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**“DON’T FRACK WITH US!” AN ANALYSIS OF TWO ANTI-PIPELINE
MOVEMENTS**

by

Rachael Hood

Honors Thesis

Submitted to the Department of Environmental Studies

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to all the organizers who volunteered time out of their hectic schedules so that I could interview them and draw lessons from their experiences. I admire their determination and passion in fighting for a better future, and I look forward to the incredible movement work that they will undertake in the future.

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“Don’t Frack with Us!” An Analysis of Two Anti-Pipeline Movements

This study seeks to compare grassroots organizing efforts against two different fracked gas pipelines. Rooting my analysis in the theory of social movements, I focus on the role of the ideological grounding of the resistance movements, the composition of resistance coalitions formed, and the tactics and strategies employed in opposition to these pipelines. I find that a broad-based coalition with a focus on relationship-building is important to the success of the movement. Additionally, I determine that the presence and involvement of small, medium, and large nonprofits as well as the use of direct action strongly contribute to the success of anti-pipeline movements. These insights are useful for those working to build successful resistance movements against the fossil fuel and extractive industries. This investigation adds to our understanding of grassroots movements, environmental justice praxis, and left politics in practice.

I. Introduction

Hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) has developed rapidly in the past few years, opening up unconventional sources of oil and natural gas (Boudet et al., 2014; Sovacool, 2014). In the early 2000s, energy companies combined horizontal drilling with fracking to tap these reserves. In this process, machinery drills horizontally through a rock layer and injects a pressurized mix of water, sand, and chemicals that fractures the rocks and allows oil and gas to flow back up with the drilling fluids. In the United States alone, shale gas production has grown from 0.2 trillion cubic feet in 1998 to 4.9 trillion cubic feet in 2010. British Petroleum (BP) predicted that global shale gas production would grow six-fold from 2011 to 2030 (Hughes, 2013).

Supporters believe that fracking will encourage economic growth, provide domestic energy security, and serve as a “transition” fuel away from carbon-intensive energy sources such as coal (Boudet et al., 2014). The US Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates that in 48 shale gas basins across 32 countries, there are 5760 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas (US EIA & Kuuskraa, 2011). The Marcellus shale region alone, located in western New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia, is believed to have a natural gas supply equivalent to 45 years of US national consumption (Finkel & Law, 2011). Fracked gas is also less expensive than

gas from new conventional wells, and natural gas prices have fallen sharply in the U.S. because of shale gas production (Sovacool, 2014). However, it is important to note that detailed studies show that forecasts about natural gas energy futures may have been “overly optimistic” (Inman, 2014). For example, the Polish Geological Institute did a study of Poland’s most promising regions and calculated that it held less than one-tenth of the gas in the original estimate produced by Advanced Resources International (ARI). Between 2011 and 2013, the ARI reduce its own estimate for the same areas by one-third. Other researchers have similarly had to correct their over-speculation on natural gas futures.

Fracked gas is touted as a “cleaner” fuel to transition energy economies away from oil and coal. Shale gas reportedly has lower sulfur oxide, nitrogen oxide, and mercury emissions than coal and oil, as well as a lower carbon footprint (Burnham, 2012). However, a study by Robert Howarth (2019) finds that shale gas is a major driver of the recent increase in global atmospheric methane. So, while carbon emissions may have fallen with the use of fracked gas, methane, a much more potent greenhouse gas, has spiked. In a tweet, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez cited these high methane emissions as a key reason why she and Senator Bernie Sanders have introduced a fracking ban bill in Congress¹. Moreover, fracking has been applied to “tight oil” reserves, which allowed the United States to become the world’s largest producer of crude oil in 2013 (Economist, 2013). Many opponents argue that fracking and pipelines will “lock” economies into fossil fuel-based energy for years.

Opponents of fracking also raise questions about its potential adverse impacts on public health, environmental health, and communities in close proximity to these extraction operations

¹ Tweet seen in article from *Common Dreams*, found at: <https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/02/20/over-570-groups-endorse-sanders-and-ocasio-cortezs-fracking-ban-act-essential-and>

(Boudet et al., 2014). Fracking operations co-occur with a number of associated infrastructure projects, including well pads, pipelines, compressor stations, and wastewater storage injection wells. These all present potential economic, environmental, social, and health impacts (Jacquet, 2009). How communities experience and manage these effects depends on a variety of factors including the development timeline and the extraction history of the impacted area (Brasier et al., 2011). In this study, I will explore how two communities, one in the Rust Belt and one in the Appalachian region, have resisted fracked gas pipeline projects and have been influenced by place-based extraction resistance histories. I argue that the involvement of nonprofits, the goals of movement organizers, and the presence of coalitions also impact how communities experience and manage these effects.

Shale gas production is technically complex and capitally intensive, which in addition to risking “cost overruns” for projects, also poses leakage and accident risk (Sovacool, 2014). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) found that between six and twelve percent of the Uinta Basin’s natural gas production in Utah could be escaping into the atmosphere, far more than previously estimated (Brian, 2013). Holzman (2011) found that fifty percent of new natural gas wells recently inspected in Quebec leaked methane. Not only do these leaks have impacts on climate change, but they pose a risk of serious accidents, including pipeline explosions and manmade earthquakes (Sovacool, 2014). Sovacool (2008) found that natural gas pipelines are the most likely type of energy infrastructure to fail and account for thirty-three percent of all major energy accidents worldwide.

Degradation to water availability and quality has been extensively documented in relation to fracking. Natural gas constituents can and do permanently contaminate not only the water used in the production process but also underground aquifers, private wells, and surface water,

damaging streams and drinking water supplies (Argetsinger, 2012). Fracking also contributes to localized air pollution and to dangerous levels of volatile organic compounds, ground-level ozone, and particulate pollution². For example, in Texas, benzene concentrations over the Barnett shale area exceed toxicity standards to a level that poses cancer risk from chronic exposure (Howarth & Ingraffea, 2011). Moreover, Resnikoff found that some shale gas deposits contain as much as thirty times the radiation as the normal background (2012). In Pavilion, Wyoming, the EPA has documented that many drinking water wells have been contaminated by toxics used in hydraulic fracturing fluids and linked these toxins to abnormal rates of miscarriages, rare cancers, and central nervous system disorders (Rahm, 2011).

Despite all the potential harms posed by fracking, the regulatory landscape is fragmented and relatively weak in many areas. At the federal level, pro-gas groups have attained a number of policy advances. In 2005, Congress exempted fracking from the regulations of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in what is known as the Halliburton Loophole (Warner & Shapiro, 2013). Oil and gas waste are also exempted from regulation of hazardous waste under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, and fracking is exempted from toxics reporting requirements under the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act. The 2005 Energy Policy Act passed the jurisdiction over the oil and gas industry from the federal government to the states. Regulations at the state level range from minimal to strict. In a comparative analysis of fracking policy, Davis (2012) finds that the differences in policy direction between Texas and

² Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are compounds of carbon that react with light and pose health risks as air pollutants. Ground-level ozone is formed from VOCs and also poses harm to human health. Particulate matter is microscopic solids and liquids that can cause serious health problems from inhalation. From <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/technical-overview-volatile-organic-compounds> and <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/particulate-matter-pm-basics#PM>

Colorado can be attributed to a variety of factors, including “the relative economic dependency on natural gas production, the degree of party competition or control, the existence (or not) of a significant environmental constituency, the benefits of entrepreneurial leadership, and the addition or subtraction of agency governing capacity.” This fragmented regulatory landscape is an important factor in how grassroots groups and environmental organizations are able to respond to and resist fracking operations.

1.1 Anti-Fracking Activism

Fracking has provoked opposition and protest across the world. A survey by *The Economist* concludes that the global public is almost evenly split regarding fracking, with 51 percent of people against it and 49 percent for it (Wright, 2012). Controversy over fracking grew rapidly between 2010 and 2012 in the United States (Mazur, 2016). The documentary *Gasland* helped to spark opposition, with its now well-recognized image of water from a kitchen faucet on fire due to fracking contamination. The BP *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill in April 2010 also spurred reporting about the risks of fracking by the *New York Times*, which gained wide national attention. As Mazur puts it, for the most part, “normal operations by the oil and gas industry have been accepted by the public and facilitated by the government.” However, the highly visible and well-publicized dangers of fracking have propelled a national movement.

Early opposition to fracking was motivated largely by local environmental and health concerns (Vasi et al., 2015; Mazur, 2018). This opposition has been characterized as a local unwanted land use (LULU) and motivated by a “not in my backyard” (NIMBY) attitude (Schively, 2007). Fracking bans have been a key focus of grassroots organizers and social scientists (Buday 2017; Dokshin, 2016; Gottlieb, 2018; Hall, 2018; Hopke, 2016). However,

recent scholarship finds that people's conceptions may also reflect larger politicized debates (Dokshin, 2016). According to Dokshin, the politicization of fracking "led to a composition change among fracking opponents" with activists being drawn in from farther away for ideological reasons, including environmental concerns.

The fight over fracking in New York state has been one of the most visible and successful. Residents hugely opposed fracking in the early 2010s, and activists collected tens of thousands of petition signatures to convince more than 200 local municipalities to pass resolutions opposing the practice (Obach, 2015). In 2014 Governor Andrew Cuomo banned fracking in the state. In the New York case, there were already powerful environmental groups in the state that were able to mobilize against environmental threats, and many groups made opposition to fracking a priority. Some larger organizations were created specifically to oppose fracking, and small informal groups helped to raise awareness by distributing literature, writing letters to the editor, and putting together educational forums. Because of their strong local ties, these small groups were able to turn out participants to actions, as well as to testify at town meetings and persuade officials to pass resolutions against fracking. In my analysis, I will also look at how social movement organizations coalesced around opposition to fracked gas pipelines and what factors influenced their success.

Fracking is an intensely debated and charged issue, particularly in states that are affected by fracking operations. In this study, I seek to understand what influenced the relative successes of the anti-fracking movements that I have followed. Specifically, I wanted to take a closer look at the Canyon Pipeline³ fight in Appalachia and the Sunway Pipeline fight in the Rust Belt.

³ Canyon Pipeline is a pseudonym for one of the pipeline cases I looked at. Sunway Pipeline is also a pseudonym. This is done to protect anonymity and confidentiality.

While Appalachia has a long and deep history of anti-extraction resistance, especially around coal mine labor, instances of Rust Belt resistance and environmental organizing are relatively isolated events. In this study, I use the literature of social movements to do an analysis of how the Sunway and Canyon oppositions were constructed and what influenced the different outcomes resulting from said opposition. I argue that organizers that are aligned ideologically, with similar goals, are able to form stronger coalitions, which contributes to their success. I also argue that the involvement of non-profit organizations and the knowledge and use of confrontational resistance are two critical aspects in anti-extraction resistance.

As I approach this research, I am influenced by the work of scholar activists like Shannon Bell who conduct research with the goal of advancing social justice objectives. I have been involved in several anti-fracking efforts myself, and I approach this research with a desire to take lessons from these fights to carry forward to the next struggle. I hope that this investigation is not only an interesting academic inquiry but provides material insight to anti-fracking and anti-extraction activists as we think about how to craft a movement in specific contexts. In this research, I begin to answer David S. Meyer's call for social movement scholarship focused on the "passionate pursuit of answers to questions that are important to people trying to change the world" (2005, p. 193). I believe that this study will help to enhance understandings of environmental social movements by documenting them as they are happening, rather than post "completion" of the movement. I also aim to challenge how we typically see movement success, as scholars like Saeed (2009) and Bell (2016) have sought to do.

The rest of this report is as follows: I review the relevant literature on social movements, including framing, coalition building, strategies, and outcomes, that I will use to inform my analysis. Then, I describe the two cases that I use in this research. After a brief review of my

methodology, I present the narrative analysis of my interview data. I use my analysis to draw comparisons from these two cases, and finally close with commentary on future social movement study and environmental organizing.

II. Literature Review

2.1 Social Movements

Social movements are defined in a variety of ways, but generally most definitions include outsider position and an orientation to social change, as well as an element of collective action (Saeed, 2009). Tarrow (1996) characterizes a social movement as a struggle against powerholders by or for a marginalized population under the control of said powerholders. Therefore, social movements serve to disrupt norms of both legitimacy and illegitimacy in terms of who holds power and whether that power is just (Balkin & Siegel, 2006). The goals of social movements are varied- changing policy, challenging power, expressing outrage- but a social movement will always engage in strategic action to advance certain values. Social movements are distinguished from other social phenomena as conscious interventions by everyday people (rather than powerholders) into the political system.

Of the large social movements in recent American history, Castells (1997: 67) describes the environmental movement as the “most comprehensive and influential movement of our time.” The environmental movement is the “great survivor” (Rootes, 2004) of the wave of new social movements in the 1960s. The history of American “environmentalism” often begins with conservationism and the creation of national parks, a fraught history that also includes violence toward and displacement of indigenous people. Then, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, community organizers demanded clean drinking water, safe disposal of sewage and

waste, clean air, and better public health. The resurgence of the environmental movement in the 1960s and 70s “grew out of an extraordinary grassroots response to ecological disasters” (Coglianese, 2001). Earth Day of 1970, in which 20 million Americans participated in a variety of actions to highlight environmental issues, marks not only a swell of environmental care but also a transition toward the institutionalization of environmentalism in the U.S. (Dowie, 1995). During this time, governmental decision-making processes opened up to the claims of environmentalists.

The environmental movement has been criticized for, among other things, its exclusion of people of color and other vulnerable populations in the movement. The environmental justice (EJ) movement centers bringing social justice values to environment-related problems and is deeply rooted in the Civil Rights Movement (Cole & Foster, 2001:125). Those in the movement recognize that communities of lower income and working class people, with less upward social mobility, generally don't have the same time and resources as communities of middle and upper income people to exert political pressure and oppose environmental harms; these resources include organizational skills, knowledge of political institutions and routines, and significant numbers of voters as a constituency (Austin & Schill, 1991; Mix, 2011). Moreover, lower income and minority citizens have been more likely to tolerate pollution from commercial development out of hopes of economic benefit. Mischen and Swin (2018), for example, find that economic opportunities from natural gas drilling provide significant incentives for communities “to address short-term economic benefit and environmental cost trade-offs.” Minority grassroots environmentalism, therefore, represents the intersection between environmental devastation and other forms of oppression such as racism, classism, and sexism. Environmental injustice intertwines with energy extraction and fracking in terms of where pipelines are placed and the

devastation that (often) lower income and racial minority communities are asked to accept for energy buildout. Whether a movement operates within the dominant paradigm or the EJ movement has significant consequences for its character and course, as I observe in my analysis of the two pipeline opposition movements.

2.2 Movement Strategy

2.2.1 Framing

It is my hypothesis the Rust Belt and Appalachian anti-pipeline movements were influenced by different ideologies and framed in contrasting ways, which led to divergence in strategy and coalition building within the movements. Framing is the process through which social movement actors construct both the problems they see and the solutions they propose. Understanding framing is critical to understanding the character and course of a social movement (Benford & Snow, 2000). Framing can facilitate the alignment between a personal and collective identity, in which one sees their individual identity reflected in a movement and feels that said identity is important to movement success. For example, the evangelical group “Christians for the Mountains” uses music to link the evangelical emphasis on prayer and a personal relationship with Jesus to mountaintop removal (MTR) opposition because of the troubles that mining causes “good people” (Billings & Samson, 2012). This use of framing is a crucial aspect of movement building. Bell (2016) deduces in her study of coal-mining resistance in Central Appalachia that many affected individuals do not feel their personal identities are compatible with the collective identity of the EJ movement. She determines that this framing gap is a main barrier in engaging people in the anti-MTR movement.

According to Benford and Snow, there are three types of framing: *diagnostic* framing

identifies the source(s) of blame; *prognostic* framing names what is to be done and constrains the range of possible solutions and strategies; and *motivational* framing provides a “call to arms” and creates agency. In environmental movements, issues can be framed in radically different ways. Some organizers shape their work through the lens of EJ, using prognostic framing to emphasize the need to expand the environmental decision-making process, build community capacity, and facilitate community empowerment through grassroots organizing over advocacy (Faber & McCarthy, 2001). EJ organizers diagnostically frame the interdependency of issues like environmental destruction and poverty. The EJ movement uses motivational framing to call for grassroots community resistance in response to unjust conditions and practices (Bullard & Johnson, 2000). In contrast, the dominant environmental protection paradigm prognostically frames environmental work as a reduction of and legitimization of a certain amount of harm, creating agency for professionalized nonprofits and policy experts. This creates obvious tension with EJ organizers and community members whose harm is “legitimized” as acceptable.

Movements can also be framed as place-based resistance or “cosmopolitical,” universal movements (Rice & Burke, 2018). Rice and Burke, in their research of anti-fracking activism in Appalachian North Carolina, argue that there is a “fundamental tension” between place-based and universal ideologies and identities in social movement building. Place-based activism, on the one hand, provides an important context for building movement energy, mass involvement, and organizational capacity. At the same time, however, place-based movements can become ineffective if they remain too inward-looking and don’t also form the broad solidarities needed for large change. Groups focused on local issues may also fail to recognize the systemic roots of the problems they face. In response to these tensions, Rice and Burke call for “situated solidarities,” connections between social movements that are place-specific, like local fracking

infrastructure opposition, but also connect beyond place. As I will show, this tension between place-based and universal ideologies can be seen particularly clearly in the Sunway pipeline case, but Canyon pipeline organizers excellently demonstrate how to craft these situated solidarities particular to the region. This situated solidarity fits into the EJ paradigm in recognizing the deeper roots of environmental destruction as systems of oppression and economic subjugation.

Benford (1993) argues that at times, frame disputes can be beneficial to a movement by creating new organizations and viewpoints. However, for a social movement organization (SMO) they can also lead to the breakup or dissolution of the organization. Frame disputes can be tremendously costly, consuming time and energy and straining trust among participants. Moreover, different framings, which are informed by different ideologies, lead to different and sometimes clashing strategies (Goodman, 2017). For example, more radical framings like environmental and climate justice will often link to confrontational acts of protest, while framings around procedural failings will call for participation in the regulatory and legislative process and “respectability politics.” All these strategies present both benefits and downfalls. For example, acts of protest can be a good way of creating an alternative vision for the world and getting attention, which may influence policymaking. However, often these protest acts cannot achieve their aims (like shutting down institutions) through the methods of protest used (Graeber, 2009). Not only does framing influence what strategies are used in a resistance movement, but it is also a powerful tool that guides whether and how organizations build relationships.

2.2.2 Network/Relationship-Building

The way that SMOs and individuals build relationships has been a central focus of recent social movement research, and a key aspect of my analysis. Partnerships between social

movement groups are associated with greater levels of success (Beamish & Luebbers, 2009). However, conflicts of interest and perspectives within movement groups can reduce membership, inhibit collective incentives and commitments, and undermine movement success. Staggenborg (1986) states that effective coalition work is “notoriously difficult to achieve.” Therefore, understanding conditions for successful collaboration between movement allies is critical to understanding movement success.

Obach (2004) argues that collaboration is less likely when movement organizations have narrow goals and are focused primarily on membership gains. Collaboration is most likely when movement organizations have a broader conception of issues, concerns, and constituents. Staggenborg (1986), in her study of the pro-choice movement, found that organizations using similar strategies and having similar ideological commitments were more likely to work together than those that did not. Additionally, she argued that ideological differences were less likely to be “bridged” when resource competition was high and campaign success seemed “remote.” These ideological differences are overcome through the help of “bridge builders” or “coalition brokers,” individuals with ties across organizations (Van Dyke & Amos, 2017). A greater degree of ideological and cultural congruence is necessary with more “intensive coalitions” where participants work closely together over longer periods of time. Additionally, Diani and Bison (2004) find that a collective identity is an essential characteristic of a social movement. Collective identity is strongly associated with the “recognition and creation of connectedness” that brings a sense of common purpose and shared commitment to a cause. Thus, ideological congruence is a key factor of successful coalition work, and organizations with a broader definition of the issues and a greater sense of collective identity are more likely to achieve this ideological congruence.

In addition to ideologies and social ties, Steinman (2019) finds that threats and opportunities are a third key factor determining social movement coalitions. Threats or opportunities may encourage groups to overcome their differences and work in alliance, but mobilization can also decrease with increased levels of threat (Staggenborg 1986; Van Dyke & Soule, 2002). Zald and McCarthy (1980) find that while pooling resources may seem advantages, coalitions also require significant resources (financial and temporal) and thus are less likely when resources are scarce. Social movement organizations (SMOs) may also lose autonomy over strategy, tactics, and messages with other coalition members. It is important to note that coalitions will only form when organizers believe that the benefits of the coalition outweigh the costs. Lower competition for resources in addition to threats that require action are the mostly likely conditions to foster the development of coalitions (Van Dyke & Soule, 2002).

Coalition work between professionalized environmental organizations and local environmental groups is of particular interest in social movement literature. Research on the EJ movement tends to focus on the “antinomies between, for example, it and mainstream environmentalism rather than on factors that could make alliances between the two more likely” (Beamish & Luebbers, 2009). Importantly, alliances with professional SMOs can provide EJ organizers a larger constituency for direct action, an opportunity to share knowledge and expertise, and additional monetary resources (Mix, 2011). However, as Buday (2017) describes, grassroots environmental activists perceive a direct threat that heightens their desire for change, and their exclusion from the political negotiations motivates them to explore “extra-institutional routes” towards their policy goals. On the other hand, professionalization constrains the flexibility and speed of national environmental organizations to modify their tactics, which frustrates grassroots organizers and strains collaboration. However, the professionalization of

national environmental advocacy organizations has been necessary for gaining knowledge of the political environment and developing law and policy expertise (Bosso, 2005). Therefore, collaboration between affected communities and established movement organizations can prove mutually beneficial. Buday finds that cultural sensitivity allows for these linkages (ibid). Coalition work is a central focus of my research due to both its importance in movement-building and also its contentious history, particularly in environmental organizing work.

2.2.3 *Tactics*

The strategies that a movement employs to engage the public and persuade powerholders to take action are varied, inspired by differing motivations and carrying a range of consequences. Kleidman (2004) identifies three models of organizing. *Relational* organizing uses issues as a tool to create campaigns that will develop leaders, strengthen relationships, and build organizations. *Issue-based* organizing uses specific issues as a starting point around which to build organizations and campaigns. *Ideology-based* organizing starts with a vision and analysis and then turns to specific issues; issues are valued more as ends than as means. Each of these models of organizing leads to different strategy choice. For example, relational organizing would use movement schools and training programs to develop leaders, while ideology-based organizing might start with a more radical and expansive framing of the problem that calls people from far-off places into the movement.

Research by Rice and Burke (2018) on anti-fracking organizing in Appalachian North Carolina describe the ways that localized and “cosmopolitical” movements can turn to very different tactics. National and statewide environmental organizations oppose fracking in North Carolina using legislative tactics (e.g. a “Disapproval Bill” in the state house) and legal strategies (e.g. court challenges). The local organizers use strategies that are more “sensitive to cultural

politics.” Activists have worked with respected community leaders to pass local anti-fracking resolutions. They believed that working through local authorities is better to mobilize a diverse crowd than a more publicly oppositional stance. These Appalachian organizers are able to balance the “dilemma” that Kleidman identifies between a broad appeal and a sharp analysis (2004). According to Kleidman, without explicit analysis and vision, movements can easily be co-opted. Conversely, a movement that isn’t dogmatic in ideology can also bring more people into the movement, and in some cases, bring the movement a more legitimate image. Finding a middle ground is key to effective organizing.

Direct action (DA) is a particularly important strategy in the EJ movement and is a key tactic used in the Canyon pipeline opposition movement. Organizations and movements that use confrontational tactics tend to be more successful (Gamson 1990). According to Austin and Schill (1991), both community organizers and attorneys are skeptical about the strength of litigation in advancing minority grassroots environmentalism, insinuating that these tactics alone are not effective. The addition of direct action tactics, ranging from protest to blockades, can change society’s values and public opinion. These changes can “feed back” into the judicial system and influence the possibility for law reform, as well as the implementation efforts of current law (Coglianese 2001). Conversely, law reform efforts can also influence public opinion and legitimize the demands made by social movements. This feedback mechanism is present in the Canyon pipeline case. Investigating the range of strategies that movement organizers focus on is both critical to understanding movement ideology and establishing correlation with movement outcomes.

2.3 Movement Outcomes

Movement outcomes are a particularly challenging topic in social movement research. Giugni (1998) finds that “a striking disparity exists between the large body of work on political and policy outcomes and the sporadic studies on the cultural and institutional effects of social movements.” McAdam and Boudet (2012) argue that most scholarship on social movements “[selects] on the dependent variable,” looking at successful social movements and then determining the factors that led to recruitment and action in that movement. This tendency, however, inflates the actual frequency of collective action as well as the success of mobilization. In this work, I have looked at two movements that with varied results, one of which that is ongoing, in order to avoid this tendency.

The range of definitional approaches to social movements is matched by diversity of theoretical approaches (Durac, 2015). Three of the prominent theories of social movements are the Resource Mobilization (RM) Theory, the Theory of Political Opportunity Structures (POS), and the Political Mediation (PM) model (Saeed, 2009). RM theory focuses on internal characteristics of the movement, including organizational structure and resources, as key to movement success. The POS theory identifies the political landscape as the primary reason for movement formation and success. The PM Model argues for a middle ground by acknowledging that both the internal characteristics of movements and the external socio-political environment impact movement success. This model “rejects the search for magic bullets,” insisting that there are no organizational forms, strategies, or political contexts that will *always* help challengers (Amenta et al., 2010). Under this model, scholars search for forms of organization and strategies that are most productive in certain political contexts. The PM Model is the one that I have conducted my research under, as I believe it both gives proper agency to social movement actors

and acknowledges factors not controlled by social movement actors influence political outcomes.

McCammon and Moon (2015) identify three movement outcomes beyond survival: organizational change, movement mobilization, and political outcomes. A number of factors influence these outcomes, including “the movement’s organizations and actions; non-movement actors, including allies, elites, and opponents; and the institutional, political, and cultural context” (Van Dyke & Amos, 2017). Importantly, social movement scholars including Goldstone (1980) find that many social movement outcomes are dependent on the temporal and geographical and factors beyond organizers’ control, including political party control and national mood. For example, Cress (1997) determines that the external organizational environment is the key determinant of SMO structure and action, including the institutional and broader multi-organizational field in which the SMO is embedded. However, as stated earlier, this research is conducted using the Political Mediation theory of social movements, ascribing some level of agency to movement organizers, while acknowledging that they cannot control all factors or outcomes, and incorporating place-based context into analysis.

One particular focus of social movement outcome literature is how to define success. Perceptions of success vary through time and from person to person, so it is difficult to define clear indicators of accomplishment. Alliances, the absence of factionalism, and beliefs and goals have been identified as critical factors influencing success (Steedly & Foley, 1979; Mirowsky & Ross, 1981). However, as Giugni (1981) points out, attempting to define a movement as a success or failure creates a range of issues, including assumption that social movements are homogenous, the fact that success is subjective, and the overstatement of the intent of participants (as many of the consequences of social movements maybe unintended or unrelated to their claims). Social movement actors cannot fully control how meanings and norms shift as a

result of a movement's disruptions (Balkin & Siegel, 2006). There are also challenges methodologically in studying the consequences of social movements, including issues of causal attribution, time reference and effect stability, movement goal adaptation, interrelated effects, and unintended effects (Rucht, 1992).

Saeed (2009) offers an excellent critique of attempting to define a movement as a success or failure. He offers the example of the Civil Rights movement to prove his point:

...the Civil Rights campaign faced a huge setback when thousands of its activists, along with Martin Luther King, were arrested in Georgia, in 1961 (47). This was a setback for the struggle, but not its end. Do we then label the whole Civil Rights campaign as a failure? Or if we consider it on the whole a success, should we completely disregard the mentioned hurdle?

Moreover, Saeed argues that social movements can have wider consequences beyond just stated goals, including on broader culture, individual participants, and other social movements. Saeed points out that the failure of one movement can become the success of another as leftist leaders learn from movements and change strategies. These dichotomous categories may present more problems than benefits in the study of social movements.

Austin and Schill (1991) articulate that the success of grassroots environmental efforts should be "judged by whether they produce the desired remedial results." A central tenant of environmental justice is that a movement must be understood in its own terms "if one hopes to make policy proposals that will be of use to those struggling to save themselves" (ibid.). In the context of my research, I argue that the question of success should be grounded in how those affected define and determine success. I evaluate success based on how movement participants describe it and attribute internal movement factors to success while also incorporating broader historical context into said analysis.

Benford and Snow (2000), in their piece about framing and social movements, itemize a

number of unresolved issues and concerns that require further inquiry, including “the discursive and narrative processes generative of collective action frames” and “the relationship between collective action frames and actual collective action.” Frey et al. (1992) call on students of social movements to “direct more attention to organizational problems of internal movement politics and factionalism.” Giugni (1998) calls on researchers to “focus on the comparative study of the outcomes and consequences of social movements.” In my research, I begin to investigate the relationship between collective action frames and collective action, as well as the impact of factionalism and internal politics, in a comparative analysis of the outcomes of the Sunway and Canyon pipeline movements.

It is my hypothesis that the Rust Belt and Appalachian anti-pipeline movements were influenced by different ideologies and framed in contrasting ways, which led to divergence in strategy and coalition building within the movements. Specifically, the Canyon pipeline opposition movement was framed through a broader and more flexible ideology but was grounded in principles of environmental justice, which allowed for a range of strategies both inside and outside of the legal and regulatory systems. This framing and range of tactics was inspired by a deep history of resistance in the area. The Sunway pipeline group, lacking knowledge of a history of resistance in the area, focused more on individual safety and rights, with the two primary strategies being to engineer a reroute to the pipeline and to pass community bills of rights. While the Sunway pipeline was ultimately put in the ground, the Canyon organizers are still successfully resisting the pipeline. This difference in results is ultimately correlated with the contrast in framing and ideology as well as differential tactics and coalition-building efforts.

III. Cases

3.1 Sunway Pipeline

The Sunway Pipeline⁴ is a 250-mile line that passes through two Rust Belt states, States S1⁵ and S2, on its way to an export terminal. It has the capacity to move 1.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day. The pipeline was first proposed in 2014, when letters were sent to landowners along the route. Shortly after those letters went out, several grassroots organizations formed to start educating neighbors and citizens as the company tried to get residents to sign off their land in easements. As landowners refused to allow surveyors on their land, the company behind the pipeline, Safeway Energy⁶, filed temporary restraining orders against many of the remaining hold-outs.

Safeway Energy applied for approval to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in 2015 for this interstate pipeline. The pipeline was delayed because FERC did not have a quorum until new appointees were approved in 2017. The pipeline was formally approved shortly thereafter. FERC also allowed the pipeline to take land through the policy of eminent domain if landholders would not grant easements. FERC has this granting power for interstate pipelines through the Natural Gas Act, passed by Congress in 1938. With this pipeline, eminent domain was used to acquire a small portion of the easements.

When the company held meetings in areas that were supposed to have compressor stations, which re-pressurize the gas and have been shown to emit toxic chemicals, residents

⁴ Sunway and Canyon are both pseudonyms for the pipeline projects

⁵ Rather than naming the states, I have used the abbreviations S1 and S2 in the Sunway pipeline case and C1 and C2 in the Canyon pipeline case to ensure anonymity and confidentiality for the resisters with whom I have spoken.

⁶ Company pseudonym

turned out to express their concerns. Many grassroots organizations worked to pass community bills of rights that banned fracking in their cities or townships, as well as resolutions opposing the pipeline specifically. Landowners along the route filed suit in US District Court, arguing that FERC's environmental review was inadequate; this suit was ultimately thrown out. An anti-trust suit was filed with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) because one of the companies behind the pipeline, an energy provider, planned to sell the gas to itself and would be able to raise prices. In response, the FTC crafted an agreement with the companies involved to resolve these issues. In late 2017, several group filed suit for a stop work order to allow for a new review over whether the pipeline was needed in light of infrastructure build-out; this request was denied. Additionally, FERC ultimately rejected an alternate route created by affected landowners because, according to FERC, it did not offer substantial environmental advantages and land would not be significantly devalued.

Two cities along the pipeline route put up long-term resistance to the pipeline. The City of Smith⁷ won a request in a federal appellate court to temporarily block construction due to the pipe's proximity to recreational areas in the city. Smith also appealed in circuit court to challenge an EPA water quality certificate that was necessary for pipeline approval. However, Smith's city council ultimately accepted a financial settlement in early 2018, ending their opposition. The city of Sabina was part of a case that went to a federal appeals court over FERC policy regarding export pipelines. The appeals court has asked FERC to re-explain and re-justify its decision regarding this policy. Sabina remains the only city on the route to not settle with the company, though the pipeline was ultimately constructed through its easement.

⁷ Again, city names, like all other names used in this report, are pseudonyms.

Since the pipeline has been put in the ground, Sunway and the extraction industry have been solidified in the region. As Sunway was being constructed, the legislature of S1 began seeing bills to target pipeline protestors, increasing the punishments for those who participated in protests or even those who had *knowledge* of protest participants. This bill was ultimately passed after several iterations. Moreover, the cities and counties affected by Sunway were promised large tax revenues from the pipeline, which were often dedicated to school funding. Now, Safeway Energy is appealing the property tax valuations to the Department of Taxation to a significantly

Sunway Pipeline Timeline

- 2014: Safeway Energy proposes pipeline and sends letters to landowners
- 2015: restraining orders against landowners
- 2015: Safeway applied for FERC approval
- 2017: FERC approves pipeline
- 2017: Construction blocked in City of Smith
- 2018: City of Smith accepts settlement
- 2018: Pipeline constructed and goes online
- 2019: Safeway appeals tax burden
- 2020: Anti-protest bill passes

Figure 1: Sunway Pipeline Timeline

decreased portion of the anticipated revenues. In its appeal, it argues that the pipe cost significantly more than expected and, because of the delays in approval, it lost some of its market share to other pipelines. As of writing this report, a decision has not been made on the appeal.

3.2 Canyon Pipeline

The Canyon Pipeline is a 300-mile long fracked natural gas pipeline that traverses two states, C1 and C2, in the Appalachian Mountain region. The line is intended to transfer gas to an export terminal at a rate of two billion cubic feet per day. The project was first proposed in late 2015. During the initial FERC approval processes, opposition groups in each county along the route raised concerns about the use of eminent domain as well as the negative impacts to forests,

waterways, and protected wildlife. Moreover, organizers and independent studies questioned whether the pipeline was needed. The project was ultimately approved by FERC in late 2017.

Several groups brought lawsuits in federal district courts and circuit courts to attempt to protect landowners from eminent domain use by the pipeline. In 2018, a judge granted the pipeline company, Clear Energy⁸, the right to use eminent domain on the remaining disputed land, though the company had to provide what is considered “just compensation” for the land first. Multiple counties filed for a rehearing of FERC’s certificate for the Canyon Pipeline, and objected to FERC’s notices to proceed, but FERC filed an order to delay consideration on the rehearing request indefinitely. Several elected officials responded to this order to delay, questioning the logic and requesting a rehearing, to no avail. Ultimately, FERC denied the request for rehearing of the Canyon Pipeline certificate.

Because the pipeline crosses federal land, the US Army Corps of Engineers, as well as the US Forest Service (USFS), also had to issue permits for the construction of the pipeline. Groups submitted legal objections to the USFS and petitions to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Governor of C1. Several large nonprofits filed comments with the FERC docket arguing that the permitting process done by the Army Corps of Engineers was insufficient and incorrect. At the same time, they requested a stay on construction across streams from federal court until a decision was made on their appeals. The DEQ announced it would have a comment period regarding the adequacy of the Army Corps of Engineers permitting process relating to the pipeline after people turned out for the State Water Agency (SWA)⁹ meeting a few months prior. However, no action was taken in response to public comment.

⁸ Company pseudonym

⁹ Pseudonym agency name; each state’s agency name is different

The pipeline *has* faced a number of delays, initiated by FERC, federal appellate court, state agencies, and the Army Corps of Engineers. Permits, including water and wildlife permits, have been revoked several times and FERC has issued multiple stop work orders, per the direction of federal circuit and appellate court. These losses were the result of construction violations and inadequate review, which were reported by citizen opponents and environmental nonprofits. Several lawsuits have been filed, challenging the federal process for pipeline

Canyon Pipeline Timeline

- 2015: Clear Energy proposes Canyon Pipeline
- 2017: Pipeline receives permits from US Army Corps of Engineers and Forest Service
- 2017: FERC approves Canyon Pipeline
- 2017: Groups file for rehearing of FERC certificate
- 2017: FERC files order to delay consideration on rehearing request
- 2018: Judge grants use of eminent domain
- 2018: C1 governor signs law allowing DEQ to issue stop work order
- 2018: DEQ comment period on Army Corps of Engineers process
- 2018-present: series of permit losses and stop work orders co-occurring with direct action campaign

Figure 2: Canyon Pipeline Timeline

development, the use of eminent domain, and the behavior of Canyon Pipeline builders. Overall, the pipeline has been cited hundreds of times for violations. Most recently, landowners have filed a constitutional challenge in federal district court objecting to the authority of the FERC to issue certificates to pipelines at all because eminent domain is unconstitutional.

Since construction began, many people have engaged in direct action (DA) and there have been dozens of arrests. The highly visible campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience has continued for approximately two years. More than a protest, these participants are directly interfering with and delaying pipeline construction. Opposition to the pipeline has been strongest in the areas directly impacted by the route, but many others across the states affected have joined in the fight. At this time, construction of the Canyon pipeline is still incomplete.

IV. Methodology and Data

There are several consistent factors between the Sunway and Canyon Pipeline cases that make them suitable examples from which to draw comparisons regarding pipeline resistance. First, they are similar in length and cross two states. Both lines end in export terminals. Part of the land was taken using eminent domain. Because both are interstate pipelines, the primary overseeing agency is FERC. As a result, the processes that both pipelines went through for approval and construction are very similar. Thus, we can meaningfully compare the way that organizers in different regions, with different experiences, acted in response to a very similar problem.

Rice and Burke (2018) used interviews in their work on Southern Appalachian fracking resistance. Their interviews, much like my own, focus on participants' personal experiences in the movement, the social networks that have formed, reflections on political tactics and strategies, and the future of anti-fracking work. They analyzed the interviews and written texts using narrative analysis to look for "prominent themes" of the ideologies and actions in the movement. My research is conducted in a very similar fashion.

Original data for this project was generated through semi-structured, open interviews that lasted in length between 30 minutes and 90 minutes. These interviews were conducted over a four-month period. Some interviews were done in person, but most interviews were done online given travel limitations. I recruited participants for these interviews through my own networks of activist and organizer friends. I have been involved in several anti-fracking efforts myself, and I want to disclose and acknowledge my own beliefs about fracking as I undertake this study. Additionally, I read news articles regarding both pipelines, and individuals and organizations that were mentioned in these articles were also recruited to participate in the study. I believe that my

personal experiences in anti-fracking and my solidarity with these groups helped to build a degree of comfort and rapport that allowed for more detailed and personal conversations with my interviewees.

I conducted a total of 17 interviews, 7 with those involved in the Sunway Pipeline resistance and 10 with those involved in the Canyon Pipeline resistance. Of the Sunway Pipeline participants, 1 interviewee was a professional organizer working for a nonprofit and 6 were grassroots activists. Of the Canyon Pipeline participants, 4 interviewees were professional organizers working for nonprofits, 4 were grassroots activists, and 2 participated in a direct action camp. A full list of interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

The interview questions prod activists to recall their organizing efforts, describe their ideologies, and outline their organizing communities. Central topics in the interviews included, but were not limited to: why fracked pipelines are a problem; how the activists began organizing; whether and how they formed alliances or coalitions; what they perceived to be barriers to mobilization; which strategies they have chosen to employ and why; and how they define success and whether they have attained it.

After interviews were transcribed, transcripts were analyzed for key words, phrases, and concepts that interviewees frequently used to describe their efforts. The qualitative data deduced through narrative analysis is used to highlight central differences between the two pipeline resistance movements and identify factors of success. The names of all individuals and organizations are changed to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, given the backlash pipeline opponents have received since Standing Rock. Activists and organizations that participated in the work against the Sunway Pipeline are given pseudonyms that start with the letter S in order to help keep them connected for the reader. Similarly, those involved with the Canyon Pipeline are

given pseudonyms that start with the letter C. A list of organization acronyms and interview participants can be found in Appendix B.

Doing this research remotely limited my interview participants to a self-selected group of people I already knew and their contacts. I tried to mitigate this effect by contacting other organizers that were named in articles with whom I had no relationship. However, it was still a relatively small group of the most vocal or public organizers against the pipelines, particularly with the Sunway pipeline. Additionally, because the interviews were done remotely and due to the limited time-frame in which to conduct research, I was not able to conduct more than one interview with each participant or build more rapport with my interviewees. I believe if I had been able to do that, I would have had even richer interview data and might have been able to ask more pointed follow-up questions based on initial interview analysis.

V. Results and Discussion

Despite operating in similar regulatory systems, the Canyon and Sunway resistance movements followed very different courses of opposition. Based on my interview data, I ascribe these different paths to four elements: goals, the role of nonprofits, coalition-building efforts, and the history and use of confrontational (DA) tactics. I argue that these four elements played a key role in influencing the different outcomes of the opposition movements.

5.1 Activist Backgrounds

People's backgrounds and personal histories influence their identities, and these identities are critical to fostering a shared movement "identity." This is not to suggest that a movement is homogenous but rather than movement participants see themselves as part of a collective and

that their values are reflected in the movement organization. In this study, I find that activists' backgrounds significantly influenced their own identity and thus the creation of a collective identity within the movement. Specifically, the Canyon Pipeline organizers' backgrounds facilitated a quick alignment to a collective movement identity of pipeline opponents, while Sunway organizers came from fairly disparate positionalities and did not have as much common ground on which to build a group movement identity.

The first question I asked my interviewees was, "How did you first get interested in environmental issues?" Two thirds of the Canyon Pipeline opposition organizers that I interviewed called back to a deeply-rooted affinity for nature that often developed when they were children. Though not all the interviewees were from Appalachia, all have an instilled love for the environment that has carried into their organizing. Three organizers specifically mentioned learned about mountaintop removal coal mining in college as a moment where they began to take a personal interest and were "ignited" as activists (Caide).

Of the Sunway Pipeline interviewees, three of the organizers named a connection to nature and the influence of their parents, particularly growing up. Sandy grew up in the "era of Rachel Carson" and went on to study biology and environmental education. Two organizers, Shannon and Sasha, named fracking as inciting their interest and participation in environmental issues. Interestingly, two of the organizers involved in the Sunway pipeline opposition, Sal and Sean, specifically stated that they were *not* involved in the opposition as an environmental issue but rather as a property rights issue.

Generally, the Canyon Pipeline organizers seemed to have significant prior organizing experience, with 8 of the 10 interviewees naming prior efforts they had been involved with. Crow, Colby, Casey, and Caide specifically named college organizing experiences relating to

anti-extraction. Cloud, Colby, Cameron, and Caide have all worked as paid organizers in this fight, through small and medium-sized nonprofits. The strategies that people learned through their organizing experience were varied, including the importance of relationship-building, the need to specialize and make room for expertise, and the necessity of an online presence and visibility. Those who had less experience, like Cal, looked to other fights against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) and Keystone XL pipeline for inspiration and guidance. Chandler has learned from Colby and organizations like Water and Culture Protectors (described below) that have been involved in the fight.

Four of the seven organizers in the Sunway Pipeline fight had little or no prior organizing experience. Sawyer, a former pastor, organized within his church as well as through involvement in a variety of political campaigns. Sam had previously been the president of a residents for wind group, which he described as “on the job training.” He is also a retired United Auto Workers (UAW) member. Sandy started a recycling program in her township, though she claims that she is “not a good organizer,” preferring to do things alone. No one had previous organizing experience in anti-extraction work, except for Shannon and Sasha who had been involved in relatively recent anti-fracking efforts.

Canyon pipeline organizers’ positionalities facilitated a quick alignment toward the collective identity of the opposition movement (Diani & Bison, 2004), given that many of them had prior organizing experience and were comfortable operating in movement settings. On the other hand, those participating in the Sunway movement were less likely to see themselves as “organizers” or “environmentalists.” As a result, they were less likely to see themselves as part of a collective and to feel the common purpose and shared commitment that is so essential to social movements (*ibid.*). This lack of collective identity was a barrier to engaging Sunway

pipeline opponents fully in a broad-based movement taking a systemic view of the pipeline problem, as in the environmental justice movement (Bell, 2006; Bullard & Johnson, 2000). Additionally, a weak collective movement identity posed problems for coalition work, as I describe in Section 5.6

5.2 The Problem

In response to my question, “why is this pipeline a problem?” Canyon Pipeline interviewees often answered along the lines of, “why is it not?” (Crow). The named problems of the Canyon pipeline were many; they are listed in Figure 3. Four of the ten organizers, Cal, Chris, Casey, and Caide, all got involved in the fight as people living in proximity to the route. Cal is particularly concerned by the impact on private water sources and was part of forming Preserve Clark County¹⁰ in his own community. He also came to be one of the key figures leading Water and Culture Protectors (WCP), the interstate coalition that connects many of the

<p>Ecological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality impacts • Threats to endangered species • Habitat and ecosystem destruction • Forest fragmentation • Erosion <p>Regulatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate use of eminent domain • Flaws in the regulatory process • Treatment of landowners by company 	<p>Danger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction in karst terrain and steep slopes • Living in the blast zone • Radioactivity of gas <p>Systemic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to climate change, creating further dependence on fossil fuels and dis-incentivizing renewable energy • Continued colonial domination and construction on stolen land • Lack of necessity, creating a market that doesn't exist.
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Figure 3. Problems that the Canyon pipeline poses, according to interviewees

¹⁰ Pseudonym for county organization

grassroots groups across both states fighting the Canyon Pipeline. Caide, Cloud, Cameron, and Colby all worked as paid organizers for nonprofits in areas impacted by the Canyon Pipeline. Crow, Cat, and Chandler were drawn to the fight in solidarity with affected communities. Though organizers come from a variety of different positionalities, most of them use a diagnostic framing (Benford & Snow 2000) of the problem that is broad and overlapping, touching on a number of different issues that feed into one another.

<p>Ecological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contamination of air, water, and soil <p>Regulatory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse of eminent domain • Redundant route <p>Danger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of explosion • Public health risks <p>Systemic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to climate change
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The problems that organizers against the Sunway Pipeline saw were more limited in scope (Fig. 4). Sal and Sean, both affected landowners, were particularly focused on the abuse of eminent domain and violation of the “constitutional right to property” (Sal). Sal and Sawyer are concerned by the risk of explosion and the lack of safety setback standards. Sawyer and Sam both argue the pipeline “locks in” fossil fuel energy and contributes to the

Figure 4. Problems posed by the Sunway Pipeline, according to interviewees.

“climate problem.” Sawyer also named the redundancy of the route with another pipeline as evidence that Sunway is unnecessary infrastructure. Sasha sees the pipeline as part of the “bigger picture” and focuses on the need to change the system. Shannon is most concerned how the pipeline, and the compressor station in her area, will contaminate the water, air, and soil and negatively affect peoples’ health. This diagnostic framing is narrower, largely focusing on local health issues and property rights issues (ibid.).

Sal, Sean, Sandy, and Sam all got involved as impacted landowners. However, Sandy said explicitly that she got involved not because of the “NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) stuff,” but because of the “principle of carbon-based fuel.” On the other hand, Sean “didn’t like the

environmental agenda and the hyperbole” of others who were organizing against Sunway, and he decided to get involved. He focused his fight on the violation of personal property, which he felt “everybody could get behind.” Sawyer got involved after becoming aware of the magnitude of risks from fracking and joining up with college students to form a group to oppose fracking. The group passed an ordinance against fracking in the city of Sabina, and Sunway popped up shortly after. At the time, the group didn’t know the ordinance would have an immediate impact.

Shannon and Sasha got involved working on the pipeline through the fight to pass community bills of rights and county charters. Sasha was the only paid organizer involved in the fight; she worked for a community rights organization. Based on the way that most interviewees joined in the fight, the Sunway pipeline fight seemed to be more oriented toward place-based, localized resistance (Rice & Burke, 2018). This framing led to narrower goals and strategies (Goodman, 2017), discussed below.

5.3 Goals

A key difference between these two movements is in how they were built and what their goals were. Specifically, the Sunway movement could be characterized as an issue-based movement in which the pipeline was the specific issue around which the campaign was built (Kleidman, 2004). The Canyon pipeline opposition has traits of both an ideology-based movement and an issue-based movement; while much of the organizing centered around the pipeline, there were also many folks who had been organizing with visions and values of environmental justice and turned to the Canyon pipeline fight as one realm in which to exercise those values. This difference in goals had consequences for every other aspect of the movement, including coalition-building, strategies chosen, and what success could mean.

Sunway organizers repeatedly mentioned two key objectives: 1) a re-route of the pipeline and 2) to inform or to make the community aware. Sal and Sean were both members of Neighbors for a Sunway Reroute (NSR). This group offered up a “fully-engineered route” that was dozens of miles long and would have moved the pipeline away from more densely populated areas into farmland. Past the reroute, Sal said, “we told everyone they need to save themselves.” Sam also pursued a reroute in his area and worked with NSR. Even after it got moved away from his son’s property in a successful small route change, Sam stayed in the fight, wanting to stop it totally. Sandy, Sasha, and Shannon sought to inform people of the health concerns and lack of community benefit, while hopefully stopping it in the process. Largely, the goals that organizers had were very tied to and focused on the specific pipeline fight.

The goals of the Canyon pipeline organizers are generally broader and often extend beyond the issue of the pipeline. Of course, the resisters want to stop the pipeline; some are camped out in the woods in order to make that happen. Cameron and Chandler also named remediation on already constructed sites as an important piece of stopping the pipeline. Beyond stopping it, relationship-building is another key goal for several of the organizers. Cat has developed close relationships that have been important in her goals of organizing communities for survival, building capacity, and gaining and sharing skills. Systems change is also a focus, which includes improving the approval process and regulation enforcement, building up grassroots coalitions, empowering communities along the pipeline route to develop their own solutions, and teaching people the principles and skills of organizing. Colby, a “bridge builder” in coalition work (Van Dyke & Amos 2017) states that she wants any movement work to “be a space that is transformative and healing,” demonstrating the focus that organizers have on issues above and beyond this pipeline.

The Sunway groups were focused on stopping the pipeline, moving it, and/or “[making] the community aware of it” (Shannon). These goals often contradicted each other and created rifts between organizers, particularly the opposing goals of stopping the pipeline versus moving it. The reroute group framed the pipeline as a problem of personal property rights, while the total opposition group framed the pipeline as a threat to public and climate health. Because these groups did not have similar ideological commitments, collaboration was difficult (Staggenborg, 1986). Moreover, these two different goals led to divergent strategies that did not support the other organizers’ work. For example, when some groups petitioned for a community charter, the reroute group felt it wouldn’t benefit them, and so did not participate in or support this strategy. This lack of mutual benefit is *because* the goals that different groups had were rather narrow in scope (Obach, 2004). Because these place-based organizers focused on local issues, they were less inclined to form broad solidarities for larger change (Rice & Burke, 2018), and often did not explicitly recognize or name the systemic problems that allow for this pipeline to be constructed.

The Canyon Pipeline opponents defined a wider scope of goals, and the movement has expanded focus to building community power and alternatives to dominant systems of capitalism and colonialism. This broad diagnostic framing of the problem opened a much broader range of strategies that are complementary and participants have developed better infrastructure for addressing conflict. Because many of the organizers have focused on relationship-building, much of the work needed to be able to solve conflicts (such as over NIMBYism) was done upfront, before things escalated. When I asked Colby about joining the fight, she said, “important work that I try to bring is really building and fostering trust and relationships with everyone I work with and everyone that’s involved.” This upfront work to build trust has facilitated collaboration and collective identity. The Sunway opponents framed the problem differently which led to

clashing strategies (Goodman, 2017). Additionally, relationship-building and coalition work was not a focal point for the organizers, and so when conflict arose, they had not developed the same infrastructure to address disagreement and conflict. These conflicts resulting from frame disputes weakened their movement and strained trust (Benford, 1993), ultimately preventing successful collaborative work.

5.4 Working in Context: History of Confrontational (DA) Resistance

I asked interviewees if there was a history of resistance where they were working, and whether and how this history affected what they did. Appalachia, particularly central Appalachia, has a deep history of organizing, especially around mine labor. As Chris puts it, people have a “loyalty to the mountains they love” and are “always ready to fight something.” When I asked Caide this question, she said her “mind instantly went to the Mine Wars.”¹¹ She says she also learned from that history that “for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction,” meaning that the industry and politicians will hit back. This has taught her not to relent: “if you get the industry or some opponent in a compromised position, keep kickin’ ‘em... do not pause, keep the pressure on, because you will lose it just as quickly as you gained it.”

According to Cameron, western C1 has always been an outlier in the state. As he puts it, “there’s something called the C1 way.” The C1 way means that “you kind of go along with the people that have power, you don’t raise too much hell, you’re not abrasive... And Western C1 has usually not fit in to that as much (laughs).” Even though there hadn’t been significant

¹¹ The Mine Wars were a series of violent struggles in the southern West Virginia coalfields from 1912-1922. The initial spark to the battles was the refusal of coal operators to recognize the United Mine Workers of America union. To this day, the Mine Wars and particularly the Battle of Blair Mountain are powerful symbols for workers, union members, and residents of the region. For more information visit <http://www.wvculture.org/history/archives/minewars.html>.

environmental activism on such a large scale before Canyon, the political bent of the area leaves residents prepared to fight against people and systems of power. Cal, who does not have family roots in Appalachia, has noticed that “without strong networks that go back, a lot of what we do wouldn’t be possible.” So even “transplants” to Appalachia, as he refers to himself, can sense this deep history that people carry with them. In Chandler’s experience, where his area has been isolated from extraction, the “absence of those histories also makes the learning curve more present.”

Crow feels that knowing the history of resistance has informed what people have done in the Canyon fight. For example, some of the people at the direct action (DA) camp were very involved in anti-mountaintop removal organizing and have a wealth of extraction resistance knowledge. Crow also senses that the history of resistance is a “source of identity and pride for some locals,” as it is “part of their heritage.” Colby similarly feels that of the Canyon movement is all a part of the resistance lineage: “people know the stories of Appalachian folks resisting big companies coming onto their land or taking advantage of their communities. It’s not just through Google searches, it’s still like an oral story that’s passed on.” Cat was previously part of another resistance camp, where the fight was a much more isolated occurrence. In comparison, she can see how the history of resistance, particularly anti-coal organizing, impacts how the DA has been positively perceived. Cat senses an attitude among locals that “extractive industry has been here and will be here and screws people,” which has led to greater local support for camp.

The critical importance of the direct action camp blocking construction of the Canyon pipeline became evident in my interviews. Many grassroots organizers and nonprofit workers hold a deep reverence for those at the DA camp putting their bodies and wellbeing on the line to stop this pipeline. The ways in which the communities have coalesced around and supported

camp is an incredible show of solidarity that many other such resistance camps have not experienced. I believe this results in part from the long history of resistance in Appalachia against extractive industry that has at times including violent labor strikes and blockades. The story of Appalachian resistance is “something everyone knows” (Colby).

The geography impacted by the Sunway pipeline does not have the same historical relationship with extraction resistance, leaving organizers without a grounded knowledge of historical oppositional efforts and patterns of success. Most of the organizers, when I asked if there was such a history, said there was not, at least that they knew of. According to Sal, this resistance was an “individual event.” While Shannon felt like this lack of history made her work harder, Sean felt like this absence was good, because then they could “approach it with an open and clear mind.” Sawyer’s case is a bit different because the city of Sabina does have a deep history of resistance that can always be appealed to. It was established as a utopian community in the mid-nineteenth century, and of all the utopias that were established in that period, Sabina is the only one that has survived. As a result, “it’s easier in [Sabina] to persuade a governing body to take a stand that is against the popular current if one can argue that in the long run this is the cause that will be vindicated.” It may be due to this history of resistance that Sabina has been one of the last-standing centers of opposition in this fight.

The Sunway pipeline saw no coordinated direct action campaign; there were only a few isolated protests, most of which did not disrupt construction or other activities. Additionally, many of the organizers said that they knew of no history of resistance in their area. As a result, many of them had not seen or heard of successful direct action campaigns where they were operating. Sean mentioned Standing Rock in his interview, saying that he could “relate... on a whole different level,” fighting the Sunway pipeline at the same time things was going down

there. But, he says, “you could see it wasn’t really going to accomplish anything,” and he felt like they “lost control.” Sean used this example to emphasize the need to “pick the right battle, manage it in the right way, with the right spirit...Fight the fight in the right way.” He indicated his disinterest and opposition to confrontational direct action tactics. Research has demonstrated that movements utilizing confrontational tactics, like extralegal resistance, are generally more successful (Gamson, 1990). The Sunway camp’s general aversion to direct action tactics, coupled with a lack of historical resistance in the area, significantly narrowed the range of paths for opposition, which created a lower likelihood for success.

5.5 Strategies

The use of confrontational resistance is one part of movement strategy. Both resistance efforts utilize a range of tactics and strategies, which I will do my best to encapsulate. A full list of strategies is found in Figure 5. In the Canyon pipeline fight, Caide describes the organizing process as “splitting off into smaller groups and then building back up.” Her nonprofit, Watershed Alliance, helped to organize different educational meetings in every county along the route, out of which county-level “Preserve” groups formed. Then, WCP was created as a communication network, which Cal describes as “really critical to heading off the regulatory stuff.” Cal also said that one of the first things the Preserve groups did was identify experts with the time and capacity to do the more technical work. Other, more generalized organizers could work on education, organization, and media. WCP, along with organizations like Preserve the Mountains Network (PMN), Casey’s group, has taught people how to spot construction violations, document them, and submit them to the right agencies.

Cloud describes how early on, there was some conflict over which route of resistance to take. But at some point, she said, the resisters “realized that we needed *all* of the different strategies.” Cloud’s organization, Forest Keepers, is most involved in baseline water testing. Forest Keepers has also been heavily involved in legal battles, some of which have led to permit revocation. Cameron, who also works for Forest Keepers, highlighted the importance of being involved in every single agency process, combining legal arguments with science, and, importantly, teaching other people how to do that. Colby’s organization, Mountain Hearts, has also been involved in litigation work, water monitoring, and public comment engagement. Caide points out that the thousands of comments on the FERC record served as an initial slowdown in the resistance. Caide and Colby both worked to help pass resolutions at the county level opposing the pipelines. They also worked with politicians, particularly state-level political

Canyon Strategies	Sunway Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial community meetings • Baseline water testing • Passing resolutions at the county level to oppose the pipelines • Involvement in agency processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teaching other people how to do that • Turn out (in solidarity) for hearings • Encouraging state-level politicians to publicly oppose the pipeline • Litigation • Documenting and reporting construction violations • Direct action campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial community meetings • Survey opposition • Pre- and post-construction air testing • Passing resolutions at the local level to oppose the pipelines • Passing county charters and community bills of rights • Media campaign: Facebook, yard signs, fliers, TV and newspaper ads, rallies • Involvement in agency (FERC) processes • Turn out for hearings • Proposing and engineering a reroute • Documenting and reporting construction violations • Litigation

Figure 5. Canyon and Sunway pipeline opposition strategies. Bolded strategies are unique to each fight (i.e. present in Canyon pipeline opposition but absent in Sunway pipeline opposition).

leaders, to take positions in opposition to the pipeline.

Paid organizers and grassroots groups also collaborate to encourage people to rally and show up at key events. Cameron has worked for state regulators and firmly believes that public turnout at key hearings and events, as well as submitting public comment, influences the actions that regulators take. Chandler, a member of Transforming Energy Advocates (TEA), says that as a solidarity group, they show up for the frontline communities in whatever ways they can, which often means rallying folks who are not directly impacted to show up to hearings and submit comments. Their strategy has been helped by people like Colby who have a detailed understanding of where the project is in the regulatory process and how people can plug in.

Importantly, there has been a significant direct action component to the Canyon Pipeline resistance work. People like Crow and Cat have been stopping the pipeline for years by putting their bodies in front of it, risking their lives in front of excavators and chainsaws. DA has made a crucial difference in the Canyon pipeline fight. Not only have the blockaders cost the company hundreds of thousands of dollars and prevented the completion of construction; they have also caused delays in construction long enough that nonprofits and grassroots organizers have been able to continue down the path of litigation and get permits revoked before it was too late. As Cat argues, this “illegality is necessary for a legal strategy.” I asked Cameron whether he thought the direct action has influenced what he and Forest Keepers have been able to do. His response:

“Certainly Canyon would be farther along...I suspect, if it hadn’t been for a lot of those [things]. And so, the fact that we’ve been able to continue the legal battles, I mean we just filed that [Endangered Species Act] case late last year, and you know if everything had been in the ground by the time we filed that, it would have been a lot harder for us to win it.”

This relationship between legal and extra-legal strategies represents the feedback mechanism that Coglianese describes (2001), in which direct action influences the possibility for law enforcement and reform, and this in turn legitimizes the demands made by direct action

organizers. Cal echoes that point: “I recognize that ultimately it is people putting themselves up against machinery that gives us the time and space to do the tedious but important work we are doing on the regulatory and legal side. Plus, it’s just awesome.”

The Sunway Pipeline organizers used many of the same strategies particularly in the beginning, including community meetings, local resolutions against the pipeline, and getting involved in the FERC approval process. Sandy, Shannon, and Sam were all involved in organizing community meetings early on, though they did not have the help of nonprofits to make sure they were organized in every county or township along the route. Sal and Sean worked in their area to organize opposition to surveys by the company, which eventually led the company to get restraining orders against dozens of landowners. Organizers used Facebook, yard signs, neighborhood fliers, TV and newspaper ads, and rallies to get attention and spread the word about the pipeline. Individuals and groups made sure to place comments on the FERC record, show up to EPA hearings, call the EPA when they spotted construction violations, and bring legal cases over issues like threats to endangered species in attempts to slow down the process. They passed resolutions in a number of cities and townships against the pipeline, but political support beyond the very local level was near nonexistent. Shannon’s group, Green Together, also worked to do pre-construction air testing and is currently working to monitor the air around the compressor station, which re-pressurizes the gas in the line and emits toxins and known carcinogens. Green Together had to fundraise tens of thousands of dollars in order to be able to do this testing.

As mentioned before, the main strategy for some of the groups like NSR was the creation of a proposed reroute to the line, which was ultimately rejected by the construction company. NSR also engaged in litigation, and importantly, one case that NSR and Sawyer’s city brought

against the pipeline went up through the federal court system regarding the use of eminent domain. The federal court has sent the case back to FERC and Sunway to justify the use of eminent domain to take land for an export pipeline. Another key strategy unique in this fight was the emphasis on passing county charters and community bills of rights. Sawyer worked to get a bill of rights passed in his city, and Shannon attempted to get a county charter on the ballot for three years before ultimately getting stuck in an ongoing court case over whether the Board of Elections can keep such initiatives off the ballot. Sasha worked with several localities to pass these resolutions. However, importantly, no one in any of the localities affected used these bills to sue either the pipeline company, the regulators, or their local governments for not defending these laws, as Sasha encouraged people to do.

While the Sunway and Canyon movements utilized many of the same strategies, including community meetings, litigation, and involvement in agency processes, the defining strategies for each movement are quite divergent. Some Sunway organizers focused on a pipeline reroute, a strategy that has been defined as inherently unjust by many EJ scholars. Other organizers focused on the passage of community bills of rights, a strategy whose efficacy has been questioned by movement scholars such as Buday (2017). These strategies fomented divisions between organizers and may have prevented them from recognizing other political opportunities in which to put up substantial opposition. In contrast, the Canyon resistance included a massive direct action campaign, which enabled other organizers to continue their legal and regulatory challenges before construction completion, and has resulted in substantial delays in the construction timeline. These strategies are mutually beneficial, with the legal and regulatory gains legitimizing the direct action campaign, while the campaign enables the

institutional fight to continue. This campaign of complementary strategies has been essential for longstanding opposition.

5.6 Coalitions

A key aspect of oppositional resistance is coalition-building with other organizers and those sympathetic to the cause. The presence or absence of nonprofits is one of the ways in which coalitions were significantly different in these two fights. More broadly, the Canyon pipeline organizers developed a far-reaching coalition that collaborated on the development of strategies to oppose the pipeline. In contrast, Sunway pipeline organizers, as a result of narrowly-defined goals, struggled to build collaborative relationships with each other and with other affected landowners and concerned citizens.

A distinct difference between these two movements is that the Canyon pipeline movement has seen heavy involvement from local, regional, and national nonprofits. Nonprofits have participated in many aspects of resistance, including community education, monitoring and violation reporting, and litigation. These nonprofits have been able to serve as coordinating bodies for all the grassroots groups while *uplifting* the voices of affected landowners and giving space to allow them to direct the campaign, demonstrating the cultural sensitivity that Buday (2017) argues will allow for these collaborations. This is a strong example of the use of “situated solidarities” in which organizers link a local issue with more globalized concerns (Rice & Burke, 2018) while recognizing place-specific dynamics. This cultural sensitivity is one factor that made these alliances more successful (Beamish & Luebbers, 2009).

Paid organizers have been able to take on a significant amount of the work needed in this resistance campaign. They have provided resources and time, including litigation funding. For

example, Cameron and Cloud at Forest Keepers have spent hours compiling and summarizing all the comments sent to the State Water Agency (SWA), because the summary the state gave was “poor.” Forest Keepers has also been able to teach other people how to do construction monitoring and submit comments (even, as Cameron puts it, hosting “comment writing parties”). This access to and dissemination of knowledge has been critical in providing opportunities for everyday citizens to participate in the movement. These organizations have also engaged their large bases, many of whom are not directly affected, to care about the issue and support people on the frontlines.

The Sunway Pipeline resisters did not receive the same support from regional and national nonprofits. One chapter of a national nonprofit did help in litigation and engaging some membership, but no nonprofit served as a coordinating body. The case against FERC that went the farthest, regarding the use of eminent domain, was paid for by the City of Sabina in collaboration with attorneys doing pro-bono work for NSR. The absence of paid organizers providing resources and institutional knowledge meant that grassroots organizers were spread much thinner, having to learn everything and create everything almost entirely on their own.

Moreover, there were obvious tensions between grassroots organizations like NSR and Green Together and large professionalized organizations, consistent with patterns that Buday (2017) observed. These tensions prevented mutually beneficial collaboration and resource sharing between grassroots and professionalized groups, in which professionalized organizations could share resources and skills and grassroots groups could mobilize large numbers of people and disseminate information. There were also tensions between some grassroots organizations and Sasha’s community rights nonprofit. This nonprofit is very narrowly focused on passing community bills of rights and county charters, and was not positioned to support the Sunway

opposition coalition in other ways (e.g. coordination efforts, regulatory assistance, litigation assistance). Buday (2017) finds that, though a number of strategic alternatives to community bills of rights exist, grassroots activists' perceptions of available opportunities narrowed considerably when they received central direction from community rights organizations. In this case, a focus on this particular strategy may have prevented organizers from recognizing other political opportunities to oppose the Sunway pipeline.

On the other hand, the Canyon Pipeline fight is in resource-poor areas of Appalachia (Colby), but collaboration among grassroots groups and between professionalized groups and grassroots organizations was actually more successful, counter to patterns that Staggenborg (1986) observed. Nonprofits operating in the area, like Mountain Hearts and Forest Keepers, demonstrated cultural sensitivity and allowed frontline communities to direct the resistance efforts, which enabled successful collaboration (Buday, 2017). They allowed local communities to use their place-based knowledge to inform how resistance should look and collaborated to make sure they seized upon opportunities as they arose. The Canyon Pipeline collaboration work was more successful in part because it included established organizations that were in a position to provide internal support in organizational infrastructure, consistent with Staggenborg's findings (1986).

In the Canyon pipeline resistance, several non-profits and grassroots organizations have served as a hub of communication for all those working in opposition. WCP has served as a coordinator for grassroots organizers, along with PMN. Without WCP, Colby says, "many of the county-size groups wouldn't be collaborating and building strategy together." Mountain Hearts, the nonprofit that Colby works for, has been a coordinator between nonprofit and grassroots organizations, pulling together conference calls and ensuring that affected landowners direct

those conversations (Cloud). National groups like the Sierra Club and the Natural Resource Defense Council have also been involved in the opposition effort. There have been some tensions with these so-called “Big Green” groups, the professionalized environmental organizations that are funded by grants and donors and have a secure institutional position. As Casey said, “Big Greens have to move a lot slower” than grassroots groups would want to see, and Caide explains that this pipeline fight is “not all-consuming for them like it is for affected landowners,” which can foster conflict. However, the nature of the conflicts has generally been resolvable, according to Cameron and others.

In the case of the Canyon pipeline, organizers created a very broad coalition. Several organizers emphasized the importance of coalition work. Cal said, “what I see being really effective is to link with people who have shared goals,” including environmental attorneys and the Big Green. There was an official coalition through WCP but also a number of individuals and organizations that comprised a looser and broader organizing force. There was strong collaboration between groups and organizations on the variety of tasks that needed to be undertaken in opposition, including regulatory intervention, citizen science, litigation, and public protest. As Cloud put it:

“So when this started, we had all these groups coming together, everyone had a theory on the best way to fight. We need to protest in the streets, we need to fight them in the courts, we need to get landowners activated, we need to test water quality, we need to map every inch of it. And pretty quickly we realized, we need *all* of that. We need every possible way; someone described it as, pound on every link of the chain.”

This emphasis on exploring every possible strategy meant that individuals and organizations could plug into the effort where they felt comfortable while also acknowledging and respecting the work that everyone else was doing. This created space for lots of folks to join in the effort and expanded the movement’s capacity for resistance.

All of the organizers involved in the Canyon pipeline fight, for the most part, reached a mutual understanding that they were all depending on each other to pursue every possible strategy to stop the project. According to Cameron, organizers see that they “need to work together and don’t want to be played against each other.” There’s also a general consensus on the need to “fight not just the pipeline but the system [because] the next one might be just as bad.” I asked him about how people have been coming together on issue and why people have been able to work so well together. He said:

You have a real mix of folks, all the way from landowners, some of whom started out with just kind of their own interests in mind, and weren’t looking at some of the broader issues, all the way to community organizers and volunteers who have been more active in environmental issues. But I think almost uniformly all those different interests have come to the conclusion that first of all, they have to work together, and second, they don’t want to be caught played off against each other.”

There is a clear understanding that the industry and other interests will try to co-opt and divide up the movement in order to weaken their efforts. In this case, organizers have successfully developed a sense of collective identity that brings a sense of common purpose and shared commitment to a cause, essential to a social movement, even though individuals come from different positionalities (Diani & Bison, 2004). This linkage between personal and collective identity strengthens organizers’ commitment to the resistance and the movement’s success (Billings & Samson, 2012; Bell, 2016).

Working in coalition seems to be an exciting part of the effort for many of the organizers. Cloud describes the coalition work as her “favorite part, being in the room with all these amazing activists.” Cal points out that there are also many groups that are not officially members of a coalition, but which participate in a collaborative process. He has been particularly inspired by the student organizers at a nearby university, as well as all the DA camp. Those participating in DA have developed mutual aid networks with anti-prison organizers and anti-mountaintop

removal groups in the area, as well as other anti-extraction movements, including the organizers at Standing Rock and the No Bayou Bridge camp. Both Crow and Cat have said that their camp has also been able to build relationships with locals, and that locals have been “valuable in support and in participating” (Cat).

This coalition work has created space to have conversations beyond pipeline strategy. Organizers have avoided the divisions that many environmental movements face over NIMBYism. While many movement participants joined the fight because of the effects to their personal lives, people have still been able to collaborate and work together beyond issues of private property. For example, Cal has been able to talk about white privilege with impacted landowners, including the indigenous land theft that has allowed them to own their land today. While these conversations have been a process, it seems that they have also been hopeful. As Colby says, “It’s not sexy work!” but it is “important for so many reasons.” This strong coalition work was a key factor in the movement outcomes they’ve seen, including delays in construction and movement mobilization (Beamish & Luebbers, 2009).

In the case of the Sunway pipeline, organizers had a harder time in building strong coalitions because they did not have common goals and a shared identity on which to build collaboration. Additionally, they did not have the same ties to histories of resistance that root collaboration and community in the ways that Appalachian resistance has. There were no nonprofits that served as a coordinator to maintain communication and create space to develop group-wide strategy. While a chapter of a national environmental organization in S2 was involved with the legal battles, the chapter in S1 was distinctly not involved in the fight, which several grassroots organizers seemed to resent. The largest environmental nonprofit in S1 did get involved at one point to help raise awareness about the dangers of methane leaks, but that was

the extent of their involvement. NSR, as the largest grassroots group opposing the pipeline, served as somewhat of a hub of information. When asked about coalition building, both Sal and Sawyer said the most significant collaboration, or “cooperation” as Sal put it, was between the attorneys for NSR and the city Sawyer lived in.

When I asked Sasha whether she participated in coalition work, she laughed and said, “not for lack of trying.” In her experience, most environmental organizations would not work with her group because they are “a part of the system,” to use her words, meaning that they were organizations with power and didn’t want to lose that power. Additionally, some of the leading grassroots organizing groups didn’t see how her strategy would benefit them, and did not join in her community rights network. Indeed, her network was not focused on opposition to the Sunway pipeline but rather on the specific strategy of passing community rights bills. Overall, there seemed to be bitter tensions between many of the organizers. For example, Sawyer was frustrated with Sasha’s group when they would not provide previously offered legal help to Sawyer’s group as they moved to oppose FERC’s licensing of the project. Shannon’s group had a distinct break with NSR. As Sal put it, “pretty soon you figure out that you’re alone.” It became clear in my interview that these tensions and distrusts made coalition work very difficult.

There was a much more prevalent “silo-ing” effect in the Sunway pipeline resistance. Several interviewees alluded to tensions between groups over what would be the “right way” to fight this pipeline. There was not the same sense of mutual support of different strategies that people chose to pursue. Leading members of NSR, like Sal and Sean, had a firm belief that there was a correct way to fight this pipeline. When I asked Sal about getting involved, he stated, “our rational minds said, you can fight a losing battle and maybe feel good about it somehow, or you can try an alternative that has never been tried before in the magnitude that we did.” Sean

disliked the political environmental agenda at the first community meeting he attended, and after doing his own research, he went back to the second meeting and “refuted some of the hyperbole that was being presented and said, if you’re going to speak about this thing then let’s use facts and truthful information. Don’t spread agenda and hysteria...And it wasn’t received too well.” Again, this reflects the very different framings that organizers used in their approach to the pipeline, which made collaboration more difficult.

Sean felt very strongly that other groups’ strategies would damage his group’s credibility. He said, there were always other people who would say, “you need to come here and do this.” His response:

“No, we’re not doing that, because that will undermine what we’re doing over here, so if you want to do that, by all means go do it, but we can’t go there. Because I don’t want to lose my voice. Because I’ll tell you when we met with the Congressmen, their offices, their staff, the first thing they said was, ‘wow, you guys are different, we’ve never seen it done this way,’ and they would give us props.”

This also speaks to the absence of a collective identity in the Sunway pipeline fight.

Organizations maintained clear boundaries and a distinct identity, rather than emphasizing their common ground, for fear of losing autonomy over strategy and messaging (Zald & McCarthy, 1980). They did not see their identities reflected in how other organizers approached the movement work (Benford & Snow, 2000). Because organizers did not have similar ideological commitments, they were not likely to collaborate well (Staggenborg, 1986). Additionally, because of these clear and distinct identities, there were not “bridge builders” with ties across organizations that could help overcome these ideological differences (Van Dyke & Amos, 2017).

On the other side of things, Shannon’s group faced supporters of a reroute who refused to work with her group. She said, “they never signed the petition, they didn’t see how that was going to help them keep it from their properties...their whole goal was ‘not in my

backyard’...and we would not work with them because we don’t agree with their thinking.”

Green Together frames their struggles more through the lens of environmental justice, and so the property rights focus of NSR was a really significant frame dispute that stifled trust between the groups (Benford, 1993).

There was some agreement over a system that wasn’t working. As Sal put it, when it came to working with groups across the nation to go to Washington D.C., “we have different individual goals but the bigger goal—this is where you can get people from disparate individual goals to work together—our bigger goal was to get Congress to hold hearings on FERC’s violation of the law. And that we can all agree on.” However, groups working specifically on the Sunway Pipeline did not seem to come to the same understanding of mutual support and solidarity as in the Canyon Pipeline case. They may have fallen into the trap of “playing into the company’s hand” that Cameron warned against.

5.7 Outcomes: Challenges and Successes

There have been a range of responses from community members to movement work. As Crow put it, “you’re always going to have ‘hell yeah’ and ‘hell naw’ people.” Generally, however, Canyon Pipeline organizers have gotten “extremely positive” feedback from community members (Cloud). Cameron says that talking to people has built “acceptance and admiration,” and organizers have been careful to not “parachute in.” Cal feels a “high level of gratitude,” along with “some level of bemusement” from his neighbors. Chris feels like, at least in his area, the resistance effort has “definitely made people come together more than anything.” Cal shared that some people, over the years, have said “y’all were right; I should’ve listened to

you.” He hopes that “looking back, people will understand you don’t get system change without having to confront this stuff in what looks like an ugly way.”

Sunway organizers had a much more mixed experience trying to activate people on the issue. Sal says, “we had very limited engagement from anybody whose property was not directly affected...They’re busy, they have other interests.” On the other hand, Sean said the public reaction was “huge, they were always appreciative.” As evidence, he points out that they got letters of support from every township but one in favor of the reroute. He uses this to emphasize the need to “set reasonable goals.” In Sawyer’s experience, keeping the emphasis on local control meant that their position was not usually controversial. The biggest issue was when Sawyer’s group tried to convince city council to reject money from Sunway (which it ultimately did). Sasha and Sam both encountered vocal opponents. Sam says that people would steal signs, Sunway was running ads against their efforts, and the Farm Bureau started to attack them. Ultimately, like Sal, Sam also felt like “people who were neutral stayed neutral.” Sasha points out that if the status quo is working for someone, they would become an opponent of the work her group was doing. Even if people weren’t benefitting from systems in place, “people don’t want to believe in the information.” Though the responses were mixed, there appears to be more pushback and community resistance in the Sunway pipeline fight.

I asked organizers to describe their challenges in mobilizing and engaging people. The Sunway pipeline organizers had a very difficult time getting people involved. When I asked Sal about the challenges, his response: “Impossible.” He elaborated, “people are busy, they have their own interests.” Sean felt similarly, that people just “didn’t want to bother.” He got the impression from other people that “it’s bad for you but that’s your problem.” Moreover, once it got moved off peoples’ property, many of them disappeared. Sandy also felt like it was hard to

get people on board because “society is overwhelmed with issues.” Sam sensed that people were afraid of their reputations and job prospects. In his experience, the ones who were directly affected were the ones that fought. Sasha felt like the challenge was mostly “peoples’ own heads,” trying to get them to “flip the switches about believing in the system.”

Canyon organizers often did not face the same challenges in getting people engaged and caring. Cloud, for example, said “I really haven’t [had challenges] ...I’ve struggled to create enough opportunities for people.” While Chandler feels that “trying to get people to show up for something far away [has] a steep learning curve,” he has also been surprised by “all the people who do show up.” I ascribe this success in mobilizing folks to the broad framing that organizers used that inspired movement participants to join in because of a range of concerns, from personal property rights to climate change and environmental destruction. However, of course there were some difficulties. Cal and Chandler both thought the sense of inevitability of the project was one obstacle. They worked to find where people are comfortable getting involved. On the other hand, Caide says that her biggest challenge has been to manage “expectations and sensitivities” from people who are directly affected by this project, when the system fails them. Chris was the only person who voiced the sentiment that only those who were directly affect got involved, though he acknowledges that when DA was happening in his area, people were more likely to join in and help.

Many of the challenges Canyon organizers named regarded resources and access. For example, the geography of the project means that it is a challenge for people to meet up in person, so people are linked by conference calls, which requires a certain level of technology (Cal). Caide highlights that “resources are always a challenge in nonprofit work.” In Casey’s experience, there is such a high poverty rate on the C2 side and people are so dependent on fossil

fuels for jobs and maintaining the economy that many just signed over their land. Colby points out that southwest C1 has been ignored in the politics of the state, as it is largely rural and poor, and there are political stereotypes associated with those demographics. As a result, it is hard to get newspapers in C1 (and the rest of the country) to pay attention. Even so, she feels that the Canyon pipeline organizers have done a fantastic job.

Of the three coalition outcomes, beyond survival, that McCammon and Moon (2015) identify, the Sunway pipeline movement saw organizational change and some movement mobilization, although several people expressed the difficulties of getting others outside of impacted landowners to join the fight. However, the group did not see political outcomes. In fact, groups were stymied in their pursuit of passing a community bill of rights, and the FERC process was not open to the reroute or feedback from communities. In contrast, the Canyon pipeline movement has seen organizational change, massive movement mobilization, *and* political outcomes as courts have stopped pipeline work and legislators have expanded regulatory powers. As interviews have shown, this is attributed partially to external factors (Goldstone 1980), including history of extraction opposition and political mood, but it is also certainly partially the responsibility of the movement organizers.

5.7.1 What is success?

As discussed earlier, it is important to judge whether movement organizers have achieved success based on their own definitions and perceptions (Austin & Schill, 1991). I asked organizers to define what success looked like to them in this fight. For the Sunway pipeline, stopping the pipeline and raising awareness were the two primary measures of success. Sam's number one goal was to get the pipeline moved off his "kid's property;" it was a danger to his

family and no one was protecting them. Shannon felt like success would've been the prevention of the pipeline and the compressor station, if the community charter passed, and if "we raised enough awareness that other communities could've fought and stopped it." Sandy and Sasha both point out that "success is not always a win," and it comes in "many different forms." For Sandy, success is "putting up a good fight and seeing it through." Even though they didn't win in their end goal, she says that she's "happy I fought." Sasha feels that any time a "community stands up for itself, whether they win or not" is a success.

Sal and Sean were both explicit that their goals did *not* include trying to stop the pipeline. Sean says that even though they weren't able to get the reroute they wanted, he is proud of what he did and feels like his group "did it in the right way." Sal shares a similar feeling that, "as an organization, we went from 0 to 1000 pretty quickly," and that was gratifying. Sawyer "never expected that we could stop Sunway from getting its license, though I hoped that we could." Success for him has been alerting those that are anticipating benefits from this pipeline to the fact that these benefits may not materialize, as, for example, Sunway appeals its tax burden. Additionally, if the appeals court doesn't accept Sunway's justification for using eminent domain for an export pipeline, "that would be huge."

While many of the organizers seemed rightly proud, the success of their efforts were limited, and many of them echo that sentiment. Unfortunately, the organizers were not able to stop the pipeline, and due to limited community engagement and mobilization, much of the area impacted remains unaware of the presence and dangers of the Sunway pipeline. I argue that narrow goals limited engagement in the opposition fight, and divisions that resulted from these narrow goals stymied mobilizing capacity. Factionalism and the absence of alliances stifled

success for these groups, a pattern seen across social movement literature (Steedly & Foley, 1979; Mirowsky & Ross, 1981).

In the case of the Canyon Pipeline, there seemed to be a larger range of ways that people defined success in this effort. Many named the foremost goal being to stop the Canyon pipeline, but most also felt like that was not an end point. For example, Cloud pointed out that stopping a pipeline is a clear end, but “that’s not success...Success is continuing to rally support and change regulations.” Similarly, Cameron points out the need to “keep momentum going to look ahead.” Cloud and Cameron have just started working on a regulatory reform campaign; as Cameron says, they can’t expect “private citizens to carry the weight.” For Colby, while all the delays have been successes, the huge success is “talking about what it will look like after we win.” Cal has seen some success in changing what people think of the region, but he says, “until there is substantive reform of processes that allow these things, I’m not willing to say we’ve made it.”

Crow and Chris both point out that the stock value of the corporation behind the pipeline has fallen consistently over the course of this fight. While Crow points out that pipeline opposition is not *solely* to blame for this, certainly “some of that is because of resistance.” For example, last summer the resistance camp was notified that they had cost the pipeline over \$250,000, in addition to the loss of permits to construct on public land. As Casey points out, the project is already “horribly over budget.” For Cat as well, making it harder and costlier to build the pipeline is a measure of success. Crow also highlights success as making the “system seem less feasible.”

Community power and relationships are another big marker of success in this fight. Crow and Cat both say that everything built in this resistance is a demonstration of success, and the relationships built out of this effort will continue. For Caide, the definition of success is the

“development of community power.” “We have demonstrated that there are still first lines of resistance in this country,” she says. For her, the ultimate success would be a system where the most-impacted are the decision-makers. And, she says, at the end of the day, if she’s given the Canyon attorney heartburn, “I’m successful.”

Chandler points out the need to hold onto both the big goals and the small goals. For example, “mile markers like turning down [the corporation’s] campaign contributions... indicate we are changing things.” He emphasizes the nature of this fight as “playing a long game.” Cat wants to see the “complete destruction of capitalist infrastructure,” and this fight is part of that very expansive work. “Do I think it’s possible?” she says. “Maybe not, but that doesn’t negate the need to try.” Success doesn’t even hinge on this pipeline; success is in the “experience of resisting together.” Based on their own definitions of success, the organizers have certainly succeeded in slowing the pipeline down and making it costlier. Moreover, the organizers have seen significant mobilization of communities against the pipeline, and there is hope that they will be able to build on this energy for future campaigns of systemic change. By their own valuations, they are successful. This success can be attributed to broad goals, strong alliances, and the absence of factionalism (Steadly & Foley, 1979; Mirowsky & Ross, 1981).

Differences in goals, coalition work, nonprofit involvement, and history of confrontational (DA) strategy in the region all contributed to the divergent outcomes of resistance in the Canyon and Sunway opposition movements. Organizers from both efforts found some level of success in their work. However, in two key measures of success, stopping the pipeline and raising community awareness, the Canyon pipeline opponents have seen more progress and seem more optimistic about their efforts. These key differences are important as objects of future study in academic work and consideration in movement-building efforts.

VI. Conclusion

This comparative analysis between the Sunway pipeline and Canyon pipeline opposition movements demonstrates that broad and connected goals; strong coalition-building; nonprofit participation; and a connection to previous confrontational organizing tactics (DA) all have a positive influence on success. Canyon Pipeline interviewees defined two key measures of success: stopping the pipeline and building community power. Over the course of the opposition, the Canyon pipeline has faced persistent delays in construction as well as a surging movement against corporate power, regulatory failures, and colonial domination. While the Sunway pipeline movement did accomplish some delays in the construction timeline, organizers were not able to maintain those delays and ultimately watched the pipeline go into the ground. Since then, much of the energy built in the movement has faded away, and the issues the movement raised have largely fallen from view.

As I have shown, these differences in success cannot be attributed to simply one group or one tactic. A variety of factors, discussed above, combined in order to make success achievable, as the political mediation model predicts (Saeed, 2009). The organizers in this case had full control over which political opportunities they capitalized on, how they framed the conflict, and how they built relationships. On the other hand, certainly the absence of a history of resistance could not be altered by anyone in the Sunway pipeline camp. Organizers cannot immediately transform the FERC process to respond to demands or control whether politicians and powerholders will be receptive to the cause. It is important to emphasize that both the Sunway and Canyon pipeline organizers worked *incredibly* hard, putting in years of research, community engagement, attending meetings and conference calls, and sacrificing their own personal well-

being. I admire the determination and passion of everyone I have had the privilege of speaking with. As Saeed (2009) highlights, social movements have broader consequences beyond their stated goals, and social movement leaders will learn from other movements and change strategies to fight the next battle. The organizers against the Sunway pipeline have shown what environmental organizing in the region can look like, and the obstacles that movement leaders will face in future fights.

This work counters the claim that social opposition is weaker in areas where “people are used to industrial activity” (Sovacool, 2014). In this case, prior experience with extractive industry has encouraged resistance work in the Canyon pipeline fight because of a negative history with fossil fuel companies. Many interviewees stated that Appalachians have a deep attachment to place. This place attachment has been shown to influence social movements (Beamish and Luebbers, 2009; Devine-Wright, 2009). On the other hand, the Sunway pipeline largely impacted areas that have not yet been heavily impacted by fracking and fossil fuel infrastructure, at least to anyone’s recollection. In this area, social opposition was weak among people who were not directly affected by the project.

Activism against fracking brings together localized concerns about environmental risks with global concerns about climate change (Hopke, 2016). This study adds nuance to understanding of social movements by adding a dimension of place-based analysis. Relationship to place, and the history of place, influenced how pipeline opponents framed the problem of the pipeline. This study demonstrates that broad-based movements, such as the Canyon movement, that are formed around an issue but expand ideologically, while maintaining a focus and a delegation of responsibility, seem well-positioned to take on the fracking industry. This framing is also well-suited to meeting folks where they are at in order to bring them into the movement.

I hope this study will prove beneficial to those working in anti-extraction movements as they think about the key elements to their work from initial organizing through the height of the campaign. Bringing folks into opposition through local issues, and then connecting the very local with global concerns, creates a broad and flexible framework that allows for a range of strategies and builds collaboration between coalition members. This is critical knowledge for social movement actors to build successful campaigns in place-specific contexts.

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. How did you first get interested in environmental issues?
 - a. Where did you grow up?
2. Why is this pipeline a problem?
3. Why did you choose to engage in resistance to the problem?
4. How did you begin organizing?
 - a. What organizations did you start with?
 - i. Follow up- how did you join this organization?
 - b. What **legal** tactics were you exposed to?
5. What are the goals of your work?
 - a. Long term vision/strategy
 - b. How do your goals align with/differ from organizational goals (if in an organization)?
6. What is your perception of the legal and political arena you are operating in?
 - a. Their perceptions of the communities they work in
7. What **legal** strategies have you and your organization used to oppose this? Why?
8. Have you been able to work with other groups or organizations?
 - a. Which ones?
 - b. How do you work together?
9. Which individuals or movements have inspired you?
10. What difficulties have you encountered in mobilizing people around this issue?
11. Is there a history of resistance here?
 - a. How does the history of resistance here affect what you do today?
12. How have people responded to the things your group has done? Note only legal activities you've engaged in.
 - a. Community members, other organizations, pipeline groups
13. How do you define success in this effort?
14. Do you believe that you have achieved success?
 - a. What do you think it will take to get there?
15. Is there anything that you think is relevant to this conversation that I haven't asked you about or that you want to add?

Appendix B: Cast of Characters

FERC: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; nationwide regulatory agency for interstate pipelines and primary regulator in both pipeline cases

Canyon: Abbreviations and Organizations

- **DA:** Direct action
- **DEQ:** Department of Environmental Quality (agency name varies by state); particularly relevant to resistance in Canyon pipeline case
- **Forest Keepers:** small nonprofit; heavily involved in regulatory fight
- **Mountain Hearts:** medium-sized nonprofit in the region, coordinating nonprofit in opposition movement
- **PMN:** Preserve the Mountains Network; grassroots organization involved in opposition movement
- **TEA:** Transforming Energy Advocates; solidarity group of pipeline fighters, including against Canyon Pipeline
- **USFS:** United States Forest Service; involved in permitting process for Canyon Pipeline
- **Watershed Alliance:** nonprofit in Canyon Pipeline fight, heavily involved in organizing early community meetings
- **WCP:** Water and Culture Protectors; grassroots coalition group for Canyon Pipeline fighters, particularly county “Preserve” groups

Canyon Pipeline Interviewees

Pseudonym	Notes
Caide	Paid organizer at Watershed Alliance
Cal	Central figure in WCP
Cameron	Paid organizer and lawyer with Forest Keepers
Casey	Organizer with PMN
Cat	Part of DA camp
Chandler	Part of TEA
Chris	Affected resident, previously did support for DA camp
Cloud	Paid organizer with Forest Keepers
Colby	Paid organizer with Mountain Hearts
Crow	Part of DA camp

Sunway: Abbreviations and Organizations

- **NSR:** Neighbors for a Sunway Reroute; largest group involved in Sunway opposition, served as a semi-coordinator for information sharing
- **Green Together:** group involved in Sunway opposition and getting a community charter on the ballot in one key hub of opposition

Sunway Pipeline Interviewees

Pseudonym	Notes
Sal	Central figure in NSR
Sam	Impacted landowner, collaborated with NSR and Green Together
Sandy	Impacted landowner, collaborated with Green Together
Sasha	Paid community rights organizer
Sawyer	Resident of City of Sabina and key community organizer
Sean	Central figure in NSR
Shannon	Central figure in Green Together

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