Laundry-Folders, Diaper-Changers, Dinner-Makers: The Women Who First Pushed for a Diplomatic End to the Vietnam War

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Group Exhibit

Exhibit: 500 words
Process Paper: 500 words
We wanted to highlight a lesser-known story of debate and diplomacy. Drawn to the idea of unconventional diplomats, we found a review of *Women’s Antiwar Diplomacy during the Vietnam War* by Jessica Frazier. We contacted the author, who emailed excerpts of her book in return. A caption describing an illegal and daring wartime meeting between female American peace activists and Vietnamese women prompted us to focus on Women Strike for Peace (WSP) and its diplomatic work with women of Vietnam and political leaders from the U.S., North Vietnam, and the United Nations.

We began researching WSP in newspaper archives after early internet searches failed. We found copies of WSP’s newsletter, *Memo*, in the Wisconsin Historical Society. The articles in *Memo* provided us with details on WSP’s protests, meetings, and actions to end the Vietnam War. The Swarthmore Peace Collection and *Washington Area Spark* were rich photographic resources. We enjoyed emailing librarians and discovering documents in the Congressional Record and UN Archives. Our most significant source was Cora Weiss, WSP leader and four-time Nobel Peace Prize Nominee. We interviewed her twice at length about her work identifying POWs, dangers she faced in Vietnam, and the importance of diplomacy. From this research, we constructed the story of WSP’s impact, from advocating for an end to nuclear weapons to being the first to demand peace in Vietnam, to its success in electing one of its own to Congress.

Our group created an exhibit that displays our research in an artistic way, which we designed to be loud and busy like a protest. Protest signs at the top of our exhibit showcase our hand-lettering talents. A photo of *Memo* editor Barbara Bick at her desk inspired our base, which is an homage to the work WSP did from home. It features WSP’s *Peace de Resistance Cookbook*, which inspired our title and recipe card captions. We imagine WSP members using
this cookbook to fulfill their conventional roles as dinner-makers while pursuing their unconventional roles as diplomats.

WSP did not wait for permission to act diplomatically. From its first day, WSP used diplomacy to contact Kennedy and Khrushchev to influence foreign policy. They faced scrutiny after traveling to Moscow because they understood what the government did not, that diplomacy requires working with the enemy to find peace. WSP received direct credit for the passing of the 1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, then pivoted to Vietnam. They picketed and sent petitions, but what set WSP apart from other protesters was that they worked to understand the complexities of war through diplomacy. The knowledge gained from meeting face-to-face with Vietnamese women in Hanoi, Djakarta, and Paris enabled WSP to debate politicians’ motives.

On November 1, 1961, 50,000 American women answered WSP’s call to protest nuclear testing. From that beginning, WSP developed a strategy for relentless diplomacy that would reveal the cruelty of the Vietnam War. WSP’s diplomacy secured the release of POWs, mobilized 500,000 everyday women into political action, and cemented women’s role in the prevention and resolution of war.
Annotated Bibliography

**Primary Sources**


This interview is significant because we see that 6 months after the first strike, Dagmar Wilson has a 5-page feature in the New York Times Magazine of the Sunday paper. The interview helps us understand how the early success of the November 1, 1961 action inspired them to keep going and reach hundreds of thousands of women within months. Wilson talks at length about the obstacles to peace that are not considered by politicians.


This testimony was very important in our understanding of WSP as "unconventional diplomats." In the record, Mr. Sullivan mentions that the State Department gave WSP no assistance, nor debriefed them in meeting with the Vietnamese in Paris about the release of POWs. Despite that, he acknowledges that WSP's work had been helpful in the release of information and in making contact with POWs.


This photo is on our right panel to show WSP's impact. It helped us understand how Weiss used diplomacy to petition her contacts in the Vietnam Women’s Union (VWU) to allow each POW a monthly letter home, which helped the US establish a list of prisoners. Weiss and WSP continued to assert that Geneva Conventions would guarantee prisoner release at the end of the war, which countered Nixon's justification for continuing the war.


This *Washington Area Spark* photo shows Dr. Benjamin Spock and Coretta Scott King at the White House gates and is on our timeline of protests on our right panel. This image and event were important to us because WSP diplomatically worked with Spock and other doctors to help politicians understand the impacts of war on participants.

This is a photo from *Washington Area Spark* that we included in our exhibit background section. It is important because it shows Wilson using diplomacy to urge Jacqueline Kennedy to broadcast an appeal for peace at a press conference after Nina Khrushchev had already broadcast her appeal at Wilson's request.


In this *NYT* article, this testimony of a HUAC observer was important to our understanding of Dagmar Wilson's wit and skill as an inspiring leader. Baker gave a detailed account of Wilson's testimony and her strong defense. We used several quotes from this article for our exhibit.


This is a Bella Abzug campaign pin from the Swarthmore Pin/Button Collection, which is part of their Peace Collection. This photo of the artifact helped us in our understanding of Bella Abzug's legislative push for WSP which helped women see that their vote could be a vote for peace.


This video footage of Bella Abzug speaking through the years was helpful in our understanding of her role in WSP during the Vietnam War. It is clear she mobilized women, fought to include more women in politics, and repeatedly called for an end to the war.


This newspaper article helped us understand how WSP used holidays like Mother's Day to communicate its message. This Mother's Day action demanded Congress deny Nixon's use of funds to continue in Vietnam and urged mothers to lobby Nixon and Congressmen to end the killing. WSP member Lorraine Gordon explained that the public should keep their Mother's Day gifts of flowers and perfume, and instead, demand that government give back the sons at war.


This photograph shows WSP member and performer Eartha Kitt using unconventional diplomacy to speak frankly to First Lady Johnson at the White House after 16,600
Americans had died in the war. This photo did not make the exhibit, but it helped us to understand that WSP felt that young people had lost hope in their future and that ending the war would provide new hope to them.

This photo is part of our historical background left panel, and it shows Dagmar Wilson and 11 WSP members leaving for a two-week meeting with the Soviet Women’s Committee in Moscow, one of their first "unconventional" diplomatic actions. This helped us to understand that it was important to WSP to use this diplomatic opportunity to learn the Soviet's side of things, even though they later would be placed under FBI surveillance.

This photograph is in the history of WSP section of our left panel. On the second anniversary of WSP, Wilson and King marched at the U.N. in celebration of the Test Ban Treaty. This was helpful in our understanding that although the Test Ban was a decisive victory for WSP, they considered it only a beginning to complete disarmament.

The photo shows many mothers with babies on laps at the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) hearings and was essential to our understanding of how WSP used motherhood to their advantage. Because WSP faced government surveillance while in Moscow, the HUAC subpoenaed WSP to public hearings which were attended by 500 WSP mothers with their babies.

Within this Memo article, WSP detailed their "Project Vietnam in Elections" actions, including electoral activities, demonstrations, draft resistance activities, and educational activities. This was important to us as we considered their impact as a call to action for women.

This Memo article talks about the WSP response to increased attacks on protestors, like the students at Texas Southern University (a historically black public university in Houston, TX), and how they supported groups under threat. Although we choose to tell a more specific story about their diplomatic efforts to end the Vietnam War, we also appreciated understanding how WSP responded to other matters. This helped us
understand that there were intersecting movements, including the civil rights movement and the feminist movement, in the work of WSP.

This *Memo* article was important for us to see how WSP called women to action. It starts by recounting the damage war is inflicting on the children of Vietnam, then asks women to take one day to lobby Congress. We see at this time that WSP wanted the end to all bombing and to have no more spent on the war.

This *Memo* article helped us understand how Bella Abzug brought more political action into WSP. It tells of how WSP, under Abzug's leadership, got 30 Congressmen to speak on the floor of Congress in a special session on Vietnam, and WSP's participation of 1,200 women was entered into the congressional record.

This article from *Memo* was important in our research on the work WSP did with POWs. At this point, WSP were the only Americans granted contact with POWs, so they used this access to the prisoners to deliver letters. Never squandering opportunities, WSP met with President Hanoi Ho Chi Minh while visiting.

This *Memo* article helped us see some of the struggles WSP faced. Here, they tell of their Los Angeles offices being vandalized and death threats made against Dagmar Wilson, Mary Clarke, and others.

Testimony shared in *Memo*, like this from Natalie Montgomery, was an important part of WSP's ability to encourage others. We understand *Memo* gave women space to share individual experiences to inform and inspire others, like this testimony of a new WSP'er, sentenced to 30 days for civil disobedience at a draft office.

This *Memo* article was important to see the difficulties WSP faced, especially in 1967. During the protest of Johnson's visit to Los Angeles, 1500 policemen brutally dispersed
protestors. This helped us understand that WSP would work on issues, such as the freedom to peacefully demonstrate and police brutality, within the peace movement and the civil rights movement.


We used a photo of Barbara Bick editing *Memo* from this article for our exhibit.


This photo from *Memo* was important because we can see that it was diplomatic talks with Nguyen Thi Binh that allowed Nguyen to tell WSP, who would subsequently tell the U.S., what the North wanted - all Americans out of Vietnam. It is interesting to us to see it was personal exchanges that make diplomacy, like how in this article Irma Zigas talks about her friendship with Nguyen that grew out of Nguyen giving her a traditional Vietnamese dress.


This article helped us understand the personal sacrifice and hardship many women faced as they worked with WSP. Many left home and work to attend conferences, lobby, or protest. This article explains that Pat Griffith, who helped WSP contact POWs in Hanoi, underwent financial hardship to make the trip.


The photograph from this article is unattributed and was most likely taken by one of the conference attendees. We used this photograph of WSP members with Vietnamese women in Cuba to show their diplomatic efforts to end the war.


This article helped us understand the goals WSP set from the National Conference in 1968. These goals revolved around diplomatic action, including sending 100 women to meet with Johnson; a national lobby at the Pentagon; continued opposition to the draft by working with schools; and involvement in local politics.

This article was helpful in our understanding of WSP's diplomatic efforts with Vietnam. While in Moscow meeting with representatives of both North and South Vietnam, they earned an additional invitation to travel to Vietnam later in the year. Through all the diplomatic talks going back to 1964, WSP had clear information from the Vietnamese that they were resolved never to stop, nor be bullied into peace talks.

We choose this photo of Dagmar Wilson because it shows her at a microphone, and we read about her explaining it was first difficult to speak in front of crowds. We think it shows how she was an unconventional diplomat. She didn't have experience, but she accomplished so much.

This NYT article gave us some insight into public perception of WSP at the time. The article makes note of the women's dress and "good nature" and helps us understand how WSP had to be aware of public perception. The article discusses their intent to meet with official delegations in Geneva to persuade an end to nuclear arms which was an important early diplomatic effort of WSP.

This article comes from the end of the Vietnam War but shows us that WSP did not consider their work in Vietnam finished, as they had an upcoming action planned to protest bombing that had spread to Cambodia and increases in military spending. The article quotes early WSP member Ethel Taylor about how WSP quickly shifted to Vietnam in 1964 which was important to our contention that WSP was the first to protest Vietnam. We used quotes by Dagmar Wilson and Amy Swerdlow from the article in our exhibit.

This Washington Post article goes into detail about the proceedings of the HUAC hearing and explains that many of those questioned invoked the First and Fifth Amendments in refusing to answer. Although presenting an opposing viewpoint, it was also important to see how the HUAC showed a fundamental misunderstanding of diplomacy, as WSP knew they must work with the enemy to find compromise and peace.
This Washington Post article was important because it shows the distress some women felt while being questioned by the HUAC. We also see how WSP's "unorganization" helped them defend themselves against accusations by the HUAC.

This newspaper article was important to us because it helped us see how Wilson used wit against the HUAC and increased our understanding of how WSP operated. As an opposing viewpoint, we see how some in the public could not understand how peace with the Soviets must involve the Soviets, despite WSP feeling this was obvious. The article also mentions women with children in the committee hearing, something that we understand must have been quite a sight.

This LA Times article presented direct responses by Mary Clarke, Ethel Taylor, Orpha Goldberg, and others on how, after being rejected by many advertising firms, they created their billboard. The group discusses the issues the billboard continues to cover and how it's helped their cause. Goldberg also commented that the success of WSP came from the opportunity it gave all women to become leaders.

This UN photo is part of our unconventional diplomacy middle panel. It is important for us because it shows us that every WSP protest was an opportunity for diplomacy. On the day of the Spring Mobilization, Wilson, Dr. King, Dr. Spock, and others delivered a formal protest accusing the U.S. of violating the U.N. Charter to U.N. Undersecretary Bunche at the UN.

This UN photo is on the left panel of our exhibit and shows WSP presenting a scroll of gratitude to U.N. Secretary-General U Thant for his role in disarmament. It helps us see that even though they lacked official capacity, WSP would strive to continue diplomatic discussions with U Thant and the United Nations through the Vietnam War.


This photo is from *Washington Area Spark* and shows Wilson delivering a letter for First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy asking her to speak out on nuclear disarmament. Another letter was delivered to the Soviet Embassy for Nina Khrushchev, wife of the Soviet Premier. It was important to us because it shows diplomacy from day one and is included in our exhibit.


This photo is from *Washington Area Spark* and shows a pregnant WSP protestors in front of the White House. We used this photo in our exhibit to show that WSP strategically used their roles as wives and mothers to demand an end to nuclear testing by arguing for the protection of their children.


This photo of a clipping from *The Christian Science Monitor* reproduced in *Memo* is on our right panel to show the mobilization of women. It shows Sen. Fulbright behind a mountain of letters from WSP members. We understand that through *Memo*, WSP gave women a way to communicate with politicians.


This is a reprint of a letter from Sen. Church to a WSP member in the June 1966 issue of *Memo*. He writes that he has been encouraged by WSP's growing base of support, and it is used on our right panel to show how *Memo* helped women see the impact of their actions. Mrs. Smith must have been proud to receive his letter because she sent it to *Memo* to be published.


This Life Picture Collection photo of Wilson was important to us because it shows Wilson in the month WSP began. She is on the phone surrounded by paper and notebooks. It helps us understand how she was doing WSP work in addition to her work as an illustrator and mother.

In this interview with Cora Weiss, we learn that her children participated in WSP activities by licking stamps and attending demonstrations. It also confirms her role in securing the release of three Vietnam POWs. In the interview, we learn Weiss' view that women's participation in government and world politics is vital to peace.


This source was important to us to see that WSP's work was recognized and formally entered into the Congressional Record. It was also important to see how swiftly they could act. In the record, Hatfield asked Johnson to be aware that WSP collected a petition of 3,000 signatures in two hours to demand Johnson end the war.


In looking at the Library of Congress, we found many documents about Cora Weiss and POWs, including this memo. The text was important because it confirms Cora helped escort three POWs home. Interestingly, it confirms the government included espionage equipment in the POW mail Weiss delivered, which she was unaware of at the time.


After our telephone interview with Cora Weiss, we went in search of a photo of the Committee of Liaison, and we were happy to work with the librarians at Swarthmore to get this photo. Here, Cora stands outdoors in Vietnam, apparently coordinating the release of POWs. In our interview, Cora Weiss explained her work in detail in identifying and helping release prisoners.


After speaking with Cora Weiss, we went in search of a photo from Bach Mai Hospital. Here she stands in a bombed-out hole of the hospital wall. WSP worked to rebuild the hospital, which was a story Weiss told us.

Covenant Sunday School Class, First United Methodist Church. Interview by the author. Dallas, TX. April 21, 2022.

We interviewed several Covenant Sunday School class members of First United Methodist Church in Dallas who experienced duck-and-cover drills as children. They explained that despite their young age, they felt certain that hiding under a school desk would not protect them from a nuclear attack, and they also described the fear they
This interview helped our understanding of how the mothers of WSP must have felt in wanting to protect their children through the prevention of war and not ineffective drills.

Crane, Ralph. *Billboard Erected by Women's Strike for Peace-California*. March 1968. Photograph. Accessed February 5, 2022. https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/billboard-erected-by-women-s-strike-for-peace-california/hgGIWYXb3WVbJg?hl=en. This Life Picture Collection photo helped us understand that WSP used many tactics to call attention to the Vietnam War. WSP's Hollywood billboard was constantly maintained to starkly remind people of the casualties of the war. It took us some time to find this image, and we were sad to pull it from the exhibit after our district competition.

Cronk, Sue. "Ban Banners Banned as Mothers March: Mothers Move for Test Ban." *The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973)* (Washington, D.C.), May 9, 1963, sec. E, 1-2. http://ezproxy.nypl.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/ban-banners-banned-as-mothers-march/docview/141817641/se-2?accountid=35635. This *Washington Post* article was important because it shows public perception of WSP, with many still focused on the way WSP members dressed or their occupations, which WSP had to use to their advantage. This article also talks about how they were prevented from picketing on Capitol grounds, but they nevertheless made their way in to try and meet with their representatives.


D.C. Public Library Washington Star Collection. 'Peace or Perish’ Say Demonstrators: 1962. January 15, 1962. Photograph. Accessed February 6, 2022. https://www.flickr.com/photos/washington_area_spark/50627882218/in/album-72157703664114941/. We included this photo in our background section, and it is important because it shows that WSP continued to march, and President Kennedy continued to watch from the White House. On this day, Kennedy was particularly concerned about them in the rain and asked his science adviser about nuclear fallout in acid rain.
This photo is on the right panel of our exhibit, showing the impact of WSP. WSP member Weiss was nominated four times for the Nobel Peace Prize and continues to lead international peace organizations.

This cartoon from the *Des Moines Register* in reproduced in *Memo* and appears on our center panel. The cartoon helps us understand that the Pentagon protest had just happened, as well as a military ban on a magazine that had a poem by a child about peace in Vietnam. This helped us consider multiple perspectives.

This image shows that WSP rallies often included diplomatic meetings. During the Mother's Day rally, Wilson and WSP members lobbied the state department with Linus Pauling, winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. WSP invited scientists to lecture and lobby with them to better inform the public and politicians.

This opinion piece in the Westchester Weekly Section of *The New York Times* was important as we considered what happened after Vietnam for WSP. It explains that the end of the Vietnam War was not the end of WSP. It explains that WSP was still pursuing diplomacy even into 1978 as they raised questions of Carter at a Pentagon briefing about his nuclear policy.

This article is a reprint of the interview published in Perspectives, a publication of the World Council of Peace. This interview was important because Duckles tells how women in WSP became more politically engaged over time. Another important thing we learned is that it was the burned children of Vietnam that compelled them to find a way to help and act.

This reprint of a political cartoon from the *Washington D.C. Evening Star* depicts women carrying Women Strike for Peace picket signs with their clothes torn up. We used this image in our exhibit to show how WSP became more determined even after police
response at protests became fiercer. It is important because it shows the women had their job as mothers, which the cartoon implies is still harder than protesting.


Foley, Eileen. "They Work, Plan and Hope All Year to Make 'Peace on Earth' a Reality." The (Philadelphia) Sunday Bulletin (Philadelphia, PA), December 10, 1967, Women Today, 4. https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/p15932coll8/id/23811. This interview from the Sunday Bulletin reprinted in Memo was important to us because it was written for women, coming from the Women Today/Society/Fashions section of the paper. The interviewer asks Ethel Taylor and others if average women can do anything to promote peace. From this, we understand that WSP was successful because it showed women exactly how to get involved.

Ford, Elizabeth. "Peace Group Studies Arms." The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973) (Washington, D.C.), September 9, 1962, sec. F, 24. http://ezproxy.nypl.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/peace-group-studies-arms/docview/141475615/se-2?accountid=35635. This article discusses a book WSP produced on disarmament. It was important because it explains that WSP was not interested in hearing from American politicians about the Soviet Union's position on disarmament but instead decided to look at the Soviet position first-hand to bring light to the subject, dig through the political motivations, and uncover the truth. Their investigation revealed that the two sides, American and Soviet, were much closer than reported by the U.S.


This image is on our right panel for WSP's impact. We learned that WSP's diplomacy has a lasting impact as part of Resolution 1325 which addresses war's disproportionate cost to women and the importance of involving women in every aspect of peacebuilding.


This letter to the editor titled *United for Peace* by WISP (Women International Strike for Peace) member Grunewald helped us to understand that WSP had an international influence. Grunewald writes that WISP members support Wilson against the HUAC and believed nothing could be more American than speaking one's mind according to one's conscience. We understand that the HUAC sought to find fault, not loyalty, in WSP.


This newspaper article was important to our thesis in developing the idea that WSP brought the ignorance of politicians to light and debated their motives. In this case, Nixon insisted on the release of POWs before withdrawing troops. Cora Weiss, however, tried desperately to show Nixon that the Vietnamese would only release troops after the withdrawal of troops, as called for in the Geneva Convention.


This letter from Womanpower United is sent on behalf of their group and WSP to a young woman selected to go to The Hague for a rally in connection with NATO sessions. This was important to our understanding of the impact of WSP, as they helped women build political leadership.


This letter to the editor titled *Role of WSP* was important because it gives credit to Wilson's diplomacy even as her motivations were called into question by the HUAC. He asks how can peace be achieved if not by communicating and compromising with the Soviets as Wilson and WSP had done.

This *New York Times* article explains that WSP managed to grab Kennedy's attention as they protested outside the White House in the rain and that they met with Adrian Fisher, Deputy Director of the Disarmament Agency. It was helpful in our understanding of WSP's diplomatic action in meeting with Fisher as well as their impact on Kennedy. The article goes on to say that activists all over the world and on both sides of the Cold War followed WSP's example.

This photograph shows African American women were part of WSP. King was a lifelong peace advocate, even before meeting and marrying civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., and she helped WSP understand peace abroad was impossible without peace at home. We used her photo on the left panel to show her involvement in the Test Ban Treaty and Geneva Conferences.

This interview helped us understand Eartha Kitt's response to the backlash she faced after visiting the White House. She explained there was a CIA dossier on her, which forced her to move her career abroad.

This is a photo of Cora Weiss at a press conference for the Committee of Liaison with Families of Servicemen Detained in North Vietnam (COLIFAM) after she accompanied three U.S. fighter pilots held as prisoners home from Hanoi, via Beijing, Moscow and Copenhagen. This photo helped us understand WSP's impact on POWs.

We were so happy to learn that WSP published a cookbook and that we were able to find it in a used bookstore. The cookbook is on our replica desk because it helps us tell the story of these women as mothers, and it also inspired us to use index card recipe cards as the design for our captions. The inside cover gives a great quote about the hot stove and the hot line, meaning the picket line, which we used on our timeline of protests.

This Library of Congress photo is used for Abzug's portrait on the right side of our board concerning WSP's impact. She is important to include because she pushed WSP to include lobbying in their efforts and worked to organize women's majority vote into a political force.

https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/1006/detail/mink03.html.

With Nixon as President, peace became even more elusive, and WSP continued diplomatic efforts for another four years, as this Library of Congress photo of Abzug in Paris with Nguyen Thi Binh illustrates. Studying Abzug and later WSP action helped us understand that WSP never swayed administration officials to understand why withdrawal from Vietnam was the only path to peace.

https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2015649162/.

Nguyen's push for total withdrawal made her an icon in the U.S, with her image appearing on t-shirts and posters, like this photo of a political poster. When Nguyen met WSP in Paris, she told of new and continued bombing despite formal peace talks, and she contended North and South Vietnam were united in their desire to see America withdraw. Studying Nguyen helped us understand that WSP's contact with Nguyen helped report what was happening in Vietnam and that the U.S. government fundamentally misunderstood the situation.


This opinion piece was important in that it looked at theHUAC hearings from the perspective of those who believed that WSP was communist. From this, we learned that those in support of theHUAC saw WSP's usage of the fifth amendment as evidence that they were communists. It also quotes Dagmar Wilson's testimony where she explains that within WSP no one person was in charge, which we understand turned out to shield them from theHUAC.

https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz0002td38.

We used this LA Times image of California WSP using a motherhood image to protest Vietnam. It shows women dressed in funeral attire, and it is included in our timeline of protests in our right panel.

We used this LA Times photo on our left panel to show the history of WSP and that women as far as the Los Angeles State Building joined the November 1, 1961 protest.


We zoomed into this photo to get a portrait of Lorraine Gordon for our center panel. We felt it was important to highlight Gordon's unconventional diplomacy. Without formal authority, Gordon arranged all 17 diplomatic meetings in Geneva, leading to invitations to Moscow and Gordon and Clarke being the first in the U.S. peace movement to visit Hanoi.
This newspaper article teaches us about some of the early interactions with police at WSP protests and discusses some of their difficulties in being recognized. WSP protested at the Atomic Energy Commission, and though their protests were likely ignored, they still tried because they believed it was better to take action than to do nothing.

We considered using this political poster of Nguyen Thi Binh in our exhibit. It was made by peace activist, Bradford Lyttle. Nguyen Thi Binh was a Vietnamese communist leader and politician who negotiated at the Paris Peace Conference on behalf of the Viet Cong, and we appreciate seeing multiple interpretations of political posters in her honor.

This photo is on our timeline of protests and shows demonstrators protesting in favor of a government resolution that would censure President Nixon. It helped us understand that WSP tried to convince Nixon to end the war with no success.

This is the last photo on our timeline of protests, and it shows Dagmar Wilson still protesting in 1972. We choose this photo because we wanted to start with Wilson and end with Wilson.

This written account of the Jeanette Rankin Brigade confirms the participation of 5,000 women, including Dagmar Wilson and Coretta Scott King. We learned the women remained peaceful after not being allowed on the Capitol grounds. They instead pushed ahead with diplomatic efforts and sent Mrs. Rankin as part of a 15-woman delegation to meet with two Senate leaders, presenting petitions to John McCormack and Mike Mansfield.


This photo is used on our right panel to show the impact of WSP. We learned one outcome of *The Women's Vote is the Peace Vote* campaign brought Abzug into the House of Representatives, surrounded here on her inauguration by 500 WSP'ers on the House steps. She took her official oath inside the House and then her "peace oath" with WSP after, as depicted in the photo.


This newspaper article was important because it confirms that the WSP women who participated in the Djakarta meeting with Vietnamese women learned the only solution to peace would be the complete withdrawal of the United States from Vietnam. This matters because 1965 is still considered very early in the war. Even at this early stage, WSP understood through diplomacy that there would be no winning the Vietnam War.


This newspaper article was one of the most important in helping us understand that WSP took diplomatic action without any granted authority on their first day of action when Dagmar Wilson delivered letters to the White House and the Soviet Embassy. From this, we learned that WSP was given a hearing at the embassy but only allowed to pass the letter to Kennedy through a police sergeant. Within two weeks, WSP had replies from both Nina Khrushchev and Jacqueline Kennedy, both supporting peace.


This is a page from *Memo* that women could clip out and send to Sen. Murphy. It is part of our right panel, which shows the impact of WSP. This helped us understand how WSP helped move women into political action.


This *NYT* article was helpful for understanding varied perspectives, including the prevailing attitudes of husbands of the time. It discusses the impact on husbands and children when 50 WSP women left for the Geneva Conference, including how they managed to feed themselves dinner, rather than discussing the importance of the Geneva Convention. It was also important because we learned the public perceived the women to
be amateurs, but Mrs. Rosenwald countered that the word "amateur" means doing something for the love of it.


Ibid. Women Voters' Action Mapped - Bella Abzug in Front of Women Voters' Campaign Calendar. November 1967. Photograph. https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/p15932coll8/id/23930. This photo is on our right panel to show how Bella Abzug coordinated the legislative push within WSP. This helped us understand how, through Abzug, WSP developed an action plan for the 1968 election that would use women's political power to elect a "Peace President" and a "Peace Congress" that would stop war spending and increase domestic spending.


This newspaper article helped us understand when WSP started to focus on draft resistance to end the war and how they used irony to help their cause. Lady Bird Johnson had a nationwide plan to beautify America while the U.S. bombed Vietnam, and WSP made this irony known. Eartha Kitt was associated with WSP, and when she was invited to speak at a luncheon on delinquency, she shocked the First Lady by relating delinquency to the draft.


*The New York Times* (New York, NY). "Peace Marchers Rally in Midtown 3,500 Demonstrators Urge Kennedy to Rescind His Nuclear Test Decision Housewives Take Part." April 22, 1962, Late City Edition, sec. A, 1-3. Accessed December 2, 2021. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1962/04/22/121471925.html. This article was important because we see the public was taking note of WSP's action. It was significant that the women and their children participated in protesting, and the article makes note of the participation of babies in baby carriages in the protest. This helped us understand how WSP used significant events for mothers, such as this Easter demonstration, as well as Mother's Day, to increase the impact of their work.

*The New York Times* (New York, NY). "Pentagon Is Stormed by 2,500 Women." February 16, 1967, Late City Edition, sec. 1, 4. Accessed February 3, 2022. https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1967/02/16/82591626.html?pageNumber=4. This article helped us understand WSP's frustration with their political representatives' misunderstanding and ignorance of Vietnam. The women not only went to Pentagon to meet with Generals but also to the White House and Capitol Hill. We learned they were blocked for some time at the Pentagon, until McNamara ordered them allowed inside where they were able to meet with his aide, and they continued to the Capitol, where they questioned Sen. Javits but were unable to see Sen. Kennedy.

This article was important because it confirmed that WSP had presented a scroll of gratitude to UN Secretary-General U Thant, and it showed that WSP had reached 500,000 supporters within two years. The photo in the article shows Dagmar Wilson and Coretta Scott King marching to the U.N. just after the Test Ban Treaty was signed. We understand that WSP legitimized peace movements in the eyes of some lawmakers.


This article was helpful because it confirms hundreds of women all over the nation marched against nuclear arms as a result of one woman asking her friends to take a stand. It also confirms children took part with their mothers in the protests and that WSP delivered letters to Premier Khrushchev and Dr. Seaborg, chairman of the A.E.C.


This source was important because it shows how WSP was quick to act. We learned that just 8 days after their November 1st action, they were in New York meeting with Arthur Dean at the United Nations. WSP protests were often followed by meetings with politicians.


In the article, we see that WSP met with a Johnson proxy at the White House gate to urge the President to end the war in his final days in office. Johnson was hospitalized at the time. This was important to us because it showed they never gave up.


From this newspaper article, we learned that the Djakarta meeting included five women from North Vietnam, three women from South Vietnam, and ten WSP members who met together to discuss ways to put pressure on the U.S. government for troop withdrawal in accordance with the Geneva Agreements of 1954.

This early article is important because it showed us that WSP was a grassroots movement started by word of mouth. It also shows how these women were able to get the attention of the news even as an unofficial organization.


This short piece was important because it shows a diplomatic request by WSP, a telegram to President Lyndon Johnson days after Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, to stop $30 billion spent on the war and direct that money to rebuild the U.S. We learned WSP's position that lives were lost here in the U.S. due to neglect by the government.


This article is important in showing that *The New York Times* was aware and interested in Dagmar Wilson's day for striking. From this, we learned that Wilson explained that the event was a spontaneous creation. By the date of publication, WSP had already gotten confirmation that the Soviet Embassy would admit a WSP delegation for talks.


Here WSP calls for action on the draft, including a call to build opposition to the draft and ways to get publicity about it.


In this 1966 interview, we learned about Nguyen Thi Binh's desire for diplomatic peace negotiations and the needs of the South Vietnamese people, especially children.


This newspaper article was reproduced in the March 1967 issue of *Memo*. It was important to our understanding of the Pentagon Protest from a non-WSP perspective. We also used a quote from the article that explains WSP's ability to get face time with several politicians and military leaders.


This image is included in our timeline of protests. It shows Dagmar Wilson protesting in Washington D.C. one day after she returned from Vietnam.
Radio Open Source. "Our Worst War." Hosted by Christopher Lydon. Aired April 25, 2015, on 90.9 WBUR. Accessed April 21, 2022. https://radioopensource.org/vietnam-worst-war/. This interview with Seymour Hersh, the journalist who broke the My Lai Massacre, covers a discussion about the My Lai Massacre he had with Nguyen Thi Binh and her response. This source was important because we learned about Binh's perspective on Vietnam's strategy against America.


Routt, F. Dish Towel Demonstration for Peace: 1964. March 4, 1964. Photograph. Accessed February 8, 2022. https://www.flickr.com/photos/washington_area_spark/50561909203/in/album-7215770364114941/. We used this Washington Area Spark photo in our exhibit because it shows the creativity these women used in making their point. Here, they had women sign a petition on dish towels, which they sewed together into a long, difficult-to-ignore protest.


Ibid. Women Call for End to Nuclear Testing: 1962. January 15, 1962. Photograph. Accessed February 6, 2022. https://www.flickr.com/photos/washington_area_spark/49696973901/in/album-7215770364114941/. This is one of three photos from this protest from Washington Area Spark that we included in our exhibit. It is important because it shows the determination of WSP to capture President Kennedy’s attention.

This is one of three photos from this protest from *Washington Area Spark* that we included in our exhibit. It is important because it shows the women marching outside the White House despite the rain. We read different accounts of Kennedy watching the women on this day and being especially concerned about them in rain that could be acid rain.


This page of the *Memo* was designed to be cut out and mailed to elected officials, in this case, Sen. George Murphy of California. It shows an aerial photo of San Francisco with an overlay of the bomb range for the bombings of Hanoi, Haiphong, and Do Son. We included this image on our right panel to show how *Memo* helped women act for peace.


This portrait of Swerdlow is on our right panel which covers WSP's impact. Swerdlow edited WSP's monthly periodical *Memo*, which kept women informed and encouraged them to act.


This Tribunal, overseen by philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, was to raise awareness of Vietnamese civilian casualties and was important in our understanding of how WSP educated itself on the war. Although it had no formal authority, the tribunal was significant in that many prominent figures studied the war and determined the United States committed war crimes. WSP published the findings of the tribunal in *Memo*.


This photo is of a WSP protest of the U.S. bombings of Laos, which we included in the timeline of protests. It helped us understand that WSP continued with its search for peace, even when it extended beyond Vietnam.

We used this photo in our right panel showing the impact of WSP in mobilizing women to lobby Congress and the government. This is a photograph of gloved hands holding a declaration against the fence of the White House. In the year Abzug was elected to Congress, WSP's declaration demanded complete troop withdrawal and an end to the draft and war spending.


This memo was important for us to understand Weiss' work in helping identify POWs. It states she had so far identified 339 prisoners. We understand this was made through her diplomatic relationships with the Vietnamese.


This is a reproduction of a photo from the Sacramento Bee showing Reagan and Clarke. Reagan told WSP that he could do nothing, a familiar refrain of politicians. Congressmen in Washington urged the women to petition their local officials who urged them to petition Washington, so WSP decided they would have to do everything themselves.


This front-page article about Dagmar Wilson and WSP is important because it confirms Dagmar Wilson wrote to Nina Khrushchev and Jacqueline Kennedy to urge them to ask their husbands to support peace. Wilson received a detailed, thoughtful response from Khrushchev in support of peace, then used that to call a press conference and force a reply from Kennedy. We have been impressed by WSP's direct, person-to-person diplomacy.


This is a reprint of an article from the Sacramento Bee of March 30, 1967, and it helped us see the failures of WSP. They could not sway politicians, live Gov. Ronald Reagan, and they felt frustrated by politicians' inaction.

This letter to the editor titled *HUAC and WSP* by Slomich is important because it shows how the public felt the HUAC should not accuse well-meaning housewives of being Communists.


The *NYT* article confirms the HUAC hearings were attended by mothers with their babies. From this article, we learned that when testifying before the HUAC, Dagmar Wilson emphasized that WSP was solely concerned with peace. We also see that after the hearings, WSP members met with Arthur Schlesinger, assistant to President John F. Kennedy.


This article was helpful in the story we presented on our board. Kennedy did see WSP in the rain and although he didn't meet with them, he understood their message. It also confirms they met with Adrian Fisher, Deputy Director of the Disarmament Agency.


This article helped us build our understanding of WSP’s diplomatic work outside of the U.S., Vietnam, and Moscow. WSP went to Mexico to attend the first national congress of the Union Nacional de Mujeres Mexicanas, where they passed a resolution against the war. This story does not make it onto our exhibit, but it was still helpful for us to understand the breadth of their diplomatic work.


This Library of Congress image is on our left panel to show WSP history. We understand that WSP protested at government institutions, including at the United Nations, because they were alarmed by the lack of urgency of male leaders and peace organizations,


This photo is included in our exhibit in the timeline section. The image is important because it shows how WSP included draft resistance in their work to end the Vietnam War. They mobilized women to teach young men how to resist the draft and supported them when they faced arrest or imprisonment.
This image was reproduced in Jessica Frazier's book, and we used it in our center panel. The July 1965 Djakarta Conference came as the U.S. began a combat role in Vietnam. This helped us understand how Clarke and Gordon believed face-to-face diplomacy would help them change political policy.

In this photograph, Clarke and Gordon are shown at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi. We learned this trip was not allowed by the State Department and happened after the bombing in Vietnam had begun, yet Clarke and Gordon felt they would contribute to U.S. foreign policy by going. On this trip, they planned for a future conference in Djakarta.

Ibid. Mary Clarke. Dagmar Wilson, Ruth Kruse with Children. October 1967. Photograph. This photo shows prominent WSP members smiling with Vietnamese children and mothers. This photo helps us show that WSP's diplomacy was face-to-face, mother-to-mother. We can see that they were happy to meet and know their Vietnamese counterparts.

Ibid. Paris Conference. April 1968. Photograph. This photo is reproduced in Jessica Frazier's book and is on our center panel for unconventional diplomacy. It helps us show that as the war escalated, women of VWU, WUL, WSP, and seven additional countries met in Paris.

Swerdlow, Amy. Barbara Bick Editing Memo. June 1964. Photograph. This image is reproduced in Swerdlow's book. We use it as Bick's portrait on the right panel because it is candid and shows what it must have been like for Bick. It was the inspiration for the desk display of our exhibit.


Ibid. Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993. This book, which is included on our replica desk, helped us understand that WSP’s strategy to present themselves as concerned mothers helped them appeal to the press and the public. We looked at several chapters of this book for free online, but because we referenced it so often, we decided to buy a copy from a used bookstore. Much to our surprise, the book has multiple signatures in ink on the first pages, including Swerdlow’s signature and inscription.
Taylor, Ethel Barol. "Ethel Barol Taylor." Interview by Jen Darr. My City Paper New York City. Last modified December 1998. Accessed January 17, 2022. https://mycitypaper.com/articles/121098/20q.shtml. This interview of early WSP leader Ethel Barol Taylor was important to us because she responds to questions about the personal impact on her family, explaining that her children supported her work, and her son's friends sought her help with the draft. She describes being confronted as a traitor and facing FBI surveillance.

Ibid. We Made a Difference: My Personal Journey with Women Strike for Peace. Philadelphia, PA: Camino Books, 1998. We were happy to find Taylor's book in an online used bookstore, and surprisingly, it included her inscription and signature on the first page. This book has been central to the development of our thesis because it explains that the war dragged on for years because of the lack of diplomacy on the part of government leaders. Taylor explains that because they were not confined by a military view, they did not consider the Vietnamese as enemies and could see the South Vietnamese as victims of their government and oppressed by decades of invasion.

Time. WSP Departs for Geneva. April 1, 1962. Photograph. Swarthmore Peace Collection. Women Strike for Peace. The image is important because 50 WSP members went to the Disarmament Conference in Geneva and met with all 17 delegations. For a long time, we had only a blurry reprint of WSP's Geneva Departure, until we found that Swarthmore had a photo in their collection. We were able to request this item, even though the librarians were working from home due to the pandemic, thanks to their willingness to help our research.

Transcript of an oral history conducted 2014, in Cora Weiss Oral History Project: The Reminiscences of Cora Weiss, Columbia Center for Oral History, Columbia University, Santa Cruz, 2014. This oral history transcript gave us insight into Cora Weiss's beginnings, as well as her experiences in WSP.


the meeting, call for an end to the war, and explain how the civil rights movement and peace movement are intertwined.


Looking at the full text of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was important to us because we were trying to determine the impact of WSP. Cora Weiss helped draft Resolution 1325, and we consider it to be one of the greatest impacts of the work of WSP. It helps all nations understand that women should have a role to play in maintaining peace and security and that women are greatly affected by war.


This is a photo from Washington Area Spark that we included in our exhibit. It is important because it shows Wilson using humor and irony at the HUAC hearings to strengthen WSP.


This photo is from Washington Area Spark and shows the first WSP protest. We included this on our background panel.


This image is an early Vietnam protest after Dr. Spock was sentenced to two years in jail for supporting draft resistance. It is a photo we included in our timeline and shows children and mothers supporting Spock.

UPI/Bettmann. Holding Paper Doves. February 9, 1966. Photograph. This photo reproduced in Amy Swerdlow's book is part of our right panel's timeline of protests. It shows members of Women Strike for Peace holding paper doves as they prepare to board a train at Pennsylvania Station for a trip to Washington.

This image was reproduced in Swerdlow’s book and is on our left panel covering WSP history. We find it to be important because it shows WSP using motherhood to attack the congressional hearings. We learned that WSP felt they were the most loyal Americans because they were caring for the future of their families.


This image shows two women, one holding a baby bottle and one shielding a baby in a baby carriage, as police with batons attack protestors in Los Angeles when Johnson visited California. The image is a reprint from a newspaper, perhaps the *Los Angeles Free Press*, and it is dated but unattributed. We had to cut this photo due to its blurriness, but we wanted to include it to show that WSP often brought babies and children with them to protests, even as they faced police aggression.

"War and Peace in the Nuclear Age; Europe Goes Nuclear; Interview with Jerome Wiesner, 1986 [2]," 03/27/1986, GBH Archives, accessed February 5, 2022, http://openvault.wgbh.org/catalog/V_E3CCFA5A4A1148579C7FB7FF0FA961EB.

This interview was important to our project because it explained what was happening inside the White House as Kennedy watched WSP protest outside. Wiesner was Kennedy's Science Advisor, and he describes a time Kennedy saw them out in the rain and made the connection that the rain coming down on them could be acid rain from testing. A quote from Wiesner is the subtitle on the right side of our board.


This image is an early Vietnam protest calling for diplomacy to bring peace. It is a photo we included in our timeline. It was important because it shows WSP organizing 33 states to demand peace.


This is a photo from *Washington Area Spark* that we included in our exhibit. It is important because it shows that after the hearing, women of WSP marched to the White House. We learned that WSP used protests to create even more diplomatic action.


This photo from *Washington Area Spark* shows a large protest at the Capitol on Mother's Day. We used this image in our exhibit because it helps tell the story of WSP petitioning
the government and using creativity for their work. We learned that as mothers, WSP felt they could demand peace for their children.


The *Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973)* (Washington, D.C.). "Iron Curtain Rings down on 'Strikers.'" April 5, 1962, sec. C, 22. http://ezproxy.nypl.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/iron-curtain-rings-down-on-strikers/docview/141602127/se-2?accountid=35635. This article confirms that the WSP delegation to Geneva included 51 participants. It was important to see that even though they had no official diplomatic authority, they still pushed to meet with both Soviet and American disarmament delegations. Wilson explains that understanding the Soviet side would be an important first step, but we know upon WSP's return, they would be questioned by the HUAC for communicating with Moscow.


This memo shows Weiss' involvement in helping determine the status of POW/MIAs in Vietnam. It was helpful in our contention that WSP acted as unconventional diplomats because it acknowledges her work as unofficial.

This article by WSP member Cora Weiss is important because it notes WSP's diplomatic action taken to counter narratives of U.S. politicians. We learned that Weiss worked with WSP and the Committee of Liaison to communicate with Vietnam regarding prisoners, and we discussed this article with Weiss in our second interview. Here she asserts that the Nixon administration was distorting the facts to use the prisoner situation as propaganda to delay the war.

This article by Weiss was important to our thesis in that WSP educated themselves about the issues so they could then advocate for peace and counter government misinformation. She talks about the importance of learning about the issues, sharing knowledge, and mobilizing. She gives details about WSP actions, especially her work with POWs and UN SC 1325 and discusses how the government used the POW issue as a pretext to extend and escalate the war.

Ibid. Clarke and Wilson at Underground School in Hanoi. September 1967. Photograph. This photo owned by Cora Weiss is reproduced in Swerdlow's WSP book, and we used this image on our center panel to show the diplomatic actions of WSP. We learned that WSP was struck by the resilience of the Vietnamese. Through their visits, they learned of the ways children and families coped with the war.

This article by Cora Weiss helped us understand how UNSC Resolution 1325 came to be and its significance. Resolution 1325 is international law because all U.N. Member states agree to carry out the decisions of the Security Council, and this is important for us as we consider the long-term impact of WSP. Weiss discusses how she still makes a point to annually celebrate and evaluate the resolution so countries will continue to honor it.

Cora Weiss is the only remaining WSP member alive who can speak, and fortunately, she granted us time for an interview. In our first interview, she explained her work.
identifying POWs, drafting Security Council Resolution 1325, the dangers she faced in Vietnam, the importance of diplomacy, and what might be our role in present world events. This interview made an impact on our understanding of WSP and inspired us to learn more.


In our second interview with Cora Weiss, she explained that a documentarian friend had died recently in Ukraine, and she insisted that the efforts toward peace should never end. We spoke for over two hours and covered topics such as how she balanced participation in WSP, her family's response to her work, and the lasting impact of WSP. She insisted we pressure Swarthmore Library for more access, and we followed her suggestion to get five additional images from her collection.


Ibid. Letter to the editor. The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973) (Washington, D.C.), November 9, 1962, sec. A, 16. http://ezproxy.nypl.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/letters-editor/docview/141697455/se-2?accountid=35635. This letter to the editor titled An Absurd Defense by Wilson was important because it shows how WSP first took up its cause. We learned that they were concerned about the impacts of nuclear radiation on children and that they believed peace, not increased arms, was the only solution. WSP was mostly mothers of young children, and they felt it was absurd to think a duck-and-cover drill would provide any safety.

Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press. Dagmar Wilson and Many Other Women at a Women Strike for Peace Meeting. Photograph. Accessed February 9, 2022. https://www.wifp.org/2020/08/11/dr-donna-allens-life-work/. This undated photo of Dagmar Wilson leading a meeting in her home is the last image on our left panel. A room full of women are smiling at Dagmar Wilson, and in the very back
corner, we can see Lorraine Gordon and Mary Clarke, who begin the story of our center panel. This image helps us show that WSP came out of the Nuclear Test Ban successful and organized.

This photo from *Memo* is on our center panel. It helps us explain that in 1967, as the U.S limited information with the press on the use of unconventional weapons or attacks on non-military targets, WSP returned to Vietnam to open alternative communication channels.

This page from *Memo* is a collection of reprinted partial clippings from newspapers, including Vietnam Courier (January 9, 1967), Washington Post (May 15, 1965, October 24, 1966, and December 10, 1966), Baltimore Sun (March 13, 1965), and The New York Times (October 4, 1966). This helped us understand how *Memo* informed WSP members of the escalation of warfare to include nuclear weapons in Vietnam.

This *Memo* clipping that women could cut out and send to Sen. Murphy shows the damage done to children by including a photo of a small child, bloodied and bandaged. We used the clipping on the right panel to help show how *Memo* provided a way for thousands of women to act and lobby politicians.

This small ad shows Dagmar Wilson and Coretta Scott King speaking together at the Second Anniversary Meeting in celebration of World-Wide Peace Day. We thought this ad was important because it shows WSP's intersection with the Civil Rights Movement. The meeting would include a discussion of disarmament from the perspective of the peace and civil rights movements.

This advertisement was an invitation for an open hearing on peace by WSP. It acknowledges they are a grass-roots movement, but not an organization, which is important because WSP had to distinguish itself from organized groups like WILPF to
withstand investigation by the HUAC. It is also important that we see they do not ask any woman about her politics, race, or religion.


Ibid. "Display Ad 3 -- No Title." Advertisement. The Washington Post, Times Herald (1959-1973) (Washington, D.C.), April 9, 1968, sec. A, 2. http://ezproxy.nypl.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/display-ad-3-no-title/docview/143472776/se-2?accountid=35635. This ad placed by WSP right after Martin Luther King Jr’s assassination called on people to wire messages to President Johnson to shift war spending to rebuilding hope at home. This ad was important in helping us understand how WSP incorporated the civil rights movement into their work. We understand that they believed the country’s preoccupation with the war left many social problems at home to worsen.

Ibid. Green Sticker; Nov.1; WSP. November 1961. Photograph. Accessed February 9, 2022. http://triptych.brynmawr.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/Stamps/id/496/rec/60. This photo of a WSP sticker with the date November 1, 1961 on it is on our left panel to show the history of how WSP began as a one-day protest against nuclear weapons.

Ibid. "Los Angeles WISP All-Day Lobby." Advertisement. Memo: National Bulletin of Women Strike for Peace 4, no. 12 (June 1966): 17. Accessed January 15, 2022. https://content.wisconsinhistory.org/digital/collection/p15932coll8/id/23730. This notice by the LA WISP asks women to participate in an all-day lobby at a conference of Governors with President Johnson in attendance. We found this notice, with illustrations likely by Dagmar Wilson, useful because it shows some of the many ways WSP called women to action, including lobbying, writing, and voting. We used the notice on the right panel showing WSP's impact.


This is a photo of a political button donated by Dorothy Marder to Swarthmore. It is on our left panel to help tell the history of WSP as a disarmament group.


This is a quarter-page advertisement for an upcoming draft resistance demonstration cleverly designed as a draft notice. This helps us to see how WSP used creativity and irony in their work, as well as how some of their work at this time focused on draft resistance. We hoped to include this ad in our exhibit, but the print was too small.


This photo shows Pentagon officials laughing at WSP and Lyvada Lambert. We understand that WSP brought Lambert to speak for all women with sons forced to kill and be killed for a meeting with Senators Javits and Kennedy. We used this image in our center panel.


This is a proof for an advertisement WSP placed in newspapers asking people to send letters to President Johnson. We created a replica of this ad for our exhibit. It was important to us because WSP gave people an easy and direct way to plead with the president.


This photo is a clipping from the *Evening Star* reproduced in *Memo* that we used in our center panel. It helps us show that although WSP had diplomatic success with Vietnamese women who shared their concern for peace and with peace organizations like the U.N., they faced serious obstacles within U.S. political spheres. WSP tried unsuccessfully for weeks to meet with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, resulting in 2,500 women picketing the Pentagon.


This is an illustration for the cover of the March 1967 issue of *Memo* to advertise and promote the upcoming Spring Mobilization. We used this image on our right panel to show how WSP called women to action. The call to action could reach thousands, such as for the Spring Mobilization, the largest peace demonstration in American history up to that time, with 100,000 participants in San Francisco and 125,000 in New York.
Ibid. "This Mother's Day, Keep Your Candy. Just Send Our Sons Home." Advertisement. 
https://digitalcollections.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/object/sc94179.
This is a clipping of an ad by WSP from the Swarthmore College Peace Collection Ephemera which aimed to collect one million signatures for their Voter's Peace Pledge. We used several clippings from this collection as replica items for our exhibit desk.

This is a clipping from the Swarthmore College Oversized Items/Newspaper Ads Collection. We created a replica clipping of this advertisement for our exhibit desk. The ad was important to us because we see WSP still fighting for decreases in military spending and an end to nuclear weapons in 1980.

This is a clipping from the Swarthmore College Oversized Items/Newspaper Ads Collection. We created a replica clipping of this advertisement for our exhibit desk. The ad was important to us because we see WSP appealing to mothers in a way they might relate, and it provided an easy and direct way for them to act for peace.

This photo of a pin for Spring Mobilization is on our right panel to help us show the impact of WSP in bringing women to action. We understand that Spring Mobilization was the largest peace demonstration in American history up to that time with 100,000 participants in San Francisco and over 125,000 in New York.

This set of photos reproduced in *Memo* appears on our center panel for diplomatic action and shows WSP members meeting with various Vietnamese officials.

This image is on our center panel to show that with Nixon as President, peace became even more elusive. WSP continued diplomatic efforts for another four years, never swaying administration officials to understand why withdrawal from Vietnam was the only path to peace.
This is a clipping from the Swarthmore College Oversized Items/Newspaper Ads Collection. We created a replica clipping of this advertisement for our exhibit desk. The ad asks Johnson to stop taking the advice of generals and calls women to come to Washington in three days.

This podcast interview gave us words directly from Cora Weiss. From this, we learned that WSP used teach-ins to explain the war and why it was wrong, as well as provided draft counseling and helped get POWs released.

This is a sample letter from WSP and WILPF to world leaders published in Memo. We see that as WSP became increasingly worried that the war would escalate to a nuclear war, they wanted to appeal to world leaders for support. We appreciated seeing this letter because it affirmed that WSP (and WILPF) had no official authority, yet they didn't hesitate in acting as diplomats do and contacted world leaders to put pressure on the United States.

Secondary Sources

This chapter gave us the details of the meeting in Dagmar Wilson's home that started Women Strike for Peace, with Eleanor Garst as the person to write the September 22 call that then would be circulated by calls and letters through the women's networks of PTAs, church groups, friends, neighbors, and so on. This was important because it showed us that Garst's letter created 68 local actions in 60 cities within weeks, with 50,000 women involved. We also were able to understand the Quaker influence on WSP to make decisions collectively.

This Congressional Record was important in our understanding of the lasting impact of WSP. Kucinich, in the week of Dagmar Wilson's death in 2011, remarks on WSP's 500,000 members and reminds the government that it has a role in organizing for peace.

This book proved to be a valuable source of information, and we used chapter 8 to find and examine specific actions taken by WSP before and during the Vietnam War, including how WSP strove to educate and inform politicians on what was happening in Vietnam. We learned about the ad they placed in advance of the HUAC hearings that asked, "Gentlemen, what are you afraid of?" which became our subheading for our exhibit. Another vital point was that WSP created a committee to study Vietnam in September 1963, which enabled them to be the first group to protest the war.

Author Jessica Frazier emailed us a copy of her book, which served as the inspiration for this project. From her book, we learned that WSP leaders wanted to influence U.S. foreign policy during the Vietnam War and looked to form their own diplomatic relations with the women of Vietnam. The book details that process and the strategic approach they developed over time to end the war in Vietnam.

This article taught us that the American women from Women's Strike for Peace (WSP), North Vietnamese women from the Vietnamese Women's Union (VWU), and South Vietnamese women from the Women's Union of Liberation (WUL) met annually from 1965 and 1973 to persuade Americans to demand an end to the Vietnam War. We also learned that WSP was first concerned that the Vietnam War would lead to nuclear war. Additionally, through their diplomacy with the Vietnamese, they also became concerned with Vietnamese civilian casualties.

From this obituary, we learned that Dagmar led a 51-member delegation to Geneva in April 1962 to meet with 17 nations at a disarmament conference. They presented 50,000 signatures on petitions for an end to nuclear testing. We also captured an important quote by Wilson about wars being antediluvian that we used in the exhibit.

From this obituary, we learned Mary Clarke intended the November 1st action to be a one-time event, but WSP instead carried on with many other activities, including a long-term project led by Clarke to maintain a billboard in West Hollywood criticizing politicians for Vietnam soldiers' deaths. We also were able to confirm that Clarke led a group of 10 women to Djakarta, Indonesia in 1962 to talk with women from North and South Vietnam and that she traveled to Hanoi in 1967.

This Lorraine Gordon obituary includes a video interview highlighting Gordon's career in jazz and her daring and illegal trip to Vietnam in 1965.

This article is an overview of the major actions of WSP, and it points out that the women were more proactive than their male counterparts in the search for peace. The author wonders why, as a student of U.S and Soviet relations, she had never heard of mothers who participated in the Baby Tooth Survey or the November 1, 1961 strike. We hope to help tell this story with NHD.

This obituary of Lorraine Gordon shows us that she played a central role in Women's Strike for Peace. It also confirms that in May 1965, Lorraine and another WSP member traveled illegally into North Vietnam (via Russia and China) to meet with North Vietnamese women about stopping the war. It also tells that she could not tell her family of her trip.

From Lorraine Gordon's obituary, we confirmed that in 1965 Gordon made an unauthorized trip to Hanoi as a member of the Women Strike for Peace.

This history from the WILPF website was important for us because, while our project focuses on the diplomatic actions of WSP, some WSP women started with WILPF. Also, some WSP women sought out WSP because it was different in its structure from WILPF.

One important detail from her obituary was that she was married to a British embassy officer which may give a window into how she created her own diplomatic actions. This article was also important because it included a Dagmar Wilson quote that expressed her frustration with men and their inaction.
Full Exhibit
“How fortunate for the forces of peace . . . that the American woman, housewife and mother, felt compelled to interrupt the very important functions in the home and become involved in the affairs of the world, especially the all important problem of the survival of mankind.”
- Coretta Scott King, life-long peace advocate

“End the Arms Race not the Human Race.” - WSP

On November 1, 1961, 50,000 American women in 60 cities answered Dagmar Wilson’s call to protest nuclear testing. Organized in six weeks, it was the largest peace demonstration of its time.

Wilson was angered that men discussed nuclear weapons in solely technical terms. “So I called every woman in my address book to ask what they think of an action for peace. The idea of housewives striking was arresting, and the response overwhelming.” - Wilson

Success of the first strike drew more women to action and WSP was born, reaching 500,000 members within months.

“Radioactive fallout was an emergency, not merely an issue.” - Ethel Taylor

Alarmed by politicians’ lack of urgency, WSP maintained pressure at institutions, strategically using motherhood to advance peace.

“I saw the ladies myself. I recognized why they were here. There were a great number of them. It was in the rain . . . I considered that their message was received.” - President John F. Kennedy
Protesting was strengthened with diplomacy. On day one, Wilson sought help from Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Khrushchev, both of whom obliged.

“We . . . accept the responsibility to act to influence the course of government for peace. We join with women throughout the world to challenge the right of any nation . . . to hold the power of life and death over the world.”
- WSP 1962 Declaration

Diplomacy expanded internationally. WSP traveled to Geneva to lobby at the 17-nation Committee on Disarmament. Despite FBI surveillance, WSP subsequently traveled to Moscow, “to find out the aspirations and values of Soviet women.” (Wilson)

Summoned to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee upon returning from Moscow, WSP used “motherhood” to attack the HUAC, contending, “mothers arguing for peace were the most loyal Americans.” (Powers/Vogel)

“If the (HUAC) knew its Greek as well as it knows its Lenin, it would have left the women peace strikers alone . . . Instead with typical male arrogance, it . . . has come out of it covered with foolishness.”
- Russell Baker, NYT

Soon after, the U.S.S.R. and U.S. ratified the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Kennedy’s Science Advisor gave WSP direct credit, “not the arms controllers inside the government.” (Weisner)

Well-positioned from their Test Ban success, WSP was first to demand peace in Vietnam. On March 4, 1964, they picketed the White House, declaring, “make 1964 the year the world turned away from war.” (WSP)
Source Credit Text:

**Student-created Replica Protest Posters**
*Mary Clarke*, 1967, January 1967 Memo

**Lorraine Gordon**, Louis Armstrong House Museum
**Djakarta Conference**, 1965, Swarthmore Peace Collection

**Mary Clarke and Lorraine Gordon**, Presidential Palace, Hanoi, 1965, Swarthmore Peace Collection

**Secretary General Thant Evening Star Clipping**, 1966, January 1967 Memo
Women Strike for Peace provided a new perspective on the Vietnam War through unconventional diplomacy, which empowered them to debate American politicians’ motives and inspire thousands to promote peace.

“We go to show the world that women are capable of meeting together in spite of their countries’ killing each other . . . Women may be able to do what no governments can do, pave the way to peace through the love and protection of their children.”

- Mary Clarke, LA WSP, Hanoi & Djakarta diplomatic meetings coordinator

“We represented our country, whether America liked it or not.”

- Lorraine Gordon, NY WSP, Geneva diplomatic meetings coordinator

WSP understood **face-to-face diplomacy** could “force a change in administration policy,” so they bravely **traveled to Hanoi, and later, Djakarta**, to speak directly with Vietnamese women. (Clarke) Wilson explained this permitted “freedom from dependence on the judgments of the Viet Nam experts.” Thus began an **alliance based on exchanging information between women** when political leaders from the two nations were not talking.

WSP built rapport with Secretary-General Thant who “expressed to the women his appreciation of the efforts of their organization in the cause of peace.” (The Evening Star)
Evening Star Clipping, 1967, February 1967 Memo
Protest Political Cartoon, Evening Star Clipping, 1967, February 1967 Memo
Pentagon Political Cartoon, Des Moines Register Clipping, 1967, February 1967 Memo
Military Officials Outside Pentagon, 1967, February 1967 Memo
Lytada Lambert, Pentagon, 1967, February 1967 Memo
Ronald Reagan and Mary Clarke, 1967, Ward Sharrer/The Sacramento Bee
Unsuccessful in meeting Defense Secretary McNamara, 2,500 women picketed the Pentagon, “jeered and laughed at by Pentagon employees and **unable to speak to anyone in authority.**” (February 1967 Memo)

> “High on nerve, and scared but articulate, the six [WSP members] cornered more Washington brass in less than 48 hours than most top lobbyists reach in a week, . . . including several senators, representatives, and finally the VP.”
> - Charles Nicodemus

> **“There is nothing I can do.” - Ronald Reagan**

Congressmen urged WSP to petition local officials who directed them back to Congress. WSP decided, “if nobody is going to do anything at any of these levels of elected representatives, the **women will have to do it themselves.**” (Madeline Duckles)
“We believe in communicating with people, no matter what governments say.” - Dagmar Wilson

As America limited press, WSP returned to Vietnam to bridge gaps.

“[Hanoi] is not going to be bullied into this . . . the country is totally unified . . . I don’t think there’s anyone left in Vietnam, North or South, who isn’t in the resistance movement against America.”

- Dagmar Wilson

WSP met frequently in Paris with Nguyen Thi Binh who relayed contradictory information of the intensifying war.

Despite officials disregarding WSP as policy-makers, their determination increased. WSP met Under-Secretary Bunche, accusing America of violating the U.N. Charter.

"WSP, having been in direct communication with the Vietnamese since 1961, knows that the only way to peace is through the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.” - Dagmar Wilson

Unfortunately, WSP never swayed Nixon.
Right Top Panel Photo

Source Credit Text:

Barbara Bick, 1969, Amy Swerdlow
Amy Swerdlow, Sarah Lawrence College
WSP Spring Mobilization Button, 1967, Swarthmore Peace Collection
Spring Mobilization Illustration Memo Cover, 1967, March 1967 Memo
Project Vietnam, Proposals for Action, 1966, September 1966 Memo
Governors’ Conference Lobby Advertisement, 1966, June 1966 Memo
Senator Murphy Mailer, Stop the Bombings!, 1966, December 1966 Memo
Senator Murphy Mailer, WISPs are Sick of the War, 1966, September 1966 Memo
Natalie Montgomery Article, 1968, Jan 1968 Memo
Senator Frank Church Letter, 1966, June 1966 Memo
Jeannette Rankin Letter, 1967, Washington Area Spark
“. . . The most important thing is that women bring forth life, and our overwhelming need is to conserve it. That is why the struggle for peace – for life – is ours.”  
- Barbara Bick, Memo Editor

“We were doing a job of being good mothers by becoming involved in political action for the sake of our children’s survival.”  
- Amy Swerdlow, Memo Editor

WSP’s monthly periodical, Memo, mobilized thousands as informed activists. Women shared experiences, showcased the impact of their action, and inspired more to join.

“Thousands of women are forever indebted to Dagmar for her leadership, her unique initiative and her vision of women being able to change the world.”  
- Cora Weiss

Rankin, first Congresswoman and lifelong pacifist, led “several thousand concerned women to present a petition...for redress of grievances.” (January 18, 1968 Congressional Record)
“We have a powerful force—our vote. Women of courage and persistence won us this precious right . . . Now we must use it courageously in our own special interests, the interests of family, children, a peaceful and fruitful life.” - Bella Abzug, WSP’s Legislative Committee Creator/Chairperson

“The Women’s Vote is the Peace Vote” - NY WSP
Abzug marshaled women’s majority vote into political force to demand troop withdrawal, ending the draft, and limiting war spending. The campaign brought Abzug into Congress.

“We saw the need for the participation of women...at peacemaking tables...Without women at the table, the table is not legitimate. No women, no peace.”
- Cora Weiss, coordinator of WSP’s P.O.W. return effort and drafter of UN Security Council Resolution 1325

“President Nixon was using prisoners of war as a pretext to continue the bombing of North Vietnam, but families in the United States did not know whether or not their loved ones were prisoners.” - Cora Weiss

Weiss petitioned her Vietnamese contacts for a list of prisoners to “weaken the angry campaign that was perpetuating the war.” (Weiss)

Four-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee Weiss leads international peace organizations. She helped draft U.N. S.C. Resolution 1325, which commands women’s involvement in peacebuilding-as international law.

**CONCLUSION**

WSP used relentless, face-to-face diplomacy to advance nuclear disarmament, reveal the cruelty of Vietnam hidden by politicians’ ignorance and indifference, secure the release of POWs, encourage thousands of women as activists and leaders, and cement women’s role in the prevention of war.
Source Credit Text:

(Timeline of Protests:)
*Mothers Lobby Protest, Washington D.C., 1965, Washington Area Spark*
*Why Must Mothers Mourn Protest, Los Angeles, 1965, UCLA Library Special Collections*
*Mothers March on Capitol Hill Departure, New York, 1966, Bettmann/United Press International*
*Voters Peace Pledge Protest, Los Angeles, 1966, UCLA Library Special Collections*
*Coretta Scott King, Dr. Spock, and Others at White House Gates, 1967, Associated Press*
*Selective Service Headquarters Protest, Washington D.C., 1968, United Press International*
*Womens’ Detention Center Picket, Washington, D.C., 1969, Wellner Streets/D.C. Public Library Washington Star Collection*
*Nixon Laos Protest, White House, 1970, Paul Schmick*
*Censure Nixon Rally, Washington D.C., 1972, Dorothy Marder*
*Dagmar Wilson, Anti-Thieu Nixon Demonstration, New York, 1972, Dorothy Marder*
“It is true we women of WSP working for peace have walked thousands of miles, written plane-loads of letters to our president, our congressmen, and the heads of our states. We’ve vigiled at the Federal Building; we’ve attended conferences of women like ourselves around the world . . . At the same time, we’ve made hundreds of thousands of beds, changed a million diapers and cooked two million meals, not to mention the mountains of dishes we’ve washed . . . Of course, we’re as good over the hot line as we are over a hot stove.”

- LA WSP/Peace de Resistance Cookbook
Base Photo

Source Credit Text:

(Folded Laundry and Baby Pacifiers)
Student-created Replica Memo, Vol. 6, No. 2, January 1968 Cover (in Typewriter)
Student-created Replica Hiroshima Day Peace Rally Pink Leaflets, Washington Area Spark, 1968
Student-created Sketchbook with Replica Quotes and Replica Sketches
Student-created Replica Newspaper Clippings, TriCollege Libraries Peace Collection Ephemera and Swarthmore College Oversized Items/Newspaper Ads Collection
Student-created Replica Memo, October 1967 Full Issue
Original Women Strike for Peace Book with Author Inscription, Amy Swerdlow, 1993
Original We Made a Difference Book with Author Inscription, Ethel Taylor, 1998