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Place, space, and family: A rhetorical analysis of the resistance rhetoric of Judy Bonds

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Place, Space, and Family:

A rhetorical analysis of the resistance rhetoric of Judy Bonds

Alex Davenport

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to everyone fighting for a more just Appalachia, and all those fighting for a more socially and environmentally just world. But most especially this work is dedicated to Judy Bonds, you were and are an inspiration to others and myself; rest in peace and power.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the ways that rhetorics of resistance can operate in contemporary social conditions. I do this specifically by examining the rhetoric of Judy Bonds, an environmental justice activist who opposed mountaintop removal (MTR) mining in Appalachia. I utilize a qualitative rhetorical approach to examine 34 instances of Bonds' discourse as well as my own autoethnographic reflections focused on my work with Mountain Justice, a regional anti-MTR activist organization. Pairing the constant comparative method with principles of ideological criticism, informed by theories of place, voice, memory, and narrative, forms this qualitative rhetorical approach. The postmodern turn allows for the multiple, unique, instances of rhetoric to be viewed as fragments of discourse. That is to say that, while each instance of rhetoric is evaluated as having unique properties, the postmodern turn allows for overarching themes and discourses to emerge. Bonds' rhetoric reveals a unique use of discourses of space, place, and a queered rhetoric of family and family values. Further research may explore the creation of an archive of Bonds' rhetoric, ways that the image of the cyborg and assemblage theory might illuminate identity relationships in rhetoric of resistance, images of a utopian future for Appalachia, and performances of memorialization within environmental justice movements. Ultimately, though, this research points toward the need to complicate an understanding of the ways that certain tropes and metaphors are deployed as discrete, and rather view them as implicating one another and operating simultaneously within an instance of rhetoric.

CHAPTER 1

In this thesis, I aim to examine the rhetoric of Judy Bonds, an anti-mountaintop removal (hereafter MTR) activist who died in January of 2011. During her lifetime Bonds served as an internationally recognized figure in resistance to the form of mining that she saw as a threat both to her community and the world at large. I approach the rhetorical artifacts left by Bonds with a qualitative sensibility, weaving autoethnographic reflections into a close examination of the texts, focusing on discourses that emerged using the constant comparative method. Not only does Bonds occupy a unique position in a contemporary social movement designed to work against hegemonic discourses surrounding our national energy policy, but the Appalachian region itself provides unique insight into the ways that rhetorics of resistance can operate in contemporary social conditions. I am concerned specifically with three questions: what does a postmodern approach to Bonds' discursive fragments reveal about the unique ways she deployed rhetoric resisting MTR, what themes emerge from an examination of her rhetoric that can inform the ways that other activists communicate their struggles for justice, and how might Bonds' rhetoric serve to complicate our theoretical understandings of rhetoric in social movements? In this chapter I provide a brief overview of MTR and Judy Bonds; discuss the texts, method, and theory that inform my research; and finally discuss the significance of an investigation into Bonds' rhetoric.

Introduction

I want you to notice nature. How geese are in flight. And they form a V in a leadership role, and when that leader of that...of that, that flight and the goose, the lead goose, when he gets tired of flapping his wings, he drops to the back, and

the next goose comes up front and becomes the leader. Without stopping, without fussing, without whining, he becomes that next leader, he or she, and that's what we have to do. (Bonds as cited in CoalRiverMountain, 2008)

In the Spring of 2008 I began work with Mountain Justice, a regional, grassroots organization designed to combat a form of surface mining known by many different names in the mining industry; but popularly known as MTR. Coal River Wind (2009) explains that MTR is a kind of coal mining in which forests are extracted and mountains get flattened as layer after layer is destroyed from the use of explosives. After a blasting area is cleared, the explosives detonate. Any rubble that remains on the site is bulldozed into the hollers, allowing for draglines and other equipment to mine coal. This process unleashes the explosive equivalent of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in one week, and it repeats until nothing is left (Coal River Wind, 2009). Bernhardt et al. (2012) examined water impacts of MTR, and found that 22% of rivers in the region were beyond "irreparable repair" by mine drainage. This damage affects everything from algae, which serves as an essential carbon sink, to fish that have traditionally served as a popular food source (Palmer et al., 2010). Furthermore, and more anthropocentrically inclined, water contamination causes people in Appalachia to suffer from chemically induced skin burns, loss of teeth, and cancer (Duhigg, 2009).

For those who live in Appalachia these effects are a physical reality, regardless of political affiliations. Despite this effect, responses to MTR vary within the region — ultimately it is the social realities experienced by those in Appalachia that help to inform their positions; realities that are unique to the region itself. Environmental justice advocates have recognized the environment as where people live, work, and play

(Bullard, 1990). Appalachia, as a region where people live, work, and play, stands out in that it forms what Markusen (2004) identifies as a forgotten place. The critical nature of place to environmental justice (Ewalt, 2015) comes to the forefront of rhetoric arising from a forgotten place as it seeks to both bring the place into a broader consciousness and create rhetorical room for the bodies of those who live there to matter; it seeks to remember. Further, Appalachian activism displays a unique aspect of gendered activism. Seager (2003) points out that, often, women serve as the bridge between an attention to place and a need for environmentally just actions; Peeples and Deluca (2006) clarify that these women are often asked to take on the figure of the militant mother, a figure troubling the line between care and confrontation. Women in Appalachia, though, have a unique entry point into this role that is historically shaped (Smith, 1999), and in Bonds' case, specifically complicated by the gendered dynamics that coal activism and the coal industry bring to the region (Bell & Braun, 2010; Scott, 2010).

One of the key figures of Mountain Justice when I began my activism was Julia “Judy” Bonds, who died from cancer on January 3, 2011. In 2003, Bonds won the Goldman Prize (Goldman Environmental Foundation, 2012), the largest, and one of the most prestigious, prize programs honoring grassroots activism, for her resistance to MTR. Despite her “*intimate* [familial] relationship with coal” (Bonds as cited by Bell 2013, p. 149, emphasis in original) she was vocal in her resistance to its extraction, and demanded that people pay attention to the havoc it wreaked upon Appalachian communities. She was the keynote speaker at the first national PowerShift conference in 2007, a now annual conference with the vision “creating millions of green jobs for our country and restoring economic and environmental justice” (Energy Action Coalition, 2013). Bonds

was a national figurehead for anti-MTR; she raised awareness about MTR through talking tours, a series of speaking engagements on college campuses and in communities, campaigning even until her cancer diagnosis (Cooper, 2011; Haltom, 2011). In her resistance to MTR Bonds became not only a national figure of resistance, but also became recognized internationally when MTR was discussed by the organization she worked for at the United Nations Conference of the Parties in 2009 (Coal River Wind). Indeed, Bonds' efforts led John F. Kennedy Jr. to state, "more than any single person, she has been responsible for the growing awareness of this environmental apocalypse" (Kennedy as cited in Clark, Dodd, Grout, and Rozsa, 2008). Bo Webb, another anti-MTR activist, saw Bonds' death as a call for activists across the country fighting for environmental and social justice to continue in their struggle to create a better world (Biggers, 2011). Bob Kincaid, the President of the Board of Coal River Mountain Watch in 2011, characterized Bonds' impact on activism in Appalachia by saying

Judy Bonds was our Hillbilly Moses...She knew better than anyone that we WILL make it to the Promised Land...She will not cross over with us on that great day, but her spirit will join us, and inform the freedom that sings from our hearts. Mother Jones, meet Judy. Judy, Mother. (Biggers, 2011)

One of Bonds' last communications with Mountain Justice urged activists to "fight harder" (Haltom, 2011). She died still hoping for a future where MTR would be a thing of the past. Since she passed some signs point to a potential end of this practice. For example, the ex-executive of Massey Energy, Don Blankenship, was indicted for his role in the Upper Big Branch Mine disaster, facing over 31 years in prison (Gabriel, 2014), to recent conversations among activists concerning the need to focus more on community

building within affected Appalachian areas. In light of this shift, and the significance of a struggle with its roots in some of the earliest labor struggles in America, it is important to examine the rhetoric of the woman was viewed as the grandmother of Mountain Justice and modern anti-MTR activism.

Approaching the Text, Approaching Myself

Watching the video of Judy speak at PowerShift I recall what I would have been doing at the time she spoke. I had just come to college and was searching for ways to be politically involved. In the Fall of 2007 I found my place in Students for a Democratic Society, my friendships and politics flourished, and in the Spring of 2008 I followed the connections I formed in SDS to JMU's environmental group: EARTH. It is in the connection between involvement in EARTH and Judy's speech that I am able to begin to make more sense of my own experiences. A semester after Judy spoke to thousands of students at PowerShift, I would be introduced to and work with the young man who introduced her to the youth of the nation. A year after she spoke I would have the pleasure of meeting her in the hollers of Appalachia and working with Judy for slightly over two years. The traces of my first meetings, both digitally and in reality, shape my approach to the texts I continue to encounter.

Bonds' leaves behind an archive of rhetorical texts. Among these texts are recordings of Bonds' speeches, interviews, excerpts from films/video, as well as autoethnographic reflections I use to contextualize my readings and provide moments of reflexivity. All together I approach 40 instances of discourse where Bonds' words have been recorded; these are described in greater detail in chapter 2. In this thesis, I aim to examine those texts utilizing a qualitative rhetorical approach. Using the constant

comparative method two broad discourses emerged from the rhetorical artifacts left by Bonds, in engaging with these themes I incorporate autoethnographic reflections to provide a further, situated nature to the analysis; building off of the critical stance taken in the analysis of each theme (Condit & Bates, 2009). Such a stance is what Davies and Dodd (2002) identify as “an attentiveness to research practice” (p. 288) that foregrounds ethics, recognizes the tension between the subjectivity of qualitative research and the objectivity of scientific research as productively eased by recognizing the objectivity of situated knowledge, encourages researcher reflexivity, and sees intervention as a form of social interaction. Goodall (2000) extends this ethic to the autoethnographic approach by urging the researcher to attend to truth — even if it is not capital T truth — and the scholarly and literary conventions that govern such reflection.

A Theoretical Turn

In 2011, I presented a paper at the Eastern Communication Association Conference in Washington, DC, in which I situated the identity of Earth First! as a performance within a protest of MTR. Because of this, a member of the audience asked me to explain MTR a little more. I went into the technical aspects: I described machinery, explosives, “particulate matter,” and biodiversity; but I also talked about the social impacts. I ended by saying “basically it’s a process with a lot of really bad effects.” The respondent told me that I should be more professional, that as an academic it is not my job to communicate a value judgment to my audience. I don’t remember what I said at the time — I think I defended situated, nonobjective research — but I know that one of my professors was in the audience and told me later that I “handled that foolishness with grace”. Now, though, I want to ask the respondent to watch someone die because of what

they fight against, to watch a mountain fall, and then tell me how it is possible for me to not give a value judgment. If there is a way to do so I have not found it, and I don't think I could trust someone who could.

Bonds was one of the most influential activists in anti-MTR efforts. To study her rhetoric, and determine the consistent themes of her work is to pay the ultimate homage to her — to continue her work. In order to do this I approach various fragments of discourse scattered through our postmodern landscape; thus, a poststructural approach towards Bonds' texts become necessary. The approaches of Barthes (1977), Cixous (1993), and Foucault (1984) all become important for both methodological and theoretical reasons; briefly, though, all three figures have produced works that exists in conversation, works which ultimately suggest that viewing any body of “work” as something that may be interrogated, played with, added to, and deconstructed is an ultimately productive framework. This poststructural turn also draws attention to the ways that texts exist in a fragmented nature (Condit & Bates, 2009). Because these fragments cycle through society, the pronouncement — or persuasion — toward a certain ethical evaluation hold implications for how we orient ourselves to our past, present, and our potential future.

Hart and Daughton (2005), provide further insight into the implications of the approach toward text as fragment that Condit and Bates put forth through their exploration of the practice of deconstruction. Postmodern critics who engage in deconstruction posit that “meaning is problematic...all messages are intertwined...[and] rhetoric is problematic” (pp. 313–315). In the first case, postmodernists point out that, despite words having a denotative definition, their meanings fluctuate, even for the same

person. This arises from texts being referential to one another. The meanings we derive from them develop from our encounters with other relevant texts making it impossible to view any rhetorical artifact as existing in a vacuum. The postmodern critic treats rhetoric as similar to literature and vice versa (Hart & Daughton, 2005). This exploration of deconstruction leads the authors to characterize the postmodern project — definitively rhetorical — as marked by “skepticism, discernment, and imagination — along with large doses of self-reflexivity and playful free association” (p. 315). While I do not engage in a traditional deconstruction in that I do not attempt to destabilize the meanings of a certain — singular — discourse, I engage Bonds’ texts seeing the disjointed meanings of each discourse as better understood when viewed as portions of a whole. The deconstructionist lens also allows me to utilize subversive frames — such as that of the queer mother discussed in chapter four — to better make sense of the ways that Bonds’ rhetoric operates.

The intersection of qualitative approaches and rhetorical criticism, finally, points to Sedgwick’s (1997) caution that the rhetorical critic ought to “use one’s own resources to assemble or “repair” the murderous part-objects into something like a whole...*not necessarily like any preexisting whole*” (p. 7, emphasis in original). A qualitative rhetoric then seeks to capitalize upon this reparative impulse by creating through deconstruction, inventing new ways of knowing and interpreting that — following criteria put forth by Tracy (2010) — is both coherent and resonant.

A poststructuralist approach is appropriate in the case of Bonds’ rhetoric because any archive of her work is incomplete. We do not have access to everything she wrote nor can we retrieve her unrecorded speeches and talks. Perhaps more important than a

complete archive, is that Bonds' rhetoric will always be met with other discourses. Our understanding of her rhetoric is entangled with an understanding of Appalachia, of gender dynamics and expectations, of global climate change, and many others. As Barthes (1977) reminds us, the intertextual nature of discourses creates a situation in which "everything is to be *disentangled*, nothing *deciphered*...to be ranged over, not pierced" (p. 147, emphasis in original). Finally, I provide my own experiences as an activist inspired by Bonds as autoethnographic accounts centering on my time advocating for Mountain Justice. She serves as a present influence in my life despite her physical absence. The pairing of the rhetorical and qualitative allows for me to honor Bonds in her activist rhetoric while also acknowledging the complexity of my own identity as an activist-academic.

Finding Significance

New Years day 2011, I boarded a bus to Boston to visit three friends from Mountain Justice, a pan-regional grassroots organization focused on anti-mountaintop removal and community building. For three days, we visited anarchist houses, activist art spaces, and queer punk gatherings all while planning an alternative spring break program focused on nurturing activism centered on Appalachia. On January 3 at about 10 pm, my phone alerted me of a new email. Lying on a twin mattress on the floor of the spare bedroom, I opened a message telling me that Julia "Judy" Bonds, the grandmother of Mountain Justice, who won the Goldman prize in 2003, the woman who inspired my own involvement with Appalachian activism, had passed away that night from cancer. In the house that night, we mourned not only our experiences with Judy and those we knew who she had touched, but also the loss of a future where she could see the end of

mountaintop removal. The loss I felt was immense. The loss we all felt was cutting and deep. Yet, we knew that Judy would not want our pain to be immobilizing. Still, we asked, what do we do now?

This project responds to both a lack of extant scholarship, a call apparent in work on Mountain Justice, and due to the responsibility I feel as a privileged academic shaped by a community of resistance. Although there exists very little scholarship on Bonds, or her rhetoric, a need for studies addressing both is apparent. Many have pointed out that the future of coal's reign is in question; however it is still up to us to find a way forward by examining the lives of those who were instrumental in bringing about the approaching end of MTR (Bell, 2013; Shapiro, 2010; Roselle, 2009). Specifically, it is important to examine the voices of

Appalachian women [who] are the leaders of the environmental justice movement to protect their mountain communities...the women — whose roots in the Appalachian Mountains “run deep as ironweed” — deserve to be recognized and celebrated as the driving force behind the movement to save their Appalachian families, communities, culture, and land. (Bell, 2013, p. 189).

In Bell's call, I see a place for myself. As Mountain Justice has shifted focus to building Appalachian communities and I have — necessarily — become less involved with the movement as I have engaged more in academia, I have been less a part of the movement than in the past. When I received news of her death I was with other Mountain Justice activists, we mourned her both that night and when we went to her funeral a few weeks later. The memories I carry of my interactions with her have left a permanent impact on my activism, my scholarship, and my life; she was and continues to be one of

my personal inspirations. I see academic interventions into Bonds' work as a way to not only move academic conversation forward, but also as a way to contribute to a movement and legacy which has helped shape me into who I am today. Indeed, the texts that Bonds left behind are able to serve as sites for both cultural and personal memory and meaning (Brockmeier, 2002).

Further, Bonds' rhetoric proves to be unique as a rhetoric of resistance. Because of the ways that gender operates within Appalachia — and Appalachian resistance movements in particular — Bonds' is placed in a situation not necessarily common to other women who engage in resistance to hegemonic forces. She also navigates the issue of space/place in important ways when examining activism that is place based. Environmental justice activism has long recognized the crucial role of place, but Bonds is endeavoring to save a place that is not only being contaminated but also actively destroyed, a people who are not only being made sick, but are also being pushed out.

Ultimately, my own implication in this project, the responsive nature of it, and the uniqueness of Bonds as a rhetorical figure serve to answer a discipline wide call. Plec (2007) notes that for critical rhetoric within environmental communication it is essential for scholars to do work that is close and important to affected communities. This thesis, then, is designed to be of use to communities who are engaged in the fight for a more environmentally and socially just future. In Bonds' rhetoric I see not only the works of a leader who was important to both others and myself fighting for Appalachia, but the potential to inform the work of others who engage in resistance.

Moving Forward

In this thesis, I approach two broad discourses that emerged through use of the constant comparative method. In the next chapter I explore methodological and theoretical approaches to the texts used, discussing the constant comparative method, theories of memory and voice, and narrative theories. I then begin my investigation of Bonds' rhetoric through an exploration of the theme of place/space and displacement. This discourse leads me to investigate the ways in which Bonds' deployed a reinterpretation of family. In my conclusion I examine the implications for my findings, discuss opportunities for further research, and reflect on the ways that I see this thesis potentially framing future works investigating communication within Appalachian resistance.

CHAPTER 2

Towards a Qualitative Rhetoric

In this project I approach the texts left behind by Bonds, accounts of her memorialization, and autoethnographic vignettes with a rhetorical stance — informed by the constant comparative method — and a qualitative sensibility. By combining qualitative research with rhetorical inquiry, the questions that are investigated are, necessarily, slightly different from what they would be for either a purely qualitative or purely rhetorical approach. Qualitative research asks academics to adopt a set of conventions or practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) and allows for questions and research agendas to arise in an inductive manner (Creswell, 2014). Rhetorical criticism, however, does not ask for a methodology, but rather a critical stance and playfulness (Hart & Daughton, 2005); at the same time, a rhetorical critic usually approaches an artifact seeking to investigate the ways that stylistic strategies were deployed and the ethical implications of those usages (Condit & Bates, 2009). Further, rhetorical criticism has been separated from qualitative inquiry due to the former's focus on texts — whether they are actual texts, instances of visual communication, or speech events (Condit & Bates, 2009; Hart & Daughton, 2005; McGee, 1990).

Despite this difference I see a bridge between qualitative inquiry and rhetorical criticism located within the historical context of qualitative research itself. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) identify the postmodern moment as one that arose from doubt and “a refusal to privilege any method or theory” (p. 3). This was evident in the turn toward examining how literary and rhetorical forms and norms were reflected in our communication, an attention to the role of narrative and storytelling, and a move toward

new forms of communicative expression. The authors also identify a “the future, which is now...concerned with moral discourse, with the development of sacred textualities...[creating] sites for critical conversations” (p. 3). It is in this interaction that I see an opening for a qualitatively rhetorical investigation; indeed, if we take a rhetorical text to be discursive fragments, then the skepticism demanded by rhetorical criticism and the attentiveness demanded by qualitative research both point to the reality that such texts are themselves rhetorical artifacts that exhibit intertextuality.

A productive combination of the methodologies of rhetorical criticism and qualitative research allows a scholar to adopt a critical stance toward an artifact while allowing research questions to inductively come to the surface. A key point of intersection that qualitative rhetoric should foreground is an ethic of applied intervention. Qualitative research requires an ethic that exhibits concern for the lived experiences of those being investigated (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Goodall, 2000; Tracy, 2010), while the ethic of rhetorical criticism points toward a need to provide useful interpretation of an artifact (Condit & Bates, 2009; Hart & Daughton, 2005). Similarly, Sedgwick (1997) cautions that the rhetorical critic ought “use one’s own resources to assemble or ‘repair’ the murderous part-objects into something like a whole...*not necessarily like any preexisting whole*” (p. 7, emphasis in original). A qualitative rhetoric then seeks to capitalize upon this reparative impulse by creating through deconstruction, inventing new ways of knowing and interpreting that — following criteria put forth by Tracy (2010) is both coherent and resonant. In an effort to position my research I utilize this chapter to explore the pairing of the constant comparative method with ideological criticism. I also position Bonds’ texts within

theories of voice and the subaltern, memory and forgetting, and a postmodern approach to rhetoric as discursive fragments. Following these methodological and theoretical discussions I present a description of the texts I examine, briefly describing their context and their relations to each other.

Method

The Constant Comparative Method

In utilizing an approach that is both rhetorical and qualitative I first turn to the constant comparative method in order to provide a holistic view of the ways that the rhetorical fragments I examine allow for broad discourses to emerge in Bonds' rhetoric. The constant comparative method is a mode of qualitative inquiry — not “restricted to one kind of clearly defined case” (Glaser, 1965, p. 438) — that occurs in four stages, “(1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory” (Glaser, 1965, p. 438). Glaser, as a developer of the constant comparative method, positions the constant comparative method directly within grounded theory and — because the method approaches a variety of texts within a wide range of contexts — argues that it lends itself to the construction of theory that is bound to lived truths while still being abstracted from direct experience. Despite this insistence, O'Connor, Netting, and Thomas (2008) remind us that the constant comparative method “does not in and of itself constitute a grounded theory design” (p. 41), while others have extended the use outside of grounded theory (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000) and into areas that are draw on extant theories (Fram, 2013).

In the first step of the constant comparative method noted by Glaser (2002, 1965), the researcher performs open coding of their qualitative data. As the name suggests, one of the key factors of this method is that of constant comparison, with the researcher comparing emergent codes both within and across data. After the data has been coded the researcher then integrates the codes developed into categories, potentially allowing for the researcher to begin identifying themes that emerge across disjointed sources of data. Before moving into the creation of theory — as was originally proposed — the researcher also provides dimensionalization of the categories, developing labels for themes and accounting for nuances of a theme to emerge through examples and the unique aspects revealed by different data sources.

In this initial examination of Bonds' texts I focus on the first two steps of the theory, focusing on themes that emerge from Bonds' rhetoric and drawing connections between those themes to present nuanced and complicated discourses. I purposefully avoid the creation of theory — as Glaser describes as resulting from a complete use of the constant comparative method — in an attempt to honor the particular situation that gives rise to Bonds' rhetoric and also to acknowledge that I have only examined discourses from one figure within a broader movement of Appalachian resistance within a larger social movement context. Glaser (2002) notes that grounded theories resulting from the use of the constant comparative method “are abstract of time, place, and people” (p. 24). Not only does this seem impossible to perform given the texts I consider — all from or about one person, all concerned with one place, and all temporally bound — but I am concerned, specifically, with the particular rhetorical strategies deployed by Bonds, especially as they were influenced by her gender and identity as an Appalachian.

Similarly, while I do not attempt to lay claim to knowledge of how Bonds experienced reality through this study, I do aim to utilize an investigation of her rhetoric to provide insights that ring true to other's lived experience; something with which grounded theory is patently unconcerned (Glaser, 1998).

Despite avoiding the creation of theory through the constant comparative method, its use provides clear strengths for this study. Because it allows for an examination of diverse sources of data, when paired with rhetorical approaches the door opens for broad themes to emerge across communicative events separated by time and space. The dimensionalization of themes allows for the acknowledgement of the unique nature of different artifacts, while still acknowledging their role in larger discourses.

Adopting a strict methodological approach also serves to ensure that research is done in such a way that resonance and coherence can be achieved (Tracy, 2010). The constant comparison method creates a research environment in which rigor — that is “an attentiveness to research practice” (Davies & Dodd, 2002 p. 288) that foregrounds ethics, recognizes the objectivity of situated knowledge, encourages researcher reflexivity, and sees qualitative inquiry as a form of social interaction — can be achieved. Because I have engaged in protests for Mountain Justice, and view Bonds as a figure who has — and continues to — impact me, it is important to ensure a rigorous approach, as well as utilizing that environment to remain cognizant of my ethical obligations as a researcher (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Goodall, 2000). Goodall (2000) elaborates that for the qualitative researcher a sound methodological approach is essential because it allows for the recognition that, while genres and presentations of research may blur, the researcher still

knows the truth of their research — even if it is not Truth with a capital T — and is obliged to convey their findings in ways that align with that reality.

Tracy (2010) provides a final methodological consideration when considering the pairing of the constant comparative method with rhetorical approaches. She explains that credibility is marked by a combination of “thick description...triangulation or crystallization, multivocality, [and/or] member reflection” (Tracy, 2010, p. 4). For quantitative research credibility is often communicated via following the basics of the scientific method and the ability to repeat research protocols; because qualitative research is site and time specific, and allows for greater flexibility in approach, the aforementioned elements allow for an audience to view the researcher as a credible figure. Although the texts I examine in this project are disjointed from the time and place in which they originally gained meaning, because I also examine my own reception of these texts via autoethnographic reflections and vignettes the research becomes more specified. In summary, then, I approach many separate instances of rhetoric left behind by Bonds as a significant whole. Because, though, I aim to highlight themes of discourse that productively intervene in extant theories, it is also essential to turn toward principles of ideological criticism that allow for critical stances to be adopted. In the following section I outline how these principles may productively complicate a simple utilization of the constant comparative method.

Ideological Criticism

Because I engage the constant comparative method as a mode of inquiry rather than as an avenue towards theory, it becomes necessary to tie this approach to others. Hodder (2000) situates the analysis of material culture as encompassing both artifacts and

texts that have been preserved, separated from their original historical context. The dualistic temporal nature of material artifacts demands that the original meaning — in this case, the unique nature of the rhetorical situation — be addressed. Because these texts are also encountered in the present it is also essential to acknowledge the meaning derived in the modern context (Hodder, 2000; Condit & Bates, 2009). Attending to both past and present meanings of texts uniquely compliments the demands of the constant comparative method (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000; Glaser, 1965), which asks researchers to explore the situated and generalized meanings of the artifacts examined. Further, rhetorical analysis promotes the adoption of various critical stances (Hart & Daughton, 2005) that inform the basis from which the critic approaches texts. These stances are chosen to highlight the way that power is enacted, enforced, or concealed. Because I approach Bonds' texts with questions focusing on power, the framework provided by ideological criticism is particularly fruitful. The necessity of grounding this analysis in literature that illuminates ways that power is embedded in experience and discourse turns us, now, toward consideration of the theoretical aspects that I — having always already encountered these texts — draw upon, while still allowing room for relevant aspects of theory to inform my investigation.

Because I view Bonds' texts from a postmodern standpoint, the interconnected nature of these seemingly disparate discourses emerges. This is complemented through the ways that ideological criticism allows for Bonds' texts to be approached with a critical stance that is informed by, rather than tied to, other theoretical works. The attention to power enabled through ideological criticism allows discussions of narrative theory, place, memory, and voice — addressed below — to inform one another and

illuminate the ways that Bonds' rhetorically approaches power. Further, this stance allows for discourses to also be understood as unifying metaphors, enabling Bonds' unique deployment of rhetoric.

Theoretical Considerations

As I examine the discourses that emerge from of Bonds' texts I will address theory that proves relevant to each discourse, highlighting discourses of displacement in chapter three and conversations on rhetorics of family and family values in chapter four. Although I approach these texts in a way that allows for discourses to emerge, I also have always already encountered Bonds'—in her life, her death, *Mountain Justice*, and the situations surrounding these texts. Clinton (2009) points out that these moments of interaction occur in an actor's past, but impact the ways they live their lives and go about their work, both in their present moment and in their futures. Because of this relationship, and because I adopt critical stances that highlight power to inform my analysis, it becomes necessary to acknowledge the foundations from which I draw the critical stance that informs my investigation of the texts (Condit & Bates, 2009; Hart & Daughton, 2005). This also aligns with the ways that extant literature has been seen to inform the constant comparative method (Boeije, 2002; Fram, 2013; Glaser, 2002; Glaser, 1998; Glaser 1965), in which an existing knowledge of relevant literature formed the building blocks of the theory that would eventually develop. To state this in another way, both the constant comparative method and ideological criticism demand an explicit acknowledgement of the lenses adopted to inform analysis. To establish this foundation, I discuss theories of Appalachia as place and space, and voice, and narrative, before examining the theoretical implications of treating these texts as fragments of discourse. In

discussions of Appalachia and Appalachian rhetoric specifically it is important to attend to the ways that the subaltern voice and the concept of the forgotten place interact with existing discourses on national sacrifice zones and the spaces people inhabit.

The Forgotten Place and the Subaltern Voice

Crucial to understanding the connection between theorizing of Appalachia and that of voice, memory, and forgetting, is the work of Markusen (2004), who introduces the concept of forgotten places. The forgotten place is one that exists, objectively, but is essentially absent from national discourse; Markusen's characterization serves to reframe the popular environmental justice concept of a national sacrifice zone into one where memory and agency play a key role. A national sacrifice zone implicates actors, but they are never fully present — a national sacrifice zone is rendered passive in its own symbolic construction, a forgotten place, though, demands agency. Actions render a place “forgotten,” which Markusen argues occurs largely for capitalist purposes, strengthened by the growth of a cultural value system that renders residents of this place disposable and worth less than others, an “ideology of forgetfulness” (Markusen, 2004, p. 2308). Thus, it is not only the place itself that is forgotten, the people are also forgotten, erased, they are made subaltern (Spivak, 1988).

In introducing this turn towards an examination of agency within the forgotten place, it is first necessary to turn back — briefly — to outline the theoretical implications of such a turn. Part of the power of Markusen's (2004) language lies in its turn away from the language of “national sacrifice zone,” however the power of this turn is not only due to the agency granted by the new symbology; within projects examining Appalachia this turn also has theoretical implications based in past theorizing of the region and my

own desire, as a scholar, to work towards justice. In 1978 Lewis and Knipe first characterized the Appalachian region as an internal third-world colony, terminology that was ultimately linked to the concept of the national sacrifice zone, notably by Orr (2007). The citation of Spivak demands an acknowledgement of the (trans)national implications of the use of this term. Certainly, those within Appalachia face systemic oppression, largely — as Markusen (2004) points out — due to the economic situation of the region; however it is certainly not tied to the complex relationships exhibited either within the first-world/third-world dialectic or in the relationship implied by the use of the term “colony.” On a theoretical level, the introduction of a new language to describe the situation faced by those within the Appalachian region allows for a more complicated understanding of power dynamics while simultaneously allowing for the experience of those facing oppression stemming from trans-national power systems to be honored. Scott (2010) also provides nuance to the discussion of Appalachia as a national sacrifice zone by clarifying that those within Appalachia are culturally required to sacrifice their land, heritage, and health — via coal mining — in order to achieve normative citizenship. This expectation is situated in the history of exploitation of Appalachian families by coal companies, and is especially tied to the ways that mining families were purposefully denied economic independence. While Bonds utilizes the language of the national sacrifice zone, it is important to recognize the problematic history of the term in relation to Appalachia, while also approaching it with the nuance provided by Markusen (2004) and Scott (2010). The characterization, then, of Appalachia as a national sacrifice zone — providing focus on cultural memory and normative citizenship — helps to clarify the interaction between the Appalachian identity and the idea of the subaltern (Spivak, 1988),

which arises out of anti-colonial scholarship but is not necessarily limited to use in relation to trans-national systems. With this in mind it becomes necessary to recognize that Spivak's (1988) identification of populations as subaltern arises out of anti-colonial scholarship; however a subaltern identity does not seem to be limited to trans-national systems in the same way as the language of "third-world" and "colony" ought to be.

Spivak (1988) characterizes an examination of the subaltern as a shift to examine silenced voices. When read together, the characterization of those who live in a forgotten place aligns with the characterization of the actor imagined as subaltern. Spivak (1988) provides a needed layer of complexity to the idea of an actor within a forgotten place by calling attention to gender dynamics within the region.

Spivak (1988) and Markusen (2004), point out that the role the academic plays can be one that is incredibly harmful. Spivak cautions that the academic may make the "Other as Self's shadow" (p. 280), while Markusen (2004) identify "symbolic analysts" as actors key in the dissemination and shaping of ideologies. These symbolic actors, notable academics, shape ideologies that contribute to the culture of forgetfulness. Yet, with these cautions, there is also an avenue for action. Spivak (1988) points out that the task for the academic is one of unlearning privilege that allows for the construction of a monolithic Other as subject, Markusen (2004) compliments this call to action with the call to actively seek to remember places. The academic, then, faces the task of providing an analysis that examines the different ways that power manifests to silence voices and forget people/places, while also ensuring that the voices from those communities come to the forefront. The characterization of Appalachia as a national sacrifice zone is present in both popular culture and in academic literature. Indeed Bonds herself characterizes

Appalachia as a national sacrifice zone in many of her speeches. Yet Scott (2010) and Markusen (2004) provide a necessary complication to the history of national sacrifice zone language in Appalachia. The attention to voice, and the power of the critic, demanded by Spivak (1988) begin to highlight agency sometimes shrouded in the language of the national sacrifice zone. Because this research focuses on Judy Bonds' rhetoric as a discourse that is, though fragmented, still whole, an attention to narrative informs the ways I receive these texts.

Re-Membering/Re-Collecting through Narrative

When discussing routes to remembering places, Markusen (2004) draws attention to the power that physical place holds, it is important, then, to acknowledge that one of the important theoretical implications of connecting voice and memory to Appalachia is that not only is a place remembered but also it is also re-membered. When a forgotten place is remembered, then, those within it are psychically granted agency. Aden et al. (2009) expand upon this by presenting the concept of re-collection both as a relational process and a product. Within this framework they urge rhetorical scholars to look toward the ways that texts may be conceptualized of in a broad way — identifying the points at which the text object, the context, and people all intersect, pointing to the ways that all collapse in on one another and cannot, necessarily, be separated, while still demanding that scholars look to the relationship between place, people, and memory.

The agency Markusen (2004) points to through the use of forgotten place is reflected in Aden et al.'s (2009) use of re-collection as a process that is always occurring. While the ultimate call for studies of re-collection is one that focuses also on physical places of memory, the framing also holds implications that expand upon the idea of re-

membering. For a rhetorical investigation to reflect the ongoing, open nature of re-collection while also providing room the re-membering of a forgotten place demands that an investigation of rhetoric not only attend to the place implicated by the text; but also positions the investigation itself as one that is open, providing avenues for further exploration of the ways that texts may act upon an audience and with/in a place. By attending to these aspects the academic is also forced to attend to Spivak's (1988) call to resist the urge to construct the Other as a discreetly knowable subject.

Attending to the concerns raised by Spivak can be accomplished by recognizing that messages surrounding space and place are communicated by Bonds via narrative, and it is essential to view narrative with a feminist lens in order to re-place bodies displaced symbolically and in reality (Spivak, 1983). Narrative, and particularly feminine narrative, allows unheard-of voices to be raised into consciousness, for "beginning the story of life elsewhere" (Cixous, 1996, p. 100). By feminine writing and feminine speech, I mean rhetoric that defies the logocentric model of acceptable rhetoric begins to create new understandings. It invites the reader to create and explore new worlds of knowledge. Indeed, the phrases feminine writing and feminine narrative are, themselves, misleading and incomplete translations of Cixous's concept of *l'écriture féminine*, a rebellious rhetoric that urges the silenced to speak (Cixous, 1976, Cixous & Sellers, 2008). Indeed, the term feminine here does not only apply to women, but is employed to attack the traditional concepts of masculine rhetoric as well as the binary introduced by the term itself (Alexander, 2004; Cixous & Sellers, 2008). Hidden truths and hidden dynamics of power — both hidden in different ways, the former obscured by a devaluing of the feminine, the latter obscured by privilege — are addressed in narrative. Narrative is, in

the Cixousian sense, feminine, because it leads the audience, and the teller, to a conclusion through exploration and illumination of a truth not quite said. For Appalachian residents narrative has a long history, seen not only in Bonds rhetorical style but also through Appalshop and the Appalachian Media Institute (Richards-Schuster, & O'Doherty, 2012). The Appalachian Media Institute (AMI) is specifically focused on producing mediated works embedded in Appalachian community and identity. The AMI's projects help to reshape identity and combat stereotypical representations of Appalachian residents; further, with its focus on young interns, potentially displaced Appalachian youth are invited to reimagine themselves as activists and voices for a forgotten place (Richards-Schuster, & O'Doherty, 2012). In many ways this serves as a rhetorical force mirroring Bonds. Appalshop and AMI, while received by wider audiences, are focused inward, Bonds' rhetoric, while heard by those within Appalachia, is focused on the outsider who forgets

Narrative form also allows participants to address multiple different truths at the same time. Both Williams (2001) and Carson (2002) utilize a narrative form to address issues of environmental injustice & degradation, while simultaneously discussing social and personal realities. Both authors illuminate different aspects of narrative with their work that proves essential for establishing a feminist narrative lens. In Carson's (2002) work *Silent Spring*, narrative and environmental imagery are used to help draw the reader to a broader conclusion regarding the importance of ecological sustainability. The "spring without voices" (p. 2), where birds were silent and people were sick, was a fictitious creation on the part of Carson. Still, her work forever changed the discussion surrounding pesticide use and helped to shape generations of scientists and environmentalists (Lear,

1993). Williams' (1991) work, too, held environmental implications; however the narrative she presents in "The Clan of One-Breasted Women" has broader implications. This account of a family and cultural history with breast cancer bundles themes of displacement, war, the empire of the west, and a connection to the Earth itself into a mythical and poetic narrative; implicitly drawing the reader to question the themes addressed in the work.

Silent Spring and "The Clan of One-Breasted Women" both serve as examples where bodies are re-placed into a conversation they were removed from, new ways of understanding old knowledge are produced, and worlds are given names. Freire (2005), while discussing dialogue and the naming of realities, asserts that this act "is an act of creation and re-creation, is not possible if not infused with love" (p. 89). Lorde (2007) expands on this analysis, stating that for women to speak is "an attempt to break that silence and bridge some of those differences between us" (p. 44). Speech, especially for women, becomes an act of reclaiming space and battling fear. Speaking provides a very real ability to make a person whole, while silence causes a psychic displacement. Neither Freire nor Lorde addressed narrative as their field of study, per se; however both touch on the ability of narrative to illuminate worlds and truths. When read together they give a unique understanding of what speaking and narrative provides: a caring creation of knowledge that reclaims a sense of wholeness. Bonds' narrative, then, while a site of resistance, is also potentially productive; naming a current world while still imagining a new one.

By addressing the ways that narrative theories intersect with issues of memory, forgetting, place, and voice, a lens that foregrounds these sites as instances where power

is communicated is provided from which to view Bonds' rhetoric. Because the texts I analyze are separate instances of discourse that I approach as a narrative whole I next attend to the poststructural foundations that allow for such an approach.

Circulating Fragments

Aden et al. (2009) position their call within an exploration of fragments of discourse that circulate through cultures, are assimilated into consciousness, and operate in such a way that allows culture itself to be cited by those fragments. This orientation, required for a project seeking to re-collect/re-member, draws attention to Foucault's (1984) work on the death of the author. By displacing the author from a place of privilege over the text — attending to intention, the construction of a (body of) Work, and historical lineage — we are able to that avoid the ways that the figure of the holds power over a text. In studying the fragments of discourse, Aden et al. (2009) draw upon the work done by McGee (1990). As they explain, postmodern discourse may be understood broadly, disjointed and freely circulated, it is embedded within sites of memory and within the people themselves. If we attend to their call to address rhetoric from a more holistic viewpoint, then we must discount the author as an authoritative, controlling figure while still attending to the moral cautions provided by Spivak (1988) and Cox (2007). In order to counteract this potentially difficult bind, it is necessary to acknowledge — briefly — other ways in which the death of the author is theorized. In a recognition that the author, while not holding absolute authority over the text, may still be a figure worthy of consideration, Barthes (1977) utilizes the term *scriptor* to acknowledge the figure responsible for bringing fragments of discourse into a new, discreetly presented, whole. Cixous (1993) further characterizes texts, particularly texts with the

power to bring about change — a camp Bonds’ text undoubtedly fall into — as texts written “with us aboard, though not at the steering wheel” (p. 156); the death of the author can only be called a death because the author is also alive. For Cixous especially the figure of the author/scriptor must be accounted for, especially if their voice has previously been silenced. For this voice to be heard is a moment of Life, and so it is also necessarily a moment of death. It is this re-approach to the death of the author that allows for the academic to escape the construction of Bonds as Other and “Other as Self’s shadow” (Spivak, 1988, p. 280). Indeed, as Brockmeir (2002) reminds us, it is by attending to narratives such as those found in the rhetoric of Bonds that we may look at what both individuals and cultures remember and, by so doing, uncover what we have forgotten.

Examined (Inter)Texts

In taking a poststructural view to Bonds’ texts it becomes necessary to gather those texts together. Barthes (1977) reminds us “a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning...but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash” (p. 146). This call is echoed when viewing Bonds rhetoric as an attempt to deconstruct the dominant narratives surrounding Appalachia and coal mining because the deconstructionist project is one that recognizes the ways that “every text bears the markings of its persuasive field...the messages to which it responds and which respond to it” (Hart & Daughton, 2005, p. 314). While these theoretical positions point toward the need to construct a living archive of texts Bonds has left, there are methodological reasons for approaching them as a pastiche as well. McGee (1990) asserts that, for critical rhetoric,

the apparently finished discourse is in fact a dense reconstruction of all the bits of other discourses from which it was made. It is fashioned from what we call ‘fragments.’...simultaneously structures of fragments, finished texts, and fragments themselves to be accounted for in subsequent discourse. (p. 279)

Drawing upon this view Condit and Bates (2009) show that “by clumping fragments together...patterns in discourse can be described as expressions of ideas that have permeated a culture” (p. 110). When using the constant comparative method this clumping action allows for broader themes to emerge from texts that can be viewed as unique speech acts that require attention to their own unique rhetorical situation, but also as a larger conglomeration of events that work together to reveal overarching messages and discourses. In order to view a holistic discourse left by Bonds I have brought together four different genres of Bonds’ rhetorical fragments: appearances in films and/or TV specials, online video clips of speeches, published interviews, and records of her memorialization. I transcribed and utilized Bonds’ rhetoric from 12 film and TV specials: *Black Diamonds* (Pancake, 2007), *Climate of Change* (Bailiff & Hill, 2010), *Coal Country* (Geller, 2009), *Is God Green?* (Casciato, Jones, & Moyers, 2007), *Low Coal* (Evans & Freeman, 2010), *Mountain Top Removal* (Holland & O’Connell, 2008), *New Green World* (Constantz & Ross, 2009b), *On Coal River* (Borshay, Cavanaugh, & Wood, 2010), *Rise Up! West Virginia* (Gudmundsson, 2008), *Sludge* (Salyer, 2005), *The Last Mountain* (Bingham, Grunebaum, & Haney, 2011), and *Time and Terrain* (Constantz & Ross, 2009a). Together this amounted to approximately 36 minutes and 55 seconds of audio, and resulted in 20 pages of transcriptions. I then transcribed 18 videos of recorded speeches and appearances, taken from 13 different events. The approximately 97 minutes

and 27 seconds of audio resulted in 34 pages of transcription and were taken from the 2008 annual meeting of the American Sociological Association (Mountain Memoirs, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, & 2008d), the first PowerShift conference in 2007 (Coal River Mountain, 2008), the 2010 Treehuggers' Ball (Lab Bunner1, 2011), the 2009 rally for Coal River Mountain (Dustin White, 2009), the 2003 Goldman Environmental Prize ceremony (Goldman Environmental Prize, 2013), the 2010 Silverdocs (Robin Wood, 2011), American University's School of Communication presentation of *On Coal River* (American University School of Communication, 2010), the 2009 capitol climate action (Center for Biological Diversity, 2009), WE ACT's 2009 Crisis Climate Vignettes (WEACT4EJ Channel, 2009), the 2010 Environmental Action Conference (m Spiess, 2010), a video conglomeration (jordan freeman, 2011), and a 2010 account of Reverend Billy and The Mountaintop Gospel Choir's visit to West Virginia (Brennan Cavanaugh 2011). The combination of these artifacts resulted in 124 minutes and 53 seconds of audio and 54 pages of transcription. I also analyzed 62 pages of previously published interviews and features (Anft, 2007; Bell, 2013; Bonds, 2009; Mitchell, 2006; House & Howard, 2009; Kirkland, 2011; Greenpeace, 2009; Smecker, 2009a; Smecker, 2009b). Together, these fragments of discourse allow for two broad discourses to emerge from Bonds' rhetoric, that of space, place, and displacement, and a queer deployment of a rhetoric of family values. Finally, for my conclusion, I turn to accounts of Bonds' memorialization, taken from 42 pages of text (Bell, 2013; <http://judybondsmemorial.com/memories>). While these texts are not Bonds', the fragmentary nature of the discourses Bonds did leave behind suggest that the way in

which she is memorialized points toward how studies of Appalachian resistance rhetoric may move forward after significant leaders have died.

Into the Texts

The discourses that I analyze in the following two chapters, discourses of space/place and a queer rhetoric of family respectively, arose from the treatment of rhetorical artifacts as fragments circulating through the postmodern landscape. Grounding myself in extant theories of place, narrative, voice, and memory allowed for these discourses to emerge and become nuanced through the use of the constant comparative method. In chapter three I first examine the discourse of space and place that informs the ways that Bonds' navigates a rhetorical resistance to MTR.

CHAPTER 3

Bonds asserts that “a sense of place pulls at you here. It’s a trait that makes Appalachians who they are” (Judy Bonds as cited in Gudmundsson, 2008). In this Bonds highlights one of the key discourses to emerge throughout her rhetoric, that of space and place. I attempt to address the ways that Bonds’ deploys space and place as separate discourses; however, ultimately they must be seen as interconnected metaphors that inform Bonds’ rhetoric. While distinctions can be difficult to draw in a hard and fast nature — often Bonds’ would deploy both in a single rhetorical situation — difference can be established in terms of both temporal and physical scale. Rhetoric addressing place addresses both localized, unique physical aspects of Appalachia — such as certain streams or hollows — as well as the way that those aspects are related to in a certain temporal moment. Space, on the other hand, refers to a more generalized understanding of Appalachia’s physicality and the ways that it is related to across time — such as the understanding of a stream as a site for localized use, a point of joining generations, and an expansive material reality that has the ability to sustain or harm others who are both not physically or temporally present. In the most simplified form place points towards geology while space points to geography.

The way that Bonds deploys a nuanced articulation of place, space, and displacement as they relate to the Appalachian identity point to their importance in resistance to MTR, but also proposes that other activists may benefit from examining the unique ways that their social positions can inform rhetoric of resistance. On a theoretical level, simple distinctions between space, place, and identity are complicated; suggesting that the postmodern view — which allows for multiple discourses to be seen as informing

another seemingly different discourse — is a particularly relevant lens when examining the discourse of social movements. The discourse of space and place surfaces in two main ways, with Bonds emphasizing both the physical place of Appalachia — which is to say the specific elements of Appalachian landscape and nature — as well as the space of Appalachia — a more generalized discourse surrounding the ways people relate to each other and a generalized sense of Appalachia. Contained in both of these discourses is the unique role that MTR plays in shaping the land itself and the ways that people live and move within it; because of the nuance with which Bonds treats the role of MTR, though, it emerged as a third subtheme within the discourse of space and place.

The Place of Appalachia

In the fall of 2010 I went to the “Weekend in Wise,” a weekend summit in Wise County, Virginia to help expose college students to the issues of MTR and begin to provide training in skills necessary for effective activism. When we pulled up to the building we were staying in it was already late at night on Friday, we had been driving for about five hours and we were very tired, everyone fell asleep very quickly. The next day we began attending various trainings and were given the opportunity to go on hikes and nature walks throughout the day. On Sunday morning several people blocked access to a mining site. While I stood beside my fellow activists I knew I supported what they were doing, but I did not know why they were doing it. Later on that morning we drove up a road and parked, hiking the rest of the way to an overlook. I do not remember the name of the first MTR site I saw, but I do remember feeling lost. Every time I see an MTR site I carry with me a sense of that disorientation. Looking onto a landscape where a mountain once was — where its presence can still be seen through its absence — simply

does not make sense. It feels as if something has been taken away, the absence of place evokes a deeper feeling of something being missing. The land is not only land; MTR sites reveal a deep interaction between the physical scene and the internal world.

Articulating the ability to relate to and feel something once present but now absent is a difficult task, when I am asked to do so I often struggle to capture the appropriate language to communicate about this particular sense I either have trouble doing so or simply cannot. Bonds, though, does this with ease. Bonds' rhetoric contains different ways of speaking about the place of Appalachia that complicate a simple understanding of place as landscape. Bonds explains the place of Appalachia in ways that are potentially already familiar to an audience, drawing on descriptions of the uniqueness of species and the Appalachian watershed, even pointing out that "this area boasts the world's most diverse deciduous forests" (Bonds as cited in Smecker, 2009a). These aspects, though, emerge in the rhetoric of the anti-MTR movement at large and in the technical language used to argue against the practice (Kirkland, 2011) and are not unique to Bonds' rhetoric. Examining the ways that Bonds discusses Appalachia reveals two unique threads to emerge within the discourse of place: the spiritual nature of the land and the connection between land and identity.

A Hug From God

God did give us these mountains. These were the first mountains God created and from above if you look at pictures, uh, of a vista of Appalachia it just looks like God took his hand and just scrunched up these mountains and formed 'em with all the little gaps and swags. (Judy Bonds as cited in Geller, 2009)

One of the main ways that Bonds described the physical place of Appalachia — and of West Virginia specifically — was via religious connection. My own interactions with Bonds were facilitated through our mutual affiliation with Mountain Justice. Bonds was also a member, though, of Christians for the Mountains, a nondenominational Christian organization that operates in central Appalachia and advocates for movement towards sustainability and away from destructive practices such as MTR. Casciato, Jones, and Moyers (2007) reveal that churches are seen as a key site in the resistance to MTR, with both sides of the debate drawing on different interpretations of Biblical text to tie into Christian values that those in Appalachia may find meaningful. The spiritual relationship to place is highlighted in a clip of Bonds and others at Coal River Mountain Watch discussing a local letter to the editor. The letter quotes Isaiah 40:4–5, which references valley being filled and mountains leveled upon the second coming of Jesus, however Bonds responds by drawing on other scripture, and placing it within a meaningful narrative.

In Revelations 11:18 it says if you destroy the earth you yourself will be destroyed. And they will be judged for what they did to this earth. He's not telling 'em that and that's what we need to tell people. Look, who are you to decide

[Janice Nease: That's right! Exactly.]

when Jesus is comin' back, they ain't botherin' to tell you Jesus said he's comin' back and meetin' us in the mountains, I hope you ain't blown up them mountains he's goin' to meet us in. [laughter] (Bonds as cited in Borshay, Cavanaugh, & Wood, 2010)

For Bonds and others, the interpretation of Biblical texts became a site of ideological debate. Yet Bonds also drew upon a more generalized description of spirituality in order to explain the importance of Appalachia. Her descriptions of place were often infused with spirituality. Casciato, Jones, and Moyers (2007) explicitly discuss the role of religion or spirituality in Appalachia, and within Appalachian discourse. In the above quotation Bonds is featured as figure in the fight to save Coal River Mountain, while Geller (2009) focuses broadly on the fight against MTR. Even in discussions not explicitly surrounding MTR Bonds addresses the spiritual aspects of place in Appalachia, describing her experience by saying “livin’ in a holler feels like a hug from God; it feels like you’re secure and safe and just, you’re just hugged from God” (Bonds as cited in Constantz, Ross, & Spears, 2009a).

Bonds also explicitly acknowledged the role her spirituality played in her motivations for activism, even connecting her own soul’s salvation with the fight to preserve Appalachia (Bell, 2013; Kirkland, 2011). The conservation of land and the redemption of the soul are inextricably linked for Bonds, and her audience — even if they do not share her spiritual beliefs — comes to understand the ontological importance of Appalachian places. While Bonds’ descriptions of Appalachia shown above draw upon religious imagery she also exhibits a broader spirituality in her descriptions of the land that bring together her identity with the Appalachia itself. The religious imagery Bonds presents provides a sense of wholeness and point toward the construction of knowledge that forms a connection between the land itself and a deeper purpose. This deeper purpose is reflected in the ways that Bonds’ discourse brings together Appalachian identity and place.

God Made Mountaineers

If you don't know where you came from, you don't know who you are. And that sense of place, that strong sense of living in the hollow, and your connection to that ground, your connection to that river, your connection to where your parents and grandparents lived — that's very fierce in us. (Bonds, 2009)

In the above quotation Bonds' explains the connection she sees between Appalachia and the identity of those who live in it. This theme occurs throughout Bonds' description of the identity of an Appalachian, revealing itself in two important ways; the connection of the land itself and the Appalachian identity, and in the ways that the uniqueness of Appalachia co-creates a unique identity for those within the region.

Land and identity. Bonds connects both the physical terrain of Appalachia and other natural aspects of the region with identity. In moving toward discourse surrounding space, which is to say a discourse that addresses generalized relations to the land and others, Bonds engages in communication that allows for an articulation of being “*with nature* [to be] conceived of as *being nature*” (Rautio, 2011, p. 117). In her speech at the first annual PowerShift in 2007, Bonds urged the youth gathered to continue their activism by saying

I want you to notice nature. How geese are in flight. And they form a V in a leadership role, and when that leader of that...of that, that flight and the goose, the lead goose, when he gets tired of flapping his wings, he drops to the back, and the next goose comes up front and becomes the leader. Without stopping, without fussing, without whining, he becomes that next leader, he or she, and that's what we have to do. (Bonds as cited in Coal River Mountain, 2008)

By connecting the identity of activists who are motivated to end MTR with the familiar image of migrating geese, Bonds draws direct connections between the human and non-human, capitalizing on the sense of a collapsed boundary between the two in order to highlight the need for action. Her language locates activists and Appalachians as being (in) nature via her descriptions of the land as a part of the Appalachian identity.

The connection between place and identity surfaced in Bonds' use of language identifying Appalachian landscape as belonging to those in Appalachia — phrases such as “our coal” and “our mountains” appear in many of the rhetorical artifacts left by Bonds. While addressing the West Virginia identity of the mountaineer, Bonds asserted “we’re mountaineers. And if they take away our mountains then who are we?” (Bonds as cited in Geller, 2009). This connection becomes even more explicit in other instances, with Bonds telling House and Howard (2009), “that’s how it is in Appalachia — you are the mountain and the mountain is you” (p. 133). This relationship becomes even more complex as Bonds ties Appalachian heritage to the land, arguing against MTR by portraying miners as people who are “destroying this land and who we are” (Bonds as cited in House & Howard, 2009, p. 135). For Bonds, Appalachian identity becomes tied to the land, with the land also exhibiting humanistic qualities. Bonds, when offering a description of the Appalachian landscape, reflect on her discourse, saying

you’ll hear a lot of that kind of talk in Appalachia, the talk of body parts. We talk in human, living parts — the mouth, the head, the spine or backbone of the mountain, the finger ridge. We speak the language of a living, breathing world...this landscape is a living breathing part of me. (Bonds as cited in Kirkland, 2011, p. 8)

Bonds spoke of a visceral connection to Appalachia in relation to its specific places, speaking not only of ownership — our mountains — but also of connection — you are the mountains. By utilizing this connection Bonds urges her audience to evaluate what the implications become when Appalachians are seen as “the invisible minority, the unwanted children of America.” (Bonds as cited in Goldman Environmental Prize, 2013). By positioning Appalachians in this way Bonds implicitly highlights that the land, too, is discounted and not valued; the places inhabited by the invisible minority seem uninhabited, the places where the unwanted children settle are also unwanted because they provide a place of refuge. The reiteration of national sacrifice zone language by both Scott (2010) and Markusen (2004) help to inform how Appalachian place as person and Appalachian personhood as tied to the land help to clarify this ambiguity.

Because Appalachia exists as a forgotten place, a place that is exploited; the reality of the existence of those who live in it — is removed from national consciousness. Markusen (2004) speaks to the sense of loss that surfaces when I encounter an MTR site in her explanation of a forgotten place, explaining that this experience — “an experience of surprise, wonder, admiration, pity and regret” (p. 2304) — is common for those who encounter a forgotten place but do not come from one. Still, for most “it is always the human face of such places that provokes emotion and thought” (Markusen, 2004, p. 2304). By connecting place and people, Bonds allows for Appalachia(ns) to become recoverable, for the region to be re-membered by its inhabitants and its terrain.

To remember, though, means that our forgetfulness is always present in our memory. Foucault explains that “if there is forgetfulness, it is much less forgetfulness of being than occlusion” (Defert, 2013, p. 280). This is to say that when we construct a

forgotten place we have not forgotten an essential reality, but we have rather allowed for reality to be masked by other constructions; a place is forgotten because it is seen not as a place — specific, unique, valuable in its own right — but as a resource (Markusen, 2004). In the case of Appalachia the image of the Appalachian is replaced by the image of the abject body, a caricaturized version of Appalachian residents who are required to sacrifice their land — and their selves — in order to gain normative citizenship (Scott, 2010). The land and the body, connected, form a unique aspect of an aspect of Appalachian resistance. When confronted with the destruction of land and — as we will see when discussing the co-creation of identity with the land — a people, Bonds' rhetoric provides a way to connect the two and, thus, potentially preserve both.

For Appalachian miners, Bonds sees serious implications for MTR. “If you’re making a living by destroying other people and destroying God’s creation, then that’s not called a living. You’re making *death*” (Bonds as cited in Bell, 2013, p. 154, emphasis in original). For those outside of Appalachia the connection between land and identity force them to examine the ways in which destruction, or preservation, exist in relation to place and identity separately and at the same time. This connection along with the impact of destructive or preserving action, become complicated by the unique ways that the land of Appalachia informs the identities of Appalachians.

A unique co-creation. Bonds discusses the unique way that the land of Appalachia and the identities of those within it in her rhetoric. In her conclusion to her address to the youth at PowerShift in 2007 Bonds cites the statement “You are the ones that you’ve been waiting for” (p. 5) as a Native American quote. The literature on development-forced displacement draws attention to the fact that Bonds’ use of this quote

is problematic, but also highlights moments of connection. For Bonds to not acknowledge a direct source of her quotation removes it from its history; but its use also reveals Bonds' placement of herself and MTR activism in a history of resistance. If the quotation is, indeed, a Native American quotation, we are confronted with its appropriation.

Interestingly, though, the history of the quotation is unclear. While Bonds does not provide any citation for this quotation when speaking at PowerShift, when she spoke at the Environmental Action Conference she tells the audience it is a Navajo saying (m Spiess, 2010). Other sources cite it as a rephrasing of a Hopi prophecy (Community Works, 2008; Matrix Masters, 2011; Spirit of Ma'at, 2002), it may also be a reference to Alice Walker (2006), or even a reference to June Jordan's (2007) "Poem for South African Woman." Scott (2010) reveals an aspect of Appalachian identity that comes to the forefront of discussions surrounding the place of Appalachia is that of long-term connection to the land as a way to legitimize claims of Appalachian — though not necessarily national — citizenship. While claims of land-rights are problematic when they are situated in a context that sets up white, Anglo-American citizen experience as similar to the experience of Native peoples, Bonds' rhetoric also reflects a conflicted understanding of Appalachian relationship to the land. When describing the history of the region she reflects on the fact that

when they, the first settlers, came to this area of course there were Native Americans here. Cherokee and the Shawnee and, and, uh, the Native Americans fought hard, hard for this area because it's worth fighting for...but the, uh, the settlers ... eventually ran a lot of the natives off. (Bonds as cited in Constantz, Ross, & Spears, 2009a)

Yet Appalachians also have a legitimate land-claim. Bonds acknowledges the Appalachian claim to land by reflecting on her own family's history in the area: "my family lived in Marfork Hollow for six generations, and in the Coal River Valley for ten generations" (Bonds, 2009). The history of Appalachia is seen as one that is both unique and "has been handed down to us all the way from the Native Americans" (House & Howard, 2009, p. 144). The Appalachian identity, then, is situated in a moment of tension where residents must negotiate their own, legitimate, long-standing relationship with the land, while also acknowledging the history of Native displacement.

This tension is further expanded upon in other instances where Bonds situates Appalachia as "a third-world banana republic" (Bonds as cited in Smecker, 2009b), or through the understanding of indentured servitude (House & Howard, 2009). Both of these characterizations arise from the history of labor in Appalachia — where miners and their families were economically dependent on the coal companies they worked for — and because of the understanding of the coalfields as a mono-economy. When considering the nature of the postmodern world — in which fragments of discourse inform one another even if they are not explicitly uttered together — it also becomes necessary to recall that Lewis and Knipe (1978) first characterized Appalachia as an internal third-world colony. The impact upon rhetoric of those who wish to resist oppression within Appalachia, then, would seem to be that these metaphors become powerful tools to communicate, in short-hand, the complex relationship Appalachians have with the rest of the nation.

The problematic nature of these articulations can be somewhat unpacked by examining the way that Bonds adds nuance to her articulations of Appalachian identity.

She asserts that “we’re the only ethnic group you can still get away with making fun of” (Bonds as cited in Howard & House, 2009, p. 143), and sees the fight to preserve Appalachia as a fight to preserve a unique and valuable culture.

Bonds’ descriptions of place — the spiritual nature of the landscape and the way that place intersects with identity — also intersects with her descriptions of the space of Appalachia — for Bonds this is seen in a focus on how people construct abstracted meanings of Appalachia and negotiate ways of relating to place.

The Space of Appalachia

One day I got a call from friends in Coal River, West Virginia; they told me that “something was happening” that weekend. They wondered if I could come down to help them. I would only be able to be there for the weekend, but I knew I could make it. Beginning with a bridge on I-64 West I began to feel the familiarity of the route. As the approximately four-hour drive came to a close I turned at the road next to a post-office and found the truck we used to identify the driveway. Throughout my weekend there I navigated the space, reacquainting myself with a space I had been so many times before to train other, attend trainings, and create community. I remember my times in Coal River mainly through senses: hiking through woods; discussions of politics, resistance, and liberation; the smell of campfires. I rarely followed directions to anywhere in the coalfields that came from a GPS or an official map source. The places I went to in the coalfields were introduced to me by fellow Mountain Justice activists and those who lived in Appalachia, when I first encountered these locations they were already loaded with meaning and significance.

Bonds discusses space as a unique bridge between place, both in general and in ways specific to the Appalachian region. While discourses on place connect the land with identity, the discourse of space allows that connection to become value-laden and also allows for a validation of lived experiences from the past.

Save the Endangered Hillbilly

A particularly notable articulation of space exists in Bonds' reclamation of the stereotype of the Appalachian as a hillbilly. By calling upon this identity, Bonds infuses the dual identity of Appalachia and Appalachian with a value that allows for the co-creation to be understood on a broader level. The power of this rhetorical turn is reflected in the popularity of the shirt printed with one of the many phrases she coined: "Save the Endangered Hillbilly." Indeed, the ways in which Bonds discussed the identity of the hillbilly is one that allows for residents of the coalfields to reclaim the identity, reflected both in her personal use of the term and her commitment to educating students and the public from the perspective of the hillbilly. Bonds clarified: "I'm considered a hillbilly and I love being a hillbilly. The word is music to my ears" (Bonds as cited in Bailiff & Hill, 2010).

While "hillbilly pride is possible" (Scott, 2010, p. 33) the term is also one that results in ambivalence. Bonds implicitly points to the ways that the hillbilly is seen as unintelligent disposable in several discursive fragments, providing a neat summation when she states that "the mountaineer, or the hillbilly, is still considered a second-class citizen" (Bonds as cited Mountain Memoirs, 2008a). Yet Bonds' rhetoric also provides opportunities for reclamation. In her acceptance of the Goldman Environmental Prize Bonds embraces the stereotype of the hillbilly while also pointing to the contradictions of

the stereotype when it is deployed in the context of MTR. She states, “some people call Appalachians ignorant hillbillies, but we understand that our children cannot drink or breathe money. So who, really, is the ignorant one” (Bonds as cited in Goldman Environmental Prize, 2013).

While Bonds acknowledges the connection between the hillbilly and the land — “the best way to destroy mountaineers and hillbillies is to destroy their habitat, the very essence of who we are” (Bonds as cited in Mountain Memoirs, 2008a) — the hillbilly becomes a symbol for Appalachian values; a reliance on the land, self-determinacy, the ability to engage in hard work, and a care-taking relationship to the land. Indeed, these values are expanded upon when Bonds addressed attendants at the TreeHuggers’s Ball, by challenging them to oppose MTR through her discourse: “Are you tough enough to get the job done? If a little old grey-haired hillbilly woman can do it, you can do it. (Lab Bunner1, 2011) Bonds’ positions the hillbilly as a linchpin identity within American society, asserting that if hillbillies disappear “we all fail. Every one of us, all of America will fail when Appalachia fails” (Mountain Memoirs, 2008b).

The Appalachian hillbilly serves as a benchmark for those who attempt to claim it, and it also serves as a potential barrier. The ways that the hillbilly identity is negotiated amongst value, space, and co-created identity, also points to the ways that place and past operate together to form a discourse of space.

Negotiating Memory

The most immediate and intimate way that Bonds’ rhetoric reflects the negotiation of place and memory as space is in her descriptions of growing up in Marfork

Hollow. Her description elaborates on the simple geography of the hollow, and relies on the way that she recalls negotiating the space. She sets the scene:

right here where this bath house is, is where Dewey Petrey's general store was, and everyday after I got off the school bus I'd walk up to the store and get the mail for Mom or whatever else she, was she wanted. And up this little alleyway here my house was, was about 20 feet on the right hand side of that green and white house. You can see no one lives there. The beauty and the peace in this holler until Massey come along was, you couldn't find any other place on earth (Bonds as cited in Borshay, Cavanaugh, & Wood, 2010)

What Bonds illustrates in this reflection is the complex way that she must negotiate the memory of growing up in Marfork Hollow, with the reality of a community changed. By drawing upon (past) human ways of being in place she is able to rearticulate its importance. While the tying together of geography and identity seen in Bond's discourse of place allows for citizens and landscape to have a reciprocal impact upon each other, people are still mobile; Appalachians can — and do — grapple with the choice to leave their homes, the land has no such opportunity. The furthering of this disjuncture allows for the forgotten place to remain forgotten, finally emptied of its inhabitants. However, by drawing upon memory to transform place into space, Bonds rhetorically reveals value previously hidden within the landscape. The memories of those within a place counteract larger cultural erasures (Markusen, 2004) and they supercede situated knowledge based on cultural stereotypes (Defert, 2013) that allow for exploitation.

Because memory always operates in the present moment reciting the past, the discourse of space allows both for re-membering (Markusen, 2004) and re-collection

(Aden et al, 2009). Places become spaces not only through their present-past inhabitation, but also through the interpolation of affect. This is to say that values and emotions interrupt a simple understanding of place by adding another layer of significance through which meaning must be read. Bonds' rhetoric creates an understanding of a space tied to memories of heritage and past inhabitation through other narratives as well. While the experience of growing up in a hollow is one that her audience may not, necessarily, share, she also invents a sense of space by drawing upon situations that are potentially universal, as well as situations that are temporally distanced but still capable of evoking emotional ties.

An example of the remembered past giving meaning to present experiences that surfaces in many of Bonds' texts is that of the discovery of coal. She recalls that in "1749, John Peter Salley discovered coal a few miles from here. If he had known what agony it woulda caused he'd covered it up and kept his mouth shut" (Bonds as cited in Geller, 2009). While this experience is not one that a broad public can relate to, the connection created, nonetheless, performs an essential function. Bonds' telling of the discovery of coal moves to create a space in which coal — especially MTR coal — is connected with regret and suffering. Bonds also recounts the experience of being allowed to access the Marfork graveyard, understood as sacred space, via a guard shack (House & Howard, 2009). Through the discourse of space MTR can be seen as a practice that violates not only a landscape, but also transgresses the possibility of memory and creation.

These transgressions and violations create a disjointed sense of space where Bonds characterizes the feeling of living in Appalachia as being "a war, we are in a war

zone; it's a civil war" (Bonds as cited in Geller, 2009). The fight against MTR is divisive and pits "brother against brother" (Bonds as cited in Geller, 2009) and literal explosives are used in the mining process, which Bonds identifies as the bombing of Appalachia. These aspects, as well as the history of mining conflict in Appalachia, lead Bonds to share that "when you come to Appalachia, you're no longer in the United States of America — no, sir. You're in the United States of Appalachia, and King Coal rules with an iron fist" (Bonds as cited in House & Howard, 2009). The specific and unique places of Appalachia are transformed through the ways that people relate to the conceptualization of Appalachia and interact with those around them. As the effects of MTR continue to push the past and present out of alignment conceptualizations of the space of Appalachia reflect this conflict. Discourse of space — the values that become embedded in place and allow for judgments to be made — thus, allows for the meaning of the effects of MTR to be understood.

Effects of MTR

In my senior year of undergrad I was working on the planning committee for the national Mountain Justice Spring Break in northeast Alabama, as well as the regional Virginia Mountain Justice Spring Break in Wise County, Virginia. Even though I had been involved with planning and had attended multiple Mountain Justice events I continued to be astounded with the many different workshops that could be presented. MTR allowed us to address watershed issues, global climate change, Appalachian culture, environmental toxins, environmental justice, law, anti-oppression and collective liberation, sustainable transition. The list of possible topics, workshops, and guest speakers we generated for each break spanned multiple pages, and often offered the

chance to explore a topic in nuance. Every workshop aside from introductory workshops — such as MTR 101 — was designed to have the ability to meet needs of attendants who had different base knowledge and different interests. We took seriously the idea that popular education allowed us to uncover, utilize, and create knowledge that could serve us all individually, and the movement as a whole. When I was asked to facilitate a training I drew upon my memories of being exposed to MTR for the first time and reflected on how that interacted with my own topic, anti-oppression work and MTR. How could I best synthesize a topic that affected an entire ecological and sociological system and relate it to a topic so specific? How could I train on a topic so specific and ensure that I allowed for an appropriate discussion of the ways that MTR and its effects impacted the work?

Instances of rhetoric that focus on the effects of MTR intersect with Bonds' utilization of the rhetoric of space and place, but do so in a way that presents urgency and provides a way to address complex social issues that arise from the negotiation of the reality that "America as a whole has literally forgotten about Appalachia" (Bonds as cited in Geller, 2009). She discusses the effects of MTR in three distinct ways: its effect on the land and larger global systems, its effect on people, and as a motivation for her activism. In what follows I will illustrate how Bonds utilized three subthemes regarding the discussion of MTR's effects that help to give nuance to a larger discourse.

Destruction of the Land

One way that Bonds explains the effects of MTR is via its effects on the land and how that relates to global systems. In many instances Bonds draws on the function water plays in both local and global systems. Bonds sees water as playing a vital role in the

Appalachia, the opportunities for enjoyment, and as sources for drinking water and food, supplement the fact that the rivers in Appalachia are intrinsically tied to the geography of the region. These facets, again, connect Appalachian identity with the landscape.

Although these rivers serve a vital function within Appalachia, their destruction also has broader implications. Bonds characterizes MTR, and the those that support it, as particularly dangerous because “the waters for the East coast comes from the rivers that are birthed up in these little hollers; if you pollute the waters in these little hollers you pollute all the water on the east coast” (Bonds as cited in Geller, 2009). The identification of chemicals, pollutants, all converge in the observation of black water spills and the ability of water to connect people within the region and around the world.

The environmental destruction caused by MTR is not limited only rivers, despite their central role in sustaining the region and the water systems of the country. Bonds discusses the more immediate effects of mining through the ways that explosives are used “to knock fly rock everywhere, to send silica and coal dust and rock dust and fly rock in our homes” (Bonds as cited in Casciato, Jones, & Moyers, 2007). The dust that covers communities is only compounded by the presence of carcinogens such as polyacrylamide used in preparation plants (House & Howard, 2009), or the toxic nature of the sludge resulting from “clean coal” being made (Salyer, 2005). The physical destruction caused by MTR, though, gains more meaning when it is related to the ways that people are displaced.

Displacement of People

One of the prominent aspects of Bonds’ discourse surrounding MTR surrounds the ways that people are displaced because of MTR. In Bonds’ descriptions of her move

from Marfork she recounts how her family was the last to leave, with all of her neighbors being forced out of the area before they finally left. Although the instances of Bonds' descriptions of displacement occur in small ways — he recounting of her move from Marfork, the description of residents being forced out of their homes, or having those homes destroyed — these instances have great significance. These results summon images of diaspora. Markusen (2004) elaborates on the effects such displacement has, arguing that part of the reason a place is forgotten is due to those within the place; however, as people are displaced they become prohibited from remembering a place. In order to explore this theme it becomes necessary to supplement a reading of Bonds' rhetoric with discourses on development-forced displacement. In order to do this I examine the history that theorizing on development-forced displacement arises from before examining it in the context of Appalachia and MTR.

Acknowledging history. While Appalachian residents experience development-forced displacement (hereafter DFD), criticism of this phenomenon arose out of discourse and struggle of those in the Global South who deal with its reality at the hands of neo-liberal institutions like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Organization. Appalachians, though they are imagined as subaltern and inhabit a forgotten place, have not experienced colonialism. Yet, DFD directly implicates Capitalism and its power structures calling into question the very way that progress and development are defined through a Western viewpoint. When discussing MTR it is imperative to utilize this lens, addressing themes of place, displacement, and identity along with a denial of agency, a destruction of culture, and a robbing of real and symbolic environments.

Examining displacement. For those in Appalachia displacement is best understood as development-forced. DFD occurs due to the “transformation of both natural and built environments through construction of such projects as...energy resources, aimed at generating and supporting...industrial growth” (Oliver-Smith, 2010, p. 8). Even biodiversity and the larger environment are transformed into goods to be measured as profitable, creating a cost-benefit analysis that weighs the capital value of nature against the capital value of development while disregarding lived experiences (Oliver-Smith, 2010). In the case of MTR, the capital yield of coal and strip-mining are supposed to outweigh the environmental costs; the environment is altered. Appalachia as a forgotten place interacts interestingly with the paradigm of development. Mountaintop removal is, by definition, an extreme transformation of the natural environment. Mountains are, literally, leveled, people are displaced, and communities are destroyed. For some, like Bonds, displacement means moving within Appalachia to another town, for many young people in Appalachia this means moving away from Appalachia completely (Richards-Schuster, & O’Doherty, 2012). Regardless of the severity of the displacement that occurs, a sense of place and belonging to that place “plays a central role in individual and collective identity formation” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1989, p. 11). Bonds recognizes the displaced as subaltern agents from a forgotten place and uses her rhetoric to bring the situation into public discourse. Rhetorical interventions, like Bonds’ speech, perform this act of resistance. Rhetorical resistance allows for physical resistance to be seen; the seeing of resistance allows for futures to be imagined.

In populations often subjected to DFD the state may be the driving force behind development; however, increasingly private companies are pushing this development,

buying out people's lands in order to pave the way for "progress" (Oliver-Smith, 2010). While people may be compensated, it is important to recognize the "degree of coercion experienced" (Oliver-Smith, 2010, p. 3) by those who choose to move. The lens provided by DFD literature allows for an examination of the power that is present in situations of displacement and/or resettlement, preventing the veiling of DFD as merely movement. Indeed, people who resist "progress" increasingly risk being labeled as a terrorist, especially if they utilize non-sanctioned forms of resistance (Oliver-Smith, 2010). Despite this threat, resistance occurs and evolves.

Resistance to displacement is organized around not only traditional points of identification, but also newer discourses such as ecology and cultural rights (Coronil, 2000). Traditionally displaced people have been silenced and unable to find allies; however current strategies of resistance act to counter this difficulty. Particularly salient for a discussion surrounding MTR is the fact that resistance to displacing practices has begun to occur on a complex and ever shifting stage. Oliver-Smith (2010), asserts that a sign of effective and healthy resistance to the mythic narrative of development and progress can be seen mainly through a fractal relationship between local grassroots organizations, social movements, and international actions; with each site coming to the forefront at different times and in different contexts, before collapsing into dormancy. This shifting allows for resistance to occur in ways that are hard to control either by the state or by non-state actors. In resistance to MTR, Mountain Justice has acted on all these fronts at different times. Local action regularly occurs in a variety of forms, and summits help to form a sense of social movement that spans the country.

Similarly, in 2009, MTR in Appalachia entered into the international stage when Coal River Wind, an organization connected with Mountain Justice activists, held a briefing at the United Nations Conference of the Parties — an international summit focused on Climate Change and surrounding issues. Importantly, while resistance has occurred in the rhetorical and physical sense — indeed, both Coal River Mountain Watch and Mountain Justice have been considered terrorist organizations (American Friends Service, 2010) — resistance has been allowed because narratives have rendered the forgotten place of Appalachia memorable.

Innocence lost. Bonds addresses displacement by forcing those outside Appalachia to acknowledge their role in that displacement. In the opening of her PowerShift speech Bonds provides a unique greeting to the attendees of the conference, saying, “greetings from Southern West Virginia, America’s sacrifice zone for your energy needs. Where every time we flip on a light switch, boom! You’re blowing up my mountains & my home & you’re poisoning my babies” (Bonds as cited in Coal River Mountain, 2008). By opening in such a manner Bonds implicates her audience in displacement, their — and our — illusion of innocence in the process is removed. But this statement also implicitly questions the role of power in a discourse surrounding MTR. PowerShift participants were not, physically, responsible for the destruction of the Appalachian Mountains, they are removed from the process; it occurs because of energy consumption and production. Participants who most likely were already engaging in critical thought surrounding the construction of capitalist concepts of progress and development are provided with a lived consequence of this abstraction. Rhetoric that

acknowledges the role that a reliance on extractive energy sources not only draws attention to displacement, but also serves as a way to potentially provide a solution.

Driving Action

Much of Bonds' rhetoric addresses the ways that renewable energy sources serve as a potential solution for not just the energy crisis, but also as a way for Appalachia to move forward and become re-membered. Renewable energy becomes a strategy for Appalachians to avoid displacement. The move toward renewable energy intersects with the effects of MTR mainly through the possibilities it forecloses. As mountaintops are destroyed and the landscape flattened, the possibility for wind power, a solution that Bonds saw as particularly promising as an energy solution and as a way to keep land from being mined (Geller, 2009).

Also, Bonds discusses the destructive effects of MTR explicitly as a motivation for her activism. When speaking to the 2008 American Sociological Association conference, Bonds recounts an instance in Wise County, VA where "a boulder comes crashing down the mountainside into someone's home and sadly crushes an innocent child sleeping, and that actually happened" (Bonds as cited in *Mountain Memoirs*, 2008b). To those who knew Bonds and her work, though, the most familiar narrative of the effects of MTR that drove her activism is her account of seeing her grandson in the stream behind their property.

I discovered my grandson standing in the stream full of dead fish, and he was six years old, and dead fish floating around him and his little chubby hands full of fish and he said 'Hey mama! What's wrong with these fish?' And then I screamed 'Get out of the stream! Get out of the river! Get out of the creek!' And so I started

to investigate a little bit more and I noticed my neighbors above me movin out.

And I realized somebody had to do something. About six months later I realized

that somebody was me. It had to be me. (Bonds as cited in m Spiess, 2010)

For Bonds the effects of MTR on space and place are located in her conception of family.

Within this chapter, I have looked at Bonds' rhetoric that situates place as the geographic region of Appalachia and space as the cultural identity of Appalachians.

Bonds' rhetoric illustrates the ways that these elements are deployed and intersect with each other. Bonds exemplifies this relationship by pointing out that

People say that ironweed is the symbol for Appalachian women. You know that tall purple flower that's all over the mountains at the end of summer? Have you ever tried to pull it out of the ground? It's called ironweed because its roots won't budge. That's like Appalachian women — their roots are deep and strong in these mountains, and they will fight to stay put. (Bonds as cited in Bell, 2013)

In the above quotation Bonds addresses the place of Appalachia through the discussion of ironweed and the space of Appalachia when discussing the value-laden ways that Appalachians fight to stay in their homes by the displacing effect of MTR and the ways that it destroys communities and heritage. Yet this quotation also reveals another discourse that emerges when examining Bonds' rhetoric, that of gender and family. The next chapter examines the unique ways that Bonds deployed rhetorical constructions of family, but it is worth noting that these discourses do not exist in isolation and that place, space, and family/gender all exist in relation to one another.

CHAPTER 4

One of the discourses that emerged from Bonds' rhetoric was that of family. Although this discourse surfaces in relation to the ways that Bonds negotiates space and place, it emerges in a nuanced and unique way outside of that intersection. Extant works on rhetoric of family and family values, though, have pointed to some of the dangers of such rhetoric. Because of the controversy surrounding the rhetorics of family values I engage with Bonds' texts differently in this chapter, weaving her discourse into a conversation with existing literature on queer identities, family, and rhetoric. The ways in which academic arguments have foreclosed upon the potential usefulness of the rhetoric of family values also shapes my approach. In her recently translated work, *Tomb(e)*, Cixous (2014) provides a call for her readers, asking that we *tombez dans notre tombes*, fall into our graves; and in so doing, to discover our redemption in what we have buried. The call she puts forward by troubling the boundaries between living, dying, and loving suggests that what we view as fundamental boundaries are only barriers to ourselves. Like most of her texts, there is something queer in this call, to trouble the boundaries and push against them. It is my hope that by interrupting the way we understand the rhetoric of family as problematic I may begin to textually fall into a grave that has been created, and in doing so find a (queer) redemption. In order to do this I briefly examine criticisms of family rhetoric, roughly outline what queer a queer family rhetoric may be, and then turn to an examination of Bonds' rhetoric, incorporating it into a conversation with extant literature in order to provide a nuanced understanding of the way that Bonds' rhetoric operates.

What We Have Buried

Cloud (1998) has argued that rhetoric of surrounding family values “offered a utopian return to a mythic familial ideal even as it scapegoated private families...for structural social problems” (p. 389) within American politics. Cloud notes that the rhetoric of family values contains the ability to construct possible utopian futures. It also creates a private group of actors that identify only with one another that does not feel the same connection with larger society, nor do they feel the need to seek change in society unless it directly relates to their own perceived self/group-interest. Change, then, is restricted to the — presumably nuclear — group, and thus not widespread. Strach (2007) extends the analysis, pointing out that policy discussions based in the rhetoric of family — and family values — are incredibly recent in American culture and politics. Strach (2007) and Cloud (1998) both point out that this rhetoric forms a utopian vision, but while Cloud emphasized that this tends to demonize individual families, Strach also points out that policy gaps emerge precisely because of this vague utopian nature. The language of family and family values is purposefully nebulous; the audience is free to interpret the connotations of the rhetoric, when this is utilized on a national level the most conservative interpretation will tend to be adopted because it will fit within schemas that are at least familiar to, if not accepted by, a majority of people. Ultimately, then, family values rhetoric tend to only reinforce conservative values and prevent progressive movements from moving forward because a rhetoric of family and family values implicitly calls for approval of entrenched systems of power (Burack, 2008; Cloud, 1998; Gingrich-Philbrook, 2005; Strach, 2007). Because groups are urged to buy into systems of power (represented through the language of family and family values), even within

calls for societal change, the nuclear group is able to take small actions to prop up structures, rather than attempting to undermine systems that keep those very nuclear structures in place. An example of this trend is highlighted by *Against Equality* (2011) as they synthesize a radical queer critique of the push for gay marriage, arguing “gay marriage apes hetero privilege and allows everyone to forget that marriage ought not to be the guarantor of rights like health care”. Indeed, Gingrich-Philbrook (2005) puts it succinctly when he states, “my fears come down to the consequences of how badly autoethnography wants Daddy’s approval” because of the compulsion to bow to “traditional” family values. Burack specifically points to the ways that the rhetorics of family values have prevented gay/lesbian rights¹ issues from advancing. Gingrich-Philbrook expands upon this point by illustrating a double bind arising from the way that queer identities already do not allow for approval from power sources, notwithstanding the fact that queer individuals still engage in rhetoric and actions that seem to beg that approval. Despite these critiques, these authors do not engage with the question of what a queer reading of family values may look like.

¹ Throughout her book, Burack refers to queer rights movements, as well as non-heterosexual identities. While her work is incredibly insightful, I choose to use the term “gay/lesbian rights” because the use of the term “queer rights” implies a more radical politic, and a focus on those more vulnerable than gay and lesbian individuals who are often imagined as white in dominant “gay rights” discourse (Yount, 2009) that is not explicitly acknowledged — although it may underlie her work.

Preparing to Dig

Given the objections raised above, it is important to turn toward the question of what a queer reading of Judy Bonds' rhetoric may look like. In his introduction to *Queering Public Address*, Morris (2007) discusses the need for a queer investigation of rhetoric. He cites Myles (2003), who argues that a rhetorical investigation is needed that moves beyond archival recovery and moves towards an examination that might "probe the vast spectrum of conjunctions and interstices that exist between bodies, genders, and desires, as well as how these formations relate to other discourses and institutions" (p. 200). Morris asserts in his introduction a need to historicize the conception of queer public discourse while also hinting at the need to infuse existing examinations of public address with a queer reading. It is in this call that his citation of Myles (2003) becomes particularly relevant; in emphasizing "bodies, genders, and desires" (p. 200) we are permitted to examine Bonds as a rhetorically constructed mother in relation to her rhetorically constructed family. Indeed, it seems her construction of the audience as family inherently foregrounds these aspects in a uniquely queer way. Bonds places both her body and the bodies of her audiences as inherently implicated in the process of MTR through her discussions of pollutants and global warming. She also utilizes her gendered identity via the lens of the militant mother (Peeples & DeLuca, 2006). Finally, Bonds' rhetoric inherently speaks to desires, the desire for security, support, and relationship found through family. Bonds' discussions of bodies, gender, and desires are situated in discourse of family. These aspects dislodge the normative assumptions of family and its rhetorical implications by offering a different lens through which to understand the familial relationship. Further, family itself may be seen as an act of rhetorical

construction (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994) that can be imbued with ideology and value (Charland, 1987), suggesting that rhetorics of family and family values have the potential to be queered.

Tumbling In

Some of my most vivid memories growing up are related to words. In second grade Mom took me to get a library card because The Secret Garden was considered a book that only 4th and 5th graders could read. It became the first book I ever checked out from my public library. In 4th grade I asked my parents what the word “mack-a-brey” meant. They told me to look it up. This response was much more reasonable than when they told me to look up words I was not reading. After I looked it up I excitedly told them that it meant something that was “disturbing and horrifying because of involvement with or depiction of death and injury.” Laughing, they looked at me and asked “macabre?” In northern Virginia I suppressed my accent around everyone but my family; but when we were together we reveled in the uses of “y’all,” “all y’all,” “y’all’s,” and “all y’all’s.” Despite living in northern Virginia for about 21 years, Mom still swears she can tell where another Texan is from is the state just from their accent. Growing up accents marked belonging. When I heard Bonds tell us how to pronounce Appalachia — pronounced like “I’m gonna throw an apple at chya” — it struck me as familial.

The nature of Bonds’ discourse on family emerges differently than those addressing space and place. Many of her references exist in fragments scattered throughout her rhetoric, small phrases that help to provide a different light to the message being communicated. Despite the small nature of these instances, they still have a

profound impact and exhibit three distinct subthemes, calling upon responsibility, the construction of an attachment to Appalachia, and the establishment of lineage.

The (Militant) Mother

Dean, Gulley, and McKinney (2012) examine the unique role that women have within Appalachia. They identify women in Appalachia as caretakers, protectors, and those responsible for ensuring a connection to the land and cohesion within the family. Motherhood in Appalachia is connected with a fierce protectiveness identified by Peeples and DeLuca (2006) as the militant mother. For Bonds, this characterization is more than fitting. Many people, myself included, can recall the story Bonds often told about her grandson standing in the middle of a dead pile of fish in the river behind her house. She spoke with indignation and sorrow, her frustration was clear. After one year of volunteer work with CRMW, she took a staff position. Eventually she moved away from her home in Marfork because of the continued dangers of MTR and fear for her grandson (Bell, 2013). It is out of this context that she began her involvement with Mountain Justice in its 2005 inception.

Bonds situated herself as a powerful activist. When she was diagnosed with the cancer that eventually took her life she told Mountain Justice activists, “we’ve got them [coal companies] on the ropes, so don’t let up for a second” (Hitt, 2011). She also positioned herself as a maternal figure, telling the story of coming to activism because of her grandson and continuing her work because it was her duty to protect her land, her children, and the children of others. Peeples and Deluca (2006) suggest that many women who engage in feminine rhetoric perform this dual identity effectively when engaging as a universal mother to their supporters and a militant towards their opponents. Further,

they note that environmental justice organizations (EJOs), which contain a larger amount of diversity than traditional environmentalist groups, have framed a good mother as a militant mother (Peeples and Deluca, 2006). The militant mother, then, highlights the ultimate difference between the EJO and big industry: a fight between life and nurturing and death and destruction.

In an interview with Bell (2013), Bonds stated:

Why is it worth it to me?...Everyone's child has to have clean air, and everyone's child has to have clean water, and I want my great-great grandchildren to be able to live on this earth. Why shouldn't they? Why shouldn't they be able to live on this earth? It's my duty to protect it for them. And that's what I'm doing. (p. 156)

Her articulation of traditionally maternal characteristics, those of caring and nurturing, combined with her position as an activist and organizer, allow her to be seen through the lens of the militant mother whose rhetoric was, in itself, one way of performing resistance, both through confrontation and the creation of connection. This connection is reflected uniquely in Bonds' rhetorical focus on the role of youth to the movement, as well as in her identification of young and future generations as a compelling reason to halt MTR now.

Save the baby humans. In her acceptance of the Goldman Prize in 2003, the first time that many people became aware of Bonds or mountaintop removal mining, Bonds specifically calls upon the audience to recognize their duties to children and families. When discussing the need for activism within Appalachia she specifically points out: "we understand that our children cannot drink or breathe money" (Goldman Environmental Prize, 2013). While Bonds is explicitly speaking about children in Appalachia, her

message seems to also implicate the American public. Her message becomes not only a justification of her own activism, but a question regarding the priorities of those who do not join in resistance. Her call to “save the baby humans” (Lab Bunner1, 2011) was recalled by Vernon Haltom at her funeral (Bell, 2013). Her commitment to children was one she emphasized in many speeches (American University School of Communication, 2010; Coal River Mountain, 2008; Dustin White, 2009; Mountain Memoirs 2008a; Mountain Memoirs 2008b; Mountain Memoirs 2008c; Mountain Memoirs 2008d; Moyers, 2007; WEACTION Channel, 2009).

The commitment to youth that Bonds exhibits in her rhetoric is consistent with a queer idea of family. Bornstein (1994) specifically calls upon the ecofeminist Starhawk — social activist, prolific writer, therapist, academic, and pagan priestess — to explain what these latter values may look like. Starhawk (1982) writes that we

are all longing to go home to some place we have never been — a place, half-remembered, and half-envisioned we can only catch glimpses of from time to time. Community...Community means strength...Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing...Someplace where we can be free (p. 92).

What this quotation highlights are underlying themes of what, I will argue, may be seen as a rhetoric of queer family values.

Kubicek et al. (2013a) help to describe the sense of support that Bornstein (1994) points to via Starhawk. In their community-engaged research with house parents, they found that “the family structure provided House members support in the form of love, a place to stay when needed, and financial assistance-when necessary *houses may replace biological families*” (p. 183, emphasis added). If we may speak of queer family values,

then, we see that they encompass support that is (potentially) both financial and emotional; it is a support that comes from an acknowledgement of connection and thusly, responsibility.

Responsibility is not only a value that is embraced by queer constructions of family, but it has also been recognized in the legal arena, in some cases being codified as families of affinity. In the hallmark case establishing Karen Tomberlin as legal guardian of her partner Sharon Kowalski (1991), this has been understood through both partner's commitments to one another's best interests. Although these relationships are often not recognized by law, they are important for queer individuals because they are formed by ties "with those whom I turn to for emotional, physical, and spiritual support—those relationships that help me survive in the world" (Arriola, 1997, p. 692); for many queer people the people with whom these relationships are formed become family.

While family can operate in the legal context — both with the recognition of a "family of affinity" and through the increasing acceptance of gay marriage — family also has other explicit usages within the queer community, namely within both drag and ballroom culture. Drag queens will often use the terms "drag mother" or "drag daughter" — which reveals a semi-familial relationship between two performers, the mother who has helped to create the persona of the daughter and nurture the younger performer — but some areas also have drag families. Hopkins (2004) describes drag families, saying they are "larger kinship units that offer a support nexus for female impersonators and present opportunities for strong interpersonal relationships to be forged...Family members have a large network to draw on for creative, emotional, and sometimes financial support" (p. 145). Arnold and Bailey (2009) also discuss the queer ballroom culture, mainly found

within urban communities consisting of People of Color. They identify two main facets of the ballroom culture: the dances and the houses. They define houses as

A part of a national social network and many have several chapters throughout the country. Led by house-mothers and fathers, houses function as families whose main purpose is to organize elaborate balls and to provide support for their children to compete in balls as well as to survive in society as marginalized members of their communities of origin. (Arnold & Bailey, 2009, p. 174)

Arnold and Bailey find that these houses operate, for many, in place of families, and conclude that the familial structure not only already provides support for individuals with HIV/AIDS, but also has enough resources to sustain partnership with agencies that provide HIV/AIDS services. Kubicek, McNeeley, Holloway, Weiss, and Kipke (2013b) expand upon this discussion, utilizing in-depth interviews to point to two types of houses. Their participants revealed that there are houses that are generally more focused on competitive balls, and less on creating the familial structure, and there are houses that focus on providing a familial structure while still offering support during competitions. By identifying familial houses as sources of resiliency, the findings of Arnold and Bailey (2009) are complicated though the ultimate point remains: a queer(ed) family allows for support in the face of social and medical stigmatization (see also Kubicek et al., 2013a; Bailey, 2009; Rivera Colón, 2009). Regardless of whether the language of family is used by houses competing in the ballroom scene or by drag families, queer individuals who belong to these families explicitly identify them as familial structures.

We see a mirror to the ability for these houses to form sites of intervention in Bonds' construction of family as she references the connection with the audience as a

way to evoke responsibility for action, for intervention into the unjust system facing Appalachians. She utilizes this responsibility in such a way that subverts the traditional critiques of rhetoric surrounding family and family values. In her construction of family, Bonds addresses activists as a widened, non-nuclear family that has an explicit responsibility to take action on a national scale. Her references to aspects of family in discourses not directed toward activists, then, take on a dual role of explaining her responsibility to the broader public as well as reminding activists of their familial connection and responsibility. Drawing on her rhetorical construction of family Bonds asks “[how] do we compromise with someone that’s blasting and poisoning us and our children?” (Bonds as cited in *Mountain Memoirs*, 2008b).

The above quotation exemplifies an example of how Bonds deployed constructions of family while tying them to issues of space and place. Including references to family, children, and community with descriptions of destruction forces her audience to confront the dual nature of the destruction in Appalachia. A rhetoric of queer family values not only implies support, but also invites attention to how the idea of home in its most idealized sense can be created and preserved. Indeed, in his short meditation on the form of the internet, Scott (2012) reminds us that — for queer people — this ideal is vital, asserting that for people already placed outside of the societally acceptable the “key to getting out of a bad relationship is being able to imagine something more fulfilling” (p. 10). Bailey (2014) clarifies this point by arguing that queer individuals who engage in the creation of family act to imbue places with values, bringing about the creation of a space that allows for growth and safety.

A Place to Call Home

One fall I was sitting on the porch of a house in Coal River as other's prepared to engage in civil disobedience. While —by law — mining companies have to reclaim a site after it has been mined, this seems to be an exception rather than the rule. Even when mine sites are reclaimed the effort seems miniscule at best, an excuse of a poor attempt at restoring the land. The grass which is planted on a now flattened area to replace the diversity of a forest that once stood upon a varied terrain will, seemingly, grow anywhere; even if it does not have a food source to easily draw from. People have decided they will walk onto an inactive mine site and plant trees that are native to the area and, hopefully, resilient enough to survive in the desolation to draw attention to the ways that reclamation of MTR sites is (not) negotiated. If they are arrested it will be, in many ways, a victory because it will draw attention to our message. However the point of an action should not be to get arrested for the sake of being arrested, there should be a larger purpose behind it. For us, it is revealed by what is implied if the mining company allows the action to go forward, an implicit acknowledgement that land reclamation for MTR sites is woefully inadequate. I wish I could be part of this action, but I am still on probation from another action and cannot risk being arrested, and so I, and others, sit on the porch.

While sitting there, our conversations turn to how we construct our homes. For all of us there is an emphasis on creating intentional community. Though our phrasing is vague we all know that we are referring to an attempt to create a space in which we are supported, but also held accountable. A space that is political and personal where we are allowed to flourish and help nurture those around us so that they, too, may grow.

For Bonds, the tie to place as a queer construction of family gets emphasized throughout her speeches, and in her interviews (Bell, 2013; Coal River Mountain, 2008; Jordan Freeman, 2011; Spiess, 2010; WEACT4EJ Channel, 2009). Bonds repeatedly explains that her family had lived on land in Marfork for six generations before she was forced to move by the conditions created by Massey's mining efforts. Yet she also attempted to connect others to the land by identifying them as members of her own family. Indeed, in her 2007 PowerShift speech she told the youth present "I think my children — and that is each and every one of you — deserve clean air, clean water, and energy" (Coal River Mountain, 2008). The construction of anti-MTR activists as family is reinforced through Lisa Henderson Snodgrass's reflections at her mother's funeral, "I always knew that her environmental family were wonderful people" (as cited in Bell 2013, p. 159).

Bonds' assertion of family relations continued even when she received treatment for the cancer which would ultimately take her life, identifying an activist that had traveled from New York as "sister" (Brennan Cavanaugh, 2011). The construction of a family is not bound by an immediate physical tie or accessibility to the Appalachian Mountains, but by a commitment to environmental justice. Bonds herself emphasized this, saying "we're all brothers and sisters on this earth, and the environment is the one thing that connects us all" (WEACT4EJ Channel, 2009). Bonds, in rhetorically constructing a family, also created a home within the movement to end MTR for activists who may not be from Appalachia. She regularly invited activists to visit West Virginia and see the reality of MTR for themselves. Whether activists visited Appalachia during a summit or chose to live for a time in the coalfields, Bonds was present to welcome them

home. Essential for the continuation of this sense of belonging, though, is the ability to identify a family line.

Establishing a Lineage

In the summer after Judy's death, my friend and colleague Jackie and I were running a training program for the Sierra Student Coalition known as SPROG. One of the activities at every SPROG is called "green fire." The facilitator reads from Aldo Leopold's A Sand County Almanac where he recounts watching the "green fire" leave the eyes of a wolf he just shot. For those of us sitting around the campfire the green fire represented the thing that drove us to take action for environmental justice, it was the thing we feared and faced losing at the same time. Sitting around the fire I told those around me how I felt lost without the guidance of Judy, how I was not sure what direction to turn. After we all left the circle an activist, my friend, who worked very closely with Judy and lived in West Virginia came up to me and asked to talk. Of course, I said yes, but I worried that I may have overstepped my bounds, laid claim to Judy's memory in some way that was not appropriate. I told him this and I will always remember his response. "No man, that was perfect. Judy's here with all of us and it's important to keep her alive by remembering her, and telling people how she impacted us. We have to tell people what having her stolen by the coal industry means."

In her eulogy, Vernon Haltom stated that Bonds "replicated herself, she expanded, she grew this movement and grew her family, which is really what this movement has become — a family" (as cited in Bell, 2013, p. 158). Via this statement, Haltom provides another interesting connection to queer familial rhetoric. Robson (1994) troubles the language of "family of affinity," along with Arriola (1997), stating that it "connotes a

relationship more akin to caretaker and dependent, with unequal status and formality in the court's language” (p. 984). Morris and Paasonen (2014) extend this conversation of support into the realm of the sexual, addressing the importance of support for the queer family. They argue that, for the heterosexual family, sex becomes crucial because it provides lineage; however for the queer family sex becomes crucial in the ways that it is always already tied to notions of support because of its connotations of risk and otherization. As Stanley (2012) reminds us, “AIDS offered the wish fulfillment of a homicidal culture that knows fags have always been, and must always be already dead” (p. 159). Morris and Paasonen clarify the importance of sexual practices within queer contexts, stating, “integral to queer identity is the fact that one’s life isn’t developed from or devoted to the genetic lineage into which one was accidentally born. The queer family isn’t a genetically based nuclear family” (p. 229). For the queer individual, the term family may have many meanings — from highly painful, conservative, problematic ones, to ones that are empowering, nurturing, and laden with notions of resistance (Bornstein, 1994; Brettschneider, 2006; Fagan, 2012; Morris & Paasonen, 2014). In his characterization of Bonds creating a family through movement building, Haltom provides a clear snapshot of what the utilization of a queered rhetoric of family and family values may do. By emphasizing resistance and the subversion of power structures, the conservative power of family values is skewed, it is made new and formed into something which begins to chip away at the rigidity produced through its own use.

Lehr (1999) elaborates on the values implied by queer use of the term family. She points out that, historically, the queer use of the term family has served to identify connection — and a safe visibility — by covertly referring to other queer individuals.

She also points to the fact that, in the civil rights movement, familial language has been used to communicate a political commitment, as well as one that is intimate and strong; she cautions, though, that this language has been appropriated and tended to lose its political implications. Further, she warns that queer usages of family — while emphasizing support and care — tend to ignore intergenerational roles and connections. Bornstein (1994) and hooks (2000), though, provide a counterpoint to Lehr (1999) by discussing the situated ways that rhetorics of family values may operate. While Lehr (1999) sees queer “families” as lacking an intergenerational aspect, hooks (2000) sees the answer to this in the politicized use of the term. She argues that family, a tie not only limited to “households...or even blood relations” (p. 38), allows for the experience of ‘dignity, self-worth, and humanization’” (p. 38). In doing so, she argues, there is the possibility of establishing a genealogy not of bloodline, but of leadership. Bornstein (1994) argues that in a queer appropriation of the term family — rather than a gay or lesbian appropriation — the term must always be political. In the queer use “family” becomes subversive; the values found when “[we] blend, fold, and mutilate popular forms and genres and claim them for ourselves” (p. 159). This value of resistance and subversion is apparent when she asserts that “[we’ve] begun sewing sequins onto our cultural hand-me-downs” (p. 13). If we return to Bonds’ connection of the nature of leadership in the anti-MTR movement and natural imagery from the lens of a rhetoric of queer family values, new lessons may be drawn from it than a simple connection between identity and place. Bonds urges us to

...notice nature. How geese are in flight. And they form a V in a leadership role, and when that leader of that...of that, that flight and the goose, the lead goose,

when he gets tired of flapping his wings, he drops to the back, and the next goose comes up front and becomes the leader. Without stopping, without fussing, without whining, he becomes that next leader, he or she, and that's what we have to do. (Bonds as cited in Coal River Mountain, 2008)

Bonds ties her construction of family explicitly to the construction of a leadership model and an activist lineage. Her return to natural imagery amidst a speech discussing pollution and destruction begins to sew the sequins handed down to Appalachian residents in a history of exploitation and oppression.

Bonds positioned herself as the militant mother of the anti-MTR movement, ready even to die for a future where there was justice in Appalachia; establishing a family, a lineage, and a home. These aspects of her rhetoric, and her gendered identity, are particularly unique given their intersection with MTR and the space/place of Appalachia.

Returning to the Mother

Bell and Braun (2010) expand on the ways that gender may have affected the development of Bonds as a spokesperson for Mountain Justice. They explain that, instead of identifying an overarching idea of hegemonic masculinity, it is important to situate masculinities in their own unique social location. They further contend that the unique hegemonic masculinity of coalfields is tied to the identity of man as coal miner and a coal miner as a member of the United Mine Workers of America (p. 800). Mountaintop removal has led to a decrease in mining employment for men in Appalachia, which threatens the hegemonic ideal of masculinity within the community. If a man were to speak out against the industry, then that act could be seen as an attack on both the masculine identity and the identity of coal miner. Bell and Braun (2010) suggest that this

offers a unique opportunity for Appalachian women to enter the field of activism. They are largely forgiven, at first, for their opposition because they are seen as non-threatening housewives and mothers. Bonds, herself, saw her identity as an Appalachian woman, to be important, connecting women in Appalachia with enduring and strong elements of the land — as was discussed in the previous chapter.

Richards-Schuster and O’Doherty (2012) also emphasize this connection with the land, pointing to the need for strong place attachment that Appalachian youth face; suggesting that space and place attachment within Appalachia — which women have the ability to manifest — serve a powerful, even familial, function. The destruction of the land in Appalachia seen through mountaintop removal mining (MTR), is distinguished from traditional forms of mining, and while mining has been connected to masculinity, MTR is hyper masculinized, threatening the cohesion of communities and families (Scott, 2010). Interestingly, Looff (1971) notes that those in Appalachia place high importance on extended family ties. For Appalachian rhetoric, then, the ability to reorganize an orientation to the land potentially serves to repair relationships that were broken by hyper masculinized actions. It is in this intersection that the discourses of space/place and family begin to intersect, forming a web of connection between Appalachia, those who live within Appalachia, and those activists who align themselves with the fight to save Appalachia.

Remembering the Dead

In my junior year, the spring of 2010, JMU’s EARTH club decided to invite Judy to come and talk to students and the community about MTR and the fight to see it end for our yearly “Earth Week” series of events. JMU students had been involved with

Mountain Justice from the very early stages, with many students and/or alumni moving into Appalachia to help build the movement. We had a history together, and wanted to make sure that our community in Harrisonburg didn't forget that. Junior, an activist with Mountain Justice who I had worked with before, and Judy pulled into JMU's parking lot behind Miller Hall. With graduation around the corner, the landscaping crew had just put in new purple and gold flowers. The sprinklers were going, and I remember thinking how fitting it was that the campus had gotten all dressed up to welcome Judy.

"I reckon I'm here, come on out and show us where to go."

After walking to her car and saying hello to her and Junior, we took a quick walk through campus. I showed them the room where they would be speaking, the library, dining areas. They had both been here before, but I wanted to make sure they knew where everything was. The talk that night was full of people, and after it was done it was getting pretty late. Junior had stepped outside to smoke, and I was itching for one too, but I needed to check-in with Judy.

"Do y'all need a place to stay for the night? I know it's getting sort of late."

"Nah, I haven't been home in a while and it's time I saw my dogs and my family. Plus I've got to be at a hearing tomorrow afternoon. You know how it is."

I laughed. In one of our phone calls we had both talked about the busyness of our schedules.

"Judy, I just want to thank you again for coming out here. It means so much to us."

"I'll always come here if I can. Y'all have been with us from the beginning. We're family, and we stick together."

We had been walking out to Junior, and when we got to the car we all hugged goodbye, exchanging the usual “see y’all later’s” and “come down to see us soon’s.” None of us at JMU had known it would be the last time we would see Judy.

Of all the reflections posted on Judy Bonds’ memorial website, nearly every one of them mentions the feeling of family, of a connection to Bonds. They speak about her as loving, fighting for her future and those of others from a sense of justice. Cixous (1996) characterizes writing that is love — in other places alluded to as *l’écriture féminine*, or writing that refuses patriarchal standards and control, writing that holds creativity at its core, writing that destroys binaries — as a she, writing “she doesn’t enter where history still works as the story of death. Still, having a present does not prevent woman’s beginning the story of life elsewhere. Elsewhere, she gives” (p. 100). Pairing the Cixousian view with that of Charland (1987), allows for us to see Bonds’ rhetoric as an act that both creates an audience that is public *and* private; that moves beyond the history that shaped Appalachia while still acknowledging it, creating a vision of the future and creating a vision of a family.

The family created certainly was private in some ways — we often critiqued ourselves for being too cliquish, land was understandably monitored and those who weren’t known could raise suspicion if it wasn’t during a summit — but in other ways it was incredibly public: the aim of the movement was to create a widespread resistance. Bonds provided an example of what a queer deployment of the rhetoric of family and family values might look like. She engaged in rhetorical strategies that valued family while imbuing them with a distinctly Appalachian flavor of resistance and protection. By identifying her audience as members of her family Bonds’ emphasized resistance to

entrenched power structures, the conservative role of family values could not play out, it aimed for a future of justice that was always just on the horizon.

In Bonds' adoption of the militant mother identity, she created a family, characterizing fellow activists as her family and leading them forward in protest as the maternal figure. Her rhetoric served to establish a lineage, tying the family together, and in so doing served to call her children home. On a theoretical level Bonds' utilization of a rhetoric of queer family and queer family values points to the need to see potential in the utilization of rhetorics that have been characterized as nonprogressive and/or dangerous. Bonds asks us to recognize that the power of a rhetorical construction can be used in a myriad of ways, and that resistance movements which tie themselves to space, place, and identity may have a unique opportunity to leverage family and a rhetoric of family values in a way that is reparative.

CHAPTER 5

On Saturday, January 15, 2011, I attended Judy's memorial service at the Tamarack Center in Beckley, West Virginia. A group of us met at my house early Saturday morning to go to the service. The drive from my house in Harrisonburg to Beckley took about 3 hours and it was, for the most part, quiet; when we did talk we generally avoided acknowledging where we were going, a silent agreement having been formed that none of us were quite ready to talk about the experience that lay on the road ahead. As we drove to the service I remember noticing how this trip the sites along the road — the indicators I used to mark that I was driving toward a place I connected with nurturing, caring, and development — took on a different meaning as we were travelling towards a very different place, a very different space. Pulling up to the Tamarack Center it became obvious that, for that time, we were creating something separate from our everyday lives; in the parking lot the license plates from different states, attached to cars of every different make and model spoke to the incredible and wide impact Judy had. Although there was seating for about 400, by the time the service began there were people standing in the back, squeezing chairs onto the ends of aisles. People from all over the country were crowded together to honor the woman who we had seen as the voice of our resistance, to provide some measure of comfort for her family, and to show our solidarity with each other. The service lasted over three hours, and by the end of our time there, everyone I saw had the telltale signs of having cried. We all congregated in the lobby, sharing tears and memories, before those of us from Harrisonburg had to head home. As we drove back east to Harrisonburg the attitude in the car was very different. We shared memories, reflected on our experiences in activism, remembered Judy and her

impact; we cried at many different times, but we also laughed and provided support. One question we returned to time and again was who would fill the gap Judy left, who would help to give voice to the movement?

The Intersection of Space, Place, and Family

By examining the speeches, film and TV appearances, and interviews left behind by Bonds, our attention is drawn to the unique way that she creates an intersection between rhetorics of space, place, and family. All three discourses are examples of powerful rhetorics on their own, but when viewed together they can build into each other, forming a web of discursive fragments that reinforce themselves by existing in conjunction with each other. Even when these themes emerge by themselves they reference the absent discourses, they implicate and give meaning to one another. In order to explore the implications of this reading of Bonds' texts I first address the discourses of place, space, and family separately; I then discuss potential areas for future research; before finally discussing the ways that Bonds utilized all three discourses in relation to one another.

Appalachian Place

Bonds' use of discourse surrounding place points toward the importance of recognizing the ways that geographies can interact with, and be shaped by, nonvisible elements such as spirituality and identity. Appalachia is connected with hard work and a mythic America (Scott, 2010). Bonds' rhetoric acknowledges this connection, while also suggesting that the religious nature of this connection can be directed toward the land. For rhetoricians, then, Bonds' discourses seem to reinforce the importance of resonating with underlying values of a population; however they also provide a caution to not pursue

this resonance in an essentialized or goal-based way. Bonds utilized spiritual and religious language in a way that was both complex and also allowed room for others' spiritual understandings — or lack thereof — to be maintained and seen as potentially aligning with her core message. For critics, this connection points to the necessity of allowing connections to form between two concepts that may be seen as separate. This is especially important given that the western cultural impulse is to see the environment through the lens of economic value. Bonds' rhetoric points to the fact that part of the power of rhetorics of resistance lies in the ability to counteract destructive practices by drawing on discourse that holds similar cultural power; that is to say, Bonds' is able to counteract the view of mountains-as-coal-as-money by positioning mountains as sacred objects and tapping into a deeper American religious mythology.

Bridging Place and Space

While Bonds' discourses surrounding place also give light to the interactions that a place can have with the identity of a places inhabitants, her discussion of Appalachia as space add a value dimension to that identification. Bonds' rhetoric provides nuance to the ways that space and place interact with identity formation. This theme suggests that place can be seen as a historical force behind identity formation — in the case of Appalachian identity this relates to land heritage as well as to understandings that result from the physical surroundings, such as the importance of streams. Space operates differently in Bonds' discourse by addressing the ways that places become value-laden, in the case of Appalachia the history of underground coal mining and a recognition of reliance upon the landscape for survival (Bonds references rooting both as a means of food production and as a way to generate income) contributes to the ability of Bonds to claim the identity of

the hillbilly as a potential source of pride and as a rallying point for resistance to exploitation. The discourse of space and place is also bridged by the utilization of the lens of DFD — acknowledged in Bonds' discussion of the effects of MTR — which recognizes the ways that destruction of the landscape and displacement of people can serve to reveal underlying power dynamics. Bonds' rhetoric suggests that it is important, then, to examine the ways in which space and place can be analyzed together in order to reveal underlying power dynamics.

Negotiating Space

One of the common ways that Bonds evoked space was through the use of discussions surrounding the difference between a remembered past and a dissonant present. This proves to be essential when navigating a forgotten place because it allows for an acknowledgement of the past while creating a possible future. The dissonance produced also serves to communicate urgency for action and support Bonds' universalized call. Appalachia and Appalachians foster an ambivalent anxiety within broader culture, representing an idealized past of American values while also subverting expectations of race and class (Scott, 2010). MTR adds to this anxiety by calling to mind those aspects of a place actively attempt to forget via its dominant representations (Defert, 2013; Markusen, 2004): that the place being destroyed is also a space, that it is inhabited and laden with value.

Family

The final discourse to emerge from this analysis of Bonds' texts was that of family. This discourse revealed ways that Bonds connected discourses of space and place with her gender identity and was able to construct a family that was connected both to the

land and to the people resisting its destruction. Importantly, this discourse complicates the understanding of a singular rhetoric of family or family values, and instead suggests that a queer, political rhetoric of family values may be successfully redeployed to facilitate political action and connection. Given the interaction between space, place, and memory, the ability to identify a productive redeployment of terms that are highly suspect within academic discourse holds particular promise when examining areas that are threatened by destruction, displacement, and interact with several cultural discourses.

Areas for Further Research

I consciously chose to approach this research utilizing a qualitatively rhetorical approach, informed by extant theories on Appalachia and narrative theories. My reading of Bonds' texts was informed by her identity as it related to space and place — that is to say her identity as an Appalachian — as well as her identity as gendered — specifically her identity as an Appalachian woman, a mother, and a grandmother. As I approached this research several potential areas of investigation surfaced as potentially productive, but which lay outside the scope of this project. Here I briefly outline lenses that may be potentially productive for further research of Judy Bonds' rhetoric specifically, and rhetoric of Appalachian resistance in general, focusing on questions of the archive and curation, complex identities, how movements remember leaders, and the ways that rhetoric may invent possibilities for the future.

Constructing an Archive, Curating a Collection

In my approach of Bonds' texts I have examined 39 discursive fragments, attempting to view them both separately and as a holistic narrative. In doing so I have engaged mainly with what Lazo (2009) identifies as migrant archives. It is important to

note that Lazo uses this term for multiple reasons, one of which is its implicit call for research to move beyond an archive bound by English. However he also describes these archives as ones that “reside in obscurity and are always at the edge of annihilation...not written into the official spaces of archivization, even though they weave in and out of the buildings that house documents” (pp. 37–38). Though I engaged with a sufficient number of Bonds’ texts to allow myself to achieve saturation in my analysis, the collection and transcription of the entirety of her discourses lay outside of the scope of this project. One of the ways forward highlighted by this research is in the construction of an archive and curation of Bonds’ work. Not only would the construction of such an archive serve other potential researchers, but it could also make Bonds’ voice more accessible to a popular audience. Many of the works that I viewed and transcribed were only available to me via the interlibrary loan system, and could be potentially difficult for others to access.

Beyond the logistical issues of access to Bonds’ texts, there is also the incredibly productive potential of an archive containing Bonds’ work, an archive of resistance. My reading of Bonds’ texts comes from a place that is situated in my own experiences with anti-MTR work, working with Bonds, and my own identity. Others approaching Bonds’ discourses would, undoubtedly, be able to provide other insights into her rhetoric of resistance; the multiplicity of readings that could result from Bonds’ texts being made accessible allows for the rhetoric of actors within social movements to be informed by nuanced academic and popular scholarship.

The Cyborg and Assemblage

My reading of Bonds’ texts address her identity as an Appalachian woman; however the discourses of space, place, and displacement complicate an ability to form

simplified identities. Bonds' rhetoric points to the ways that space, place, spirituality, displacement, and constructions of family all come to the forefront of discourse at various times with various implications. Despite an identity — Christian, Appalachian, Mother — being centered in a particular instance, it is still informed and complicated by a host of other identities, and by the material realities of MTR. When examining the unique ways that technology, non-human entities, place/space, and human actors all interact, Haraway (1991) reminds us “a cyborg world might be about lived socially and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints” (p. 154). Puar (2012) sees Haraway's cyborg as an example of assemblage, and clarifies the viewpoint of assemblage as one that sees “categories — race, gender, sexuality — [as] events, actions, and encounters between bodies, rather than simple entities and attributes” (p. 57). While assemblage theory has been positioned as, potentially, in opposition to intersectional analysis, Puar sees a possible intersection of the two arguing that “there surely must be cyborgian goddesses in our midst” (p. 63). While Bonds does not position herself in a cyborgian manner, future analyses of her rhetoric from the standpoint of assemblage theory and/or cyborg studies could provide insight into potential tensions resulting from how Appalachian residents may negotiate the ways different aspects of their identities become salient at different moments and, particularly given the mechanized relationship to the land demanded by the use of MTR, the tensions resulting from their land and heritage being connected while they also contend with the destruction of that very same land.

Echoes of Utopia

Peters (1988) suggests that as texts are removed from their original time and original context the psychic space between audience and rhetor widen, the gaps formed become a unique site of investigation because both sets of parties are removed from the discourse, but also implicated by it. Discourses that are removed from their original contexts can be understood as echoes, and give us the opportunity to explore these gaps. The echo effect — discussed by Farrell and Goodnight (1988) — has been used to describe the loss of credibility faced by experts as the same information is expressed and reported on in slightly different ways, resulting in general confusion and skepticism; attending, though, to the reparative turn advocated by Sedgwick (1997), I find that the idea of echo rhetoric may be theoretically useful when attending to voice and memory.

In mathematical terms, to hear an echo is to “see” an open space, a space of possibility; from a mythological perspective the figure of Echo serves to repeat fragments of discourse, but imbues them with either mourning, indictment, or longing, depending on the myth. Viewing artifacts as echo rhetoric allows for a mapping of the cultural space embedded in the fragments, an affective reading that allows for an exploration of (Appalachian) resistance rhetoric that is at once freed from the rhetor Author while still honoring identity. Importantly, as Peters (1994) points out, examining the gaps of communication reveals “hidden utopian energies” (p. 136).

In his 2009 work *Cruising Utopia*, Jose Muñoz speaks of world-making as a particular result of what he terms queer utopian memory, “a utopia that understands its time as reaching beyond some nostalgic past that perhaps never was or some future whose arrival is continuously belated — a utopia in the present” (p. 37). For Muñoz this

utopia is inherently tied to performance, a cataloging and presentation of voice and bodily presence. Although his work is focused, explicitly, on a Queer site, his connection of memory to the creation of an always already occurring utopia is useful in understanding the implications of a theorizing of Appalachia that grounds itself in the ideas of voice, space/place, and in the troubled binary between memory — remembering, re-collecting — and forgetting. Although this project examines Bonds' texts in order to uncover broad discourses present in her rhetoric, it does not attempt to address those utopian energies. Indeed, in her last communication with Mountain Justice activists, Bonds urged us to “fight harder” (Haltom, 2011). She saw the fight against MTR coming to an end and a necessity to begin the transition toward healthier communities. As Mountain Justice has shifted focus to building Appalachian communities, an examination of the utopian affect revealed through the echoes of resistance rhetoric has the potential to reveal how we can move toward a more just future.

Performances of Memorialization

In chapter four I turned to an examination of the discourse of a construction of family that emerged within Bonds' rhetoric, in an attempt to examine this theme I turned to posts written in remembrance of Judy Bonds' on her memorial page. While these reflections were able to reveal the way that people recalled Bonds' rhetoric as it related to discourses of family and family values, they also could prove to be a rich entry point for analyzing how a community engages in performances of memorialization. The interaction between the proliferation of videos documenting Bonds' appearances shortly after her death, the reflections posted on her official memorial website and on other websites, her memorial service itself, and the ways that Mountain Justice and other

organizations have engaged with the fight against MTR could provide unique insights into the evolution of social movements. Looking toward Bonds' memorialization specifically offers the opportunity to examine how such acts interact with the concepts of re-membrance (Markusen, 2004) and re-collection (Aden et al, 2009).

Constructing a Quilt

Bonds' discourse points to the power of narrative in its ability to draw attention to realms of power, re-remembering and re-collecting a forgotten place, and claiming voice for the subaltern. It is also important to treat any rhetorical act as a creative one. By this I mean creative in the sense that a rhetorical act has the power to create the possibility of a different future. Bonds' discourse defies logocentrism; she drew on narrative and metaphor to inductively lead audience members to conclusions that empowered them to struggle against entrenched systems of power. Her rhetoric created agency because she resisted the traditional style.

Bonds' rhetoric draws upon discourses that address the "simultaneity of fact and fiction, materiality and semioticity, object and trope" (Haraway, 2000, p. 82–83) that is able to address the past, present, and future simultaneously. Bonds' rhetoric of Appalachian resistance addresses memories and lived experiences, representations and landscapes, prejudices and the possibility for reclamation. The analysis of her discourses draws attention to the ways she constructs a holistic way of understanding MTR and its relations to space, place, identity, and history that — while mythic — "is true history because it is sacred history" (Pettazzoni, 1984, p. 102). Importantly, Bonds' construction of a holistic narrative draws attention to the way that spirituality, land, place, identity, and family are all connected; while also negotiating tension surrounding the increase in coal-

mining resulting from technological advances and the discarding of a place and its inhabitants. Bonds' narrative reinforces the revelation that narratives "hope is that we may reclaim our spiritual ground, reconnect with our communities, reunite the scattered parts of ourselves, and call our technological shadows by name" (Rushing & Frenzt, 1995, p. 203).

My intent for this analysis is not to mine for nuggets of wisdom, a metaphor that too accurately reflects what Judy Bonds fought against. It is, instead, to construct a quilt in which to wrap ourselves. A quilt, like Bonds' rhetoric, is a piece of art, a comfort, and a thing of utility. Just as a quilt give light to cultural history Judy Bonds' texts give light to the history and power of a movement.

Coda

Since Judy's death in 2011 I have been searching, in various ways, to make sense of what her loss means to me and to a movement that has helped to shape me into the scholar and activist I am today. In 2011, our environmental organization at JMU chose to dedicate EARTH Week — an annual event focused on activism and sustainability — to Judy's legacy. That same year I completed a senior thesis examining the way that young activists connected with Appalachia and Appalachian culture in a way to stop the destruction of MTR. Looking back I realize two things: the first is that I should never attempt quantitative research without someone very familiar with statistics being involved, the second, is that in those projects I was searching for a way to memorialize a someone who has, in a very real way, touched my soul. This project sought out to begin that process. That process is still incomplete, but anything worth doing is — to me — worth doing in a way that acknowledges the ways that projects of love are always

evolving. I remember a conversation where I was told that after my thesis I would either be done with the topic forever (or for at least a good amount of time) or I would realize I have more work to do. I find myself experiencing the latter.

When people see me one of the first things people notice is the amount of tattoos I have, and each one has a story. Currently two of them honor great women who have impacted my life: my Grandma Betty, and Judy Bonds. Throughout my work examining Bonds' texts her messages have been inscribed upon my skin, a flock of geese serves to point me always forward to love and justice. Whenever I find myself being less than my best self I attempt remember how important it is to me to live up to the vision that Judy — Mother — had for our future and had for us all.

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