



**Getting Off the Sidelines: Individual Motivations for Joining and Remaining in the Line 3
Movement**

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by

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Abstract

In this thesis, I examine what motivated individuals to join the movement against the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline in Northern Minnesota and to stay in the movement even after the pipeline was successfully expanded in 2021. Drawing from a digital ethnography and semi-structured qualitative interviews with 11 members of the Line 3 movement, I find that individuals joined the Line 3 movement because they had relationships with members of the movement and because they were concerned that the Line 3 pipeline expansion would harm the environment and Indigenous people in Minnesota. Moreover, while many people were disappointed that the movement failed to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline, I find that people stayed in the Line 3 movement even after the pipeline was expanded because they believed the movement was capable of success and because they felt that they needed to monitor and shut down the Line 3 pipeline and other pipelines in the area.

Keywords: Social movements, pipelines, social networks, framing

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Getting Off the Sidelines: Individual Motivations for Joining and Remaining in the Line 3 Movement

Over the last several years, social movements against the construction and operation of oil pipelines in the United States have gained attention from both the media and the public. For instance, protests, beginning in 2011, over the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, which was a pipeline that would have transported tar sands oil from Alberta, Canada to Nebraska, and the protests at Standing Rock in 2016 over the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, which was a pipeline that would have transported crude oil from North Dakota to Illinois, gained national and international media attention and drew in thousands of participants (BBC, 2017; Kennedy 2022; Lindwall, 2021). It is likely that anti-pipeline movements will only continue to grow and gain more attention due to the fact that in the coming years, companies are planning to build thousands of kilometers of new oil pipelines in the United States (Carrington, 2022). Moreover, many of the nation's existing pipelines are becoming older and are starting to break down, leading to accidents that harm people and the environment (Groeger, 2012).

Despite the fact that anti-pipeline movements are gaining more attention from both the media and the public, there is very little scholarly research on anti-pipeline movements and what is motivating people to join these movements and what is motivating people to stay in these movements after experiencing a defeat or setback. Studies that do examine movements against oil pipelines focus mostly on the Indigenous participants and what motivated them to join these movements. While it is important to understand the motivations of Indigenous people, who have been at the forefront of many of the fights against oil pipelines in the United States, anti-pipeline movements are made up of a diverse group of individuals and so it is important to also understand the motivations of non-Indigenous participants and why they are supporting these

movements. Moreover, it is important to understand not just what motivates people to join anti-pipeline movements but also what motivates people to stay in these movements even after experiencing a defeat or setback. Anti-pipeline movements, and almost all social movements that come up against a powerful and well-funded opposition, will inevitably experience a defeat or setback at some point. Therefore, it is important to understand how social movements can successfully move on from defeat and can continue to push for change.

To address the gaps in the existing literature about movements against oil pipelines, I focused on a case study of the movement against the Line 3 pipeline in Minnesota. I conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews and a digital ethnography to be able to better understand why people decided to take action against the proposed expansion of the Line 3 pipeline and why some people continued to participate in the movement even after the pipeline was successfully expanded in 2021.

I found that many people initially decided to participate in the Line 3 movement because of their connections to individuals involved in the movement and because they were concerned about the harm the pipeline could cause to the environment and to Indigenous communities in Minnesota. I also found that some people decided to stay in the Line 3 movement after the pipeline was expanded because they believed that the movement was capable of success and because they wanted to continue to fight against the Line 3 pipeline, to shut down other pipelines in the Minnesota and the Midwest, and to prevent the construction of other oil pipelines in Minnesota in the future.

Literature Review

The literature review is divided into four sections. The first section examines the previous research on the role that social networks play in introducing people to social movements, and

specifically to environmental movements. The next section examines the previous research on motivational framing and the motivational framing in anti-pipeline movements and the environmental and climate justice movements. The third section shifts the focus towards social movements and defeat and reviews the literature on how a social movement can frame a defeat or setback and how this framing impacts the longevity of the movement. The fourth and final section focuses on the lack of research about how individuals in a social movement readjust the goals of their activism after experiencing a defeat or setback.

Social Networks and Social Movements

To better understand why individuals decide to join social movements it is helpful to draw from the theoretical framework of social networks. Social networks are a cluster of two or more individuals who are connected to one another (Laninga-Wijnen & Veenstra, 2021). Through links in a social network, information can be shared between different individuals, including information about social movements (Snow & Soule, 2010). More specifically, people can be informed about a social movement and can be invited to participate in social movement activities by an individual in their social network (Snow & Soule, 2010). Research has consistently shown that being asked to participate in movement activities is the strongest predictor of participation (Saunders, 2022; Snow & Soule, 2010). Moreover, some evidence suggests that people are more likely to be in contact with someone in a social movement if they have participated in activism before (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995).

Previous research shows that in addition to interpersonal ties, people can be recruited into social movements via organizational ties, which are ties that are formed between people in the same organization. It is likely that individuals who are members of the same organization have similar ideologies and values as one another and so when an individual is asked to participate in

a movement activity by someone in the same organization, they may be more likely to take up that offer (Snow & Soule, 2010).

There is some previous research which shows that social networks are a point of entry into environmental movements. For instance, Diani & Lodi (1988) found that the vast majority of individuals who were involved in the ecology movement in Milan, Italy, had joined organizations within the movement through personal contacts. Similarly, Saunders (2022) found that “close contacts” such as friends and acquaintances, were “quite important in recruitment” into moderate and low-risk environmental actions, such as demonstrations and protests (p. 401). What remains unclear from previous research, however, is the role social networks play in recruiting people into anti-pipeline movements specifically.

Motivational Framing

In order to understand why individuals decide to participate in a social movement it is also helpful to draw from the literature about framing in social movements. Frames help “render events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organize experience” (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). In social movements, people are able to make sense of “events or occurrences” through collective action frames (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). Not only do collective action frames help people make sense of the world, but they perform this function in a way that “inspire[s] and legitimate[s] the activities and campaigns of a social movement” (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614). In other words, collective action frames, which are created by social movement organizations and movement activists, help to explain why it is both important and necessary for a social movement to exist and for people to join that social movement (Benford & Snow, 2000).

To be able to convince people that they should get off the sidelines and should participate in a social movement, collective action frames must engage in motivational framing (Benford & Snow, 2000). Previous research has found that motivational framing is able to push people to take action by first identifying a problem and explaining why this problem is so serious that people must take action to ameliorate it (Benford, 1993; Snow et al., 2018). Motivational framing is also able to push people to take action by explaining why action needs to be taken now rather than later (Benford, 1993; Snow et al., 2018). For example, in the nuclear disarmament movement, individuals believed that they needed to join the movement and immediately take action because the world was on the verge of “nuclear holocaust” (Benford, 1993, p. 203). Even when people believe a problem is serious, if they do not also believe that the problem is an urgent threat, they could delay taking action and could end up never joining the social movement trying to address the problem (Benford, 1993).

In addition to explaining why an issue is serious and why it must be addressed with a sense of urgency, previous research has found that motivational framing also needs to emphasize the potential for the movement to produce change and for individuals within the movement to make a difference (Benford, 1993; Snow et al., 2018). The last component of motivational framing is explaining the moral and ethical duty people have to act (Benford, 1993; Snow et al., 2018). For instance, some people joined the nuclear disarmament movement because they felt that they had a duty to protect the world from nuclear war so that their children and grandchildren could have a future (Benford, 1993).

Motivational Framing: Anti-Pipeline Movements

There is very little existing research that focuses specifically on members of anti-pipeline movements or how they frame and understand their activism. The research that does exist about

these movements focuses primarily on Indigenous members and why they felt compelled to join anti-pipeline movements. This research shows that many Indigenous members of anti-pipeline movements see pipelines as a serious threat to their land and water. For example, members of Native Tribes in the Dakotas opposed the Dakota Access pipeline because they feared that the pipeline would damage their ancestral burial grounds and would pollute Lake Oahe, which is the main source of water for the tribes (Conway & Duguay, 2019; Goeckner et al., 2020).

Additionally, since Lake Oahe connects to the Missouri River, some Indigenous people were concerned that the Dakota Access pipeline would pollute the Missouri River, harming the downstream communities who rely on the river for their water (Conway & Duguay, 2019).

In addition, previous research has shown that Indigenous people are motivated to participate in anti-pipeline movements because they believe that pipelines that go through their land are a violation of their treaty rights and are a threat to their sovereignty (Conway & Duguay, 2019; Lane, 2018). For instance, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe opposed the Dakota Access pipeline because they had not been consulted by the federal government about the construction of the pipeline despite the fact that it would go through land that belonged to the Tribe according to two treaties that the Tribe signed with the US government in the nineteenth century (Conway & Duguay, 2019).

Motivational Framing: Environmental and Climate Justice Movements

While there is very little research about how people, particularly non-Indigenous individuals, in anti-pipeline movements frame their motivations for participating in these movements, there is more research about how individuals involved in the larger environmental and climate justice movements frame their motivations. First, this research shows that members of the environmental justice movement became involved in the movement in part to protect their

health (Rainey & Johnson, 2009). More specifically, research shows that individuals joined the environmental justice movement because they believed that polluting industries in their communities were a serious threat to their health due to the fact that exposure to the pollution from those industries is linked to asthma, cancer, diabetes, and birth defects (Rainey & Johnson, 2009).

Additionally, previous research shows that individuals are motivated to join the climate justice movement because they want to stop climate change, which they see as an existential threat that needs to be immediately addressed. More specifically, climate activists are fearful that if no action is taken to address climate change in the next few years, it will be a “catastrophe” and millions of people will die (Martiskainen et al., 2020; Pickard et al., 2020, p. 7).

Many climate activists are also motivated to join the climate movement because they feel they have a duty to protect younger generations. For instance, Martiskainen et al. (2020) found that climate justice protesters from six different cities around the world wanted to join the climate justice movement because they were concerned that if they did not take action to address climate change, their children and grandchildren would not have a habitable planet, and therefore would have no future. Similarly, individuals in the environmental justice movement also became active in the movement because they believed they had a duty to protect their children from the harmful effects of environmental degradation (Rainey & Johnson, 2009).

Lastly, research on participants in the climate justice movement also shows that some individuals decided to join the movement because they believed it could help bring about change. For instance, Martiskainen et al. (2020) explains that while many climate justice protesters were overwhelmed and anxious about the climate crisis, they believed that a mass

movement of people could help push those in positions of power to take action and implement policies that would help to address the climate crisis.

Framing Defeat

In addition to research about how people frame their motivations for participating in a social movement, there is also research about how people in a social movement frame setbacks and defeats. This research reveals that the way that people in a social movement frame a setback or defeat has an effect on whether a social movement is able to continue its fight or whether it “wither[s] and die” (Voss, 1998, p. 137). Research from Beckwith (2015) found that there are two main frames that enable a social movement to continue to exist after experiencing a setback or defeat. The first frame is what Beckwith (2015) calls ‘Defeat as a Learning Opportunity’. In this narrative, individuals in a social movement recognize that they have experienced a setback or a defeat but they frame this setback or defeat as a “source of learning for the next anticipated encounter” (Beckwith, 2015, p. 7). In other words, individuals frame the defeat as something that helped the movement learn what strategies do not work, which is information that could help the movement be more successful in the next fight. This type of framing leads to the continuation of a social movement after a defeat because it makes it seem possible for the movement to be more successful in the future (Beckwith, 2015).

The other type of frame that research has shown leads to the continuation of a social movement even after experiencing a defeat is the ‘Defeat as Defiant Survival’ frame (Beckwith, 2015). When individuals employ this frame, they claim that the movement experienced partial success because it was able to achieve some small successes at discrete points in the process and was able to prevent the most damaging outcome from occurring (Beckwith, 2015; Voss, 1998). For example, when labor activists failed to stop an employers’ association from winning the right

to hire nonunion men, the activists framed their fight as partially successful because they said they were still able to prevent the employers from being able to block the employment of union workers (Voss, 1998). Therefore, the labor activists saw the movement as partially successful because while they did not achieve their primary objective, they were able to achieve one small success and they were able to prevent the worst possible outcome from occurring.

The defeat as defiant survival framing is also likely to lead to the continuation of a social movement because it paints the movement as capable of success and suggests that if the members of the movement continue to fight, they will eventually be able to achieve their primary objectives (Beckwith, 2015; Voss, 1998). Although the previous research on the framing of defeats and setbacks illuminates how a social movement can process and overcome a defeat or setback, this research has focused almost exclusively on labor movements and so it remains unclear whether this type of framing occurs in other social movements, including anti-pipeline movements.

Readjusting Goals after Defeat

While there is previous research about how people within a social movement frame a defeat or setback and how some types of frames can lead to the continuation of a movement, there is relatively little research that examines how people are able to continue to participate in a movement even when it is no longer possible for the movement to accomplish its original goal. More specifically, there is very little research about how people who remain in a social movement readjust the goals of their activism and create a new focus for the movement after a defeat or setback makes it impossible for the movement to achieve its initial objective. This study seeks to begin to fill in this gap in the literature by examining what kept people in the Line

3 movement even after the pipeline expansion could no longer be stopped and how they shifted and expanded the goals of their activism.

Case and Method

Line 3 Pipeline: History and Backlash

The Line 3 pipeline is a 1,000-mile-long pipeline, which currently transports nearly 1 million barrels of tar sands oil per day from Alberta, Canada to Superior, Wisconsin (Arvin, 2021). The Line 3 pipeline was originally built in 1960 by the Canadian multinational energy transport company, Lakehead Pipeline Co., now called Enbridge, and was put into service a few years later (Arvin, 2021). Not long after the Line 3 pipeline was put into service, it caused two major oil spills. First, in 1973, the Line 3 pipeline spilled 1.3 million gallons of oil near the city of Argyle, Minnesota (AP News, 1991). Then, in 1991, the Line 3 pipeline ruptured in Grand Rapids, a city in Northern Minnesota, and spilled 1.7 million gallons of crude oil onto the frozen Prairie River, which is just two miles away from the Mississippi river (Kraker & Marohn, 2021). This oil spill was the largest inland oil spill in US history (Kraker & Marohn, 2021).

In 2014, Enbridge began the process of expanding and rerouting the Line 3 pipeline farther south so that it would cross more than 330 miles of Northern Minnesota (Arvin, 2021). As it crossed through Northern Minnesota to Wisconsin, the pipeline would cut through land belonging to the Ojibwe people, including the Leech Lake and Fond du Luc reservations and the treaty lands of the Red Lake, White Earth, and Miles Lacs tribes (Pember, 2021). Enbridge claimed that they wanted to expand and reroute the Line 3 pipeline because they needed to replace old pipes that had started to age and corrode (Arvin, 2021). Expanding and rerouting the Line 3 pipeline would also allow the pipeline to transport more oil. In fact, the expansion would double the amount of oil that the pipeline was able to transport to almost 1 million barrels per

day (Arvin, 2021). In 2018, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, which regulates utilities in Minnesota, unanimously approved the Certificate of Need and the Route permit for Line 3 (Evelyn, 2019). The construction of the new pipeline began in December 2020 (Thompson, 2021).

The expansion of the Line 3 pipeline drew criticism from a number of people, including Indigenous people in Minnesota. Ojibwe people were concerned that the Line 3 expansion would damage wild rice, or manoomin in the Ojibwe language, which is an important part of Ojibwe culture, because the construction process of the pipeline would require pumping out billions of gallons of groundwater (Abulu, 2021; Pember, 2021). Ojibwe people were also concerned that the Line 3 pipeline could damage wild rice through an oil spill, which the Line 3 pipeline has a history of (Abulu, 2021). Furthermore, Ojibwe people argued the Line 3 pipeline expansion violated their rights because in the 1800s the Anishinaabe people, a group of Indigenous people from the Great Lakes region that includes Ojibwe people, signed treaties with the US government that guaranteed their right to gather wild rice, which they argued they would not be able to do if the Line 3 pipeline was expanded (Abulu, 2021; Beaumont, 2021).

In addition to Native communities in Minnesota, environmental advocates also opposed the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. Environmental advocacy groups echoed the concerns of Indigenous peoples over an oil spill, which they argued would harm lakes, rivers, and wild rice in the state (MPR News, 2021). They also believed that the Line 3 expansion would exacerbate climate change (MPR News, 2021). According to these groups, expanding the pipeline would mean that the state and country would be committing to using carbon-intensive oil for decades to come when it should be transitioning away from fossil fuels (MPR News, 2021).

In order to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline, people organized and participated in protests and demonstrations. One of the largest protests that took place was the Treaty People Gathering in June of 2021. This gathering, which took place at the headwaters of the Mississippi river, drew over 2,000 people, including individuals from Indigenous-led groups, faith groups, and climate justice organizations (Thompson, 2021).

People opposed to the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline also held protests and demonstrations at or near the pipeline construction sites. For example, in June 2021, close to 200 protesters tried to stop the construction of the pipeline by setting up tents on platforms that Enbridge had built to allow heavy machinery to roll over the marshy land (Beaumont, 2021). Similarly, some protesters locked themselves to equipment and machinery to stop construction (Beaumont, 2021; Kraker & Frost, 2021). There were also resistance camps which acted as bases of operation for protesters and were set up near six cities and small towns along the pipeline's proposed route in northern Minnesota (Tigue, 2021). Despite the widespread opposition to the expansion, the new Line 3 pipeline was eventually finished in September 2021 and became operational in October 2021 (The Associated Press, 2021).

Data Collection

To better understand why people decided to join the Line 3 movement and why people stayed in the movement even after the pipeline was expanded, I collected data using both semi-structured qualitative interviews and a digital ethnography. Semi-structured qualitative interviews allow participants to share their experiences in their own words and ethnographies help researchers gain a deeper understanding of a group of people and their experiences and so these were the most appropriate methods to be able to understand the Line 3 movement from the perspective of those involved.

The interview questions were divided into three main sections: 1) Introduction and Previous Activism, 2) Line 3 Activism, and 3) Post-expansion and Reflection. In the first section, I asked participants how they learned about the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline, how they felt about the expansion when they first heard about it, and what activism, if any, they were involved in before joining the Line 3 movement. The second section focused on the actions that participants took against the Line 3 pipeline, what they believed had motivated them to participate in that activism, and how they believed their motivations were similar to or different from other participants. The last section focused on understanding how participants felt about the pipeline being expanded, how they believed their goals changed as a result of the expansion, and how participants believed participating in Line 3 activism had affected them and their life. (See Appendix for the full interview guide). While all three sections were discussed in each interview, the order of the questions and the types of follow up questions that were asked varied depending on who was being interviewed and their responses to the questions I had prepared. At the end of the interview, participants were also asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire.

Participants were people over the age of 18 who had participated in collective action, such as protests and rallies, to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. The study focused on adults because most of the people who participated in Line 3 protests and demonstrations were adults. The total number of participants in this study was 11. The sociodemographic characteristics of each participant are listed in Table 1 on the next page.

In order to meet members of the Line 3 movement, I joined an anti-pipeline group at a Minnesota-based environmental organization. This group meets for two hours every two weeks on Zoom and is made up of about 15 people. I attended a total of six meetings between August 2022 and January 2023. During the meetings that I attended, I mostly listened to the other

Table 1*Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants*

Name (pseudonym)	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Highest Level of Education
Laura	70	White	Female	High School Degree
Claire	72	White	Female	High School Degree
Luke	53	White	Male	High School Degree
Ryan	33	White	Male	Bachelor's Degree
William	81	White	Male	Advanced Degree
Kari	61	White	Female	Advanced Degree
Helen	68	White	Female	Advanced Degree
Sabrina	33	Biracial	Female	Bachelor's Degree
Uma	39	Asian	Female	Advanced Degree
Natalie	26	White	Female	Advanced Degree
Ellen	52	White	Female	Advanced Degree

members, and I took some notes on the concerns the members had about the Line 3 pipeline. I also took some notes on the current focus of the members' activism, namely what issues they

were concerned about and what demonstrations or events they were attending now that the Line 3 pipeline has been expanded.

I decided to join this particular anti-pipeline group because most of the people in this group participated in actions against the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. Thus, members of this group could help me better understand why individuals joined the Line 3 movement and wanted to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. I also decided to join this anti-pipeline group because members of this group continue to engage in activism related to the Line 3 pipeline even now that the pipeline has been expanded. Therefore, members of this group could provide some insight into why some individuals decided to remain in the Line 3 movement even after the successful expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. Lastly, this group meets online and so even when I was not physically present in Minnesota, I could still attend their meetings.

Participants were recruited into this study in two ways. After I had attended a few meetings with the anti-pipeline group and developed some rapport with the members, I asked the group if anyone would be willing to be interviewed for my study and I then reached out first to those members who expressed interest. Later, I reached out to other members of the group whose emails I had access to.

Participants were also recruited by asking people who agreed to be interviewed if they knew any other adults who had participated in Line 3 activism and who may be interested in being interviewed for this study. Those potential participants were then emailed to see if they were willing to be interviewed for this study. Participants were not provided with any incentives or compensation for participating in this study.

All interviews took place on Zoom and were audio-recorded. Interviews took place over Zoom due to the fact that participants lived in the Midwest, while I was in the Northeast. Before

each interview, participants were sent an informed consent document via email so that they could read over it before the day of their interview. At the beginning of each interview, I discussed the informed consent document with participants, and I asked them if they had any questions about the informed consent document or about the study. I also reiterated during this time that participation was completely voluntary, and if they chose to participate, they could withdraw from the study at any point. Interviews lasted between 25 and 38 minutes and the average length of an interview was 30 minutes.

Participants were then asked for their verbal consent to participate in the study and to be audio recorded and the interview only continued if participants gave their consent. After each interview, audio recordings were uploaded to a departmental server. Audio recordings were then transcribed verbatim using the transcription service, Otter.ai, and were de-identified. The completed interview transcripts were then uploaded to the departmental server and the audio recordings were deleted.

Data Analysis

After each interview, I created an analytical memo to summarize what the participant said during the interview, to describe the participant's emotions and body language at different points of the interview, and to formulate tentative answers to my research questions. Once all the interviews were completed and transcribed, I went back and read over all the interview transcripts multiple times so that I could become more familiar with the data. I also went back and read through the notes I had taken during the anti-pipeline group meetings I had attended. Then, I analyzed both the interview transcripts and the meeting notes using open coding to identify themes that both supported and diverged from the existing literature on participating and staying in social movements. When I was coding, I focused specifically on how participants

talked about their relationships with other people in the movement, what concerns they had about the pipeline and what they hoped to accomplish in the movement, and how they described the movement's failure to stop the pipeline expansion and how they described the focus of their current activism.

Findings

The findings are separated into three sections. The first section focuses on how participants' social networks facilitated their involvement in the Line 3 movement. The next section focuses on participants' environmental and treaty rights concerns about the Line 3 pipeline and why they believed the Line 3 movement could effectively address those concerns. The third and final section focuses on the Line 3 movement post-expansion and shows that the participants who remain in the movement frame the Line 3 movement as partially successful even though it was not able to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. The third section also shows that participants who remain in the Line 3 movement have now shifted their focus to monitoring and shutting down the Line 3 pipeline and other oil pipelines in the region.

Social Networks

When asked how they learned about and became involved in the Line 3 movement, almost all participants talked about how their connections to other individuals involved in the Line 3 movement contributed to their own participation in the movement. More specifically, many participants joined the Line 3 movement after they learned about and were invited to participate in Line 3 movement events by other activists they knew. For instance, Claire explained that she became involved in the movement to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline after an individual she had met at Standing Rock a few years earlier told her about the Line 3 pipeline and

Invited [me] to come to his camp at White Earth. And so, I went. And I spent a couple of weeks there...there were meetings going on nearby about Line 3, put on by the Minnesota DNR. And so, I took part in all that.

Like Claire, several other participants joined the Line 3 movement through their relationships with activists they had met during their previous activism on other pipelines, such as the Keystone XL pipeline in Nebraska and the Dakota Access pipeline in the Dakotas. Other participants became involved in the movement through their connections to progressive activists who were not specifically focused on pipelines. For example, one participant, Ellen, explained that she "...joined Indivisible and met a woman there who had got me kind of involved in going to the hearings [about the permitting of the Line 3 pipeline]."

The only participant who mentioned learning about the Line 3 pipeline through non-activist individuals in their social network was Uma. When I asked how she first learned about the Line 3 pipeline, Uma stated that she "...was talking to colleagues from work...they said that...there's an oil pipeline being constructed across the headwaters of the Mississippi."

Almost all of the participants who were introduced to the Line 3 movement through individuals in their social network then went on to join various environmental organizations, which they learned about through the same individuals who introduced them to the Line 3 movement or from taking part in actions against the pipeline. It was through these organizations that participants learned about various actions that they could take part in to help stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. Uma explained how this process worked when she said,

I went to one of their [environmental organization] meetings and they were talking about, like submitting some comments to I think it was the Army Corps...and it was pretty much like, hey, I can do this.

While in this instance Uma was talking specifically about submitting comments against the expansion, other participants also mentioned that they learned about, and then participated in, protests and demonstrations in both Minneapolis and Northern Minnesota, where the pipeline construction was taking place, from other members of the environmental organization they belonged to.

Two other participants also joined the Line 3 movement through their involvement in anti-pipeline environmental organizations. However, unlike the individuals above who joined environmental organizations after being introduced to the Line 3 movement through individuals in their social networks, these participants were already involved in organizations and groups that were fighting against oil pipelines prior to the Line 3 pipeline. One of those people, William, explained that he got involved in the Line 3 movement after the anti-pipeline group that he was a member of shifted its focus from the Alberta Clipper and Sandpiper pipelines in Northern Minnesota to the Line 3 pipeline in 2014 when Enbridge filed for permits to expand the Line 3 pipeline. Once the anti-pipeline group William was a member of shifted its focus to the Line 3 pipeline expansion, William started to learn about various protests and rallies that were being held to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline during the group's meetings. After learning about those protests and rallies, William then went on to participate in many of them.

Motivations for Participating in the Line 3 Movement

When I asked participants why they wanted to participate in the Line 3 movement to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline, most participants talked about their concerns that the pipeline would harm the natural environment and would exacerbate climate change.

Additionally, some participants were also motivated to join the Line 3 movement because they felt they had a duty to stand up for the rights of Indigenous peoples in Minnesota.

Environmental and Climate Change Concerns

When I asked participants why it is that they felt they needed to get involved in the Line 3 movement, many mentioned their concerns about the potential damage an expanded Line 3 pipeline could have on the natural environment. For example, one participant, Laura, said that she was concerned that the pipeline was going to be “invading” different “swamps, ponds, and creeks”. Similarly, another participant, Uma, said that she was concerned about the damage the Line 3 pipeline would have on the “pristine waters” and wetlands in Minnesota.

Many participants were concerned not only about the potential impacts the pipeline would have on the natural environment, but also how damage to the natural environment would then cause harm to people. For instance, one participant, Ellen, mentioned that her activism against the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline stemmed from a concern that an oil spill from the pipeline would pollute bodies of water in the state, which could then harm people all over the state who rely on that water.

Oil spills are going to happen and it isn't just going to impact people up in Northern Minnesota, you know, water flows. So, all of us down here getting our water from the Mississippi River, it is going to impact us as well.

Another participant, Kari, was also concerned about the potential damage that an expanded Line 3 pipeline could have on the natural environment, and how this damage could negatively affect her own health.

We have a family cabin we've had for 50 years up in north central Minnesota and...seeing that the pipeline was coming right through by our cabin...I thought I can't stand by and watch this be ruined because this beautiful place has been so important to me in my growth and mental health...

Kari was concerned that the expanded Line 3 pipeline would damage the land and water around her family's cabin, and therefore would deny Kari the ability to go to her cabin to help improve her mental health. Therefore, for some participants, the Line 3 pipeline expansion was a serious problem because it threatened to damage the natural environment and to put their own and other people's health at risk.

In addition to concerns about how the expanded Line 3 pipeline could damage the land and waterways in Minnesota, many participants were concerned that expanding an oil pipeline could exacerbate climate change. Participants believed that the Line 3 pipeline would contribute to the problem of climate change because they believed the pipeline would lead to more oil being burned, and when burned, oil releases greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere, causing the planet to warm.

Many participants were concerned about the Line 3 pipeline expansion making the problem of climate change worse because they believe that climate change is one of the most serious and pressing issues that the world is facing. For instance, Ryan said that "Climate change is certainly the biggest environmental issue of our time and I would say one of the biggest issues

of our time we're living in." He later talked more about why he believed that climate change was such a serious issue when he said,

The ways that we see, you know, in the global south, weather related destabilization, making some places no longer livable for reasons that are, you know, from a variety of factors, but often can be traced back to climate disruption. And so, you have people needing to leave the lands that they're connected to and migrate to other places in the world...it's [climate change] a very destabilizing force...

Ryan was not the only participant who saw climate change as a serious problem. Another participant, Helen, explained that she closed down her art studio to focus on climate change activism because she thought "if there's not going to be any people left on the planet, what is the point of making art?" Therefore, for Helen, the climate crisis was the most serious problem the world was facing because it had the potential to wipe out all of humanity.

In addition to climate change being a serious issue, many people saw this as a time sensitive issue. For instance, one participant, Uma, said that she was concerned about the continued use of fossil fuels because she believed that this meant that there was no way that "we are going to get to no emissions or half emissions by 2030." For Uma, addressing climate change was an urgent issue because the world only has a few more years to move away from fossil fuels and reduce its emissions if it wants to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change. Therefore, since participants saw climate change as a serious and pressing problem, they also felt that the Line 3 pipeline was a serious and pressing problem due to the fact that it would contribute to climate change.

Not only do participants see climate change as a serious and pressing issue, but many participants also feel that they have a duty to address climate change so that younger and future generations can have a beautiful and habitable planet. For instance, Kari said that she wanted to “save the earth” for younger generations, and specifically, for her “grandchildren and grand niece and nephew.” Similarly, Helen said that she wanted to stop climate change so that “future generations” can “have a beautiful and livable place.” Since participants felt they had a duty to address climate change, they also felt that they had a duty to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline due to the fact that the expansion would contribute to the problem of climate change.

Indigenous and Treaty Rights Concerns

In addition to their concerns about how the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline could harm the environment, many participants were also motivated to stop the Line 3 pipeline because they believed that they had a duty to uphold treaties that the Anishinaabe people made with the US government in the nineteenth century that guarantee their right to hunt, fish, and gather wild rice (Beaumont, 2021). Participants believed that the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline would disproportionately harm Indigenous communities in Minnesota and would violate those treaties. For instance, Helen said Indigenous people in Minnesota “have every right to be able to ...hunt and gather and fish” on their own territory but believed the pipeline would threaten this right by polluting their water.

Since the Line 3 pipeline expansion would violate the treaties the government made with the Anishinaabe people in Minnesota, many participants felt that they had a duty to stop the pipeline expansion and uphold the rights outlined in the treaties. One participant who talked about this duty was Luke when he said

People who came here to this continent for me made agreements with people who were already here. They were kind of like this is the rulebook. This is how it's going to be okay for us to all be together over here. You know, we made commitments and now I know that like, we haven't honored any of those...you know folks on my side of things, or on my behalf, haven't honored those commitments. I need to do whatever I can do as a person to make things right.

Luke felt that as someone of European descent who is similar to the people who made treaties with Native people in Minnesota and then violated those treaties, he had a responsibility to redress those wrongs and ensure that the treaties are now being honored, which he felt he could do by trying to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline.

Many of the other white participants made comments similar to Luke's in that they also felt that as white people whose ancestors came to the US as "colonizers" they had a responsibility to try to right past wrongs and ensure that Native people's rights were not currently being trampled. However, even those participants who do not identify as white also felt that they had a duty to stand up for Indigenous rights. For example, when I asked Sabrina why she felt compelled to get involved in the Line 3 fight she said that she wanted

...to be in alignment with indigenous communities who have suffered for so long and are continuing to be ignored and have their rights trampled and in wanting to help repair some of the harm. Do what's right.

Although Sabrina does not identify as a white person, she still felt that as a non-Indigenous person who recognizes the harm and injustices that Indigenous people in Minnesota

have experienced, she had a responsibility to stand up for Indigenous people and their rights and ensure that the wrongs of the past were not repeated.

While many participants said that this duty to uphold Indigenous and treaty rights motivated their activism against the Line 3 pipeline, this was a motivation that developed over time. More specifically, participants talked about how becoming involved in the Line 3 movement and meeting and forming relationships with Indigenous people helped them learn more about the treaties and the rights that are protected by those treaties. Therefore, while this duty did not motivate them to join the movement initially, it nonetheless motivated them to continue to participate in the Line 3 movement and stop the pipeline from being expanded.

Efficacy of Collective Action

In addition to explaining their specific concerns about the plan to expand the Line 3 pipeline, some participants also mentioned that they believed that joining the movement against the pipeline and participating in protests and demonstrations was the most effective way that they could try to stop the pipeline. For example, one participant, Luke, explained that he decided to participate in protests and demonstrations against the pipeline because

...I just felt like that was a way that I could actually do something to help. Not just sign a petition that nobody's going to read or call a congressman who is not going to care...but to actually do something.

Another participant who believed that the Line 3 movement could help bring about change was Ryan. Ryan has been involved in environmental activism for a number of years and he explained that he believes the only way to bring about change is through organizing and social movements because

Being right doesn't equal winning. You need a power analysis...you have to be building power because no one cares about a little group of people that doesn't have anybody else's respect or attention but happens to be right.

Therefore, for Ryan, being a part of a social movement was the only viable way to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline because people in positions of power will not pay attention to individuals or small groups but will only pay attention and listen to a mass movement of people who are demanding they take action.

Reasons for Staying in the Line 3 Movement

Although the first priority of the Line 3 movement was to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline, the pipeline was expanded and became operational in the fall of 2021. While many people left the movement after the expansion was successfully completed, some people remained committed to the movement. The participants I interviewed who remain active in the Line 3 movement believe that the movement was successful in some respects, even if it did not achieve its main goal, and feel that the movement has more work to do on the Line 3 pipeline and other pipelines around the Midwest.

Line 3 Movement as a Partial Success

While the Line 3 movement did not accomplish its primary objective, which was to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline, many of participants I interviewed who are still involved in the Line 3 movement believe that the movement was not a complete failure but rather was successful in some respects. For example, Ryan framed the movement as partially successful when he said

I am pretty confident that the fact that delaying Line 3 by four years, which is what this organizing did, saved 200 coal plants worth of emissions over a year, puts this in one of the most impactful things that had probably been done in Minnesota ever on climate, just that four-year delay.

Other participants saw the movement as partially successful because it helped them and other people learn more about pipelines and about environmental injustices in the state. For instance, when I asked Ellen if she believed the movement had been effective, she said, "...I guess it depends on what you mean by effective...If you mean effective in terms of, you know, teaching other people about what's happening [with the Line 3 pipeline], you know, even my own growth, it definitely was."

The comments from both Ryan and Ellen illustrate why some of the people who are still involved in the Line 3 movement believe that the movement was somewhat successful in its fight against the Line 3 pipeline expansion. By framing the movement as partially successful, these individuals are able to justify their continued participation in the movement because if the movement is able to produce some success, then it is worth it for them to stay in the movement and to continue their activism.

More Work to do on Line 3

While the expanded Line 3 pipeline that the movement was trying to stop was successfully completed in 2021, many of the participants who remain in the movement feel that their work on the Line 3 pipeline is not complete. More specifically, some participants have remained committed to the Line 3 movement because they feel that they need to monitor the area around the Line 3 pipeline for any unreported aquifer breaches, which cause groundwater to flow

out uncontrollably, that were created during the construction of the expanded pipeline. For example, during one of the anti-pipeline group meetings I attended in December 2022, one member gave an update to the team about an aquifer breach in Northern Minnesota that another group she is a part of discovered.

In addition to monitoring for aquifer breaches, some participants also feel that they need to ensure that state officials are made aware of these breaches so that they will repair them and will hold Enbridge accountable for the damage they caused. For instance, Uma explained that the people in the movement could not “just be done because oil started flowing” but rather, they needed to remain vigilant and “hold state agencies accountable” because there continue to be new “breaches” discovered.

Despite the completion of the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline, individuals have also stayed in the Line 3 movement because they now want to shut down the expanded Line 3 pipeline. One participant, Natalie, put it concisely when she said, “the goal is to get Line 3 out of the ground”. Another participant, Ellen, is also focused on getting the Line 3 pipeline shut down and she wants to do this by focusing her efforts on phasing out gas cars and transitioning to electric cars.

So, at this point...I want to get gas cars off the road. You know, eliminate the need for Line 3. I mean, we actually don't need Line 3 but if we can get rid of gas, that will for sure make it obsolete, right? And so, my big thing is electric vehicles.

Even now that the Line 3 pipeline has been expanded, there are people like Uma, Natalie and Ellen who remain in the Line 3 movement due to their ongoing concerns about the impact the Line 3 pipeline will have on the environment and Indigenous people in Minnesota. Since

people in the movement can no longer stop the expansion of the pipeline, they have found other ways to eliminate, or at least mitigate, the harms of the pipeline.

Looking Beyond Line 3

In addition to continuing their work on the Line 3 pipeline, some participants have also stayed committed to the Line 3 movement because they want to try to shut down other oil pipelines that are currently operating in Minnesota and the Midwest. For example, one participant, Ryan, explained that for him

The goal right now is to make the case for shutting down the Enbridge mainline system and work to make that happen as soon as we can. So that means that it's not just one pipeline, but it's six, including Line 3 in Minnesota, and it's more if you get into Wisconsin and Michigan.

One Enbridge pipeline that some in the Line 3 movement are currently focused on getting shut down is the Line 5 pipeline, which runs through northern Wisconsin and Michigan (Sierra Club, n.d.). Activists in Wisconsin and Michigan are opposing Enbridge's attempts to reroute and upgrade the Line 5 pipeline and are trying to get the Line 5 pipeline to cease operating completely (Sierra Club, n.d.). To support the activists in Wisconsin and Michigan who are trying to shut down the Line 5 pipeline, some people in the Line 3 movement have attended events and demonstrations to oppose the Line 5 pipeline. For instance, during an anti-pipeline group meeting I attended in December 2022, some members shared that they were going to Montreal for COP15 to protest and pressure leaders from the US and Canada to oppose the Line 5 pipeline. Some Line 3 participants are also hopeful that the Line 5 movement will learn from

their experience with the Line 3 pipeline expansion and will be able to successfully shut down the Line 5 pipeline.

In addition to shutting down existing pipelines, some participants mentioned that now that the Line 3 pipeline has been expanded, they have started to focus more on getting legislation passed that will make it more difficult for other oil pipelines to be approved and built in Minnesota in the future.

Discussion

The first aim of this research was to better understand why people decided to participate in the movement to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. I found that many Line 3 participants initially learned about and got involved in the Line 3 movement through their connections with other people. More specifically, many participants became involved in the Line 3 movement because they were invited to participate in movement activities by activists they had met through their previous activism. This finding is consistent with previous research which shows both that personal contacts are important for recruiting people into environmental movements and that being invited to participate in a social movement by someone who is already in the movement is a strong predictor of participation (Diani & Lodi, 1988; Saunders, 2022; Snow & Soule, 2010). Moreover, this finding is consistent with research showing that people who have previously engaged in activism are more likely to be asked to participate in a social movement because they have been able to form relationships and connections with other activists (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995).

I also found that almost all participants joined Line 3 movement activities, such as protests and demonstrations, after learning about them through their involvement in an

environmental organization. While a couple of participants first learned about and got involved in the movement through organizations, most participants first learned about the movement through individuals they knew and then later joined anti-Line 3 organizations. After they were introduced to the Line 3 movement, many participants who were passionate about Line 3 and wanted to fully commit to the movement joined organizations so that they could consistently meet with other Line 3 activists and learn about events and actions that were taking place that they could participate in. While much of the previous research on social networks and social movements tends to look at either the role of interpersonal ties or organizational ties, I found that both types of ties are important and together they help facilitate someone's involvement in a social movement.

Secondly, my findings about how participants framed their motivations for participating in the Line 3 movement closely align with previous research on motivational framing. In his study about the nuclear disarmament movement, Benford (1993) found that when explaining their motivations for participating in the movement, many participants discussed the severity and urgency of the issue, as well as the efficacy of taking action, and the moral imperative to take action. When explaining their motives for joining the Line 3 movement, almost all the participants that I interviewed touched on all four of the elements that Benford (1993) outlined.

The specific motives of the Line 3 participants mostly align with the motives of participants in the larger environmental and climate justice movements, as outlined in previous research on those movements. The similarity in motives is not completely surprising due to the fact that the Line 3 movement is made up of people who also belong to the environmental and climate justice movements.

The motives of members of the Line 3 movement are also similar to the motives of Indigenous members of other anti-pipeline movements. Previous research on Indigenous participants in anti-pipeline movements has found that Indigenous people join these movements because they are concerned that the construction and operation of pipelines will violate their treaty rights and sovereignty (Conway & Duguay, 2019; Lane, 2018). Similarly, I found that non-Indigenous Line 3 participants were motivated to stop the Line 3 pipeline based on their concern that the pipeline would violate the treaty rights of the Anishinaabe people in Minnesota. Many of the Line 3 participants that I interviewed were not concerned about treaties when they first joined the movement but through their conversations with Indigenous people in the Line 3 movement, they began to feel that they had a duty to uphold the rights outlined in those treaties. The impact of the Line 3 participants' relationships on their motivational framing demonstrates that people's motivations for participating in a social movement are fluid and can be influenced by the people that they meet once they are involved in a social movement.

The second aim of this study was to better understand why some people decided to stay in the Line 3 movement even after the movement failed to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline. First, I found that some people remained in the Line 3 movement because they saw the movement as partially successful. Although the Line 3 movement was not able to stop the expansion, many participants still believed the movement was somewhat successful because it was able to significantly delay the completion of the expanded pipeline. Therefore, the movement was successful at some parts of the process and was able to ensure that the environmental impact of the expanded pipeline was not as harmful as it could have been. Other participants also framed the movement as partially successful because it was able to teach them and other people more about oil pipelines and environmental injustice.

These findings both support and build on previous research about framing defeat. Both Beckwith (2015) and Voss (1998) also found that a social movement can frame a defeat as a partial success by arguing that the movement was able to achieve small successes and was able to prevent the worst possible outcome from occurring. In addition to the reasons for partial success that Beckwith (2015) and Voss (1998) lay out, I also found that some participants felt that the Line 3 movement had been partially successful because the movement was able to educate the public about oil pipelines and the harms they can cause. Therefore, even if the movement was not able to change the minds of those in power, some Line 3 participants believed that the movement had been partially successful because it was able to show people all over Minnesota that they should care about oil pipelines and they should try to do what they can to prevent them from being constructed in the state.

My findings are also consistent with research by Beckwith (2015) showing that framing a defeat as a partial success helps individuals in a social movement continue on with their work after a defeat. By framing the Line 3 movement as a success, people were able to justify their continued involvement in the Line 3 movement because if the movement was capable of success, then it was worthwhile for them to stay in the movement and continue to push for change.

In addition to seeing the Line 3 movement as capable of producing success, I found that people stayed in the Line 3 movement even after the pipeline was successfully expanded because they felt there was still more work to be done on the Line 3 pipeline. More specifically, I found that post-expansion, many participants continued to focus on the Line 3 pipeline but instead of trying to stop it from being expanded, they began to focus on monitoring for any environmental damage caused by the construction of the Line 3 pipeline and on shutting down the pipeline. Even after the Line 3 pipeline was expanded, many participants were still concerned about the

harm that the pipeline could have on the environment and Indigenous communities and so they found other ways they could try to stop or at least reduce the damage of the Line 3 pipeline.

I also found that many participants expanded their focus beyond the Line 3 pipeline and stayed in the movement so that they could try to shut down other pipelines in Minnesota and the region, specifically the Line 5 pipeline, and so that they could prevent any other oil pipelines from being constructed in Minnesota in the future. Many participants were disappointed after they were unsuccessful in their attempt to stop the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline and so post-expansion, participants put their energy and focus into ensuring both that they were not in that position again and that no other community felt the disappointment they experienced. Therefore, even when it was no longer possible for the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline to be stopped, some people continued to participate in the Line 3 movement because they shifted and expanded the goals of their activism and created a new purpose for their participation in the movement.

This study, of course, does not come without limitations. First, I had a small sample size of 11, and almost all of those participants identified as white and as women. Moreover, most participants were recruited from the same anti-Line 3 organization. While I tried to recruit more participants and a more diverse group of participants, I had difficulties getting in touch with potential participants, particularly those who I did not regularly see at the anti-pipeline group meetings, to schedule interviews. Therefore, my findings only represent the views of a small segment of the Line 3 movement and cannot be used to generalize about the motives of all participants in the Line 3 movement.

Notwithstanding these limitations, this study helps advance our understanding of the Line 3 movement and anti-pipeline movements more generally. Up to this point, there has been very little scholarly research that focuses on the Line 3 movement and specifically why people

became involved in this movement. This study reveals both the important role social networks played in introducing people to the Line 3 movement and the specific concerns that pushed people to take action against the pipeline expansion. Moreover, this research helps us better understand why people, particularly non-Indigenous people, participate in anti-pipeline movements more generally. Like the Line 3 movement, many other anti-pipelines movements are trying to stop oil pipelines that run through or near land belonging to Indigenous communities and so it is likely that participants in other anti-pipeline movements frame their motivations in ways that are similar to Line 3 participants. This study also begins to shed some light on the question of how participants in a social movement readjust the goals of their activism after they experience a defeat and are no longer able to achieve their initial objective. Future research should continue to investigate this question and should examine how other social movements readjust after a defeat or setback and how this compares to the readjustments made by individuals in the Line 3 movement.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that anti-pipeline movements, such as the Line 3 movement, have brought together thousands of people and have garnered national and international media attention, up to this point, there has been very little scholarly research on these movements. This study starts to fill in some of the gaps in the literature by providing insight into the reasons why individuals joined the Line 3 movement and why some of them remained with the Line 3 movement even after the expansion of the Line 3 pipeline was successfully completed. By beginning to provide some answers to these questions, this study helps us better understand how this movement and other movements like it are able to exist and are able to overcome adversity and continue to push for change.

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Appendix

Semi-Structured Interview Guide:

- I. Introduction and Previous Activism
 1. When and how did you first learn about the expansion of Line 3 in Northern Minnesota?
 2. What were your initial thoughts and feelings on the expansion of Line 3?
 - a. Did you have concerns and if so, what were they?
 3. Did you participate in other activism before you participated in Line 3 activism?
 - a. If yes, what other activism have you participated in?

- II. Line 3 Activism
 1. What actions did you take to stop the expansion of Line 3?
 - a. How did you learn about these events?
 2. What made you decide to participate in the movement against the expansion of Line 3?
 3. What were you hoping to accomplish by participating in this movement to stop the expansion of Line 3?
 4. Did you participate in activism with other people that you knew, such as family or friends?
 5. Do you think other people chose to participate in Line 3 activism for similar reasons?

- III. Post-expansion and Reflection
 1. Do you believe that you have accomplished your initial goals?
 2. How did you feel when the pipeline was expanded in 2021?
 3. Now that Line 3 has been expanded, what are the goals of your activism?
 4. In what ways do you think participating in Line 3 activism has affected you and your life?
 5. Is there anything else you would like to add?