

# Anti-War Activism and New Media: New Resource Structure or Creation of Symbolic Power?<sup>1</sup>

Paper presented to the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Sociological Association, Glasgow, September 2007

Kevin Gillan  
Sociology, University of Manchester  
kev@aktivix.org

## Abstract

Significant activist groups see information and communication technologies (ICTs) as offering substantial potential in empowering social movements in organisation, mobilisation, and communication of their critiques and demands. Academic studies have begun to demonstrate some of the creative and technologically sophisticated uses to which activists have put new media. However, emphasis on the novel tends to overshadow the degree to which activists' everyday lives are structured by interaction with new communications media. This paper analyses informational practices among UK anti-war and peace activists, demonstrating a far more complex picture of the value of new media to campaigning organisations. On the one hand, we see informational practices that utilise the *manifest functionalities* of new technologies as absolutely pervasive in contemporary activism. On the other hand, we see some activist groups discovering the *latent functionalities* of ICTs through stringing together multiple modes of communication or combining technologies with the social and political networks in which they interact. Through such practices activists produce relatively novel communication structures that potentially offer new ways of exerting the power of collective action.

## Introduction

Social movements are definitionally collective and communicative. As such we might expect that new information technologies potentially offer significant benefits to

---

<sup>1</sup> This paper draws on findings from the ESRC funded project, 'Anti-War Activism in the Information Age', being carried out with Prof. Frank Webster (City University) and Jenny Pickerill (Leicester University). This is draft work; please don't quote without permission.

movement groups. Interview data from a two-year project examining the informational practices of anti-war activists from a wide range of groups demonstrates that heavy ICT use occurs on a number of levels. In particular, we find a difference between practical, day-to-day organisation of activities on the one hand, and political debate and the mobilisation of new activists, on the other. In the former case, the more obvious benefits of ICTs (what we call their *manifest functionality*) are adopted by activists in a straightforward manner: the mobile phone offers ‘perpetual contact’, email offers quick communication that overcomes difficulties of distance and scheduling and the Web offers a vast, inter-connected store of relevant information. By examining activists’ choices regarding uptake of manifest functionality we can learn more about their wider ambitions in their day-to-day activities. Further, because we conceive of these technologies as enabling and constraining behaviour we examine the delights and frustrations experienced in making use of them, thus gaining understanding concerning the characteristics of technology and its impact on the contemporary anti-war movement.

ICT use is not limited to manifest functionality, however. We offer indications of more innovative use of the technologies employed through activists’ adoption of *latent functionality*. Examining the more innovative (which is not to say more successful) uses of technology in anti-war activism we find activists stretching the potential of the technologies they use in ways that alter the communication structure attached to the technological media. For instance, in utilising mass-text messaging and combining the power of ‘perpetual contact’ with the value of social networks, we find that an individualistic one-to-one medium can be developed to become a collective, many-to-many medium. Additionally, we find activists taking advantage of the convergence on digitisation in order to create multi-modal communication structures, producing innovative flows of information. Innovative uses of latent functionalities demonstrate less constrained behaviour than the simple adoption of the most obvious technologies. They are of interest, therefore, because they highlight preferences of anti-war activists with regard to information flow and communicative interaction.

A focus on 'resource mobilization' provided the dominant understanding of social movements in American scholarship through much of the 1970s and 1980s. The theory sought to explain the emergence and persistence of social movements through focusing on the ways in which movement organisations achieved relatively steady supplies of human and financial resources: 'the first principle of this approach is that the aggregation of resources is crucial to social movement activity... [which] requires some minimal form of movement organization without which protest will not occur.' (Buechler 2000: 35; McCarthy and Zald 1977). The main drive of the approach was to explain the success or failure of particular movements in relation to the flows of resources across organisations, rather than to provide sociological understanding of movement organisation *per se*. But to examine the relationship between technology and political activism it is necessary to look within the organisations and understand the fact that being an activist is partly constituted by carrying out relatively mundane organisational activities – dealing with correspondence; arranging meetings, agendas and minutes; raising funds; purchasing goods; designing leaflets and so on – in addition to the development and dissemination of political critiques and engagement in protest behaviour. It is here that we first see the extent to which new ICTs have become central to activist groups. In the following sections we will examine the ways in which UK anti-war organisations have made use of technology in all these activities, noting both the practical and the political reasons that different groups have for their particular approaches. While there are differences of detail between different groups, we will be able to reflect, in the conclusions, on the more general ramifications of these multiple approaches to technological adoption.

### **Technologies as Tools – Everyday Communication in Anti-War Activism**

More formally constituted anti-war organisations, and those with longer traditions, tend to have more formally organised offices and professional staff. But the mobile and relatively cheap nature of modern ICTs makes it possible to equip an effective temporary office. For instance, in visiting a small flat near Faslane Naval Base, which was home to two members of the anti-Trident campaign Faslane365, we saw:

This had become the central hub of activities for the first week of the campaign and was strewn with the paraphernalia of modern activism: in addition to banners and posters around the place, three laptops were on and networked, several

mobile phones were charging as well as the landline and a dedicated campaign phone line.

(Field notes, Helensburgh, October 2006)

This note indicates the informationally intense environment of a small campaign group and also highlights the importance of the telephone, in particular its newer mobile alternative. While the social and psychological aspects of CMC in general, and the politics of the Internet in particular, have come under scrutiny from scholars for some time, work on mobile phones has been slow to emerge. This may be because of the appearance that 'the mobile, resembling in part its ancestor the fixed-line phone, seems relatively transparent ... speaking on the phone appears so natural that the mediating technology is often forgotten' (Cooper et al. 2002, p.288). However, while the user's experience of talking on the phone may be familiar, the portability and pervasiveness of the mobile plus its many additional functions, offer a new dimension of the intersection between technology, information and politics in contemporary social movements. In the following paragraphs we first consider the ramifications of specifically mobile communication for anti-war activism, before going on to discuss some of the benefits of other ICTs. In later sections we will consider the additional uses of the mobile phone emerging as the technologies available become increasingly complex and interconnected.

### **Micro-coordination and the mobile phone**

As the titles of two recent volumes on the emergence of the mobile phone attest - Katz and Aarkhus's (2002) *Perpetual Contact* and Agar's (2003) *Constant Touch* - an important feature is the fact that location and time have become less relevant to the possibility of communication. It was such benefits of flexible and efficient organisation that were foremost in our interviewees' responses to questions about mobile phones. This backs up some of the emerging literature on the sociology of the mobile. Ling and Yttri (2002), for instance, refer to 'micro-coordination': 'one need not take an agreement to meet at a specific time and place as immutable... mobile communication systems allow for the redirection of transportation to meet the needs of social groups. This is largely a functional and instrumental activity' (p.139). Such benefits offer particular value in political demonstrations. In describing the adoption of technology in general, David Webb told us that 'mobile phones were the first thing to occur... that was when we were going to bases and all trying to organise ourselves. If you're trying to blockade gates and so on,

then mobile phones are obviously quite useful to communicate with different groups involved'. Similarly, a Society of Friends activist pointed out the strategic benefit of the mobile phone, vis-à-vis security services:

What the police tend to do is block you off, and they form a kind of wall around all four sides of your block and won't allow you to get out. So mobile phones are very useful there because for those who are inside the block and can't get out they can make a phone call to others who can then organise in another place... So there's more spontaneity. With the rise of the environmental activism like anti-roads and so on, that for me has been a feature, this kind of spontaneity, the "hey let's do it." (Steve Whiting, Quakers)

But the benefits of the mobile phone are hardly limited to particular styles of protest. In relation to the more orderly national march, 'we don't have the hassle any more like we used to. At the first Stop the War demonstration someone had to walk up and down the whole length of the Embankment to try and find the flipping bus - it was a pain you know. Whereas now we can coordinate people to get back on the buses a lot more easily with mobile phones and I think that makes a difference to people coming because they're not so likely to get lost' (Chris Goodwin). Given that the text message has only been a possibility since the mid-1990s, and the mobile phone call has been at all affordable for just a little longer, it is remarkable how central they have become through micro-coordination benefits. As one of our most experienced respondents, Lindsey German, Convenor, Stop the War Coalition, clearly stated: 'you couldn't not have them, you'd be stuffed without mobile phones'.

Other analyses of mobile communications similarly stress social and psychological benefits of the ever-present possibility of connection where frequent short communications allow the 'maintenance of symbolic proximity' and allow the expansion of users' 'psychological neighbourhoods' (Licoppe 2004; Wei and Lo 2006). Kate Fox (2007) explains how the 'anytime, anyplace, anywhere' nature of the mobile phone facilitates 'social grooming' among close-knit social networks that had become more difficult in the 'fast-paced and fragmented modern world'. Comparable benefits may help maintain solidarity among collectives engaged in political campaigns. For instance, in discussing the first major demonstration against the war on terror which took place in London in September 2002, Lindsey German noted 'we had no idea what it would be like, and it was very big... I always have the picture on my phone (of) the front of the demo'.

The image serves as a reminder of being a part of a mass of people with a shared opposition to war, as a personal symbol of collective identity and the potential for collective action. More simply, activists reported using the larger demonstrations to catch up with friends who lived far apart. Perpetual contact makes it possible for the demonstration to become a site of the maintenance of friendships in a highly mobile and fragmented society. It has been demonstrated within social movement studies that networks are essential to mobilising protest and to the transferral of oppositional political belief (McAdam 1982, 1986; Nepstad 1997). It seems likely then, that to the degree that political action and social networking become intertwined, potential for the construction of collective identity and collective action frames increases. The perpetual contact made possible with the mobile phone, and its utility as a store of names and phone numbers, is beneficial in this sense.

### **Internet Interactions: Decision-Making, Debate and Mobilisation**

The developing feeling of dependence on technology noted with respect to mobile phones is also familiar from discussions of email and the Web. As 'Fiona', a Trident Ploughshares activist, said of anti-war activism in general, 'it's hard to think how it worked before [the Internet], but of course it did.' With over four decades of experience of peace campaigning, Bruce Kent (Vice President, CND) has recently taken up the use of email, and noted, 'the advantage is certainly instant reply, can you do x on this day, yes/no, very good, I like that very much.' While this offers clear improvements over postal communication, respondents more commonly compared the use of email with the telephone. Here, one might expect the asynchronous nature of email to slow down communication. However, email was often the preferred medium because 'its so much easier to get something done, I'll send them an email ... I don't have to catch them when they're in or when they're able to answer their mobile' (Denise Craghill). Asynchronous communication is beneficial because one can communicate and then move on, picking up the original task as soon as a reply is received. Thus, 'you can all work at your own pace and your own timescale ... and across time-zones as well' (Jane Tallents) and 'decision making can happen where people don't have the same schedule' (Jesse Schust). As such, an obvious benefit from electronic communications is overcoming problems associated with time and distance. However, Fiona went on to specify that, 'the improvements are about being able to get in touch with a lot of people at the same time

through email, instead of making lots of individual phone calls.' The ready possibility of combining the technology with an existing social network, communicating with multiple recipients, offers significant benefits to anti-war activists.

Since *collective* action is a defining feature of social movements, it is clear that communication among groups is a central task. This communication could be towards several different purposes: micro-coordination around practical tasks; making decisions about group action; discussion of political issues; and informing groups about relevant items of news or possibilities for taking action. Each of these tasks could potentially be carried out via a range of different interactive applications of Internet technology. The email discussion list attached to a named group – whereby sending email to a single address will result in all members of the list receiving the email – appears to be a mainstay of electronic group discussion. However, respondents also reported using Web-based forums and discussion boards or more specialist instant messaging software for similar tasks. The following paragraphs consider ways in which anti-war activists have made use of the different possibilities offered by Internet communication, highlighting some of the advantages and disadvantages that appear either to be inherent to the medium or to the communication structure, or reflective of the composition of the social movement group.

Kate Hudson (Chair, CND) explained how email discussion aided work in the busy CND national offices:

[Email] makes for easier decision-making. Our office team is the centre of the decision making process ... we meet less frequently physically because we're in email communication... And for things like getting agreement about leaflets, for example ... you can agree the whole thing in five minutes, whereas previously it would have taken much longer.

It is particularly the ability to have group communication among multiple members across email that aids this process, so 'distribution lists are really good ... like today, someone had sent out a press release, and someone else sent an amendment' (Anna Liddle). The communication structure of email group discussions, which might best be labelled few-to-few, therefore has clear benefits over one-to-one communication in terms of speed and efficiency.

A second benefit of email discussion arises from the text-based nature of communication: 'you consider your position more carefully, writing something compared

to when you're speaking' (Tom Shelton). Similarly, Anna Liddle found email discussions 'an important way of people to share views who might not be confident enough to do it in person. I find it easier if I've got a problem or want to describe how I'm feeling to actually write it down and amend it a bit, so you actually know what you're saying.' So, in addition to improved efficiency some respondents have detected improvements in expression and understanding. This is enhanced by the potential connection between different electronic media, such that 'you can actually research the facts and send what you mean, you can even add references if you want from the website' (Anna Liddle). This hints at the notion of information circuits, whereby the nature of the medium offers easy potential for connections between different information sources. By copying the URL references to specific websites into a discussion, activists can contextualise their opinions on a matter and offer supporting information. To the extent that this is done with a thoughtful selectivity concerning the relevance and reliability of information sources (which we discuss shortly) this may improve the quality, if not the speed, of activist learning and decision making.

Text-based, on-screen interaction appears to produce a perceived increase in emotional distance between discussants. This may be seen as a benefit. For instance, Denise Craghill of Yorkshire CND hinted that email could be used to avoid telephone conversations that might present personal difficulties: 'sometimes you need an email, sometimes you use email conversations as a preference to a phone call.... You can keep at a distance with emails, can't you?' She noted that 'if you use [email] carefully, you could set out your position, and give the other people a chance to think about it, rather than being put into a corner, which they would be on the phone conversation. Conversely, others argued that for more difficult policy or strategy debates, face-to-face meetings were preferable. Face-to-face is seen as a more creative way of discussing and deciding on issues: Maya Evans of JNV, for instance, thought that 'electronic resources are really important in organising.... But also it's equally important to come to meetings... whereby we see each other face-to-face, because it's really hard to bounce ideas off each other through emails'. Similarly, 'it's partly the feeling... you just don't get quite the same connection as you can get with a face-to-face... that you need for creative policy making. It is a discreet-step discussion, you don't quite get that free flowing thing' (Adam Conway). This remark again highlights the asynchronous nature of email; here we see that the distance in time that divides participants' interventions can create an emotional

distance that impedes creativity. Denise Craghill noted that the same characteristic can increase potentially divisive conflict:

People can get really irate, really cross with each other, and that's when they should be phoning each other rather than emailing. Because ... it's like lobbing a stone at them, now it's your turn, you lob one back, I'll lob mine back, then you lob yours back, whereas if you had a conversation, you could sort it out... if you get into a conflict over emails, you can polarise it fantastically.

Denise was not alone in simultaneously pointing to the potential benefits of keeping a distance over email and the danger of it polarising conflict. Mike Marqusee, for instance, criticised the StWC for not utilising an open e-mail discussion list for debate, before going on to explain how a dispute on another list, 'became traumatic for the whole group, within hours ... [it] became overloaded with questions of both anti-Semitism [and] Islamaphobia ... if they want to have a fight privately, of course, that's completely up to them, but this so demoralised all the rest of the people, it virtually wrecked the group.' Two sets of factors seem to be involved in determining whether the distanced nature of communication is beneficial for activist groups or not. The first set revolves around the character of the group communicating, and the second is connected with the nature of the task at hand.

First, the value of email discussion varies with the nature of the group involved. Activists involved in F365 referred to trust within a small group as enabling better email communication. For instance, in responding to a question about the quality of online decision making, Jane Tallents stressed it was 'within a small group that know each other fairly well' that decision making could be better by email because 'you all have a chance to take part' as opposed to face-to-face meetings where scheduling difficulties and physical distance inevitably make full participation impossible. Utilising a custom built virtual chat-room for short-text communication via the Internet, she also pointed out that 'you can even crack the dilemma of being in two places at once', since simultaneous meetings could be taking place with overlapping groups and to attend both one simply need to keep two separate chat room windows open on the screen. Elsewhere, in the CND national office described by Kate Hudson above, there is a structure to decision-making that appears ease the difficulties of email communication; elected officers 'dictate and drive policy ... But in terms of day-to-day, on-the-ground running campaigns, it's all done

by the office staff with direction ... And quite often decisions are made over email. That seems to work quite well, actually ... it's time-saving' (Tom Shelton). It is not only that people associate small, structured close-knit groups with positive evaluations of electronic communication, but the reverse appears true as well. Where such communications – particularly through email distribution lists – are evaluated negatively, reference is often made to the broad-based nature of the group. A Leicester activist, Chris Talbot, described 'a kind of general left list ... [but] the trouble with those email lists were.... conflicts seem to arise on email discussions much quicker than they do face-to-face... there are tensions between the different left-wing groups – there's no doubt about that'.

Second, the nature of the task at hand seems to impact on the value of email interaction. There is a divide between a group attempting to organise an action and a list on which social discussions and political debates might occur. As Denise Craghill explained, 'if you have a network of activists trying to do something, I think you need to limit how much your e-lists are for chat (because) you can just get the sort of discussion they should be having in the pub.' Similarly, Anna Liddle noted that 'quite often people have theoretical debates on [email lists] but in the end I just stopped reading them. It was always just between a few people arguing.' However, list managers do recognise the need to clearly define the purposes of various communication forums because, as Jesse Schust put it, 'activists [can] get brought to a standstill by being on too many lists... a key is trying to minimise the flow of traffic for the people who need that, and recognising that some people need to have the discursive chatty thing'. The low costs of setting up email discussion lists allow the tailoring of different lists to different groups, Schust recalling that 'there was a group where they wanted to have a kind of social aspect to the list, so we created a social atmosphere on the list, and then had a [separate] posting list just for information'.

Hence when setting up lists these various issues may be taken into account when setting the rules of interaction on the list. Several respondents referred to trying to keep general chat or political discussion separate from organising. The Wandsworth Stop the War Coalition's email list, for instance, is 'mostly notification and organising things, who's going to do what, when. So debate happens in meetings or face to face' (Linda Heiden). The Quaker email list, Peace Exchange, is also 'explicitly ... not for discussing issues, if

they do, we'll come down on them (because) otherwise they get quite out of hand, and you tend to get very vocal people who will write their own views every other day, but everyone signs off (David Gee). It should be noted that both of these lists do allow all members to send email to the whole group the lists are, therefore, potentially interactive. This holds value for activists because it broadens the number of people who could be looking out for relevant news stories or possibilities for protest action. Where the work of investigation and communication is devolved in this way, however, sensitivity to the dynamics of email discussion lists is required in order to avoid some of the more problematic characteristics inherent in the nature of the technology itself.

In addition to trying to 'minimise the flow of traffic', interaction might be avoided on a number of other grounds. Most simply, there are practical considerations. In discussing a very extensive re-design of the F365 website, Adam Conway pointed out that 'discussion forums actually take a lot of central maintaining ... there will be people who just spam it, there will be people who accidentally spam it because they didn't figure out how it worked ... so you do need people to be editors or moderators ... and that's not a priority.' The important point here is that since the website re-design made use of a content management system – software intended to make website maintenance easier and that offers the possibility of providing complex website functionality with minimal programming skills – it would have been relatively straightforward to install a forum or bulletin board. What was off-putting, therefore, was not a lack of technical resources, but rather the ongoing maintenance work. Since campaign groups typically stretch their human resources to the limit, prioritising workload is crucial. And the priorities that different groups set often signal deeper political positions held within the group. Since activists' political worldviews typically involve understandings of power, agency and social change, their choices of kinds of action can often be read as a statement of deeper political beliefs. It is hardly surprising that within F365 – as a campaign focused on direct action to disrupt a military installation to the maximum possible effect – there were priorities other than maintaining discussions. Yet it should be understood that such priorities vary depending on the politics of the group involved, and their understanding of the possibilities for achieving their targets. Effective action, for F365, centres around directly targeting their opponents and, through blockading the nuclear submarine base, putting economic and political pressure on the government. Secondly – but still of high

priority – is the potential to influence others through gaining coverage in the mainstream media. Engaging in discussions through new media is low on the list of possibilities for change. Therefore, for Faslane 365 activist Adam Conway, ‘if people want to comment on [the campaign], I would rather that they did it in a letter to their local paper than on the website, because that will reach a broader audience ... [and] be a more effective campaigning tool... if it was on our website, then it would, likely become very much an internal discussion with probably a few people who avidly anti us coming in’. For him at least, prioritising workload meant either pressuring the government directly, or seeing the issue of trident renewal receive broad based media attention. Where discussion was most was in a highly public forum and not in one so intricately tied to the campaign itself.

As a rather different example, we can consider the development of the Big Trident Debate website from the national offices of CND. Like F365, this initiative was set up in response to government plans to plan the next generation of nuclear weapons delivery systems. The 2006 Defence White Paper, ‘The Future of the United Kingdom’s Nuclear Deterrent,’ in fact proposed an updating and renewal of the submarines that carry American-built trident missiles armed with nuclear warheads designed and built in the UK nuclear weapons research facility at Aldermaston. The Big Trident Debate appears as a Web-only campaign ostensibly to increase discussions of the relevant issues. It claims:

Last year, the government promised that there would be a full and open debate on the future of Britain's nuclear weapons. Since then, there has been considerable demand from all points of view for a genuine public and parliamentary debate but the government has done nothing to ensure that this happens.

This Big Trident Debate website has been established, with widespread support, with the single aim of pressing the government to facilitate that debate, and to provide a public space for debate of the issues. It is not confined to any one point of view and we urge participation from all perspectives. (Big Trident Debate, undated)

In fact, as Tom Shelton explained, the website was set up from the national offices of CND. With five decades of campaigning for unilateral nuclear disarmament by the UK government, it is obvious that CND’s position is resolutely against any renewal of Trident weapons and no amount of online debate will change the direction of that policy. Indeed, policy is set by CND’s membership through voting on resolutions at their national

conference. Yet the website claimed not to be 'confined to any one point of view'.

We do not make these points to suggest any attempt to deceive the public on CND's behalf, but to express surprise about the purpose of the website. The website offers three possibilities for interaction. One is to sign a statement that argues 'It is the responsibility of Government to facilitate a thorough, national consultation. This dialogue must inform the decision-making process and take place before the Government makes any decision on the way forward.' By taking part in this first option, one does not commit to a particular point of view on Trident renewal, but instead makes a public claim (since signatories are published on another part of the website) to the value of consultation in democracy.

The second potential interaction is provided by the website WriteToThem.com. Every page of the Big Trident Debate website shows an image of an envelope with a label saying 'Contact Your Politician'. It is possible to enter a postcode in a text box on the image, and clicking an arrow icon takes you directly to the Write To Them website, where you are given the opportunity to contact the local, national or European representative for that postcode area. Again, this form of political action does not force one to take a particular line on Trident renewal. However, one might expect that visitors with strong feelings on the issue might write to their representative with a very different opinion to that taken in the statement. So, rather than writing to appeal for a public debate, one might instead write to ask one's representative to argue for or against Trident renewal.

The third interactive possibility of the site was an online discussion board where visitors could read and reply to opinions others had written. Again, this offered visitors an opportunity to make a public statement on either side of the debate. Indeed, by offering such a forum the website attempted to offer the beginnings of the consultation that they demanded from the government. However, this aspect of the site appears not to have met with success and, by August 2007, it had been removed. An earlier interview with CND's Tom Shelton highlighted some of the problems of the online discussion: 'most people have logged on, posted one comment or a couple of comments and not returned regularly. Two main people have gone on there with polar opposite points of view and

started a slanging match'. This polarisation of debate, which we discussed earlier in relation to email discussion lists, appears to be a danger on interactive Web-based discussion boards too. This is particularly problematic for the Big Trident Debate, since 'we wanted to bring in people from both sides of the debate and provide a forum for discussion', but what in fact developed 'is very full in terms of messages and not very full in terms of users' (ibid). However, the failure to achieve its aims is, for present purposes, less important than the decision to use the website in this way in the first place. CND made an attempt to publicise the website through a wide range of groups in order to ensure a diversity of views were represented. However, starting from a network of organisations attached to disarmament and peace issues it would always be easier for them to attract participation from organisations that are 'basically to the left of centre, so we haven't got organisations that are pro-Trident yet. We're trying quite hard.'

Tom Shelton recognised that a part of the difficulty of attracting a truly broad range of participation was awareness that the initiative was being driven by CND, 'it's not coming from someone who's in the middle of the debate; it's coming from one side and we're trying to stimulate debate.' This should hardly be surprising. The structure of CND ensures tight control of material publicised on the main CND website, with every document being checked by the chair before publication. This is common where an organisation is keen to present an unambiguous political line. What seems puzzling is why an organisation which has opposition to Trident weapons as its central mandate for action would expend resources attempting to give space for alternative points of view. Partly, this may be explained by the confidence with which the central CND activists have in the rectitude of their perspective, as Shelton observed, 'we think our arguments hold up against any of the arguments counter to it'. Furthermore, anti Trident campaigners had taken a strategic decision to work towards delaying decision-making as far as possible. Premier Tony Blair was pro-nuclear weapons, but about to stand down, so the possibility of greater influence with a successor may have been attractive.

However, beyond the strategic reasons for CND to spend its resources in this way, 'I just think if you believe in democratic process then there should be a debate. You know, whether my opinion or another person's opinion eventually comes out on top is another matter really, but just having that debate is as important as the result' (Tom Shelton).

Similarly, Anna Liddle (who had no connection to the Big Trident Debate website) used her role as CND Education Worker to teach campaigning and debating skills because she wanted 'children to be more democratic'; she argued that the views they ended up with were less important than the fact that they had come to them through questioning mainstream views, finding facts and thinking through their positions. From another angle, almost all of our CND respondents talked positively about the internal democracy of the organisation; seeing it as not just a key organisational feature but a secret to success such that, for instance, after the challenge to peace movements after 9/11 it was only the 'mass democratic organisations [that] were able to rise to the challenge' (Kate Hudson).

It seems likely that the decision to utilise the interactive possibilities of the web to encourage a genuine debate on the issue of Trident renewal was not only motivated by a strong conviction about the strength of the anti-Trident arguments, but also in the vision of democracy as a foundational value, and a belief that the Web offered potential for improving democratic debate. To be sure, not all activists see the Web in such a positive light; Chris Goodwin, for instance, said simply, 'I don't like discussing on the Internet – I don't think it's a very democratic way of doing things', and respondents from both Wandsworth and Lewisham Stop the War Coalitions preferred for debates in face-to-face meetings. An anonymous interviewee from Friends of Al Aqsa considered the issues too sensitive to justify online discussions, 'it's such a difficult topic that I'm sure forums would get bloated'. However, Zulfi Bukhari of the Muslim Public Affairs Committee thought it best to allow such discussions to take their own course, less for the democratic value in doing so, but more for psychological benefits. Bukhari recognised the tendency to polarisation and described their forum as 'the Wild West, whoa, who knows what goes on there, there's some crazy stuff there. But that's really for people just to, I think, let off steam ... we don't say, guess what, Big Brother is watching you.' In sum, both the F365 and CND stories demonstrate that pragmatic, strategic and political values impact on choices regarding the provision of interactive spaces for debate on the Internet. As these comparisons suggest, the degree to which different pragmatic and political issues impact on the decision finally depends on the balance struck between these issues within the particular groups. Different political values and aims – even within the same movement – may lead to different uses of the available technology.

Decisions that groups make regarding use of communication media have been the basis of a variety of critiques levelled at larger organisations. Nahell Ashraf criticised the email groups for lacking a more genuine connection between people, elaborating that '[MAB] would send out emails about Stop the War, and give out mass leaflets, but never spoke to anybody.... Actually you don't develop your networks and your activists if it's just an email list... you'll send them an email telling them what to do, and they turn up. But actually it's not about them having the conversations and the discussions.' Mike Marqusee, conversely, considered that email discussions did hold the potential for a genuine interaction among movement participants, but intimated a similar critique of StWC saying that they 'actually did not welcome, and did not use the Internet possibilities that were there ... it's all one-way. What they never wanted was ... the kind of free-flowing open discussion on an e-list, which has become pretty much the standard practices through much of activist-land.'

What such comments hint at is a belief – quite common among activist groups – that discussion of political issues holds transformative potential and can thereby bring people into more active roles. The degree to which such transformations might occur without face-to-face interaction is, however, contested. Describing the attempts of the F365 coordinating group to find new blockading groups to organise days of action through the year-long campaign, Jane Tallents argued that 'the most effective thing is actually to speak to people... even emailing specifics – “dear Kevin we met once at a bus-stop and would you like to come and take part in this” - doesn't actually work, I've got to phone you up and say “hey, remember this”... and it's actually personal contact works much better to get those initial meetings together.' Similarly, Sadia Jabeen stated, 'we tend to use the good old-fashioned telephones to organise things really. The Internet is useful but in terms of organising, it's better to phone people, because you get a much better response. ... If I actually give you a call and have a discussion with you about why I think it's important for you to come [to a march], you might be more likely to come.'

Despite this, some positive evaluation of CMC in mobilisation was apparent. Most often, this is in connection with possible speed of information flow, thus creating the potential for the 'nimble campaigns'. That is, 'if you identify suddenly there's some campaign that

needs to happen, it can materialise much more quickly if people have this [technology]' (Jesse Schust). This frequently leads to positive comparisons with past modes of communication, 'From my CND days, which was the 80s ... we were contacting people through a telephone tree – now the net and mobiles and you think, "Oh God, it's so much easier." The telephone trees always broke down. It was so primitive [compared to] what you get on the net' (Isobel McMillan). From the perspective of today's Yorkshire CND, 'we'd definitely use the email list if we wanted to organise quickly. And you can lobby your MP and things like that more quickly as well' (Denise Craghill).

When targeting information about the practicalities of protest to those who have been involved previously CMC offers efficiency gains at little cost. It is now perceived to be essential to use technology in this way, as Zina Zelter conceded: 'I resisted getting email for years... [but] I couldn't have done the campaign I've just done – the Faslane stuff – without email. It made it possible because of sending out all that information.' However, enthusiasm for CMC was tempered when discriminations were made Co-ordinating a meeting or arranging transport was mobilisation of a sort, but when issues of galvanising supporters were raised then CMCs seemed much less valuable than interpersonal exchanges. David Webb, for instance, told us that 'certainly if you put a note out that a coach is available to go to London, say, you do get a lot of emails booking seats ... or asking for more information.' But he went on to note that 'in terms of developing, trying to get more and more people involved, I'm not sure it does an awful lot with that (since you get an awful lot more from meeting people than just exchange of information.'

Despite the difficulties of CMC for debate, decision-making and mobilisation, its evident advantages seem to be driving activists to adapt their practice to suit the medium. While Ippy recognises that e-list discussions can 'go round and round and round and round', she also points out that 'it's not impossible and we do struggle along ... it is sort of participatory but sometimes its participatory by silence ... people have to develop ... how they use things to be more effective and to be clearer about their participation in the decision making process'. In the process of learning some groups have begun to take advantage of mixing communication media, and matching them according to their best use. Jesse Schust claims that 'Most of the groups that I've been involved with revolve around having meetings that are facilitated by someone ... based around a consensus or

near consensus decision making ... And with email lists you can prepare for the meeting much more successfully, you can circulate agenda, get ideas out there before so people can think about things. Also you can decide simple things ... over the Internet.' Similarly, 'if it's something that involves us here, if it's sort of more the creative side of how to respond, or how to approach this problem, I'll talk to one or two other people in the group, either on the phone or face-to-face about it ... And I have to go through that process a little bit, and then that process will become a proposal, which they'll refine and agree upon on email ... which is better than just a couple of people having to make the decision ... You can do combinations of methods in that way, it's often quite useful, because you start with a better proposal' (Adam Conway). Referring to the Trident Ploughshares virtual meetings on IRC, Jane Tallents pointed out that 'it doesn't replace having actual physical face-to-face meetings every few months ... but it does have a place in between and we've got a protocol for how to decide things'.

In addition to the more specific points made throughout this section, the various quotations also demonstrate some more general features of activist uses of technology. First, as heavy users of email and the Web, activists have become sensitive to the ways in which CMC can effect the quality of communication – efficiency benefits are often weighed against the potential barriers to understanding and creation of conflict that may occur with asynchronous communication that lacks the non-linguistic information often required for nuanced expression. Second, in learning how to best make use of new communication technologies, activists have found ways to piece together different forms of communication within ongoing processes of debate, decision-making and mobilisation. As we describe below, multi-modal communication structures can be created that demonstrate relatively high levels of innovation and seem to have particular benefits for particular kinds of campaigns.

### **Digitisation and Information Gathering**

In chapter three we discussed the use that anti-war groups make of the web for disseminating information, whether that be through presenting particular political arguments, providing information about the consequences of the war on terror or encouraging people to take part in protest. That is, we considered use of the web by activists primarily as creators of content. Activists are also the users of that content and

many respondents reported using such information made available on the web. There is evidence from the United States to suggest that use of the web has encouraged participation in anti-war protest, as Nah, Veenstra and Shah (2006) argue, 'the Internet played an important role in spurring activism among individuals who opposed the war above and beyond what would have been explained by their demographic characteristics, their ideology, their concerns about war, and their opinion about US-led invasion of Iraq'. Furthermore, studies of participants at demonstrations against the war on terror in the US suggest that those activists who are closely connected with anti-war organisations are 'disproportionately likely to rely on digital communications media' and those with movement affiliations 'overwhelmingly received their information about the Iraq crisis through e-media' (Bennett and Givens 2006, p.1, 17). As users who seek information about protest, therefore, activists recognise the web as a 'phenomenal resource, absolutely phenomenal, the links ... what you can do, the resources, the information you can access, the networking you can do' (Steve Whiting).

This quotation does not refer exclusively to movement created e-media. Activists are information hungry and seek pertinent material from a variety of sources ranging from television news to favoured websites, newspapers to blog commentaries, as well as anti-war sources such as Information Clearing House and Z-net. Several of our respondents began their everyday activities with trawls of websites they regularly used for relevant materials, which might include the likes of BBC news and the *New York Times*. Milan Rai pointed out that sources may also include official documents, describing how during one campaign

having the text of the UN Security Council resolutions was crucial ... and the only way we could get those was from the UN information office in London, which had to request them from New York... it would be weeks of delay before we got these Security council resolutions. Foundational documents like that suddenly became immediately accessible. And it did make a really big difference to our work.

As we observed earlier, the hyperlinked structure of the web encourages the creation of links between anti-war organisations and a wide range of other entities, including websites that represent mainstream media organisations and institutions of governance (Gillan a; Gillan and Pickerill, 2008). The fact that anti-war website authors' linking practices lead them frequently to link to the sites of organisations about which they might

be critical, such as government departments or news articles with which they disagree, indicates the value of information from multiple sources. Furthermore, in comparing the hyperlink activities of anti-war activists in Australia, Britain and the US, in chapter 5 we noted a substantial degree of agreement across movement websites about which sites to link to, which implies some commonality in the assessments made by activists about the nature of those sources. However, linking practices do not of necessity reflect the ways in which activists carry out information gathering in their day to day activities.

For a minority of activists, information gathering takes the form of finding original primary data. This is, for example, the role of NukeWatch. According to their own website, 'NukeWatch monitor and track the movement of British WMDs from Aldermaston in Berkshire to Coulport on the West coast of Scotland.' The organisation is described as 'a network of individuals who campaign against the convoys ... because they are part of a system of weapons of mass destruction' (NukeWatch, undated a). The website also contains information and advice about how to spot a convoy of nuclear weapons, and how to prepare for and carry out convoy tracking and protesting at convoys. They note that 'a hands-free mobile phone is essential these days for keeping in touch. Make sure it is always charged or get a car charger ... Programme a few essential numbers into your mobile for emergencies' (NukeWatch, undated b). One participant in our email discussion group mentioned NukeWatch explicitly; when asked about the value of new technologies Alison said, 'Specific examples of major improvements are: NukeWatch – much easier to follow convoys and communicate with other nukewatchers through mobiles. The initial alerts are done by text message, and updates through email.' A F365 participant, Jane Tallents, also noted the use of mobile phones in following convoys of nuclear weapons: 'when there's a convoy, it's still down to some individual being out there and actually seeing it, but we send it on email lists, we do mass text messaging ... and even being able to follow it with a mobile phone instead of a bag of bloody 10ps looking for phone boxes.' Further, she noted that 'information sometimes can be sent out about meetings of the MOD, discussing warhead convoys ... that they put up on their own websites, and they forget we can find it too.' This demonstrates again the practical benefits of the 'perpetual contact' available through the mobile phone. More interestingly, it also points to the ways in which activists can connect together various channels of communication to suit their particular circumstances. This aspect of

technology use will be discussed further as 'multi-mode action' below.

While other examples of primary information gathering within anti-war and peace activism clearly exist, the majority of activists more usually gather information from secondary sources. Here we recall to the web as 'a phenomenal resource' However, the sheer quantity of information available over the Web, or delivered to email inboxes, raises new problems, 'of course, you get too much ... before, people thought a bit before they actually wrote something down because they then had to get it printed ... to distribute it and all that, now it kind of gets churned out.' The key is that, 'you have to work out which are the good sources, which ones you can rely on to be useful and to the point' (David Webb).

Activists therefore learn skills for filtering information, as we discussed in the previous chapter. However, such filters readily introduce biases in seeking out confirmatory sources: 'a lot of people, and me included, will click on the links to things that they think, "ooh, I like the sound of that" ... and not necessarily hunt for information in an impartial way' (Tom Shelton). 'Honestly speaking', Arif Sayeed admitted, 'I one hundred percent believe what's on the Islam Channel – I know that probably seems a bit naïve ... and if I read something in the Socialist Workers' paper I'd trust that 100 times more than if I read something in the Daily Express.' Similarly, Korin Grant reacted to a question about 'what you were going to trust' in gathering information with, 'God, I don't think I ever thought about it. I was probably naïve enough to think, if it's on the Internet, it's probably alright. Unless it's something that I disagree with and, therefore, it isn't.' Despite their confessed biases, Arif Sayeed pointed to a process of understanding through 'reading both sides, reading the extremes [by which] you can have a middle ground yourself and take things from either side and assimilate it' and Korin Grant continued to explain that 'it looks right, maybe if it has association with something like CND or certain groups.' Indeed, both these notions seem to be central in activists decisions on whether to trust, and even whether to consult, various information sources. And such decisions take in the whole gamut of available current information sources including newspapers, television, websites and newsletters circulated by post or email. On the one hand, individuals trust sources 'if you correlate the information and you've got a piece of information that appears at several sources' (Maya Evans). On the other hand, 'if the source is from a certain place,

you get to know whether it's something you could rely on' (David Webb) and 'there are particular people who, if they say I went there and I saw this, you tend to believe that they did ... There are also people who are of the left who are in the anti-war movement who you can't necessarily immediately take ... at face value, and the same goes in the mainstream media' (Milan Rai).

Several points throughout the preceding discussion have indicated the existence of information circuits. By this we mean the ways in which one source of information can be passed around a number of groups, and be put to a number of uses, very rapidly with the aid of ICTs. The generation of such flows of information is, at times, the result of activist efforts and may be a part of the structure of the working day. In CND, 'we have, every morning in the office ... a press roundup, and there's a list of websites that people check. And it varies, showing different ones each day or depending on what comes up on the more general news portals' (Tom Shelton). Within CND this comes across as an internal affair, and its attitude to information put out on their own website is that it ought to be there for campaigning, rather than for purely informational purposes. Yet for others the generation of flows of information itself is seen to have potential in mobilising opposition to the 'war on terror'. Justice Not Vengeance, for instance, concentrates its resources on attempts to build anti-war arguments from sources that are likely to be found credible by members of the general public. As such, the recycling of news information from mainstream newspapers is a key activity. However, the process of doing so affects the meaning, since they are typically put together in ways that might, for instance, highlight inconsistencies in government-sourced stories or demonstrate truths otherwise hidden. Alternatively, such activities might be less central, but 'even though this group in general does not put up information on the Internet, we make a huge use of it by ... trawling the 'net, exchanging and sending links to each other, ... and sending those links on to other people who we know might be interested' (Linda Heiden). Particularly among those 'other people', Heiden explained, such information might serve to make them more interested in a particular campaign. In this way information of itself was seen to have mobilising potential.

It is worth highlighting that it is not necessary to create such resources from scratch, but rather to use what is already available. Manzoor Moghal described his personal website,

created for him by his son: 'What my son did was he collected all the material that's available on the net about me....he's collated everything, put it under one heading, he's not edited anything. He's written nothing, I've written nothing, just all the things that have appeared about me.' Such uses of information do suggest a significant change in the processes of social movement groups, and one that is deeply intertwined with the particular, enabling features of new ICTs. There are traditional connections between social movements and the production and distribution of informational materials. From the radical, socialist newspapers to the regularly posted newsletters from groups to which one subscribes, print resources form a core space for the production of shared frames, shared identities and additionally offer selective benefits that might entice group membership. Electronic distribution, however, greatly reduces the costs of copying information from other sources, and the creation of informational montages for distribution has become far easier and more commonplace. This also carries a danger of fragmentation as it becomes less likely that large numbers of group members have been informed by the same mix of informational materials.

### **Innovative Uses of ITCs: Networked Structures and Multi-Modal Communications**

Thus far this chapter has concerned itself primarily with activists' uses of the manifest functionality provided by ICTs. Most engagements with technology within the anti-war and peace movements in Britain are of this kind. By contrast, the following sections examine ways in which activists have engaged more innovatively, discovering latent functionality enabled by technology. We examine several moments where the furthest horizons of informational connectivity are exploited. Our intention is to suggest neither that these examples demonstrate a direction in which activism is headed nor that more technically sophisticated uses of technology are necessarily more effective than simpler methods of communication and interaction. However, reflection on these examples highlights two key ideas that have already been mentioned: first, the ways in which technology is embedded within the social and political networks utilised by activists and, second, the ways in which different technologies are connected in attempts to make best

use of the particular characteristics of particular technologies.

### **Networked communication structures**

As described earlier, the practical benefits of micro-coordination represent the most obvious use of the mobile phone, utilizing the technology more or less as intended by its inventors. There are examples of political uses of the mobile, however, that extend the technology in novel ways. The most often discussed case is the role of text messaging in the campaign against Philippine President Joseph Estrada that forced him from office. Throughout 2000, anti-Estrada text messages such as hostile slogans and satirical jokes, were propagated across social networks. Anti-Estrada activists began to use 'phone trees to quickly organize massive demonstrations against Mr Estrada. When riot police would manoeuvre to contain demonstrators, protest leaders would use mobile phone messaging to redirect the crowds' (Katz and Aarkhus 2002, pp.2-3). Additional information was spread by protesters through email discussion lists and websites, so 'mobile phones had to function in a particular media environment, which reflected the middle-class-dominated power structure at the time. It is within this larger framework that we should acknowledge that the mobile phone – as a medium that is portable, personal, and prepared to receive and deliver messages anytime, anywhere – can perform the mobilization function much more efficiently than other communication channels at the tipping point of a political movement' (Castells et al. 2007, p.192). It seems that the combination of social networks and mobile phones, aided by their in-built record of phone numbers, contains significant potential for aiding mobilization. It appears that such mobilization is likely to benefit from the long-established 'strength of weak ties' (Granovetter 1973). If an individual forwards a text message to all of the people in their address book then they will send it to people with whom they have strong relationships and to those with whom they are likely to be less well acquainted. Because the sender is personally known to the receiver, this form of communication seems more conducive to producing a sympathetic response than in mass forms of communication (cf. the Berlusconi case described below). So, to the extent that the message seems to be true and important to the receiver, it is likely that it will be passed on beyond the densely networked clusters of friends and allies from which it originates, into the wider (mobile phone owning) society.

Such forms of networked communication problematise established ways of differentiating media in terms of one-to-one and one-to-many. This is because in examining the communication we broaden our focus beyond a single link (such as from broadcaster to audience) to many links from individual to individuals, thus it would need to be described as few-to-few-to-few- etc. This reflects a shift in the nature of the communication as the potential for control is dissipated across a broad network and the ability of the message to spread to thousands of recipients depends to a large degree on individuals' evaluation of the content of the message, its potential for having an impact, its potential for getting the sender in trouble with security services and so on. Such networked communication appears to be more focused on activity than representation or deliberation. Yet this feature also seems to make it a riskier mobilization tool for groups with radical claims since, one might expect, messages that are furthest from mainstream opinion would be more likely to hit a high proportion of dead-ends within the network as individual receivers evaluate the content as wrong, or as risking repression, and do not pass it on to their networks.

The potential to use network forms of activism is partly limited, however, by the practical necessity of learning the technology. Tom Shelton noted that 'Ben in the office has used group text messaging to convene one small anti-war demo at university. That is something we thought about doing but we haven't. Partly, just you can't constantly expand into areas, learn new technology the whole time as an organization.' However, he also argued that asking people to pass on text messages, as a low intensity form of participation, could not build a sustainable movement: 'you could say x number of people have texted this thing on this day, which indicates a level of popular support ... but I think it's a fairly transient kind of thing. It doesn't ... stay in people's minds and I'm not really sure that it has any lasting effect.' Furthermore, the effects could potentially be 'detrimental in the sense that people feel like they've done something when actually they haven't really ... [text messaging] is basically the least involved type of political activism you could possibly have.' There are two points of interest here. Firstly, skills constrain the uptake of new technology. Second, communication per se may not count as activism to some commentators.

### **Multi-modal action**

One example of the use of mixed technologies in protest comes from the 2004 demonstrations against the Republican National Convention (RNC) in New York. A graduate student, Joshua Kinberg, designed and built a 'dot-matrix graffiti bike'; an extended pedal cycle mounted with computer-controlled chalk aerosol cans that could spray messages onto the pavement. Kindberg's website, Bikes Against Bush, enabled visitors to write short message that could be transmitted directly to a 'printer' via his mobile phone and bicycle-mounted laptop. Messages could thereby be submitted from anywhere with Internet access and (almost) instantaneously sprayed as graffiti onto the pavements outside the convention. Kindberg demonstrated his technology, but was never able to use it in protest since in the lead-up to the demonstrations Kindberg was arrested, and his equipment was seized, by 'NYPD's "RNC Intelligence Squad," which had been travelling around the country infiltrating progressive groups and building secret files on potential rabble-rousers ahead of the convention.' (Singel 2007)

This example is at the more creative end of technology usage: there is no sense in which the designers of the technologies Kindberg utilised has this end in mind. The latent potential existed in the technological infrastructure, but nevertheless needed a technologically adept, creative individual to bring these to the surface. But, because such creativity requires high levels of skill, it is also relatively rare and highly unlikely to be taken up broadly. Nonetheless, this example can be used to examine some of the features of multi-modal communication. First, the range of modes of communications can be broad. Using graffiti as a medium, Kindberg's virtuoso design combined an ancient dimension of political communication (graffiti has been found from Roman times) with digital technology. Second, we should pay attention to Kindberg's position in the network of communication. His use of the website to garner messages of protest put himself in the position of a single node mediating a many-to-many communication system. The mobile phone is, of course, intended as a one-to-one communication device. By hooking it up to his website, Kindberg stretched its capabilities to allow many-to-one communications and by hooking it up to his graffiti printer he turned it into a one-to-many communication. In numerous political applications of the mobile phone beyond pragmatic micro-coordination we see that the technology has been similarly stretched. For instance, the

day before the Italian regional election of 2004, Silvio Berlusconi sent 13 million messages to Italian mobile phones, thus making use of the system for definitively one-to-many communication resembling the Italian television networks under his control.

The third issue raised by the Kindberg example is that of the location of power in communication networks. Within any information network, densely connected nodes are potential points of control or the exertion of power. If Kindberg's system allowed him to intervene by selecting some submitted messages to print and to discard others, his position in the network would allow him to change the meaning conveyed in this experiment of many-to-many communication. By, for instance, filtering out messages with expletives or that simply seemed 'whacky' he would, for better or worse, misrepresent the overall message conveyed against the RNC. Alternatively, he might not have included that possibility in his design, and the node would therefore be structurally transparent; in this case he would have created a truly many-to-many network, and one that roughly conformed to the 'end-to-end' principle described above. The concentration of power in a network is not simply a problem of distorting meaning, however. As this example demonstrates, it is also a point at which the network can be taken over or destroyed. The seizure of Kindberg's equipment by the police did just that, making it impossible for any messages to be relayed from the Internet to the streets.

As introduced in chapter 2, one of the more creative actions by the Stop the War Coalition was the promotion early in 2007 of an anti-war single by a band spoofing Tony Blair's university rock group, Ugly Rumours. They produced a cover of the anti-war song, 'War (What is it Good For?)' which was made available as a download only release. An opportunity was spotted to gain publicity for StWC following changes in the rules of the official singles charts without the expense of producing and distributing a physical format CD. Further, the CD could be pre-ordered simply by text messaging the code 'Peace1' to an automated service that then enabled the messenger to download the CD from an online distribution outlet. The fact that Ugly Rumours performed at large national demonstrations in both Glasgow and London, with instructions for buying the single given repeatedly and shown on screen, undoubtedly contributed to the success of the single, which reached sixth position in mid-week charts. The intention of the group was clear, to attempt to embarrass the Prime Minister and gain attention and significant funds

for Stop the War. Moreover, this was seen by commentators as a bid to attract the attention of the younger generation of media-savvy teenagers. This example appears to have been Stop the War Coalition's most technologically sophisticated intervention into the information environment. Multiple modes of communication were used, utilising the perpetual contact made possible by mobile phones to enable promotion at a public rally to have a wider impact. A video made for the single, along with a video of the live performance, made available via You-Tube, quickly propagated across the Web, being linked to and discussed on music-related websites and weblogs as well as the 'usual suspects' on the political left. Additionally, the normal channels of communication through the email newsletters, the national StWC website, and various local anti-war groups were also used to promote the song.

## **Conclusions**

## **References**

- Agar, J. (2003), *Constant Touch. A Global History of the Mobile Phone*, Cambridge: Icon.
- Buechler, S.M. (2000), *Social Movements in Advanced Capitalism: The Political Economy and Cultural Construction of Social Activism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Castells, M., Fernández-Ardèvol, M., Linchuan Qiu, J. and Sey, A. (2007), *Mobile Communication and Society: A Global Perspective*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Cooper, G., Green, N., Murtagh, G.M. and Harper, R. (2002), 'Mobile Society? Technology, Distance and Presence' in S. Woolgar, (ed.) *Virtual Society? Technology, Cyberbole, Reality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 286-301.
- Fox, K (2007), 'Evolution, Alientation and Gossip: The Role of Mobile Telecommunication in the 21st Century', *Social Issues Research Centre - Publications*. Online at: <http://www.sirc.org/publik/gossip>; accessed 16/07/2007.

- Katz, J.E. and Aarkhus, M. A. (2002), 'Introduction: Framing the Issue' in J.E. Katz and M.A. Aarkhus (eds) *Perpetual Contact: Mobile Communication, Private Talk, Public Performance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-13.
- McAdam, D. (1982), *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- McAdam, D. (1986), 'Recruitment to High Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer', *American Journal of Sociology* 92(1): 48-51.
- McCarthy, J.D. and Zald, M.N. (1977), 'Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory' in *American Journal of Sociology* 82:1212-1241
- Nepstad, S.E. (1997), 'The Process of Cognitive Liberation: Cultural Synapses, Links, and Frame Contradictions in the US-Central America Peace Movement' *Sociological Inquiry* 67(4): 470-487.
- NukeWatch (undated a), 'What is NukeWatch?' in *NukeWatch UK*. Online at: <http://www.nukewatch.org.uk/nukewatch.php>; accessed: 8 August 2007.
- NukeWatch (undated b), 'Tracking and Monitoring' in *NukeWatch UK*. Online at: <http://www.nukewatch.org.uk/tracking.php>; accessed: 8 August 2007.
- Singel, R. (2007), 'NYPD Intelligence Op Targets Dot-Matrix Graffiti Bike' in *Wired*, 10 April 2007. Online at: [http://www.wired.com/politics/onlinerights/news/2007/04/kinberg\\_0410](http://www.wired.com/politics/onlinerights/news/2007/04/kinberg_0410); accessed: 8 June 2007.