

2003

The dual paths of a political movement: convergence and divergence in contemporary conservative public address

Lyman Davis Hunt

Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations



Part of the [Speech and Rhetorical Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hunt, Lyman Davis, "The dual paths of a political movement: convergence and divergence in contemporary conservative public address" (2003). *LSU Doctoral Dissertations*. 434.

https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_dissertations/434

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at LSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in LSU Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized graduate school editor of LSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact gradetd@lsu.edu.

THE DUAL PATHS OF A POLITICAL MOVEMENT: CONVERGENCE AND
DIVERGENCE IN CONTEMPORARY CONSERVATIVE PUBLIC ADDRESS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Communication Studies

by

Lyman Davis Hunt

B.A., The Pennsylvania State University, 1989

M.A., Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1994
December, 2003

For Emily and Virginia

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I wish to thank Andy King for his wonderful direction, guidance, and friendship. I also would be remiss without thanking the members of my examination committee, Michael Bowman, Jim Honeycutt, Hugh Buckingham, and Mary Sirridge for their patience and helpful commentary. Their input will surely help this work grow into a more mature statement. Finally, I wish to thank Mary Frances HopKins, Harold Mixon, Owen Peterson, and Ken Zagacki, former Speech Communication faculty members who have moved on yet still exert an influence over my academic direction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS iii

ABSTRACT v

CHAPTER

 1 CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE 1

 2 HOMOLOGY IN THE TRANSCENDENCE OF CONSERVATIVE RHETORIC .. 28

 3 A HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CONSERVATISM 45

 4 THE DUAL PATHS OF CONSERVATISM 97

 5 THE IMPERATIVE FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION 157

REFERENCES 183

VITA 190

ABSTRACT

This study examines the rhetorical choices made in public addresses by members of the contemporary conservative movement in the United States during the 1990s. The contemporary conservative movement in this instance is defined as a post World War II phenomenon. Specifically, it is argued that the popular notion of a unified conservative ascendance in America is but an illusion. Rather, two distinct tribes of conservatives, the economic and the traditional conservative, participate in a rhetorical homology that serves to hide significant ontological differences beneath the dialectical *God* terms freedom and order. Additionally, the *charismatic* nature of the term freedom authorizes allegiance to several abstract policy positions for differing reasons. It is only when the abstract is offered as concrete policy proposal that each wing of the movement is confronted with the gap between their core beliefs and those held by their ally. Because of the transcendence achieved in their discourse, conservatives are able to continually win election while experiencing policy defeat. Several implications for the future of conservatism in particular and political movements in general are asserted in the conclusion.

CHAPTER 1

CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE IN POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Our vision of the good society and of the American political tradition at its best has been pre-empted by considerations of policy or the ephemera of “management style.” In this calculus the conservative cause becomes synonymous with tepid compromise rationalized in public by servants of the President who have no history or personal principle in common with the tradition we once defended.

M.E. Bradford

Since at least 1980, the American conservative movement has spoken of revolution – an ascendance of their fundamental beliefs that stood ready to usurp the liberal order that dominated mid-twentieth century America. Still, 20 years into the revolution the movement’s ascendance is marked more by stops and starts, fits of victory followed by defeat or worse yet, in the mind of the hardcore leaders, a coopted inertia.

But how could this be? Did we not watch three consecutive republican landslides in presidential elections during the 1980s? Did we not see a shocking shift in the balance of legislative power in November of 1994? Did we not in 2000 observe yet a new Republican president assume the reigns of power advocating a largely doctrinaire conservative ideology? While all are true, there still is an air of fecklessness surrounding the movement – a record of inachievement in policy implementation.

The present study seeks answers to the apparent failure of the Republican/conservative revolution. The “revolution” has produced strategic alliances and electoral victories but has not brought about the profound changes envisaged by its founding members. My thesis is that a unified conservative movement has not emerged and thus the movement cannot speak with a single unified voice and cannot express a clear conservative agenda. This dissertation will

describe the two major voices within the movement and the ways in which their conflicting “rhetorics” have shaped the fortunes of conservatism in the present era.

I will use a combination of sociological and rhetorical theory to examine the way in which a divided political movement struggles to manage identity and effectiveness. Through the synthesis of these methods, a picture will emerge of a movement, not homogeneous, but rather encompassing two of five distinct ways of life posited by Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky (1990) – ways of life that conflict with one another while simultaneously needing one another. Using the strategy of rhetorical homology, these “wings” of the movement have appeared outwardly homogeneous and have presented a unified political front despite fundamental rhetorical differences.

Following Simons’ (1970) ideas about persuasion and social movements, scholars began to understand how common symbols may mask conflict during the creation of social movements. This study will detail the pragmatic rhetorical choices made by movement conservatives that serve to publically sublimate their very real differences, thus creating the illusion of a monolithic conservative movement. Kenneth Burke reminds us that on a certain level of abstraction disagreements can be transcended and identification achieved. I argue that these practices forged election victories that were followed by policy implementation failures when the two major conservative factions descended to concrete details.

This study is not concerned with the relative worth of conservative ideals. Nor does it bother itself with the quality of the strategies employed by movement conservatives when faced with implementing conservative policy. Simply, I intend to demonstrate the existence of two of

the four ways of life within the movement and how language serves to both hide and highlight, but mainly hide, the differences among them.

Toward that end, I will in this opening chapter first, review contemporary literature that posits a unified conservative movement, Second, I will examine the cultural theory that posits five ways of life. Third, I will survey rhetorical and public address theory surrounding the use of language and why words matter. Fourth, I will outline the progression of the study and why rhetorical homology advances the study of public address in political movements. Finally, I will provide preliminary grounding for this work.

A Conservative Movement?

That the presence of a unified conservative movement has been largely accepted can be quickly gleaned from a look at works rooted both within and without the movement and in academic as well as lay circles. From the early post-war days of the contemporary movement writers and commentators, with scant exception, have spoken axiomatically of “the conservative movement” as a monolith that sustains but small disagreements within its ranks.

For example, academic writers who count themselves as conservatives regularly speak of the movement in catholic terms. Russell Kirk’s (1953) *The Conservative Mind* assumes a coherent intellectual grounding for conservative thought and argues its centrality for contemporary times. Kirk includes those with more economic leanings in the conservative fold due to their devotion to private property rights, a key conservative belief. The influence of Kirk’s work is immeasurable and has often been cited as *the* core work in the conservative canon¹.

¹See Charen (1996), Edwards (1995, 1999), Ericson (1994), Guroian (1994), Hardisty (1999), Hodgson (1996), Nash (1976, 1994), Niemeyer (1994), Regnery (1996), Rusher (1975, 1993, 1998), and Schoenwald (2001) for a partial survey in the academic press of this thought.

Following Kirk's lead, the notion of conservatism as a movement gradually took root through the 1960s and into the 1970s. In 1975, conservative writer William Rusher argued for the ascendance of the conservative movement in *The New Majority Party*, a work that argued among other things that conservatism was so pure that it might need to evolve into a separate party. Rusher sounds a similar note in his evaluation of conservatism in *The Rise of the Right* (1993). Rusher is far from alone in building the notion of one conservatism. George Nash (1976) makes much the same synthesis in *The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America Since 1945*. Much of the credit for this sort of thinking in the mid/late 20th Century can be attributed to William F. Buckley's development of "fusionism," a method for focusing conservative energy on issues that were less contentious within the movement².

After the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, several works began to appear that spoke of conservatism as a unitary movement. A convergence of factors contributed to this trend. First, retrospective works on the Ronald Reagan presidency hit the market. Characteristic of these is Melvin Bradford's *The Reactionary Imperative: Essays Literary and Political* in which Bradford evaluates the successes and failures of the conservative movement all the while assuming it to be a unitary program.

Secondly, The congressional takeover of 1994 by the Republican Party generated works such as *Newt Gingrich: Speaker to America* (Warner and Berely 1995) and *Rock the House: History of the New American Revolution* (Norquist 1995), which hail Gingrich as the unifying figure that led conservatism to the promised land. 1994 additionally brought the death of Russell Kirk and a host of articles appeared in conservative intellectual journals touting Kirk as the

² Fusionism will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three where a detailed history of the contemporary conservative movement is developed.

founder of the movement. The Fall 1994 issue of *The Intercollegiate Review* devotes an entire issue to a discussion of Kirk's legacy.

Finally, by the late 1990s, the fifty year mark in the internally accepted movement time line brought histories of conservatism such as Lee Edward's (1999) *The Conservative Revolution: The Movement That Remade America*. Edwards is a respected movement insider and the very title of his book reflects a view of conservatism as a singular force. William F. Buckley (1999) hailed the work as "a history of our movement that gets it right."

On the other side of the coin, academic works that attempt objectivity or are clearly antagonistic to conservatism have been a feature of the landscape in recent years. Only in the past two decades has the conservative movement seemed of much interest to those outside of the movement. Prior to the current era, non conservative works on conservatism were fairly scarce. Conservatism was largely viewed as a fringe orientation. Habitual of this type of thought are works by Lionel Trilling's (1950) *The Liberal Imagination* and Richard Hofstadter's (1965) *The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt*. However, with the apparent emergence of a powerful force, those on the left and those without vested interest have begun to evaluate conservatism as a post WWII phenomenon.

Hardisty (1999) provides a look at the conservative movement from the perspective of a feminist scholar. In *Mobilizing Resentment: Conservative Resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers*, she critiques what is assumed to be a homogeneous conservative movement and divines lessons for the left to employ in countering conservative ascendance.

Scholarly work attempting an objective look at conservatism in the late 20th century is well manifested in Godfrey Hodgson's (1996) *The World Turned Right Side Up: A History of the*

Conservative Movement in America and Jonathan M. Shoenwald's (2001) *A Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism*. Both of these works are histories written in the academic vernacular that posit a unified conservative movement that has emerged as a powerful force in contemporary American politics. Indeed, at points one could easily take from these works the notion that conservatism had already won the battle.

.That there is perceived a conservative movement and that there is interest in the underlying factors driving that movement is underscored by three recent articles in psychological literature. Jost et. al (2003a) have proposed a motivated social cognition model of conservatism that has prompted immediate response in both academic and lay circles. The article elicited a response by Greenberg and Jonas (2003) that challenged the pejorative nature (true, but likely an unintentional side effect) of their findings and a counterpoint by Jost et. al. (2003b) defending the original work. However, all involved, while noting some variance within conservative thought, nonetheless work with the *a priori* assumption that there is but one conservatism. The very fact that this research has attracted so much passionate attention speaks to both the relevance of the notion of "conservatism" in contemporary America and how misunderstood it is.

The popular media in America has long treated conservatism as a homogeneous force. Within the movement, popular radio hosts such as Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity speak as if they are the vanguard of a movement that is finally ascending. Writers such as Ann Coulter (2002) and Bernard Goldberg (2003) contend that conservatism is fighting a liberal media conspiracy to short circuit the movement's historic march. Columnists like Jonah Goldberg

(2003) and David Frum (2003) speak in the pages of *The National Review* of conservative disagreements as merely minor problems while maintaining the idea of a singular movement.

From outside the movement, conservatism is almost exclusively taken as a unified force. Disagreements among conservatives are often portrayed as being rooted in the essentially misguided foundations of a single conservatism rather than the possibility that there might be more than one conservatism. Typical of this trend are articles by Andrew Sullivan and Peter Beinart in the December 17, 2001 *New Republic*. Both authors note some discord within the movement all the while treating conservatism as “the” movement.

Countless examples of “conservatism as homogeneous political movement” are available in both academic and popular literature. Each work speaks of *the* conservative movement. I here provide a brief look at this body of work since this dissertation will challenge the notion that there is a unified, singular conservative movement. Rather, I argue that there are at least two distinct and ontologically separate core forces within what is often referred to simply as conservatism.

Cultural Theory

Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky have proposed a theory of culture that revolves around five distinct ways of life. For them the term “way of life” is employed as a scheme “to designate a viable combination of social relations and cultural bias”(1990, 1). It represents equipment for living – the assumptions one relies upon to justify their daily actions and behaviors in the real world³. Furthermore, there are a finite number of manners in which social relations and cultural

³This concept is in many ways the same/similar to various other configurations that have appeared in social science research. Steve Turner (1994) has noted that there is something shared yet unseen that goes by various names such as world view, practices, institutions, paradigms, etc. See also Douglas (1986).

biases can combine. These combinations, in other words, are neither random nor unlimited. They continue:

A change in the way an individual perceives physical or human nature, for instance, changes the range of behavior an individual can justify engaging in and hence the type of social relations an individual can justify living in. Shared values and beliefs are thus not free to come together in any which way; they are always closely tied to the social relations they help legitimate. (1990, 2)

This leads to the assertion that there are five and only five distinct ways of life within which individuals can organize their existence. If one is dislodged from one way of life through, for example, a shift in cultural bias resulting from a disjuncture between the beliefs one holds and real world observation⁴, that individual must migrate to a new set of biases and a new way of life. In sum, “change occurs because the five ways of life, though viable, are not entirely impervious to the real world” (1990, 3).

Cultural biases and social relations come together in the theory as value commitment and group commitment. In other words, how relatively rigid and inflexible one is to his value commitments represents a degree of cultural bias. How deeply one is bounded into group units gauges social relations. To operationalize these variables, Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky turn to the grid-group theory of Mary Douglas (1970). The grid-group typology is a four box square that locates individuals as a function of their degree of value commitment on one hand and their level of group commitment on the other. Within this schema are located the five ways of life⁵.

⁴This phenomenon is similar to Kuhn’s (1970, 1977) paradigm shifts. Such shifts occur in times of upheaval when prior assumptions are no longer viable. One has encountered information which makes adherence to former commitments no longer possible and the emergence of a new set of commitments necessary.

⁵See Figure 1.

An individual who perceives a high level of value (grid) allegiance combined with a relatively low level of group affiliation would represent what Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky term a *fatalist*. “A fatalist is controlled from without . . . their sphere of individual autonomy is restricted” (1990, 7). As we will shortly see, this person does not exist within the contemporary conservative movement.

A person with both low grid and low group engagement is an *individualist*. For this actor “all boundaries are provisional and subject to negotiation” (1990, 7). They further note that:

Although the individualist is, by definition, relatively free from control by others, that does not mean the person is not engaged in exerting control over others. On the contrary, the individualist’s success is often measured by the size of the following the person can command. (1990, 7)

The individualist embraces value commitments and a view of nature concordant with today’s economic conservative.

In the top right square of the typology resides the *hierarchist* with her/his high fidelity to both grid prescriptions and group connections. “Individuals in this social context are subject to both the control of other members in the group and the demands of socially imposed roles” (1990, 6). They are highly ordered and connected. The contemporary traditional conservative is a hierarchist.

Finally we encounter the egalitarian. The *egalitarian* exhibits a high sense of group devotion offset by relatively low fidelity to value imperatives. This individual is all about the

CULTURAL THEORY		
GROUP		
	Low	High
High	<p><i>FATALIST</i></p> <p>These people perceive themselves to be under outside control. Thus, any attempt at influence over their station is futile. An example of this person would be the non voter who believes the system is fixed.</p>	<p><i>HIERARCHIST</i></p> <p>These people feel both high commitment to shared values as well as a strong bond with the group. There is a correct order to the world. The traditional conservative resides here.</p>
GRID	<p><i>INDIVIDUALIST</i></p> <p>These people experience a boundless existence where all commitments are negotiable. They see little need for strong group or value allegiance. This is the home of the economic conservative.</p>	<p><i>EGALITARIAN</i></p> <p>These people bond tightly to the group while diminishing value commitments. All is negotiable as long as it is in the interest of the group as a whole. Here we find the American left.</p>
Low		

Figure 1. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky’s (1990) Sociocultural Theory of Viability where *grid = value commitment and group = group commitment*. Following the authors, *hermits* are excluded do to their total refusal to engage.

team. There is a communal sense afoot that tends to make conflict difficult to resolve. There is a lack of ultimate authority other than “speaking in the name of the group” (1990, 6). Egalitarians are not part of the conservative constellation. Their commitment to the group above all results in a devotion to equality of outcomes and places them on the American left.

One final yet rare way of life exists – that of the *hermit*. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky argue that the hermit fits in the middle of the typology due to a refusal to engage at all. This individual escapes social control by refusing to control others or to be controlled by others (1990, 7). One could argue whether such extreme disengagement actually exists in a developed modern society. After all, even Ted Kaczynski was about control through terrorizing and also was at the mercy of monetary handouts from his family in order to pursue his agenda.

Despite its possible existence, I argue that the fifth way, the hermit is ultimately irrelevant. The hermit is outside the political community represented by the scheme. Further, since the four boxes of the typology remain filled even in the absence of the hermit, the theory remains robust. In this application, the absence of the hermit does not equal falsification.

Another qualification is necessary before moving along. In the original Douglas (1970) conception of grid/group, the individualist quadrant is uninhabitable. Douglas posits the individualist as actually embracing a fatalist ethic. Here she follows Durkheim's (1951) discussion of anomic suicide which results from the disconnection of the individual from group and value commitments, particularly religious affiliation. Douglas further argues that all ways of life are eventually gravitate toward hierarchy in much the same manner as Kenneth Burke (1966) in his definition of man.

Whether the individualist is actually a fatalist depends on the level of analysis undertaken. Theoretically, the individualist places him or herself as an agent of the “free market.” In an absolute surrender to the fortune of the market, the individual would be fatalistic. However, this pure anomic individual does not exist except as an ideal type for purpose of analysis. Here we are concerned with ways of life as they emerge in the discourse of participants.

As such, while the individualist likely does conceal a fatalist world view at some level, the rhetoric that conceals it is absolutely individualist in form and content. Thus, I will continue to treat the economic conservative as an individualist as a reflection of their rhetorical choices.

All of the ways of life are what Weber would call ideal types, constructed for the analysis of contemporary American society. However, Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky argue that only three, egalitarian, individualist, and hierarchist represent *active* ways of life. The fatalist does not believe influence is possible. Moreover, for my purpose, it is important to note that all need not be present within conservatism. The egalitarian is grounded in an ontology that precludes all but the most temporary alliances with contemporary conservatives. Nevertheless, alliances are often necessary to sustain a social system. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky predict the alliance between the individualist and the hierarchist as forming “in current parlance, ‘the establishment’” (1990, 88).

It is my contention then, that the vast majority of contemporary conservatives can be divided into individualists and hierarchists based on their rhetorical choices. The movement is an alliance of these two world views. And while Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky may be correct in asserting that “from this mixed motive coalition individualists gain stability in property relationships and defense against outsiders, while hierarchy receives the enhanced economic growth, . . . (and) enhanced capacity for innovation” (1990, 88), each partner is having to continually hide deep ontological divisions that speak to the legitimation of their respective identities. The result is a movement that is repeatedly restrained at the moment of action. With some pragmatically motivated exceptions, governing becomes often futile.

Before turning to a discussion of the rhetorical compromises that have characterized the conservative revolution, a brief look at its two polar perspectives is in order.

The individualist emerges in several forms of economic conservatism ranging from doctrinaire libertarianism to more muted forms of free-market devotion. They are nicely embodied by the Americans for Tax Reform and their leader Grover Norquist⁶. They sound a single note agenda on the surface; cut taxes. Theirs is a politics of “leave me alone.” Economic freedom is the watch word of this group. Their major goal is to reduce the confiscatory and regulatory power of the state.

On the other hand, hierarchal impulse is strong in traditional conservatism. Traditional conservatives value order above all and are devoted to preservation of the Western tradition as the ultimate development of civilization. Ralph Reed’s⁷ “Christian Coalition” is representative of the hierarchist in 1990s conservatism. Traditionalists believe in a divinely ordained scheme and are thus duty-bound to direct the conservative movement on a path of virtue that many among the masses simply do not and cannot understand.

Two of the five ways of life grounded in differing ontological precepts dominate contemporary conservatism. Their difficult union has resulted in electoral victories. However, while this marriage works at the polls, it presents problems in governance. The central dialectic of the two contingents revolves around the terms *freedom* and *order*. I will explore in this study how reverence for one term over the other ultimately divides the two groups.

⁶See Easton (2000).

⁷Again, see Easton (2000)

Sharp as those incompatibilities might be, the two groups have maintained their alliance despite Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky's assertion that such alliances "never provide a lasting solution" (1990, 89). I contend that this problem has been somewhat overcome by means of movement rhetoric. The alliance has been maintained in the 1990s through some fortuitous features, as well as the skillful use, of language by spokespersons in the conservative movement. Conservatives are magically adept at subsuming this gap in their public discourse.

Language in Social Change

How indeed could people adhering to two divergent, conflicting, and, at times, belligerent world views ever see themselves as coalescing within the same movement – particularly a movement such as contemporary conservatism? Answers are to be found in Hart's (2000) admonition that words do matter.

In his study of 50 years of presidential campaign talk he located several consistent trends. As he puts it "political language is so powerfully barometric, it often signals important political phenomena" (2000, 27). His study learns through a careful, quantified study that certain types of words have identified several key trends in electoral politics. In sum, the type of words employed has much to do with political victory. Contemporary conservatives likewise converge around honored terms. The two types of conservative, however, have different meanings for those terms.

While to some it would appear that Hart has provided a map of American social evolution as revealed in its political language, others might suggest that there is a second trend afoot. McGee (1980) terms "ideograph" the manner in which language carries ideology, the link between coexistent symbolic and materialist concerns. "Ideographs are one-term sums of an

orientation, . . . a species of “God” or “Ultimate” term” (429) that serve as “the basic structural elements, the building blocks, of ideology” (428). Furthermore, “like Chinese symbols, they signify and “contain” a unique ideological commitment; further, they presumptuously suggest that each member of a community will see as a gestalt, every complex nuance in them” (428). In sum, Hart suggests that we have a pretty good idea what our words mean while McGee opens the possibility that we may or may not.

So which is it? Do words reveal our specific cultural and political direction or are they empty vessels, simultaneously functioning as a Weaverian⁸ “God term” while remaining available, always ready to be filled with an illusionary, or even delusionary, set of shared values? Even within this admittedly extreme formulation of the question, I think the answer may be “both/and.” It may be that our “God terms” shift situationally, at one moment hiding the division in our ideological commitments while, in the next, bringing them into sharp focus. As Pocock points out, language:

invokes values; it summarizes information; it suppresses the inconvenient; it makes certain kinds of statements and does so by means of formulations which can convey several kinds of statement at once, while simultaneously diverting attention from others. (1971, 18)

⁸I hesitate to evoke the name Richard Weaver for his rhetoric is an exalted and elegant rhetoric consciously seeking a higher end. The ideograph might represent a “symbol rhetoric” which would place rhetoric on the same path as formal logic -- a notion considered and denounced by Weaver (1970).

In politics the differences may revolve around the divergent requirements of campaigning versus governing. McGee notes that “an ideograph is always understood in its relation to another; it is defined tautologically by using other terms in its cluster” (1980, 434)⁹.

McGee, however, is not alone in positing an “empty vessel” notion of core value concepts as they emerge in language. Wuthnow in discussing the structure of moral codes notes that

It is probably fortunate that the concept of freedom, like other moral objects, remains somewhat vague. Generally it is poorly enough defined that we have considerable difficulty determining whether the market system actually reinforces personal and collective freedom or not. There are no standard, easily measurable criteria . . . (1987, 88)

The marrow of Wuthnow’s argument is that our commitment to freedom or any other core value term is through our experience of daily life. Wuthnow additionally expands the concept to include the symbolic nature of our nonverbal communication. By making choices in the world we dramatize for ourselves what it means to be free, for example. It is through this symbolic enactment that we subsume concrete questions about the meaning of freedom.

Nevertheless, the abstract -- often masquerading as the concrete -- is at the hub of political campaigns. Congruent with the argument of this study, we should expect a quasi harmony to appear during the electoral season. That harmony then dissipates within the contests dramatized by participants in daily performance¹⁰. Freedom or any abstract value commitment is

⁹Maybe there is such a disjuncture between the two forms (campaigning and governing) that the paradigm shift is automatic. They are different fields with different requirements.

¹⁰ Wuthnow, while likely not realizing it, is speaking clearly to the notion of “cultural performance” in a manner compatible with the writings of Victor Turner (1982)

more sharply focused in the contradictory allegiances revealed as discreet individuals engage in the concrete behavior of policy implementation.

Furthering the concept of a tension between the personal/concrete and social/abstract character of value terms Billig (1991) argues that we develop ideological commonplaces – social representations¹¹ -- that function as a socially negotiated “common sense” that provide ready-made, peer-tested group commitments. These commonplaces then become the equipment for daily argument. “Social beliefs are rooted in the life of groups”, Billig argues, and “dialogue is crucial for their creation and maintenance. Such dialogue expresses the contrary themes of cultural and ideological life” (1991, 74).

Billig analyzes the apparent ease with which members of the Young Conservatives in 1980s Britain adopt the abstract commitments of the Conservative Party while maintaining several beliefs boldly contradictory to the ideology of conservatism (1991, 79-106). The daily experience of life requires a different set of beliefs than the group context of a Young Conservatives weekly meeting.

Billig also attacks the paradox of ideology, the dualism in contemporary thought which invites two contrasting social psychological views of the ordinary person. In short, the ordinary person is simultaneously a thinking and an unthinking being – the agent of thinking and the passive recipient of thoughts. However, the paradox is only a convention of the contemporary academic. Real people use the “common sense which they do not themselves invent but which

¹¹Following Moscovici, Billig notes that social representations are “the knowledge of common sense . . . [the] elaborating of a social object by the community for the purpose of behaving and communicating . . . [it] is a system of values, ideas, and practices” (1991, pp 60-61).

has a history.” Thus, we must recognize “that the process of everyday thinking can be a process of ideology” (1991, 1).

Because of this paired process the individual can demonstrate social loyalties when engaged in group discourse that might be manifested differently in individual action. As Giddens has argued, ideology is both the representation of the present as natural *as well as* the representation of sectional interests as universal interests. Accordingly the heightened level of collectiveness present during campaigns demands the fusion of the sectional and universal. If “ideology is a political language composed of slogan like terms signifying collective commitment” (1979, 435), then should we not expect heightened allegiance to such terms and diminished critical reflection during for example, a political campaign -- the moment power is being contested?

I think we should and that through examining certain “God terms” expressed by a political movement their critical commitments will emerge. The contemporary conservative movement embraces terms and policies that seduce the many adherents into identifying in one another a shared world view. The result is a perfectly unitary vision for building the commitment necessary for election, yet far too flexible to sustain that momentum when the realities of policy implementation come into play.

Most amazingly, this phenomenon summons a rhetoric with the ability to adjust people to one another *and* ideas¹² when the deep-felt commitments to one another and idea may be

¹²I will frequently fall back on Donald Bryant’s (1953) formulation of rhetoric as the art of adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas.

nearly non-existent¹³. Again my point is that the only unified, catholic conservative revolution may be more a trick of language than any shared ideological obligation. The terms mean something vaguely conservative to all while simultaneously meaning something specifically but divergently conservative in the minds of members of each group.

While this may sound thematically similar to the tenuous coalitions held together by the Democrats, I believe it differs in one key respect. The Democrats are acutely aware of their differences almost to the point of celebrating the internal fight before the eventual horse trading begins. Their approach is one of positional bargaining and leads to only the partial satisfaction of all. The goose is carved into thin, equal, but ultimately dissatisfying slices.

Republicans are more likely to demand the whole goose. However, since they too are forging a heterogeneous coalition, they must appear to maintain commitment to a single path in their language. In so doing, a concurrent shame at the mere thought of compromise emerges and presents significant obstacles to accomplishing concrete goals. Their inability to deal with anything other than total victory is a marked feature of individual and movement self-evaluation. To compromise on even the smallest, most inconsequential matter is to be marked as a “squish”¹⁴.

Simons points out that “within the movement interfactional conflicts invariably develop over questions of value, strategy, tactics, or implementation” (1970, 389). Such may indeed be the case. However, within the contemporary conservative movement such questions (and likely

¹³In a Gorgian sense we may be looking at rhetoric as an art of deception.

¹⁴Squish was a term used liberally by Grover Norquist and Ralph Reed in their days at the head of the College Republicans as a pejorative reference to a conservative revealing even the *thought* of compromise. See Easton (2000)

the questioners themselves) can quickly be seen as disloyal and treacherous (Easton 2000). It might be that this particular movement is peculiarly susceptible to self-delusion through language.

It is the multiple levels of language noted by Pocock (1971) that may constitute the Republican/conservative revolution in its *entirety*. That people in one faction, who advocate a renaissance of Judeo-Christian values as a central influence on government policy, might even for a moment see themselves as the revolutionary comrades of people advocating the legalization of street drugs and prostitution should be the surprise here (and ultimately a tribute to the power of discourse), not that the revolution has been unable to achieve ultimate victory. Ultimate victory itself is an illusion read against the underlying goals of these two factions representing two of the five ways of life.

It might be argued that a mythic rhetoric of possibility¹⁵ (Kirkwood 1992) is at work here – one that might be best explained in the implied audiences created at the center of its two ways of life. As Black explains, “certain features of a linguistic act entail certain characteristics of the language user” (1970, 332). Furthermore, following Booth, he notes that “the author implied by the discourse is an artificial creation: a persona, but not necessarily a person” (333). This thought leads to an implied possibility for “groupness” – McGee’s people “based on organic conceptions of human society,” conceived to account for their rhetorical function “in arguments designed to warrant social action, even society itself” (1975, 343).

¹⁵Kirkwood’s notion here is to make creative possibilities of thought and action possible through discourse, specifically narrative rhetoric. While he mostly discusses this as a positive heuristic tool for social action, one might note that his “human capacity for various states of mind” might encompass some negative possibilities as well.

Again we must turn to the notion of a mythic ideologically-defined people. Black cautions that in defining personae:

It is not age or temperament or even discrete attitude. It is ideology – ideology in the sense that Marx used the term: the network of interconnected convictions that functions in a man epistemically and that shapes his identity by determining how he views the world. (1970, 334)

As I read Black he is speaking to an illusionary set of commitments and auditors that are brought together rhetorically. There is no need for a truly homogeneous set of beliefs about the world – simply a need for the illusion that those homogeneous commitments exist.

Indeed, it may be something uniquely American that this requirement exists at all. Our two party system negates the possibility that the three active ways of life would coalesce into three separate parties as they might under a parliamentary system. Instead a loose-fitting, yet seemingly rigid, pattern of shares practices must be present in order to, as McGee says, warrant social action.

The implication is that this may not be a truly Republican or conservative phenomenon. It likely is not. My purpose here is simply to account for the failure of the “mythic” conservative revolution through investigating public addresses delivered by key figures identified with the movement. There is an ideographic constellation of terms that function to rhetorically create the possibility of a movement. At the same time, the real, fundamental differences in world view are hidden. Methodologically, then, the central focus will be on language as it is used in public address.

If, as stated, there is no need for a truly homogeneous set of beliefs about the world – simply a need for an illusion of such -- for people to trust that they share commitments, then an

approach to the study of public address that permits a broad view of the overall picture is in order. That approach is available through the implementation of the rhetorical homology method.

Rhetorical Homology

Approaches to the study of rhetorical discourse abound. Many would be perfectly useful in accomplishing the general goals of this study. Several dramatistic methods could serve well. There is Bormann's (1972) conception of "fantasy and rhetorical vision" and a collective vision "dreamed" by a rhetor and bought by an audience as well as Burke's notion of "representative anecdotes" that encapsulate the dramatic essence of a vision in its most fundamental form¹⁶.

While these options are not foreign to this investigation, and indeed may offer support in places, the thrust of this study is to examine how shared, yet illusionary, uniform allegiances emerge in language despite the world view differences embodied by the implied auditor. More specifically, the idea here is to appraise the way this vision is created in a set of terms that allow a transcendence of underlying divisions.

Therefore, the scope of this work suggests rhetorical homology as the optimum method with which to investigate conservative public address. Since speeches are somewhat periodic and directed to specific audiences, rhetorical homology is useful in examining repeated and recurring themes.

Brummett argues that homology is a term that can be employed "as generically as possible without also intending . . . complex theoretical connotations." For him, homology means "formal parallels among seemingly disparate things or experiences" (1988, 203). Olson adds that "a homology argument emphasizes formal resemblances across discourses *in spite of*

¹⁶Barry Brummett (1984) offers a fine justification and example of this method in *Burke's representative anecdote as a method of media criticism*.

their apparently disparate contents and situations” (2002, 217). If as Weaver (1970) has proclaimed, “language is sermonic,” then formal resemblances should emerge as the general theme of the homily. Examining speeches homologically also permits the focus to shift from terms celebrating values to language advancing specific policy initiatives. This is of course precisely what political speeches tend to do.

Homological rhetoric “bridges” positions and maintains alliances between different groups who can then oppose a common antagonist. This rhetorical alliance is fragile and as such meanings and expectations must constantly be maintained.

There are three ways of constructing rhetorical homology between divergent groups. The first is to use the unifying terms on a high level of abstraction. Groups that disagree on the concrete application of a term can agree on its primacy as an abstract term. The second is to unite on a similar policy or objective for different reasons. Finally, a third method of developing homological identity is the “token” reference to the issue of an allied group.

Through the close reading of speeches by representatives of both the traditional and economic brands of conservatism, all three manners of constructing rhetorical homology will be identified as significant in fashioning conservatism’s contemporary identity.

Why Conservative Discourse?

I seek in this study to advance scholarship in political communication in the public address vernacular. Speeches still are important. If a movement with continuous claims of revolution, validated in the popular press can become such a key player over a twenty year span, yet simultaneously seem as illusory as the fabled emperors suit, then rhetorical analysis of that movement’s public address is demanded. Political speeches are a communication genre that

celebrates shared values, attempts to induce shared action, and convicts shared villains.

Examining speeches of the conservative movement will synthesize public discourse with a sociology of cultural being. Accordingly, public address study provides a ground for looking at real humans doing real work in an actual time and place.

Bantz defines organizational communication as “the collective creation, maintenance, and transformation of organizational meanings and organizational expectations through the sending and using of messages” (1993, 18). If I could be permitted to drop the term “organizational” (although a social system *is* an organization -- albeit less formal in structure than that of which Bantz speaks), the “creation, maintenance and transformation of meanings and expectations” sounds like a pretty apt working concept of culture. Meanings and expectations appear to be identifying something similar to Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky’s (1990) notion of cultural biases. Further, collective, creation maintenance and transformation is surely the essence of communication, more specifically, the job of rhetoric.

It is thus reasonable to view rhetoric and culture as intertwined. Accordingly, this study combines the two in a way that identifies functional cultural types and seeks to demonstrate how each is rhetorically produced and transcended through the sending and using of messages.

Through this effort, I hope to learn more about the function of language in doing that work, or conversely in keeping it from being done. It is only through the connections made in language that concerted political action becomes possible. -- a “rhetoric of possibility” as visualized by Kirkwood (1992). More specifically the function of specific terms in painting the possibility of unity of purpose will be explored. As a side light, lessons about those possibilities in the American tradition should emerge.

As the words of M.E. Bradford (1990) suggest, there is a notion within contemporary conservatism that the revolution has died/is dying. Movement conservatives tend to attribute this death to the efforts of a well-financed liberal reaction working in concert with both an intractable and entrenched bureaucracy and media. While I intend no comment on the existence of such conspiracies, I do believe that other possibilities exist. Notably, that the revolution never existed at all -- that it was “dreamed” into being within the “collective consciousness”¹⁷ of its participants.. Moreover, it has been reified through a homological rhetoric of identification.

A Modest Preview

In the next chapter I will further outline the homological method of rhetorical analysis suggested in this introduction.

Chapter three is devoted to a history of the contemporary conservative movement. To understand conservatism today, the progression of conservative thought and the emergence of the movement must be detailed. Since scholars and commentators largely agree that what we today view as conservative is a post World War II phenomenon, I will sketch the movement from that beginning through the present.

Chapter four is devoted to the analysis of conservative public address. For this chapter I have chosen to analyze two speeches each from four speakers; two representing economic conservatives and two representing traditional conservatives. Here I will tease out the overall homology and then explain why it functions so imperfectly.

Finally, Chapter five is where I draw my conclusions and suggest the implications of this study for future research. I view this work as the beginning of a research regime. Conservatism

¹⁷ I read Durkheim’s (1965) term as another attempt to get at the notions of “cultural bias,” “practices,” “institutions,” “paradigms,” and the like.

appears to be here to stay. But depending on *when* and *where* one hears conservatives tell the story, it could easily be assumed that they had lost the game on their last possession -- that the struggle ultimately has been forfeited. Furthermore, despite wishful predictions from conservative spokespersons, liberalism and its cousins on the egalitarian left do not appear defeated.

There is in the minds of many observers of the cultural and political scene a shrillness that has enveloped our civic discourse. In my view, this study finds several future avenues of investigation that might provide worthy answers to these critics of the contemporary scene.

Conclusion

This study takes as its charge the examination of the much-lamented failure of the conservative revolution. As opposed to purely political reasons, it is here posited that a fundamental clash of cultural assumptions may be the culprit. However, for this to be the case, one must explain how the widely-accepted notion of revolution emerged in the first place. The two ways of life discovered at the heart of the movement would seem to preclude the components of the revolution remaining connected over such a long and fluid period..

Such a conundrum demands the examination of language . Rhetorical theory concerns itself with how ideas and people can be adjusted to one another. Adjunct to this is how people, even those with seemingly little to share, can remain working in tandem over long periods of time. The study contends that, through a careful analysis of the overall rhetorical homology practiced in contemporary conservatism, we can reveal that the image of a single, monolithic conservative revolution always was more hallucination than reality – Coleridge under the spell while writing *Kubla Khan*.

Such is not to argue that there is and has been no such thing as a conservative vision. Rather, the point is that there likely are several conservative visions, each with its distinct commitments, masquerading as an entirety. That they were ever able to create an apparition of accord is probably the real surprise. However, it is a surprise explained through robust rhetorical analysis.

CHAPTER 2

HOMOLOGY IN THE TRANSCENDENCE OF CONSERVATIVE RHETORIC

The world is full of magical things patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper.

Bertrand Russell

Bryant argues that rhetoric performs “the function of adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas” (1953, 413). As such, how does rhetoric operate to unite seemingly disparate political viewpoints behind one political program and party? In other words, what sort of “invention” might produce a “similar” and consensus building expression out of dissimilar axiologies? Can logically different doctrines be disguised by common stylistics, or blurred by an emphasis on compatible methods and temporary objectives? These questions are salient to any analytical approach seeking to reconcile the central divergence in world views among the several forms of contemporary conservatism.

This chapter will outline an approach rooted in an examination of similar language that ultimately reveals a rhetorical homology rooted in formal appeals. Kenneth Burke’s early work revived the classical concept of the power of form. Burke noted that apart from “content,” “form” has collaborative power. It argues expectation, desire, communal memory, -- and it fulfills them.

Burke noted the forms of sporting events, the repetitive forms of ritual, music, and dance, the ascending and descending forms of social hierarchy, the conflict and resolution form of narrative, the intricate rhythmic form of the sonnet. He noted that artists and politicians use these forms to make us surrender to their art and embrace their programs. In a sense, the form of an

argument – its sound, context, pacing, delivery, aesthetic – supply an ethos and pathos that are at least as powerful as its logical content.

Kenneth Burke’s significant form is at the heart of his concepts of identification, terministic screens, and transcendence. Brummett employs the term homology “to mean formal parallels among seemingly disparate things or experiences” (1988, 203)¹. Olson extends Brummett and argues that “a homology argument emphasizes formal resemblances across discourses *in spite of* their apparently disparate contents and situations” (2002, 217). To fully develop the homological approach, McGee’s concept of the ideograph will be discussed. An ideograph is a formal distillation of communal wisdom, a linguistic expression of common identity. Like Burke’s terministic screens, the ideograph focuses our attention on certain bits of communal consensus and blots out others. These “forms” are the means by which embattled rhetors build audiences from individuals, and communities out of groups.

A primary example of form building for consensus is Lloyd Bitzer’s *The Rhetorical Situation*. He argues that form is determined by potential opportunities and limitations:

Prior to the creation and presentation of discourse, there are three constituents of any rhetorical situation: The first is the *exigence*; the second and third are elements of the complex, namely the *audience* to be constrained in decision and action, and the *constraints* which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience. (1968, 6)

An exigence is a problem that comes to light through human interaction. It is a feeling that such and such is other than it should or could be. While Bitzer places exigence in a privileged position, audience and constraints are critical features that must not be ignored. A rhetorical

¹Brummett further notes that in rhetoric the term homology can be used “as generically as possible without also intending the complex theoretical connotations that come from its use in particular systems” (1988, 203).

audience consists of those open-minded enough to be influenced as well as those with power to contribute to change. Constraints provide both openings and closings based on preconditions in the social system essentially creating a boundary condition. Such preconditions would include the swirl of cultural knowledge surrounding a particular rhetorical situation including traditions, history, attitudes, beliefs, motives, interests, and prejudices. Without these factors, rhetorical form is *en potencia*.

In the contemporary conservative movement, the exigence has been a general reaction to the methods and practices of the prevailing liberal order. However, various groups have reacted to that prevailing order for different reasons and with different ends in mind. One formal homological device for reconciling differences is the mythical purgation form. Identity comes through a shared common enemy. I identify with you because we have a common enemy and, as a result, I view myself as being cut from the same cloth as you. In this way disparate groups can embrace the label “conservative” out of varying and perhaps conflicting motives. A common enemy provides a pragmatic sanction for overlooking differences. From its beginnings as a statement of a “way of thinking about the world” as opposed to a political ideology² in the years immediately after the Second World War, conservatism has gradually forged alliances between

²I base this distinction on what William Rusher has called “a metaphysical dream of the world” in discussing the underpinnings of the conservative tradition. Rusher further argues in discussing traditionalist prophet Russell Kirk that “Kirk’s traditionalism is neither a strategy nor a tactic; it is, in the fullest sense of the word, a philosophy. As such, it is the bedrock of American conservatism” (1998, 4). Simply put, followers of this faith posit a divine as opposed to human plan for the world. Ideological prescription is both unwise and unnecessary.

groups with different core philosophies – groups whose only affinity for the original ideas of the movement is its opposition to liberalism, or worse, radical egalitarian leftism³.

In cold war conservative discourse there has long been an honored tradition of positing world communism as what Burke might term a “perfect enemy.” Symbolized by the specter of shadowy conspirators in the Kremlin, the Soviet Union served the late twentieth century west as the material embodiment of this threatening, and alien ideology. For many who unified under the term “conservative” it became an easy shift of enemies from the radical leftist ideologies of communism and socialism to the New Deal liberalism in fashion mid-century. The genius of the scapegoat is that local ills can be attributed to alien forces. Thus, the power of the common enemy is magnified because it now resides both without and within the native culture.

Another homological strategy is the “definition of a situation.” Booth calls language “the medium in which selves grow, the social invention through which we make each other and the structures that are our world, the shared product of our efforts to cope with experience” (1974, 135). Thus language is the key to understanding how these unlikely comrades have found themselves ostensible allies. Burke argues that symbols are the means through which all meaning is comprised.

For rhetoric as such is not rooted in any past condition of human society. It is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols. (1969, 43, emphasis original)

³Liberalism and leftism are terms that have become almost meaningless in today’s popular discourse. While contemporary liberalism is a philosophy of the left it eschews the total control implied by more “pure” leftist ideologies. Since conservative literature makes a strategic conflation of the two, I will combine the terms. This study concerns conservative literature.

A rhetorical act is an argument about how we should label our experiences, about how we should view reality in some meaningful way. We make choices about how we view reality because there are often many different arguments in play in any given situation. As we make these choices, Burke points out that we identify ourselves with others who make similar choices in the labels to which they respond. If we cannot agree on goals we might still agree on defining a problem.

Even in the face of division, we are goaded to identify with others. Thus, “identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division” (Burke 1969, 22). Without identification we cannot act. Identification is a way of acting together. As humans, we only participate in our symbolicity by selecting symbols through which we mediate our experiences and fashion those experiences in a meaningful way. Additionally, these selections have behavioral consequences. By choosing one term over others, we direct our attention toward particular meanings and relationships and deflect attention from options suggested by other terms. As we select words we invite both ourselves and our audiences to construct and evaluate the phenomena we encounter in particular ways. When audiences accept the enticement to experience the world through the “terministic screen” of a particular stable of words, other symbolic possibilities and the alternate meanings they evoke will accordingly be diverted from consideration. “Even if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality” (Burke 1966, 45). This is why the seemingly simple act of choosing among symbols is always a form of persuasion, and ultimately shared symbolic action.

The persuasion that occurs here leads directly to an argument at a different level, an argument for a certain way of viewing the world. Each of our symbolic choices make at least a tacit case for a particular world view. By selecting certain terms rather than others, we accentuate the meanings and values that seem consistent with our understanding of the world. These preferences in terminology point our audience in the direction of the values and beliefs embodied by the terms we find suitable. Richard Weaver (1970, 179) has proclaimed that “language is sermonic.” Indeed it is when we consider that an argument for a particular interpretation of experience is embedded in each selection of symbols that we make. Thus the terministic screens that are constructed through the identifications we make become intertwined with the reality we experience. They are an exhortation to follow a particular path as opposed to other paths.

Of course an exhortation reminds us that there is also a moral evaluation present within our terministic screens. Weaver called this screen an order of value which gives our lives and our discourse “purpose and direction” (1970, 179). That which is to be praised or blamed⁴ is evoked by our choices of symbols. Each world view argues for a particular ontology, and thus, axiology. Being is prior to the value choices one makes. For example, Weaver draws a value distinction between an “argument from circumstance” and an “argument from definition.” The argument from circumstance is an expedient strategy and therefore lacks the virtue inherent in a argument from definition which finds force in the “nature of things” (1953, 86). Weaver believes “that the argument from definition or genus involves a philosophy of being” (87). It is superior morally and ethically to the argument from circumstance. For his analysis, Weaver appraises the 1858

⁴There is in a very real sense an epideictic function in force at this level

Lincoln/Douglas debates and deems Lincoln to be arguing on the higher ethical plane because he employs arguments from definition thus grounding his position in essential first principles.

Weaver points out that Douglas' popular position that slavery should be a question of majority inclination is rebutted by Lincoln's rebuke that slavery is morally wrong. Douglas employs a argument from circumstance that for Lincoln is one step removed from mob rule.

As Johannesen, Strickland, and Eubanks (1970) note, Weaver preferred argument from definition as the ideal form. Furthermore, "this mode of argument, he felt, was also the mark of a true conservative" (22). Interestingly, both houses of conservatism meet Weaver's imperative. Ironically, they are arguing from different and often competing definitions. This merely strengthens the transcendent power of the ultimate term "freedom."

Moreover, the irony is further sharpened when we consider Weaver's warning that charismatic terms are "terms of considerable potency whose referents it is virtually impossible to discover or to construct through the imagination," their nature is "to have a power which is not derived, but which is in some mysterious way given" (1970, 105). Weaver fears that the word "freedom" is "the principle charismatic term of our age," and has "[broken] loose from all anchorages" (106).

The irony is brought full circle when we consider that Weaver, a founder of contemporary conservatism, should find his most feared term subsuming the competing arguments from definition (his ideal type) grounding each of the two clans of conservatism. Weaver himself recognizes irony in the use of the term freedom, He points out that "the most extensive use of the term is made by modern politicians and statesmen in an effort to get men to assume more responsibility (in the form of military service, increased taxes, abridgement of

rights, etc.)” (107). Weaver is prescient in his analysis. One wonders what effect *actually reading* Weaver might have on the considerable number of contemporary conservatives who honor him as a movement father.

Against the backdrop of ontological and axiological intricacies, the world participated in by a traditionalist conservative might be at odds with that encountered by an economic conservative, or a liberal, or a Marxist. Commitment to any of these perspectives requires different notions of the order of the universe and the possibility or impossibility of essential first principles.

However, if this is all there is to the story, we should expect some variants of conservative to be constantly at one another’s throats. Since with few minor exceptions they are not, we need further amplification if we are to explain the ability to mythologize a cohesive conservative movement. Such further amplification is provided by Burke in his discussions of hierarchy and how we perfect terms in order to transcend our differences.

Gusfield notes that, for Burke, our screens are not only terministic, but terminal. In this sense they carry their users to an absolute end, a peak from which descent can later encapsulate all terms that led to the ultimate term. “In selecting reality, human beings necessarily reduce the complex to the simple; the impure to the pure. Thus societies can be seen as using terms as theologies use ‘God’.” Furthermore, there is here a progression toward purity. They are ideal types that become aspirations. The “God” terms of a movement become “terms of endearment, matters to be pursued both as explanations and as goals” (1989, 35).

Divisions are bridged when the perfected terms transcend the more root motivations that initially drove the perfection. In our case, for example, focus should be directed at those terms

that can transcend the almost Nihilist allegiances of many conservatives of the economic bent and the Judeo-Christian devotions held by most traditional conservatives. Oravec points out “that a general motivating principle, whether it be moderation, transformation, or whatever, is manifested in, or ‘embodied by,’ groups of concerns which are otherwise only artificially associated with each other” (1989, 185).

Oravec’s analysis focuses on association as a sub class of identification and continues on to argue that, from a Burkean perspective,

Language, then, is the strategy of transcendence by which the unification of subject/object, self/other, and in Jameson’s terms, individual/collective can occur. What may look like a break or separation between two underlying principles of association becomes a transformation between the two, if the corresponding transcendent term is found which names the unifying principle. The naming of this principle makes the two orders of associations more meaningful in their relationship to one another. (1989, 186)

Symbol usage is not merely descriptive or metaphorical but a species of action. It allows merger, alliance, and acting in concert. Burke points out that “conflicting functions of religion (solace and control) work together in the doctrine of Christianity” and that “we should expect to find analogues” of such conflicts working together in every doctrine that must be enacted by human beings (1962, 406-408).

Thus, the story becomes more complete. Through perfecting the terministic screens that accrue from our identifications we progress toward transcendent terms. These transcendent terms then form the basis for a rhetorical homology of the contemporary conservative movement by way of the ideographic nature they embody.

Ideographs: Another Step on the Path to Homology

McGee terms “ideograph” the manner in which language carries ideology, the link between coexistent symbolic and materialist concerns. “Ideographs are one-term sums of an

orientation, . . . a species of ‘God’ or ‘Ultimate’ term” (1980, 429) that serve as “the basic structural elements, the building blocks, of ideology” (428). Furthermore, “like Chinese symbols, they signify and “contain” a unique ideological commitment; further, they presumptuously suggest that each member of a community will see as a gestalt, every complex nuance in them” (428).

So which is it? Do words reveal our general cultural direction or are they empty vessels, functioning as Burkean or Weaverian “God term” while simultaneously remaining empty enough for us fill them with a loosely fitting set of shared values? The answer may be “both/and.” It may be that our “God terms” shift situationally, at one moment hiding the division in our ideological commitments while, in the next, bringing them into sharp focus. As Pocock points out, language:

invokes values; it summarizes information; it suppresses the inconvenient; it makes certain kinds of statements and does so by means of formulations which can convey several kinds of statement at once, while simultaneously diverting attention from others. (1971, 18)

The situational differences for a group’s commitment to a set of terms may revolve around the divergent requirements of campaigning versus governing. Whatever the reason it is fortunate for the conservative movement that language offers the ability to hide significant gaps. McGee notes that “an ideograph is always understood in its relation to another; it is defined tautologically by using other terms in its cluster” (1980, 434). As such, the homological transcendence is forged in constellations of fairly abstract terms and policy positions that delude participants into believing that they share a world view.

McGee⁵, however, is not alone in positing what can be read as an “empty vessel” notion of core value concepts. Wuthnow, in discussing the structure of moral codes, notes that

It is probably fortunate that the concept of freedom, like other moral objects, remains somewhat vague. Generally it is poorly enough defined that we have considerable difficulty determining whether the market system actually reinforces personal and collective freedom or not. There are no standard, easily measurable criteria . . . (1987, 88)

The marrow of Wuthnow’s argument is that our commitment to “freedom” or any other core value term is through the experience of daily communal life. By making choices in the world we dramatize for ourselves what it means to be “free” for example. It is through this symbolic enactment that we subsume abstract questions about the meaning of “freedom”. The concept is only meaningful within a communal lexicon. Thus McGee writes that “the world is a distorted structure of facts and inferences selected not for their representation of the world, but rather for their salience to the satisfaction of intersubjective desires” (1982, 43).

This is where the clashes among conservatives are revealed. While conservatives may coalesce around certain terminology to gain power, they may reveal different interpretations of core symbols once in power. Counter Wuthnow, in this instance the participants are not subsuming abstract questions, rather they are spotlighting their contentions. Recently, in response to an anti-Iraq war stance adopted by several traditional conservatives including nationally syndicated columnists Pat Buchanan and Robert Novak, former George W. Bush speech writer and current *National Review* contributor David Frum attempted to read these anti-war conservatives out of the movement. He accused them of making common cause with leftists

⁵McGee does, however, believe that there is more than an “empty vessel” function of the ideograph. Nonetheless, his theory does require, in part, that the ideograph function as this sort of flexible carrier.

and liberals (the enemy), espousing defeatism, and conspiracy-theorizing. All because their notion of proper policy founded in conservative principles differed from that of the White House (2003). Conservatives coalesced around terminology yet clashed over policy.

If then, as Burke argues, our experience of daily life is a function of our symbolicity, of the terministic screens we develop through these choices, then the ostensibly mundane language choices we make on a daily basis dramatize our deepest commitments. Furthermore, following McGee and Wuthnow, these commitments can be carried through abstract terms that can operate for us at several levels. In the first instance, through our choice of words, we become able to conceive, analyze, and evaluate phenomena in a particular way. In a second sense, symbols are petitions to view the world in *our* way as opposed to the other options that might be proffered by others and their choices of symbols. In a third state they become perfected, subsuming more concrete individual meanings and assuming an ideographic character that allows us to identify with others using the same symbols. A rhetorical homology is forged around the shared, perfected symbols that invite us into consubstantiality. Transcended is the possibility that others in the group have employed a different set of symbols and commitments in building towards the ultimate term(s). We are thus able to experience shared world views at an abstract level that begins to unravel at a more concrete level.

For example, to extend Wuthnow's example, let us assume that we, in our public discourse, share a deep commitment to "freedom⁶." This would prompt us, were we civically active, to support policies, candidates, and actions that placed "freedom" as their central focus.

⁶For the purposes of illustration, I am hypothesizing rather extreme cases. Not all economic conservatives adopt a radical libertarian view nor do all traditionalists root their commitments in a fully inerrant divine will.

In so doing, we would be affirming and arguing for our individual world view in concert with others who, in our mind, reasonably share the same world through their allegiance to the term “freedom” as the term is viewed merely as an antithesis of slavery. We have union of motive and purpose. However, let us further consider, that some of us who ally themselves with the term “freedom” got there through a series of vows rooted in a vision of a resilient world where humans are the ultimate masters of their fate. In this case freedom can only be attained through an unpolluted free marketplace and the absence of government. Seen as freedom to actualize one’s substance in the marketplace, it becomes antithetical to order and threatens the legitimacy of a government that regulates the market.

Alternatively, let us imagine that others among us found our devotion to “freedom” through a belief in an ordered universe undergirded by essential, eternal truths. This series of loyalties would find “freedom” only under a government that provided order in the service of those truths. Here freedom is singularly possible when we are able to pursue happiness within the moral/ethical order prescribed by our basic ontology. Liberty is in service of the communal pursuit of the just life. Government has a limited role in protecting our “freedom.” During the Cold War both groups could support a freedom that was expressed as being the antithesis of the regimented Soviet Union. With the demise of the Soviet union in the early 1990s, the different conceptions of freedom became glaringly evident.

Or a third possibility might be present if we consider that others still might have found their pledge to freedom via terms that highlight an emancipatory vision that focuses on equality

of outcome. Such an egalitarian⁷ vision would see “freedom” as only existing where government prescribed and enforced measures to insure absolute uniformity of individual condition. This conception requires government to be pervasively involved in nearly all aspects of social life.

That these three paths to “freedom” as ultimate term clash with one another should be obvious. The first is libertarian bordering on anarchy. The second reflects a traditionalist conservative view or even a Christian democratic perspective⁸. The final option represents a radical egalitarianism that, if perfected, would be worthy of Pol Pot. Still, when speaking in the abstract, the use of the symbol “freedom” allows adherents to each perspective to transcend the very real foundational differences among the three perspectives. Indeed, conflict is only likely to surface at the point of policy implementation where the substructural terms supporting the homology are more overtly revealed. The economic conservative might support the legalization of drugs and prostitution. The other two would not. The traditionalist conservative might want the Sabbath protected from worldly commerce. The other two would not. The egalitarian might demand a redistribution of wealth and conformity of thought. The other two would not. Further complicating matters, the two groups opposed to each of the above proposals would justify that opposition in incompatible ways. Yet they all pledge allegiance to “freedom.” As McGee contends:

⁷I hesitate to construct an egalitarian example since “freedom” is not a particularly resonate term for this group – at least not nearly as central as it is to the others. Nonetheless, since it is one of Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky’s (1990) three *active* ways of life, I feel it a worthy extension of the example. After all, almost all political persuasions in America gather at Independence Day celebrations and pay devotion to “values” such as freedom.

⁸ Here I am thinking of an idealized version of post war movements in Western Europe as opposed to any actual government or party that emerged.

An ideograph is an ordinary language term found in political discourse. It is a high order abstraction representing collective commitment to a particular but equivocal and ill-defined normative goal. It warrants the use of power, excuses behavior and belief which might otherwise be perceived as eccentric or antisocial, and guides behavior and beliefs into channels easily recognizable by a community as acceptable and laudable. (1980, 435)

“Freedom” is a term both highly abstract and easily recognizable as acceptable and laudable.

The homological effect of a term such as “freedom” is powerful. These are not only “apparently disparate contents and situations” (Olson 2002, 217), they are often absolutely disparate. “Freedom” for the economic conservative means little government control, for the traditionalist it means “proper” government control, and for the egalitarian it means pervasive, and in some quarters total, government control. In some respects a homology of ideographs allows vastly diverse peoples to live together through its ability to link discordant views under a unifying moniker. While the egalitarian posited above is not to be found within the contemporary conservative movement, such thought is present in contemporary America and coexists with conservatives without “riding to the sound of the guns” as Pat Buchanan might say. On the other hand, this example does suggest how the economic and the traditional are both able to find a home within the tent of conservatism – perhaps a homologic term itself. Such a suggestion maps the technique.

Method in Action

Hart claims that “politics is indeed a world of words but is also a world of poorly understood words, poorly remembered words, and poorly theorized words” (2000, 35). Since I have suggested that the idea of a contemporary conservative “revolution” driven by a unified and ideologically pure conservative “movement,” understanding the means by which this illusion is fabricated through shared symbols becomes the chore. Thus, a method which allows us to

examine the broad convergence painted by the movement in their God terms and policy commitments is in order. The development of this cluster will result from textual analysis of speeches delivered by representatives of the two fundamental styles of conservatism. Since statements purporting to advance the core beliefs of an organization and statements concerning specific policy initiatives are germane to the scope of this study, texts that simultaneously speak in both vernaculars will be analyzed.. While statements of the former type speak to the eternal and of the latter to the moment, policy initiatives often contain abstract hints at core beliefs.

The criterion for inclusion as a conservative spokesperson is that the speaker must largely self-identify as conservative. Such a straightforward self-identification is in itself an interesting situational and audience feature. I do not argue that there might not be some actual overlap between the two key types of conservative. Certainly these people are not from completely different planets. However, my analysis will establish that core differences outweigh the overlaps.

The concepts of identification, terministic screens, and transcendence as well as the ideograph all contribute to the rhetorical homologies -- they are the raw materials from which a homology is forged. It is for this reason that I will, in keeping with the scope of this study, focus on the consumer product as opposed to its components. The component parts are nevertheless important and present. Rhetorical homology is a particularly elegant approach for appraising the overall theme advanced by a public address. This is, after all, primarily a public address study.

We expect to find several traditional ways of constructing rhetorical homology between divergent groups. They are: 1) the use of unifying terms on a high level of abstraction, 2) convergence on a similar policy or objective for different reasons, and 3) a “token” reference to a

cherished issue of an allied group. The rhetorical homology becomes theology for a movement. And as a religion's theology is comprised of scriptural injunctions and traditions, so a movement's theology is fashioned from the honored terms they embrace. I choose to study the theology. However, the overall theology can envelope differing belief systems. Christians can coalesce around the image of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, yet disagree about the concrete behaviors suggested by that sacrifice.

Once we have divined the two basic orientations towards conservatism, I will apply Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky's "ways of life" scheme. Recalling from chapter one that the "ways of life" are rooted in fundamental ontological clashes representing five (and only five) viable world view possibilities, we may discover some distinct collisions among the orders of contemporary conservatism. Finally, I will examine the rhetorical strategies (homology) that in the 1990s were used to perpetuate their alliance and see if they are still viable for the future.

At this point a homology should emerge that will further our knowledge of how language functions in American political alliances. By studying division, subsumed under our ultimate terms, I hope to discover the means of unity. Hart argues that "politics exist to contravene these facts" (of division) and that "political rhetoric exists to make those contraventions artful" (2000, 50). This analysis hopes to determine something about the nature and the limits of political merger through homology.

CHAPTER 3

A HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN CONSERVATISM

Many conservatives have come to the conclusion that the only way they can save America and get it off its present downslope is to become a regime with a greater military presence and drive toward empire.

Norman Mailer

This study is about the contemporary conservative movement. Specifically, it is about the movement in the 1990s. Accordingly, it is important to lay a foundation of the constellation of values, theories, and ideologies that have gradually and persistently chiseled their image on the post-war American political scene. Such is not to argue that there was nothing “conservative” before World War II. Indeed various ensembles before this arbitrary marker have thought of themselves as conservative. To this day many conservatives avow Edmund Burke as the father of conservatism. This chapter is about the path conservatism has followed to arrive at the present destination.

I seek to look at a sharply defined movement in consciousness if not actuality. That movement can be most clearly distinguished as having its roots in the late 1940s. Accordingly, I will follow the development of contemporary conservatism beginning with the Robert Taft bid for the 1948 Republican Party presidential nomination. From this departure I will proceed to examine the cold war development of the movement in the 1950s and 1960s. This period is dominated by the issue of extremism. Next I will chart the conservative movement’s gravitation toward, and eventual take over of, the Republican party in the 1970s. Finally we will look at the ebb and flow that has followed the victory of Ronald Reagan in 1980. The “Gipper’s” apparently

revolutionary triumph has in many ways been stained by the unraveling of the various veins of conservatism.

Through this trip I intend to begin demonstrating the inherent tensions between what has settled into two distinct versions of conservatism, each with its own agenda. These two approaches have their roots in pre-depression America. One is the traditionalist strand that reveres heritage, order, and (often) religion. The second is an economic thread built around devotion to free-market forces. Here the focus is on freedom from government intervention in an individual's pursuit of free choice in his endeavors. Both were powerfully influenced in the post-war era by a rigidly anti-communist fibre that deflected focus upon one colossal demon. In this chapter, I will describe how these indigenous conservative movements were able to appear to be a unified, homogeneous crusade.

Robert Taft and Post-war Reaction to Liberalism and the New Deal Coalition

Godfrey Hodgson identifies four books as central to emerging conservative thought in the immediate post-war era. Ayn Rand's (1943) *The Fountainhead*, Albert Jay Nocks's (1943) *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*, Friedrich August von Hayek's (1944) *The Road to Serfdom*, and Russell Kirk's (1953) *The Conservative Mind*. While Hodgson does not argue these as the only influential books arousing the burgeoning movement, he does single them out as central to an awakening of a dormant spirit. Further, they provide a window into the mind set of the time. In these books one finds:

a strong sense of how lonely, despised, even proscribed, the conservatives of the 1940's felt. They tramped, more in hope than confidence, and more in defiance than hope, through what seemed to them a boundless wilderness of collectivism. Most of those who deigned to notice them at all were sure that they were marching defiantly under the banners of the past. (1996, 23)

Thus, the outcast mentality of which passionate belief is born surfaces early in the post-war movement.

Perhaps the feelings of conservatives in the early post-war era were not, however, paranoid without reason. Schoenwald (2001) concedes that conservatives were in fact marginalized during this period. A host of intellectuals led by Lionel Trilling and Richard Hofstadter had eulogized conservatism as an irrelevant and dormant ethic. Trilling argued that:

In the United States at this time liberalism is not only the dominant but even the sole intellectual tradition. For it is a plain fact that nowadays there are no conservative or reactionary ideas in general circulation. . . . the conservative impulse and the reactionary impulse do not, with some isolated and ecclesiastical exceptions, express themselves in ideas but only in actions or in irritable mental gestures which seem to resemble ideas. (1950, ix)

One well might wonder if conservatives were more incensed at being characterized with *ad hominem* wit or at being mostly ignored.

Nonetheless, the ideas expressed by Kirk and others did resonate with many Americans who had come to believe that the New Deal coalition and its policies had begun to exhibit some disturbing trends: the growth and power of the federal government, increasing threats to personal liberty, and a lack of will signaled by American concessions at Yalta.

These feelings find expression in the voice of an unreconstructed leader. Robert Taft of Ohio had never yielded to the liberal instincts of the New Deal. Lee Edwards (1999) in his account of the conservative revolution glowingly refers to Taft as “Mr. Republican¹.” Despite the

¹Edwards posits a tritheism with Taft as “Mr. Republican,” Barry Goldwater as “Mr. Conservative,” and Ronald Reagan as “Mr. President.” These three serve as a continuum of leaders in Edward’s unlikely chronology of events.

hero-worship dripping from Edwards account, Taft is indeed a substantial figure in the reemergence of conservatism².

Taft behaved as if the New Deal and America's expansionist policies were merely an anomaly, Taft unrepentantly preached an isolationist/protectionist ideology that would have been perfectly at home with pre-depression Republican administrations including that of his father William Howard Taft. Simply put, Robert Taft believed that America had embraced something distinctly non-American – something imperialist and interventionist, vaguely socialist yet certainly collective, and of European as opposed to American heritage.

Despite their minority status, Taft's ideas had deep heartland roots. His was a midwestern isolationism that frowned on foreign adventure and government intervention in free enterprise. Private property was not to be infringed whether through regulation or taxation. Moreover, his was a conservatism that believed that humans were subservient to a divine will that ordered the universe. Thus, there were correct and incorrect solutions to social and political problems; both being, after all, moral/ethical dilemmas at root.

Taft, however, was not the only voice in the Republican party despite the “Mr. Republican” honorific bestowed upon him by Edwards (1999). Taft's midwestern conservatism stood in contrast to Thomas Dewey's eastern establishment wing of the party. These Republicans were apt to be self-styled intellectuals who were more likely to have accepted the main features of the New Deal and tended to be international in outlook. Often referred to as the “liberal” wing of the party, it would be nonetheless a mistake to conflate them with true New Deal ideologues.

²Hardisty (1999) in an unabashedly liberal history and critique designed as a manual for anti-conservative activism grants similar status to Taft. Thus his position is acknowledged on both the right and the left.

Liberalism is relative, and these easterners were relatively liberal when compared to their midwestern, western, and southern counterparts. Compared to liberal Democrats they were moderate at best. Perhaps the best characterization of the eastern wing is that they temporarily and partially tolerated the New Deal.

These two forces clashed openly at the 1948 Republican convention when the eastern establishment coalesced behind Thomas Dewey to deny Taft the party's presidential nomination. While Taft was bitter about his loss and was suspicious of Dewey's conservative credentials, he nonetheless backed the ticket on the belief that it would regain the White House for the G.O.P.. Dewey, despite the support of a unified party and seemingly invincible lead, lost.

Taft determined not to compromise his beliefs again and worked to insure for himself, a "true" conservative, the 1952 nomination. Thus began a conflict for the soul of the Republican party that would play out over at least the next 20 years. When in 1952 the eastern establishment once again thwarted Taft's effort with the candidacy of General Dwight Eisenhower, a man never embraced or trusted by conservatives, the split was complete. Conservatives would have to decide if their home was in the Republican party and, if not, then where?

Added to this was the emerging fear of nuclear war with the Soviet Union. The threat of communist expansion began to scare Americans in earnest by the late 1940s. Many found conspiracies and sellouts to be likely explanations for all manner of world events. The specific tone, tenor, and affairs of the times have been well chronicled elsewhere. It is this fear that gave conservatives their special edge and added an apocalyptic note to their public discourse.

Communism presented a convenient common enemy for both traditionalist and economic conservatives. After all, communism was an ideology characterized in America as anti-God,

anti-liberty, and anti-free market. Thus, for most traditionalist, Marxism was intrinsically wicked, materialistic, and atheistic. Further, it rejected nationalism and patriotism in the name of global revolution. On the other hand, those with economic priorities were more exercised by Communism's threat to property rights and free-markets. The practical benefit for conservatism was that there was now a unifying force drawing together two distinct threads of thought. Yet, there would be an eventual price to pay for that unifying force, as very real differences were muted under the threat of a common foe.

During the early 1960s the manichean rhetoric of certain conservatives was labeled "extremist," and there was a paranoid aura about the extremist faction. They described the world in transparent and absolutist terms. This was a world of black and white. "Rather be dead than red" was a slogan that captured their perspective. There was little of substance in their view to distinguish between a program of moderate socialism and doctrinaire Marxism/Leninism. Socialism was merely Communism's slippery slope. Extremists posited a worldwide conspiracy whose goal was nothing short of the global ascendance of communist ideology and governments. Internationalists and New Deal liberals within the American government were seen as dupes of this conspiracy.

While the early extremist crusade involved individuals far beyond those identified as conservatives or Republicans, it was to conservatives and the Republican party that the movement eventually emigrated. In the early years of anti-communism, marked by witch hunts and loyalty oaths, ideology and party affiliation were immaterial. Liberal and conservative, Democrat and Republican alike were equally suspicious of the camouflaged enemy. Later

though, when the initial furor of McCarthyism had died down, extremism became a phenomenon associated with the right by those both inside and outside extremist circles.

The extremist movement was a marginal affair and in most respects situated on the far right. As such one might question the possible benefit the movement might present to a resurgent conservatism. The answer in part lies in the very term movement. As Schoenwald points out “political movements are not easily defined” (2001, 5). I have thus far used the term quite loosely as a catch all to signify the conservative energy emergent in post-war America. However, in a stricter sense a movement “at a minimum must possess a group consciousness, with members identifying with each other and with common political aims” (5). The anti-communist movement had all of these as well as the concomitant grassroots, bottom-up movement building design that would eventually become the hallmark of the overall conservative movement.

Best typified by Robert Welch and the John Birch Society, grassroots organizing became an art among anti-communist extremists. Born partly of necessity (they often found themselves on the fringe of mainstream party activity) and partly of practicality (it is an exceedingly effective and economical avenue), grassroots movement building provided an outlet of influence for the extreme right. Local chapters met in living rooms around America. These cells would be loosely connected to movement leaders such as Welch. From here the troops would fan out, influencing their social networks, motivating like-minded voters, and winning election to local office. Below the level of precinct and caucus an almost stealth power developed. It entered the fabric of mainstream American political structures. As we will see later, this strategy still serves movement conservatives well as demonstrated by the organizing skills of the Christian Coalition.

As long as the Democratic party remained a dominant majority, intellectuals of the left believed with Trilling and Hofstadter, that a conservative movement had not yet arisen in America. With a righteous arrogance this elite consistently underestimated the power and influence of conservatism and continued to do so for decades to come. Nevertheless, movement building skills alone were not enough to offset the liabilities born by association with the extreme right. For conservatism to continue its ascendance, extremism would have to be dealt with lest conservatism be dismissed as a persuasion of the lunatic fringe.

In Defense of Extremism?

Concurrent with the rise of anti-communism during the 1950s was the development of an obviously intellectual conservatism perhaps best embodied by William F. Buckley Jr.³ Buckley had grown up in an eastern establishment household in Connecticut where traditional value commitments, a belief in divine guidance, and a strong devotion to liberal education governed. Upon graduation from Yale, Buckley (1951) published *God and Man at Yale*, a book detailing the alienation he felt attending a university founded for the training of the clergy that had lost its religious orientation and became a secular institution. Buckley gained an abundance of attention inasmuch as his credentials were not so easily dismissed by the intellectual community and his book expressed ideas not normally associated with the contemporary intelligencia of the 1950s. His ideas were conservative ideas and not so easily ostracized by Hofstadter's (1956) "pseudo-

³Buckley is far from alone as a conservative intellectual during this period. However, he became the best known and most influential of the group. Nonetheless, men such as the previously noted Russell Kirk, William Rusher, and James Burnham among others provided significant contribution to the emergence of an intellectual conservatism. Still, as Hodgson notes, "Bill Buckley is probably the most important single figure in the whole history of the revival of conservatism in late twentieth-century America" (1996, 71).

conservatism” invective. Additionally, they were probably distressing to Yale’s leaders who publically maintained that Yale was a Christian institution.

Up until this point, conservatives had lacked the cross pollenization between academia and government that marked liberal institutions. This dynamic began to change in the 1950s. Conservative intellectuals began to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the pragmatic and their ideas began to infiltrate and influence mass audience oriented writers and lecturers. “These populizers played a key role in disseminating information to audiences, whose members then helped spread the word even further” (Schoenwald 2001, 22).

By the mid 1950s conservative intellectuals inaugurated their own opinion vehicle. Persuaded by many of his intellectual colleagues, Buckley started *The National Review*, a public policy magazine with a distinctly conservative outlook. Conservative attitudes were beginning to gain force as an alternative to New Deal liberalism. As James Burnham later recalled “an idea in a few hundred heads” (cited in Nash 1976, 292) had won millions of adherents.

During this period, conservative intellectuals began to smooth over the differences among various sectors of the movement. William F. Buckley is generally credited with the advent of “fusionism,” although others argue that it was a group effort⁴. Fusionism refers to a mostly tacit strategy by conservative intellectuals to simply emphasize their commonalities and ignore their differences and, although imperfect from the start, laid the ground work for the post 1964 development and eventual ascendance of modern conservatism⁵.

⁴see Diamond (1995, 29-36) for this argument.

⁵Himmelstein (1990, 55-60) provides a detailed treatment of fusionism.

Still, the problem of extremism dogged the movement as the 1950s gave way to the 1960s and would have to be dealt with if conservatism were to become a governing ideology. Serious thought about forcing the ideological issue within the Republican party had gained momentum as movement leaders began to make designs on the 1964 Republican presidential nomination. Thoughts of party control became real with the late 1950s emergence of Barry Goldwater, a steadfast and unyielding conservative senator from Arizona who appeared to be perfect candidate material.

Barry Goldwater was first elected to a U.S. Senate seat from Arizona in 1952. Goldwater was a shoot-from-the-hip, devout conservative who unshakenly supported strength in national defense and fidelity to the free market. Schoenwald maintains that “with unshakable conservative ethics, Goldwater embodied the ‘anti-politician’; his frankness was perceived as an indication of his moral obligation to do good” (2001, 126). These qualities made Goldwater a party leader by the late 1950s.

Goldwater first came to the fore as a young protege of Joseph McCarthy during the height of the Wisconsin senator’s reign. Edwards notes that:

Many conservatives in the mid-1950s noticed the same pugnacious, quixotic, antiestablishment air in one of McCarthy’s young senatorial supporters: Barry Goldwater. Thus, when those who had supported Joe McCarthy for his anticommunism and Robert Taft for his Republicanism and Douglas MacArthur for his patriotism began looking for another leader, their eyes fell, almost inevitably, on the handsome young senator from Arizona. (1999, 72)

We find here the first signs of an accommodation among the various factions of conservatism embodied in an individual able to transcend differences while bringing to the table the core sentiments of each group.

Goldwater's rise was not without risk. In April of 1957 he had denounced President Eisenhower's fiscal policies by declaring them anathema to Republican ideals and amounting to a broken 1952 campaign promise. The attack catapulted Goldwater to the forefront of national media attention and drew a condescending response from Eisenhower. As Edwards characterizes the incident, "Ike could not have waived a larger red flag at conservatives"⁶ (1999, 84). Drawing the ire of a sitting president as popular as Eisenhower actually strengthened Goldwater's position among a constituency that would come to inherit the party apparatus in the 1960s.

By 1959 *ad hoc* citizen groups dedicated to a Goldwater presidential candidacy in 1960 began to emerge. Meanwhile, several conservative leaders (including Strom Thurmond)⁷ had made backchannel approaches to Goldwater about the 1960 nomination. In December of 1959 Goldwater met with conservative activist Brent Bozell and approved the manuscript of a ghost-written conservative manifesto to be offered under his authorship. "*The Conscience of a Conservative* was a skillful fusion of the three major strains of conservatism: traditionalism, classical liberalism or libertarianism, and anticommunism⁸. It presented unequivocal positions on a wide range of issues..." (Edwards 1999, 90). Barry Goldwater was the accepted leader of the conservative movement heading into the 1960 Republican National Convention.

Meanwhile, William F. Buckley and his brother James had been organizing in New York. Buckley had long realized the need for conservative institutions and began to develop the

⁶ As mentioned earlier, Edwards' narrative is decidedly pro-conservative. As such it prompts questions about the double meaning of the term "red flag."

⁷ Although gravitating toward the Republican party, conservatism at this stage was not a single party movement, particularly in the south.

⁸ Edwards posits anticommunism as a separate "type" even though anticommunists were likely also either traditional or economic conservatives.

Conservative Party of New York. Behind this effort was the idea that a conservative party could serve to move the Republican party to the right just as Buckley believed the Liberal party in New York had forced the Democrats to the left. Buckley clearly believed that the establishment of such institutions would help conservatism survive the coming and needed repudiation of the extremists, particularly Robert Welch and The John Birch Society. Edwards notes that:

All the ingredients of a national political movement were coming together: a charismatic political leader, Barry Goldwater; widely known populizers both young (Bill Buckley) and old (George Sokolsky); thinkers like Hayek, Kirk, and Milton Friedman in their intellectual prime; and two influential journals of opinion – *National Review* and *Human Events*. (1999, 97)

Meanwhile the agenda turned to the development of grass roots groups free of extremism to energize the movement.

Conservatives had now attained a position of influence in the Republican party. While in no position to dominate, they nonetheless felt it was time that their concerns were addressed. As the 1960 convention rolled around it was apparent to Barry Goldwater that he had no chance at the nomination. Goldwater already felt he had been sold out by Richard Nixon who claimed to have come to an understanding with Goldwater, yet had met with Nelson Rockefeller to formulate what came to be known as The Compact of Fifth Avenue, a compromise on platform issues. Still, Goldwater allowed the Arizona delegation to place his name in nomination as a “favorite son,” a formality designed to provide him both recognition and the opportunity to unite the party with an endorsement of Nixon. After a long and boisterous demonstration on the convention floor, Goldwater removed his name from consideration and asserted that not supporting the ticket was a tacit endorsement of socialism. Again, Republican conservatives felt

that they had been swindled by party elites. “It signaled the ongoing struggle between liberal king makers and conservative activists for control of the Republican party” (Edwards 1999, 94).

Following the narrow defeat of Richard Nixon at the hands of John F. Kennedy in the 1960 general election, the conservative movement maneuvered more forcefully to insure the nomination of a true conservative in 1964. Grassroots organizing was to be a crucial tool in this effort. Furthermore if a conservative were to be nominated it could only come with the losing of the albatross of extremism from around the conservative movement’s neck.

While it was clear to most conservatives that Goldwater was the candidate for 1964, he had an unfortunate manner of not only failing to renounce extremism, but sounding like an extremist himself. William F. Buckley in the early 1960s set about the task of resolving the extremist dilemma. So long as the label “extremist” could be attached to conservative leaders, electoral success would be impossible. The time for responsible conservatives to denounce extremism, to at the very least perfect a divorce from the readily identifiable extremist groups and leaders, had come.

Robert Welch and the John Birch Society were by now the most notorious extremist faction in America. They simply scared the average American. Welch’s group was grassroots at one level and a cult of personality at another. While the John Birch Society relied upon local chapters to effect their goals, they were simultaneously controlled in thought and action quite rigidly by Welch. Welch convinced his followers that a common front was absolutely necessary to the attainment of their goals. Welch himself projected a paranoid ideology in his discourse. The John Birch Society represented the ideal case study for Richard Hofstadter’s (1965) “paranoid style” trumpeting slogans such as “Get the U.S. out of the U.N. and the U.N. out of the

U.S.” and “Impeach Earl Warren.” Welch through his organization had alleged that President Eisenhower was either a “mere stooge” or “had been consciously serving the communist conspiracy for all his adult life” (Welch 1963, 276-279). Eventually Welch would assert that the civil rights movement was a communist plot designed to undermine freedom. “The Birchers did not restrict themselves to saying that communism was a present danger in the United States. They said the communists were already in control” (Hodgson 1996, 61).

The problem of what to do about the extremist was formidable. Goldwater had been disinclined to denounce the John Birch Society “citing the presence of balanced, hard-working conservatives as well as the kooks” (Schoenwald 2001, 137). After Goldwater met with Buckley, and Russell Kirk, both of whom wanted to disown the John Birch Society, a compromise was reached whereby they would condemn Welch rather than the entire group in hopes that this would allow them to disclaim extremism while retaining the grassroots support of John Birch Society members.

In February 1962, Buckley used the editorial pages of the *National Review* to address the issue. Schoenwald reports that:

In “The Question of Robert Welch,” Buckley and the other editors turned the tables on Welch, took apart his conspiracy theories, and declared “Woe unto the man who disagrees with Mr. Welch. He is 1) an idiot, or 2) a Comsymp [Welch’s label for “communist sympathizer], or 3) an outright Communist. (2001, 137)

Concurrently, they offered olive branches to the John Birch Society membership, noting their tireless work ethic, unquestioned patriotism, and dedication to conservative ideals. The Birchers were a good group of people who had been misled.

The scheme produced mixed results. While it did provide some cover for “respectable” conservatives as well as deliver a blow to John Birch Society membership numbers, “the

majority of members continued to parade Goldwater as *their* hope for American politics” (Schoenwald 2001, 138). Perhaps the biggest obstacle in breaking the link with extremism proved to be the prospective candidate’s mouth.

Goldwater had a way of making statements that shared a tenor and tone with extremists and was decidedly off-key to the mainstream American ear. Various in the period leading up to the 1964 election, Goldwater would suggest using nuclear weapons to defoliate the jungles in Vietnam, comment about “lobbing a-bombs” into the Kremlin men’s room, and warn of the greater danger of extremist on the left than of those on the right. Goldwater would neither make an unequivocal repudiation of the John Birch Society, nor moderate the off-the-cuff speaking manner that made him appear to be a member of the Birch Society’s vanguard.

Goldwater became an easy target of Republicans and Democrats alike. In mainstream media he was described as a man with an “itchy finger on the nuclear trigger,” and “a war hawk.” Were he elected “there might not be another tomorrow.” The coverage cascaded into an avalanche of unsubstantiated claims including a *Good Housekeeping* report that he had twice suffered nervous breakdowns in the 1930s, and an assertion by CBS’ Daniel Shorr that Goldwater “was in touch with the Right Wing in Germany⁹.”

Nonetheless, The disinheritance of the extremist in the months leading up to the 1964 election was important in separating the overall conservative movement from the extremist faction. This alteration would serve the movement well in coming years although it was too little and too late for Goldwater.

⁹All taken from Hodgson (1996, 104)

Concurrently, conservative intellectuals had been sharpening the notion of what it meant to be conservative at the same time the movement was entrenching itself in the realm of organizational and electoral politics. Both were necessary in order to fight the eastern establishment for control of the party in 1964.

In the wake of the defeat of Nixon the eastern wing was as equally disgruntled as the conservatives. Nelson Rockefeller and Michigan governor George Romney were both positioned to make a strong run for the 1964 nomination. Richard Nixon had bitterly retired from politics¹⁰. The eastern wing felt positioned to offer their vision of the Republican party and secure the nomination for their candidate. Conservatives viewed this move as business as usual. After all, they had seen their hopes hijacked in both 1948 and 1952, why not now? Of course this was not 1948 or 1952 – conservative skill at organization and electoral politics had matured during the decade plus since the final defeat of Taft.

The sort of coalition assembled by conservatives for the runup to the 1964 convention was eclectic to say the least. Edwards in his biography of Goldwater describes the crowd at a 1963 rally:

There were little old ladies in tennis shoes, truck drivers with tattoos, professors who read Mises rather than Keynes, right-wingers convinced that Wall Street and the Kremlin were conspiring to run the world, Southern whites who had faith in the Cross and the Flag, retired people on Social Security worried about inflation, Westerners tired of catering to Easterners, anticommunists demanding action against Cuba and Krushchev, small businessmen fighting a losing battle against government rules and regulations, readers of *The Conscience of a Conservative*, high school and college rebels looking for a cause. (1995, 180)

¹⁰Nixon's graceless goodbye following his defeat by Edmund brown in the 1962 California governor's race is one of the most famous moments in a famous man's life and needs to be chronicled no further.

The description, although littered with loose caricatures and stereotypes, paints a pretty complete picture of the conservative coalition of the early 1960s – a picture that retains remarkable fidelity in contemporary times. This was the movement that won the 1964 Republican nomination for Barry Goldwater.

However, this was also the movement that was trounced by Lyndon Johnson in the general election. Denied the support of eastern establishment conservatives and too easily associated with extremism by both the Democrats and the media, Goldwater lost in a monumental landslide. While at first the election results were demoralizing, the spirits of hard-core movement leaders soon began to buoy. They had succeeded in shifting the party to the right, secured the presidential nomination for one of their own kind, begun to legitimize conservative views, and, most significantly, established organizations and networks that would form the infantry for battles to come. Most eventfully, however, they had found the general to lead them into those future battles, Ronald Reagan.

Post 1964: The Conservative Movement at Valley Forge

The years immediately following the 1964 general election were at first cheerless for the conservative movement. Lyndon Johnson, bolstered by the mandate of 1964, drove the New Deal to what were previously unthinkable dimensions for conservatives. On the policy front the movement saw their beliefs further disregarded as they endured the nadir of leftist policy in American history. Yet, like Washington and the Continental Army at Valley Forge, they endured, preparing to fight on at a future date.

The leader for that next fight had been discovered almost by happenstance during the 1964 general election when Barry Goldwater asked old friend Ronald Reagan to deliver, on the

candidate's behalf, a version of the latter's stump speech to a national television audience. The speech, *A Time for Choosing* was a finely tuned set of remarks that Reagan had been giving for years as part of his spokesperson duties for General Electric. To assert that Reagan and the speech had drawn a cult following during those years would be extreme understatement. Conservative power brokers in California such as Henry Salvatori sat in on the speech on several occasions. It became a must-see event.

These same power brokers had already begun to look at Reagan as a political candidate by the time the speech was delivered October 27, 1964. Reagan clearly met the exacting standards demanded by movement conservatism. Long a staunch anticommunist, Reagan had realized he was no longer a Democrat when he perceived that a combination of New Deal programs and wavering moral commitments had made membership in the party untenable.

A Time for Choosing revolved around the theme of choice; choice between communism and freedom, choice between government interference and free market economics, choice between the New Deal slippery slope and a renewal of traditional American values, and choice between the liberalism of both the Democrats as well as eastern establishment Republicans and the new conservative orthodoxy. The speech is lauded by scholars, pundits, and reporters alike as a masterpiece. Reagan, as widely appreciated today, was a master orator. His training as an actor combined with a deeply felt conviction of belief and seemingly selfless persona gave him a type of ethos rarely encountered. His was an ethos of the trusted next door neighbor one had known their entire life.

While the speech was not a masterwork of logical argument, Reagan did challenge his audience to make powerful moral choices. His use of pathos intersected the trepidations felt by

many Americans in this volatile chapter of the cold war while suggesting that the correct choices dwelt in the house of contemporary conservative thought. In all Reagan expertly found the pulse of a troubled nation while revealing himself as a potential standard-bearer.

For the average viewer as well as the conservative activist, Reagan had all of Goldwater's good qualities while replacing the latter's negatives with glowing positives. Where Goldwater would often appear cold, dour, and aloof, Reagan was warm, cheery, and familiar. Goldwater looked like, and had been, a retail executive. Reagan looked like, and had been, a Hollywood leading man. Finally, Reagan, not tainted by the specter of extremism, was less likely to exit the stage with his foot in his mouth.

The impression that Reagan made with this speech would be remembered by both lay voter and movement activist alike. For the movement activist it would also offer hope for the future during a time that often seemed exceedingly bleak.

After the landslide defeat of Goldwater in 1964, the conservative movement recognized that its message would need to be further popularized if they were to secure election. A core of young conservative leaders such as Howard Phillips, Richard Viguerie, and Paul Weyrich set about to rebuild and reposition the conservative movement. Despite the efforts of Buckley and others, the movement had been unable to escape the extremist stigma in the 1964 campaign. Rebuilding revolved around the fund-raising skills of Viguerie, while repositioning was a collective effort at continuing to mainstream the conservative ideology and provide vehicles for cultivating attractive policies.

Viguerie, most significantly but not singularly, was the cornerstone of the conservative movement's new found fund raising strength. Viguerie had for some time been using file cards

and later computers to track donors to conservative candidates and causes. Then, during the heat of the 1964 campaign he realized that Federal law required recording the name of any contributor donating more than fifty dollars to a political campaign. Moreover, those records were public. Consequently, Viguerie and his staff began to access and copy those records. Next he formed a company, had the collected names computerized, and began doing “ideological” direct mail. William Rusher asserts that “the mailing lists accumulated during the Goldwater campaign were the foundation of all subsequent political activity on the part of American conservatives” (1975, 41). With this brainstorm the foundation of a powerful network that would become a formidable force in American politics was born.

Meanwhile, on the ideological front, movement conservatives were busy smoothing the hard edges of their message. Goldwater had too easily been painted as a racist in 1964. Hardisty argues that “in developing the more ‘modern’ message, these leaders dropped the explicit racism associated with the Old Right and its very public support for segregation, and highlighted a protest theme against a range of ‘social issues’” (1999, 38). The rest of the agenda remained unchanged with a continued focus on patriotism and anticommunism. Likewise, they continued to oppose government regulation and social welfare programs. To further sharpen their message, liberalism was adjoined as a transitional stopover on the road to communism. As Hodgson documents:

The ability of these groups, coordinating efforts with Viguerie and other direct mail fundraisers, to collect large sums of money for conservative causes resulted from the application of a new technology to the new legal framework for campaign finance. ... Their rise was a direct consequence of Viguerie’s perception that the Goldwater campaign showed there was money out there if you could scare or cajole it out of troubled conservatives. (1996, 114)

Conservatives had captured the party in 1964, but to retain control and assure the votes needed to gain power, concessions would be necessary. Of course, concession is a word that sounds remarkably like sellout to the true believer. Nonetheless, a steadfast ideological orientation that provided a foundation rather than a focus would serve their goals better. The focus would become pragmatic policy initiatives and, by the late 1960s, provided a wealth of issues for which conservative thought was well equipped. Schoenwald maintains that;

To capture power conservatives realized they could not simply preach the free market and a strong national defense and expect the public to agree without question. Conservative candidates who followed Goldwater's footsteps knew that they had to focus on breaking issues: the war, law and order, the civil rights and Black power movements, the emerging counterculture, and an economy that had begun revealing fault lines. (2001, 157)

The preparations at Valley Forge were productive. A more audience friendly movement began to emerge.

The effects on both Republican party membership and the general electorate became evident by the late 1960s. First, Ronald Reagan, capitalizing on the niche he had carved for himself in 1964, won the California governorship in 1966. Second, a new and (as far as conservatives were concerned) improved Richard Nixon reemerged as a candidate for the 1968 presidential nomination.

As mentioned earlier, Reagan had long been on the radar of California conservative leaders. Running in 1966 on a specifically conservative agenda that seemed to anticipate the times (emerging campus and urban unrest), he defeated incumbent Democratic Governor Edmund Brown by nearly one million votes. While it is true that Brown's tenure had been beset by problems that made change appear inevitable, this particular sort of change was truly

remarkable. After all, Nixon, a much more moderate candidate at the time, had lost to Brown just four years earlier.

During the campaign, Reagan, after being tightly controlled in the beginning, cast off the reins and proved to be a formidable campaigner with a sound grasp of the issues and an honestly conservative instinct that won respect from even his opponents. Reagan polled well among Democrats and independents as well as Republicans. If anything, Reagan had to be consciously under produced in order to not appear too slick. Gerald Popper, a campaign consultant instructed that:

Rather than projecting as an actor, we would rather have Ronald Reagan functioning as a commentator reporting from the pertinent scene. A man who knows the state's problems because he has learned them, not solely from books and lengthy reports, but from going out on the street and getting – first hand – the reactions of his fellow citizens. He is questioned and answers those questions. The answers may come quickly . . . sometimes there is an effort in phrasing the answer. Credibility! (cited in Schoenwald 2001, 207).

While it may not have been at the depth of a seasoned policy analyst, Reagan did, of course, have a grasp on the issues.

Since Reagan was clearly more dynamic, telegenic, and captivating than Brown, the latter took the only avenue that remained open; he attempted to paint Reagan as an extremist. The problem of extremism still dogged the conservative movement like a crazy old aunt in the attic. However, the charges just would not stick to Ronald Reagan. He was already beginning to demonstrate the teflon image that would serve him well in years to come.

Richard Nixon actually began his reemergence in the 1966 campaign by providing valuable support on the stump for a host of Republican candidates around the country. Not only did he buy favors by helping several victorious candidates, he further “quieted the questions

raised about his character and political appeal by the unhappy 1962 California governorship race” (Hodgson 1996, 120). Nixon was now positioned for the 1968 party nomination.

Although never fully trusted by conservatives, Nixon, although an admitted centrist, had shifted noticeably to the right. Moreover, his campaign combined with the gains of 1966 marked an end to the “me-too” Republicanism that conservatives had decried since the time of Taft. If compromise was necessary, then conservatives had learned the lesson well. Nixon gave them more of what they were after than was likely from any other electable candidate. He placed a steadfast law and order plank at the center of his campaign and promised “peace with honor” in Vietnam. Further, he touted a “New Federalism” intended to role back cascading government expenditures and mounting national debt. Of course, Ronald Reagan made a belated bid for the nomination, but it is doubtful that he was electable at this time.

Perhaps most noteworthy was the success of Nixon’s campaign approach. The narrow 1968 victory would not have been possible without his conscious “Southern strategy.” For the first time since reconstruction, the Democratic lock on the “Solid South” had been broken. Southerners, more conservative in general than the rest of the electorate, were beginning to recognize that they might be better off with their ideological brethren in the Republican party than remaining a fringe voice in the wilderness among Democrats.

For conservatives, the Nixon presidency was a disappointment in ways that had nothing to do with Watergate. Nixon had been all over the ideological map, imposing wage and price controls, forging a policy of *detente* with the Soviet Union, presiding helplessly over a now-ingrained counterculture, and being unable to arrest war, be it on the streets at home or in the jungles of southeast Asia.

When Nixon resigned in 1974 and the reigns of power were turned over to Gerald Ford, conservatives simply continued to reload for future battles. That Ford was not one of them was drawn into sharp relief by his choice of the despised Nelson Rockefeller to be vice president. Perhaps nobody more than Rockefeller represented the politics of appeasement better in the minds of movement conservatives.

Still, the movement building that had begun in the 60s continued. The movement embraced a protest message that gained steadily in popularity. This message resonated with long-time conservatives as well as new adherents, especially fundamentalist and evangelical Christians, southern Democrats, white ethnic working-class Democrats, and many previously luke-warm conservatives. The conservatism of the 1970s had shed its rigid my-way-or-the-highway tone while perfectly positioning itself to offer explanations and remedies for the broadening and seemingly unmanageable problems facing the country by the late 1970s. As Hardisty reports:

Three themes proved particularly effective in mobilizing [new conservative] constituencies in the late 1970s: Social ills are the fault of liberalism; free market capitalism delivers greater prosperity than that delivered by liberal economic programs; and the national defense is weak in the face of the communist threat. (1999, 41)

Certain social issues – abortion, school prayer, street crime – proved particularly effective as mobilizers. Still critiquing social ills was not enough. In order to mobilize, pragmatic alternative solutions that could restore economic security, traditional values, and national pride would need to be advanced.

As the conservative movement moved toward the zenith of its long sought victory, it was the strategy of grass roots movement building through the recruitment of activists, sympathizers, and leaders as well as their superior fundraising capabilities that were the key. These

mechanisms, developed and perfected over the previous two decades, were beginning to bear an heroic harvest.

The Reagan Revolution

Ronald Reagan began his first serious onslaught on the presidency with a challenge to incumbent President Gerald Ford for the 1976 Republican nomination. Ford was obviously vulnerable. The country was suffering from a combination of stagnant growth and runaway inflation that had been termed “stagflation.” Furthermore, Ford had angered many with his preemptive pardon of Richard Nixon for crimes he may or may not have committed. The Democrats appeared likely to take the White House.

Within Republican circles, support for Ford was lukewarm. Within the conservative movement, support for Ford was surrendered belligerently at best. Ford represented all that was wrong with the party in the minds of conservative leaders. He was just too centrist. Once again, conservatives felt that the time had come for one of their men to lead the party. Ronald Reagan knew exactly who that should be; Ronald Reagan. Thus, Reagan formally announced his candidacy in November 1975.

Support for Reagan leading up to the 1976 primary season was at a fever pitch among movement conservatives. After two successful terms as California governor, Reagan was clearly the leader of the conservative movement and a clear distinction could be drawn between him and “softer” conservatives as well as moderates within the party. However, the moderate wing was still strong in 1976 and, combined with the resources available to Ford as a sitting president, heisting the nomination would be an imposing task.

Beginning in New Hampshire, Reagan proved to be an impressive candidate. Support in New Hampshire was strong and early polls had him in the lead. With backing from the state's governor and the *Manchester Union-Leader*, Reagan appeared to be marked for victory. However, Ford's campaign put Reagan on the defensive with well placed attacks on the latter's plans to transfer several federal programs to the state level. Many today blame an overly protective Reagan campaign staff led by John Sears for the effectiveness of Ford's attacks. Edwards comments that "fearful of further missteps, Sears pulled Reagan out of New Hampshire the weekend before the primary election, neglecting to tell the candidate that his once-comfortable lead had evaporated" (Edwards 1999, 201).

Reagan lost by 1587 votes in New Hampshire, a margin of less than 2 percent. The momentum swung to Ford with ensuing victories in Massachusetts, Vermont, Illinois, and Florida. With the pall of a losing campaign descending, contributions began to thin. Many in the Reagan camp were now counseling his withdrawal including his wife Nancy and longtime friend and campaign chairman Paul Laxalt. However, Reagan resolutely forged ahead, defiantly determined to press on in the face of calls for him to quit. Simultaneously, he abandoned the muted approach of Sears and painted clear distinctions between his and Ford's policies. Clustering around core conservative issues such as the Panama Canal, detente, and the federal deficit, Reagan hit the campaign trail hard in North Carolina and secured his first primary victory.

Building on this energy, Reagan went on to victory in Indiana, Alabama, Georgia, and Texas. After his run of wins, Reagan was virtually tied with Ford heading into the crucial June 8 primaries in New Jersey, Ohio, and California. Some campaign miscalculations that mistakenly

read polls in California as closer than expected kept the former governor campaigning at home rather than Ohio until it was too late. Heading into the convention the nomination was still up for grabs.

In a play for uncommitted delegates, the Reagan camp announced that Pennsylvania senator Richard Schweiker (an eastern establishment moderate) would be the vice presidential nominee should Reagan secure the nomination. The gambit failed and Reagan lost on the first ballot in a close contest. Conservatives were left to lament what might have been and speculate as to who might be the conservative choice in 1980. Few expected a Reagan reprisal in four years. If for no other reason, his age would be prohibitive. However, the movement had come further than they could have hoped without a Reagan candidacy.

Nevertheless, Reagan *had* become a candidate and the movements' mechanisms proved to be quite formidable themselves. The new conservative coalition of anti-communists, economic conservatives, and social traditionalists (freshly infused with activists from fundamentalist and evangelical Christianity) supported Reagan with the fervor of crusaders. Pitchfork brigades may seem commonplace amongst today's right, but in the mid 1970s the awakening of the Christian right was an exceptional turn of events.

Long averse to involvement in "worldly" affairs, fundamentalists¹¹ began to believe that they could reverse the cultural degradation they perceived by organizing at the congregational level and sending the legions out in mass to swing elections in the direction of undiluted

¹¹ For ease of classification, I will begin using the term "fundamentalist" as a catch all for all Christian conservatives. Such is not intended to gloss over the very real theological differences between several discreet types of politically conservative Christian including fundamentalists, evangelicals, and charismatics.

conservative candidates. Ronald Reagan was just the type of candidate the fundamentalists could embrace. Still the involvement of Christian conservatives was in its nascence, the maturity of the movement would not come in 1976.

Movement building, which began in the 1950s and became a credo in the 1960s, developed into a power by the late 1970s. Not only were movement fathers still active, but a new breed was also beginning to make its presence felt. These were young conservatives of the baby boom generation and they tended to be even more “hardcore” and unyielding than the older generation.

Ford lost to Jimmy Carter in November of 1976, although not as badly as many conservatives had predicted. The Carter years were by many analyses a low period in contemporary America. Whether it was a result of Carter’s policies or the convergence of several economic and social trends at a particular time and place is still debated by scholars. The point is mute, however to this project. Whatever the cause, conservatives were especially dismayed by the Carter years and what they viewed as outright capitulation on both the domestic and foreign fronts.

Against this backdrop, Reagan announced in March 1979 that he would again be a candidate. The campaign immediately appeared different this time around. In stark contrast to 1976, Reagan was backed from the outset by dozens of Republican congressmen, senators, and party luminaries. Reagan was at long last the front runner and conservatives sensed the first opportunity since 1964 to nominate one of theirs for the presidency. This time they felt they had a realistic chance at additionally winning the office itself.

In another turn, Reagan was not the only conservative to enter the 1980 Republican field. Joining Howard Baker, Robert Dole, George Bush, John Connally, and John Anderson was Representative Phillip Crane, chairman of the American Conservative Union and a man considered by many to be more conservative than Reagan. Indeed Crane was the favorite of many of the baby boom conservatives who felt that even Ronald Reagan was too soft. That there was a candidate perceived as being more truly conservative than Ronald Reagan demonstrates how far the conservative movement had come since the days of Robert Taft.

The baby boom contingent is an important dynamic that Republicans would have to factor over the next 20 years. Now, however, was not the boomer's time. The party establishment was now much more oriented to the right than in past years. While the establishment still presented a large block of influence, they no longer had the monetary and process power to dictate the direction of the party. Of the candidates involved in the 1980 nomination process, four; Baker, Dole, Connally, and Bush were all closely associated with the old party establishment. Anderson was an anomaly even for 1980, a clearly liberal Republican.

As the primary season rolled on the centrist candidates split the establishment support allowing Reagan to mount an imposing lead. By May, Bush, the lone remaining challenger, acknowledged defeat. The conservatives would have their candidate for 1980. Nonetheless, several political tightropes had to be walked if victory in the fall was to be secured. Among these were formulation of the party platform and the choice of a vice presidential candidate. Both tasks needed to be accomplished in a way that was both true to Reagan's conservative ideals and politic enough to insure support of party moderates in the general election. Unlike with

Goldwater sixteen years prior, these conservatives would not take solace in any moral victory from merely gaining the nomination. Victory in the fall was a must.

The party platform was entrusted to Jack Kemp and Jesse Helms. With the committee co-chaired by an economic and traditional conservative a genuinely conservative document emerged that appeased all factions save the most liberal of Republicans, many of whom had bolted with John Anderson for a third party campaign. Platform highlights included a 30% tax cut, systematic deregulation, decentralization of government programs, a constitutional amendment banning abortion, opposition to the ERA, and a defense build up.

The vice presidential question was trickier. While not forgetting the uproar over the choice of Schwieker in 1976, the Reagan campaign nevertheless wanted to choose a candidate with broad appeal. Their first choice was former president Gerald Ford who they felt would assuage both party moderates and independents. However, negotiations with Ford (which appear to have included some sort of co-presidency) eventually fell through. The campaign then turned to George Bush who had run strongest among Reagan's primary challengers and who, while never completely trusted by conservatives, had stronger conservative credentials than Ford while at the same time maintaining some centrist appeal.

Bush readily accepted the nomination. Still movement conservatives were dismayed by either possibility. Phil Crane would have been more to their liking. A paranoid psychology permeated the movement in these days born of too many perceived sell outs over the years and strengthened by an increasing ideological rigidity. The odd coalition that is contemporary conservatism was about to win their largest victory and, in its aftermath, begin to discover just

how divided they actually were. Movement conservatives were anticipating nothing less than revolution. What was to come was something less.

Ronald Reagan won the presidency in a landslide in November of 1980. Movement conservatives sensed something truly remarkable. Not only had a coalition of disparate conservatives set aside their differences in order to attain a higher goal, but also the disintegration of the New Deal coalition seemed at hand. Reagan ran strong among working-class Democrats, conservative Catholics, and traditionally Democratic southerners. All three groups were key components of the Democratic victories for nearly 50 years.

Movement conservatives, however, were the constituency who felt that Reagan was obligated to them for his victory. And they were ready to call in markers as the new administration began to take shape. As Edwards reports, Reagan benefitted from

a vital, committed conservative movement. Reagan could turn to the Heritage Foundation, The American Enterprise Institute, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and other think tanks for ideas. He could call on groups like the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, the American Conservative Union, the National Rifle Association, and the National Tax Limitation Committee for political muscle. (1999, 225).

All these groups had agendas and, in return for their loyalty, they expected administration positions and policy proposals.

Indeed, many political appointments did accrue to movement conservatives and their allies. However, for every Edwin Meese there was a James Baker, for every James Watt there was a George Schultz. Movement conservatives saw themselves as crusaders who had divined the true path. Men such as Baker and Schultz, both moderately conservative, were useful allies at times. Nonetheless, they should not be in such central positions of power. Those positions should only be occupied by true believers.

Again, however, the establishment wing of the party still wielded substantial power. They had helped Reagan win as well and wanted their concerns addressed. This constituency wanted conservative minded reform of a pragmatic nature, not a complete and sudden overthrow of the old order. Reagan's advisors recognized this exigence and understood that balance was necessary in order to attain any measure of success. Alienation of longtime party regulars would doom future legislation and appointments. Success in both would demand a unified front among congressional Republicans.

Movement conservatives became increasingly disheartened. After a few early victories (tax cuts and increased defense spending most notably), progress seemed to vary between slow and nonexistent. Conservative revisionist history likes to lay the blame at the feet of the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives. However, it was Republican Senator Howard Baker who stood firmly in opposition to abolishment of the Department of Education, an emblematic illustration of Federal intrusion and waste in the minds of movement conservatives. Likewise, moderates within the administration influenced Reagan to abandon some orthodox conservative causes. In 1984 Terry Dolan, chair of the national Conservative Political Action Committee remarked that "We constantly hear nonsense about how conservatives are running everything. If that were true, we wouldn't have the biggest budget deficit in history" (in Judis 1992, 18).

Hodgson (1996)¹² reports widespread disillusion with the Reagan years among key movement conservatives. Paul Weyrich points out that "government grew dramatically during

¹² All quotes in this paragraph are from personal interviews conducted by Hodgson (1996).

the Reagan years. He didn't veto legislation to speak of. He didn't veto budgets. He really did not curb the growth of government" (249). Howard Phillips adds that "I don't think there has been any president in American history who was less engaged in the conduct of affairs than Ronald Reagan since Woodrow Wilson was confined to quarters with a stroke" (249). Of evangelicals, Ralph Reed charges that "evangelicals were taken to the cleaners. They helped Reagan to get elected; then he took no notice of them" (251).

Indeed evangelical appointments during the Reagan years were scant. Hodgson asserts that:

Reagan and his advisers decided to give a low priority to the "social issues" than to economics and foreign policy. From this standpoint, for all his rhetoric and that of others, he was indistinguishable from a mainstream Republican president, not a distinctively conservative one. (1996, 251).

The coalition that had elected a conservative had found governing to be a different proposition. Edwards claims that "However which way he tacked, Reagan often found himself being roundly criticized by leaders of the New Right, eager as always to find fault with a conservative for not being conservative enough" (1999, 235).

Only on the foreign policy front do most movement conservatives find the Reagan years to be truly revolutionary. The "Reagan Doctrine" as it came to be known represented just the sort of "get tough" policies advocated by conservatives of all stripes. The policy was straightforward. Gone would be the concessions of previous years that had marked arms negotiations with the Soviets. Additionally, the American economy would allow a level of military spending that would force the Soviets into either capitulation or economic suicide. However, some conservatives still felt that Reagan had abandoned the cause. Howard Phillips in a Bircean hyperbole charged that Reagan was "a useful idiot for Kremlin propaganda" (Chicago Tribune,

1987) after the administration had concluded a treaty banning medium-range missiles from Europe. “Was there, in fact, a Reagan revolution? With a surprising degree of unanimity, the leaders of the New Right insist that there was not” concludes Hodgson (1996. 248).

Different notions of what commitments were required for one to be considered conservative were surfacing among movement leaders themselves. How those distinctions aggregated and segregated will be examined in greater detail in chapter four. That there was and is something less than a monolithic conservative movement would become more apparent as the 1980s turned to the 1990s.

Beyond Reagan: Bush and the Mainstream

Lee Edwards makes a curious statement summing up the Reagan years. “Aside from the decline of the New Right, the 1980s were generally bountiful years for conservatives as all elements of a successful political movement came together: a consistent philosophy, a national constituency, requisite financing, a solid organizational base, media support, and a charismatic, principled leader” (1996, 241). How a movement could be successful while in decline is a peculiar notion. Moreover, asserting that there was a consistent philosophy and media support seems self-delusional. If the movement had indeed ascended, how then is George H. W. Bush explained?

By 1998 George Bush had served Reagan loyally for eight years as vice president. With this record, a popular president’s support, and the organization that accrues to those well placed he sought the Republican presidential nomination. There was no consensus among conservatives, however, as to who should carry the movements standard in the post-Reagan era. The opposition came from congressman Jack Kemp, senator Robert Dole, and televangelist Pat

Robertson. The movement predictably split among the candidates. Kemp attracted the support of the *National Review* and most economic conservatives. Robertson gained most of the social conservative support. Dole had varied support from a hodgepodge of more tepid conservatives. Bush, on the other hand, found most of his backing coming from more classically establishment sectors of the party. With the notable exceptions of Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater, both of whom endorsed him, conservatives lavished faint praise on Bush. Edwards contends that “Bush was not conservative enough for either the New Right or the Old Right, and so conservatives went their separate ways, thereby ensuring Bush’s nomination” (1999, 264).

Indeed George Bush was never trusted by conservatives. In prior years conservatives might well have sat the election out. But in a tribute to just how well conservatives had organized and recruited, they were able to sublimate their differences and present a unified front behind Bush once he had secured the nomination. Perhaps this is more a function of a desire not to denigrate Ronald Reagan’s legacy or the powerful revulsion evoked by a common enemy in the form of Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis. Even if both factors are true, the conservative movement demonstrated a maturity and through their unanimity rebuffed notions that the “Reagan Revolution” had been little more than a cult of personality.

With this consolidated support, George Bush easily won the 1988 presidential election. Upon election, most conservatives choose to stress the positive, accepting Bush as a conservative convert. He had pledged to not raise taxes and consistently emphasized conservative positions on most key social issues such as gun control, criminal justice, school prayer, and abortion. And the loyal manner in which he had served Reagan counted in his column.

Not all conservatives were as magnanimous. The movement's hardcore ideologues still mistrusted Bush and always had. Richard Viguerie in 1984 had called Bush an "elitist with life-long ties to the liberal eastern establishment" (1984, p. 6). Little had changed to alter that view. Edwards points out that the change in tone was almost immediate. Conservatives felt betrayed by Bush appointments. They perceived backdoor insults in Bush's "kinder and gentler" catchphrase and emphasis on ethics in government, both read as implying that the Reagan years were none of those things. Movement conservatives even "noted that the new president did not even mention the outgoing president's name in his inaugural address" (1999, 269). Much of this sounds like the machinations of a child not invited to a birthday party. Still, such feelings reveal the discomfort conservatives felt with Bush.

Many of the fears expressed by movement conservatives were realized shortly into the Bush administration. Despite his famous "read my lips" anti-tax pledge, Bush began to cave to pressure from Democrats and advisers in his own White House to cut a "deficit reduction" deal. For conservatives this tax bill was nothing more than a tax increase. Newt Gingrich, now a key elected leader among conservatives having risen from backbencher status in the late 1980s, refused to support the plan and, at times, was openly hostile. Movement conservatives were, on a whole, appalled by the deal. *National Review* accused Bush of repudiating Reaganism. *Human Events* spoke of unconditional surrender. And in a foreshadowing of the president's reelection fortunes, Pat Buchanan asserted that the administration embraced

continued growth in social spending – paid for by cuts in defense – and higher taxes on working folks. ... owls against loggers, feminists against Virginia Military Institute ... a New World Order where our wealth is spread around the globe through foreign aid and institutions like the United Nations and the World Bank. (1990, 5)

He concluded by warning that continuing to support Bush would mean the ultimate death of the “Reagan Revolution.”

Thus the dye was cast. In 1992, despite having successfully conducted the Persian Gulf War, a stunning reversal of fortunes accrued to George Bush. His chance at reelection was in trouble. Not only had conservative support become lukewarm at best, but there was also a stagnant economy in recession. He faced an impassioned challenge from Pat Buchanan for the Republican nomination that served to further erode the president’s conservative credentials in the eyes of movement conservatives. By the time of the general election campaign, Bush was forced into an unenviable position. The 1992 Republican National Convention was portrayed by many as being more appropriate to Nuremberg in the 1930s. Easton characterizes the convention as “a strange outpouring of hostility, the war dance of the modern conservative movement” (2000, 242). While such accounts are an exaggeration and likely overestimate the average American’s involvement in party convention happenings in the age of 100 plus channel cable t.v., Bush was, nonetheless, cloaked with the image of Buchanan’s “Culture Wars” speech and the appearance of an insensitive and intolerant party. He was forced to rhetorically embrace a hard core conservatism and risk alienating the independents and working class Democrats that were crucial to Reagan. In so doing, he cast his lot with a movement that believed in him less than ever. For many conservatives, there was little difference between Bush and George McGovern.

Bush appeared almost comical spouting the conservative orthodoxy on the campaign trail. So desperate was the campaign that several appearances featured polarizing talk show host Rush Limbaugh. By October it began to appear that Bush was simply going through the motions.

His opponent was more conservative than any Democratic party nominee in quite sometime. Bill Clinton could not be tagged as the typical New Deal liberal. Moreover, billionaire Ross Perot mounted an independent campaign that attracted many conservatives that had become increasingly wary of social causes. Indeed, with the Cold War off the table, the only key conservative constituency that Bush could count on was the social brand. And there support was less than enthusiastic.

By now many social conservatives, particularly fundamentalist Christians, had set upon a new movement strategy. In the wake of the perceived betrayal by Ronald Reagan and the failure of Pat Robertson to achieve more success in 1988, they turned to a bottom up approach. The newly formed Christian Coalition, led by Ralph Reed, set about to elect candidates to local offices such as school boards, city councils, and zoning boards. From there they would infiltrate state legislatures and continue up the food chain. The president was not seen as truly committed to social goals and, while Bush remained the preferred choice of fundamentalists among the three candidates in 1992, their resources were divided as they embarked on this new strategy.

Bush predictably went down to defeat in November 1992. Edwards notes that “conservative reaction to Bush’s defeat ranged from sarcastic to frustrated” (1991, 291). *National Review* editor John O’Sullivan eulogized Bush as having “inherited an impregnable fortress from Mr. Reagan and set assiduously about undermining the Ramparts” (1992, 6). *Human Events* despairingly inquired, “Who would have thought that a Republican president closely identified with the Reagan revolution would be defeated by a Democratic challenger campaigning against him from the right” (1992, 2)?

The baby boom conservatives who were unsure of Ronald Reagan's conservative credentials were wildly distrustful of Bush. They failed to grasp the Reagan credo of being willing to accept most of what you want with some compromise rather than demanding complete capitulation and winding up with nothing. Hardisty observes "because the leadership is focused on a narrow ideological agenda, the right is often unable to compromise in order to work with those who are not adherents. In the real world of electoral politics ... the ability to engage in give-and-take is not just desirable but necessary" (1999, 64). The intoxicating confidence with which they expected complete revolution came home to undermine Bush. As Easton summarizes:

if the baby-boom conservatives were honest, they would have to look in the mirror. And if they did, they would have to acknowledge some hubris that prevented them from seeing how the Right's message at times scared mainstream Americans. America's connection to conservative ideas is there, to be sure, ... But bereft of Reagan as hero, and Moscow as enemy, the new conservatives lost that connection. (2000, 244)

Furthermore, they often failed to realize that they were practicing two distinct forms of conservatism.

The reasons for Bush's defeat are complex and are not simply reduced to a lack of conservative enthusiasm. Conservatives had by now begun to delude themselves, never fully understanding the dynamics that carried Ronald Reagan into office. Bush also suffered from the end of the Cold War. Losing this issue removed the key element of Buckley's fusionism. However, the newly elected president would prove to be a passable replacement for the lost "common enemy" and soon anticommunism was replaced with antiClintonism as the unifying element for movement conservatives.

The Movement Reformulated

Bill Clinton's presidency was met with open defiance by movement conservatives. They saw in him the archetype 1960s counterculture liberal. To many it appeared that Clinton was under attack from the outset. Rush Limbaugh opened his short-lived television show by tracking the number of days the president had been in office with an "America Held Hostage" graphic and segment evoking Ted Koppel's *Nightline* broadcasts during the Iranian hostage crisis of the Carter years. "Don't Blame Me I Voted For Bush" bumper stickers appeared before Clinton had even been inaugurated. Failure was predicted across the board by conservatives. And Bill Clinton helped.

Shortly after assuming office, Clinton attempted to tackle what came to be known as the "gays in the military" issue, squandering his "honeymoon" period and sharpening the cultural divide in the minds of movement conservatives as well as many centrist Americans. His effort at health care reform was equally inept and was easily portrayed by opponents as a revolutionary leftist social program. With a large push from the Democratically controlled Congress, the man who had run to the right of Bush, a New Democrat, appeared to be reconstructing the Great Society. Clinton quickly became a lightning rod for unified conservative opposition. The attempt to remove gender barriers in the armed services was hated by social conservatives. Health care reform scared economic conservatives. AntiClintonism was born.

The movement quickly sprang into action. The constellation of grassroots political organizations, creative fund raisers, conservative journals, and visible leaders had long been firmly in place by the Clinton presidency. Hardisty argues that

To the grassroots warriors of the right's mass-based organizations, Bill Clinton embodies the moral degradation that has inspired their crusade. The right's leaders have educated

them to see Clinton as a pot-smoking, draft dodging, adulterous, criminally minded representative of the 1960s generation. When the time came for the right to mobilize against Clinton, its vast machinery was in place. (1999, 66)

Against this backdrop Newt Gingrich continued to formulate a plan to put Republicans in control of Congress for the first time since the 1950s.

Gingrich argued beginning in 1990 that the nation faced a watershed and suggested five goals that would result in an American renewal and offer hope and opportunity to all. The five ideas centered around government ethics, crime reduction, economic growth, privatization, and tax reduction. Here is the nascence of the “Contract with America.” In early 1993 Gingrich met with Tom DeLay and Dick Armey, House colleagues and potential rivals for leadership, to begin charting the course for both a complete conservative takeover of the Republican party as well as a Republican take over of the House.

By the spring of 1994 conservatives could clearly sense the possibility of success. Off term and special elections during 1993 had been swept by Republicans. Against this backdrop, Gingrich convinced House Republican candidates to gather on the steps of the Capitol in September to announce support for a unified party platform. Gingrich and Armey then set about collecting input for platform items and meticulously refining content and language. The finalized document was termed the “Contract with America” and was enthusiastically embraced by a majority of conservatives despite the contract purposefully ignoring social issues such as school prayer, parental choice, and abortion. Social issues were omitted because leaders felt they would have a polarizing effect on the electorate.

Despite once again having their issues strategically ignored, fundamentalist Christians for the most part expressed enthusiasm for the platform, accepting the idea that the economic relief

offered, such as child tax credits, helped further their family values goals. Ralph Reed asserted that “the most urgent challenge for pro-family conservatives is to develop a broader issues agenda.” Traditional conservatives would need to “speak to the concerns of the average voter in the areas of taxes, crime, government waste, health care, and financial security” (1993, 31). Some support was, however, tepid. Paul Weyrich noted that the contract “was primarily an economic document” that ignored the “reestablishment of values in our culture” (cited in *Human Events* 1994, 16). Support for the contract would anticipate a more rigorous open debate between social and economic conservatives in the later 1990s concerning government’s role in value issues.

The signing of the contract demonstrated sophisticated media and public relations acumen. The ceremony on the Capitol steps included a marching band, recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, the stars and stripes, and patriotic bunting. Gingrich served as keynote speaker and proclaimed that “today on these steps we offer this contract as a first step toward renewing American civilization” (Warner and Berley 1995, 182). The contract gained widespread media attention and almost immediately was polling favorably. The presentation of a unified party program in an off-year election was novel and created a sense of immediacy around the fall campaign that is normally lacking when the presidency is not on the ballot. In succeeding weeks similar signing ceremonies were staged at state houses and city halls across the country.

Capitalizing on the momentum created by the contract ceremony, Gingrich and Bob Dole crisscrossed the country campaigning for Republican candidates. Movement organizations were active as well; raising funds, mobilizing grassroots forces, and activating the growing conservative talk radio network. The party supported candidates with funds and advice.

Particularly effective was their ability to tie Democratic candidates to Clinton. Most memorable was the oft used tactic of electronically morphing the opposition candidates image into that of Clinton. The contract became a referendum on Clinton as much as a set of policy goals. And Clinton played into the Republicans hands. Rather than ignore the contract, he instead launched a concerted and forceful attack on the document.

The convergence of the contract and conservative institutions yielded the hoped for results. In November of 1994, Republicans won an emphatic victory securing control of both the House and the Senate. Not one Republican candidate for Congress was defeated. Results at the state level were equally impressive as the party gained control of 17 additional state houses and a majority of the nation's governorships. The local results are often overlooked but gave Republicans control over thousands of patronage jobs, critical to the consolidation of power and a key advantage in growing the party. Activist Grover Norquist, a baby boom movement conservative, pointed out that the results at the state and local level provided Republicans with "a strong farm team for future statewide and national elections" (1995, p. 9).

Whether the strong support Republicans received in the Fall of 1994 was a result of movement activism, hunger for the contract, or disillusionment with Clinton is debated to this day. Regardless, the movement once again perceived a mandate.

Commentary in the immediate aftermath contributed to conservative's haughty expectations. Clinton's ability to govern was widely questioned in the national press. Gingrich himself termed the president irrelevant to the agenda in Washington. All of the contract's provisions were quickly brought to the floor of the House and most were passed. But passing legislation is not enacting legislation and, due to a less than revolutionary zeal among Senate

Republicans and the veto power held by the president, only five of the 21 legislative initiatives prompted by the contract were enacted into law. Still, several landmark measures were among those enacted including tax cuts and a balanced budget agreement.

However, as before when conservatives exulted in the glow of the final ascendance of conservatism, movement leaders overplayed their hand. Even among conservatives contract supporters endorsed the plan for several different reasons stemming from diverging agendas. Within a year of the 1994 revolution congressional Republicans saw their public approval ratings nosedive and again found themselves on the defensive. There was an arrogance and rigidity about movement conservatives in the period immediately following the 1994 election. As with 1980, they failed to realize that the 45% of Americans that did not support their views represents a large number of people in a country of 280 million. Many who had voted Republican, particularly Democrats and independents, soon felt dismayed. More traditional Republicans in Congress wanted, as did Ronald Reagan, to reform government, not dismantle it. Democratic representative Barney Frank remarks that Republicans “mistook public dissatisfaction with excesses in government for hatred of government. People are not ready for a radical repudiation of a governmental role in society” (CQ Almanac 1995, p. 1).

Commentator Mona Charen (1996) provides a five point autopsy of the 1994 revolution. First, Republicans assumed that the case for cutting government was not in need of being continually reinforced. The hubris infecting movement leaders prevented them from considering that their 1994 victory may have been driven by factors other than their ideology. Second, One or two reforms should have become the focus rather than the wholesale and rapid introduction of legislation. They created an image of themselves more in keeping with Lenin’s vanguard than

that of the framers. Third, leaders, particularly Gingrich, allowed their personal agendas to interfere with the movement's agenda. Charen singles out Gingrich's intemperate remarks linking the first government shutdown to his felt snub at being forced to the back of Air Force One on the trip to the funeral of Israeli premier Yizhak Rabin. Gingrich was widely panned as a cry baby. That it was more about Gingrich than good government was driven home by the now-speaker's 4.5 million dollar book advance – an advance he later renounced only after the damage was done. Finally, they badly underestimated Clinton's resolve leading up to and during the twin government shutdowns of 1995 and 1996.

Clinton reversed the tables during the budget crisis and effectively killed the latest conservative bid for revolution. The media savvy that they displayed in the campaign of 1994 was missing in the budget crisis. Republicans allowed Democratic leaders and groups to effectively portray them as heartless extremists. Conservatives inability or unwillingness to mount a compelling counterattack allowed Democratic characterizations of events to reify into received wisdom. Some doubtlessly allowed the extremist label to stick because they were in fact extremists.

Republicans had again squandered substantial political capital at a blinding pace. As the 1996 presidential primary season dawned, Bill Clinton, just 14 months removed from a staggering defeat and exile in irrelevancy, appeared solidly positioned to win reelection in November. Clinton was able to position himself in the political middle in 1996 returning to his centrist roots. Ironically, Republican victories in 1994 may have afforded him the luxury. Gone were the Democratic congressional majorities that had forced his leftward shift. Republicans further aided Clinton's occupation of the middle with a primary season featuring a battle to

determine who was most truly conservative. Here is another point at which fusionism failed and differences, sometimes bitter, over what counted as conservatism came to the surface rather prominently.

The 1996 field included single issue candidate Steve Forbes and his flat tax, Pat Buchanan with a mix of social conservatism and Robert Taft protectionism, Phil Gramm, an economic conservative mostly off the radar, and frontrunner Bob Dole who had tried to remake himself as a staunch conservative but appeared to many to be the likely nominee based solely on inheritance. Analyst Ramesh Ponnuru argued that the Reagan coalition split in the absence of a unifying candidate. Conservatives “badly overestimated their power in the nominating process.” Further, they needed to apprehend the urgency to continually recruit and convert conservatives. Conservatives had failed to hold the coalition together within an anti-statist consensus and to resolve “cultural and economic anxieties” (1996, 36-39).

Dole eventually won the nomination and was clearly a compromise candidate. He was a loyal life long Republican who had payed his dues and was now owed his time at bat. Movement conservatives could live with Dole in place of the polarizing Clinton but were never enthusiastic over the man Gingrich had called “the tax collector for the welfare state.” Dole went on to run an unfocused fall campaign that had him resign his Senate seat and experience a conversion to supply side economics. The tax cut proposal fell on flat ears in good economic times. The Clinton campaign masterfully stole page after page out of the Republican’s 1994 play book continually running television spots featuring black and white images of Dole and Gingrich holding a budget crisis press conference. The implication that this was the actual Republican ticket hung around Dole’s neck like a lit kerosene necklace.

Clinton won reelection in a landslide. While Republican's retained both the House and the Senate, they were now on the defensive. Republican fortunes at the state and local level were also positive. Nonetheless, movement conservatives felt that they had squandered a great opportunity over the last two years. Clinton also demonstrated an enriched political savvy when he declared in the 1997 State of the Union Address that "the era of big government is over." The president had moved to the right leaving Republicans with little but extreme positions with which to draw distinctions between their philosophy and that of the White House.

Gingrich also adopted a modified course. He became more pragmatic and conciliatory. The American electorate had blamed him and the Republicans for the government shutdowns of 1995 and 1996. The party had managed to portray themselves as ideological zealots. A battle ensued between those who actually *were* ideological zealots and those with a more moderate mind set. Interestingly, Gingrich, by becoming more accommodating, had angered his own constituency – those ideological purists whom he had led into power in 1994.

In July of 1997 Tom DeLay and Bill Paxson attempted a coup against Gingrich. Their power play was designed to remove Gingrich as Speaker of the House and force a resumption of ideological battles with the White House. Dick Armey declined to participate in the plan and the gambit failed with the result that Paxson was removed as House leadership chairman. Still, even in failure, the attempted coup revealed much about divisions within the Republican party and the conservative movement. The ideological warriors of the baby boom generation almost fully supported the effort to remove their leader. The public image of this group as a guerrilla band of unyielding ideological warriors was further strengthened. Moreover, the Republicans simply appeared unable to govern.

For his part, Gingrich, along with Senate majority leader Trent Lott, began meetings with the White House that resulted in a compromise to balance the federal budget by 2000. Completed in the summer of 1997, the budget deal was immediately repudiated by movement conservatives. *Human Events* (1997) characterized the deal as a surrender that would guarantee the continued growth and cost of the federal government well into the next decade. Stephen Moore (1997) of the Cato Institute argued that the deal was an historic setback for the conservative movement and nullified key tenets of the Contract with America. Steve Forbes compared “Clinton versus the GOP to Cortes versus the Aztecs – a swift wipe out of a proud but unprepared people” (cited in Edwards 1999, 315). Thus, opinion organs, think tanks, and movement leaders representing a fairly representative cross section of movement institutions from both main types of conservatism, all voiced disappointment and outrage with the compromise.

With conservatives once again having snatched defeat from the jaws of victory in the three years following one of the movement’s greatest triumphs, President Clinton once more reminded the movement of the nemesis around which they could rally opposition. In January 1998, reports began to surface of a sexual relationship between the president and a 21 year old White House intern.

Accusations of an oval office dalliance between the president and Monica Lewinsky confirmed every misgiving movement leaders had held for Bill Clinton. Conservative institutions immediately began capitalizing on the reports as proof of the ignoble character of the president. Independent council Kenneth Starr sought and was granted permission to expand his long-running inquiry into the president’s conduct to include this new matter. Specifically, Starr sought

to determine whether the president had committed perjury when queried about Lewinsky during a civil suit deposition. Interestingly, despite first lady Hillary Clinton's famous accusation that there was afoot "a vast right-wing conspiracy that has been conspiring against my husband since the day he announced for president" (Washington Post, 1998), several prominent conservatives seemed content to ignore the burgeoning scandal. Newt Gingrich, in particular, was more concerned with promoting the Republican legislative agenda for 1998. Gingrich was, in retrospect, prescient. Most Americans felt that the story had crossed a line and had descended into a pruriently motivated invasion of privacy. Nonetheless, a scandal driven media blitz all but drove the affairs of government out of public consciousness.

Whether "conspiracy" is the appropriate term, there was a concerted conservative effort to undermine the president from the day he was elected. Indeed, that the Lewinsky affair ever came to light, is at some level an offshoot of this effort. Clinton was, however, an enemy of the doctrinaire conservative cause. That some type of coordinated effort to damage him would be undertaken should surprise nobody. That it was a machine-like conspiracy misunderstands the differences among the varied veins of conservatism. Gingrich and others of an economic bent could care less about sex. Many were not even all that concerned about perjury. Social conservatives, on the other hand, viewed the scandal as representative of the nation's moral decline made all the worse by desecrating sacred ground, the White House. "How can we watch the news with our families and explain the president's behavior to our children?" was an oft repeated refrain. Moreover, what message does this send to our youth if there are seemingly no consequences for such behavior? While conservatives were able to unite against Bill Clinton to a degree, they had often diverging reasons beneath the surface for their solidarity.

As the scandal deepened throughout the summer months, independent council Starr readied a report to Congress outlining what he felt to be impeachable offenses. The report arrived in September and House Republicans almost immediately authorized an open ended impeachment inquiry by the Judiciary Committee. Meanwhile, with the 1998 mid-term election approaching, Gingrich reversed course and decided to use the scandal to rally support for Republican congressional candidates and to damage their Democratic counterparts. Again, conservatives misread the overall degree to which Americans agreed with them. The combination of forceful attack ads as well as the sanctimonious and judgmental performance of several Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee cast Republicans as heavy handed and unfair. For trifling reasons, they were trying to bring down the president during the greatest economic expansion in history.

The strategy was an abject failure. Republicans became the first party since the civil war to lose seats to a setting president's party during his second term. Movement conservatives had once again overplayed their hand. Many immediately scapegoated Gingrich for the loss. While it is true that the Speaker eventually reversed course and spearheaded the attack on Clinton during the campaign, there was little dissent among conservatives over the viability of the tactic. Indeed many, only a few months prior, had been critical of the absence of this very approach. Others became self-reflexive and found in the defeat a different message. Many social conservatives, most notably long-time movement organizer Paul Weyrich (1999), argued that it was now clear that the notion of a moral majority in this country was a myth. Instead, most Americans did not agree with the agenda of social conservatives. The 1998 election demonstrated that the only

honorable avenue for social conservatives was to drop out, to live separately from secular society.

Within three days power had coalesced around an initiative to remove Gingrich from power. Robert Livingston, a representative from Louisiana, announced a challenge for the post of speaker. By Friday Gingrich stood down as speaker and resigned his House seat. Ironically, Livingston's candidacy was short-lived as reports of serial infidelity quickly surfaced. He too would remove his name from consideration and resign his House seat. The very issue that Republicans had attempted use to destroy Clinton had destroyed many of them instead. Undoubtedly, Weyrich took this into account when writing his famous letter.

With House Republicans voting to press the impeachment issue to a Senate trial, public opinion of the conservative movement often included words like "hypocritical." For speaker they choose Dennis Hastert, a pragmatic conservative from Illinois who in style is the antithesis of Gingrich. Many movement conservatives had always been lukewarm to Gingrich. He was never particularly enthusiastic about the social agenda and often seemed to be focused more on himself than the movement. Turning victory into defeat and compromising on key issues are the twin Gingrich legacies in the minds of many conservatives. With the Clinton era coming to a close, Democrats were in a better position heading into the 2000 election than most dreamed possible.

Following, the embarrassments suffered at the hands of movement conservatives in federal office, many leaders turned outside the beltway for a presidential candidate for 2000. George W. Bush son of the former president and governor of Texas quickly emerged as the frontrunner. Conservatives felt it critical to unify around a candidate early and Bush appeared to be the most electable choice. His conservative credentials were seen as more solid than those of

his father. Additionally, he had proved able to work well across party lines and had criticized the self-destructive tendencies of conservatives on Capitol Hill, a plus in 2000.

Uniting the disparate ideological components under one banner might prove more difficult than ever in 2000 in the wake of the open wounds still festering from the squandered opportunities of the 1990s. However, conservatives did a reasonable job of doing just that and, despite a bitter primary fight with maverick senator John McCain and a Pat Buchanan third party bid positioned on the right in the general election, George W. Bush captured the presidency in probably the most bizarre presidential election in American history.

The question remains whether conservatives will be able to subsume their differences well enough to govern. Obscuring this problem has been the shocking terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. There are still significant differences among the two main variants of conservatism. The 2000 election provided nothing remotely resembling a mandate to govern with the sort of ideological purity demanded by movement conservatives of either traditional or economic variant. The story has for 50 years revolved around the movements ability to create unity when addressing one another only to allow critical differences to paralyze them when in the position to apply fire to steel. The need for fusion was recognized early by William F. Buckley and others. Communism and the Cold War served as a rallying point for forty years. In the 1990s Bill Clinton replaced the East as common enemy. Still, tensions remain at the dawn of the 21st century.

How the essential tensions, the cultural and economic anxieties that Ponnuru contemplates, between economic and traditional conservatives played out during the 1990s will be the subject of chapter four.

CHAPTER 4

THE DUAL PATHS OF CONSERVATISM

Civil society . . . (is) predicated on giving the widest possible latitude to the individual so that he has sovereignty over his own life.

Edward H. Crane

There has to be one party that will stand up for our sovereignty and stand by our workers who are being sacrificed on the altar of the Global Economy.

Patrick J. Buchanan

The several voices of conservative thought in contemporary America can produce a disparate cacophony. Contradictory ideas and conflicting allegiances now claim the master rubric “conservative.” The expanded term risks the loss of coherent definition. If everything is conservative then nothing is conservative. Much like a theory, such broad application saps the term of explanatory power. Nonetheless, I argue that we can decipher two clear, primary foundations amongst contemporary conservatives; that of the traditionalist and that of the economic conservative. As the opening thoughts from two prominent conservative thinkers indicate the divisions can be subtle.

As outlined in the previous chapter, the conservative movement has seen a coming together of groups with differing fundamental commitments. In a real sense, the last half century of conservatism has been a story of what Burke would call “identification through division,” an assembly of differentially motivated individuals embracing a cafeteria of causes. However, there is more to the story than a simple *quid pro quo* alliance based on opposition to world communism. Both Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson led the nation into costly conflicts in the

fight against world communism and neither would be called conservative. Nor would either be embraced by the conservative movement.

My goal in this chapter is to provide a synthesis that allows examination of conservatism as a movement that can, at base, be rendered into the traditionalist movement on one hand, and the economic on the other. After briefly making the case for a two-headed movement, I will present as rhetorical artifacts, speeches, delivered in the 1990s, that reveal the movement's differing commitments while also revealing a homology of language that allows a delusional sense of oneness to surface – a sense of oneness that has allowed the movement to experience electoral success at the same moment internecine warfare lurks just beneath the surface. At times the divisions may appear subtle, at others brutally obvious. Often shared images and ideas are used to mask divisions and to achieve pragmatic goals.

My choice is to focus on speeches¹ rather than other rhetorical artifacts such as platforms, policy statements, and media advertisements. Speeches better reveal competing rhetorical visions which are targeted to particular audiences. Too often, op-ed pieces and other mass audience texts are written with multiple constituencies, potential constituencies, and opponents in mind. They are respectable journalism pitched to a centrist audience, not “red meat” speeches with clear rhetorical visions. The speeches I have chosen are those that have been delivered to what can be comfortably assumed as friendly audiences. Such is not to say that the audiences are entirely

¹In employing speeches I am relying on the published texts of delivered addresses. I have made no attempt as was often requisite in traditional public address studies to verify that the published text is *exactly* as the speech was delivered. While such background may be important when assessing immediate effects on an audience or performative nuances, neither is relevant to this study. Indeed, as with Cicero, the fact that the speeches might have been later edited to express the thoughts of the rhetor more effectively rhetor makes them more relevant to a work examining the overall flow of a movement as opposed to a momentary snapshot.

homogeneous, they are not. The point is that they can safely be believed to consist largely of traditionalists, economic conservatives, or a mixture of both. Speeches of this type are characteristic of the movement's attempt at managing its divided consciousness. Their prose is particularly revealing of both the contradictory and synthesizing commitments animating the movement.

Spokespersons for the traditionalist movement will be two former Republican Party presidential candidates. Patrick J. Buchanan and Alan Keyes are both seminal figures in the advance of the traditional conservative thought. Buchanan has a long history of involvement in conservative causes dating back to his days as an aide in the Nixon White House. He has maintained a long-term television presence as a conservative commentator and ran failed presidential campaigns in 1992, 1996, and 2000. Keyes is a former Reagan administration diplomat rising to the rank of ambassador. He was twice the Republican Senate nominee in Maryland and unsuccessfully sought the Republican presidential nomination in 1996 and 2000. Both of these spokespersons express sentiments that lie at the core of the traditionalist movement. They are animated by a belief in the existence of *a priori*, divinely ordained principles that govern truth and justice, thus right and wrong. In their view, social organization gains its legitimacy from essential first principles rather than popular will. In general terms these men find their foundations in what is commonly termed the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Traditional conservatives as a whole root themselves in what we often refer to as the bloodline of Western thought. Former Congressman J. C. Watts has characterized the mentality of conservatism as being based on “transcendent truth, personal responsibility, and duty to others.” He further points out that “American democracy was created for self-governing

individuals – people who did the right thing whether or not anyone else was watching. It was created for people who honored the golden rule not because it was a rule, but because they understood that it was truly golden” (2000)². Watts clearly views the Western tradition as being divine in origin. Some emphasize the religious components of that tradition more than others. Others find our contemporary Western ethic as simply being the perfection of centuries of human culture – the right way without feeling much need to place their faith in what Sir Isaac Newton memorably termed the “watchmaker.” Nonetheless, both types, as well as several other nuanced permutations, can usefully be grouped within traditional conservatism.

Typical of the economic lode of conservatism are two leaders of independent conservative groups. First, Edward H. Crane is the president and founder of the Cato Institute, a think tank dedicated to the advancement of a economic conservative agenda. While Crane and the Cato Institute profess a scholarly distance from the political fray, they generally come down on the side of the “conservative” or Republican position when the black-or-white, us-or-them, realities of election season set in. Jack French Kemp is a former N.F.L. quarterback and multi-term Republican congressman. Kemp also served as secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and occupied the second spot on the 1996 Republican presidential ticket. Kemp is now a director of Empower America, a conservative think tank and advocacy group. Both men maintain a prolific speaking schedule offering economic conservative rhetoric to audiences across the nation and insuring a wide dissemination of their ideas.

²Citations in this chapter that are absent page numbers come from World Wide Web sources. As such, page numbers are n/a. Documents of this type are cited by specific URL location in the references section.

As with the traditionalists, several permutations of economic conservatism exist. The most recognizable are the purely libertarian conservative and the free market conservative. However, all economic conservatives are united by a deep mistrust of government and a philosophy of unrestrained, world-wide economic activity. The libertarians tend to be scientific thinkers who believe in the perfectability of the human condition through pure liberty. Free market conservatives embrace much of the same agenda without commitments to such nonmainstream ideas as drug legalization. There is nearly universal agreement among economic conservatives that pure free trade is the best and only viable policy. Most economic conservatives also believe in free and completely open borders, because, in theory, such policies benefit everyone.

For the economic conservative, justice is an offspring of freedom. These are individualists who may or may not have room for a divine being in their ontology. While there may be differences as to how far freedom should go among economic conservatives, freedom is nevertheless the shared organizing principle providing their common substance.

Thus, there are two distinct intuitions. The traditionalists champion an ordained universe founded on transcendental ideals which provide the authorization for justice and, therefore, liberty. The economic conservative may or may not find divine inspiration. Frankly the question for these folks is mute. Economic conservatives advocate financial and personal freedom as the condition by which justice accrues. Essentially the two groups can be sorted by reversing cause and effect. When justice is the cause and liberty the effect, one is dealing with a traditionalists. When liberty is the cause and justice is the effect, one is considering the economic conservative.

I will now turn to an examination of traditionalist rhetoric from selected speeches delivered during the mid 1990s. Following, I will look at economic conservative addresses from the same period. Next will analyze how the two blend and create a surface similarity. Finally, I will explore the differences in emphasis among seemingly common terms.

The Traditionalist Inspiration

Traditionalist conservative discourse reveals several core motifs. To uncover the central drive, common thematic elements will now be culled from speeches by Pat Buchanan and Alan Keyes. The result will yield a unifying vision, anchored in first principles.

Patrick J. Buchanan.

Longtime, political operative and commentator Pat Buchanan began to enter the trenches of electoral politics in the early 1990s. This move resulted in three successive unsuccessful presidential campaigns. In 1992 he challenged incumbent President George H. W. Bush for the Republican nomination. He returned to challenge favorite Robert Dole for the 1996 party nomination. Finally, in 2000, he migrated to the Reform Party in a final effort to make it to the general election and secure a forum for his conservative vision.

Buchanan's signature speech during the 1992 election season was actually delivered after he had left the race. Known almost universally and notoriously as "The Culture Wars" speech, this address was intended to satisfy the norm whereby defeated candidates coalesce behind the nominee in a perfunctory show of unity at the party's convention. Delivered on August 17, 1992 in Houston, Texas, this is Buchanan's *1992 Republican National Convention Speech*.

Buchanan begins by satisfying the expectations of the situation. Here he acknowledges Bush as the nominee and pledges the support of himself as well as his followers. Additionally,

the expected attacks on the Democratic ticket and the liberalism there embodied are offered. These generic components continue through the first 13 paragraphs³ before Buchanan begins a transition that turns the focus of the address to his value-laden vision of conservatism. He announces that “The presidency is also America's bully pulpit, what Mr Truman called, "preeminently a place of moral leadership." George Bush is a defender of right-to-life, and lifelong champion of the Judeo-Christian values and beliefs upon which this nation was built “ (1992). Clearly a religious foundation for the core values of the nation is being fashioned. A foundation which attempts to paint Bush as the defender of the faith for the purpose of defining the movement in the traditionalist model. Bush’s tepid support of cultural conservative issues makes an unlikely symbol, but he is the only available standard bearer and Buchanan wants to portray the party and the ticket as embracing his vision and thus, shape the coming debate in the general election in terms favorable to traditional conservatives⁴.

Buchanan then outlines his interpretation of the Democratic Party’s agenda in a series of paragraphs contrasting his caricatured view of their positions with the conservative way of Republicans. The binary terms of the political dialectic are sharply focused with a synopsis of the Clinton agenda for change:

. . . abortion on demand, a litmus test for the Supreme Court, homosexual rights, discrimination against religious schools, women in combat – that’s change all right. But it is not the kind of change America wants. It is not the kind of change America needs.

³The generic components mentioned are standard fare for a convention speech by a defeated candidate pledging support to the nominee. Thus, they are irrelevant to this study and will be ignored.

⁴An interesting subtextual reading of this speech can argue that the “culture war” Buchanan speaks of is as much between the competing factions within the movement as it is between the right and the left.

And it is not the kind of change we can tolerate in a nation that we still call God's country. (1992)

Throughout this sequence the economic conservative's concern with market issues is ignored.

Buchanan's attack is grounded in moral issues as defined from a Judeo-Christian world view.

Later in the speech, Buchanan again turns to his reasons for first challenging but ultimately supporting Bush for the nomination. Again we encounter a sequence of paragraphs arguing a perceived convergence with the nominee on social issue positions.

In quick succession a constellation of policy positions are then offered that help flesh out the Buchanan concept of freedom for the discerning listener or reader. Here is the core of the address and the primary reason it is remembered to this day.

Yes, we disagreed with President Bush, but we stand with him for freedom to choose religious schools, and we stand with him against the amoral idea that gay and lesbian couples should have the same standing in law as married men and women.

We stand with President Bush for right-to-life, and for voluntary prayer in the public schools, and against putting American women in combat. And we stand with President Bush in favor of the right of small towns and communities to control the raw sewage of pornography that pollutes our popular culture.

We stand with President Bush in favor of federal judges who interpret the law as written, and against Supreme Court justices who think they have a mandate to rewrite our Constitution.

My friends, this election is about much more than who gets what. It is about who we are. It is about what we believe. It is about what we stand for as Americans. There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America. It is a cultural war, as critical to the kind of nation we will one day be as was the Cold War itself. And in that struggle for the soul of America, Clinton & Clinton are on the other side, and George Bush is on our side. And so, we have to come home, and stand beside him. (1992)

In a rebuff to Al Gore, Buchanan further notes that "The central organizing principle of the republic is freedom."

Buchanan makes no mention of the free market concerns and raw notion of freedom championed by economic conservatives. This complete omission implies a repudiation of that other brand of conservatism. Further, censorship of pornography and voluntary prayer in schools can hardly be classified as free market issues. The Clinton/Bush contrast is followed by the conclusion that “we *have* to come home” and speaks to the sort of identification Burke marks as springing from unification against a common enemy – a pragmatic, instrumental sort of identification – not an identification of truly shared substance.

Less than three years later, on March 20, 1995, Buchanan announced his candidacy for the 1996 Republican nomination in a speech at the Manchester (NH) Institute of Arts and Sciences. In this speech, Buchanan begins with revolutionary fervor denouncing mainstream leadership on both the left and right. He contends that:

The Buchanan Brigades are not leap-year conservatives. We have borne the day's heat. We have labored in these vineyards from the very first hour. And we stand here today to resume command of the revolution that we began here three years ago—because we intend to lead that revolution to triumph and into the White House in 1996.

But this campaign is not about yesterday. It is about tomorrow. It is about America's future. It is about taking America forward toward the dream of a Constitutional Republic that first stirred in the hearts of the boys who stood their ground on the Lexington Green and the men who held at the Concord Bridge. This campaign is about an America that once again looks out for our own people and our own country first. (1995)

The link to nascent days of the republic roots the cause in traditional conservative imagery while the vineyard metaphor links religious and soldierly images and suggests the more revolutionary concept of a just war.

Buchanan next outlines in the following several paragraphs what he sees as a sellout of the American dream by the forces of free trade. He asks;

What are we doing to our own people? What is an economy for if not so that workers and their families can enjoy the good life their parents knew, so that incomes rise with every year of hard work, and so that Americans once again enjoy the highest standard of living in the world? Isn't that what an economy is for? (1995)

Buchanan is clearly attacking free market proponents of all stripes whether “New Democrats” or economic conservatives. However, few Democrats take the pure free market positions associated with the economic variant of conservatism, preferring instead to link free markets to environmental and standard of living benchmarks. They are for free trade provided that vigorous mechanisms are in place to shield the environment and insure a livable wage. As such, this attack may be read as directed mainly at economic conservatives.

At this point Buchanan begins to consider a familiar litany of social issues that reflect the same commitments found in the 1992 convention speech. He passionately confronts school choice and prayer, homosexual rights, federal court intransigence, right-to-life, and a popular culture polluted with sex and violence. To this he adds the issue of sovereignty including the need to fight a war against illegal immigration and argues for distancing ourselves from multilateral organizations such as the United Nations. He is particularly adamant when it comes to the notion of allowing international agreements to influence policy at home as well as permitting American troops to serve under any flag but the Stars and Stripes.

And we Americans must also start recapturing our lost national sovereignty. The men who stood at Lexington and at Concord Bridge, at Bunker Hill and Saratoga, they gave all they had, that the land they loved, might be a free, independent, sovereign nation.

Yet, today, our birthright of sovereignty, purchased with the blood of patriots, is being traded away for foreign money, handed over to faceless foreign bureaucrats at places like the IMF, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and the U.N. (1995)

This isolationist drive represents a further distancing from the core concepts advanced by the economic conservatives.

Finally, Buchanan exploits the power of a sense of loss. His language equates a lost Edenic America with an erosion of conservative principles.

When many of us were young, public schools and Catholic schools, Christian schools and Jewish schools, instructed children in their religious heritage and Judeo-Christian values, in what was right and what was wrong. We were taught about the greatness and goodness of this land we call God's country, in which we are all so fortunate to live. (1995)

He attributes the loss of "God's country" to the active agents of secular materialism. Under this influence children's minds

. . . are being poisoned against their Judeo-Christian heritage, against America's heroes and against American history, against the values of faith and family and country.

Eternal truths that do not change from the Old and New Testament have been expelled from our public schools, and our children are being indoctrinated in moral relativism, and the propaganda of an anti-Western ideology. . . ."What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his immortal soul?" That is true also of nations. No matter how rich and prosperous we may become in material things, we cannot lose this battle for the heart and soul of America. (1995)

In the concluding paragraphs, Buchanan offers himself as a committed defender of the conservative faith:

I pledge to you: I will use the bully pulpit of the Presidency of the United States, to the full extent of my power and ability, to defend American traditions and the values of faith, family, and country, from any and all directions. And, together, we will chase the purveyors of sex and violence back beneath the rocks whence they came. . . . In the history of nations, we Americans are the freedom party. We are the first people, the only nation dedicated to the proposition that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And nothing can stop to stop us from going forward to a new era of greatness, in a new century about to begin, if we only go forward together, as one people, one nation, under God. (1995)

Buchanan's conclusion uses the language of the Pledge of Allegiance, the Declaration of Independence, and other primary American documents to celebrate conservatism, thus identifying Americanism with traditional conservatism..

At first blush, Buchanan's 1995 speech seems to hold little new. While he continues, extends, and sharpens his 1992 themes, he also further delineates the schism between traditional and economic conservatives. Indeed the most remarkable aspects of this address is his rejection of the global market.

He devotes but a single section of the speech to economic concerns by announcing a protectionist orientation that would disentangle the United States from global free trade agreements and put barriers in the way of forces threatening American jobs.

When I am elected president of the United States, there will be no more NAFTA sellouts of American workers. There will be no more GATT deals done for the benefit of Wall Street bankers. And there will be no more \$50 billion bailouts of Third World socialists, whether in Moscow or Mexico City. . . . We're going to bring the jobs home and we're going keep America's jobs here, and when I walk into the Oval Office, we start looking out for America first. (1995)

Buchanan demonizes three icons revered by economic conservatives; GATT, NAFTA, and Wall Street bankers. Protectionism is anathema to economic conservatives and that Buchanan chooses to use the only substantial time devoted to economics in support of policies diametrically opposed to free market concerns is remarkable in and of itself. Perhaps more so than the actual argument, this move is revealing of the basic split between the protagonists.

Buchanan's vision of conservatism in the 1990s is clearly a traditional view. His focus on essential first principles and tradition as prior to freedom and liberty place him squarely in the camp of Russell Kirk. His protectionist impulse and anti-immigration stance would be worthy of Robert Taft. Buchanan, in 1992, told us who he perceived as his audience, what he thought a conservative was. In crying the alarm of impending globalism he spoke of them:

My friends, even in tough times, these people are with us. They don't read Adam Smith or Edmund Burke, but they came from the same schoolyards and playgrounds and towns

as we did. They share our beliefs and convictions, our hopes and our dreams. They are the conservatives of the heart. (1992)

Buchanan's vision of the people moves conservatives from a group whose nation has come loose from them to the guardians of core American values.

Alan Keyes.

Like Pat Buchanan, Alan Keyes has long been a familiar face among conservatives, working as a commentator, party operative, and government official. Keyes entered the electoral fray with two unsuccessful attempts at a senate seat from Maryland before entering the national arena with a bid for the 1996 Republican Presidential nomination. Keyes again sought the nomination in 2000. Along with Buchanan, Keyes is one of the key spokespersons articulating a traditional conservative vision.

An emblematic Keyes' speech is *The Declaration of Independence and the Spirit of American Law*, delivered as the Thomas Aquinas College President's Day Lecture on February 21, 1997 in Santa Paula, California. Coming on the heels of the failed 1996 presidential bid, this address provides a wonderful synopsis of Keyes' view. Along with the other Keyes address to be considered in this section, it represents a ground laying for the 2000 election season and a bracketing of a "true" conservative vision.

Keyes begins predictably with an attack on the moral fiber of Bill Clinton woven with an apocalyptic characterization of "creeping lawlessness" (1997) in America. Clinton's act is a synecdoche for America's moral decline. After a few paragraphs of implying a direct linkage between the criminal character of the President and the criminal character afoot on our streets, Keyes begins to advance his traditional conservative vision. He provides his diagnoses of the problem thusly:

But I think we have reached the point where we have to realize that what we are actually dealing with is the consequences of a breakdown of that internal regime of self-discipline and self-control, which is the best preventative for crime in the first place. Known variously as "character" or "moral discipline," it actually prevents people from committing crimes, because they no longer have the mind set of the lawless. (1997)

Here is a clear traditionalist belief that prior principles provide humankind with a necessary foundation for justice and freedom.

Keyes goes on to argue that right and wrong have been conflated with success and failure -- that an unwavering commitment to foundational values is critical to making a distinction between the former and the latter. In a characteristic paragraph he contrasts situational ethics with morality based on transcendental foundations:

And what is that mind set? Well, I think it's basically a mind that says that you do whatever you can get away with, and that understands that success (that is, getting away with it) is the only measure of whether what you have done is wrong--because, of course, in this context the word "wrong" has no moral connotations. It simply means that you made an incorrect move, and got punished for it. . . . That sense that there is no fundamental distinction to be drawn in action between right and wrong, except that which is determined by the consequences, is, I believe, the real key to understanding the difference between those who are law-abiding and those who are not. (1997)

Obviously, Keyes is attacking relativism and what traditional conservatives believe to be the undermining effect of postmodernism. Elsewhere Keyes conflates postmodernism with the political philosophy of the Democratic party, and what he regards as the excessively individualist political philosophy of economic conservatives.

Here, he provides a brief discussion of what he terms the poor record humans have accrued concerning justice and places the everyday effects as being revealed in the concrete saga of centuries of human misery. The core problem is a relativist orientation that brands as "good" what one can get away with provided it has been done skillfully. Good is function of the execution of the means.

Now, I think you can look over the course of the centuries of human history, and you can see that that understanding of justice--though the spectacle isn't unrelieved, in terms of human misery, it's pretty bad. The great fabrics of despotism, all over the world, rested in the end on some version of this--when the sword and that will of the conqueror were in the end the only things that constituted the difference between the lawful and the lawless. Or, to put it another way, the difference between the lawful and the lawless was whatever the strongest lawless person said it was. I think that this spectacle of human history is not real attractive to most of us. And its consequences, in terms of human misery and oppression, did lead people over the course of the centuries to seek alternatives--most of which ended up being mere utopian speculations. (1997)

Keyes discussion of the Declaration of Independence illustrates the basic strategy. He explicates the function of a political term in a secular manner and then “elevates” it to transcendental status. Thus legitimacy is explored as a foundational principle of secular authority. A consideration of the “deeper” meaning of the term reveals a mystical grounding somewhere “beyond human will” and “beyond human strength.” Ultimately Keyes finds authorization for liberty in God.

We live, however, in the context of a nation in which that rejection of the idea that might makes right is not just a speculation, but was, in fact, the explicit basis for the foundation of the country. When the Founders of this country set forth the idea in the Declaration of Independence that governments, in order to be legitimate, have to be based upon the consent of the governed--when they, by adopting that principle, put in place the basis for what has become our system of self-government--they did so declaring quite explicitly that the reason that this idea of legitimacy was correct had to do with a principle that acknowledged that there is a ground for justice in human affairs that goes beyond human will, beyond human success, beyond human strength, and that establishes a principle by which justice can be understood and determined, and through which even those who have no strength and no prospect of success can nonetheless claim to be respected in their basic dignity, can seek justice, can declare grievance, even against their well-armed oppressors.

That principle, stated in the Declaration, was very simple: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." (1997)

While Keyes uses the “founding fathers” as his authorities, he treats them as vessels for a greater authority.

Keyes continues to develop his argument in traditional Christian terms. Liberty becomes a necessary condition of the doctrine of free will.

The Founders articulated the principle "all men are created equal," but they also went on to say something about the source of that equality: "and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights." For a moment, we shall put aside the cavils that are bound to be raised by those who adhere, these days, to this idea of the separation of church and state (we'll talk about that a bit more). And we will simply point to the fact that what that means, if it means nothing else, is that our rights are not the result of any human determination. Even if we are not willing to agree exactly on what the word "Creator" connotes, even if we are not willing to talk in any positive way about what might be the attributes of this Creator, we do know that, if what the Declaration says is true, then by negative inference our rights do not have their source in any human determination or will. We can safely say that. . . . Now, I would have to say that if we then look at the logic of the American Declaration, it goes from that recognition of a transcendent ground for the claim to human rights, to the conclusion that in order to be legitimate--which is to say, "lawful," in the larger sense, or "just"--government must be based upon a principle that respects the existence of those basic rights, which is the principle of consent. From these ideas flow, then, the consequences of self-government that we live with every day. (1997)

The argument is complete. The traditionalist conservative mantra, liberty, freedom, and human rights are gifts from the creator and the Declaration represents a wise and righteous use of these gifts..

Now the Constitution and all its guarantees are only relevant insofar as we respect the hand of God and the body of tradition. Church and State may be separate spheres, but the state's authority rests upon spiritual foundations, and its powers are utterly dependent on the larger moral order.

Keyes further buttresses his position in the succeeding paragraphs with a treatment of the *Federalist Papers* as well as other writings by the framers. Then he turns to an attack on the economic conservative who prefers a conservatism outside the traditional framework.

I go through all of this because it seems to me it is impossible to understand the meaning of the Constitution, or the meaning and intention of the Founders in putting it together, if

you don't do it against that background. And this is why it surprises me, sometimes, when we encounter people who otherwise have the reputation of being conservative in their understanding of the Constitution, who reject that entire background as irrelevant. There is a contradiction here: one at the simple level of logic, and the other at the larger level of principle. (1997)

Thus it is. Keyes finds as “curious” conservatives who focus on rights first as opposed to the authorization for those rights. This is a central point of contention between the two sides. Which is prior?, the rights endowed upon us by the document or the transcendent authorization for the document. Keyes would obviously answer the latter, while economic conservatives would argue for the former. Keyes vision is more communal, more hierarchal with a focus on responsibility. And he finds the economic conservatives position a kind of self-serving individualism. For Keyes “if you are unwilling to acknowledge the principles on which it (the Constitution) was based, then you do not respect the original intention of the Founders. And, at bottom, your ‘originalism,’ your ‘conservatism’ is just another arbitrary whim” (1997). The phrase “just another arbitrary whim” diminishes the economic conservative’s position by characterizing it as opportunistic relativism.

Mounting a second attempt at the Republican nomination, Keyes spoke before the Conservative Political Action Conference on January 23, 1999. Against the backdrop of the deepening Clinton/Lewinsky scandal and the impending Senate impeachment trial, Keyes frames the scandal as a symptom of moral decline.

Keyes begins with a direct attack, noting that Clinton “is a liar” (1999a). He then quickly establishes the premise that Clinton’s fate in the trial reflects our fate as a nation – failure to impeach him may be a synecdoche for national moral failure: “I think affirming, rather than rejecting, his conduct will help to destroy the moral foundations of this country. And that will be

deeply threatening, not only to our moral character, but, as many people seem to fail to realize, immediately to our safety” (1999a). In high Roman fashion, Keyes has tied Clinton’s behavior to our future as a free and sovereign country and attached grave consequences to those actions.

Here we have a clever rhetorical move to employ an omnipresent national story to invest a sense of immediacy in an time-honored traditional conservative motif, a motif Keyes has kept at the core of his conservative vision throughout his public life. Moreover, the advancement of this agenda represents, once again, a case for the traditional brand of conservatism as the only “true” conservatism.

Having established the relevance of the present situation to the constitution of conservatism, Keyes sharpens the alarm and focuses the remainder of the address on the Biblical motif of the time of testing:

This country, as is evidenced by the great crisis we are in, in our national institutions, is in the midst of the greatest moral crisis in our history. That moral crisis threatens the survival of our free institutions. We must deal with that moral crisis as the top priority of our national concern, or we will lose our republic and lose our freedom. It is simply true. (1999a)

Continuing, Keyes next cautions that the typical policy initiatives undertaken by the conservative movement are nearly irrelevant. For him they reflect the empty materialism of the liberals:

You THINK that we can talk about taxes, and Social Security, and education. "We've got this conservative agenda. We have to pursue it, and then we're gonna win support," and so forth. "And we can put those moral issues on the back burner somewhere, and deal with them as they come along." And the only reason you think that, I think, is that you haven't thought it through. (1999a)

For the next several paragraphs Keyes lays his alternative foundation. One by one he dismisses policy concerns such as education and social programs as utterly vain. The economic

conservative agenda does not favor moral accountability. In sum, moral issues are prior to economic issues – not vice-versa as has been the typical conservative style of governance.

Keyes continues to advance his position adamantly throughout the core of the speech.

The critical conclusion to his line of reasoning is affirmed just past the midpoint of the talk.

Isn't it interesting? Every element of our key conservative agenda is founded on the same assumption: that people are responsible enough to make choices for themselves; that they have the capacity to do what is right for themselves, for their children, for their parents, for the family. . . . We stand for individual responsibility and the recognition of it. . . . The arguments that we are based on, and they are making, are not economic arguments and they are not political arguments. They are arguments premised on the moral capacity, or lack thereof, of the American people. . . . We have been attacked most successfully on our moral plank, on the basis of the premise that you can't trust people because they don't have the moral capacity to do what is right. They won't do it. They will be selfish, they will be greedy, they will be careless, they will be indifferent to the future and to the obligations they have to one another. . . . That is not an economic argument. And that is not a political argument. It is a moral argument. (1999a)

In subordinating economic issues to moral idealism, Keyes actually provides strong counter arguments for liberals and egalitarian leftists who might wish to attack the conservative movement.

Many economic conservative ideas come from 19th century economic liberalism, thus they have little or no direct connection with traditional conservatism. Furthermore, the willingness to ignore foundational principles on the part of economic conservatives saps the movement of all legitimacy. Economic conservatism is undermining the movement as a whole.

This idea is driven home in the final sequences of the speech.

I have, as you know, a fairly broad background. I have been involved in foreign policy. I have been involved in budget issues. I could stand up here and tell you what you want to hear, probably a little bit better than most other people, on any issue you want. Why is it that instead I have spent and will spend every chance I get, before you and every other audience in this country, emphasizing one fact? We are in the midst of a moral crisis; we must return to the fundamental moral principles that this country was based on. We must address the issues that involve our rejection and destruction of those principles, starting

with the issue of abortion and the need to reverse Roe vs. Wade, and get ourselves back on track in terms of our Declaration principles. And why do I put it first? I put it first, I put it at the top of the agenda, I say it everywhere, I will never leave it behind--because we will not win as conservatives until we have won the battle for America's moral renewal. We will not win as conservatives until we have done what is necessary to defeat the liberal lie that our people do not have the moral capacity to be free. We will not win as conservatives until we have once again reestablished the strong moral heritage and foundation of this nation, and the principles of judgment and right action that allow us to know with confidence that we will not abuse our freedom, we will not abuse our money, we will not abuse those rights which God has given us, any more than we did when we built this country great, and strong, and free. (1999a)

The movement is in peril and the “liberal lies” are being fostered, confirmed by conservatism’s willingness to maintain its governing focus on the economic agenda.

Keyes rhetoric shreds the Reagan coalition between economic and traditional conservatives. He makes it plain that there is only one brand of conservatism after all. No olive branch is offered or big tent republicanism endorsed. Keyes is an agent of political purity, not one of building winning coalitions.

We have got to understand that there is no hope for us as conservatives if we follow the pied pipers of political expediency . . . who tell us to "put all that stuff on the back burner. Let's talk about the taxes; they love that. Let's talk about Social Security; they love that. Let's talk about what we are going to do for school choice; they love that." All that is important, but we will win none of those arguments, as long as the American people are led to believe that they are not morally fit for the role that our policies give them; as long as they believe that they will abuse the money, abuse the freedom, turn their backs on their responsibilities as parents and human beings. So you see, the reason that I spend so much time talking about it is because there is no hope for America if we don't put the moral crisis at the top of our concern. And sadly, there is no hope for conservatism either. (1999a)

In the final analysis, Keyes roots everything in a transcendent moral order. He represents the Kirkian notion of conservatism as not being an ideology, but rather more like a crusade. For Keyes politics is more than a struggle for advantage. It is the public implementation of moral belief.

Keyes' conservatism is clearly evangelical, the closing passages of the speech are a call to repentance as well as a call to arms. Keyes notes that "in order to sustain self-government, you must sustain the character that it takes to be free" (1999a). And how does one go about sustaining that character? Character comes from "moral discipline" and deliberate submission to divine authority.

Our Founders knew that. That is why they built this country on moral premises that reflect the basic truth that is, I think, at the heart of all moral probity: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." So many people speak the language of rights these days: the left, the right, everybody's all about rights. Why is it that we forget that the great Declaration is actually a statement, first and foremost, about the authority from which our rights derive? And that authority is NOT the Constitution; that authority is NOT the Supreme Court; that authority is NOT the President; and it is NOT the will of the people. That authority is the will of the Creator, God. And our willingness to accept the truth that, in our exercise of freedom, we must stand before the tribunal of that authority, is, in fact and in the end, the bedrock strong foundation of moral discipline--we must restore our respect for that truth, in order to restore the foundations of our moral will and judgment. (1999a)

I know of no more naked statement of the foundational principles of traditional conservatism than that advanced by Keyes in this address. Freedom is subordinated to order. Adherence to universal first principles conditions all individual action. Keyes rhetoric sums up the traditional movement from Russell Kirk to the present. The social and cultural freedom of liberals is disdained. The economic freedom of economic conservatives is mentioned but rarely, and such freedom can only exist within a framework of obligation and accountability.

While Keyes doesn't explicitly name economic conservatives as the object of his ridicule, his choice of policy issues and his denigration of materialism and individual indulgence clearly mark them as a target – a target shared by Pat Buchanan and a considerable community of other traditional conservatives. Economic conservatives value freedom above order. Their

arena is global and individual, not national and communal. An examination of some representative economic conservative rhetoric will illustrate the deep gulf between the two political voices.

The Economic Conservative Impulse

Like the traditionalist, economic conservative discourse can be found in nearly pure form. A constellation of emblematic aspects can be found in speeches by Edward Crane and Jack Kemp. Their God term is order. Their focus is on the individual rather than the community, the future rather than the heritage, the global as opposed to the local, the material as opposed to the spiritual.

Edward H. Crane.

A representative outline of economic conservative thought in the 1990s is offered by Cato institute president and founder Edward Crane in a speech delivered before the Dallas (TX) Rotary Club on July 14, 1993. Delivered eight months after the defeat of George H.W. Bush in the 1992 presidential election, Crane articulates a profound suspicion of order. His "history" focuses on individual freedom rather than communal character.

Early in the speech Crane launches an attack on "big" government as a corruption of the intent of the founders of the Republic.

There was a time in this nation's history when people would have looked at you quizzically if you had said you were from the "private sector." For the first half of the great American Experiment, society and what we call the private sector were pretty much the same thing. Government, or what we now call the "public sector," was viewed as a necessary evil -- and therefore kept very small -- with its task being limited to protecting the rights to life, liberty, and property of those individual human beings who constituted society. (1993)

Crane's "great American experiment" seems abstract enough to fall within the orbit of traditional conservatism. However, the emphasis is squarely on "life, liberty, and property" and remains so throughout the body of the speech. His paraphrase of The Declaration of Independence is a particularly interesting move. He substitutes "property" for "the pursuit of happiness," a substitution emblematic of economic conservative values. The language of John Locke is restored in full measure, and Locke like the economic conservative considered the possession of property logically prior to all other rights and freedom.

Crane spends the next few paragraphs preaching his economic philosophy, in this case well buttressed by a cacophony of colorless statistics (e.g., "regulations alone cost the American consumer an estimated \$600 billion a year"). He then begins to draw an interesting distinction between what he terms "political society" and "civil society." Political society is his name for an intrusive and paternalistic government. Civil society is the voluntaristic and entrepreneurial private sphere. These "ideal types" represent the dialectic of his political discourse:

Because there are basically only two ways to organize society: Coercively, through government mandates, or voluntarily, through the private interaction of individuals and associations. . . . There's an awful lot of heavyweight philosophical debate that goes on, but don't let them fool you: Politics is about the individual's relationship to the state, pure and simple. Do you spend the money you earn or does some politician? Do you pick the school your child goes to or does some bureaucrat? Can you buy products someone from another nation made or does a politician say you can't have that choice? Can you pick your own retirement plan, or are you forced to put so much money into a mandated pay-as-you-go government plan, that you can't afford to choose for yourself? (1993)

The tension between these two poles is the theme that guides his treatment of the issues he uses in priming his listeners. His inventional material is largely drawn from a single idea topos: excessive order destroys individual freedom. Suppression of freedom smothers individual creativity and by extension renders society impoverished, oppressed, and unhappy.

Crane proceeds to drive home his distinction between civil and political society over the next few paragraphs. He frames his terms (surrogate for order and freedom) in a binary struggle. Political society (excessive order) is evil, while civil society (freedom) is good.

In a civil society you make the choices about your life. In a political society someone else makes those choices. And because it is not the natural order of things for someone other than you to make those decisions about your life, the political society is of necessity based on coercion. None other than George Washington warned us of this reality when he wrote, "Government is not reason, it is not eloquence -- it is force! Like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearsome master." Civil society, on the other hand, is based on voluntarism and predicated on giving the widest possible latitude to the individual so that he has sovereignty over his own life, so long as he respects the equal rights of others in society. It's a simple concept, really, but a radical one nevertheless. It's the concept on which this great nation of ours was founded. (1993)

In Crane's view sovereignty is rooted in the individual who has full control over its delegation to a government. In the traditionalist view God only is sovereign and the powers of the community are delegated.

Next, Crane fills a number of successive passages with an example-rich discussion of specific policy orientations tied to the initial roster cited above. Throughout the focus is liberty as the highest political value.

Crane then finishes the address by again pounding home his central theme and strengthening the link to the legitimizing principles of the republic.

So, let me conclude by reminding you again of America's heritage of freedom. The Founders of this great nation thought they were creating a civil society. They did, and except for the very un-American institution of slavery, it worked magnificently. But just as the Founders feared and tried to prevent, the political society has emerged again with a vengeance in the Twentieth Century. We must not let the statist politicians destroy the great American experiment in human liberty. There is, it seems to me, a moral imperative for all of us to reclaim our heritage as a free people and our right to live in a civil society. And it can be done, if only we take seriously our responsibilities as a free people, which means never conceding to politicians and bureaucrats the right to run our lives. (1993)

Being devoid of any link between freedom and the creator, this represents precisely the sort of “irresponsible” conservatism Alan Keyes derides for aiding egalitarian counter arguments.

Certainly, Crane’s idea of a “moral imperative” differs from that of the traditionalist. It is anchored in human agency and its criterion appear to be a “successful” and “powerful” society.

Crane hummed the same melody again and again as the 1990s progressed. By the end of the decade, an increasing irritation with the social agenda of the traditional conservative begins to more explicitly emerge.

Crane addressed the September 1, 1999 meeting of the Mont Pelerin Society in Vancouver, BC with a speech entitled *An Optimistic Assessment of the Future of Liberty*. Not only does he take a clear shot at a key Republican figure, he also emphatically embraces the globalism that so animates Pat Buchanan’s ire.

Beginning immediately in his introduction he goes after the frontrunner for the 2000 Republican presidential nomination. Crane opens his address by remarking that:

I had just finished reading a speech by George W. Bush in which he calls for creating a Compassion Capital Fund whereby the federal government would finance a wide variety of local social initiatives that "worked" when I received a letter from Milton and Rose Friedman asking me to give a speech at the upcoming Vancouver Mont Pelerin Society meeting making the optimistic case for the future of liberty. I didn't know whether to laugh or to cry. After all, when the leading candidate of the so-called market-oriented party in the U.S. thinks that federal bureaucrats could or should engage in such activities, one despairs for the future of liberty. (1999a)

Of course Bush’s “Capital Compassion Fund” is the first iteration of what is now commonly known (and celebrated by traditionalists) as his “faith based initiative.” Crane’s calling Republicans the “so-called market-oriented party” is an argument from definition. In defining the party’s essential mission, Crane deems the traditionalist’s communitarian concerns irrelevant at best, dangerous at worst.

If Russell Kirk represents a paternal figure in the mind of traditional conservatives, Freidrich Hayek occupies a similar role for economic conservatives. Not surprisingly Crane turns to Hayek to fashion a definition of liberty.

Hayek typically cuts quickly to the chase, saying we should seek "that condition of men in which coercion of some by others is reduced as much as possible in society." He contrasts liberty to slavery by saying that liberty involves "the possibility of a person's acting according to his own decisions and plans, in contrast to the position of one who was irrevocably subject to the will of another." (1999a)

Most revealing here is the association between slavery and being "subject to the will of another." Undoubtedly, any red meat traditional conservative would argue as Buchanan and Keyes have both done earlier in this chapter that we are all "subject to the will of another." This is typical of the dismissive tone often used by economic conservatives when broaching core beliefs before select audiences. This audience would be full of just the type of like-minded individual who would not bat an eye at such a statement.

Crane proceeds over the next several paragraphs to provide his standard, example-laden celebration of the unfettered free market. He then begins a transition leading to an extension of the previously visited idea of "civil society" In making this transition, Crane drops a line that seems sympathetic to the traditionalists fear of pure democracy and devotion to republican government. However, his reasons are Hamiltonian conservative fears, not rural or social. Crane contends that "Without some kind of institutional constraints -- in the case of the United States, the Constitution -- the majoritarian instinct in a democracy would naturally lead to the tendrils of the state reaching into every corner of civil society" (1999). Mob rule is feared by traditionalists as well, but because they are hierarchists, not because they are individualists.

In the very next passage, Crane provides further clarity about his notion of what sort of liberty he actually embraces. It is the “space” provided for individuals by a “divided” and limited government.

But, as I say, that all may be changing. The father of the Constitution, James Madison, said that the courts were to be the "bulwark of our liberties" against the inevitable majoritarian onslaught from the two political branches of the national government. In recent years the federal courts have once again started defending property rights, have been firm in support of free speech rights, have challenged Congress not to delegate its power to unelected bureaucrats, and even have resurrected the essence of the Constitution, the Doctrine of Enumerated Powers, whereby if the power is not specifically delegated to the national government it is reserved to the states or to the people. A renaissance of respect for the Constitution, which seems to be taking place in the States, is imperative if the prospects for liberty are to be as positive as they should be. (1999a)

Thus, an optimistic assessment. The transition reaches its apex with a restatement of his stock distinction between civil and political society followed by an association of liberty with globalism. The forces of the future not history are liquidating the restraints of the nation-state.

In a civil society you make the choices about your life -- how to spend your money, where to send your children to school and so forth -- in a political society, based as it is on coercion, somebody else -- a politician or a bureaucrat -- makes those decisions. The goal, it seems to us, should be to minimize the role of political society consistent with the protection of our individual liberties. Political society, of course, has historically derived its power from three main sources: Geographical territory, which is to say land; control of the flow and nature of information because knowledge is power; and control over capital flows and the value of a nation's currency. The Information Age is eating away at those three sources of power just as surely as the sun rises in the East. (1999a)

Political society, then, is provincial. It represents the sort of *traditional* organizing schemes that mark the progression of civilization, Western civilization at the very least. But Crane seems to say that the nation-state will be surpassed. This is a strong fault line between economic and traditional conservatism. The latter believe individual freedom can only be guaranteed through the preservation of the Western nation-state, particularly the American state.

Crane then forces his point that political society is the old way while civil society represents the future with a discussion of sovereignty that would frighten the majority of traditional conservatives. Quoting Walter Wriston, Crane declares that “Individuals are being empowered irrespective of borders; irrespective of what politicians have done throughout the sorry history of government domination of society, which is happily coming to an end: The twilight of sovereignty” (1999a). Continuing in a vein completely at odds with traditional conservatism he avows that:

It is likely that those nations that wish to preserve their sovereignty in the future will do so only in a superficial sense, and then only by pursuing policies of very low taxation and free and open trade. . . . The twilight of sovereignty means the dawning of a new age of liberty and the empowerment of individual choice. The world is moving toward pluralism, capitalism, and civil society. (1999a)

At the risk of redundancy, this message is antithetical to the message of Pat Buchanan and Alan Keyes to say nothing of Russell Kirk. But Hayek, not Kirk is the hero here.

Crane’s vision as mapped before audiences sharing his view represents quite a different sort of conservatism than that embraced by traditionalist thinkers. That economic conservative’s ideas are divergent, is perhaps best noted by the very fact that a mere month after delivering the speech just considered he organized and provided the opening remarks for a conference titled “Beyond Prohibition: An Adult Approach to Drug Policies in the 21st Century” In this brief address, Crane argues that it is a “mistaken notion that government can effectively engineer social arrangements” (1999b). This strikes directly at the role traditionalist believe government *should* be accountable for. From a traditionalist conservative perspective, drug prohibition is requisite to the protection of life, liberty, and “property” to use Crane’s permutation. But for the economic conservative, such a policy is only one more example of totalitarian creep.

While Edward Crane is, a somewhat obscure figure on the national scene he is a key opinion leader among influential economic conservatives. His vision differs only marginally from that of a very well known economic conservative spokesman, Jack Kemp, 1996 Republican nominee for the vice presidency.

Jack Kemp.

Jack Kemp has become an iconic figure of the contemporary conservative movement. In the 1970s, Kemp was one of the very few conservatives holding elected office who could command national attention, partially owing to his previous career as a star quarterback for the Buffalo Bills and partially because of his passionate allegiance to (what seemed at the time) an extreme economic philosophy. American myth has come to associate the now familiar term “supply side economics” with Ronald Reagan. It is no stretch to maintain that both Reagan and Kemp were early allies on supply side theory. To paraphrase the country-western song of the era, Kemp was supply side when supply side wasn’t cool.

Kemp’s political career began as a Republican member of the House of Representatives from a suburban district of Buffalo, New York. This foundation led Kemp to a high profile stint as secretary of Housing and Urban Development in the George H. W. Bush administration. Often thought of as the true heir to the Reagan revolution, Kemp mounted an unsuccessful bid for the 1988 Republican nomination before finally finding a place on a national ticket as Robert Dole’s running mate in the 1996 presidential campaign.

For a first look at Kemp’s brand of conservatism in the 1990s, his speech accepting the Republican nomination for the second spot on the ticket in 1996 is a good place to begin. While not the same as previously examined speeches in terms of audience (except Buchanan’s

convention speech) – Kemp is dealing with a much more heterogeneous group than the others, the speech is nonetheless interesting due to the sheer weight placed on economic issues. Social concerns emerge as little more than platitudes although Kemp is likely sincere in addressing them. The point is that the economic conservative vision trumps that of the traditional conservative in the implicit hierarchy adhered to by Kemp.

Delivered on August 15, 1996 in San Diego, this address follows the typical form one would expect of a convention acceptance speech. It really is a quite rigid genre. Still, despite the need to be all things to all people, the speech provides a representative introduction to Kemp's thought in the 1990s, if for no other reason because of the relative weight devoted to economic as opposed to traditional concerns.

Kemp opens the speech by honoring the party's history and placing presidential nominee Dole as the sacred political progeny of Abraham Lincoln. Then, in the third paragraph, Kemp offers a sketch of his elemental convictions.

We will carry the word to every man, woman and child of every color and background that today, on the eve of the new American century, it is time to renew the American promise, to recapture the American Dream and to give our nation a new birth of freedom... with liberty, equality and justice for all. (1996)

Kemp almost goes beyond the economic conservative impulse of an Edward Crane and almost strikes a foreign, for a conservative, egalitarian tone. Further sharpening his definition of the coming campaign, Kemp assures his audience that "Our appeal of boundless opportunity crosses every barrier of geography, race, and *belief*" (1996, emphasis mine).

While we must keep mindful the specific situation and generic concerns to which Kemp is responding, there is a curious egalitarian feel to this remark. Moreover, the notion that

“boundless opportunity” accrues despite “belief” would be an odd concept for traditional conservatives. After all, one’s belief system is what it is all about for the traditionalist.

Then, in an interesting passage honoring party hero Reagan – an expected passage in this particular speech, he defines the former president’s legacy thusly, “He brought America back and restored America's spirit. He gave us a decade of prosperity and expanding horizons. Communism came down, not because it fell. He pushed it.” (1996). For Kemp, the Reagan revolution is purely about economic policy and the defeat of an enemy who represents a polarly opposed (and failed) economic philosophy. Kemp is silent on the entire social agenda of the traditional conservative is his account of Reagan⁵.

Kemp speaks of the Creator in a way different from traditional conservatives. God is a distant and abstract force and an inspiration for individual action, not a beacon for national destiny.

Democratic capitalism is not just the hope of wealth, but the hope of justice. When we look into the face of poverty, we see pain, despair and need. But, above all, in every face, we must see the image of God. The Creator of All has planted the seed of creativity in us all, the desire within every child of God to work and build and improve our lot in life, and that of our families and those we love. And in our work, in the act of creating that is part of all labor, we discover that part within ourselves that is divine. I believe the ultimate imperative for growth and opportunity is to advance human dignity. (1996)

God is a democratic capitalist. Divine will, justice, and liberty all flow from unrestrained economic activity. Max Weber (1958) described this secular piety in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. A social action theorist, he believed that the disciples of Protestant sects

⁵Of course many traditionalist, particularly Christian conservatives have long felt betrayed by Reagan. An oft repeated criticism paints him as pragmatically providing lip service to the concerns of the traditionalist in order to coalesce support for his economic agenda. For more see Paul Weyrich, Richard Vigurie, and Howard Phillips, all early “true believers” in Reagan who later expressed frustration with his eight years in the White House.

would remain allied to rationalism in producing an increasingly “hollow” society. Nevertheless, only the most cynical traditional conservative would embrace Kemp’s implied hierarchy. However, the mere mention of terms such as “God”, “creator”, and “divine” is likely to resonate in a way that allows the traditionalist to inhabit Kemp’s remarks with their own meaning.

Kemp proceeds to hone, through the next few paragraphs, his economic-centered message. He optimistically asserts that:

Every generation faces a choice: hope or despair - to plan for scarcity or to embrace possibilities. Societies throughout history believed they had reached the frontiers of human accomplishment. But in every age, those who trusted the divine spark of imagination discovered that vastly greater horizons lay ahead. (1996)

A traditionalist would argue that we have, perhaps, reached the “frontiers of human accomplishment” and, whether we have or not, progress for the sake of progress is counter to divine will. Kemp, on the contrary, believes otherwise. “Americans do not accept limits; we transcend them. We do not settle; we succeed” (1996). Human will is ontologically prior in Kemp’s conservatism. For Kemp, humanity makes itself, and the progress he speaks of is material progress, not moral progress.

Of course for the traditionalist, human will is only legitimate insofar as it follows the will of God. Change is not necessarily a good thing. Indeed, change is more often a negative impulse that further removes human society from our natural, ordained, and just condition. Kemp’s rhetoric is innocent of these contradictions: social change may mean societal dislocation, increasing secularism, larger and more destructive wars, abandonment of fulfilling crafts and skills.

In wrapping up the talk, he contends that “I believe that today America is on the threshold of the greatest period of economic opportunity, technological development and

entrepreneurial adventure in our history. We have before us tomorrows that are even more thrilling than our most glorious yesterdays” (1996). Kemp embraces the enlightenment promise that, through progressively higher levels of knowledge, humankind is perfectible. A traditionalist would reject such a premise at its very root.

Throughout the speech Kemp’s emphasis is squarely on an economic conservative agenda. References to transcendent principles are perfunctory and, when present, reverse the traditionalist’s equation placing human action in the foreground and the divine as a remote and distant caretaker. I am not arguing that Kemp is insincere, merely that his priorities are different from those of the traditionalist. After 1996 Kemp, shorn of the responsibility of running on a national ticket and speaking before much more homogeneous audiences, has continued to present the same message.

Characteristic of Kemp’s discourse is an address in Seattle, Washington on December 1, 1999 titled *Democratic Capitalism: The Ultimate Triumph of the Worker* during the now notorious, violence-marred World Trade Organization conference. Kemp’s address is about free markets and the familiar litany of capitalism’s final abolition of history. Poverty, war, and sectarian will all disappear before the global triumph of capitalism..

Kemp wastes absolutely no time in acquainting his audience with his conservative vision of global, material prosperity as the ultimate human achievement and the solvent of human conflict:

Just think, today is the first day of the last month of the 20th Century, and it's just 30 days until the next thousand years of human history. This watershed moment, full of hope and optimism, should inspire us to ever-greater heights of human achievement, opportunity, growth, and freedom, not for ourselves alone but as Mr. Lincoln observed, for the ultimate purpose of lifting the burden off the shoulders of all mankind. (1999)

“Human achievement, opportunity, growth, and freedom” represent the holy grail of conservatism. And he has crassly appropriated Lincoln’s remarks about human slavery. This is the sort of modernist evaluation that the traditionalist criticizes as empty liberal materialism. That Kemp was able to sell this message without public grumbling is a testament to the power of coalition building and the desire of conservatives to win office first and settle differences afterward.

Kemp is an undaunted and unapologetic advocate for his cause. His cause, however, while surfacely intersecting many themes shared with the traditionalist, it firmly diverges from the latter in first principles. Free markets become a substitute for divine agency. “The history of the past 50 years proves that only solid economic growth, technological innovation, and expanding markets can eradicate poverty, hunger, and disease, and give developed nations the resources and the will to tackle pressing ecological concerns” (1999). Pure *laissez faire* economics is here endowed with magical force. Kemp is preaching a secular religion. The global market becomes the instrument of self denial. It seeks to abolish the very foundations that traditionalists see as giving life meaning.

The next sequence of paragraphs represent nothing less than a rejection of the social agenda of the traditionalist. Moral imperatives can be counterproductive to progress. Loud in his support for open and expanded trade with the People’s Republic of China, Kemp cites the drum major of conservatism. “President Reagan summed it all up perfectly: ‘As the leader of the West and as a country that has become great and rich because of economic freedom, America must be an unrelenting advocate of free trade’. So we must” (1999).

Linking free trade to moral/ethical concerns about the legitimacy of a government or the way that government treats its people is a faulty path. If the Chinese persecute Christians, that is

a sad reality, but ultimately no reason to not embrace them as trading partners. The familiar economic dogma is that trade builds tolerance and that open markets open minds to democracy. Although this belief has not been borne out beyond the developed world, it is an article of faith for economic conservatives. Throughout this section, Kemp does not even bother to make his typical argument that pure economic liberty is the best way to subvert undemocratic regimes and eventually safeguard religious liberty. The aim here remains fixed on “the full-blown benefits of free trade and open markets world wide. Of course China’s human rights record was a key factor in the opposition of many traditional conservatives to China’s acceptance in the WTO.

As Kemp begins to conclude his talk he states in stark terms his central principle. “There is a bottom line here, and it is this: Free trade is a good in itself” (1999). Free trade is no longer a means to an end, it is both means and end. This is a stark split with the traditional conservatives world view. Some traditionalists embrace free trade, many do not. However, none would place it before and above all else in the manner Kemp has.

Turning to Kemp’s concluding paragraphs we find additional evidence of how deep the chasm between traditionalist and economic conservatives can be. He sums up his remarks by noting that:

No one could improve on that profound statement that free trade benefits consumers more than producers. Let us turn Churchill's words to our profit, and engage public opinion, our political leadership, and the "electronic global village", as it were, in securing the blessings of free trade, growth, and opportunity for generations to come. The global spread of economic freedom, decisively propelled by free trade, is truly the triumph of the proletariat: the workers and laborers who are becoming savers, investors, and consumers, truly empowered by economic freedom and in charge of their own destinies at last. There is no more important legacy we could leave at this epochal point in history, and we will have much to answer for if we fail. (1999)

In a quasi-religious sense “free trade, growth, and opportunity” are a blessing. And, echoing Edward Crane, humans have sovereignty over themselves – a sovereignty “empowered by

economic freedom”. That “there is no more important legacy we could leave at this epochal point in history” is such a severe departure from the traditional conservative’s vision that further comment is unnecessary.

Kemp resembles Crane in locating human well being in unfettered economic freedom – it is the critical first principle for justice and true emancipation to occur. Ironically, this individualist impulse can almost appear egalitarian insofar as ultimate ends. In many ways it is. The difference being that the egalitarian works from the top down while the individualist sees an egalitarian reality as the end result of a bottom up process. The economic conservative promotes pure freedom as the path to the promised land whereas egalitarian leftists believe justice and emancipation are children of a forced equality of condition. Most importantly, economic conservatives reject the hierarchist’s highly ordered model of social organization just as they reject the primacy of order advocated by traditional conservatives..

Nonetheless, it is between the hierarchist and the individualist that we find the alliance animating the contemporary conservative movement. In the next section, I will revisit and enumerate those distinctions before turning in the final section to an examination of the heart of the homology that often allows those differences to flourish unchallenged.

Distinctions *with* Differences

Throughout the analysis of speeches, I have noted the differing commitments underlying the rhetoric of the traditionalist conservative and the economic conservative. To make sense of this split, the underlying world views inspiring the notion of liberty or freedom⁶ held by each faction is the requisite starting point.

⁶“Freedom” and “liberty” are terms used interchangeably by contemporary conservative speakers. Accordingly, I will as well use them interchangeably throughout this analysis.

It is nearly impossible to find a speech of even minute significance delivered by a conservative leader that does not feature liberty as a central value. The term enjoys a great width of meaning. For traditional conservatives liberty equals the power of choice within a moral order. For economic conservatives liberty becomes unfettered self-development, closer to what traditionalists call “secular humanism” than the culture of traditional conservatism.

At the very core of the differing notions of freedom underpinning each orientation’s outlook lie ontological questions. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky argue that “The viability of a way of life . . . depends upon a mutually supportive relationship between a particular cultural bias and a particular pattern of social relations”⁷ (1990, 2). Furthermore, “an alliance can help make up for the defects of a single way of life, but it can never provide a lasting solution. Allies remain competitors; antagonism is always there just beneath the surface” (89). But with such disparate means and ends one wonders whether an alliance between these groups can provide a solution at all

I argue that two of these competing ways of life are at the core of contemporary conservatism, the hierarchist and the individualist⁸. The ends, means, and goals of the two groups are very different. “When an individual’s social environment is characterized by strong group boundaries and binding prescriptions, the resulting social relations are *hierarchical*” (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990, 6). This describes the social orientation of the traditional conservative, a world view in which “Individuals in this social context are subject to both the

⁷Recall that the authors note that “*Cultural bias* refers to shared values and beliefs. *Social relations* are defined as patterns of interpersonal relations” (1).

⁸Refer to chapter one for a discussion of how the individualist is actually a fatalist couching his/her world view in the rhetoric of individualism.

control of other members in the group and the demands of socially imposed roles” (6). As Russell Kirk asserts in his bible of traditional conservatism, the traditionalists’ ties to prescription, prejudice, and tradition are a function of their “belief in a transcendent order . . . which rules society as well as conscience” (1986,.8) and are foundational to their way of life.

In Kirk’s conception of society, there are greater and lesser ideas, people, and objects. Choices are prescribed by an order of goods, not marketplace whims or individual choice:

Conviction that civilized society requires orders and classes, as against the notion of a “classless society.” With reason, conservatives often have been called “the party of order.” If natural distinctions are effaced among men, oligarchs fill the vacuum. Ultimate equality in the judgement of God, and equality before the courts of law, are recognized by conservatives; but equality of condition, they think, means equality in servitude and boredom. (1986, 8-9)

Strong group boundaries and binding prescriptions represent an ontological “correctness” in the mind of a traditionalist. To tap the resources provided by nature in a viable fashion, one must follow the prescriptions of an *a priori* just social order.

Traditionalists censure those persons who feel no such prescription. Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky contend that “individuals who are bound by neither group incorporation nor prescribed social roles inhabit an *individualistic* social context. In such an environment all boundaries are provisional and subject to negotiation” (1990, 7). Traditionalists condemn economic conservative’s mystical attachment to the market’s higher logic, which to traditionalists is nothing but the sum of countless individual acts:

Individualists attribute personal failure to bad luck or personal incompetence or some combination thereof. Those who complain are told, “You had your chance and will have it again if you work hard.” The competitive system itself remains blameless. People may be dumb, as economic individualists say, but markets are always smart. (60)

Traditionalists fear that economic conservatives behave as if there is no transcendent order. Humans are the source of their rights as a function of their own will and skill according to

the economic conservative. To paraphrase Edward Crane, the individual asserts sovereignty over his or her self. Even markets, a human creation, attain ontological status. Thus markets may be smart, sluggish, overheated, or troubled.. This way of speaking suggests that a market is prior ontologically. Being is attributed to a social arrangement engineered by the sheer resolve of humans asserting themselves within and against the natural law.

Thus, the economic view represents a fundamental rejection of the core organizing principles of the traditional conservative. For the economic conservative, personal achievement is a result of the assertion of individual will. Justice is seen as a social system in which meaningful individual action is possible. Economic conservatives embrace the individualist's allegiance to natural law, while traditional conservatives place their faith in divine law.

When liberty is viewed as a reward for adherence to a divine moral order, gratification of individual desire becomes mere license. On the other hand, if liberty is humanly constructed, things that retard individual achievement are viewed as necessary evils at best. Laws for protection of property for example, are among the few that economic conservatives enthusiastically endorse.

The chasm between economic and traditional conservatives is most evident in their attitude toward life style crimes such as drug use. Edward Crane, as already noted, is typical of many economic conservatives in advocating the legalization of drugs. Crane believes that in a society founded on freedom, the individual has a right to engage in this behavior if she or he so chooses. Abuse will be corrected by market forces. People who cannot keep their drug consumption within reasonable limits will be less able to sustain themselves in the free market. Crudely put, this is the force of natural law. Moreover, prohibitions against drugs represent an

artificial, illegitimate invasion of government into the life of the individual. Regulation represents an abridgment of individual freedom

The traditionalist's take quite a different view. For this person, sanctions against drug use represent just the sort of protection of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness that is a *moral imperative* for the just society in service of divine will. To allow such behavior represents a danger in the community and further, signals an abdication of *moral obligation* by members of that community.

Sexual "crimes" provide another clear case of contention between the two lodestars of conservatism. The economic conservative would allow the legalization of prostitution and free access to pornography. They believe that willing sellers ought to be able to do business with willing buyers. There are needs in the community which the skillful entrepreneur, through hard work and management of resources, stands ready to satisfy. Those who don't wish to avail themselves of these services are simply exercising their market freedom. Although they may not approve of pornography or prostitution personally, economic conservatives believe that limiting them would begin a slippery slope toward market regulation.

The traditionalists' view of liberty is quite different on this issue. Not only does the sex business violate the divinely ordained prescriptions from which liberty flows, it also is a purely exploitative enterprise. Sexual entrepreneurship is based on human weakness and represents a failure of the community to act justly. Government protection from such behaviors is central to its legitimate mission.

The ground distinction between the economic conservative's conception of liberty and that envisioned by the traditionalist conservative is reducible to each's devotion to competing prior terms. Specifically, if one believes justice to be the necessary injunction in order that true

freedom might accrue, then the traditionalist view of liberty, as rooted in a divinely ordained moral order, is the necessary condition. Order is the God term. Conversely, if freedom is an extension of human will and self-sovereignty, then justice and order flow from liberty. For the economic conservative, unwavering fidelity to seldom restrained liberty is prior to order. Freedom is the God term. Simply put, for the traditionalist conservative, order brings about liberty, and for the economic conservative, order flows from liberty. The traditional conservative believes that freedom is a gift in return for devotion to a divine moral law. The economic conservative believes that human will and the assertion of the individual is the only path through which humans secure a just order.

Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky argue that rival ideas of human freedom are rooted in different conceptions of nature. The individualist (or economic conservative) believes nature to be benign. “*Nature benign* gives us global equilibrium. The world, it tells us, is wonderfully forgiving. . . . The managing institution can therefore have a laissez-faire attitude” (1990, 26). In a version of systems theory, regardless of what we do, nature will always return to a center point – it will achieve equilibrium. The hierarchist (or traditional conservative) views nature as perverse/tolerant. “*Nature Perverse/Tolerant* is forgiving of most events but is vulnerable to an occasional knocking the ball over the rim” (26). The world is forgiving but only within limits. Unchecked behavior might lead to total destruction of the system. This latter view undergirds the traditional conservatives acceptance of moral prescription.

I have highlighted just two of the many behavioral clashes that are possible based on these two antagonistic formations of freedom. Moreover, since the skirmish is rooted in divergent ontologies, we should expect these and other battles to emerge over time. One’s notion of being subsumes all other activity. As humans, our ontological commitments authorize all else.

Whether we have devoted our lives to scholarly developing a theory of being or whether we have simply spent a few moments contemplating what our world is, all but the most mentally impoverished humans have an ontology. Because of that ontology, “Ways of life are made viable by classifying certain behaviors as worthy of praise and others as undesirable, or even unthinkable” (Thompson, Ellis, and Wildavsky 1990, 2).

Despite these very different conservative axiologies, the two groups have managed an uneasy alliance. Such is the pragmatic power of American politics that rival groups have worked hard to minimize these potentially fatal quarrels. Rival conceptions of “liberty” and “freedom” are at the core of the disputes. In the interests of power and governance, these disparate groups have found policy commitments that mask their differences. I will now show how a homology is constructed around the term liberty as well as over several of these policy positions.

Homological rhetoric “bridges” positions and maintains alliances between different groups who can then oppose a common antagonist. This rhetorical alliance is fragile and is no guarantee that the traditionalists and economists may not live to fight each other with the same passion they exhibit against liberals and leftists.

The Homology of Contemporary Conservative Public Address

That there is some sense of identification present between both types of conservatives is evidenced by the increasing electoral success enjoyed by the Republican Party over the last two decades. As I have already claimed, for the first of these decades, much of this convergence is purely a function of coalescing against a common enemy. However, explaining the ascendance of conservatism as a mere marriage of convenience ignores the role of mediating discourse in keeping the wings of conservatism on the same political agenda.

There are three ways of constructing rhetorical homology between divergent groups. The first is to use the unifying terms on a high level of abstraction. Groups that disagree on the concrete application of liberty can agree on its primacy as an abstract term. The “devil” and disagreement lie in the details. The second is to unite on a similar policy or objective for different reasons. True feminists and religious conservative anti-feminists were recently able to unite against pornography. These ordinarily opposed groups marched together in strong solidarity albeit for very different reasons. Feminists marched because they found pornography exploitative of women while patriarchal conservatives marched because they found it immoral. Both groups marched together through the streets of San Francisco, New York, and Chicago during the spring of 2003 and to the observer appeared a single formidable body. Finally, a third method of developing homological identity is the “token” reference to the issue of an allied group

On Liberty.

Liberty and freedom are the wonderful sorts of terms McGee (1980) refers to as ideographs. At one level they indicate a shared value orientation while simultaneously remaining flexible enough for each individual to inhabit them with their own meaning. Around a central definition (denotation), personal inclinations (connotations) permit a range of associated meanings.

Not surprising, then, that liberty remains an authorizing concept among conservatives. Pat Buchanan may assert that “The central organizing principle of the republic is freedom” (1992). He boasts that “In the history of nations, we Americans are the freedom party” (1995). In the body of his speeches, however, a list of social prohibitions lets the hearer know that liberty is proscribed by a stern moral order.

Thus at an abstract and thematic level, the economic conservative can find common ground with Buchanan's praise of liberty and ignore the restrictions of the details. As long as their economic agenda seems assured they may not quarrel with a man who wants to lead a fight against "the amoral idea that gay and lesbian couples should have the same standing in law as married men and women" as well as "the raw sewage of pornography that pollutes our popular culture" (1992). Easily lost in the celebration of liberty is that here is a vision of government antagonistic to the economic conservative's notion of freedom.

Following Buchanan, Alan Keyes repeatedly returns to what he terms "our declaration principles." Keyes frequently peppers his discourse with affirmations such as "We stand for individual responsibility and the recognition of (liberty)" (1997), and "we built this country great, and strong, and free" (1999).

Interestingly, Keyes recurrently approaches the concept of liberty as an endangered right, in arguing first principles as the source of American freedom. He firmly wages war on "the liberal lie that our people do not have the moral capacity to be free" (1999). In the absence of action to reaffirm our national moral authority "we will lose our republic and lose our freedom" (1999).

Of course Keyes believes that "our rights do not have their source in any human determination or will" (1997). The economic conservative would think otherwise owing to the individualist world view he/she embraces. The divine source of liberty that Keyes accepts authorizes far more restrictions on freedom than an economic conservative would countenance. Still, the god terms remain freedom and liberty, and until these contradicting meanings are foregrounded, an uneasy alliance may be maintained.

Edward Crane holds liberty dear as well. He believes that we must “reclaim our heritage as a free people” (1993). However, “it can be done, if only we take seriously our responsibilities as a free people, which means never conceding to politicians and bureaucrats the right to run our lives” (1993). Like Keyes, he finds liberty to be threatened but, unlike Keyes, he sees a different threat. “We must not let the statist politicians destroy the great American experiment in human liberty” (1993).

The very title of Crane’s 1999 address, *An Optimistic Assessment of the Future of Liberty*, highlights this core value term. Again, Crane perceives a threat to freedom. “After all, when the leading candidate of the so-called market-oriented party in the U.S. thinks that federal bureaucrats could or should engage in such activities, one despairs for the future of liberty” (1999a).

Crane then turns to a more upbeat assessment that springs from his already noted reconstitution of world political order. “The twilight of sovereignty means the dawning of a new age of liberty and the empowerment of individual choice” (1999a). Of course the “twilight of sovereignty” is not a comforting concept for those who find sovereignty morally invested by the Creator. Crane wisely refrains from dwelling on the details of the decline of the American nation-state.

Liberty, however, is still the key term. So it is as well with Jack Kemp. Kemp stands ready “to give our nation a new birth of freedom... with liberty, equality and justice for all” (1996). The dawn of a new century finds Kemp urging his audience “to ever-greater heights of human achievement, opportunity, growth, and freedom” (1999).

Kemp chooses Reagan to assert that our “country that has become great and rich because of economic freedom” (1999). Characteristically, Kemp almost never mentions the words

liberty, free, or freedom without a link to economics. Liberty becomes nearly synonymous with purchasing power in Kemp's rhetoric.

Across all four of these speakers, liberty is an honored term, a term for which meanings accrue at different levels of abstraction. Therefore, both economic and traditional conservatives are granted the opportunity to hear what they wish to hear. When we attend an Independence Day celebration and enjoy the evenings fireworks we often talk of celebrating liberty. Rarely, if ever, does such talk explore what each of us means when using terms such as liberty or freedom. If we did we might find our nation spiraling toward civil unrest, fracturing at its foundation. Instead, we glorify something shared -- something we believe to be at the core of our being, even if it is in actuality shared only at the surface. The individualist and the hierarchist can each find their liberty. And that they share the term nudges them into the tenuous alliance that is the contemporary conservative movement.

Policy Talk

Policies are specific and as such would seem to threaten the unity of the two factions. However, different groups may support the same policy for different reasons. Liberty and freedom provide the two groups with the illusion of a common vocabulary. Accordingly, the repeated discussion of these issues encourages the alliance between the economic conservative and the traditional conservative to flourish.

Among many, three issues are regularly repeated by conservative speakers in speeches delivered in the 1990s. Each is particularly revealing of the manner in which differences are hidden while similarities are highlighted in conservative language. Tax reform and reduction is a central issue. Secondly, school choice is championed as the magic elixir for our education system. Finally, conservatives place an imperative on returning power to state and local

governments. I will deal with each of these individually, demonstrating how each provides a common objective supported for different reasons. Herein rests the homology across policy initiatives that serves to create the illusion of unanimity and, again, subsume the real differences between the groups.

If there is one signature idea associated with contemporary conservatism, then it is the need for tax reform and reduction. Taxes are unfair. Taxes are too high. It is not the governments money, it is your money. Indeed, taxes and the power dynamic surrounding them represent a threat to liberty for the majority of conservative speakers.

All four of the speakers examined in this chapter argue the need for tax reform and reduction. Pat Buchanan provides a window into his view on taxes in 1992 by noting that “according to the Taxpayers Union, Al Gore beat out Teddy Kennedy, two straight years, for the title of biggest spender in the Senate” and in 1996 declares that “Four years ago, we came here to say no to tax hikes .“

That Buchanan is on the side of tax reform and reduction is obvious. What is less explicit is why he so detests taxes.

Yet, today, America's culture—movies, television, magazines, music—is polluted with lewdness and violence. Museums and art galleries welcome exhibits that mock our patriotism and our faith. Old institutions and symbols of an heroic, if tragic past—from Columbus Day to the Citadel at South Carolina, which graduated Captain McKenna, from Christmas carols in public schools to Southern war memorials—they are all under assault. (1995)

Buchanan, like many traditional conservatives, dislikes taxes because of what he sees them financing. *Their* tax money is being used to finance lewd and immoral museum exhibits. Those dollars are being used to tear down traditions at the Citadel and VMI In sum, federal tax dollars are being used to attack and undermine the culture of the traditional conservative.

Perhaps more critical here is the fact that the traditionalists believes that *their* tax dollars are being used to finance “abortion on demand.” There is no issue to more quickly raise the ire of a traditional conservative than right to life.

Abortion must be driven as policy and fact from this nation's life and from the precincts of all our laws and public places. Let that be the first step in what ought to be our efforts to reclaim our rightful place. . . . If we want to restore that self-government, then we are going to have to return control of our money and our economy to the hands of the people who work for it. (Keyes, 1999b)

For Pat Buchanan, Alan Keyes and other traditionalists, every federal dollar that goes to Planned Parenthood or other like organizations is a dollar financing the murder of a child. While many would argue that such a link cannot be established, that argument is here moot. The traditionalist *believes* that her/his tax money is financing abortions.

For the tax issue, the traditional conservative’s social agenda, wrapped as it is with his/her notion of liberty, is the energizing impulse. This is not to say that they would simply like to keep more money, only that there is more here than a simple financial equation. That taxes, for the traditionalist, represent more than economics can make allusions to tax issues seductive and further entice them into the homology.

On the economic side of the equation the need for tax reform and reduction finds a different source. Indeed tax reform and reduction is in many ways a cause unto itself. In this calculus, taxes are an unlawful taking of property and, as Edward Crane instructs us, Government is a necessary evil “with its task being limited to protecting the rights to life, liberty, and property of those individual human beings who constituted society” (1993).

Crane is an advocate of a nominal flat tax and the abolition of the I.R.S.. Taxes are “something that should be of considerable concern to anyone who values freedom and prosperity” (1993). Taxes are a foundational evil. “Some time back the famous jurist Oliver

Wendell Holmes wrote, "Taxes are what we pay for civilized society." I think Holmes got it precisely wrong. In fact, I would argue that the level of taxation and of government regulation is a measure of our failure to civilize our society" (1993).

Like Crane, Jack Kemp almost never misses an opportunity to decry the level of taxation. For him, our economy is "moving like a ship dragging an anchor, the anchor of high taxes" (1996). Kemp spends the largest proportion of his 1996 acceptance speech discussing taxes. The solution is "tax cuts designed to liberate the productive genius of the American people . . . But this is just the beginning - the first step. We are going to scrap the whole, fatally flawed internal revenue code and replace it with a fairer, simpler, flatter system. We will end the IRS as we know it." (1996). Furthermore, Kemp offers a "just do it" notion of the ease with which it can be done. After all, "cutting taxes is just a matter of presidential will. If you have it, you can do it."

Tax policy is a worthy pursuit just for the sake of tax policy, and ultimately freedom. Its not so much *what* the federal government is doing with tax revenue, its *that* it is doing at all.

The government never has a deficit -- it spends every penny it can get its greedy little hands on. If you want to cut spending primarily to reduce the deficit, that's fine with me; but from my perspective, we should cut public sector spending because to do so increases the prosperity and freedom of the private sector. (Crane, 1993)

Economic conservatives never met a tax they like.

Cutting taxes is an a worthy end for both Crane and Kemp as well as legions of economic conservatives. On the other hand, some taxes are desirable for the traditional conservative. The so called Christian right has universally embraced George W. Bush's faith based initiative. For the traditionalists, taxes are not so bad when they support policies they embrace rather than those they detest. This fissure represents a fault line for conservatives that may be important in the future.

The resonance of the tax issue is the result of two divergent concepts of government. Economic conservatives want as little government as remotely feasible. Taxes are by definition evil. Traditional conservatives want limited government – limited to promoting policies sympathetic to their value system and from promoting policies that run contrary to their beliefs. Taxes are only evil if they are used for evil purposes and the traditionalist’s support of low taxes could go away in a society that embraced their agenda for order. For different reasons both groups worship the same discourse of tax reduction and reform. Similar means/ends dynamics are afoot in the issue of school choice.

School choice appears as a goal in conservative rhetoric throughout the 1990s. Often referred to as “school vouchers” or “parental choice” the idea is that parents should be able to choose how their tax dollars spent on their children’s education by choosing which school they will attend. Choice of school is implicitly linked to freedom in the conservative mind.

The traditionalist rhetors, Buchanan and Keyes both see school choice as a moral as well as product quality decision. Buchanan argues for school choice because:

In too many of our schools our children are being robbed of their innocence. Their minds are being poisoned against their Judeo-Christian heritage, against America's heroes and against American history, against the values of faith and family and country.

Eternal truths that do not change from the Old and New Testament have been expelled from our public schools, and our children are being indoctrinated in moral relativism, and the propaganda of an anti-Western ideology. (1995)

Traditionalist want school vouchers to choose schools that reflect their moral traditions.

Education should not be secular. Accordingly, the traditionalist is comfortable with using vouchers to finance a child’s attendance at a parochial school.

Keyes agrees and argues that the issue revolves around whether we want to “fix” our schools “Because if we do, then we're gonna have to reclaim control of our schools, we're going

to have to take them out of the hands of bureaucrats and educrats and put them back in the hands of parents who stand before God with the first responsibility for their children's lives" (1999b).

While it is unfair to dismiss educational quality as a factor in the traditional conservative's support of school choice, the prime factor remains a desire to return God to the classroom. School choice is a form of liberty and, as such, is a moral imperative from God. Again, justice authorizes freedom.

The economic conservative needs no such justification for her/his support of school choice. In this case, the erosion of government and concomitant infusion of free market principles are the only reason necessary to see the value in school choice.

Crane constantly calls for school choice because "We've been too tolerant for too long of politicians and their court intellectuals who smugly tell us that 30 years of declining SAT scores and increasing expenditures means we must spend more on the public school monopoly" (1993). School choice equals competition and the ultimate victory of the most savvy and skilled, all the while forcing one more government sacred cow to bite the dust. "Empowering parents with school choice vouchers will be incentive enough for entrepreneurs . . . to fill the void" (1993).

At a fundamental level, traditional conservatives view education as moral instruction, while economic conservatives see it primarily as job training. Despite their huge perspectival differences, both groups unite for school choice.

A third method of developing homological identity is the "token" reference to the issue of an allied group. Careful attention to the discourse employed by Crane is instructive in this matter. A perfunctory reference to school prayer is embedded in school choice appeals:

In a civil society parents, not bureaucrats, determine where their children go to school and what curriculum they study. The whole debate over prayer in school is a good example of the inherent conflict that exists in political society. Private schools cost much

less and do a better job while affording parents the opportunity to have their child pray or not, depending on their choice. The teachers unions and public school bureaucracies fight the idea of school choice with a remarkable passion, given their record of success. (1993)

School prayer is a hot button issue for many traditionalists. However, they would place it at the heart of education, not a mere choice in an array of choices. For Crane school prayer is not a sacred cause, but a stick with which to beat the liberal bureaucracies.

Kemp mirrors Crane in his advocacy of school choice. For Kemp the problem is “a government that runs . . . our schools. You see, they (the bureaucrats) don't believe in the unlimited possibilities that freedom brings” (1996). Again the core term freedom is linked to school choice and is set in opposition to government. School as educational marketplace is more important than school as agent of moral socialization and as a means of social control.

As with the other issues treated here, talk of school choice allows the traditionalist and the economic conservative to forge an identification. The idea of school choice sparks visions of a renewed morality for the traditionalist. The economic conservative finds another test bed for their pure *laissez faire* theory and competition for training the next generation of skilled entrepreneurs. In a sense, school choice is a cousin of the overall issue of local control.

The need to return power to the state and local level is also a foundational principle of both veins of conservatism. For the traditionalist the issue revolves around the notion of community standards and represents a recovery of the power to curtail activities that are viewed as morally aberrant. For the economic conservative, local control is a more efficient management scheme.

For Buchanan the need to return power to local authorities is about “the right of small towns and communities to control the raw sewage of pornography that pollutes our popular culture” (1992). Furthermore, local control is the only path to reclaim the “power and ability, to

defend American traditions and the values of faith, family, and country, from any and all directions. And, together, we will chase the purveyors of sex and violence back beneath the rocks whence they came” (1995).

Buchanan and Keyes both reveal a desire to subordinate both freedom and liberty to order. Keyes argues that the framers devotion to limited government and local control was about how the “painstaking effort to establish a government based upon consent was, in fact, a requirement of justice” (1999). Justice only accrues when the government and the governed remain in close proximity. For this reason we should provide local communities “the authority and control over their own hard-earned dollars” (1997).

Economic conservatives are equally enamored of local control. Crane notes that it is the function of “inside-the-Beltway institutions . . . to spend the money and run the lives of everyone who lives outside the Beltway.” (1993). In Crane’s view, the growth of power in the federal government and the corresponding decrease in control at the local level is emblematic of the ascent of political society over civil society. Because local officials must deal with the governed face-to-face, on a daily basis, governments ability to interfere with liberty is acutely curtailed.

However, it should be noted that Crane is but a lukewarm fan of local government. Local control is simply preferable to Federal control. In many ways one gets the sense that Crane envisions local control as a step toward the liberation of the individual who will soon be free to operate on a global stage.

Kemp advocates local control because “the truth is, there is a wisdom and intelligence in ordinary women and men far superior to the greatest so-called experts” (1996). Moreover, Kemp would extend local control to the far reaches of the planet. In an attack on the global

environmental movement, Kemp argues that “government must always be kept the servant of the people, never allowed to become their master” (1999). Furthermore, the creeping growth and power of international bureaucracies such as the World Trade Organization is “like a new brand of international corporatism: socialist in sentiment, statist in practice” (1999). This last comment sounds suspiciously like a definition of fascism, echoing the Mussolinian eulogy of the corporate state.

Kemp’s disdain for centralization, both nationally and internationally memorializes the creativity of the unfettered individual:

The more extreme elements of the green movement too often forget that much of the world still faces life-and-death issues of hunger, disease, and malnutrition on a daily basis. To use international regulation of labor and the environment to impede solutions to those problems, to tie access to global markets to a costly, Eurocentric agenda of "managing" Third World development according to the whims of green bureaucrats, is simply wrong. We, as Americans, as opinion leaders, as member nations of the WTO - have no right to do it. (1999)

Although Kemp is here focusing on international issues and international bureaucrats, his tone is much the same as when he was a member of the House of Representatives and was attacking the Department of Education.

For the economic conservative, local control is a bulwark against “the mistaken notion that government can effectively engineer social arrangements” (Crane, 1999b). Quite the opposite, the traditional conservative would apply the engineer’s tools to social arrangements that they find destructive to the moral good of the community. Once again we have rhetoric that appears to offer to each side precisely what they want. The details often recede as the celebration of the issue – in this case local control – builds.

In each of these three instances both versions of conservative’s orientation to liberty is critical to their commitment to particular issues. In a general sense, the traditionalist finds a

moral ground for justice, and thus freedom. It is the freedom to pursue the moral right that commits the traditionalist to tax reform, school choice and local control. For the economic conservative, liberty leads to justice by removing the cloak of government mandated servitude from the individual. Freedom in and of itself is the reason to embrace tax reform, school choice and local control.

George W. Bush: Successful Conservative Homology

Lest the reader think that the homology is only in force among leaders who are ultimately unsuccessful, a brief look at George W. Bush's 2000 nomination acceptance speech will illustrate a successful use of the strategy.

Bush addressed the Republican National Convention after rolling through the party's primaries with ease. Clearly he was a candidate with broad support across the conservative spectrum. While this speech also serves the purpose of reaching out to undecided voters, the central imperative is consolidating the conservative base(s). Contemporary American party conventions are no longer mass audience events. Rather, today they speak to the cabal of "true believers" and, as such, have become narrowly focused forums in the main.

Bush begins his speech with the perfunctory acknowledgments demanded by situational expectations. He salutes America, the party, his running mate, and his family. Here he alludes to his father's noteworthy service in World War II and transitions to a discussion of a Bush "vision," the values and policies that will guide his presidency, by noting that this "great generation . . . delivered us from evil" (2000). Indeed:

Some never came home. Those who did put their medals in drawers, went to work and built on a heroic scale highways and universities, suburbs and factories, great cities and grand alliances, the strong foundations of an American century. (2000)

For Bush economic activity appears to be the anecdote to evil. Once again we have homological language that associates traditional conservative values with economic conservative activity. Strenuous moral effort is rewarded with prosperity. This is a clear pattern that persists throughout the address.

After Bush spends a passage drawing distinctions between himself and the Clinton/Gore administration he returns to his theme of traditional values embodied in economic activity. He asserts that “our generation has a chance to reclaim some essential values.” Furthermore, “we will add the work of our hands to the inheritance of our fathers and mothers – and leave this nation greater than we found it” (2000). This is a salute to the centrality of traditional, time-honored values that is stated in a way that is likely to be agreeable to all. The traditional conservative hears a disciple of Russell Kirk, the economic conservative detects the voice of Friedrich Hayek.

Bush sharpens his encomium on traditional values in the American frame with the following movement.

Greatness is found when American character and American courage overcome American challenges.

When Lewis Morris of New York was about to sign the Declaration of Independence, his brother advised against it, warning he would lose all his property. But Morris, a plainspoken founder, responded, "Damn the consequences, give me the pen."

That is the eloquence of American action. We heard it during World War II when General Eisenhower told paratroopers on D-Day morning not to worry. And one replied, "We're not worried, General. It's Hitler's turn to worry now."

We heard it in the civil rights movement, when brave men and women that did not say, "We shall cope," or "We shall see." They said, "We shall overcome."

An American president must call upon that character. (2000)

The tradition is offered as a clear authorizing principle in Bush’s view.

Bush next outlines his method for honoring thy father and thy mother, for calling upon that character and recapturing our threatened traditional values.

Some say that growing federal surplus means Washington has more money to spend.

But they've got it backwards. The surplus is not the government's money; the surplus is the people's money.

I will use this moment of opportunity to bring common sense and fairness to the tax code. And I will act on principle. On principle, every family, every farmer and small-business person should be free to pass on their life's work to those they love, so we will abolish the death tax.

On principle, no one in America should have to pay more than a third of their income to the federal government, so we will reduce tax rates for everyone in every bracket.

On principle, those with the greatest need should receive the greatest help, so we will lower the bottom rate from 15% to 10% and double the child credit.

Now is the time to reform the tax code and share some of the surplus with the people who pay the bills. (2000)

Each and every action offered serves an economic purpose. The traditional conservative divines the purported reason for these initiatives. The economic conservative sees a first step toward fiscal freedom. Even Bush's "faith based initiative" is spoken of more as a way for government services to be delivered more efficiently.

Bush provides both clans cause to support his candidacy, each for different reasons that are nonetheless linked homologically. Freedom is the unstated but omnipresent guiding principle throughout. Bush evokes the founders, the fight against fascism, and the struggle for civil rights; each a fight for greater freedom in the American mythos. That liberty is functionally equivalent to market freedom is revealed consistently in his policy position highlights.

With the assertion that "the world needs America's strength and leadership" (2000), Bush allows for the use of military might to enforce a hegemonic American world arrangement.

Whether that arrangement places our will in the service of justice and order as prior to freedom

or the opposite is left unspoken. Each house of conservatism can find the answer that suits them best.

It is evident that Bush is employing the same form as Buchanan, Keyes, Crane, and Kemp. It is the homology that transcends tribal disputes and allows the illusion of a unified conservative movement to persist both in the eyes of its adherents as well as those of its critics.

Conclusion

I have examined, in this chapter, the function of discourse in both aiding as well as attenuating the ascendance of the conservative movement during the 1990s. Through the use of seemingly similar language, each group is able to find what they want to hear in the speeches of key leaders. At times, Pat Buchanan, Alan Keyes, Ed Crane, and Jack Kemp could all be following the same list of talking points. Each appears to be speaking the other's language.

Alternately, I have noted throughout how the outward resemblance between the discourse of each faction serves to hide some axiomatic dissimilarities in both foundational commitment and how each might enact the sort of policy issues advocated. The homology of conservative discourse provides the necessary fiber to hold together a coalition that has lost the common enemy that drew them together in the first place. Replacing the global evil of communist domination is not, however, a simple task.

Traditional conservatives revere order. They love language that speaks to liberty and freedom because that liberty and freedom was bought with the blood of the messiah on the cross. Economic conservatives worship liberty. Human will and initiative in an unrestrained social system naturally gravitate toward a just order.

This chapter has explored the three ways of constructing rhetorical homology between divergent groups. We have witnessed the use of unifying terms on a high level of abstraction.

An important feature of group cohesion is their ability to disagree on the concrete application of a term such as “liberty” yet agree on its primacy as an abstract term. The details are then transcended by the honored term. Additionally, commitment to a similar policy or objective can be rooted in different impulses. That we both want school choice obscures the “why.” Finally, the “token” reference to the revered issue of an allied group evokes emotional attachment to one another. This is the most pragmatic and cynical level. Accordingly, each side has a tendency to use one another as well as those in the center as “useful idiots.”

In acquiescing to the mythic universe fashioned by the homology, ontological differences are hidden. For Traditionalists, homology comes about because they continually honor the values of liberty. Which is prior? According to traditionalists, following God’s moral law will bring about liberty, and economic conservatives attest that the assertion of human will results in liberty and thus order. What is the source of our rights as humans? Economic conservatives say man will *Lord* over the natural while traditionalists hold to the idea that the authorizing force is the grace of God or, at the very least, some transcendent and logically prior force..

There are two major lodes of contemporary conservative thought. A tentative partnership has been fashioned through their differing but seductively similar rhetorics. Order is the essential first principle of the traditionalist. Order in this sense is a divinely ordained moral order from which authentic liberty springs. Liberty is primary for the economic conservative. The assertion of human will can and should bend nature to the convenience of humankind. As such a just order is ultimately forged.

Order versus freedom forms the core of this binary dialectic. Individual juxtaposition of these two ideas influences which sort of conservative one becomes. From these polarly opposed notions other dialectics are revealed; the material versus the spiritual, the individual in

opposition to the community, the future rather than the heritage, and the global against the national and local.

Notwithstanding the problems inherent in maintaining a coalition of groups divided by contending and incompatible core ontological obligations, the conservative movement has found electoral success beyond the most fantastical dreams of the 1960s or 1970s. The alliance of the individualist and the hierarchist behind the conservative movement has succeeded because they have both, for differing reasons, embraced to the point of seeming to embody several core issues that resonate in the minds or hearts of contemporary Americans. Whether it is the mind or the heart likely depends on the type of conservative one is considering. Most importantly, they have placed themselves on the correct side in the mind of a significant number of Americans.

In the final chapter, I will contemplate some of the implications of this study of conservative discourse and suggest where it may ultimately lead.

CHAPTER 5

THE IMPERATIVE FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Our custom as conservatives – indeed, our occupation – has been to inhabit the wilderness, there crying out against the interlopers who occupy the citadel and dispossess the rightful heirs. That role we understand perfectly, and the sound which it makes: a prophetic song of wrath to come. Moreover, we have learned how to suggest in general terms a view of the political things very different from our adversaries – an idiom for political campaigning, if not for policy.

M.E. Bradford

Summary

This study has detailed the growth of the modern conservative movement. It has identified the two major wings of the contemporary movement: Economic conservative and Traditional conservative. It has argued that the uneasy alliance of these two wings is best understood by an analysis of their differing rhetorics. Traditional conservatives have built their discourse around the God term *Order*. This term refers to a transcendent moral order they honor, not statist order. As Robert L. Paquette remarks, traditional conservatives “might respond to a call for Christian charity to alleviate the conditions of inequality among the poor. On the other hand, (they) should recoil at the prospect of a statist crusade designed to abolish the fact of inequality itself” (2002, 58). The God term of economic conservatives is *Freedom*, Freedom is operationalized as the individual’s capacity to seize the opportunities of the global marketplace. Freedom is necessary in order to secure the blessings of property and to build a rich and prosperous society.

Other differences are apparent. Traditionalists emphasize the transcendent; economists the material. Traditionalists profess the local and communal; economic conservatives the individual and global.

One of the weaknesses of both varieties of conservatism is knowing where to draw the lines between freedom and order so that one does not gravitate to extreme materialism or theocracy. In order to navigate between the dialectical terms, traditionalists emphasize the past. Tradition, custom, and concrete historical cases guide them. This veneration of the past and the limits it imposes on free choice is what William F. Buckley and others have called “the politics of realism.” The great fly wheel of economic conservatives is the marketplace. It acts as a guide and disciplinary force against irrationality, slovenliness, and lack of planning. Weaknesses remain. Adam Smith (1993) noted long ago that the market had no mechanism for justice and that the surrounding society must supply one. And for economic conservatives, with their eyes fixed on the future, history must seem a record of behaviors that have been improved upon, abandoned, and surpassed, rather than a repository of traditional virtue and paradigmatic leaders.

Next I described the homological strategies that kept the two wings in an uneasy alliance: they were essentially emphasizing common objectives and ignoring differences, using different arguments to justify common goals, postponing direct struggle until after conservative victory by emphasizing common enemies, and so on. These rhetorical measures were initially not successful, but they are now threatened by the very success of the conservative movement. The two wings were able to form a pragmatic bond that brought them high office, notably during the Reagan years. During the Democratic interregnum of William Jefferson Clinton, the alliance was strained to the breaking point. Newt Gingrich was clearly estranged from traditionalists, and the 1994 Contract with America was largely an economic document with a few perfunctory gestures toward cultural matters. Conservatives worried that without realignment or a third force (a new conservative group to exert leadership) they might never be able to govern again. A portion of

this chapter will assess the rhetorical burdens of those who might “renew” the movement in these ways.

Future Problems for Political Coalitions

I choose to begin both the opening and closing chapters of this study with Bradford¹ because he represents the dissatisfaction of traditionalists with the progress of the conservative revolution. He blames, among other things, lack of loyalty among movement members, seduction by the trappings of power in Washington, and an unwillingness amongst conservatives to be “pure” enough. Bradford worries that the outsiders have become insiders. What he fails to consider is that the movement is composed of different people with different world views and different reasons for identifying themselves as conservatives. Given the ideological chasm between the two wings, the successes of the groups are remarkable. In 1964, the Republican party was torn into bits and Goldwater was smashed at the polls. By 1980 Reagan won a near landside victory. This was accomplished by an alliance of conservatives.

Earlier, Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky (1990) predicted that an alliance of the individualist and the hierarchist could continue for only a short period of time. The traditionalist conservative and the economic conservative have maintained an association for a half century despite the contrary ontological commitments embraced by the hierarchist and individualist. Were this association one based on a finite goal, perhaps a particular policy initiative, we might expect the two sides to set aside these differences and work toward that goal. However, the two veins of thought in contemporary conservatism appear to hide, rather than set aside, those

¹Bradford’s essays are largely concerned with the lost momentum of the Reagan revolution during the 1980s. These essays are compiled in *The Reactionary Imperative: Essays Literary and Political* (1990).

differences – differences at the most basic, world-view level. Furthermore, they have managed to maintain the alliance despite the end of Communism and new configurations of power and of world trade. One might have expected the union to dissolve during the 1990s in the absence of the common enemy presented by communism yet the conservative movement enjoyed its greatest electoral success in 1994 as judged by their domination of the Federal legislative branch as well as state and local government.

I have demonstrated in this study how common language has served to deflect attention from the divisions in the conservative movement and to keep the focus on common objectives. They unite to win elections. Policy implementation is often a more combative endeavor. The traditionalist supports an agenda of social issues that the economic conservative supports with lukewarm sympathy. School choice is easy, abortion is not. Tax cuts are popular across the movement. Federal dollars for a faith-based initiative appall the economic conservative. In many ways, both sides appear to be returning to the foundational homology as we move toward the first national election of the 21st century². On the other hand, internecine warfare seems closer to the surface than at any other period in the movement's history.

What are the prospects for a renewal of the alliance through a new leadership cadre? A third group, the neoconservatives, intellectuals without a mass base, is bidding to fill that role. They see themselves as uniters and inheritors of the mass-appeal conservative movement.

Specifically, while not a new phenomenon, the neoconservative movement has more firmly entered the mainstream consciousness with the coming of the Bush administration. Usually lumped with free-market conservatives as a largely economically motivated group, and

²The 21st century beginning of course on January 1, 2001.

thought of suspiciously by traditionalists, neoconservatives are now asserting themselves as the “third way” of conservatism; the logical evolution and synthesis of conservatism. They do not see themselves as subversives but as a new leadership cadre, the inheritors and saviors of the movement.

Accordingly, I will look at the implications of this bid for leadership for the conservative movement as a whole. First, can neoconservatism fashion discourse that could subsume the traditionalist conservative and the economic conservative into a more focused and truly unified movement? Second, does the discursive synthesis fashioned by the conservative movement during the 1990s provide lessons for the fractured American left? The left, despite sharing across the spectrum many egalitarian tenets, has been unable to build the sort of illusion of community that has provided electoral success for the right. The Democratic party has long been a party of tribes and its difficulty in keeping those tribes together has been at least as great as for the Republicans. In forty years they lost the South, parts of labor, and many ethnic groups. Third, I believe that future work should examine the possibility of a realignment of groups across the Republican and Democratic parties. The individualist/hierarchist alliance is only one possible combination. Several other alliances are conceivable. A combination of neoconservatives and D.L.C.³ Democrats might make sense as well as an alliance of economic conservatives with these centrist Democrats. Perhaps we are on the verge of a new order in American politics – an

³D.L.C. refers to the Democratic Leadership Council, a group of socially liberal but economically conservative Democrats formed to move the party back toward the center and away from its increasingly leftist leanings.

alliance that may have been foreshadowed by the flash of support for Ross Perot's Reform Party effort in 1992⁴.

The fluidity of the present situation has emboldened the neoconservatives. Accordingly, a brief examination of the beliefs, language, and prospects of this group is in order.

Neoconservatism in the 21st Century

That neoconservatism is experiencing a revival as a distinct brand is undeniable. With the emergence of several so called "neocons" in the Bush administration foreign policy and defense teams, the community of political pundits in the American mass media has spotlighted neoconservatism frequently during 2003.

Neoconservatism is not new. Zagacki studied *The Priestly Rhetoric of Neoconservatism*. He notes that "Neoconservatism began with the classic liberal respect for social scientific progress, method, and for individual liberty, self government, and equality of opportunity. To this they added a conservative commitment to the preservation of a stable, prosperous, and tradition-bound society" (1996, 169). Zagacki believes the neoconservatives aspired to be thought of as the ultimate development of American political thought. They had outgrown the idealism of the liberals and shed the sanctimony of traditional conservatives.

That neoconservatism is a nebulous phenomenon as opposed to a coherent movement is also noted by Zagacki. He focuses on neoconservative discourse from the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. However, he argues that a new type of neoconservatism has emerged in the late 1980s.

⁴John McCain's bid for the 2000 Republican nomination may also be an indication of a growing phenomenon here.

To summarize, neoconservatives generally embrace ten tenets⁵:

- 1) Cutting tax rates as the path to consistent growth.
- 2) While not ideal, budget deficits are the natural outgrowth of democracy and human nature.
- 3) History teaches that the growth of the state is an organic outcome of democratic capitalism.
- 4) The decline of our Western heritage threatens the continued ascendance of American culture.
- 5) Patriotism is a healthy and necessary conviction.
- 6) International institutions represent the first step toward world tyranny and should be treated with suspicion.
- 7) National interest cannot be constrained by geography.
- 8) America's identity is ideological and has ideological interests to defend beyond simple material interests.
- 9) Power breeds responsibility and, if you do not choose to exercise both, others will force you to exercise them on their terms.
- 10) Neoconservatism is the synthesis of economic and traditional conservatism into a mature variant suitable for governing the 21st century nation-state.

⁵ For more on what neoconservatism is, see Buchanan (2003), Dorien (1993), Goldberg (2003), Kristol (1995, 2003), Mattheis (2003), Shpak (2003), Weiler (1984, 1987), and Zagacki (1996). Kristol, however, is the primary source of these tenets since he is credited as the father of the movement and proudly self-identifies as neoconservative. However, I must add that Weiler incorrectly conflates neoconservatism with economic conservatism.

While neoconservatism remains a moving target, this list represents as accurate a constellation of contemporary neoconservative belief as is possible with any fluid entity. However, I must add that neoconservatives are here embracing several apparent contradictions. Specifically tenet six denies tenet seven. Again, neoconservatism is a moving target.

Conflating neoconservatism with either economic or traditional conservatism is an error. Neoconservatives are at odds with both groups on several key points. Neoconservatives are vociferous supporters of open-borders immigration. Economic conservatives champion the "International Community," where the nation-state is a thing of the past. They plant their flag alongside of those in service of managerial globalism. Neoconservatives see America's position as the remaining superpower as an opportunity to implement a permanent world empire – to spread American influence and culture throughout the world. America is a new Rome, a great empire whose mission is to encourage stability and prosperity under American principles of democracy.

Weiler (1987) confuses neoconservatism with economic conservatism. He appropriates the term neoconservative as a catchall for everything that is *not* traditional conservatism. Unfortunately, this mistake finds such long time economic conservatives as Jack Kemp, Phil Gramm, and Newt Gingrich branded as neoconservatives in his analysis. Accordingly, his notion of neoconservatism simply does not do justice to the views expressed by self-professed neoconservatives.

How then is Weiler wrong in viewing neoconservatives and economic conservatives synonymously? Neoconservatives are perfectly comfortable with the advancing size of government. It is a foreordained feature of human progress. The question focuses on what ends

government serves. While neoconservatives denounce the welfare state, they embrace the militaristic state, enforcing American will across the globe. Economic conservatives do not embrace “big” government for any reason. Indeed, they see it as evil incarnate. No difference could be more fundamental.

Additionally, the economic conservative is confronted with a sea of red flags when neoconservatives begin speaking of their foreign policy objectives. Economic conservatives see an internal contradiction in neoconservatism’s advocacy of the dissolution of economic barriers and faith in pure *laissez faire* policy on one hand and endorsement of the use of America’s unique, singular position as the only superpower to exert its will over others on the other. How can the influence of the nation-state (in the abstract) be decreased in favor of globalism while simultaneously increasing one particular nation-state’s global power?

In response to the increasing attention directed toward neoconservatism, Irving Kristol, generally cited as the “father” of neoconservatism, felt the need to define the type in an August 2003 essay, *The Neoconservative Persuasion*.

Kristol, in setting out to delineate the qualities of neoconservatism, first acknowledges that there is a need and that neoconservatism is advancing itself as a type of conservatism not easily subsumed by the two customary types.

A few years ago I said (and, alas, wrote) that neoconservatism had its own distinctive qualities in its early years, but by now had been absorbed into the mainstream of American conservatism. I was wrong, and the reason I was wrong is that, ever since its origin among disillusioned liberal intellectuals in the 1970s, what we call neoconservatism has been one of those intellectual undercurrents that surface only intermittently. It is not a “movement,” as the conspiratorial critics would have it. Neoconservatism is what the late historian of Jacksonian America, Marvin Meyers,

called a "persuasion," one that manifests itself over time, but erratically, and one whose meaning we clearly glimpse only in retrospect. (Kristol 2003)⁶

Kristol mimics the language of Russell Kirk in denying that neoconservatism is a movement⁷. More important, the seminal figure in the history of neoconservatism admits error in assuming that this type had been integrated into the "mainstream" conservative movement. The conservative debate in the early 21st century certainly reflects such.

Kristol draws some clear distinctions between neoconservatism and the more conventional orientations and argues for the need for neoconservatism to resurface. With much of the current attention on neoconservative foreign policy, he notes that "The older, traditional elements in the Republican party have difficulty coming to terms with this new reality in foreign affairs, just as they cannot reconcile economic conservatism with social and cultural conservatism" (2003). Neoconservatism, as I asserted earlier is sold as the future.

He further points out that "But by one of those accidents historians ponder, our current president and his administration turn out to be quite at home in this new political environment, although it is clear they did not anticipate this role any more than their party as a whole did. As a result, neoconservatism began enjoying a second life, at a time when its obituaries were still being published" (2003). Unpredictable and unexpected world events have summoned neoconservatism to the rescue. Again the notion that neoconservatism is the future is advanced.

⁶As with chapter 4, several World Wide Web documents are here cited in which page numbers are n/a.

⁷For Kirk (1988), conservatism is not an ideology. Rather it represents an outlook or mind set.

Somehow, neoconservatism stands ready to subsume the original types. But, how is this to occur?

Kristol has a habit of speaking condescendingly of the two customary conservative varieties. He asserts that “one can say that the historical task and political purpose of neoconservatism would seem to be this: to convert the Republican party, and American conservatism in general, *against their respective wills*, into a new kind of conservative politics suitable to governing a modern democracy” (2003, emphasis added). While I make no judgement about the relative worth of Kristol’s position, it is impossible not to wonder if arrogance among newcomers has now become the coin of the realm.

Despite his condescending tone, Kristol highlights several affinities between the neoconservative and the traditional conservative. Kristol asserts that “The steady decline in our democratic culture, sinking to new levels of vulgarity, does unite neocons with traditional conservatives--though not with those libertarian conservatives” Moreover, the policy issues highlighted by Kristol in prophesying this alliance should be music to the traditionalist’s ears. He claims that “They are united on issues concerning the quality of education, the relations of church and state, the regulation of pornography, and the like, all of which they regard as proper candidates for the government's attention” (2003). This is a veritable laundry list of traditional conservative concerns – concerns that might trouble the economic conservative who finds little that should be proper for the government’s attention.

After all “Neoconservatism is the first variant of American conservatism in the past century that is in the "American grain." It is hopeful, not lugubrious; forward-looking, not nostalgic; and its general tone is cheerful, not grim or dyspeptic” (2003). Again he levels another

broadside at the foundational tenets of traditional conservatism. Kristol even dismisses the traditionalist's hero. "Though they (neoconservatives) find much to be critical about, they tend to seek intellectual guidance in the democratic wisdom of Tocqueville, rather than in the Tory nostalgia of, say, Russell Kirk. The traditionalists are a good sort. However they are the nostalgic past while we are the forward-looking future.

Kristol clearly places neoconservatism in a keystone role. They are and have been the synthesis of the varying veins of conservatism.

neoconservative policies, reaching out beyond the traditional political and financial base, have helped make the very idea of political conservatism more acceptable to a majority of American voters. Nor has it passed official notice that it is the neoconservative public policies, not the traditional Republican ones, that result in popular Republican presidencies. (2003)

In a couple of subtle moves, Kristol implies that the Reagan presidency as well as the current Bush presidency have found favor with the American public because of neoconservative influence. This is really quite a claim considering the condescending tone neoconservatives often exhibit when they speak of traditionalists. Additionally, they make a habit of drawing clear and fundamental distinctions between themselves and economic conservative -- distinctions that cut to the very core of economic conservatism and are also often delivered in a self-righteous manner.

Kristol outlines the neoconservative view on economics as being pro tax-cut because of the power tax-cuts have to stimulate the economy. However, about government he says:

Neocons do not like the concentration of services in the welfare state and are happy to study alternative ways of delivering these services. But they are impatient with the Hayekian notion that we are on "the road to serfdom." Neocons do not feel that kind of alarm or anxiety about the growth of the state in the past century, seeing it as natural, indeed inevitable. . . . People have always preferred strong government to weak

government, although they certainly have no liking for anything that smacks of overly intrusive government. (2003)

The typical traditionalist response is reflected in a recent column by Pat Buchanan where he tackles neoconservative enthusiasm for the war in Iraq by retorting in an accusatory tone that:

Finding themselves in an unanticipated firefight, our neoconservative friends are doing what comes naturally, seeking student deferments from political combat by claiming the status of a persecuted minority group. People who claim to be writing the foreign policy of the world superpower, one would think, would be a little more manly in the schoolyard of politics. Not so. (2003)

Buchanan is so put off by the neoconservatives that he employs blatant *ad hominem* language in calling the neoconservatives cowards.

In the same piece Buchanan draws a line in the sand for the upcoming 2004 election asserting that “Though we have said repeatedly that we admire much of what this president has done, he will not deserve reelection if he does not jettison the neoconservatives’ agenda” (2003). It is either the traditionalist or the neoconservative for Bush. He must make a choice. There is no room here for the sort of discursive synthesis that has held together the dual paths of conservatism discussed in the previous chapter.

Buchanan again provides a telling account of the resentment and even revulsion traditional conservatives feel for the neoconservatives.

The weakness of the neocons is that, politically speaking, they are parasites. They achieve influence only by attaching themselves to powerful hosts, be it “Scoop” Jackson, Ronald Reagan, or Rupert Murdoch. When the host dies or retires, they must scramble to find a new one. Thus, they have blundered in isolating themselves from and alienating almost every other once-friendly group on the Right. And rather than confirm the neocons as leaders of the Right, such bile betrays their origins and repels most of the Right. One wonders if the neocons even know how many are waiting in hopeful anticipation of their unhorsing and humiliation. (2003)

Buchanan is here attempting to read the neoconservatives squarely out of the movement.

That the rift between traditional conservative and neoconservative is so deep is telling in light of Kristol's argument that our national culture has become utterly debased. For the chief spokesperson of a movement claiming a synthesis of two contrary positions, Kristol's strategy is puzzling. Rather than build lasting bridges, Kristol seems insistent on destroying them once built. Insulting those we wish to persuade is rarely an effective strategy. Despite homological indications in Kristol's social issue olive branch, traditionalists simply do not trust neoconservative motives.

Still, Kristol persists in his habit of offering one hand in peace while concealing a loaded gun in the other. Despite approving economic conservatism's free-market agenda, Kristol argues that big government should be of little concern. Furthermore, the moment has come for the United States to dominate the world economically and militarily. This is the sort of position that any true economic conservative would loathe. Kristol believes that the growth of government is good, natural, and besides, people like it. Furthermore, the imperial vision advanced by Kristol would dramatically grow government bureaucracy.

Neoconservatives appear to be but lukewarm toward both economic conservative hero Hayek and traditional conservative hero Kirk. How then in the face of such divisive discourse, perhaps an anti-homology of the conservative movement, has neoconservatism "helped make the very idea of political conservatism more acceptable to a majority of American voters?" How will they "convert the Republican party, and American conservatism in general, against their respective wills, into a new kind of conservative politics suitable to governing a modern democracy?" Despite Kristol's dubious claims, the rest of the conservative movement has yet to recognize the presence of the messiah.

If neoconservatism truly is to be “the first variant of American conservatism in the past century that is in the ‘American grain’,” then a rhetorical strategy that highlights the similarities claimed by Kristol while deflecting attention from the differences is necessary. Neoconservatives cannot embrace aspects of traditional conservative social policy while dismissing, even attacking, the fabric of that policy. Equally, the leading role prophesied by Kristol has scant chance of success with economic conservatives while overtly bowing at the altar of big government. Again, essential first principles that ground both traditional and free market conservative positions come into play.. For neoconservatism to become a “third way” in American conservatism rather than a “persuasion” that appears and disappears with the political tidal cycle, a homology along the lines constructed by traditional and economic conservatives in chapter four must be achieved. The present rhetoric is wholly inadequate.

If a recent psychological profile of the conservative mind is correct, perhaps the neoconservative movement should concentrate on an alliance with traditional conservatives. In their study, Jost, et. al. (2003a) examined several years of research concerning the psychology of conservatism through the lens of motivated social cognition, a perspective that argues that beliefs and attitudes are a function of individual motivation. They divide the motivational needs into three overall categories; epistemic, existential, and ideological. They conclude that at its heart, political conservatism is a function of the resistance to change and a tolerance for inequality. Other common psychological factors linked by the study to political conservatism include; fear and aggression, dogmatism, intolerance of ambiguity, uncertainty avoidance, need for cognitive closure, and terror management. They further note that these characteristics are usually present in some combination although all must not necessarily be present.

Several of these attributes do appear in both neoconservative and traditional conservative discourse⁸. A tolerance of inequality could be stated less pejoratively as a fondness for hierarchy. That there is a concern for the future of traditional values and an often aggressive stance in defense of those values is true of both orientations. Finally, both groups exude a self-confidence whether rooted in a trust in divine guidance or the perfectability of Western traditions, that could be labeled a dogmatic attitude. While the language used in this study is reminiscent of the dismissive tone of Richard Hofstadter⁹, the findings might suggest a strategy for forming a homology between traditional conservatives and neoconservatives.

However, it should be further noted that almost none of the attributes argued by Jost et. al. as being present in the conservative mind fit the economic conservative. This point is made in a rejoinder to Jost by Greenberg and Jonas (2003) who note that “in favoring a capitalistic system, economic liberty and a free-market economy, conservatives seem to be quite tolerant of uncertainties” (378). I would add that the economic conservative agenda in full form appears to embrace change.

This prompts a central criticism. Both the Jost et. al. study and the Greenberg and Jonas response commit the error of assuming that there is one monolithic conservatism. I have argued here that such is not the case. While many of their conclusions at some level suit traditional

⁸As a side light I might note that even a cursory listen to talk radio programs such as those hosted by Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity would make one suspect this mind set afoot in both hosts and audience.

⁹Richard Hofstadter commits a similar pejorative error in his 1963 essay *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*.

conservatism and neoconservatism, the motivational factors, with the possible exception of a tolerance for inequality, are a poor fit for economic conservatism.

Additionally, the Jost et. al (2003a) study, the response by Greenberg and Jonas (2003), and the counterpoint by Jost et. al. (2003b) are concerned with psychological motivation. We are here examining a sociological phenomenon rooted in differing ontological commitments. While there likely are motivational factors informing and being informed by the core ontologies of contemporary conservatives, those factors are tangential to the present exercise. Simply put, the point here is that the wings of conservatism differ ontologically. What motivates each to embrace his/her ontology is beyond present purposes.

Nonetheless, neoconservatism has made its biggest splash yet on the American political scene and may well have arrived as a recognizable type. Accordingly, I believe the present study offers a solid point of embarkation for an analysis of neoconservative public address over the near term and to evaluate their success in fashioning alliances with the customary forms. Not all neoconservatives are as disdainful in their discursive treatment of the established paths of conservatism. Their rhetorical choices will determine their success. Perhaps a more profitable alliance for neoconservatives lies elsewhere, outside the Republican party.

The DLC and the Conservative Movement

The political attitudes of DLC Democrats appear at the surface to have many commonalities with both neoconservatism and economic conservatism. As such, potential alliances between DLC Democrats and either of these conservative types suggest a rich vein for future investigation.

Again, DLC Democrats embrace a relatively liberal social agenda while adopting a fairly conservative economic approach. The affinities that economic conservatism has for the DLC movement are intriguing. Both place far less emphasis on social issues. Precisely, neither is inclined to legislate morality¹⁰.

However, they also are champions of unrestrained free trade policies and a reduction of bureaucratic roadblocks that they argue inhibit economic growth. Each group also places an emphasis on elimination of Federal deficits and debt. For both debt reduction is smart economic policy that would make more funds available to the private sector. The economic conservative glimpses the bonus of defunding the Federal government.

Certainly, the goals of the DLC movement and the economic conservative are similar. Still, they are not identical. Although a bit simplistic, it is safe to say that the two groups differ only in a matter of degrees. The DLC asserts on their website that:

We believe in expanding opportunity, not bureaucracy. We believe our elected leaders have a responsibility to spend every tax dollar as carefully as their own. Fiscal discipline is fundamental to sustained economic growth as well as responsible government. America cannot prosper if we don't live within our means. . . . We believe in democratic capitalism -- giving all Americans willing to work for it the chance to do well and share in America's prosperity. Government's responsibility is to put its own house in order, keep the private sector honest, expand markets here and abroad, and equip Americans for economic success and security. We should give people the tools to get ahead, not promise them the moon on their nickel. (DLC 2003)

¹⁰There are exceptions. Notably, Connecticut Senator Joseph Lieberman, a former vice presidential candidate and current presidential candidate, has demonstrated a willingness to address moral issues. He has been a frequent proponent of instituting some content control over the entertainment industry and was a vocal critic of the moral behavior of President Clinton in the White House.

That there is common ground here is inescapable. However, the economic conservative is likely to pause at the notion of keeping “the private sector honest” and placing government in the role of equipping “Americans for economic success and security.”

While the DLC is not fixated on social issues they do not ignore them entirely. Though the economic conservative may be ambivalent about the social agenda, the emerging neoconservative movement, as Irving Kristol has told us, is not. Recall Kristol’s assertion that neoconservatives and traditional conservatives “are united on issues concerning the quality of education, the relations of church and state, the regulation of pornography, and the like, all of which they regard as proper candidates for the government's attention” (2003).

Now compare Kristol’s treatment of social concerns with the beliefs attributed to DLC chairman and Indiana Senator Evan Bayh by the DLC itself.

Bayh's signature legislative efforts seek to raise the performance of our nation's public schools, encourage responsible fatherhood, and provide tax relief for families struggling to afford the rising costs of college, retirement, and the long-term care of a loved one. The *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* says Bayh's commitment to fiscally responsible tax cuts makes him "one of the few voices of reason" in Washington. (DLC 2003)

Perhaps the neoconservatives are not Republicans at all. Either that or the DLC members might not be Democrats.

Of course, neither assertion is the case. Critically, for the purpose of this investigation, the question is prompted as to why there has not been some convergence in the form of a practical coalition forged between the neoconservatives and the DLC democrats? Have we seen such a move foreshadowed in the 1992 third party campaign of Ross Perot and the 2000 insurgent bid of John McCain for the Republican nomination? Why are the similarities between these movements not manifested as a rhetorical homology? Might we be on the verge of a

reordering of political parties such as that which occurred in the 19th century with the death of the Whigs and the birth of the Republicans? In the continued absence of such a union should we assume that discourse is less powerful than party affiliations, that public address is losing its force in the 21st century?

Summary of Questions for Future Research

Each of the above questions leads to profitable extensions of the present study with implications for the future of American political public address. If our present political parties have become so institutionalized with inertia to forestall profitable, goal-directed alliances, then a fundamental reexamination of the relevance of political rhetoric to advance the needs of the governed should be undertaken. Perhaps our culture has matured to the point that change is unlikely. The possibilities for reconstitution have been pre-constrained by deep seated cultural commitments that go unnoticed and thus, unquestioned.

An additional area of inquiry should lead us to further work in applied theory. Rhetoric and public address scholars often become transfixed with the analysis and criticism of political communication – this study being an immediate example -- at the expense of recommending a better path. Perhaps our focus should be on the type of homology that might be constructed between the DLC and either the neoconservative or the economic conservative. Such judgements are scant in contemporary scholarship. One often hears the perceived irrelevance of Communication Studies researchers decried within the discipline. Perchance a renewed focus on applied theory is the answer to the problem.

Nevertheless, the reality of contemporary politics is that a homologically forged alliance between two groups nominally identifying themselves as conservative has been forged. That we

have not seen other combinations reflects on the power of properly chosen language to conceal. There is an intricacy to how things are said and the DLC Democrats, while sharing some foundational commitments that we can tease out of their discourse, are not sounding that all important identical note on the surface. To the economic conservative or the neoconservative these centrist democrats plainly sound off key. Moreover, it might be that these other potential allies simply are not saying the same things often enough.

Since, I intend this work to be a beginning, not an end, the point here has been to establish the deeply different commitments held by the economic conservative and the traditional conservative and explore how they cover them with their rhetorical choices. Still, there are several robust ways that the conclusions of this study can be further sharpened by delving more deeply into language functions as well as engaging in some quantitative analysis of word frequency following the methods of Roderick P. Hart

Toward a Quantitative Interlude

Quantitative methods have not historically been associated with inquiry in rhetoric and public address. However, Hart (2000) has made a convincing case that quantitative data collection can enlighten a qualitative study. He employs computer power to evaluate word choice over a vast number of rhetorical artifacts generated by fifty years of presidential campaigns.

Hart's program (DICTION) organizes data along various distinct polar opposite groupings of word type that reflect basic orientations of the speaker. For example, his program

generates an “optimism”¹¹ score that searches for, groups, and sums words associated with praise, satisfaction, and inspiration and then subtracts the total of words associated with blame, hardship, and denial. Essentially, the quantity of each type of word uttered is the foundation of the optimism score.

The results yield several consistently recurring constellations of language. Indeed, the type of word used along with the *frequency* of use reflects a consistency in what the American people want to hear. For example, high optimism has been a persistent trait of victorious candidates across the thirteen elections studied. With the exception of Carter in 1976, the candidate with the higher optimism score has won each election. Similar consistencies are revealed for the other word clusters the program develops.

While Hart argues throughout his work that it is *word choice* that is important, *word frequency* is an implicit factor. After all, the program is subtracting the quantity of certain word types from the sum of other word types thus generating a score anchored on a continuum between polar opposites. It is the notion of word frequency that I think would be a profitable extension of this study and help explain why we see the habitual presence of this homology across economic conservatives and traditional conservatives.

In sum, maybe answers lie in just how repetitive we are, so long as we are sounding the properly vague and concealing theme. If word frequency matters as much as word choice, then this could explain why we are seeing the persistent combination of the economic conservative and the traditionalist conservative rather than the other possibilities speculated above. While

¹¹Along with optimism, DICTION also generates scores for certainty, activity, realism, and commonality.

there are others with similar beliefs, they are just not saying certain things *often* enough. In the face of these unrealized alliances, I would suggest that such a study might yield profitable results.

I have already argued that the two established factions of conservatism have been preaching a one note message. It may also prove true that they have been repeating it with remarkable persistence and frequency. The intersection of word types and frequency may reveal why we have the alliance we have and why we do not have the other combinations suggested above..

Word frequency might imply certainty on the part of the speaker. A consistently repetitive theme reveals to a speaker's audience the presence of a "true believer." I suspect that DLC democrats and neoconservatives simply do not sound like true believers to the traditional or economic conservative ear. Hart's method can extend the findings of rhetorical analysis, suggest future directions of inquiry, and provide a unique, different text for future analysis. A good critic should embrace all the tools available to his/her craft.

Conclusion

The modest goals of this study have been to further the conversation about the emergence of conservatism in the late 20th century from a communication perspective. As stated, this study is a beginning that has both established a homology of conservative discourse and unearthed several rich veins for future harvest. Pundits, political scientists and laypeople regularly evaluate contemporary conservatism. They draw some interesting conclusions but consistently miss that the divisions between the types are not simply surface policy orientations. Rather the differences represent essentially different ways of being. Establishing the presence of competing ontologies

between the groups changes the landscape. Instead of wondering why the conservative movement has been unable to complete the revolution, we begin to ask how they got this far to begin with. That there *is* something universally acknowledged as a conservative movement should perhaps be viewed as a miracle.

As Hart (2000) points out, the ear of the American polity hears certain things and notes the absence of others. Perhaps the homology is ultimately perfected by the lack of those others – others such as allusions to a utopian egalitarian future. While such a future might be an ideal end, the conservative mind recognizes it as nothing more than an idealized, unattainable fantasy. The political history of the American republic teaches that the several forms of egalitarian doctrine are generally dismissed as something alien and European. Both characteristic forms of conservatism as well as the resurgent neoconservatives speak in anything but egalitarian terms. Therein, maybe, lies the reason for the persistence of the hierarchist/individualist alliance.

It might be suggested that we have little more than a marriage of convenience between the two conventional forms of conservatism. It is *possible* that economic conservatives are working surreptitiously to co-opt the vote of the traditional conservative. Such a conspiracy would have the effect of advancing the economic conservative's free market agenda while leaving the traditional conservative's social concerns in the deep background. Altogether, this hypothesized strategy would only work because the economic conservative could unfailingly bank on liberals and leftist egalitarians to defeat the traditionalist's social policy initiatives. The sum would leave the economic conservative agenda supported and allow them to comfortably pay lip service to the traditionalist's concerns.

Of course, all the benefit in this scenario accrues to the economic conservative, none to the traditional conservative. While this intricate strategy is *possible*, it is highly *improbable*. One would be required to assume that the traditional conservative is nothing more than a mindless dupe, that the old stereotype of conservatives as intellectually challenged is true. Banishment of traditional conservative thought and capability to some pre-human wasteland recalls Lionel Trilling's (1950) dismissal of conservative "thought" as consisting of nothing more than "irritable mental gestures" that come and go before reason and calm is restored.¹² Alan Keyes and Pat Buchanan are fully aware that the social agenda has been receiving short-shrift, as are others in the traditionalist movement.¹³

Frankly, it is quite likely that those who anchor themselves to the left of conservatism have provided aid and comfort to the conservative movement by embracing just such pejorative caricatures as Trilling's. Lessons are plentiful throughout human history of the folly undertaken when we dismiss an enemy too lightly. I would argue that rhetorical analysts can no more afford to dismiss an object of investigation too lightly. The result of committing that mistake is short on learning and long on intellectual chauvinism.

I believe dismissal of the conservative union as some cynical yet pragmatic strategy represents an impoverished view of human kind and ultimately does disservice to scholarship. There is much more afoot than a bunch of mentally irritable minions being consistently

¹²Again, see also Richard Hofstadter (1955, 1960, and 1965) for more of the same tone while discussing the American right.

¹³Powerful conservative strategist Paul Weyrich (1999), in a famous letter penned immediately after the Clinton impeachment, suggested emphatically that traditionalists were being used and that they should withdraw from the political process and separate themselves from the secular world. "I no longer believe there is a moral majority."

hoodwinked by cunning Svengalis to serve the latter's agenda. There is a homology of discourse that emerges in the public address of both traditional and economic conservatives. There is no grand design, no delicate strategy to delude either faction into agreement. Likely, the union and the discourse actuating the union emerge from the bottom up like most other cultural phenomena.

After defeat in 1992, George H. W. Bush was quoted as believing that "a campaign is a disagreement, and disagreements divide. But an election is a decision, and decisions clear the way for harmony and peace" (Thomas and Bass 1996). While Bush's argument may have merit for a national campaign as a whole, I think the opposite obtains within a movement such as contemporary conservatism. As I have discovered, within the conservative movement, it appears to be the *campaign* that unites the two forms of conservatism, providing an opportunity for communion in their discursive homology, while *governing* and implementing the policies suggested by the homology spawns combat.

M.E. Bradford's laments are simply because there is no such thing as a homogeneous, unified conservative movement marching steadily toward revolution.

REFERENCES

- Bantz, C.R. 1993. *Understanding organizations: Interpreting organizational communication cultures*. Columbia: University of South Carolina.
- Beinart, P. 2001. Duty free. *The New Republic*. December 17.
- Billig, M. 1991. *Ideology and opinions: Studies in rhetorical psychology*. Newbury Park CA: Sage.
- Bitzer, L. 1969. The rhetorical situation. Reprinted in J.L. Lucaites, C.M. Condit, and S. Caudill. *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader*. 1999. New York: Guilford
- Black, E. 1970. The second persona. Reprinted in J.L. Lucaites, C.M. Condit, and S. Caudill. *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader*. 1999. New York: Guilford.
- Booth, W.C. 1974. *Modern dogma and the rhetoric of assent*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Bormann. E.G. 1972. Fantasy and rhetorical vision: The rhetorical criticism of social reality. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58: 396-407.
- Bradford, M.E. 1990. *The reactionary imperative: Essays literary & political*. Peru, IL: Sherwood Sugden.
- Brummett, B. 1984. Burke's representative anecdote as a method for rhetorical criticism. Reprinted in J.L. Lucaites, C.M. Condit, and S. Caudill. *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader*. 1999. New York: Guilford
- 1988. The homology hypothesis: Pornography on the VCR *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 5: 202-216.
- Bryant, D.C. 1953 Rhetoric: Its function and its scope. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 39.
- Buchanan, P.J. 1990. The end of the Reagan revolution. *Human Events*. October 13.
- 1992. *1992 Republican National Convention speech*. <http://www.buchanan.org/pa-92-0817-rnc.html>. August 17.
- 1995. *1996 announcement speech*. <http://www.buchanan.org/pa-95-0320-announce.html>. March 20.
- 2003. Is the Neoconservative Moment Over? *American Conservative*. June 16. http://www.amconmag.com/06_16_03/buchanan.html.

- Buckley, W.F. 1951. *God and man at Yale*. Chicago: Regnery.
- Burke, K. 1962. *Rhetoric of religion*. Berkeley: University of California.
- 1966. *Language as symbolic action*. Berkeley: University of California.
- 1969. *A rhetoric of motives*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Burnham, J. 1977. Panama or Taiwan. *National Review*. September 16.
- Bush, G.W. 2000. Acceptance speech.
http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/DailyNews/GOPCVN_transcripts_gwbush000803.htm
- Charen, M. 1996. Can the revolution recover? *Washington Times*. May 17.
- Chicago Tribune. 1987. *Ronald Reagan, Kremlin Dupe?* December 9.
- Coulter, A. 2002. *Slander: Liberal lies about the American right*. New York: Crown.
- CQ Almanac. 1995. 104th Congress, 1st session.
- Crane, E.H. 1993. *Defending civil society*. <http://www.cato.org/speeches/sp-71493.html>. July 14.
- 1999a. *An optimistic assessment of the future of liberty*.
<http://www.cato.org/speeches/sp-ec090199.html>. September 1.
- 1999b. *Opening remarks*. <http://www.cato.org/speeches/sp-ec100599.html>. October 5.
- Diamond, S. 1995. *Roads to dominion: Right wing movements and political power in the United States*. New York: Guilford.
- DLC. 2003. *New Democrats online*.
http://www.ndol.org/ndol_ci.cfm?kaid=128&subid=174&contentid=251925
- Dorien, G. 1993. *The neoconservative mind: Politics, culture and the war of ideology*. Philadelphia: Temple University.
- Durkheim, E. 1965. *The elementary forms of the religious life*. New York: Free Press.
- 1951. *Suicide: A study in sociology*. New York: Free Press.
- Douglas, M. 1970. *Natural symbols: Explorations in cosmology*. London: Barrie and Rockliff.
- 1986. *How institutions think*. Syracuse: Syracuse University.

- Easton, N.J. 2000. *Gang of five: Leaders at the center of the conservative crusade*. New York: Simon & Shuster.
- Edwards, L. 1995. *Goldwater: The man who made a revolution*. Washington: Regnery.
- 1999. *The conservative movement: The movement that remade America*. New York: Free Press.
- Ericson, E.E. 1994. Conservatism at its highest. *The Intercollegiate Review*. 30-1 Fall.
- Frum, D. 2003. Unpatriotic conservatives: A war against America. *National Review*. <http://www.nationalreview.com/frum/frum031903.asp>
- Giddens, A. 1979. Central problems in social theory: *Action, structure, and contradiction in social analysis*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Goldberg, B. 2003 *A CBS insider exposes how the media distort the news*. New York: HarperCollins
- Goldberg, J. 2003. State of confusion brouhahas — intellectual and otherwise. *National Review*. May 16. <http://www.nationalreview.com/goldberg/goldberg051603.asp>.
- Greenberg, J. and E. Jonas. 2003. Psychological motives and political orientation – the left, the right, and the rigid: Comment on Jost et.al.. *Psychological Bulletin*. 129-3.
- Guroian, V. 1994. “The conservative mind” forty years later. *The Intercollegiate Review*. 30-1 Fall.
- 1994. The conservative mind in America. *The Intercollegiate Review*. 30-1 Fall.
- Gusfield, J.R. 1989. The bridge over separated lands: Kenneth Burke’s significance for the study of social action. in Simons, H.W. and T. Melia. *The legacy of Kenneth Burke*. Madison: University of Wisconsin.
- Hardisty, J.V. 1999. *Mobilizing resentment: Conservative resurgence from the John Birch Society to the Promise Keepers*. Boston: Beacon Hill.
- Hayek, F.A. 1944. *The road to serfdom*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Himmelstein, J.L. 1990. *To the right: The transformation of American conservatism*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Hodgson, G. 1996. *The world turned right side up: A history of the conservative ascendancy in America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Hofstadter, R. 1955. The pseudo-conservative revolt. In D. Bell (ed.) *The new American right*. New York: Criterion.

----- 1960. *The age of reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* New York: Vintage.

----- 1965. *The paranoid style in American politics, and other essays*. New York: Knopf.

Human Events. 1992. Capital briefs. November 28.

----- 1994. "Contract with America" a good start on needed reform. October 16.

----- 1997. Bad deal, worse leadership. May 16.

Johannsen, R.L., R. Strickland, and R.T. Eubanks. 1970. *Language is sermonic: Richard M. Weaver on the nature of rhetoric*. Baton Rouge: LSU.

Jost, J.T., J. Glaser, A.W. Kruglanski, and F.J. Sulloway. 2003a. Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin*. 129-3.

----- 2003b. Exceptions that prove the rule – using a theory of motivated social cognition to account for ideological incongruities and political anomalies: Reply to Greenberg and Jonas. *Psychological Bulletin*. 129-3.

Judis, J.B. 1992. *The grand illusion*. New York: Strauss and Giroux.

Kemp, J.F. 1996. *Acceptance speech*.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/convention96/floor_speeches/kemp.html. August 15.

----- 1999. *Democratic capitalism and the ultimate triumph of the worker*.

<http://www.felsef.org/mar00.htm#3>. December 1.

Keyes, A. 1997. *The Declaration of Independence and the spirit of American law*.

http://www.renewamerica.tv/archives/speeches/97_02_27aquinas.htm. February 27.

----- 1999a. *Independence Day speech in Iowa*.

http://www.renewamerica.tv/archives/speeches/99_07_04iowa.htm. July 4.

-----1999b. *Speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC)*.

http://www.renewamerica.tv/archives/speeches/99_01_23cpac.htm. January 29.

Kirk, R. 1988. *The conservative mind*. (7th edition, 1st 1953). Chicago: Regnery.

Kirkwood, 1992. Narrative and the Rhetoric of Possibility. *Communication Monographs* 59: 30-47.

- Kristol, I. 1995. *Neoconservatism: The autobiography of an idea*. New York: Free Press.
- 2003. The neoconservative persuasion. *Weekly Standard*. August 15.
www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/003/000tzmlw.asp
- Kuhn, T.S. 1970. *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- 1977. *The essential tension: Selected studies in scientific tradition and change*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- McGee, M.C. 1975. In search of "the people": A rhetorical alternative. Reprinted in J.L. Lucaites, C.M. Condit, and S. Caudill. *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader*. 1999. New York: Guilford.
- 1980. The ideograph: A link between rhetoric and ideology. Reprinted in J.L. Lucaites, C.M. Condit, and S. Caudill. *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader*. 1999. New York: Guilford.
- 1982. A materialist's conception of rhetoric. *Explorations in rhetoric in honor of Douglas Ehninger*. Glenview: Scott Foresman.
- Mattheis, E. 2003. Untitled. <http://shockingelk.com/text/neoconservative/>.
- Moore, S. 1997. This is the biggest spending Congress ever. *Human Events*. July 8.
- Nash, G.H. 1976. *The conservative intellectual movement in America since 1945*. New York: Basic.
- 1994. The conservative mind in America. *The Intercollegiate Review*. 30-1 Fall.
- Niemeyer, G. 1994. Russel Kirk and ideology. *The Intercollegiate Review*. 30-1 Fall.
- Nock, A.J. 1943. *The confessions of a superfluous man*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Norquist, G.G. 1995. *Rock the house: History of the new American revolution*. Fort Lauderdale: Vytis Press.
- O'Sullivan, J. 1992. ITYS, number 453. *National Review*. November 30.
- Olson, K.M. 2002. Detecting a common interpretive framework for impersonal violence: the homology in participants' rhetoric on sport hunting, 'hate crimes,' and stranger rape." *Southern Communication Journal* 67: 215-244.

- Oravec, C. 1989. Kenneth Burke's concept of association and the complex of identity. In Simons, H.W. and T. Melia. *The legacy of Kenneth Burke*. Madison: University of Wisconsin
- Pacquette, R.L. 2002. A pioneer American conservative. *Intercollegiate Review*. 38: 56-59.
- Pocock, J.G.A. 1971. *Politics, language, and time: Essays on political thought and history*. New York: Atheneum
- Ponnuru, R. 1996. Reagan's spoiled children. *National Review*. May 6.
- Rand, A. 1943. *The fountainhead*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Regnery, H. 1996. Russell Kirk: A life worth living. *Modern Age*. 38-3 Summer.
- Reed, R. 1993. Casting a wider net. *Policy Review*. Summer.
- Rusher, W.A. 1975. *The making of the new majority party*. New York: Sheed and Ward.
- 1993. *The rise of the right*. New York: National Review Books.
- 1998. Conservatism's third and final battle. *Intercollegiate Review* 34: 3-9.
- Schoenwald, J.M. 2001. *A time for choosing: The rise of modern American conservatism*. New York: Oxford University.
- Simons, H.W. 1970. Requirements, problems, and strategies: A theory of persuasion for social movements. Reprinted in J.L. Lucaites, C.M. Condit, and S. Caudill. *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader*. 1999. New York: Guilford.
- Shpak, M. 2003. Those cuckoo neocons. *Original Dissent*.
<http://www.originaldissent.com/shpak040902.html>
- Smith, A. 1993. *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*. World's classics selected edition. New York: Oxford University.
- Thomas, D. and L. Bass. 1996. The postelection campaign: Competing constructions of the Clinton victory in 1992. *Journal of Politics* 58: 309-331.
- Thompson, M., R. Ellis, and A. Wildavsky. 1990. *Cultural theory*. Boulder: Westview.
- Trilling, L. 1950. *The liberal imagination*. New York: Viking.
- Turner, S. 1994. *The social theory of practices : tradition, tacit knowledge and presuppositions*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press

- Turner, V. 1982. *From ritual to theatre: The human seriousness of play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.
- Viguerie, R. 1984. Do we need another establishment president? *Conservative Digest*: January 6-7
- Wallace, K. 1963. The substance of rhetoric: Good reasons. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 49: 239-249.
- Warner, J. and M. Berley. 1995. *Newt Gingrich: Speaker to America*. New York: Signet.
- Watts, J.C. 2000. *A call to arms: Renewing America*.
<http://www.nraila.org/Speeches.asp?FormMode=Detail&ID=11>
- Weaver, R.M. 1953. *The ethics of rhetoric*. Chicago: Gateway (Henry Regnery).
- 1970a. Language is sermonic. In R.L. Johannsen, R. Strickland, and R. Eubanks *Language is sermonic: Richard Weaver on the nature of rhetoric*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press.
- 1970b. Ultimate terms in contemporary rhetoric. In R.L. Johannsen, R. Strickland, and R. Eubanks *Language is sermonic: Richard Weaver on the nature of rhetoric*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press.
- Washington Post. 1998. Some folks are going to have a lot to answer for. January 28.
- Weber, M. 1958. *The protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. New York: Charles Scribner.
- Weiler, M. 1984. The rhetoric of neo-liberalism. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. 36: 43-60.
- 1987. Neoconservatism: A study of ideological argument. *Journal of the American Forensic Association*. 24: 37-47.
- Welch, R. 1963. *The politician*. Belmont MA: John Birch Society.
- Weyrich, P. 1999. Open Letter. <http://www.rfcnet.org/archives/weyrich.htm> February 16.
- Wuthnow, R. 1987 *Meaning and moral order: Explorations in cultural analysis*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Zagacki, K.S. 1996. The priestly rhetoric of neoconservatism. *Western Journal of Communication*. 60: 168-187.

VITA

A native Texan, Lyman Davis Hunt was born in Dallas on April 6, 1957. At the tender age of eight he migrated with his family to New York where he attended elementary school. Following two years in the Big Apple, the Hunt clan settled in Western Pennsylvania where the author graduated from Oil City High School. After several invigorating, yet ultimately unproductive, years in the “real world,” he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication from the Pennsylvania State University in 1989 and his Master of Arts from Louisiana State University in 1994. The author has now devoted his life to scholarship with the hope that those of us in the Humanities and Social Sciences can *still* make a difference in society.