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Launching Conservative Resistance: A Rhetorical Criticism of the Young Americans for Freedom

Tyler John Snelling

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, snellt1@unlv.nevada.edu

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LAUNCHING CONSERVATIVE RESISTANCE: A RHETORICAL CRITICISM
OF THE YOUNG AMERICANS FOR FREEDOM

by

Tyler J. Snelling

Bachelor of Arts – Philosophy and Sociology
Concordia College – Moorhead
2015

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of Arts – Communication Studies

Department of Communication Studies
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs
The Graduate College

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Tyler J. Snelling

entitled

Launching Conservative Resistance: A Rhetorical Criticism of the Young Americans for Freedom

is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts – Communication Studies
Department of Communication Studies

David Henry, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Chair

Kathryn Hausbeck Korgan, Ph.D.
Graduate College Interim Dean

Sara C. Vander Haagen, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Member

Donovan Conley, Ph.D.
Examination Committee Member

Robert Futrell, Ph.D.
Graduate College Faculty Representative

Abstract

Launching Conservative Resistance: A Rhetorical Criticism of the Young Americans for Freedom

By

Tyler J. Snelling

Dr. David Henry, Examination Committee Chair
Chair and Sanford Berman Professor
Department of Communication Studies
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

At the end of the 1940s, conservatives faced internal divisions, an elitist image, and people supporting government post Great Depression. Liberalism seemed entrenched in multiple of society's sectors. Yet, the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), the first national, conservative movement, formed in 1960. This thesis investigates YAF's earliest "publicity" in *National Review*, an influential magazine, to understand part of what preceded conservatism's evolution. Publishing "The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" by William F. Buckley and the "Sharon Statement," YAF's manifesto, side-by-side formed a new identity—young conservative—that empowered activists. From Maurice Charland's "constitutive rhetoric," chapter two investigates Buckley's telling of the past as a justification for the present and possibilities for the future despite material and symbolic obstacles. Richard M. Weaver's theory undergirds chapter three's analysis of the "Sharon Statement," which illuminates how the document unified via its structure and language. Buckley's narrative energized youth and dismissed stigma, while the manifesto conveyed a workable ideology for managing intra-conservative conflicts. This thesis benefits previous research by starting the work of examining YAF's resistance, theorizing "publicity" through an understanding of narrative and vision, and tracking "freedom" as a powerful addition to conservatives' vocabulary.

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Chapter One: From Sharon to Resistance through Publicity

Over the weekend of September 9th, 1960, a group just shy of 100 people met for a conference in Sharon, Connecticut at Great Elm—William F. Buckley Jr.’s family estate—to create a national social movement. The Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) emerged with the core components of an organization, including an executive board and regional leaders, bylaws, a crisp document of principles, and motivation for change.¹ Historian Gregory Schneider argued that, over the next twenty years, activists from YAF “worked at the grass roots to construct an alternative political culture based on their ideas, captured the Republican Party, and wound up *profoundly reshaping* American politics in the process.”² In 2010, Wayne Thorburn, historian and former YAF member, added extensive historical evidence to support these claims. After documenting the lives of approximately twenty members at Sharon, Thorburn concluded by saying:

it is clear that this was a group of future leaders in business, academia, government, law, and the media. It reminds us also that while it is interesting and informative to trace through the accomplishments of the organization over its years of activity, the *real impact* of Young Americans for Freedom has been its development of new generations of conservative leaders, individuals who would help bring about the conservative success of the 1980s and beyond.³

Sequestered within Schneider’s claim about “profoundly reshaping” society and Thorburn’s use of “real impact” is an account of agency created by participating within the movement.

Following the lead of Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, this thesis conceptualizes “rhetorical agency” as “the capacity to act, that is, to have the competence to speak or write in a way that will be recognized or heeded by others in one’s community.” Situating the discussion within rhetoric

guides the conversation towards how people invent new “subject-positions, and collectivities” through discourse and agitation.⁴ Based on Schneider’s and Thorburn’s comments, YAF activists exerted agency by working in local communities to move the political spectrum substantially to the Right. Emerging members altered society’s political, economic, educational, and social spheres. Yet, it can be difficult to understand why YAF needed to employ a grassroots campaign for change, given eight years of Ronald Reagan, two Bush presidencies, and a recently elected Donald Trump.

Between the 1930s and 1950s, the balance of political power shifted towards liberalism. Clinton Rossiter described this period as conservatism experiencing “generations of exile from respectability.”⁵ Historians Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin noted that “[i]n 1945 the future seemed to belong to the Left. Liberal Democrats governed in Washington and in most of the big states.”⁶ At least two political developments justify this reasoning. First, Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal generated popular sentiment for government’s economic involvement given the Great Depression.⁷ Second, Andrew described how “encounters with fascism” compelled people to feel uncomfortable with government overly regulating social behavior.⁸ Along with the traditional sphere of politics, education appeared to move further Left every year. Buckley’s *God and Man at Yale* reported in 1951 that the university represented a beacon of light for liberalism, especially in its instruction of economics.⁹ Rebecca Klatch, a sociologist at the University of California, San Diego, connected Buckley’s criticism to the generation of students forming YAF. She found that “[m]any attending ... [the Sharon Conference] felt *ostracized* for being conservative activists on campus, a sense ‘... of swimming against the current.’”¹⁰ Conservatives’ political power slowly drained throughout society with no stable basis for its return if young people continued receiving liberal training.

The need to resist communism and liberalism activated the motivation and energized the commitment for a conservative social movement. Historian George Nash contends that scholars should not conceptualize this movement as a single organization based on one ideology, but as at least three threads within a broad tapestry. Libertarians, traditionalists, and anti-communists worked together at various times during the 1960s, but they did not always agree completely. Traditionalists debated with libertarians over what parts of society required regulation. Both groups, though, clashed with Robert Welch and his John Birch Society for preaching conspiracies about the scope of society “infected” by Soviet spies.¹¹ Historian John A. Andrew III argued that these factions united over their hatred of communism and concern with the Republican Party. Conservatives believed President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Vice-President Richard Nixon compromised their politics to attract the Left.¹² Instead of defeating communism and dismantling state based programs, conservatives characterized moderate Republicans as sell-outs. For instance, in 1956 the United States failed to intervene when Hungary withdrew from the Warsaw Pact and a Soviet puppet regime swiftly replaced it. Conservatives perceived inaction like this as a sure path towards global destruction.¹³ Barry Goldwater, the Republican candidate for president in 1964, wrote in his influential *Conscience of a Conservative*, published in 1960, that “we are in clear and imminent danger of being overwhelmed by alien forces. We are confronted by a revolutionary world movement that possesses not only the will to dominate absolutely every square mile of the globe, but increasingly the capacity to do so.”¹⁴ For those on the Right, the period between World War II and the 1960s marked an ongoing emergency, which warranted a return to activism.

Along with the publication of several books, Buckley’s creation of *National Review* drastically, but subtly, changed conservatism’s position. Historian Rick Perlstein compared the

magazine to “a mighty engine for massing right-wing fellow travelers into a community, a *force*, a band of brothers and sisters ready to take on the (liberal) world.”¹⁵ In 1960, the magazine reached approximately 34,000 people.¹⁶ Employing libertarians and traditionalists as editors and accepting contributions from both groups created the time and space for establishing a common basis. A flexible ideology emerged from a former organizer within the Communist Party. Although he did not appreciate the label, Frank Meyer’s “fusionism” synthesized two primary themes within traditionalism and libertarianism, order and freedom, against conservatism’s common enemies, liberalism and communism. In the sense of philosophical doctrine and constructing policies, the merger failed to resolve all of the tensions between groups. Rhetorical scholar Michael Lee characterized the synthesis as “the Right’s ‘*fait accompli*,’ not because ... [Meyer] purged contradiction permanently but because his dialectic was so workable.”¹⁷ Essentially, the balance between freedom and order with common enemies subdued internal disputes and oriented the movement towards pragmatic action.

This thesis enters the conversation at the shift from advocates debating doctrine to their attention to changing the political sphere. How did activists overcome conservatism’s stigma and liberalism’s political power without becoming mired in internal disputes? Part of the answer stems from understanding the rhetorical strategies employed to announce YAF’s existence. Buckley’s article, “The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom,” created a narrative combatting stigma based on what precipitated the moment, while the “Sharon Statement,” YAF’s manifesto, offered a vision for changing society propelled by fusionism’s dialectic against two enemies.¹⁸ Publication of these documents side-by-side constitutes a new identity—young conservative—that pushed activists toward radically changing society. Chapter two examines Buckley’s article by unpacking allusions that, when connected, illustrate a transformation of

material and symbolic barriers precluding a conservative movement. Drawing from Maurice Charland's "constitutive rhetoric" illuminates how Buckley's narrative reached back historically to justify conservatism as a natural form of resistance, while also projecting the activists into the future as agents changing society.¹⁹ Chapter three scrutinizes the "Sharon Statement" from the perspective of Richard Weaver's argumentative strategies and ultimate terms. The document unified divergent groups by offering an ideal, interlocking set of definitions for an individual and structures in society through god and devil terms.²⁰ Splinters by anti-communists and libertarians within the decade illustrate that definitions are contingent instead of transcendent, as the manifesto described. Nonetheless, the power of idealism, with the ultimate term "freedom," partially explains why the conservative movement continued to gain speed and was unaffected by fragmentation.

The remainder of chapter one has three purposes. First, a literature review justifies the texts examined in this thesis. A close textual analysis of the documents announcing YAF's creation stems from studies that track the movement over the course of its existence and engage YAF's members through survey, interview, or ethnography. The second section contextualizes the "Sharon Statement" and Buckley's "The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" in regard to why they generated a public presence. This section also establishes the enduring relevance of YAF and its manifesto to the conservative movement. Finally, scholarship about rhetoric and dissent generates a position for the critic relative to conservative "rhetorics of social resistance" (RSR). Brian Ott's framework prioritizes scholarly attention towards a movement's "consequentiality," which is accomplished here by analyzing YAF's identification based on their "publicity."²¹ Discussing the discrepancy between possible names for the organization generates an example of why claiming "freedom" unified disparate groups by establishing an *end* to their

activism. A summary of the rationale for the thesis established in the preceding sections concludes the chapter.

Literature Review

Although rhetorical scholars have until recently ignored YAF, studies in history and sociology provide a foundation for any analysis of these activists. In contrast to those who briefly mention or footnote the organization,²² Michael Lee's work situated YAF in the context of a burgeoning conservative movement.²³ Through an analysis of fifteen books published between the late 1940s and early 1960s, Lee charted a "canon" that produced, what he terms as, independent traditionalist and libertarian dialects or a set of shared argumentative strategies based on a common identity. Meyer's ideological synthesis, Buckley's style, and Whittaker Chambers' conversion from communism to Christianity emerge from the canon as a set of "shared symbols," which were "formative in the creation of conservatism as a political identity that housed differing ideological traditions."²⁴ This thesis extends Lee's work by focusing more closely on how these primary documents constitute a young conservative subject for converting theory into action. A tradition emerging in history and sociology grounds a close examination of YAF.

In *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics*, Andrew provided the first historical analysis of the conservative movement. His research drew from archival material and interviews with "many prominent early members of YAF."²⁵ The book's chronological structure begins with the rise of YAF in 1960 and continues to Senator Barry Goldwater's nomination as Republican candidate for president in 1964. Aside from the social, political, and economic reasons this period is significant, Andrew highlighted an insightful reason for rhetoricians. Traditionalists reference this decade as the

cause of society's downfall since rules became too promiscuous and people lacked religion. Therefore, "struggles to define the sixties ... [have] become a contest not only to write the 'proper' history of that decade, but to control the public's memory of it."²⁶ The next section illustrates that conservatives still negotiate and aspire to control memory even twenty years after Andrew's book.

Schneider's scholarship extended Andrew's study and shows the enduring value of the discourse under analysis. *Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right* complements Andrew's book by attending to YAF between their creation and beyond 1964 to their first collapse in the mid-1980s. This book established a "narrative history" based on an extensive collection of data: twelve archives provided over fifty sets of papers, twenty-six interviews with leaders of YAF and a wide review of scholarly work, conservative magazines, and books.²⁷ Along with Irwin and Debi Unger, Schneider published a reader with Buckley's article and the "Sharon Statement."²⁸ His framing of the manifesto demonstrates the continual relevance for analyzing how participation in YAF developed agency.

The Sharon Statement ... was a succinct statement of conservative principles, well representative of the fusionist views Frank Meyer had been articulating. YAF would be the largest conservative student organization (it would claim over 60,000 members by the late 1960s), and throughout the 1960s would be a recruiting ground for conservative activists, many of whom would go on to prominence within the conservative movement and in government.²⁹

Through fusionism, the manifesto articulated an ideological position that brought contentious groups together. After uniting, YAF created a significant presence in society and trained its

members to politically engage. Hence, Schneider's work grounds both the broad study of YAF and the texts within this research.

The Young America's Foundation financed Thorburn's *A Generation Awakes: Young Americans for Freedom and the Creation of the Conservative Movement* to create a comprehensive history of YAF. University of Massachusetts Anthropologist Boone W. Shear observed that this organization "spends \$10 million a year ... offering training to students in political tactics and sponsoring a related speaker series (e.g., Ann Coulter, Dinesh D'Souza, David Horowitz, etc.)."³⁰ Thorburn's economic resources and close connections within the movement generated unprecedented access to "too many former YAF members who provided documentation to list them all here."³¹ Joining YAF in 1961 and serving as the executive director from 1971 to 1973 made Thorburn an excellent candidate to write this history.³² He also surveyed YAF alumni in 2008, which created a unique source of data. This book is a critical touchstone for any research on YAF since it includes the most detailed record of alumni and projects. Although David Franke, one of the students behind YAF's creation, confirmed the book's reliability, the narrative induces the perception that "the past is fixed. We are looking at it with 20/20 hindsight, and the unspoken assumption is that whatever happened was inevitable. It happened, therefore it was meant to be."³³ Taking away this caution leads the critic back to arguments made by historians concerning the relative dominance of liberalism at the time. Considering the agency these activists developed requires attention to the constraints and difficulties that made the 1960s a contingent period for social change.

Klatch's *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* told "a story about two wings of one generation: their relationships, their tensions, their compatibilities, their fates."³⁴ She conducted twenty-one interviews with members of YAF and nineteen from

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Whereas the three previous books used interviews to compile a historical record, Klatch discussed how she coded and processed the data with scientific rigor. She also visited multiple archives, three reunions for the Left, and two gatherings of libertarians to collect data.³⁵ Although multiple differences separated SDS and YAF, Klatch noted that they “are also inevitably bound together through their shared histories. Representing fundamentally different ... worldviews, activists share a passion for politics.”³⁶ Carol Dawson, secretary for the student group to elect Goldwater in 1964, commented on this passion when she told Klatch about attending Sharon: “We felt like pioneers. It was challenging.... It was ... a thrill to travel up there and be among those people.”³⁷ The activists felt a pull to attend Sharon because it provided them a chance for community among people with similar worldviews. These four books provide a robust foundation for the study of YAF.

A small collection of journal articles also inform how this thesis investigates the activists’ agency based on their identity. Multiple articles by sociologist Richard G. Braungart and colleagues are noteworthy.³⁸ Given that the libertarians split from YAF in 1969, Braungart’s survey a year later found a traditional perspective: “YAF members, who came from the more conservative Republican and highly religious backgrounds, maintained a different *Weltenschaungen*. These are the status-threatened strata, who are least secure and desire to maintain the status quo.”³⁹ This lack of perceived security justified fearing communism and liberalism. In 1991, Margaret and Richard Braungart analyzed the oral testimony of eleven leaders from YAF and thirteen from SDS. They tested how generations form common attachments based on experience. One stasis point supports attention to the conservative movement’s shift from theorizing into activism: a “common theme involved strong and highly positive memories associated with group affiliation and the efforts of the group to translate

principles into action.” For instance, a participant mentioned that “[i]n 1960 everything came together with YAF demonstrating it is possible to have a conservative movement.”⁴⁰ While some caution for interpreting these findings is warranted since they explicitly studied leaders, the general insight reflects similar accounts of agency as other sources surveyed above. This thesis continues the conversation about YAF by analyzing two primary documents from a vital medium that galvanized the conservative movement.

An Ivory Tower Manifesto

Two weeks after the Sharon Conference, Buckley penned an essay in *National Review* justifying the moment as a unique time for change and documenting the movement’s creation.⁴¹ Prior to the Sharon conference, a few of Buckley’s projects established him as a prominent conservative leader. He wrote *God and Man at Yale* and *Up from Liberalism*, created *National Review*, and contributed to conservative periodicals. For instance, he had a semi-regular column discussing educational matters under the title “The Ivory Tower.”⁴² Michael Lee’s analysis of Buckley showed how his prose constructed public presence for the Right: “What distinguished Buckley from other conservatives was that he was not merely defending a political program, he was crafting an *attractive* and *strategically flexible* outsider identity that invited several alienated groups to call their politics conservative.”⁴³ Along with Carol Dawson’s previous comment to Klatch, Bruce McAllister’s reflections to Thorburn’s survey substantiate this position. In 2008, McAllister believed that one of the “most thrilling invitations of ... [his] life” was creating YAF “at the home of my hero.”⁴⁴ Clearly, Buckley attracted people to conservatism. He also supported YAF through more ways than merely providing space for their origin. Andrew’s archival research into Buckley’s letters found that he “sought to exercise a guiding influence while remaining in the shadows.”⁴⁵ As host for Sharon, editor of *National Review*, and strategist

for the movement, Buckley's "The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" provides a keen perspective into how he desired people to perceive YAF.

Over the summer of 1960, M Stanton Evans received an assignment after contacting William Rusher, an editor of *National Review*, about his hope for a national movement.⁴⁶ He may not have Buckley's resume, but Evans influenced YAF via his writing and editing. At the time of Sharon, he had or held positions at several periodicals, including managing editor of *Human Events* from 1956 to 1959, head editor of the *Indianapolis News* from 1959 to 1960, and associate editor of *National Review* from 1960 to 1973.⁴⁷ Evans' work made him well qualified as a writer, which justifies his task for YAF's creation. In *Up from Liberalism*, Buckley lamented the lack of a "conservative political manifesto which, as we make our faltering way, we can consult, confident that it will point a sure finger in the direction of the good society."⁴⁸ Evans resolved this problem when he arrived at the retreat with a nearly complete draft of the "Sharon Statement." Although Goldwater's *Conscience* served a similar role, YAF's manifesto condensed these values into a one-page version that could easily be distributed and consumed. The document begins with a short preamble and includes twelve propositions concerning the structure of government, economics, and foreign policy. Despite the length, fully reproducing the manifesto familiarizes the reader with YAF's vision:

In this time of moral and political crisis, it is the responsibility of the youth of America to affirm certain eternal truths.

We, as young conservatives, believe:

[1] That foremost among the transcendent values is the individual's use of his [sic] God-given free will, whence derives his right to be free from the restrictions of arbitrary force;

[2] That liberty is indivisible, and that political freedom cannot long exist without economic freedom;

[3] That the purposes of government are to protect these freedoms through the preservation of internal order, the provision of national defense, and the administration of justice;

[4] That when government ventures beyond these rightful functions, it accumulates power which tends to diminish order and liberty;

[5] That the constitution of the United States is the best arrangement yet devised for empowering government to fulfill its proper role, while restraining it from the concentration and abuse of power;

[6] That the genius of the constitution—the division of powers—is summed up in the clause which reserves primacy to the several states, or to the people, in those spheres not specifically delegated to the Federal Government;

[7] That the market economy, allocating resources by the free play of supply and demand, is the single economic system compatible with the requirements of personal freedom and constitutional government, and that it is at the same time the most productive supplier of human needs;

[8] That when government interferes with the work of the market economy, it tends to reduce the moral and physical strength of the nation; and that when it takes from one man to bestow on another, it diminishes the incentive of the first, the integrity of the second, and the moral autonomy of both;

[9] That we will be free only so long as the national sovereignty of the United States is secure: that history shows periods of freedom are rare, and can exist only when free citizens concertedly defend their rights against all enemies;

[10] That the forces of international Communism are, at present, the greatest single threat to these liberties;

[11] That the United States should stress victory over, rather than coexistence with this menace; and

[12] That American foreign policy must be judged by this criterion: does it serve the just interests of the United States?⁴⁹

Charles J. Stewart, Craig A. Smith, and Robert E. Denton, Jr.'s research substantiates why scholars should study manifestos. The "Sharon Statement" needed to "create a shared historical narrative for ... [recruits] to embrace."⁵⁰ Thorburn declared that the manifesto achieved this goal due to its enduring relevance.⁵¹ Evans developed an ideology supporting the group's strategic, political, and ethical decisions.

The Young America's Foundation still references and reproduces the "Sharon Statement." This nonprofit started under a different title in the mid-1960s to provide speakers at Vanderbilt University. Three YAF members received control in the late 1960s and gave it the current name in the early 1970s.⁵² Schneider and Klatch's books only observe YAF up until their first collapse in the mid-1980s since the movement was not revived and merged under the foundation until 2011. The continual relevance of both the manifesto and the social movement is established by considering a piece of the Foundation's mission statement:

Founded by William F. Buckley, Jr. and a group of young conservatives in 1960 at his home in Sharon, Connecticut, Young Americans for Freedom today promotes to youth

the principles of limited government, individual freedom, free enterprise, a strong national defense, and traditional values, as outlined in the Sharon Statement. The chapters accomplish this by participating in a wide range of campus initiatives, such as the 9/11: Never Forget Project, Freedom Week, and the GPA Redistribution Contest, among others; and by hosting prominent conservative speakers.⁵³

Two of the Foundation's other projects transmit YAF to current students. The group sponsors the National Conservative Student Conference each year since 1979. Hundreds of students gather to hear lectures by leaders from politics, media, and academia.⁵⁴ In the mid-2010s, the Foundation resurrected *New Guard*, YAF's original periodical. At first, they released a print magazine. Now, a website operates under the same name with articles posted like a blog rather than intermittent issues. All five of the editions examined for this thesis from summer 2010 to spring 2011 contain the "Sharon Statement" and mention YAF as a successful enterprise.⁵⁵ The Young America's Foundation's demonstrates YAF's enduring legacy.

Conservative Rhetorics of Social Resistance

Broadly, rhetorical criticism involves an argumentative approach, which prioritizes concepts emerging from a close reading of the text. The theoretical framework guiding this thesis does not simply describe YAF's strategies of resistance or classify their discourse. Wayne Brockriede prioritized "explanation" through an argument, which involves: constructing or reinforcing a claim produced by "inferential leap" from one view to another, employing a "rationale to justify that leap," staking a controversial claim, regulating "uncertainty" since the claim can be neither absolutely true nor false, and "risk[ing] a confrontation of that claim with one's peers."⁵⁶ Instructive in adhering to Brockriede's guidance is James Jasinski on the functions of theory and method in criticism. Rather than select the rationale *a priori*, Jasinski's

concept-oriented criticism described “*abduction* which might be thought of as a back and forth ... between text and the concept or concepts that are being investigated simultaneously.”⁵⁷ Consequently, this section does not dovetail too deeply into the two particular theoretical perspectives—Charland’s “constitutive rhetoric” and Weaver’s rhetorical theory—animating each chapter’s analysis. These theories are explicated in the chapters that follow. This section establishes an orientation for the subsequent chapters by situating the critic within a framework based on Ott’s “rhetorics of social resistance” (RSR). Analyzing YAF’s “publicity” is critical to understanding how Buckley’s narrative and the manifesto’s vision constructed identification between and among groups divided by principle.

Ott’s conceptualization of RSR warned against the tendency to essentialize. He called for scholars to move away from the phrase “social movement rhetoric,” since “movement” often falsely clusters people together and denies agency from “everyday” or fragmented forms of dissent.⁵⁸ An earlier debate in the *Western Journal of Speech Communication* between Martin J. Medhurst and Barbara Warnick supports this claim in regards to agitation on the Right. Medhurst examined how conservatives defeated an initiative for gay rights in Davis, California despite the bill having a “favorable formula” for passage.⁵⁹ He distinguished between the effort in California and Anita Bryant’s more prominent religious and traditional campaign. In Davis, the protesters portrayed the Left’s argument such that people interpreted it as a criticism of the community’s progressive beliefs. Community opinion shifted because of this portrayal and a claim that the proposed legislation bypassed the Constitution.⁶⁰ Conversely, Bryant’s “Save Our Children” campaign in Dade County, Florida sought to overturn a non-discrimination ordinance based on sexuality. She supported the approach by characterizing homosexuality as immoral through reference to scripture.⁶¹ Unlike Bryant, the protestors in Davis omitted religious arguments.

Consequently, Medhurst critiqued what Warnick treated as a genre, “conservative resistance”:
“Conservative rhetoric, like its liberal sister, is neither monolithic nor homogeneous. To assert that the rhetoric of conservative resistance is invariably characterized by moralism, reiteration of ideology, and resistance to compromise is to confuse one species with an entire genera.”⁶²
Warnick responded by claiming that “Medhurst’s case study is not a movement.” Rather, it represents “part of the establishment’s response to” the activists.⁶³ While Warnick persuasively classified Medhurst’s object, analyzing YAF raises questions about her assertion of a genre. Inclusion of libertarians as conservatives dismisses that this type of resistance “fear[s] ... losing traditional values.”⁶⁴ Similarly, YAF’s actions, while conducive to traditionalism, lacked the reiteration of fundamentalist Christian values that characterize Right to Life or Bryant’s movement. Consequently, scholars of the Left and Right must cautiously approach grouping together discourses.

The cultural hostility felt by the Right during the 1960s plus the activists’ commitment to transform politics through grassroots action suggests that YAF fits the criteria of RSR. The range of this term includes “any discourse, performance, or aesthetic practice, which through its symbolic and/or material enactment, transgresses, subverts, disrupts, and/or rebels against the social codes, customs, and/or conventions that—through their everyday operation—create, sustain, and naturalize the prevailing relations of power in a particular time and place.”⁶⁵ Each clause ensures inclusion of various performances, actors, and texts. Paring down the definition, with caution that the original is vital to prevent misperceptions, reveals four parts: subject(s) acting, a verb describing the practice, object(s) of resistance and an account of power. Buckley’s narrative for YAF’s creation and their manifesto “rebel” against the structure that sustains liberalism and communism. YAF’s status as a collective group organized against the status quo

places them in the rebellion category within Ott's scheme for differentiating resistance based on "the intersecting axes of agent (individual/collective) and action (coordinated/disjointed)."⁶⁶ Even though Ott pushed to leave "social movement" behind, this thesis employs the term to recognize that some forms of resistance coalesce as national or transnational organizations, which requires rhetorical strategies to cultivate a presence and force. Scholars should proceed with caution so as not to mischaracterize larger forms of agitation or abandon "everyday" acts of dissent. Yet, recognizing the transgressive potential of quotidian performances should not preclude examining collectives that create a national or international movement. "Social movement" describes YAF given the level of its organization,⁶⁷ but it is important to recognize the dangers of essentialism given the debate between Medhurst and Warnick and Nash's advice to conceptualize the movement with three core parts.

RSR as a framework, although not explicitly exclusive, lacks guidance for critics to examine the Right's resistance rhetoric. None of the five books selected relies on agitation from conservative or reactionary ideologies. One text comes close since Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp analyzed anti-abortion movements as part of five examples. However, this case also warrants caution due to essentialism since anti-abortion is not exclusively advocated by conservatives.⁶⁸ Although critical rhetoricians should examine strategies from revolutionary and radical movements, scholarship on resistance is incomplete if it omits an account of rhetorics from the Right. For instance, the Tea Party is a powerful, contemporary RSR, whose analysis by previous communication scholars attests to the value of additional studies on the Right.⁶⁹ Furthermore, this thesis responds to requests for additional investigation into conservative activism. David Henry called for additional analyses in rhetoric, Robert Futrell and Pete Simi echoed Nelson Pichardo's call within sociological social movement scholarship, and Neil Gross, Thomas

Medvetz and Rupert Russel recently requested additional research from sociology.⁷⁰ Studying YAF from the lens of RSR is justified as a starting point to prevent rhetoricians from falling into an insular trap of only considering perspectives on the Left.

Ott identified “consequentiality” as a heuristic for scholars engaging a rhetoric of social resistance. He defined the concept as the “capacity to effect change in the attitudes, values, and beliefs of individuals and the rules, rituals, and norms of collectives.”⁷¹ Ott identified two methodologies for conducting research based on this heuristic. One option is completing interviews and ethnographies within the resistant group. Since Buckley and Evans died and living members are considerably distanced from Sharon, close study of primary documents supplies an alternative. If “social change is a matter of historical record,” then Ott argued that “the task of the critic becomes one of conducting intensive archival research to recover the disparate discourses that contribute to changes in social practices and policies.”⁷² Printing the two texts adjacent to each other put forth a representation of the movement, which minimized the possibility for conflicts between groups.

Analyzing the “Sharon Statement” and Buckley’s “The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom” probes at YAF’s “publicity,” which refers to the images put forth by rhetors. In Ott’s words, this concept “concerns the strategic rhetorical efforts of a person or group to *frame* the public’s perception of a subject.”⁷³ Given the status of *National Review*, printing the artifacts side-by-side generated a powerful hail to the audience. The magazine’s Chief Editor framed the movement’s origin for people to know what happened at Sharon and the manifesto framed the activists’ values moving forward. This focus responds to Julie Kalil Schutten’s push for “movement scholars . . . to consider the active interpretation and incorporation of media by social movement actors by exploring what members of movements can *do with* media texts.”⁷⁴

Although it is common to analyze how media portray movements, Schutten prioritized the inverse: how a movement strategically deploys media. *National Review* excels as a case study for this discussion due to its popularity and construction of agency.

National Review helped develop the Right's capacity for resistance by giving content to audiences and room for leaders to practice. Professor Susan Currie Sivek reasoned that the magazine framed the ideology behind "conservative" and mobilized action without alienating traditionals, libertarians, or anti-communists.⁷⁵ Part of Sivek's reasoning resembled Evans' argument in *Revolt on the Campus*. The periodical "served as a frequent outlet for conservative writers, acquainted them with one another's work, and developed new talent. It has become an intellectual journal which can meet the Liberals on their own ground."⁷⁶ *National Review* connected theorists with a widening audience of sympathetic conservatives. In terms from Campbell's discussion of agency, it fostered an environment for editors and the audience to "accept, negotiate, and resist the subject-positions available to them at given moments in a particular culture."⁷⁷ In 2008, Patrick J. Buchanan, advisor to Presidents Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Ronald Reagan, described how the periodical developed capacity for action by rearranging the meaning of conservatism: "Other than that one magazine, young conservatives had almost nowhere to turn for intellectual and political sustenance. For us, what *National Review* did was take the word *conservatism*, then a synonym for stuffy orthodoxy, Republican standpatism and economic self-interest, and convert it into the snapping pennant of a fighting faith."⁷⁸ This journal negotiated a young conservative identity, which is the subject position the two texts studied in this thesis help to constitute.

Overcoming the lack of a central organization and of conservatism's sigma required renegotiating the meaning of "conservative," which can be captured as a process by examining

the movement's strategies for identification. In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Kenneth Burke prioritized identification as rhetoric's operative term instead of persuasion. The rhetor seeks to build a common relationship with the auditor so that the message stems from their consubstantiality or shared essence. The difference between two individuals is fundamental to the human experience, but "[i]dentification is compensatory to division. If men [sic] were not apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity."⁷⁹ Burke's theory of rhetoric describes a symbolic process in which rhetors negotiate how to *frame* their position so that the audience adopts the identity. In regards to activism, Steven Buechler found that this process precedes resistance. The "ability of people to engage in collective action," he maintains "is increasingly tied to their ability to define an identity," which "places a premium on the social construction of collective identity as an essential part of contemporary social activism."⁸⁰ Analyzing YAF's publicity establishes their stasis points for identification since Ott argued that "reformers across the movement often rally around their central cause in an effort to project a unified 'public face.'"⁸¹ YAF perceived society as not only suffering due to liberalism and communism, but on the verge of collapse or apocalypse. Part of the movement's "central cause" was saving society from falling into abyss. Yet, conservatives stood for more than just attacking the Left. Both chapter two and three find fusionism woven into each text. Meyer's ideology created a flexible set of values that the movement rested upon for what should replace the status quo.

The decision-making process behind YAF's name serves as an anecdote for how fusionism unified a broader conservative movement by centralizing a powerful word, freedom. The activists contemplated choosing either Young Conservatives of America or Young Americans for Freedom. Lee Edwards explained the choice for the latter by referencing David

Franke's argument. The activists hoped to "keep title to the word 'freedom' and not let the Left capture it as they had 'democracy' and other useful words."⁸² Concern with the Left taking the term may be a response to two developments. First, FDR's "Four Freedoms" included "freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear." Historian Eric Foner claimed that "the Four Freedoms had an unmistakably liberal cast. Embodying principles associated with the New Deal, they suggested that Roosevelt's policies of the 1930s were an expression of deeply held American values."⁸³ The New Deal represented what YAF feared from overly expanding government, which could explain why Franke worried about the Left controlling freedom. Second, the Civil Rights Movement began using the term. In 1955, slogans in the Montgomery Bus Boycott frequently included freedom, which foreshadows the use of Freedom Rides, creation of Freedom Schools, and participation in Freedom Summer.⁸⁴ With officials and activists using the term, YAF struggled to assert its ownership.

Drawing from the language of "freedom" created a powerful linguistic arsenal for challenging public perceptions of conservatism. In *Rhetoric*, Burke categorized the word as a "god-term."⁸⁵ Barry Brummett related the use of these expressions to their symbolic consequences: "[s]ince an ultimate term orders and subsumes other, lesser principles, the term itself must express a value or principle. It must be weighted, a 'principle of principles,' other than a neutral term; it must describe to what *end* lesser frames of acceptance are joined together, rather than simply *how* they are joined."⁸⁶ He applied Burke's theory to an analysis of James Gaius Watt, Reagan's Secretary of the Interior, since Watt needed to forge unity for controversial plans. Under the broad frame of "public interests," the Secretary urged legislation removing environmental restrictions that opened drilling and closed wildlife refuges. However, Brummett argued Watt's sub-frames—balance, national defense, and Christianity—failed to create

bipartisan support.⁸⁷ Balance provoked a question of “means,” which does not convey what end or principle should guide maintaining equilibrium. Given that Reagan’s election employed defense as a primary term, Watt’s use carried too many partisan feelings for Democrats to agree. Religion had potential, but Watt alienated Jews, Catholics, and moderate Protestants since his version of Christianity relied on “a highly sectarian interpretation of the relationships among humanity, nature, and God.”⁸⁸ Watt failed to create the realignment necessary to provoke agreement based on one of these terms. His frames produced debate when he needed “shared symbolic ground on which both Haves and Nots may stand.”⁸⁹ Watt’s case illustrates why the ultimate terms a rhetor chooses construct the grounds or possibilities for decreasing polarization.

Freedom created an *end* for conservatives to orient themselves. As chapter three continues to explore, Weaver justified an interpretation of freedom as an eternal value or end to aspire towards within an ideal society. For instance, the speech “Rhetorical Strategies of the Conservative Cause” guided students towards absolute and eternal values, which included freedom.

We have got to say in language that goes to the root [of] ... why we think freedom is better than captivity by the state; why we think private property is intrinsically a good thing; and why we think it is best to reward intelligence and effort.... It will not be enough to defend these ideals by saying that we inherited them with our system. We must rather show why we prize them in essence, and that is what I mean by facing questions in an ultimate light.⁹⁰

This quote from an appearance before students establishes one of Weaver’s connections to conservatism. G. Thomas Goodnight found Weaver took on the role of teacher and “tried to influence his students to take up the burden of a responsible rhetoric.”⁹¹ Weaver believed ethical

rhetoric involved definitions via reference to something absolute or eternal. These words function like “links in a chain stretching up to some master link which transmits its influence down through the linkages.”⁹² By placing freedom atop YAF’s discourse, the meaning of proximate words like conservative changed. Weaver influenced his students by teaching them skills and directing them to an end that defended exerting free will outside governmental regulation.

Although libertarians and traditionalists used freedom differently, they found commonality in regards to deregulation of markets. Along with Weaver’s defense of private property as an eternal right, Buckley’s *Up from Liberalism* conveyed a similar idea. He responded to the question “What then is the indicated course of action?” with “to maintain and wherever possible enhance the freedom of the individual to acquire property and dispose of that property in ways that he decides on.”⁹³ Yet, the term extends far past YAF’s creation with similar meaning. Per Robert C. Rowland and John M. Jones, President Reagan believed that “advocates of freedom were inherently good and possessed a spirit of perseverance that could not be overcome by outside forces. For Reagan, West Berlin symbolized what had taken place throughout the free world.”⁹⁴ In contrast with the totalitarianism of the Soviet Union, America rose to the standards of virtue by preserving freedom. Given that term divided capitalists from communists as a matter of economics, it is logical that “in the mouth of Mr. Reagan and other conservatives, freedom conveyed what Isaiah Berlin called its negative sense, an absence of constraints on markets and individual action.”⁹⁵ While traditionalists ultimately sought to preserve social restraints on individual action, libertarians aspired to hold onto both social and economic openness. The “Sharon Statement’s” ambiguity meant YAF did not need to take a stance. Ultimately, YAF keeping “title to the word” helped unite the movement through identification based on freedom.

Conclusion

This chapter introduced YAF through previous literature, explored the public's perception of texts considered by this thesis, developed a framework for how critics approach resistance, and started examining the use of freedom. Brian Ott's "rhetorics of social resistance" prioritized "publicity" as a heuristic, which directs attentions to YAF's self-representation. Chapter two examines William F. Buckley's "The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" from the perspective of how narratives enact constitutive rhetoric. As the first piece in *National Review* about YAF, the article framed the movement's origin. His story naturalized activism, shared logistical details from Sharon like the group's age limits, and energized youth towards changing society. Buckley generated identification by making conservatism relatable and non-elitist, while also targeting liberalism as an enemy.

Chapter three tracks how the "Sharon Statement" framed what society should become. Drawing from Richard Weaver's theory explains decisions made in regards to what YAF desired to change. This approach is justified for two reasons. First, Weaver influenced the manifesto's writer, M. Stanton Evans, and ideological father, Frank Meyer. Second, Weaver's theory explains the strategy behind the document's construction of sentences and choice of words. The manifesto's argumentative strategies supposedly reflected absolute beliefs and used ultimate terms, which mirror Frank Meyer's fusionism. By defining a person's, government's, and market's essential characteristics, the "Sharon Statement" developed an ideal structure moving forward. The document functionally offered an olive branch to sooth strife between libertarians and traditionalists. Yet, these values did not hold the test of time. At the end of the decade, two splinters occurred. Conservative leaders kicked out radical anticommunists from the John Birch Society and libertarians left over traditionalists controlling too much power.

The final chapter connects the strategies discussed in previous chapters between Buckley's "The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" and the "Sharon Statement." YAF's publicity formed identification from both creating a point of agreement based on fusionism and common enemies from liberalism and communism. Despite limitations outlined in the chapter, this research is justified for three reasons. First, rhetoricians neglect conservative social movements. The Young America's Foundation's revival of YAF makes it an ideal test case as the group approaches nearly sixty years of direct political engagement or lingering cultural significance as an example on the Right for how to succeed. This thesis joins Lee's work to balance focus along America's political spectrum. Second, this thesis extends Ott's concepts of "publicity" and "consequentiality" by analyzing how the forms of narrative and manifesto conferred a representation of the movement that motivated action. Both texts offered a basis for commonality from fusionism and an enemy that threatened society. The activists created agency by inventing new positions and overcoming material and symbolic barriers, which demonstrates the power of resistance with an ambitious narrative and sharp set of values. Both the manifesto and Buckley's article assist members of YAF on "[t]he quest for identity" as a "modern pilgrimage."⁹⁶ Relative to other scholarship on the social movement, understanding the nuances of this identity construction requires a close analysis to the moment it was forged. Finally, this thesis tracks part of how conservatives picked up "freedom" within their vocabulary. YAF's name coopted the term and the "Sharon Statement" contextualized its meaning relative to society's institutions. As Reagan's campaign language attested, the Right benefited from capturing freedom.

Endnotes

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⁹⁶ Edwin Black, "The Second Persona," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56, no. 2 (1970): 113.

Chapter Two: Tracking Buckley's Narrative

In an issue of *National Review* from February 1959, William F. Buckley, Jr. published an article on the prevalence of apathy within the university. He offered two explanations for why political engagement was waning. First, students suffered a “vivid sense of personal remoteness from the mechanisms of public policy.” This claim was supported by an example concerning how “agitations” could not stop Josip Broz Tito from executing Dragoljub Mihailović, a Yugoslavian leader with anti-communist views. Second, students lacked “conviction, and therefore the lack of partisanship, that has resulted from regnant philosophical notions about truth.” In particular, an expansion of relativism concerned Buckley. For instance, students started questioning whether America could criticize the Soviet Union for backlash against intellectuals without being inconsistent. Buckley thought this position was only tenable from a “little dialectic artfulness” and the decay of strong moral principles.¹ Despite these problems, the article’s conclusion discussed two political dreams taking hold on campuses. Buckley compared conservatism to communism since “it is not lost on the undergraduate that there is no Liberal vision.” He went on to claim conservatives lacked an agenda that was “particularized ... and because it is not, conservatives, everywhere, are disorganized and incoherent. But they are stirring.”² While communists sought to complete specific goals, Buckley felt conservatives had conviction without the process for engagement to create their vision. Regardless of whether Buckley accurately diagnosed the two causes of apathy, the creation of the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) oriented activists towards “the mechanisms of public policy” with strong moral beliefs.

Examining Buckley’s article from the middle of September, 1960 reveals a different narrative than just a year and a half earlier. As host for the Sharon Conference, it is only fitting

that Buckley had the honor of announcing the results to *National Review*'s audience. This chapter examines "The Ivory Tower: The Young Americans for Freedom" from the critical perspective of Maurice Charland's "constitutive rhetoric" to unpack the creation of a new subject position.³ Buckley told a tale that linked changes over the past decade with the development of YAF and ambition for altering the future. Young conservative became an identity grounded by transhistorical values and destined towards political engagement. Buckley's account framed the movement by alluding to changes that produced a unique moment for resistance and created a natural path for activists to follow. Two ideological shifts in the decade between 1950 and 1960 fostered conviction for change: conservatism lost its perception as economic elitism and liberalism unified traditionalists, libertarians, and anti-communists with a clear enemy. Buckley's narrative naturalized the activists' pathway forward as an ethical necessity and framed organizing with YAF as the logical next step. Although Buckley believed his ideology resolved stigma, its lingering presence and the challenges of apathetic youth meant young conservative, as an identity, functionally did not exist. But, YAF appeared on the horizon of campus politics poised to create a difference. Invoking the new leadership and Barry Goldwater's success at the 1960 Republican Convention created hope that energized activists. Examining the story developed throughout the article reveals how Buckley generated unity and ambition while shaping the Right during the early 1960s.

Charland's "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*" challenged rhetoricians to conceptualize how narratives, identities, and ideology prime and construct people's understanding of the world. Rather than assume an audience ready to be persuaded, Charland maintained that Louis Althusser's concept of interpellation explains the dynamic involved when a rhetor puts forth a message. In his metaphor for the creation of subjectivity,

Althusser described a cop shouting out “hey” to someone walking down the street. Interpellation occurs the instant the body recognizes the hail.⁴ For instance, readers of *National Review* are interpolated the moment they find themselves within the story told to conservatives. This symbolic process positions the person with a new identity as a “subject,” which Charland uses to refer to an individual “who simultaneously speaks and initiates action in discourse (a subject to a verb) and in the world (a speaker and social agent).”⁵ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell’s theorization of agency productively extended this concept of subject to account for how structures constrain people, yet people create new meaning, identities, and structures.⁶ This paradox is at the heart of extensive debates within critical theory and post-structuralism, but Campbell’s explication of agency explores a middle path that suffices for this thesis. Using this framework prevents interpreting agency through extremes like nothing changes due to structures being too ingrained or people have total free will to act. Drawing from Kenneth Burke establishes that “[h]istory, and indeed discourse itself, form the ground for subjectivity,” but Campbell’s theorization preserves the possibility for invention without ideology overdetermining the result.⁷ Given the obstacles before conservatism in the 1960s, part of Buckley’s power is inventing a subject and story that escape the status quo.

This chapter extends Charland’s symbolic framework for how a rhetor hails an identity into being based on “ideological effects” within narratives. An election in 1976 left the *Parti Québécois* with control over the Quebec government. They released a White Paper or formal policy statement three years later detailing their proposal for national sovereignty. Through an analysis of this document, Charland outlined three ideological effects within constitutive rhetoric. First, *Québécois* offered a “collective subject,” which “transcends the limitations of the individual body and will.” Instead, constitutive rhetoric constructs a relatable “protagonist of the

historical drama, who experiences, suffers, and acts.” Rather than being absorbed within a demographic like “French-Canadian,” *Peuple Québécois* united regardless of class or other political beliefs. Charland referenced Kenneth Burke to call this relationship an “ultimate identification” because it transcends differences. Second, ancestry with the first explorers and colonizers justified those in the present laying claim to sovereignty over the land. Charland referred to this process as the creation of a “transhistorical subject.” With it, people can claim a history that they use to justify their actions. Finally, the “illusion of freedom” adds a *telos* or destination to the history and motives garnered by the first two effects. Identifying as *Québécois* oriented one towards pro-sovereignty action. Freedom is illusory precisely because, in writing the story, the end already exists. In other words, “the subject is constrained to *follow through*, to act so as to maintain the narrative's consistency.”⁸ This effect does not suggest that all action is determined in advance from identity or ideology simply because the constitutive process is ongoing and can fail. At the same time, one cannot underestimate the power of storytelling to “stimulate strong emotional responses in hearers— such as sympathy, which can heighten common identity, and anger, which can spur or increase the motivation to work for change.”⁹ Although changing conservatism’s stigma required sympathy and the response to liberalism generated anger, a better marker for the tone of the text may be *excitement*. Through Buckley’s connection of the past to the present and the future, he told a story with relatable protagonists (young conservatives), based on history (overcoming economic elitism and liberalism’s fallacies), and *destined* towards political change (overcoming liberalism).

Buckley started with a lengthy rhetorical question concerning whether YAF would “matter.” Examining the opening paragraph illuminates the message developed throughout

subsequent paragraphs. Although phrased as a question, it can be read as Buckley's thesis and a general understanding of how conservative youth guarded against crisis.

A new organization was born last week and just possibly it will influence the political future of this country, as why should it not, considering that its membership is young intelligent, articulate and determined, its principles enduring, [and] its aim to translate these principles into political action in a world which has lost its moorings and is looking about for them desperately?¹⁰

Buckley constituted a new subject position by situating the newly formed organization within a historical trajectory. The principles at the basis of conservative ideology connect the present to the past, while action forward gave a glimpse of freedom. The question, as a whole, constructed a narrative for why students participating in YAF have agency to change society and shifted the burden onto the reader to fill in why this might not be possible. Given who was reading, questioning the narrative seems unlikely. With only two weeks on record as an organization, Buckley's proclamation of the commitment to "political action" reveals an "illusory" opening for how young conservatives might orient themselves. Engagement should defeat liberalism and revive conservatism in its place.

The rest of this chapter moves from the beginning to the end of "The Ivory Tower: The Young Americans for Freedom" through three parts with historical context based on symbols within the text. After the introduction, Buckley allocated two paragraphs to developing key themes concerning conservative ideology, one paragraph on the creation of YAF at Sharon, and finally two paragraphs offering a glimpse of YAF's potential for changing society. No scholarly work can outline all of the moving parts in the giant web that connected young conservatives to politics, which means decisions related to what and where history is discussed relative to the

article are driven by the text. This chapter unpacks Buckley's constitutive rhetoric as a case study for understanding the changes preceding YAF. The material and symbolic barriers that existed given the lack of a central organization and the political framing of conservatism prevented activists from exerting agency by changing the political spectrum. Buckley's "publicity" for the creation of YAF refuted these barriers and framed the identity of young conservative, which could galvanize other possible youth into action.

Rekindling the Past

The second paragraph began by expressing that the reader might "wonder" what prevented the movement from existing earlier. For Buckley, knowing how "naturally does it fit now that it is on the scene, and so plain is the need for it" only legitimized the concern.¹¹ He connected YAF's actions to the past by creating the perception of the movement being natural. This framing reveals Buckley's hail to create an identity since "rhetoric paradoxically must constitute the identity ... as it simultaneously presumes it to be pre-given and natural, existing outside of rhetoric and forming the basis for a rhetorical address."¹² The paradoxical nature of the concept relates to rhetoric needing to invent an identity while assuming the identity already exists. Buckley claimed in 1959 that conservatives were disorganized and apathetic. Yet, the very designation that YAF marked the first national conservative youth movement justifies why he told a different anecdote. Buckley positioned young conservatives to believe in political engagement's efficacy. Conveniently, conservative theory provides what is later described in the article as "transcendent values; of the nature of man."¹³ Activists within YAF could trust agitation because the goals were based on established values. Yet, the story did not begin at Sharon. Buckley explained two phenomena that precipitated the movement. Reading further into his allusions reveals numerous interlocking pieces changing at nearly the same time.

Allusions related to the perception of “conservatism” and focus on liberalism as a broken ideology set the article’s historical basis. This technique might not satisfy someone without historical background, but it suggests who should be aware of how to participate within YAF. Even at the time, Buckley’s references required some pre-existing political awareness or, at least, curiosity. Consequently, his narrative mobilized youth by constructing an identity for them to embody oriented towards action rather than rehashing conservative principles. A portion of the invitation to possible attendees of the Sharon Conference supports that YAF looked for students committed to agitation: “Now is the time for Conservative youth to take action to make their full force and influence felt. By action we mean *political action!*” This entailed “implementing and coordinating the aspirations of conservative youth into a dynamic and effective political force.”¹⁴ Although Buckley explicitly said conservatives were unorganized in 1959, one can read the same message from Caddy given the need for coordination to become what Brian Ott described as “consequential” from collectively reshaping the political process.¹⁵ YAF offered an avenue for disparate groups of students to find connections for growing the broader conservative movement. Buckley’s report on the group’s activities at Sharon emphasized why the movement is historically justified, natural, yet also new and exciting.

The rhetorical question beginning section two allowed Buckley to both characterize and refute what precluded the movement. He took aim at society’s perception of his ideology as economic elitism. Within a decade, “conservatism has been freed from the exclusive hold which the narrow dogmas of vested business interests had upon it.”¹⁶ By recognizing the problem, Buckley forwarded a more reasonable claim than saying something like the stigma never existed. He quickly developed this claim about the changing nature of conservative politics by referencing the National Association of Manufactures (NAM). An understanding of this

organization puts Buckley's comments into perspective. Beginning in 1895, NAM lobbied politicians on behalf of businesses. They encouraged trade legislation, helped create the United States Department of Commerce, and formed what became the United States Chamber of Commerce. In the 1930s, the organization added a public relations campaign while advocating for conservative businesses.¹⁷ For instance, *Industry on Parade*, NAM's weekly series between 1950 and 1960, took people inside factories across the country. A sufficient viewership existed to sustain ten years of production between 1950 and 1960. Jason S. Mittell claimed that the episodes were "heavy on propaganda, pushing pro-industry, patriotic, and capitalist ideologies."¹⁸ After praising NAM for being a "splendid organization," Buckley claimed they could not "generate a *Weltanschauung* which could galvanize the intellectual, creative and moral energies of students who had been indoctrinated over thirty years by their teachers to believe that conservatism was merely a highbrow word for the profit system."¹⁹ The end of this sentence is noteworthy because Buckley pushed the blame for conservatism's woes onto educators. As author of *God and Man at Yale*, he had the *ethos* to support without explicit evidence why students received a miseducation. Given his previous claim that the movement was no longer beholden to "narrow dogmas," the students participating within YAF presumably experienced the *Weltanschauung* that energized them to engage politically and to help others overcome their "indoctrination." A relationship with NAM actually proved very valuable since they gave YAF a list of 3,000 people in business to contact for donations.²⁰ Even though liberalism seemed fortified within the academy, the narrative conveyed a sense that the status quo warranted forming a new organization.

Repeated reference to changes over the last decade emphasized why unique circumstances existed for the embodiment of a conservative identity. At the beginning of the

third paragraph, Buckley claimed activists “have the benefit of perspectives which ten years ago could only have been intuited.”²¹ In addition to conservatism losing its elitist image, the perspective youth gained boiled down to targeting liberals and, by extension, moderate Republicans from the perspective of a fused conservative ideology. Buckley omitted communism from the article, but he exclaimed that “[h]istory proved the irrelevance of Liberal doctrine. The critique of liberalism has been made, if not definitively, at least sufficiently; and it is a total critique.”²² This focus differentiated conservative values from Republicans and Democrats. Schneider substantiated this argument by suggesting that “[a]nticommunism was attractive, but since liberals as well as conservatives embraced it there was nothing particularly distinctive about being anticommunist in postwar America.”²³ Notable Democrats engaged in this work included Harry Truman creating a loyalty review for federal employees in search of communists and Hubert Humphrey introducing the Communist Control Act of 1954.²⁴ Putting crosshairs on liberalism created a stasis point for unifying conservatives that Democrats could not agree with like some did by implementing anti-communist policies.

Buckley’s constitutive rhetoric partially relied on what Kenneth Burke described as identification via antithesis. This relationship occurs when a union is formed “by some opposition shared in common.”²⁵ Charles Goehring and George N. Dionisopoulos illustrate how antithesis creates identification and mobilization in their analysis of William Luther Pierce’s *The Turner Diaries*. This book outlined a world where white nationalists revolted against the federal government and exterminated black people and other oppressed groups. However, the novel assumes the reader is familiar with the ideals of white supremacy, so it “provides little with which people can identify, relying instead on a well-defined evil they can rally against.”²⁶

Although not a fictional novel, Buckley's article relied on a similar strategy by targeting liberalism.

Buckley reinforced his attack through an allusion to texts that substantiate his claim: "In the last ten years more important books have been written than there is time here to catalogue, books of journalistic, philosophical, economic, historical, and cultural import—all of them concentrically pointing an accusing finger at the tottering idols of Liberalism."²⁷ Turning to Michael Lee's work on the "conservative canon" contextualizes some of the books Buckley might have been referencing. Six of Lee's ten "first-order" books and two of five "second-order" texts were published within a literal ten years before YAF's creation.²⁸ Buckley's allusion captures a critical aspect of what *Creating Conservatism: Postwar Words that Made an American Movement* developed via an analysis of books: "the canon was a resonant symbol of conservative synergy as well as a constituent element of ... a political identity with a shared history, a trove of insider references, a set of common heroes and enemies, and a repertoire of preferred argumentative forms."²⁹ For the purpose of this chapter, the specific texts are less significant than their combined consequences. Lee's analysis of how conservatives use the canon parallels Buckley's strategy in the article: "conservatives employing canonical allusions wrapped themselves in the authority of an authentic conservative identity; their politics were the natural result of internalizing ... treasured books within the community's postwar textual tradition."³⁰ Buckley's identification with the audience stems from a common relationship with the texts forming the movement. Rather than list the books, Buckley's narrative engaged readers by allowing them to self-select which texts attacked "the tottering idols of Liberalism." Regardless of which books Buckley had in mind, the message points towards identification based on the common enemy of liberalism.

This theme of identification via antithesis is helpful for noting how liberalism connected disparate groups, but YAF also developed power from an explicit defense of “conservative.” Buckley dismissed objections that conservative’s only care for economics and alluded to another synthesis occurring from *National Review*. He noted how “‘conservative’ is accepted both by Russell Kirk and Frank Meyer as designating their distinct but complementary, even symbiotic positions.”³¹ Both theorists regularly contributed to *National Review* and edited parts of the magazine. Kirk believed in traditionalism, while Meyer converted from communism to libertarianism. Nash described this unification by writing that “[t]ime and again, on practical matters—from the production of *National Review* and *Modern Age* [Kirk’s journal] to the support of specific political leaders and issues—conservatives found themselves able to collaborate with one another.” Even Nash’s language following the previous passage reveals how YAF’s identification involved more than just antithesis: “if the conservative movement had not attained unity, it had achieved an *identity*. That awkward and unwieldy coalition had become a partnership.”³² This willingness to compromise reveals a stronger commitment to the cause than ideological discrepancies. In his discussion of the constitutive potential of Goldwater’s rhetoric, Andrew Taylor argued that “constitutive rhetoric must be both polarizing (critical of the way things were currently ordered) and synthesizing (creating a new electoral coalition).”³³ Similarly, Lee’s framework emphasized the role of having “friction” and “fusion” as part of the symbolic process for creating conservative identity.³⁴

Meyer’s concept of “fusionism” assisted with developing what Buckley referred to as the “symbiotic position” between YAF’s factions. He influenced the emerging group by attending the conference and teaching M. Stanton Evans, who drafted the “Sharon Statement.”³⁵ Buckley

framed the manifesto as the symbolic knot between the past and the unique moment creating YAF.

The great renewal of the last decade is reflected in the nuances in the Young Americans' statement of first principles, which is reproduced on the next page. Here is mention of the moral aspect of freedom of transcendent values; of the nature of man. All this together with a tough-as-nails statement of political and economic convictions which Richard Nixon couldn't read aloud without fainting.³⁶

Although chapter three pursues a more focused analysis of the "Sharon Statement," Buckley's claims justifies a brief detour into the preamble. The first three lines expressed YAF's and, by extension, Buckley's hail to renegotiate the identity of youth towards activism: "In this time of moral and political crisis, it is the responsibility of the youth of America to affirm certain eternal truths. We, as *young conservatives*, believe."³⁷ Twelve Statements of YAF's ideology and values follow this statement. Buckley's narrative paired with this portion of the manifesto reveals how "young conservative" became a new subject, a new "people." Unified by the identity of being conservative, wielding motives and desires based on chapter three's analysis of perceived "eternal values," and oriented towards change, youth developed an ambition towards political engagement. Charland's theory of "constitutive rhetoric" explains the constraining power of a *telos* accepted by assuming an identity, which occurred as one adopted the subject position of a young conservative.

The Republicans' adoption of liberal values provoked widespread concern for conservatives. One cannot lose perspective that *National Review* printed this piece while Nixon sought election as president since the last line of the section attacked his convictions. YAF decided not to support the Republican candidate as a group. Evans explained that this decision

“was crucial; for it established the organization as authentically nonpartisan, and authentically dedicated to the advancement of conservatism, irrespective of party labels.”³⁸ He reasoned that since YAF was still small and its members independently supported Nixon, there would be little benefit to supporting him collectively. Furthermore, the backing could *backfire*. Picking Nixon jeopardized YAF’s distinction from other youth organizations like Young Republicans since the Republican Party’s candidate would almost always hold more conservative views in an election than the Democrat. YAF wanted to retain the threat of separating into a new party.³⁹ Referencing that Nixon could not stomach YAF’s values demonstrates why a unique organization was needed to stop the Republican Party from becoming more liberal. Buckley’s reference to the “Sharon Statement” brought the past into the present as the document was written less than two weeks before publication of “The Ivory Tower: The Young Americans for Freedom.”

Establishing Cadres for Resistance

In the second section and fourth paragraph, Buckley briefly detailed YAF’s creation. He began by saying, “students were called to the founding conference ... by Douglas Caddy, until recently a student at Georgetown University, now with the McGraw-Edison Committee for Public Affairs in New York.”⁴⁰ Although Buckley glossed over why Caddy changed positions, the reason directly relates to YAF’s creation and requires additional background on Caddy. A significant change within the preceding year to YAF’s creation included the emergence of a single-issue conservative organization focused on activism. In 1957, President Eisenhower initiated the National Defense Education Act, which funded universities’ research. The agreement contained a clause requiring schools to pledge an oath to America. Harvard and Yale, among many other universities, protested the government’s control. Eisenhower’s support for the oath’s removal enflamed conservatives even more than the universities.⁴¹ Caddy, along with

David Franke, created the Committee for a Loyalty Oath (CLO) at the end of 1959. CLO protested removing the provision. These two students were optimal candidates for leadership positions:

Caddy, at Georgetown, was chairman of the District of Columbia College Young Republicans. Franke was editor of ISI's [Intercollegiate Studies Institute] publication, *The Individualist*, as well as *The Campus Republican*, the organ of the national College YR [Young Republicans]. Both had been fellows ... in the first college journalist class sponsored by *Human Events* [in 1957].⁴²

Evans taught Caddy and Franke in that class, which is another example of how close connections in the years before 1960 took hold. Appealing to a national group of students strengthened both members' previous experience with conservative politics. Eventually, the organization spread to thirty colleges. They contacted representatives in the Senate and House as frequently as possible to declare the support of youth for the loyalty oath.⁴³ Their efforts contributed to preventing Congress from removing the oath, but skills accrued during CLO were more essential to YAF's creation. Caddy later reflected on this experience by describing how "[o]ut of this cauldron came the beginnings of the modern conservative mass movement. Franke and I were put in touch with hundreds of like-thinking students around the country."⁴⁴ Given students' distance from mechanisms of power concerned Buckley, this organization provided a palliative for apathy. Schneider claimed that activists now had "experience in working the corridors of power in Congress and in using the press to their advantage."⁴⁵ The optimism generated by success plus leadership experiences and networking encouraged young conservatives to seek additional political engagement.

At the Republican National Convention in 1960, a meeting between Caddy and Franke with Buckley and Marvin Leibman started preparations for Sharon. By the weekend's end, a lunch held by Leibman and New Jersey Governor Charles Edison brought the pieces together with the creation of the Interim Committee for a National Conservative Youth Organization.⁴⁶ Caddy's first assignment while working within Liebman's public relations firm was to finish arrangements for Sharon. On August 16th, he sent invitations to 120 conservative leaders from across the country.⁴⁷ Buckley reported on the attendance by claiming that "[n]inety students ... representing 44 colleges" made their way to Great Elm. The networking put in place by CLO was critical to the success of the movement.⁴⁸ Buckley also shared that Caddy held the positions of National Director and recipient for "inquiries" about the organization. He placed the audience in an active role by letting them know Caddy received mail should they choose to "[e]nclose a dollar bill, if you want to help with the cost of setting the organization up."⁴⁹ Consequently, Caddy became an important figure within the narrative because he is both responsible for hailing the activists to Sharon and receiving funds for launching the organization.

Within this paragraph, Buckley established two boundaries for the organization. First, he clarified who counts as youth. Although an original motion set the age between sixteen and twenty-eight, the group moved the upper limit to thirty-five. As Charland wrote, "the very *boundary* of whom the term 'people' includes and excludes is rhetorically constructed."⁵⁰ Lee Edwards later explained that the group made this decision "because several people pointed out there were numerous young people on the way up, including some Congressmen [sic], who would be barred if the age were set that low."⁵¹ Consequently, the impetus to remain politically engaged motivated where YAF established the boundary of who could participate in the movement as a youth. Buckley remarked that the decision "made at least this bystander feel

young again,” which contextually fits since he was still thirty-five for two months.⁵² Although necessarily exclusive by restricting the age, Buckley’s presentation conveys the unity the group achieved by allowing youth to work together.

The second boundary relates to the leadership structure of the organization. Although new, YAF developed a framework with multiple set positions. The group selected Caddy as National Director and Robert Schuchman, a student from Yale, as Chairman. Then, Buckley outlined six regional directors and twelve board of directors with their affiliations. Although the list itself is not particularly exciting, it legitimized the organization. Those included exemplified YAF’s commitment to conservative principles. First, the list proved the group was, as Buckley described at the beginning, “intelligent” by showing their credentials. Although a small sample of the full conference, the board represented Harvard Law School, Georgetown University, Stanford University, Northwestern University, Yale, the University of Kansas Law School, and Lee Edwards’ status as “press assistant to Senator John Marshall Butler.”⁵³ Second, examining a few of the board members based on what Thorburn reported after a survey in 2008 reveals the students’ impact. Along with several lawyers, Robert Harley and Dick Noble each became copartners for their own firms. Jim Kolbe served as a state senator in Arizona for six years, which launched him into Congress for twenty-two years. Ronald Reagan appointed Carol Dawson as Commissioner of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, a position she held for nine years (1984-1993). Lee Edwards wrote eighteen books on conservatism, started a public relations company (Lee Edwards & Associates), and serves as Distinguished Fellow in Conservative Thought at the Heritage Foundation. Finally, Herbert Kohler climbed the ranks to become Chairman of the Board for Kohler Industries, a family business.⁵⁴ YAF’s beginning leaders extensively impacted the United States since this brief examination revealed legal,

political, intellectual, and economic changes. Buckley's narrative legitimized the organization by constructing their leadership, which served as a barrier demonstrating who was on the *inside* of the group. The credentials of the students and their subsequent actions highlight YAF's commitment to political engagement.

Appetite for Power

After invoking the historical context precipitating a conservative movement and the specific context for YAF's creation, Buckley turned to the future. He began this section with a question. "What will the Young Americans for Freedom do?" Buckley followed with four questions asking what the Young Socialists, Students for Industrial Democracy, American Youth for Democracy, and Students for Democratic Action started doing upon creation. After quibbling that the Right does not lack an agenda, Buckley claimed "[e]very chapter of YAFF in every college will shape a program rooted in the principal concerns of its own campus; except that no one will be accepted as a member who does not endorse the Sharon Statement."⁵⁵ Reminiscent of the relationship between federal and state governments that conservatives hoped for, Buckley returns power to the "states" to enact their agenda. This framing implies differences between actors, yet he lumped them together under a single symbolic umbrella. The manifesto flattened differences and revealed a core that could be the basis for an identity beyond deconstructing liberalism.

Buckley suggested that the group would have annual meetings and possibly a newsletter. About six months later, YAF released their publication, *New Guard*. Lee Edwards, the first editor of the magazine, wrote the opening editorial with a theme similar to Buckley's.

Ten years ago this magazine would not have been possible. Twenty years ago it would not have been dreamed of. Thirty-five years ago it would not have been necessary.

Today, The *New Guard* is possible, it is a reality, and it is needed by the youth of America to proclaim loudly and clearly: We are sick unto death of collectivism, socialism, statism and the other utopianisms which have poisoned the minds, weakened the wills and smothered the spirits of Americans for three decades and more.... Action is the key word and principal motivation of Young Americans for Freedom and this publication.⁵⁶

Between 1950 and 1960, conservative principles experienced a revival and early actions preserved the possibility for societal change. With three dollars, students could become a member of YAF and receive a subscription to the periodical.⁵⁷ Although many members skipped this official process, the publication “would serve an important role in building a conservative movement, communicating ideas, events, and activities of relevance to YAF members as they constructed a ‘grassroots’ base on campuses.”⁵⁸ Buckley’s story foreshadows a meaningful development for how YAF distributed their message. Even though he left the possibility open by not predetermining YAF’s actions, the alluded publication represents “freedom” tied to a controlling *telos*.

Buckley did not bestow upon YAF the sole responsibility of changing campuses. He knew that the activists had “the help of the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists, a non-political organization whose aim it is to advance an understanding of freedom at the college level.”⁵⁹ While YAF and ISI developed different means towards a goal, both empowered youth to create freedom in society. Although not committed to political engagement, ISI helped Buckley when he became the initial president. Frank Chodorov, editor of *Human Events*, started ISI in 1953 to distribute conservative literature across the country for either no price or a very low portion of the cost.⁶⁰ In *Revolt on the Campus*, Evans reflected on the organization’s

symbolic unification: “it was a discovery beyond price; for it meant that I was no longer alone. Here were men of reputation—scholars, journalists, publishers—who shared my uneasiness, and who brought factual support and theoretical subtlety to the conservative cause.”⁶¹ Nash reported that by 1961, “ISI had ... distributed conservative literature to about 40,000 students ... [and] was an indispensable link between right-wing scholars and college students.”⁶² YAF complemented ISI by providing an outlet for these newly awakened conservatives. Buckley portrayed the struggle to change campuses by connecting YAF to ISI.

The narrative concluded with a projection of how the movement might “matter.” The last paragraph is worth quoting at length to preserve the words of the person Andrew described as “the intellectual godfather to the new conservatism.”⁶³

But what is so striking in the students who met at Sharon is their appetite for power. Ten years ago the struggle seemed so long, so endless, even, that we did not even dream of victory. Even now the world continues to go left, but all over the land dumbfounded professors are remarking the extraordinary revival of hard conservative sentiment in the student bodies. It was Goldwater, not Nixon or Eisenhower, who was the hero of the bright and dominant youth forces at the Chicago Convention. It is quixotic to say that they or their elders have seized the reins of history. But the difference in psychological attitude is tremendous. They talk about *affecting* history: we have talked about *educating* people to want to affect history. It may be that, as Russell Kirk keeps reminding us, the Struggle Availeth. No one would doubt it who talked to the founding fathers of the Young Americans for Freedom.⁶⁴

This paragraph has three noteworthy strategies. First, suggesting the students had “an appetite for power” naturalized the desire for conservative advancement like everyone has for nourishment or

water. The framing stuck, as Evans wrote, “[f]or YAF ... is marked by its ‘appetite for power,’ and for action. It clearly does not mean to abate its activities until the last vestiges of Liberalism have been removed from our government.”⁶⁵ While Evans provides another indication of the identification formed from targeting liberalism, his framing of the movement mirrored the constitutive nature of Buckley’s appeal by naturalizing resistance. The latter part of the paragraph’s discussion about psychological changes positions young conservatives as poised to reclaim power. No longer apathetic, removed from the political process, or without conviction; rather, conservative youth embody a *trajectory* towards radical change and “affecting history.” Finally, this is the first time that possessive pronouns—“we” and “us”—are used throughout the article. Aside from Buckley implicating himself as a youth during the previous section, the usage here captures the unity that Charland linked as an effect of constitutive rhetoric. Michael Lee found from his study into Buckley’s style that he “inspired conservatives to abjure doctrinal uniformity and to express their identity provocatively and combatively.”⁶⁶ In 1959, Buckley reminded his audience that conservatism sat as a dream on the horizon, but, by 1960, the expression that the “Struggle Availeth” conjured a combative identity for change.

Barry Goldwater’s impact cannot be lost when examining the passage. Buckley was not the first or only person to describe him as a hero. Lee Edwards also complimented the Republican presidential elect in 1964: “the knight on the white horse, the Lochinvar riding out of the west to do battle with evil, a diamond in the rough who exhibited character (if not always tact) A hero.”⁶⁷ Four contributions help portray Goldwater’s force in developing the conservative movement. First, publication of *Conscience of a Conservative* created an extended manifesto for students to learn their ideology. Second, his nomination effort at the 1960 Republican Convention brought students together with elders to create YAF. Caddy claimed that

Goldwater intercepted him at the end of the convention to say “turn your group into a permanent organization of young conservatives. The man is not important. The principles you espouse are. Do this and I shall support you in any way I can.”⁶⁸ Next, students working on Goldwater’s 1964 campaign took away valuable experience about the political process and hope for change. Finally, one cannot miss that Goldwater’s candidacy gave many people their first impression of Ronald Reagan as a politician when he gave “A Time for Choosing.” Presented on October 27, 1964 to help Goldwater raise campaign funds, the speech led conservative donors to see Reagan as a plausible candidate for governor of California in 1966.⁶⁹

Several rhetoricians studied Goldwater’s effects on the conservative movement. As early as 1963, Ernest Wraga documented how his diagnosis and solutions appealed to the audience by providing “a clean-cut choice.”⁷⁰ John Hammerback argued that Goldwater personified his message concerning conservatism via projecting an image of rugged individualism.⁷¹ Hammerback later extended this claim by suggesting that Goldwater “not only asked audiences to think some way or do something, he asked them to *be somebody*. If they took on his personae, they would be prepared and motivated to think and do what he requested.”⁷² Hence, Taylor’s observation that Goldwater constituted an identity “around which conservatives could rally, organize and mobilize.”⁷³ Goldwater’s support provided a cause for unification and activists mobilized based on his messages. Their presence at rallies for him legitimized the movement as more than tinkering with ideas. Rather, the students developed ambition to take control of the Republican Party and begin to change the cultural and social climate of the United States.

Conclusion

William F. Buckley’s “The Ivory Tower: The Young Americans for Freedom” crafted a narrative for activists to embrace throughout subsequent decades. For many reading the *National*

Review, Buckley's text was their first exposure to the developing organization. YAF's operations, as a social movement, depended upon young conservatives claiming their identity as advocates on campus, which created a set of obstacles requiring discourse to manage. Along with drawing an identity into being, James Jasinski's "constitutive framework for rhetorical historiography" expanded the power of constitutive rhetoric: "Discourse functions to organize and structure an individual's ... experience of time and space, the norms of political culture and the experience of communal existence (including collective identity), and the linguistic resources of the culture (including ... the stock of fundamental political concepts that shape the culture's understanding of political existence)." ⁷⁴ The *National Review's* hail to readers exemplified these three tendencies. Buckley's narrative structured the past for easy digestion to understand the potential of a newly emerging movement. Invoking YAF's presence created by the Sharon conference produced a favorable "experience of communal existence." Chapter three shows how the "Sharon Statement" helped by diffusing ideological conflict through common concepts based on ultimate terms. The people alluded to throughout Buckley's article personify the movement, which made action real, possible, and tangible. By alluding to the past, setting the context from Sharon, and showing ambition for change, a newly emerged subject position equipped conservatives with conviction and a unified mechanism for political engagement. The focus on liberalism provided the motivation to compromise on ideological disputes and a *telos* for what actions should overcome.

The ideological effect of Buckley's publicity can be traced through its residual hold on the conservative movement. In 1991, Margaret and Richard Braungart analyzed the oral testimony of eleven leaders from YAF and thirteen from Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). ⁷⁵ The results show that "each activist leader had formed and maintained a personal

identity, generational consciousness, and collective bond as a member of a decisive political generation in history.”⁷⁶ Hence, the experiences in YAF transcended the moment of the sixties by allowing for a new sense of self and community. Directly connecting the identity with action was crucial for it to stick since “the power of the text is the power of an embodied ideology. The form of an ideological rhetoric is effective because it is within the bodies of those it constitutes as subjects.”⁷⁷ In the case of resistance, Charland’s use of “effective” establishes a relationship that conveys the difference between a passive observer and a motivated activist. The creation of YAF generated an avenue for young conservatives to embody their identity and agitate: “No longer would conservatives view themselves as solely ‘the Remnant’ standing outside and decrying the trends and tendencies in society and government. Now they would be taking *direct action* to influence and redirect American society.”⁷⁸

Briefly turning to another of Buckley’s speeches demonstrates how these conservatives enacted their identity. On September 11th, 1964, Buckley spoke before YAF’s National Convention. The logistics of this event contained one glaring difference compared to his other speaking engagements; Buckley asked beforehand and during for the speech to occur off the record. Although two months before the presidential election, he planned to share his controversial feeling that Lyndon B. Johnson would win.

I have ... ventured to predict that Senator Goldwater will most likely lose, and I have been dismayed by the growls of resentment at the utterance of this political truism. The election of Barry Goldwater would presuppose a sea change in American public opinion; presuppose that the fiery little body of dissenters of which you are a *shining meteor* suddenly spun off nothing less than a majority of the American people, who suddenly overcame a generation’s entrenched lassitude and ... succeeded in passing blithely

through the walls of Alcatraz and tripping lightly over the shark-infested waters and treacherous currents, to safety on the shore.⁷⁹

By comparing the creation of conservative consciousness writ large to a prison break from Alcatraz, Buckley stressed the difficulty of changing society in the early 1960s. Accordingly, the theme of the speech centered on the need to recruit without allowing expectations to crush resistance upon defeat. Buckley recognized that social change of the scale conservatives sought required a long-term focus on creating a base. He advised the students to “infuse the conservative spirit in enough people to entitle us to look about, on November 4, not at the ashes of defeat but at the well-planted seeds of hope.”⁸⁰ This “spirit” Buckley desired for the students to cultivate in their communities mirrors what the activists ultimately learned from participation in YAF. The previous reference to them as “a shining meteor” illustrates a trajectory towards changing society embodied by the activists within the movement. As Hammerback and Taylor revealed from their studies of YAF, this election generated a lightning rod to bring together conservatives even though Goldwater lost. This excerpt shows the role Buckley played as a leader for YAF by speaking at their engagements and providing them frames for how to interpret the events occurring before them. Similarly, the “Sharon Statement” established a frame for understanding what young conservatives believed. The manifesto’s values mirrored many of Goldwater’s, which chapter two helps contextualize given the Senator’s close relation with YAF at the 1960 Republican Convention and throughout YAF’s beginning years.

Endnotes

¹ William F. Buckley, Jr., “The Decline of Partisanship,” *National Review*, February 14, 1959, 524.

² Buckley, Jr., "The Decline," 527.

³ William F. Buckley, Jr., "The Ivory Tower: The Young Americans for Freedom," *National Review*, September 24, 1960, 172; Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the People Québécois," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, no. 2 (1987): 133-134.

⁴ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 142-143.

⁵ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 133.

⁶ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Agency: Promiscuous and Protean," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 2, no. 1 (2005): 4.

⁷ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 148.

⁸ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 138-141.

⁹ Joseph E. Davis, "Narrative and Social Movements: The Power of Stories," in *Stories of Change: Narrative and Social Movement*, ed. Joseph E. Davis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 24.

¹⁰ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

¹¹ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

¹² Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 137.

¹³ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

¹⁴ Douglas Caddy to Robert Croll, 16 August 1960, Robert Croll Papers quoted in John A. Andrew III, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 55.

¹⁵ Brian L. Ott, "Review Essay: Assessing Rhetorics of Social Resistance," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 344-345.

¹⁶ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

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- ¹⁹ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.
- ²⁰ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 67.
- ²¹ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.
- ²² Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.
- ²³ Gregory L. Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 12.
- ²⁴ Robert Griffith, "The Politics of Anti-Communism: A Review Article," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 54, no. 4 (1971): 304; Mary S. McAuliffe, "Liberals and the Communist Control Act of 1954," *The Journal of American History* 63, no. 2 (1976): 362.
- ²⁵ Kenneth Burke, "The Rhetorical Situation," in *Communication: Ethical and Moral Issues* ed. Lee Thayer (New York: Gordon & Breach, 1973), 268.
- ²⁶ Charles Goehring and George N. Dionisopoulos, "Identification by Antithesis: The Turner Diaries as Constitutive Rhetoric," *Southern Communication Journal* 78, no. 5 (2013): 374-375, 381.
- ²⁷ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.
- ²⁸ The six first-order books include: Buckley's *God & Man at Yale* (1951) and *Up from Liberalism* (1959), Whittaker Chambers' *Witness* (1952), Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* (1953), Robert Nisbet's *The Quest for Community* (1953), and Goldwater's *Conscience of a Conservative* (1960). Eric Voegelin's *The New Science of Politics* (1951) and Leo Strauss'

Natural Right and History (1953) are the two of five second order texts. Michael Lee, *Creating Conservatism: Postwar Words that Made an American Movement* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), 15-16, 217.

²⁹ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 18.

³⁰ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 22.

³¹ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

³² George H. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976), 171 [emphasis added].

³³ Andrew Taylor, "Barry Goldwater: Insurgent Conservatism as Constitutive Rhetoric," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21, no. 3 (2016): 243.

³⁴ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 18-19.

³⁵ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 108.

³⁶ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

³⁷ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 173 [emphasis added].

³⁸ M. Stanton Evans, *Revolt on the Campus* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961), 114.

³⁹ Evans, *Revolt on the Campus*, 113.

⁴⁰ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

⁴¹ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 26; Rebecca E. Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 18.

⁴² Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 21.

⁴³ Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 21.

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- ⁴⁴ Douglas Caddy, “The Birth of the Conservative Movement,” p.7 quoted in Wayne Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes: Young Americans for Freedom and the Creation of the Conservative Movement* (Ottawa: Jameson Books, 2010), 19.
- ⁴⁵ Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 23.
- ⁴⁶ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 54; Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 29-30.
- ⁴⁷ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 55; Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 23.
- ⁴⁸ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 27.
- ⁴⁹ Buckley, “The Ivory Tower,” 172.
- ⁵⁰ Charland, “Constitutive Rhetoric,” 136.
- ⁵¹ Lee Edwards and Anne Edwards, *You Can Make the Difference* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1968), 284.
- ⁵² Buckley, “The Ivory Tower,” 172.
- ⁵³ Buckley, “The Ivory Tower,” 172.
- ⁵⁴ This analysis is heavily indebted to a survey completed by Thorburn in 2008. Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 32-37.
- ⁵⁵ Buckley, “The Ivory Tower,” 172. To my knowledge, this is the only use of YAFF for Young Americans for Freedom.
- ⁵⁶ Edwards and Edwards, *You Can Make*, 288-290.
- ⁵⁷ Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 41.
- ⁵⁸ Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 51.
- ⁵⁹ Buckley, “The Ivory Tower,” 172.
- ⁶⁰ Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 16; Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 24.
- ⁶¹ Evans, *Revolt on the Campus*, 6.

⁶² Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement*, 272.

⁶³ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 17.

⁶⁴ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.

⁶⁵ Evans, *Revolt on the Campus*, 119. Various excerpts of the passage were frequently quoted throughout literature analyzing YAF and Buckley, see: Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 58; Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 32; Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 30.

⁶⁶ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 137.

⁶⁷ Lee Edwards quoted in John C. Roberts, *The Conservative Decade: Emerging Leaders of the 1980s*, (Westport, Conn.: Arlington House, 1980), 25 quoted in Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 7.

⁶⁸ Douglass Caddy, "Birth of a Conservative Movement," 14 quoted in Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 21.

⁶⁹ Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 205-206.

⁷⁰ Ernest J. Wrage, "The Little World of Barry Goldwater," *Western Speech* 27, no. 4 (1963): 214.

⁷¹ John C. Hammerback, "Barry Goldwater's Rhetoric of Rugged Individualism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58, no. 2 (1972): 181.

⁷² John C. Hammerback, "Barry Goldwater's Rhetorical Legacy," *Southern Communication Journal* 64, no. 4 (1999): 329 [Emphasis Added].

⁷³ Andrew Taylor, "Barry Goldwater: Insurgent Conservatism as Constitutive Rhetoric," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21, no. 3 (2016): 243, 257.

⁷⁴ James Jasinski, “A Constitutive Framework for Rhetorical Historiography: Toward an Understanding of the Discursive (Re)constitution of ‘Constitution’ in *The Federalist Papers*,” in *Doing Rhetorical History: Concepts and Cases*, ed. Kathleen J. Turner (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 75.

⁷⁵ Margaret M. Braungart and Richard G. Braungart, “The Effects of the 1960s Political Generation on Former Left- and Right-Wing Youth Activist Leaders,” *Social Problems* 38, no. 3 (1991): 302.

⁷⁶ Braungart and Braungart, “The Effects of the 1960s,” 310.

⁷⁷ Charland, “Constitutive Rhetoric,” 143.

⁷⁸ Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 25 [emphasis added].

⁷⁹ William F. Buckley Jr., *Let Us Talk of Many Things: The Collected Speeches* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 76-77 [emphasis added].

⁸⁰ Buckley, *Let Us Talk of Many Things*, 78.

Chapter Three: Idealistic Rhetoric in the “Sharon Statement”

In an article for *The New Guard* ten years after the Sharon conference, M. Stanton Evans recounted his experience while writing the “Sharon Statement.” Prior to the weekend of September 11th 1960, Douglas Caddy arranged for Evans to arrive with a rough draft. Any number of events delayed the beginning of the project, but a ride with Eastern Airlines provided time for composing the document. David Franke and Carol Dawson, with the small influence of William F. Buckley Jr. adding a word, edited the statement during Friday evening and Saturday morning. They shortened the preamble, rearticulated the first belief, and made a few other stylistic changes. Ultimately, Evans described the modifications of his rough draft by saying “[n]one of this is particularly earth-shaking and I put it down not because I think the Sharon [S]tatement is historic prose requiring exact attention to every nuance, but simply to establish my own relationship to it.”¹ Yet, responses at the conference and by historians challenge Evans’ perception of the statement’s quality. Interviewees from Rebecca Klatch’s *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* described the immediate audience’s response as “a standing ovation.” In 2010, Wayne Thorburn “credited” the document “with helping launch and define the conservative movement in America.”²

Recalling chapter two’s analysis of how Buckley’s narrative positioned the “Sharon Statement,” paired with examining scholarly literature on the form, establishes that the document served two ideological roles. First, it differentiated the Young Americans for Freedom’s (YAF) ideology from that of moderate Republicans. YAF pursued different political commitments than the liberal sellouts occupying the party. Buckley believed that Richard Nixon could not even read the document without becoming repulsed. The ideologies conflicted, at least, because conservatives desired substantial limits on the state and defeat of communism. Second, the

“Sharon Statement” provided a stasis point for unifying disparate groups of students working across the country. Each campus hosted a chapter of YAF, but the change they sought to create bound the organization together. In his essay on rhetoric and social movements, Leland Griffin wrote that a manifesto “constitutes the initial act of the movement—... the vernal bud from which the movement will unfold into a flower.” He further described why studying these documents is crucial since “[t]hey identify the ‘heaven’ of the movement, as well as its ‘hell’; its gods, or god, as well as its devils.”³ By declaring the values of the movement, the manifesto offered a stasis point for the organization to engage politically instead of bickering about beliefs. To borrow the language of Craig Allen Smith and Kathy B. Smith while writing about manifestos for British parties, “ideological statements ... can be read as rhetorical documents, as purposive texts intended to attract voters to each party’s ‘us.’”⁴

This chapter analyzes YAF’s manifesto to gauge the document’s symbolic potential for generating identification and, consequently, unification. The “Sharon Statement” offered activists within YAF a coherent vision based on the perception of eternal values marked by the intertwining of traditional and libertarian god terms against a communist devil. Fissures within the decade, though, reveal why these values did not offer a stable basis for political activism. Adopting Richard Weaver’s philosophy as a lens helps unpack two recurring rhetorical strategies concerning argumentative styles and ultimate terms. First, YAF’s ideology is based on a set of interlocking arguments from definition that paint an idealistic picture of how society should be formed. Twelve statements declare the purpose of a person, government, and foreign policy. Despite tensions or paradoxes between values, the discussion of Weaver’s rhetorical theory in the subsequent section suggest the vision needed to create enthusiasm rather than a consistent ideological system. Second, the manifesto synthesizes both a belief in eternal values—a common

feature of traditional conservatism—with an emphasis on preserving freedom and capitalism—typically libertarian sentiments. The document offered both groups symbolic space for unifying while declaring the need to defeat communism, a devil term that targets a specific enemy.

Examining the tensions and dangers within Weaver’s philosophy also demonstrates the failure of the “Sharon Statement.” The ousting of extreme anticommunists and libertarians within the 1960s reveals dissent from the core values laid out in Connecticut. Yet, neither conflict substantially damaged the conservative movement. Rather, they test the eternal nature of the values, but reveal something about the commitment to a vision instead of the object of the vision. The manifesto’s symbolic foundation temporarily fulfilled its function in Buckley’s narrative by connecting conservatives, but the text ignored or glossed over significant problems. The next part of this chapter briefly situates Weaver in relation to the emerging conservative movement and develops relevant facets of his rhetorical theory. Examining why eternal values compel an audience demonstrates a connection between constitutive rhetoric and Weaver’s theory. By understanding the document as a series of definitions and god/devil terms, the second part of the chapter unlocks the potential of the document’s rhetorical identification. The third part situates anti-communist and libertarian “splinters” in the 1960s as a challenge to the Platonic assumptions within the “Sharon Statement” and Weaver’s philosophy.⁵ Despite these challenges, a nucleus of conservative beliefs formed that helped to move the political spectrum to the Right.

Idealistic Rhetoric

On March 7th, 1962, YAF convened a rally with 18,000 people at Madison Square Garden, where they gave out several awards. Along with former President Herbert Hoover, former New Jersey Governor Charles Edison, actor John Wayne, and M. Stanton Evans, Richard Weaver received recognition for his contributions to conservatism.⁶ He concluded his acceptance

speech by saying: “If freedom is not found accompanied by a willingness to resist, and to reject favors [from the state], ... it will not long be found at all. It therefore gives me great pleasure to accept this award from hands that have joined to win back and to secure our heritage of freedom.”⁷ The double usage of freedom offers support for YAF’s activities and displays a rhetorical strategy found within the “Sharon Statement.” When he first invoked “freedom,” Weaver reinforced a need to act. Fear of losing freedom without sustained resistance outside of the state jeopardized society, which galvanized traditionalists and united a larger movement given the looming menace of communism. The second usage illustrates an important synthesis of values found within YAF’s manifesto. The phrase “heritage of freedom” connects traditionalists’ admiration for order and hierarchy with the libertarian impulse for exerting free will. Weaver is not celebrated as a central figure for fusionism, but his assistance creating *National Review*, publication of books and articles, and guidance from speaking at seminars with the Intercollegiate Studies Institute trained prominent young conservatives.⁸

Ideas Have Consequences left a lasting mark on conservative ideology. In an autobiographical piece for *Modern Age*, Weaver recalled “wondering whether it would ... be possible to deduce, from fundamental causes, the fallacies of modern life and thinking that had produced this holocaust and would insure others.” Within “twenty minutes,” he composed the framework of propositions that grounded his analysis of American society and formed the book.⁹ Frank S. Meyer considered Weaver’s initial text “the *fons et origo* of the contemporary American conservative movement.”¹⁰ Andrew and Schneider claim people revered the book because it offered a sharp account of the traditionalists’ argument “that the decline of ‘transcendent values’ had prompted the deterioration of Western Culture.”¹¹ Weaver blamed deconstruction of absolute knowledge and ethical relativism for this problem. In his words,

“[t]he defeat of logical realism in the great medieval debate was the crucial event in the history of Western culture; from this flowed those acts which issue now in modern decadence.”¹² By “logical realism,” Weaver referred to a branch of philosophy stemming from the belief that intellect—not senses or experience—determines truths. This position assumes “matters of logic turn upon matters of fact and that these facts are not grounded in us or our practices.”¹³ Weaver flagged William of Occam’s theory of nominalism as the basis for retreating to empiricism and the denial of truth. The absence of a hierarchy concerning knowledge created an ethical problem since “the shift from speculative inquiry to investigation of experience . . . left modern man [sic] so swamped with multiplicities that he no longer sees his way.”¹⁴ Buckley’s example that students could not distinguish between the United States’ and Russia’s control of intellectuals exemplifies this problem. Essentially, *Ideas* depicted a broken society on the brink of greater crises because of the inability to know and determine right from wrong.¹⁵

Applying the label of “traditional conservative” to Weaver deserves consideration. One of Buckley’s conservative teachers at Yale, Willmoore Kendall suggested that “categories for classifying Right-wing intellectuals in America do not exist.” Regardless, “Weaver just may be unique, so that even if the relevant categories did exist he would not fit into any of them.” As an example, Kendall criticized Russell Kirk’s introduction to Weaver’s posthumously published *Visions of Order* by characterizing “Mr. Kirk’s main purpose,” as converting Weaver to “sound . . . like ‘one of the boys’ in the exalted Right-wing circles in which Kirk himself normally moves.”¹⁶ G. Thomas Goodnight also challenged the label of “traditional conservative” since Weaver believed dialectic should produce a position instead of tradition.¹⁷

Weaver unpacked the relationship between rhetoric and dialectic in *The Ethics of Rhetoric*. Although refinement as a process of negotiating between two poles is critical for

ethics, “rhetoric, with its passion for the actual, is more complete than mere dialectic” because “man is a creature of passion who must live out that passion in the world.”¹⁸ This definition of a person is consistent across Weaver’s works from *Ideas* to his lecture “Language is Sermonic.” In his first book, Weaver used existentialist language to express that a person “is in the world to suffer his passion.” Yet, the metaphysical aspiration for the ideal rescues people “with an offer of conventions, which shape and elevate that passion.”¹⁹ Similarly, Weaver criticized science for separating the production of truth from a person’s passions. He prioritized rhetoric as “the most humanistic of the humanities. It is directed to that part of our being which is not merely rational, for it supplements the rational approach.”²⁰ In a Platonic ideal, dialectic suffices to guide people towards the good, but what Goodnight described as Weaver’s belief that there is a “perversity in human nature” reveals the necessity of rhetoric.²¹

In *Ethics*, examining a comparison between rhetoric and Baruch “Spinoza’s ‘intellectual love of God’” underscores the benefits of joining dialectic and rhetoric together. Weaver justified each term of the philosopher’s phrase. “Intellectual” shows dialectic’s role guiding the terms under consideration. For “there is no honest rhetoric without a preceding dialectic.” The second term represents “something in addition to bare theoretical truth. That element in addition is a desire to bring truth into a kind of existence.”²² Spinoza classified three levels of love: sensual love, rational love, and divine love. Weaver’s comparison represents the last, which Steven Smith interpreted as “not just knowledge of facts but of natures. It describes a passionate relationship between the knower and the world.”²³ The comparison to love accounts for the determination required to create change or understand eternal meaning. Weaver characterized a “true conservative” as someone “who sees the universe as a paradigm of essences, of which the phenomenology of the world is a sort of continuing approximation.” In simpler language, “he

sees it as a set of definitions which are struggling to get themselves defined in the real world.”²⁴ “Love” describes the commitment to continue approximating and discerning those definitions. Finally, Weaver reflected on the religious term. In a form consistent with Spinoza’s opening of God towards nature instead of a Christian deity,²⁵ Weaver conditioned the use of God: “Echoes of theological warfare will cause many to desire a substitute for this, and we should not object. As long as we have in ultimate place the highest good man can intuit, the relationship is made perfect. We shall be content with ‘intellectual love of the Good.’”²⁶ Dialectic as the ideal’s source, love as the endurance for aspiring towards the ideal, and Good as an aspiration of the ideal come together to unpack the function of rhetoric.

The rhetor’s role described by Weaver is akin to constitutive rhetoric although not equivalent. A seminar hosted by Kenneth Burke in the early 1950s influenced Weaver.²⁷ Both describe the rhetor as compelling the audience into action through the acceptance of a subject position, narrative or worldview. In *Ethics*, Weaver explained that “rhetoric at its truest seeks to perfect men by showing them better versions of themselves.”²⁸ Hence, the rhetorician constitutes an audience through their realization of a lack in life. In other words, offering people a glimpse at the Good provokes the spectators to accept their own love. Examining “Language is Sermonic” thickens the connection between constitutive rhetoric and Weaver’s interpretation. The former describes the rhetor’s ability to draw an audience into being. Similarly, Weaver postulated that rhetoric’s “assertions have ontological claims.” Moreover, “[t]he very task of the rhetorician is to determine what feature of a question is most exigent and to use the power of language to make it appear so.” Finally, Weaver’s explanation of the speech’s title is evidence of the relationship: “We are all of us preachers in private or public capacities. We have no sooner uttered words than we have given impulse to other people to look at the world, or some small

part of it, in our way.”²⁹ Weaver strongly believed there are eternal and absolute truths, but human perception approximates them and requires a commitment to share with others. Rhetoric mediates the process for people, connecting dialectic’s insights to the materiality of human existence.

Both Weaver’s responsibility for rhetoric and understanding of man as a “creature of passion” explain why YAF’s manifesto needed to build enthusiasm instead of an “air-tight” structure of beliefs. In *Ethics*, Weaver elaborated on the process of change: “Rhetoric moves the soul with a movement which cannot finally be justified logically. It can only be valued analogically with reference to some supreme image.”³⁰ Richard Johannesen quoted Weaver to define the soul as “an integrative power binding the individual into an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual unity which is his highest self.” Yet, Weaver maintained his secularism by offering “psyche” or “personality” as alternatives.³¹ Evans adds worldview to this list. In reflecting on Weaver’s contributions, he found that a fundamental similarity between their projects was a desire to create a conservative “worldview,” which “determines everything else.”³² Since “[t]he soul is impulse, not simply cognition,” Weaver prioritizes arguments that activate an individual’s passion and help structure a worldview.³³ Rhetoric compels the audience by demonstrating the consubstantiality between the audience’s soul and the rhetor’s *telos*.

Examining Weaver’s call to action in *Ideas* develops how rhetoric changes the soul. “The first step must be a driving afresh of the wedge between the material and the transcendental,” which is required since “without a dualism we should never find purchase for the pull upward, and all idealistic designs might as well be scuttled.”³⁴ Given a person is a creature of passion, Weaver’s theory taps into the sensation and hope of creating change as the primary mover of beliefs. Two examples help substantiate this claim. Early in *Ideas*, he sequenced “sentiment ...

anterior to reason. We do not undertake to reason about anything until we have been drawn to it by an *affective interest*.”³⁵ In the speech “Rhetorical Strategies of the Conservative Cause” at the University of Wisconsin before ISI, Weaver connected the “pull” of conviction and social movements.

What is necessary to win any political victory? According to my reading of history, it is the hard pull of enthusiasm and determination. If these are lacking, the movement will not go on. If they are present, the movement has a dynamism that will certainly cause it to expand. Enthusiasm is something that people get more by contagion than by logical argument.³⁶

Richard Johannesen read this position as Weaver prioritizing “the example of dedicated advocates who spark interest and attraction among the uncommitted.”³⁷ Buckley’s characterization of the activists having an “appetite for power” nods toward YAF representing this “spark” for change. That YAF had a set of goals to work towards was critical because it created a *commitment* towards the Good; that every single goal worked in perfect harmony is questionable. The activists’ agreement that liberalism and communism needed replacements minimized conflicting desires for how society should operate.

Unification from Ultimate Definitions

While Buckley created a narrative for young conservatives to embody, the “Sharon Statement” proclaimed what activists should act towards. Recall from the first chapter that as late as 1959, Buckley felt conservatives lacked a manifesto for how to change society.³⁸ “The faithful,” according to Michael Lee, “needed a document that would clarify their beliefs, serve as a catchy constitution to unite cantankerous camps, and become a rallying cry for new converts.”³⁹ The previous chapter’s analysis of Buckley’s narrative post-Sharon positioned

YAF's statement of principles as a corrective to the absence. Turning to Evans' reflection on the document for the influential *New Guard* establishes a structure for YAF's vision.

The first section deals, rather elliptically, with the metaphysics of the case; the middle paragraph takes up the political and constitutional issues; and the final portion considers the role of government in questions of domestic economy and world affairs. The implicit argument is that a proper metaphysics will lead us to establish government on its right foundation, which in turn will make a regime of liberty possible.⁴⁰

Although not referenced by name, Evans' assessment of the document's structure implicitly shows a close association with Weaver. The manifesto defines the purpose of a person, the government, and government's role protecting market economics while preventing communism. Twelve statements encapsulated the framework of what young conservatives believed.

Although foreshadowed above, Weaver's argumentative strategies require more explanation for understanding the manifesto's statements. His lecture "Language is Sermonic" added a fourth, but *Ethics* outlined three strategies: argument from genus or definition, from similitude or comparison, and from circumstance or situation. The first includes "arguments based on the nature of the thing," while similitude often is employed by "poets or religionists" to convey the value of things given other eternal features.⁴¹ Even though people like Russell Kirk heralded Edmund Burke as a conservative icon, Weaver called Burke a liberal for arguing from circumstances or empirics. For instance, Burke's *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly* incorrectly advised an emerging French government after the French Revolution. Weaver characterized his position as "they should build on what they had instead of attempting to found *de novo*."⁴² This guidance represents a retreat from the ideal into the specifics of the situation.

The Republican Party dissatisfied Weaver for a similar reason. Upon concluding his discussion of Burke, he broadly ruminated on the political spectrum:

To look at the whole matter in an historical frame of reference, there has been so violent a swing towards the left that the Democrats today occupy the position once occupied by the socialists; and the Republicans, having to take their bearings from this, now occupy the center position, which is historically reserved for liberals. Their series of defeats comes from a failure to see that there is an intellectually defensible position on the right. They persist with the argument from circumstance, which never wins any major issues, and sometimes ... they are left without the circumstances.⁴³

When the Great Depression occurred in the middle of the 1930s, the status quo could not legitimize the party's platform. Weaver's call for a speculative approach based on ideals attempted to correct the absence of values that plagued the Republican Party since the crash.

Examining President Abraham Lincoln's speeches offers an alternative case for unpacking the argument from definition. By Weaver's assessment, Lincoln asked: "[w]as the negro [sic] a man or was he not? ... The answer was a clear 'Yes,' and he used it on many occasions during the [eighteen] fifties to impale his opponents."⁴⁴ Lincoln's argument from person, more specifically black person, oriented the defense for abolishing slavery. Rather than remain bogged down by prevailing or circumstantial legal codes, Lincoln asserted an "ideal" vision as the basis for his political commitments and worked continuously towards that goal. According to M. Stanton Evans, YAF's manifesto employed the same strategy to illustrate the changes conservatives hoped to make in society.

The document's length of a page with several definitions of critical institutions places a high burden on each word to establish meaning. The author and editors used shortcuts to quickly

convey conservatism's beliefs. Weaver's theorization of "ultimate terms" aids with examining how the "Sharon Statement" unified disparate groups. In the last chapter of *Ethics*, he distinguished "god terms" from "devil terms" and "charismatic terms." God term reference an "expression about which all other expressions are ranked as subordinate." Some of his examples include "progress," "fact," and "science."⁴⁵ Except for "America," Weaver's analysis is not relevant to the manifesto's terms since his chapter analyzed language from a society moving Left. Michael Lee's classification of libertarian and traditional god terms establishes a more germane basis for examining the "Sharon Statement's" language: "traditionalists' favored terms—'tradition,' 'hierarchy,' 'order,' and 'transcendence'—were not shared by speakers of the libertarian dialect, which repeated a different set of terms: 'freedom,' 'liberty,' 'reason,' 'individual,' and 'markets.'"⁴⁶ The issue concerns conflict between two competing ideologies; not simply a different set of words. Throughout each group's critical books and media, "[t]raditionalism and libertarianism repelled one another at every political turn. Libertarians urged freedom; traditionalists pushed for order."⁴⁷ This dialectic underlies the conflict between these two factions. For instance, Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind* exemplifies the traditionalist problem with freedom expressed by others like L. Brent Bozell Jr.⁴⁸ The deconstruction of structures like religion, economics, and family produced an "individual free from nearly everything, truly: but that freedom is a terrifying thing, the freedom of a baby deserted by his parents to do as he pleases."⁴⁹ Again, the issue is not with the word freedom, but the ethical system attached to its use. The free will to own private property is part of Kirk's canon of conservative beliefs, but the "only valuable kind of freedom" is the "freedom to be good and wise."⁵⁰ Placing the state in charge of these moral decisions concerned libertarians.⁵¹

Weaver's discussion of "freedom" generates a common basis for both libertarians and traditionalists to find room within YAF's ideology. In *Ethics*, Weaver classified freedom as a "charismatic term." This concept is difficult to define, but essentially refers to a word where the "content proceeds out of a popular will that they *shall* mean something. In effect, they are rhetorical by common consent, or by 'charisma.'"⁵² These terms compel action but do not have a referent in social or historical conditions. Freedom illustrates the concept since its use causes people to act even if acting results in more responsibility and, therefore, less freedom. For instance, politicians deploy the term to encourage public engagement in civic service, from paying more taxes to joining the military. Historically, urban design complicates the term's meaning since cities contain the literal, spatial freedom that an "American pioneer" might long for. Freedom is not "really free" if it results in restricted agency or the scope for action limits the possibilities to act. Nonetheless, charismatic terms are persuasive. Although infrequent, these terms "are perhaps the most efficacious terms of all."⁵³ Their power reflects Weaver's concern that they shield unethical intervention by the state. While this implies the use of different terms, turning to Frank Meyer's reflection on Weaver documents the connection between libertarians and traditionalists concerning freedom. If Meyer's theory is the foundation for fusionism, then "theoretically it is to Dick Weaver's first book that I [Meyer] owe much of the inspiration of what I have been able to develop." This expression is vague enough not to establish a compelling link, but Meyer continued: "his writing proves ... that respect for the tradition of metaphysical truth does not contradict a politics based on individual liberty—is not a 'fusionism' of disparate European traditions ... but is rather born out of the most fundamental American experience."⁵⁴ The attribution of fusionism to Weaver hints at an important philosophical lineage between

Weaver, Meyer, and Evans, which helps to explain why “freedom” provoked coalitions rather than division.

Examining an ISI conference organized by Evans in 1959 thickens the connection between Meyer, Weaver, and Evans. At the event, Weaver gave the speech “Conservatism and Libertarianism: The Common Ground,” which was published in both *The Individualist* and a posthumous edited collection. “Both want a settled code of freedom for the individual,” which prompted Weaver to affirm that “we can show that their agreement has a philosophical basis. Both of them believe that there is an order of things which will largely take care of itself if you leave it alone.”⁵⁵ By reining in the state’s power and letting people act per their free will, the pull of creating a more ethical society compelled the divided groups to act. Despite ultimate differences between the *telos* of urging freedom—an ordered society or pseudo-anarchy—the need to act because of the status quo’s dangers generated a powerful movement.

Historian Eric Foner postulated a contentious claim that “unlike the YAF manifesto, [Barry] Goldwater spoke the language of traditionalism as well,”⁵⁶ This chapter defends from closely reading the preamble and subsequent elements that the “Sharon Statement” closely resembles Goldwater’s *Conscience*. Alfred Regnery, child of the conservative publisher, asserted that “[i]n this manifesto, YAF echoed the same principles enunciated in *The Conscience of a Conservative*, albeit in fewer words.”⁵⁷ Given the connection between Goldwater’s nomination at the 1960 convention and YAF’s creation established in chapter two, examining his book is productive for how YAF constructed their vision. Both prioritized freedom, an anti-state position, defeat of communism, and society’s benefit from order. The manifesto offered an idealistic vision that reconciled a divided set of conservatives.

The preamble demands action and employs a traditional framing of the subsequent values. Although only one sentence and a guiding clause for the list of values, it contains three powerful rhetorical strategies. The document begins by declaring a “moral and political crisis,” which imparts upon youth the “responsibility” for changing America.⁵⁸ This language harkens back to a prevalent theme within traditionalism, certainly *Ideas*, concerning the broken nature of society. Connecting the theme with a need to act shows that the statement called for commitment to resistance, rather than a dialogue about conservative values. Second, the sentence appeals to traditionalism by framing the document as an affirmation of “eternal truths.” Finally, the constitutive hail—“We, as young conservatives, believe”—draws the audience into a framework based on conviction and determination instead of deliberation.⁵⁹ The manifesto’s preamble hailed the students together as a “we” united against a crisis facing society. After the preamble, the “Sharon Statement” articulates the purpose of a person.

Investigating statements one and two reveals a synthesis between traditional and libertarian sentiments. The manifesto determines that “foremost among the transcendent values is the individual’s use of his God-given free will.” Two pieces of the statement establish the traditional basis: “transcendent values” and the reference to God. Meanwhile, the freedom to act—a libertarian sentiment—is centralized as an *a priori* goal. Eric English’s reading of Goldwater’s *Conscience of a Conservative* found a similar understanding of conservatism. The first chapter appealed to “traditionalists in the movement by indicating that he was concerned not merely with a narrow, economic view of society, but also with deeper, spiritual commitments.”⁶⁰ God as the basis of the activists’ agency ensures a similar holistic view of an individual by seeking what is transcendental.

Weaver's characterization of two other prominent ideologies contextualizes why claiming free will had political power. Existentialism and Marxism concerned him because they threatened agency. Regarding the former, a *National Review* article explains that "since man is only an atom in this vast flux, free will is not only intellectually untenable but also practically undesirable."⁶¹ While Marxism worried him since it assumes from economic determinism that "one event follows another regularly and unavoidably as one billiard ball imparts its force to another."⁶² Conservatives needed a more stable foundation than either ideology offered the Left. In *Ideas*, Weaver defended ownership of property as a transcendental value. His criticism of radical ideologies meant that defending this value needed to provide an alternative, which prioritizes "freedom of the will, for private property is essential to any scheme which assumes that man has choice between better and worse."⁶³ Having the free will to control possessions is a synecdoche—a part representing a whole⁶⁴—for a person's ethical position within society. Asserting free will as a primary value prevents encroaching on the individuals' ability to choose a moral course of action. The "Sharon Statement's" commitment to free will does not deny the individual agency, but offers the possibility of virtue.

The second statement contains a libertarian value. Protecting "liberty" requires an understanding "that political freedom cannot long exist without economic freedom." This belief resembles Goldwater's sentiment that a person "cannot be economically free ... if he is enslaved politically; conversely, man's [sic] political freedom is illusory if he is dependent for his economic needs on the State."⁶⁵ Communism threatened people's ability to exercise their agency in the context of politics and as participants within an economic system. The manifesto emboldened people to act against this threat by proclaiming the importance and scope of their actions. In other words, engaging as consumers of the free market precedes the possibility for

agency in politics or civil society. This intertwining sets the stage for how the document defined the purpose of government in the next few statements and the ideal economic situation in the subsequent set.

Considering the functions of government reveals another basis for traditionalists within the document and separates the movement from moderate Republicans. Keep in mind that the very impetus for the state to have responsibility is controversial: “[L]ibertarians viewed the state as ‘the great oppressor’; traditionalists believed that ‘the state is ordained of God.’”⁶⁶ The three expectations echo Goldwater’s definition of the state: “the purposes of government are to protect these freedoms through the preservation of internal order, the provision of national defense, and the administration of justice.” Government creating order represents the traditional position, but the defense is in service of freedom. English considers Goldwater’s use of this synthesis as one of the strong bridges over the chasm before young conservatives. He wrote that *Conscience* “anticipated the efforts of Frank S. Meyer” since it defended “conservatism in a manner both ideologically coherent and broad enough to accommodate the various factions of the movement.”⁶⁷ A passage from the first chapter of *Conscience* represents this synthesis:

the Conservative looks upon politics as the art of achieving the maximum amount of *freedom* for individuals that is consistent with the maintenance of social *order*. The Conservative is the first to understand that the practice of freedom requires the establishment of order: it is impossible for one man to be free if another is able to deny him the exercise of his freedom.⁶⁸

Goldwater intertwines a traditional and libertarian god term to create a foundation for limiting the government and allowing people to exert agency. Government’s other two functions stem from a common belief that sets even some libertarians apart from a more anarchist tendency

within the extremes of the ideology. Ultimately, society requires defense against communism and justice for checking disputes between people, which allows for everyone “to follow their chosen pursuits with maximum freedom.”⁶⁹ The “Sharon Statement” echoes Goldwater’s position on the government, which both ensures order and protects freedom. The Constitution is critical to how society retains this balance. Both Kirk and Weaver legitimized this position given that the Constitution reflects timeless values within America’s government.⁷⁰ Defining the purpose of government affords shared symbolic space by substantially curtailing intervention without sacrificing the need for order to foster the conditions for freedom. The position on the state clarified the difference between moderate Republicans and conservatives since it stopped supporting policies like The New Deal. Nowhere in YAF’s beliefs did the system create equal opportunities.

Outlining the manifesto’s preference for an economic system continues the chain of definitions. Following the hierarchical nature of the document, the “Sharon Statement” asserts “[t]hat the market economy, allocating resources by the free play of supply and demand, is the single economic system compatible with the requirements of personal freedom and constitutional government, and that it is at the same time the most productive supplier of human needs.” This sentence quickly defines the nature of a market economy, implicates the system within the previous two values outlined by the document, and establishes the general benefit of capitalism. The next sentence states that welfare policies “reduce the moral and physical strength of the nation.” Hence, moderate Republicans complied with anti-conservative beliefs by not curtailing the expansion of government. Furthermore, Michael Lee considered “markets” to be a libertarian sentiment because traditionalists feared the consequences of materialism. And Russel Kirk’s book defended the traditional position against capitalism by lamenting that greed swamped rich

people's concern with helping their poor neighbor.⁷¹ The manifesto supports capitalism, which appeals to libertarians and divides the group from their enemy in the Republican Party.

The end of the "Sharon Statement" articulates a few calls to action based on the preceding values. First, individuals should fight communism since "history shows periods of freedom are rare, and can exist only when free citizens concertedly defend their rights against all enemies." Freedom becomes a god term to justify people's actions defending society. Since the "capacity to demand sacrifice is probably the surest indicator of the 'god term,'" ⁷² the sentiment highlights the important symbolic work done within the document concerning freedom. Rather than simply being the open exertion of will, freedom requires virtuous subjects willing to defend it. To borrow Lee's phrasing, "the pious, piquant 'freedom' compelled ennobled individuals to accept two somewhat conflicting public responsibilities: to oppose government virulently and to risk personal sacrifice by protecting the nation from its enemies."⁷³ The "Sharon Statement" positions YAF against the "menace" looming throughout the world.

The manifesto's later portion requires an examination of "devil terms." Like the strategy of identification via antithesis, these words condemn a common object, including nations, races, and classes. Whatever the object, "[p]erhaps the truth is that we need the enemy in order to define ourselves." At the time, "Communist is beyond any rival the devil term."⁷⁴ Molefi Kete Asante's concept of "objectification" is apt for describing the function of this rhetorical strategy for manifestos. It refers to "the agitator's use of language to direct the grievances of a particular group towards another collective body such as an institution, nation, political party, or race."⁷⁵ When considering the "Black Manifesto" by James Forman, Jerry Frye limited the effectiveness of this strategy to ideological gains instead of material changes. It prompted the audience—white churches—to reflect, but they paid very little of the five-hundred million dollars sought for

reparations.⁷⁶ Jeremy Engels' concept of "enemyship" also substantiates the advantages of a common foe. By tracing critical documents circa the Revolutionary War, this concept describes the powerful "bond of mutual antagonism for an enemy, resulting in a solidarity of fear, a community of spite, a kinship in arms, and a brotherhood of hatred."⁷⁷ Devil terms as the marker of who is the enemy, therefore, generate a powerful form of unity towards a goal.

Both *Conscience* and the manifesto center their focus on eliminating communism from politics. In the tenth statement, the manifesto prioritizes "the forces of international Communism" as "the greatest single threat to these liberties." The next statement exclaims "[t]hat the United States should stress victory over, rather than coexistence with this menace." Similarly, Goldwater's tenth chapter, "The Soviet Menace," articulated a path towards victory. The conservative politician famously or infamously said "[w]e must—as the first step toward saving American freedom—affirm ... that we would rather die than lose our freedom."⁷⁸ Given the enemy's superior size and America's obligation to defend other countries, his platform cherished a "long-overdue answer" from "the development of a *nuclear capacity* for limited wars."⁷⁹ While YAF's manifesto does not explicitly defend these extreme tactics, both documents proclaim the need for defeating communism and the group wholeheartedly supported Goldwater.

One cannot underestimate the power of resistance forged by preventing a constant object. In Lee Edwards's view, nearly "all conservatives of whatever philosophical disposition were bound together by the reality of a common deadly enemy: the Soviet Union."⁸⁰ Similarly, Nash characterized the attack on communism as the "cement" holding fusionism in "theoretical harmony."⁸¹ While conservatives may not agree on the destination of their resistance (moral

order versus free will), preventing communism's destabilization of the world bound them together.

The god and devil terms used throughout the "Sharon Statement" united libertarians, traditionalists, and anti-communists on a seemingly absolute ground with a flexible and focused vision for change. Although the manifesto pales in length compared to the Students for a Democratic Society's *Port Huron Statement*, YAF wedged enormous meaning into the document. The values outlined, to borrow Edward Schiappa's language concerning definitions, "fix' or 'freeze' language in order to function as a sort of roadmap demarcating what words mean. These roadmaps depict the definer's reality; they function as arguments about the way language and the world 'really' are."⁸² Defining the movement's strategic goals moving forward functioned to diminish differences between the groups and strengthen bonds to act. In 2013, Tom Huston, a former chairperson of YAF and a lawyer for the Nixon administration summarized the synthesis.

By opting for a mission statement with broad objectives and general principles in the early years, we were largely able to avoid the sectarianism that is the Achilles heel of a political organization with an ideological orientation. Each young conservative was free to emphasize that particular point in the statement that he deemed most important, and when disputes arose, as they often did, compromise was possible by recourse to the accommodating language of the statement.⁸³

The document could be both a basis for traditionalists to lament the loss of order within society and a foundation for libertarians to cherish the possibility for freedom. Although the tension between these two positions persists, Goldwater, Meyer, and other fusionists showed the possibility for them to harmonize. Beyond even just peacefully existing together, Goldwater's

speech accepting the Republican presidential nomination posed consequences when only upholding one: “freedom—balanced so that order, lacking liberty, will not become a slave of the prison cell; balanced so that liberty, lacking order, will not become the license of the mob and the jungle.”⁸⁴ These values formed an acceptable platform for young conservatives to work towards an ideal. Society could be ordered and individuals free as long as liberalism and communism were sufficiently restrained.

Cracks in the Eternal Veneer

Whereas traditional conservatives perceive their epistemic practice as constructing meaning from something essential, definitions should be conceived as contingent based on several factors. Edward Schiappa’s explanation of a definition counters Weaver’s theorization. The “truth or appropriateness of a particular definition,” Schiappa contends, “is predicated upon the truth or appropriateness of a constellation of historically and socially contingent beliefs, values, and concepts.”⁸⁵ This position denies that there are absolute or natural statements of value. The term “conservative” demonstrates the contingency of language since it “does not have an essence, only a history, and it is only by looking across time that we can see how the only constant in conservatism is its evolution.”⁸⁶ While conservatives might refute this argument, even just a cursory examination of work by Michael Lee or George Nash attests to the dynamic set of values that generate the meaning of conservative.

Examining Brian R. McGee’s, “The Argument from Definition Revisited: Race and Definition in the Progressive Era,” substantiates the contingency of definitions by contrasting two books. McGee analyzed *The Sins of the Father* by Thomas Dixon Jr. to criticize Weaver. A series of definitions excluded biracial people by extending the essence of black people compared to white people. Similar to the one drop rule that classified a person as black based on one eighth

African ancestry, the novel's hierarchy depends on the closeness of biracial people to the controlling images of "savage/child/animal" within white society.⁸⁷ The perceived eternal essences from different races legitimizes a hierarchy with white over black.

In contrast, James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* describes a contingent construction of identity. As the title suggests, Johnson narrates the experience of a mixed person who passes from being considered black to white. Events like joining local African associations shift white townfolks' perception to considering the narrative to be black. The story portrays that "racial identity is an experience that one *has*, rather than something that one *is*."⁸⁸ Consequently, McGee defended a constructivist position rather than a realist or idealist one advocated by those like Weaver. "[D]efinitions ... are not inscribed by some deity on a wall or stone tablet," McGee argued but "are the product of a community's prior experience with a term or the result of contemporary negotiations over a term's use."⁸⁹ Complicating the ontology behind definitions contextualizes splinters within the 1960s concerning the "Sharon Statement's" values.

John Andrew and Gregory Schneider consistently note that conservatives acted to avoid the label of being too extreme.⁹⁰ Buckley, among other conservative leaders, stigmatized Robert Welch in 1962 and the full John Birch Society (JBS) three years later. The October 19, 1965 edition of *National Review* featured a five-part series distancing the magazine's platform for conservatism from JBS: 1- general comments by the "editors," 2- three columns written by Buckley in August discussing errors in Welch's newsletter, 3- an article by Meyer condemning JBS, 4- an article by Professor James Burnham on strategic consequences of JBS for defeating communism, and 5- questions and answers concerning the condemnation. Considering Eisenhower a card-carrying communist prompted Welch's exclusion as "a man with a very

special set of views that reality rejects.”⁹¹ The organization’s wider endorsement that communism infected 60-80% of society stretched the limits of truth beyond acceptable margins. Meyer’s column described how “false analysis and conspiratorial mania of the John Birch Society has moved beyond diversion and waste of the devotion of its members to the mobilization of that devotion in ways directly anti-conservative and dangerous to the interests of the United States.”⁹² The conservative leaders threw both Welch and the Birch Society out of their group because of their enormous exaggerations of truth.

While Buckley portrayed the conflict favorably by claiming that it did not tarnish conservatives’ beliefs, the event shows a limit concerning which tactics conservatives employed to defeat communism. Blatant lying was not on the list. Andrew’s examination of letters exchanged between Buckley and William Rusher revealed that “[t]he *National Review* crowd ... was particularly concerned that the Birch Society might appear to be the mouthpiece for all conservatives.”⁹³ Risking this association jeopardized conservatives’ ability to attract moderate Republicans. Nash postulated that Welch damaged the image of “‘responsible conservatism’ far more than Communism.”⁹⁴ Charles Stewart, Craig Smith, and Robert Denton argue that “fanatical elements ... who make demands unacceptable to ... the movement” jeopardize the broader struggle since they “splinter the movement and drain persuasive resources from the cause.”⁹⁵ Although dissociating one person is relatively insignificant, YAF drew a line concerning its defense of anti-communism with the whole society on the outside to preserve a respectable image of conservatism.

Since “YAF ... sought to welcome virtually all conservatives, regardless of their other affiliations,” the decision risked breaking apart their fusionism.⁹⁶ Several sources discuss the dangers this decision posed, but the movement’s size or power experienced little damage. As

Susan Currie Sivek argued, the conservative movement “was still righteously anti-Communist, without its egregiously radical elements.”⁹⁷ Regardless, the event tested the values of the “Sharon Statement” and proved the contingency of conservative’s commitment to reject communism.

Another set of events during the late 1960s challenges whether YAF’s values included libertarians. In June 1969, the libertarian caucus demanded that YAF balance its leadership during the convention. The group also put forth a number of objections with YAF’s platform. Involvement with the war in Vietnam concerned libertarians since the state was overreaching its power.⁹⁸ The “Sharon Statement” prioritized defeating communism and defending the country as critical functions of the state, but the longevity of the war raised questions about the value of these politics. Additionally, domestic reliance on the state provoked enough agreement that Shawn Steel and David Walter proposed changing the manifesto to say “That international communism *and domestic statism* are the greatest threats to these liberties.”⁹⁹ The counterculture started to influence the libertarians and they held pro-legalization of cannabis demonstrations, which traditionalists viewed as “self-indulgent and destructive.”¹⁰⁰ After sweeping the leadership positions on day one of the convention, traditionalists rejected motions to withdraw from Vietnam, legalize cannabis, and remove the draft. Upon denial of the last policy, libertarian Lee Houffman set his draft card on fire and “the convention turned into bedlam.” Once the chaos settled, a group of about 300 libertarians decided in hotel rooms that evening to leave YAF and form the Society for Individual Liberty.¹⁰¹ This conflict reveals that the “Sharon Statement’s” definition of state involvement was not as inclusive as the group perceived.

The splintering of libertarians caused some short term problems, but did not change the course of YAF. One conflict played out in California. After the convention, Ronald Reagan

wrote Buckley about the upheaval the state chapter experienced. For instance, leaders like Harvey Hukari, a libertarian at Stanford, resigned from their positions. Reagan's letter to the new National Chairman details the concern over libertarians remaining in the party.

Young Americans for Freedom was formed because enough young people wanted to preserve the principles of our free society. From recent reports, I have been concerned that a faction within YAF would seek to thwart those goals under the guise of 'libertarianism.' ... [I]t is obvious that there are those who would try to destroy YAF as an effective and powerful force among our young people, united against the onslaught of liberalism on our campuses today. As Honorary Chairman of YAF, I would sincerely appreciate your comments on these recent events and the measures being taken to keep YAF single in purpose, dedicated to those goals we hold in common.¹⁰²

Reagan's concern reads much like Nash's framing of the position against JBS. YAF sought to cultivate a controlled image that did not err on the side of extremism. Schneider argued that the "radical libertarian influence had been crushed by the beginning of 1970." The conflict revealed that members in YAF lacked maturity and slightly hurt the ability to coordinate against the Left, but also freed up time to focus their agenda.¹⁰³ YAF stood poised at the edge of a new decade "as it had started some nine years earlier, the national conservative youth organization."¹⁰⁴

While YAF's manifesto provided a short-term, coherent vision, conflicts demonstrate that those values were contingent based on the situation. Yet, neither of these conflicts threw the conservative platform off balance. At an event in 2010, Thorburn moderated a panel remembering the 50th anniversary of the Sharon conference with Lee Edwards, former U.S. Representative Jim Kolbe, and Alfred Regnery. While the event itself demonstrates the continual relevance of remembering the document, Thorburn concluded the panel by framing the "Sharon

Statement” as “the most decisive and inclusive statement of conservative principles.”¹⁰⁵ The resurgence of the “Sharon Statement” as part of the Young America’s Foundation’s revival of YAF demonstrates the centrality of these values to what became the conservative platform: a strong belief in the individual’s capacity for action, paired with a limited state based on the constitution and market economics. Substitute “terrorism” for “communism” and a constellation of similar beliefs forms.

Conclusion

With Richard Weaver’s theory as a backdrop, examining the “Sharon Statement” united the conservative movement through two rhetorical strategies. Definitions of the individual, government, and foreign policy declare a set of eternal values for conservatives: pro free will, limited domestic government, and active defense against communism. Ultimate terms bridge the chasm between libertarians and traditionalists to build a commonality even if they might be at odds like order and freedom. Yet, turning to Lee’s observations reveals that a focus on doctrinal consistency is less important than the agency generated from the coalition:

[T]raditionalists never needed libertarians to achieve doctrinal purity or philosophical completeness. They needed them so that they did not sound like theocrats. They needed them to be politically successful with a diverse electorate. Libertarians did not need traditionalists to fill in missing premises about markets. They needed them to sound savvier than Scrooge. Meyer’s was the language that healed wounds from intraconservative conflicts, the language that convinced frustrated factions to give their partner one more chance.¹⁰⁶

Although paradoxes persisted in Meyer’s philosophy like YAF’s manifesto, moving forward to save society from crisis outranked internal disputes. To borrow Evans’ language while

describing Weaver's publications, the manifesto created "a place to do battle, ground on which to carry the fight forward, clearing a space to be able to accomplish" their goals.¹⁰⁷

Splinters within the decade tested these values. Libertarians leaving and conservatives kicking JBS out show the anti-state and anti-communism values conflicted with other beliefs either within YAF or the group splintering. The nucleus of conservative beliefs persisted. The vision of a better society compelled the group to coexist together long enough to establish a mutual basis. The enthusiasm that sparked a pursuit of the Good had already taken hold for the young conservatives. One member at the Sharon Conference reflected in a survey for Thorburn "the ease with which all 90 of us reviewed a draft of our Sharon Statement, and approved it simple and conservative prescriptions for U.S. policy."¹⁰⁸ The document did not need to reference conservative texts, justify the beliefs in regards to specific policies, or even explicitly address a possible conflict because the vision pulled—to borrow Weaver's verb—the audience towards a better tomorrow.

Although the doctrine of conservatism developed on a balance between order and liberty, the term "freedom" had enormous power for the conservative movement. Rhetorical scholar J. Louis Campbell characterized freedom as "an ideological incantation conjuring up the American Spirit ... which functions epistemically and shapes our identity by determining how we view the world."¹⁰⁹ Rather than a stale, authoritarian or un-limiting philosophy, claiming "freedom" rejuvenated conservatism. Rhetorical examinations of his speech supporting Goldwater in 1964, acceptance address in 1980, and speech at the Brandenburg Gate in 1987 document that Ronald Reagan benefited from reliance on "freedom" as a strategy.¹¹⁰ In 1999, historian Eric Foner argued that "Reagan used the word more often than any president before or since." His speeches "completed the process by which freedom, having been progressively abandoned by liberals and

the left, became fully identified with conservative goals and values.”¹¹¹ YAF’s name and manifesto carved out space for the defense of freedom within conservatism.

Endnotes

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² Rebecca E. Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 21; Wayne Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes: Young Americans for Freedom and the Creation of the Conservative Movement* (Ottawa: Jameson Books, 2010), 27.

³ Leland M. Griffin, “A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements,” in *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke, 1924-1966*, ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 462-463.

⁴ Craig Allen Smith and Kathy B. Smith, “A Rhetorical Perspective on the 1997 British Party Manifestos,” *Political Communication* 17, no. 4 (2000): 469.

⁵ Charles J. Stewart, Craig A. Smith, and Robert E. Denton, Jr., *Persuasion and Social Movements*, 6th ed., (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 2012), 75, 99-100.

⁶ John A. Andrew III, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 142.

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⁸ Gerald Thomas Goodnight, *Rhetoric and Culture: A Critical Edition of Richard M. Weaver's Unpublished Works* (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1978), 430-433.

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¹⁰ Frank S. Meyer, "Richard M. Weaver: An Appreciation," *Modern Age* 14, no. 3 (1970): 243.

Nash also claims *Ideas* is a groundbreaking text in conservative thought from its number of reviews and being in print since publication, George H. Nash, "The Influence of *Ideas Have Consequences* on the Conservative Intellectual Movement in America," in *Steps Toward Restoration: The Consequences of Richard Weaver's Ideas*, ed. Ted J. Smith III (Wilmington, Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1998), 81-84.

¹¹ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 13; Gregory L. Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 9.

¹² Richard M. Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 3.

¹³ Michael D. Resnik, "Against Logical Realism," *History and Philosophy of Logic* 20, no. 3-4 (1999): 181.

¹⁴ Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 3, 13; see also George H. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976), 33.

¹⁵ Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 121-122.

¹⁶ Willmoore Kendall, "How to Read Richard Weaver: Philosopher of 'We the (Virtuous) People,'" *The Individualist* 2, (Sept. 1965): 79-80.

¹⁷ Goodnight, *Rhetoric and Culture*, 574.

¹⁸ Richard M. Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Battleboro; Echo Point Books & Media, 1953), 21.

¹⁹ Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 22.

²⁰ Richard M. Weaver, "Language is Sermonic," in *Contemporary Theories of Rhetoric: Selected Readings* ed. Richard L. Johannesen (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 167.

²¹ Goodnight, *Rhetoric and Culture*, 35.

²² Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 24-25.

²³ Steven B Smith, *Spinoza's Book of Life: Freedom and Redemption in the Ethics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003): 161-162, 169, 172.

²⁴ Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 112.

²⁵ Spinoza's *Ethics* is the source of Weaver's comparison because it represents knowledge of the eternal. Yet, "[t]he God that emerges in the opening pages of the *Ethics* is not the God of Scripture, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who created man in his image, but of an infinitely extended substance with neither beginning nor end and who is not distant from the world but immanent within it." Smith, *Spinoza's Book of Life*, 31; Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics: With the Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect and Selected Letters*, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1992), 217.

²⁶ Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 25.

²⁷ Weaver asserts that "[a]ll rhetoric is a rhetoric of motives, as Kenneth Burke saw fit to indicate in the title of his book." Weaver, "Language is Sermonic," 176; see also Richard L. Johannesen, "Richard M. Weaver's uses of Kenneth Burke," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 52, no. 3 (1987): 312-330.

²⁸ Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 24-25.

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³² M. Stanton Evans, “The Legacy of Richard Weaver,” in *Steps Toward Restoration: The Consequences of Richard Weaver's Ideas*, ed. Ted J. Smith III (Wilmington, Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1998),

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³⁴ Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 130.

³⁵ Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 19 [emphasis added]

³⁶ Richard M. Weaver, “Rhetorical Strategies of the Conservative Cause,” in *Rhetoric and Culture*, 599.

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⁴⁰ Evans, “Reflections of the Sharon Statement,” 9-10.

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- ⁴³ Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 82.
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- ⁴⁵ Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 212-218.
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- ⁴⁸ L. Brent Bozell Jr., “Freedom or Virtue?,” *National Review*, September 11, 1962, 181-187.
- ⁴⁹ Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind: From Burke to Eliot*, 2nd ed., (Washington: Gateway Editions, 2016), 484.
- ⁵⁰ Kirk, *The Conservative Mind*, 9, 310.
- ⁵¹ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 87-88.
- ⁵² Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 227 [original emphasis].
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- ⁵⁴ Meyer, “Richard M. Weaver,” 244.
- ⁵⁵ Richard M. Weaver, *Life Without Prejudice and Other Essays* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1965), 163.
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⁵⁹ Using “we” binds groups together. See Janet Lyons, *Manifestos: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 23-24.

⁶⁰ Eric E. English, *Constituting Conservatism: The Goldwater/Paul Analog* (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2013), 101.

⁶¹ Richard M. Weaver, “Education for What?” *National Review*, November 24, 1956, 20.

⁶² Richard M. Weaver, “On Setting the Clock Right,” *National Review*, October 12, 1957, 321.

⁶³ Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 146.

⁶⁴ Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1945), 503, 507-511.

⁶⁵ Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservative* (Shepherdsville: Victor Publishing Company, 1960), 12.

⁶⁶ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 73.

⁶⁷ English, *Constituting Conservatism*, 119; Lee Edwards described Goldwater’s book as a “remarkable fusion of the three major strains of conservatism,” Lee Edwards “The Conservative Consensus: Frank Meyer, Barry Goldwater, and the Politics of Fusionism,” *The Heritage Foundation’s First Principles Series* 8, (2007): 4.

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⁶⁹ Goldwater, *The Conscience*, 17.

⁷⁰ Kirk, *The Conservative Mind*, 220; Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, 48.

⁷¹ Kirk, *The Conservative Mind*, 228-229; Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 69-73.

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⁷³ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 79.

⁷⁴ Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, 222-223.

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⁷⁶ Frye, “The ‘Black Manifesto,’” 73.

⁷⁷ Jeremy Engels, *Enemyship: Democracy and Counter-Revolution in the Early Republic* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010), 13, 17-21.

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⁸⁰ Lee Edwards “The Conservative Consensus,” 4.

⁸¹ Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement*, 165.

⁸² Edward Schiappa, “Arguing about Definitions,” *Argumentation* 7, no. 4 (1993): 404.

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- ⁹⁰ Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 48-49; Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 102-104.
- ⁹¹ William F. Buckley Jr., “Introduction: Did you Ever See a Dream Walking?” in *Did you Ever See a Dream Walking? American Conservative Thought in the Twentieth Century*, ed. William F. Buckley Jr. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1970), xxviii.
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- ⁹³ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 102; Thorburn also suggested not kicking JBS out would allow “the media to lump all conservatives under the label of far-right extremists” Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 89.
- ⁹⁴ Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement*, 275.
- ⁹⁵ Stewart, Smith, and Denton, *Persuasion and Social Movements*, 100.
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- ⁹⁸ Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 129-132.
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- ¹⁰⁰ Klatch, *A Generation Divided* 145; Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 253.
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¹⁰² Ronald Reagan letter to David A. Keene, October 8, 1969 quoted in Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 273.

¹⁰³ Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism*, 139-141.

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¹⁰⁵ Wayne Thorburn, "50th Anniversary of the Sharon Statement," (presentation, Washington D.C. September 11, 2010).

¹⁰⁶ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 134.

¹⁰⁷ Evans, "The Legacy of Richard," 299.

¹⁰⁸ Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes*, 29.

¹⁰⁹ J. Louis Campbell III, "Freedom and the Rhetoric of Grammar: A Spelunkian Exploration," *Central States Speech Journal* 36, no. 3 (1985): 178.

¹¹⁰ Martin J. Medhurst, "Postponing the Social Agenda: Reagan's Strategy and Tactics," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 48, no. 3 (1984): 266-267; Henry Z. Scheele, "Ronald Reagan's 1980 Acceptance Address: A Focus on American Values," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 48, no. 1 (1984): 57; Robert C. Rowland and John M. Jones, "Reagan at the Brandenburg Gate: Moral Clarity Tempered by Pragmatism," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 9, no. 1 (2006): 31-32.

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Chapter Four: Conclusion

Out of a series of events during the 1950s and early 1960, the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) appeared as the first national, conservative social movement. Before action could occur, leaders needed to develop an agreeable ideology for uniting intra-conservative conflicts, deal with external perceptions of conservatism, and form an organization that could house the movement's work. Historian Eric Foner explained the difficulties the Right faced after 1945:

From the vantage point of the late twentieth century, it is difficult to recall conservatism's beleaguered condition at the end of World War II. Associated in many minds with the crimes of European fascism and the economic policies that had produced the Great Depression, and identified with conspiracy theories, anti-Semitism, and an elitist belief in social hierarchy, conservatism appeared to lack the intellectual resources to deal effectively with the problems of the postwar world.¹

The combined weight of these forces meant the balance of political power skewed towards the Left. In *The Ethics of Rhetoric*, Richard Weaver described how the Republican Party reflected this shift by becoming more moderate.² These broad political changes reverberated down to the university. Rebecca Klatch's interviews found many recruits at Sharon felt "ostracized" and alienated on campuses, which decreased their aspiration towards politics.³ As examined at the beginning of chapter two, William F. Buckley's article "The Decline of Partisanship" reported in 1959 that students lacked the means for political engagement and conviction towards change.⁴ The second concern mirrors Weaver's belief that relativism jeopardized the ability to make moral decisions. Society's drift Left seemed inevitable to conservatives since liberals captured higher education and installed a curriculum without principles. Yet, a force on the Right started

in 1955. Buckley's editorial positioned *National Review* as standing "athwart history, yelling Stop, at a time when no one is inclined to do so, or to have much patience with those who so urge it."⁵ Five years later, YAF became, what John A. Andrew III called, *National Review's* "protégés."⁶

Brian Ott's "rhetorics of social resistance" guided this thesis towards understanding the strategies forming YAF's "publicity" about their origin and values. Analyzing this concept means unpacking rhetors' strategies for establishing an image and linking the movement or its messages to other people.⁷ Buckley's "The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" framed the movement for *National Review's* conservative audience. His narrative justified YAF's activism as a product of multiple, intersecting historical forces, brought the audience up to date on developments from Sharon, and energized readers towards changing the future. The "Sharon Statement" constructed a set of values that framed what YAF stood for as an organization. The manifesto imparted upon youth a responsibility to act, illustrated an ideal relationship among society's interconnecting parts, and employed ultimate terms, especially freedom, to develop an ideological foundation, which mitigated conflict between libertarians, traditionalists, and anti-communists. By printing the texts side-by-side, an identity for young conservatives emerged with a vision and motivation for changing America. This chapter has four goals: synthesize analysis from chapters two and three to explain how YAF's publicity developed the capacity for change, justify contributions to the field of rhetoric, discuss limitations with the thesis, and provide directions for future research.

National Review was a cornerstone in the foundation of the Right's struggle to define a conservative identity during the late 1950s. Buckley's periodical provided space for editors to refine their strategies and, ultimately, develop "fusionism," while curious readers found

intellectual sustenance. Articles within the magazine became, what Steven Buechler described as, “symbolic laboratories in which reflexive actors pose questions of meaning, purpose, identity, and change.”⁸ Frank S. Meyer’s fusionism is one experiment from *National Review* that profoundly changed the Right’s trajectory forward. Through columns called “Principles and Heresies,” seminars, and publication of *In Defense of Freedom: A Conservative Credo*, Frank S. Meyer put forth a justification for “fusionism” that “defended the freedom inherent in America’s founding principles, which were the basis of American social order ... and individual liberties.”⁹ This approach sufficed for an ideology due to clearly marked enemies, which threatened the foundation of society. On top of Meyer’s contribution, Jefferey Hart claimed *National Review* “taught conservatives *how to think*. Here, debate within the magazine has been the necessary condition; argument meeting with counterargument has been a refining fire.”¹⁰ Michael Lee’s *Creating Conservatism: Postwar Words that Made an American Movement* noted a similar theme about the canon. Common terms from fusionism subdued the feud between libertarians and traditionalists, but the synthesis did not resolve all disagreements.¹¹ Lingering disputes, ultimately, fortified the activists against critique by training them how to argue. *National Review* fostered intra-conservative coalitions and shaped how people engaged society.

Ott’s conception of “consequentiality” guided analyzing publicity by orienting this thesis towards unpacking how each text frames the movement to construct the capacity or ability for change.¹² Communication Studies scholar Susan Currie Sivek’s investigation into *National Review*’s first issue developed the connection between media and resistance: “political movements can form and be aided in that formation by carefully crafted partisan media products. *National Review*’s example illuminates a powerful way that media can, if thoughtfully constructed to do so, encourage political engagement and mobilization by the public.”¹³ Digging

into Kenneth Burke's theories supports how publicity, as a form of rhetoric, changes people through constructing identification or points of commonality. These strategies should offer what Ott called a "unified 'public face.'"¹⁴ When this identity does not exist, it must be created anew or modified from a previous one. People called themselves conservatives before YAF, but intra-group conflict and external pressures minimized the unity and reach of this identity. Chapters two and three offered separate critical perspectives for explaining how YAF negotiated these obstacles, but Richard Johannesen's scholarship theoretically brings them together since "Burke and Weaver" agree that "words, rather than simply representing things, actually *constitute* or *create* the reality or 'thingness' of things."¹⁵ The literal creation of YAF necessitated a position for activists to embody, which imparted the requirement and opportunity to change how people perceived themselves as "young conservatives." YAF became consequential by imparting to youth a conservative "logic," which Maurice Charland conceptualized as "a way of understanding the world."¹⁶ Chapter two's analysis of Buckley's narrative and chapter three's examination of YAF's vision unpacked the early strategies used to transmit this logic to the audiences of *National Review*

"The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" positioned activists within a historical trajectory by naturalizing their resistance, explaining present developments, and representing their commitment to change society. In six short paragraphs, Buckley told a story loaded with allusions that linked the present to the past and future. Charland described three effects of constitutive rhetoric, which amount to the creation of a unified, transhistorical subject with a *telos* towards freedom. A rhetor draws a group into being by imparting a sense of self that makes change a byproduct of accepting the new narrative.¹⁷ For instance, when Buckley described activists having an "appetite for power," he naturalized a desire for political

engagement. Given “young, intelligent, articulate and determined” people formed the movement with a commitment to “translate ... principles into political action,” the group achieved unification with a destination they hoped to reach based on the “Sharon Statement.” The students desired to engage politics rather than remain trapped in theory. Yet, YAF unified by doing more than attack the Left. Buckley fused traditionalists and libertarians with the claim that “Russell Kirk and Frank Meyer” adopted conservative to name “their distinct but complementary, even symbiotic positions.”¹⁸ If one accepted the identity of young conservative, then one was bound by the narrative to enact change. Buckley did not simply say YAF started two weekends ago at Great Elm, but strategically told a story to hook readers by allowing them to see YAF’s creation as an energetic and inevitable reaction to problems with liberalism.

The connection between Buckley’s article and the “Sharon Statement” extends beyond simply being printed side-by-side for two reasons. First, both texts express two similar symbolic strategies based on Burke’s conception of identification from holding analogous values and antithesis. Both chapter two and three present fusionist themes given Buckley stated that Kirk and Meyer agreed and the “Sharon Statement” integrated a combination of traditionalist and libertarian god terms. While the meaning of conservative is contingent, “fusionism” created a strategic tool for moving forward that had the connotations of being eternal or transcendent. Representing the status quo as a “moral and political crisis” heightened the motivation to compromise internally. YAF’s symbolic unification was powered by what chapter two described as identification via antithesis and chapter three referenced with devil terms and enemyship. YAF benefited from having liberalism and communism as enemies. The former gave them access to domestic problems, while the latter imparted a greater sense of fear given global collapse. Neither Buckley’s narrative nor the “Sharon Statement” explicitly targeted both

adversaries. Thus, *National Review*'s connection of Buckley's "The Ivory Tower: Young Americans for Freedom" with YAF's manifesto invigorated conservatives by giving them enemies. The world needed change.

Second, the "Sharon Statement" provided part of Buckley's reasoning for why YAF emerged unhampered by previous strife. Along with joining together local chapters across the country, YAF's manifesto offered a "tough-as-nails statement of political and economic convictions which Richard Nixon couldn't read aloud without fainting."¹⁹ YAF activists easily differentiated themselves from the Left by critiquing liberalism, but the "Sharon Statement" also distinguished YAF from moderate Republicans. Similar to Barry Goldwater's *Conscience of a Conservative*, the manifesto maintained three functions for government: maintaining order, national defense, and justice. The "Sharon Statement's" discussion of market economics clarified what this list excluded. Government should not "take from one man to bestow on another" since "it diminishes the incentive of the first, the integrity of the second, and the moral autonomy of both." Because Dwight D. Eisenhower maintained the New Deal, he complied with governmental expansion beyond acceptable limits. "To Meyer and most of the Buckley circle," George Nash maintained that "liberalism itself was the target, [and] the New Deal was a revolution to be fought relentlessly."²⁰ Consequently, the "Sharon Statement" articulated an alternative arrangement for government, which allowed YAF to attack moderate Republicans and liberals. Examining Buckley's article or the manifesto without looking at both either risks losing the support the "Sharon Statement" provides for Buckley's argument or missing the tumultuous set of changes that made YAF possible.

The "Sharon Statement's" definitions for what young conservatives believe constructed agency. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell interjected into disputes about an individuals' relationship to

ideology and structures by creating a middle path between free, autonomous action and complete determination. People both enable and are enabled by structures. As the guiding document of principles for the movement, the “Sharon Statement” expresses a framework for how “articulators ... link past and present, and find means to express those strata that connect the psyche, society, and world.”²¹ With repeated instances of Weaver’s argument from genius, this manifesto instructed young conservatives to believe in their own ability to exert free will, the purposes of government, role of market economics, and dangers of communism. Andrew found activists developed “their own voice in the Sharon Statement.”²² Michael Lee explained how the manifesto’s vision spread throughout conservatism:

It was not only a promising model but an enduring one as well. After its codification at Buckley’s estate, burgeoning groups like the California Republican Assembly adopted Sharon Statement principles as their own.... In the speeches of conservative politicians, the books of conservative authors, and its continued reprinting by organizations like the Heritage Foundation and Young America’s Foundation, the document has been used as its authors hoped: as a concise declaration of conservative principles worthy of fealty.²³

Even if the meaning of language is contingent, the practice of drawing from supposedly absolute beliefs meant the document could transcend isolated contexts. The “Sharon Statement’s” ultimate terms helped to strengthen the commitment towards action. After defending free will from private property as an eternal, absolute value, Weaver postulated that “Upon this rock of metaphysical right we shall build our house.”²⁴ Examining the uptake of “freedom” into the conservative movement describes one “boulder” that endured from YAF throughout Ronald Reagan’s rise and beyond.

Claiming the term “freedom” exemplifies how the synthesis between libertarians and traditionalists dispelled elitist stereotypes. Within both Burke’s and Weaver’s theorization, an ultimate term can rework or build upon the language surrounding it. Similarly, David Zarefsky described a “frame shift” when discussing different approaches to definitions. This concept refers to when “a subject that usually is defined from a certain perspective” encounters “a different frame of reference,” which causes “people [to] see the thing ‘in a different light’ and their attitudes about it therefore change.” Sexual harassment exemplifies this idea for Zarefsky since understanding harassment as an exchange of power rather than a “private matter” created new meanings. People took sexual harassment more seriously as its surrounding linguistic context shifted to provide a new light.²⁵ Additionally, Barry Brummett’s discussion of James Gaius Watt failing to achieve a frame shift for his environmental proposals reveals the importance of how a rhetor justifies their rhetoric. Brummett suggested “government’s interest is to name the new situations confronted by Haves and Nots so as to *reorder* those frames of acceptance within an ultimate frame that once more produces social harmony.”²⁶ In the context of YAF, Buckley and the “Sharon Statement” needed to create harmony among disparate groups of conservatives and using “freedom” became a powerful tool in the pursuit of reordering conservatism’s meaning.

Eric English’s “Constituting Conservatism: The Goldwater/Paul Analog” substantiates the symbolic consequences of claiming “freedom.” English suggested that this addition produced one of conservatism’s “greatest rhetorical strengths.” Attempting to overcome the chasm between libertarians and traditions “led the movement’s key rhetors to adopt a discourse of American identity, rooted in a very particular concept of freedom, which would implicitly endorse a conservative worldview while not explicitly delimiting the concept of freedom.”²⁷ In

other words, both traditionalists and libertarians bought into freedom because its meaning has, what Leah Ceccarelli termed, “strategic ambiguity.” Like a successful “frame shift,” Ceccarelli found this strategy “is likely to . . . result in two or more otherwise conflicting groups of readers converging in praise of a text.”²⁸ Even though libertarians might define freedom contradictory to traditionalists, part of YAF’s defense offered commonality. The mutual desire to curtail the New Deal informed traditionalists’ and libertarians’ value of freedom. The libertarian splinter over cannabis legalization and Vietnam illustrate an interest in social freedom, while Weaver’s and Kirk’s defenses of private property conveyed a different meaning. James K. Galbriath, a public policy professor, argued that Ronald Reagan convinced people of Reaganomics by defending the capacity for economic freedom, which amounted to opening the ability for “shopping” and “spending.”²⁹ Linking conservative to freedom created a frame shift that dismissed the perception of elitism by tapping into a deep reservoir concerning national identity and economic mobility. Allan J. Lichtman contends that conservatives “wage total war against liberals” by controlling what it means to be American and developing commitment to free enterprise.³⁰

Returning to Charland’s discussion of how constitutive rhetoric changes subjectivity affords the final link between Buckley’s narrative, the “Sharon Statement’s” vision, and YAF as a material and political force. Transformation occurs through disseminating new narratives or aesthetic appeals. The former works by “providing stories that through the identificatory principle shift and rework the subject and its motives.” Buckley’s narrative and the “Sharon Statement” conferred upon youth a logic that challenged apathy and the loss of principles. Alternatively, Charland referenced music, dance, or architecture as cultural artifacts with implications on subjectivity. He maintained that aesthetic appeals engage at the level “of what [Raymond] Williams terms the ‘structure of feeling’ and [Lawrence] Grossberg describes as the

‘affective apparatus.’”³¹ Alongside the heuristics of “publicity” and “consequentiality,” Ott followed the recent “affective turn” within the humanities by offering “affectivity” or how rhetoric enables or enacts resistance through feelings and emotions.³² Returning to the discussion of Weaver’s rhetoric and idealism from chapter three justifies why these two paths of transformation intersect. Weaver believed a movement’s backbone was enthusiasm, which explains his preference for “contagion” rather than “logical argumentation.”³³ Idealism motivates people because it compels action by showing them better images or stories. Charles J. Stewart, Craig A. Smith, and Robert E. Denton, Jr. similarly noted that constitutive rhetoric must “touch the nerve, ... animate the spirit, ... stir the embers, and ... ignite the fumes of an identity.”³⁴ Underneath the language and rhetoric used within both primary documents rests a strong sense of inclusion that manifests as excitement and enthusiasm.

Two examples, along with those referenced periodically through previous chapters, support how activists felt. One of the student founders, David Franke, conveyed that “[t]he greatest thrill for most of the participants was to meet William F. Buckley Jr. in the flesh. I don’t think it is possible for a young conservative today to understand the overwhelming presence of WFB Jr. in 1960.”³⁵ Similarly, Scott Smith recounted to Klatch that attending Sharon conjured “a new spirit ... a kind of gathering of the clan, like being a black in North Dakota and going to Chicago.... We were so glad to discover that there were other unicorns in the valley.”³⁶ The collective identity that ensued from the conference correlated with a strong ambition for making a difference within the world.

The identification created by these two primary documents cannot completely capture the feelings formed at the conference, but Buckley’s article represents a bridge from Sharon to the audience of *National Review* and back to YAF. His narrative constructed identification by

repeatedly suggesting the previous ten years created a *kairotic* moment for YAF's emergence. While he can attest to forming YAF as the host, printing the "Sharon Statement" provided a relic for readers to grasp. Referencing the document showed that YAF stood against moderate Republicans. Even though Lee Edwards worried about putting "conservative" into YAF's name because of backlash, this movement was definitively conservative to a reader of *National Review*.³⁷ Yet, it did not provide a stringent set of requirements. The ambiguity and contingency of their values allows for elasticity when considering what exactly being conservative entailed. YAF pushed forward to act justified by perceiving their values as naturally resulting in a better world upon defeating communism and liberalism.

Implications

This thesis contributes in three ways to the study of rhetoric and resistance based on understanding the identity of young conservative that emerged from YAF's publicity.

First, finding artifacts from the Right broadens the field, which is valuable for considering how power is distributed throughout society. With Donald Trump's election, the progression of conservatism from the 1950s until now remains a vital question. For instance, Craig R. Smith parsed through conservatism's meaning from the United States' origin to Trump's election. Despite spending a section on "Ronald Reagan's transformation of conservatism from 1961 to 1966 culminating in his election as governor of California," Smith did not reference YAF.³⁸ While there are meaningful and significant studies of conservatism that omit YAF from analysis, understanding Reagan's push for governor without the social movement poses difficulties given that he joined YAF as an advisory board member in 1962. Furthermore, Lisa McGirr's *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* tracked conservatism's rise in California. Reagan benefited when the California Republican Assembly

adopted principles like the “Sharon Statement” in the mid-1960s.³⁹ This thesis contributes to rhetoric by opening the door for considering how YAF changed the Right’s identity and the United States’ political structure.

Second, analysis of YAF extended Brian Ott’s “rhetorics of social resistance,” which provided multiple heuristics for thinking about dissent.⁴⁰ Movements must frame themselves to survive as planned and collective rebellions against the status quo. Both artifacts and corresponding theoretical foundations push Ott’s original conception by unpacking the power of narratives and an ideal vision expressed through ultimate terms and arguments from genus. Symbolically, these two artifacts developed strategies that build a common relationship via shared principles and enemies. Situating publicity in regard to Kenneth Burke’s theory of identification supports why some framings compel people and others lack interest.

Finally, the investigation of freedom within YAF’s discourse helps trace how the Right created a more appealing message. James Jasinski and Jennifer R. Mercieca urged scholars to understand “how texts invite listeners and readers to modify the meaning of a culture’s key terms,” which this thesis accomplished through discussing the symbolic implications of conservatives capturing freedom.⁴¹ The end of chapter three and previous section of this chapter demonstrate that traditionalists, libertarians, and anti-communists found some meaning of freedom to be agreeable. Whether social and/or economic, this term taps into something close to being an American. George W. Bush’s rhetoric exemplifies this thematic relationship. John M. Murphy reported that Bush adopted a definition, where the perpetrators of attacks on 9/11 became “enemies of freedom.” Like Reagan’s positioning of freedom against communism at his Brandenburg Gate address, Bush developed a Manichean worldview with freedom as the axis

between good and bad.⁴² This thesis helps develop how the Right threw the Left out of freedom's driver seat by coopting the term during the early 1960s.

Limitations

While this project begins the work of establishing a rhetorical understanding of YAF, three limitations merit consideration.

First, the availability of archives, texts, and perspectives about YAF limits any scholarship concerning the period. Unlike Students for a Democratic Society, YAF lacks a "central depository or archives containing documents, memoranda, correspondence, and publications from the organization's history."⁴³ Chapter one documents a growing set of books and journal research that examine YAF, which establishes a sufficient basis for this thesis. Yet, in combination with limitation three, the difficulty of doing thorough archival research is a noteworthy obstacle for studying these activists and a constraint on the arguments presented in this thesis.

Second, both texts stem from a leader-oriented perspective towards studying movements, which scholarship on the Left suggests this focus can obscure acts of resistance.⁴⁴ However, the conservative movement's leadership structure complicates this limitation since they operated with a defined hierarchy.⁴⁵ YAF had regular elections, a well-defined executive board, and even local chapters with clear leaders. The section on future directions outlines opportunities to shift towards YAF's everyday or grass-roots forms of activism, but starting with that analysis at this point underscores a relatively small number of people's impact to even form a conservative social movement. This limitation calls for additional research rather than rejection of understanding YAF's publicity.

Third, historian Hyrum Lewis implicates the epistemic perspective for this project from his criticism of the “triumphant narrative.” This critique questions scholars like Lee Edwards or Richard Viguerie for how they discuss conservatism’s success through a linear relationship.⁴⁶ This thesis made two decisions that counter, but not correct the limitation. First, discussing “constitutive rhetoric” shifts from a simplistic cause-effect model to a complex understanding of how symbolic relationships configure identity through narratives and other strategies of rhetoric. Second, chapter three’s analysis of YAF’s splinters supports Lewis’ conclusion that scholars “should concentrate ... on the changes that the meaning of conservatism itself has undergone.”⁴⁷ However, the limitation is a valid concern for scholarship on YAF. Setting aside Thorburn because of his direct membership in YAF, Andrew’s and Schneider’s scholarship rely on people like Lee Edwards as authoritative. This limitation raises a need to question who and how people remember YAF.

Future Directions

The research comprising this thesis uncovered numerous possibilities for future scholars to learn from YAF given their timespan left nearly sixty years of activities. At least two pathways show a great deal of promise for continuing research: an analysis of *how* activists protested and what memories of YAF are passed along to different eras of conservatives.

First, YAF employed a diverse set of forms for activism. Using the term “forms” does not simply refer to different tactics like sit-ins or marching, but the medium these resistant acts are expressed through. Darrel Enck-Wanzer’s work on The Young Lords Organization (YLO) inspired this suggestion. Through disseminating print, protest in the street, and visuals, Enck-Wanzer argued YLO exhibited “intersectional rhetoric.” This concept refers to an approach that “places multiple rhetorical forms (in this case, speech, embodiment, and image) on relatively

equal footing, is not leader-centered, and draws from a number of diverse discursive political or rhetorical conventions.”⁴⁸ Applying it directly to YAF fails since the group was very leader centered, but it generates meaningful questions about the relationship of content, form, and agency. In *Revolt on the Campus*, M. Stanton Evans illustrated YAF’s “flurry of activity.”⁴⁹ Within six months of creation, the movement employed tactics that operated through text, embodiment, and visibility. Evans discussed a special bi-weekly publication by a New York chapter of YAF and the creation of *New Guard*. In terms of YAF’s embodied resistance, he recalled the 1960 Republican Convention, a protest in support of the House Un-American Action Committee’s (HUAC) investigation of communism, the Manhattan Center Rally with Barry Goldwater in March of 1961, creating the Student Committee for Congressional Autonomy, and protesting the National Student Association. Finally, YAF appealed to visual forms by showing *Operation Abolition*, propaganda created by HUAC with an anti-communist message. YAF even screened the documentary in Greenwich Village, a prominent queer neighborhood in New York City.⁵⁰ This snapshot of less than a year represents a sliver of decades worth of activities that could expand our knowledge of how YAF acted and what actions produce the capacity for resistance.

A second possible track pertains to elders and leaders in YAF, who composed and continue creating extensive memories of the organization’s work. As Lewis’ critique of the “triumphant narrative” attests, these texts circulate without anyone questioning their epistemology. Rhetoricians can help navigate these connections by studying the transmission of knowledge across generations. Michael Lee’s scholarship began this process. He claimed “acts of rhetorical remembrance” created an expectation for conservatives to know the books behind their creation and ideology.⁵¹ Sara C. VanderHaagen’s theorization of the “agential spiral” offers

a critical perspective for future research and supports why memory constructs agency. This concept describes how meaning is created and transferred through a cyclical process, where a critic attends to “not only the individuals in the present who argue about and revise memories but also those in the past who have created the fodder for memories and those in the future who will use public memories as a resource for action.”⁵² Publication of Evans’ *Revolt on the Campus* and Lee and Ann Edwards’ *You can make the difference* reveal memory work proximate to YAF’s creation. The Young America’s Foundation’s revival of YAF and *New Guard* offer a contemporary opportunity. For instance, young conservatives can request from the Foundation a copy of *The Conservative Guide to Campus Activism* (3rd ed.). After a dose of strategies and tactics for movements, Congressperson Dana Rohrabacher concluded the book’s chapters with his experience participating in YAF.⁵³ Digging further into conservative archives and literature could reveal other opportunities for understanding how leaders preserve YAF as an illustration for successful activism.

Endnotes

¹ Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 308.

² Richard M. Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Battleboro; Echo Point Books & Media, 1953), 82.

³ Rebecca E. Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 21.

⁴ William F. Buckley, Jr., “The Decline of Partisanship,” *National Review*, February 14, 1959, 524.

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- ⁵ William F. Buckley, Jr., “National Review: Credenda and Statement of Principles,” in *Conservatism in America since 1930: A Reader*, ed. Gregory L. Schneider (New York City: University of New York Press, 2003), 201.
- ⁶ John A. Andrew III, *The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 103.
- ⁷ Brian L. Ott, “Review Essay: Assessing Rhetorics of Social Resistance,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 343.
- ⁸ Steven M. Buechler, *Social Movements in Advanced Capitalism: The Political Economy and Cultural Construction of Social Activism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 211.
- ⁹ Gregory L. Schneider, *The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 59.
- ¹⁰ Jefferey Hart, *The Making of the American Conservative Mind* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2005), 370 [original emphasis].
- ¹¹ Michael J. Lee, *Creating Conservatism: Postwar Words that Made an American Movement* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), 194-195.
- ¹² Ott, “Review Essay,” 343-344.
- ¹³ Susan Currie Sivek, “Editing Conservatism: How *National Review* Magazine Framed and Mobilized a Political Movement,” *Mass Communication and Society* 11, no. 3 (2008): 272.
- ¹⁴ Ott, “Review Essay,” 344.
- ¹⁵ Richard L. Johannesen, “Richard M. Weaver’s uses of Kenneth Burke,” *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 52, no. 3 (1987): 315 [emphasis added].
- ¹⁶ Maurice Charland, “Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the Peuple Québécois,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, no.2 (1987): 143.

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- ¹⁷ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 138-141.
- ¹⁸ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.
- ¹⁹ Buckley, "The Ivory Tower," 172.
- ²⁰ George H. Nash, *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976), 142.
- ²¹ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Agency: Promiscuous and Protean," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 2, no. 1 (2005): 5.
- ²² Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 6-7.
- ²³ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 109.
- ²⁴ Richard M. Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 130.
- ²⁵ David Zarefsky, "Definitions," in *Argument in a Time of Change: Definitions, Frameworks, and Critiques*, ed. James F. Klumpp (Annandale: National Communication Association, 1997), 8.
- ²⁶ Barry Brummett, "Burkean Transcendence and Ultimate Terms in Rhetoric by and about James Watt," *Central States Speech Journal* 33, no. 4 (1982): 550 [emphasis added].
- ²⁷ English, *Constituting Conservatism: The Goldwater/Paul Analog* (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2013), 33.
- ²⁸ Leah Ceccarelli, "Polysemy: Multiple Meanings in Rhetorical Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84, no. 4 (1998): 404.
- ²⁹ James K. Galbraith, *The Predator State: How Conservatives Abandoned the Free Market and Why Liberals Should Too* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 15-17.

³⁰ Allan J. Lichtman, *White Protestant Nation: The Rise of the American Conservative Movement* (New York: Grove Press, 2008), 6-7.

³¹ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric," 148.

³² Ott, "Review Essay," 345; Patricia Ticineto Clough, "Introduction," in *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*, eds. Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean Halley (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 1-3; see also David R. Gruber, "The (Digital) Majesty of All Under Heaven: Affective Constitutive Rhetoric at the Hong Kong Museum of History's Multi-Media Exhibition of Terracotta Warriors," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (2014): 163-164; Caitlin Bruce, "The Balaclava as Affect Generator: Free Pussy Riot Protests and Transnational Iconicity," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 12, no. 1 (2015): 49-50; Zizi Papacharissi, *Affective Publics: Sentiment, Technology, and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 32-33.

³³ Richard M. Weaver, "Rhetorical Strategies of the Conservative Cause," in *Rhetoric and Culture*, 599.

³⁴ Charles J. Stewart, Craig A. Smith, and Robert E. Denton, Jr., *Persuasion and Social Movements*, 6th Ed., (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 2012), 177-178.

³⁵ David Franke, "Rise and Fall of the Young Right" *The American Conservative*, September 16, 2010, <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/rise-and-fall-of-the-young-right/>, para. 8.

³⁶ Scott Smith personal interview quoted in Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 21.

³⁷ Lee Edwards and Anne Edwards, *You Can Make the Difference* (New Rochelle: Arlington House, 1968), 286.

³⁸ Craig R. Smith, "Ronald Reagan's Rhetorical Re-invention of Conservatism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 103, no. 1-2 (2017): 33.

³⁹ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 129-131.

⁴⁰ Ott, "Review Essay," 344;

⁴¹ James Jasinski and Jennifer R. Mercieca, "Analyzing Constitutive Rhetorics The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions and the 'Principles of '98,'" in *The Handbook of Rhetoric and Public Address*, eds. Shawn J. Parry-Giles and J. Michael Hogan (West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 333.

⁴² John M. Murphy, "'Our Mission and Our Moment': George W. Bush and September 11th," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6, no. 4 (2003): 614-615; Robert C. Rowland and John M. Jones, "Reagan at the Brandenburg Gate: Moral Clarity Tempered by Pragmatism," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 9, no. 1 (2006): 31-32.

⁴³ Wayne Thorburn, *A Generation Awakes: Young Americans for Freedom and the Creation of the Conservative Movement* (Ottawa: Jameson Books, 2010), 545.

⁴⁴ Darrel Enck-Wanzer, "Trashing the System: Social Movement, Intersectional Rhetoric, and Collective Agency in the Young Lords Organization's Garbage Offensive," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 2 (2006): 179-180; Ott, "Assessing Rhetorics," 334-335.

⁴⁵ Andrew, *The Other Side of the Sixties*, 100.

⁴⁶ Hyrum Lewis, "Historians and the Myth of American Conservatism," *The Journal of the Historical Society* 22, no. 1 (2012): 29.

⁴⁷ Lewis, "Historians and the Myth," 38.

⁴⁸ Enck-Wanzer, "Trashing the System," 177.

⁴⁹ Evans, *Revolt on the Campus*, 121.

⁵⁰ Evans, *Revolt on the Campus*, 108-124.

⁵¹ Lee, *Creating Conservatism*, 13.

⁵² Sara C. VanderHaagen, "The 'Agential Spiral': Reading Public Memory through Paul Ricoeur," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 46, no. 2 (2013): 185-186, 188.

⁵³ Dana Rohrabacher, "The Rewards of Activism," in *The Conservative Guide to Campus Activism* (3rd ed.), eds. Patrick X. Coyle and Ron Robinson (Herndon: Young America's Foundation, 2012), 123-150.

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Zarefsky, David. "Definitions." In *Argument in a Time of Change: Definitions, Frameworks, and Critiques*, ed. James F. Klumpp, 1-11. Annandale: National Communication Association, 1997.

Curriculum Vitae

Tyler John Snelling
Email: snellt1@unlv.nevada.edu

Education

Master of Arts in Communication Studies May 2017

University of Nevada – Las Vegas, emphasis in Rhetoric

Thesis: Launching Conservative Resistance: A Rhetorical Criticism of the Young Americans for Freedom

Advisor: David Henry

Committee members: Sara VanderHaagen (Communication Studies), Donovan Conley (Communication Studies), and Robert Futrell (Sociology)

Completed Graduate College Research Certificate

Bachelor of Arts May 2015

Concordia College – Moorhead, MN

Majors: Philosophy & Sociology

Minors: Women's and Gender Studies & Classical Studies

Advisor: Susan O'Shaughnessy

Graduated *magna cum laude*

High School Degree May 2011

Millard South High School – Omaha, NE

Graduated with Honors

Research

Publications

Brooks, Sara Beth, and Tyler Snelling. "Jimmy's Resistance: Or How to Kill the Joy of Cruel Optimism in *South Park*." *MediAbility*. Ed. Joe Leeson-Schatz and Amber George. Jefferson: McFarland Press, anticipated Fall 2017.

Presentations, Individual Papers

Snelling, Tyler, "An ELF in the Political Woods: Examining the Guilt of Eco-Terrorists." UNLV's 19th Annual Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum, Las Vegas, NV. 8 April 2017.

*Awarded 2nd place in the Social Science (Platform B) session

Snelling, Tyler, "The Power of Identity: Expanding Critical Interpersonal Communication." *Interpersonal Communication Division of the 2016 National Communication Association Convention*, Philadelphia, PA. 11 November 2016.

- Snelling, Tyler, “Generously Drifting through Cruel Optimism: An Affective Examination of Injustice and Ethics.” *Rhetorical and Communication Theory Division of the 2016 National Communication Association Convention*, Philadelphia, PA. 10 November 2016.
- Snelling, Tyler, “Reform Toolbox: Examining Recent Publications on Changing the University.” *Far West Popular Culture Association*, Palace Station Hotel, Las Vegas, NV. 27 February 2016.
- Snelling, Tyler, “A Fat Epistemic Inequality: Navigating Credibility Deficits in a Large World.” *2015 National Conference on Undergraduate Research*, Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA. 17 April 2016.
- Snelling, Tyler, “Comedy in ‘Nam: A Burkean Rhetorical Analysis.” *2015 Celebration of Student Scholarship*, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. 10 April 2015.
- Snelling, Tyler, “A Fat Epistemic Inequality: Navigating Credibility Deficits in a Large World.” *2015 Celebration of Student Scholarship*, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. 10 April 2015.
- Snelling, Tyler, “A Qualitative, Sociological Examination of Urban Debate Leagues.” *2014 Celebration of Student Scholarship*, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. 4 April 2014.

Presentations, Panels

- Panel Participant for Josh Miller’s “Debate’s Civic Callings.” *Cross Examination Debate Association Division of the 2016 National Communication Association Convention*, Philadelphia, PA. 13 November 2016.
- Aragon, Corwin, Tyler Snelling, and Nathan Clements, “Shaping the Philosophy of Race.” *Centennial Scholars Lecture*, Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. 17 October 2014.

Student Researcher

- Intern with Concordia College Women’s Studies Department Sept. 2014 – May 2015
 Responsibilities included attending weekly meetings, helping with community events, and planning monthly on-campus events (film showings, speakers, poster conference, and workshops)
- Centennial Scholars Research Grant May - August 2014
 Under Dr. Corwin Aragon’s guidance, I completed weekly assignments, including: reading selected texts, researching further, preparing abstracts, and giving short presentations to complete an anthology for the Philosophy of Race.

Teaching

Instructor of Record, UNLV

Summer 2016, Term 2 COM 101: Public Speaking (18 Students)

Graduate Teaching Assistant for COM: 101 Public Speaking, UNLV

For this online-offline hybrid course, the sections I taught met approximately half of the semester. My responsibilities included planning lab sessions, giving a few lectures, grading speeches, and maintaining the course gradebook.

Course Director: William Belk

Fall 2016 Section 1020 (26 Students)

Fall 2016 Section 1025 (26 Students)

Spring 2017 Section 1027 (22 Students)

Spring 2017 Section 1032 (25 Students)

Guest Lecture

“Examining Cultural Fallacies,” 21 March 2017, COM: 101 Public Speaking with William Belk and Darrian Carroll.

“Case Study in Style: Martin Luther King Jr.’s ‘I Have a Dream,’” 17 November 2016, COM: 101 Public Speaking with Tom Gliniecki.

“Media and Persuasion: Extended Elaboration Likelihood Model,” 2 November 2016, COM: 404/604 Principles of Persuasion with Emma Frances Bloomfield.

Camp Instructor

Rebel Debate Institute (high school students)

July 2015 and 2016

Arizona Debate Institute (college students)

August 2013

Service

To University

UNLV Graduate College Ambassador

Fall 2016 – Spring 2017

Sanford I. Berman Debate Forum, Assistant Coach

Fall 2015 – Spring 2017

Responsibilities included scheduling 8-9 weekly coaching sessions with individual students, managing research assignments, and traveling to 4-5 tournaments each semester

Concordia College Student Ambassador

Fall 2012 – Spring 2015

Philosophy Club President

Fall 2012 – Spring 2015

Planned bi-weekly meetings and created events for community discussion.

Concordia’s Speech and Debate Leadership Council

Spring 2012 – Spring 2015

President

Spring 2014 – Spring 2015

To Discipline

Reviewer for 2017 National Communication Association Convention

Spring 2017

Political Communication Division

Feminist and Women's Studies Division

Reviewer for 2016 National Communication Association Convention

Spring 2016

Disability Issues Caucus

Political Communication Division

Served on Dr. Corwin Aragon’s Philosophy evaluation committee	Spring 2015
Served on Jason Regnier’s Communication Studies evaluation committee	Fall 2014

To Community

Judge for UNLV’s “Presidential Debate High School Essay Contest”	October 2016
TedX UNLV Speaker Coach	Spring 2016
Co-led the workshop “‘Man Up’: The Link between Masculinity and Violence in Our Communities”	Spring 2015
Co-organized the conference “Gender Matters Expo”	Spring 2015
Co-organized Take Back the Night in Fargo, ND.	Fall 2014
Volunteer for the Nebraska Debate Institute	July 2012 & 2013
Organized the workshop “Debating Genocide”	Fall 2012

Awards and Scholarships

UNLV Communication Studies Graduate Research Award	Spring 2017
Phi Kappa Phi member	Spring 2017
National Communication Association Caucus Student Travel Grant	Fall 2016
Greenspun College Dean’s Associates Travel Funding Award	Fall 2016
Department of Communication Travel Funding Award	Fall 2016
Lamda Pi Eta Honor Society member	Fall 2016
Department of Communication Travel Funding Award	Spring 2015
UNLV Graduate Access Scholarship	Fall 2015 – Spring 2016
UNLV Graduate Teaching Scholarship	Fall 2015 – Spring 2017
Magna Cum Laude National Debate Scholar	Spring 2015
Heidi Leider Award for Forensics service	Spring 2015
Ruth Thorsrud Legacy Scholarship	Fall 2013 – Spring 2014
Pi Kappa Delta Honor Society member	Fall 2013
Concordia College Dean’s List	Fall 2012 – Spring 2015
Concordia Excellence Scholarship	Fall 2011 – Spring 2015

Course Work

University of Nevada- Las Vegas

- Famous Speeches — Dr. VanderHaagen
- Presidential Debates — Dr. Henry and Dr. Thompson
- Thesis x2 — Dr. Henry
- Globalization — Dr. Parker
- Independent Study — Dr. Henry
- Rhetoric of Dissent — Dr. Henry
- Rhetorical-Critical Research Methods — Dr. VanderHaagen

Empirical Research Methods — Dr. Emmers-Sommer
Survey of Communication Studies — Dr. McManus
Theories of Communication — Dr. Conley
College Teaching in Communication — Mr. Belk