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# Gendered Activism and Outcomes: Women in the Peace Movement

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# CHAPTER 34

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# GENDERED ACTIVISM
# AND OUTCOMES

*Women in the Peace Movement*

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## LISA LEITZ AND DAVID S. MEYER

OVER several days in August of 2012, a few energetic women interrupted prime-time speeches at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida. Somehow gaining access to the arena, they screamed at the party's presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, while unfurling pink, silky signs highlighting a number of social justice issues. Security guards removed the women in relatively short order, but activist invaders were also able to interrupt speeches by other Republican notables in a similar fashion. Each time, the women demonstrating were shouted down by the members of the convention who were vigorously chanting "U-S-A, U-S-A."

The activists also appeared at the Democratic National Convention weeks later, and although they could not get inside the convention hall, they picketed and protested outside, deploying signs, chants, and skits focused on drone use, the influence of the banking industry in politics, gun violence, the financial and human costs of military intervention, and women's rights. The protests were colorful, theatrical, and provocative. At the Republican convention, protesters brought handcuffs and crime scene tape to attempt a "citizen arrest" of former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice for war crimes. On another occasion, activists wore pink silk costumes resembling vaginas and held signs with the slogan "read my lips: leave my vagina alone," in protest of Republican-backed abortion restrictions.

The group staging these protests was CodePink, which defines itself as "a women-led grassroots organization working to end U.S. wars and militarism, support peace and human rights initiatives, and redirect our tax dollars into healthcare, education, green jobs and other life-affirming programs" (CodePink 2015). CodePink provides a window for viewing the aspirations and difficulties of women's peace activism. There are tensions about issues, approaches, and organizing strategies. Throughout U.S. history, women's peace activism has held three sometimes overlapping concerns: providing opportunities and influence for women; promoting social justice; and stopping war and the

preparations for war. Women have mobilized in women-only and women-led groups, as well as in groups led by men that did not share an explicit commitment to women's social and political advancement.

The example of CodePink's multiple forms of activism illuminates a number of trends in U.S. women's peace activism. First, many women have been involved in general peace activism, and a significant portion of them have concentrated their focus on women-only and, more recently, women-led organizations. CodePink represents a perspective that women have something special to bring to discussions about war and peace. Second, women's peace organizations have often connected women's rights to issues of peace, as CodePink did by protesting in costumes as dancing vaginas. Third, women's peace activists have struggled, often unsuccessfully, to build a diverse and inclusive agenda that addresses the full range of social justice issues involved in peace. Many of the women involved in peace activism, including CodePink's leaders, are wealthy Whites. Fourth, while CodePink often used a maternalist perspective that bases opposition to military action in women's nurturing capacity as mothers, other organizations, such as the National Organization for Women, use a liberal equality narrative that links (militarized) power to masculinity (Kutz-Flamenbaum 2015). Women's peace activism has reflected larger debates about gender within the women's movement, as well as within the larger society. Finally, women in peace activism use a diverse array of strategies and often disagree strongly over the best path to peace or even what peace entails. CodePink works in the more radical or idealist segment of the U.S. peace movement that uses direct action to advance a broad peace and justice agenda, rather than focusing on a narrower opposition to a specific type of conflict or weapon, and its focus is internationalist rather than isolationist.

In this chapter, we look at the history of women's activism in the peace movement over the course of U.S. political development, examining the ways that women expanded the goals of peace activism to include gender and other social justice issues. We then examine which women actually participated in these efforts, and how that has changed over time. In the following sections, we explore distinct tensions in women's activism focusing on the role of gender (essentialism versus social constructionism) and radicalism versus pragmatic realpolitik. We conclude by looking at the outcomes of such mobilizations, which have been very limited in terms of policy, but much more extensive in terms of changing people's lives and feeding other kinds of activism, including women's rights.

# PEACE AS A WOMEN'S ISSUE

The peace and feminist movements have often intertwined in the United States with intense periods of women's involvement in peace activism immediately preceding, following, and/or coinciding with periods of activism around gender equality within a nation. As Meyer and Whittier (1994) describe, these movements shared coalitions, personnel, and communities, leading to the transmission of tactics, frames, and organizational structures. Women often moved between these movements because many of

the issues underpinning one—such as a belief in inherent human dignity, opposition to violence (from romantic partners or a state), and the need for individual rights—could be applied to the other. Initially, many of these women had been influenced by William Lloyd Garrison's inclusion of women's rights in the articulated arguments about abolition and peace (Alonso 1993). While a number of prominent women began to speak out for nonviolence and peace in the 1800s, women's roles in the peace movement dramatically expanded as they developed single-gender peace organizations in the early 1900s, and as their opportunities in politics and culture expanded (Alonso 1993). These typically single-gender organizations connected issues of women's rights to international relations and insisted that women should have an expanded role in political decision-making, both nationally and internationally.

U.S. women's peace activism originated in large part from their activism on other justice issues, including suffrage and abolitionism. The contemporary women's movement dates its origins to an international conference at Seneca Falls in 1848, where women's rights to property and full engagement in civic life were the ostensible foci of the conference. However, from the start the women's movement was justified not only by the notion of equal rights, but also by the promise that women's participation in politics would bring about better, more moral policies. In particular, women at the conference saw themselves as strong advocates of peace. Many of the activists present, notably including Frederick Douglass, had long been active in the abolitionist movement, and the presence of a large Quaker contingent ensured that peace was on the agenda as well.

U.S. women's activism for peace is not only rooted in feminism, but also built on women's work in abolitionist organizations. That movement's criticisms of the inhumane treatment of slaves became the basis for understanding how ethnocentrism and racism fed bellicose and nationalistic fervor. Ultimately, the Civil War ended slavery in the United States, and this massive shift in U.S. life and politics, ostensibly a victory for the many women crusaders in the movement, marked a starting point for emergent women's activism. Susan B. Anthony, leading the Women's National Loyal League, wrote that the bloodshed of the Civil War could have been avoided had women led the country to the moral position of abolition (Alonso 1993).[1] Responding to the deaths and devastation from the Civil War, the same woman who wrote the "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" made an appeal for a "Mothers' Day of Peace" (Pickman Clifford 1979). Calling upon women to leave their homes in order to become active politically for peace in feminist organizations, Julia Ward Howe wrote in 1870:

> We will not have questions answered by irrelevant agencies,
> Our husbands will not come to us, reeking with carnage,
> For caresses and applause.
> Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn
> All that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience.
> We, the women of one country,
> Will be too tender of those of another country
> To allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs. (Howe 1870)

Howe's plan for a national holiday dedicated to women working against war every July 2 was ultimately unsuccessful, but "Women's Peace Festivals" were held on that day for a number of years internationally (Alonso 1993). Howe believed that gender equality was a necessary step for women to be effective advocates for peace; she fused feminism with the promotion of peace in ways that became common among U.S. women's peace activists throughout the following century—just as the anti-nuclear organization Women Strike for Peace would later learn that for women to be effective advocates for peace, they needed greater power in traditional politics (see Swerdlow 1993).

Suffrage provided the focal point for women's organizing in the wake of the Civil War, and the belief that women's presence in politics would lead to more pacific policies was part of the rationale for action (Banaszak 1996). Women gained the vote state by state, beginning in Wyoming in 1869, followed shortly thereafter in other Western states. In mobilizing for the vote, women built organizations, developing tactics for making claims, such as parades, that would become staples in the tactical repertoire of both feminist and anti-war organizing afterward—and in many other movements as well (Banaszak 1996; McCammon 2012). Women's concerns with peace and social welfare found a more prominent place in national discourse.

A variety of gendered circumstances pulled women into the anti-war movement and encouraged the development of separate women's peace organizations (Kretschmer and Meyer 2013). Exclusion from positions of policymaking in the state has been one push. Exclusion from influence within male-dominated peace organizations has been another. Women were often shut out of male dominated organizations, and even when included, were excluded from leadership positions. In the 1830s women were entirely excluded from the American Anti-Slavery Association (Sklar 1990), and in forming their own abolitionist organizations they met with women from Europe, not only leading to a strengthened U.S. suffrage movement (Anderson 2000), but also setting the groundwork for the international women's peace movement. Women involved in the European-American abolitionist movement were the founders of the International Council of Women, which had a committee on "Peace and International Arbitration" (Rupp 1997: 19).

Because exclusion, particularly from decision-making, continued well past suffrage, women-only and women-led organizations have been particularly visible in the peace movement.

In the student, civil rights, and anti–Vietnam War movements, women protested disrespectful treatment by male leaders, and exclusion from positions of power within movement organizations. Women in the draft resistance movement, for instance, found that only male activists were allowed to be spokespersons, strategists, or other leaders (Thorne 1975). These frustrations led to the development of a stronger and more focused feminist movement that developed in the 1970s. For example, some women's liberation organizations such as Red Stockings formed in response to the sexist treatment that many women faced in the wider anti-Vietnam movement (Burgin 2012). During the 1967 Pentagon Protests against the U.S. war in Southeast Asia, women were relegated to roles such as cooks because male activists believed that since their lives were

at stake through the draft they should be the leaders (Burgin 2012). While some female activists feared that feminism would splinter the anti-war movement (and the Left more broadly), others chose to create women-only peace organizations or left to join the burgeoning feminist movement.

When peace campaigns returned in a large way later in the decade, women enjoyed both access to leadership of mixed-gender organizations and the establishment of strong women-led organizations. Women who charged the student and civil rights movements with sexism were said to have been inspired by Women Strike for Peace, which featured all-women leadership and had been active on nuclear disarmament issues since 1961 (Swerdlow 1993).

Women's peace activism was affected not only by international conflicts, but also by the gender norms of their times. As women became involved in issues of abolition and suffrage, many were led to see these issues as important for improving international relations. However, women often found that they were not taken seriously because of their exclusion from the polity and the military. Due to their exclusion or second-class status in the wider peace movement, women formed women-only, and then later women-led, organizations. Most of these organizations would address issues beyond opposition to a particular war and would link a broader human rights agenda to the cause of peace.

# WOMEN'S RIGHTS AS A PEACE ISSUE

Cultural norms that restricted women's roles in public life also restricted their activism. Women used movement tactics for activism in general—and peace in particular—in part because they were formally excluded from alternative routes to political influence. Thus, peace and abolition efforts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were accompanied by demands for suffrage. Even after suffrage, however, the claim that women played little role in making the political decisions that led to war legitimated and spurred activism that linked feminism and peace.

U.S. women activists saw the connections between social reform, feminism, and peace long before these connections would become standard in the scholarship on peace and conflict. The career of Jane Addams, scholar and social organizer, is in many ways emblematic. Addams spent most of her adult life in Hull House, the settlement community she founded, animated by the idea that reformers should live among those they seek to help. Addams herself was deeply rooted in Chicago, but also connected with women's movements and peace activists transnationally. Following a series of Peace Parades in 1914, after the start of war in Europe, Addams and suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt founded the Women's Peace Party, amid spirited debate about whether men should be involved in any peace organization (Sklar 1995). Addams became its first president. Months later, she was among a delegation of women from the United States attending the International Congress of Women in the Hague, which was itself organized as a protest against the war (Rupp 1997). The Women's International League for Peace and

Freedom, modeled after the Women's Peace Party, grew out of that conference, with Addams as its first president (Rupp 1997). This organization would continue to expand the issues it saw as connected to feminism over the years, as it expanded worldwide and maintained an influential U.S. chapter.

Linking women's rights and war was difficult and contentious. Women worked hard, and unsuccessfully, to have the United States play a mediating role instead of entering World War I (see Patterson 2008). The largest and most powerful women's organizations supported Woodrow Wilson's campaign for re-election as president in 1916, largely on his promise of suffrage, but also because Wilson promised to stay out of the European war. When Wilson reneged on the latter promise, some activists focused on the former: Catt offered the National Woman Suffrage Association's (NWSA) support for the war effort, believing that this would be the best strategy to achieve suffrage (Patterson 2008). This caused a schism in the women's movement that delineated women-led peace organizations from feminist organizations, and Catt left the Women's Peace Party (Alonso 1993).

Others, like Alice Paul, who came from a Quaker background, saw the war as an issue that could not be ignored or compromised. She left NWSA when Catt supported Wilson's war efforts and founded the National Woman's Party (NWP), which was committed to opposing the war, and to engaging in more aggressive tactics to promote suffrage. Paul and the NWP opposed Wilson's bid for re-election, and commenced picketing outside the White House to call for a constitutional amendment guaranteeing suffrage to women, and for peace as the United States entered the war. Paul went to jail in 1917 and staged a hunger strike to protest the war, political exclusion, and the conditions in prison; she continued to link issues of social welfare, gender, and international relations. Shortly after the activists were released from prison, in 1918, President Wilson introduced the Nineteenth Amendment, which, he said, was necessary to support the war effort (Banaszak 1996).

During World War I, women served in the military and took jobs in the civilian economy that servicemen had vacated. Although the numbers were quite small by contemporary standards, women's military and economic engagement represented a significant break with past practices that would re-emerge and increase during the next world war. Perhaps more important, particularly in U.S. cities, progressive women had become significant political actors, spearheading campaigns for social welfare and government reform generally (see Patterson 2008). President Wilson's regular correspondence with these women and the fact that he believed that he needed their support demonstrate women's growing influence on politics and policies, including those related to peace.

While men were more likely to be combatants, women faced distinct issues as civilians and as sexual conquests of militarized male power. Until recently, rape and sexual assault in the context of war were regularly ignored by mainstream peace organizations and official negotiations, so women sought ways to make the issues visible and to call for their end. For example, these issues were a focus for some of the women who organized internationally prior to and during World War I, and after the war women from a dozen nations appealed to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson to develop international mediation

as a way to protect women from wartime rape (Rupp 1997). During the Iraq War, women veterans involved in peace organizations, such as Colonel (Retired) Ann Wright, member of Veterans for Peace and CodePink, would raise questions about wartime rape of women soldiers by their comrades that would inspire future changes to Department of Defense policies (Leitz 2014).

Activists regularly moved between feminist, peace, and other social justice movements. For example, women in New York City formed Women Strike for Peace in 1960, dedicated to direct action to oppose the arms race (see Swerdlow 1993). With the rest of the peace movement, the campaign flourished in the early 1960s, focusing on the dangers of nuclear testing and radioactive fallout as a means of opposing the arms race more generally. The movement as a whole faded in 1963 when President Kennedy signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty, which ended atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons while allowing all signers to increase the number of tests underground and underwater (Divine 1978). Activists spilled out into a range of other developing campaigns, including the civil rights, early feminist, and free speech movements (Hadden and Tarrow 2007). Indeed, the campus-based chapters of SANE (the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy) became the basis for the new Students for a Democratic Society (Miller 1987).

As women's roles in society broadened, so did their participation in movements, including those around issues of war and peace. Many in these organizations believed that women's experiences, especially as mothers and as unequal citizens, gave them a special vantage point from which to understand the causes and consequences of war. These organizations succeeded in broadening the focus of the peace movement to incorporate issues of gender, ranging from suffrage to wartime rape, as well as other issues of social welfare and equality.

# INTERSECTIONALITY IN THE PEACE MOVEMENT

In 1910 *The Advocate for Peace* published an article about women's roles in the movement, which connected the early lack of substantial numbers of women in peace activism before 1880 to their absence from mainstream politics. In the February 15, 2003, protests of the coming Iraq War, women comprised two-thirds of the protesters in the U.S. streets; this is a substantially higher percentage of women protestors than were in European streets, though women comprised a majority of protesters in most European countries, too (Walgrave, Rucht, and Van Aelst 2010). The growth of women in the peace movement is likely linked to cultural norms about gender that link peaceful attitudes to femininity. Klandermans (2010) links women's greater participation in the protests leading to Iraq to the significance of gender in opinions about the Iraq War. Even when controlling for political and demographic characteristics, women consistently demonstrate less support for war than men in U.S. public opinion polls (Eichenberg 2003;

Goldstein 2001). Although women, racial minorities, and the economically or educationally disadvantaged have tended to be more opposed to war than their counterparts (Burris 2008), women's peace activists and organizations have often ignored the intersectional politics of peace.

The women who have mobilized for peace in the United States have often been White and advantaged and, particularly early on, many came from liberal Protestant churches, reflecting economic and social stratification in the broader society. Although women regularly wished to expand the movement's demographics, their efforts were often stymied by circumstances beyond their control (Alonso 1993). Activism requires substantial resources, especially for those who wish to travel internationally for meetings. Activists were those who had the financial, time, and educational resources to devote themselves to the sometimes abstract issues of peace. Women's peace activism has often developed with "platform leadership" (Kretschmer and Meyer 2007) whereby organizations are spearheaded, funded, and led by a small group of wealthy individuals without much input from a larger grassroots membership; in the case of CodePink, Medea Benjamin and Jodie Evans direct the issues the organization addresses, its strategies and tactics, and obtain the vast majority of media attention. Additionally, women activists from other backgrounds were often occupied by concerns of inequality that were generally more pressing than peace.

In addition to those issues largely beyond the control of organizers, some of the demographics of women's peace movement activism reflected the ethnocentric biases found in both the wider society and among activists. Many women's peace organizations ignored intersectionality, collapsing the category of women to only encompass the experiences of elite White women. Since women's peace activism is intertwined with feminist organizing, that movement's historical exclusions of the issues of racial minorities and the poor in favor of White upper (and middle) class feminism also affected activism (e.g., Breines 2006; Dubois 1999). Although the Euro-American women involved in early twentieth-century international peace organizing ostensibly opposed racial discrimination, their work involved paternalistic and stereotypical understandings of Middle Eastern, African, and Asian people. For example, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) opposed sexual aggression in World War I by employing stereotypes of Black Africans and called for their exclusion from European militaries (Rupp 1997). Later the Black members of the Detroit chapter of Women Strike for Peace unsuccessfully called for combining anti-nuclear activism with campaigns for racial desegregation (Swerdlow 1993). Whether and how to incorporate issues of civil rights with those of peace would plague that organization throughout its history. Many organizations struggled with the strategic decisions around whether to expand their conception of peace beyond opposition to direct violence (often referred to as negative peace) to include addressing poverty and social justice (referred to as positive peace). As peace organizations expanded their concerns into tackling issues of structural violence that affect minority groups, they sometimes met with greater success in connecting with a broader range of women. For example, Women for Racial and Economic Equality operated as a feminist peace organization that attracted an interracial membership,

unusual at that time, between the 1970s and 1990s (Alonso 1993). However, most peace organizations continued to struggle with their handling of intersectional politics.

In the interwar period, a number of prominent members of minority groups joined existing women's peace organizations. For example, African Americans such as Addie Hunton, Alice Dunbar Nelson, and Jessie Fauset became leaders in various organizations involved in the international peace movement (Plastas 2011). These women successfully challenged White American women at the helms of the WILPF to engage with intersectionality, leading WILPF to link international peace and racial justice activism in the United States. However, African Americans' work within WILPF was often confined to committees focused on race (Plastas 2011). Jewish-American women became active participants in peace movement organizations during this period as well (see Klapper 2013). They challenged the anti-Semitism rising in Europe and in their own organizations, where Christian rituals, beliefs, and language dominated (Rupp 1997). With the addition of both Jewish and Black American activists, WILPF became more active in movements against racially based structural violence in the U.S. (including Jim Crow laws) and for finding ways to overcome the ethnic, racial, and religious tensions that underpin many conflicts. For example, the statement from jailed women activists from the 1981 Pentagon protest connected ethnocentrism, imperialism, and sexism to the "military mentality" (Alonso 1993: 248).

Language about morality often buttressed women's calls to mobilize for peace. Most of the earliest women peace activists came from Protestant traditions, including many Universalists, Quakers, and Unitarians (see Alonso 1993). In particular, U.S. women's peace activism was rooted in Quaker traditions that not only stressed nonviolence, but also encouraged women to play an expanded role in religious and public life. Following the world wars, a Catholic peace movement, often led by women, grew from war relief efforts. Journalist and lay activist Eileen Egan formalized these efforts in 1962 by cofounding the American PAX Association, which later became Pax Christi-USA. By the 1980s, some of the women involved in peace activism were simultaneously involved in the feminist spirituality movement (Alonso 1993). While religion continued to play an important role for some women's peace organizations through the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, there was greater diversity in religious (and non-religious) traditions in women activists who stood against the war. While some women's peace organizations acknowledge the importance of religious/non-religious identities and the discrimination of religious minorities in their organizing, others have left this out of their understanding of the intersectional politics of peace.

Although women involved in same-sex romantic relationships played important roles in peace activism since at least the end of the 1800s (see Rupp 1997), the gay liberation movement of the 1960s encouraged these women to address homophobia as a form of structural violence. Most of the large organizations resisted linking these issues, just as they had ignored other aspects of intersectionality. In 1985, the U.S. chapter of WILPF became the first major U.S. peace group to incorporate equality for lesbians and gays in its "Women's Budget," which described what could be accomplished for social welfare if money were shifted away from the military (Alonso 1993).

Women's peace activists continue to wrestle with the interplay of gender, race, class, religion, sexuality, and other categories of identity and inequality. Although the consequences of war, like most other social troubles, fall even more heavily on the poor and disadvantaged, activism for peace has been primarily animated by people from relatively advantaged backgrounds (e.g., Parkin 1968). During periods of military conscription and deployments, the composition of the activist community shifts somewhat to include those from disadvantaged groups likely to be inducted to military service, but peace activists have historically struggled to make their campaigns racially and economically diverse. Differences in background often have exacerbated rifts between activist groups with different strategies and analyses when actual wars occurred.

# EMBRACING AND ESCHEWING GENDER DIFFERENCES

Historically, women in the peace movement have adopted a range of strategies for linking gender to war. One stream of women's peace activism has rested on essentialist notions of gender, in which men are seen as aggressive and bellicose, while women are pacifist and nurturing. This approach frames women as moral authorities and nurturing mothers of the nation. This approach was dominant in the early stages of women's involvement in peace activism, and continues to be offered by women's peace organizations such as CodePink and the Raging Grannies (see Kutz-Flammenbaum 2007, 2011, 2015). Another stream of activists argues for a more social constructionist perspective, whereby the power relationship in war and politics provides women with different experiences that make their voices essential to the development of long-term peace. This egalitarian framing sees women's rights as contingent on a reduction of war and military spending, and it draws a variety of connections between the inequalities that women face and militarism or nationalism. Organizations in this segment frame their critique of militarism and aggressive masculinity, not as innate characteristics of those born male, but as systems of power derived from gendered political structures. These tensions between essentialism and social constructionism, often called radical and liberal branches of the feminist movement, has been a well-documented (e.g., Echols 1989; Freeman 1975; Whittier 1995) rift within the women's movement as a whole, as well as within women's peace activism (Alonso 1993; Burgin 2012; Kutz-Flammenbaum 2011, 2015).

Women's responsibility for families throughout much of U.S. history has made caregiving, especially for children, women's work, and many women's peace organizations use maternal framing to encourage resonance with their messages. These organizations describe the act of bearing and caring for children as antithetical to war (see also Ruddick 1998). For example, in 1961 Women Strike for Peace organized marches in approximately sixty U.S. cities in favor of nuclear disarmament; women walked off their

jobs and out of their homes to join the picket line against the nuclear arms race. In the coming decades of activism, these activists would regularly refer to their role as mothers needing to protect their families from the effects of nuclear fallout in their signs, literature, and speeches. During the Vietnam War, several in the organization attempted to assert rights as mothers to prevent their sons from being drafted (Swerdlow 1993). The motherhood references not only connected with the gender norms of the time, but also allowed the women to avoid the accusations of socialism and communism that plagued other anti-war and peace activists of the time.

During the Iraq War, a new organization, "Mothers Acting Up," reflected this maternal framing, and its emails described the purpose of protecting children by protesting the war and military spending (Kutz-Flammenbaum 2011). By the start of the twenty-first century, women's ideas about international relations, even within the peace movement, continued to be ignored and their voices heard only when speaking as a family member of someone in the military (Lidinsky 2005). Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a U.S. Army soldier killed while serving in Iraq, garnered much attention for the anti–Iraq War movement when she staged a sustained protest while camped outside President Bush's ranch in Texas during the summer of 2005 (see Leitz 2014). Bush refused to honor her request for a meeting, which fed media attention focused largely on her role as a grieving mother (Grand 2007), ignoring the variety of realpolitik and international arguments for opposing the war offered by Sheehan and the military veterans, other military family members, and civilian activists with her (Leitz 2014). Media reports of military families opposed to the war routinely quoted women, despite the important roles that fathers and other male family members played in Military Families Speak Out and Gold Star Families for Peace (Leitz and Lemon 2013). Many women in the peace movement believed themselves to be societal "caretakers," with a moral obligation to engage in peace activism (Anderlini 2007: 19). For many, "mother love" was an essential component of their expressions for peace, whether they actually had children or not (Taylor and Rupp 2002).

But many organizations, especially those with explicitly feminist goals, rejected such maternalist framing. In 1968 the New York Radical Women challenged the Vietnam War and conventional gender norms when they met in Arlington National Cemetery to bury "traditional womanhood." The tactic challenged activists to stop war by refusing to engage in traditional roles such as supportive wives, girlfriends, and mothers of soldiers. Through the symbolic funeral of a large effigy bearing curlers, makeup, and other White feminine accessories, activists decried gender norms that not only encourage women to play supporting roles in war, but that also socialize men into an aggressive masculinity that leads to war (Burgin 2012; Firestone 1968). This protest was not only a response to male-led peace protests, but also a radical feminist response to the Jeannette Rankin Brigade, in which the former (and first woman) member of Congress led a march to present a statement to male political leaders from women opposed to the conflict in Southeast Asia. The Brigade had utilized essentialist language about the moral superiority of women and described women exclusively in relation to men, as spouses, mothers, and mourners of the war dead (Burgin 2012). Some of the women who had marched in

the Brigade joined the protest the next day in an attempt to assert the need for women to obtain greater power in domestic and international politics (Alonso 1993). Although the event had little impact, the activists sought to challenge the ways in which gender norms kept politicians from taking women's peace activism seriously.

Women's activism for peace has not been monolithic, but rather tensions over why women should mobilize for peace have led to many complimentary and competing organizations. In her quantitative examination of these ways to frame gender, Kutz-Flammenbaum (2011) found that the essentialist and egalitarian frames that make connections between gender and peace appeal to different groups. Those who are less experienced with activism and racial minorities found the maternalist frame more appealing, while those with greater experience with women's organizations were more likely to find the egalitarian frame appealing. While essentialism and egalitarianism represent different theoretical arguments about the operations of gender, social movement frames that rely on these differing explanations of why women should be involved in peace work likely appeal to different audiences, and each has a place in increasing mobilization and retaining activists (Kutz-Flammenbaum 2011). It may be useful to consider the diversity that has developed in women's peace activism, over strategies, goals, and tactics, as also providing a wealth of organizations and actions that connect with a diverse group of women and in which women are willing to take part.

# Diverse Strategies for Peace

Women involved in peace activism have disagreed, often vehemently, with each other about the best way to make change as well as which changes need to be made. Some activists favored currying the support of elites by engaging in lobbying tactics, while others preferred to challenge the legitimacy of elites and militarism through direct action. Women were the architects of mediation, dialogue, and peace education tactics aimed at mitigating existing violence. Regarding goals, there have been tensions between those who strove for a broad intersectional agenda that linked military violence to a host of social justice issues, including gender and race, and those who have focused on a more limited agenda. In general, some women preferred pragmatism, while others were more idealistic.

These conflicts between idealism and pragmatism are deeply rooted; we can see their roots in the emergence of a women's movement that incorporated peace at Seneca Falls. Some attendees thought it was presumptuous to put women's suffrage on the political agenda when slavery was a more pressing issue. Frederick Douglass and the majority of women gathered there disagreed. Seneca Falls was an important and radical step in the way that it linked a number of justice issues, from abolition to women's rights to war. In the years that followed, many U.S. women-led peace organizations, such as WILPF and CodePink, maintained multi-issue agendas, while some, such as Women Strike for Peace, struggled more with whether issues such as race or women's rights were as important as peace (Swerdlow 1993).

The end of World War II, marked by the use of nuclear weapons against Japan, ushered in a new era in international relations, and women were at the forefront of opposition to the use of nuclear weapons through episodic campaigns using both conventional politics and direct action. Eleanor Roosevelt became a champion for disarmament in the years after the war, and spoke vigorously and repeatedly on behalf of the cause. Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Workers movement, saw nuclear weapons as a distinct threat in their own right, and a diversion of necessary attention and resources for the poor. She protested against the arms race by publicly refusing to go to an air raid shelter in a compulsory crisis drill in New York City in 1955, sitting instead on a park bench (Coles 1987; Wittner 2003). Roosevelt and Day represented the two broad wings of the anti-nuclear movement, one directed to conventional politics and the politics of persuasion, and another that emphasized moral witness and direct action.

Perhaps no one embodied the tension between ostensibly pragmatic politics and more consistent application of principles than Jeannette Rankin. The first woman elected to the House of Representatives, Rankin took office in 1917; her first significant vote was cast against the United States entering World War I. The Montana state legislature redrew the district lines to move Rankin, a Republican, to a district dominated by Democrats. Rather than seek re-election from an inhospitable constituency, she ran unsuccessfully for a U.S. Senate seat, pushing her peace activism back outside of institutional politics and into the streets. Years later, in 1940, Rankin again ran for—and won—a congressional seat from Montana, entering office in time to cast the only vote in opposition to the declaration of war against Japan. "As a woman," she said, "I can't go to war, and I refuse to send anyone else." Once again, she lost her seat at the next election, but continued to campaign—for social welfare and against war—for the rest of her life, extending well into the Vietnam era. Employing both traditional politics and movement activism, Rankin refused to maintain political power at the expense of her pacifist beliefs.

The nuclear freeze campaign, announced by Randall Forsberg and Helen Caldicott, represented both the radical and pragmatic wings of women's peace activism symbolically. Caldicott, a physician, emphasized women's knowledge and the value of emotions in mobilization against war. She moved from leading a mixed-gender professional organization, Physicians for Social Responsibility, to create a women-led organization, Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND). Her rhetoric was often absolutist and apocalyptic. Forsberg, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)–trained political scientist, founded the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies, a think tank devoted to gathering data on existing nuclear arsenals, and emphasized professional expertise and rationality. Forsberg's brief activist proposal in 1978 (amplified in Forsberg 1984), which proposed a bilateral (U.S. and Soviet Union) freeze on the development, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons, became the basis of a broad activist campaign (Meyer 1990; Solo 1988).

The simultaneous visibility of Caldicott, emphasizing emotion and fronting a women-led organization, and Forsberg, emphasizing numbers and expertise, represented two different visions of feminist activism. The presence of both at the helm of the freeze

campaign, in conjunction with other women such as Representative Pat Schroeder, a Democrat from Colorado who served on the House Armed Services Committee and ran a peace-oriented campaign for the presidency in 1988, and Pam Solo, a former nun who led the education and protest campaign against the Colorado plant producing the fissile material for nuclear warheads, underscored the broader progress of women in U.S. politics broadly. Even as women gained entry into mainstream politics and peace movement leadership, expressive activism also continued. Indeed, in a period when Forsberg testified before the U.S. Congress on technical issues like verification of arms control compliance and the nuclear balance, other women staged theatrical protests outside the Pentagon that involved a mock cemetery, screaming in anger, and weaving the doors of the building closed, representing women's movement from mourning to defiance (Phelps 2014).

Women were often at the forefront of radical activism for peace. For example, after winning the right to vote, some U.S. suffragettes advocated further constitutional change, this time outlawing war (Alonso 1997). They organized as the Women's Peace Union, an organization that opposed violence in any form, and their focus was on lobbying and providing testimony to political committees, including the Military Affairs Committee. The Women's Peace Union worked with North Dakota Republican Senator Lynn Frazier to introduce the unsuccessful amendment in 1926 (Alonso 1997).

Women played important roles in mediation and dialogue work intended not only to bring leaders together, but also to bring the populations of warring nations to recognize each other's humanity. Women commonly used their gendered familial roles and non-combatant identities to reach across divides in ways that have not been available to men in most countries (Hunt and Posa 2001). U.S. women steered WILPF through difficult conversations between women of warring sides in the world wars and between imperial powers and their colonies and former colonies (Rupp 1996, 1997). This type of dialogue work was also seen in the Women's Gulf Peace Initiative, which attempted to build bridges between U.S. and Arab organizations to negotiate for peace (Alonso 1993).

Women activists staged visits between informal delegations traveling to conflict zones to encourage mediation and engage in citizen diplomacy. A Hungarian activist living in the United States, Rosika Schwimmer, is typically credited with convincing Henry Ford to finance the 1915 "Ford Peace Ship Expedition." This was an attempt to bring World War I to an end by having U.S. academics, activists, and business leaders broker a deal with the European nations involved in that war at the time. The Peace Ship failed miserably, but some of Schwimmer's work on mediation would continue through other organizations and set the foundations for WILPF's work with the Israeli-Palestinian Women for Peace on a similar boat tour. Placing female peace activists' Middle East trips of 1931–1975 within the context of other WILPF peace and fact-finding trips, Confortini (2012) describes these types of tactics as a specific "feminist methodology" embedded in peace activism. She describes how these trips engaged in feminist politics that explored relations of power and encouraged people to empathize across warring boundaries. She argues that these tactics, born of feminism, are uniquely situated to building lasting

peace through the development of trust and processes that force activists to re-examine their own biases (Confortini 2012).

Women peace activists were the first to develop curricula for peace education. For example, Fannie Fern Andrews, founder and leader of the American School Peace League, distributed pacifist literature and curricula to schools and held peace-focused essay contests for high school students (see Howlett and Harris 2010). President Roosevelt appointed Andrews, also one of the founders of the Women's Peace Party, to serve as a U.S. delegate to several international conferences on education prior to World War II. This type of educational work was continued by women opposed to the Persian Gulf War when female activists used their jobs as educators to teach peace (Riley 2005). Peace education is today recognized alongside research and action as one of the pillars of peace studies.

Similar to peace activism more generally, women's peace activism has been split between those who favored isolationism and those who preferred international and transnational attempts to build a humane global community. Prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, women activists from both the Left and the Right opposed U.S. involvement in World War II. Right-wing women's organizations, such as the National Legion of Mothers of America and the Women's Committee to Keep the U.S. Out of War, sought isolationism. Women's left-wing organizations pushed for global solidarity in opposition to war. Today, most women's peace activists are engaged in internationalism, but some organizations are limited in focus to opposing U.S. involvement in specific wars, such as Military Families Speak Out or Iraq Veterans Against the War, which include activists who come from an isolationist perspective that seeks to bring the U.S. military and the money spent on it back to the United States (Leitz 2014).

Activist women's efforts have included the full range of activities of the peace movement, ranging from electoral and institutionally oriented action to dramatic protest. There has been substantial interchange between activists employing different strategies. While activists sometimes have fought over these differences in strategies, tactics, and goals, it may be best for future research to consider how the varying tactics reach different audiences as targets and for mobilization. Rather than contradictory actions, they may indeed be complimentary.

# DISCUSSION: THE DIFFICULTY OF MAKING PEACE

Peace activism has allowed women a platform and has encouraged skill development. Although barred from voting and many professions for most of their lives, Jane Adams and Emily Greene Balch were each awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. While many suffragettes worked for peace because they believed it demonstrated the good that women would

bring to their nation, many women transitioned into feminist activism because within the peace movement they recognized their lack of power in U.S. society and politics.

Although rarely successful in ending or preventing war, U.S. women's activism played an important role in the wider peace movement. Since women were denied more traditional avenues to assert influence on U.S. foreign policy, they had little choice but to engage in direct action, often using theatrical and emotion-laden tactics to draw attention to the need for peace. Women were instrumental in successfully dreaming up and pushing for the development of international institutions such as the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations. Women were also successful in focusing attention on the needs of women and the role of justice more broadly in developing a lasting peace. For example, in the 1990s U.S. women, including lawyer Catherine MacKinnon, were instrumental in having rape recognized as a war crime. However, even when women were very visible in efforts to encourage peace, they have often been missing from the formal negotiation for agreements between states or factions. Though a gender imbalance in negotiations continues, U.S. activists celebrated the inclusion of women, especially Afghan women, in the Bonn Peace Talks due to the efforts of the Feminist Majority Foundation (Anderlini 2007).

U.S. government officials often attacked female peace activists publicly, and some were fired because of their beliefs (Alonso 1993), but conforming to traditional gender norms, which emphasized motherhood and nurturing, helped insulate some women's activism (Swerdlow 1993). However culturally acceptable it may have been for women to espouse pacifism privately, voters, employers, and political and judicial leaders often saw women's peace activism as evidence that women should not be full participants in U.S. political life. For example, Rosika Schwimmer was denied U.S. citizenship because of her pacifist beliefs (*United States v. Schwimmer* 1929). Representative Rankin was twice voted out of office after her votes opposing U.S. entry into world wars; it was widely reported that she demonstrated that women were unfit for politics, especially related to international conflict. The distinction may be that while women were expected to be nurturing in the private sphere, emotion and concern should be left out of the political sphere. These ideas socialized some female activists into framing their work as apolitical; for example, during the Persian Gulf War some influential activist women described their work as just being good mothers (Riley 2005). Organizations that focus on women's traditional roles, as mothers and world nurturers, cannot make much of a difference in the overall scheme of peace if their rhetoric contributes to their own powerlessness (see also Swerdlow 1993).

Activists opposed to war frequently place importance on feminine qualities such as nurturance and caring, which can provide ready understandings and resonance for a rejection of war, but that connection to femininity also offers opponents an easy strategy for dismissing them. Alternatively, women activists can offer arguments against wars based on pragmatic realpolitik, effectively playing on the turf of dominant (masculine, power-oriented) politics, but women are still handicapped here by dominant gender norms and official military regulations. Over time, women have made gains in the larger social world through education and employment, such that women activists have

developed expertise, credentials, and credibility in articulating opposition to war and the preparations for war that mirrored those of men. Both activist approaches display inherent advantages and risks: the women-are-different approach, with claims based on emotion and nature, is often dismissed, especially from official political negotiations and policymaking. The women-as-similar approach, making claims based on expertise, often requires the dismissing of claims based on social justice, and activists and organizations may end up being incorporated into mainstream politics without affecting any kind of policy change. The tension between ostensibly idealistic moralistic approaches to stopping war and apparently pragmatic approaches based on strategy has both animated and stymied women's peace efforts.

# CONCLUSION

War is a fundamentally gendered experience (Enloe 2000; Goldstein 2001: 7), and as such gender shapes the mobilization, strategies, and tactics in women's activism against it. Until relatively recently, war has been fought by men, while women were expected to tend to the homeland, where they were often victimized, both by invaders and by their own governments extracting the resources of sons and dollars to fight war. The gendered division of labor has supported broad cultural constructs in which war is seen as manly, while opposition to it is feminine—and weak (Goldstein 2001; Kretschmer and Meyer 2013). Although the peace movement and feminist movement often spilled over to each other, at times these movements worked at cross-purposes. While women expanded the peace movement by linking opposition to particular weapons or conflicts to various inequalities, activists often were blinded by their own racial and economic privileges, and failed to broaden the base of the peace movement.

Women are no longer excluded from more conventional means of making claims, or even from making decisions about war and peace. These critical gains have meant that women have become not only potential victims of war, but also perpetrators. Women are now part of the decision-making apparatus for war, as well as the combatants. This has led to rifts between some feminists and women's peace activists. For example, since the 1970s some feminists advocating for occupational equality fought to expand the military occupational specialties open to women, including as fighter aircraft pilots (Katzenstein 1999). During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, many women peace activists, including CodePink, engaged in counter-recruitment tactics, some of which highlighted the military's poor handling of sexual assault cases, hoping to discourage women (and men) from joining the military altogether, thus shutting the pipeline of bodies for war.

While women tend to exhibit more pacifist attitudes, if a war is predicated on humanitarian reasons or commands broad international support, U.S. women are more likely to support it than men (Brooks and Valentino 2011). In addition to the differences in radical and liberal women's peace activism, this may explain why some women, such as Samantha Power, are the strategists behind aggressive foreign policies. Often these

women have been self-identified feminists with broad human rights agendas, who support the use of military force to promote women's or minority rights abroad. While women are more likely to be sympathetic to a peace movement, their participation is constrained not only by the gendered circumstances of their lives, but also by the conditions of the conflict against which they are mobilizing.

There is much work to be done on women and peace activism, particularly as the nature of war and the nature of gender relations continue to evolve. First, whereas most peace activism has emerged in response to proximate threats or atrocities of war, the conduct of low-level wars is now a constant strain, rather than episodic. It is therefore critical to understand the nature of gendered peace activism in response to the routines of an ongoing state process, including large expenditures, proxy wars, and large-scale surveillance. Toward that end, a gendered approach to protecting privacy poses questions for activists and scholars alike.

Second, there is a continued need for historical and contemporary scholarship that examines women's peace activism through an intersectional lens. Recent books have begun to examine the role of race and ethnicity as it pertains to the inclusion of a single minority group's entry into women's peace activism (e.g., Klapper 2013; Plastas 2011). Heaney and Rojas's (2014) examination of the role of hybrid organizations, which span multiple identity categories, in peace activism suggests that intersectional organizations are central to peace organizing, but their (2015) examination of competing identity loyalties in peace activism also suggests the pitfalls for intersectional politics. Potential participants and donors must choose between a variety of movements where they can contribute, and the relationship between internationally focused peace movement activism and other forms of social justice activism requires further examination. Activists and researchers alike must examine these issues because the lack of diversity shapes the issues in which the movement engages, as well as the strategies, tactics, and mobilization/demobilization of the movement.

Third, the complications of an emerged, rather than emergent, international order raise difficult questions about activism for justice and against war. Isolationist approaches to international affairs often, at least implicitly, accept the subordination of women, ethnic, religious, or other minorities abroad; political figures in the West have often pointed to discrimination against these groups in other societies as justification for military intervention abroad. Peace activists need to find ways to reject a military solution while offering alternative means of engagement that promise to redress the same problems. Again, the challenge for activists also poses an analytical and empirical problem for analysts. We expect that both groups will find creative means to do so.

## NOTE

1. Of course, it wasn't only women organizing against slavery, and moral suasion was ineffective in lessening the Southern commitment to preserving the institution.

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