

ACTIVIST ORGANIZATIONS AND STRATEGIC UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION AND  
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES: AN EXPLORATION OF CODEPINK: WOMEN  
FOR PEACE

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Keywords: Activism, Collective Action, Multi-modal Ethnography, Online Activism, Social Media, Social  
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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my Mom and strong women like her.

“I write for those women who do not speak, for those who do not have a voice because they were so terrified, because we are taught to respect fear more than ourselves. We've been taught that silence would save us, but it won't." - (Audre Lorde)

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## Abstract

Social networking sites have changed the nature of online social movements and decreased the role of formal organizations in facilitating collective action. Conceptualizing how social networking sites are relevant in organizations, and how they facilitate collective action through interaction and engagement, is the central question of my study. The theoretical frameworks used in this study include the concepts of collective action theory and social capital, which provide context for exploring CODEPINK, a women-led grassroots organization focused on ending U.S. wars and militarism, while supporting peace and human rights initiatives. Drawing on previous research about collective action and social networking sites, this study investigates the following questions: What type of civic information does CODEPINK use to facilitate followers (email and social networking sites) to take part in collective action? How does civic information shape a relationship between the followers and the organization? What are the strategies that CODEPINK enacts to facilitate activism concerning political and social issues on social networking sites? What factors build capacity to signal dissent to governments and what constitutes success? How does CODEPINK use social networking sites to build social capital to involve followers to participate in collective action? How do the staff of CODEPINK, if at all, view social networking sites as a tool to facilitate collective action? This research utilizes a multi-modal ethnographic approach to explore the online and offline communities of CODEPINK. Data resources include field observations, social media activities, and semi-structured interviews. Instead of focusing on the outcomes of a social movement, I focus my research on the practices of CODEPINK, whose work in the activist field has contributed a series of micro-mobilizations on a variety of different topics. This work highlights the strategic practices of activists using capacity builders, social networking site practices using social ambassadors to build social capital, the relationship between organizations and different types of civic information, and a multi-layered approach for successful social media campaigns. The organization's role is as an educator of civic information that inspires individuals to participate in activism. With the use of customer relationship management systems, organizations are able to digitally organize followers using a feedback system that creates a social infrastructure. The combined use of traditional face-to-face practices and social networking sites facilitates collective action according to CODEPINK staff. Moreover, this work establishes that the current digital practices of activists have created a new type of activist organization: a digital grassroots organization.

**Keywords:** Activism, Collective Action, Multi-modal Ethnography, Online Activism, Social Media, Social Movement Organizations

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## Preface

The basis for my research originally stemmed from my outrage for the 2016-2020 U.S. Executive Branch's uncivil agenda and my consequential interest in what Americans are doing to take part in resisting intentions and rhetoric that have become vitriolic (Belluck, 2019; Greshko, et al., 2019; Meckler & Barrett, 2019). I have always been a strong supporter of feminist values and women taking a stand for what they believe. Traditionally, the value of a dissertation is founded on the ability of the researcher to fill a needed academic gap. However, writing this dissertation has been so much more than just a research study for me. It is a representation of a journey that includes many exciting endeavors, yet periods of struggle. Writing this dissertation has shown me the true value of commitment over time and the dedication of amazing activists in the United States.

In this vein, for my study, I volunteered with a women's activist organization, headquartered in Venice, California, known as CODEPINK. With CODEPINK, my enhanced understanding of the activist human experience was the most important part of my research process. The capacity to be aware of another human's experiences in life and what they stand up for is extremely important to me as a researcher. I felt that collecting data that was purely quantitative would not provide a comprehensive, nuanced depiction and context of what I needed to learn about activists today. The only way I could fathom studying CODEPINK was by getting involved in the organization's everyday workings and attending their activist events. With political participation being taken for granted, I wanted to understand what critical factors, especially pertaining to the enactment of social media and other communicative digital platforms, were being considered in order to get individuals to join an activist movement. During these unprecedented times, where social media is being employed by governmental figures to communicate actions

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with international implications, it is more important than ever to understand the strategies being utilized by the voices who are trying to create change within the current political climate. Declining civic engagement among the millennial population and the rise of information manipulation, particularly amongst digital media platforms, gives further importance to this work.

## Chapter 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Introduction

Expansion of digital technologies are changing the trajectories of social movements and are enhancing coordination to facilitate organized collective action (Tufekci, 2017). Social networking sites have been central to facilitating civic engagement of individuals and are significant to overcoming common problems of activism such as free-riders, coordination, and organization (Bimber, Flanagin, & Stohl, 2012). The nature of modern online social movements has created a new public sphere, which has become decentralized and leaderless due to the role of the Internet in facilitating new forms of collective action of mass individuals. The current social media environment is enhancing interaction and engagement, and providing alternatives to formal organizations. Conceptualizing how social networking sites are relevant and how they facilitate collective action through interaction and engagement, is the central question of my study.

Collective action involves groups of independent individuals coming together for a common objective (Cress & Snow, 2000). In a healthy democracy, organizations and state institutions are meant to make sure that politics are reflective of grassroots social preferences (Marinov & Schimmelfenning, 2015). Traditional collective action theories show that the private-public boundaries between individuals and organizations are firm, but now with the immediacy of our current electronic, social-based media environment, those boundaries are being redefined (Bimber, Flanagin, & Stohl, 2012). Literature stemming from the 1960s placed the role of organizations at the forefront, while individuals were not the center of the collective (Olson, 1965). Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl (2005) argued the need to re-conceptualize collective action theory to accommodate modern scenarios of collective action. CODEPINK, a grass-roots, woman-led social and political activism non-governmental organization, exemplifies ways in which socio-

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communicative boundaries between individuals and organizations are shifting due to the power of social networking sites. Analysis of CODEPINK's activism, stemming from their action-oriented activities conceived via social networking, brought insight into how social networking sites and digital technologies are utilized effectively to help individuals participate in collective action. In particular, CODEPINK embodies an organization that has utilized new digital strategies to harness member participation.

There are two primary motivations for my research to work with CODEPINK and social networking sites. Firstly, there is a need to understand our society's institutional structures and how they connect activism with social networking sites. Literature on the Occupy Wall Street movement (began in 2011) show a disconnect between civic organizations and activists, resulting in a high anti-organizational ethos (Hammond, 2015). Thus, there is a need to understand our society's institutional structures and how they connect their activism with social networking sites. Secondly, in light of the reduced role of civic organizations with citizens, I wonder: how has the relationship of social networking sites and organizations created a new pattern of interactions, online and face-to-face? (Bimber, Flanagin, & Stohl, 2012). For me, this question becomes more salient within the current political climate, which as I will review in the next section, has changed in recent years and could potentially be seen as indicative of the rise of more social justice movements in the future. Movements are a series of events that are often classified later to be a significant catalyst to change. Therefore, studying a social movement organization like CODEPINK during a pivotal moment in real-time, can potentially reveal how social networking strategies are efficient in creating change in a society.



## 1.2. Political Climate

The current American social and political landscape has urged many individuals to come out in solidarity and start participating in activism. After the 2016 U.S presidential election, the American Psychological Association found that the overall stress level of Americans had risen from a 4.8 to 5.1 on a 10-point scale (APA, 2017). Furthermore, 57% of Americans reported that the current political climate is a significant source of stress in their lives (APA, 2017).

On January 20, 2017, the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States was inaugurated. This president entered office on a platform that continues (as of this writing) to be regarded as offensive and injurious to women, minorities, and various social and civic policies, laws, and freedoms. In response to Donald Trump's caustic rhetoric that now had national and international implications, more than 500,000 Americans gathered in the nation's capital city of Washington, D. C., the day after the inauguration, on January 21, 2017.

This protest, named "The Women's March," was spearheaded by a broad coalition of social movement groups of which CODEPINK was an organizational partner (CodePink.org; WomensMarch.com). The Women's March was supported worldwide, with an additional estimated five million people in multiple cities throughout the U.S. and the world, marching and protesting, to advocate for women's rights, immigration reform, healthcare reform, human rights, LGBTQ Rights, racial equality, and climate change.

In response to calls to action posted on social media, The Women's March became the largest single day of protest in U.S history, setting the national protest record to an estimated 3.8 to 4.5 million participating Americans, overall (Heath, 2017). To punctuate the point, on Twitter, the March received over 270,700,200 reactions in the form of "likes," retweets, and comments on

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protest day from 42,298 posts (Heath, 2017). The current American social and political landscape has urged many individuals to join in solidarity and start participating in activism, with The Women's March continuing to occur annually (WomensMarch.com). Americans have been more likely to say that they feel stress when they have political conversations with people from the opposite political party (Pew Research, 2018). Furthermore, 57% of Americans reported that the current political climate is a significant source of stress in their lives (APA, 2017). The Woman's March can be considered a response to this collective thread of stress and anxiety, with online reactions to posts about the event also being regarded as a form of internet activism (Simone, 2006; WomensMarch.com).

During the first year of the Trump presidency, there was an increase of partisan divide on political values such as aid to the needy, racial diversity, and immigration reform. One of the major fundamental philosophical changes that the Trump Era has wrought, is deep rooted discord over factors which constitute success for the country. Americans (43%) believe that the country's success is rooted in its "reliance on long standing principles" (Doherty, 2017, p. 20). According to *New York Magazine*, the transgressive nature of the Trump administration has created a wave of activism and inspired American progressives to get involved in political activism. Since the beginning of 2016, over 19% of Americans have attended a political activist event, with the largest demographic of individuals among middle-aged, highly educated suburbanites (Levitz, 2018). According to the Center for American Progress, for members of the Democratic Party, the Trump administration is a serious abrogation of generative governmental procedures and represents a fundamental change in American politics, creating a shift to authoritarian nationalism (Halpin, Nayak, Teixeira, Garin, & Molyneux, 2018). Furthermore, many Americans are no longer basing

their evaluations on objective criteria of party policies, but rather on who is leading the government and what political party is in charge.

### **1.3. Role of Social Networking Sites**

Marshall McLuhan famously stated, “instant information creates involvement in depth” (1964, p. 161). Within the last decade, social networking sites have experienced mass popularization and have created instant socialization. People from all over the world are connecting, engaging, commenting, posting, sharing, liking, tweeting, and video recording on social networking sites to engage with one another across geographical boundaries, continents, regions, and miles. Furthermore, social networking sites have been found to build high levels of social capital where users will interact online and offline, building strong relationships (boyd, 2006; Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2007). For a large number of people, social networking sites have taken on a significant role in their lives and how they interact with information, organizations, and one another. Since 2017, 34% of Americans have engaged in a social media group that shares the same interests on a particular issue or action (Anderson, Toor, Rainie, & Smith, 2018). Notably in the U.S., members of the Democratic Party (24%) are more likely to look up civic information about rallies and protests and participate in activism than Republican Party members (9%) (Anderson, Toor, Rainie, & Smith, 2018). Additionally, members from both parties have participated on social media in at least one civic activity (Anderson, Toor, Rainie, & Smith, 2018). Engagement and participation in civic activities varies consistently with age, where Americans aged 18-50 are more likely to participate in political activities online. The majority of Americans believe that using social media is an important and effective tool to attract elected officials’ attention to social issues necessary for sustaining a social movement (Anderson, Toor, Rainie, & Smith, 2018). Moreover, two-thirds of Americans believe that social media gives a voice to

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underrepresented groups and helps heighten awareness to issues that would otherwise not have been paid consideration (Anderson, Toor, Rainie, & Smith, 2018).

Taylor and Kent (2014) suggest that there are many roles that social networking sites have taken in our current society, ranging from social communication, corporate communication, public relations, marketing applications, and advertising (Taylor & Kent, 2014). It should be noted that these particular sectors of industry vary in goals, interests, and priorities while working with social networking sites. According to Taylor and Kent (2014) however, all of these industries have the same goal in mind, including activists and organizations, where the goal is to build awareness of social issues, amplify pro social messages, create relationships, and motivate prosocial behaviors that ultimately benefit society. The contrast that Taylor and Kent (2014) point out is that social movement organizations do not have economic relationships with the public, so they must be highly reliant on social networking sites for community and relationship building purposes.

The use of social networking sites in conjunction with politics in particular is in high contention amongst American voters. Since the 2008 presidential election, the use of social networking sites has increased steadily with consequent elections, locally, state-wide, and nationally (Duggan & Smith, 2016). The creation of individual user profiles on social networking sites has allowed for networked communities to create peer-driven political content (boyd, 2010). Furthermore, social networking sites have become the chosen venue for organizing political events and collective action (Wohn et al., 2011).

According to Pew researchers, one in five political users (19%) engage in political discussion by commenting online (Duggan & Smith, 2016). Efficacy of the digital campaign is still unclear, whether voters will draw conclusions to change voting decisions from social networking sites (Haynes & Pitts, 2008). However, during the 2016 election, the Russian

government interfered in the outcomes of the election and it was reported that disinformation spread from Russian governmental outlets and then was posted on social media (Leonnig, Hamburger, & Helderman, 2017). According to *The Washington Post*, a Russian “troll farm<sup>1</sup>” paid over \$100,000 U.S. dollars in Facebook Ads, which was known to promote pro-Kremlin propaganda advertisements. Combined with the current political sentiment in the U. S. and social media controversies over misinformation, the digital environment and use of social media by individuals is riddled with distrust and reluctance to participate.

### **1.4. Contextual Role of Organizations**

Putnam (2001) posits that with a significant decline in American social capital, today’s youth have lower community involvement, political participation, interpersonal trust, and political knowledge than the majority of older Americans. Political participation and engagement, both online and offline, refers to behavior that is oriented around the public good. Participation can be measured at three levels: 1) civic engagement, 2) offline participation, 3) online political action (Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012), with traditional organizations being similar to governmental entities, having characteristics of being bureaucratically organized and procedurally complex.

Karpf (2012) found that political organizations became strengthened through communications and the Internet and labeled this the “Moveon Effect”. CODEPINK has utilized the Moveon Effect with their socio-political movement potential by using both online and offline political participation patterns. Yet, just as social media are ever-evolving, progressive organizations like CODEPINK are also challenged to restructure their organizational dynamics by

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<sup>1</sup> Are anonymous users who are organized into groups of commentators that participate in political social networking sites and blogs to create disinformation campaigns or promote propaganda.

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employing communication and interaction strategies via social networking sites. Vromen (2016) cites six specific strategies that organizations need to employ in order to address the new technological environment:

- nimble organizational and staffing structures,
- passive to active membership,
- use of both online and offline engagement strategies,
- approach to small donations to fundraising,
- using narratives and storytelling,
- having well integrated use of social media in their communications.

(p. 194)

Many organizations have employed these structural changes to advance their missions in a contemporary, globally-connected society, however many large organizations were observed by Vromen (2016) to not have been able to adapt to this new technological environment in civil society. Organizations with older members are still using the traditional tactics and strategies (e.g. fliers, pamphlets), rather than having allocated significant resources to online social movements.

Findings show that organizations that privilege digital communication tools have become centers for employing different communication strategies to garner support for different campaigns. Providing civic information and inspiring individuals to become activists toward a certain cause has become a battle of attention and how to harness it with different engagements. Each particular governmental administration provides different opportunities and threats, which leads to variations of how organizations must plan and react toward political issues. Creating a robust activist campaign requires the organization to educate, inspire, and mobilize individuals to participate in civic engagement. Organizations have to utilize many different digital channels in

order to garner and sustain interest; such effort has become increasingly time consuming and difficult. Due to these constraints, organizations are turning to platform management systems that allow the delivery of information and management of relationships to become streamlined.

### **1.5. Problem Statement**

Conceptualizing how social networking sites are relevant in organizations, and how they facilitate collective action through interaction and engagement, is the central concern of my study. I argue that the traditional organization acts as a mediator that facilitates modern day collective action through social networking sites, rather than being the main and only source where individuals can express collective action. Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl (2012) argue that technology is speeding up collectivity within organizational contexts by eliminating physical barriers. My study is based on the assumption that modern-day social movement organizations actualize Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl's stance by using digital social media strategies to organize political collective action offline. The problem that I see is that social movement literature largely lacks a systematic understanding of social network strategy and a clear understanding of the relationship between an organization's members and the organization in collective action. I worked closely with CODEPINK to learn if and how this problem is recognized and considered, via the ways in which organizational members use social networking sites to strategize online and offline communication for the purpose of people gathering, engagement, and management. To contextualize this problem, I focused on collective action theory and social capital theory as my foundational framework to guide my research with CODEPINK. Researching social capital and citizen engagement (collective action) together can represent strong indicators of healthy discourse between different societal networks (Putnam, 2001).

In Chapter 2, I review my theoretical framework, the existing academic literature, and conclude with my formal research questions, which are drawn from the literature. In Chapter 3, I explain my methodology for collecting data, data resources, analysis, and further information concerning the structure and procedures for this study. Chapter 4 is an informational chapter that provides information about CODEPINK, including a historical account, current campaigns, political issues they address, information about the founders, my experiences researching CODEPINK, and organizational practices that affect CODEPINKS' operations. Chapter 5 provides a deep analysis of the data that was collected through the methods detailed in Chapter 3, in relation to the research questions that were posed in Chapter 2. Chapter 6 draws conclusions about this research study and how the outcomes of this work will fit within the larger academic field and current research in the fields of online activism, social media literacy practices, and digital grassroots organizations. Chapter 7, finally shows the limitations, future research, contributions, and final thoughts on the exploration of CODEPINK.



## **Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

### **2.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, I explore the theoretical framework and literature that are the foundations of this dissertation. The theoretical framework includes the concepts of collective action theory and social capital theory that provide the context for exploring CODEPINK. Finally, following the theoretical framework, I explore the existing literature of social networking sites, social movements, civic information, customer management systems, and social movement organizations.

### **2.2. Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.2.1. Collective Action Theory**

Collective action, according to Snow and Cress (2000), is in its most basic form two or more individuals coming together to perform goal-oriented activities. An individual may not have an influence on a situation, but coming together collectively can have an effect on the collective good. The collective action theory was originally conceived by Mancur Olson in 1965, where he argued that individuals had difficulty unifying to provide a public good under the pretense that individuals do not have the individual economic rationale in bettering the public good. Olson's argument was focused on the "free-rider" problem and that economic benefit would not be produced because individuals do not want to bear the financial expenses for social improvement. Olson's arguments have long been disproven because his conclusions are considered insufficient and hindering to the creation of social movements based on common interests. On the contrary, some contemporary organizations do not rely on identified leaders or prescribed roles, as these are not central to an organization to accomplish collective action. Furthermore, Bauermeister (2014) points out that

collective action does not materialize on its own, the formation of “we-ness” becomes a collective identity, which can be understood through one’s emotional connection to the broader community. Melucci (1989) concluded that collective identity is constantly changing as individuals have shared experiences and different interpretations of the social movement landscape.

Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl (2012) re-conceptualize collective action theory within the context of organizations. They focus on the assumptions that the decision to participate in collective action is binary and that the main focus should be on the communication and organizational problems of coordinating collective action. For the purpose of this dissertation, I contextualize the study around these assumptions. Furthermore, researchers have been exploring the benefits of using new information communication technologies are facilitating creating novel ways of conducting collective action. Uses of information technologies in facilitating collective action has been seen in the Middle East’s Arab Spring movements (Lim, 2012) and in the Occupy Wall Street movement (Penney & Dadas, 2013) in the United States. The affordances that have developed on social networking sites are seen as tools that have facilitated successful social movements. It has been argued that without these social networking technologies, the organizational aspects of large groups of individuals would not be possible (Penney & Dadas, 2013). The design of these technologies, according to Kling, McKim, and King (2003), are influenced by these types of social interactions from the users on the platform. Socio-technical interaction networks (STIN) show that technology and social interactions are not separated (Berleur, Impagliazzo, & Nurminen, 2006).

### **2.2.2. Social-Capital Theory**

The definition of social capital within collective action looks at the behavioral and social relations within communities of various sizes (Ostrom & Ahn, 2009). The basic idea of social capital is that an individual's network, like friends or family, are available during crises, and thus considered a valuable asset. The basic conventional saying of "it's not what you know, it's who you know," summarizes the concept of social capital, thereby showing the importance of associations. According to Moser (1996), communities with high social capital and civic networks will confront poverty and vulnerability much more efficiently. Theorists of modern social capital theory place collective action within a political and economic context to frame their research.

Ostrom and Ahn (2009) define social capital to be a creation of benefits, actual or virtual, that come from allocating resources for immediate consumption to create benefits over time. Furthermore, there are three types of social capital that are important in linking collective action: 1) trustworthiness 2) networks, and 3) formal and informal institutions (Ostrom & Ahn, 2009). Requena (2003) supports Ostrom and Ahn's notion with the stance that social capital establishes important sociological concepts such as social cohesion, social support, and integration.

Social capital can be also identified from a network perspective, attempting to account for the horizontal and vertical associations between individuals within a community group or organizational entity (Bauermeister, 2014). The network perspective builds on the work of Granovetter (1973) that recognized that strong ties were needed to give families a sense of structure within a community, while also emphasizing the importance of weak ties across social divides. Social networking sites are particularly effective in connecting individuals with weak ties or with individuals they may not be in contact with on a daily basis. Gittel and Vidal (1998) called these

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two forms of social capital as bonding and bridging capital, which if organized differently, can provide different forms of social capital. Bonding capital, very close and emotional relationships as such family or close friends, can provide a certain level of reciprocity and companionship (Gittell & Vidal, 1998). Bridging capital—which forms with individuals that are weaker ties, and do not necessarily provide emotional support—can expose individuals to perspectives and new sources of information (Gittell & Vidal, 1998). The challenge in social science research is understanding the conditions where there are positive correlations of bonding and bridging that provide the optimal degree of social capital. The network perspective does not take into consideration state-level societal relations and macro-institutions, however, because social capital cannot be uniform across large aggregates like societies or nations (Gittell & Vidal, 1998).

The institutional perspective argues the importance of community networks and civil society within the products of the political, legal, and institutional environment (Bauermeister, 2014). It argues that community networks are a dependent variable, where the creation of collective interest depends on the quality of formal organizations. The institutional perspective stresses that the internal coherence, competence, and credibility stems from within organizations to exude external accountability to society. Woolcock (2001) and Narayan (1999) developed the notion that bringing together social capital and state governmental functions can have different outcomes on communities. This framework is effective in illuminating the different aspects between government and community networks.

Putnam's (2001) work in the social-capital paradigm focuses on the claims that an organization benefits from the building of social capital among the organization's members. This formation of social trust and reciprocity can occur in a variety of different contexts online and offline. Johnston et al. (2011) found that there is an increase of social capital within a community

when it commits to joining collective action. Furthermore, heavier social networking site (SNS) users have been found to participate more in organizations and be more in touch with friends and relatives (Wellman, Quan-Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 2001). Understanding who is the primary benefactor of an organization’s membership formations and civic engagement can help with understanding the associations people are building in the participation of collection action. The power in achieving collective action through social capital is not the interpersonal connections that are made, but individuals posting their private opinions and preferences on mass public issues.

Online communication on social networking sites is differentiated by user actions and behavior, and is categorized into three different kinds of social behaviors: directed communication, broadcasting (not directed at a particular user), and passive consumption of social news (Burke, Kraut, & Marlow, 2011). Directed communication has been correlated to social capital, especially in regard to bridging capital on social networking sites where users are social information-seeking (Burke, Kraut, & Marlow, 2011). Directed communication for the purpose of this dissertation will be measured by actions where users communicate directly with CODEPINK, signaling enough of an online relationship to merit an action and social capital (Burke, Kraut, & Marlow, 2011).

Table 2. 1. Theoretical Framework Summary

Theory	Literature	Characteristics/Critique
Collective Action Theory	Olson (1965) Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl (2012)	Focus should be on the communication and organizational problems
Social Capital Theory	Ostrom and Ahn (2009) Putnam (2001)	Looks at the behavioral and social relations within Communities. Directed Communication (Burke, Kraut, & Marlow, 2011).

## **2.3. Literature Review**

### **2.3.1. Social Networking Sites**

Social networking sites (SNS) are important because of the social-technical dynamics that have been embraced by millions of users. Usage of social networking sites has altered the behavior of many users in their everyday lives including their personality and social life. Social networking sites are defined by Ellison & boyd as:

a networked communication platform in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content provided by other users, and/or system-level data; 2) can publicly articulate connections that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce and/or interact with streams of user-generated content provided by their connections on the site. (2013, p.158).

This definition has been refined as social networking sites have evolved over time and developed into more sophisticated platforms. Furthermore, individual actors (nodes) usually share social relations, interests, activities, or real-life ties. Individuals most commonly represent themselves as a profile that is a combination of content generated by the user and system-provided content (Ellison & boyd, 2013). The connections made among profiles are a collection of varying social relationships ranging from a person someone knows to a stranger. Social relationships are the core and backbone of social networking sites, and these relationships can be explored by researchers who collect and analyze social graph data. boyd explains that it is not the fact that individuals can meet strangers online, it is that they are able to see the social networks of others and make “latent ties” (boyd, 2008, p. 211). Users are able to construct profiles based on information they provide through the website prompting them to give personal data and sharing relationships the individual has. For example, just because one “friends” someone on Facebook does not necessarily denote

friendship in the usual sense, but instead is a term used to describe a certain type of connection one may have.

Social networks have become 74% of the browsing and engagement of Internet users (Duggan & Smith, 2016). Access to SNS has allowed for a wide variety of people to communicate, utilizing different tools and features to micro-broadcast their thoughts, views, and opinions. This technology has connected different social actors on an individual level to a platform that is geared toward broadcasting to the community or group level.

### **2.3.2. Facebook**

Facebook, the sixth most valuable company in the world (Statista.com, 2017), has revolutionized how users interact with one another and within groups of users. Mark Zuckerberg, the creator and founder of Facebook, transformed the site from his beginnings in his Harvard dorm room in 2004 to become an all-purpose social networking website that nearly caters to all age groups and is worth over 1.51 billion dollars (Facebook, 2017). The website is currently boasting two billion active users—of which 1.32 billion log on daily—making it the largest social networking site visited daily in the world (Facebook, 2017). The potential to broadcast messages on Facebook is seen to give individuals a high sense of psychological satisfaction, a tool for personal identity, and social gratification (boyd & Ellison, 2013). Collectively, Facebook users create over 140 billion pieces of content monthly, creating an ecosystem of personal information that is dominating online communication (Facebook, 2017).

One of Facebook's primary features is its 'News Feed,' which works as an aggregator of a person's social connections and all of the network's posts. The profile, a self-representational portrait, has changed immensely over time and now consists of a series of actions and works like a repository of social data. In terms of relationships, or social ties, it is estimated that 25-30% of

people's Facebook Friends are their "actual friends" (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2011). The profile has become almost completely hyperlinked, allowing people to traverse multiple points of information on each other's profiles (boyd & Ellison, 2013). In order to interact with individuals on Facebook, users can post on another user's wall, 'like' with emotions, comment on a photograph, tag a user in a status or photograph, and direct message. Direct messages are meant for more private dialogue and allow communication between users to be with a more directed audience. Finally, one of the most important forms of connecting on Facebook for collective action is the ability to create events and groups.

### **2.3.3. Twitter**

Twitter—the brainchild of Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams, Biz Stone, and Noah Glass—started in 2006 and has developed into a platform that allows for civic engagement and political decision making. Twitter currently boasts over 500 million users and is being used by 23% of all online adults (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart, & Madden, 2015, p.6). Furthermore, the website has 328 million active users monthly worldwide and has increased every year its daily active users by 14 percent (Twitter, 2017). The micro-blogging service allows users to broadcast short messages (tweets) consisting of 280 characters or less (boyd & Ellison, 2010). Twitter has become a common tool for political discussions in many countries, which has been evident in political content from local, state, and national elections (Bruns & Burgess, 2011). In 2010, Twitter added the affordance for timelines to display photos and videos in Tweets. Individuals are identified on Twitter by a username or screen name and contacted by another user by @username. Mentions, according to Sudhof (2012), are a way to give internal structure and link users to concepts and hashtags. A hashtag is a metadata tag, that indicates a specific theme or movement, allowing users to then search for a hashtag and generate all of the messages that indicated that particular hashtag.



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Furthermore, when a tweet is directed toward a particular user, they are able to gather an audience due to the fact an individual is being called out publicly (Sudhof, 2012). Users can become a follower of other users and are then able to see the content or status message (tweet) on the other user's page. If a user is following another user, he or she is able to retweet the other user's tweet.

Twitter's microblogging platform is defined by Murthy (2012) as:

An Internet-based service in which (1) users have a public profile in which they broadcast short public messages or updates whether they are directed to specific users(s) or not, (2) messages becomes publicly aggregated together across users, and (3) users can decide whose messages they wish to receive but not necessarily who can receive their messages; this in distinction to most social networks where following each other is bi-directional (i.e., mutual).  
(p.1061)

Twitter has facilitated a symbiotic relationship with traditional media news outlets to engage users during critical moments to rapidly disperse information during social movements. In this way, Twitter wrestles away the gatekeeper of traditional media to allow for public distribution networks that allow for a flow of unmediated information. For example, users are no longer just passive audiences, but are information producers and consumers with news related posts. Information about these uprisings was assessed around the globe on Twitter, and widely recognized as a tool in facilitating revolutions. They allow users to make coordinated movements in real-time and provide organizational information to facilitate activism.

To further discuss the influence of Twitter and activism, one must look at its ability to transcend fundamental boundary lines in information streams to engage individuals. Activism-related tweets are the only information streams that transcend different languages and are accessed globally (Bastos, Puschmann, & Travitzki, 2013). Duggan and Smith's (2016) research shows that

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60% of Twitter users engage in and view political discussions while using the platform. Twitter has changed the relationship that consumers have with interacting with news where they find themselves both the creator and consumer. Kwak et al. (2010) concludes that there is a reciprocal nature of the dissemination of information and that there are well-developed actors who influence the diffusion of information. Tufekci (2017) points out further that information from traditional journalists is becoming less reliant on the credibility of the information that is being posted. This is also a common problem users are facing when wading through so much content.

### **2.3.4. Affordances**

The concept of affordances, originally studied first in ecological psychology research, was created by James Gibson (1986) to conceptualize different kinds of physical environments in relation to animals. Gibson's work focused on exploring how we see the environment around us and how the perceived affordances provide different possibilities. Gibson defined affordances as "perceptual cues in the environment that facilitate interaction" (Hogan & Quan-Haase, 2010, p. 310). After Gibson, the concept of affordances was adopted in the field of design studies by Norman ([1988] 2013), where he used the concept to describe how material artifacts allowed people to interact with computers. Norman ([1988] 2013) defined affordances as "the perceived and actual properties of the thing, primarily those fundamental properties that determine just how the thing could possibly be used" (p. 9). His focus was on exploring the relationship between the design of a device and human cognition in terms of how the user interacted with a device. Norman ([1988] 2013) created a concept called "perceived affordance," suggesting that designers could build devices where the user would understand the operation by the design. Norman changed the way affordances were studied: they were no longer relational concepts but proprieties of technology.

Similar to Norman, Gaver (1996) believed that technology could suggest different actions to the user by design, but he recognized that affordances can be perceptible in terms of functionality, yet hidden within the design. Gaver's (1996) conception of affordances also included social activities and how they can be shaped by the material environment. In his studies of email technology, Gaver (1996) used the notion of affordances to describe the changes in email culture with higher-bandwidth services. Communication scholars used the notion "social affordances" to refer to the technological changes in relation to social structure (Wellman, 2001). Wellman (2001) showed that social affordances can describe how technology can create sociality.

As technology has evolved, the importance of affordances has continued to play an important role in social media research. Within the research, social networking sites have been analyzed regarding whether they have affordances or technological constraints to users (boyd & Marwick, 2011). Researchers have focused on the social structures and how they are formed through a particular affordance within a technology (boyd & Marwick, 2011). Furthermore, Marwick and boyd (2014) point out that affordances allow the user to place a context to their social networking use and thus use the platform. Social networking sites form networked publics which are formed by four central affordances: persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability (boyd & Marwick, 2011). Due to these technical affordances there is a structure that is created for users that is unlike everyday life (boyd & Marwick, 2011). However, Treem and Leonardi (2012) argue that there are also four different affordances that are forming organizational communication in social media processes: visibility, editability, persistence, and association.

According to Bucher and Helmond (2017) there are two types of distinct dimensions that are particular to affordances: abstract high-level and more concrete feature-oriented low-level. Higher-level affordances are properties that are introducing new opportunities for users to engage

in interaction and communication with other users (boyd & Marwick, 2011). Ellison and Vitak (2015) research the specific features of a profile considering high-level affordances to understand how users are engaging in social capital processes. Instead, Postigo (2016) in his research examines how low-level affordances design features in the platform, which are creating meaning for users at Youtube.com.

The distinction between low-level and high-level affordances is meant to show how, focusing on different concepts, the term affordance is highlighting different aspects of research. The original concept of affordances as described by Gibson is a high-level abstract relation between the user and the environment (Bucher & Helmond, 2017). Norman in his architectural design concept of affordances takes on the low-level which focuses on the technical features of the platform or interface (Bucher & Helmond, 2017).

### **2.3.5. Social Movements**

The impact of social networking sites on politics and democracy has been the focus of social scientists for last decade. At first only seen as a forum to reinforce existing participatory patterns, social networking sites have become an interactive environment for self- expression and engagement (Vaccari et al., 2015). Tilly and Wood (2013), in their study of social movements from 1768-2012, found there was a new type of social movement that was distinctly unique for the twenty-first century. They describe social movements as a series of performances and campaigns on new technologies where individuals come together to make collective claims with a common goal or interest in mind (Wood & Tilly, 2013).

The turning point for social movements occurred in 2011 in Tunisia, where the use of social networking sites became a tool for empowerment, and activists and citizens alike used online

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platforms to communicate and organize political forces. Howard, et al. (2011) describes this development as the start of “The Arab Spring” movement where the young vegetable merchant, Mohamed Bouazizi, was videotaped setting himself on fire to protest the Tunisian government. The Bouazizi video was posted on multiple social networking sites, sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, creating a worldwide response that, for the first time, put immediacy to a visceral protest act that was rarely witnessed beyond the act. The video ignited concern from people and cultures everywhere, playing a central role in bringing a human face to oppression.

Tufekci (2017) points out that at this time there were already two million people on Facebook in Tunisia, with a strong community of individuals who opposed censorship. Globally, users were able to see Bouazizi’s protest and sympathize with the oppression happening across the Middle East. Protestors used this story to stimulate and inspire protestors to organize in order to criticize their governments all over the Middle East in the search for democracy. Howard et al. (2011) confirmed in their research of the Tunisian blogosphere, Egyptian political websites, and Twitter, that there exists confirming evidence that social networking sites played a critical role in the Arab Spring movement. Social movement actors (people and organizations) most commonly address social problems by voicing their grievances and concerns via engaging in collective action in order to change the social structure of society (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). The Arab Spring protests had the civil context of rising frustrations of economic inequality, human rights violations, and a systematic organized level of fear (Tilly & Wood, 2013).

In Madrid, at Puerta del Sol in 2012, several thousand citizens gathered in the streets to protest the “Indignados” and the economic disparities for the young people of Spain. These citizens and their protest significantly shaped the November elections which gave the Social Workers’ Party a confirming victory. That same year in the United States, Occupy Wall Street in

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Manhattan's Zuccotti Park was well underway, where a large base of protestors who were fighting against corporate America and its brazen bolstering of profits to the 1% at the expense of the common citizen. Penney and Dadas (2013), in their exploration of Occupy Wall Street, confirmed that there was a rapid circulation of texts that allowed individuals to gather quickly and work outside of the mainstream media. Furthermore, they concluded that both strategy and planning involving social networking sites can create a social movement offline (Penny & Dadas, 2014)

What all three social movements have in common is that they were found to use social media platforms to collectively operate as a non-hierarchical structure purely based on horizontal peer-to-peer organization. They mobilized using innovative approaches that fostered unique forms of protest and activism, with little to no institutional support. The traditional ways that institutions tend to organize and implement social movements were not present in the early "Internet Revolutions"; online social organizing techniques were disconnected from the civic information practices of the past.

Civic participatory behaviors of younger voters have been at their lowest with rates of engagement in regards to voting, civic organizations, and news habits down (Putnam, 2000; Zukin, 2006). Young political activists, according to Wells (2015), are becoming a political force that needs to be reckoned with. With economic stagnation and unemployment at an all-time high there is growing unrest amongst the disenfranchised youth of America and globally. Studies on social movements, according to McAdam (1986), explain that "biographical availability" is needed for a social movement to occur within a group of individuals. Biographical availability is defined as having no personal responsibilities or constraints, such as a time-consuming career or family obligations (Lim, 2012). Lim (2012) concluded that the members of the Egyptian social movements were considered urban youth with high levels of biographical availability and

expansive social connections.

### **2.3.6. Civic Information**

Civic information is the flow of information, facts, opinions, and ideas that help individuals create informed decisions about political and public concerns, and where they can identify opportunities for action (Wells, 2015). The consumption of civic information, according to Wells (2015), has changed in the early twenty-first century. Wells (2015) categorizes civic information as having two different paradigms: one rooted in the social and one in new media technologies. The social paradigm involves ways in which basic foundations of social organizations have shifted in the west; the technological paradigm involves ways in which individuals interweave civic information with digital communication technologies. Furthermore, these social and technological changes have shifted the meaning and use of civic information in socio-political organizations involving young adults. Wells (2015) attributes these socio-technical practices to globalization, otherwise known as the information age, and more specifically to the concept of the “networked society” as described by Manuel Castells (2012). Global connectedness of individuals changes the space and time of information and how those structures are organized. The salience of individual level concerns and conceptions of social and political institutions have declined and lost a degree of influence (Wells, 2015).

The change of how quickly information is created and distributed across digital channels in the modern era has transformed activism from a local to a global level. Due to this impactful transformation, modern institutions are unable to resolve global challenges and issues as quickly as they arise. Thus, citizens in society are left on their own socially, according to Beck (1999), and are participants in a global society where social institutions are seen as unable to develop

relationships with individuals. Wells (2015) gives the example of the reliance of workers on unions and civic organizations as a risk assurance in getting worker's rights, which has declined in recent years and is no longer relevant as employers have more control in their employee and employer relationships. In the view of individuals, social organizations are increasingly being recognized as groups instead of distal organizations that individuals could depend on to affect change on political regulations and rights. This new level of perceived connection and interactivity has a direct impact on the choice's citizens make to engage in organizations and their "faith in them being able to have influence" (Wells, 2015, p. 35).

Civic information has changed most drastically with the ways in which content is presented or styled. In their research of three different organizations, Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl (2012) found that the civic experience and media use is changed by the ubiquitous nature of the tools that are available for communication practices. The communicative relationships that are formed by citizens everywhere are based on a variety of participation tools that vary social experiences based on the individual platforms.

### **2.3.7. Social Movement Organizations**

The term "social movement organization" was introduced into social movement research in the mid 1960's by Zald and Ash (1966). A social movement organization, abbreviated as SMO, is a formal activist organization that has a set shared of goals, which are coordinated through the organization and its members (Zald & Ash, 1966). Complex membership institutions, these organizations have sets of issues and values that drive their collective action support. SMOs are seen as the central actors in coordinating and mobilizing a sustained support for any social movement community pursuing activism (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Spreading civic



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information, coordinating support, and mobilizing is known as “action repertoires,” giving opportunities to supporters to act in regard to a political action. In this digital age, action repertoires can refer to online and offline actions that create collective action (Selander & Jarvenpaa, 2016).

Social movement organizations, according to Zald and Ash (1966), are different from bureaucratic organizations in that they wish to restructure society and have a purposeful attempt to change society. Furthermore, social movement organizations have purposive incentives, which makes keeping memberships difficult because the goals of an organization must be more important than the demands of everyday life (Zald & Ash, 1966). One important aspect is that social movements have an “ebb and flow” of interest from the society at large and its members (Zald & Ash, 1966, p. 330). The relationship between the members of the organization and the cause is constantly evolving with support and changes in terms of cooperation with their success and failure (Zald & Ash, 1966).

The study of social movements originated from two different traditions: social movement theory and organizational theory. The two different traditions were developed separately from each other. Social movement theory focused on forms of expression of gangs, riots, and crowds (Weber & King, 2014) and were considered irrational and uncivilized forms of collective action. The other was based on organizational theory, and was thought to be the rational and formal method to explore bureaucratic structures of organizations (Weber & King, 2014). The two studies converged during the civil rights movement of the 1960’s, when global politics united on several civil rights topics (gender, ethnicity, peace). These movements were relatively peaceful and oriented toward making reforms within society. Following the civil rights movement several scholars shaped the discipline into exploring the informal and formal structures of organizations through their research

on social movement organizations. The most important change that came with the studies of the 1960/70's was the concept that movements were no longer considered blind movements of participants, but purposeful movements motivated by social incentives prescribed by organizations (Weber & King, 2014).

### **2.3.8. CRMs Customer Relationship Management Tools**

Customer relationship management tools (CRMs), formerly known as contact management, developed early in the business and private sectors in order to provide consistent customer insights based on interactions to predict customer needs, products, and future purchases (King, 2006). CRMs are generally believed to be traced back to when vendors were able to build interpersonal relationships (Pan, Tan, & Lim, 2006). The concept was based around the idea that businesses could create better customer loyalty and develop stronger relationships (King, 2006). Kotler (1997) points out that CRMs revolve around the concept that there is first a deep analysis of consumer behavior and then relational marketing. A common argument suggests that CRMs were created as a decision-making platform for managers to aggressively capitalize on every single customer's potential (Pan, Tan, & Lim, 2006).

CRMs have been developed and used by many different business sectors, but now are being utilized by governments to develop relationships with citizens. King (2006), in his research with the British government, found that CRMs were being used by the public sector, especially by local governments to try and see how they could best disseminate public services. The British government shifted away from the Weberian practices of hierarchical bureaucracy, and started seeing people as human clients (King, 2006). According to Reddick (2010), citizens believe they need multiple different channels in order to get in contact with government services and officials. Reddick and Anthopoulos (2014) found that, besides traditional channels, citizens need many

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different methods for getting in contact with services such as digital media, text messages, and social media to gain access to the government. Furthermore, the choice of channel is dependent on the type of services or information the citizen needs to resolve their problems (Reddick & Anthopoulos, 2014)

The need to improve connection and relationship management has also developed in the political sector in elections and activism. Political campaigns are having an increasing level of success using customer relationship management tools to connect with voters or citizens with civic information. The use of political CRMs has been considered very controversial, especially with the use of them by the Republican and Democratic parties to further political agendas. Activism, the same way politics have used CRMs to win elections, is utilizing CRMs to spread civic information and inspire individuals to participate politically.

### **2.4. Research Questions**

Below are the questions that guided my research with CODEPINK. My research questions specifically focus on how individuals receive civic information and ideas that help individuals create informed decisions about political and public concern on social networking sites through organizations. In ethnographic research, questions are formulated prior to the study to act as a guiding principle or in hopes of filling a gap in scholarly discourse. However, these types of studies are characteristically unpredictable and could uncover unforeseen data and analysis. The following questions have been formulated through preliminary research in the field and acted as a holistic guide to my research study with CODEPINK.

R.1.1: What type of civic information does CODEPINK use to engage followers (email and social networking sites) to take part in collective action?

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R.1.2: How does civic information shape a relationship between the followers and the organization?

R.2.1: What are the strategies that CODEPINK enacts to facilitate activism concerning political and social issues on social networking sites?

R.2.2: What factors build capacity to signal dissent to governments and what constitutes success?

R.3: How does CODEPINK use social networking sites to build social capital to involve followers to participate in collective action?

R4: How does the staff of CODEPINK, if at all, view social networking sites as a tool to facilitate collective action?

## **Chapter 3. Methods**

### **3.1. Method Introduction**

This research utilized a multi-modal ethnographic approach to explore the online and offline communities of CODEPINK. The multi-modal ethnographic approach is described by Murthy (2011) in his work of defining digital technologies and ethnographic research. Ethnographic research has the defining characteristics of bringing the investigator into the field (digital or physical) to learn the culture of an organization from the inside out.

The ethnographer learns the most important ideas, practices, and the way an organization is constructed through understanding the day-to-day operations and strategies employed to engage CODEPINK community members. Understanding both the offline and online presence of CODEPINK was vital to answering my research questions. This study benefitted from using both physical and digital data from CODEPINK in understanding the relationship that community members have with the organization.

### **3.2. Site and Participants**

Founded in the Fall of 2002, CODEPINK is a women-led grassroots organization that is “fighting 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 programing” (CODEPINK, 2017). The demographic that the organization serves is not limited to women but instead is non-binary, gender non-confirming, and welcomes men.

The organization was started by three women in 2002, after they set up a four-month vigil with 100 other women in front of the White House to stand for peace and against the U.S. war in Afghanistan. By the end of the four months, the founders had 10,000 other women join their efforts

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and were arrested for their protest. Since 2002, the organization has grown into a worldwide network that has been fighting for social justice and has become infamous for fighting warmongers. They are particularly well-versed in using social networking sites, which they manage using a customer relationship management system (CRM) called Nation Builder, in order to create social activism and initiatives in Congress.

The organization utilizes what they call “pink action principles” that stand for: nonviolence, clear goals, communication guidelines, responsibility and teamwork, diversity and tolerance, resource sharing, messaging, global community, and long-term vision (CODEPINK, 2017). Furthermore, “CODEPINK is all about taking action where it truly matters. We channel community grassroots democracy to where the power players are making (awful) decisions and make them listen. Wherever there is injustice we'll be there to highlight in bold PINK” (CODEPINK, 2017).

CODEPINK was chosen to be the focus of my research study because a part of the organization’s mission is to use social media “as a powerful tool for activism” (CODEPINK, “Using social media,” 2017). As an extension of their organizational efforts, CODEPINK encourages its community members to independently use social networking sites and offline action, which is revolutionary in comparison to other organizations and NGOs (CODEPINK, “Using social media,” 2017). In particular, my work focused on CODEPINK’s organizational practices and its social networking sites. CODEPINK by end of the study had about 93K followers on Facebook and 59K Twitter users following the organization, which had created a rich data set of interactions.

### **3.3. Research Design**

#### **3.3.1. Multi-Modal Ethnography**

The research design of this study is a balanced combination of physical and digital ethnographic sites, which gave me a rational way to explore CODEPINK's social networking sites and on-the-ground activities. Focusing on all sites told the story of the dimensions of the organization's intended visions and how digital and physical activities support the CODEPINK community members and their intended outcomes.

#### **3.3.2. Data Resources**

Data was collected through observation of the social movement organization's staff, practices, observations, face-to-face interactions, semi-structured interviews, the organization's website, and social network interactions from Facebook and Twitter. Figure 3.1 reflects the data resources that were used to triangulate and draw conclusions. Having multiple resources created a rich data environment that was able to tell a story of a yearlong experience with an activist group (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994). The following sections will describe each data resource and how it was utilized in this study. With the multi-modal approach, it is important to understand how each method will contribute to the research study.

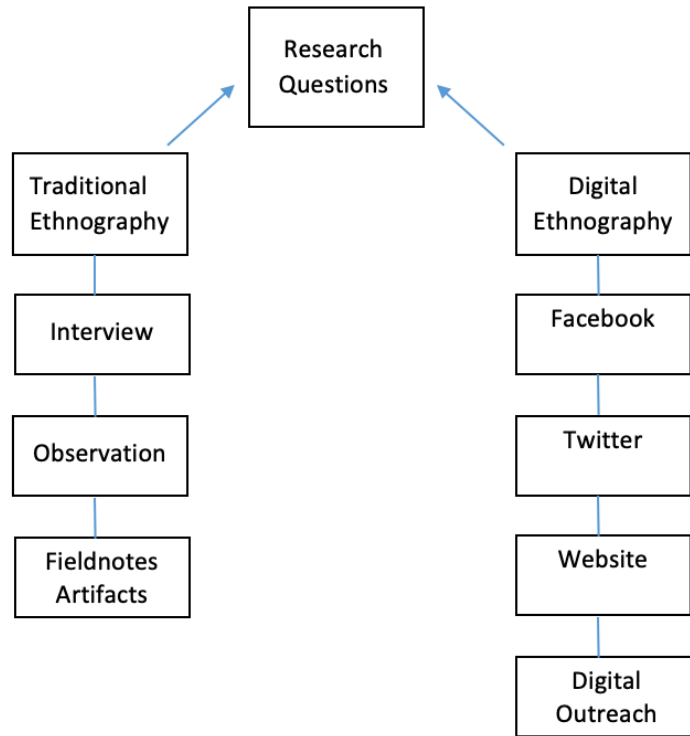


Figure 3. 1. Multi-Modal Approach showing the different methods of data collection

### 3.3.3. Traditional Ethnography

For the purpose of this research study, a traditional ethnography was selected to study CODEPINK’s inner-most workings at the offices of the organization. The organization has its headquarters in Venice, CA, local chapters, and a Washington, D.C. office and activist house specializing in congressional action. Exploring an organization in this manner allows for the researcher to explore the natural environment instead of focusing on testing certain hypotheses, which closes off many possibilities for exploration. Ethnographic research was first introduced and attributed to the groundbreaking fieldwork of Polish anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski (1913). The central goal for Malinowski (1913) was that the researcher must become immersed in the culture they are studying and must understand the “insider” point of view. The most important



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concept of ethnography is having rich insights on people's views and actions, while taking a holistic approach to interpreting the data. Unstructured data is a common characteristic of ethnographic research, where the researcher aims to discover themes and conclusions from the data that is collected (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). When I explored the CODEPINK locations the aim was to be meticulous in my field notes with a high level of detail and description to ultimately understand the organization's goals and strategies.

Observation is one of the cornerstones of ethnographic research, where the researcher must be "empathetic, yet distancing" in order to reach conclusions that have a human understanding, but still are detached from the subject (Tedlock, 1991). These observations took place at the CODEPINK offices and also at CODEPINK events/protests. One of the main choices a researcher must make is whether or not to be a participant-observer and what role they will play in the organization. For the purpose of this dissertation, I let it be known during my research that my role was being a researcher. Furthermore, in my role as the researcher I knew I was entering into an environment where I must be aware of my own representation in terms of my identity in society. I was keenly aware that I had to keep my political views to myself and remain a neutral observer of the inner workings of CODEPINK. Field notes were the primary method of writing down my observations, which acted as a running log of each experience with the organization. The data from the traditional ethnography portion of my research was analyzed using content analysis described in 3.4 Data Analysis.

Table 3. 1. Traditional Ethnography Data Aim

Data Resource	Research Question	Concepts	Analysis
Traditional Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R2.1, R2.2	Strategy and Planning Social Networking Sites, Capacity Builders,	Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify strategic practices and capacity builders.
Traditional Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R4	Social Networking Sites and organizational practices	Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify staff opinions on social networking sites and collective action.

### 3.3.4. Interviews

One of the main methods of data collection was 10 in-depth semi-structured interviews carried out during field interviews and using the online video application Zoom. For this study I used purposive sampling, where I selected the participants based on the characteristics of the organization and their political activism. The main participants that were interviewed (nine women, one man) were the founders of the CODEPINK organization, campaign organizers, communication officers, and a digital strategist. The interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 1.5 hours and regarded questions concerning the strategy of social networking sites, civic information, and practices in methods of operation. The interviews were semi-structured, which aimed to give the interviewees all the same questions in almost the same order, but were adapted as new information came to light (Bryman, 2012). The objective of this type of interviewing was that the questions are aggregated and the responses have identical cues to increase reliability of the answers from each interviewee (Bryman, 2012). The questions were purposely formatted as open-ended questions, which allowed the respondent to openly discuss each question's topic and provide robust qualitative answers. An audio recorder was brought to the interviews and the online

interviews were recorded to ensure accuracy of the transcription of the interviews. After the interviews were transcribed, they were reviewed for validity and accuracy of transcriptions. The content from the open-ended questions was analyzed using coding by the steps described in 3.4 Data Analysis.

Table 3. 2. Interview Data Aim

Data Resource	Research Question	Concepts	Interview Questions Corresponding to Concepts/Analysis
Interview	R2.1, R2.2	Social Networking Sites and Strategy, Digital practices,	Questions 8-38: Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify strategic practices and capacity builders
Interview	R4	Questions are geared toward staff’s opinions on SNS’s in relation to the organization	Questions 39-42: Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify staff opinions on social networking sites and collective action.

**3.3.5. Digital Ethnography**

In a modern digital society, online communities on social networking sites have spurred a new type of research design called digital ethnography (Lim, Lee, & Kim, 2011). Over the years, an extensive corpus of research has emerged that defends the use of this method. Digital ethnography involves gathering data through a computer-mediated communication technology (Murthy, 2011). Online social networking communities have been shown to be useful in studying social interactions of individuals (Murthy, 2008), and numerous researchers have investigated online communities to better understand relationships between online community members. Murthy (2008) notes that digital ethnographic approaches are limited to individuals and

communities who have the financial ability, knowledge, and social capital to participate in digital technologies. Furthermore, Carter (2005) states that the ethnographer’s own bias and online presence could affect the data. For the purpose of this dissertation the organization let me attend their virtual campaign meetings via ZOOM, scheduled every Monday and Friday. Moreover, I joined Twitter and Facebook and was an observer participant on CODEPINK’s social networking sites. I made observations, took field notes, and gathered artifacts while being a passive member of the organization’s online communities. Upon reviewing existing literature of digital ethnographic studies, the data was then analyzed by using content analysis (Richmond, 2014), specifically identifying patterns through coding steps described in 3.4 Data Analysis.

Table 3. 3. Digital Ethnography Data Aim

Data Resource	Research Question	Concepts	Analysis
Digital Ethnography - Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R1.1, R1.2	Digital Civic Information, Collective Action, Call to Action, Interaction between users and organization	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for civic information
Digital Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R2.1, R2.2	Alignment of digital strategy with interactions, collective action	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for strategies and capacity builders
Digital Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R3	Social Capital	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for social capital

### 3.3.6. Digital Outreach

Digital outreach was recognized as any digital communication that the organization has with CODEPINK’s community members outside of social networking site platforms. In particular, CODEPINK sends emails weekly to community members reminding them of events, campaigns, or actions to take toward certain issues they are working on. The email data that I sampled is based on the emails that I received from the organization. These emails are sent to followers of the organization and are based on interests that they express to the organization. This data was then uploaded on to the NVivo 12 platform and analyzed for patterns in terms of capacity builders, engagement of citizens, calls to action, and civic information. Understanding the messages that are sent out to community members is important to understanding the relationship between CODEPINK and its members. Civic information in this case was identified as information, facts, opinions, and ideas that help individuals create informed decisions about political concerns, and can ideally identify opportunities for action. After collecting this type of data, it helped define civic information and digital communication patterns that facilitated collective action. The digital outreach (emails) were analyzed using content analysis specifically identifying these patterns through coding steps described in 3.4 Data Analysis.

Table 3. 4. Outreach Data Aim

Data Resource	Research Question	Concepts	Analysis
Digital Outreach	R1.1, R1.2	Civic Information, Calls to Action, Events, Engagement, Relationships	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for civic information and relationship builders

### 3.3.7. Social Networking Sites

Twitter, Facebook, and CODEPINK's website were the main sites for the digital ethnographic study portion of the dissertation. They were selected because they contain rich data and a significant amount of interactions between individuals in their communities. Furthermore, Twitter (CODEPINK) and Facebook (CODEPINK) were specifically targeted for established significance in aiding and influencing social movements and coordinating activism. Each platform was seen as a separate site in the digital ethnography due to each website having different affordances and motivations for engagement from individuals. Changes in the platform's functions were noted throughout the study as each environment was constantly fluid. NVivo 12 for Mac was used to gather the data from each site in the study. This data revealed the sentiment, emotions, and opinions from users who were interacting with CODEPINK on these platforms. The social networking site data from Facebook and Twitter were specifically coded and categorized for directed communication—indicating reciprocity—with the organization for the presence of social capital (Burke, Kraut, & Marlow, 2011). Directed communication on Twitter was categorized by the affordances of mentions and shares. On Facebook, directed communication was categorized by the affordance of tagging the organization. Tagging is when a follower connects the organization with content. Looking at these affordances where users are directly communicating with the organization shows the creation, maintenance, or growth of a social relationship and capital with users in the network. Patterns of engagement were identified through repeated interactions, such as sharing of posts and information, engagement with posts, and sharing with CODEPINK. Throughout the year of the study, CODEPINK's social networks grew in size with Facebook growing from 86,248 followers to 92,920 followers, and Twitter's following climbing from 48.9K to 62K followers. The data from these websites was analyzed using content analysis,

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described in 3.4 Data Analysis, to identify any patterns of engagement between the organization and user's actions online.



Figure 3. 2. CODEPINK's Website



Figure 3. 3. CODEPINK's Twitter Account end of 2018



Figure 3. 4. CODEPINK’s Facebook Account at the end of 2018

Table 3. 5. Social Networking Sites/ Data Aim

Data Resource	Research Question	Concepts	Analysis
Social Networking Sites/Website	R1.1, R1.2	Civic Information, Call to Action, Collective Action	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for civic information and relationships
Social Networking Sites/Website	R2.1, R2.2	Strategies, Interactions, Call to Action, Engagement, Social/Political Issues	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for strategies and capacity builders
Social Networking Sites/Website	R3	Social Capital, Collective Action: Mentions, Replies, and Tags	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for social capital



### **3.4. Data Analysis**

For this multi-modal ethnography, numerous studies were reviewed to see how other researchers analyzed data collected. In particular, Hemmi, Bayne & Land (2009) used content analysis to better understand social networking site interactions by using the computer software NVivo 12 for Mac. NVivo is a qualitative analysis software, which uses textual data to make thematic coding. For the purpose of this dissertation, I used NVivo 12 for Mac to analyze social media data, field notes, interview transcriptions, digital interactions, and website content. Reoccurring themes and patterns are based off of keywords and phrases, which created an understanding of both online and offline data. Furthermore, NVivo 12 was able to gather the social network data for long periods of time and allowed me to upload other documents such as images, pdf's, audio, video, spreadsheets, and webpages (NVivo, 2017). Due changes in the Facebook API, which made Facebook data collection difficult, I had to use another website called Netlytic.com in order to download the Facebook data from CODEPINK. Once the data was uploaded into NVivo's platform, I was able to visualize the data and start the content analysis and coding to answer the research questions.

Code, according to Saldaña, is a word or phrase that “assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language based or visual data” (2009, p. 3). The analytic process is a cyclical practice that was divided into three main stages for this study (Saldaña, 2009). These are the following coding stages of my content analysis for the textual data resources:

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1. Pre-Coding Process- highlighting and bolding important aspects of interviews and passages (Saldaña, 2009).
2. First Cycle Coding- processes that happen after initial round of coding (Saldaña, 2009).
  - Descriptive Coding- also named topic coding. Used in studies with a wide variety of data resources. This type of coding creates “basic vocab” categories to index the content for further analysis (Wolcott, 1994).
3. Second Cycle Coding- Re-organizing and finding more accurate categories and conceptual themes to develop more meaningful units of analysis (Saldaña, 2009).
  - Pattern Coding- is grouping data into more explanatory or inferential codes that identify emergent themes that need further explanation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This type of method is often used to examine social networks and patterns of human relationships.

<p><b>Current Admin Specific</b></p>	<p>Dear Wiebke,</p> <p>While Donald Trump is gunning for war with North Korea, we, the people of the United States, declare peace. Inspired by the Vietnam-era <b>People’s Peace Treaty</b>, concerned U.S. peace groups have initiated a People’s Peace Treaty with North Korea. <b>Civic Information</b></p>	<p><b>Anti-War Petition</b></p>
<p><b>Call to Action Incentive</b></p>	<p><b>Sign this historic document here and get at least 10 friends to sign on.</b> The five people who get the most signatures will all get special gifts from South Korea, where we are working with our allies who are desperate to stop a new war on the Korean Peninsula.</p>	<p><b>Engagement</b></p>
	<p>The plan is to collect 100,000 signatures and to publicize the People’s Peace Treaty in conjunction with Armistice Day (aka Veterans Day) on November 11, when many local actions for peace will take place throughout the U.S. <b>Event</b></p>	<p><b>Local Action &amp; National Action</b></p>

Figure 3. 5. Coding Digital Outreach Example

Figure 3.5 is an example of how content was coded from the data that is collected. This particular example is from a CODEPINK national email that I had received as a community member. The light pink highlights are representative of the pre-coding process, where I identified important aspects to the email. The yellow, red, blue, and green highlights are indicative of the first cycle of coding where I identified basic groups or categories. In this example I specifically identified civic information, calls to action, events, engagement, and social capital. The text in black is indicative of pattern coding, the final phase of coding, which over time identified emergent themes that were present within the data.

Table 3.7 shows all the resources and aims from the previous data resource sections. The different sources of data are meant to contribute unique pieces of information to answer portions of each research question. Triangulation of all the data sources elucidated consistency of the findings and constructed a comprehensive understanding of the research questions. When reporting findings that are direct quotes from staff members of the organization, I numbered the participants to protect their identity.

Table 3. 6. All Resources and Aims

Data Resource	Research Question	Concepts	Analysis
Traditional Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R2.1, R2.2	Strategy and Planning Social Networking Sites, Capacity Builders,	Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify strategic practices and capacity builders.

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Traditional Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R4	Social Networking Sites and organizational practices	Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify staff opinions on social networking sites and collective action.
Digital Ethnography - Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R1.1, R1.2	Digital Civic Information, Collective Action, Call to Action, Interaction between users and organization	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for civic information
Digital Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R2.1, R2.2	Alignment of digital strategy with interactions, collective action	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for strategies and capacity builders
Digital Ethnography- Observations, Field Notes, Artifacts	R3	Social Capital	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for social capital
Interview	R2.1, R2.2	Social Networking Sites and Strategy, Digital practices,	Questions 8-38: Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify strategic practices and capacity builders
Interview	R4	Questions are geared toward staff's opinions on SNS's in relation to the organization	Questions 39-42: Descriptive coding and pattern coding to identify staff opinions on social networking sites and collective action.
Digital Outreach	R1.1, R1.2	Civic Information, Calls to Action, Events, Engagement, Relationships	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for civic information and relationship builders
Social Networking Sites/Website	R1.1, R1.2	Civic Information, Call to Action, Collective Action	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for civic information and relationships
Social Networking Sites/Website	R2.1, R2.2	Strategies, Interactions, Call to Action, Engagement, Social/Political Issues	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for strategies and capacity builders

Social Networking Sites/Website	R3	Social Capital, Collective Action: Mentions, Replies, and Tags	Descriptive coding and pattern coding for social capital
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### 3.5. Methodological Limitations

Murthy (2016), in his work with digital ethnographies, describes the many pitfalls to doing ethnographic research online. Qualitative research, as explained by Denzin, is an "interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counter-disciplinary field... [which] is inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions" (2004, p.4). Murthy (2013) describes the researcher's responsibility to recognize that there is an increasing shift of people's lives appearing in a public domain. Furthermore, the fluidity and unpredictability of changes to the Internet should be considered as platforms are constantly changing and evolving. As such, consent cannot always be obtained with online research such as Facebook and Twitter. Rutter and Smith (2005) say that online research can have ethical issues due to it being an unconventional research setting. Furthermore, Murthy (2008) states that due to the digital divide, online research is still limited to the digital "must-haves" of the population. Ethical issues can also arise due to lurking, privacy, intellectual property, and informed consent (Murthy, 2013). Carter (2005) brings up issues such as whether online studies can really have participants tell the truth and verify their identity. However, in argument for multi-modal ethnographies, Murthy (2013) says that validity and triangulation increases by having both face-to-face interviews with participants as well as online interactions.

The researcher's presence at the organization and her interactions may also be biased, which needs to be reflected upon in the field notes and analysis. To avoid any ethical issues, the

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researcher will not disclose any identities of specific online respondents to the project. Furthermore, the researcher will not reveal any identities of specific statements from CODEPINK staff, but will number the participants. In keeping with the methods of Zimmer (2010), careful approaches to ethical research on Facebook and Twitter will be conducted.

## **Chapter 4. CODEPINK**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter introduces CODEPINK on a deeper level and establishes the historical foundations upon which the organization operates. Additionally, this chapter reviews famous protests, the founders, issues and campaigns, locations, the organizational structure, software the organization uses, and branding. The campaigns that I review are Divest, Local Peace Economy, Justice for Palestine, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Accountability, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Ground Drones. Moreover, I evaluate the current campaigns that have been discussed this year. Lastly, I share my experience with CODEPINK throughout the yearlong study and some of the fieldwork that I found pivotal in the study.

### **4.2. History**

The concept of CODEPINK was started on the steps of the White House on November 17, 2002, by four women—Medea Benjamin, Jodie Evans, Diane Wilson, and Starhawk—in protest of the US involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq. The women set up a four-month vigil that inspired over 10,000 people and organizations such as The National Organization for Women, Women for Women International, Global Exchange, and Greenpeace to join them on the steps of the White House lawn. The event led to the creation of CODEPINK and a “deep desire by a group of American women to stop the United States from invading Iraq” (CODEPINK, 2018, para. 8). The name is derivative and satirizes the Bush administration’s color-coded homeland security threats, where pink is supposed to signify a color of cooperation (CODEPINK, 2018). The staff of the organization call themselves and followers CODEPINKers. The group strives to be a politically non-partisan organization, but quite often have been characterized in the media as a socialist,

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extremist, Marxist, left-wing activist group. The group is most famous for staging disruptive protests at congressional hearings and political speeches.

### 4.3. Famous Protests

There are a number of CODEPINK protests happening on any given week, and whether it is an action being taken by CODEPINK followers or a demonstration put on by staff members, they are always active in standing up with their voice and opinion. A number of protests are memorable:

- Arrest during Jeff Sessions Confirmation Hearing in 2017 - member was arrested for laughing loudly during the confirmation.
- National Rifle Association Protest in 2012 - Protesting the NRA after the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre.
- Halloween White House Protest in 2009 - they organized a war protest outside of the Obama's Halloween party.
- Tucker Carlson Interview - Tucker Carlson criticized Medea Benjamin for her support of the Venezuelan President. From the event they started a media dialogue.
- Interruption at Republican National Convention - They held up a sign that said, "Build Bridges Not Walls."
- Protests at the Walter Reed Medical Center - Vigils to draw attention to the need in care of veterans.
- Bloody hands at Condoleezza Rice Confirmation - While Condoleezza Rice testified in the House Foreign Relations Committee regarding the policies in the middle east one CODEPINK member painted her hands red and others held up signs saying "liar."
- Airbnb campaign to stop working in occupied territory - Under years of pressure, Airbnb stopped allowing settlement rentals on their platform.
- Kavanaugh Senate Hearing disruption - Ariel Gold interrupted and arrested during the hearings with a sign that said, "KavaNope."
- Hanging a giant pink nightgown slip off the Century City Plaza - They hung a 20-foot nightgown slip off a building to protest President Bush.
- 10,000 women in pink marched on International Women's Day

Furthermore, when asked a CODEPINKer told me about some protests she felt were particularly successful:



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The walk in their shoes display at Hillary Clintons, or 100 of us in pink slips disrupting her and giving her a pink slip, our daily vigil outside the White House Camp Casey, Mother's Day at the White House, getting Obama to radically reduce his drone strikes, stopping the act of war on Iran with the Ackerman dingy flotilla blockade on his boat, Taking 800 people to Gaza (1).

### **4.4. Founders**

CODEPINK was founded by three women named Gael Murphy, Jodie Evans, and Medea Benjamin. Gael Murphy was an active member in CODEPINK from 2003-2009 and was an essential member contributing to its founding. Jodie Evans and Medea Benjamin continue to work as CODEPINK founders in the daily operations of the organization. In the following sections I will write in depth about the founders of the CODEPINK organization and their accomplishments within CODEPINK and in their own lives.

#### **4.4.1. Jodie Evans**

Jodie Evans was born on 22 September, 1954 in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is the co-founder of CODEPINK and has been a political activist for over 40 years. An author of two books, she is also a three-time Emmy award winner and Oscar nominated documentary film producer, most famously executive producing *The Square* and *The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers*. Additionally, she serves as a board member on twelve different organizations, with the most notable including the Women's Media Center, Rainforest Action Network, and Drug Policy Alliance. In 1992, she served on California Governor Jerry Brown's cabinet and managed his presidential campaign. Before that, Evans was known to be democratic insider and worked in party politics for over 20 years as a skilled campaign fundraiser. Some of her famous protests as an activist include: interrupting former US President George Bush's

acceptance speech at the Republican convention while stripping down to a pink-slip; interrupting Sarah Palin's speech at the Republican National Convention in 2008; protesting the Koch brother financiers; and performing a citizen's arrest on Karl Rove at his book signing in Beverly Hills.

### **4.4.2. Medea Benjamin**

Medea Benjamin was born Susan Benjamin on 10 September 1952, and is the other co-founder of CODEPINK, as well as co-founder of the fair-trade advocacy group called Global Exchange. She renamed herself during her time at Tufts University, after the Greek mythological character Medea, and became a member of the Students for Democratic Society. Benjamin went on to get a Master's degree in Public Health and Economics at Columbia University and worked for over ten years in Latin America and Africa for The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. In 2000, she was a Green party candidate running for California's U.S. Senate seat, and won the highest vote for any Green Party U.S. Senate candidate in American history.

Benjamin has been described by New York Newsday as "one of America's most committed and most effective fighters for human rights," and by the Los Angeles Times as "one of the high-profile leaders of the peace movement" (Peace News, 2014). She has participated in numerous protests involving U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. President George W. Bush, and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. She famously repeatedly interrupted a major speech by former U.S. President Barack Obama, and interrupted U.S. President Donald Trump's acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention (Gupta, 2016). In addition to her advocacy work, Benjamin is the author of over 12 different books focusing on topics such as: the U.S. relationship with Afghanistan and Iran, drone warfare, the Cuban Revolution, the Peace Corps, and bridging the global gap of inequality. She has been honored with The Martin Luther

King, Jr. Peace Prize, Kellogg National Peacemaker Award, Thomas Merton Center Peace Award, Peace Foundation Memorial Award, and the 2014 Gandhi Peace Award for her “unyielding advocacy for social justice for more than 30 years” (Peace News, 2014).

## **4.5. Issues and Campaigns**

### **4.5.1. Divest**

The purpose of the Divest Campaign is rooted in the organization’s main focus on ending wars and creating peace. A CODEPINKer (1) stated, “that the United States economy is prioritizing military spending and profit over actual human needs.” They have a call out to radically change the way that the United States is spending money and to re-allocate spending. These are the main goals of the Divest Campaign from the organization’s website:

- “Empower individuals, institutions, and communities to change their investments and support peace and sustainability; instead of war, death, and destruction.”
- “Highlight how the war machine is in our streets and in our communities, and is impacting all of us.”
- “Expose how the war machine is taking precious resources away from the programs and industries that support us, from education to housing to the environment (CODEPINK, 2018, para 2).”

### **4.5.2. Local Peace Economy**

Since 1776, the United States has been at war 93% of the time. Therefore, the Local Peace Economy campaign is targeted toward providing civic information about an alternative economy. CODEPINK states that the entire premise of the United States history is founded on “waging

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genocide on indigenous and African peoples, and violently extracting resources from the earth, in order to accumulate wealth and power into the hands of a few” (CODEPINK, 2018, para. 2). Furthermore, they state that the entire economy is rooted in violence and an ecosystem of relationships that were integrated during war time. To counteract this, CODEPINK’s website provides resources for individuals to learn what companies, websites, books, and organizations are aiding a peaceful economy (2018). Furthermore, the organization provides tool kits to start your own local peace economy in your town and tools for mindfulness for transformative social change. CODEPINK has also created a number of petitions in order to further the Local Peace Economy campaign: Demilitarize Standing Rock, Spread the word about growing a local peace economy, and Take the peace economy pledge (CODEPINK, 2018).

### **4.5.3. Justice for Palestine**

The Justice for Palestine campaign, also called the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS Movement), is an international movement which aims to have Israel uphold its obligations under international law to return occupied territories to Palestine (CODEPINK, 2018). The Justice for Palestine movement is the most supported campaign, and is largely led by CODEPINK’s National Campaign Director, Ariel Gold. CODEPINK has organized a number of campaigns related to the BDS Movement over the years: RE/MAX movement, urging the real estate company to not do sales or rentals in Israel; NO Airbnb in #StolenHomes; Boycott Ahava: Stolen Beauty; Boycott HP; Stop abuse of the Palestinian Children; #HandsoffJerusalem; and this year’s campaign, Free 16-year-old Ahed Tamimi. In 2018, while protesting for Ahed Tamimi and supporting Palestine’s search for Justice, CODEPINK was banned by the Israeli government from entering the country. Ariel Gold had obtained a travel visa to enter Israel, but was detained and

denied entry upon arrival in the country, along with 20 other organizations that were also banned from entering the country for their support of the BDS movement.

#### **4.5.4. Saudi Arabia**

The United States, according to CODEPINK, has spent over 8 trillion dollars in the Persian Gulf region since the 1970's (2018). In consequence, the United States has been assisting Saudi Arabia, which opposes religious freedom and commits serious human rights violations against women in the repressive male guardianship laws. Between the years of 2016 and 2017, it is estimated that Saudi Arabia has killed as many as 6,000 people in aggression toward Yemen (CODEPINK, 2018). In 2018, CODEPINK protested the visit from the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman (MbS) to the United States, citing that CODEPINK believed the US should not allow a war criminal in the country and support his regime. CODEPINK has led many different protests against Saudi Arabia, including: 1001 Letters to Congress, Tell Google to Say No to War, Tell Your Senators: End Our Unauthorized War in Yemen, Tell the Senate to vote to invoke the war Powers Act Now, No Weapons to Saudi Arabia, Feast or Famine?, Support the Bipartisan resolution to withdraw unauthorized US forces from Saudi-led civil war in Yemen, Tell your Senator to Block All Weapons Sale to Saudi Arabia, Uber: Oppression of Saudi Women, Tell Trump: Don't Escalate War in Yemen, Yemen Food Drive, and Stop the mid-air refueling of Saudi warplanes! (CODEPINK, 2018). The organization's co-founder Medea Benjamin has also published a book called *Kingdom of the Unjust, Behind the US-Saudi Connection* (CODEPINK, 2018).

In March 2015, an international coalition led by Saudi Arabia, and backed by the United States, launched air strikes against the Huthi armed group in Yemen. According to Amnesty

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International (2018), horrific human rights have been committed throughout the region and 15,000 civilians are said to be trapped in the middle between the anti-Huthi (Saudi Arabia-led Coalition) and the Huthi's. Approximately 22.2 million Yemenis rely on humanitarian aid assistance, however the Saudi Arabia-led coalition unlawfully blocks the region of receiving essential supplies that are necessary for civilians (Amnesty International, 2018).

### **4.5.5. Ground Drones**

CODEPINK is known for acting as whistle-blowers against the U.S. government for the use of indiscriminate drone killings of civilians in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Libya. The U.S. era of using man-less drones started when the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001. In conjunction with other peace and justice groups, including Nevada Desert Experience, Veterans for Peace, and Voices for Non-Violence, CODEPINK has worked to raise awareness and education about the use of these weapons. They have protested on a global scale on this issue and have been arrested at drone airbases worldwide, including Creech Air Force Base, Germany Ramstein AFB, and Beale (CODEPINK, 2018). The organization firmly believes that drone strikes are counter-productive to creating peace and instead fuel hatred against the United States in the middle eastern region. Their objective is to have non-violent actions against the worldwide drone network and have the U.S foreign policy become “restrain, cooperation, rebuilding, and mutual security” (CODEPINK, 2018, para. 4). Shut Down Creech, (SDC) is the organization's annual peaceful non-violent mass mobilization of resistance against drone strikes.

#### **4.5.6. Iran**

The state of Iran has been a major violator of human rights abuses and has been condemned by the United Nations and the Human Rights Commission (CODEPINK, 2018). The government has been criticized for their stringent death penalty on drug offenses, torture, killing of political prisoners, lack of freedom of speech or expression, violations of children's rights, and the killing of dissidents and other civilians. CODEPINK, in particular, has been working to bring the injustices of Iran to light. During 2018 CODEPINK worked to keep the Nuclear Iran Deal in place, however President Trump decided to overturn it in 2018.

Co-founder Medea Benjamin is one of the leading experts on the current government of Iran. She has published a book called *Inside Iran: The Real History of the Islamic Republic of Iran* and recently created a resistance by interrupting Brian Hook during the State Department's Special Envoy to Iran. CODEPINK has also made headlines in the Washington Post, when they interrupted Mike Pompeo at the United Against Nuclear Iran Summit in 2018. Since their inception, the organization has executed a number of protests and led campaign initiatives that protested Iran, for example:

- Called out War Criminal Dick Cheney at his major Iran Speech
- Organized a press conference with Sarah Shourd (US journalist imprisoned in Iran for over 400 days)
- Created a peaceful presence at the Donald Trump and Ted Cruz vigil on the Capitol steps to “Seal the Deal” (CODEPINK, 2018)

#### **4.5.7. Iraq**

According to Human Rights Watch (2018), multinational military operations in the region have intensified in 2017. Iraq is a region that has been war since the early 2000's and has over 3.2

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million of its people displaced by the war and the Global Coalition against ISIS, which is led by the United States (Human Rights Watch, 2018). ISIS, an Islamic militant group, uses civilians as human shields, utilizes chemical weapons, and has carried out serious human rights abuses in the name of jihad (Human Rights Watch, 2018). CODEPINK, since the beginning of their founding, has been against war in the Middle East and Persian Gulf region. They are actively promoting keeping out of and stopping all military intervention in Iraq. CODEPINK encourages activists to post on Facebook and on Iraqtribunal.org, engage on Twitter, invite speakers to local peace talks, watch and discuss feelings about the Iraq war, write letters to local newspapers, march and/or rally, hold a candlelight vigil, do a phone-a-thon, visit your member of congress, hit your local bookstores, and start a peace rally in your town (CODEPINK, 2018). They currently have two petitions that activists can sign on their website: Reverse the Military Escalation in Iraq, and Independent Investigation of the Iraq War Now (CODEPINK, 2018).

### 4.5.8. Syria

The conflict in Syria, according to *The Atlantic*, is a confusing conflict that emerged from peaceful protests in 2011 to merciless war that stems from a multitude of countries and issues (Gilsinan, 2015). The conflict is partly a civil war of government, religious war with Assad's minority Alawite sect, Shiite fighters from Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon, Sunni rebel groups, and a "proxy war featuring Russia and Iran against the United States and its allies" (Gilsinan, 2015). The war has killed over 220,000 people and has created a country that has half its citizens displaced. The United States Ambassador Nikki R. Haley announced to the United Nations in April 2018 that the U.S. believes Syria has used chemical weapons more than 50 times (Gladstone, 2018). On their website, CODEPINK bids activists to take action and send messages to the Syrian



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people via Twitter. Furthermore, they have two petitions: No More Troops to Syria, and Drop Food—Not Bombs—on Syria (CODEPINK, 2018). The petitions' main goal is to ask Congress to stop airstrikes on Syria and to invoke the War Powers Act to stop unconstitutional strikes (CODEPINK, 2018).

### **4.5.9. Accountability**

CODEPINK aspires to be a model organization that is attempting to highlight citizen justice when it calls out the different presidential administrations starting with Bush, Obama, and now the Trump administration. They are in support of whistleblowers and believe that the actions of Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning are commendable and a civic duty for a democratic society rather than violations of the Espionage Act. CODEPINK encourages individuals—and provides directions on their website—to stage citizen's arrests against war criminals. Furthermore, the organization asks their website readers to strategize and educate themselves on the top 50 war criminals in the United States. Petitions that CODEPINK has taken in the past related to the Accountability Campaign are: Elliot Ahrams, Thank you, Chelsea!, Independent Investigation into the Murder of Berta Cáceres Now!, End US Military Aid to the Oppressive Honduran Government!, Obama: Reinstate Snowden's American Passport Now!, and Free Chelsea Manning!

### **4.5.10. North Korea**

In response to the U.S. and North Korea nuclear war threats, peace groups like CODEPINK have united to bring a message to Washington and Pyongyang. In a document along the lines of a Vietnam-era People's Peace Treaty, CODEPINK has initiated a treaty to raise awareness about the past U.S. policy toward North Korea and to send a clear message to

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Pyongyang that the U.S. does not want a war (CODEPINK, 2018). The goal of the creation of the treaty is to raise awareness and to have individuals sign a petition and spread it through their social networks and email lists to get others to sign as well. In CODEPINK's past, they have joined Gloria Steinem and many other peace activists from across the world and crossed the DMZ between South and North Korea. They marched with South Korean women to end 70 years of War for the Korean People and demanded a peace treaty with the U.S. government. The march in South Korea in 2015 gathered media reactions from the CNN, The Guardian, The New York Times, ABC News, The Wall Street Journal, US News, Global Times, FOX News, PBS News, and many more.

### **4.6. Current Campaigns (2018)**

There are a number of campaigns and issues that CODEPINK is currently raising awareness, educating, or protesting against. The biggest current campaign that CODEPINK is leading is the Justice for Palestine Campaign, which is primarily lead by the National Campaign Director Ariel Gold, and has been active for a number of years with their Soda Stream, Airbnb, REMAX—and mostly recently in 2018—the Ahed mi Campaign. The Ahed Tamimi Campaign revolves around a 16-year-old Palestinian activist who was facing prison time for slapping an Israeli soldier in the face. CODEPINK has also been particularly active in the BlackRock Campaign, which is part of the larger Divest Campaign, focused on educating the public that Blackrock and CEO Larry Fink invests in military weaponry. Furthermore, CODEPINK has been vigorous in campaigns concerning Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. CODEPINK tries to focus their campaign work on the existing issues and campaign goals, however is very active in critiquing the Trump administration and actively protesting current affairs. For example, they have been very

critical at the Brett Kavanaugh supreme court confirmation hearings, protesting and disrupting the judicial hearings. The organization is also keenly aware that advocating issues that are in the current media cycle keeps the interest of members relevant and heightened. CODEPINK is sought after to respond to current events, create calls to action, and provide relevant civic information from the point of view of its staff.

### **4.7. CODEPINK Organizational Structure**

Structurally CODEPINK consists of 15 staff members and is led by Jodie Evans and Medea Benjamin. It is organized by founders, staff, local leaders, and interns. Ariel Gold is the National Co-director for the organization and is the leading voice for the Justice for Palestine Campaign. There are a number of directors for each major region of the organization: a Social Media Director, Campaign Organizers, and Community Directors. Furthermore, there is one “house mother” who watches over the CODEPINK house, which is open September through May in Washington, DC. The group also works with several independent contractors, but the most noteworthy is the Social Media Strategist whom has worked on large scale campaigns in the past. While observing the organization, a number of positions had new individuals start and/or leave their position.

#### **4.7.1. Funding**

The funding structure of CODEPINK is what makes the organization unique from traditional organizations. Since 2008, CODEPINK has been operating as a 501c3 non-profit organization, and makes no profit off of the donations that members give to the organization. According to Influencewatch.org, the organization’s tax return had: an annual revenue of \$1,401,321, \$1,031,031 in expenses, and \$944,721 in assets (Influencewatch.org, 2018). The

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organization raises money from private donors, supporters from the website, and individuals who donate to campaigns from emails. One They do successfully raise a lot of money from private donors, however are not transparent in terms of where the funding is coming from. They have also received funding from campaigns that were seen on television, according to a CODEPINKer (1), “Dal La Magna saw it on TV and contacted us and pledged \$5k a month.”

### **4.7.2. Work Schedule/Meeting Schedule**

CODEPINK has a unique style of communicating with each other as they do so digitally and in physical locations across the country. They convene as a group on an online platform called Zoom, a video conferencing software that allows people to call in from anywhere in the world. They meet as a group on Mondays and Fridays to speak about what types of campaigns are happening for the week, what types of alerts they have to create, what type of shareable is required, and what actions they are going to take. Monday meetings are designed to catch up CODEPINK staff with what is happening in the world and configure communication and messaging strategy. The group goes through each campaign and discusses the actions and/or newsworthy events that shape each campaign. The Friday meetings are generally shorter and they are designed for reflexivity on the effectiveness of digital communications, social media strategy, and strategizing on how the group could more effectively use NationBuilder to reach bigger audiences. Overall, the activist schedule cannot be contained to the confines of what would be considered a normal schedule, but it would be considered a lifestyle choice and a dedication to causes and activism. To CODEPINKers it is a way of life and dedication to campaigns that are for the greater good.

### **4.7.3. Content Calendar**

The content calendar was implemented into CODEPINK's organizational structure during April of 2018, with the recommendation from a digital strategist. The calendar allows for messages, campaigns, and social networking ideas all to be linked and located in one calendar so the information and design teams could work together to create the social, email, and website content. The content calendar is discussed on Fridays and is important so the team can reference all of the strategies and tasks that have to be done during the upcoming week. Furthermore, during the content meetings the team analyzes email data to see what campaigns are working and what campaigns need to be revisited. The content calendar has allowed the team to streamline the process for social media strategy, and also organize the content that needs to be created to sustain a campaign. Additionally, it allows the team to understand how the content and the campaigns develop over time within the organization's strategy. The content calendar is the organization's checklist for the upcoming week and each individual team member is responsible for having their content on the calendar prior to the upcoming week. This allows the individuals who create shareables and content to organize the content that is going to be created and posted the week prior.

## **4.8. Physical Locations**

CODEPINK was started on the steps of the White House in 2002, but has evolved to have a Los Angeles office and store, Washington D.C. activist house, New York residence, and a San Francisco location used for mailing. The founder's main residences are split up on each coast of the United States, however they travel all over the world on a regular basis. There are specific teams in different locations all over the United States.

### **4.8.1. D.C. Activist House**

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The D.C. CODEPINK Activist House is located in Washington D.C. and has a house mother that runs the facilities from September to May. The house is located in a Washington D.C. suburb and is light purple with turquoise window trims and a hot pink railing (see Figure 4.1). The house is surrounded by a multi-colored fence and has a CODEPINK Library where people can borrow books for free.

When you walk into the house you immediately notice the giant papier-mâché head, the immense number of peace signs, protest signs, and CODEPINK memorabilia. The living room is in the front and the kitchen in the back of the house, while upstairs there are three bedrooms that are available for sleeping. The most important part of the house is the attic, which houses years' worth of activist signs, costumes, and memorabilia. The attic has an impressive amount of materials that really shows how much activism the organization conducts in the Washington D.C. area. CODEPINK had a different D.C. house between 2006-2008, which housed over 35 different activists. They were able to disrupt congress every day, and as a CODEPINKer stated, "it was a wild time and taught a lot of people activism and created a beautiful community" (1).



Figure 4. 1. CODEPINK Activist House Washington D.C.

#### **4.8.2. CODEPINK: The Los Angeles House**

The Los Angeles CODEPINK house is located in Venice, California, and serves as the headquarters for the organization (Figure 4.2). In an interview Jodie Evans said that the Venice location “has been the office since we started, it was my home. I had to get another (office) as it was overrun with people and materials and so I bought another down the street when I married.” The Los Angeles house is where Jodie Evans leads the Local Peace Economy Campaign and where the L.A. team does the majority of their work. They hold Local Peace Economy meetings there, work on their daily campaigns, and hold events on behalf of the organization. This house follows the same kind of interesting and fun color scheme making it recognizable within the CODEPINK

theme of peace. The Los Angeles location also houses the CODEPINK store and according to Jodie Evans provides a “shed of visuals, and lots of work space.”



Figure 4. 2. Los Angeles CODEPINK House

#### 4.9. Brand/Identity

CODEPINK’s major brand identity color is the use of hot pink and peace signs. The name CODEPINK is a satire derivative of the Bush era labeling system that was used as a terrorist alert system. The colors that are iconic are pink #ff0099 and #cc0099 and secondary pink #ff0066, with accent colors of yellow and black. The organization has a strong identity within the successful campaigns that they have had in the past and predominately known for being one of the only peace organizations that is currently actively participating in anti-war movement. They strategically lean toward conducting activism that is eye catching and theatrical and memorable, in order to inspire, educate, and activate. The organization uses this tactic to draw the attention of individuals to their campaigns and issues that they want to focus on. CODEPINK shows up to disrupt and educate the



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government and individuals through their campaign messages. The organization has been a frequent disrupter of different senate hearings and governmental events. When CODEPINK targets a certain cooperation or government they use theatrics, a strong social media presence, and disrupt major political events. Additionally, when they create protest signs they are always with @CODEPINK written on the bottom of the sign. Furthermore, the protesters for the organization are usually adorned in hot pink clothing, peace signs, or CODEPINK memorabilia.

### **4.10. NationBuilder**

CODEPINK utilizes a software program called NationBuilder to manage and organize their relationships with their members. NationBuilder was founded in 2009 by Jesse Haff, Jim Gilliam, and Lea Endres, and has a headquarters located in the Greater Los Angeles Area. Moreover, the company has field offices in New York, London, Sydney, Vancouver, and Washington D.C., totaling about 135 employees. During 2017, the company states that it has made over 11 million contacts, sent 1.5 billion emails, hosted 360,000 events, mobilized over 500,000 volunteers, and raised over 690 million dollars for their customers (NationBuilder, 2018).

Some famous campaigns that the software has run includes the New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Arden, Jagmeet Singh from the National Party in Canada, and French President Emmanuel Macron. The company's slogan for the software is "Software for Leaders," and their vision for the software is "a world where everyone has the freedom and the opportunity to create what they are meant to create" (NationBuilder, 2018). Furthermore, the company's mission statement is: "We build the infrastructure for a world of creators by helping leaders develop and organize thriving communities" (NationBuilder, 2018). According to promotional content, the main beliefs of the software company claim to be:

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- People connected create everything great in the world
- The Internet makes it possible for everyone to be a leader
- The tools of leadership should be available to everyone
- Service is sacred
- Creators must become leaders (NationBuilder, 2018)

NationBuilder allows its customers to design a custom website, create campaigns, process donations, send targeted emails, and match email lists to social media (NationBuilder, 2018). The platform is geared toward organizations and toward individuals who are looking to run for an elected office. It allows individuals to gather data about eligible offices, get free voter profiles of all the individuals in your district, and how to run for office (NationBuilder, 2018). According to the platform, over 40% of state legislative office races go uncontested and there is a dire need for people to run for office (NationBuilder, 2018). One of the most useful affordances is that the platform does social matching of emails to public social networking profiles, then harvests public data to create a member profile to record the digital actions a person takes with a candidate or organization.

### **4.11. My Experience**

I was first introduced to CODEPINK by my former boss and mentor, Maxi Cohen, a renowned documentary filmmaker who is a colleague and friend of Jodie Evans through the documentary film industry. I remembered hearing Jodie's name while I worked with Maxi in 2012. In October 2017, I was in conversation with Maxi, about my search for an organization to conduct my research on social media activism. It was during this conversation that Maxi shared that she had just received an email invitation to a CODEPINK event, celebrating their 15<sup>th</sup> year of

operation. Maxi forwarded me the email, which by no surprise was hot pink, and I submitted my RSVP to attend. That evening I met Jodie Evans, Medea Benjamin, Anne Wright, and many other activists who inspired me to center my dissertation study on CODEPINK.

I worked with CODEPINK from January-December 2018. The first CODEPINK online platforms I connected with were their social networking sites on Facebook and Twitter. As I explored their social networks I noticed there was a robust thriving community that often had lengthy debates about policies or issues that they cared about. Moreover, I observed the sheer size of their social networking presence and how large their social footprint was online for a small peace keeping organization. CODEPINK had excelled at getting individuals to connect with them on a basic level with their social networking sites, having users comment and engage with their content.

At the beginning of the study the first things I did was sign up for the organization's email letters, follow their social accounts, thoroughly explore their website, scour Google for anything CODEPINK, and coordinate my attendance to their meetings on a regular basis. For the first few weeks of the study I patiently observed their social media accounts until I got to start going to their online meetings via Zoom where I listened and carefully observed CODEPINK's organizational process. My personal background originates from Europe, and my family immigrated to the United States in the early 1990's. Moreover, my own personal political ideals lean toward democratic socialism; however I am a registered Democrat who only recently became an American in 2014. My background has shaped my observations to the extent that I had to be extremely impartial when observing actions and social media content that align with my political affiliations. I was consistently reflexive and make sure my political bias was not part of my analysis and my report of this research.

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Attending their weekly meetings was invaluable in terms of getting to know the organization. The meetings, for the most part, happened at the same time every week and I quickly started to build CODEPINK into my weekly routine. I set weekly reminders in my calendar so I could make sure to be present. The meetings were in the middle of the day so that they could accommodate people in different time zones. At the beginning of every meeting there would be a check in, where people would answer a prompt or introduce themselves if they were newly joining the group. I made sure to be present to the best of my ability, at the beginning of the meeting to make sure that people were aware that I was there as an observer participant. Quite often I would reintroduce the fact that I was doing the research and what data I was gathering. For the rest of the meeting I would remain silent and just observe what was happening.

I immediately noticed that neither of the founders of CODEPINK ran the meetings, but the moment they both spoke during a meeting they brought years of wisdom, guidance, and intelligence to the table. In my field notes I reiterated constantly that I found that the women operated on sheer drive, enthusiasm, power, determination, and dedication to their campaigns. There is a strong core group of women within CODEPINK who have been with the organization for many years and are surrounded by newer members who were freshly out of college or just starting out in their activism career.

One particular facet that I found unique was that the majority of the members consider themselves professional activists: they possess advanced degrees in peacekeeping and have worked in other organizations previous to CODEPINK. Throughout the year that I spent observing CODEPINK even though they had a high staff turnaround, the organization maintained a core group of women. The organization, I have noticed through observation, has the same problem plaguing them as many political activist causes: they have people who get burnt out and then

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choose to no longer participate. I perceived the level of commitment is rather high in terms of self-sacrificing your own freedom for the cause (e. g. getting arrested) and constantly having to show up and share your political disdain for the American government.

The first protest that I attended was on January 30, 2018, which was a collaboration with the International Action Center. I was invited via Facebook to attend the protest and was surprised to see a large number of people assembled. The protest was about freeing Ahed Tamimi/Palestinian Rights, but was also heavily attended by members of the Jewish Defense League, a radical far-right religious political organization. With the presence of both Pro-Palestinian and Pro-Israeli groups, the protest quickly turned into a competition of the loudest voice and at times became hostile, especially among the crowds of Penn Station. The police showed up at the protest and started to intimidate people while trying to separate both sides. At that point I felt uneasy being there with so much law enforcement. What astounded me about this event was the fact that CODEPINK was able to convene a lot of people on the ground through a single Facebook invitation.

One memorable field site visit was occurred the day I visited the CODEPINK activist house in Washington D.C. I drove down early in the morning from Brooklyn, New York, to Washington D.C. to first go to Medea Benjamin's home to interview her and to attend a CODEPINK meeting in person, as well as to take part in D.C. activism. During the meeting, CODEPINK decided to go to the White House and protest Trump ending a deal with the country of Iran. Immediately, planning members utilized their text message system to get people out to the protest at the White House that evening at six o'clock. They also got right to the phones and started calling people that lived in the Washington D.C. area. Following the planning meeting, I finally made my way to the CODEPINK Activist House where I was greeted by a multi-colored edifice surrounded by a

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colorful fence (Figure 4.1). Upon arrival at the house, the CODEPINKers were already making a banner with fresh paint for the White House protest that evening. Inside, the house was decorated with old protest posters and giant peace signs.

Later in the afternoon we drove to downtown D.C. and parked very close to the White House. Admittedly, this was my first time at the White House, and I had it imagined it much more grandiose than it was in real life. I found it interesting being an immigrant from Europe, that my first time going to the White House would be to protest the policies of the current administration. The CODEPINKers brought a megaphone and the sign that they had just painted that afternoon that read “Save the Iran Deal: CODEPINK” (Figure 4.2). They immediately started to chant “No more war in the Middle East!” over the microphone, while waving a rainbow peace sign flag. The group attracted many onlookers, media outlets, and other activists to join in on their protest. The group asked me to hold one of their cellphones so that the protest could be filmed on Facebook Live, which is one thing they seemed to try to do during every protest they hold.



Figure 4. 3. CODEPINK at White House Protest to try and Save the Iran Deal

Another memorable campaign of particular interest to me was the Blackrock campaign. BlackRock is a large global investment company; one of the world's largest asset holders controlling over 6 trillion dollars, which they choose to invest in large weapons manufacturing. I went to two protests for BlackRock in New York City. One was a very small so-called action where three of us went to the BlackRock offices and the other was a massive protest outside of BlackRock offices. Both protests, I learned, were rather effective regardless of size. The first one was on April 20<sup>th</sup> and consisted of me and two other CODEPINKers. The minute we walked into the BlackRock building I could see the security guards start to watch the two CODEPINK women. It was apparent the Blackrock employees already knew who CODEPINK was and were anticipating their every move. The two CODEPINKers made their move up the stairs and were immediately stopped by the security guards. The guards did not want to be a part of the live-stream and they wanted the women to leave the building.

The second time I went to a protest at BlackRock there was already a huge crowd gathered on the side of the building. As part of the protest, there was a giant papier-mâché drone on display, and there seemed to be supporters attending from multiple organizations. For example, the Raging Grannies, a group that travels the country to support activism, was there to support CODEPINK's efforts (Figure 4.3). The protest was held outside of BlackRock's annual shareholder meeting, with the intention that the shareholders would have to see all the protestors complaining about where their money was being invested. One by one all of the shareholders arrived and had to face the protestors, more importantly they all responded by walking quickly past the crowds, embarrassed. Like almost all the protests I had attended, the police came to contain the protestors even though they were peacefully protesting. The police were concerned that the CODEPINKers were blocking the entrance to where the shareholder meeting was being held (Figure 4.4). It seems like the police



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are a very real threat to activists today. During a meeting with one of the CODEPINKERS I was told that usually you have to pay your own legal fees. From the meetings I also learned that they often discuss the fact that an event could have some potential risk of a protestor getting arrested: an “arrestable.” I have noticed this firsthand at the protests that I attended. The amount of risk these women put themselves in for a cause and a campaign is extraordinary.



Figure 4.4. Black Rock NYC Protest with Raging Grannies and CODEPINK



Figure 4.5. CODEPINK Protest at BlackRock May 23<sup>rd</sup> showing the NYPD and CODEPINK in front of the shareholder meeting for BlackRock.



## **Chapter 5. Analysis and Results**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter answers the research questions from the data that was collected using the methods that were outlined in Chapter 3. The data that was collected was from a yearlong (2018) multimodal ethnography of the women's activist organization CODEPINK. For the purpose of analysis, the data were separated into insider and outsider information. The insider data stems from the ethnography portion of the research study, where the researcher participated in online meetings, interviews, and field notes from attending events. The outsider data stems from the digital ethnography portion of this research, which includes public social media information and digital outreach (emails). The data was split in this way to distinguish publicly available data, which any person could experience, and the data that was collected from the inner workings of the CODEPINK organization. According to Postill and Pink (2012), it is important to organize the data based on digital and physical data points, but consider the data to all stem from one ethnographic place. Within the premise of one ethnographic place, I separated the data based on the information a staff member experiences and what a follower of the organization engages with.

### **5.2. Civic Information (R.1.1)**

The following analysis serves to answer the research question 1.1 to gain a deeper understanding of the use of civic information within emails and social networking sites. Research question 1.1 is: What type of civic information does CODEPINK use to facilitate followers (email and social networking sites) to take part in collective action? The definition and purpose of civic information is to foster civic education and learning amongst the organization's followers. Civic information was coded according to the definition that civic information is the flow of information,

facts, opinions, and ideas that help individuals create informed decisions about issues of political and public concern and can identify opportunities for activism. The data was separated into two different sets to answer the question: insider and outsider. The insider data was from 10 voluntary semi-structured interviews that were conducted with staff members of the CODEPINK organization, and from attending meetings that CODEPINK facilitated on Zoom. The outsider data was gathered during my digital ethnography and included emails and social networking site data from Facebook and Twitter.

### **5.2.1. Insider Data: Interviews**

Civic Information is one of the most important tools that the organization uses in order to facilitate collective action. One of the main strategies of CODEPINK is “educating, inspiring, and activating (1).” The role of becoming the educator for CODEPINK is helping deliver a message to followers to think about information and facts in a different and new way. The strategy is surrounded by the concept that they take current events and information in media and craft a campaign around the question: “How do we get in and disrupt that message? (1)” Providing the right messaging is important to CODEPINK with so many different media outlets providing messages that are contrary to the goal of creating peace. Changing the messaging is the main goal, or “to stand in front of the madness and say “NO,” there’s another way you can think about this differently” (1). However, most importantly the distinction was made that it is not only to be a civic information source, but to be a source that gives “them something to do about it and make them want to do more” (1). Providing a source of inspirational civic information to get individuals involved in a campaign was valued equally as providing the information in the first place. The civic information that is framed to be inspirational for each campaign is created to reflect current

events that are in the news to spark interest among followers.

Civic information can also be presented in a manner that would be considered reporting on what CODEPINK is doing about a particular issue. Showing what CODEPINK is doing about a particular issue is something the organization does often in their emails and social media content. Sharing this type of information serves the purpose of trying to inspire their followers to also get involved in a particular campaign. From an interview a CODEPINKer said,

So, they're not necessarily going to click every link or take an action, but they want to know what is CODEPINK's stance on something. I hear a lot people say: What's CODEPINK going to do about it? So, there's always this question mark swishing every time something provocative happens (6).

Furthermore, providing a progressive stance to their followers also helps educate on issues they may not have had the chance to fully understand or become knowable about. CODEPINK provides live protest information, front of the lines information, feminist points of view, and information from a progressive community. Another CODEPINKer, stated that, "I think we provide very real updates that you're actually not getting somewhere else" (4).

During the interviews the CODEPINKers made it very clear that social networking sites were the venue for providing organizing information, whereas in emails they would provide more insightful information that dove deeper. According to a CODEPINKer, social networking sites are the "primary source of action" and emails are where the organization spreads information and educates (5). In terms of social media one CODEPINKer said, "the social media stuff tends to be much more like, here's kind of an explanatory sentence then a link to go a place to learn more. Whereas emails tend to be a little bit more like, here is a series of information and then with

the move to action, you know, buried in there a couple sentences farther down the line” (9). Distinguishing the concept that social networking sites and emails provide different sources of civic information is important to how the individual experiences CODEPINK as an organization and what information they receive. The type of civic information that the organization uses can best be described as information that provides education to their followers and facilitates collective actions on behalf of the organization.

### **5.2.2. Insider Data: Meetings**

The term “civic information” was never used during the meetings at CODEPINK, but rather the concept of “education” and “messaging” was discussed on a regular basis. The meetings were structured so that the organization would review each campaign and what was important to each member as a group and then they would decide what messages would be shared for the week. The organizer for each campaign would share with the entire group what current news events were happening concerning their campaign, what updates they have, and what were the main messages. Then the organization would discuss openly what types of strategies and actions they should take in response to the campaigns updates.

The organization considers their emails (alerts) to be the main centers of education or civic information, and so I will focus on the process of how the organization creates an alert. CODEPINK has a checklist that the campaign organizers use in order to create an email, which allows them to provide all the information that is needed for the content to be created. During a meeting it was stated by a CODEPINKer:

When we do alerts, we have a few templates; if you stay on after this call, I can review them with you. We have prompts which ask you to fill out this information. Once we draft our

alerts and actions and send them to [omitted], give her some time so she can edit it for you. Most important for all of your requests are the graphics which go for all of your actions and alerts. So those are our big focus and we want to make sure those are short, to the point, and are as accurate as possible (4).

There is an order and protocol to putting out information and creating messages (see Figure 5.1).



Figure 5. 1. Process for creating an email alert (CODEPINK, 2018)

- Who: Who is writing/researching the content? Who is approving the content? Does it need the co-founders' approval?
- What: If alert what is the subject, to whom? Local List (which tags/campaign to include and or zip code/city/state/area), What is the Content? - links, graphics, images needed? Is this a new alert? Recycled or multiple regional alerts?
- If Website: Where should this reside on the website? Page Title, Top Actions for this page? Resources for this page? Social Media Sharing Message? Social Media Sharing image needed? Content Campaign Tags?
- If Sign-up Page: Where should this reside on the website? Page Title, Page Slug, Top Action for this page? One-time Event? Auto-response? Social Media Sharing Message? People Tags?
- If a petition: Where should this page reside on the website? Which Campaign? Page Title? Page Slug? Auto-Response? Thank you email? Social Media Sharing Message? Social media sharing image needed? People tags?
- If one Click Political Action: Where should this page reside on the website? Which Campaign? Targets: Send to the House, Send to the Senate, Send to all of Congress, Page Title? Page Slug? Action intro needed? Action Content? Email Subject Line? Auto-Response? Thank you email? Social media sharing message? Social media sharing image needed? People tags?

- If an Event: Where should this page reside on the website? Which Campaign? Page Title? Page Slug? When? How many days or hours? Where? Location, Introduction + Event Details? Instructions? Event Email? Image/Shareable? Tickets Need? Ticket Costs, Max # of Tickets? Auto Response email content? Social media Sharing message? Content campaign tags? People tags?

The steps that the campaign organizers take to create an email alert is important to understand how they present content that contains civic information. Furthermore, it builds context for the different types of civic information that are present within email and social media content. CODEPINK has a system for checks and balances to ensure that the content that is being created from the organization is accurate and has opportunities for engagement, links, social content, and the correct ask for the type of email that is being sent. To send an email, CODEPINK requires that there is a final signoff from a certain number of individuals on the content that is being sent out. Furthermore, they must confirm their audience, confirm reply to: email, confirm preview text, confirm subject lines, test all links, test images, text, and buttons to ensure they work in mobile and desktop. These are important steps for the organization to take in order to send out an email that is reliable and functioning properly when the follower receives the email.

### **5.2.3. Outsider Data: Email**

As part of my digital ethnography, I gathered 70 emails that I received from 1 Jan 2018 to 31 Dec 2018 from the organization by signing up on the website. The emails that I received were based on the email lists I was a part of within CODEPINK's backend email system. I analyzed the content of the emails according to topic, civic information types, capacity builders, and engagement asks. Based on descriptive and patterned coding, the written content of the emails was comprised of 18.67% civic information on average. Figure 5.1 below depicts the frequency of the amount of civic information per each individual email that I received. The amount of civic information varied from email to email depending on the different campaigns and authors of the

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emails, having a low of 4.84% of content being civic information and a high of 39.02%. This breakdown is vital to understanding a content strategy of not over loading your followers with information, which causes digital burnout on engagement in emails. Moreover, digital content burnout can occur if you do not breakup your email content into more manageable groupings of information that a reader can easily engage with.

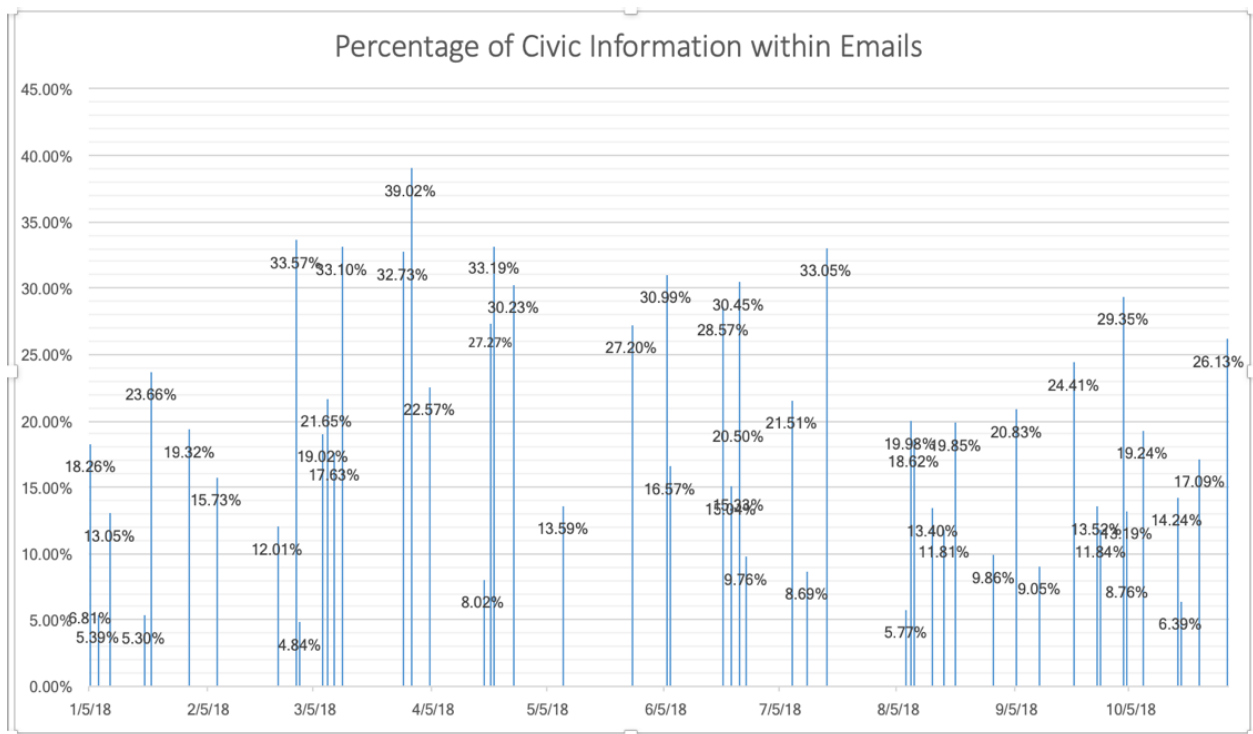


Figure 5.2. Frequency of Civic Information within Emails

Figure 5.3 below shows the breakdown of the different categories that the content was coded to, with the largest percentage of the content being capacity builders and civic information. The structure of the emails shows that in order to engage users via email, CODEPINK relies on firstly on capacity builders and secondly civic information to engage individuals, and then asks for engagement with Facebook or Twitter. Capacity builders are defined as actions that signal dissent against the government and are taken collectively by a group of people. Capacity builders, within

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CODEPINK actions, were coded when the organization asked followers to: Protest, Call to Action, Target Congressional Members, Traditional Media, Influencers, Collaborations, and Click Petitions. Moreover, this shows that the information the organization provides in their email content is mostly focused on future actions that could have the capacity to signal dissent on behalf of the organization.

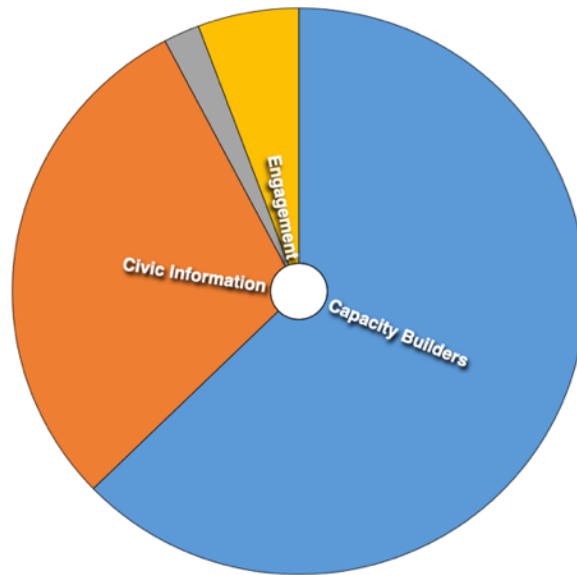


Figure 5. 3. Email Content Breakdown

When coding the civic information that the organization was utilizing in their email content, it was broken down into four different strategic categories: News and Informational (21%), Relational (23%), Provoking (34%), and Organizational (22%). These categories emerged from the data that was coded during the final round of coding. Breaking down the civic information into further categories provided context as to what the content was actually referring to. This is important because it shares what exactly the organization is sharing with their followers, whether it was factual news, something that was outrageous and action worthy, some good news about the organization, or something that is widely relatable. This contribution of categorizing civic



information potentially provides insight into what type of content leaves followers more inclined to follow-up with collective action. The categories of news/informational, provoking, relational, and organizational civic information are further examined in the following sections.

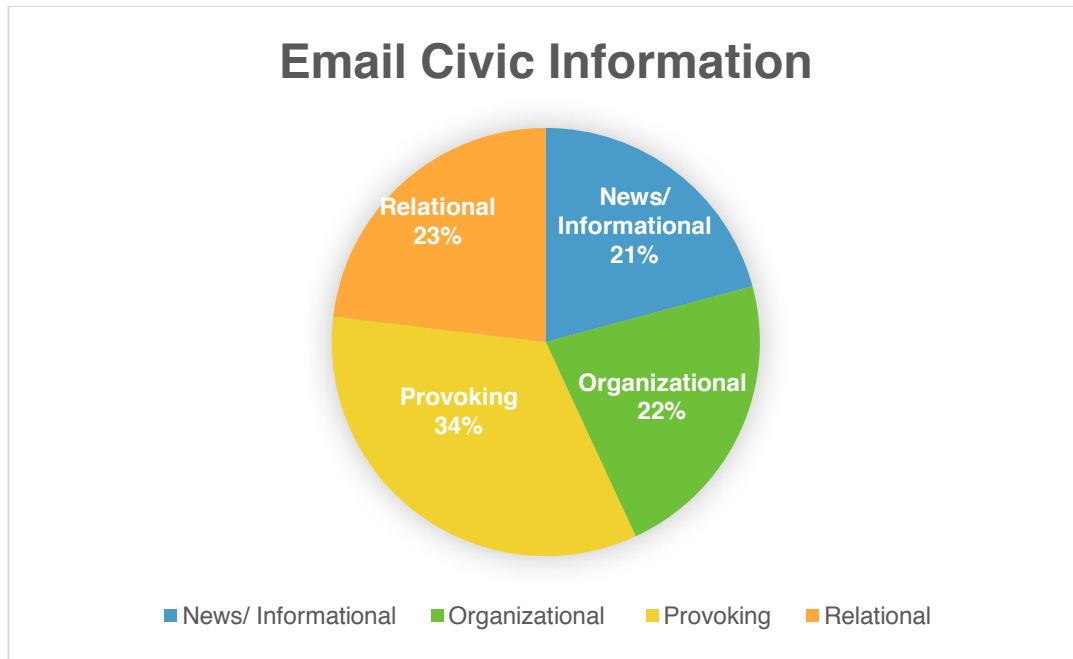


Figure 5. 4. Types of Civic Information within Email Content

### 5.2.3.1. News/Informational

Civic Information that is news/informational is utilized by CODEPINK emails 21% of the time. This type of civic information is defined and characterized by current event facts that are meant to inspire and educate CODEPINK followers to take action. Furthermore, it is characterized by including statistics and/or the latest information about a current topic that could cause public concern. Providing current news to CODEPINK followers is important to the process of civic learning and creating an informed followership. With the increase of dis-information on social networking sites, providing CODEPINK followers with news/information that is accurate fosters

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a civic ethos amongst the organization’s community. Below are three examples from their emails of information that was coded as being news/informational. The information is current—addressing current topics for new information, concise, and using summative statements to display factual information. The first example is from the organization’s campaign concerning Yemen, the second from their protest of not ending the Nuclear Iran Deal, and the third from their campaign against the NRA and in favor of gun control. Each of the following provide an example of civic information that was news/informational:

- “Today the Saudis bombed a school bus in Yemen! Dozens of young children have been killed, and many more wounded. The local health department chief in a Saada province said 43 were killed and at least 61 injured. Most are children under the age of 10. The bombs that killed these children were made in the USA” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “Under the Iran nuclear deal, which Obama signed in 2015 and Trump rejected this year, Iran agreed to reduce its uranium stockpile and nuclear enrichment program in exchange for lifting the crippling sanctions destroying the Iranian economy and harming ordinary citizens. The International Atomic Energy Agency certified Iran’s compliance, and the other signatories—Britain, France, Germany, China and Russia—were happy with the deal” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “The NRA spent more than \$7 million on school shooting programs in 2017. During the 2016 election cycle, the NRA spent more than \$1 million in campaign contributions. Campaign contributions from weapons manufacturers — such as Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon, General Dynamics, and Northrop Grumman — exceeded \$125 million in 2017” (CODEPINK, 2018).

### 5.2.3.2. Organizational

Organizational civic information is utilized by CODEPINK in 22% of the content within emails. This type of civic information is characterized by having an element of CODEPINK information that is only able to be sourced from CODEPINK firsthand, for example a protest or event. Furthermore, this type of civic information answers the prompt of what is CODEPINK as an organization doing about a certain issue or cause. Providing civic information that is sourced

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from the organization provides a sense of interpersonal trust and reliability in the content that they provide. Organizational civic information provides more transparent information, interrelated facts, and opinions on topics that are current within public policy and government. The first example below is a first-hand account from a CODEPINKer describing her involvement with Ahed Tamimi—a Palestinian child protestor who was arrested by the Israeli Army. The second example below is concerning the BDS movement and a first-hand example of CODEPINK getting barred from entering Israel.

- “The first time I met Ahed Tamimi was when she was 13 years old. I sat in her living room in the West Bank village of Nabi Saleh drinking tea with her parents while she and my daughter, then 12, compared dance moves. Now at the tender age of 16, Ahed is sitting in an Israeli detention cell facing a significant number of years in prison. Her crime was that she slapped an armed Israeli soldier with her bare hand” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “This is outrageous! CODEPINK, alongside 19 other organizations worldwide, has just been banned from entering Israel. Israel banned us for our support of the nonviolent boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement and because we oppose their human rights violations—human rights violations that are committed with US weapons and US military assistance” (CODEPINK, 2018).

### 5.2.3.3. Provoking

Provoking civic information is utilized 34% of the time within the content of CODEPINK emails that were examined. Characterized by information that is framed in a shocking manner or a hyperbole, provoking civic information uses current event facts that are meant to create engagement from CODEPINK followers. This type of civic information is defined as information that is framed in such a shocking manner that it is thought-provoking and could potentially create engagement from a citizen. The information is framed so that the individual who would read the email/message is outraged enough to participate politically. The statements most often have a sentiment of hyperbole or extremeness about them, which is exemplified in the examples below:

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- “Weapons manufacturers steal from all of us. They take billions of our tax dollars to make products of death and destruction, reaping huge profits while our communities at home suffer. We are faced with rampant funding shortages for housing, education, food assistance, and clean water. Meanwhile the CEOs of the top five weapons makers pulled in a combined salary of \$96 million” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “While US bombs continue to blow up children in the Middle East, refugees continue to risk their lives to find safe haven, and our elected officials continue to hand over billions of our tax dollars to the merchants of death (i.e. the weapons makers), we at CODEPINK have been busy educating, mobilizing, and strategizing” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “If Donald Trump can meet with Russia’s Vladimir Putin and North Korea’s Kim Jung Un, surely he can meet with Iran’s President Rouhani. If Donald Trump is indeed anxious to listen to Putin, he should heed Putin’s warning about the dangers of destroying the Iran nuclear deal” (CODEPINK, 2018).

### 5.2.3.4. Relational

Relational civic information is presented within CODEPINK emails 23% of the time. Relational civic information is defined and characterized by information that an individual could easily relate to such as family information, iconic memorable historical events such as 9/11, or on-going tragic or emotional topics such as school shootings. The purpose of using this type of civic information is for individuals to relate to CODEPINK on issues that they are already familiar with. These issues are very relatable for the majority of individuals and are meant to inspire action from CODEPINK followers because they have experienced these events firsthand. Furthermore, these are posts that are creating an ask to engage in a relationship or engage with CODEPINK:

- “As we pause to remember the events of 9/11 and honor the victims here in the United States, let’s remember the millions of Afghans who have been killed, maimed and/or displaced over these years. I am one of them. When I was six, we fled our home and country in the middle of the night after a rocket blew up our neighbor’s house. By age 24, I had already lived in five countries” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “Nineteen years ago, two students at Columbine High School planned and carried out a massacre of 12 students. Eleven years ago, 32 people were massacred and 17 more wounded on the VA Tech campus with semi-automatic weapons. Unfortunately, the violence has not stopped. From the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in

Florida to last Friday's strike on Syria, mass shootings and military attacks have become a routine, almost expected, part of American life" (CODEPINK, 2018).

#### **5.2.4. Outsider Data: Social Networking Sites**

For the purpose of this research study CODEPINKs' Facebook and Twitter was explored to further understand the type of civic information was being utilized by the organization. The sampling period for this research study was from Jan 1, 2018 to Dec 31, 2018. Using Netlytic.com I gathered 1,860 Facebook posts and used NVivo to gather 7,158 Twitter posts. The posts from Facebook were gathered with Netlytic.com because of the change in the API that did not allow the researcher to gather Facebook data via NVivo. The Facebook and Twitter content is largely created by CODEPINK from the email content that is sent out. The data in the second round was coded to be civic information and then broke down further into the four categories: Relational, Provoking, News/Informational, and Organizational.

##### **5.2.4.1. Facebook Data**

For this research project 1860 Facebook posts were gathered, but only 1659 posts were posts created by CODEPINK. I analyzed 1659 CODEPINK Facebook posts, Jan 1, 2018- Dec 31, 2018, to further understand what type of civic information was being used by the organization within their Facebook content. Facebook out of all the social networking sites has the largest following with 93K followers. During meetings, I observed the organization having 75K visitors a day on their Facebook site. Civic information was identified using descriptive and pattered coding on Facebook Posts, but then was further broken down into the following categories: News//Informational 29% (488), Organizational 35% (583), Provoking 20% (326), and Relational 16% (262) (See Figure 5.5).

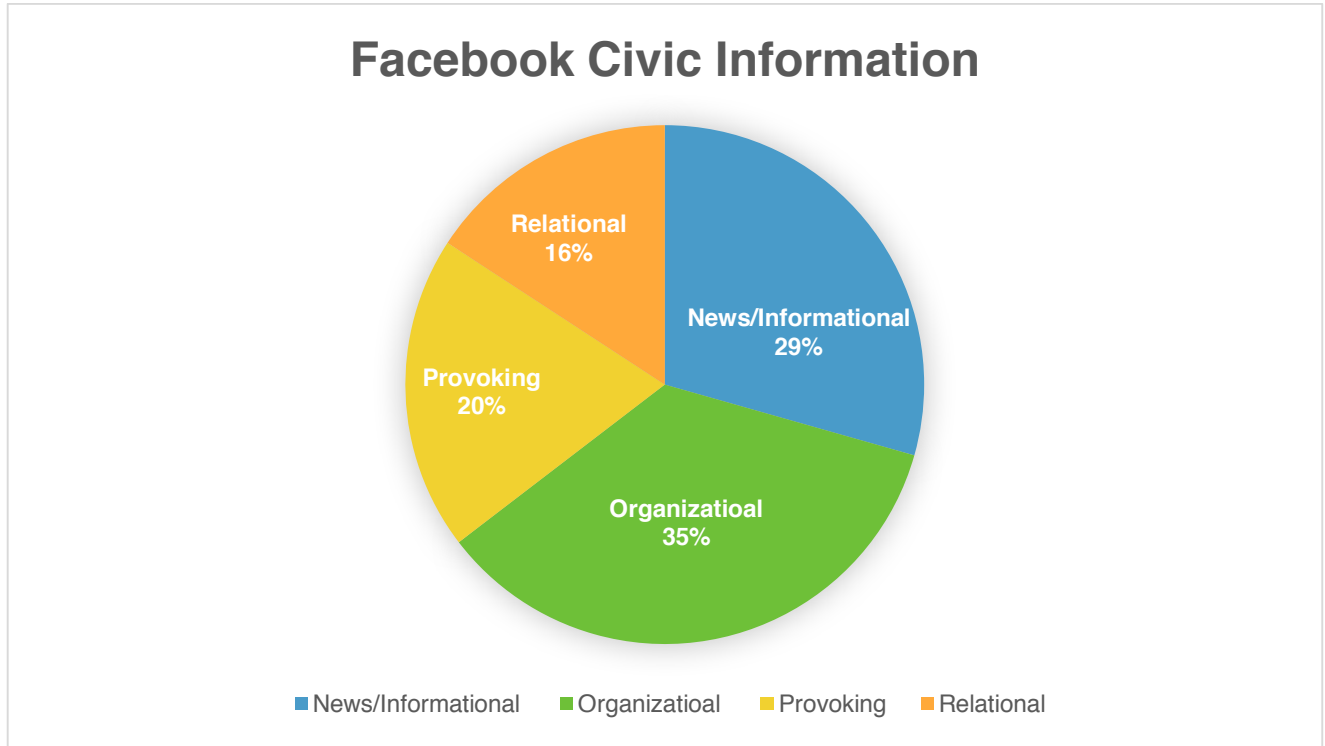


Figure 5. 5. Facebook data broken down by type of civic information

Below are examples of organizational civic information Facebook posts that CODEPINK posted. Within Facebook content organizational civic information was shared the most 35% of the time, which is where the organization shared information about what they are doing like an event or protest, information related to campaigns, or information related to the organization. The first example is describing when CODEPINK attended a committee hearing. The next post is showing organizational civic information describing a media event that the founder is attending to speak about the Divest Campaign. Lastly, the post is satirizing the Attorney General, while inviting followers to come and stay at the Activist House in Washington DC to protest.

- “CODEPINK attended today's Senate Intelligence Committee hearing on worldwide threats to national security. The took away our signs and never discussed the threat of U.S. militarism...” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “In just a few minutes, Jodie Evans will be speaking about our #DivestFromWar campaign

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on KPFK 90.7 FM Los Angeles / 98.7 FM Santa Barbara's Middle East In Focus! Follow the link below to listen live” (CODEPINK, 2018).

- “It's been a wild year for Sessions and we are still laughing. Sessions is still Attorney General – shouldn't you be in DC protesting? Come stay with us [codepink.org/codepinkdcactivisthouse](http://codepink.org/codepinkdcactivisthouse)” (CODEPINK, 2018).

In the Facebook data 29% of the time the organization was using content that had news/informational civic information. This type of civic information is meant to inform followers of current news information and facts of information that are relevant to campaigns. The purpose of news/informational posts is linked to the concept that the organization is striving to educate and inform their followers on current events and issues they protest. The examples below are three examples from Facebook that are utilizing news/informational civic information, in particular they are focusing on campaigns that are international centric.

- “More than 20 million people in Yemen, including 11 million children, are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. Yemen. Can't. Wait. Action is long overdue” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “South Africa will be cutting ties given the absence of genuine initiatives to secure lasting peace and a viable two-state solution that includes full freedom and democracy for the Palestinian people” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- “Each year around 700 Palestinian children are arrested, abused and detained in Israeli military court system” (CODEPINK, 2018).

Provoking civic information (20%), as seen in previous sections within emails, is using civic information that is particularly shocking or a hyperbole to provoke civic engagement. The posts are often extreme and having information that is distressing. They are meant to grab the attention of a follower or highlight a cause that has grieves. They are meant to draw forth a narrative that social change is necessary on these particular issues. Below are three examples that highlight this type of civic information. The first example is surrounding the NRA and is

rather provoking because the organization is condemning the NRA for the deaths of people and children. The second and third are provoking because they are referring to military weapons that are causing death and don't offer any peaceful alternatives.

- The NRA kills people. They kill children. This is not okay” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- Nuclear weapons won't protect us - and they certainly are not cute!” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- The death and destruction in Syria has gone on for too long. Stop the killing! Let the people of Syria live” (CODEPINK, 2018).

Relational civic information was coded within Facebook posts 16% of time. Relational civic information is characterized by having content that followers can easily identify with or have an associate trust with. The organization will quite often use celebrities or influencers to build that relationality between themselves and their followers. Furthermore, they also focused on issues that their demographic is easily able to relate to. The first and second example below from Facebook is highlighting the involvement of a celebrity in agreement with an issue, in this particular case Ahed Tamimi. The second example is trying to humanize Ahed by sharing information that she is celebrating her birthday within prison, which something that everyone can relate to a birthday celebration. The last example is having women relate themselves to the peace process and their own experiences, which is part of the feminist message that quite often comes across in CODEPINK content.

- Thank you Sarah Silverman for standing up for Ahed! Join Sarah in calling for Ahed's freedom here [codepink.org/freeahed](http://codepink.org/freeahed)” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- Today is Ahed's birthday and she is celebrating in an Israeli prison. This is unacceptable. Ahed should be free” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- When women lead the peace process, they bring a commitment to avoid violence rooted in their own experience of its impacts” (CODEPINK, 2018).



### 5.2.4.2. Twitter Data

During 2018 the organization had an average of 9.88 tweets per day and 43.28 % of the tweets were retweets by the organization. For the purpose of this research question I analyzed the Twitter posts that were original content created by CODEPINK on the organizations Twitter account, which were gathered through NVivo. Of the 7,158 posts gathered 2,574 were retweets that were posted by the organization. I analyzed 4,584 of the tweets I gathered, in particular I analyzed the tweets for civic information and then further coded them for different types of civic information: Relational 22% (1,024), Organizational 28% (1,278), Provoking 26% (1,190), and News/Informational 24% (1,092) (See Figure 5.6). The posts varied in content and topic, but after the posts were coded they did not vary in terms of civic information significantly. This platform provides the shortest number of characters for content creation so it is particularly interesting that when information is created for Twitter it translates differently than the other platforms.

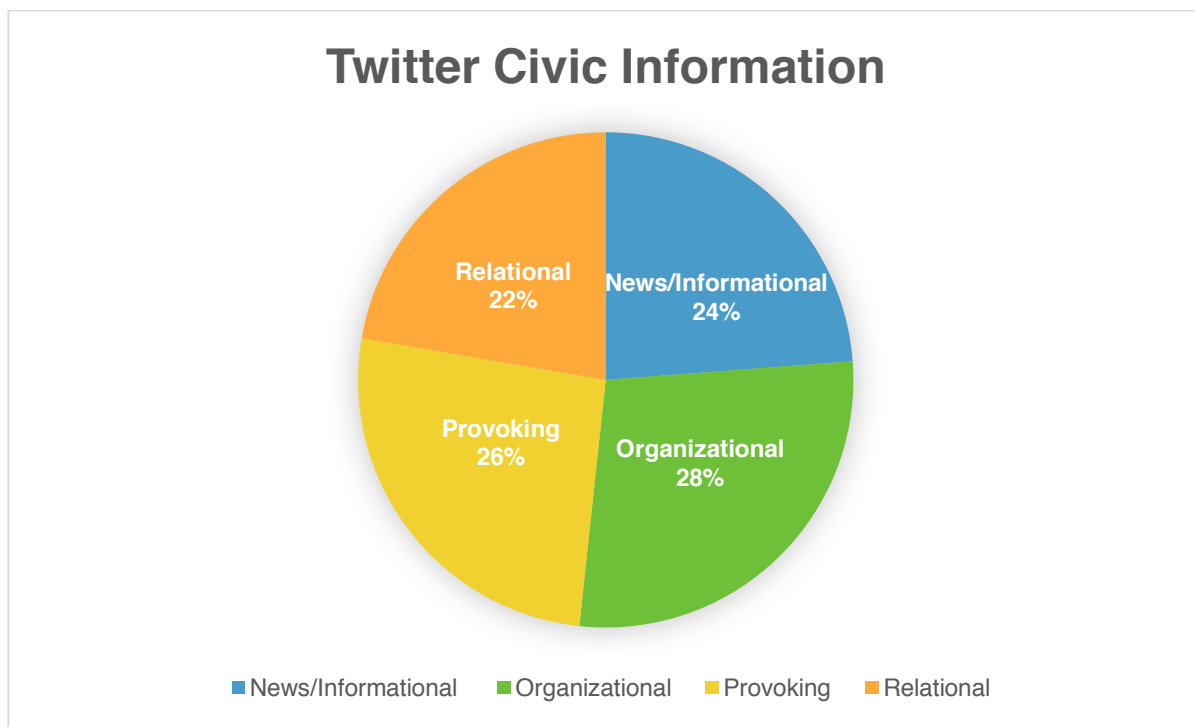


Figure 5. 6. Twitter data broken down by type of civic information

Below are examples of each type of civic information that was posted on the Twitter page of CODEPINK. The first example that is provided is showing provoking civic information, which is showing shocking context for the already established Ahed Tamimi campaign. The second is providing organizational civic information, which is taking about how CODEPEINK spoke with a 11-year-old activist Janna Jihad Tamimi. The third is providing information about how much money the US military would be saving if they were not operating overseas. And lastly, the organization uses many well-known celebrities to try and relate the topic of Iran back to their followers with civic information.

- Provoking: “The first Palestinian to be killed in 2018 was 17-year-old Musab Firas al-Tamimi, a member of Ahed's family” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- Organizational: “ICYMI: 11-year-old Palestinian journalist Janna Jihad Tamimi spoke with us this weekend from Nabi Saleh about the situation on the ground in her village & the arrest of her cousin Ahed Tamimi” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- News/Informational: “We could save about \$150 billion/year by closing US military bases overseas, says author @DavidSVine #NoForeignBases” (CODEPINK, 2018).
- Relational: “Join Jane Fonda, Oliver Stone, Danny Glover, Noam Chomsky, Vijay Prashad, Eve Ensler, Mike Farrell, Frances Fisher, Shiva Rose, Matthew Modine, and more in reaching out to the Iranian people with an apology and a pledge to try to reverse this decision” (CODEPINK, 2018).

### 5.2.4.3 Conclusions

CODEPINK utilizes civic information in order to take on the role of being a source of education and inspiration to individuals. With the ebb and flow of interest the organization utilizes four different types of civic information to evoke different kinds of reactions and accomplish different engagements by users. After the second round of coding, four different thematic categories of civic information emerged: relational, provoking, organization, and news/informational. When these themes were coded across different platforms email, Twitter, and

Facebook the information showed that affordances of the platform like content length effected how the information was presented.

### **5.3. Relationship Building (R.1.2)**

Research Question 1.2 explores the concept that civic information creates relationships with the followers of the organization. The research question that this section addresses is: How does civic information shape a relationship between the followers and the organization? To answer this research question, I used information from interview data and the digital ethnography data where I attended CODEPINK's weekly meetings via Zoom. The interviews addressed the type of relationships that the organization strives to create and how they utilize interest-based emailing to foster a relationship of mutual shared interest. Furthermore, through the interviews I explored social matching, which is how CODEPINK organizes these relationships to better utilize the information from emails and public information on social networking sites.

#### **5.3.1. Insider Data: Interviews**

The organization strives to create relationships from campaign messaging that are not transactional, but they “want to stay in the relational” (1). It was described to me that CODEPINK's strategy is most importantly about creating a narrative that is “about relationships” and it is creating “pieces of relationality” (1). Furthermore, CODEPINK told me that it is “not about quantity, but quality” and that it does not matter how many individuals show up to a protest, but the potency of the engaged community that is able to stand up (1). The relationships created through digital media are ones where CODEPINK is constantly trying to capture and regain attention through certain “asks or engagements” they want their followers to complete.

The relationship that is formed with individuals is contextually also coming from “a voice that speaks from the space of the feminine, which is a homemaker, in a sense the economy is to make a home” (1). For CODEPINKers the feminine is a paradigm, which all of their content prescribes to: “I interpret CODEPINK as feminist as it lifts the voices of women who are and have been affected by violence in so many ways” (5). Furthermore, having a feminist paradigm to the information provides a context to the actions that the group takes in terms of protesting in peace: “It really emphasizes the fact that we should be making, making our protests fun and really trying to embody what we're working for like this feminist peace, liveliness. And connecting all the issues and that all these problems of refugees of hate and racism and all this stuff stems from or is directly related to war” (5). Additionally, when creating pieces of civic information, the goal is to create content that does not sound like “it’s coming from a boring account. Like, I want it to seem like there’s an actual person tweeting about this” (8). This in effect is creating content that isn’t formulaic, but more life-like or relational.

### **5.3.1.1. Interest-based Targeted Emailing**

Email communication is quite often the only way an organization gets in direct contact with followers to build a relationship. For CODEPINK, emails serve as the main educational resource for civic information and campaign information. Emails are structured so that they provide many opportunities for the individual to engage with the organization's different campaigns. Interest-based targeted emailing is defined as a practice where emails are sent out to followers based on the characteristics or issues that they already have shown previous interest in.

CODEPINK utilizes data that is gathered from NationBuilder to better shape the relationships they have with individuals via email. The data that CODEPINK gathers helps inform the organization on how best to target their emails to follower of the organization. In a full alert,

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CODEPINK has significantly fewer numbers of open-rates, then on a targeted niche campaign alert that is geared toward a cohort of individuals. Creating a targeted email campaign allows the organization to email individuals who are interested in a particular issue and not individuals who will not even open the email. According to a CODEPINKer, “you actually have a lot of different cohorts of people and you really need to think about them as that. And that the tags are much more representative of a cohort than just thinking I have a whole list” (4). The platform allows the organization to “instead of bombarding everyone with an email, we are able to focus more on what I think of as the right apps to the right audiences at the right time” (4). The organization will create tags, which act as a characteristic about a certain individual, which then creates a taxonomy of different groups that are based on certain characteristics. The individuals who are tagged to having a certain characteristic can then be contacted with the premise that they had interacted with the organization in the past on that same data point. Tags are created around a certain campaign topic such as a petition that was signed, a social media interaction, or an action that an individual directly took with the organization like donate or RSVP to an event. On the subject of tags, a CODEPINKer said, “Tags are critical to managing thriving campaigns and using email and data to develop more meaningful relationships” (6). All members of the organization who do campaign planning have knowledge of how to utilize different tags and the tag hierarchy within different campaigns. Top level tags are campaigns and campaign issues, while lower-level tags are campaign tags/abbreviations, a sublevel of engagement, unique info, and the date.

When using Facebook events, a CODEPINKer said that NationBuilder’s “action calendar has the RSVP, so then we’ll send that out to an email list through NationBuilder” (6). The NationBuilder system can also provide a multitude of different filters, which can organize individuals by whether they have opened up an email in the last three months, geographical

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locations, interests, and responses to emails. Utilizing and analyzing these emails and data points helps segment individuals in groups based on what they already feel politically connected to and helps the organization have higher open rates of engagement with their content.

### **5.3.1.2. Social Matching**

CODEPINK also utilizes social matching to better organize follower information to be able to utilize relationships at a later point in time or for particular campaigns. Social matching is when a management system triangulates digital information, which it sources from an individual's social network public information (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) to their email address. NationBuilder does social matching and allows CODEPINK to connect emails to social accounts that already follow their organizations social pages. If there is no email on their social profile that is public, then the system will not be able to match the social and email accounts. The organization is then able to see user behavior and engagement aggregated to one profile. A CODEPINKer said in relation to participation that "we can track engagement fairly accurately and that's connected to NationBuilder" (7). The triangulation of this data allows CODEPINK to organize interactions based on interests and per individual user. If a profile is designated as being private, the system will not pull the user's social data to the platform. If the social information exists, the system will match even profile pictures to the NationBuilder platform. The social matching that occurs on the platform allows CODEPINK to more effectively plan a long range strategy and organize people in terms of how they engage with CODEPINK. Organization of followers and being able to manage different contacts is one of the hardest administrative barriers to having constant outreach to followers and building strong relationships for future protests.

### **5.3.1.3. Conclusions**

CODEPINK utilizes a number of different practices in order to build different relationships with followers of the organization. The civic information within the content helps information interests that the follower has via email open rates. Moreover, the practice of using a customer relationship management system helps the organization digitally mediate and organize the relationships via social matching and triangulating public data.

## **5.4. Social Media Strategies (R.2.1)**

This research question addresses the specific strategies that CODEPINK uses on social networking sites to promote their activist campaigns. This research questions asks: What are the social media strategies that CODEPINK enacts to facilitate activism concerning political and social issues on social networking sites? It seeks to answer the direct protocols CODEPINK enacts to keep their social program robust. Firstly, I will present insider data from my interviews with the CODEPINK staff about the particular strategies they have on social networking sites, then I will discuss strategic practices discussed during meetings, and finally focus on the social networking data itself.

### **5.4.1. Insider Data: Interviews**

When I interviewed the CODEPINKers, the question of strategy in terms of social networking sites resulted in conflicting information. Contextually, within the Anti-War movement, CODEPINK's social media following "is a really big one" (4). Very few organizations are able to point to their social media programs and say that they are "leveraging social media to drive people towards deeper action, which is statistically low in impact" (4). Furthermore, according to a

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CODEPINKer, almost “95% of folks in some sort of management leadership position at most organizations don’t fundamentally know what goes into a sophisticated social media program” (4). During the interviews, the majority of the CODEPINKers were unable to point to an official direct strategy that the organization does, however they were able to identify certain requirements or behaviors that they engage in. The main strategy that was identified during the interviews was “a mixture of educational strategy or just raising the overall level of awareness around issues” (4). Furthermore, producing content that is peace-related on a global lens is not available in many places: “thinking about their accounts as a place people can go to, to understand what's happening around global conflicts with a lens towards peace, like that alone as a strategy” (4). This strategy of being a content producer translates to the theme of wanting to be an educational resource for individuals. The act of being peaceful is a learned social behavior, according to one CODEPINKer, “You learn to be peaceful, you learn to be violent, doesn’t matter what gender you are” (5).

### **5.4.1.1. Analyzing Reflexively**

There were several concerns that the organization had upon reviewing whether or not their social strategy is effective. Analyzing reflexively is defined as a process where the organization consistently is reevaluating their social networking sites and content strategies and they are identifying factors where they can improve and revise. CODEPINK conducts content calls on Fridays and discusses the strategies that are working well and what strategies could use refinement:

Like sometimes it's literally just hard to get people to do the basic tasks on the Friday meeting and um, so yeah, it is important doing some of the reflective stuff or we're just using it as a point in time to like talk about strategy and what is possible with strategy and knowing though what is not. But most importantly, Friday meetings are a reflexive time for analyzing



social strategies and how they are progressing. (4)

The content calendars are created during those meetings to organize strategic messages for campaigns and are saved in a Google document to review over time. First and foremost, CODEPINK is concerned with some of the basic metrics that are important to creating a social footprint. Addressing the basic things like what is the “actual reach of conversation, are we maintaining or growing our followers and are we starting to raise engagement, and creating enough volume to feed the beast to stay relevant” (4). The basic metrics are important, but are not indicative of whether or not the organization is creating impact with their social networking practices and content. The more important content strategies are related to whether or not CODEPINK’s content is going beyond their followers and penetrating social networks outside of what the organization has already fostered. Moreover, whether CODEPINK’s content and campaign messages are changing the narrative on social networking sites enough to impact the way the story is told and fostering people to engage in action.

### **5.4.1.2. Content Creation**

Part of the social media strategy of CODEPINK is creating content while they participate in activist activities. Content creation is defined as a process where the staff member is creating media content such as pictures, videos, blog posts, or social media posts on behalf of the organization. Within the context of disrupting the mainstream message, they aim to make “content that’s shareable that people feel they get nourished by us” (1). Prior to social media, one CODEPINKer explained they would bring the campaign messaging to Congress and they would see it again in the New York Times, but they had no chance to comment on it; now “we can take a hashtag and drive it” (1). CODEPINK staff members are encouraged to create posts on Facebook

and Twitter on behalf of the organization on their personal accounts while protesting. With the task of creating content while protesting, it can sometimes change the behavior and engagement during the protest, according to one CODEPINKer:

[Creating content] can sometimes pull you out of the moment of the activism. If I attend an action, I'm very much aware of what pictures do I need to be getting. The live streaming or live tweeting, you know, all these kinds of things. So for example, there was the big Immigrants are Welcome Families Belong Together rally a few weeks ago and the whole time I was running along the protest trying to give video and pictures rather than marching with them and I was like, wait a second, like this is good for my organization, but for me as an individual activist, I'd rather be in line with everyone with a sign and so it can kind of change how you're in a protest or in the moment if you're more geared to what is going to be put up online later. (5)

The concept that social media is enlarging the audience, but splitting the attention of the protestors on the ground is a concept that needs to be further explored. It potentially shows the relationship that technologies can be rather disruptive of the processes of activists. It raises the question more importantly if there could be strategies created to increase activists who are present that are not focused on using technology while protesting.

### **5.4.1.3. Reactionary Strategy**

A strategy that seems to be on the back burner within some campaigns but was relevant in my interviews, was the concept of being an organization that is reactionary. Being an organization that is reactionary is defined as always creating content that is responding to an event instead of producing content that allows other people to build a narrative. Within local peace campaigns

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CODEPINK is proactive and building new blocks of information for individuals to share, but for most campaigns they have “been mostly reactive” (1). Reactions are the majority of their social networking posts, because individuals are reacting to news events and current happenings, building a response. For one CODEPINKer, she stated that “from Friday to Monday, its’s like we’ve never really been able to plan because we’re just reacting” (1). When the organization is consistently just reacting, it has no opportunity to “create something substantial that people are sharing and that grows” (1). One problem for CODEPINK, according to a staff member, is that they do not have enough actions for American citizens overseas, “it turns to out to be reactionary, whether the issues are domestic or foreign” (1). Even the way CODEPINK processes their social networking posts is reactionary: they do not plan ahead for the majority of their posts and instead only schedule posts that are static.

### **5.4.1.4. Negative Social Networking**

Negative social networking posts are prevalent within online activism and have to be handled in a strategic manner. When observing the social networking posts on Facebook and Twitter, the majority of the posts the organization creates have some kind of combative comments or negative viewpoints from individuals. For this reason, when sensitive topics are addressed on social networking sites, “we kind of try to get a statement ready that we kind of send out to be like, you know, this is how we feel about it. We do have to monitor for death threats because staff members have received death threats” (5). The death threats have become personal, even so far as to have “someone threaten their kids” (5). The team tries to be supportive of each other and recognize what is happening, and “80% percent of the time they’re not just arguing the message, they’re turning it against you” (5). Unfortunately, with the group’s feminist messages, a lot of negative comments are profanities against women are garnered, “I think everyone on the staff at one point had been

called bitches or slut” (5). If the negative comments are “just nasty trolling kind of things, I encourage us to ignore them” (8). Moreover, if the individual is posting on the social network in all caps, “I know that person’s really angry, you’re not going to really be able to talk to them” (8). The ultimate goal for the organization is to create a dialogue with people who don’t have the same viewpoint and build a relationship between the bi-partisan divide. The struggle is mostly how CODEPINK is going to react and then build dialogue that is constructive. Additionally, the organization has to deal with destructive negativity, like when “terrorist organizations post things that are not true” (8). The response for these kind of negative posts is to block the individual or organization completely.

### **5.4.1.5. Prioritizing Video**

With Facebook’s algorithm change, videos are prioritized more than pictures and ranked higher in the newsfeed algorithm. CODEPINK has changed their strategy in reaction to this, “so the videos are what is going to be seen in the newsfeed most” (8). Because of this change there are various signals that the algorithm evaluates when video content is ranked, such as time watched, how compelling the video is, and how much time commitment a user needs to complete watching a video. This change in algorithm has changed the strategy for CODEPINK concerning Facebook content: “now we are trying to see, well how can we turn this into a video like [omitted] right now is working on creating a video for a petition. This excites me because I know that’s gonna do well and know that’s shareable and the kind of content Facebook and Twitter want on their Facebook” (8). Moreover, videos have a better opportunity to go viral and according to a CODEPINKer, “that gives us a huge opening to mobilize people to call demonstration” (2). An important facet of videos is that they can be uploaded to the platform in real-time and that helps individuals get connected with a protest or movement more easily. Facebook live stream video’s, during the year of the

research project, where encouraged and were able to garner real-time support from the organizations followers.

#### **5.4.1.6. NationBuilder (CRMs)**

The uses of technology, customer relationship management systems (CRMs), are the biggest innovation that CODEPINK is utilizing to achieve complex goals within the political activism field. CODEPINK is one of the innovative activist groups that are utilizing a political customer relationship management system called NationBuilder to manage their contacts. NationBuilder is one of the most comprehensive, non-partisan, robust, out-of-the-box software tools that helps political and social campaigns to build and organize digital data. One member stated, in regard to NationBuilder, that they had “never seen an organization use it all and CODEPINK utilizes maybe 30 percent of it consistently” (4). Another CODEPINKer said that “we still don’t use them to the capacity that are available to us (tools), but we’re on a learning curve” (1).

NationBuilder allows the organization to manage their contacts, social networking sites, website, email, events, and fundraising all in one system. CODEPINK has a backend system of about 400,000 members, consisting of contacts, email contacts, and social contacts on NationBuilder. The management system allows the organization to utilize contacts from a variety of different resources and organize them in a more relational manner to best reach different niche interest groups, “we always need to engage people and how to be relational with them, and know as much information as we can about them on the backend” (7).

The platform draws social contacts from Facebook and Twitter, email, the organization’s website, and manual self-reported contact data. The system will then organize all the data points

into individual profiles that provide a summary of the actions that a person has taken. Data points such as a phone number and address, if it is public information, are also integrated into the database along with any information provided or collected from social media. If the organization wants to do a locally-targeted text message, they can use that information to contact individuals with whom they have interacted digitally or physically. One CODEPINK member said,

We started using text messages for events...because all the data says that you are going to probably get 50 percent more from text messages. It was also described as fairly useful when we're on the ground and we're doing a location action to tell people in particular, let's say 25 miles, that we'd love to meet you (4).

Furthermore, the platform allows the organization to initiate fundraising through their email and website and then keep track of how individuals have contributed to the organization. Using these tools is effective because NationBuilder, says a staff member, "understands human organizing" (4). Additionally, according to another CODEPINKer, "NationBuilder saw what activism really wanted; you are able to build a following" (1).

### **5.4.2. Insider Data: Meetings**

During the meetings CODEPINK discusses strategy for each campaign, which they are currently promoting. On Fridays they review how the content is performing on social networking sites and via email in terms of open-rates. I will review in the following sections important themes in terms of strategy that have become part of CODEPINK practices: story arcs with campaigns, text messaging, connecting with students, petition practices, and email performance practices.

#### 5.4.2.1. Story Arcs with Campaigns

Changing the narrative for campaigns is an important part of the media content goals, whether it is on social media, the organization's website, or in an email. A story arc is defined as a continuing storyline in episodic storytelling, generally consisting of five parts, where the organization is continually resurfacing issues and updating the story of the issue. For example, CODEPINK discussed the importance of having a narrative on social media and making sure that narrative is identified when they are planning campaign messaging using shareables on social networking sites, "[Omitted]- I think one thing is telling a story through social media. Having a narrative. Trying to tell a story through shareables. [Omitted]- So the message is Peace with Iran, what does that look like? Just like what does that look like in our narrative in our story?" (7) Furthermore, when the organization is trying to build a long-term campaign they are trying to engage working with other groups within that arc, "It's about building something in each community to build power" (6). Periodically, CODEPINK discusses how a campaign has developed over time, which the content calendar has been important to understanding the arc throughout campaigns: "[Omitted]: I posted a lot of the social media on the content calendar. I really encourage us to pause and take time to list out the campaign arcs that are happening (4). [Omitted]: Thank you for encouraging that, that would be helpful for everyone to tune into that" (5).

Treating campaigns differently on different social networking sites is important to sustaining a social networking campaign: "One thing [omitted] and I discussed is the possible way to sustain the difference between FB and Twitter" (4). The group treats each platform differently and creates content differently for each platform in terms of length, with Facebook having more robust content and Twitter having short 200-character posts. Considering that different algorithms

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are used on social networking sites, actions that the organization takes have to be strategically planned: “every time we post something and it does worse, it pulls down our overall presence on FB. So, we have to be clear about what we need. Twitter is different. Pre-drafting how different people will talk about the report so it’s a narrative arc from different voices. Facebook is more of a volume game” (4). Moreover, when creating Facebook content, creating a variation in content and copy is important to build interest as the campaign arc builds further over time. On Twitter, during a meeting it was mentioned that the “platform is penalizing identical tweets/copies -- tweet from one handle and retweet from the other handle or make copy different and schedule at different times. Accounts that tweet 20 times a day grow larger. That’s tweeting twice an hour” (6). This shows that the organization does not only aim to grow larger as a social network, but seeks to utilize influencers and staff members to create more of a story arc for the organization. However, they are often limited by the platform itself.

### **5.4.2.2. Text Messaging**

Text messaging is utilized by the organization through their account on the NationBuilder platform and utilized through geo-location. At the beginning of the study, the organization had only used text messaging once before, but by the end of the study they were utilizing this tool more often. During planning the organization discussed the appropriate number of miles away the individuals they were texting should be: “[Omitted]: Yah, it is part of our NationBuilder package and we don’t have to pay more; everyone who is textable 100 miles of DC? What is the best radius? Change it to 25 miles; limited # of characters but we can send two texts right after another” (6). During the meetings it was discussed that text messages were mostly utilized for events that were short notice: “It is hard with the timing because it is last minute—this is a good time to use SMS”



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(3). Furthermore, when specifically asked about how many times they have used text messages, it was stated by one CODEPINKer, “We try to only use the text message when it is urgent and in the media, giving the receiver a way to engage with what they are experiencing as urgent. Or around large mobilizations to help inform. So, it is hard to say how often; it has been 3 times a day and once a week” (1). The targeting is very precisely geared toward the events the organization is trying to promote, so CODEPINK tries to make sure that targeting is done toward individuals who are interested in the campaign and are able to attend an action if contacted. The premise of using text messaging is directly related to getting information out immediately and efficiently to a targeted population. In the exchange below, the organization considers using follower information from petitions that individuals sign. Utilizing not only the followers’ civic interest, but also using their contact information from a signed petition, provides the ideal context for sending a text message for a follower to engage in an action:

[Omitted]: Wanted to talk about the SMS that went out, do we know how we targeted that?

Because I got it on the Westcoast. I may be tagged on everything, but we should double check. (4)

[Omitted]: I’ll double check. (6)

[Omitted]: Most of our petitions we don’t ask for their address, but we should because it would make targeting easier. (3)

[Omitted]: Could we just ask for state/zip? That’s all we need. (6)

Moreover, during the meetings it was shared that the organization has about “10,000 textable people, however there were bugs in the texting system” (4). The utilization of these technologies is still in its infancy, and many organizations are still not contacting their followers through text message.

### 5.4.2.3 Connecting with Students

Throughout the year that the research was conducted, there were numerous strategies that involved building CODEPINK campaigns and local chapters within universities. Historically, organizations have often tried to garner the support of student groups and strategize alongside the educational system; the same is true for CODEPINK: “We have been engaged with universities in the past” (1). In particular, during the meetings CODEPINK strategized to connect with Cal Poly and the City University of New York school system, “Also working on educational campaign, we’re also reviving the Divest campaign around universities here. There’s also active divest campaigns with CUNY, and involve students in the Elbit campaign as well” (10). Building relationships with college students for CODEPINK is something they love and want to expand and grow, “We really take supporting students seriously” (1). For CODEPINK, they want the college students to take leadership on their college campuses, while they are able to act as a support factor. In April, the Cal Poly SLO Peace Coalition, who was protesting Raytheon’s missile sales peacefully at a Career Fair, received violations under the university’s student code of conduct. In response, CODEPINK supported the coalition with a petition and media support:

[Omitted]: How can we help the students at Cal Poly who are being punished for protesting their career fair? (10)

[Omitted]: We can run the story to help them out; who in that area can we use to help them - the mayor; Kamala Harris? (1)

[Omitted]: They are getting student support and we are trying to get external support.  
(10)

[Omitted]: Seems like a great media story. (2)

#### 5.4.2.4 Petition Practices

Petitioning has been one of the cornerstones of campaigning and activists have had to strategize how to best accomplish this task. CODEPINK in particular has used three different mechanisms for petitioning for signatures. Firstly, in the past with their grassroots history they used to stand on street corners and try to collect signatures from individuals. Secondly, they use One Click Politics (OCP), which is an online software platform that allows advocacy groups to contact officials directly with social media posts, emails, voicemails, and text messages. During meetings CODEPINK quite often discusses OCP strategies, when they are trying to plan contact with officials within government, “Use OCP tools for emailing Congress people directly—they track incoming emails and tally them per district” (6). Thirdly, CODEPINK uses their CRM platform NationBuilder to send out petitions, which allows CODEPINK to send a customized response letter back to the individual to sign the petition, “Use NationBuilder petitions when reaching individuals like Larry Fink. OCP is not a good tool for this because Fink can block/filter incoming emails, and NationBuilder can auto-respond to petition signers urging them to share on social media” (6). When an individual receives the custom auto response it asks the individual to share the message on Twitter, Facebook, and then also via email. Strategically, the organization wants to hand deliver the petition to the target, because if you email the petition it has more of a chance of getting erased. Ideally planning for petitions to be delivered should be part of each campaign and pre-organized, with photos of the delivery shared on social media. Furthermore, acknowledgement and receipt of the signatures to the target of the petition builds confidence in the ability of the organization’s individuals to spread a message.

#### **5.4.2.5. Email Performance Practices**

With the help of a strategist, the organization examines the efficiency of their email lists and how their content messages are catching the attention of their email lists. Strategically speaking, when an organization or company has a low open-rate it could potentially harm their email deliverability, as email server algorithms using machine learning will believe the content is spam for all users. A low open rate can occur from an email if the email list is not up to date with current followers, or “we have people who have signed up but never taken action” (6). To remedy the problem of having a stale email the organization will “export people we send emails to and export the people that actually open. See who is subscribed who are non-openers. We need to find out who opens the emails and how to target them” (4). To target the non-openers from emails, the organization then takes their emails and creates look-alike audiences on Facebook to then target the followers who have not engaged with the organization via email. As discussed in section 5.3.1.1, the organization specifically creates email lists that are based on a follower's interests: “the targeted alert had a 14% open rate and the non-targeted had a 7% open rate” (3). The organization is very meticulous in separating individuals into target groups and then building a community surrounding that interest. In terms of engagement strategies, CODEPINK has a foundational following but they also see their role in educational purposes: “like the national we send out, we know that we have a core set of followers, but then we also know that there are all these other people who are following us for information purposes” (6). The targeted groups are based on the information that people are interested in and also currently opening within their email accounts. This is important because it helps get information to those who are interested in that particular topic and more likely to act on behalf of the organization. Moreover, one important strategic practices CODEPINK also utilizes is testing the subject line to see which messaging draws more

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interest and opens by people who are actual CODEPINK followers. One strategy in terms of content that was important is that it is important to share the successes of CODEPINK within emails. Furthermore, in terms of length, emails are an important place to share content that needs further explanation and builds or strengthens the relationships with the followers compared to social networking sites.

### **5.4.2.6. Conclusions**

CODEPINK uses a number of strategies in order to enact and facilitate activism on social networking sites and digital technologies. These are the strategies CODEPINK executes to reach their social networking site goals: Analyzing Reflexively, Content Creation, Reactionary Strategy, Negative Social Networking, Video Preference, Nation Builder, Story Arcs, Texting Messaging, Connecting with Students, Petition Practices, and Email Performance Practices.

## **5.5. Capacity Builders (R.2.2)**

This research question is meant to address what activities the organization does in order to be successful or make a difference within the campaigns that they focus on. Capacities are built by activists through the actions that they take to signal that they do not agree with the policies of the government or other entities. The following research question is addressed from the data that was gathered from 10 CODEPINK staff interviews and the digital ethnography where I attended CODEPINK meetings via Zoom, emails, and social networking data from Facebook and Twitter. The research question is: What factors build capacity to signal dissent to governments and what constitutes success? Firstly, I will review what constitutes success, which was explained during the interviews; and then I will address what capacity builders are planned from the meetings that

I attended.

### **5.5.1. Insider Data: Interviews**

During the interviews, the notion of campaign success on social networking sites was a topic that had a few different layers of responses. The overarching theme that dominated the conversations in the majority of the interviews was that the mission of CODEPINK is “world peace,” which is one that is unattainable. Spreading the ideas of CODEPINK’s campaigns was an important metric of success that was prominent in all of the interviews:

Success is such a hard thing to claim because when your mission is ending war militarism, it can kind of feel like you're not achieving much. And so that's something that I struggle with a lot and kind of like looking at our actions and kind of determining what was achieved with them. But I think, um, I think if it's framed as raising awareness about the issues, then it becomes much more successful. (5)

Understanding what constitutes success on social networking sites is an entirely different concept, in light of the revolutions that were spurred on social networking sites. Organizations have different types of successes on social networking sites and are not necessarily focused on the basic measures, which have been statistically shown to have low impact. Using advanced social listening tools and understanding how the organization is building a conversation or “have a sense of how much we are changing the narrative,” are much more important categories to focus success on (4). Furthermore, having an “impact on the way the story is told” and changing the media narrative about a certain issue is also valued as a success for the organization (4). One CODEPINKer told me what she considers success was, “I think that visibility might be the easiest way to kind of claim success or feel successful in that sense. I feel success more when I’m engaging

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with people and having important conversations and that's where consciousness raising for me comes" (5). And lastly, "converting people to petitions to actions" is one of the biggest measures of success for the organization as an individual is directly engaging with the content and the social justice campaign (4). One CODEPINKer stated, "I would have to say we're up against really large systems: the military industrial complex, the government, and the largest militaries in the world. So, we celebrate small windows and a victory can be anything from an increase of people who are part of a campaign or support in a cause, or it could be a small or large shift in public opinion" (3).

Having content that is creating a different message and is aiming to disrupt the media is important to CODEPINK, so by receiving coverage by the main stream traditional news media is another big success for the organization, "that was good coverage because it was a mainstream news that felt successful kind of thing" (5). Additionally, there is always a need to create media attention around each campaign, "It really depends on the goal of the campaign. It is the goal of the campaign to create a media buzz and it is the goal of the campaign to disrupt" (7). Having recognizable messaging that stands out within the onslaught of media content that individuals contend with is important to CODEPINK as identifiability for an organization is just as important as brand recognition is for a company. The iconic color of hot pink and the branding of the CODEPINK logo at the bottom of the protest signage is consistently part of the mainstream media image. When CODEPINK is acknowledged as part of the mainstream media, they are able to further their reach—having the funny costumes and messaging they are able to accomplish that even more easily.

### **5.5.2. Insider Data: Meetings**

Capacity builders are actions that signal unrest or dissent surrounding government policies.

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These are different competencies of communities or organizations that help them achieve their goals to overcome problems that are occurring within their communities. During meetings and campaign planning, achieving success means creating a capacity builder that creates government uneasiness or creates waves within party politics. The civil rights movement is an example of how a movement can put pressures on political parties and governmental institutions and create social change within policy. Social movement pressures are the most prominent during times where the country sees increased polarization and distrust of governmental institutions. Community-building or social movement building, is creating a group of people who identify with one issue, is a capacity builder that builds trust within a group of people and signals dissent to the government. During a meeting it was discussed (below) by CODEPINK it is important to have follow through when working on a campaign and reaching a goal of building a community around a topic,

[Omitted]: I think we need to make a real re-commitment to organizing so we can build capacity in our movement. Sometimes we get distracted, and we never carry the ball across the field. I also want to say that Local Peace Economy has proved that when we invest in building the community, it rewards you. (1)

Having these accounts shows the importance of building a community of people around a movement, and continuing to utilize building more relationships to achieve policy change and further building capacities. Community ultimately build political pressures onto governments that a group of people do not agree with their policies.

CODEPINK plans email campaigns that offer a series of emails, like a 21 days of Giving Peace series, that are targeted toward a topic for a certain period of time. An email campaign series is meant to provide a body of civic information that is meant to educate community members on a



relevant campaign.

[Omitted] is thinking that on the last day she will do a survey and then a call to action of how to get the practices in people's communities; offering time for people to talk and do one on ones with [omitted]. Bringing it back to the community and getting people to bring the personal to the community; want to offer one pdf with all the practices. How do we sustain these practices? (7)

Building a community through providing information about different practices is a good way of building relationships with followers who have an established body of civil interest. There are a multitude of factors that emerged from the meetings that are considered capacity builders. These capacity builders were then identified in CODEPINK content that they created: Call to Action, Targeting Congressional Members, Traditional Media, Influencers, Webinars, Protest, Collaborations, and Click Petitions. These factors are realized through an action that an individual takes on behalf or with the organization:

- “Contact senator saying hope they will support the deal” (3)
- “...how we can continue to use the momentum from the protest with our cosponsors” (10)
- “What is the action after they don't respond to us? One Click Politics?” (6)
- “[Omitted] and I are working on one click politics for Senate and House” (3)
- “[Omitted] yesterday we were up to 36 on participants on webinar” (7)
- “Working to get celebs and people that are important to do a border crossing in Jordan.” (3)
- “We have the media outreach, we just met a young woman from Yemen” (1)
- “[Omitted] is going to be on Democracy now tomorrow - this will enthuse people in our base. Build something on social media; what is the ask?” (2)

Above are meeting notes from CODEPINK throughout the year of 2018 that provide examples

showing discussion about capacity builders, which were identified during the meetings. These examples were strategically planned to create “an ask” that can potentially build dissent towards the government political party or governmental institution.

### 5.5.3. Outsider Data: Emails

The emails that the researcher received during 2018 from CODEPINK were coded to analyze what type of capacity builders the organization used within their content. During the second round of coding, capacity builders were coded within the emails, with the following third broken down into the specific tasks that were asked from an individual that could signal dissent. The emails were broken down to: Protest, Call to Action, Targeting Congressional Members, Traditional Media, Influencers, Collaborations, and Click Petitions. Establishing these different methods is important to understanding what tools are effective in building capacity.

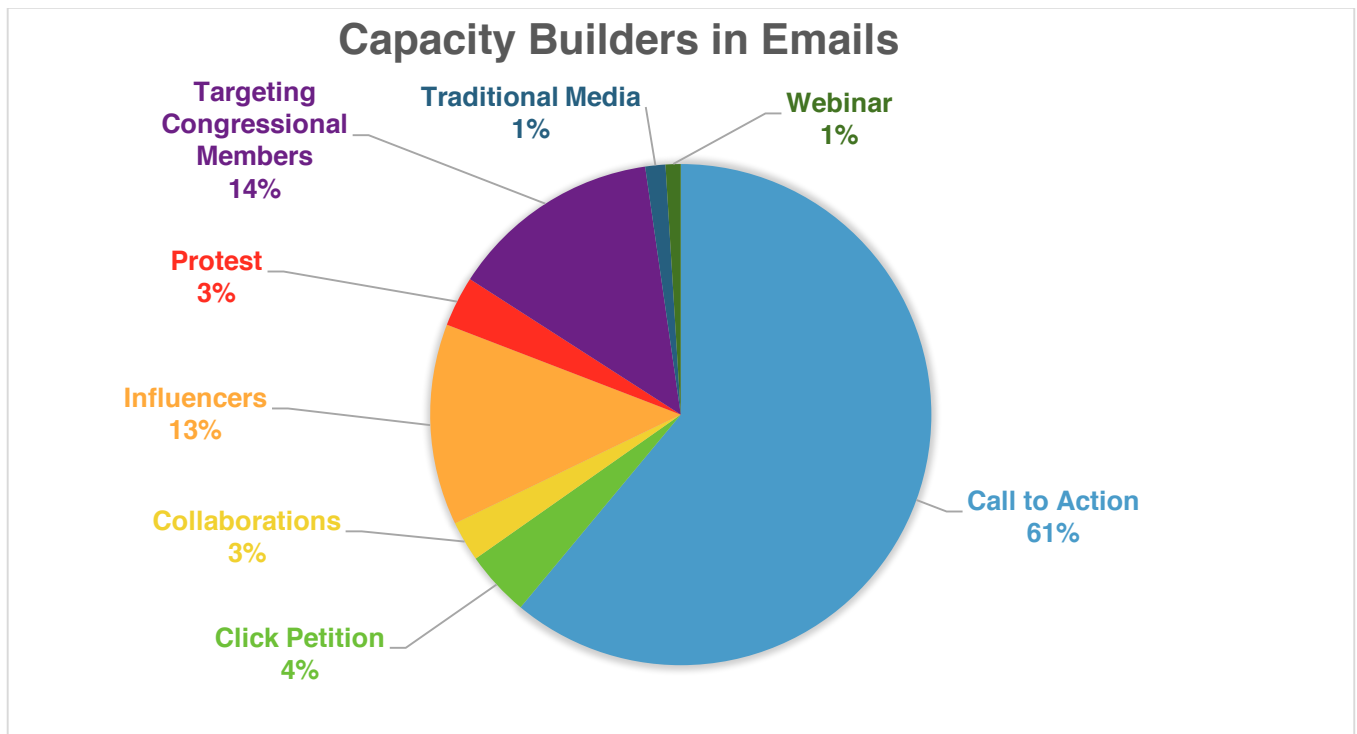


Figure 5. 7. Capacity Builders within Emails

### **5.5.3.1 Call to Action**

A call to action is anytime CODEPINK asks an individual or group of people to take any type of action. It can be calling a senator, signing a petition, or supporting a cause. These are factors of engagement in either online or offline capacities that are creating social movements. A call to action was coded any time there was a sentence that said, “Join CODEPINK LA tomorrow, Don't forget to share, Read and share, Send a message to, Rally around... and, We will stand in vigil.” These are all types of call to actions that were seen throughout the data. Call to actions dominate the conversations within emails occurring in 61% of the content. Call to actions are important because they are asking followers to take part in the campaign that CODEPINK is spear heading. However, call to actions are difficult to accomplish because motivating an individual to go outside of their regular routines with little biographical availability can be insurmountable.

### **5.5.3.2. Influencers**

CODEPINK uses the social networks of their most popular activists, supporters of the cause, celebrities, and the staff to create a buzz about an issue. Influencers, like discussed during other research questions, are important to the stability and spread of a campaign. Influencers, which is a marketing term, refers to individuals who have a larger social media network and have influence over other people in the market. Celebrities in recent years have been drivers to influence individuals to join a social movement, or at the very least, force the conversation into the traditional media. For example, CODEPINK and Mark Ruffalo—who is mainly an activist for anti-fracking initiatives—is an example of a celebrity the organization partners with. The organization will then create content around that celebrity by creating videos, social posts, and emails that help promote that relationship. Individuals are willing to follow influencers and celebrities to take action and

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express dissent against a government policy, because they have an established brand that they identify with. Celebrities act as a bridging capital between the personal and political concepts that are important to signal a sentiment of dissent. The organization relies on influencers to spread the word about their campaigns: “So we have a lot of influencers. So, there's a huge network and we do rely on them to help spread the word” (6). Within the email data influencers were used within 13% of the content that the organization was sending to their followers. Furthermore, CODEPINK will also try to engage with celebrities on social networking platforms by tagging themselves or directly creating messaging that is trying to engage that celebrity. Having celebrity and influencer endorsements, either through engagement or in an official capacity, is important to the success of different campaigns and actions.

### 5.5.3.3 Click Petition

CODEPINK uses click petitions as a way to digitally mediate the process of gathering signatures or support from followers. Within the email data the organization will mention click petitions 4% of the time within the content. Creating a petition online allows the organization to speed up the process, which was traditionally done by organizers and clipboards. According to the White House We the People Petition’s website, “If you gather 100,000 signatures in 30 days, we’ll review your petition, make sure it gets in front of the appropriate policy experts, and issue an official response” (“About We the People,” 2018). In order to be searchable on the whitehouse.org website, the organization has to get 30 signatures within the first 30 days. CODEPINK links their petitions on their social networking sites to their website. Having click petitions is a cornerstone characteristic of modern organizations. Petitions are effective to tell the government that individuals do not agree with a policy, and provide the opportunity for real viable tangible evidence that the organization can provide to policy makers. Within emails the

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organization links click petitions 4% of the time. Here is an example of the messaging that CODEPINK uses on their emails, “Can’t make it? Sign here to show your support of getting troops out of Afghanistan and make it clear that War is NOT GREEN or good for anybody.” Connecting a campaign with an actual click petition helps followers feel that if they take this small action they are actually participating with activist campaigns.

### **5.5.3.4 Targeting Congressional Members**

Targeting congressional members is one of the main methods that CODEPINK uses to get the attention of policy makers. The data shows that the organization will refer to contacting or engaging with a congressional member 13% of the time. The Washington D.C. team, along with Medea Benjamin, are the main CODEPINKers who are planning and attending these protests at congressional members’ offices. Furthermore, the organization asks their followers to also participate by calling certain congress members to protest certain policies. Here is an example of the organization asking their followers via email to call their congressional representatives: “Now it is time for Congress to pick up the torch. Tell your Congressional representative to stop taking money from the NRA and weapons manufacturers.” When CODEPINK visits a congress member, they usually also do a livestream on Facebook so they could continue to spread the message and their action. Targeting senators is one of the important things that CODEPINK does to show that they do not agree with policy decisions of certain senators. While the Senate is in session, they often protest in the back of the Senate, and sometimes are dragged out. For example, one CODEPINKer was “hailed out of the Senate and arrested today for calling on Congress to vote NO on Brett Kavanaugh. #KavaNOPE. Join her and tell Schumer to Stand against Kavanaugh.” The protest landed the organization prime time news coverage and graced the covers of many

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different publications. When the organization asks their followers to engage in contacting their senator it is only a small part of a bigger plan: “it is a pile on, it needs to happen in coalition, and it is part of a layered strategy. So just calling is not enough: it is office visits, it is talking points they are not getting it is sit-ins, it is disruptions and calls. One alone is never enough” (1). Contacting the individuals who have the power to change policy is an important capacity builder as is sharing campaign messages connected with CODEPINK values.

### **5.5.3.5. Collaborations**

Collaborations are part of building a vibrant community around different activist organizations and getting support for different campaigns. Within the email data the organization will mention collaborations 3% of the time. CODEPINK consistently partners with different organizations in order to increase the reach of their campaign messages, increase attendance at protests, and increase the size their network. Collaborations are when another group also shares the mission and interest in what CODEPINK is doing, furthermore is a coordinated response. Collaborations are consistently organized by CODEPINK members to further their individual campaigns: “going to have a call this week with the folks who are trying to pull it together - coalition effort with 5 different groups who want to help organize” (5). Collaborations are capacity builders, as they bring in a larger following to show discontent, deviance, and dissent against the government, because more than one group is joining together their efforts. One CODEPINKer explained that linking out to existing campaigns in other organizations is a strategy that is often employed to get a larger movement: “everybody's in a coalition and it's all networked and was so, so much of the strategy is linking out to existing things that other folks are doing and trying to ride those waves while including our own messaging in there and driving things back ideally to CODEPINK” (9).

### **5.5.3.6. Traditional Media**

Traditional Media is still the most important capacity builders that CODEPINK aspires to connect with. Traditional media is defined as mediums that are foundations in society including television, radio, newspapers and magazines. Within the email data, CODEPINK will refer a connection to traditional media within 1% of the content. To gain a larger following and momentum within a social movement or a campaign, the organization cannot continue to grow without reaching new audiences. Traditional media outlets provide that opportunity to grow with individuals who may have not heard of CODEPINK previously. Furthermore, because traditional media forums have a larger active audience, they have the power to sway public opinion and change the narrative on a particular social issue. CODEPINK often contacts traditional media outlets and provides them with a press release in order to inform the media circuit in what they are planning. Moreover, they will tweet at or tag news organizations that they want the attention if they have a particular campaign they are pushing. During the interviews, when CODEPINKers were asked if they valued one type of media over another, they all preferred traditional media attention because of the reach of larger audiences. When specifically prompted, a CODEPINKer stated that Democratic and Republican media outlets were giving them attention, “Funny Fox News was the only one that took us seriously. They had us on a lot. But Democracy Now has always been there for us” (1). Additionally, outlets such as: “The Real News, Truthdig, AlterNet, Common Dreams, TruthOut. KPFFK, Pacifica stations, Washington Post, New York Times, The Daily Show, and tons of cartoonists included us as part of the WDC culture” (1). These media publications carry a different weight and legitimacy to different readers, but it helps legitimize their messaging and potentially change the narrative around a social issue.

### **5.5.3.7. Webinars**

A webinar is a video broadcast that is a presentation, lecture, or workshop that is transmitted over a website or social networking site. The email data shows that the organization will mention a webinar within their content 1% of the time. CODEPINK utilizes webinars on social networking sites—in particular Facebook and Twitter—in order to engage with individuals and to provide more content or open up the opportunity for public discourse. Webinars are an important tool for the organization to build capacity and provide a venue for followers to learn more about certain campaigns. Webinars sometimes feature celebrities or influencers as well to illustrate a discussion around a certain issue or topic. Webinars serve as an opportunity to not only further the conversation, but also control the building of a narrative around a topic within the context of a learning space. Webinars are advertised on Facebook, Twitter, and emails so that individuals can attend the webinar live. CODEPINK holds webinars almost weekly and sometimes more than once a week, because they find that connecting with people through video helps with the preference for videos on social networking sites. Furthermore, webinars are seen as being successful for connecting with individuals and promoting training on activism: “webinar last week was very successful, encouraged people to go to town halls, next steps will happen closer to the budget asking members of Congress to oppose it” (3). Webinars create relationships and provides hands on training to individuals who are attending.

### **5.5.3.8. Protest**

Protesting is an expression of discontent and an attempt for individuals to directly and systematically influence public opinion or government officials on policy matters. The email data shows that the organization will talk about protesting in 3% of the content. Protesting and gathering



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individuals is the most effective capacity builder, however within modern day protests in the United States scale of attendance is irrelevant. The organization protests on average about 1 to 2 times a week and is often geared towards displaying discontent, but protests can also be peaceful as in a vigil. Protesting for CODEPINK is about using non-violent pressure as a tool for persuasion. For CODEPINKers, sometimes they put themselves into situations that are deemed as civil unrest and are then arrested for their actions. The organization believes that putting your body on the line can be an effective way to protest: “should we send an alert that day, after, in case you do get arrested -- ‘put your bodies on the line’ to help drive engagement?” Most often CODEPINK decides prior to the event, whether they believe that the event is worth getting arrested during, otherwise known as an “arrestable.” Furthermore, when the organization engages in protest, they will continuously use the media content from the event to promote the campaign message. They try to use the energy of the protest momentum to continue their campaign and build on the narrative: “how we can continue to use the momentum from the protest with our cosponsors and folks we have been able to reach out to” (7). Protests that CODEPINK organizes are not always located within the United States, so international laws are often a part of their protest strategy, “new law around social media (Israel also arrests people for Facebook posts), [omitted] put up a post criticizing the PA for arresting a journalist, it’s freedom of press & freedom of expression—you can be arrested for criticizing the government on Facebook, not first attack but first arrested by the PA” (3). Online protests are just as important as the on-the-ground protests, but are still not as effective in building capacity against policy holders.

### 5.5.4 Social Networking Data (Facebook and Twitter)

Exploring capacity builders on social networking sites are important to understanding how the organization communicates that they are signaling dissent or a like-mindedness on an issue. CODEPINK, in particular uses a multitude of different methods, as seen in the previous sections, that signal dissent against a government policy or issue. When looking at the Facebook data gathered through netyltic.com I was able to categorize the content based on the type of content they were posting: Video, Link, Photo, Status, Event (see Figure 5.6).

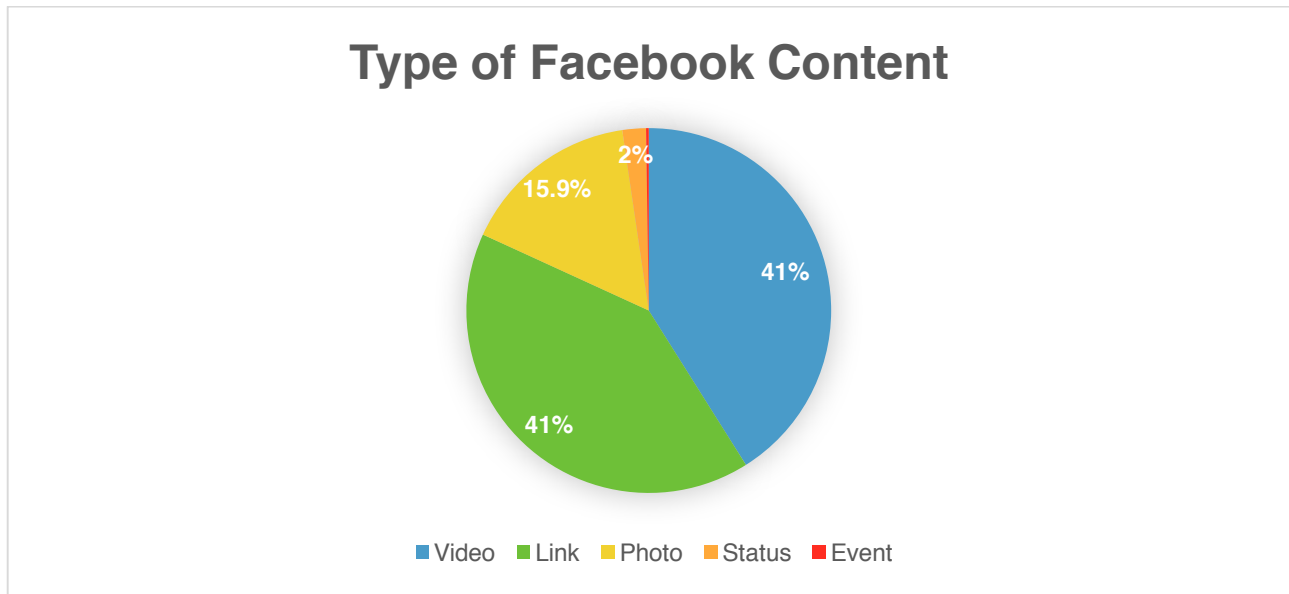


Figure 5. 8. Facebook content broken down by type of content

The data showed that CODEPINKs Facebook content was utilizing videos and links 41% of the time. Furthermore, it showed that 15.9% of the content was a photograph, 2 % of the time a status, and 0.1 % of the time an official event. Exploring what type of Facebook content is being utilized is explaining how capacity builders are communicated via social networking sites. It provides an insight into which tools the organization decides to use to display the different capacity builders. This data furthermore confirms the strategy of the organization to prioritize using videos within

their social networking content. This strategy most importantly creates more opportunities for successfully utilizing capacity builders to the fullest extent.

Twitter content furthermore utilized capacity builders within content. The content because of the character limitation is much more truncated than on other platforms. Below are examples of capacity builders that signal dissent to a government by asking an individual to take an action. The three examples show how the organization creates an ask for a person to potentially take an action. These types of asks are all asking followers to act on the behalf of the organization:

- “Take action to free Ahed Tamimi”
- “Send her love and solidarity as she fights for her freedom #FreeAhed”
- “Sign the petition to #FreeAhed”

Additionally, Twitter most importantly was utilized by CODEPINK to create Twitter storms, which are a series of posts that happen rapidly during an event to recreate an event. The organization utilized this type of posting when they were communicating an event that they were protesting. The concept behind creating a twitter storm is that the organization joins a conversation with the use of hashtags with the intention of creating a viral post.

### **5.5.5. Conclusions**

CODEPINK utilizes a multi-layered approach when creating capacity builders in order to signal dissent to governments. They use different social media platforms, emails, and information communication technologies to communicate dissent. The factors that build capacity are: call to action, influencers, click petitions, targeting congressional members, collaborations, traditional media, and webinars. The organization uses a number of these strategies in order to build a narrative of dissent against the government or issue campaigns.

## **5.6. Social Capital (R.3.)**

This research question is important for the growth of the organization and how CODEPINK has their followers build networks of relationships among other people's networks. The following section is answering the research question: How does CODEPINK use social networking sites to build social capital to involve followers to participate in collective action? Using social networking sites to digitally mediate social capital growth is a characteristic of modern activist organizations. The social networking sites have affordances that allow users to engage in political participation. The following research question was answered through interviewing 10 CODEPINK staff members and attending weekly CODEPINK meetings via Zoom.

### **5.6.1. Insider Data: Interviews and Meetings**

Building social capital on social networking sites—specifically on Twitter and Facebook—is building user relationships by connecting each other through sharing posts, tagging an individual, or replying back to a conversation. By having an individual take one of those actions with CODEPINK content, it creates a connection for the organization with that individual's network. There are a multitude of different opportunities that CODEPINK can utilize when it comes to using social networking sites for social capital building: 1. Retweets/Tags/Shares, 2. Posting on Staff Accounts, 3. Influencers/Celebrities, 4. Social Ambassadors, and 5. Outside Platforms/Websites. I will review each of the following different types of opportunities to build social capital on social networking sites with both interview and meeting data.

#### **5.6.1.1. Directed Communication: Retweets/Tags/Shares**

On social networking sites, directed communication posts, retweets, tags, and shares on

social networking sites act as social capital builders. The organization pays attention to these actions by examining their base metrics, “We are always looking at live stream numbers and webinar numbers and retweets and all of that” (3). CODEPINK incentivizes posts on social networking posts to share the content to friends and family to expand their networks, “So we’ve even tried to incentivize people sharing and all our events like in the auto response gives them a link to share with your friends and things like that. So, we really do try to kind of broaden our network” (5). Incentives help drive people to participate on social networking posts and actions when there are so many organizations asking for engagement.

Encouraging people to share CODEPINK content to their followers increases the reach of each individual post. When an individual gets tagged (using the @ sign) it spreads the content to one other person (or more) and creates the engagement between these people. When the content is re-tweeted it is posted on the user’s page and is usually shared with a personal comment on Twitter. This allows the individual’s entire network to view the post. For example, one CODEPINKer said, “We retweet things and tag ourselves in photos to share. Several of us were tweeting David Hogg (Parkland High School) under the auspices of CODEPINK to try to make the link there” (9). When content is shared it also is placed on the page of the individual or friend and allows the content to spread to their entire network. These affordances allow for individuals to identify with the organization, or in the very least, create a dialogue about the campaign message while building social capital.

### **5.6.1.2. Posting on Staff Accounts**

Posting CODEPINK content from the Facebook and Twitter of staff members helps spread the content to a larger network. However, posting from the accounts of staff members has even

more effectiveness than the usual share or retweet. The social capital from friends and family members is more valuable because they are inclined to support the work and values of a person who they already have an established relationship with. Furthermore, in terms of timing, having multiple accounts sharing out the same content can amplify their messages to spread further: “You send it out to a bunch of your followers and everyone’s schedules that tweet for the same time. So that in theory, this massively amplified message, a single message is all going out at the same time from whole bunch of people’s individual channels. It’s meant to cause instant virility” (9). Moreover, because campaign managers have established followings, sometimes they receive more engaged responses. According to one CODEPINKer, “I do some posts from mine (Facebook) and sometimes we find when I do it from mine, I get more response” (3). This is often the case when certain activists are well known within their respective campaigns.

### **5.6.1.3. Influencers/Celebrities**

Influencers and celebrities are an important part of motivating social movements. CODEPINK quite often uses celebrities to influence their campaigns. The organization is hoping to benefit from the social capital that the celebrity or influencer’s network brings to the engagement of their content, “I see people love when Natalie Portman speaks out on something or people like anything about children and I can see that by look at the engagements and the analytics that Facebook and Twitter provide” (8). When a celebrity endorses a social movement, there is a larger network and social capital opportunity for the organization. CODEPINK, for example, has used social capital and the support of Mark Ruffalo and Lorde for the Justice for Palestine movement. Below are two examples from Twitter where the organization utilized celebrities:

- “We are SO grateful for your continued support for Palestinian, and human rights, @MarkRuffalo. Thank you for speaking out for #Ahed” (CODEPINK, 2018).

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- “New Zealand pop star Lorde cancelled her show in Tel Aviv in support of the BDS movement and the Palestinian people. Send a message to Lorde to thank her for her courage, commitment, and strength!” (CODEPINK, 2018).

Furthermore, the organization also criticizes celebrities in order to build social capital, by tagging a celebrity that they feel is not supporting their campaign messages. For example, they criticized the comedian Jerry Seinfeld in his actions regarding the Justice for Palestine

Campaign:

- “Comedian Jerry Seinfeld visited an ‘anti-terrorist training camp’ with his family in an illegal Israeli settlement in the Occupied West Bank. Share to tell Seinfeld that Israeli occupation & military violence is no laughing matter!” (CODEPINK, 2018)

Additionally, CODEPINK creates celebrity engagement weeks, where they are encouraged to also post the content on their accounts to reinforce the content being posted from larger networks. Below is meeting data from when CODEPINK was planning more celebrity content to be posted back in September:

- “[Omitted]: We’ll be doing a celebrity push this week so if everyone could retweet that would be good (5). [Omitted]: Make sure you’re tweeting out from your own account and retweet CODEPINK. It looks bad if the staff doesn’t engage” (4).

Moreover, because some of the CODEPINKERS have their own following so many of them are considered influencers. During meetings it has been discussed that some followers would prefer hearing from some CODEPINKers rather than others. Each individual CODEPINKer who is an influencer has a following both online and offline through the events they have attended and the content they have shared. This creates a more dedicated and loyal following, which builds relationships.

### **5.6.1.4. Social Ambassadors**

During 2018, the year that I observed CODEPINK, they started to strategize creating the

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social ambassadors program, where they would have volunteers post content on behalf of the organization to build a larger network of content. They created the program specifically to create more interactions on their social networking accounts, according to a CODEPINKer, “we are starting to turn the corner on launching our social ambassador stuff to get intentionally people to push content for us and help drive engagement on social” (4). During a meeting, it was discussed that the social ambassadors could drive traffic to the website by sharing the activist tool kits:

[Omitted]: Both the IRC Fink and Iran page have a toolkit, so that also might be [Omitted] a great thing to send to the social media ambassadors. We’re working on creating a big structural change around our social media. As a team we’re probably at or above capacity right now (4).

Having social ambassadors allows for individuals to share CODEPINK social networking content, while at the same time they are building social capital for the organization. Having the content being shared from a regular citizen’s social network validates the content and builds closer relationships to a broader network of followers. For Giving Tuesday, an online holiday for donating to different causes, the social ambassadors were also asked to send out emails to individuals, with the organization providing three different samples. They were also provided Facebook and Twitter content, including different links and hashtags. To close out the email it was stated, “It is very important that we broaden the community who know about us on #GivingTuesday and the difference they can make by donating! Please help us spread the word to donate to CODEPINK next week!”

### **5.6.1.5 Outside Platforms/Websites**

The organization uses different platforms to garner social capital support. For example, they



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used a platform called Thunderclap: “I think Thunderclap would be one way we go out to our list and have them pile onto a Thunderclap” (1). The platform asks a user to support the campaign initiative and then post their support on their own social network accounts. This is an example of a user that tweeted out their support from Thunderclap: “I just supported Free Ahed and Nariman Tamimi on @ThunderclapIt // @[Omitted]” (CODEPINK, 2018). Messaging content on Twitter provides civic information and then asks to engage the user to take part in the campaign, “Reducing the military budget by 10% would fund more than 650,000 teachers. Will you help us spread the word? Sign up for our thunderclap today by clicking our link!” (CODEPINK, 2018). Having a user share the content on their personal account spreads the message of the campaign to further networks, utilizing the individual’s social capital. Moreover, CODEPINK uses Amazon to get donations and to build social capital via the shares from the individuals who donated on Amazon. Here is an example of how CODEPINK providing donating via Amazon: “When you shop through Amazon Smile you can donate to CODEPINK! Amazon is tripling the donation amount to 1.5% when customers make their first eligible smile.amazon.com purchase from March 12 - 31” (CODEPINK, 2018).

### **5.6.2. Conclusions**

CODEPINK on social networking sites—specifically on Twitter and Facebook— utilizes a number of different affordances and strategies that allows the organization to build network growth and social capital. There were a number of different social capital building factors identified within the research: 1. Retweets/Tags/Shares, 2. Posting on Staff Accounts, 3. Influencers/Celebrities, 4. Social Ambassadors, and 5. Outside Platforms/Websites. During 2018, the organization garnered growth in all of the social networking platforms.

## **5.7. Social Networking Sites as Tools (R.4.)**

This research question is addressing the importance of social networking sites according to the staff members of CODEPINK. The research question addressed in this section is: How does the staff of CODEPINK, if at all, view social networking sites as a tool to facilitate collective action? The staff members of CODEPINK are all professional activists with years of experience, have dedicated their life to activism, or have higher educational degrees in peace building. Understanding their organizational ethos is important to understanding their social networking strategy and how they utilize the different platforms. The following research question will be answered through interview data that was gathered from 10 CODEPINK staff members.

### **5.7.1. Insider Data: Interview**

Social networking sites dominated the conversation while interviewing CODEPINK members, particularly how using this medium has changed the landscape of grassroots organizing. CODEPINK as an organization was created in 2002, prior to the existence of the major social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. The organization operated by cold calling, pamphlets, fliers, their website, face-to-face communication, and generic grassroots organizing. When asked, the subject of social networking sites arose within the interviews, and the conversation led toward concepts that were unexpected. A CODEPINKer stated that, “We're relying on our technical tools and not relying on our real basic grassroots organizing. So, there is a real shift and I'm actually having a hard time grappling. Well, uh, with that because I feel like we're losing that, that good old on-the-ground organizing and just doing everything all on social media” (7). This concept was not just present in one CODEPINKer interview, but remained a constant throughout the interviews. The role of social media within activism has changed the

fundamental processes that the organization has to plan for when trying to conduct activism. For example, the organization used to have a really strong street presence, but “that has shifted to social media. We’ve taken all that energy and all that creativity that we’ve had on the streets and shifted it over to social media” (7).

The concept of the shift in using social networking sites for spreading campaign messages seemed to be successful to some and just a tool to others. The question was posed whether the organization would still be successful without social networking sites, and one CODEPINKer replied, “I think we would still be successful. That's because our message is very important and a lot of people care about it and people want to come out and support our issues, but I think social media helps spread the message and it helps get more people involved and it just helps people learn about what we're doing” (8). Using social networking sites was overwhelmingly stated to be nothing more than a tool that the organization utilizes to spread a message and that it needs to be utilized with other campaigning efforts. It was important to one CODEPINKer that social media gives a follower an opportunity to engage with the organization: “So I would say social media is an alert, ‘wake up, wake up!’ or a tool to respond to. It's like you can use this to respond to that” (1). The importance of being able to connect to the organization and engage with campaign messaging through social networking sites seemed to be a generational concept to the CODEPINKers. A younger staff member in the organization believed that the organization could not operate at all without social networking sites. While operating without social media would be rather unusual, operating solely using social media would be antediluvian.

Finding the balance of using social media in conjunction with other campaigning methods is important to the organizations layered approach. Using social media cannot replace the core

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foundational methods that activists have been using to garner support. One CODEPINKer stated that the organization has become dependent on social networking sites:

I think in some ways we tend to rely too much on social media. So, we used to have cooking in D.C. For example, have weekly potlucks and we don't do them anymore. I think this is because of social media; I think part of it is that we have other ways to communicate it. So sometimes I think we relied too much on social media and forget how important the face to face is (2).

Their reliance on social media, due to its effectiveness, is not the reason why CODEPINK continues to use social media, but because it gives them the opportunity to provide a new message: “it's not as much as we rely on our social media as it is that we rely on it to get in the middle of it and be disruptive” (1). The goal of the organization’s campaigns is to provide alternative viewpoints or framework from a feminist point of view with the goals of peace and ending war in mind.

The importance of interpersonal communication that is not digitally mediated, is a theme that was heavily communicated during the interviews. Building relationships via social networking sites is seen as not as effective and relational than meeting face-to-face, which is the cornerstone of grassroots organizing. Furthermore, utilizing the influencers and leaders that the organization has is crucial to the organization’s success in connecting with individuals. Replacing the core principles of connecting with individuals face-to-face cannot be replicated by social media strategies or campaigns. One CODEPINKer made it clear that it was the inspiration brought on by crucial members of the organization that makes the difference:

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I think if we try to replace face to face recruitment and through just putting something on social media then it's not going to be effective, because you're going to be really inspired when you meet XX or whoever in person as opposed to something you hear about on social media. So, I think it has its limitations that way (6).

This passage emphasizes the importance of influencers, and more importantly, connecting with individuals in a face-to-face environment.

The concept of time was also a prevalent theme concerning social media and collective action. Social media campaigns, according to one CODEPINKer, can only be effective if there is an affluence of time to build awareness for an issue or event:

I have to say that in organizing the protests tomorrow at Pelosi's, I wasn't very successful online. I actually had to do the cold calling. So, it really depends on what your event is. If you're given enough time for people to do the outreach and to send the emails and to get it up, uh, you know, share the post over social media, then it can be successful (7).

With the absence of success on social media, CODEPINK returns back to grassroots organizing practices to ensure they have attendance at an event. Moreover, the concept of time is also relevant to how popular an issue is at the time a campaign event is taking place. The organization is dependent on the traditional media to push issues to be more successful on social media campaigns: “Honestly I think it depends on how popular the issue is. If it's something that's really in the news and people are really interested in and then our Facebook event or post will get a ton of responses. If it's not in the news cycle or it's more of a niche issue, then we don't get as much traction with it” (5). This fact lends itself to the idea that users are only interested in online events with the ebb and flow of traditional media interests and influences.

Social networking sites, when utilized as a tool to facilitate collective action, are seen by staff members as a mechanism that must be combined with traditional grassroots initiatives in order to be successful online campaigns. Some members expressed that the organization is still considered grassroots even though the organization now relies on digital strategy first. According to one CODEPINKer, social media is the reason “we're losing our local grassroots organizing at the same time. So, there's... we need to find a balance of doing this social media organizing as well as doing the basic grassroots organizing” (7). Grassroots organizing is undergoing a transition from purely ground organizing and shifting to an augmented version. For example, protestors used to use “phone trees where you would just pick the phone and just call someone and you’d have a tree of different people who would just call more people” (7). However, now CODEPINK is embodying a modern type of organizing—augmented grassroots organizing—that is utilizing social media and digital tools to expedite different organizing processes. Identified by a CODEPINKer, “they are using the backend of NationBuilder for the grassroots organizing in a way that every organization should; all the data lives in there overcoming all the organizational struggles that folks have when someone does grassroots organizing” (4). With the aid of social networking sites, digital tools, and technologies are aiding organizations to better organize in a more expedited manner. The shift from grassroots organizing to the digital saddened one CODEPINK staff member: “It’s shifting all of that grassroots, on-the-ground organizing and put it all on social media and we’re doing it and I don’t think we’re very conscious of that right now” (7). Remembering that the goal of CODEPINK is to create relational and not transactional content and interactions, they truly embody a modern organization. Social networking sites are changing the landscape of political activism, but not taking away the relationality of the organization and instead creating an ecosphere of more efficient planning methods: “everything has shifted from

grassroots to primarily using all these different social media platforms, to get the word out and it can be successful” (7).

### **5.7.2. Conclusions**

CODEPINK staff members overall agree that social networking sites are critical to the success of an organization in today’s media environment. However, at the same time they recognize the importance of face-to-face interactions in order to build relationships. Moreover, the role of social media within activism has changed the processes that the organization has to plan for when trying to conduct activism. The digital practices that the organization conducts have taken traditional grassroots organizing to digital grassroots organizing.

## Chapter 6. Discussion

### 6.1. Introduction

Since the early 2000s, there has been an identified shift in the role of organizations and individuals with regards to how they interact in collective action. Innovations in new technologies have changed the digital environment that both activists and individuals are organizing within a multi-layered approach. They are interacting with civic information and engaging with one another on social networking sites in a variety of different styles (Bimber, Flangin, and Stohl, 2012).

With examples for modern social movements like Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring, there has been a shift to informal networks (social networking sites) taking precedence over formal networks (bureaucratic organizations). Moreover, organizations are taking a back burner to being the driving force behind organizing, framing, and identity building during social movements (Bimber, Flangin, and Stohl, 2012). CODEPINK has taken on that role to use digital technologies and social networking sites to educate and create relationships with individuals in order for them to take part in collective action.

Chapter 6 seeks to discuss the implications of my research with CODEPINK within the larger scope of the literature, and how these power dynamics have changed within the advent of social networking sites and digital strategy. Having reviewed the results in Chapter 5, the following sections will discuss the results in relation to civic information, relationships built, strategies, the layered approach, social capital, and digital grassroots. Additionally, the concepts discussed here specifically address the research questions, while using CODEPINK as an example of a modern social movement organization. The discussions of these concepts are limited to the data from the CODEPINK organization and their practices, and can only represent one scenario of an organization's experience in the modern-day digital environment.



## 6.2 Civic Information

Civic information has undergone one of the largest shifts during the last decade. Mistrust of information, in particular, has increased substantially, with the intensification of fake news and the “proliferation of doctored narratives that are spread by humans and bots” (Anderson & Rainer, 2017, p.3). According to Pew Research, 64% of adults think that fake news is causing a problem of confusion and have engaged and shared content that was fake unintentionally (Anderson & Rainer, 2017). Having false information within content that individuals see online has created an atmosphere that is unreliable and has created a network of false concepts. Political polarization, distrust in government officials, and media fragmentation is fostering an environment that is making it hard for citizens to draw the lines between information and misinformation.

Wells (2015) categorizes civic information as having two different paradigms with the advent of modern information patterns: one rooted in the social, and one in new media technologies. The social paradigm is embedded in the concepts that there is a mistrust and secularization of the political structures that once had influence on people to participate politically (Wells, 2015). If individuals never seek to engage with these political structures, then they certainly are not going to participate in social groups, which have been an important mediator for the civic information process (Wells, 2015). With less reliance on information resources and a mistrust of established resources, the power shifts to the individual and creates networked individualism (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). With civic participation being focused on the individual level—a shift from addressing problems through an institutionalized route— organizations have to garner the interest of individuals to participate in civic engagement, which involves relating to individuals on a personal level. As Wells (2015) points in his work there is a need for information from organizations to resonate with individuals on a personal level. With this framework in mind,

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there was a need to further understand how that personal connection is being made by organizations through exploring civic information that is used to engage individuals digitally. With so many different organizations competing and having different civic styles, CODEPINK is consciously aware that if they wanted to garner the attention of individuals, they would have to be informative, yet create an ask within their content.

My research found that there are four different styles of civic information that were present within the digital content of the CODEPINK organization:

- 1) informational/news,
- 2) provoking,
- 3) relational, and,
- 4) organizational.

These four different styles seek to address the needs of individuals within the context of a digitally competitive environment, where there are many organizations trying to garner the attention and engagement of networked individuals. The demographics of the CODEPINK organization, which consists of both networked digital natives and baby boomers, affect how their communication styles have developed and are managed. The four different types of civic information are meant to address the needs of each of those demographics differently, and consciously trying to inspire individuals to engage in political activism.

The information/news type of civic information addresses the participatory style of individuals who still have faith and trust in the information that they are receiving via the Internet. The provoking type of civic information is potentially addressing the civically engaged youth, which is more prone to participate in political activism (Wells, 2015). The relational, which seeks to garner the attention of individuals who emotionally relate to information, seeks to tie back to

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something in the individuals' lives to inspire them. The relational civic information is addressing that change in civic participation that addresses one's own reactions to a political event or campaign. The fourth type of civic information is organizational, which seeks to address the need of individuals who lack a reliable resource that is trusted, and provides context for that individual to take part in political communication. For individuals to receive CODEPINK digital content, they have already made the conscious choice to affiliate themselves with the organization, which is why this type of civic information can be effective for some individuals to engage with the organization. Furthermore, organizational civic information also addresses the concept of social capital within activism, which is the attempt of an organization to create this type of familial bridging bond that extends beyond the CODEPINK network.

Wells (2015) references the concept of bricolage, which is the notion that individuals are piecing together information from a variety of different resources to create their knowledge base. Moreover, they are curating information via email feeds or controlling what they view via privacy settings, making organizations more information nodes rather than centers (Wells, 2015). This model does explain the mass polarization of individuals but fails to address how an organization best combats and overcomes the practices of information preferencing. CODEPINK's digital footprint shows that the organization engages in all four types of civic information in order to best garner the support individuals. I argue that organizations are becoming educational centers for individuals to receive civic information, which is geared toward their interests and political affiliations, and are presented to them in these four ways in order to increase political participation. However, one must account for the findings of Anderson et al. (2018), which showed that Democrats (24%) are more likely to look up civic information about rallies and protests and follow

through with participation than Republicans (8%). With the targeted audience of CODEPINK being ultra-liberal, the conclusions may be only limited to left-leaning organizations.

### **6.3. Relationship Building**

Since the emergence of the Internet, theorists have been speculating about how the Internet would influence the relationships that we have with each other and our surrounding communities. In particular, these discussions center on whether the relationships that individuals built online would translate into relationships offline, and how those relationships would affect how we communicated with each other. In 2018, a Pew Research study found that even with misinformation, individuals still believe that the Internet is an important tool to do good within society (Anderson & Rainer, 2017).

The positive views of the Internet came from the ability to access information and build relationships with others online (Anderson & Rainer, 2017). Taylor and Kent (2014) found that all industries have the same goal in mind, including activists and organizations, to build awareness of social issues, amplify pro-social messages, create relationships, and motivate pro-social behaviors that ultimately benefit society. In my research with CODEPINK, I found that building relationships was the most important goal—besides making policy changes—upon which the organization focused their work. The study specifically identified that the organization uses NationBuilder, a political CRM, which is an example of an organization using ICTs in order to expedite and mediate the process of collecting users' interests and contact information. Without the aid of a CRM, the purely physical amount of organization of information for a group is an insurmountable administrative process and is important for mediating a friendship or relationship via the Internet. Furthermore, using a CRM allows the organization to forgo the traditional problems that many organizations are plagued with such as tracking the previous engagement with the organization,

contributions, and actions taken on behalf of the organization. Having this type of information more easily through a CRM provides a rich context of social infrastructure for the organization, particularly when they are trying to engage a follower of the organization.

Building on its use of NationBuilder, CODEPINK was also found to use previous social interactions such as email opens, petition signatures, and other social engagements to build email lists that are based on an individual's interest surrounding a topic. This practice is not unlike companies who utilize and match user indicated interests automatically to maximize advertising and sales efforts (Lim, Chan, Leckie, & Karunasekera, 2017). While this practice is effective for businesses, social movement organizations have to motivate the individual not by a product, but rather by a "sense of shared meaning and purpose" (Taylor & Kent, 2014, p. 82). According to Horrigan (2016), 20% of Americans feel they are overloaded with information, so matching an individual's interests directly avoided information fatigue from an organization. Receiving emails that are targeted and reflecting the interests of an individual are important because it allows an organization like CODEPINK to articulate shared goals of interest with an individual.

However, building a relationship with an individual goes beyond a shared goal or interest for a social movement organization, because the goal of the organization is to activate a behavioral change such as altering their lifestyle, sharing information, contacting a senator or congress person, or attending a protest. Furthermore, Bauermeister (2014) points out that this collective action does not materialize on its own; the formation of the "we-ness" is in a collective identity, which can be understood through one's emotional connection to the broader community. To further create the collective identity within individuals who follow CODEPINK, the organization automatically has public information socially matched through NationBuilder. This triangulation of data allows for information to be stored in one place about a person who engages with the organization. Oliver

and Marwell (1992) point out that individuals may receive many asks from an organization, and they may have the shared collective goal in mind, but they cannot contribute their money and time for all events. Keeping track of when individuals do engage with the organization, through NationBuilder, takes the guesswork out of maintaining the relationship that is established through the actions that individuals take on behalf of the organization.

### **6.4. Social Capital**

Social capital is the ability of the organization to utilize connections—and therefore create reciprocity and cooperation of social relationships—to share information. Ostrom and Ahn (2007) defined social capital to be a linking mechanism between individuals and collective action based on three different factors: 1) trustworthiness, 2) networks, and 3) formal and informal institutions. Social capital is first and foremost created through the face to face interactions, protests, events, and meetings that the organization has. Secondly, the organization uses computer mediated communication to replicate the physical relationships with digital interactions. Social capital, in particular, has become an important factor within the context of the Internet becoming an environment where individuals are surrounded by misinformation and mistrust (Anderson & Rainer, 2017). Therefore, when an individual engages with CODEPINK, this signifies a level of trust in the information, a support of the CODEPINK network, and a connection to a formal organization. Creating these connections for CODEPINK promotes an environment that is building supportive relations for community building and a deliberate strategy to use social connections as a resource to build collective action.

CODEPINK utilizes the resource of social capital through social networks to build their network and to build a connection that has a shared sense of the same outcomes. With social capital being one of the main factors in building a healthy democracy, utilizing this tool is rather crucial

and a key component of organizing within a social movement organization (Putnam, 2001). Social capital, although useful for an organization, does not solve the symptoms of a weakening civil society—it only helps build relationships between individuals, which creates a potential for social movements. Gittel and Vidal's (1998) concept of social capital is defined as being two different types of social capital: bonding and bridging capital. Bonding capital is utilizing the already emotional relationships such as family or close friends. In the case of CODEPINK the individuals that are already following the organization, are receiving content that is through the lens of relational and organizational civic information. Bridging capital, which is formed by individuals that have weaker ties, is what CODEPINK is primarily focused on. This type of outreach exposes individuals to new resources of provoking and informational civic information and perspectives framed by CODEPINK. Bridging capital, in this case, occurs when CODEPINK is using social ambassadors, influencers/celebrities, and directed communication.

The business sector, like CODEPINK, also uses influencers and celebrities to sell a product in an attempt to grow their network and connect with weaker ties. Many organizations tap into Granovetter's (1973) concept of the potential strength of weak ties and utilizing these ties to build relationships that they previously may not have had access to. Overcoming the issue of trust and knowing whom to trust on the Internet can be overcome by this method, because of the established branding and context that individuals have with influencers and celebrities. Furthermore, having the context that is already established by the influencer builds an enormous amount of trust within the network. Individuals associate the relationship that they have already established with CODEPINK when they ask staff to post on accounts, are using influencers, or celebrities. CODEPINK's social infrastructure comes with a serious advantage having been founded by women who already have well established activist networks that have a built-in level of interest

and social capital. Furthermore, the founders of the organization have relationships build with celebrities and established influencers.

CODEPINK uses social capital in a variety of different ways, including directed communication: retweets/tags/shares, posting on staff accounts, influencers/celebrities, social ambassadors, and outside platforms/websites. However, the most novel use of the organization's activist content to gain social capital is the implementation of social ambassadors. To review, social ambassadors post CODEPINK content on their own social networks and email their own contacts on behalf of the organization. CODEPINK benefits by gaining both bridging and bonding capital, and by building a larger network that is engaging with their content (Gittell & Vidal, 1998). Furthermore, they gain the benefit of adding information to a new network and potentially changing the narrative within that network to a certain extent. Changing the narrative or changing minds on social networks would be associated with a high level of success for an organization, because conceptually it would constitute more like-minded individuals and successful campaigns.

### **6.5. Strategies**

Since the beginning of 2016, more than 19% of Americans have attended a political activist event, with the largest demographic of individuals among middle-aged, highly educated suburbanites (Levitz, 2018). With the increase of activism, there is a strong need to harness digital technologies and use these technologies as innovations in driving social change. However, in the view of individuals, social organizations are increasingly being recognized as groups instead of distal organizations that individuals could depend on to affect change. With this growth and changing environment of digital technologies, organizations are in a constant flux of changing



their strategies to become more effective in establishing success, as strategies are always designed with the purpose of creating success for organizational campaigns.

Contemporary research is centered on social media participation as a general conclusion or outcome, while it is not addressing the different types of strategies that online social movements are utilizing (Dolata & Schrape, 2015). However, Vroman (2016) cites six specific strategies that organizations need to employ in order to address the new technological environment: nimble organizational and staffing structures, passive to active membership, use of both online and offline engagement strategies, approach to small donations to fundraising, using narratives and storytelling, and having well integrated use of social media in their communications (p. 194). However, during my interactions with CODEPINK, I found that there were two more strategies—in addition to the presence of Vroman's (2016) six—that are relevant in this technological environment: CODEPINK analyzed their actions reflexively, and organized their connections digitally as being major strategies.

To review, analyzing reflexively means that the organization gathers data and then reformulates existing strategies with more effective strategies. Giddens (1990) described late modernity as a time of intense reflexivity where organizations and individuals repeatedly reformulate their own actions and change the narrative. Moreover, Giddens (1990) stated this reflexivity aided in the formulation of maintaining an identity, especially during this moment in time where traditional identities and infrastructures are lacking. CODEPINK's identity, and their ability to communicate a shared sense of identity to the organization's followers, is critical within social movements. Additionally, the digital organization of connections, which is achieved through NationBuilder, helps expedite and organize these connections in a more productive manner for

utilization. This is a particularly important development in the practices of organizing activism campaigns because they are able to harness their social connections to the highest extent.

Additionally, this research found that there was high level of importance on creating a strategy that was heavily reliant on constructing capacity builders: actions that signal dissent to the government or that create a narrative that would create uneasiness across different political parties. CODEPINKers would label these actions as events or movements that disrupt the status quo or the normative message framing. The following capacity builders were discovered within the data and coded: Call to Action, Influencers, Click Petition, Targeting Congressional Members, Collaborations, Traditional Media, Webinars, and Protests. Moreover, the organization has to take a layered approach by utilizing multiple capacities builders at one time to be successful. According to Poell and José (2015), that online ecologies emerge during protests that involve social networking websites, traditional mainstream media, and alternative outlets combined.

In terms of their digital strategy the organization is focused on content creation and digital action repertoires that prioritize using video. CODEPINK uses Facebook live stream at protests and then reconstructs the event on social networking sites with photographs, links, and a narrative framing the protest contextually within a campaign. Recent literature, reaffirms the importance of utilizing video and event-orientated dynamics on social networking sites, which was seen being done by activists during the Arab Spring in 2012 (Poell & José, 2015). Moreover, the literature reaffirms that the strategies of activists online and offline are deeply intertwined.

### **6.6. Layered Approach for Success**

Success for CODEPINK, aiming to have world peace, is beyond reach given the mission of the organization. However, versions of micro-successes are often the level of accomplishment CODEPINK reaches. Micro-successes can be anything from making a small social change,

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shifting the narrative about a certain issue, changing the vote of a government official, creating awareness and media attention around campaigns, or raising money for a certain cause. A successful social movement, according to Zald and McCarthy (1977), is changing “a set of opinions and beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society” (1217–18). Throughout the organization, individuals interviewed consistently believed that gaining traditional media attention and educating, inspiring, and changing the narrative around a certain issue, constituted success.

For success, I quickly learned that the organization has to offer a variety of participatory styles for individuals to engage with the organization. CODEPINK has a layered strategy of engaging across multiple platforms and providing a variety of different media—everything from live streaming, videos, posts, petitions, webinars, shareable, blogposts, and emails—to engage an individual with CODEPINK. Activists inside of social movements work extremely hard to change the narrative, and successful social movements start at attacking different perceptions. Ward (2015) found that “[e]xpectations for success are a composite of expectations about participation from others, as well as the expectation that one’s own participation will lead to a successful outcome” (p. 6). Furthermore, joining collective actions for individuals is dependent upon their experiences and emotions in successes and failures within a social movement (Ward, 2015). The research conducted at CODEPINK reinforces this concept of emotional connection, where one of the key attributes to success is to inspire individuals to participate in activism.

Social movements that originated online have seen mass participation from individuals, with one attribute to their success being the sheer volume of individuals joining a movement. However, success is also experienced within micro-mobilizations and does not have to involve mass scale. Micro-mobilizations include utilizing opportunities in different communication

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capacities to connect an individual to different sociocultural developments such as identity, solidarity, and consciousness (Gamson, 1975). Gamson (1975) stated that the following four processes are significant for social movements to experience success: collective identity, consciousness, solidarity, and micro-mobilization. These factors were found within CODEPINK's practices to remain relevant in social movement processes, but they also included computer mediated communication processes. Researchers at the University of Maryland argue that the use of specific hashtags, or groups discussing topics online together, may constitute micro-mobilization (Ray, Brown, Fraistat, & Summers, 2017). Based on that assumption, CODEPINK is in a constant state of micro-mobilization, which is their dominant strategy in order to reach success: a continuous flow of messaging that involves content of resistance and the reframing of issues to display a new narrative.

### **6.7. Digital Grassroots**

Started in 2002 on the steps of the White House, CODEPINK is considered to be the very definition of a grassroots organization. The group worked with clipboards, created local activism with protests and leaflets, and mobilized by letter writing, phone calls, and emails. The group was able to inspire ordinary people to participate in activist campaigns in many local chapters across the United States. Today in 2019, the organization has grown to have a large online social media presence, and continues to use elaborate platforms to organize their contact list, online click petitions, and presence in the traditional media circuit. The organization continues to practice their traditional grassroots strategies, but they are also utilizing so many more digital practices. These digital technologies have provided an outlet for activism to gain a more expansive network and change social narratives around campaign issues.

Through the use of digital technologies, I argue that groups are no longer mere grassroots organizations, but digital grassroots organizations, as characterized by the practices of CODEPINK. This definition is a direct response to the data that I gathered during the year of study, particularly through the interviews, where respondents were asked to comment on the question: Would the organization be successful without social networking sites? Respondents voiced that there was a fundamental change in their practices, and they had to adapt to using social networking sites to be relevant and active within the digital environment. Social networking sites provide a new level of perceived connection and interactivity that has a direct impact on the choices citizens make whether to engage in organizations, and their overall “faith in them being able to have influence” (Wells, 2015, p. 35). With overall civic engagement being low, organizations have to employ digitally advanced strategies in order to be a relevant voice within the activism community. The digital campaign allows quick growth, but a high level of fragility, which makes it imperative that grassroots organizations turn digital.

## **Chapter 7. Conclusion**

### **7.1. Introduction**

Within the United States there has been a long and robust history of Americans engaging in activism to seek social, political, and economic policy changes. The civil rights movement in the 1950's and 60's is a perfect example where activism put pressure on political parties and governmental institutions to make policy changes. Currently, within the United States there has been an increase of political and social activism, occurring alongside the nation's discontent with governmental policies and the administration's discrimination against the marginalized middle and lower classes. With political activism being one of the hallmarks of American democracy, there are still relatively small measures of success within protest history that have resulted in actual change in policy. The sheer size of a protest in modern day is not an indicator that change will occur as a result. Similarly, the size of digital discontent is also not a strong indicator that actual policy change could take place.

The exploration of CODEPINK has provided a robust environment to understand advanced social media practices that provide an example of the modern-day grassroots activist organization. With social movements having changed significantly in practice since the 1950's, the social movements and mass protests in the modern day have both a high level of fragility and organizationally different processes involving both digital and physical actions.

In the following sections I will review the summary of my findings, future research, limitations, and present my final conclusions. Following this chapter are my appendices and resource citations.

## 7.2. Summary of Findings

This dissertation has contributed to the overall understanding of the strategies and practices of a modern-day social movement organization. After following the organization as a participant observer for an entire year, I gathered data through a multi-modal ethnographic approach that informed conclusions for my research questions. In the preceding chapters I presented the data within a summarized fashion that allowed me to highlight the most important concepts and constructs that emerged after three rounds of coding for the research questions. By no means could I present all data that was collected, but rather an amalgamation of the most important findings and concepts that were relevant to the research questions. There were six major groups of findings that I developed from the data: civic information, relationships, strategies, layered approaches, social capital, and digital grassroots. I have addressed these final findings in the previous chapter, which were drawn from the data in Chapter 5.

To review, I have analyzed social networking and email data to categorize the different types of civic information the organization uses in order to facilitate collective action. Civic information is any information that could potentially create interest for an individual to take an action on behalf of the organization to further the campaign. The data showed that there were four different types of civic information: relational, organizational, informational/news, and provoking. These four types of civic information had distinct characteristics, each provoking a different type of relationship with each follower who is consuming the content. The relationships are influenced and mediated by the organization digitally organizing the interactions on a CRM platform called NationBuilder. Furthermore, informational data about individuals was pooled through social matching and gathered in a profile displaying all digital actions with the organization. The emails were then targeted toward the follower based on interests that the organization has gathered via

backend information on the CRM. Additionally, the strategies that CODEPINK enacts to facilitate activism concerning social issues on social networking sites are important to building relationships with followers online.

From the research, I have determined a number of factors that CODEPINK considers and discusses while creating content and planning an activist campaign. These strategies are not exclusive to CODEPINK and are not the only strategies the organization uses, but have been prominent through the duration of this research study. Here are the following strategies that were discussed in Chapter 5: analyzing reflexively, content creation, avoiding reactionary strategy, negative social networking, video preference, NationBuilder (CRM), story arcs with campaigns, text messaging, connecting with students, petition practices, and email performance practices. Furthermore, I identified capacity builders, which are important to instigating social change: call to action, influencers, click petition, targeting congress members, targeting senators, collaborations, traditional media, webinars, and protests. Finally, I identified a group of methods on social media that create social capital: directed communication, retweets/tags/shares, posting on staff accounts, influencers/celebrities, social ambassadors, and outside platforms/websites.

In total, I have analyzed a plethora of different types of data such as digital social networking site data, field notes, meeting notes and interview data to reach my conclusions. I base all my conclusions on my observations and the data that was gathered during the full calendar year of 2018.

### **7.3. Limitations**

A major limitation of this research project was the change of the API for Facebook, which did not allow me to capture the data on NVivo and easily transfer the data to the analysis software. Due to this I had to gather the data in two different methods (just in case), which



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consisted of making PDF's of all the posts on the accounts, and using Netlytic.com. Moreover, the Facebook research had another limitation that I did not secure authorization from secondary participants so I was unable to analyze the comments that were left by individuals commenting on CODEPINK posts. Analyzing the comments would create an understanding of the attitudes and sentiments of the individuals who engage with CODEPINK Facebook content.

Another major limitation was my ability to connect with protestors at the events. It was difficult to get individuals to speak about where they connected with CODEPINK in order to attend the protest. Stopping a protestor from participating during a protest was nearly impossible, because most of the time they were so crowded that it was hard to move. Additionally, the police presence seemed to garner a bit of hesitation on my part to fully look like I was a part of the of the protest. I kept my distance at some points and mostly observed the protests. Notably, attending some of the protests occurring during very turbulent political moments were some of the most arrestable protests. I made a decision to not attend those events and possibly receive an arrest on my record and have to pay for legal fees. This was a limitation of the project in a sense that I missed important protests that would have been beneficial for this research.

Additionally, a limitation of the research was the lack of funding for this project. If I had the funding to follow CODEPINK across the entire country and on activism trips, it would have changed the entire experience of the project and the outcomes of my work. If additional funding would have been secured, I could have had a longer exposure to the organization and potentially making further conclusions about the research.

Finally, I am concerned for the external validity of my project, because the work that I conducted was only with one organization, and these patterns may very well not be present within

other activist organizations. However, in terms of internal validity, I was able to complete three rounds of coding and have the leaders of CODEPINK read my dissertation to ensure accuracy.

### **7.4. Future Research**

This research project has invigorated an abundance of future projects concerning social movement organizations and how they utilize social networking sites to participate in collective action. In particular, I see research potential in exploring the specific digital tools—such as live-streaming—and how some tools create more engagement than others. Moreover, I would like to expand my research to a group of social movement organizations who are all potentially utilizing different strategies for conducting activism within the digital landscape. Exploring social activist organizations that also cater to different age demographics is also worth exploring to see how their strategies differ. For example, I would like to research the Raging Grannies who travel across the United States supporting different activist causes.

Another project that I would like to pursue is creating a research project around the social ambassadors an organization utilizes. I would like to explore how utilizing their social capital creates more connections for an organization and for the personal life of a social ambassador. Furthermore, I would like to explore how much the social ambassador's networks are actually making a difference in changing political narratives. Moreover, throughout this study I have been fascinated with the concept of pinpointing which messages could potentially change the narrative of a social movement. Within that context, I would like to study the shelf-life of particular messaging that has gone viral and how those particular messages travel through the online environment to change the verbiage of mainstream media outlets.

Moreover, from the data collection that I was able to also gather a plethora of extraneous data that I did not utilize for the purpose of this dissertation. For example, I only analyzed the

textual data for this dissertation, but still have the same amount of visual data such as live-stream, video, and pictures. Understanding the visual components of a social networking strategy are important to understanding the visual narratives followers have with the organization. Due to the length of this project I also have data that was never addressed within the narrow scope of the research questions. Furthermore, because of the sheer length of the data I will conduct multiple rounds of exploratory content analysis for further themes and patterns.

Lastly, my research also opens up the need to research how members of government respond to social change activists. This type of research would address what type of messaging and/or actions are most effective or bothersome to members of government. Researching what capacity builders are most distressing would create insight into the power relations between government entities and activists and potentially illuminate how these relationships shape policy decisions and social change.

### **7.5. Contributions**

This dissertation contributes to the body of literature on social movement organizations and social movements. Instead of focusing on the outcomes of a social movement, I focus my research on the practices of CODEPINK, whose work in the activist field has contributed a series of micro-mobilizations on a variety of different topics. Moreover, the research makes a number of important contributions including:

- Identification two more strategies—in addition to the presence of Vroman's (2016) six—that are relevant in this technological environment: analyzing actions reflexively, and organizing connections digitally as being major strategies.
- Identification of 4 different types of civic information and how civic information can be used to cater information to followers.
- Organizers digitally triangulate social information/data to communicate with their followers with the utilization of CRMs.

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- Coined a new term -digital grassroots organizations- to show the shift of grassroots organizations utilizing social networking sites and ICTs.
- With the use of civic information, social capital is built through the use of social ambassadors and influencers.
- Identification of a layered approach to successful outcomes that include utilizing multiple capacity builders at one time.
- Relationship building is the most important strategy for an organization.
- Content creation and strategy should not be reactionary and strive to constantly be analyzed reflexively.

### 7.6. Final Conclusions

Studying CODEPINK was an eye-opening experience into the world of professional activism, and is very relatable to the business sector in terms of strategic social media practices. The first contribution that I have made to the academic literature is largely rooted in the practices that CODEPINK utilizes when it comes to political CRM's, and how these practices enhance the relationship between the organization and its followers. Another contribution is rooted in the high value the organization places on social capital gaining practices such as social ambassadors and utilizing influencers. My final contribution is the concept that because of the way the digital landscape is being utilized by grassroots organizations, they are themselves now considered digital grassroots organizations. Despite all this, I found it surprising that in light of social movements that have occurred online, there is still a higher value placed on traditional media outlets because of their ability to change the social narrative. Traditional media still have this role because they have a large audience they reach.

My approach in studying the organization, although demanding at times, was data rich in the findings and conclusions I was able to make. From the data that I have gathered over the last year,

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I will be able to make many further conclusions and findings to contribute to the academic community. In a period of time (2018) when the information that we receive online is untrustworthy, and social movement micro-mobilizations are occurring at a higher rate, there is a continued need to study these social developments as they pertain to technology use and advancements. Even within the confines of this study, new strategies and practices were consistently employed because of technological advancements and changes. With the privilege of the first amendment right to protest, these women at CODEPINK are leading the way in changing the narrative: “We really want to change the world and do what we’re aiming to do, that has to come in a more engaging personal way” (1).

## Appendix A. Interview Questions for CODEPINK's Staff



**University of Hawai'i**  
**Consent to Participate in a Research Project**  
Wiebke Reile, Principal Investigator

“Social Networking Sites and their impact on Social Movement Organizations and Collective Action”

Aloha! My name is Wiebke Reile and you are invited to take part in a research study. I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in the Department of Communication and Information Sciences. As part of the requirements for earning my graduate degree, I am doing a research project. The purpose of my project is to evaluate the role of social networking sites with the members of CODEPINK to create collection action. I am asking you to participate because you are member of the staff.

**Activities and Time Commitment:** If you participate in this project, I will meet with you for an interview at a location and time convenient for you. The interview will consist of 42 open-ended questions.

Only you and I will be present during the interview. With your permission, I will audio-record the interview so that I can later transcribe the interview and analyze the responses. You will be one of about 13 people I will interview for this study.

**Benefits and Risks:** There will be no direct benefit to you for participating in this interview. The results of this project may help provide a better understanding of social networking sites and organizations. I believe there is little risk to you for participating in this research project. You may become stressed or uncomfortable answering any of the interview questions or discussing topics with me during the interview. If you do become stressed or uncomfortable, you can skip the question or take a break. You can also stop the interview or you can withdraw from the project altogether.

**Privacy and Confidentiality:** I will keep all study data secure in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office/encrypted on a password protected computer. Only my University of Hawai'i advisor and I will have access to the information. Other agencies that have legal permission have the right to review research records. The University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program has the right to review research records for this study.

After I write a copy of the interviews, I will erase or destroy the audio-recordings. When I report the results of my research project, I will not use your name or other staff members of the organization. I will report my findings in a way that protects your privacy and confidentiality to the extent allowed by law.

**Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. You may stop participating at any time. If you stop being in the study, there will be no penalty or loss to you. Your choice to participate or not participate will not affect your rights to services at the UH Career Development and Counseling Program.

**Compensation:**

You will receive no compensation for your time and effort in participating in this research project. Thank you for your participation.

**Questions:** If you have any questions about this study, please call or email me at 760-505-8570, [wreile@hawaii.edu](mailto:wreile@hawaii.edu). You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Jenifer Winter, at [jwinter@hawaii.edu](mailto:jwinter@hawaii.edu). You may contact the UH Human Studies Program at 808.956.5007 or [uhirb@hawaii.edu](mailto:uhirb@hawaii.edu) to discuss problems, concerns and questions; obtain information; or offer input with an informed individual who is unaffiliated with the specific research protocol. Please visit <https://www.hawaii.edu/researchcompliance/information-research-participants> for more information on your rights as a research participant.

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign and date this signature page and return it to the researcher.

**Signature(s) for Consent:**

I give permission to join the research project entitled, “Social Networking Sites and their impact on Social Movement Organizations and Collective Action.”

Please initial next to either “Yes” or “No” to the following:

Yes       No      I consent to be audio-recorded for the interview portion of this research.

**Name of Participant (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of the Person Obtaining Consent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Mahalo!

## ACTIVISM and ICTs

Date:

Interviewee:

Location:

BEGIN TIME: ##\_##

### **Identifiers:**

Name:

Rank:

Professional History:

Political Affiliation (Optional):

### **Basic Organization Information**

1. How many members does (organization) currently have?
2. How many staff members does (Organization) have? What are their names?
3. How are the staff structured in the organization?
4. What are their specific roles?
5. What current issues is the organization focusing on?
6. How does the organization gain most of its members?
7. What are some recent successful campaigns? And what does that look like for (Organization)?

### **Social Networking Sites and Strategy**

8. What accounts are relevant for the organization?
9. Do you have a specific employee who handles the social networking accounts?
10. Are employees encouraged to interact with the organizations social accounts?
11. How often does the organization post on social networking accounts?
12. What type of strategy does the organization have to handle social networking accounts?



## ACTIVISM and ICTs

13. How does the organization handle negative social networking posts?
14. How does the organization handle when a member comments on a social networking post?
15. Does the organization view social networking posts the same as media posts?
16. Does the organization have specific action plans for members to fulfill on social networking sites?
17. Does the organization pay for posts to be boosted on social networking accounts? Do they believe they won't receive organic traction?
18. Do you hold events on social networking sites?
19. Do you believe members depend on social networking sites for civic information?
20. How have social networking sites been helpful for the organization?
21. How have social networking sites been negative for the organization?
22. How has the organization taken advantage of the social capital of their members on social networking sites?
23. Does the organization view any analytics to better understand engagement on social networking sites?
24. Do analytics change strategy and actions taken by the organization to be more effective in reaching audiences?
25. How does the organization address all political parties on social networking sites?

### **Website Engagement**

26. How many visitors does the website have monthly?
27. Does the organization use any analytics to track engagement and movements on the website?
28. What types of civic engagement do you have available for members on the website?
29. Do you connect your social networking sites to your website?
30. Do you receive traffic to your website from social networking sites?
31. Do you have specific personnel who handle the organizations website?
32. Does the organization strategize how to best draw members and new traffic to the website?

33. Is the website essential for the organization to receive contributions?

**Digital Communication**

34. How effective are email communications with members?

35. Are emails considered the main venue for communication with members?

36. How often are emails sent out to members and how do these emails engage members to take action?

37. Do you use email to invite members to attend different events?

38. Does the organization use information to better improve email marketing strategies?

**Closing Questions**

39. What in your opinion has changed in the landscape for organizations with the advent of social networking sites?

40. Do you believe that organizations have a chance to be successful in their campaigns in the United States using social networking sites?

41. Does the organization believe that social networking posts are helpful in facilitating collective action?

42. In your opinion do social networking sites improve relations between the organization and its members.?

Mahalo!

## Appendix B. Letter of Cooperation from CODEPINK



**CODEPINK**  
WOMEN FOR PEACE

2010 LINDEN AVE VENICE, CALIFORNIA 90291 | TELEPHONE:310.827.4320 | EMAIL: [INFO@CODEPINK.ORG](mailto:INFO@CODEPINK.ORG) | ONLINE: [WWW.CODEPINK.ORG](http://WWW.CODEPINK.ORG)

October 30, 2017

Dear Wiebke Reile,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study on the CODEPINK organization. As part of this study, I authorize you to conduct data collection on the organization and publish the results of those activities. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: provide access to campaign meetings, visiting and observing offices, survey "members", interview main staff, and gather social network site, website and digital data resources. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I understand that the student will be naming our organization in the doctoral project report that is published in ProQuest.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from University of Hawaii, Mānoa IRB.

Sincerely,

  
Jodie Evans

## Appendix C. Code Book used for Content Analysis

Name	Description	Files	References
Capacity Builders	These are actions that signal unrest or dissent with government policies. Different competencies of communities or organization that help them achieve their goals to overcome problems that are occurring in their communities.	1	1
Call to Action	A call to action is anytime CODEPINK asks an individual or group of people to take any type of action. It can be calling a senator, signing a petition, or supporting a cause.	63	265
Click Petition	Click petitions are more accessible to the public and are easier to share. They are used to raise awareness on issues CODEPINK needs support on.	18	29
Collaborations	Anytime CODEPINK works together with another organization.	8	37
Influencers	CODEPINK uses the social networks of their most popular activists, supporters of the cause, famous people, and the staff to create a buzz about an issue.	31	87
Protest	Anytime CODEPINK participates in collective action and protests on the street.	13	51
Targeting Congressional Members	Anytime CODEPINK targets members of Congress and protests congress.	30	57
Text Messages	CODEPINK uses geo-located text messages to organize collective action.	1	2
Traditional Media	CODEPINK is mentioned, interviewed, or featured in any traditional media outlet.	11	55
Webinar	CODEPINK holds webinars on Zoom for discussion forums, teaching, or book clubs	3	5
Civic Information	Civic information is the flow of information, facts, opinions, and ideas that help individuals create informed decisions about political and public concern where they can identify opportunities for action	62	228
News and Informational	Civic information that is sharing news and informational that could inform an individual to take action.	3	1609
Organizational	Civic information that is sharing any information or news relating to the CODEPINK organization itself that could inform an individual to take action	3	1892
Provoking	Civic information that is sharing something so outrageous, a hyperbole, or phrase that is bluntly provoking that could inform an individual to take action.	3	1563

## ACTIVISM and ICTs

Name	Description	Files	References
Relational	Civic information that is sharing something an individual could already relate to in their everyday lives that could inform them to take action.	3	1318
Email	Instances where the organization asks an individual to email on behalf of the organization.	14	30
Engagement	Is referring to when CODEPINK is asking their “members” to engage with social or their website on emails	1	1
Facebook Engagement	Asking for engagement with Facebook	14	17
Facebook Live	Facebook Live is important to CODEPINK to engage with protestors in real-time, inform, and create discussions surrounding protests and actions.	5	22
Twitter Engagement	Asking for engagement with Twitter	13	14
Live-Tweet	Live tweeting is important to CODEPINK to engage with protestors in real time, inform, and create discussion surrounding protests and actions.	1	1
Website Engagement	When CODEPINK provides a link to engage with their website and affiliated websites.	3	39
Feminism	Within the interviews directly relating to the topic of feminism within the CODEPINK action strategies	2	11
Grassroots	This was coded for when the organization and the researcher discussed the development of grassroots organizing	3	6
Issues			
Accountability	Asking the United States government/ foreign governments/ cooperation’s to be accountable for their policies and actions.	2	3
Divest	The purpose of the Divest Campaign is rooted in the organizations main focus on ending wars and creating peace.	16	47
Ground Drones	CODEPINK believes that war drones target not only targets but also civilians. They are calling for ending drone usage and strikes.	3	18
Guantanamo Bay	CODEPINK believes that the Guantanamo Bay prison should be closed and protests the reopening of the facilities.	2	2
Iran	The state of Iran has been a major violator of human rights violations and has been condemned by the United Nations and the Human Rights Commission. CODEPINK in particular has been working tirelessly to bring actions in Iran to justice.	13	231
Iraq Tribunal	CODEPINK is actively promoting keeping out of	3	58

Name	Description	Files	References
	Iraq and stopping all military intervention in Iraq. CODEPINK encourages activists to post of Facebook and on Iraqtribunal.org, post on Twitter, invite speakers to local peace talks, watch and discuss feelings about the Iraq war, write a letter to your local newspaper, March and/or Rally, Candlelight vigil, do a phone-a-thon, visit your member of congress, hit your local bookstores, and start a peace rally in your town (CODEPINK, 2018).		
Justice for Palestine	The Justice for Palestine campaign also called the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS Movement) is an international movement that is against Israel, which aims to have Israel uphold to obligations under international law to return occupied territories (CODEPINK, 2018).	10	254
Local Peace Economy	Since 1776, the United States has been at war 93% of the time, the Local Peace Economy campaign is targeted toward providing civic information about an alternative economy.	12	19
North Korea	The political and diplomatic relations between North Korea and the United States have been historically hostile, developing primarily during the Korean War. CODEPINK is critical of the Trump administrations relations with North Korea.	8	60
Saudi Arabia	The United States according to CODEPINK, has spent over 8 trillion dollars in the Persian Gulf region since the 1970's (2018). They protest the human rights violations in Saudi Arabia and all weapons sales.	9	199
Syria	The petitions main goal is to ask Congress to stop airstrikes on Syria and to invoke the War Powers Act to stop unconstitutional strikes	3	92
Travel CODEPINK	CODEPINK organizes international travel for peace in different countries.	6	10
Yemen	Specifically referring to the campaign that they have against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in relation to the atrocities that have happened in Yemen.	10	175
NationBuilder	NationBuilder is the political customer relationship management software the organization uses to organize their email, social, website, and in-person contacts they have. The platform's functionality is described in Chapter 4.	7	16
Social Capital	The networks of relationships of people who are members of CODEPINK.	11	31

## ACTIVISM and ICTs

Name	Description	Files	References
Thunderclap	Thunderclap is a platform that uses a person's private network to raise funding for an issue or campaign.	1	1
Strategy	Purposeful actions taken to disrupt and engage citizens	11	160
Celebrity	This is referring to any discussions where the group talked about the benefits of using a celebrity for activism. The use of celebrity endorses gives meaning to brand power which is acquired through the name recognition. This recognition allows the organization to achieve larger audiences to raises awareness on issues through relatability.	8	25
Questions	These are meant to engage individuals to think about their own stances on certain issues.	10	24
Relate	Creating emotions that are relatable to an issue.	19	71
Success	This what the organization constitutes as success within the organization.	9	19

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