace activities even though they had never done so before because of these “personal” invitations. Epstein notes successful movement building comes from drawing together pre-existing networks, and that movements last when they have a home/population base. In the case of women’s peace movements, advocating for peace as *women* serves as a stable base, and the tendency for women to reach out to others and sustain friendship networks as an organizing principle has enabled there to be an identifiable peace movement over time.

Although I am not offering an exhaustive account here, the history of women’s peace movements is the primary support for my arguments about Cindy’s work. In part, I aim to write Cindy into this continued history of women’s peace movements, and show Cindy represents the latest manifestation of the movement. Although, academically, social movements have been defined as “networks” since the 1980s (especially with the rise of New Social Movement Theory), it is only recently with the predominance of internet technology and the concept of the “networked society”²⁷ that “network” has spurred scholarly theorization to figure out what women activists have known all along—within a network is power. As Manuel Castells theorizes, the power of the network as organizing form is not just the domain of movements nor an imaginary to make sense of our world, but that networks manifest themselves in a variety of contexts. Although networks are not a new phenomenon, as Alexander

²⁷ See Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd ed (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000).

Galloway and Eugene Thacker underscore, it has become the dominant organizing structure of movements, terrorist groups, and States—contemporary politics are dependent literally in understanding how the Internet as distributed network *works* since this is also the logic and terrain of contemporary organization and resistance.²⁸ As noted above, my read of Cindy is ambivalent, but I do think Cindy and Camp Casey show the power of a movement employing a network against an unmatched State network. Moreover, understanding network logics also enables us to better understand what persuades individuals without relying on limited persuasive messages or instrumental campaigns.

“Everything Changed:” The Post-9/11 Context

Apart from internal ideological differences within “the peace movement,” any dissent in the US was constrained because of 9/11. Judith Butler’s essays post-9/11 describe a world where “heightened nationalistic discourse, extended surveillance mechanisms, suspended constitutional rights, and developed forms of explicit and implicit censorship”²⁹ became the dominant norms—norms that led US public intellectuals to be less vocal in their dissent³⁰ and where those who dared to speak (peace movement activists included) were mocked, silenced in the mainstream media, or made unintelligible through the narratives spun to rebuild US identity after being attacked on our own soil. Carolyn Byerly shows the Bush Administration’s rhetorical strategy was not just to blame Islamic terrorists for the attacks, but went further to actually hire and consult with media and entertainment professionals to launch a literal

²⁸ I develop and distinguish the power of network forms in Chapter 2.

²⁹ Judith Butler, *Prearious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York: Verso, 2004), xi.

³⁰ Notably, Susan Sontag was immediately attacked for her comments post-9/11 (Faludi, 27).

public relations campaign to support military policy.³¹ Misinformation about the war (both in the immediate response to Afghanistan and leading up to the 2003 Iraq invasion) was supported by uncritical journalists and even perpetuated further by mainstream media.³² As Butler shows, the framing of and dehumanizing discourses started after 9/11 justified US militarism whether in Afghanistan or Iraq.

Within official news stories in mainstream media as well as the more “democratic” forums of the internet/blogosphere, voices of opposition and women’s voices in particular were silenced. As Susan Faludi and Butler both argue, feminism came to represent the same vulnerability felt by the US following the attacks, thus it was employed in the name of those the US aimed to “save” (i.e. Afghan women) while simultaneously being eliminated from the subjectivity of US citizens. The “war” on feminist subjectivity especially following 9/11, is demonstrated by Faludi where she argues networks refused to air stories about female firefighters, had few female guests on Sunday morning political talk shows, and even the *New York Times* featured women writers in less than 10% of all editorials in the three weeks after 9/11. The general public also self-regulated talk of dissent: female firefighters tried to combat the incorrect narrative that there were only *male* heroes and widows of 9/11 who dared to move on with their lives (perhaps even getting remarried) were both attacked on blogs and mainstream media—being called unpatriotic and selfish (among other things).³³

Also public opposition to the Iraq invasion was more than with the initial war in

³¹ Carolyn M. Byerly, “After September 11: The Formation of Oppositional Discourse,” *Feminist Media Studies* 5, no. 3 (2005): 281-296.

³² Amelia Arsenault and Manuel Castells, “Conquering the Minds, Conquering Iraq: The Social Production of Misinformation in the United States—a Case Study,” *Information, Communication and Society* 9 no. 3 (2006): 284-307.

³³ Faludi.

Afghanistan, Faludi shows “security moms” replaced soccer moms as the target electorate in 2004, and even though women were in combat positions both in Iraq and Afghanistan, the main story of females on the front lines was how Jessica Lynch had to be “saved” after being held as a POW in Iraq.³⁴

The “terror dream” described by Faludi was not just with constructing the paradigmatic “hero” at Ground Zero or on the battlefield, but also extended to how civilians should conduct themselves. As Faludi argues, 9/11 offered the Bush Administration an opportunity to promote traditional (and patriarchal) family values by emphasizing the heroic role of males, necessitating women to atone to their sins of feminism—the cause for America’s vulnerability to terrorist attack. On the home front, women should aim to be “security moms” by getting married and starting families while supporting the Administration who would protect them from further harm. The role of women was constituted through the figure of the 9/11 widows, who were supposed to remain in chaste mourning, raising families for the husbands tragically killed. Widows who dared to marry again or oppose the war in the names of their loved ones were as traitorous as those advocating for peace. In short, 9/11 meant that patriotism, security, and citizens’ roles were narrowly redefined, where anything outside the dominant narrative meant that you were either aiding the terrorists or not heard at all.

Clearly, in this context, any movement for peace is inherently constrained.

Butler further describes how popular discourse against the peace vigils and demonstrations that did occur before the Iraq invasion were characterized as

³⁴ Never mind that the initial “story” of Lynch’s situation and rescued was falsified to fit an appropriate narrative of a “girl-in-need-of-rescue” script—Lynch was actually cared for by Iraqi medical civilians after her unit was ambushed and turned over to American forces peaceably—not saved in a daring rescue from abusive captors.

“anachronistic or nostalgic” and worked to marginalize both movement efforts and dissent in general.³⁵ The challenge for peace advocates became more daunting after the apparent “success” of “Operation Iraqi Freedom” signified by images of soldiers toppling Saddam Hussein’s statue on April 9, 2004 accompanied by images of Iraqis presumably rejoicing the US’s involvement. As Nathan Newman reports, activists failed to come up with a rebuttal that war was not the best way to achieve this outcome or any better strategies to take out a dictator like Hussein.³⁶ In Nathan’s view, a message of “no war” was “too thin” and failed to combat the extensive “intellectual outreach” done by neoconservatives that built a pro-war base (at least in terms of public opinion). Nathan also blames the “failure” of the peace movement on the myriad of groups and divisions that (in 2003) constituted “the movement.” Tom Hayden’s chronology of the current peace movement concurs: post-9/11 there were a few small pockets of opposition. The first major anti-war demonstration on September 24, 2001 sponsored by CODEPINK gathered only 200 people outside the White House.³⁷ Although Hayden shows demonstrations grew leading up to the Iraq invasion (20,000 gathered outside the White House in April 2002), many activists on the Left active in the global justice and fair trade movements were decisively neutral toward the war. Although there were voices for peace attempting to speak in an otherwise constrained public sphere, the early movement struggled to formulate a compelling message—even one that could reach progressive allies otherwise connected ideologically. Although

³⁵ Butler, 3.

³⁶ Nathan Newman, “Where the Peace Movement Went Wrong,” *Dissent* (Summer 2003) 12.

³⁷ Hayden.

support for peace grew as the war dragged on, most activists remained connected only in local, small networks until the 2004 election.³⁸

A significant difference in the growth of dissent was in part due to the internet where major peace organizations could have more outreach than in previous wars. Although CODEPINK is best known for their acts of guerilla theaters and performative demonstrations, they also have a web presence with resources for people to act locally participating in reading groups, finding local organizations already established, or signing online petitions.³⁹ United for Peace and Justice⁴⁰ has been instrumental in organizing demonstrations, and from 2002-2007, they coordinated eight demonstrations of between 100,000-600,000 supporters in large part due to an email “blast” list with over 75,000 members.⁴¹ TrueMajority.org and MoveOn.org have used the internet to build the movement online, securing donations to pay for anti-war advertisements, campaigning with online petitions, as well as connecting other online campaigns and organizations.⁴² With rising public opinion against the continued war⁴³ and a growing support base cultivated online, activists turned their attention to supporting anti-war or Democratic candidates. MoveOn.org led this effort, contributing nearly \$25 million to Howard Dean’s 2004 presidential primary campaign,⁴⁴ and funneling the “peace

³⁸ Hayden reports that demonstrations occurring after the October 2002 war authorization vote in Congress brought out 100,000 protesters in Washington with smaller demonstrations nation-wide (including 50,000 that marched in San Francisco). However, as Hayden notes, given the media climate, the *New York Times* and even NPR were “surprised” by the demonstrations—denying the scale of the events and reporting that organizers were disappointed at the turn out as part of news reports (125).

³⁹ “CODEPINK: Index” *CODEPINK* <<http://www.codepinkalert.org/>> (28 October 2009).

⁴⁰ Notably, UFPJ is led by a woman: Leslie Cagan.

⁴¹ Hayden, 126.

⁴² Hayden, 126.

⁴³ At this point, most of public concern was addressed against Iraq, with the Afghanistan front being largely forgotten and ignored.

⁴⁴ Hayden, 140.

movement” into an electoral campaign against Bush and for *any* Democratic candidate up for election. The election strategy was largely ineffective, Bush was reelected and Democrats who did keep and gain seats in Congress largely turned their back on the movement that elected them. Instead of following promises made to the peace movement, representatives opted instead to attack Republicans instead of strategizing to end the war, and backed down on policies that would force the Bush Administration to agree to timelines for exiting Iraq or that would limit war funding.⁴⁵

Focusing solely on anti-war demonstrations and electoral politics limited the peace movement as a whole; it has been women’s peace organizations continuing to critique politicians and focusing on the lives lost in war. CODEPINK staged a hunger strike in 2007 outside of Nancy Pelosi’s home to pressure the Democrats to be more firm in ending the war,⁴⁶ and a group of 23 Congresswomen formed the “Out of Iraq Caucus” to petition for legislation to bring soldiers home from war.⁴⁷ WILPF has continued to campaign against the war and coordinate female grassroots activists. The websites of all these organizations focus on petitions and specific US legislation on war and military spending, but also campaign for women’s education and economic independence in Afghanistan and Iraq. CODEPINK, in particular, has worked to bring delegations of Iraqi and Afghani women to the US for speaking tours and campaigns.⁴⁸ Despite some media coverage of arrests from CODEPINK demonstrations, many of

⁴⁵ Matt Taibbi, “The Chicken Doves,” *Rolling Stone*, 21 Feb. 2008, 37-39. Hayden also indicates that Kerry and Dean both turned their back on the Iraqi issue for six months after the election, and MoveOn drew back its anti-war efforts post election (147).

⁴⁶ Pelosi became the first woman Speaker of the House in 2006.

⁴⁷ Katti Gray, “Silence = War: A New Wave of Feminist Peace Activists Take it to the Streets,” *Ms* (Winter 2006): 44-47.

⁴⁸ CODEPINK. “Support Iraqi Women.” *CODE PINK*, <<http://www.codepinkalert.org/section.php?id=131>> (28 October 2009).

these organizations and their work have largely been overlooked in part because of the marginalization of female voices overall in mainstream media as well as the fact that these organizations work largely as collectives—networking and connecting local organizations—making them “less visible to male observers.”⁴⁹

The narrative of the peace movement, especially after the 2004 election, was one of defeat. Yes, there were some organizations active and utilizing internet tools to gain membership, donations, and support for petitions, but these groups largely failed to get any media coverage or be heard even by the legislators they helped to elect. Although public opinion shifted from largely intolerance of dissent to being outright against the Iraq War, the movement still was struggling to construct a coherent message or strategy for ending the war. Ritter argues the movement has not done enough to wage a fight for public opinion nor to construct a new “vision” of peace.⁵⁰ Amidst a marginalized protest community, failed election strategy, and continued shifts of public opinion, there emerged the new face (and energy) of the movement in Cindy Sheehan in 2005. Cindy, as a mother of a fallen soldier, spoke on behalf of other parents and veterans against the war, and in doing so, gained the media attention and public support that, in Hayden’s words, breathed life back into the movement.

⁴⁹ Hayden, 118. As Hayden points out, there is a misunderstanding that there is no peace movement since public, traditional organizations with single leaders and bureaucratic structures (read, masculine) do not make up the majority of peace organizations. Localized efforts remain largely invisible and underreported in mainstream media. Importantly, women’s peace movement history is often lost and not recognized by women’s activists themselves because only traditional organizations are usually the focus of such histories. Cindy notes in her autobiography that nothing like Camp Casey had ever happened before—the history of women’s peace camps was not included in what she learned as a history major. In other words, just because peace groups go overlooked because their form is unintelligible to (mostly male) historians/media, does not mean it does not exist.

⁵⁰Notably, Ritter was a UN Weapons Inspector in Iraq during the 1990s and served in the Marine Corps during the first Gulf War.

Cindy's Peace Movement

Without the organizations and networks being developed after 9/11, Cindy may have never emerged as the “face” of the movement at all. At the same time, Cindy’s role in the movement has already been criticized as not capitalizing on the gains made during Camp Casey or that Cindy herself is no longer useful to the movement. Ritter in particular is critical of Camp Casey as being a won battle of a lost war, and he suggests the movement should analyze this experience as the military would study a battle: in order to learn and develop future strategies and tactics. In a basic sense, my project is to take up Ritter’s call, and show why Camp Casey was an important moment for the peace movement as this was precisely the moment a network came together. Camp Casey “represented a confluence of ideas and personalities, triggered by Cindy Sheehan’s courageous stance,”⁵¹ thus I aim to understand what elements of the movement came together surrounding Cindy, in what ways, and to what consequence. In understanding Cindy, we can understand *how* to build and utilize power inherent within networks. This section is to trace how Cindy became face of the peace movement.

Following Cindy’s autobiography, her journey to activism starts with and is guided by her son, Casey. Interestingly, in the forward of the book, Cindy states, “This book is the story of Casey Austin Sheehan.”⁵² Casey Sheehan, Cindy’s oldest son, died on April 4, 2004. In her autobiography, Cindy notes it is Palm Sunday when she is told of her son’s death, further noting she received conflicting stories from the army about the circumstances of Casey’s death. Casey enlisted in 2000, and as Cindy describes,

⁵¹ Ritter, 91.

⁵² “Autobiography,” ix.

was promised a college education, signing bonus, and the ability to be a chaplain's assistant—away from combat. Instead, Casey was taught to be a Humvee mechanic and was deployed to Iraq in 2004. We could presume Casey's death was the moment Cindy became an activist against the war, but her autobiography tells a slightly different story. Instead, Cindy describes how she cried and was depressed for months following his death, unable to work due to panic attacks. Cindy started coping with her grief by going to the internet, and this is when she indicates she started her activist journey. Cindy blames herself throughout her autobiography for not acting sooner and speaking out against war even though she was critical of Bush after he "stole the election" in 2000—instead praying for peace in the hopes her son would not have to go to war. After Casey's death, she read news and scoured websites looking for the "truth" behind the Iraq Invasion. Largely through the Internet, she connected with other families of soldiers that died with Casey, in the process discovering the Military Families Speak Out (MFSO)⁵³ website.⁵⁴ Shortly after, Cindy starts attending speaking events of other MFSO members, and starts to speak herself at local events.

To be clear, Cindy did not start the movement, but rather joined a movement network already in progress. She started to connect herself to the movement through seeking out information on the Internet about the war. As she describes in her autobiography, "she did not know" about the work of the Project for a New American Century, a neoconservative think tank Cindy describes as part of the Bush

⁵³ MFSO formed in November 2002. See Military Families Speak Out. <<http://www.mfso.org/index.php>> (28 October 2009).

⁵⁴ As Cindy notes, "I believe this act [emailing MFSO] was the single moment in my life that started me on the road to activism" ("Autobiography," 90). Importantly, she credits her daughter Carly for helping her wake up from her grief by writing a poem which is what she initially emailed to MFSO (and that has been subsequently included in Cindy's blog posts for Daily Kos and in CODEPINK's book.

Administration's "plot" for waging war and promoting American Empire. She never heard of the term "neoconservative" nor the various ways the Bush administration "fixed" intelligence about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq to be "fixed around the policy" of invading Iraq.⁵⁵ By seeking out the "truth" via the Internet, Cindy was making herself part of the movement by attending to the discourse being developed by and read by others in the movement.⁵⁶

Bush, himself, provided opportunity for Cindy to join the movement. Before she found MFSO, Bush invited her family to Fort Lewis in Washington in June 2004—one of his meetings with families of soldiers killed. It is here Cindy meets the family of "Ed" (she uses pseudonyms here). Ed's biological mother was outspoken against the war and became one of Cindy's friends, while Ed's stepmother helped to organize the "Cindy Doesn't Speak for Me" counterprotests to her own Camp Casey.⁵⁷ Unlike Ed's "real" mother (who spoke to Bush about her son and why the war was wrong),⁵⁸ Cindy did not directly confront Bush about the cause her son died for. However, Cindy does remember how Bush did not even know the name of her son and only referred to her as "Mom" in their meeting.⁵⁹ Thus, through Bush, Cindy made connections to the

⁵⁵ See "Autobiography," especially 65-69.

⁵⁶ Michael Warner describes the same phenomenon as part of constituting "counterpublics" in that counterpublics are constituted by the circulation and mere attention of various texts and discourses. As I will develop in the next chapter, the logics of networks coincide with the logics of public sphere(s) and counterpublics. Thus, Cindy's attention to discourses (and adoption of the same information and dominant tropes within her own thinking and writing) makes her a part of the movement. See *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York, Zone Books, 2002).

⁵⁷ Cindy emphasizes it was Ed's "real" mother (biological mother) who was against the war, indicating that some "mothers" (like Ed's stepmother) have less right to speak for the dead or to criticize Cindy's anti-war stance.

⁵⁸ As Cindy recounts, Bush responded to Ed's mother by asking her, "If your son came home from Iraq alive, how do you know he would have had a good life?" ("Autobiography," 79).

⁵⁹ During the Camp Casey experience, Cindy's opponents criticized her for turning against Bush citing this earlier meeting, suggesting if she was *really* opposed to the war, then she should have made it known at this meeting. In her autobiography, Cindy responds to this criticism, noting she was still grieving and

“movement” through meeting others who would support and oppose her on her activist journey.

Through her connections with local families of fallen soldiers and her new connection to MFSO, Cindy attended a speaking event on July 4, 2004 where she connected with Deane Little, founder of RealVoices.org, a political action committee aiming to have “real people” speak out against Bush. Cindy was picked to film a commercial for RealVoices where Cindy threw her script away, opting instead to speak from her heart, crying the whole time. MoveOn.org bought the commercial from RealVoices to air nationally. Out of Cindy’s control (and thrusting her into mainstream media), the commercial was made and disseminated as part of the network organized against Bush leading up to the 2004 elections. Cindy also campaigned “against Bush” through volunteering to speak at the launch of her commercial in October 2004 at a rally in Washington D.C. Through this and other events, Cindy became connected to CODEPINK and its founders Medea Benjamin and Jodi Evans, met families featured in Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 9/11*, and connected with members of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) who formed in July 2004.

There is a peace movement *network* of various organizations, events, and discourses Cindy was able to link to through the Internet, organizational events, and even through Bush sponsored meet and greets. As a *network*, the control of how the public perceives the movement and who is connected is somewhat out of the control of participants. In Cindy’s case, she did not “choose” to be the face of the movement, but

had not yet “woken up” to be able to do what Ed’s mother did, although she also notes she did ask Bush why her family was invited to this meeting since they did not vote for Bush in 2000. Bush replied this meeting was (ironically) “not about politics” (“Autobiography,” 84).

through the “choice” of her commercial as part of election campaign strategy, it was her crying face representing those against the Iraq War. The move from organizationally produced media to publicly televised commercials implicates a national public who can then critique and evaluate the movement itself. To the national public, Cindy seemingly “comes out of nowhere” when the *New York Times* reports on her MoveOn.org ad on October 17, 2004 in an article about “scary campaign ads:” the “most vivid and evocative images and messages seen in presidential commercials in a generation.”⁶⁰ Sheehan responds to the article in a letter to the editor on October 24, 2004, asking “you think my campaign ad is scary?” asserting that losing one’s son and hearing about the deaths of more soldiers is much scarier. The movement, then, through the reporting in the *New York Times* effectively defines the movement with Cindy-as-mother and forever links her to MoveOn.org and RealVoices.org. In turn, Cindy is attacked by other families of fallen soldiers who also had commercials with RealVoices that did not go national *and* by the right-wing media who suggested she was using her son’s death for political gain.⁶¹ Cindy’s first national message was not successful either in linking supporters or changing minds—she was a foil for critics of the barely formed movement network.

I focus on this ad specifically because the ad was a product of a single organization (Moveon.org) that hijacked the peace movement network—funneling resources and activists into the singular goal of defeating Bush. On the one hand, many activists were keen to join Moveon.org because, as a large organization, it had the

⁶⁰ Jim Rutenberg, “Scary Ads Take Campaign to a Grim New Level,” *New York Times* (17 Oct. 2004): 1.

⁶¹ See “Autobiography,” 94-95. She also describes how Lila Lipscomb, featured in *Fahrenheit 9/11*, became a mentor to Cindy both in dealing with her grief but also in facing criticism for making their opposition so public through the media.

resources and clout to broadcast on mainstream media and reach a national audience.

On the other hand, centralizing a movement in this way limits the possibilities for action. If the single message strategy fails—Cindy’s “scary” ad—the movement fails.

At the same time, the use of Cindy’s grief as a mother is not surprising as strategy.

Mothers have always been allowed to speak for peace, and Cindy could be made into the mother of this movement.

In this movement, some of the strongest peace organizations are rooted in families and veterans with direct ties to the war they oppose. Cindy similarly extended her activism in this way, forming Gold Star Families for Peace (GSFP) in January 2005. Already recognized as a national peace movement leader, she was invited to speak on *Larry King Live*⁶² and *Good Morning America* around the January 2005 Inaugural because of a GSFP organized demonstration/meeting with Donald Rumsfeld.⁶³ In May 2005, Cindy worked with the After Downing Street Coalition with Congressman John Conyers, testifying during the Downing Street Memo hearings, her testimony largely related to the continued grief of her son and speaking on behalf of other families and soldiers who died.⁶⁴ She continued to go on speaking event tours with CODEPINK, IVAW and Veterans Against the War (VAW), and blogging on the *Daily Kos*. Meanwhile, her marriage fell apart, she separated from her husband in June 2005, and

⁶² See was bumped from this show due to coverage of the Michael Jackson trial.

⁶³ There is a long tradition of women’s peace activists getting invited to speak to Congressional committees (such as Women Strike for Peace speaking on behalf of nuclear test ban treaties) or in attempting to speak to Presidents (successfully so in the case of Carrie Chapman Catt during WWI) and as part of demonstrations (such as Women Strike for Peace marching to the Pentagon and banging their shoes on its doors). See Alonso.

⁶⁴ Cindy Sheehan, “Congressional Forum on the Downing Street Memo” in *Not One More Mother’s Child* (Maui, HI: Koa Books, 2005). The Downing Street Memo was the minutes of a meeting between British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s senior ministers detailing Bush’s intent to invade Iraq without just cause. The memo was published in the UK’s *Sunday Times* on May 1, 2005.

had her divorce made public while at Camp Casey. As she describes, her marriage was not as strong before Casey died, and the dissolution of her marriage was largely due to her unwillingness to go back to the way things were before Casey died. Certainly, for Cindy, things *could not* go back to the ways they were before Casey died once she cemented herself as the face of the movement through the establishment of Camp Casey. For her, activism was the *only* way to be a good mother both to the son she lost and to her children still living.

Why Cindy? Mothering and Care Post-9/11

Cindy did not start the movement against the war in Iraq, but has been a significant part in publicizing and energizing the movement (especially in 2005). But the question remains, out of all the grieving mothers, peace activists, and bloggers, why Cindy? What is significant about how *she* worked within this peace movement? I argue 1) Cindy was the right person at the right time to speak for the movement, 2) Cindy used different discursive forms in “activating” the movement, and 3) Cindy’s message activated an ethics of care working against rhetorics of war. Whereas a post-9/11 context was perpetuated by an affect of fear, the success of the movement was when Cindy was able to constitute and combat fear with care.

To the first point, Cindy was the “right” person speaking in the right time. Following women’s peace movements of the past, Cindy spoke as a mother against State aggression, but this persona was especially intelligible given a turn to traditional gender roles post-9/11. Hayden argues Cindy was a threat to Bush during Camp Casey

because she claimed the “authority of the dead” in seeking peace.⁶⁵ In particular, Bush’s rhetoric justified the loss of US soldiers’ lives as being for a “noble cause.” Bush, enacting the power of a sovereign, claimed authority to regulate who can live or die and for what cause. But, as the mother of a fallen soldier, Hayden argues Cindy won the war of meaning because other Americans acknowledge *her* authority to speak for the dead as someone intimately connected to a soldier’s death. Against the narrowly constructed definitions of patriotism post 9/11, the space left open for opposition was the message of “Support Our Troops and Bring Them Home” as this both supported the heroes fighting for our freedom while wishing the heroes to return home to live out the domestic fairy tale also constructed by post 9/11 discourse. This publicly acceptable message of war opposition conveys respect for those in the military as well as respect for life, with mothers perceived as the most genuine persona to speak to both these issues.

Cindy-as-mother ties her to the historical tradition of movements speaking as mothers. Even in the earliest, patriarchal peace societies such as the American Peace Society (APS), there was a prescribed role for women to play: their inherent morality and understanding of life as life-bearers gave them authority to speak for and teach peace.⁶⁶ In anti-nuclear and environmental movements, women who only knew themselves as mothers (such as in the 1950s and 1960s) and others who utilized women-as-life-bearers as strategic essentialism (such as in the ecofeminist movements also connected to anti-nuclear issues of the 1970s and 1980s), speaking as a mother was

⁶⁵ “Cindy Sheehan’s War,” *Huffington Post*, 14 Aug. 2005, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-hayden/cindy-sheehans-war_b_5633.html> (18 March 2009).

⁶⁶ See Alonso.

speaking for the survival of one's children. As one Greenham Common woman wrote, "Everyone tells me they [my children] are my responsibility. The government tells me this. It is my responsibility to create a world fit for them to grow up in."⁶⁷ War and violence essentially creates conditions where mothers can no longer guarantee or protect the lives of children yet are still expected to have this responsibility. Therefore, the activism of mothers is to take responsibility through acting against violence. Although within women's movements, the use of women-as-inherently-peaceful or women-as-mothers is problematic (as not all women are peaceful nor mothers as well as the potential oppression inherent in this role),⁶⁸ national metaphors of domesticity and general respect for mothers allows women-speaking-as-mothers access to be heard in to public spaces they might not otherwise be allowed to as "women."⁶⁹ Under the protection of the mother-persona, women have been able to act more radically than would otherwise be allowed, whether it is draft counseling (as done by WSP) or camping near a President's vacation home. Again, in a post-9/11 context, the public is primed to listen to mothers. By association, activists speaking as mothers against the war would not be considered treasonous, and opposition to the war would be deemed acceptable discourse for mothers.

⁶⁷ Susan Lamb quoted in *Greenham Women Everywhere: Dreams, Ideas, and Actions from the Women's Peace Movement* edited by Alice Cook and Gwyn Kirk (Boston: South End Press, 1983), 27.

⁶⁸ See Lynn M. Stearny, "Feminism, Ecofeminism, and the Maternal Archetype: Motherhood as the Feminine Universal," *Communication Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (1994): 145-159 for summary of use and critique of the mother trope in movements.

⁶⁹ See Sara Hayden, "Family Metaphors and the Nation: Promoting a Politics of Care through the Million Mom March," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* vol. 89 no. 3 (2003): 196-215. Hayden shows how moral reasoning in contemporary US has been shaped by familial metaphors. See also Karen A. Foss and Kathy L. Domenici, "Haunting Argentina: Synecdoche in the Protests of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 87, no. 3 (2001): 237-258. Foss and Domenici show how a culture of respect for mothers allowed the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo access to the public plaza when other demonstrations were prohibited.

More significantly, movements utilizing the mother-persona have been able to bring together women who might not otherwise have been political. The inherent cognitive dissonance of not being able to protect the lives you have brought in the world allows women to act, defining their “radical” action as what any mother should do to protect their children. In this way, motherhood becomes a source of power as articulated through movements. Similarly, Cindy defined herself in these terms: “What I am is a devastated, broken-hearted mother who will mourn the needless death of my son for the rest of my life. I just want the killing to stop before there are any more American or Iraqi Casey and Cindy Sheehans.”⁷⁰ Cindy both acted to save the lives of other children and was empowered to act as Casey’s mother. Cindy showing care as a mother, along with Cindy needing care from others for the loss of her son, brought people into the movement network. At the same time, the movement is attacked by questioning whether Cindy is a “good” mother or merely exploiting her son’s death.

Secondly, Cindy is important to this peace movement because of her ability to write the movement into history while simultaneously building movement links. The dissertation chapters focus on various “media forms” and attempts to show how each form, through the logics of its own circulation along with how the public perceives and uses these forms, contributes to constituting the movement network. To be clear, I follow Galloway and Thacker to define a network as a “set of relations existing in time,”⁷¹ and extend to suggest the relations existing at any given time are a product of past movement discourses. For example, the “common sense” understanding that

⁷⁰ “Autobiography,” 105. This was included in a letter sent to Republican Congressman Jack Kingston responding to a press release where Kingston indicated that Cindy was not a hero, but rather a flakey nutcase during a hearing of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on March 31, 2006.

⁷¹ Galloway and Thacker, 33.

mothers speak for peace allows the present day peace movement to reconfigure through this language. Further, networks (whether technological, biological, or otherwise) are made up of nodes and edges with nodes being objects, locations, spaces, or agencies and edges being the links between or actions effected by nodes. Notably, Galloway and Thacker propose we should theorize less about the actions taken by nodes and define networks more in terms of the edges. Importantly, information and communication is the substance of networks and is what define edges. In other words, we should care less about the various peace movement organizations making up this network and should be more concerned with how communicative forms, circulation of messages, and ideas code and connect nodes. Communicative processes are the edges of Galloway's and Thacker's model, yet they leave the theorizing of edges up to other scholars. Networks are controlled and conducted as we act through information, which for Galloway and Thacker is *"both immaterial and materializing, abstract and concrete, an act and a thing."*⁷²

To translate this into the language of a movement network, the "movement" is the set of relationships existing in a given time, made up of the individuals, organizations, and events that "constitute" what is already recognized by movement scholars as "the movement." Importantly, the way "movements" come together or coordinate action is through communication constituting connections and guiding action.⁷³ For example, consider MoveOn.org as a node and their commercial of Cindy as a particular edge. The commercial (both in its material film-to-be-aired and its

⁷² Galloway and Thacker, 57 (italics theirs).

⁷³ Galloway and Thacker define control in networks through the concept "protocol" which I develop more in the next chapter.

immaterial message of Cindy-as-crying-mother) guides action in this network—connecting individuals and groups to support MoveOn.org, disconnecting other military families upset over MoveOn.org’s choice of airing Cindy’s commercial, and helping to disseminate the “movement” to the larger public through the attention of the commercial in the *New York Times* (subsequently connecting, disconnecting, or preventing connection of other nodes to this network). Thus, in order to understand the movement network, we have to pay attention to the communication and information that constitutes the substance of the network itself. Cindy herself is a node, but her action of writing open letters to politicians, blogging, speaking, publishing books of her writings and speeches, publishing an autobiography, *and* participating in demonstrations makes her active in constructing possible edges and links to constitute a networked movement.

My focus in each chapter on the specific forms of communication used by Cindy (her open letter to Bush featured both on the internet and book publication, her camping and campaigning, and her autobiography) is to recognize rhetorical forms are not neutral because they instruct and shape the relationships between the nodes of the network—with each form having its own particular histories within movements as well. Galloway’s and Thacker’s theory is built upon the technological aspects of computer code, and they describe how it takes the coordination between the coded layers of each part of a given function or software application in order for the computer-based network to work. For example, when we send email, we must have a computer application (e.g. Gmail) to receive and compose messages. The messages we compose are translated through yet another layer of code to bundle our inputted message into an “email” read

by yet another application to be sent to the address we intended relying then on the physical Ethernet cables to transport data from machine to machine. Analogously, the same process and coordination occurs with non-Internet forms of communication. Users must interpret, circulate, and understand the message based through the message medium. For example, Margaretta Jolly describes the use of personal chain letters used by the Greenham Common women in inviting other women to Air Force Base for different protest actions.⁷⁴ In receiving letters—personal invitations to join in the action—women who had been to Greenham understood this as a call to visit friends they already knew; for women who had not been to Greenham, the personal invitation was *also* read as coming from friends they could join and meet in person once they arrived at camp. Moreover, the form of the chain letter signaled to the receiver that the proper course of action was to pass on the message and to send their own chain letter invitations.⁷⁵ Embedded within the form of the communication exists histories and traditions that allow the receiver to know how to understand, or what to do, with the message. With personal letters, the understanding of intimate friendships and circulation/response becomes part of the message. In the next chapter I will develop further how histories and norms become imbedded within forms as well as how forms

⁷⁴ Margaretta Jolly, *In Love and Struggle: Letters in Contemporary Feminism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

⁷⁵ This, of course, does not mean that *all* women sent along letters nor went to the particular actions (again, the success of connections between nodes or parts is *if* the recipient translates the message correctly). At the same time, Jolly shows that letter writing as a practice extended beyond the immediate campers at Greenham with women writing letters of support or to connect to other groups on their own initiative even if they had not been to Greenham.

and norms influence each other. Following Warner, it is this relationship between norms and forms that constitute public(s) which I, in turn, translate into networks.⁷⁶

The particular forms I am analyzing in each chapter were chosen because they are major aspects of Cindy's activism, and because each has particular histories within women's activism. Importantly, different societal norms limit the ability for some individuals to speak publicly or to be included within the public/network, but the form a message takes (such as a personal letter) has allowed, women especially, the ability to have a voice or resist the systems that otherwise excluded them. As Galloway and Thacker describe, resistance and political action comes in the form of an "exploit": like a computer virus that finds a "hole" in system codes, different rhetorical forms are the means to change a system in destructive or productive ways. In each chapter, I will describe how different forms work as exploits, using the norms controlling societal networks (along with the norms embedded within the form) to gain access to or recode for change. For example, although women were once not allowed to publicly speak because it was improper for respectable women, they were allowed to write letters of petition. Similarly, also excluded from the public, women were allowed to privately communicate, using personal letters to voice dissent and even treasonous prose with the letters sometimes being shared publicly. I argue the use of rhetorical forms "activates" the previous network traces left by movements past and have power in the present movement because of the histories and norms carried by the form. Resistance in a networked age described by Galloway and Thacker rests within finding political practices through exploits, thus to think about the possibilities for social change means

⁷⁶ Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

to understand and analyze the norms controlling and constituting the various networks of movements and the networks interacting with movements.

Finally, Cindy's communication defines the relationship between nodes of this peace movement network, which in and of itself acts as resistance or in a "netwar" against the norms constructed in a post 9/11 context. Movements are not self-contained within their own network without interacting with, and being influenced by, other networks or even being attacked by other networks with competing norms or protocols. As Galloway and Thacker articulate, networks exist along with and are embedded within other networks—there is a network defined by the State, by particular cultures, and by particular societal configurations all with their own norms and protocols and particular nodal connections. Post 9/11, the State guided US citizens to support the war effort to ensure continued protection and security. Through media and culture, citizens followed norms defined by a reasserted masculine imagery and privileging of traditional gender roles. State and cultural norms infected our personal lives, limiting the possibility for us to show care or grieve for *any* lost lives in 9/11 or the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. As Butler reports, President Bush gave the order to the American people on September 21, 2001, that we had finished grieving and "resolute action" must take the place of grief.⁷⁷ As a society, we were told grieving was not allowed or should be feared. From Butler's perspective, not grieving or mourning preempted our ability to see ourselves as vulnerable or to connect ourselves to others—even to our enemies. Common ground between international communities was foreclosed because acknowledging vulnerability through grieving became an offense

⁷⁷ Butler, 29.

“against the public itself, constituting an intolerable eruption within the terms of what is speakable in public.”⁷⁸ In Ivie’s analysis, not being able to see others as human and to perpetuate dehumanizing rhetoric is what allows war to become acceptable and preempts cultures of peace. The “norms” post 9/11, then, are in direct contrast to the image of Cindy: publicly crying over the death of her son—“scary” in the terms of the *New York Times*.

Control in networks requires individuals to adopt the norms constituting the network. War was allowed by the public because norms of patriotism and fear were adopted and accepted. At the same time, because there are different layers and different networks at work at any given time, new norms can be asserted and adopted—the network with the most users wins. For example, choosing to be a Mac or a PC user (with all the accompanying cultural and actual operating system behaviors) can be understood as a war between networks existing within a larger network frame of a technologically-reliant society. The terrain of resistance for movements can also be seen as a battle of competing norms, with the movement attempting to gain public support and adoption of movement values, norms, and culture. Through Cindy, movement culture and norms was defined as care, combating the dehumanizing norms developed post-9/11. Joan Tronto defines an ethics of care as both a practice and a disposition: care implies an interdependent relationship in which we reach out to and understand the needs of someone other than ourselves as well as take action towards caring for the Other in need.⁷⁹ Cindy’s grief and her explicit call of need in asking Bush

⁷⁸ Butler, 35.

⁷⁹ Joan C. Tronto, *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (New York, Routledge, 1993).

“What noble cause?” activated care for Cindy (and others) as the means to link to the movement. At least in the Camp Casey moment, an ethics of care was the norm that defined the movement—achieving an upper hand in the netwar between the movement and the State. Arguably, by not meeting with Cindy at the camp and heeding her call for care, it was Bush (and the norms he represented) that became irrational to the public.

The care ethic has significance because of its history within women’s movements for peace as well. The initial development of a feminist care ethic was from psychologist Carol Gilligan to combat Kohlberg’s argument males had higher moral reasoning abilities than women where Kohlberg framed morality in terms of justice, defined by rights and rules.⁸⁰ In contrast, an ethics of care is defined by responsibility, relationships, and tied to concrete circumstances instead of abstract or universal dilemmas. Tronto describes how the care ethic has been undermined and dismissed because of its association with women, and was misunderstood as “sentiment” or only for “pre-political, private, associations.”⁸¹ The ethics of care was problematically taken up in essentialist terms to argue women inherently reason differently than men following both the nature and nurture arguments. At the same time, the care ethic was empowering for women’s peace and anti-nuclear movements, substantiating women as inherently more able preserve and care for life, thus should be able to influence (anti)war policy. Although the care ethic is not entirely unproblematic and can be limiting in its own right (as Tronto points out, those that end up doing most of the work of care are still women and other marginalized groups in society), I argue the

⁸⁰ See also Tronto’s “Beyond Gender Difference to a Theory of Care,” *Signs* 12, no. 4 (1987): 644-663, for more on Kohlberg’s initial study, Gilligan’s critique, and subsequent critique of Gilligan theory.

⁸¹ Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 6.

reassertion of care in this peace movement opened up a space for resistance and redirected the discussion, norms, and understanding of what was “right” in this war.

All combined, Cindy is analyzed in this project because she exposes ways of resistance in the current networked configuration(s), as well as offers a space for us to interrogate the relationship of movements to the State. Importantly, the care ethic problematizes our understanding of State power: care is oftentimes far removed from the person in need, usually because States fail in their obligations to citizens. Thus, care compels citizens to cooperate without State help—allowing movement networks to form. In each chapter, the themes presented here will be expanded upon more fully: how communication shapes relationships within the movement network as well as connecting this movement to configurations of the movement of the past; the ways in which rhetorical forms hold the possibilities of resistance through “exploiting” dominant networks; and how norms present in this peace movement are built from Cindy, as a mother, asserting an ethics of care.

In the next chapter I will further describe and develop the theory of movement-as-network and the terms of resistance and social change defined by Thacker and Galloway. Especially post-9/11, the line between sovereign powers and networks has blurred, making theorizing movements as networks more important. Those that master the network form first, have more power to control and gain “users” in the public. The next chapter will also underscore how network logics have also constructed our understandings of private and public, where private and public distinctions still provide constraints and resources of social change. Lastly, the next chapter will explore

different networked forms, showing the potential of distributed networks in the present age.

Although Bush is no longer in office and sweeping hope for “change” has developed in the wake of President Barack Obama’s 2008 election, the netwars and networks for peace continue on, so the lessons provided by Cindy’s moment will be instructive for how the current movement understands itself, its mission, and the possibilities to achieve peace.

BEYOND SOCIAL MORPHOLOGY, THE NETWORK HAS ALSO BECOME A POWERFUL CULTURAL IDEAL, PARTICULARLY AMONG MORE RADICAL ACTIVISTS, A GUIDING LOGIC THAT PROVIDES A MODEL OF, AND MODEL FOR, EMERGING FORMS OF DIRECT DEMOCRATIC POLITICS.⁸²

*TO BE EFFECTIVE, FUTURE POLITICAL MOVEMENTS MUST DISCOVER A NEW EXPLOIT.*⁸³

Social Change and Political Resistance through Networks

Cindy Sheehan became the Rosa Parks of the 2003 Iraq War Peace Movement by sitting down outside of President Bush's Crawford Ranch in August 2005. The act of going to the ranch was strategic: she hoped to gain media attention to her cause by demanding Bush meet with her to answer "what noble cause" her son died for in Iraq. When Bush refused to meet with Cindy, sending Secret Service and other security advisors to meet with her instead, a single demonstration turned into a month-long peace camp. "Camp Casey" thrust Cindy and her grief into the national spotlight in ways a single advertisement could not. Regardless of mainstream media's (MSM's)⁸⁴ reporting of the camp, it is incorrect to assume the camp was solely Cindy's doing or even solely coordinated by her peace movement organizations. Although Cindy acted as the "face" of the camp and the public spokesperson for *her* demand to speak to Bush, Cindy was not a leader in the traditional sense, nor was the camp operated by a single organization. "Miracles," as Cindy called them in her autobiography, occurred at the camp everyday by individuals who had never met or participated with Cindy prior to

⁸² Jeffery S. Juris, *Networking Futures: The Movements Against Corporate Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 11.

⁸³ Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 22. Hereafter, "Exploit."

⁸⁴ As Cindy is my guide in this project, I often use her shorthand—problematic as it might be. She uses MSM in her autobiography, although this moniker is often used by the Right when pointing out a liberal bias in "the media." Cindy directs the moniker at all media (which she assumes is biased in support of Bush). Similarly, she rarely refers to Bush as President and employs the collective "BushCo" for his administration/connections. I similarly follow suit as I do wish this to be a retelling of Cindy's movement story.

Camp Casey. Tents and supplies were donated, food was prepared for campers and visitors, memorials built and repaired, and land was donated for the camp to exist legally.⁸⁵ Certainly, Cindy and her closest organizers from Gold Star Families for Peace (GSFP), Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), CODEPINK, Crawford Peace House, and Veterans For Peace (VFP) helped coordinate Cindy's interviews and coordinate activities at the camp once supplies and people showed up, but as Cindy notes in her autobiography, this was when the peace movement was truly a "people's movement:" a movement not led by a singular organization, but rather a movement of all peace supporters. By the time Cindy left Crawford, over 15,000 people visited and over \$500,000 was raised (much given as aid for Hurricane Katrina victims).⁸⁶ All of this was accomplished not through direct campaigns or requests for supplies or visitors, but facilitated through a distributed network of individuals who had, through various means, made themselves part of the Camp Casey movement. Without centralized decision-making or singular organizational affiliation, Camp Casey *became* the movement as various individuals, groups, communications, and projects converged—both physically and virtually. Camp Casey may not have had a clear organization or campaign strategy, but it did have creativity, communication, and self-organized cooperation⁸⁷—values inherent in networked movements. Camp Casey was important for the peace movement because it took on network strategies of resistance. This

⁸⁵ Chapter 4 gives more details and the workings of Camp Casey.

⁸⁶ Cindy Sheehan, *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey Through Heartache to Activism*, (New York: Atria Books, 2006). Hereafter, "Autobiography."

⁸⁷ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 83.

chapter develops network theory employed in this project to understand resistance and social change possible by distributed networks.

Camp Casey is not worthy of attention merely because groups and individuals from various political and cultural affiliations joined together for the “camp” cause, but because the camp itself was a catalyst for change, prompting “the public” to confront issues of peace and war in ways not previously considered. In the history of this peace movement, anti-war demonstrators were accused of being unpatriotic, but otherwise were ignored by MSM. Before Camp Casey, Cindy, other than the brief mention of her 2004 MoveOn.org advertisement in the *New York Times*, had not “broken through” to MSM. She also had not yet been accused of using her son’s death for personal gain nor was attacked for her perceived personal agenda. MSM, blogs, and counter-protest groups all claimed “Camp Casey” as representing America’s stance on the war in this particular moment—both for and against. Cindy was cast both as hero and villain; depending on the media sources, she either exemplified citizenship or was depicted as someone out of touch with what was needed for this (Iraq) war. Regardless of media depictions of Cindy, Camp Casey was not just Cindy’s camp. Even when Cindy left to care for her ill mother in California, Camp Casey continued on and grew. At the same time, media attacks of Cindy continued on even *after* she and others left Camp Casey at the end of August 2005. All of this begs the question of why *this* event would spur the reaction it did when other peace demonstrations and campaign politics did not. Why was Camp Casey deemed a threat to social order? The answer lies in the network form made manifest in the camp itself.

Jeffery Juris writes, when movements consciously think of themselves as or organize through networking, they perform a dual politics: “intervening within dominant publics while generating decentralized network forms that ‘prefigure’ the utopian worlds they are struggling to create.”⁸⁸ The camp was, as Richard Day defines, a *politics of the act*: without seeking recognition or retribution from a State, a politics of the act embodies the *new* or preferred relations desired by actors.⁸⁹ The camping “act” is a direct refutation of post 9/11 patriotism perpetuated through a “with us or against us” dichotomy predicated on uncritical support of government and our commander-in-chief. Privileging and building connections and relations with others was more or less preempted in an atmosphere of fear and polarization, where one was careful of making associations deemed unpatriotic. The camp showed that people *wanted* to connect with others and *wanted* to connect even with strangers. In doing so, and in grieving and remembering the consequences and lives lost to war, participants of the camp defied and *refused* State authority by refusing and denying dominant logics defining social relations more generally. Because the camp was a creation of a *new* order, it also could not be stopped or contained by merely attacking or silencing the singular figure of Cindy Sheehan.

Although scholars have theorized networks,⁹⁰ as Juris notes, this theorization has not extended to the specific mechanisms through which networking logics are produced, reproduced, and transformed. Although his own anthropologic ethnographic work on

⁸⁸ Juris, 9.

⁸⁹ Richard J.F. Day, “From Hegemony to Affinity: The Political Logic of the Newest Social Movements,” *Cultural Studies* 18, no. 5 (2004): 716-748.

⁹⁰ Notably, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000); and Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

movements against corporate globalization describes the means by which actors “connect” or find themselves participating in a movement—through interpersonal connections, attendance at events, participation in mediated social networking sites/listserves—these descriptions do not adequately explain *why* or *how* linking works within the network. Why would some events, such as Camp Casey, have more “pull” and ability to include and expand a movement network when the main anti-war rhetorical message seems to be the same? What processes account for the ability for some links to become “strong” (in the quality of communication and relationship formed) while others remain “weak” or broken even though similar messages and events are constructed? Although contemporary movement actors understand networking has power—they see positive effects by sending letters or creating Facebook groups—why this works at all remains largely a mystery. This dissertation project overall is to explore some taken-for-granted movement practices (such as letter writing, demonstration, and autobiography writing) to better explain their network potential. Moreover, I contribute to network theorization by explaining the rhetorical “links” largely constituting the values and nature of a movement-network—the communication that *produces* the network. In this task, I translate Galloway’s and Thacker’s network theory and political practice through exploits into Cindy’s rhetorical practices. This underscores the power and threat distributed network forms create, and argues movement actors must attend to rhetorical acts that construct, repair, and maintain movement networks as much (if not more) as communication advocating for specific policy or change in State action.

The move to network theory to understand communicative practices in social movements challenges scholars to be more attentive to the socio-political contexts surrounding speech acts. Importantly, the turn use rhetoric to understand networks allows scholars to go beyond describing a movement *as a network* to articulating how networks work and where to find spaces of resistance. In using Cindy and this peace movement as example, I do not prescribe practices that all movements should do or that particular practices (i.e. letter writing) will have the same “effect” in a given space.⁹¹ Rather, this project uses these examples to theorize how communication can work within networks. To understand rhetorical acts within movement networks is to understand the forms and norms constituting the “substance” and order of that network. Largely drawing from counterpublic and literary theory,⁹² I recognize forms and norms are mutually constitutive, both being influenced by and constituting societal relations. Thus, understanding a movement network means to also understand the various other networks that overlap or subsume the movement network. For example, to understand the power the Camp had, we have to understand the technology that facilitated information sharing (blogs, MSM, email listserves), the “common sense” or habitual practices of these forms (i.e. forwarding and sharing emails), the cultural meaning behind these practices (i.e. supporting others virtually), and the ethics of the Camp interplaying with other “dominant” cultural values (i.e. relations of competition instead of cooperation post 9/11). Each of these elements can be understood as a layer in the

⁹¹ In fact, in Chapter 3, I argue letters have the ability to “exploit” dominant publics, but this ability changes based on where and how letters are presented. For example, the meaning of a printed letter will be different than a letter found on a blog *because* of norms associated with each media channel.

⁹² Specifically, I use Micheal Warner’s *The Letters of Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990) as a model.

“whole” network where the movement finds itself. At one level, I use the network as a heuristic to analyze the “layers” of the Camp to find the possibilities of resistance, which challenges the researcher to account for complex relations and practices. At another level, I understand the network as social ontology, which underscores that we make sense of our world and construct our meanings and actions *as networks*, thus movement strategy much also be a network.

Network theory and my specific use of Galloway’s and Thacker’s model of political resistance is still under development, thus the purpose of this chapter is to present their theory and clarify the concepts employed in the remaining analytical chapters. First, I outline network theory as understood within movements, and present some of the considerations of movement analysis under this framework. Next, I show how counterpublic theory can be translated into network-speak, allowing us to understand rhetoric’s role in networks. Then, I define Galloway’s and Thacker’s model of networked resistance through the concepts of protocol and exploit, and how “netwar” becomes the terrain of political revolution. Finally, I preview the chapters to come showing how these concepts come together. Two other theoretical dichotomies—sovereign/network power and private/public—are woven throughout because these are the original dominating logics and places of exploit (political practices) at the forefront of all social change. In sum, the project shows how resistance facilitated through movement networks is tied to rhetorical practices that “exploit” dominant network systems, ultimately to become the “common sense” protocol of society. As with Camp Casey, rhetorical practices orientating social relations into ones of cooperation, shows how and why communication works in networks.

Network Theory in Social Movements

Network is both structure and meaning; material and immaterial. A network exists when various actors are linked together to form some identifiable “whole;” the “whole” can be understood as physical bodies interacting in the same geographic space, or can be understood as collective subjects interacting over time and space on a shared (real or ideological) struggle. Our understanding of “network” evolves with technological allowances. In the case of women’s peace movements, “networking” has changed from women who would physically travel to speak to one another to organizing transnational global peace actions via email listserves. Even though the information/internet age has given new conceptual clarity to “network,” understanding movements-as-networks began in sociological circles in the 1970s,⁹³ with the concept of network itself dating back to the 16th century.⁹⁴ Regardless of form or historical context, network has designated “a field of vision in and through which the field of meaningful relations are gathered together.”⁹⁵ In short, a network enables meaning-making for our collective experiences, and allows members to orient actions to that vision and form. At the same time, even within the same historical age, “network” has been employed and theorized both for its material and immaterial properties; the variance of ontological orientations to “network” requires clarification and definition here.

⁹³ Mario Diani, “Introduction: Social Movements, Contentious Actions, and Social Networks: ‘From Metaphor to Substance,’” in *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, eds. Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁹⁴ Kai Eriksson, “On the Ontology of Networks,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 2, no. 4 (2005): 305-323.

⁹⁵ Eriksson, 320.

In general, networks are defined as structures made of nodes connected or linked by “edges” where edges contain the “action” of the network. In network-speak, “actors” are referred to as nodes, where movement-network nodes refer to individuals, organizations, neighborhoods, or even states. More recently, social movement scholars from across disciplines have included non-human elements as nodes including events, elements of speech, or texts.⁹⁶ In analyzing movements, sociologists have mainly been concerned with the empirical links between nodes to determine who is tied to whom and how direct or strong those ties are. For example, attendance (edge) at the same rally (node) would connect two activists (nodes) in a weak sense if they did not interact together at the event. With new communication technology, the links between nodes becomes harder to decipher as more link possibilities emerge from disembodied messages continually circulating across the internet and other mediums. As Mario Diani notes, computer-mediated communication and mass media challenge scholars to address how mediated messages work to “network” actors, while at the same time, allows the range of action taken by movements to include the circulation of messages. Similarly, Paul Routledge describes the purpose of networks as facilitating communication: where the “production, exchange and strategic use of information” designates participation in a given movement and is the source of finding the support and collective identity necessary for movements.⁹⁷ The function of “network” for social movements is for recruitment, to socialize and construct identities for participants, provide opportunity for participation on issues, and to shape the perception or meaning

⁹⁶ Diani.

⁹⁷ Paul Routledge, “Convergence Space: Process Geographies of Grassroots Globalization Networks,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 28, no. 3 (2003): 335.

of the movement.⁹⁸ Although the parts of the network can be material (humans), the “substance” and what is produced by the network is meaning and information (immaterial). “Agency” in a network is more about process—that which enables or disables links between nodes—which can be both human and non-human.⁹⁹

What a network is, however, does not lead us to *why networks matter*. From the perspective of scholars, “network” as an analytical tool avoids reifying a movement or reducing it to singular, historically bound entities.¹⁰⁰ Kai Eriksson explains, network “enables one to think about the mutual relationship between a number of different actors, technologies, and practices as if they are in the same picture without arresting movement and turning this picture into a static model.”¹⁰¹ A network lens allows one to understand the movement “whole” even when that movement seemingly comes in historical waves or emerges and re-emerges in different forms across time as the peace movement has done. For scholars and activists alike, network has come to symbolize and is the source of resistance. Galloway and Thacker, working from Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* thesis, show power exists as either a sovereign or network form. They argue even “sovereign” nation-states have become more “networked;” power strategies come with adopting and shifting forms. For movements, resistance is not a contest between the singular sovereign state against the movement network where networked movements have an upper-hand in disrupting and demanding concessions. Rather,

⁹⁸ Florence Passy, “Social Networks Matter. But How?” in *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, eds. Mario Diani and Doug McAdam (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 41.

⁹⁹ In Routledge’s work with globalization networks, he shows communication (and its facilitating technology) can enable action (more people are able to interact) but can also be disabling (depending on who has access to the internet or who chooses the language to be used).

¹⁰⁰ See Diani and also Fernando J. Bosco, “Place, Space, Networks, and the Sustainability of Collective Action: The *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, *Global Networks* 1, no. 4 (2001): 307-329.

¹⁰¹ Eriksson, 321.

networked movements are now contending with networked States in conjunction with media, markets, and other associations. I push this argument farther to claim movement networks have *always* worked with and against other networks whether with competing movements, dominant cultural norms, or the State itself. Networks *matter*, then, because the formation and reconfiguration of networks is also the shifting and reconfiguring of power in society.

To emphasize, networks are not an invention of the information age; networks have been a preferred organizational model for movement actors throughout history. Women who rejected or were excluded from traditional, hierarchal organizations preferred organizations that privileged interpersonal relations and connections. The network form was manifested by women's peace groups such as the peace camp at Greenham Common¹⁰² or other Direct Action Movement groups¹⁰³ who felt the act of living in cooperative, non-hierachal, and non-violent communities was literally being the change they wished to see in the world. As noted above, the creation of a new order instead of attempting to change the old order is the possibility provided by networked organizing.

This is not to say all networks are created alike. A network can be centralized, decentralized, or distributed. Centralized networks resemble wheel spokes where individual nodes are connected to a singular node or "hub," where hub indicates a more powerful actor in the network. For example, a centralized organization might have a national organization responsible for directing or constructing a platform, which is then

¹⁰² See Sasha Roseneil, *Common Women, Uncommon Practices: The Queer Feminisms of Greenham*, (New York: Cassell, 2000).

¹⁰³ See Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

followed by local chapters. Most movement networks operate as decentralized networks where individual nodes are free to link to other nodes in various ways, and where each node has the potential to influence other nodes or has agency in planning actions on their own. Galloway describes decentralized networks like the US airport system, where each node has the potential to be its own “hub,” but there are limits to which nodes are connected to others.¹⁰⁴ The peace camp at Greenham Common, for example, operated as a decentralized network with each gate around the Air Force Base fence having its own autonomous camp. At the same time, each gate was reliant on the camp at the “main gate” that served as the public face of the whole camp and where mail and supplies were sent.¹⁰⁵ More over, the Greenham network extended beyond the physical camp, with women connecting to individuals or peace groups across the world. Autonomous actions were done by “Greenham Women Everywhere,” whether women were directly connected to the camp or not, yet always following the same non-hierarchal principles developed at the camp. The principles of decentralized networking enable self-determination, connect diverse autonomous elements, privilege open circulation of information, and oftentimes employ consensus based decision making.¹⁰⁶ Strategically, decentralized forms are harder to contain and quell as autonomous groups logistically cannot be rooted out all at once.

¹⁰⁴ Alexander R. Galloway, *Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentralization*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 31. Hereafter, “Protocol.”

¹⁰⁵ See Roseneil.

¹⁰⁶ See Juris’s networking logics, 11. Similarly, Greenham Common Women recognized similar criteria in the camp including the importance of non-hierarchal decision making, flexibility, and diversity in their decentralized network (see Gwyn Kirk, “Our Greenham Common: Not Just a Place But a Movement, in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, eds. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989)).

A third network form—a *distributed* network—has become more of a reality in the internet age. Distributed networks were first theorized by Deleuze and Guattari as a rhizome. Rhizomes have no central hubs, are never complete, and all nodes are connected through varied paths.¹⁰⁷ Conceptually, rhizome forces us to conceptualize networks not as what is empirically given, but what is *possible*. As such, rhizomatic structures do not constitute a pre-given order and operate under logics of variation and expansion. Thus, the rhizome is constantly changing and reforming anew.¹⁰⁸ Our attention in a network analysis under this assumption

requires a focus upon process, interaction and intensity. The ‘object’ of analysis becomes the iterative character and fractal patterning of overlapping networks, and the processes of interaction and exchange between global locales, the relationship between the virtual and the real, and the interaction between new social actors and familiar forces of antagonism.¹⁰⁹

Interaction includes recognizing oneself connected to others in similar exchanges, or could even include the transmission of “techniques of self” conducive to collective action. Interaction implies communicative practices that trace, mark, and identify patterns, locales, and relationships formed. For communication scholars, this forces us to look beyond actors (especially human ones) to focus on the circulation of messages—that which constitute and define the edges of the network. Following Galloway and Thacker, what is most important in understanding networks is understanding the conditions nodes may interact, that networks only are “live” to the extent they can be enacted or rendered operational, and that operational networks are those where action is distributed and dispersed. Much like exploring the World Wide

¹⁰⁷ See “Protocol” for Galloway’s synthesis of Deleuze and Guattari.

¹⁰⁸ See Eriksson.

¹⁰⁹ Graeme Chesters and Ian Welsh, “Complexity and Social Movement(s): Process and Emergence in Planetary Action Systems,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 22, no. 5 (2005), 194.

Web, movement actors are part of a distributed network when they “explore” and connect themselves via various links (events, people they know, emails read, etc.). Through their own participation, actors help build the network by providing new connections and pathways for other actors to join. With Camp Casey, Cindy sent an email (edge) with the initial idea for the camp (a node) along with a blog post (edge) on the *Daily Kos* (another, yet unrelated node), and other individuals (more nodes) either responded to the initial email or blog *or* forwarded the email or blog along to others (another edge practice). More nodes were able to find and connect to the network through the multiple pathways of emails, blogs, and other connected individuals.

From this description, it may seem that distributed networks are inherently chaotic and uncontrollable, or at best indefinable. There also seems to be slippage between what acts as a node or an edge/link (i.e. is the email a node or link or both?). It is from this apparent chaos distributed networks have resistive or political power. Galloway and Thacker define networks as flexible, distributed, agile, robust, disseminated, resistive to hierarchy, and invisible. Galloway and Thacker underscore how these characteristics are built into the structure of the “network” itself. As the internet was, in part, developed for the US military, its distributed network form purposefully allows it to change, react, and renders it indestructible to outside forces. Built into the logics governing the network, these characteristics compel participation and inclusion while at the same time allows for changes as needed. For the purposes of translating Galloway and Thacker to movement terms, the characteristics of movement-as-distributed-network enabling movement-power are its 1) ambiguity, 2) open

circulation of information, 3) reconfiguration around key nodes, and 4) autonomous coordination.

First, the distributed network is ambiguous. One is never fully certain who is involved at a given time, yet there is power in the ability to include and connect many at any given time. As Gwyn Kirk describes of the Greenham Common peace camp, local and international groups formed—some knowing about or being connecting to Greenham directly, and some not—with women participating in the camp at Greenham coming and going as their individual circumstances would allow.¹¹⁰ Under feminist principles of organizing, no one person could speak or represent the whole Greenham Camp, yet all could speak on behalf of themselves as “Greenham Women,” thus enabling support from countless others around the world. As Greenham demonstrates, the “camp” was distributed with individuals and groups organized around the world, was disseminated because the ideals and principles of women’s peace extended beyond the camp, and the camp could be flexible and agile given the changing participants at any one time. Flexibility also came in the form of tactics and actions taken as the camp that often took base soldiers by surprise because tactics changed based on the particular women involved. Most importantly, ambiguity allows a sense of invisibility: there is no single leader or group of individuals that can easily be identified as the main “hub” of the camp. Although some Greenham women were evicted or arrested for actions at the camp, the camp could continue on because other women could continually take their place and participate. Importantly, Galloway and Thacker show the distributed network form means there is no central node (or leader) that, if removed, would cause the whole

¹¹⁰ Kirk.

web to unravel.¹¹¹ In the case of Camp Casey, even if attacks were made on Cindy's character, the camp survived and continued to be enacted by everyone (whoever they were) participating.

Second, for distributed networks to continue to be enacted, they also must generate "power" by including participants and producing new pathways. To do this, there must be an open circulation of information because the network is the sum of the information produced and shared by and within it. Cindy's email and blog about the camp, circulated through internet connections, demonstrate the importance of information in building movements because this was largely how people linked to Camp Casey. Greenham Common was premised on openness to coordinate action¹¹² allowing activists to understand "how the network works" or what the process for taking action is. This allows members to choose to participate or not, and allows individuals to participate on their own terms. The network is more robust with the diversity and inclusion of participants that comes when individuals have access to, and the ability to connect with, the movement in a variety of ways.

Third, distributed networks are inherently flexible in their ability to reconfigure as needed around key nodes. Distributed networks can continue on (albeit in different forms) and withstand attacks because of their ability to "repair" or change to address new conditions. Barbara Epstein's analysis of direct action movement of the 1970s and 1980s, mostly related to environmental and antinuclear issues, shows how a single "movement" developed over the course of numerous campaigns and actions at different

¹¹¹ "Exploit," 112.

¹¹² Gwyn Kirk, "Our Greenham Common: Feminism and Nonviolence," in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, eds. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989).

sites across the country—connected together through shared nonviolent, direct action tactics. As such, the movement was literally reshaped to fit new situations with affinity groups and individuals moving from site to site or nonviolence trainers moving from location to location. Key nodes of individuals and events remained intact, along with the norms of nonviolent direct action, even though affinity groups might dissolve. In the case of mass arrests, members could still reform and reconfigure, maintaining consensus decision making and the use of affinity spokespersons even when dealing with guards in the jail. As Galloway and Thacker argue, political strategy through the distributed network form consists of articulating tactics as needed, including changing the network to become more centralized as needed, in an effort to be the most advantageous form for the situation.

Fourth, distributed networks operate through autonomous coordination. The structure of the distributed network, including who is involved and *how* control exists at any one time are invisible, and as such, are hard for opponents to assess and attack. At the same time, there is control and order in the distributed network through protocols. As Galloway theorizes, protocol is a system of management or “set of instructions for the compilation and interaction of objects...It is etiquette for autonomous agents.”¹¹³ Although I go into more detail on protocol later in this chapter, protocol acts as decorum for the system—we shape our action and speech to what the situation calls for, what is common sense, or what is appropriate—adopting protocol links us to the network. For example, in the direct-action-movements and at Greenham, there were explicit nonviolent principles defining participation. Although there were many ways

¹¹³ “Protocol,” 75.

for individuals to enact those principles (weaving symbols on the fence at Greenham Common or going over the fence into the base for example), the protocols provided a foundation and boundaries for what possible action entailed. Coordination occurred through participants speaking the same language—adopting the same protocol. The power of protocols is that they are developed on what users already know, and are many times unstated yet “common sense” ways of being within the network. As described in Chapter 1, a protocol of “fear” and disconnectedness defined much of our social relations in the United States post 9/11, and although there was no official mandate from Bush to feel this way, a variety of practices, policies, and information circulating around the public invited citizens to engage with others under these “instructions.” As a form of invisible control, protocols are both hard to detect and even harder to break, but by adopting new protocols, we essentially create new conditions and social relations.

In total, distributed networks *work* as a form of resistance because they go against traditional logics of centralized power and allow for actions and agency not afforded by centralized, hierarchal organizational forms. For centralized movements, and the organization becomes defunct, its leader arrested, or if goals are met by concessions from the State, then the movement ends. If a movement is reliant upon disruption or campaigns directed at a single State, Party, or policy, then the movement ends either when the campaign is won or lost—even if cultural or social conditions are not changed by the objectives of the campaign. Certainly, long standing issues such as peace, women’s rights, or civil rights writ large have not been successful if we look at the history of organizations operating in the name of these “movements.” As a *distributed* network, movements are not defined or limited in these ways. At

Greenham, nuclear arms were housed at the base until it closed defeating the direct aims of the Greenham Women, but because their tactics are remembered, studied, and potentially adopted by contemporary movements, we could understand them as a success. The connection of activists, development of cultural norms, and sustainability afforded by the *network* makes Greenham a success. If success is defined as the continuation of these issues over time, then the distributed network provides the mechanism to make this possible.

More than that, the distributed network politically shifts the terms of debate of what the aims and goals of movements should be. As Juris indicates, networks have become preferred by movement actors both as a structural form as well as political norm—the network is the model of social relations and power that are part of movement goals. Whereas many movement organizations put all energy and efforts into, what Day calls, a *politics of demand* with political campaigns and in seeking rights and recognition from the State, the network offers the possibility that demand is not the only strategy. Day advocates for a *politics of the act* over a *politics of demand* as the politics of the act does not demand a *change* for social relations as they are. A politics of the act is rooted in the creation of new orders and new ways of being while a politics of demand, although pragmatic in some cases, perpetuates structures of power, which reproduce “the conditions of its own emergence.”¹¹⁴ In other words, movements might be caught in demanding changes from the State which created the conditions for those demands in the first place. A distributed network, on the other hand, brings with it a politics of the act—manifesting new ways of being and order—and therefore attacks

¹¹⁴ Day, 734.

from all sides of an issue, swarming and reordering conditions at the political, social, and cultural level.

Camp Casey and the ethics of care produced by the camp demonstrate the “swarm”¹¹⁵ of the distributed network. Although Cindy made a “demand” of Bush, this demand did not fall neatly into the traditional understanding of State power and responsibility. She did not demand Bush end the war, but rather asked Bush engage with her on a human level, to show care for her regarding her son. Asking the question of “what noble cause did my son die for?” activated a network of blogs, celebrities, and citizens to come Cindy’s support to demand that Bush answer her. People physically swarmed from all over the nation to join Cindy at the camp. Camp Casey was not just a single action or organization, it was a mass of countless others coordinating through protocol defined by care. As noted above, the power of the distributed network comes from nodes linking as well as providing potential links for others—networked movements build and grow beyond what a single organization can do in terms of recruitment because the network is not limited to a single message, identity, or campaign. As Galloway shows, within a distributed network, each “receiver” of a message becomes a potential transmitter or producer because the protocols compel participation instead of passive consumerism of messages emitted by a central node.¹¹⁶ Instead of Camp Casey being the sum of the information and messages Cindy was able to create, it was the sum of all participants, bloggers, and individuals receiving/reading Cindy’s posts and creating their own (which were then read, received, and acted on by

¹¹⁵ Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*. Hardt and Negri describe the multitude and resistance as coming in the form of a swarm in comparison to a unified, homogenous campaign or organization.

¹¹⁶ “Protocol,” 57.

others). The ability for distributed networks to *produce* and *reproduce* is what allows it to sustain a movement. The distributed network provides the resources for the movement to take shape as needed (creating organizations, policies, or campaigns) and continue on through different battles between networks and States.¹¹⁷

Theorizing movements-as-networks has been taken up by movement actors and academics alike, and while Galloway and Thacker provide space to understand rhetorical components of distributed networks, there is little if any work that directly shows the processes of communicative acts in creating networks. Again, my aim in this dissertation is to further theorize *how* communicative acts form edges in networks—linking, acting, and constituting what is possible for networked movements. It is rhetorical acts that constitute edges and that produce the protocols controlling networks altogether. Networks are fundamentally rhetorical processes, and I turn to (counter)public sphere theory to understand how norms and rhetorical forms are the base of the networks.

Norms and Forms: Public Sphere as Network

Within communication studies, studies on resistance or social change have focused on the rhetorical claims making of social movement actors centered primarily on policy change or what I have noted above is a politics of demand.¹¹⁸ More recently, publics and counterpublics theory has opened up new possibilities for social change via communicative action either by the formation of public opinion translated to policy

¹¹⁷ This point will be developed further in Chapter 4.

¹¹⁸ See Charles E. Morris, III and Stephen H. Browne, eds. *Readings on the Rhetoric of Social Protest* (State College, PA: Strata Publishing, 2001).

change, or the creation of alternative spaces and poetic world making.¹¹⁹ Although counterpublics present the possibility of a politics of the act, it is unclear how participation in discursive publics can produce material change. Jürgen Habermas is even less optimistic about the effectiveness of social movement and other civil society associations as “the signals they send out and the impulses they give are generally too weak to...redirect decision making in the political system in the short run.”¹²⁰ Social movement and counterpublic theory are limited in providing strategies for resistance especially for a network versus network understanding of power, and network theory alone cannot fully account for these practices as they historically have been enacted. Thus, in this section I show affinities between these strains of theory in order to justify a turn to more technical aspects of network theory to understand the nature of networked resistance. Further, counterpublic theory provides the rhetorical grounds to understanding the communication of networks.

Social movement, (counter)public, and network theory have affinity with one another and overlap. Habermas himself underscores the “public sphere can best be described as a network for communicating information and points of view...the streams of communication are, in the process, filtered and synthesized in such a way that they coalesce into bundles of topically specified *public* opinions.”¹²¹ Like networks, counterpublics, according to Warner, require circulation of texts,¹²² and “action” in the public/network requires (from both Habermas’ and Warner’s perspectives) norms that

¹¹⁹ See Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” in *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002).

¹²⁰ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, trans. William Rehg (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996), 373.

¹²¹ Habermas, 360.

¹²² Christine Harold asserts this point in *Our Space: Resisting the Corporate Control of Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

guide and compel participation. Habermas describes the public sphere in decisively distributed network terms including diversified, autonomous publics constituting an “anarchic structure;”¹²³ publics require fair and unobstructed communication flow; and publics have “fluid temporal, social, and substantive boundaries.”¹²⁴ At the same time, Habermas acknowledges this “wild” complex resists organization and is subject to unequal power distribution, exclusions, and distorted communication, but has the benefits of unrestricted communication in a space that “stands open, in principle, for potential dialogue partners who are present as bystanders or could come on the scene and join those present.”¹²⁵ Similar to Warner who contends one becomes a member of a (counter)public through mere attention,¹²⁶ both theorists see the “wild” of the public as self-organized through protocols derived, in Habermas’s terms, by *facts* (the material, structural, and institutional determining directives of society) and *norms* (the cultural, common sense practices developed alongside and influencing social institutions). The possibilities of the public and the possibilities for resistance from distributed networks are indeed one in the same, but distributed networks not defined as publics lack a clear end goal for communication. Unlike publics aiming to direct public opinion and policy, networks can imagine other possible ends.

The limitation to Habermas’s conception of the networked-public is that he ultimately sees politics as the end goal: public opinion formation should work its way to decision-making cores of the system (hence why he understands social movements to be “weak” if their opinions are not “heard” and bundled to be intelligible by State or

¹²³ Habermas, 307.

¹²⁴ Habermas, 307.

¹²⁵ Habermas, 361.

¹²⁶ Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics.”

other institutions). Warner's model also presents limitations for action: publics become social movements when speech becomes directed to the State,¹²⁷ and some publics are more "public" than others and afforded more voice in political realms.¹²⁸ However, as Warner warns, not all issues should invite State or political intervention as many State interventions turn a *public* matter into a *private* issue, thereby removing discussion (and the potential for cultural change) from *the public*.¹²⁹ In sum, the public sphere model defines and limits resistance to a public versus a sovereign state with goals limited to using public opinion to demand State change. Since States and publics are constituted as an antagonistic relationships, there is also inherently a threat the State attempting to quell and encroach on public(s). In the State-oriented public sphere model, any cultural or social change, much like with New Social Movements, seems to be incidental or a secondary effect to the "real" work of policy change—yet it is at all layers of society (State, social, cultural, etc.) that change *can* be possible and *can* be the focus of communicative action. The technological turn of network theory allows us to theorize beyond the public/State dichotomy underwriting public and social movement theory.

First, we have to remember that publics/networks overlap and interact with each other (in various and sometimes indeterminable ways) within the entire whole of the *system*. Galloway's and Thacker's technological turn is instructive here because we can understand society in the same framework as we might our personal computer, which provides more layers, spaces, and avenues to direct communication and resistance. Your own computer is a node in one network (a movement, organization, public, or

¹²⁷ Michael Warner, "Public and Private," in *Publics and Counterpublics*, 50.

¹²⁸ Warner, "Public and Private," 45.

¹²⁹ Warner, "Public and Private."

community) and, in order for your node to be part of this network, you must agree to follow the norms and rules and speak the same language¹³⁰ the network itself is built upon. At the same time, the network your node is a part of is also embedded in other networks and systems (that, too, are working from the same language). For example, if you wanted to send an email, an interaction among four “layers” of the system must occur—each layer contains its protocols in order to function.¹³¹ First, your computer connects to the application layer or “user software.” The application layer might be Internet Explorer or an email program such as Outlook we choose/adopt, and then we follow the features and procedures of our particular software program. We might also think about the application layer as the “everyday” talk that Habermas describes as constituting the mechanisms of the public sphere because software is made to be “user friendly” in that it incorporates language features from other everyday expectations, practices, and norms. Again, protocol is built, many times, on practices users already know. With email programs, we plug in information and headers much like office memos: “To:” or “Subject,” etc. Galloway and Thacker liken the application layer to the headers and footers of written letters: the application layer acts as the salutation or signature allowing the user to understand “this is a letter” and “the words contained within is a letter from a person.” Much of my concern with rhetorical forms (personal letters, camps, and autobiographies) is with how users learn to interact with these forms since, much like our software programs, the form itself is our entry point into the

¹³⁰ Galloway and Thacker (“Exploit”) literally mean computer codes and programming languages that most users adopt unknowingly through using already coded programs and software, but users also follow the “language” of that program (i.e. “send” and “forward” are different commands for email). Here, we can think of all different levels of language of human interaction from linguistic and language codes or ethics of relations or decorum.

¹³¹ See “Exploit,” pp. 42-45 for more explanation of these layers. Galloway, in “Protocol,” uses the analogy of a telephone conversation to describe these layers (pp. 38-53).

system. For example, in Chapter 3, whether Cindy Sheehan's blog posts and emails are understood as *letters* or as *editorials* changes how this discourse moves and connects others within the system. The norms of these forms come from other layers in the system and also play a role in how users interact and perceive the form.

The user must adopt procedures and language to use the software of the application system (how to send an email), and also adopts and practices the protocols or norms of communication the application enables (responding to an email, remembering not to "reply all" for private issues, etc.). In this process, the user is also adopting the protocols of the network's transport layer because the application layer is built from and interacts with yet another system layer. As Galloway and Thacker explain, "The transport layer acts as a concierge. It ensures that messages are bundled correctly and are marked with the appropriate tags indicated by various application layers encapsulated by it—emails directed over here, Web pages over there."¹³² The transport layer is the organizing system. Like numbers on apartments or zip codes for addresses, the transport layer establishes persistent connections between the nodes, whether or not we are actually using or sending information to a given destination. When we *want* to send a message, the code is in place within the transport layer enabling us the *possibly* to do so. Habermas envisions the public sphere much like this transport layer in that the public sphere processes communication and *bundles* it to form public opinion. The categorization system at work in the public sphere might also be to separate out private from public interests; dominant from counter interests. Not coincidentally, Warner's description of counterpublic rhetoric recognizes discourse is

¹³² "Exploit," 43.

marked, and “ordinary people are presumed to not want to be mistaken for the kind of person who would participate in this kind of talk...”¹³³ Through social and cultural systems defining categories, groupings, and hierarchies, we understand *to whom* discourse is meant to go; we understand the *appropriate* place for this communication whether or not it is directly stated.

Just as the public sphere does not guarantee all voices and ideas get to be bundled as public opinion, or that mail does not always make it to the correct destination, it is at the “error correction” function of the transport layer that distributed networks are the most vulnerable. As Galloway and Thacker describe, to change a network is to change the relationship between nodes. If messages become bundled or coded incorrectly or differently than intended, they cannot reach their desired destination nor have their desired effect. As I develop more in Chapter 5, the “netwar” to discredit Cindy’s involvement in the peace movement by the Right was an attempt to “resort” or “recode” her messages as not genuine or for personal gain instead of mother’s love. Instead of being a call for an ethics of care, Cindy’s messages were meant to be *marked* as something others would not want to connect with. The autobiography, then, becomes a tool for Cindy to correct the transport layer and relationships between nodes.

Third, the transport layer is embedded within the most fundamental layer—the Internet layer—where the actual movement of data takes place. As Galloway and Thacker note, it does not matter to the Internet layer what content or information is being transferred, its job is merely *to* transfer that information. They note within the

¹³³ Warner, “Publics and Counterpublics,” 120.

Internet layer, different and even antagonistic network systems might exist and even work in coordination, thus it is possible for society at large to work within both a State driven system as well as other, counter systems. The Internet layer might be likened to societal institutions that allow for the circulation of messages within the public sphere at all: our print shops, post offices, or news agencies. Camp Casey acted as an Internet layer, allowing people from across the political spectrum to participate; it served as the grounds for both pro and anti-war messages to exchange and travel. Like Warner's analysis of print in 18th century America, circulation is essential for understanding this layer. Warner explains how printers constituted networks and systems for letters to circulate through the material ability to print and transfer information as well as the physical circulation of the printers themselves around the region, bringing back materials and newspapers from elsewhere to reprint locally.¹³⁴ Within this project, the Internet layer is ever present: from the actual Internet facilitating blogs, emails, and social networking, to other institutions prescribing processes and norms for circulating information.

Finally, Galloway and Thacker describe the physical layer—the material substance of the network. For the Internet, this means copper wires and Ethernet cables. For the public, it means actual people, printing equipment, tents and land for camps, or other physical spaces that enable the system. Habermas' bourgeois public sphere required taverns and coffee shops. Warner's and Berlant's modern sexual publics *require* the “red light” districts, theaters, and clubs to exist and form at all.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Warner, *Republic of Letters*, 68.

¹³⁵ Lauren Berlant and Micheal Warner, “Sex in Public,” in *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002).

For them, removing or making spaces “illegal” effectively censors and silences the possibility of a public. At Camp Casey, Cindy was restricted in where she could walk, how close she could get to Bush’s ranch, and whether she was on private or publicly owned land. Battles over spaces are indeed politically battles, and as I will develop in Chapter 4, the physical camp enabled and sustained the movement, in part, because the physical space enabled new behaviors and relations to develop. Without Ethernet cables, our personal laptops could never imagine to communicate to one another across time and space. Without Camp Casey, the peace activists could never imagine themselves as being part of the same network.

The turn to understand a network *system* and the layers of that system opens up new channels for understanding how communication *works*. As I’ve started to develop in Chapter 1, to understand Cindy’s role in the peace movement means analyzing her communicative acts by accounting for 1) the application she uses (email, blog, or printed book), 2) how the message is coded or categorized (trivial rant, genuine motherly plea, or activist ego-trip), 3) how the messages traveled and to whom, and 4) the material resources that her activism was allowed to develop at all. This is not so different from Warner’s analysis of publics in which he insists on being interpretive and form sensitive, understanding historical orientations, and remaining alert to the dynamics of textuality.¹³⁶ The combination of public and network theory allows us to move beyond the technical to the historical/social elements of communication, all of which are important for understanding movement work. The use of women’s movement history throughout these chapters is to demonstrate the origins of protocols at

¹³⁶ Michael Warner, “Introduction,” in *Publics and Counterpublics*, (New York: Zone Books, 2002), 15.

all these levels. Within each layer, it is protocols compelling and telling a user how to participate, and that tell the user what is appropriate for participation. Protocols create order, but they also offer spaces for resistance.

For Warner and Habermas, publics should be self-organized, and the power of the public is that it is independent from State institutions and formal frameworks. Protocol allows publics/networks to operate without a centralized authority. Protocol eliminates arbitrary authority for as Galloway argues, “Protocol gains its authority from another place, from technology itself and how people program it.”¹³⁷ Similarly, Habermas states, “Only the modes of operation internal to each system, and not the intentions or interests of participating actors, are decisive for interactions between such systems.”¹³⁸ Similarly, for Galloway and Thacker, protocol is both the apparatus that facilitates networks (the protocols of the physical or Internet layers) and codes governing operation within that apparatus (the norms and code of the application and transport layers).¹³⁹ Understanding networks, then, requires uncovering and understanding the protocols operating the system.

Like the distributed network itself, protocols must be robust, inclusive, flexible, and universal, while at the same time are achieved or adopted through negotiation and openness. We know to choose the PC operating systems over Mac (or vice versa) because we know both exist, and we chose one over the other through testing or public vetting. At the same time, protocols are not a completely free choice. Just as we might be forced to use a PC because that is what is available to us, protocols deceive us into

¹³⁷ “Protocol,” 121.

¹³⁸ Habermas, 334.

¹³⁹ “Exploit,” 29.

believing we have made a correct “choice” because it would be irrational for us not to use the system everyone else is using. We would not want to choose an email program that cannot connect to the Internet; we would not choose untraditional gender roles because it would isolate us from relationships with others. The network with the most power has the protocols that win the most adoption. In thinking about network action and political resistance, it is by understanding the protocols that we can become part of the system as well as work to change the system. Change in the system comes from exploiting protocols.

Political Resistance through Exploits

The last technological concept underwriting this project is *exploit*; exploit is the means to change, resist, or destroy protocols ordering a given system. The history of networked social movements and women’s work within them is literally a history of exploits as women have had to work against system norms (namely gender dichotomies of public/private, reason/emotion, and hierarchy/equality) in order to find cracks, holes, and spaces of resistance. As Galloway and Thacker state, “*The goal for political resistance in life networks, then, should be the discovery of exploits—or rather, the reverse heuristic is better: look for traces of exploits, and you will find political practices.*”¹⁴⁰ An exploit, for computer systems, is a virus; the computer virus is the new “sabotage” for network against network wars. As noted above, changing the coding or relationship between nodes (turning Cindy supporters against her for example) is a form of exploit directed at the protocols of a given system. Exploits find and use holes in the system in both productive and destructive ways. Like computer

¹⁴⁰ “Exploit,” 82 (italics theirs).

viruses, exploits use and work within the given codes and norms of a system in order to 1) infect a system (overwrite, replace, or edit code), 2) create or distribute copies of “virus” code, 3) explore and gain access to systems, or 4) create a disturbance in a system.

The technological network theory allows us to understand resistance and political practice in a multitude of ways rather than a singular goal of legal policy or representation—sometimes invading and exploring dominant systems *is* radical action. This project is to uncover exploits within the rhetorical acts of women’s movements. For example, as I will show in Chapter 3, personal letters allowed women to exploit the “public” system on a variety of levels. First, letters enabled them to replace the code that women were not capable of acting or speaking politically/rationally because the women’s voices embodied in letters (circulating in the public) demonstrated otherwise. Letters *could* act for women, transforming “woman” into public speaking agents. Women were able to gain access to the public system when they were otherwise excluded because the letter, as a *private* form of communication was appropriate for women to use. The women’s letters exploited norms of circulation and reproduction because all letters were shared and copied *in the public*. Lastly, many women have been able to speak, even radically, through the neutral and safe packaging of the intimate personal letter. Contained within otherwise “personal” information, could be criticism of the government with the “package” of the letter allowing even this treasonous information to circulate *as if* it were all intimate pleasantries.

At the same time, we should not see exploits as being practices solely intended to pursue movement goals or in positively productive ways. Exploits, like networks, are

not inherently more egalitarian, democratic, or ethical, but whether exploits are used to build or destroy movements, the logic is the same. For examples, the “netwar” attacks from the Right on Cindy were an exploit because they attempted to change the appearance of the distributed network of Camp Casey to be more centralized under the singular control of Cindy herself. By targeting Cindy’s mother role, the Right essentially targeted the norms of care derived from that role, thereby changing the relationships of nodes in the network. Whether exploits are to pursue movement goals or to attack and destroy opposing networks, the point is simply to reorient our understanding of political resistance through this technological lens and recognizing different strategies of exploit.

At the same time, unlike movements operating under the *politics of demand*, the consequences and changes produced through exploits may not be readily apparent—there might not be a clearly defined goal. Rather, change at the level of protocol is intended to fundamentally reorder systems and norms, without which more direct social change would not be possible or intelligible. Again, with movements classified under the “New Social Movement” label, the change advocated was unintelligible until the theory (and public opinion) allowed “cultural” change to be a relevant and acceptable goal. Exploits also allow activists to understand change is possible even in the most constrained of circumstances. As Galloway and Thacker indicate, protocols work best by universal adoption even though this consequently makes the system *more* vulnerable to being exploited.¹⁴¹ Although traditional gender roles may have seemed permanent, the way these roles were assumed in all areas of life created more “holes” to be

¹⁴¹ They give the example of computer viruses that target Windows PC systems instead of Mac systems since Windows is more universal than Mac. “Exploit,” 84.

exploited. For example, even though women were expected to remain in the private sphere of the home, because women, in fact, could be seen in workplaces, recoding an understanding of women as workers became a possibility and eventually normalized.

In finding exploits, one cannot assume the actors intended to exploit or were conscious of the changes made to the system. As Galloway and Thacker show, “Political action in the network, then, can be guided deliberately by human actors, or accidentally affected by nonhuman actors... Often, tactical misuse of a protocol, be it intended or unintended, can identify the political fissures in a network.”¹⁴² As they show, some computer viruses have not been malicious acts by hackers, but rather innocent coding gone awry. The history of women’s movements presented here along with writing Cindy into that history does not assume women were conscious of their exploits (at least under these technological terms), but rather is an attempt to reassess these models in light of this technological lens. Taking a cue from community organizer Gabriel Thompson, history is important for movement organizers to have as a compass to guide them as they confront new challenges, and as example of heroic deeds and the possibility of change even in the direst of circumstances.¹⁴³ At the same time, he underscores how our consciousness of the past is “eroded” and “dead.” For contemporary activists, perhaps reframing the heroic deeds of the past under modern network logics will breathe new life into the seemingly inconsequential communicative acts of women’s movement makers. The emphasis on “norms and forms” of these acts also allows us to see that the most eloquent or rational persuasive plea may not win the

¹⁴² “Exploit,” 30.

¹⁴³ Gabriel Thompson, *Calling All Radicals: How Grassroots Organizers Can Help Save Our Democracy*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007), Chapter 7.

day, but as Thompson himself examples, even the passing out of flyers written by a mostly illiterate tenement resident can help build a movement. This project, then, aims to recover women's movement work, shed light on Cindy's particular peace movement work, and further theorize resistance through a networked lens.

The project proceeds as follows. Chapter 3 aims to show how the norms of personal letters provided the protocols for the public sphere, and as such were the original exploit for women's political work. Personal letters enabled women to move from the private to the public and enabled them to address sovereign powers. In the present blogosphere, there are many "open letters" to sovereign leaders such as the letter Cindy posted to Bush after his reelection in 2004, and given the history of the letter as an exploit, we might expect Cindy's letter to have the same impact, albeit in electronic form. However, this chapter also shows how technological protocols and discursive norms of a polarized, editorialized blogosphere have changed the conditions which open letters are allowed to move, thus arguing that we must attend to the protocols at work in order to make communicative acts have our intended effect. Next, I analyze Camp Casey to show the power of a distributed network, the threat it posed by recoding norms under an ethic of care, and also showing how the Camp enabled Cindy to exploit protocols as a mother in the public that also enabled her to break through to mainstream media. Chapter 4 underscores the importance of movements to create discourse that builds and sustains movements (and a politics of the act) along with campaigning for a politics of demand. Lastly, in Chapter 5 analyzes the netwar mode of resistance initiated by the Right's attacks on Cindy and Camp Casey. Returning to themes from Chapter 1, "Cindy" became a battle ground to maintain cultural, social,

and governmental protocols post-9/11, and the netwar between Cindy the Right shows how presumably sovereign forms such as the US government strategically employ networked forces to uncover and disrupt movement networks. For Cindy, the autobiography becomes a means to use another form (with accompanying norms) to rebuild and reassert the protocols of the peace movement. Lastly, Chapter 6 concludes the project by bringing together the diverse threads of network theory, women's movement history, communicative forms, and Cindy's own story to show how each interacts and offers lessons for scholars and activists alike.

At the outset, I noted this is less a dissertation about Cindy Sheehan and more a dissertation about theorizing movement resistance. At the same time, I do want to acknowledge Cindy's efforts, without which, we may not have seen that something new was possible in a post 9/11 world.

*THE TARGET OF RESISTANCE IS CLEAR ENOUGH. IT IS THE VAST APPARATUS OF TECHNO-POLITICAL ORGANIZATION THAT WE CALL PROTOCOL.*¹⁴⁴

THEY [LETTERS] ARE A RECORD OF IDEOLOGY AND INTRIGUE, AND ILLUSTRATE STRUGGLES AND ALLIANCES OF POWER. . . PERSONAL LETTERS ARE INSCRIBED BY VERY SPECIFIC CODES OF FORM AND STRUCTURE AT THE START AND FINISH BUT ALLOW A FREE FORM WITHIN.¹⁴⁵

DEAR GEORGE,
YOU DON'T MIND IF I CALL YOU GEORGE, DO YOU? WHEN YOU SENT ME A LETTER OFFERING YOUR CONDOLENCES ON THE DEATH OF MY SON, SPC. CASEY AUSTIN SHEEHAN, IN THE ILLEGAL AND UNJUST WAR ON IRAQ, YOU CALLED ME CINDY, SO I NATURALLY ASSUME WE ARE ON A FIRST-NAME BASIS.¹⁴⁶

Exploiting the Public: Cindy's Open Letter to George W. Bush

Cindy Sheehan's role in the peace movement is inextricably linked to President George W. Bush. As the opening to her "An Open Letter to George W. Bush" above indicates, she, in her sarcastic tone, recognizes how *his* war has forever changed her and her family. This is a theme carried throughout all her writings: in her autobiography, speeches, blog posts, and emails, Bush is to blame for Casey's death. He is also to blame for her commitment to activism against the Iraq War (and Bush himself). Although Cindy's open letter is not her first activist rhetorical act, the circulation of this letter allows us to trace her peace movement network. Connecting Cindy's letter to a history of women letter writers allows us to understand how actors can "exploit" systems through working within and changing the protocols or norms controlling the

¹⁴⁴ Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 78 (emphasis theirs). Hereafter, "Exploit."

¹⁴⁵ Máire Cross and Caroline Bland, "Gender and Politics: Breathing New Life into Old Letters," in *Gender and Politics in the Age of Letter-Writing, 1750-2000*, eds. Caroline Bland and Máire Cross (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004), 3-5.

¹⁴⁶ Cindy Sheehan, "An Open Letter to George W. Bush," *Not One More Mother's Child* (Maui, HI: Koa Books, 2005), 3. Hereafter, "Open Letter."

system. Her open letter also points to challenges of utilizing the “public” in an internet/blogosphere age.

Personal letters, like Cindy’s, are significant because they enable the constitution of publics: the space of discursive agency for citizens. First, letters have been a means for ordinary individuals to address sovereigns or others in power. Letters to public representatives are often made public or “open” for all citizens to read and share. For example, Cindy’s letter, along with other open letters to Bush by Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) members are posted on MFSO’s website¹⁴⁷ for anyone in “the public” to see. Open letters have gotten new life with blogs and online news publications using the form to hold public officials accountable to campaign promises or to offer advice for new leaders.¹⁴⁸ Cindy’s letter offers the potential to constitute a peace public similarly, especially because it was published online and in print being included in both in her own, *Not One More Mother’s Child*, and in CODEPINK’s *Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism*.¹⁴⁹ Cindy’s letter was deemed significant by other movement leaders, namely CODEPINK, to warrant republication, perhaps also indicating the movement recognized the potential power for

¹⁴⁷ Cindy Sheehan, “An Open Letter to President George Bush from Military Families Speak Out Member Cindy Sheehan,” *Military Families Speak Out: Letters to President George W. Bush*, 4 Nov. 2004, <<http://www.mfso.org/article.php?id=309>> (2 Oct. 2008).

¹⁴⁸ Newly elected President Barack Obama has his share of “Open Letters,” notably one published by *The Nation* and signed by notable progressives including Tom Hayden and Howard Zinn reminding Obama of key issues he must hold to (after being named Democratic Presidential candidate). See “Change *We* Can Believe In: An Open Letter to Barack Obama,” *The Nation*, 18 August 2008 <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20080818/open_letter> (9 March 2009). In the online version of the letter (posted originally July 30, 2008) readers could add their own names to the list (prompting an email sent to Obama). As of March 2009, the signatures totaled 24,650.

¹⁴⁹ Cindy Sheehan, “From Cindy to George,” in *Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence and Terrorism*, eds. CodePink Founders Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans (Maui, HI: Inner Ocean Publishing, Inc, 2005).

this letter to awaken other activists or to circulate in a print and blogosphere public.¹⁵⁰

Despite this potential, I argue Cindy's letter did not circulate or effectively constitute more into the peace movement, as her letter followed protocols of many blogs—polarizing, editorialized punditry. Cindy's letter shows how different mediums and channels of discourse can determine the protocols of use. At the same time, the medium is not the only determining factor of protocols because societal culture and practice also develop protocol—which means we can shape a medium's norms.

Following Jürgen Habermas' and Michael Warner's work on the public sphere, letters are significant because they literally built the ideal of the public sphere—ironically a public sphere excluding women. Letters, as a “private” and familial form of writing, historically have been linked to women because women were responsible for maintaining relationships with family and others as a household duty. Women's education focused on learning to write through personal correspondence. When societal norms dictated women and men live separate lives emotionally and physically, letters were the means for women to maintain close friendships with other women.¹⁵¹ The private practices of letter writing, reading, and sharing were translated into the reading and discussion associated with the public sphere. The public was “coded” with private, letter protocols, thus women were able to exploit the otherwise public and exclusionary space by speaking publicly *through* the letter form. Letter practices constitute public protocols providing the “holes” for exploit, allowing women access to publics, space to recode other system norms, or even to disrupt and change the system.

¹⁵⁰ This letter was significantly revised in CODEPINK's collection to include more about Casey and who he was. These revisions are an issue I return to later in this chapter.

¹⁵¹ Lisa M. Gring-Pemble, “Writing Themselves into Consciousness: Creating a Rhetorical Bridge Between the Public and Private Spheres,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84 (1998): 41-61.

Significantly, letters and women's role in speaking on behalf of their families or for the cause of peace, have allowed women access to sovereign leaders in extraordinary ways. Letters gave agency to women who could petition sovereigns on behalf of their family. Like open letters of today, women's letters constituted "public tribunals" to witness grievances and compel leaders to address concerns of citizens. Cindy's open letter, then, connects her to a tradition of women speaking through letters, and history of women's peace activists playing within public/private spaces in the name of their cause. Even when women were confined to traditional gender roles within peace organizations, letters were the means to advocate for peace—sometimes sneaking in treasonous or radical critique through the guise of the personal letter. Thus, this chapter is to explore Cindy's open letter through the history of women's letter writing and its relationship to public sphere networks.

Cindy's open letter is less a success story of productively working through protocols of the public. Rather, the story is more about a missed opportunity to work against blog culture to evoke a resistive public. Cindy's letter ceased to circulate regardless of its numerous republications in print and online, which points to the changing nature of protocols from an "Age of Letters" to an "Age of Blogs." Cindy's letter demonstrates how forms and cultural norms are mutually constitutive of each other and constitute the very workings of a (networked) public. Users cannot simply create messages using the "right words," but must also account for how the message will be perceived and what protocols of use the form triggers. Although Cindy's letter did not have some of the exploitive effects of her women's movement predecessors, I conclude there is hope for resistance in an internet age, and that letters still have an

exploitive role in movement work. The norms of a public of letters hold the possibility for bringing citizens together, but we must shape technologies under these norms (instead of vice versa). First, I show how letters constituted the ideal of the public through the interaction of norms and forms. Next, I show how Cindy's own open letter fits within a history of women letter writers exploiting a public network system. Then, I point to how protocols (norms) have changed in the "Age of Blogs," limiting the potential for Cindy's own open letter. I conclude by showing how the letter form and its cultural protocols for awaking publics is still possible through the blogosphere with the example of an open letter that did circulate in the public.

Letter Making Publics (and Women's Entrance into the Public)

Agency in democratic States has been defined and conceptualized through the imaginary of the public sphere through discursive acts and public opinion formation. From Habermas' initial model of the bourgeois public,¹⁵² to initial critiques against this model to recognize counter, subaltern and multiple publics,¹⁵³ to Habermas' own revisioning of the public as a networked system (with nested levels of private, public, civil society, and other associations),¹⁵⁴ our understanding of *how to act* and *how to communicate* as self-governing people is through norms of "the public." To understand how the public became the normative model for citizen participation, we have to trace

¹⁵² Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 48-49.

¹⁵³ The most famous of these critiques from Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992).

¹⁵⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, trans. William Rehg (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996).

its development (as Habermas and Warner¹⁵⁵ have) to the textual forms, their uses, and their cultural meaning constituting “the public” ideal in the first place. As Warner understands, “Habermas [in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*] tells the story of an increasing differentiation of a public sphere from state and civil society as primarily a story about new uses of texts.”¹⁵⁶ Elsewhere, Warner argues, “The making of a public requires conditions that range from the very general—such as the organization of media, ideologies of reading, institutions of circulation, text genres—to the particular rhetorics of texts.”¹⁵⁷ Unlike previous critiques of Habermas concerned about persons excluded or power in the public sphere, I follow Warner here to think more about the institutions and ideologies surrounding texts and textual forms in understanding agency and resistance in “the public.” This is not to say that concerns of who were excluded (namely women here) are unimportant, but rather is to prioritize how exclusions are a function of norms and protocols, and that *inclusion* is more a matter of exploiting those norms within the practices of texts instead of seeking recognition or representation. In understanding how the public developed through norms derived by the uses of rhetoric forms—especially personal letters—we can uncover the political practices and exploits that have allowed women into the public, which can still be applied to present day networks.

Power comes from inclusion because, as Galloway and Thacker show, power within a network system is additive. To gain power is to add oneself to the system.

Adopting or exploiting protocols gives access to the system, where access presents the

¹⁵⁵ Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

¹⁵⁶ Warner, *Letters of Republic*, x.

¹⁵⁷ Warner, “Introduction,” in *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), 14.

possibility to act and link within the network. Shifting our attention to inclusion through protocols along with attention to texts, we approach the public in less of an oppositional way (“the” public excludes me!), instead seeking to uncover the various levels, practices, and systems that *might* allow us to participate. Although a particular institution of circulation (e.g. publication of an article in national magazine if you are not a staff writer) might not allow access to some actors, working through a particular genre of text (e.g. personal letter) might allow one entry into the system (as with letters to the editor). Remember, in a distributed network, multiple pathways might get us to where we want to go, so it is for us to forge or find a path.

Importantly, Warner challenges us to recognize “public” protocols do have histories and a politics of their own. In his work on print culture in 18th century America, he argues print *became* the politically powerful medium and was prioritized because the culture of Republicanism privileged public discussion and participation with print providing the means to do so. Print was the language of legitimate participation, so held a special place within the imaginary of the public.¹⁵⁸ However, Warner argues the medium of print did not determine the republican culture, nor the culture determine the power of the medium—both co-developed protocols that reciprocally determined one another. Print was valuable because of republican norms, but it was print (and the networks/institutions of circulation through local printers) that allowed people to understand themselves as acting distinctly from the State. Textual forms are part of how we define ourselves as agents because of what they make possible in the system, but it is only through our practices that the form derives its meaning. As

¹⁵⁸ Warner asserts that this was especially true for illiterate persons who perhaps more clearly saw print as a technology of power (*Letters of the Republic*, 11).

Warner suggests, we have to think about the metapolitics of speech—what passes for common sense about the medium and how/who determines how we use it—to understand practices and protocols of the public (and how we can exploit them).

This brings us to personal letters as a form with norms literally embedded within it, built by its various uses throughout history. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas describes the 18th century as the “Century of the Letter,” and the letter allows the development of the bourgeois public sphere to build democracies and republics of the era. The letter literally transformed private communication into a public practice, and gave private individuals the ability to cultivate the subjectivity needed for public participation. Letters transformed into the weeklies, pamphlets, and response letters constituting public conversation in salons and coffeehouses. Even prior to their use in coffeehouses, letters exchanged among family members became social events, as letters were shared, read aloud, or copied for others to read. Warner similarly shows within 18th century America, letters and other printed pamphlets were, just as they may have been in private family settings, read aloud at town meetings so that even the illiterate or semi-literate would be informed. The understanding that letters were something to be shared developed from private, familial practices translated to public use. Printed objects shared in the public cultivated the understanding, at least in 18th century America, that printed objects contained legitimate and important information since the information was important enough to read aloud to the community. The protocols of the public developed through these practices: to read and participate in printed discourse is what made one a member of the public; it is what allowed one to have a public voice. Literally, the language of the public sphere

developed from the practices, culture, and common sense assumptions developed from personal letters within the private sphere.

Part of letter protocols allowing for their circulation and sharing within the public is because of the private, familial traces embedded in the form. Habermas argues public letters and discourses in coffeehouses still had the imprint of the private letter form, and were perceived as the same outpourings of the heart or imprint of the soul of the author.¹⁵⁹ Margaretta Jolly concurs by showing letters written from the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp were understood as *embodying* the person who wrote them. As she details, the motivation of the women at the camp to write and respond to letters was an understanding that there were *real* people one was likely to see if they went to the camp.¹⁶⁰ In other words, to interact with a letter was perceived as interacting with that person—not a piece of paper. To fail to respond to a letter would likewise be understood as the uncaring act of failing to respond as if the person was face to face with you. Just as we might be compelled to respond and share letters of family members as a means to interact and care for them virtually, letters in the public maintain this common sense practice. Thus, the developing practices of the public sphere were effects of the rituals of letter writing, and because letter writing was a practice of the private sphere, women had the possibility to access and act publicly.

Gender, along with the accompanying private/public dichotomy, ordered the “public” and constituted the protocols to exploit. Because letters originally were from the private sphere and became feminized as result, they also caused the first

¹⁵⁹ Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 48-49.

¹⁶⁰ Margaretta Jolly, *In Love and Struggle: Letters in Contemporary Feminism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

contradiction or “hole” in the public code. The creation of a public through private forms was an exploit in and of itself as it created code for a public subjectivity. Perhaps the first “exploit” of the public was to transition from private, personal letter writing to writing “letters” and pamphlets specifically with a public audience in mind. Warner shows part of the meaning embedded into a printed object was the assumption it would be read by indefinite others; it would be read to communities wherever it circulated.¹⁶¹ As Warner argues, all textual forms come “saturated with the distinctive qualities of communities;”¹⁶² our common sense practices of texts are influenced by the “common sense” protocological practices from other arenas of life. Private letters from the particular feminine private world became public and consequently masculinized, addressed to a universal audience. Warner states, “Insofar as written contexts entailed the dispositions of character that interpellated their subject as male, women could only write with a certain cognitive dissonance.”¹⁶³ Those who could speak in a (masculine) “public” voice were allowed to be heard. Discourse marked as “private” or feminine would, much like computer viruses, be subject to exclusion to save the system. Although letters coded the system, as practiced, the system did not accommodate for all voices.

However, exclusion in the public is not a simple matter of women’s voices being excluded on the basis of their gender, nor the only source of resistance or inclusion to speak as a male. The layers of a network¹⁶⁴ provide more possible holes and places of

¹⁶¹ Warner, “The Mass Public and the Mass Subject,” in *Publics and Counterpublics*.

¹⁶² Warner, *Letters of the Republic*, 17.

¹⁶³ Warner, *Letters of the Republic*, 15.

¹⁶⁴ As outlined in Chapter 2, networks consist of the application, transport, internet, and physical layers—all nested and interacting with one another.

exploit. Although women might attempt to be included into the public through writing a *public* letter, as prescribed by the application layer (software in this case being the letter), their letter might be excluded as being categorized through the transport layer as being “private” or “feminine” and therefore sent away from the otherwise masculine public. The transport layer might prevent a women’s letter from circulating in the main Internet layer of mainstream media, or women might circumvent the “public” in favor of developing their own “Internet” institutions of women’s presses built through the physical layer of obtaining their own printing presses and distribution channels. Because of the layers, the points of exclusion (and spaces for exploit) increase. A woman might gain access to a system through the letter form alone, as protocols for letters *make* the public. Their letter might gain access at the transport level depending on whether or not it is coded as “public” or for circulation, or again, women can find or create other systems (which in turn might give access to “the” public system after all).

Although a public constituted through letters has worked to exclude women, women have been aware of these exclusions while at the same time using letters to create and enact their own publicness. The coupling of women’s exclusion in the public and the use of letter writing alongside the rise of democracy can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome with notable women writing to one another even as they were excluded from speaking or representation. Perhaps reflexively, similarly excluded women Abigail Adams and Mercy Otis Warren adopted pseudonyms of Marcia and Portia (patriotic Romans) in their correspondence in the early American republic.¹⁶⁵

When women were excluded from public education institutions, education through letter

¹⁶⁵ Kate Davies, “Revolutionary Correspondence: Reading Catharine Macaulay and Mercy Otis Warren,” *Women’s Writing* 13, no. 1 (2006): 73-97.

writing manuals developed in the Middle Ages onward constituted women's instruction within the home. Even though women could not hold office or other occupations, letters as part of their household duties provided an avenue to address sovereigns, engage in commerce, or build alliances. Noble women especially, as managers of the household, were expected to use letter writing to obtain goods, to report news to family members, and to maintain alliances and relationships. More importantly, peasants and other working women gained access to nobility through letters of petition to obtain resources for their families, to get relief from tax burdens, or to petition on behalf of imprisoned family members.¹⁶⁶ The act of petitioning nobility was an act to exploit the public/private dichotomy. Petitioning is essentially a public act, and women were able to speak of *private* concerns to access the public. More importantly, women's petitions *acted* in public to constitute "public tribunals" who prompted a noble to respond to the petition. Public letters have enabled support for a cause, and have "not only kept the tribunal of the public active, but it made the public realize it had a tribunal."¹⁶⁷ The letter form has within it the double function of conveying a specific argument/critique, and to constitute a network/public. The letter evokes response from the audience to judge and discuss the argument, but also compels a normative response from an audience to judge those in power.

One form of exploit through letters is for excluded individuals to gain access to the public system, with letters speaking for and embodying women in public. Exploits

¹⁶⁶ Christa Hammerle, "Requests, Complaints, Demands. Preliminary Thoughts on the Petitioning Letters of Lower-Class Austrian Women, 1865-1918," in *Gender and Politics in the Age of Letter-Writing, 1750-2000*, eds. Caroline Bland and Máire Cross (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004).

¹⁶⁷ Clare Brant, "'The Tribunal of the Public': Eighteenth-Century Letters and the Politics of Vindication," in *Gender and Politics in the Age of Letter-Writing, 1750-2000*, eds. Caroline Bland and Máire Cross (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004), 24.

also work to recode or change a given system. As chronicled by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, women were excluded from speaking in public under protocols defined by “true womanhood.”¹⁶⁸ Women were meant to stay within the private, domestic sphere as not to sully their purity and morals. The public was a masculine realm, with competitive and ruthless norms dictating public speaking. Although some women dared to speak in public regardless of the harm to their reputations, Campbell argues most speeches by women had little chance of success with a male audience opposed to the very idea of women speaking in public.¹⁶⁹ However, women were able to speak through letters, and in doing so were able to critique the system excluding them as well as normalizing (recoding for) women speaking in public. For example, Sarah Grimké’s “An Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States” was published in *The Liberator* and *The Spectator*, and as Jami Carlacio argues, the letter (printed and circulated like other letters) could stand in for her and present her lecture when she, as a female, could not.¹⁷⁰ Because the public could read and thereby interact with women public mediums, the public could also be primed to physically interact with women in public spaces.

Further, women have been able to exploit system by “sneaking” in radical ideas under the guise of the letter form—infecting the system to change in new ways.

¹⁶⁸ Gring-Pemble develops this further to show that women were excluded from taking public speaking courses in universities (such as Oberlin where Antoinette Brown Blackstone attended). Brown Blackstone started a secret Literary Society to practice speaking, and was able to use the public speaking conventions of comparing and examining arguments and positions in letters in the way that the secret society engaged with each other. The letter then became a means to learn “masculine” discourse, as well as means to learn how to speak.

¹⁶⁹ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric, Volume 1* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1989).

¹⁷⁰ Jami Carlacio, “‘Ye Knew Your Duty, But Ye Did It Not’: The Epistolary Rhetoric Sarah Grimké,” *Rhetoric Review* 21, no. 3 (2002): 247-263.

Galloway and Thacker underscore that the transport and internet layers do not care about the content within the “package” created by the application layer the letter—these layers merely categorize and move the package throughout the system. As long as the package has the right signatures to identify it as an email or as a letter, it goes through the system as all other emails or letters would. In this way, women speaking as mothers or women *and* speaking through the form of a letter have allowed them to move, perhaps treasonous, content through the system. For example, Mercy Owen Warren, writing in revolutionary New England corresponded with Catherine Macaulay and other women patriots in the US and Britain. Within the otherwise private “news” included in the letters, both women included more direct critique of how authorities prolonged and made hasty decisions in the war.¹⁷¹ The guise of the letter in this case allowed women to make their claims and criticisms, and allowed their views to both be read and applauded by the (male) public. Further, both women used their correspondence to write histories of the war encoding the writing as “letter” instead of “history” thereby allowing their critique to circulate further.¹⁷² In accordance with dominant protocol, these women were acting within their roles, but allowed to provide criticism as seditious as male revolutionaries because it was written in the form of the letter.

We can see exploit at work within women’s peace work as well. Women were given access to organizations such as the American Peace Society (APS) because of their traditional roles as caregivers. Women were able to recode practices and create spaces for women to take on leadership roles because of “holes” coded by the Universal

¹⁷¹ Davies notes Warren rationalized that her politicization was because the issues concerning revolutionary New England had an impact on domesticity, and should compel women to speak/write.

¹⁷² Davies.

Peace Union (UPU). Further, women were able to create and infect the public with particular, even feminist, rhetoric by working within their own networks. Women were given access to many peace organizations by working as editors and writers for organization publications.¹⁷³ Women, as caregivers and mothers, were prescribed roles and activities appropriate to their gender, most explicitly in APS leader William Ladd's *The Duty of Females to Promote the Cause of Peace* including praying, singing peace songs, writing children's literature, and joining female peace societies such as Olive Branch Circles.¹⁷⁴ An unintended consequence of gender segregation was that women were allowed the space to write their own publications and to start building international female peace networks. Women developed rhetoric emphasizing their moral superiority to men, special concern for peace as mothers, and the economic consequences of war. This rhetoric found its way into other women's organization (for women's rights and temperance), who also created peace committees as part of their other work. Segregation actually allowed women's peace activists to build their network power, and when Jane Addams sent the initial call to form the Woman's Peace Party (WPP) leading up to WWI, she already the strength of a network of peace committees to draw from.

¹⁷³ Wendy E. Chmielewski, " 'Binding Themselves the Closer to Their Own Duties': Gender and Women's Work for Peace, 1818-1860," *Peace and Change* 20, no. 4 (1995). Chmielewski notes by the 19th century, it became respectable for women to earn a living through writing: novels, hymns, essays, histories, and textbooks.

¹⁷⁴ Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the US Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights* (NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 36. Chmielewski also emphasizes Ladd's promotion of women to act privately was in part because women were beginning to challenge male leadership and demanding a more active role in peace organizations. This in part, was an effect of male rhetoric that promoted the cause of peace to women—reminding them that they were also in danger of war and they should not educate their sons for war—so women began to make the issue their own. To counter this, Ladd's work was to prescribe gender roles in organizations and the movement at large to protect male leadership by reminding women that political revolutions were brought about by men; it was indecent for women to actively be part of any revolution (see 469-470).

Through women's peace work, women also began to become accustomed to leadership roles and speaking in public—recoding women's activism in the public. Quaker norms allowed women to speak and take on leadership roles, so women working through organizations such as the UPU expected similar agency in other organizations.¹⁷⁵ Although respectable women could not give speeches to audiences of elite males, they were allowed to speak to male audiences on the topic of peace, and were able to speak to mixed gender groups of “nonelites” otherwise shunned by the male leaders of organizations.¹⁷⁶ Women's participation, then, normalized women speaking and leading in public.

Women have been able to challenge and change the public system, working through norms that understood women as having a unique perspective on the peace issue. In this way, women have exploited the system both to gain access to powerful leaders as well as to develop radical positions on peace. Women have balanced their access to the system by speaking within appropriate bounds of their “expertise” of peace, while pushing more radical agendas. Before women achieved the vote, they used petitions to have a voice with their legislators, with some groups such as the WPP actively lobby Congress prior to WWI. As “experts” women were invited to testify before Congressional hearings, including WPP members appearing before Congress in 1916 to propose a Commission for Enduring Peace. Jane Addams visited with President Wilson six times during 1915 to promote the US's role in mediation,¹⁷⁷ while Carrie Chapman Catt used her relationship with Wilson to allow women from the

¹⁷⁵ John M. Craig, “The Woman's Peace Party and Questions of Gender Separatism,” *Peace and Change* 19, no. 4 (1994). Craig reports that 1/3 of UPU leadership in the late 19th century were women.

¹⁷⁶ Craig, 378.

¹⁷⁷ Alonso.

International Women's Suffrage Alliance including Aletta Jacobs and Rosika Schwimmer to petition him for the US's role in mediation.¹⁷⁸ During the 1950s, the Organization of Mothers from All Nations used the *Ladies Home Journal* to organized a letter writing campaign to Congress advocating against nuclear war, and in 1967, Another Mother for Peace formed in Hollywood where women used their own mailing lists (with Donna Reed as chair for this effort) to send Mother's Day cards to Congress with some proceeds from cards sold going to anti-war candidates.¹⁷⁹ In the midst of the Vietnam War, members of Women's Strike for Peace (WSP) testified before Congress on behalf of the Test Ban Treaty, and President Kennedy admitted there was no one better to represent issues of peace than the mothers and grandmothers of America.¹⁸⁰ Although much of the advocacy women were able to do was within the traditional role of women, they were given access to leaders and the public by adopting and using traditional gendered protocols.

As Alonso's history of women's peace movement work indicates, for every organization utilizing traditional feminine norms in the name of peace, other, more feminist organizations developed alongside or within the same organization. WSP members, speaking as mothers, used their role to testify to Congress as well as to counsel draftees or aid them actually dodging the draft. At the same time, tensions arose with other radical feminist organizations who criticized WSP for using traditional

¹⁷⁸ Mineke Bosch and Annemarie Kloosterman, eds., *Politics and Friendship: Letters from the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, 1902-1942* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990).

¹⁷⁹ Alonso.

¹⁸⁰ Amy Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

motherhood because defeated gains achieved for women's equality. In this case, to exploit one system disrupted relations between different women's networks.

The "guise" of radical critique through letters or radical action as mothers is not always successful, and the "virus" of exploit can be captured and quarantined. Although the national WPP organization strategized as mothers, the New York branch developed more radical analysis that they published in their newsletter, *Four Lights*. Editors of the publication were arrested for causing public disorder, and issues of the publication were not allowed to be mailed under the Espionage Act of 1917.¹⁸¹ US Department of Justice representatives even visited *Four Lights* editors to find out if any of their members were German (and therefore working for the enemy).¹⁸² At the same time, the analysis developed in *Four Lights* was successful to the extent that it was read by some, and was rediscovered by 1940s feminist pacifists who continued to build upon the critique in their own rhetoric. Although some exploits might not be successful when first employed, their coding leaves traces of the political practices; traces that provide substance to movement networks.

The history of women letter exploits demonstrates the possibilities for action even for present day activists. First, resistance and furthering a movement's message not only comes through promoting a single idea or hoping for others to directly adopt the message. Change comes through exploits to gain access, to recode existing protocols, or through introducing new protocols and ideas (sometimes through means and protocols already existing in the system). At the same time, activists must

¹⁸¹ Cynthia Wachtell, "Four Lights: The 'Woman's Way' of Protesting World War I," *Feminist Media Studies* 5, no. 3 (2005): 364-367, and also Erica Kuhlman, "'Women's Ways in War: The Feminist Pacifism of the New York City Woman's Peace Party,'" *Frontiers* 18, no. 1 (1997): 80-82.

¹⁸² Alonso.

recognize that the availability and use of exploits changes with how the system (and its users) perceives the communication. Spaces of exploit have to be found within a given network (such as the legitimization for women to speak as mothers or through letters), exploitive measures must adapt when the network changes, and the effects of the exploit will affect interconnected networks differently. With this in mind, I now analyze how Cindy's open letter worked through the 2004 public.

Cindy's Letter with the Protocols of the Blogosphere

After working with peace organizations campaigning against Bush's 2004 re-election, Cindy writes an open letter immediately following Bush's win that she posts to the MFSO website. The letter is a short, roughly 1000 word¹⁸³ scolding of a President who presumably will continue to make policies with utter disregard of the people he represents. The letter enacts a dialogue between Cindy and "George" as she reminds him of how he wrote her with his condolences for Casey's death. She uses rhetorical questions to suggest how "proud" Bush must feel in "betraying" the country again. In paragraph 3, Cindy speaks on behalf of the 56 million people who voted against Bush by calling for a "true vote count," and "if that fails, your [Bush's] impeachment."¹⁸⁴ Paragraphs 4-11 indicate Bush does not really know what "hard work" is, as Cindy describes how hard it is to see your son go off to war, hear of his death, bury your child, "digest" that the leader of your country lied to you, and then how hard it is to work to defeat a President who will not be defeated. She returns at the end of the letter speaking for the 56 million against Bush and vowing to work against Bush on "her agenda—

¹⁸³ As printed in *Not One More Mother's Child*, the letter is three single spaced pages, including 14 paragraphs.

¹⁸⁴ "Open Letter," 4. She also calls for Cheney's impeachment as well at this point, and it is unclear whether this is the first time that Cindy or others in the movement call for impeachment.

“bringing about your [Bush’s] political downfall.”¹⁸⁵ Cindy ends by accusing Bush of killing innocent Iraqis, and showing that, unlike Bush, her son Casey was moral, honorable, and courageous. Cindy’s open letter, a response to a lost election,¹⁸⁶ emphasizes Bush’s responsibility (and lack of care) for her son’s death, as well as her vow to impeach/continue to work against Bush.

Cindy’s own open letter follows in the tradition of women using letters and petitions in the public to address those in power. Similar to other women speaking for peace, as the mother of a fallen soldier, she warns against further destruction caused by Bush’s war. Differently than letters awakening public tribunals, Cindy herself writes off the letter as having little impact—barely mentioning it in her autobiography, noting only, “I wonder if anyone close to them [Bush or Cheney] read it and dismissed it as the rantings of a grieving mother?”¹⁸⁷ Yet, this letter is posted and reposted to a variety of blogs beyond MFSO’s website, and gets reworked and republished in her own writings and with CODEPINK. As a letter, it was presumed to be shared, yet it did not work as other letters have. In this section, I analyze her open letter and argue she followed protocols more akin to editorialized writing typical of blog pundits, which did not allow the letter to “live” as a letter in the public. Instead, readers responded under blog protocols to simply consume instead of circulate the “rantings of a grieving mother.”

As noted in the letter, November 4, 2004 is exactly seven months since Cindy’s son, Casey, was killed in combat in Iraq. Cindy’s tone is overall sarcastic,

¹⁸⁵ “Open Letter,” 5.

¹⁸⁶ Cindy also makes reference in the letter about how Bush had to get the Supreme Court involved to win the election in 2000.

¹⁸⁷ Cindy Sheehan, *Peace Mom: A Mother’s Journey Through Heartache to Activism* (New York: Atria Books, 2006), 106. Hereafter, “Autobiography.”

demonstrating the “hard work” Bush has done in his “reckless and wanton foreign policies”¹⁸⁸—policies that killed Casey. As Cindy describes, many had worked hard to defeat Bush in the 2004 election, “but he ‘won’ anyway.”¹⁸⁹ Her letter indicates Bush (and his dishonest campaign) stole another election, and Bush will continue to spend his “political capital” and admire his “hard work” of lying, fooling, and betraying the American public. Cindy frames the Iraq War by emphasizing the “1125 (so far) other brave Americans...your [Bush’s] lies have killed.”¹⁹⁰ Just as she begins the letter with her sarcastic tone (“You don’t mind if I call you George, do you?”) she ends the letter thanking “George” for having to live the rest of her life desperately missing Casey, telling Bush to “Have a nice day.”¹⁹¹ Unlike the cordial salutations or respectful tone one might expect a subject to have towards a sovereign, Cindy’s letter is decisively and unapologetically callous toward Bush. Her call to the public is not to have them pity or sympathize with the loss of her son, but rather a call to others to join her in screaming “until our last breath to bring the rest of our babies home from this quagmire of war that you have gotten our country into.”¹⁹²

What are we to make of Cindy’s letter? It is less reasoned plea and more rant. It is less about her grief or advocating for peace and more demonstrating the faults of the re-elected President. It is less connected to a specific organization and more speaking for the millions of others who did not vote for Bush. Arguably, her style of writing here is to mimic the writing of the public she had been participating in to this

¹⁸⁸ “Open Letter,” 3.

¹⁸⁹ “Autobiography,” 106

¹⁹⁰ “Open Letter,” 5.

¹⁹¹ “Open Letter,” 6.

¹⁹² “Open Letter,” 5.

point: the blogosphere. Specifically, Cindy's opening lines to Bush in this letter indicates this is less a genuine "letter;" she is setting up the scathing tone for what is to follow. At the same time, the letter is set up as a response to her own letter, sent by Bush offering his condolences for Casey's death—hence her assumption Bush and her are on a first name basis. It would be a mistake to read this "greeting" as attempting to establish a relationship with Bush through a letter, but rather is another piece of evidence of how little Bush cares about families affected by his war.

Cindy is speaking as someone who lost a child to war, but the "hard work" of losing her son is overshadowed by pointed jabs at "George." Instead of asking for compassion, she punctuates the letter with rhetorical questions (especially near the end of the letter) asking, "By the way, George, how many more innocent Iraqis are your policies going to kill before you convince them that you are better than Saddam?"¹⁹³ Her persona is less grieving mother and more irate activist especially when she states, "I'm not politically savvy, and I don't have a Karl Rove to plan my strategy. But I do have a big mouth and a righteous cause, which still mean something to the country, I hope."¹⁹⁴ Rhetorically, Cindy's letter demonstrates what Karin Wahl-Jorgensen has described as an "exhibitionist style;" a style commonly in published letters to the editor in newspapers.¹⁹⁵ Exhibitionist style is characterized by emotionally charged personal stories, where individual greatness and spectacle become markers of authenticity and the norm for public interaction. Unlike norms of personal letters that motivated a public to dialogue, exhibitionist editorials are meant to be consumed and to entertain readers—

¹⁹³ "Open Letter," 5.

¹⁹⁴ "Open Letter," 4.

¹⁹⁵ Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, "Letters to the Editor as a Forum for Public Deliberation: Modes of Publicity and Democratic Debate," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 18, no. 3 (2001): 317-318.

not to participate or respond. As Wahl-Jorgensen argues, “since we can’t argue with their story [presented in the editorial], we might as well remain silent...[the public sphere is turned] into the site for exhibitionist publicity of parallel monologue[.]”¹⁹⁶

Exhibitionism in print is a relatively new norm, and certainly not the ideal Warner saw in the print culture of 18th century America. However, as Warner notes, we have to assume that the purposes, uses, and meanings of print do change. Through our various practices, protocols and systems become recoded. Wahl-Jorgensen points to newspaper editors as perpetuating and supporting the publication of exhibitionist letters, showing editors assume those inclined to write letters to the editor are likely to be “insane” or irrational, which in turn feeds into public perception that only extreme voices write to newspapers (as those are also, ironically, the ones published).¹⁹⁷ Again, in a reciprocally deterministic way, to be heard in the public forum of print, one must become an exhibitionist, but to become an exhibitionist means to, many times, take on “uncivil discourse that does not want or expect an answer.”¹⁹⁸ This style of writing is what the public is *used* to reading, and Cindy’s open letter seems to follow the same conventions.

¹⁹⁶ Wahl-Jorgensen.

¹⁹⁷ Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, “The Construction of the Public in Letters to the Editor: Deliberative Democracy and the Idiom of Insanity,” *Journalism* 3, no. 2 (2002) notes that some newspapers, like the *New York Times*, combat the “idiom of insanity” by soliciting or only publishing public intellectuals or individuals with expertise on the topic. In either case, “normal” individuals are less likely to have a voice in the press. This is analogous to getting onto television news. Kevin Michael DeLuca and Jennifer Peeples (“From Public Sphere to Public Screen: Democracy, Activism, and the ‘Violence’ of Seattle,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19, no. 2 (2002)) suggest that violence is one way to get onto the “public screen;” DeLuca (*Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism*, (NY: The Guilford Press, 1999)) elsewhere talks about creating image events as a means to exploit the medium of television. These are versions of exploits in their own right, although DeLuca’s examples show the limits of these events to promote discussion.

¹⁹⁸ Wahl-Jorgensen, “Insanity,” 196. Wahl-Jorgensen also notes that most letter to the editor writers are overwhelmingly male, conservative and elderly. David Permuter, *Blogwars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) similarly notes that a majority of the bloggers of the most visited sites are also male and conservative.

The exhibitionist style of letters-to-the-editor seems to have influenced the newest circulatory medium—blogs—where everyone can self publish. With many distrustful of mainstream media or newspapers—perhaps frustrated their voice is not heard—they turn to blogs or other internet forums where they can post and become exhibitionists without the control of editors or censors. The blog is a space where we are simultaneously producers and consumers of ideas. At the same time, the blog allows us to filter what we read and consume, where we really only consume those ideas we already agree with. There is less of a chance that we will be overtaken by viral ideas snuck under the radar through an exploit—blog culture allows us to remain in “clean room” echo chambers immune to disruption. The blogosphere post-9/11 is a “beast” in its own right, according to Geert Lovink, who agrees with Cass Sunstein, that this network thrives in our ability to create “secluded social networks” consolidated through the protocol of link lists, RSS feeds, and favorite website caches.¹⁹⁹

We are anonymous, our readers are anonymous, and the protocol creating celebrities on the blogosphere relies less on the content of what we say and more on who and how many read and link to one’s individual blog. The protocol for interaction and circulation on blogs is a matter of savvy public relations. Like letter writing manuals, there are also tips for blogging on websites and wikis to inform us on the proper protocols. For example, one should make their content brief, easy to scan, with catchy headlines. The goal of your post is to be seen, get cross listed by other bloggers, or have your posts syndicated and re-published on other blogs.²⁰⁰ As a producer, you

¹⁹⁹ Geert Lovink, *Zero Comments: Blogging and Critical Internet Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Cass Sunstein, *Republic.com 2.0* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

²⁰⁰ See Lovink, 4.

get to control conversation in ways not available before: with the comment features on some blogs, you can control who responds or even if they have a chance to respond at all. The blog operates as a ratings game where your popularity goes up the more you keep your blog fresh and updated with new information. The goal is to have visitors to your site—not interlocutors or responders.²⁰¹ Promoted in this public is not ideas, but rather characterizations of view points where the views held by individuals become more and more polarized.²⁰² The best use of blogs is not in posting information, but rather *linking* to other sites so individuals get stuck clicking their way through a terrain of ideas they already agree with.

We can assume Cindy's discourse is highly influenced by online blog culture. She went to the Internet to find out the "truth" on the war as a way to deal with Casey's death, thus she joined with others discussing, conspiring, and blogging about Bush and his "cronies" going to war for business deals and oil. Archived interviews found on the internet also supported Bush wanted to be a war president even before running for office.²⁰³ Cindy, like others on blogs, use found bits of information to compile their own discourse. Cindy's letter might be read as "normal" amongst other punditry and critique found online using the "catchy" device of "hard work;" she becomes an exhibitionist to the extent she includes biting commentary of Bush as demonstration of her logic. Cindy's open letter is brief, but with catchy, snarky lines, others might be compelled to share the link to this letter, but probably not promote the *communal*

²⁰¹ See Perlmutter.

²⁰² Sunstein.

²⁰³ In her autobiography, Cindy claims when Bush was governor of Texas, he told his biographer he wanted to be a great, war president, and *if* he could invade Iraq, he would not "squander his political capital as his father had" "Autobiography," 29.

sharing of personal letters.²⁰⁴ Just as we can forward emails to without knowing (or caring) if the email was read or deleted, sharing links on blogs does not necessarily mean *circulation*. There is no evidence Cindy's letter created a public or was shared and discussed even by those in the movement.²⁰⁵

The practices of linking and blogging have become determining factors in the present day “public,” with the “technology” dictating norms for the content of our speech, how we navigate through the network, and the practices of that speech. At the same time, we have to remember norms and forms are mutually constitutive, and blogs are empty vessels that can accommodate any discursive form (from poems, to letters, or books). Instead of using blogs as a tool of exploit, we have to change ourselves and our ideas under the protocol developed from the physical/code structure as well as other published discourse—but we could use blogs in the same way as letters in the public if we chose. Perhaps the “exploit” of the blogosphere age is to recreate publics of letters.

Exploiting the Blogosphere: Recreating the Public of Letters

As indicated in the beginning, for all its faults, a public of letters contains within it contradictions and tensions which in turn provide spaces of exploit. The promises of “the public” also support the linking and networking of citizens for a common cause, acting apart from the State. Reenacting protocols of letters, even with Internet discourse, should allow for the same interactions and possibilities of the public. Interestingly, the republication of Cindy's open letter from the Web to printed book

²⁰⁴ It should be noted that the MFSO website does not allow comments on the open letter, thus preempting any public discussion as well as flaming or unsupportive comments. The technology can also dictate how “public” discourse is allowed to become.

²⁰⁵ As I will show in Chapter 4, Cindy does provide evidence of her emails about Camp Casey circulating and being shared (unlike this letter).

form suggests that the movement still assumed circulation of print in public could produce new interest and support. In this section, I will trace the transformation of Cindy's letter in attempt to build a "public," as well as show how a public of letter is possible on the Internet.

Cindy's open letter, and its publication in *print*, seems to be an attempt to create a peace public through the circulation of books. In the translation from blog to print, the history of this letter becomes confused and lost, as if Cindy and CODEPINK wished to give the letter new life. In Cindy's own collection of writings, *Not One More Mother's Child*, the open letter is mistakenly cited as being published first in CODEPINK's *Stop the Next War Now*. The text, however, of the letter featured in *Not One More Mother's Child* is the exact text posted on the MFSO website dated November 4, 2004 so presumably the original text. In *Stop the Next War Now*, Cindy's letter is a blend of the original letter and an essay entitled, "Casey's Story."²⁰⁶ Instead of Cindy's accusations about Bush stealing the election and Cindy's call for impeachment of Bush and Cheney (along with the biting remark referencing Saddam noted above), the letter in CODEPINK's version includes a description about Casey. Casey was a good boy who played Nintendo, was in Cub Scouts, and wanted to be a chaplain's assistant in the army because he was also a good Catholic who never missed Mass. The date of the letter has been removed; the immediacy of the letter being written right after the 2004 election has been edited away. The "letter" has now become timeless, and potentially has become an object that can continue to work and circulate through the movement. Cindy's persona is transformed to be more of a mother and less

²⁰⁶ Cindy Sheehan, "Casey's Story," in *Not One More Mother's Child* (Maui, HI: Koa Books, 2005), 6—it follows the letter itself.

of a pundit; the public is meant to feel more sympathy, compelling us to engage in our role as public tribunal.

In publishing *Stop the Next War Now*, CODEPINK seems to be working to build a public through the communal sharing and reading of the book, much like Habermas' ideal public sphere, in that the book was purposed to help spur localized action by having individuals buy the book to have reading and discussion groups with friends. CODEPINK has a free downloadable study guide on their website for this purpose, and they suggest one should donate copies to local libraries for more public access.²⁰⁷ The letter is put into the book form for the purpose of circulation to a general (not polarized) audience, so the language has been softened, especially with the inclusion of Casey's story. For a general or new audience to the peace movement, the inclusion of Casey's Story is important as some would not know who Cindy was, why her voice is essential to this collection, or who would be alienated by a direct (unpatriotic) call to impeach the president. The letter is included in the first section of the book, "It Starts with One Voice," alongside the story of an Iraq veteran who refused further service, the co-founder of MFSO (also a mother of a killed soldier), entries by other military personnel, and the poem Cindy's daughter Carly wrote.²⁰⁸ Cindy is credentialed in this publication as founder of Gold Star Families for Peace, although the original letter was written before she founded this organization, and the organization itself has become more or less defunct as of this writing. Cindy and CODEPINK attempted to make this letter

²⁰⁷ CODEPINK. *PINK Reading List 2003-2007*
 <<https://codepink.rdsecure.org/article.php?list=type&type=173>> (2 Oct. 2008).

²⁰⁸ The poem by her daughter has been reposted in most of the places Cindy has written for. It went first to MFSO, and is one of the first contributions that Cindy makes to the DailyKos blog.

work in the public, although there is no evidence that Cindy's contribution was influential.

As demonstrated by Cindy's letter, the influence of editorial protocols took away the "publicness" of the blogosphere, but I still hold out hope the blogosphere can be used as our new public. When blog protocols seem to drive us to be individuals or divisive for individual gains of advocacy, then the real exploit is to return back to communal practices by *using* the structure provided by the Internet. For example, Joe Trippi, campaign manager Howard Dean's 2004 presidential campaign, paints a different picture of the blogs and internet as bringing people together. Trippi describes the internet as an *active* medium, providing a forum for people to coordinate together; online forums did much of the work for the campaign by developing virtual communities.²⁰⁹ Unlike Sunstein, Trippi applauds audiences for telling the computer what they want and what the computer should do; bringing this back to the letter, we have to tell the computer how we want to interact as well. Trippi states, "What they [campaign experts] underestimated was the Internet's ability to grow rapidly, virally, to create a *movement*. What they never understood was that we were not *using the Internet*. It was using us."²¹⁰ Like Warner, the internet and our cultural norms can constitute practices of a new public.

A public of letters is possible on the internet, so open letters can still work in our activist arsenal. An editorial posted on the Common Dreams website, written in the form of an open letter, was circulated around email lists and reposted to other websites.

²⁰⁹ Joe Trippi. *The Revolution Will Not be Televised: Democracy, the Internet, and the Overthrow of Everything*. (NY: Harper Collins, 2004).

²¹⁰ Trippi, 103.

The letter, by Sarah Shield, was a letter to her rabbi father expressing her concerns about the Israeli oppression of Palestinians. Shield received many personal responses to this editorial, many of which included the senders' real names and addresses. The editorial took on a life of its own on the Internet, sometimes being reposted to sites without identifying information about the author or that it was from the Common Dreams website. The editorial worked its way through emails and websites ranging the whole spectrum of audiences with differing views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.²¹¹ Like other letter writing publics, Sarah's letter was shared, circulated, and responded to. If personal letters in the public promoted sharing, responding, and discussion, then Sarah's letter shows people are able and willing to share and respond through the virtual salons of the Internet.

Analysis of rhetorical forms, especially through a network lens, cannot rest simply with the content of the letter itself, nor should strategies of social change or resistance rest with crafting a compelling or appropriate message. As Jolly states, "The *form* of these letters, their *symbolic function* and *reception*, as much as their content, is crucial to their meaning."²¹² A network heuristic allows us to see more complex relationships between the form and its ability to connect and affect audiences because it pushes us to look at the various network levels and protocols. In understanding Cindy's open letter or other "letters" on the internet, we have to account for the protocols of blogs and Internet postings inherently derived from, and interacting with, our cultural norms of participation and deliberation. The question here is less about how Cindy's

²¹¹ Christine Ogan, Filiz Cicek, and Muzaffer Ozakca, "Letters to Sarah: Analysis of Email Responses to an Online Editorial," *New Media & Society* 7, no. 4 (2005): 533-557.

²¹² Jolly, 13.

letter failed, and more towards what public protocols are preventing this message from traveling. Using network logic, we have to ask about the means in which forms are allowed to circulate, how they are categorized (and interpreted by users), and through which systems they must interact.

Tracing the history of forms enables us to understand the protocols we might be able to exploit for movement gains. The history of women's uses of letters points to the tensions still at work between private and public, between what is expected from genders (and who can speak for peace), as well as the necessity of those messages being directed at the sovereign power who has the authority to send nations to war in the first place. This is not to say that we should have another "mother's movement" for this war, nor should the peace movement send "peaceful" women to chat with the President as "experts" as movements in the past. As we will see in the next chapter, President Bush and his administration were less open to speaking mothers. At the same time, the history reminds us to be creative with the constraints existing in a given time and space—where there are protocols, there are spaces for exploits. In the next chapter, I show how the protocols of care did change "the public" network for peace's cause in ways that the various blogs and editorials of the movement online could not. Lastly, our cultural norms and uses of forms never fully disappear, and by understanding the development of publics of the past, we might also consider how we can renew, recode, or change our current system to work more as in the past. Again, tracing histories of exploits, we will find political practices, with letters being only one mechanism to create change.

*CONNECTIVITY IS A THREAT. THE NETWORK IS THE WEAPONS SYSTEM.*²¹³

ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN PART OF A PROTEST FOR MORE THAN A WEEK OR TWO KNOWS INTUITIVELY THAT CAMPAIGNING IS INTIMATELY RELATED TO COMMUNITY MAKING.²¹⁴

WHAT NOBLE CAUSE DID MY SON DIE FOR?²¹⁵

A Campaign and a Camp: Building the Movement Network in Crawford

Cindy solidified her status as the “face of the peace movement” when she camped outside Bush’s Crawford ranch for 26 days in August 2005. The camp gave Cindy access to mainstream media (MSM) in ways that, even as a spokesperson for peace organizations during the 2004 election, she did not have previously. The camp attracted support and opposition to Cindy and her cause in ways antiwar demonstrations and campaigning against Bush in the 2004 election did not. Camp Casey, according to Tom Hayden, was a turning point, breathing new life into a waning peace movement.²¹⁶ This chapter explores why Camp Casey was a significant moment for the peace movement while also showing how the camp itself worked to change protocols operating in the wider public network system. The camp was a new, productive common for information to travel and circulate. As a symbol of a networked-movement as well as exemplifying care over fear, Camp Casey threatened the order provided by the State post-9/11.

²¹³ Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Network* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 16. Hereafter, “Exploit.”

²¹⁴ Margaretta Jolly, *In Love and Struggle: Letters in Contemporary Feminism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 114.

²¹⁵ Cindy Sheehan, *Peace Mom: A Mother’s Journey Through Heartache to Activism* (New York: Atria Books, 2006), 194. Hereafter, “Autobiography.”

²¹⁶ Tom Hayden, *Ending the War in Iraq* (New York: Akashic Books, 2007).

Successful networks outperform others at multiple levels—attacking from all sides to win the adoption of protocols from the hearts and minds of citizens.²¹⁷ The network with the most power is the one controlling organizational, narrative, doctrinal, technological, and social frameworks,²¹⁸ and as argued previously, the State largely succeeded in gaining support for military action in Afghanistan and Iraq by crafting visions of masculinity and patriotism as well as adopting structures of surveillance promoting fear. Protocols post-9/11 supported a State agenda and were the product of narratives of heroism reported in the media, ideologies framing the “terrorist” threat, and new government organizations designed for “homeland” security. Camp Casey presented the American public with a *new* narrative of people cooperating for peace, it questioned the State’s ideology by asking “what noble cause” we were fighting for, and showed organizations operating under care instead of paranoid surveillance. The creation of Camp Casey, through Cindy’s question of “what noble cause did my son die for?” worked as an exploit to recode post-9/11 America, not only functioning at the “application” layer of a network system to recode norms through the messages carried in MSM, but Camp Casey also developed a new network system providing a literal Internet and Physical layer²¹⁹ of the peace-movement network. Camp Casey became the place to physically bring people, organizations, and resources together as well as being the impetus for the creation and circulation of peace movement messages.

The “recoding” of the larger public system through the “virus” of Camp Casey demonstrates the means for movements to use a *politics of demand* and *politics of the*

²¹⁷ John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy*, (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001).

²¹⁸ “Exploit,” 17.

²¹⁹ “Exploit,” 42-45.

*act*²²⁰ to work in conjunction to exploit and change multiple network layers.

Movements should not only be strategizing on issue campaigns and negotiating with State leaders, but should think about communication that builds the movement network and movement network resources—building and maintaining a distributed network so that the movement can continue to exist and grow. Cindy’s question of “what noble cause” can be understood as a politics of demand: literally requesting an answer from Bush. Her question was a request to the sovereign to meet and show care for the public. Through Cindy’s question, an ethics of care was coded into the movement. The story of Camp Casey, then, was an issue campaign requesting answers from Bush, but the campaign developed into something larger—shifting from a coalition of individual organizations to a coordinated distributed network operating under protocols of care transcending individual strategies and ideologies. Unlike other anti-war campaigns prior to Camp Casey, Camp Casey was not the product of a single organization centrally guiding others for a singular goal. Rather, Camp Casey worked as a distributed network where various organizations and individuals who had not previously heard about Cindy or the movement became connected and committed to the cause through various means. Some may have heard about Camp Casey directly from Cindy, some through affiliated organizations, some saw Cindy on national news, some read about it in various blogs, and some went to the Camp *not really knowing why* but felt they had to be part. Camp Casey developed not through an organized plan by Cindy or her closest CODEPINK or Veterans For Peace (VFP) supporters, rather, Camp Casey was developed by a multitude of individuals who all wanted to be part of Cindy’s question

²²⁰ Richard J.F. Day, “From Hegemony to Affinity: The Political Logic of the Newest Social Movements,” *Cultural Studies* 18, no. 5 (2004): 716-748.

and the place of Camp Casey—whether at the Crawford location or through vigils and mini-camps that sprung up nationwide.

In this chapter, I show how Cindy’s question of “what noble cause,” as a message campaign, worked to recode the movement network under the protocol of an ethics of care. The ethics of care was a competing protocol in opposition to the State, making the Camp, and all it represented, a threat. The Camp was literally at Bush’s doorstep, shifting power away from the “common sense” of State control, while at the same time attracting even those opposed to the peace camp who attempted to maintain their (fearful) understanding of post 9/11 life. The development of the Camp shows how change and resistance is wrought through developing and adopting new protocols. Camp Casey demonstrates how new protocols can also create new forms of movements, transforming movements from coalitional campaigns to distributed networks. The lesson of Camp Casey underscores the need to maintain distributed network forms and communication supporting that network, otherwise the strength of the distributed network ceases to be “live.” The ability for a movement to come together and coordinate as a network is always there, but takes the right communication to bring it about. As Cindy said, “The movement was already there. The people were already there. It just took me to spark a movement and give Americans a voice.”²²¹ The peace movement—with its various organizations and individuals—*was there*, and it was reconnected when Cindy made her demand to know “what noble cause.”

²²¹ Cindy quoted in Rodney Thrash, “She Got No Answer; Instead, a Raging Debate,” *St. Petersburg Times*, 31 August 2005, 3A.

The Politics of (Women's) Peace Camps

One of the reasons I was drawn to studying Cindy in the first place was because of Camp Casey. Just like the women at Greenham Common Air Force base²²² who sustained their camp against nuclear weapons for nearly 20 years, Cindy brought the demonstrations and peace message to the very source of power.²²³ Whereas Greenham Women creatively used their bodies and objects of motherhood in transforming the cold base fence into a symbol of life,²²⁴ Camp Casey participants balanced celebrating life and death through their “Arlington West” crosses paired with marriages and other celebrations performed at camp. Peace camps are not centered on campaigns and messages alone since the very act of camping and living collectively in public also has significance. Women's peace camps work both as a politics of demand *and* politics of the act—centered on a particular issue while at the same time demonstrating a new way of being together. Further, as part of a politics of the act, camps balance having a stable physical presence at a *place* while allowing the flexibility for participants to come and go or act in *the name of* the camp more locally. Camps can be, like distributed

²²² It should be noted that there was also a women's peace camp in Seneca, New York (see Rhoda Linton, “Seneca Women's Peace Camp: Shapes of Things to Come,” in *Rocking the Ship of State: Towards a Feminist Peace Politic*, eds. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989) and Louise Krasniewicz, *Nuclear Summer: The Clash of Communities at the Seneca Women's Peace Encampment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992)). I choose to focus on Greenham here for sake of clarity and brevity, and because the Seneca Camp had organizational and community conflicts that would complicate the reading of Camp Casey here. Moreover, as evidenced by Linton, Seneca was less of a distributed web than Greenham's operation, relying on decision-making flowcharts and “process webs,” thus Greenham is more akin to Camp Casey for the purposes of this project.

²²³ One of the Greenham Women's first “demands” was to have a public debate with the Minister of Defense on nuclear weapons, as they felt the decision to hold US Cruise Missiles on their “common” land was made without input from the people. They also felt it would be effective to have the debate at the very site where missiles would be kept. See Maeve E. Doggett, “Greenham Common and Civil Disobedience: Making New Meanings for Women,” *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 3, no. 2 (1989): 395-419. See also Nick Couldry, “Disrupting the Media Frame at Greenham Common; A New Chapter in the History of Mediations?” *Media, Culture, & Society* 21, no. 3 (1999): 337-358.

²²⁴ See Margaret L. Laware, “Circling the Missiles and Staining them Red: Feminist Rhetorical Invention and Strategies of Resistance at the Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common,” *NWSA Journal*, 16 no. 3 (2004): 18-41.

networks, dynamic and ever changing while at the same time ordered and functional. In total, peace camps have worked to sustain movements due to their ability to support a distributed network structure as well as inspiring others to act through creativity and breaking “common sense” notions of what is possible.

Camps are cultural productions: physical sites to bring together movement activists, to expose the movement to newcomers, and to act as both a war critique and physical manifestation of the war alternative.²²⁵ Many Greenham Women narratives emphasize going to Greenham because it was something they knew *they* could do.

Women who had never acted politically before saw other *ordinary* women at the base, and joined or supported other Greenham women who they felt were *like themselves*.²²⁶

For women not informed on peace issues, nuclear weapons, or feminism, Greenham served to educate and acculturate new activists.²²⁷ The camp, then, worked as a new public space—serving to create and promote discussion in ways not otherwise allowed in “the” public.

Women’s camps also play within a liminal space of public and private. Sasha Roseneil, a Greenham Woman and academic, emphasizes, “[a Greenham Woman] was a woman who transgressed boundaries between the public and private spheres; she made her home in public in the full glare of the world’s media, under the surveillance of the

²²⁵ See Suzanne Staggenborg and Amy Lang, “Culture and Ritual in the Montreal Women’s Movement,” *Social Movement Studies* 6, no. 2 (2007): 177-194, for more on cultural production as political protest and Noel Sturgeon, “Theorizing Movements: Direct Action and Direct Theory,” in *Cultural Politics and Social Movements*, eds. Marcy Darnovsky, Barbara Epstein, and Richard Flacks (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995) for more on direct action as both critique and creation of alternatives.

²²⁶ See Alice Cook and Gwyn Kirk, *Greenham Women Everywhere: Dreams, Ideas, and Actions from the Women’s Peace Movement* (Boston: South End Press, 1983).

²²⁷ Kathleen Maas Weigert, “Experiential Learning and Peace Education: On Visiting Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp,” *Peace & Change* 15, no. 3 (1990): 312-330.

state.”²²⁸ Like other women speaking for peace, Greenham Women exploited their roles as private mothers, disrupting our expectations of the actions of “ordinary” women by camping in public. They brought with them photos, diapers, and other household wares to transform the public space into their “private” home. Using skills from the home, women knitted and wove yarn and other materials into the fence, and created larger scale demonstrations, such as “Embrace the Base,” to show love, care, and life. Although Greenham Women used traditional feminine symbols to emphasize and confront the “masculine” space of the Air Force Base, the Camp became a place to confront heteronormativity and live out values of feminist, non-hierarchical organizing. The camp accommodated all types of women who came to the base for many different reasons. Some came to the camp to campaign against nuclear weapons; others came to the camp to live out alternative values and show new possibilities for organizing. The camp, then, worked to exploit a variety of norms that otherwise constrained women.

The flexibility of the camp in terms of who could join and how they could participate²²⁹ contributed to the sustainability of the camp. Moreover, the *place-based collective* of women’s peace camps allow values and ethics to be sustained and carried across space, where Greenham Women truly could exist “everywhere,” symbolically recreated through localized or individual acts. Similarly, the Madres of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo also engaged in place-based rituals, which have sustained a transnational network for over 20 years for their cause. Bosco argues the *place* of the initial Madres

²²⁸ Sasha Roseneil, *Disarming Patriarchy: Feminism and Political Action at Greenham*, (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1995): 155-56.

²²⁹ See Gwyn Kirk, “Our Greenham Common: Not Just a Place But a Movement,” in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, eds. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989).

marches has been a source of solidarity and mobilization as women across the world recreate the sense of place through their own actions.²³⁰ Unlike an organization, *places* that come to stand in for and represent movements allow all to claim and find their own connection to the movement. The “place” of a movement allows individuals to hold multiple meanings of the movement simultaneously; while at the same time requires individuals to understand themselves as part of a common cause, coordinating individual actions in the name of a single movement. Places, both understood and enacted symbolically and materially, present the possibility to also exploit dominant systems at symbolic and material levels.

Like Greenham Common, Camp Casey was both a physical space for the material exchange of ideas and goods, but the symbolic nature of *camping* and living together in this *place* was also the immaterial building blocks of the peace movement network. Activists all over could embody Camp Casey and its ethics, building the distributed network of the movement. The movement’s waning energy post-Camp Casey demonstrates the need for movement activists to have a *network* strategy as part of movement efforts; movements need to maintain their movement networks through a politics of the act as much as they need to come up with new persuasive issue campaigns under a politics of demand.

The Question that Built Camp Casey

Cindy jokes in her autobiography that Bush is at fault for the camp’s existence at all: “If he had met with me on the first day it would have defused everything. If he had met with me any other day in August, we would have left. He didn’t, so here we

²³⁰ Fernando J. Bosco, “Place, Space, Networks, and the Sustainability of Collective Action: The *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*. *Global Networks* 1, no. 4 (2001): 307-329.

are.”²³¹ She describes the camp as an organic experience and one “literally made up as we went along.”²³² Galloway and Thacker argue exploits can be intentional or unintentional, can be used to change systems and forms, or used to disturb systems. Cindy’s simple question of “what noble cause did my son die for?” was meant to create a disruption as she initially planned on marching with others from the VFP convention to Bush’s ranch. She meant to disrupt Bush’s comfortable vacation and his isolation from a public whose opinion was shifting against the war. Her question had the unintended consequence of speaking to the movement in a multitude of ways. This section develops how the message campaign of Cindy’s question worked to awaken the public to her cause. Her question and the response of the public, carried through the blogosphere and other media channels, had resonance because it was the right message for the norms already existing in the system. She was speaking as a mother. She was speaking to the otherwise unspoken needs of the public. Cindy did not need to rationally convince us Bush was not being accountable for his actions or justifications for the war, his failure to respond to her message did demonstrated it more powerfully. Moreover, Cindy showed us a new way of being with one another—she showed us the ethic missing from our post-9/11 lives.

The rhetorical goal of most social movements largely revolves around constructing message campaigns. A campaign can be defined by the multiple messages—disseminated through multiple mediums—to promote a particular demand, goal, or idea. In activist manuals and other strategic communication texts, activists are

²³¹ “Autobiography,” 154.

²³² “Autobiography,” 137.

advised to construct media campaigns and attempt to get time on MSM.²³³ Campaigns, then, are a way to concretize and organize movement actors for a common cause. Prior to Camp Casey, Cindy's activity in the movement was largely in speaking and writing for various organizations as part of an "antiwar campaign." Whether organizations coalesced around "campaign against Bush" or "Support the Troops by Bringing Them Home," the communicative work is focused on singular, controlled messages. By the time of Camp Casey, Cindy had become a professional "campaigner:" speaking at Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) rallies, working with CODEPINK and MoveOn.org in campaigning against Bush, starting her Gold Star Families for Peace (GSFP) in January 2005, and working with Congressman John Conyers to testify at the Downing Street Memo hearings.²³⁴ Through these organizations, Cindy's basic demand and goal has been to end the war in Iraq and bring home the troops, including impeaching Bush if need be. After the 2004 elections, she began a campaign to meet with the Bush Administration to demand explanations and justifications for the war in Iraq.²³⁵ Cindy's role in the movement at this point, much like the peace movement as a whole, was with individual organizations and local groups speaking against the war,

²³³ See for example, John P. McHale, *Communicating for Change: Strategies of Social and Political Advocates* (Lanham, MA: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004). Gabriel Thompson, *Calling All Radicals: How Grassroots Organizers Can Help Save Our Democracy* (New York: Nation Books, 2007) also includes section on how-to write press releases and deal with the media.

²³⁴ The Downing Street Memos are transcripts from meetings held among British Secret Intelligence Service members, Attorney General, and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs suggesting Bush had planned to oust Saddam Hussein by force regardless of evidence of weapons of mass destruction. The memos were leaked to the UK's *Sunday Times* May 2005, and later reported in the *Los Angeles Times* and *Washington Post*. Although both the UK and US governments denied the accuracy of those memos, a committee of 131 Congresspersons requested for Bush to respond and turn over information about the US policy in Iraq (which has been denied).

²³⁵ Included in Cindy's collection of writings, *Not One More Mother's Child*, are letters to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (January 9, 2005) and White House Spokesperson Dana Perino (March 30, 2005) both requesting that the President meet with her and members of the Gold Star Families for Peace to justify killing in Iraq since there were no weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq. (See Cindy Sheehan, *Not One More Mother's Child* (Maui, HI: Koa Books, 2005).

sometimes coming together for larger marches and rallies.²³⁶ Arguably, these efforts did little to shift public opinion or discourse on the war. Certainly, anti-war campaigns had not been successful in shifting Bush Administration policy on Iraq. There was no real public tribunal—especially with MSM—to judge and hold the Bush Administration accountable. Although issue campaigns can be successful, unless the campaign works at multiple levels (narrative, doctrinal, etc.), it cannot recode or change what the public already accepts to be true or necessary. The war was necessary. The Bush Administration was the right choice for continuing a war effort.

Cindy’s question of “what noble cause?” did “break through” to the public differently, and somewhat spontaneously. Throughout her autobiography, Cindy rationalizes events of her activism as being ordained by fate or being a sign Casey was telling her she was on the right track. “What noble cause?” was no different. Cindy was already engaged in speaking tours and engagements with various antiwar organizations, and was scheduled to speak at the VFP convention in Dallas. While preparing for this convention on August 3, 2005, Bush made a press statement about 14 Ohio Marines killed in Iraq that day. Cindy heard Bush state, “the families of the fallen can rest assured that their love ones died for a noble cause.”²³⁷ It had been over a year since her own son was killed in Iraq, and Cindy had been active in the movement for nearly nine months, thus in a knee-jerk reaction, she responded to Bush’s statement through an email. Cindy sent out an email to over 300 contacts stating simply:

I am going to Dallas this weekend to speak at the Veterans For Peace convention. After I am finished, I am going down to Crawford, and I am going to drive up as far as I can go and I am going to demand to meet with that m.f. er

²³⁶ Hayden.

²³⁷ “Autobiography,” 135.

and I am going to ask him for what noble cause did he kill Casey and to demand that he stop using Casey's sacrifice to justify more killing.²³⁸

In response to this email, Cindy received over 600 replies from people wishing her well, offering her supplies, sending her media contact information, or letting her know they were passing along her message to others they knew. Notably, this email was forwarded on the VFP listserv, and although they were supportive, Cindy had to reassure VFP convention organizers she was not trying to disrupt or divert people from their conference.²³⁹ Cindy posted a similar "call to action" on her diary at the *Daily Kos* on August 4, 2005,²⁴⁰ and similarly, over 200 comments were made to offer admiration, criticism of Bush, places to stay, advice on surviving the weather, local media contact information, and advice on message strategy for posters and signs. At this point, VFP, CODEPINK, Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), MFSO, and Crawford Peace House had all pledge support of Cindy to demand an answer from the President, even though Cindy writes her *Daily Kos* statement as representing GSFP alone. CODEPINK sent out the first press releases.²⁴¹ A new campaign demanding a justification for the war had begun and was going public at Bush's Crawford Ranch.

²³⁸ "Autobiography," 136.

²³⁹ With issue campaigns, one must "stay on message" and be unified with the organization's goals. VFP's concern here was both that Cindy would take people away from their convention *and* her action would dilute *their* platform and message. Cindy's plan to go to Bush's ranch conflicted with the "business" day of the convention where the organization would plan goals for the next year, and VFP leaders were worried that many would leave and follow Cindy to the ranch ("Autobiography," 139).

²⁴⁰ Cindy Sheehan, "We Are Going to Crawford to Stop the Killing," *Daily Kos*, 4 August 2005, <<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2005/8/4/94551/60876/401/135871>> (20 March 2009). Hereafter, "Daily Kos." In addition to saying she was going to Crawford, Cindy also offered three demands for President Bush: 1. Bush needed to bring troops back from Iraq immediately, 2. Bush needed to explain his noble cause, and 3. Bush should send his own twins to war if he would not bring others' children back from Iraq.

²⁴¹ Cindy met Medea Benjamin (co-founder of Code Pink) in Florida during the 2004 elections and that they have "helped each other with our common goal for ending the war" ("Autobiography," 136), hence CODEPINK working with their already established media contacts and strategy for this event.

Cindy's email gave antiwar organizations an opportunity to make the VFP convention "newsworthy" for MSM as a demonstration directly to Bush. As a tactic in the campaign, going to Crawford took advantage of a political opportunity structure:²⁴² at a time when public support of the war was waning,²⁴³ the President literally absent from the public hidden at his ranch, and with antiwar supporters already gathered in Texas—Cindy decides to ask Bush a question, and everyone was primed to listen. Unlike Cindy's open letter which presumably received no response—certainly not the exponential replies this email garnered—this email and blog post started to bring a peace network together. Significantly, people were responding to help without there being much of a plan or strategy in place, yet they shared anything they knew or thought would be helpful to Cindy. The responses show, as Hayden argues, Cindy reenergized the movement because a "spontaneous and lasting community immediately formed around her" and, at the Camp, hundreds were able to basically conduct a "seemingly endless press conference" on the war.²⁴⁴

Cindy met with a small group of organizers the Friday before heading to Crawford including her sister, a member of VFP, Crawford Peace House organizers,

²⁴² Social movement theorists, notably Doug McAdam, use political opportunity structure to understand the conditions that enable a movement to mobilize or attain its goals. Political opportunity structures are both external to the movement's control (Cindy heading to Crawford at the same time that Bush was on vacation and with the White House Press Corp having slow news days because of his vacation) and internal to the movement (such as the already established coalition of organizations in place for the VFP convention that enabled Cindy to travel to Crawford). This theory has been heavily criticized (even by McAdam himself) as not accounting for all factors of a movement, but I use it here because it can describe a particular instance of contention—a campaign to demand an answer for example—and it is also how many (including "mainstream media") have described the success of the camp. For an overview of the critiques of this theory, see Douglas Bevington and Chris Dixon, "Movement-relevant Theory: Rethinking Social Movement Scholarship and Activism," *Social Movement Studies* 4, no. 3 (2005): 185-208.

²⁴³ A Harris Poll reported in Hayden (150), showed 63% of Americans supported a one-year withdrawal from Iraq in 2005.

²⁴⁴ Hayden, 150-151.

and another Texas based activist. Although Cindy left much of the logistics, permits, and contingency planning to the rest of the group, she continued to spread the word of the demonstration via Mike Malloy of Air America and online. Strategically, the group decided 12 individuals representing VFP, IVAW, and Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) would escort Cindy and another mother from GSFP, Amy Branham, in the “Impeachment Tour Bus” to Crawford followed by about 20 other cars, driving as far as Secret Service would allow. As a campaign, the group put members of the military escorting grieving military mothers as the “face” to represent their message. Like any other campaign strategy crafted to be the most persuasive and attention getting, Camp Casey began as a coalition of antiwar organizations seizing an opportunity to get press and public interest.

The “march” of cars reached a “triangle” space where Cindy would disembark for a press conference before marching, on foot, closer to the ranch. Seventy-five members of the press (it was a slow news week) met Cindy at the triangle, and then 75 members of the caravan proceeded to march toward the ranch with Cindy, her sister Dede, and Gold Star mom Amy in the lead—holding pictures of their sons. As they marched, sheriffs warned Cindy to walk in the ditch instead of the *public* road even though traffic had already been blocked. Cindy describes how she “broke the rules” by walking (barely) on the road, and was blocked by police from proceeding further. So Cindy sat down.²⁴⁵

Eventually, Cindy went back to the triangular area where the march began to seek shade and officially establish Camp Casey. Forming the camp, or at least Cindy

²⁴⁵ And yes, this has allowed her to be referenced by others as the Rosa Parks of the movement. Cindy notes it herself in her blog posts, and it is picked up in the MSM (See Thrash, for example).

staying there, had already been part of the plan, when, in the first planning meeting of the march, Cindy said she would stay until Bush met with her or his vacation was over.²⁴⁶ Importantly, Cindy emphasizes that Camillo Mejia, an Iraq Veteran found guilty of desertion for refusing to return to Iraq, named the spot “Camp Casey.” As the Camp continued, Cindy was subject to accusations she was exploiting Casey’s death, and the Camp was *her* plan all along. As Cindy tells, it, Camp Casey was spontaneous and was planned only once at the camp—it was a collective effort and not her plan alone. Seven others stayed with Cindy on the first night in a makeshift camp of lawn chairs, with other supporters staying at the Crawford Peace House or returning back to the VFP convention. Cindy admits mistakes were made, but emphasizes “nothing had ever been done like Camp Casey up until then.”²⁴⁷ Intentional or not, Cindy’s telling of the story obscures the network and planning preceding this campaign, but opens up the possibility for others to link themselves to this seemingly spontaneous event.²⁴⁸ The story of Camp Casey is not just about the campaign or message crafted by a coalition of a few organizations, thus allowing for a recoding of peace action altogether.

The campaign message of “what noble cause?” grew Camp Casey beyond its initial seven members largely because it was a question that never got an answer from

²⁴⁶ “Autobiography,” 140.

²⁴⁷ “Autobiography,” 137. Although it is true that the current peace movement did not have a peace camp in this manner before Cindy, Cindy seems unaware of other women’s peace camps that have existed (such as at Greenham Common and Seneca). Cindy notes throughout the book that even though she was a history major in college, she blames herself for not recognizing history repeating itself in regards to President Bush’s actions and invading Iraq. Again, emphasizing women’s peace movement history here is to help maintain peace networks through maintaining stories and history.

²⁴⁸ Francesca Polletta, *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006) makes a similar argument with students participating in lunch counter sit-ins during the Civil Rights Movement. The continued narrative that such sit-ins were “spontaneous” seemed to galvanize other students to follow suit, understanding the issue and action as urgent. The narrative’s strategic ambiguity also failed to supply a rational explanation for the sit-in’s origins, thus allowing anyone to make themselves part of the heroic tale.

the person it was directed to, thus, others felt compelled to respond. Bush himself *never* met with Cindy. Instead, Bush sent Deputy Chief of Staff Joe Hagin and national security advisor Stephen Hadley to meet with Cindy on the first day. As Cindy recounts, Hagin and Hadley “tried to ply me with the usual propaganda about WMD [weapons of mass destruction] and the war on terror, etc.”²⁴⁹ She responded back that she was not an idiot, and still wanted to talk to Bush. Secret Service agents also met with Cindy to warn her she might get run over by passing cars at night, and that she should leave for her own safety. The threat of safety, however, did not really phase Cindy as she (and others camping) knew if anything did happen, the blogosphere would hear about it. This campaign had already drawn the attention of more than were physically at the Camp, and these others were also already primed and waiting for Bush to respond to Cindy—a response that was metonymically to the waiting public. From Cindy’s initial email/blog post, the Camp turned into a fully developed message campaign that included TV advertisements and demonstrations wherever Bush traveled. By the end of August, many voiced their support of Cindy and demanded Bush respond; meanwhile, support for the war had decreased past the point of no return.²⁵⁰

Why was this message able to have impact and support from the public? First, the message was simple. Cindy asked a question, and the appropriate response from Bush would be to answer. Unlike more complex analyses or having Bush respond to an editorial, all Cindy required was a face-to-face meeting. Second, Cindy seemed to

²⁴⁹ “Autobiography,” 148.

²⁵⁰ Paul Harris, “Mother Tips the Balance against Bush: Cindy Sheehan’s soldier son died in Iraq. Her vigil outside the President’s ranch has galvanized the anti-war lobby—and provided a fierce political Storm,” *The Observer* 21 Aug 2005: 19. Harris reports political scientists think that Cindy was the final push to reach the “tipping point” of public opinion against the war. At the time of this article, a Gallup Poll showed 54% believed it was a mistake to go to Iraq, and Bush’s approval ratings were in the 30s. In comparison, once support for the Vietnam War fell below 50%, it never recovered.

speak to the sentiments of the public and voice the basic concern about invading Iraq—what did we do it for, *really*? Part due to a slow news period and aided by the 24 hour news cycle, Cindy’s message was disseminated farther than any organizational press release could hope for. Major news figures all covered her story, and Cindy’s face was literally everywhere. Cindy’s popularity enabled other antiwar demonstrations, advertisements, and messages to disseminate with ease because this was, for the moment, *the news*. Finally, Cindy’s voice was given moral authority to speak for the public to address and demand answers from Bush. Public protocols allowed the voice of a military mother to speak, allowed her message to circulate, and her message was perceived as representing public sentiment.

The message’s response from Bush and the public demonstrates how a movement campaign can work at different levels. First, the message Cindy put forth was clear and simple. Although her initial *Daily Kos* post complicates the message a bit—including “we want our loved ones’ sacrifices to be honored by bringing out nation’s sons and daughters home” along with suggesting that Bush should send his own twins to war if there is a noble cause²⁵¹—the question itself was the most salient, continuing to circulate through her many press interviews and picked up by MSM. The question was the sound bite that continued to travel and was addressed even by Right media outlets. Even when right-wing media such as Fox News and Rush Limbaugh attempted to undercut the question about noble cause by bringing up statements Cindy had made, or supposedly made, in other speaking events and blog posts, Cindy asserted

²⁵¹ We might infer the comments included in the blog post may have helped Cindy shape the message before the camp. A few thought the twins should be left out of the discussion, or responded that those comments would be more extreme to an audience beyond the Daily Kos community.

back that her intention at Crawford was always to ask Bush “what noble cause?” Along the lines Scott Ritter suggests in creating the movement’s statement,²⁵² the simple question worked best to reach and be reproduced in MSM. The goal of the message was also clear: for Bush—and not any of his advisors—to meet with Cindy. When Bush declined to meet with her, then the message gained more traction as a lack of response confirmed the public’s suspicions Bush would not, or could not, be completely truthful with the public on the reasons for invading Iraq.

Second, the message tapped into public sentiments questioning the justification for the Iraq invasion. Compounded by Bush’s physical “absence” by being on vacation, the message resonated with a public who felt that President Bush had isolated himself from the public, yet continued to ask for the sacrifice of Americans in the war. Blogger Amanda Marcotte agreed, stating, Cindy and the camp was “about Bush’s refusal to take responsibility for this war that is being paid for, one way or another, by all of us.”²⁵³ Others doubted Bush could give a genuine response to Cindy if not carefully coached or through some “scripted, hush-hush meet ‘n’ greet.”²⁵⁴ Based on public sentiment, many wanted a response from Bush, and wrote their own requests for Bush to meet with Cindy. Requests for Bush to meet with Cindy occurred in MSM, on blogs, as well as from Congresspersons. Fifty-two percent of Americans supported Bush

²⁵² Ritter specifically criticizes the movement for diffusing the message through laundry lists of demands, showing that the right has always been better at staying on message with singular agendas. Scott Ritter, *Waging Peace: The Art of War for the Antiwar Movement*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007).

²⁵³ “Camp Casey, PTA,” *AlterNet*, 22 August 2005 <<http://www.alternet.org/story/24392>> (18 March 2009).

²⁵⁴ Sarah Jones, “Moms Like Cindy Sheehan,” *Huffington Post*, 11 August 2005, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sarah-jones/moms-like-cindy-sheehan_b_5481.html> (18 March 2009).

meeting with Cindy Sheehan,²⁵⁵ and editorials including one in *The Boston Globe* simply requested Bush meet with Cindy although doubtful he would: “Bush, who often is stubborn in his Iraq policies, is once again locking the door and making things far worse.”²⁵⁶ Bush helped the persuasiveness of the campaign because he did not meet with Cindy, the camp to wait for an answer became prolonged, and the message was taken up in different media channels.

Bush’s failure to respond is perhaps not surprising. Political theorists recognize in this war on terror, Bush extended executive power and created, as Giorgio Agamben defines, a state of exception.²⁵⁷ In a state of exception, those outside of the order of the State are denied recognition or are physically deported or contained within concentration camps. To deny Cindy an audience with the president is an attempt to exclude and deny recognition; State camps work to keep resistance invisible and individuals forgotten.²⁵⁸ In a state of exception, the State acts without justification or public support—removing opposition as it goes—always maintaining its *right to act*. Even when public sentiment demanded Bush to respond to Cindy, Communication Director Dan Bartlett continued to reinforce that the US could not quit in Iraq—yet another effort to conceal and deny recognition anti-war claims.²⁵⁹ Unlike State sponsored camps, Camp Casey refused to be silent or ignored, and Bush *lost control* by allowing Camp Casey to continue on. Bush strategists have conceded Cindy’s protest

²⁵⁵ Richard Moran and Dan Balz, “President’s Poll Rating Falls to a New Low,” *Washington Post*, 31 Aug. 2005, A6.

²⁵⁶ “Talk to Cindy,” Editorial *The Boston Globe* 17 Aug. 2005: A12.

²⁵⁷ Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

²⁵⁸ Nicholas Mirzoeff, *Watching Babylon: The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 2005).

²⁵⁹ Kenneth R. Bazinet with Thomas M DeFrank, “Prez Turns Heat on Peacenik Ma,” *Daily News (NY)*, 24 Aug 2005: 24.

denied them momentum, while presidential scholar Allan Lichtman argued even if Bush had responded to Cindy, his response would have come too late given the tipping of public support.²⁶⁰

The continued media coverage also helped to disseminate the message and news of Camp Casey. With press readily available at Crawford waiting for any presidential news, Cindy could call press conferences with the White House Press Corp at will. With no other major events occurring that August, Cindy could become the focus of media attention, and she utilized daily radio spots on Air America along with spots on most major television stations.²⁶¹ MoveOn.org and True Majority continued campaign strategy by creating and airing commercials of Cindy's asking "What noble cause?" Other GSFP moms took the campaign on the road, traveling to "dog" and demonstrate at Bush meeting events with parents of dead soldiers in Idaho and Salt Lake City.²⁶² The camp, combined with the message campaign, legitimized the cause, educated and informed those who were not already involved in anti-war organizations, and created roles for other activists such as the GSFP mothers who may not have been as active in the core of the movement before.²⁶³ The campaign worked because of financial support of anti-war organizations and supporters, the cooperation of MSM media, and

²⁶⁰Bazinet and DeFrank.

²⁶¹ Cindy's blog posts while at Crawford are reprinted in *Not One More Mother's Child*, and all major interviews, media connections, and visitors to the camp are chronicled there.

²⁶² See Elisabeth Bumiller, "Citing Sacrifice, President Vows to Keep Up Fight," *New York Times*, 23 Aug. 2005: A1. Bumiller reports that 1000 people attended the demonstration in Salt Lake City, and 100 were in Boise, Idaho. True Majority helped to fund the trip of other GSFP mothers to those rallies.

²⁶³ See Staggenborg and Lang for the use of campaigns and cultural events in movements to gain participation and attention.

participation from the blogosphere. Given the right circumstances, MSM can be used for movement goals, and can positively frame protest events.²⁶⁴

The continued media attention required Bush to respond to Cindy's question, if not to Cindy directly, then through press statements. The press underscored how easy it would have been for Bush to meet with Cindy. He cycled with Lance Armstrong, held fundraising dinners, and met with donors while at Crawford, so could have made slight detours to visit Cindy. Press asked Bush about meeting with Cindy; he replied he supported her right to speak her mind, and it was important for him to be sensitive to those who have something to say. However, it was also important for him "to go on with my life, to keep a balanced life."²⁶⁵ Bush emphasized the need for continuing the war because it was owed to those that had already lost their lives. Moreover, Cindy did not represent the families he has met with. Cindy responded to this last sentiment published by the Associated Press, in her Day 18 blog post²⁶⁶ asserting she never claimed to speak for all families of soldiers, but she represents a lot of citizens who want justification for the war. She disagreed with Bush's justification of "honoring soldiers by killing more of their buddies."²⁶⁷ Cindy's public seemed to agree.

The public seemed to agree that Cindy, as the mother of a dead soldier, had the moral authority to speak in the name of the fallen, and Bush was not allowed to justify the war in their names. Although there was debate on whether Cindy was dishonoring

²⁶⁴ See Simon Cottle, "Reporting Demonstrations: The Changing Media Politics of Dissent," *Media, Culture & Society* 30, no. 6 (2008): 853-872. It could also be argued that, as MSM is relying more on bloggers and internet sources for their stories, the support from credible blogs like the *Daily Kos*, *Huffington Post*, and *AlterNet* also helped legitimize the campaign and fed into MSM's interest in Cindy.

²⁶⁵ Elisabeth Bumiller, "Bush and the Protester: Tale of 2 Summer Camps," *New York Times*, 22 August 2005, A9.

²⁶⁶ "My Response to George as He Speaks from His Vacation Away from His Vacation" in *Not One More Mother's Child*.

²⁶⁷ "My Response to George," 124.

the troops through her protest or even dishonoring her own son's sacrifice, others found her grief genuine, in turn legitimizing her role as a speaker for the movement and for the soldiers. Christine Lahti, writing for the *Huffington Post*, understands why Bush might be intimidated to meet with Cindy: "I can imagine that her grief and rage—her demand for justice and action—are [sic] a force that is unstoppable."²⁶⁸ Lahti, like others writing to support Cindy, indicates Cindy speaks for a silent majority that should also make their voices heard.²⁶⁹ At the same time, Lahti acknowledges Cindy's courage is "waking up America,"—importantly, unlike Lahti's characterization of Cindy here, it is not because of Cindy's grief, rage, or even courage that the public is inspired. Rather, it is Cindy's insistence for care and response.

Cindy's question, perhaps accentuated because she claims authority to speak for life as a *mother* when mothers seemed to have the loudest voices,²⁷⁰ was interpreted as a reasonable request all could sympathize with. She is not just Casey's mother, but literally and symbolically "Mom" for many in the movement. IVAW and other soldiers at nearby Fort Hood "adopted" and called her mom. Other soldiers' parents similarly recognized her as "family," agreeing Casey would support Cindy's actions. Care is often associated with, and manifested through, familial relations, and Cindy's question evoked this type of response. Moreover, because there are both victims and survivors of combat, it was more than mothers grieving or seeking answers for the Iraq War.

²⁶⁸ "Cindy Sheehan is My Hero," *Huffington Post* 11 Aug. 2005
 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/Christine-lahti/cindy-sheehan-is-my-hero_b_5495.html> (18 March 2009).

²⁶⁹ Lahti concludes her blog post hoping that Laura Bush wouldn't be as afraid as her husband and meet with Cindy—as a fellow mother. Other posts (and Cindy's own writing) also requested Laura to meet with Cindy as well.

²⁷⁰ Elisabeth Bumiller, "In the Struggle Over the Iraq War, Women Are on the Front Line," *New York Times* 29 Aug. 2005: A11.

Tom Hayden compared the Iraq War with Vietnam, noting eventually State justification that those killed represent a noble sacrifice begins to sour as survivors deal with their own emotions over having *survived*. The war created a family of survivors dealing with death; given this, it is Cindy—not Bush—that can claim authority for the dead and speak in their name. Hayden argues this makes Cindy the ultimate threat to Bush’s authority and has allowed her to win the war for meaning. “She wants the truth, nothing more than the truth, because that will stop George Bush from desecrating the dead all over again through deceit.”²⁷¹ It is out of care for others Cindy asks the question, and the response she receives from all except Bush is similarly through care.

A literal politics of demand, Cindy asked a question and got no response. At the level of discussion and debate in the public spurred by her question, the campaign was a success. Hayden agrees stating, “The antiwar movement had been restored in the public eye, not as a group of chronic complainers, but as an instrument to interrogate the powerful with a persistent question—*What noble cause?*—to which there was no answer.”²⁷² At the same time, movements based in a politics of demand alone are not sustainable. When Bush left Crawford, the issue and message left along with him. The uniqueness of this campaign is that the message was not the only part produced because there was also the camp—and the protocols controlling it. Embedded within Cindy’s question primed the response the practices of the public—to care for her and one another. The response to Cindy’s question by the public was in part the content of the

²⁷¹ Tom Hayden, “Cindy Sheehan’s War,” *Huffington Post* 14 Aug. 2005 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-hayden/cindy-sheehans-war_b_5633.html> (18 March 2009). He also notes that Bush was unable to deliver his own campaign of pro-war mothers to counter Cindy’s claim on the dead. Pro-war versus anti-war (soldiers’) mothers became central as Camp Casey continued with counterprotests and camps (albeit smaller groups) confronting Cindy.

²⁷² Hayden, *Ending the War in Iraq*, 151.

message itself—we'll ask and answer the question, too. Moreover, the public *cared* about Cindy and her question because of the ethic it suggested by it and that developed into Camp Casey. In the next section, I'll show the ethic of care built into the question/camp enabled Camp Casey to be successful as the manifestation of individuals adopting new protocols of care.

From Campaign to Camp: Adopting Protocols of Care

The public response to Cindy's demand is significant because individuals writing on behalf of Cindy (in newspapers, blogs such as the *Huffington Post*, or on their own accord) were not all connected to Cindy directly through the camp or the various organizations initially involved in her campaign/march. Any movement campaign wants to receive public support, create awareness of issues, and link to other groups and individuals, but the outpouring of support for this one march/campaign seems too good to be true. Candlelight vigils were organized around the country, individuals called the Crawford Peace House to show their support, Jesse Jackson called Cindy to pray with her every night, and others came to the camp without really knowing why other than they were compelled to come after hearing about Cindy on the news.²⁷³ Although some peace movement and local anti-war groups were already networked from campaigning against Bush in 2004 and other demonstrations, there seems to be another logic at work explaining *why* people were as moved and compelled to answer Cindy's call. For example, Rik Flynn, a school teacher who spent two weeks with Cindy at the camp after reading about it on Arianna Huffington's *Post*, stated: "If this lady is going to sleep in a ditch in 100-degree weather and demand to be heard and

²⁷³ "Autobiography."

demand to have an explanation as to why her son died for this cause, she needs support.”²⁷⁴ Cindy’s demand was not simply persuasive strategy, but evoked an ethics of care from those reading and hearing about her plan. As Joan Tronto argues, care is a basis for political change, however we seem to have lost our ability to recognize and act in terms of care in today’s day and age.²⁷⁵ Cindy’s demand helped redefine the relationship (and practices) of the public towards the movement and promoted the adoption of protocols created under the ethic of care. In adopting norms and practices of care, Cindy’s movement was able to include and bring in new members—even those opposed to her—without consciously knowing why.

Protocols, as Galloway and Thacker describe, are the source of control and organization within distributed networks. We can view “the” public or society at large as a distributed network as we are all, in some ways, connected to cultural and societal norms specifically connected to the State and other dominant institutions. As Judith Butler describes, the protocols that emerged post 9/11 (to coordinate and guide the action and response of the “American People”) were largely driven on the basis of fear and shutting down *any* discussion about US foreign policy. She underscores it was “irrational” to mourn or concern ourselves with civilians or other would be casualties of US’s retribution of the 9/11 attackers (and their apparent Iraqi connections).²⁷⁶ Galloway contends protocols go beyond functionality and also code given relationships

²⁷⁴ Quoted in Thrash, 3A.

²⁷⁵ Joan Tronto, *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*, (New York, Routledge, 1993).

²⁷⁶ Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, (New York: Verso, 2004).

between network parts, referring to protocols as the “etiquette” of the system.²⁷⁷ The “etiquette” of the post-9/11 public was to shut out care and concern for others for the sake of national security. As Butler shows, any sympathetic move towards non-US Others was translated into support for terrorists leading to the “raw public mockery of the peace movement, and the characterization of anti-war demonstrations as anachronistic or nostalgic...putting into question in a very strong way the very value of dissent as part of contemporary US democratic culture.”²⁷⁸ Given this context, it would be irrational to support Cindy, speak against President Bush, or adopt norms other than continued uncritical war support. Speech not in support of Bush would be otherwise indecorous.

Cindy’s question of “what noble cause?” however, was not deemed indecorous even as it was in an effort to criticize Bush. Thus, we have to interpret the message as working at a different level. The question offered another system and set of protocols for people to *choose* to adopt, which individuals could adopt through the support of Cindy and Camp Casey. As Galloway and Thacker demonstrate, any protocols emerge in relationships, are robust and flexible, are universal but achieved through public negotiation and vetting, and inclusive to all who adopt them.²⁷⁹ We adopt protocols not through force, but because we desire to. We adopt given protocols because it would seem irrational not to—adopting norms is what allows us to access the network, work in the system, and use the system.²⁸⁰ Analogously, public ethics and norms work in a

²⁷⁷ Alexander R. Galloway, *Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentralization*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004). Hereafter, “Protocol.”

²⁷⁸ Butler, 3-4.

²⁷⁹ “Exploit,” 29.

²⁸⁰ “Protocol,” 147.

similar way: they are created through relationships and how relationships are defined; inform us who is “with us or against us;” and are produced, in part, through discussion and public opinion formation. Further, Tronto’s ethics of care is an ethic inherently constructed through relationships and negotiations with others and not a function of a moral imperative: we act not on the basis of self-interest but rather “as the result of the particular constellation of caring relationships.”²⁸¹ Cindy and Camp Casey pose a direct threat to the State because it presents a new system and order of relations for “the public” to adopt. Whereas the State wants to maintain “non-discussion” and uncritical support of State policy, Cindy’s question literally brought individuals together to work collectively to care about the needs of a grieving mother.

Significantly, adoption of care is an affront to State power. As Tronto argues, States are given the responsibility of care for their citizens in working and representing (supposedly) public interests, but Tronto underscores States work under logics of obligation, where obligations become narrowly defined under public and private issues. Care, defined as feminine, is categorized as a private activity, thus the State removes its obligation to *care* for citizens, however needs for care are defined. Thus, we can read Butler’s analysis of mourning as the State defining empathy as a non-public/non-political response; we can understand Bush’s non-response to Cindy’s congruent with a State response where care is not appropriate. However, Tronto argues care *is* a public issue and care can only occur in societies where open and equal discussion occurs. Moreover, care develops better democratic citizens as individuals operating through norms of care are “presumed to be in a state of moral engagement, rather than in a

²⁸¹ Joan Tronto, “Care as a Basis for Radical Political Judgments,” *Hypatia* 10, no. 2 (1995): 142.

condition of detachment.”²⁸² Cindy’s demand reawakened a public operating through caring relations. Cindy offered a new space for individuals to act through this ethic—power shifted in the public with more “users” adopting care and the protocols created in the public instead of those established by the State.

The “exploit” here is not that Cindy worked through the protocols already existing in the system to successfully send messages (as letters worked in the “application” layer of the network). Rather, Cindy’s demand enabled a recoding of the operating system itself (at the Internet layer). More than that, Camp Casey was less of a demonstration but the actual physical layer of a network in which care could come together and be transported to the public at large. *A politics of the act* is a means to present the possibility of a new way of being, and Camp Casey, symbolically and materially, is that act. As Hardt and Negri describe, the type of resistance necessary is to create new hearts and minds “through construction of new circuits of communication, new forms of social collaboration, and new modes of interaction”²⁸³ and the primary values necessary for this include creativity, communication, and self-organized cooperativity. Camp Casey was not merely a well organized demonstration by a movement organization, but was the coming together of a self-organized collaborative.

The Distributed Network of Camp Casey

Camp Casey—the physical space where Cindy supporters gathered in Crawford—was the medium for ideas, resources, and relations to develop. Just as a public needs systems for printing and circulating texts, movement-networks are born

²⁸² Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*, 164.

²⁸³ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 81.

and sustained through “home bases.” As with many movements, a predominant organization could serve as a home base, making the movement more centralized, but events and camps can also serve that function while allowing the movement to become more distributed. Staggenborn and Lang describe cultural events of movements, which “can help to maintain movements over time by renewing the energies of existing activists and providing spaces for newcomers to encounter movement ideologies, activists and tactics.”²⁸⁴ Events or collective rituals enable protocols to develop, but more importantly, strengthen bonds and commitment among activists even in geographically extensive networks.²⁸⁵ Unlike a *politics of demand* requiring movement actors to “stay on message” oftentimes developed to play in a State created system, a *politics of the act* manifested through cultural events, camps, or other free spaces allows movement actors to participate on their own terms, autonomously, while at the same time dismantling and exposing old systems of rule with new norms and ways of being. Although Camp Casey started as part of Cindy’s initial idea to go to Crawford and demand explanations from Bush, Camp Casey itself grew from movement individuals developing the camp as its own statement. The camp became the space to build the movement, and was the world the movement wished to create. This section will trace the “miracle” of Camp Casey, showing how it carried on the legacy of autonomous zones and camps attempting to create the new in the shell of the old.

²⁸⁴ Staggenborg and Lang, 179. This is also closely related to free spaces as defined by Sara M. Evans and Harry C. Boyte, *Free Spaces: The Sources of Democratic Change in America* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), where free spaces are where movement ideologies, culture, and leadership styles are generated.

²⁸⁵ Bosco, 321.

One only has to look at Cindy's initial blog post on the *Daily Kos* on August 4, 2005 to see that the Camp was already expanding into a network before Cindy "sat down" on August 6, 2005. Cindy writes to her "friends and supporters" inviting others to join GSFP, VFP, MFSO, IVAW, Code Pink, and Crawford Peace House in going to "show George Bush that we mean business." Although the demonstration was framed as an already-planned action by a coalition of organizations, the responses in the comments section indicate the network of blogging others continued planning for what could possibly be a long stay at Crawford. One commenter asked whether a permanent vigil should be staged either at Crawford or the White House following many comments criticizing Bush for taking such a long vacation. At another point, Cindy herself joked in response to commenters who worried about her getting arrested: she could certainly stay in Crawford for the month of August if jailed. In another exchange, people suggested what Cindy should bring to stay hydrated in the Texas sun. Others, like a self-identified parent, "cosette," offered to attend at a later date, stating, "If there is a semi-permanent encampment outside his [Bush's] faux ranch, I can come up Sunday or beyond." Cindy responded to this statement by saying: "I PLAN ON CAMPING THERE UNTIL HE ANSWERS ME OR I GET ARRESTED...I HAVE THE ENTIRE MONTH OF AUGUST OFF...NO SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS...I WIL STAY THERE WITH HIM...DO YOU THINK I CAN USE THE POOL???"²⁸⁶ At least from the start, Camp Casey and its organization was not limited to just member groups, but others felt ownership enough to plan to join in their own ways.

²⁸⁶ "Daily Kos" (Caps hers).

As this first blog entry shows, people were responding to what they believed would be a single-day demonstration at Bush's ranch, yet they were able to pull together resources (with the demonstration only a couple of days away) through reading and responding to one another on the blog. On Cindy's initial blog post, 243 comments were made ranging from 1) general support and encouragement, 2) statements of actions to be taken such as being at the event or sending supplies, 3) debate on tactics especially in regards to the possibility of arrest, media contacts, and what to have on signs, 4) criticism of Bush or debate on the war issue, and 5) personal testimonies of involvement in the movement or as a parent of a soldier. Cindy responded to the thread during the course of the day on August 4th, and the final comment on this blog post was made on August 7th—offering to help set up another blog forum specific for Cindy to document the days at the camp.²⁸⁷ Unlike a centralized effort, there was no one person coordinating or directing the action or response on the blog, and all could contribute and participate on their own terms. In many cases, commenters pointed Cindy towards different media contacts and gave phone numbers of who they suggested she should contact. Other commenters not only pointed but took action themselves to spread the word: forwarding Cindy's blog post to major media outlets (one commenter specifically was contacting Keith Olberman), to personal networks, and to other blogs. "Alohaleezy" noted this blog should get cross-posted over at *Booman Tribune* where Cindy apparently had 2000 supporters, "many of which never come to dkos."²⁸⁸ Others pointed Cindy to local newspapers that would be friendly to her cause, while others

²⁸⁷ Cindy did blog daily from the camp through her Daily Kos diaries including pictures taken at different parts and events at the camp throughout August.

²⁸⁸ *Booman Tribune* is another blog community that labels itself as a "progressive community." <http://www.boomantribune.com/>

included information about advertisement costs, asking other “kossians” to help buy an ad. Another commenter who identified herself as a “Gold Star Sister” indicated both that she had passed on the word to her own lists and media contacts as well as suggested those who could not go to Crawford should light a candle on Saturday morning and keep it lit all day. Others agreed to the idea of a vigil and committed to organizing their own vigils locally. During August, other candle light vigils were organized later in the month by MoveOn.org who had over 50,000 RSVPs for the vigil on August 18. Commenters asked where to send money if it was needed, while others were interested in knowing what the Crawford Peace House was and how to contact them. One of the final comments on this post from “guyute16” begins simply by stating, “Offline civil disobedience...What we sadly lack in this day and age” to show support for Cindy “stick[ing] it to the man.” Although some of the logistics of the camp were taken over by the Crawford Peace House, Jodi Evans, and other members of CODEPINK including coordinating Cindy’s media appearances, from the start, Camp Casey was never closed off or an organization limited to a core few individuals. Whereas many doubt cyberactivism translates into action in the real world, the comments on Cindy’s blog were not just “mere rhetoric” but were indeed statements of support that translated to action whether in real donations or in sharing and spreading the word.

Strength and power in a network is additive, so distributed networks *want* inclusive protocols. “Dead links” are the death of networks, and there were seemingly no “dead” links where anyone who wanted to contact media or contribute was told they could not. Camp Casey allowed individuals to be included in ways centralized campaigns do not allow. Similarly, Greenham Common continued over a 20 year

period because it allowed different women from all over participate in their own ways under the same ethic. Greenham woman, Carol Addington, saw this as a strength because “If you’ve got strategies all the time, whoever’s got ideas won’t put them in because they won’t think they’re valued.”²⁸⁹ Similarly, Roseneil shows the flexibility in common values allowed Greenham to “accommodate different *reasons* for being there and different *ways* of being there.”²⁹⁰ When it came to the “common” living at Camp Casey, the ability for anyone to contribute allowed the camp to transform from a chair in a ditch to a fully operational facility. “Camp Casey,” meant that everyone from CODEPINKers, military mothers, soldiers, conspiracy theorists, celebrities, and ordinary citizens were all welcome to contribute to building the camp.

Allowing individuals to contribute in their own ways (without first getting clearance from Cindy or another authority) emphasizes the power of a coordinated distributed network as well as demonstrates the ethic of care underwriting the camp. As Tronto contends, care is a practice; care puts moral ideas into action, which requires individuals being attentive to the needs of others and feeling responsible to act.²⁹¹ In the case of Camp Casey, the need was maintaining a place for visitors and campers to stay, be fed, and use the space as needed—with everyone sharing the resources and responses from supporters nationwide. By the end of the first week, over 700 visitors came to the camp. By Cindy’s account, over 15,000 people visited the camp during the month of August including celebrities Viggo Mortensen, Joan Baez, and Martin Sheen. Visitors partook in daily demonstrations, whether bringing signs or helping with more

²⁸⁹ Quoted in Sasha Roseneil, *Common Women, Uncommon Practices: The Queer Feminisms of Greenham*, (New York: Cassell, 2000), 123.

²⁹⁰ Roseneil, *Common Women*, 126.

²⁹¹ Tronto, *Moral Boundaries*.

permanent displays. An “Arlington West” display of crosses to remember the dead of the Iraq War was erected at the camp, and when non-supporters would run over or steal crosses, crosses were replaced by whoever was at the camp. Others volunteered in town at the Crawford Peace House, which also handled the various donations coming in (an estimated \$25,000 a day), as well as the place for visitors to be fed by volunteer caterers.²⁹²

Based on descriptions of the camp, visitors and others *found* things to do to meet the needs of the camp. Soldiers from Fort Hood, where Casey trained, donated tarps and other supplies. On day nine, a pro-war neighbor fired his rifle “shooting at doves,” and on day 11, sheriffs met to consider closing the land around Prairie Chapel Road (where the original camp was) because it was “discovered” that it was not public land. In response, Fred Mattlage, a cousin of the rifle wielding neighbor, donated land for Camp Casey II—land closer to Bush’s ranch itself.²⁹³ At the new site, more permanent tents were erected, including an infirmary, chapel, kitchen, meeting tent, and porta-potties. Another large meeting tent was donated, apparently having been used at a Bush fundraiser and just relocated to Camp Casey. In total, the physical camp space coming together and all the other “little miracles” of the camp manifested because individuals were compelled to help and attended to whatever needed to be done. As Galloway describes, nodes in the distributed network work through a logic of “next jumps”—they know not what the final destination is, but work to move to the next step. Camp Casey

²⁹² See Bumiller, “Tale of 2 Summer Camps.” Bumiller notes that Ann Spicer was in charge of meals and was making three meals a day for over 1000.

²⁹³ Both Greenham Common and Seneca Women’s Peace Camps had legally obtained land to ensure they would not be completely evicted. Yoko Ono was a main contributor in the land purchase for Greenham Common in 1987 (see Laware). Camp Casey II was close to a Secret Service checkpoint less than a mile from Bush’s ranch.

was many individuals making their next jump to contribute to the developing network, not knowing how long the camp would last or what the next campaign or strategy might be.

Cultural events or other free spaces are also places for newcomers to a movement to learn the protocols and issues of the movement itself. Like Greenham Common Peace Camp, those who came to Camp Casey received guidance from watching how the Camp was already being coordinated. For example, blogger Amanda Marcotte joked that if you did not know better, you might assume Camp Casey was just another local PTA group getting ready for high school dance with the majority of campers “middle-aged women in shorts with sensible shoes and sensible hats.”²⁹⁴ Things came together easily with the everyday organizing experience of PTA moms, and like Greenham, the power of the camp came from understanding this was an action that, even without activist experience, one could participate in.²⁹⁵ Thus, even though different groups came to Camp Casey, and brought with them their own particular anti-Bush message, by Cindy’s account, tensions between those groups were worked out without much disruption to the camp. The potential for collective power existed at Camp Casey, and the success of this prolonged demonstration points to the strength of distributed organizing.

Unlike a campaign messages, a movement grounded in protocols of care draws in participants through participation. Just as changes to one’s favorite website forces

²⁹⁴ Marcotte.

²⁹⁵ One Greeham Woman (quoted in Cook and Kirk, 29) stated she participated in the camp without having other political experience: “But one day I had a letter from a woman in the peace camp telling of the threat of eviction that the women here faced. What was needed was a strong physical presence of women and it was something I could do...I had never been to a peace camp before...But the warmth and love that I was greeted with, the total absence of suspicion, was a fantastic feeling and I really felt that I’d made the right decision.”

one to adopt new ways of navigating that website, protocols similarly convince users to adopt new ways of being through participation. Protocols also do not discriminate ideologically. Another reason Camp Casey was disruptive is because it operated under norms that could not be rationally argued against. On one level, the Camp was a vigil and support for Iraq soldiers, so even anti-Cindy individuals were compelled to make themselves part, as they identified with what this community symbolized. On day eight, Cindy notes she ended up drinking beer with a Bush supporter who also lost a son in the war, and on day 25, Camp Casey and counterprotesters held a joint candle vigil for all fallen soldiers. Although individuals might differ on their ideological positions or support for the war, all could adopt care for one another to the extent of participating in a vigil or drinking beer together. Unlike a single message campaign, the camp allowed all these ideas to co-exist and became a place to bring the various perspectives of the war to the forefront of public consciousness. As Cindy states, “This is what Camp Casey does for us: it transforms bitter anger into righteous, productive anger. It turns hate into love...It brings people together who would normally not ever meet and makes them lifelong soul-friends.”²⁹⁶ Individuals from all sides of the issue came to try out a new system, and chose to be transformed.

At the same time, not everyone opposed to the Camp or Cindy were as quick to include themselves to the Camp Casey ethic nor recognized the Camp as a *whole new system*. Counterprotests (smaller in number than Camp Casey) formed by the end of the first week, with other Gold Star mothers and Move Forward America specifically organizing the “You Do Not Speak For Me, Cindy” campaign. Interestingly, opposition

²⁹⁶ “Goodbye to Crawford, But Not to Camp Casey” in *Not One More Mother’s Child*, 147.

here is framed as *against Cindy* indicating they were more opposed to Cindy representing “a movement” as a central figure instead of opposing what Camp Casey stood for. These mothers did not (could not) understand Camp Casey other than through campaign logics. Similarly, others questioned the Camp as a tactic. Those who supported the war still valued the camp as bringing attention to the war, and even supported obtaining truth from the president. However, those like Raymond Hull, a father whose son also died in the war, sympathized with Cindy but also recognized blocking traffic to Bush’s ranch would not bring back their sons. At the same time, he conceded, “She might bring people to an awareness as to what is going on and the fact that the Bush Administration only talks to anyone on their own terms.”²⁹⁷ Interestingly, these statements suggest awareness that the Camp was something *more* than Cindy, yet there was an unwillingness to adopt or try out a new way of understanding movements.

Regardless of the counter-protest non-adopters, there were many who linked to the Camp Casey network. Each new individual that came or donated to the camp became part of the Camp Casey distributed network—providing new links or ways that others would hear or participate in the Camp. The press garnered from the first day at the camp and continued press attracted more individuals to the camp who had not otherwise heard about Cindy’s groups or been involved directly in other peace organizations.²⁹⁸ Rallies in Crawford brought in more individuals for what Cindy describes as her *Field of Dreams* moments where cars would caravan from Crawford to

²⁹⁷ Abby Goodnough, “In War Debate, Parents of Fallen Are United Only in Grief,” *New York Times* (28 Aug. 2005): 1-1.

²⁹⁸ Couldry also indicates that mass media was important for people finding out about Greenham Common.

Camp Casey.²⁹⁹ Those who came to the camp or participated through donations or letters of support were building a community—relationships—not just part of an organizational action. When Matlage donated the land for Camp Casey II, he received letters from all over thanking him. Like Greenham Common building their own network through letters (before the age of blogs), messages conveyed by individuals speaking for themselves—in this case Cindy and others working on the camp—are “immediately inspiring as they are written by individual women who, if you have been to Greenham, you will probably have met.”³⁰⁰ *People* have a stake in this network, not mediated by organizations, issues, or campaigns.

The “community” of Camp Casey did not fully get left behind in Crawford, however. Those who heard about or came to Camp Casey went on to participate in peace movement activities—either during the month of August or leading up to the September 24, 2005 demonstration in Washington DC following Cindy’s speaking tour post-Camp Casey. Cindy stated she met many individuals who participated in the September 24 demonstration (their first ever) because of Camp Casey. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, many of the supplies and funds collected at Camp Casey went to help Katrina victims, including aiding those directly connected to the camp. Gerry Fonseca, Cindy’s “security” at the camp, lost everything in Katrina, but benefited from aid collected *before* and shortly after Katrina hit.³⁰¹ Through the connections developed

²⁹⁹ “Day Eight: Hope is Blossoming,” in *Not One More Mother’s Child*.

³⁰⁰ Carol Stibbs, a Cleveland Greenham supporter who received Greenham newsletters, quoted in Jolly, 123.

³⁰¹ Cindy notes that, with the help of Michael Moore, the Camp Casey network raised over \$500,000 in aid for Katrina (“Autobiography”).

at and through Camp Casey, the anti-war *community* was built, and this community enabled the network to come together outside of Crawford as well.

This is not to say organizing or focusing movement strategies towards distributed network forms is entirely unproblematic. Criticisms of the Camp focused on the plurality of messages, organizations, and groups using the space for their own ends, so the message of “Casey” and the soldiers was obscured. With the Crawford Peace House gathering “every anti-Bush movement under the sun,”³⁰² a coherent message of what the camp was all about was lost. Further, just as ideologically opposed groups could find ways to co-exist at the camp, it also opened up the possibility for other tensions. With CODEPINK camped alongside members of MFSO and other Gold Star families, some challenged Cindy to remove the pink “Camp Casey” signs and rename the camp “Camp Gold Star.” Others pushed to only have MFSO and GSFP members at the camp, suggesting that mothers should be the most visible campers. More problematic were the mother and brother team (another Gold Star mother Cindy was friends with) who were paid to come to Camp Casey to help with press to uphold a campaign strategy to use Cindy and other Gold Star mothers as spokespersons. “Ma/Bro,” as Cindy calls them in her autobiography (not even giving them names in the book), tried to impose new rules and order at Camp Casey when Cindy was away taking care of her ailing mother in California, which turned some of the initial Camp Casey supporters away who did not like the “heavy-handed, almost dictatorial tactics”³⁰³ at the Camp. Upon Cindy’s return to the camp she worked to keep Camp Casey as much of a

³⁰² Matt Taibbi, “Bush vs. the Mother,” *Rolling Stone* (8 Sept. 2005): 61. Taibbi specifically mentions a sign that read “Free the Cuban 5” and specifically criticizes the anti-war movement for being too inclusive of all variations on the “anti-Bush” theme.

³⁰³ “Autobiography,” 166.

people's movement as possible—to the dismay of “Ma/Bro.” This shows that without a clear “leader” and protocols as the only controlling force, individuals may attempt to shift or transform network controls. “Ma/Bro” and others wanted to centralize Camp Casey into a clear message campaign, while others fought to maintain the distributed organization form. Distributed networks are controlled by protocols, so the network ceases to function (or function well) through recoding or through attempts to change form. When we are used to operating old systems (i.e. movement campaigns) it sometime is hard to learn or adopt the protocols of a new system. However, new systems have power. Creating new systems also confronts other, State sponsored systems, delegitimizing the “common sense” practices that, in this case, perpetuate war. The disruption of a politics of the act is to show another order is possible, and works just as well (if not better).

Distributed network politics and forming spaces such as Camp Casey are also the means to create meaningful change and sustain movements. Again, campaigns end when the message changes, when demands are met, or when the message fails—but protocols, norms, and ethics are more sustainable as long as their practice and use continues. Although a movement may not be “active” in terms of a specific campaign or action, a movement can survive over time through keeping connections between individuals, groups, and events “live,” allowing the movement to come together when it is needed. Camp Casey could come together for demonstrations after Katrina, and holds the possibility to be made “live” again.

However, it takes communication and attention to communication to maintain the network. Roseneil underscores the immaterial network connecting “Greenham

Women” was a source of strength for the movement, but also something that needed to be maintained. As she states, “The invisibility of these connections to outsiders was protective; it made the Greenham network hard to locate and almost impossible for its enemies to infiltrate. And like a spider’s web, the building of the network was never finished; it was continuously in creation, never static.”³⁰⁴ Sarah Hopkins and Barbara Harford further explain that, just like maintaining fires and dishwashing, letter writing was a chore of the camp for any woman who wanted to take up that role at Greenham. Letters, in fact, were displayed in communal spaces of the camp on notice boards and eventually, an office developed with typewriters and stationary to complete the task of answering mail.³⁰⁵ Bringing together many women for a particular action at Greenham Common Airforce Base became as easy as sending out a letter.³⁰⁶ Without communication reinforcing protocols (such as campers talking to visiting women at Greenham) or communication purposed to connect others (to let all parts of the network know it still exists), the network ceases to be. Cindy and other bloggers, like Greenham letter writers, continued to build connections and webs by making the camp “live.” Cindy’s question of “what noble cause” ignited movement-building communication, with the continued movement-building discussion occurring while she was at the camp.

Lastly, communication to maintain the network and the protocols/ethics controlling it is important because other competing systems will work to shift power or attack the network itself. Perhaps because the whole Camp Casey network was

³⁰⁴ Roseneil, *Common Women*, 69.

³⁰⁵ Barbara Harford and Sarah Hopkins, *Greenham Common: Women at the Wire* (London: The Women’s Press, 1984), 23.

³⁰⁶ For example, the Embrace the Base action on December 12, 1982 brought over 30,000 women to Greenham each bringing symbols of life to decorate the perimeter fence that they encircled. The invitation to this event was done by chain letter, with each women forwarding on the letter to those in their personal networks.

invisible—Cindy as the only visible face—it was Cindy attacked for her message, character, and actions. To characterize the movement as being organized *centrally* by Cindy also meant that undermining and removing *her* would delegitimized the *movement* (and consequently the ethic upon which it was built). The network of the Drudge Report, Rush Limbaugh Show, Bill O’Reilly and even other MSM channels—even Anderson Cooper—questioned the genuineness of her grief, how good of a mother she was, “had a field day” when her divorce papers were leaked online, and dug up all of her previous interviews and speeches to undermine her character. Rush Limbaugh went to the extreme to suggest Cindy’s whole story was a fabrication.³⁰⁷ As much as Cindy was the “perfect” spokesperson for the movement, she also became the only target. Again, the movement was not *just* about Cindy, and even if one member is attacked, the movement can continue on by continuing practicing the protocols of the system they built.

Cindy and Camp Casey certainly did not end after August 2005. The attacks on Cindy’s character did not end after she no longer was at Bush’s doorstep. In fact, in MSM, Cindy still is a “face” of the movement and she metonymically stands in for the “anti-war movement” when issues of the war come up. In the next chapter, I will explore more of the war between the networks of those defined on the “right” and those loosely constituting the newest “left.” Cindy has continued as a face of the movement in part because she continues to speak—with printed collections of her blogs and her own autobiography taking the place of her physically camping. The system and ethic of

³⁰⁷ Cindy details some of the attacks in her autobiography and her blog posts, Arianna Huffington catalogued the attacks in “It Takes a Village to Smear Cindy Sheehan” *Huffington Post*, 12 August 2005, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/it-takes-a-village-to-sme_b_5557.html> (18 March 2009).

Camp Casey now is carried into the circulation of her printed works. The next chapter analyzes Cindy's autobiography and how it attempts to repair the movement network attacked by Right-Wing networks. The challenge for the peace movement, however, is to remember that Camp Casey was not Cindy's work alone, and that all must contribute to making the network "live" and active.

I CAN'T SAY I WAS RIGHT OR WRONG, THOUGH. I NEVER WANTED TO WALK IN THE UGLY SHOES THAT WERE COBBLED FOR ME BY GEORGE BUSH AND THE WAR MACHINE. BUT I KNEW I HAD TO WALK IN THEM MY WAY.³⁰⁸

IN WRITING THEIR LIVES, ACTIVISTS SEEK TO DOCUMENT THEIR EXPERIENCES, TO CORRECT MISINFORMATION, TO EDUCATE THEIR READERS, AND TO ENCOURAGE THE CONTINUATION OF STRUGGLE.³⁰⁹

*IF, AS THE TRUISM GOES, IT TAKES NETWORKS TO FIGHT NETWORKS, THEN IT ALSO TAKES NETWORKS TO UNDERSTAND NETWORKS, AS WELL.*³¹⁰

Unmaking Movements through Netwar; Rebuilding Movements through Autobiography

Cindy's autobiography, *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey Through Heartache to Activism*, is a curious read. Cindy writes the autobiography shortly after the end of Camp Casey, and frames her work in the peace movement as inspired by her son; she is compelled to act as a mother to protect all children by ending the Iraq War. However, the narrative is not just about Cindy or a retrospective about her own life, rather, *her* story begins with Casey's birth and she tells as much about Casey's life as her own. Her autobiography is not written fully in the past tense because she chooses to tell what she is currently feeling and doing. Some of the text is written to prompt future action, suggesting what we all must do to end the war and prevent future wars. Further, Cindy chooses to weave political critique in the vein of her blogging alongside her narrative, continuing to expose the "dirty politics" of the Bush Administration. She addresses a "we" meant to continue her fight to impeach "BushCo," and explicitly calls for a

³⁰⁸ Cindy Sheehan, *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey Through Heartache to Activism* (New York: Atria Books, 2006), 131. Hereafter, "Autobiography."

³⁰⁹ Margo V. Perkins, *Autobiography as Activism: Three Black Women of the Sixties* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2000), 70.

³¹⁰ Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 100. Hereafter, "Exploit."

continued “struggle for peace and justice for the world and for our children.”³¹¹ Unlike other autobiographies, Cindy tells her story less as a celebration of her life, and more as a justification for her choices and actions, sometimes explicitly referencing the “right-wing conspiracy” aiming to undermine her motives. Thus, Cindy’s autobiography is part herstory, part biography of Casey, part defense, and part manifesto. In total, Cindy’s autobiography follows a tradition of women autobiographers using the form as an extension of activism; the private story made public for political ends.

Moreover, the timing of Cindy’s autobiography explains the pastiche of elements within it, especially when read against the backdrop of media and right-wing attacks during and after Camp Casey. Throughout the book, Cindy breaks from the narrative to comment on the latest Bush policy or latest personal attack, self-aware of these breaks—“Anyway, where was I”—before she picks up the narrative again.³¹² Cindy’s autobiography, then, is not merely a retelling of her life, but rather is an attempt to continue fighting and “coding” for a movement under attack. As argued in the previous chapter, Camp Casey developed from Cindy’s question of “what noble cause?” This question spurred the coming together of the peace movement network, recognized by Camp Casey participants as aiding a grieving mother, but became more the recognition of care for all—especially in the face of a sovereign who forgot his obligations to the public fighting his war. The question coded and defined the protocols of the Camp Casey network. The Right/MSM confronted the new protocol by creating

³¹¹ “Autobiography,” 239.

³¹² For example, she breaks to acknowledge and include text from Congressperson Jack Kingston’s (R-Ga) blog (along with her response to him) referencing a closed hearing of the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee about the “meaning of anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan” where Kingston called Cindy a “nutcase” (“Autobiography,” 99-106). I come back to this example later in the chapter.

suspicion of Cindy, her motives, and care itself. The attacks of the Right on Cindy are a literal means to show the public the “code” of the movement does not work or is not as desirable as once thought. The autobiography becomes a means to protect and promote the movement underwritten by care; the autobiography is a means for Cindy to repair damage done by Right-wing exploits to the peace network and to also leave code for the network’s future.

The attacks on Cindy’s character occurring during and after Camp Casey further show the importance of understanding “code” and control protocols. If we follow Galloway’s and Thacker’s lead, resistance is not merely to disturb systems as they are, but is also to write new code—build new systems. Building a network takes code; protecting and maintaining a network takes protecting and fixing that code. As Galloway and Thacker argue, “when all is information, the forging of objects is not longer most important. Instead, sources, essences, recipes, and instruction sets are madly sought after and protected.”³¹³ Keeping the code secret or protected (remaining hidden in a world where everything becomes public online) is another key to resistance. Although a movement needs to disseminate its message and practices to compel others to join the network, it also has to take care to hide information that could be use by opposing networks or State to quell or destroy the network. Just as movements look for holes in dominant system code, dominant systems do likewise. Thus, women activist autobiographers use their personal narratives strategically to expose and leave a record of the movement while at the same time blurring the line of fact and fiction through how they include or exclude details of their lives. Understood as part of networked

³¹³ “Exploit,” 135.

resistance, activist autobiographies are created for, and eternally engage in, a struggle to keep movements alive and to fight against dominant (State) forces working to break movement networks.

This chapter is to expand on Galloway's and Thacker's use of "netwar" to go beyond recognizing that today's possibilities for resistance are defined by networks versus networks to also explore network repair. Following women's autobiographical practices, I recognize the need for networks to repair or fix their system or code the same as when a computer becomes infected with a virus. To view a movement as a "virus" against dominant/State systems might seem a bold comparison, but the actions of States against movements suggests otherwise. For many marginalized groups, the act of organizing at all (regardless of the cause) is a disruption to norms and is reason for dominant others (or the State) to preemptively attack or quell the movement. Censorship of publications, deportation and arrest of activists, or public smear campaigns sometimes in the form of red-baiting have all been used to remove, quarantine, or "fix" exploits of activists past. Thus, the same computer-virus logics apply for movements to defend, repair, or attack their opposition as well. The way networks fight networks is to work to destroy or change code, but like any army, a network will have need for rehabilitation and repair after battle to continue in the war.

The autobiographical form allows for a powerful public forum for movement activists, enabling action in various "netwars." As many autobiographies usually become printed books, arguably, the autobiography becomes the "source code" or stable narrative. With the legitimacy given to print (even in today's electronic culture), the

autobiography is a means to convey the “truth” of a movement.³¹⁴ Regardless of hearsay or rumors circulating in the ever-changing internet landscape, the authoritative voice of the printed word can discredit information found elsewhere. The form allows (as with other activist, political, or manifesto autobiographies³¹⁵), an opportunity for activists to correct representation in mainstream media, rebuild the movement in the present, and (hopefully) inspire others to continue movement work into the future. In this chapter, I show how women have used autobiographies politically, expose the actual netwar against Cindy by the Right, and demonstrate how Cindy’s autobiography can be read both as means of network repair as well as manifesto. Importantly, I call attention to the importance and political resistance possible with autobiographies and assert their use and study for movement participants and scholars. I also aim to uncover some of the Right’s network currently active in attacking progressive causes, so the Left can start fighting back as a network itself.

The “Possible” of Autobiographical Practices

The autobiography is an activist’s tool: reaching diverse audiences, shaping public discourse and memory, or constituting audiences to continue the struggle. Autobiographies are an extension of activist work,³¹⁶ and work to educate broader audiences about the movement as well as inspiring continued or new commitment to the cause. Autobiographies of activist leaders have punctuated movement histories to the

³¹⁴ Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth Century America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990). Warner shows the political significance of print as it developed in America, but I would argue the norm of the legitimacy of print is still imbedded in our culture.

³¹⁵ Sidonie Smith, *Subjectivity, Identity, and the Body: Women’s Autobiographical Practices in the 20th Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993). Hereafter, “Autobiographical Manifesto.”

³¹⁶ See Martha (Solomon) Watson, *Lives of Their Own: Rhetorical Dimensions in Autobiographies of Women Activists* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999) and also Perkins.

point that an activist autobiography is considered its own genre,³¹⁷ with autobiography offering the movement network continued life through a permanent, printed record. The activist autobiography can persuade the uncommitted or opposed individual, can circulate movement ideology to global audiences, or can allow marginalized and excluded voices entry into dominant publics. Importantly, the autobiography allows its author space to reflect and reconcile experience against dominant historical accounts as well as the ability to correct dominant narratives. Women autobiographers have used and played with autobiographical generic conventions as political acts, but the act of writing itself can also be seen as political with women speaking through an otherwise masculine genre. This section outlines the political possibilities and uses of autobiography for women activists, and shows how Cindy's autobiography fits within the particular category of autobiographical manifesto. Although there is debate among scholars on how one should write their life story for political ends, there is no debate on the importance, especially for women activists, to record and legitimate their experiences.

Autobiographies, by definition, record one's life, and can be understood as a historical account. Smith and Watson³¹⁸ outline the tension inherent for women writing their lives *as history* as dominant historical narratives have been predominantly written by and about male figures and "public" accomplishments. Analyses of women's autobiographies recognize women had to come to the self-revelation that women's lives were *worth* writing about in order for them to engage in the otherwise masculine

³¹⁷ Works by Perkins and Solomon Watson are premised on this.

³¹⁸ See Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, "Introduction: Situating Subjectivity in Women's Autobiographical Practices," in *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader*, eds. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

practice of writing history.³¹⁹ Even activists who were public figures, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Emma Goldman, wrote at the urging of other movement leaders in part to preserve herstory and in part to further their participation in the movement.³²⁰ Some 19th century women autobiographers struggled to frame their private lives publicly, and were compelled to represent their lives more modestly, following traditional feminine norms. Writing feminized autobiographies, women resisted creating self-narratives under masculine characteristics of demonstrating intellectual curiosity, daring, or boasting about individual accomplishment³²¹ assuming their experiences did not count the same as male accomplishments. Instead, women's autobiographies tend to privilege aspects of daily (private) life, and emphasize collective identity, interdependence, and friendships.³²² With the advancements of the women's movement, women activists have become less concerned with navigating Victorian constraints of feminine values, but still navigate telling their narratives on in the space between public and private.

Gender conventions allow women's autobiographies to, perhaps better, record movement histories. Women tend to define themselves in relation to others, so the

³¹⁹ Smith and Watson argue (following post-colonial critiques of autobiographies) the autobiographical form—the telling of an individualized “I”’s life—is a Western (white, male, rational, etc.) construct, therefore autobiographies written by any marginalized Other is its own political act. This also points to, as other scholars following Smith and Watson support, the importance of *women* writers who were reluctant to engage in this otherwise masculine practice (but still took on a masculine or universal subject position in constructing their narratives) or who did so through feminine strategies and content, upsetting Enlightenment standards of rationality to underscore the authority of experience or personalizing the political.

³²⁰ See Solomon Watson.

³²¹ Lisa Shawn Hogan, “The Politics of Feminist Autobiography: Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s *Eighty Years and More* as Ideological Manifesto,” *Women’s Studies* 38, no. 1 (2009): 1-22.

³²² However, Hogan argues that Cady Stanton had a more androgynous style in her writing, following feminine chronology (including recollections of childhood, marriage, and her children) but showing more masculine traits by focusing on her public accomplishments. Playing within the inherent tension of telling one’s private life through the public form of the autobiography, Cady Stanton was also able to present political critique softened by her personal stories.

autobiography can be read to “see” the movement network—just as I have done with Cindy’s autobiography to understand the peace movement network. Cindy’s autobiography can be used as a catalog of all the individuals and organizations of her peace movement network, and she also mentions those in oppositional networks whether referring to them by name or pseudonym. The autobiography becomes a means for the author to “accurately” maintain records of the movement otherwise scattered or dispersed in various media accounts or personal records. At the same time, the author may choose to keep parts of the movement network anonymous or play with the chronology of events to consciously protect fellow activists. For example, Perkin’s analysis of the Black Power Movement’s Assata Shakur shows how Shakur purposefully leaves out details of some members in her autobiography. Shakur wrote her autobiography in the midst of movement activity when many activists were either incarcerated or surveilled by government agencies, thus exposing too much information could open up the movement to more attack. At the same time, it was important for Shakur to spread movement ideologies to wider publics to gain support for the cause. Through autobiography, the private life of an activist is allowed to circulate through public economies of readers; when an activist is not allowed herself from speaking in public (perhaps due to incarceration), the circulation of a printed book can continue the activist’s work.³²³ As Perkins argues, in a logocentric society, the act of writing itself lends legitimacy to voices otherwise excluded and particularly legitimizes the experience of the author. The written record itself reclaims a space in the public for those movements and activists otherwise written off, ignored, or misunderstood.

³²³ The economy of books has also allowed some activists to fund their work. Emma Goldman in part wrote her autobiography to gain entry back into the United States while generating income for herself.

In writing history through the autobiography, activist authors can create new narratives and subject positions for themselves and readers. The autobiography allows authors to “negotiate the politics of subjectivity through generic expectations and contradictions,”³²⁴ while at the same time indicating the conditions for agency in particular historical contexts. Smith argues, pointing to de Certeau, the autobiography is a tactic of the weak, where the subject can seize the opportunity to adjust or confront social norms.³²⁵ As autobiographies are premised on, and privilege, experience, anyone can record her life and do so in the ways she sees fit. Women writers gain agency to create their own identity and subjectivity—many times to contest dominant narratives or to “create one’s *own* understanding of self, as opposed to accepting an external construction of self, and in turn offer that understanding to others.”³²⁶ As White shows, dominant publics are resistant to even *hear* the story of marginalized others, or quickly writes off those experiences when they do not match up with rational (masculine) discourses. Thus, presenting the possibility of another narrative affirms one’s own experience and allows other readers the possibility of recognizing and affirming their own as well. As a subject that understands itself as one with others, women’s autobiographies can act as a voice for the voiceless, using the opportunity of writing to represent those who otherwise do not have public audience, and represents the author as part of those groups and movements she identifies with. Justification and legitimacy of one’s experience is underwritten and affirmed through the narratives and participation

³²⁴ Smith and Watson, 23.

³²⁵ Sidonie Smith, “Performativity, Autobiographical Practice, Resistance,” in *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader*, eds. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

³²⁶ Leah White, “Narratives of Mental Illness: The ‘Autobiographical Manifestos’ of Kate Millett, Susanna Kaysen, and Kay Redfield Jamison,” *Women and Language* 31, no. 1 (2008): 4.

of others represented in the text.³²⁷ Finally, the autobiographical narrative constructed constitutes “the movement” and can connect others through participation in the text, providing a subject position with agency that can also be manifested in society.³²⁸

The author acts politically by creating a new subject position or narrative much like Camp Casey created a new system and network, but the autobiography can also work to exploit dominant protocols already in place. As Smith outlines, there are three main strategies autobiographies present to women authors: she can mime the universal subject of man, she can disrupt ideals of rationalism and unitary self through a politics of fragmentation, or she proclaims experience both through what one is and what one is not.³²⁹ These modes act as an exploit in using the tools of the dominant to find one’s own space while exposing and assuming power for the author. First, women writing *as if* one is the universal subject conveys authority, puts one in equal position with dominant others, and psychologically empowers the author. Secondly and developed further by Smith and Watson, women may write the story of their lives against conventions of linearity, writing in disconnected or fragmented patterns. Women might, as Cindy does in her autobiography, break from narrative to insert poems, letters, or other tangential devices. Showing one’s identity as fragmented underscores the various connections and affiliations one has, as well as pointing to the contradictions, roles, or

³²⁷ In particular, Perkins shows that Angela Davis wrote her own autobiography as a political autobiography in which the goals outlined here were intentionally part. Davis further explains that her story has legitimacy at all because of the struggle she is apart of (7).

³²⁸ This is similar to counterpublic theory (see Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, (New York: Zone Books, 2002)), where groups are constituted in whom the text addresses as well as participation in reading and circulating the text. Further, Smith shows with autobiographical manifestos, the rhetorical grounds of appeal are in being a member of a group—the autobiography constructs a space of authority and legitimates appeals because it is perceived to come from a collective.

³²⁹ “Autobiographical Manifesto.”

tensions an individual lives through.³³⁰ Finally, as experience becomes the authority to truth, sharing one's experiences becomes a means to also uncover material conditions and oppressions that shape and contribute to one's understanding of the self. Again, autobiography lends itself to resistive practices because it becomes a platform to define, critique, and create relationships between individuals and between groups and dominant societal structures. Importantly, autobiographical writing is a practice "that reveals itself within frameworks of power, ideology, and representation."³³¹ Although the autobiography presents itself as a reflection of one's life, it becomes foundational for movement ideology and critique.

For many activist autobiographers, writing the history of the movement while it is happening (as in Cindy's case) is both to record what has occurred, but also to inspire others to join in the continued struggle. By hearing the experiences of the author, readers might realize their own unvoiced aspirations, hear agendas for new/liberated subjectivities, or come to realize their own agency and potential to change material conditions. By providing the story for how one became an activist or developed a revolutionary consciousness, the activist provides a model for others to follow. Moreover, telling one's own journey to activism presents the possibility to expose more radical critique to otherwise unreceptive audiences. Like letters, radical ideologies—even espousing women's equal rights through suffrage leader autobiographies—became more palatable to oppositional audiences under the guise of the autobiographical

³³⁰ Smith ("Autobiographical Manifesto") argues a fragmented subject may hinder emancipatory objectives, valorizing instead the challenges and obstacles of a given subject. At the same time, a fragmented subject does reflect the experience of many women.

³³¹ Naida Zukic, "Webbing Sexual/Textual Agency in Autobiographical Narratives of Pleasure," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 28, no. 4 (2008): 397.

form.³³² At the same time, the activist has to be strategic in how “radical” they can present their lives, navigating the tension between inspiring supportive others while not alienating or fueling attack by oppositional others.

The use and assessment of activist autobiographies presents a tension among women’s autobiography scholars. Should an activist seek to persuade those not otherwise engaged in a movement more instrumentally, or should activist autobiographers strategically frame their lives (to the point of half-truths or lies) in order to present a new possibility for action? Solomon Watson argues activists should attempt to present their (potentially) unusual lives in ways that are believable to “ordinary” readers in the hopes that anyone could aspire to imitate the activist life. She faults Emma Goldman for presenting herself too fantastically—mythologizing her life—against what any woman of Goldman’s time could ever hope to aspire.³³³ Differently, Perkins argues activist autobiographers provide a critical education for all audiences, and autobiographers should constitute new audiences into the movement ideology. Extending this, Smith argues, “Autobiographical practices become occasions for restaging subjectivity, and autobiographical strategies become occasions for the staging of resistance.”³³⁴ Strategy of autobiography can go beyond merely omitting

³³² Hogan further combines the “activist” autobiography with Smith’s theory of manifesto autobiographies in her corrective reading (in relation to Solomon Watson’s analysis) of Cady Stanton’s autobiography. Instead of Solomon Watson’s assessment activists must create a persuasive and believable narrative according to Walter Fisher’s narrative paradigm, Hogan shows that the manifesto style is effective in promoting political ideals, and further argues against Solomon Watson’s assessment of Cady Stanton presenting herself first and foremost under traditional feminine values pointing to Cady Stanton’s androgynous style.

³³³ For example, Solomon Watson criticizes Goldman for promoting free love when many women (without access to birth control of any sort) could not practice free love in the same manner as the infertile Goldman could. At the same time, Solomon Watson begrudgingly admits Goldman’s narrative was more effective for a Second Wave audience.

³³⁴ “Autobiographical Manifestos,” 156-57.

information, to creating fictions. Again, unlike Solomon Watson, many autobiographical scholars allow these otherwise “non-fictional” accounts to be more creative, recognizing that any objective view of one’s life is really *subjective*. As Perkins further argues, the fictive lines of activist autobiography can be blurred, where the author create myths, “even as they set out to challenge old ones.”³³⁵ Whatever “lying” might occur in the text, it is to convey some larger truth or to be strategic towards the purpose of the narrative. Cindy’s autobiography follows Perkins’ conventions more, pushing further to what Smith has defined as an autobiographical manifesto.

As manifesto, the autobiography functions to confront the powerful, publicly announce issues and demands, and “inspire us to see beyond the constraints of the here and now to the idealized vision of a perfect future.”³³⁶ As Smith defines, autobiographical manifestos “position the subject in a potentially liberated future distanced from the constraining and oppressive identification inherent in the everyday practices of the *ancien régime*.”³³⁷ Writing an autobiography in this manner signals that the activist is impatient with traditional channels of politics and must assert and make demands.³³⁸ The autobiography is not written as a retrospective summation or justification for one’s life (as many male autobiographies are), but rather is written premised on future loss or motivated by the anxiety of dangers yet to come or danger

³³⁵ Perkins, 100.

³³⁶ “Autobiographical Manifestos, 163.

³³⁷ “Autobiographical Manifesto,” 163.

³³⁸ Smith (“Autobiographical Manifestos”) works from Janet Lyon’s work on manifestos, where Lyon shows that the manifesto genre participates symbolically in a given struggle (usually against a State, and representing/calling into being a given People), and that it specifically functions to circumvent parliamentary avenues that have excluded or oppressed a given group. See Janet Lyon, *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

presented if current conditions are not changed.³³⁹ In Cindy's case, she is writing in the midst of a continued Iraq War, where more deaths of soldiers are at stake if President Bush is not (in her view) impeached.

Smith outlines six characteristics of autobiographical manifestos, and Cindy's autobiography can be best understood under these conventions.³⁴⁰ First, the manifesto appropriates or contests sovereignty, in part challenging the universal subject constituted through sovereign power. Next, manifestos brings to light (makes manifest) experiences as well as "announces publicly" those experiences upsetting the private/public dichotomy. Fourth, manifestos perform publicly, displaying a new subjectivity. Fifth, the manifesto is written for and speaks as a group where group identity becomes the grounds to appeal to a sovereign. Lastly, manifestos "speak to the future" creating active subjects positioned to act on the demands and issues brought to light in the manifesto. Cindy's combination of personal narrative, political critique—specifically targeted at Bush—and explicit call to action follows Smith's conditions for autobiographical manifesto.

Cindy's autobiography, as other manifestos, directly contests sovereign power during a period of oppression. Cindy is writing during arguably the height of the movement, written in the time post Camp Casey to April 2006 (roughly a six month period). The time encompassed within the text is literally two years (from the time of her son's death to completing the autobiography two years later). She confronts both Bush and the Right-wing conspiracy against her, with Bush directly blamed throughout the text for her son's death. As Lyon defines, "to write a manifesto is to participate

³³⁹ "Autobiographical Manifestos," 162.

³⁴⁰ "Autobiographical Manifestos."

symbolically in a history of struggle against dominant forces; it is to link one's voice to countless voices of previous revolutionary conflicts."³⁴¹ Thus, the act of writing one's autobiography as manifesto is to be consciously engaged in a conflict. We can infer Cindy's intent to demonstrate her participation in the movement by how she constructs her story against the foes of "BushCo" and Right-wingers. Although Cindy (herself white, heterosexual, and otherwise privileged to be supported as a professional activist) is not a typical marginalized voice, the marginalization of the peace movement and the attacks on Cindy's character do work to marginalize her. Through Cindy's narrative, she performs as an activist by providing political critique, and by demonstrating the attacks against her, she also argues through experience her marginality.

The most apparent marker of a manifesto, however, is that the author speaks as one of a group to the future the group aspires to. Lyon supports this point in showing the language of manifestos is declarative, makes demands, and is a "genre that gives the appearance of being at once word and deed, both threat and incipient action."³⁴²

Cindy's autobiography demonstrates the actions already being taken (by herself and others) and ends with a more explicit call to action where Cindy's activist voice describes what world is possible, and how the reader can get involved with organizations working for the cause of peace. As a manifesto, Cindy looks to the future noting in the final lines of the autobiography that the "story is just beginning."³⁴³

Following the lead of other activists, the central theme of the book is Cindy's story of how she became an activist, presented to inspire others to join the struggle. In

³⁴¹ Lyon, 4.

³⁴² Lyon, 13.

³⁴³ "Autobiography," 240.

motivating others to join the movement, Cindy explicitly confronts the criticism lobbied against her as well as situates herself within the 9/11 context—she accepts blame for her own inaction and hopes others will also work to wake from uncritical inaction. The autobiography emerges at a time where Cindy’s motives and personal integrity as a mother have been attacked in an effort to undermine the peace movement network, and the autobiography works to correct this representation as well and motivate a continuation of the struggle for peace. Historically, movements have been attacked, monitored, or quelled in an effort to maintain dominant protocols; Cindy’s autobiography presents us with another activist function: to repair and engage in a netwar.

Netwar: Cindy versus Right-Wing Networks

The general consensus after 9/11 was that “everything changed.” “Things changed” because a visible networked threat³⁴⁴ was successful in attacking the perceived sovereign superpower of the US on its own soil. As Galloway and Thacker describe, “netwars”³⁴⁵ are less about winning control of sovereign power centers, and are more about shifting power in the system. They emphasize, those who master the network form first, win. Al-Qaeda did not seize power in the US but did succeed at the network level—“generating a state of immanent preparedness”³⁴⁶ where security moms replaced the myth of the soccer mom³⁴⁷ and citizens became uncritical of the Bush Administration’s policies (both foreign and domestic) to keep America safe. In

³⁴⁴ See Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) for an analysis of al-Qaeda as a networked movement.

³⁴⁵ The concept of netwar comes from John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001).

³⁴⁶ “Exploit,” 92.

³⁴⁷ Susan Faludi, *The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America*, (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt and Company, 2007).

response to the 9/11 attacks, the US retaliated in networked fashion, but in large measure against itself, literally “circling the wagons” to create conditions where dissent was almost impossible, and where traditional values (including a retreat of feminism to become mothers and wives) reasserted their dominance. At the same time, the State asserted its sovereign power as it waged war against the networked terrorists—arguably unsuccessfully as combat in Afghanistan and Iraq rage on nearly a decade later. Even before the internet age, US/State institutions have been effective in finding and attempting to destroy networked threats to maintain public loyalty to State sponsored protocols. The attack on Cindy from the Right-wing is not a new occurrence, but an extension of netwars against peace movements throughout history.

Essentially, a “netwar” occurs when there is contest between competing systems (with their own particular protocols), where the system attracting the most users amassing a larger share of power. As Galloway and Thacker contend, power in the network is additive, and netwars are based on creating asymmetry within the power existing in the system. Networks are controlled and attacked through the same means, which means engaging in netwar is not merely to eliminate a single node in the system (as that will not break the entire web), but to understand the protocols defining relationships between the nodes. To engage in netwar is to diagram the many relationships within the network and attack the very substance connecting nodes. If one can show that the dominant network no longer works or that the protocols are somehow deceptive, undesirable, or go against our common sense of how things are or are

supposed to work—then the network loses power with users adopting new systems.³⁴⁸

The other way to shift power within a netwar is through what Galloway and Thacker describe as a transgression: to change topology of the network from distributed to centralized (or vice versa). Changing the nature of relationships, including eliminating links, can also change the network type. We can understand the Right's attacks on Cindy as a netwar because through attacking her character and motives—constructing her as a threat—centralized the network around Cindy and created conditions where other nodes might sever their connections to her in the process.

The control and power within networks is largely immaterial: control occurs through communication and creating myths, narratives, and interpretations of the world. Post-9/11, the opportunity for new protocols emerged, with the Bush Administration/Right essentially winning the lion's share of the network power in the contest over control of the "American" public network. Although the comments of moral majority leaders such as Jerry Falwell—blaming the terrorist attacks on the liberal causes of feminism, gay rights, and others—might be written off as irrational rants, there was a power shift that occurred from liberal protocols to more conservative protocol after the Towers fell. When the system literally crashed, it was the Right who successfully brought together state, cultural, and social networks to adopt narratives and

³⁴⁸ Alexander R. Galloway, *Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentralization* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004), 64-72. Hereafter, "Protocol." Galloway outlines the conditions ideal for networks—that networks work best in a state of continuity and movement where we believe in the coherence of the system. Using the internet as the example system, some of those conditions include: concealing the source or code that operates the system; eliminate dead or deceptive links so that we continue to move through the system; and to have continuity between parts of the system (such as similar speeds and resolution of different media within a single webpage).

values consistent with their policies³⁴⁹—their network won. From the policies created within government (such as the PATRIOT Act) to coverage in mainstream media, scholars argue that, post 9/11, protocols of patriotism and support of government leaders created conditions in which dissent was the irrational protocol. Arsenault and Castells construct the complex relationships at work for Americans to adopt misinformation (about Iraq) in the Bush constructed network, and show the Bush administration was successful in presenting misinformation disseminated approvingly by mainstream media outlets. In turn, those networks that were more supportive of the administration, such as Fox, also gained more viewership from audiences that, once exposed to misinformation, were less likely to believe or adopt contrary viewpoints even when those contrary viewpoints were supported by confirmed evidence.³⁵⁰ In other words, the public adopted the coherent narrative presented by the Administration's defining protocols, and adopted the behaviors imbedded within it—including limited civil liberties and amplified discourses of patriotism. Moreover, many refused to listen or watch information disrupting this narrative.

Again, in the private/public tension of the networked public, discourses adopted post 9/11 left out the voices of women who may have brought a more peaceful or mournful response to the aftermath. Instead, as Susan Faludi argues, the Bush

³⁴⁹ As Faludi shows, it was not just the Falwells that blamed feminists for the 9/11 attacks, but subsequent social commentary asserted women's liberation had feminized men, made the US vulnerable to attack, and that all needed to "toughen up" instead of mourning or healing from 9/11.

³⁵⁰ Amelia Arsenault and Manuel Castells, "Conquering the Minds, Conquering Iraq: The Social Production of Misinformation in the United States—a Case Study," *Information, Communication and Society* 9 no. 3 (2006): 284-307. Other studies have also asserted that mainstream media willingly served as a public relations tool of the administration (see Mohan J. Dutta-Bergman, "Operation Iraqi Freedom: Mediated Public Sphere as a Public Relations Tool," *Atlantic Journal of Communication* 13 no. 4 (2005): 220-241), and that the mainstream media was largely uncritical about the war (see for example Melissa Wall, "Blogs of War: Weblogs as News," *Journalism* 6 no. 2 (2005): 153-172).

administration met with entertainment moguls to create propaganda of the “terror dream,” “to restore the image of an America invulnerable to attack, to conjure a dreamscape populated by John Wayne protectors...[and] a reverie in which women needed to play the helpless and dependent foil...”³⁵¹ As she shows, even news coverage of 9/11 heroics focused only on male firefighters and police officers, even though efforts were made to recognize and acknowledge the work by female heroes.³⁵² Female voices were literally absent from mainstream media with men outnumbering women in opinion columns, Sunday talk shows, and other news outlets.³⁵³ Byerly supports that women were excluded from the debate and unable to define conditions post 9/11, thus the protocols given and adopted were masculine and narrowly defined.³⁵⁴ Any voices (many feminist) against the newly renewed visions of patriotism and masculine retribution were deemed treasonous,³⁵⁵ with oppositional discourse and feminist voices being relegated to its own netwar on the blogosphere.³⁵⁶

Consequently, the conditions of possibility for the antiwar movement were also limited, thus Cindy’s voice as a mother became one of the only options for the

³⁵¹ Faludi 115.

³⁵² In some instances, female firefighter stories were only presented on mainstream media if they were going to wear their “outfits” (80) and a documentary about the women of Ground Zero (produced by the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund) caused the group to receive threats when it was found out that the organization was pushing for contracts for women owned businesses in the rebuilding of Ground Zero. Further, Faludi shows female firefighters and widows of 9/11 were criticized in mainstream media and the blogosphere for speaking up to correct stories about them or to criticize the administration. Notably, the “Jersey Girls” (widows who became Kerry supporters and were active in Congressional Hearings around the 9/11 Commission) were “swift boated” themselves—called porn stars, witches, harpies, and accused of reveling in their husbands’ deaths (112).

³⁵³ Faludi indicates that in the three weeks after 9/11, only eight out of 79 opinion pieces were written by women in the *New York Times*, and 75% of guests on Sunday political talk TV shows had no women guests in the first six months after 9/11 (35).

³⁵⁴ Carolyn M. Byerly, “After September 11: The Formation of an Oppositional Discourse,” *Feminist Media Studies* 5, no 3 (2005).

³⁵⁵ Susan Sontag was notably attacked in the *New York Times* for her comments (Faludi, 27).

³⁵⁶ See Byerly and Richard Kahn and Douglas Kellner, “New Media and Internet Activism: From the ‘Battle of Seattle’ to Blogging,” *New Media & Society* 6 no. 1 (2004): 87-95.

movement. Women's voices are not heard unless they fit traditional feminine roles, and otherwise dissent inherently became marginalized as anti-American. Even for women fitting the "appropriate" position (such as the widow's of 9/11), failure to maintain their status as chaste widows opened them to attack from media networks. It is no surprise, then, prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, protest against the war received little coverage by mainstream media, and the coverage it did receive was negative—constructed as unpatriotic or belittled as individual protesters craving media attention³⁵⁷ or trying to relive their activism of the Vietnam era. To some extent, the "terror dream" is not a new phenomenon conjured by "BushCo," but is merely history repeating. Women's peace movements have continually navigated the spaces of traditional feminine roles as life-givers and mothers, while pushing feminist critiques to understand why conditions of war exist in the first place. Women activists have always had to play "appropriate" roles to have voice in the public and avoid public reprisal for their actions. Cindy was first given voice *because* of the post-9/11 context as a wife and mother who dutifully sent her son to war. She (as portrayed and perceived in the media) conformed to the right protocols—transgressing the conservative frame, pulling the peace movement along with her. That is, of course, until Camp Casey was built.

Women's movement networks, perhaps more than others, find themselves on the defensive of a netwar because their very manifestation is an affront to dominant, patriarchal systems. Galloway explains how network forms can be gendered: patriarchal systems gain their power through being centralized and closed while women excluded from these systems have represented and built distributed systems—only to

³⁵⁷ Dutta-Bergman.

have these contributions systematically left out of histories or redefined as threats to traditional orders.³⁵⁸ In the process of building movements, then, women have had to work to repair their networks as they went because the feminine/private is inherently opposed to the masculine/public. In particular, the history of women's peace movements consistently shows that the State has been better at identifying and using women's networks against them. After WWI, the Red Scare produced conflict within the relationships between the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and various branches of the Woman's Peace Party (WPP), with organization leaders advocating the need to become more moderate in their rhetoric and actions to avoid being labeled as Communist. Some affiliated organizations went as far as distancing themselves or cutting their associations from other groups in order to avoid the potential consequences of being labeled as radicals. As Alonso shows, Carrie Chapman Catt not only distanced herself from WILPF, but also organized her own organization, the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War (NCCCW), which was successful in collaborating with numerous organizations by staying away from controversial topics.³⁵⁹ Moreover, the NCCCW was protected from attacks from the government and conservative groups such as the Daughters of the American Revolution. Notably, in 1923, the War Department produced the "Spider Web Chart," a document purposed to construct and trace the connections of peace, suffrage, and labor movement leaders and organizations to Communist ties. WILPF as well as Jane

³⁵⁸ Galloway makes this connection more explicit, noting that patriarchy declines with the rise of protocological controls. He also shows that although women have been instrumental in building networks (including computers and the internet), they have been largely written out of this history where technology was constructed as a male domain.

³⁵⁹ Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the US Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights*, (NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993).

Addams were targeted in this chart, with Catt defending Addams against Communist accusations. Surveillance of activists groups has been a continued state of affairs, to the extent that, during the Vietnam War, the CIA planted “housewives” into Women Strike for Peace (WSP) groups as well as raided their offices and opened their mail.³⁶⁰ Attacks on women’s sexuality in these organizations have also come into play, where feminists are constructed as man-haters or lesbians in order to show their marginalized and deviant status.³⁶¹ In all these attacks, the strategy was not overt repression, but rather a recoding of the networks built by the women’s networks in an effort to “convince” others to not adopt or be part of this network and its protocols. This brief history shows the extent that movement networks have faced constant attack from an unequal State network—which has continued to operate into the present day.

By creating moral panics and Red Scares, State sponsored networks create doubt for whether a peace movement network has legitimate or trustworthy protocols. By creating conditions of fear, the State presents itself as the most rational and user friendly network. Within the peace movement, for each node’s own survival and protection, nodes have cut ties or created “dead links” with others accused or made suspect by the State. Moreover, the Right capitalizes on the public’s knowledge of “how things work” where repeating accusations of Communist ties seems realistic—even when they occur post 9/11. In uncovering the attacks Cindy is responding to in her autobiography, what we uncover is a conservative network working to prevent the peace movement network

³⁶⁰ Alonso notes that the CIA was found guilty when WSP sued them for these intrusions, but only for the charges against opening their mail.

³⁶¹ The Greenham Common Women went from being represented as “ordinary women” in the press, to being called lesbians or other terms to show that they were now outside of what could be tolerated by the community. See Sasha Roseneil, *Common Women, Uncommon Practices: The Queer Feminisms of Greenham* (New York: Cassell, 2000).

from forming—a continued presence surveilling the “threat” of the Left. Electronic “Spider Web Charts” are currently being constructed by right think tanks and conservative organizations such as the Capital Research Center (CRC) and David Horowitz’s Freedom Center.

The Capital Research Center (CRC) has a seemingly harmless agenda of studying nonprofit organizations, “with a special focus on reviving the American traditions of charity, philanthropy, and voluntarism.”³⁶² CRC is wary of organizations promoting the growth of government, and suggests that their analysis helps to promote “viable private alternatives to government regulatory and entitlement programs.”³⁶³ CRC’s analysis of nonprofit organizations³⁶⁴ includes tracking financial status by showing “net assets” (apparently to show some organizations are not as nonprofit as they seem), and even catalogues each group’s ideological status (where a 1 indicates “Radical Left”).³⁶⁵ Most of CRC’s staff (including President Terrence Scanlon) worked previously at the Heritage Foundation, a self-defined conservative think tank. CRC publishes a monthly *Organizational Trends* newsletter that analyzes various organizations and movement groups, and analyzed CODEPINK for its December 2006 edition.³⁶⁶ Written by John J. Tierney, professor at the Institute of World Politics,³⁶⁷

³⁶² Capital Research Center, “About CRC,” 2007, <<http://www.capitalresearch.org/about/>> (2 June 2009).

³⁶³ “About CRC.”

³⁶⁴ A directory of organization profiles is included here:

<<http://www.capitalresearch.org/search/directory.html>> (2 June 2009).

³⁶⁵ Groups indicated as radical left have entries linked to the “Discover the Network” website maintained by David Horowitz’s Freedom Center (<http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/default.asp>).

³⁶⁶ John J. Tierney, “Code Pink: The Women’s Anti-War Movement,” *Organizational Trends*, Dec. 2006 <<http://www.capitalresearch.org/pubs/pdf/v1185995675.pdf>> (2 June 2009).

³⁶⁷ The Institute of World Politics is an accredited non-profit institute that focuses on national security and international affairs dedicated to developing leaders for the “ethical conduct of statecraft” although it notes that its programs tend to address issues overlooked by other educational programs (for example the use of military and defense against foreign propaganda). Although the institute’s mission emphasizes the use of military, it also notes public diplomacy is important in today’s mass mediated world, but it’s hard

CODEPINK is described as an outgrowth of the Communist Party, undermining America's War on Terror. The cover of the issue shows a picture of Cindy Sheehan with Venezuelan leader, Hugo Chavez to emphasize how CODEPINK is a "well organized political operative"³⁶⁸ led by women such as Medea Benjamin whose "vengeance against America has led her [Benjamin] to support murderous dictators across the globe."³⁶⁹ Tierney outlines the other organizations CODEPINK is connected to (through donations or that leaders have participated in before), arguing CODEPINK is anti-American and uses women acting in the name of peace as a pretense for their real mission of total revolution. As contemporary red-baiting, Tierney links CODEPINK explicitly to the Bolsheviks, and argues that the Left use "women" and gender as code for their revolutionary class, noting this logic is flawed since women are also found on the Right, citing Republican women such as Margaret Thatcher, Elizabeth Dole, and Ann Coulter as examples of conservatives who "disdain the ideological baggage of modern feminism."³⁷⁰ Moreover, Tierney offers a revisionist history of women's peace movements to show CODEPINK is not in the same vein as The Women's [sic] Peace Party³⁷¹ and certainly not following the agenda laid forth by William Ladd of the American Peace Society where women have a role in advocating for peace through educating children and upholding religious values. Although Tierney's history is flawed, he is partially correct in asserting that WILPF and WPS are ideological allies paving the way for CODEPINK. However, he connects these organizations to argue

to understand that statement as anything other than preparing "the state" to engage in networking strategies. See Institute for World Politics <<http://www.iwp.edu/about/default.asp>> (2 June 2009).

³⁶⁸ Tierney, 2.

³⁶⁹ Tierney, 3.

³⁷⁰ Tierney, 5.

³⁷¹ Tierney selectively notes WPP under the leadership of Carrie Chapman Catt, which leaves out the more problematically radical branches of the organization such as the New York branch.

that we are not to be fooled by mothers speaking for peace as this is only a Communist ruse.

CRC and *Organizational Trends*, however, is only the start of the “network” tracing and delegitimizing the peace movement. CRC is linked to “Discover the Networks,”³⁷² which is an outgrowth of the work of conservative activist David Horowitz’s Center for the Study of Popular Culture³⁷³ and its online journal, *FrontPage Magazine*.³⁷⁴ Horowitz started to trace the peace movement network (including communist or socialist ties) in 2003 with his publication, *Who is the Peace Movement?*³⁷⁵ As described in this document, the movement is a terrorist popular front, anti-American, Communist, and is filled with Left-wing “Peace” Saboteurs. The introduction to the pamphlet constructs the peace movement as a terrorist threat whose speech should not be respected, especially when it decries “America as the aggressor and refer to its President as a ‘terrorist,’ a ‘baby killer,’ and an ‘oil thief.’”³⁷⁶ The articles included in the publication show the peace movement’s present and historic connections to Communism and communist leaders (Castro and Mao are named), ultimately to argue these connections “should give decent and patriotic Americans

³⁷² Discover the Networks established in 2005 boasts having eight million visitors. DiscovertheNetworks.org: A Guide to the Political Left, 2006, <<http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/default.asp>> (2 June 2009).

³⁷³ Renamed David Horowitz Freedom Center, its defined mission is to promote traditional constitutional values of individual freedom, limited government, rule of law, and private property. David Horowitz Freedom Center, “Our Mission,” *David Horowitz Freedom Center*, 2009, <<http://www.horowitzfreedomcenter.org/>> (2 June 2009).

³⁷⁴ Front Page Magazine, *FrontPageMag.Com* 2007. <<http://www.frontpagemag.com/>> (2 June 2009). FrontPage Magazine is the Freedom Center’s online journal of news and political commentary, boasting 1.5 million visitors.

³⁷⁵ David Horowitz and John Perazzo, eds., “Who is the Peace Movement?” *Center for the Study of Popular Culture*, 2003, <<http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/Articles/Peace%20Movement.pdf>> (2 June 2009).

³⁷⁶ Horowitz and Perazzo, 4.

cause for second thoughts.”³⁷⁷ In the wake of the protests prior to the Iraq invasion, Horowitz and his conservative “research” groups worked to represent the developing movement as a threat.

Horowitz’s projects demonstrate not only how conservatives have worked to form their own networks, but also to the extent that they have researched and can trace the networks of the Left. Most explicit in this project is the Discover the Network website that literally traces connections of Left activists of all causes. As the site explains:

This site is a "Guide to the Political Left." It identifies the individuals and organizations that make up the left and also the institutions that fund and sustain it; it maps the paths through which the left exerts its influence on the larger body politic; it defines the left's (often hidden) programmatic agendas and it provides an understanding of its history and ideas.³⁷⁸

Again, the Left is framed as a threat that must be tracked and watched, as it is, according to the site, powerful with tens of millions of dollars to support it and exists as a “major player” in the destiny of the nation.

Obviously, in the long list of individuals profiled on the site, Cindy has her own page.³⁷⁹ Her profile was compiled by Ben Johnson (writer for *FrontPage Magazine*), and the site works through hyperlinks to connect you from one person to all their affiliated groups and individuals. The site includes an interactive map to visually see how connected an individual is. Cindy’s profile begins with a bullet point list describing her as Founder of Gold Star Families for Peace, an admirer of Hugo Chavez,

³⁷⁷ Horowitz and Perazzo, 6.

³⁷⁸ DiscovertheNetworks.Org, “Guide to Navigating DTN,” 2006, <<http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/groupProfile.asp?grpId=7030>> (2 June 2009).

³⁷⁹ DiscovertheNetworks.Org, “Cindy Sheehan,” 2008 <<http://www.discoverthenetworks.org/individualProfile.asp?indId=2031>> (2 June 2009).

and quotes her saying George Bush is a terrorist and that the country is not worth dying for. The selective history presented about Cindy includes how she “changed her story” about meeting with President Bush,³⁸⁰ that she gave a speech at San Francisco State University where she calls the President a terrorist, and that she disputed Islamic terrorism was brought on by Muslim doctrine (arguing instead that it was a reaction to American transgressions).

The selective history and purpose of the site is premised on demonstrating how “dangerous” a person evidenced by being connected to other “dangerous” individuals. Cindy is “dangerous” because Michael Moore includes her blog posts on his website, and Cindy had Howard Zinn write the introduction to her collection of writings, *Dear President Bush*.³⁸¹ Further, Cindy participated in the World Social Forum with Hugo Chavez, and went to Jordan in August 2006 to meet with members of the Iraqi Parliament along with other US delegates including Tom Hayden, Jodi Evans, and Medea Benjamin. This trip (apparently) connects her to individuals “likely affiliated” with the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, and al-Qaeda. Her profile on the site ends with a quote from a previous *FrontPage* article by Johnson, “Cindy Sheehan thinks so little of her son that she is willing to join forces with the movement whose extremist ideology spawned the organization that killed him and whose offshoot holds his killers up as role

³⁸⁰ Specifically, Cindy was called a hypocrite because she did not immediately criticize President Bush after Casey’s death, nor use the meeting that her family had with Bush at Fort Lewis, Washington in June 2004, to ask Bush “What noble cause?” It was only after she really began her activism during the 2004 elections that she began to criticize the war. It is notable that Cindy spends a good portion of the chapter entitled “Close Encounters of the Bush Kind” in the autobiography to construct a history of her disapproval of Bush even beginning with his election in 2000. At the same time, she shows that she had no personal disagreement with him until Casey died and when she started to uncover and research the Bush Administration (including their involvement with The Project for the New American Century—an organization that Cindy describes as planning American hegemony and empire around the world).

³⁸¹ Cindy Sheehan, *Dear President Bush*, (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2006).

models.” The lesson here is clear: not only is Cindy connected to terrorists and communists, but she dishonors her son in the process. Based on the Right’s description of Cindy, if members think their participation in the peace movement network is because of Cindy honoring her son, then they should rethink their alliance.

Although we might consider Horowitz’s projects as extreme in their characterizations and attacks on Cindy and the movement (Red baiting in the 2000s), the “distributed” network of the Right extends to other blogs, online magazines, and mainstream media critiques. For example, *Cindy Sheehan Watch*³⁸² offers its own profile of Cindy and her “famous friends,” places she traveled (in 2006), and recent blog posts/analysis of why Cindy is “absolutely NUTS!” Although online publications such as the *Huffington Post* were largely supportive of Cindy, others were not as kind. For example, Christopher Hitchens writes for *Slate*,³⁸³ arguing Cindy does not have absolute moral authority to speak for the troops, nor should the movement privilege her voice of dissent before others. Moreover, military and families of military might have *less of a claim* to voice dissent against the President because they have “voluntarily sworn an oath to obey and carry out orders,” thus adult volunteers like Casey (and their mothers) should not complain. In short, Cindy’s motives as a mother as well as speaking for Casey are questioned and critiqued. The premises by which the movement came together are being pulled apart.

³⁸² JB Pendleton, “Cindy Sheehan, is she nuts? You bet!!!” *Cindy Sheehan Watch* 2006 <<http://www.cindysheehanwatch.com/>> (2 June 2009). This website was created by a self-described 54 year old white male from California, and includes blog posts, pictures, and commentary about Cindy Sheehan’s activism and (most recently) election campaign. Cindy and her supporters are referred to as “MoonBats,” and the goal of the website is to get out the “truth” about Cindy and “shut her down.”

³⁸³ Hitchens, Christopher, “Cindy Sheehan’s Sinister Piffle,” *Slate*, 15 Aug. 2005, <<http://www.slate.com/id/2124500/>> (2 June 2009).

As evidenced in Cindy's autobiography, she is aware of the attacks to her and the movement. She is also painfully aware the challenge the movement has to overcome is public compliance with the Bush Administration and the protocols defined by the Right. A continued theme throughout the autobiography is that she is frustrated she did not act sooner or question Bush's policies until after Casey died. Mirroring Faludi's analysis, it seems Cindy realizes the extent Bush created conditions where dissent was not even considered. As she says,

We blindly followed leaders into Hell because they could climb up on a rubble pile and demonstrate that they could use a bullhorn. We allowed them to spread their cancer of Pax Americana because we were told that the best thing we could do after 9/11 was to go shopping and to travel. Shopping and travel?! Excellent, we love to shop and travel!"³⁸⁴

With the movement still in need of making connections with the dominant public and transferring power (not in the form of opinion polls of support, but at all levels of protocol), and with the Right winning on the attack side, Cindy writes the autobiography to keep the movement engaged in this netwar. Moreover, she strategizes her content, as it is her own story and representation as a mother at stake. The next section, then, traces Cindy's strategy in trying to repair and sustain the peace network.

Reinforcing the Possible: The Labor of Cindy's Autobiography

Cindy's personal story and how she, as a grieving mother, was able to exploit various layers of the post 9/11 public/network, shows us what *is possible* (for agency, resistance, or social change) in a particular socio-political context. At the same time, her autobiography exposes the ways oppositional networks have attempted to recode and disrupt the peace-movement-network by attempting to disprove, twist, and

³⁸⁴ "Autobiography," 22.

manipulate Cindy and her story. Camp Casey represents a power shift in the system, creating a netwar between those loyal to the post 9/11 narrative and those adopting care over fear; adopting critical views of the State over uncritical support. In response to Camp Casey and this “attack” by the peace movement, the media and right wing organizations constructing the 9/11 “Terror Dream” had to undermine Cindy’s narrative and her motivation for activism. As Galloway and Thacker contend, if you change the relationship between nodes of the network—recode the message and meaning linking different nodes—you can change the network. If we no longer believe Cindy is genuine or acting out of her role as a mother—if she really is the ego-centric “media whore” others have defined her as—then, it is not logical to make one part of this story or Cindy’s network. In this netwar, Cindy’s autobiography becomes the means for the peace movement to retaliate and for Cindy to repair her own network while continuing to expose (recode) the protocols underwriting the Right.

The “repairs” Cindy must make is to reassert the protocols of the peace-movement-network developed at Camp Casey. She must reassert and defend her role as a mother, and show her actions and motivations are genuine—she has to demonstrate she is acting because of Casey. She does this by marking time with references to Casey’s life and death as well as directly refuting and redefining motherhood to fit her story. She also includes Casey’s biography alongside her own, and describes the “signs” Casey has given her after death to support her activism. Lastly, along with the continued critique of “BushCo,” she writes the autobiography in the present tense to show there is still a network for others to join. The peace movement can continue on for those participating in her story.

First, Cindy writes her autobiography as if she is speaking to the reader in the present—which conveys the sense the movement is not over nor is fixed—thus the reader might be compelled to take action as Cindy suggests. Although she uses past tense in describing events that have already occurred, she punctuates these moments with how she currently is feeling, especially when it comes to criticizing Bush. For example, as she explains how her grief affected her marriage, she talks about how she resented her (now ex) husband, Pat, for not allowing her to grieve or how Pat insisted Casey was a grown man who knew what he was getting into when he joined the army. Switching to present tense, Cindy states Pat *still insists* Casey “volunteered” on the mission that killed him, but ultimately she *still believes* Casey made uninformed decisions (because of Bush’s lies). She states, “now I [Cindy] feel that BushCo also needs to accept blame and responsibility for their part.”³⁸⁵ Cindy uses her autobiography to show how she learned, reflected, and changed in the process of grieving Casey and becoming an activist, but emphasizes what she knows and believes *now* as if we are having a conversation with her in the present. We now have the option to agree with her and follow in the footsteps she is currently walking.

Another present-tense strategy Cindy uses is to punctuate her story with tangents, flashbacks, or even brings in letter/blog exchanges she is currently having (while writing the autobiography). As Hogan notes, many women’s autobiographies do not follow linear paths and others include long excerpts from letters or other non-public forms of writing as a means to tell the author’s story. Given Cindy is a public figure and the more “private” writing that she has done has been on the public space of blogs,

³⁸⁵ “Autobiography,” 130.

the fragmented nature of Cindy's book conveys the sense she is speaking spontaneously using what comes to mind as she writes, much like her public speaking persona. She notes moments when tears run down her face as she remembers moments with Casey,³⁸⁶ and she interrupts her own narrative as tangents arise. For example, she posts a statement by Congressman Jack Kingston (R-Ga) calling Cindy a nutcase, followed by her response back to him. Her response comes in the form of a letter, which opens, "How dare you psychoanalyze me and call me a 'nutcase'! How dare you call me a beatnik and lie about me in your blog!"³⁸⁷ Her response is clearly emotive, yet she does not attempt to revise or change what she wrote (to not sound like a nutcase) even though she would have time to reflect or revise before the autobiography was published. She leaves her response in as is, as if she stopped mid-conversation to dash off this response to Congressman Kingston. In fact, she notes she is interrupting herself at this point, "to answer an attack" by this Republican Congressman—indicating this is just one of many "right-wing" attacks that she received as a result of Camp Casey—an example of what she is "constantly up against."³⁸⁸ All of this conveys Cindy is still active and at work in the movement with the writing of the autobiography just part of this work. Her use of tense indicates we are in conversation with her in the present, making the reader part of the movement as well.

³⁸⁶ "Autobiography," 42.

³⁸⁷ "Autobiography," 101.

³⁸⁸ "Autobiography," 99. In fact, this exchange probably happened close to the moment she was writing this chapter of the autobiography as the date of Kingston's press release is March 31, 2006. Again, this is temporally out of order within a chapter that she shows the steps of her activism, falling within a moment that she is talking about meeting Iraq Veterans Against the War in October 2004. This particular section connects IVAW as being in support of Cindy's actions (some of which came to Camp Casey), which then leads to the right-wing attacks because of Camp Casey.

The temporality of the autobiography continues to blur the lines of time in a constant attempt against fixing or putting the movement in the past tense. Cindy marks time through noting how long it has been since Casey's death, showing her grief continues, potentially signaling she will still act as long as she remembers his death. As Smith and Watson note, women often mark the passing of time with events instead of through specific dates or years as male autobiographers do. In fact, it is difficult to construct a clear chronology of events using Cindy's autobiography alone because very few specific dates are given, with time noted, for example, only as occurring "seven months since Casey's death." Casey's life constructs the temporal frame for the whole book, with Cindy starting the book noting Casey's birth and death dates, marking her journey with activism as connected to Casey's death date. In the epilogue, she states she is writing the final words in her autobiography on April 4, 2006—exactly two years since her son, Casey, was killed in combat in Iraq. In her forward, she explains, "This book is the heartbreaking story of how my son Casey inspired me to give my dash [the living that happens between the born and death dates on a tombstone] meaning and to make him as proud of my life as I always was of his."³⁸⁹

The story of Cindy's life literally begins with Casey's birth and death; from the forward indicating how his short life inspired many, to the first chapter simply titled, "Casey." Cindy's construction of her story around Casey also works to emphasize her role as mother and genuinely acting in his name. In a significant passage, she shows her seventh month of mourning—the most difficult period of mourning a child—was when she began to realize her life's work of activism. She talks about the ninth month of

³⁸⁹ "Autobiography," ix.

mourning, when she remembers the nine months Casey was protected in her womb. She emphasizes the 21 years he was protected by her growing up only to bring the reader to the moment when Casey has been nine months in the “cold womb of our mother earth.”³⁹⁰ As part of reconstructing herself as a good mother, Cindy marks events in the book based on the life of Casey. As part of reasserting the protocols of care for the movement, Cindy’s demonstration of caring for her child, even as he lies in the “cold womb,” reminds us of the care we should show for all.

Cindy’s shifts between the present to flashbacks of Casey indicates care is not confined to given moments, but is something we must continually remember and enact. Even when Cindy chronicles specific events, such as her time at the camp, she moves the story back and forth between the present and remembering moments with Casey and her family; she goes on tangents as she is telling stories, again as if she were remembering each event in the moment and speaking with what comes to mind first. As other women have, Cindy lives her life fragmented between her roles as mother and activist, and shows this through the structure of the narrative, including marking time through what she sees as the most important event in her life—Casey’s death. The temporal shifts and inaccurate marking of time works to emphasize her story as a mother, giving the reader a sense these events are not locked in the historic past nailed down with a specific date because “nine-months since” could apply to any year or time for anyone’s grief or awakening. Recognizing and caring for another’s grief could and should occur at any time.

³⁹⁰ “Autobiography,” 108.

Performing the role of “good mother” in the autobiography through telling her story in relation to her son, however, is not enough to repair the holes exploited by the Right. As much as Cindy emphasizes her relationship with her son, she does not fit the stereotype of a “good mother,” so Cindy must also redefine what speaking as a mother means for *her*. Right-wing attacks as well as personal attacks from others in the blogosphere critiqued Cindy for leaving her other children at home while she demonstrates. As she notes in her autobiography, the “public” knew about her divorce before she did, and her husband’s family worked with MSM to defame her as a bad wife and mother. While at Camp Casey, she blogged to address these issues³⁹¹ and admits her own failings within the autobiography: “As I have stated before, I was a horrible mother to my other three children after Casey was killed. It seemed that they had to spend all of their time comforting me.”³⁹² She does not fit the ideal vision of motherhood provided in the 9/11 narrative, but she claims responsibility, and in doing so can expand what being a good mother is. Like other women’s autobiographies that expanded the definition of womanhood, Cindy shows she is still a mother: to her own children and caring for those that are not biologically hers. She repeats throughout the book she is an activist so no other mother has to go through what she did. She underscores this point further by pointing to the support of Iraq veterans who call her “mom” and “they [Iraq veterans who came to Camp Casey] have all told me that being there helped heal their inner wounds and that they hoped that if they had come home in

³⁹¹ See “Leave My Family Alone: Camp Casey, Monday, August 15 (Blog Entry #2),” and “Go Home and Take Care of Your Kids: Los Angeles, Monday, August 22,” in *Not One More Mother’s Child* (Maui, Hawaii: Koa Books, 2005).

³⁹² “Autobiography,” 124.

flag-draped coffin that their moms would have done the same things that I did.”³⁹³ To some extent, Cindy recognizes how others have evaluated her as a mother, but challenges the status quo of what it means to be a good mother, which now includes fighting against this war and Administration. As she states, “I think I am a better mom because I am free from trying to be society’s ideal mom. I know that I am a deeply flawed person who owes her children, and especially Casey an apology for trying only to live up to the world’s expectations, and not to her own integrity.”³⁹⁴

However, it is not enough that she rhetorically creates a new definition of what a “good” mother is, or how she *is* acting as a mother. She must also refute the claims it was her activism that forced her marriage to fall apart and forced her away from her other children. Casey again becomes the means to address this critique as she argues it was Casey that acted as peace keeper in the family. Casey’s death merely pushed Cindy and Pat farther apart, but the marriage was falling apart before his death. Cindy shows her family (again before Casey’s death) was not as close as it used to be with all her children basically grown—there were not as many family dinners together as everyone was away with their various jobs or Casey being off at boot camp. In short, the Right’s claims are unfounded because her family was not “perfect” to begin with. She also shows her activism was not the cause of family trouble or a “new” development in her personal life. She shows her current activism is a continuation of what she had been doing all along, and especially since 9/11. Specifically, she talked about donating to the Red Cross after 9/11, how she didn’t vote for Bush in any election, and how she has a history of defying authority (noting an argument she had with a church pastor when she

³⁹³ “Autobiography,” 99.

³⁹⁴ “Autobiography,” 128.

worked as a youth minister).³⁹⁵ Solomon Watson shows autobiographies use refutation by demonstration: by pointing to specific events, Cindy can construct that her path to activism was part of this longer process, and her participation with anti-war groups was neither a spur of the moment decision nor the cause of the state of her marriage.

The final “repair” Cindy makes is regarding whether Casey supports her activism in his name. Cindy’s life is written in relation to Casey’s life, and she goes to great lengths to describe how Casey was as a child, along with the music and television shows he liked growing up. She focuses on Casey being active in Boy Scouts and the Catholic Church—both things that might have influenced his obedience or his idea he “had to” join the military. Cindy emphasizes that when Casey joined the military he was promised he would be a chaplain’s assistant—not working as a mechanic. Cindy builds the case Casey did not “volunteer” in the true sense because he was not informed correctly about what the army would have him do. Cindy emphasizes how Casey was not given the roles or opportunities promised to him by his recruiter, and that is why he was killed in Iraq. Including Casey’s biography is to show him as a typical child—he could be anyone’s son—and the military could lie to anyone’s enlisted child.

Further, not only does Cindy show she acts in the name of her son, but explains “signs” that Casey is helping her activism. Cindy shows Casey only listed her as a beneficiary of his military insurance, and it is this money that has enabled her to travel for her speaking tours. Casey serves as a ghostly presence throughout the book, from Cindy hearing one of his favorite songs on the radio as she drives to Crawford (a sign that she is on the right path), or the moment two days after the news of Casey’s death

³⁹⁵ “Autobiography,” 33.

when Cindy, her sister Dede, and daughter Carly felt Casey's presence around them like a ghost.³⁹⁶ Perhaps due to Cindy's religious beliefs, she notes Casey divinely intervened to help her daughter Carly write the poem that would comfort a grieving Cindy. It was this poem Cindy emailed to Military Families Speak Out as an initial action of activism. It was fate that lined up events for her to go to Crawford. Cindy's activism, in her own assessment, is being guided by Casey from beyond the grave.

Cindy plays with temporality in her autobiography further to show her journey to activism (past tense) alongside her present activist voice in the form of political critique. Similar to other activist autobiographies, Cindy's story is explicitly framed as her journey into activism. As Cindy notes in the forward, "This book is the story of one mom's journey from believing that her son was a 'war hero' to believing that her son died as a victim of the war machine...[and how she became] an active participant in making history and having an effect on social change."³⁹⁷ Cindy's conversion to activism is, in part, her own critical awakening and vendetta against Bush and his war policies. As Perkins notes, autobiographies can work as critical literacy and raise the consciousness of the reader; Cindy uses her autobiography to offer her critique of Bush because her journey to activism is a result of the research and conversations had with other activists. Her story, then, is punctuated with critique of the Bush Administration. In her first chapter, she focuses on Casey and her role as his mother, and then shifts in her second chapter to talk about 9/11. Not only does she establish she had a nightmare (premonition) of the events of 9/11, but also integrates a hindsight critique on how Bush handled the events of 9/11 and calls to question Bush's motives. For example, she

³⁹⁶ "Autobiography," 49.

³⁹⁷ "Autobiography," xi.

states, “Bush just recently stated that he wanted to add another 125 nukes to our already obscene arsenal. Why do we need more nukes? Well, call me cynical, but I believe he has some buddies in the ‘nuclear’ [sic] bomb industry who want a bigger piece of the defense pie.”³⁹⁸ Her third chapter, “A Rush to Disaster,” extends her critique against Bush, questioning his character and pointing out that, while governor of Texas, he told his biographer he wanted to be a great war president. As Smith describes of autobiographical manifestos, Cindy is clearly contesting sovereignty represented by Bush, and is bringing to light issues that the public should know about (and that might also inspire them to speak out or be critical of Bush). Once Cindy makes “repairs” for her own network, she uses the autobiography for continued action against Bush.

Cindy goes beyond showing her own analysis, and like other manifestos, she speaks as part of the American public. Throughout the autobiography, she notes that “we” have allowed our government to fail us, “we” need to make the new world possible, and “we” cannot allow BushCo to pick and choose which democracies to support. Most importantly, Cindy requests that “we” take action: “I hope this book has been a challenge to everyone who thinks that one person can’t make a difference...I hope that this book has been a challenge to you to make your dash have meaning.”³⁹⁹ Smith argues autobiographical manifestos *perform* the subjectivity the reader should aspire to. In presenting her analysis and placing blame directly on the Bush Administration, Cindy also presents herself, and her public speaking persona, throughout the text. In part because she does include excerpts from speeches and blogs she gave/wrote, she appeals to us to take on critical outlooks as one would do in a

³⁹⁸ “Autobiography,” 20.

³⁹⁹ “Autobiography,” 240.

persuasive speech. For example, included in the autobiography is part of the speech she gave at the Veterans for Peace convention (before Camp Casey): “I think that we have to ask ourselves two questions about anyone who still supports the continued cluster-fuck in Iraq: What is he/she gaining monetarily or politically? And what media outlets does he/she get their propaganda from?”⁴⁰⁰ Cindy has begun to explore these questions and has come to realize we need to remove support for the war, thus she directs us to ask the same questions. Moreover, she makes no apologies for using profanity (another point she was criticized for), drinking beer, or otherwise presenting herself in unbecoming ways (such as crying in public over Casey). As a manifesto, Cindy provides the facts of the situation as she understands them and compels us to act. As manifesto, the time for decorous deliberation is over, and Cindy presents a subject demanding answers and action.

Cindy’s autobiography speaks to the faults of the public being uncritical of going to war in Iraq, but she demands Bush take responsibility for his faults in the continued war. As she was ignorant of what she came to believe as the facts of the situation, she provides this information throughout her narrative as well as suggests reading for her audience to continue their own critical literacy.⁴⁰¹ In these ways, the autobiography works as extension of Cindy’s own activism, and as manifesto, places blame in order for others to act in the future. At the same time, Cindy is also motivated to represent herself in the face of the explicit criticism that she received in the press and from others (mothers of soldiers as well as her extended family). Her contestation of

⁴⁰⁰ “Autobiography,” 141.

⁴⁰¹ Specifically, she says that everyone should read *War is a Racket* by General Butler (“Autobiography,” 129), and in doing so, it would be hard to defend the military at all. Elsewhere she confronts “patriotism” (in favor of matrotism) by citing Emma Goldman’s essay on patriotism (“Autobiography,” 215).

sovereignty is not just of Bush, but to this criticism as well—repairing her own image while showing the faults of others. In this way, Cindy’s autobiography is in response to what I have constructed here as the “netwar” of the Right against the antiwar movement that has been constructed around Cindy. Finally, the autobiography is to define, for herself, who she is an activist—she is a mother (albeit imperfect) acting on behalf of her sacrificed son and for all the other soldiers and their mothers. As she also notes, she never does anything half-assed, and although she has made mistakes, she has done this all “her way.”

Who Wins in a Netwar?

Unlike a war in between sovereign nations, there is no clear winner in a netwar, only the shift of power between networks in changing contexts and times. Certainly, there is no empirical proof Cindy’s autobiography helped to “recode” or “repair” networks, nor can we assess the reach of the Right’s Discover the Networks reach. Arguably, we may have found ourselves in equilibrium in this netwar. Currently, there is more voiced dissent against Bush and the war in Iraq (with the election of Barack Obama as being part of a “change” of opinion and power), but Cindy has continued to receive negative attention in the press (in part due to her participation and arrests in CODEPINK demonstrations as well as her critique and rejection of both the Democratic and Republican parties).⁴⁰² Arguably, there is less “fear” operating in the public in regards to an al-Qaeda networked threat, but “care” has also not replaced fear as our

⁴⁰² Cindy has blogged against both Republican and Democratic leaders for supporting the war, and took this challenge further to run against Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi in the 2008 election. Cindy did manage to gain 16.2% of the vote (beating the Republican candidate who received only 9.7% of the vote). See “2008 General Election Results,” *US News and World Report*, 4 November 2008 <<http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/campaign-2008/2008/11/04/electoral-college-map.html>> (9 June 2008).

operating protocol. At the same time, the autobiography has done its work to leave traces of the movement and remind us of the care protocols of Camp Casey. Because the peace movement network continued to be active despite the attacks on it from the right and from the attacks on Cindy, then we can assume that all forms of communication (like the autobiography) aid to keep links active is essential for maintaining power in a movement (if not to shift power).

This assessment of Cindy's autobiography is not to claim Cindy was effective or successful in convincing us her motivations, recruiting participants to the movement, or that she was successful in exploiting the subject of "mother." Unlike Solomon Watson, these seem irrelevant questions as the autobiography is not just working at the present moment, but is meant to be a lasting reminder of movement work—we cannot assess what future receptions or effects it might have. We might say, in fact, Cindy was ineffective given the continued war. Her description of Casey as a soldier that was lied to might reflect more negatively on his character; her description of Casey as a theater major might fit into the narratives of how feminism "feminized" males, opening the US to attack. Cindy presenting herself (including her flaws) might also prevent those not already in support of Cindy from identifying with the movement. The more important question for netwars is whether a network is maintained and has the potential to exist. In this way, Cindy's autobiography was successful. Cindy outlined the movement as she knew it, included those she is connected to, and included her own story for us to gain an understanding of her participation. In print form, perceived as more legitimate perhaps than blogs, she has put her story into history and has ensured that the movement

will not be forgotten. We can experience Camp Casey through her retelling, and perhaps be reminded of protocols of care in the process.

The autobiography should be understood as another form of resistance: as another possible tool for exploit. Like other rhetorical forms, the autobiography helps to understand the conditions of power existing within a netwar. Resistance has to be understood as a competition of networks—not merely in gaining public support or participation or to overturn government policies. As Galloway and Thacker argue, the one who masters the network form first, wins. And, given the history of the state dismantling movements, it seems that the Left still has to learn.

SUBJECTS ARE CONSTITUTED THROUGH NORMS WHICH, IN THEIR REITERATION, PRODUCE AND SHIFT THE TERMS THROUGH WHICH SUBJECTS ARE RECOGNIZED. [...] NORMATIVE SCHEMES ARE INTERRUPTED BY ONE ANOTHER, THEY EMERGE AND FADE DEPENDING ON BROADER OPERATIONS OF POWER, AND VERY OFTEN COME UP AGAINST SPECTRAL VISIONS OF WHAT IT IS THEY CLAIM TO KNOW [...] IN OTHER WORDS, THE JOB IS NEVER DONE “ONCE AND FOR ALL.”⁴⁰³

The Struggle Continues Affect in a Networked Age

Finding an entry point to begin to conclude this project is somewhat difficult because, like distributed networks, there are many different thematic nodes connected to others—all of which would make a coherent and compelling summation. This project weaves together a history of women’s activism in an attempt to recover and reinterpret this history for contemporary movements. This project is about movement-networks and theorizing networks under technical/Internet constructs as a means to understand resistance. Women’s history and networks intersect as the logics of women’s organizing paved the way for networking in the Information Age. Yet another strand of the project has been with Cindy and the peace movement specifically, in an attempt to understand how rhetorical forms work through networking strategies. Like distributed networks, all these entry points enable their own possibilities for continued theorization or activist action, and it is hard to choose or privilege one starting point. In what follows, I attempt to explicitly draw connections between elements of the project and offer implications for each thematic cluster. Regardless of the entry point and particular nodes, the project, like distributed networks, is held together by its own protocol—all points are connected through affective relations—with the ethics of care acting as a strong, binding thread whether the focus is on women’s movements, networks, or Cindy’s peace work. As this project is also a re-telling of Cindy’s story, it seems fitting

⁴⁰³ Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (New York: Verso, 2009), 3-4.

to weave another thread into the project's network—my own story. Following other feminist scholars who recognize the politics behind knowledge production, it seems fitting to offer some critical self-reflection on how I have brought the various strands, nodes, and links together. In writing about Cindy at all, I have made myself part of the network, and hope this “trace” enhances *the possible* for peace work to come. If there is a direct lesson to leave for movement actors, it is in the process of coming to understand network logics and affective protocols controlling our interactions with others.

Theorizing Peace Post-9/11

After the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center fell, and violent retaliation seemed the *only* option, some citizens and scholars began to theorize and act in the name of peace even when prevailing protocols made this irrational. After the first bombs fell in Afghanistan, international voices worked to compile a collection called *Voices for Peace: An Anthology*,⁴⁰⁴ in an explicit effort to offer discourses otherwise not heard in the rush to war—to question whether war in Afghanistan would have any real effect on fighting terrorist networks. This anthology was published in part to offer new perspectives, and in part to raise money for War Child, a non-profit network dedicated to helping the inevitable child victims of war. Susan Faludi watched media networks conspiring to create a “terror dream” where Americans were left fearful and uncritical towards war.⁴⁰⁵ Judith Butler has completed two collections of essays post-9/11 tracing how grief and mourning were deemed irrational, but argues it is only in recognizing the

⁴⁰⁴ Anna Kiernan, ed. *Voices for Peace: An Anthology*, (London: Scribner, 2001).

⁴⁰⁵ Susan Faludi, *The Terror Dream: Fear and Fantasy in Post-9/11 America*, (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, 2007).

precarity of life that we have any chance of preventing violence in the future.⁴⁰⁶

Although these are not the only voices speaking against the war, the purposes and conclusions drawn from the work come together as a tale of rhetorical action, networks, and ethics of care. *Voices for Peace* offered a new code or framework for understanding events post-9/11, in the hope others would adopt and recognize the consequences of war. Given the media network outlined by Faludi, *Voices for Peace* was competing with protocols otherwise excluding these *Voices* at all. And Butler shows we could not even begin to hear dissenting voices because we had forgotten our fundamental ethical responsibility for others. Post-9/11, our discourses, practices, and actions *worked* in a network controlled by protocols of fear and aggression—and, regardless of attempted interventions, citizens did not know how to think or act differently.

Butler goes from arguing for *public* emotive responses of mourning to remedy our reaction for violent retaliation in *Precarious Life*; in *Frames of War* she argues the frames that we come to know the world are politically charged: constructing the *norms* by which we act. Intersecting with Faludi, Butler references how Bush told the nation we were no longer to grieve, and should take resolute action instead. As Butler states, “When grieving is something to be feared, our fears can give rise to the impulse to resolve it quickly, to banish it in the name of an action invested with the power to restore the loss or return the world to a former order, or to reinvigorate a fantasy that the world formerly was orderly.”⁴⁰⁷ The “terror dream” was created to control and restore

⁴⁰⁶ Judith Butler, *Frames of War and Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, (New York: Verso, 2004).

⁴⁰⁷ Butler, *Precarious Life*, 29-30.

order—even if that order was itself a fantasy. Bush’s demand for action denied us the ability to *publicly* come together in a “complex” political community to recognize the lives of others: the lives of our “enemy” and the lives of our own US soldiers fighting in Bush’s war. In Butler’s analysis, war was allowed to happen because we were disallowed the affective relations otherwise preventing that response. Butler explicitly arrives at affect as a key component in our response to war showing it is “cultural modes of *regulating* affective and ethical dispositions through a selective and differential framing of violence”⁴⁰⁸ that we can or cannot apprehend the lives of others. Regulation and control—the work of protocols—literally enables or disables us from recognizing lives worth our care from disposable lives. Butler’s prescription to combat and prevent war rests in adopting new affective relations, which she describes through Levinas’ ethics, but that we can also describe as practices of care.

At the risk of comparing my own intellectual journey in this project to that of Butler’s or others theorizing post-9/11, coincidentally, Butler and I have been working and thinking about similar themes albeit in diverse ways. I began my doctoral program when Cindy was camping outside of Bush’s ranch, but I did not immediately know she would (or should) constitute my dissertation. I got caught up in the “system” of graduate school, which included competition, fear (of success, of finishing, of measuring up), and what turned out to be a very atomizing and isolated experience. I even forgot about Cindy as my scholarship shifted to find something more *worthwhile* than women’s peace work. Perhaps it was a factor of unconsciously realizing my own personal condition, but *something* led me back to researching peace, and led me back to

⁴⁰⁸ Butler, *Frames of War*, 1 (italics mine).

Cindy. My renewed activism sparked by a university labor strike and the consequential networking with others (serendipitously as I was beginning to research Cindy), allowed me to see activism and social relations in a new light. I found myself in a system where protocols of care were not prevalent, and then I began to participate in systems among other organizers where care and networking was more prevalent—and where I experienced competing networks who did not readily adopt calls for care. This is not to say my conclusions were in an effort to “fix myself” or out of a self-serving mission. Rather, I present this to underscore how my conclusions, in part, come from my own experience and practice—which I may not have fully grasped without understanding my position within a network. Protocols work as invisible control. Much like society post-9/11, we were not consciously aware fear dominated our choices, but we also did not “see” another option or system to join. Like Camp Casey, experiencing a new system allows you to “see” other systems and protocols at work. Following Butler, our systems are founded in affective relations and the norms derived from them, which also means the possibilities for change similarly are rooted in changing affect. We merely need to find ourselves in a new system.

Through network theory, we can understand *how* to change affective relations. Although Butler’s work is instructive to understand the frames and consequences of a post-9/11 affect, her theory is not easily translatable to movement work. Chapter 1 outlined the conditions post-9/11 and the context in which Cindy emerges. Chapter 4, then, was to show how Camp Casey itself provided the “system” for a new affect/ethic to emerge and manifest. Like other peace camps before it, Camp Casey was a means to show the possibilities of a new set of relations and order, and because it proved “another

world was possible,” it posed a threat to the affective order established after 9/11. We were able to grieve publicly with Cindy during Camp Casey, and this opened up the possibility we would also want to grieve and mourn our enemies.

Women’s movement practices, largely through network logics as women were excluded from public or traditional organizations, further support the power of relational strategies—care is ever present. Affect is *produced* through communicative and rhetorical practices: the “edges” of networks. It is only through sending letters that we come to recognize ourselves as connected and accountable to others. It is only through the circulation of autobiographies that a legacy of a movement can carry on through the “code” imprinted in the text. Part of recovering the history of women’s peace movement work in this project is to remind us of movements operating from care and affective relations, and to assert this work is as important as demanding policy or governmental change. Ending war does not come through convincing States is it legally wrong to fight, it comes through developing protocols which make war irrational.

Women’s History and History of Forms

One of the reasons I came to study Cindy is because her actions reflected the actions of other women’s peace movements. Some might say I am an accidental women’s peace movement scholar, only stumbling upon the story of the Greenham Common women while researching nonviolent strategies. It was a revelation to me not only that Greenham sustained its camp for as long as it did, but also that a primary goal was to prove non-hierarchical, non-violent systems *worked*, thereby proving aggression and patriarchal order was not the only way. It was also a revelation to me that *no one* (especially US Americans) knew about Greenham or knew about the Seneca Women’s

Peace Camp. Cindy did not even know about these camps, and thought Camp Casey was something that had never happened before. This project was to privilege women's peace work because, like much of women's history, it is overlooked, left out, or simply forgotten. Like women's own struggle to understand themselves as, and gain entry to, the public, much of women's peace work is written off as inconsequential or ineffectual because the "effect" of this work is defined as merely cultural or symbolic. As this project has shown, it is the cultural and symbolic that *is powerful*, especially when wars are justified through otherwise symbolic fantasies.

Women's peace movement history also shows us how networks are enacted, and shows that networking is not a recent phenomenon of the Internet Age. Based on recent network scholarship, particularly from Castells,⁴⁰⁹ we might assume network ontology is only a recent phenomenon *because* of technological allowances. Although Castells does point to women's movements as networked,⁴¹⁰ he incorrectly concludes networked movements are held together through shared identity alone. Women did not network merely because they identified with other women; they networked because they also *cared* and saw themselves in *relationships* with other women. I emphasize: women have understood their movements as networks, whether through web imagery or explicitly as a decentralized network, and thus we should acknowledge women's work as contributing to the "new" network theorization. At the same time, most women's movements have not consciously described their work as *distributed*,⁴¹¹ although the

⁴⁰⁹ Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000).

⁴¹⁰ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

⁴¹¹ Gwyn Kirk, "Our Greenham Common: Not Just a Place But a Movement," in *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics*, eds. Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King (Boulder, CO:

rhetorical work of the movement has allowed women's movements to extend transnationally and transhistorically—distributed farther than many could imagine.

Along with recovering and privileging women's movements, I have also attempted to recover and privilege the rhetorical work of these movements through presenting the history of the movement as also a history of rhetorical forms. Although letter writing was an important act for many women activists, one would be hard pressed to find sections within activist handbooks explicitly instructing activists to cultivate relationships with one another through letter writing. Importantly, women's use of rhetorical forms shows communicative action in movements is not just instrumental: letter writing was not just used to petition leaders but was *also* used to maintain connections with other activists. As emphasized throughout the project, many activists privilege a politics of demand (requesting rights or recognition from an authority) over a politics of the act (creating new relations or systems).⁴¹² Women's rhetorical practices whether in the form of a letter, camp, or autobiography show the possibilities for movements to enact both demand and act, while showing the power of a politics of the act. Again, the importance of cultivating relationships is because those relationships also constitute the protocols (affect) of networks.

Tracing the uses of forms under network logics also allows us to understand resistance differently. "Success" in a movement sometimes is not through more apparent gains in State policy, but success can also be through exploiting dominant

Westview Press, 1989) explicitly states Greenham Common operated as a decentralized organization, although Kirk is only referring to the camp at Greenham. However, Greenham can be understood as distributed when the many localized groups are factored in. Like with Camp Casey, there were "Greenham women everywhere" because actions were done as part of the movement if not directly connected to the camp.

⁴¹² Richard J. F. Day, "From Hegemony to Affinity: The Political Logic of the Newest Social Movements," *Cultural Studies* 18, no. 5 (2004): 716-748.

(public) network systems. Network theory is useful here because it allows us to understand resistance specifically for those *excluded* from the systems they wish to change. Combining rhetorical forms with network logics translates social movement resistance as 1) exploiting norms already in a given social system/public to have one's voice heard; 2) communicative exploits use, recode, or disrupt a given system; and 3) communication can be used to code an entirely new system. Women were able to play within and exploit the protocols of private and public and gain entry into the public through using the private letter form. Working for social change does not just mean gaining entry, but also means understanding the networks (along with the protocols operating them), and building strategies of exploit both on the level of "demand" within existing systems as well as of "act" in coding new systems. Both levels of communicative action occurred at Camp Casey: Cindy's demand of "what noble cause" spoke through the norms post- 9/11 of patriotism and traditional gender roles while the development of Camp Casey is the peace movement's version of a new operating system where care protocols developed and circulated.

The history of forms and women's use of those forms demonstrates how rhetorical theory aids in building network theory by providing the historical evidence for network practices. Social movement network theory has remained largely within showing which nodes are connected and in what ways, but Galloway and Thacker push us to use technological language to describe those practices. They compel us to think about the links—the edges—for it is in edges where agency is derived. As Galloway and Thacker state, "what matters more and more is the very distribution and dispersal of action throughout the network, a dispersal that would ask us to define networks less in

terms of the nodes and more in terms of the edges.”⁴¹³ Rhetorical acts constitute edges.

The practices and norms derived from rhetorical acts also produce the protocols controlling the network altogether.

Networked Movements: Exploits, Protocols, and Affect

Throughout the process of this project, I have been asked, “Why network theory?” The rhetorical “exploits” of women activists have been analyzed by historians and rhetoricians alike, using concepts such as the public sphere, rhetorical situation, or agency. Scholarship focusing on movement strategies based on public personas as with the use of motherhood has also been part of understanding women’s peace work. The histories of rhetorical forms, specifically in building the public sphere, have been traced by Habermas⁴¹⁴ and Warner,⁴¹⁵ so this project could have easily worked through public sphere theory to present the discursive publics constituted by Cindy’s rhetoric. If women activists, Cindy included, did not understand their own actions as “exploiting” dominant systems, why translate their otherwise organic and creative acts into the logic of computer code? The appropriate academic answer is that network theory provides some value-added or nuances the reading of these actions in ways otherwise limited by public or literary theory, which I have shown in the preceding chapters. The more correct answer is that *I* would have not reached the conclusions I did *without* the framework provided by Galloway and Thacker. More so, women’s peace work might

⁴¹³ Alexander R. Galloway. and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Network*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 157. Hereafter, “Exploit.”

⁴¹⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989).

⁴¹⁵ Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth Century America*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

not seem relevant to today's activists without its translation to network theory, as we have been otherwise unable to recognize relational work as revolutionary.

At the same time, network theory does provide nuance and overcomes limitations of other social change theory. Although I have been reading about the creative resistance of women activists working within and against societal norms for awhile, the only conclusions that could be reached on why these acts were successful in reaching audiences or gaining attention rested in the construction of the message alone. "Embracing the Base" as the Greenham Common women did, was indeed a clever, symbolic demonstration constructed through our dominant meaning systems of gender roles. But that explanation does little to explain *why* women were compelled to break their everyday routines to travel to Greenham. That explanation does little to explain why people, at Greenham and Camp Casey, went to camp *without really knowing why*. Although public sphere theory allows us to understand the rhetorical challenge of exclusions from "the" public or the possibilities of being able to self-organize through attention to discourse alone,⁴¹⁶ the justification for such work always, at least in Habermas' model,⁴¹⁷ translates back to public opinion formation to sway centralized sovereign bodies. This is problematic, for as Day reminds us, those sovereign bodies can be the source of oppression in the first place. If camping at Greenham was to prove another order is possible, then we also need theory that allows us to understand how this, too, can be powerful without always coming back to the State. Again, without the

⁴¹⁶ See Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, (New York: Zone Books, 2002).

⁴¹⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, trans. William Rehg (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996).

language of exploit and protocols, we might too easily write off Camp Casey as a clever rhetorical campaign, without recognizing our own affective conditions.

Indeed, there is “value-added” by applying Galloway and Thacker to movements as their project attempts to reorient social change and resistance under network frameworks *because* the terrain of resistance is no longer “networks” of citizens (in movements or publics) against sovereign States. Our social and political landscape is much more “wild” with States being networked or working within other networked systems *against* other networks. The State does not rule with juridical order alone, but as the “terror dream” shows, the State can coordinate protological controls as well. We have witnessed the reality of networked threats against the US in 9/11; we have technological tools that allow us to engage and understand our own actions as being “networked” everyday. Accordingly, movements have to consciously recognize networked systems. Galloway’s and Thacker’s ontological shift changes the way activists *have* to understand themselves and *have* to organize. In their own way, Galloway and Thacker reach the same conclusion as Day: seeking rights and recognition from a State is no longer how the game is played.

Further, Galloway and Thacker extend how we understand “networking” to include centralized, decentralized, *and* distributed forms. Each form contains its own control protocols, and tactics to enable or destroy these networks are based on the form. Moreover, changing networked forms is also a source of power. Galloway and Thacker push us further to understand networks as operating as a set of nested layers: if one cannot gain entrance through the more visible “application” layer—for example, a woman using letters because she is otherwise disallowed from speaking in public—

then, one can find other spaces of resistance by creating new physical or internet layers (creating other applications in the process) while compelling others to join new systems. Women's presses were not just significant because they allowed women a space to print their own publications—it is powerful because it shifts power away from dominant print systems. Further, by convincing others the new system works just as well if not better than other systems, movements gain power through the inclusion of others while at the same time rejecting and delegitimizing oppressive (State) systems.

The goal for movement actors, then, does not have to be solely directed towards gaining access to or changing norms already in place—this is only the beginning for how one can disrupt systems. Galloway and Thacker also point to different ways of understanding resistance: it is no longer merely to destroy or disrupt old systems, but exploits (like computer viruses) can work to make systems *more productive* or to change particular relations within the system. As evidenced by the netwars conducted against women's movements, sometimes the goal is to understand the system's protocols well enough to make the system turn on itself. In systems where trusting relationships are the prevailing protocols, the goal is merely to convince nodes they are no longer interacting with trustworthy others, or that it is a threat to continue working in this system. Red-baiting and other similar tactics do just that: convince others to be paranoid and break ties of their own free will with those they once thought of as friendly. Again, resistance is less about policy and State change and it is more about changing affective relationships.

Galloway and Thacker challenge us further to recognize the distributed network form as the key for possible resistance in today's society. The "new" form of

organizing is not through traditional organizational bodies, but should extend to organizing ways of being together or life in common.⁴¹⁸ The power of distributed networks is precisely its ambiguity, open circulation, ability to reconfigure, and ability to coordinate autonomously.⁴¹⁹ The sustainability of Greenham Common or other Direct Action Movements⁴²⁰ was made possible through a system in which others could link and act on their own terms. Activists chose their affinity groups or gate camps; activists chose when to participate and when to connect others. In some respect, the goal of organizing is to create opportunities and a system by which one can carry out those opportunities. We should think less of the success for a *single* organization or *single* campaign, and think more about how we can be, and are, connected to others. The reconfiguring of the “network” for particular historical moments allows a movement to act and create change for a particular time. Further, distributed movements can have continuity over time—connected through particular activists, organizations, tactics, and messages leaving traces and the possibility for movements to emerge when necessary. Just as women suffrage activists used letters to maintain relationship so that they could resume their cause when politically appropriate, rhetorical practices make possible networked action. Just as letters are coded with protocols for *how* others perceive and use them, the networks coded by letters compel action through the norms of protocol.

To emphasize, the logics behind movement organizational structure should be less about having stable “nodes,” and our rhetorical acts should be less about how we

⁴¹⁸ “Exploit,” 101.

⁴¹⁹ “Exploit.”

⁴²⁰ See Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) for a history of the Direct Action Movement.

can construct compelling frames to convince other nodes to identify with our node's cause. The "new" theory for resistance is to "write code," just as the ethics of care was a "new code" for the movement and society at large. Again, "code" occurs at different levels and constitutes the protocols of control for a network. Rhetorical forms have their own codes such as when we use private, personal letters to build familial relationships. The practices and goals of the movement also become affectively charged—again we are back to the protocols of care. Michael Hardt, working from Spinoza, understands affect as the power to act, where *affective labor* produces social networks and forms of community.⁴²¹ If networks are ordered through protocols, and protocols are derived from communicative practices, then it follows that protological practices manifested through the use of rhetorical forms are affective labor. As affect defines and hold networks together, Cindy's rhetorical work presents the possibility of a network not constituted of fear but rather care. Whereas fear (especially produced by States) limits our power to act—or at least defines the boundaries of our actions—a care affect presents possibilities for liberation. In short, we must continue to write codes of care to define our own networked relations.

The Lessons of Cindy Sheehan's Movement

Admittedly, this was a hard project to write. I went into the dissertation expecting to tell a heroic tale of Cindy's peace movement work and to offer some "movement-relevant theory"⁴²² for activists to continue organizing for peace. Clearly, if Cindy's actions were a reflection of women activists of the past, then it would follow

⁴²¹ Michael Hardt, "Affective Labor," *Boundary 2*, 26, no. 2 (1999): 89-100.

⁴²² See Douglas Bevington and Chris Dixon, "Movement-relevant Theory: Rethinking Social Movement Scholarship and Activism," *Social Movement Studies* 4, no. 3 (2005): 185-208.

an analysis of her letters, camping, and autobiography would lend itself to how Cindy was *effective* in bringing the peace movement message to the public or how strategic her use of a mother persona was in a post-9/11 context. Cindy, however, proved to be more problematic—both a result of her own rhetorical actions as well as a result of a movement that did not take advantage of networking strategies (only accidentally adopting them through Camp Casey). Although Cindy’s story is more about missed opportunities than successes, her story is nevertheless important for continued peace work.

To make sense of Cindy’s story, it is best to go chronologically, as the chapters in this project have. Cindy did not *start* a movement, but rather joined one already in progress. Women’s peace movement work has left traces of rhetorical resources, frames to understand war and peace, and actions constituting new worlds—these are the resources for continued peace movement work. Whether we are conscious of it or not, adopting mother speaking personas or understanding appropriateness or decorum of how to speak for peace has been and continues to be shaped by movement activists. Activists writing in the present bare traces of the discourses that have come before, and we would do better to remember—to intentionally remember—these histories. The movement is there, and we can bring it together through our rhetorical work—but we can send the system into hypertrophy⁴²³ if we built on what already exists instead of recreating the “new” or patterning our actions after the old. Instead of activists forcing their “new” message on what is already given, they use what is already given to work within and push system limits.

⁴²³ “Exploit,” 101. Galloway and Thacker describe the “future political algorithm” not as disturbance, but hypertrophy—to make the system work beyond its own limits.

Cindy's work, in some ways, built on what was *already there* or what was already made possible by the present peace movement. Cindy was able to join the movement because of "new" technological networks: she went to the Internet and found others asking the same questions she was asking about the war. She went to the Internet and found organizations such as Military Families Speak Out, and she began linking to others. She went to hear speakers; she then became a speaker herself. She joined established organizations, and then she established her own organization. She read others' analysis of the war through blogs, and then she started to write her own. Her own rhetorical acts, then, were influenced by and bared traces of the messages already circulating in this peace movement network.

Building on rhetorical traces already existing can work for or against a movement as demonstrated by Cindy's open letter. She posted an open letter to Bush after his re-election, but this letter did not circulate or create publics to oppose (or impeach) the president. This letter failed to "exploit" and awaken a public because the protocols of editorialized rants of blogs colored readers' perceptions on how to respond or react to the letter. The response, appropriate for blogs, was to consume or not to read at all. We have to understand all the protocols at work in a system. We must remember the relational work constituted by letter protocol in order to make a "blog" system *work for us*. If technology enables us to "network" faster and across greater distances than before, then we must also remember "networking" as understood by women's movements was not just having others agree to your arguments and ideas but also includes asking others to enter into a *relationship* with you and your cause. The

opportunity to build networks exists even with letters on the internet, but we must activate the right protocological relationships to enable the system to work that way.

Camp Casey and Cindy's question of "What noble cause?" seemed to work *the best* for building movement networks and awakening the public. When Cindy spoke the least is when she was most effective. The question worked on the audience at a level beyond reason—it spoke to our affective cores. The question showed us, both through how it was asked and by Bush's lack of response, that we were living in a system controlled by fear, perpetuated by driving individuals apart from one another. We were not to care or connect. We were meant to surveil and assume all others were a threat to our safety and security. Cindy reminded us of what we were missing in our lives; Cindy's question reminded us of what we *needed* in our lives and from our sovereign. People came to Camp Casey because they *desired* to connect to others. People came to champion Cindy's cause because they, too, wanted to care and be cared for by others. Building affective relationships is an important tactic for any movement because *anyone*, even ordinary housewives, can participate. The system gaining the most users—the most nodes to adopt the protocols—has the most power. Camp Casey was powerful because people were awaking from their "terror dream" and recognizing war was the irrational choice.

A network orientation to movements allows us to perceive threats against movements differently. Although overt actions to dismantle movements have been apparent—jailing leaders, tear gassing demonstrators, etc.—these overt actions lead us to strategize under the wrong constructs. A sovereign State arrests the leader of a centralized organization. A centralized police force quells a singular demonstration.

The “new terrain,” however, is network against network—and we have been slow to catch onto this point. Women’s movement history demonstrates the use of network tactics *by the State* against movement-networks. Women’s suffrage, presenting an affront to patriarchal control, is not stopped through arresting its leaders. It is stopped by compelling members to atrophy, convinced suffrage is a front for Communism. Although women at Greenham were arrested and evicted on a regular basis, the only way to stop “Greenham” from spreading everywhere was to convince non-adopters not to adopt the protocols of the deviant, queer, and dirty women living at the camp. A netwar is conducted not through brute force, but through affect. We convince others to change their relationships or how they *feel* about those they interact with. The Right convinced us Cindy was acting selfishly and for her own gain in the media spotlight. The Right forced us to question whether Cindy was the person we *wanted* to support regardless of our feelings against the war because the Right was also successful in making us believe the movement was about *Cindy* and not our own need for care.

Cindy’s autobiography, then, is a mixed bag. On the one hand, it leaves a record of the movement network to allow us to “see” that the movement is not just about Cindy. The record shows the various organizations acting in the world, so we can also visualize ourselves as connected and as a peace movement *collective* instead of operating in localized isolation. If others are indeed out there, we might be more motivated to combine our efforts and see beyond our individual organizational walls. On the other hand, in an attempt to “fix” the breaches in the peace movement network by the Right, Cindy may have done more to centralize the movement around her. Cindy may have done more to limit the possibilities of continued distributed action by

showing the repercussions of action against the State, and by trying to refute the attacks made on *her* instead of recognizing those attacks were on the movement itself. Because Cindy was made a central figure in the movement by the Right, she responded as a the central figure—she played into the netwar strategy of the Right to change the topology of distributed Camp Casey to a centralized Cindy’s movement. Had Cindy understood the work of Camp Casey under network logics, she might have used the autobiography strategically to recode the ethics of care as the protological system—not to show herself at a war with BushCo and the Right. Ultimately, BushCo, through netwar strategies, bought itself enough time through creating doubt in a peace movement network to continue to “surge” in Iraq.⁴²⁴ The lesson for activists is that to keep members using our system, we must continue to “make it work” and make it attractive to users. We must continue to convince others of our protological code.

I do not wish to end on a “failed opportunities of Cindy” note in this project. Again, she is important to the movement and for continued peace movement work. Without Cindy, we may not have been able to see affective relations played out; Butler’s theory would have no grounding of how it might be *possible* to prevent war through public grief. As Galloway and Thacker remind us, political practice, like computer viruses, are sometimes accidental, and like Cindy’s belief in fate leading her to activism, perhaps it was fate for Cindy to “accidentally” spur new affective relations with Camp Casey. Cindy opened up the possibility the war would not be endless because we “saw” a new reality. Cindy opened up the possibility for new affectively charged messages to gain

⁴²⁴ In 2006, the Democrats gained majority in Congress, and peace activists thought the Democrats they helped elect would work to force Bush to end the war—limiting war funding and implementing deadlines. However, Bush was able to push through a troop *surge* in January 2007 and quell any plans by Congress to hold him accountable to deadlines or budget.

political traction. President Barack Obama campaigned in 2008 on an affective message of “hope” with its accompanying implications of “change.” Obama did not just represent a new political party and policy to the American people from Bush, he represented new affective relations that would *guide* and direct public policy. The people’s disappointment over Obama sending more troops to Afghanistan in December 2009 is not because people disagree that this action will not be effective, but because this action goes against the assumed affective relationship with Obama. Continued war is consistent with our relationship with Bush—not the hope we had for Obama.

So where do we go from here? Butler argues the “job is never done” when it comes to normative frames directing our relationships. The “terror dream” continues to connect 9/11 to Afghanistan to Iraq in the minds of the public—even though the evidence shows this was never the case. Cindy suggests in her autobiography that the “struggle continues on,” but Tom Hayden’s analysis of the peace movement as constituted through localized, isolated organizations seems to still be the case today.⁴²⁵ The movement has not thought of itself as nor embraced “network” as its organizing principle. At the same time, it would be misguided to follow Hayden’s advice to channel efforts into electoral politics or to follow Scott Ritter’s lead in creating a compelling ideological campaign—at least if that campaign consisted of persuasive messages alone.⁴²⁶ The movement’s work must come from developing and coding protocols of care and peace into our everyday experience. Instead of understanding dissent from war as an “irrational” act, we should come to understand it as the

⁴²⁵ Tom Hayden, *Ending the War in Iraq*, (New York: Akashic Books, 2007).

⁴²⁶ Scott Ritter, *Waging Peace: The Art of War for the Antiwar Movement*, (New York: Nation Books, 2007).

appropriate response. Instead of uncritically agreeing troop surges win security, we must see war as an affront and attack on the systems we have created. Clearly, there is more work needing to be done, thus, I find no more appropriate closure to the journey Cindy has taken me on than to quote her own call to action for us at the end of her autobiography:

Go now and change the world. It is in us all.
These are the last words written for this book.
However, the story is just beginning.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁷ Cindy Sheehan, *Peace Mom: A Mother's Journey Through Heartache to Activism*, (New York: Atria Books, 2006), 240.

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